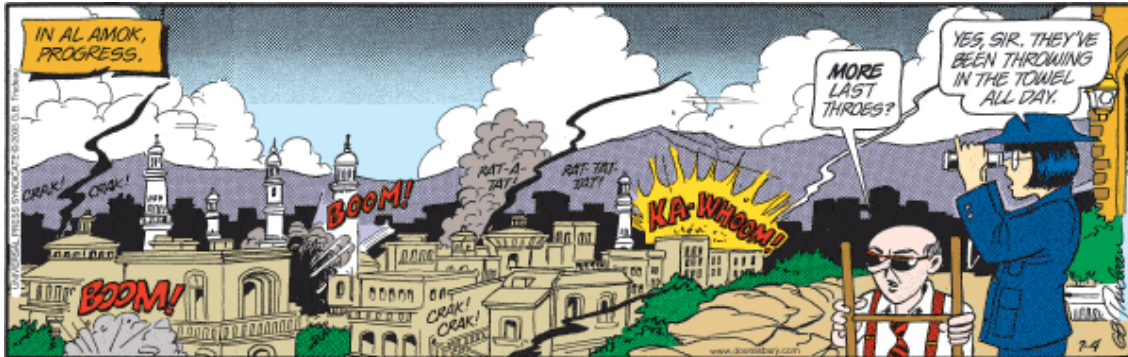


## GI SPECIAL 3B80:



[Thanks to Kate, who sent this in.]

# Georgia

June 27, 2005

From: Debbie Clark, US Army ('76-'84), Veterans For Peace

To: GI Special

**Copied at the bottom of this post is an article which appeared in the Gilmer County, Georgia newspaper regarding the death of a native of Ellijay, Georgia, Lt. Noah Harris**

**This was the son of one of my 16-year old daughter's teachers at Gilmer High School. (My 16-year old lives in Ellijay at her father's house and comes to my house in the Atlanta area on weekends.)**

I will be driving my daughter back to Ellijay on Sunday evening, so I suppose I will see the yellow ribbons I've been hearing about that they hung up on Friday all over Gilmer County in celebration of Noah Harris' life. Today (Saturday) would have been his 24th birthday.

**I think I would have hung up black ribbons, myself, with big, "Bring Them Home Now!" signs everywhere, but then I wasn't in charge of the decorating scheme...**

I see that Noah's mother was quoted as saying, "What a life I've lived – to be the mother of an American hero. I cannot let grief overwhelm me."

**Kind of reminds me of the old Vietnam antiwar song that was a staple of my youth:**

**Well, come on mothers throughout the land,**

**Pack your boys off to Vietnam.  
Come on fathers, don't hesitate,  
Send 'em off before it's too late.  
Be the first one on your block  
To have your boy come home in a box.**



I tried to get Michael Hoffman of Iraq Veterans Against the War in at my daughter's high school (Gilmer High) to speak to the students there this past April when he was here for the speaking tour of Atlanta, which I was the local coordinator for. However, for the time period that Michael was here, the school was apparently undergoing some kind of testing of the students, thus, the school principal declined my offer, stating, "We might consider it for next fall."

Well... I've been spending the evening chatting with my 16-year old daughter while simultaneously working on my other daughter's wedding invitations and contemplating their future, my mind drifting around. My 16-year old and I were originally planning to go watch the film on DU at 11:15 Sunday morning at the Unitarian Universalist church, but have stayed up too late now. Napping and sunning ourselves at the swimming pool sounds more enticing...

Like Noah Harris, my 20-year old daughter's fiancée is in the ROTC and will be going into the military immediately upon graduation from college. He is a handsome young man, smart and well-educated, with strong ideals and integrity.

**The article about Noah's death further states, "Both parents said they were proud of their son and they had no regrets."**

**America's sons and daughters dying in Iraq for nothing but lies and parents have nothing to say when their own flesh and blood is gone from this earth, except that they have no regrets. It makes me want to scream, "What is WRONG with you?? WAKE UP!!!"**

**How many more?**

**I don't think Bush's idea about creating reality is such a bad one. I'd like to create some reality myself - a reality in which Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld are all behind bars and there is war no more.**

**My wedding prayer for my daughter and future father of my grandchildren is for the war to end before he goes.**

**As I saw on a counter-recruitment sign on the CodePink website: "You can't be all you can be if you're dead."**

### **Addendum:**

**Today I drove my 16-year old daughter back to her father's house up in Ellijay, Georgia.**

**There I saw the yellow ribbons that were hung up on Friday in celebration of the life of Lt. Noah Harris (3rd Infantry Division) of Ellijay, GA, who was killed last week in Iraq.**

The yellow ribbons are displayed in the median of Interstate 515 (named the Zell Miller Mountain Parkway a few years ago) starting in Jasper, Georgia - that is Pickens County, actually - going all the way up to Gilmer County, and then they are all over Ellijay, too. (Don't know if they go north of Ellijay or not since I didn't drive that far, though I would guess that they do.)

Putting all those ribbons up must have been an all-day long project involving a large contingent of the townspeople. The ribbons literally go for miles. Some of my daughter's friends who have been students of Lt. Noah Harris' mother at Gilmer High School were among those who helped put them up.

**My daughter was asked by her friends to help, too, but she was at my house in Marietta on Friday, and I had to be at work, so I couldn't take her back up there for that. Although this town project was by no means an antiwar action - totally the opposite - my daughter's friends do include some rather serious antiwar kids. I seem to be rather popular with some of them because I hand down antiwar T-shirts to them and give them antiwar buttons. :-)**

Currently my daughter is making a pillow out of the tie-died VFP T-shirt that I got at the 2003 VFP national convention in San Francisco. It's not that I don't like the T-shirt; it's just that there was this one boy up in Ellijay, a friend of my daughter's, who thought the idea of it so cool, I couldn't resist offering it to him, and he was so excited that I said I would give it to him! Since the shirt was slightly too small for him, my daughter is making a pillow out of it for him instead.

That is what you call a homegrown counter-recruitment strategy. :-)

[The news story:]

## **Lt. Noah Harris killed in Iraq**

6.23.05 by Al Summers, News Editor, Times-Courier, Devoted to the Progress of Gilmer County

The war in Iraq hit close to home last Saturday when 1st Lt. Noah Harris, of Ellijay, was killed when the Humvee in which he was riding came under attack by rocket-propelled grenades. Harris would have celebrated his 24th birthday this Saturday, June 25.



**Lt. Noah Harris**

Harris had just returned to Iraq, where he was a platoon leader in the 3rd Infantry Division, after recently spending some time at home on rest and relaxation. He was the son of Rick and Lucy Harris, of Ellijay.

The lieutenant enlisted in the U.S. Army R.O.T.C. program at the University of Georgia shortly after Sept. 11, 2001. Initially told he was too late to join for that period, when the Army found out he was the Georgia state scholar athlete of the year for 1999, he was allowed entry. Noah Harris became a serviceman.

After graduating from the UGA with a degree in business in 2003, the soldier reported for training at Fort Benning. Harris recently helped organize a program where UGA students acted as pen pals with soldiers in his platoon.

An outstanding athlete at Gilmer High School, the Harris served as captain of the GHS Bobcat football team and was high school state wrestling champion in 1999 after being the state runner-up in 1998.

Former GHS head football coach Mike Thompson remembered Harris as “one of the most well-mannered, very determined young men I have ever had the chance to be around. He was very optimistic about everything.”

Thompson added, “Noah was the type of person who liked to help people. I was talking to a classmate of his recently and she said, ‘He was a special person.’ I think that sums him up. He was a special person.

One of Harris’ wrestling coaches at GHS, Sam Snider, said, “One of the things that stands out in my mind as far as memories go was when my two kids were young wrestlers. He always spent time with them and encouraged them and taught them things he had learned. That meant a lot to me and to them.”

Snider recalled Harris’ run at the state championship in 1999. “If Noah won his match, we would win fifth place. If he won his match by pinning his opponent, we would win fourth place and receive a team trophy.

Noah said he wanted to help the team win a trophy.

“He was wrestling a Division I football prospect for the state championship. Coach (Mark) Pettit and I told him, ‘Noah, just go out there and win the match, don’t worry about the pin.’ After he wrestled around with the guy and scored six or seven points, he looked over at us and winked. At that point we said, ‘Well, go ahead and pin him.’ He did and the team walked away with a fourth place trophy, the first team wrestling trophy for the school.

“I think the world of Noah Harris. I am still in shock,” Snider added.

The coach then said, “During his senior year, he juggled acting with Mrs. (Linda) Miller (GHS drama teacher) and our demanding wrestling schedule, and he succeeded at both of them. And, his greatest desire was to serve our country.”

Snider concluded his words about Harris with another story, which seems to emphasize the type of person the soldier was. “Last spring, Noah sent his old wrestling shoes to school by his mom. They were the ones he wore when he won state. He wanted to see if some kid who could not afford shoes might want them in order to be able to wrestle.”

Those shoes had to hold some important memories for him and he was willing to give them up so some other athlete could wrestle.

Miller remembered Harris as, “one of the most talented students who ever walked across the stage. He created the standard by which I measure the work on our stage since he graduated. He took more risks and had more passion than any kid I have ever directed. I am devastated with grief, but I will not stay there. As Noah would say, ‘I will drive on.’”

Harris was a 1999 Honor Graduate at GHS. He was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from Dallas-based retailer Footaction USA. Over 15,000 students nationwide had applied for the 84 scholarships. Announcing Harris’ receipt of one of the scholarships, Footaction president and CEO Ralph T. Parks said, “For those of you who think America’s youth are headed in the wrong direction, take a look at Noah Harris. He is an outstanding young person we can all be proud of.”

Harris was recently back in Ellijay for some rest and relaxation. While at home, he visited with students at Gilmer High and shared his experiences with them.

He also spoke to the women of the Joy Circle at Ellijay First United Methodist Church. Members of the circle had adopted Harris and members of his platoon, and the soldiers had adopted the ladies, as “prayer warriors.” The circle members were sending the troops care packages and birthday cards.

His father has been quoted as saying his son thought it was important to have a purpose higher than yourself to serve in life.

**His mother was quoted in The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, “What a life I’ve lived – to be the mother of an American hero. I cannot let grief overwhelm me.”**

**Both parents said they were proud of their son and they had no regrets.**

Flags were lowered to half staff all over Gilmer County by early Tuesday morning in honor of the soldier who has been described as “carrying bullets in one pocket and Beanie Babies in the other.”

A celebration of the life of Lt. Noah Harris will be held Saturday, June 25, at Ellijay First United Methodist Church at noon. Overflow seating will be available at the Ellijay Elementary School auditorium with a live feed of the service.

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# **Hurt Georgia Vet Used And Thrown Away: "The VA Rep Told Us We Would Have To Wait" "Army People Are Poor People. We Are Not High On Any Totem Pole."**

June 26, 2005 Moni Basu – Staff, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

**On a recent Friday, James Webb awoke without having had a dream about Iraq.**

**It was an exceptional day for the former Army specialist because when Webb dreams, he sees himself with his son, Christian, at his side being swallowed by infinite desert drabness. Suddenly they come under fire from a bus parked on the side of the road.**

**Webb whips out his handgun, passes it to Christian, and together father and son "light up the bus."**

**"I woke up and thought, Whoa, that's a disturbing dream," Webb said. "My son is 6 years old."**

Webb is part of a new generation of American soldiers returning home from the battlefield with scars --- some physical and some emotional --- that can create havoc as they try to pick up the personal lives they left behind.

And like thousands of injured soldiers, Webb is waiting for help from the Department of Veterans Affairs. But by its own admission, the VA is severely backlogged.

The average wait time for a disability check in Georgia is 5 1/2 months, said Larry Burks, director of the regional VA office in Decatur. For some veterans, it could take even longer.

"That's too long for me," Burks said. "And we are desperately trying to change that."

**For Webb, who was discharged for medical reasons, the struggle has been more about sleep-busting dreams at night, popping painkillers during the day and constant anxiety about how to pay next month's rent.**

**The weight of his troubles led him to contemplate suicide after he returned from Iraq last fall.**

**"I didn't feel like I had reason to live anymore," he said. "Sometimes I'd cry myself to sleep. I'd lie down at night and all I'd see was Iraq."**

In Georgia, officials say first-time disability claims spiked 16 percent in 2004, partly because of Afghanistan and Iraq.

"Our government is saying, We don't really value your service," said James Sursely, national commander of the Disabled Veterans of America. "Otherwise we would be providing health care and benefits in a more timely manner."

The VA managed to trim the backlog of disability claims during fiscal years 2002 and 2003 but has lost ground since then, according to a Government Accountability Office report released in March.

**The report found that the average wait time for processing disability claims was 119 days at the end of March 2005, an average of eight days longer than at the end of fiscal year 2003.**

**During that period, the number of cases waiting for review grew by about 86,000 to about 340,000 -- an increase of about one-third.**

**Sen. Larry Craig (R-Idaho), chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, said resources for veterans were adequate to take care of their needs.**

Veterans groups lobbied Congress for an amendment to the \$80 billion supplemental appropriations bill that would have provided an extra \$2 billion to cover what they call a shortfall in funding for veterans medical care. But the measure failed to pass.

**While the funding debate continues in Washington, James Webb waits for help in his apartment in Covington.**

"I am disappointed at the way I was treated after I got back," said Webb, who lives every day surrounded by hints of the soldier he used to be.

There are the certificates of achievement on the wall and the honorable discharge, the piece of paper of which Webb is most proud. And there is still the glint in his eye of a man determined to fight.

Webb completed a tour in Iraq that lasted a year and a week with the 4th Cavalry Regiment's Delta Troop. He and his buddies provided escorts for convoys traveling dangerous roads.

A pre-existing hip injury got much worse when an explosion threw him back against the steel of a gunner's turret. His medical records indicate an injury to his sacroiliac joint.

**Webb, who grew up playing football, ran seven-minute miles and passed the Army's most rigorous physical endurance tests, can't stand up straight anymore. He hobbles around on legs that wasted away from months of inactivity.**

**"Some people wake up and listen to the birds sing," Webb said. "We got to hear mortar rounds going off."**

Even in Iraq, Webb was having difficulties coping. His medical records show that his weapon was taken from him for a week when he was sent to a combat stress clinic.

Webb got married a few weeks after he returned home last September to Michelle, whom he met on the Internet. But when he went back to Fort Riley, Kan., she remained in Georgia.

At Fort Riley, Webb drifted in and out of the military hospital. He was treated for his hip pain, seizures and severe depression. Alone in a one-bedroom apartment off base, he said he entertained thoughts of ending his life.

**The Army gave Webb a medical discharge on Feb. 4, the day before his 29th birthday. He returned to Georgia and applied for disability benefits.**

He could receive \$2,299 a month if the VA determines he is entitled to 100 percent disability. Webb will be happy with 30 percent of that.

**"They said they'd get back to me in six or eight months," Webb said. "I think the VA is totally swamped. I know there's people a lot worse off than me. I would wait forever to see my buddies who really got messed up over there to go in front of me," he said, tears welling in his eyes.**

**Webb occasionally goes to a local hospital for physical therapy. His wife's health insurance policy helps pay the bills.**

**Michelle is now fighting to stop the foreclosure on her Covington house, but with one income, medical bills and three children from other marriages, "it has been tough," she said.**

The stress has taken a toll on their marriage, he said, and there have been frequent arguments, something not uncommon in the families of returning veterans.

**A few weeks ago, Webb's mother, Jackie Gibson, called a local veterans group desperately pleading for help for her son. She said the group first agreed to help, then reneged.**

**"The VA rep told us we would have to wait," Gibson said. "Army people are poor people. We are not high on any totem pole."**

**Two other organizations --- Military Families Speak Out and Veterans for Peace --- have been trying to help the Webbs sort through their tangled life.**



"We should ask America how we can send someone to war and let this happen," said Steve Robinson, executive director of the Washington-based National Gulf War Resource Center, who is familiar with the case.

**When he was hurting in Iraq, Webb did what his officers told him to do: "Suck it up. Pain is for the weak."**

**Now it's hard to suppress that pain, either physical or emotional.**

"Life is good," Webb said. "It's just different. Over there, there's no time to be scared --- your adrenaline's pumping. I came back home and I have a lot of time to think."

**MORE:**

## **July 4<sup>th</sup> Update On James Webb From His Mom**

From: Deneise  
To: GI Special  
Sent: July 04, 2005

**I just visited my son in the VA hospital in Atlanta with spinal injuries, knee, ankle, and shoulder along with PTSD - he can't walk correctly and guess what he was to be seen at Walter Reed Hospital that was never followed through by his chain of command - he was in the Atlanta paper thanks to Military Families Speak Out Group a special thanks to them**

Needless, to say someone at the chain of command dropped the ball!!!! Just now is getting seen

**This soldier needs a good lawyer, if you know anyone that can help him - he will get his life straightens out but he still needs help.**

**I can't believe the stories I am hearing from military families and some are afraid to go to the VA to get help - but I encourage all to get what they deserve they fought hard for our freedom and took a beating over there -**

**Please pass this on so others can beware - help get the soldiers what they need when they come home wounded that is what we can do for them - needs a lawyer in the Covington, GA area.**

This the 4<sup>th</sup> of July go to visit soldier in need.

Anyone willing to help call me at 423-245-3457 home.

**Bring them home.**  
Jackie Gibson

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## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

### **How Bad Is It? Gonzalez Visit Almost Cancelled; Couldn't Get From Airport To Green Zone**

July 4, 2005 By MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press

The United States will help Iraq investigate the killing and kidnapping of government officials, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales says.

The informal agreement was disclosed as Gonzales made an unannounced and tightly guarded, six-hour visit Sunday to Baghdad. He met with Iraq's prime minister, Ibrahim al-Jaafari, as well as police and judicial officials.

The attorney general's visit took place under extraordinary security precautions, including a news blackout until Gonzales was safely inside the heavily fortified Green Zone where Iraqi and U.S. officials work.

**The visit was almost scrapped because bad weather temporarily grounded helicopters that were to take Gonzales and his entourage from the Baghdad airport to the city. Driving the eight miles from the airport -- a stretch that risks bombings and other attacks -- was considered too dangerous.**

### **Notes From A Lost War:**

**“You Do Not Know Who The Enemy Is”  
“He Melts Back Into Society”  
“The Battle Space Returns To The  
Insurgent Control”**

**Col. Robert Davis, who commanded the explosive ordnance disposal teams in Iraq, said that when a U.S. patrol leaves a street, “the battle space returns to the insurgent control.”**

July 04, 2005 By Greg Grant, Special to the Army Times

FORT IRWIN, Calif. — U.S. commanders grudgingly concede they remain a step behind insurgents' ever-adapting use of improvised explosive devices.

**Detailing lessons learned from a yearlong combat tour in Iraq, Col. Mike Formica of the Army's 1st Cavalry Division said it's the insurgent, not the U.S. soldier, who "has the initiative when it comes to executing these operations."**

**Until an insurgent attacks, Formica said, "you do not know who the enemy is." And immediately after the attack, "he melts back into society."**

**Each time U.S. soldiers venture outside their heavily protected bases in Iraq, they enter a minefield that varies in structure, density and location every day, even every hour.**

**A U.S. patrol may drive down a Baghdad city street without incident only to return a few hours later along the same route to find a pile of garbage, a dead animal or a broken-down car, all of which may contain IEDs placed by insurgents who track U.S. movements.**

Votel said IED "incidents" — the discovery or detonation of a bomb — have surged in recent months and currently run about 30 a day. An Army study showed that 93 percent of IED attacks occur in Baghdad. From June 7 to June 16, IEDs killed 17 U.S. troops, and wounded an unknown number more.

The Pentagon has directed millions of dollars and countless hours trying to devise a technological counter to IEDs, but Votel was frank in his assessment that technology "offers no silver bullet." **Despite attempts to develop high-tech detectors, U.S. commanders who recently returned from Iraq admit the best means of spotting an IED remains a pair of human eyes.**

**Col. Robert Davis, who commanded the explosive ordnance disposal teams in Iraq, said that when a U.S. patrol leaves a street, "the battle space returns to the insurgent control."**

When U.S. forces added steel plating to their Humvees and increased the use of heavy tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles, the insurgents responded with sophisticated shaped-charge explosives that can penetrate even the thickest armor.

**Votel said insurgents recently have targeted "iconic vehicles," such as the 70-ton Abrams tank, to show U.S. soldiers they're not safe no matter how much armor surrounds them.**

Most frustrating to U.S. soldiers is the realization that their ability to defeat IEDs is limited. Trying to interrupt the supply of explosives won't work, Formica said, as there is no shortage of material for the bomb makers.

**"This was a very militarized society with ammo plants and depots all over the country; by and large, many of those were unsecured," he said. "Forget the**

borders being open, it doesn't matter; (the enemy) has almost an endless supply in theater that he can tap into.”

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**No Water  
No Mission  
Wrong Turn  
Time To Come Home, Now**



**US Marines amphibious assault vehicle [!] rolling through the desert in Iraq's western al-Anbar province. (AFP/USMC-HO/Cpl. Mike Escobar)**

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Two Missing US Troops 'Are Dead'**

4 July, 2005 BBC

**Two of the three US special forces soldiers missing in eastern Afghanistan for almost a week have been found dead, US government sources tell the BBC.**

The whereabouts of the other team member remains unclear, while a fourth soldier was found alive on Saturday.

In the Afghan capital, Kabul, US officials confirmed the deaths of the two missing soldiers, members of an elite Navy Seals unit.

Meanwhile, the US military has said it regrets that civilians were killed in an air strike by US forces in eastern Afghanistan.

Women and children were among 17 killed in the raid on Chechal village, Konar province governor Assadullah Wafa said.

Mr Wafa has called the bombing a "mistake" and called for an investigation into how it happened.

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## TROOP NEWS

# The Bush Speech At Ft. Bragg: “Hypocritical, Manipulative, Condescending, Meaningless Drivel,” Gold Star Mom Says

**I will never be able to look at an American flag without thinking of the uniform my son wore proudly that displayed that same symbol and the evil ones who desecrated and defiled the stars and stripes by lying us into the invasion of Iraq.**

July 03, 2005 By Cindy Sheehan, Gold Star Families for Peace

Last January, I was bumped from the Larry King Live show in favor of an appearance by the soon to be proved innocent, alleged pedophile, Michael Jackson. I was going to be on the program to answer the question: Did I feel my son's murder in Iraq was "worth it" after the "free" elections in the war torn country on January 30th. I wrote an article then called: "Not Worth It." (<http://www.lewrockwell.com/orig6/sheehan1.html>)

I never thought I would be invited back on as a guest after I pretty much burned the Larry King Bridge with my article. However, to my astonishment, I was invited back to be a guest on June 28th. I was asked to be on the broadcast in order to give my impressions and rebuttal to George's speech on Iraq that he delivered in front of the less than enthusiastic (what the White House spin doctors call: Respectful) troops at Ft. Bragg, NC.

I felt like I was in Bizarro World as I heard George speak about 9/11 five times and mention terrorism 31 times, even though these rationales for war have been disproved repeatedly. I think George thinks that since we believed him once about terrorism vis a

vis Iraq, that we must therefore be gullible enough to believe him this time. I don't know, and I am not a professional pundit, but my theory is he might have mentioned 9/11 to manipulate our emotions and maybe even frighten us a little again?

**The thing that struck me when I was watching that vacuous man giving his hollow speech was the fact that he could have always replaced the word "terrorists" with the phrase: "my moronic and callous foreign policies."**

**For example, when he said that terrorists spread death and destruction on the streets of Baghdad and kill innocent people, he could have just as easily said: "My moronic and callous foreign policies spread death and destruction on the streets of Baghdad and kill innocent people."**

**When he said that we need to stop terrorists from toppling governments in the region, he could have just as easily said: "We need to stop my moronic and callous foreign policies from toppling governments in the region."**

**People have characterized the speech-lite in many ways, but if I had to pick a few words to describe it, I would say: "Hypocritical, manipulative, condescending, meaningless drivel."**

I sat through an entire hour in the CNN studio in DC hearing not one person say that the invasion was a mistake and if it was a mistake, then our troops should be brought home immediately.

**Even the "Democratic" Senators (Kerry and Bayh) that were on the program just gave their recipes for "success" in Iraq, which did not include any exit strategies.**

The guest host for that hour was Bob Costas and he asked one guest, Sen. John McCain, an intriguing question: "If you could push Button One and have an eventual wonderful outcome in Iraq, or if you could push Button Two and never have had it happen, which one would you pick?" Of course, Sen. McCain chose Button One.

**He hasn't had a loved one killed in this enormous tragedy of a war, nor does he have a loved one in harm's way. It has not affected him personally one bit. What skin is it off McCain's teeth if our troops remain for a highly unlikely rosy outcome at the cost of thousands of more lives?**

**I would push the button that would bring back my son, Casey, and the tens of thousands of the other victims who have been killed for nothing but outright lies and bald-faced betrayals. I would push the button that would give Iraq back its power, water, and their infrastructure.**

My absolute favorite guest of the evening was Sen. John Warner, powerful Chair of the Senate Armed Disservices Committee. Of course, he fell in lockstep behind his fuehrer and praised the speech and how, although we have "all" paid a terrible price for this invasion and occupation, bringing freedom and democracy to the Iraqi people is worth all the sacrifices that the world is making.

**I sat in the Green Room with Sen. Warner's entourage. I wondered (even out loud) what price they have paid for our administration's misdeeds in Iraq. They all**

**looked like happy, well-fed, well-dressed, well-educated, and well-hydrated Americans. They looked to me like they had plenty of electricity to blow dry their hair and charge their cell phones and lap tops. They looked like they had quite a nice supply of clean drinking water and fresh food.**

I sincerely doubt if any of them had a loved one ripped from their lives by a car bomb, IED, or bullet in an ambush.

**I wondered who the “we” was that John Warner spoke of. I spoke with John Warner after his interview and told him unless he was prepared to sacrifice even a good night’s sleep over this senseless and criminal war, then he should work on ending it, not prolonging the carnage. He told me that I was “entitled to my opinion,” but he would respectfully have to disagree with me. That was awfully Constitutional of him!**

I finally got on to speak for my 82 seconds (all the time Larry King Live could spare for the peace message) about how this war is a catastrophe and how we should bring the troops home and quit forcing the Iraqi people to pay for our government’s hubris and quit forcing innocent children to suffer so we can fight terrorism somewhere besides America.

How absolutely racist and immoral is it to take America’s battles to another land and make an entire country pay for the crimes of others? To me, this is blatant genocide. How dare we export our patriotic brand of flag waving death and devastation to a people who have been through so much already? It wasn’t bad enough that our sanctions killed tens of thousands of Iraqis before we even started an active aggression on them, now we have to create confusion, chaos, and disorder there. How dare our president, Congress, and we Americans allow this to continue?

After my brief advocacy for peace, my position was refuted by another Mom whose son was killed in Iraq in 2003 who said she “totally disagrees” with me and “feels sorry” for me.

**Well, you know what? I feel ache for her blindness and for the millions of sheeple who have had the wool pulled over their eyes by the bunch of hypocritical, bad shepherds who are running disastrous herd over the world.**

**I have distressing news for the Soccer Safety Moms and the NASCAR Dads who are such ardent supporters of this administration and war: Your grandchildren and children who will be entering Kindergarten this fall will be fighting George’s endless war if he gets his way and is allowed to continue spreading the cancer of imperialism in the Middle-East.**

**Donny Rumsfeld said we could be in Iraq for another dozen years. Does anybody think with all the billions of dollars that are being poured into constructing super-sized bases in Iraq that the war machine plans on relinquishing the cash-cow that is that poor, unfortunate land anytime soon? Think about it when you tuck your child into bed tonight.**

**I heard George and the Senators say that evening the sacrifices we as Americans have had to make for Iraq are “worth it.”**

**I really would like to know who has benefited and profited from Iraq and who has really had to sacrifice anything.**

**I know it was “worth it” to Dick Cheney who was the CEO of Halliburton, (of no-bid contract fame) which has raped billions of dollars from our government, from the people of Iraq, and from our soldiers who are not getting what they need to survive in a combat zone.**

It is “worth it” to Black Water Security Co. who sends one thousand dollar a day mercenaries to Iraq, funded by the War Department. It is “worth it” to L. Paul Bremer who slunk out of Iraq with 8.8 BILLION dollars missing from the Provisional authority. It is also “worth it” to the other companies and individuals who have been enriched by feeding our children to the military industrial complex.

By George, I think we have found the people who think this war is “worth it.” But, is it worth it to George Bush who was counting on this unlawful and unprincipled aggression in Iraq to give him “political” capital? Instead, if poll numbers are any good indication, Americans are withdrawing their assent for George and they are withdrawing their consent for him to wage eternal war on humanity.

**As I sat in the Green Room of CNN, I was saddened and troubled by George’s call for us Americans to fly the flag proudly on the 4th to honor our troops.**

**For one thing, the American flag is not a magical token that can bring armor to the troops who are still dying without the protection.**

**The flag is not a faith healer that can restore limbs and eyesight to the ones who have been maimed forever. The flag is not a genie in a bottle that can blink her eyes and bring our children home from this horrible blunder that they are suffering for and being slaughtered for.**

**But, as for me, I will never be able to celebrate another patriotic holiday without mourning what this nation has stolen from my family.**

**I will never be able to look at an American flag without thinking of the uniform my son wore proudly that displayed that same symbol and the evil ones who desecrated and defiled the stars and stripes by lying us into the invasion of Iraq.**

**No, Casey’s sacrifice was not “worth it” and George needs to do more than wave his flag and manipulate our sense of patriotism. He needs to march his girls to a recruitment center and send them to Iraq to fight the terrorists that his moronic and callous foreign policies have recruited or he needs to wake up and smell the apple pie and bring our other sons and daughters home, now!**

Cindy Sheehan

Mom of Casey Sheehan, KIA in Sadr City Iraq, 04/04/04 Casey's Peace Page

Cofounder of Gold Star Families for Peace [www.GSFP.org](http://www.GSFP.org)

Member of the After Downing Street Coalition [www.AfterDowningStreet.org](http://www.AfterDowningStreet.org)

[www.CindySheehan.com](http://www.CindySheehan.com)



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

## **Stop-Loss Forcing Thousands To Stay Army**

July 4, 2005 Army Times

**Personnel records indicate nearly 22,000 active-component enlisted soldiers and officers who are in stop-loss status are beyond their scheduled separation or retirement-eligibility dates.**

Under the active-component unit stop-loss program, soldiers generally are barred from voluntarily separating or retiring 90 days before and after a deployment, and during the deployment.

As of mid-June, the personnel files of 21,179 soldiers carry a tracking code of "S," which means their separation dates have been delayed because of stop-loss. The "S" numbers fluctuate but generally are in the 20,000 range, the Human Resources Command said.

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## **Soldiers Arrested: Wanted To Burn Flag**

July 4, 2005 Army Times

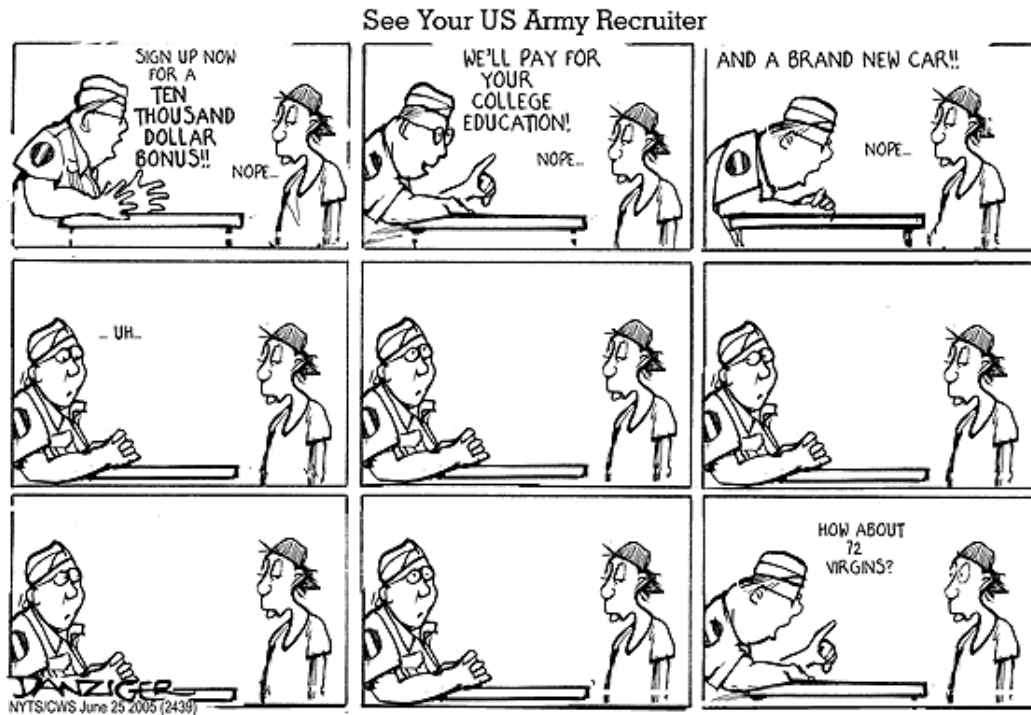
Some National Guard soldiers are donating blood in Rapid City, S.D., to make up for about 40 units reportedly destroyed by one of their comrades.

Serafin Delgado with the West Virginia National Guard, is accused of breaking into United Blood Services, causing thousands of dollars of damage, and destroying the blood units.

**According to police, Delgado got into an argument with other members of his unit and said he wanted to burn an American flag. Reports indicate he found one at the Blood Services office but couldn't pull it off the pole, so he broke into the building.**

Delgado is being held in the Pennington County Jail.

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## VA Gets The Picture -- No Shortfall Here

[This was sent to Veterans For Peace by J. Bello. He writes: **This is incredible! A \$1 billion dollar shortfall and the VA is worried about its CBOC's not having VA Secretary Nicholson picture on the wall. I truly wonder what is next!**]

June 27, 2005 By Al Kamen, Washington Post

**Turns out that \$1 billion shortfall for health care funding for our nation's veterans - - disclosed last week at a House Veterans Affairs Committee hearing -- is only one of many important and vexing dilemmas facing top officials at the Department of Veterans Affairs.**

**Take, for example, this discussion of a major problem during the weekly conference call a few weeks ago among senior officials at the Veterans Health Administration, which is the medical part of the VA.**

**"As you know," Deputy Undersecretary Laura Miller said on the May 27 call, "many of our facilities, medical centers, CBOCs" -- that's community-based outpatient clinics; there are about 850 of them in the country, many in rural areas and some open only one to two days a month -- "and (other) offices have a picture of Secretary Nicholson prominently displayed.**

"Unfortunately, however," Miller continued, "there are many facilities that currently do not have the picture displayed. I am aware that the mailings of the pictures occurred on April 22, 2005." So that's more than five full weeks.

**"Dr. Perlin" -- that's Jonathan B. Perlin , undersecretary for health, who revealed the \$1 billion shortfall after being grilled by committee Chairman Steve Buyer (R-Ind.) -- "and I cannot stress the importance of this enough," she said. "We are asking that you give this your highest priority. We will continue to ask for daily updates on the status until we are assured that all of our facilities have a current picture displayed."**

In defense of local VA officials, it turns out that Miller was wrong: Not all the photos went out on April 22. **And we hear some officials disagreed that the photos should be their "highest priority."**

**"And here we're trying to figure out where our next patient meal is coming from and what furniture to sell to buy drugs next year," one VA official said.**

Agency officials said Friday that 100 percent of the VHA facilities have reported appropriate placement of the Nicholson photos.

**Well, it is important to be able to recognize the head of the agency, especially after last week's hearing.**

**Nicholson was the author of an April 5 letter to senators saying, "I can assure you that VA does not need (additional funds) to continue to provide timely, quality service. . . . "**

**If by some chance any CBOCs or hospitals lost or did not get the pictures, we provide one here that you can cut out and use just in case a headquarters inspector shows up to check on compliance with this important initiative.**



VA Secretary Jim Nicholson, suitable for framing.  
(By Gerald Martineau -- The Washington Post)

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

# Militants Groups in Iraq Name Spokesman

July 03, 2005 The Associated Press

**Two militant groups said Sunday they have named a new spokesman to silence those who claim to speak for the insurgency.**

In a joint statement posted on an Islamic Web site, the Islamic Army in Iraq and the Army of Mujahedeen said they had chosen Ibrahim Youssef al-Shammari as their spokesman.

The little-known al-Shammari appeared on the Arab satellite channel Al-Jazeera on Sunday "to silence all those who talk in the name of the mujahedeen," the groups said in a statement posted on an Islamic Web site.

**During an appearance on Al-Jazeera, al-Shammari said the resistance "has a realistic and truthful political project," adding that the groups were in talks with other armed factions to come up with a unified position. He did not elaborate.**

Al-Shammari argued that sectarian problems were created after the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq in order to prolong the presence of foreign troops.

The reputed spokesman of two insurgent groups on Monday dismissed reports of talks between US officials and rebels as a "ploy," adding that the militant organisations were trying to forge a unified political vision for the country.

**"Yesterday, they launched the sword and the spear (military) operations and whole neighborhoods were destroyed," he added. "And today, they say 'We're negotiating with the armed groups.... What appeared in the media is just a ploy for the US legislators in order to say: 'We're a realistic administration. We are negotiating and we will reach a solution. The American administration is embarrassed in front of its public opinion and lawmakers in Congress.'"**

Al-Shammari, whose appointment was announced in an Internet statement on Sunday, said his appointment was the first step toward merging the Islamic Army in Iraq and the Army of Mujahedeen. The move also came in response "to those who speak in the name of the resistance and who want to adopt political projects that don't serve the resistance." he added.

"There are many operational steps in this regard. The contacts are continuing."

Asked if the two groups included foreign fighters, al-Shammari said: "Every group has its secrets. We cannot put all our cards on the table at once."

**"But, as you know, we are the people of this country. It's not strange that the people of the country would rise up to fight their enemy. The cause doesn't**

require importing people from outside this country to defend its land, dignity and pride.”

Al-Jazeera said al-Shammari was talking from Iraq.

Last week, a Web statement issued in the name of The Islamic Army in Iraq, the Army of Mujahedeen and the Ansar al-Sunnah Army threatened the life of a Sunni Arab politician, Ayham al-Samarie, who announced the formation of a political group he claims represents the demands of an umbrella organization of insurgents.

The three groups accused the dual U.S.-Iraqi national of spreading lies.

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## Assorted Resistance Action

July 04 2005 By Frank Griffiths Sapa-AP & (KUNA)

**An attack by guerrillas in Mosul killed a bodyguard of the provincial Nineveh governor, Captain Ahmad Muayad, police said.** He was killed in front of his home in the eastern part of the city, which is the capital of Nineveh province.

**Guerrillas in Baghdad killed an Iraqi painting contractor who worked with a US military base, doctors said.** Omar Othman and a friend were driving on Baghdad's dangerous airport road Monday morning when the assailants opened fire. Othman's friend was wounded.

**A joint U.S.-Iraqi patrol came under fire Sunday south of Baghdad, killing five Iraqi soldiers and wounding three, the U.S. military said Monday.** No American casualties were reported after the attack in Youssifiyah, 12 miles south of Baghdad.

<p><b>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</b></p>
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## FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

# Happy July 4: Time For Another Revolution?

From: John Spritzler  
To: Anti-Allawi-group  
Sent: July 03, 2005

Dear Friends,

Americans celebrate a revolution tomorrow. Although it was led by and ultimately only served the upper class of wealthy property owners, its popular support was due to the writings of people like Tom Paine who debunked the legitimacy of social inequality and aristocratic privilege.

**I encourage you in the 'States who will be celebrating with friends and family tomorrow to direct some of the conversation around the Bar-B-Q grill to the question of whether we need a second and more fundamental revolution today. I think you will be pleasantly surprised to find that many people think we do, even if they also think it is not possible because not enough other people agree.**

*The article below, however, shows that there is far more opposition in America to the ruling elite than one might suspect. It reports that even rank and file members of Veterans of Foreign Wars, an organization with a reputation for rallying around the flag whenever government leaders play their WAR and PATRIOTISM card, are not buying it this time around.*

**If ever there was a time to take the idea of a second revolution in the United States seriously, today is that time. The first revolution began when people saw they weren't alone in thinking that rejecting King George III's authority was, as Tom Paine famously called it, common sense.**

**It's time to talk with friends and neighbors about what is common sense today, when an arrogant plutocracy robs from the have-nots to enrich the haves at home, sends our sons and daughters to be killed in an unjust war on innocent people abroad, and tells us it's "democracy" because we get to vote for tweedledee or tweedledum.**

**Happy 4th!**

**THE STORY:**

## **Backing For Bush On Iraq Is Gone, Local Veterans Say**

**Said Anderson: "Korea turned out to be B.S., Vietnam was B.S., and Iraq is B.S. It's all political. All these people are dying in vain ... I was in for nine years, so don't go waving a flag in my face and say I'm not being patriotic."**

June 29, 2005 Michael Mayo, News Columnist, South Florida Sun-Sentinel

HOLLYWOOD - The televisions at VFW Post 2500 in Hollywood were tuned to President Bush on Tuesday, but his words weren't getting rapt attention.

About 30 people were around the bar drinking, chatting, smoking as the president talked. "Does it have to be so loud?" asked Barbara Flint as she sat next to Jerry Giblock, a visiting Vietnam veteran.

**"He's running scared," said Giblock, 63, a former Post 2500 member who lives in Anchorage, Ala. "His poll numbers are so low, he's got to say something, but the support is gone. It's gone. I don't think there's anybody in here who's behind him."**

Tuesday was spaghetti dinner night at the hall on Dixie Highway, where \$4 got you a nice plate with meatballs and garlic bread. Post commander Richard McDonald pointed to a sign hanging above the bar: "It's not the price you paid to join. It's the price you paid to be eligible."

**These veterans have fought in foreign wars and struggled after them, which makes them more than eligible to comment on the ongoing war in Iraq.**

The view inside the faded lounge wasn't optimistic.

**From Charlie Nessler, 89, who fought in World War II at the battle of Midway: "I don't think we should be there."**

From Bob Artman, 79, a World War II veteran: "I got a bad taste in my mouth. Every time I read about a guy getting killed, I tear up. I didn't feel this way at the beginning, but now I just don't see an end to it."

**The last time I came around here, in May 2004, President Bush was about to give a speech about Iraq, and the veterans' feelings were mixed. Some thought the war justified. Others had nagging feelings of doubt.**

**But this time, as Bush once again spoke to the nation, there was nothing but skepticism about the war's necessity, and worry about a staying the course.**

"When you got people who are willing to strap bombs to themselves and blow themselves up, that's a hard war to win," said McDonald, 71, a Korean War vet who voted for the president last year. "I think Bush had the right idea, but now it's turned into a religious war for some people there. And that's the worst kind of war to be in."

"The thing is, Bush is committed, so he's got to stick to his guns. But at some point he's got to come up with a plan to get out of there because we're never going to be able to get rid of 100 percent of the terrorists. He's going to have to pull out, just like Vietnam."

Said Artman: "I'm a registered Democrat, but even people in his party are now questioning things. They don't see the light at the end of the tunnel. ... So many people in this country need things: People are starving, people need health care and medicine. But here we are taking care of people all over the world. How about starting at home?"

Howard Fay, a former prisoner of war in Vietnam, ladled meatballs in the kitchen.

"I don't like this war at all," he said. "Saddam wasn't doing anything to us. The one we should have been going after with everything is Osama bin Laden."

**Said Anderson, who spent nine years in the Navy and Marines: "They just play up on the fear. It used to be the domino theory and stopping communism. There was**

a picture, The Russians Are Coming, The Russians are Coming. Now it's 'The Terrorists are Coming, The Terrorists are Coming.' After 9-11, I think we overreacted a little bit. We're not using our heads."

"I have no respect for this president," said Bud Lynch of Hallandale, a Korean War veteran. "He's just trying to finish Daddy's job. That's all this was about. There was no nuclear (expletive) or WMDs to begin with ... If it were my son who was being sent over there, I wouldn't let him go."

Said Nessl: "These people have no idea what war is like."

Said Anderson: "Korea turned out to be B.S., Vietnam was B.S., and Iraq is B.S. It's all political. All these people are dying in vain ... I was in for nine years, so don't go waving a flag in my face and say I'm not being patriotic."

Bush heard applause as he finished at Fort Bragg, but there wasn't a ripple at Post 2500.

"I go to a VA Hospital in Anchorage for my medicine and I'm seeing a lot of new people in there every time," said Giblock. "We have an Army base and an Air Force base nearby, and they're getting MedVac'ed back in all the time.

"I'm seeing people in wheelchairs, people missing limbs, people with burns. That's the part they don't show on the news."

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.

## OCCUPATION REPORT

# Occupation Torture Out Of Control: "Tactics Reminiscent Of Saddam Hussein"

June 19, 2005 By Jeffrey Fleishman and Asmaa Waguih, Special to The Los Angeles Times



The public war on the Iraqi insurgency has led to an atmosphere of hidden brutalities, including abuse and torture, carried out against detainees by the nation's special security forces, according to defense lawyers, international organizations and Iraq's Ministry of Human Rights.

**Up to 60% of the estimated 12,000 detainees in the country's prisons and military compounds face intimidation, beatings or torture that leads to broken bones and sometimes death, said Saad Sultan, head of a board overseeing the treatment of prisoners at the Human Rights Ministry. He added that police and security forces attached to the Interior Ministry are responsible for most abuses.**

**The units have used tactics reminiscent of Saddam Hussein's secret intelligence squads, according to the ministry and independent human rights groups and lawyers, who have cataloged abuses.**

"We've documented a lot of torture cases," said Sultan, whose committee is pushing for wider access to Iraqi-run prisons across the nation.

**"There are beatings, punching, electric shocks to the body, including sensitive areas, hanging prisoners upside down and beating them and dragging them on the ground.... Many police officers come from a culture of torture from their experiences over the last 35 years. Most of them worked during Saddam's regime."**

**The ordeal described by Hussam Guheithi is similar to many cases. When Iraqi national guardsmen raided his home last month, the 35-year-old Sunni Muslim imam said they lashed him with cables, broke his nose and promised to soak their uniforms with his blood. He was blindfolded and driven to a military base, where he was interrogated and beaten until the soldiers were satisfied that he wasn't an extremist.**

**At the end of nine days, Guheithi said, the guardsmen told him, "You have to bear with us. You know the situation now. We're trying to find terrorists."**

The death penalty was recently reinstated, and for much of the country there is an unspoken acceptance — often rooted in harsh tribal justice — that intimidation and torture serve a purpose.

"The Americans are occupying the country, but the Iraqi national guard and Iraqi police are violating the human rights of detainees," said Sattar Raouf, director of the Popular Committee for Culture and Arts, who has followed allegations of abuse. "Intelligence and security forces are torturing people for confessions. You can go to the sixth and seventh floors of the Interior Ministry and find case after case like this."

The Interior and Justice ministries have been struggling over control of prisons and detention centers. Interior operates in a secret realm of intelligence networks in which suspects can be jailed or vanish for weeks.

A report this year by the international organization Human Rights Watch found that abuse had become "routine and commonplace" and that detainees were often beaten

and held in violation of judicial process, including not receiving court hearings within 24 hours of their arrests. The group stated that some detainees — many of whom are arrested based on tips by paid informants — waited months before a court appearance.

**"One of the most common complaints made by detainees," said Human Rights Watch, which interviewed 90 current and former detainees in 2004, "was of police officials threatening them with indefinite detention if they failed to pay them sums of money."**

**The abuses reported by former detainees and human rights organizations echo some of the Hussein regime's tactics: poor legal protection, crowded cells, electric shock, threats of sexual abuse and hanging and beating prisoners for prolonged periods.**

Abbas Jibouri said in an interview with the Los Angeles Times that about 25 national guard members raided his house on the morning of May 8.

A 41-year-old farmer from the Maden area near Baghdad, Jibouri, whose account could not be verified, said he had been taken to a detainee center and later transferred to the national guard base at Rustumiya.

"There was always one man interrogating me and four or five others who punched me in different parts of my body," said Jibouri, a Sunni. "They accused me of providing terrorists with weapons and money.... They gave me a list of 10 names and told me to give information about their being terrorists. One of the names belonged to my brother and another was a neighbor of mine who actually died a year or so ago."

**Jibouri said he was beaten with pipes and given electrical shocks. "I didn't know when it would end," he said.**

Last month, Iraqi national guardsmen handcuffed Guheithi at the home of his brother in the Rasafa neighborhood of Baghdad.

**"They were beating me and my brothers in front of our children," he said. "They told me that I was helping the insurgents by sending trucks to Fallouja during the first [anti-insurgent] offensive in April 2004. They had piles of reports about me. I was actually only sending humanitarian aid to the people there, which I gathered from our mosque."**

<p><b>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></b></p>
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**DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

**FORTUNATE SON**

[Thanks to Jim, who sent this in.]

June 29-Jul 5, 2005 NY Press

**"With supreme guts and righteousness, President Bush went into Iraq," Gov. Pataki told the Republican National Convention last August. The place erupted with applause. It was all very stirring.**

**Almost one year later, Pataki's son Teddy is, with supreme guts and righteousness, seeking a three-year law school deferment from the Marines, which last week commissioned the recent Yale grad as a second lieutenant.**

**The governor, who himself received a medical deferment during the Vietnam War because of poor eyesight, has said he hopes his son is granted the deferment. Of course he does.**

**No doubt all the parents of New York's nearly 100 war dead also wish their children could have gotten deferments. But they couldn't. They got killed instead.**

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## **Received:**

# **The Things He Won't Talk About**

From: JM  
To: GI Special

From GI Special:  
23 June 2005 By William Rivers Pitt, Truthout Perspective

And how, exactly, does he propose to "change the underpinnings of our economy"? Leaving aside the fact that it's not "our" economy, does he really think that happens by way of another Empire-loving Democrat like Kerry, that Pitt pushed in our faces last year, or is he for taking it to the streets? Who knows. No answer

## **Comment By JM**

That's the problem: "No Answer". That's the problem with modern democracy. In our modern governments wealth and power is all that matters. A presidential candidate needs to be super wealthy to run his campaign.

The only answer is to alter this and bring democracy back to the majority. How can the ordinary citizen be represented by a multi-billionaire? How can the ordinary voter get a candidate not seeking personal wealth and power? How can a candidate be found who doesn't seek financial help from the powerful corporations and wealthy neo-cons? (They don't give help without expecting something in return).

**I don't believe the answer lies in communism or the new, war orientated, evangelistic Christians, so where does it lie?**

**It's the whole system that needs altering and I think until this happens the choice in an election must be - "Which candidate is the lesser of two evils. Can anyone give a answer to this?**

Can you T.?

**Reply:**

William Kuntsler, who spent a lifetime defending people the government loved to prosecute for opposing war and injustice, came to the following conclusion, quoted in the New Jersey Abolitionist, April 20, 1996

**“There is only one thing that moves government on any level: stark fear.**

**“And if you will recall when Richard Nixon sent the troops into Cambodia, in April of 1970, to look for Vietcong strongholds and shelters in that country, the United States went on a tear that culminated as you know in 4 young people being shot down in Kent State, in 2 at Jackson State, and in the closing down of 300 colleges and universities, and it forced the president of the United States to walk to the Lincoln Memorial where students were gathering and tell them that he was withdrawing the troops from Cambodia because he was scared shitless.**

**“And that is the only thing that moves them.**

**“Not whether you vote for them tomorrow or the next day.**

**“Electoral politics doesn't really bother them that much.”**

**True then, true now.**

**Web Copies:**

For back issues see GI Special web site at <http://www.militaryproject.org/> .

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

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

[www.williambowles.info/qispecial](http://www.williambowles.info/qispecial),

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

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