

GI SPECIAL 3C38:



**Iraq Veterans Against The War:
Crawford, Texas, Aug. 7, 2005**

Photo thanks to W. Leon Smith, publisher, The Lone Star Iconoclast

More Ft. Hood Soldiers Visit Cindy Sheehan

08/28/05 By Cindy Sheehan, Daily Kos [Excerpts]

A photographer friend of mine went down to Crawford to the Pro-War, Anti-Peace rally today. There were about 1500 people there he said.

My friend said that the speakers were whipping up the crowd into a frenzy of hatred for me (like they already didn't hate me?) and for the peace movement.

My friend said that the entire theme of the rally was: "Cindy is killing American troops by her anti-American protest."

Oh really, isn't George Bush killing innocent Americans and Iraqis by sending them to fight in an illegal and immoral war for power and greed? I think the real culprit is my neighbor: George.

I am really sad that there are still people in America who think that someone exercising her freedom of speech is anti-American. People who say we DON'T have the right to dissent are un-patriotic and un-American.

Our rally had about 2500 people jammed into the Camp Casey II tent. The speakers and music were awesome. Joan sang a few more songs.

I told the crowd that I totally understand George Bush's noble cause for continuing the war: I have to kill more Americans because I have already killed so many.

Then I posed the question to them that we will pose to Congress and the small minority of Americans (38-40%) who still believe in George's oil war. How many more lives are you willing to sacrifice before you bring the troops home?

I led the crowd in a deafening chant of "Not One More," aimed at George's vacation home.

I kind of feel sorry for George; holed up in his ranch. Not being able to go out unless he flies over in his helicopter. If he drove out of the ranch, he would have to see people who disagree with him. But every time he leaves the ranch now, he faces people demanding answers to the question: What Noble Cause?

George is going golfing in Arizona on Monday, then to San Diego on Monday afternoon and Tuesday. Be sure we will have people in those locations bird dogging him. He deserves to be made uncomfortable: he is making the entire world more than uncomfortable.

We are relaxing a little bit tonight after the rally.

A very nice young man who was wounded and put in a wheel chair by Bush's war on the same day Casey was killed came out tonight. He is spending his honeymoon with his new bride here at Camp Casey.

Which reminds me...we are having 2 weddings here tomorrow: One at Camp Casey I and one at Camp Casey II. We have had so many children and babies come out too...it is the cycle of life.

I was visited by a 2nd Lt. from Casey's 2-5 Cavalry that told me to keep up the good work and Casey's old roommate came out from Ft. Hood to meet me.

He may have to go back to Iraq soon. He hopes he doesn't have to since he will be out in 6 months, but he is pretty sure he will be stop-lossed.

It was so hot today in Crawford. So hot, it seemed like there wasn't enough air to breathe. Then a storm came and gave us some blessed relief.

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Two U.S. Soldiers Killed: The Press Could Care Less

28 Aug 2005 By Ellen Knickmeyer and Jonathan Finer, Washington Post

Roadside bombings on Monday killed two U.S. soldiers in Baghdad. [That's it, the whole report about two more soldiers gone.]

U.S. Copter Shot Down At Tal Afar; One Soldier Killed, One Wounded

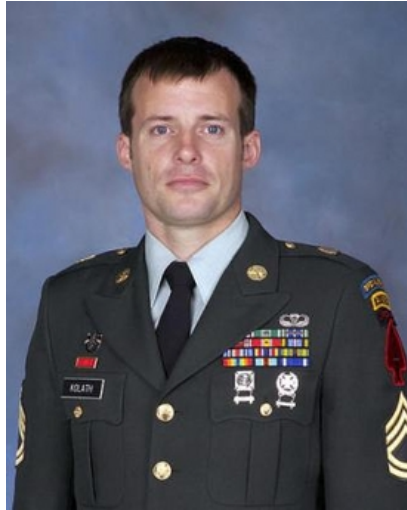
August 30, 2005 CNN

A U.S. pilot was killed and a second was wounded when a U.S. helicopter was hit by small-arms fire in northern Iraq, a military spokesman said.

The attack on the UH-58 Kiowa Warrior helicopter came while it was flying over Tal Afar.

The aircraft went down, but the wounded pilot was able to get the helicopter airborne again and left the immediate area.

Soldier From Dallas County Died From Bomb Blast



Sgt. 1st Class Obediah J. Kolath, 32, of Louisburg, Mo. (AP Photo/The U.S. Army Special Operations Command)

08/30/05 ky3.com

LOUISBURG, Mo. -- A soldier who grew up in the Ozarks died while fighting in Iraq. Sgt. 1st Class Obediah "Obie" Kolath, 32, was a 1991 graduate of Skyline High School near Urbana.

The Department of Defense says Kolath died on Sunday in a hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, from injuries that he received on Thursday in Husaybah, Iraq. A homemade bomb exploded and killed three other soldiers. Kolath was a Ranger who was part of a Special Forces operations team.

Kolath was stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C. He was born on Dec. 1, 1972, and had been in the Army for around 13 years. He had been a member of the Special Forces operations for several of the 13 years that he served.

Kolath was divorced. His brother, John, said three children survive him. One is in Germany and two are in the United States. His mother also survives him.

"He was a very loving and dedicated person who will be deeply missed by friends and family alike," wrote John Kolath in an e-mail message.

Friends Are Lost In Battle Days Apart

August 30, 2005 Washington Post

Spec. Toccara R. Green was killed in Iraq earlier this month when a roadside bomb exploded near her truck. Her high school friend, Sgt. Damion Campbell, was killed last Friday in Afghanistan when his convoy was ambushed.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



A U.S. soldier stands guard at a car bomb scene in Baghdad's Palestine Street on August 30, 2005. One person was killed and two wounded when a car bomb detonated in Baghdad Tuesday according to witnesses. REUTERS/Thaier Al Sudani

Notes From A Lost War:

Resistance Returns To Tal Afar

August 10, 2005 By Antonio Castaneda, Associated Press

CAMP SYKES, Iraq — Nearly a year ago, U.S. forces swarmed through Tal Afar, killing enough insurgents for the local police chief to declare the city insurgent-free. Now the militants are back, and the United States has moved in more soldiers to drive them out.

When the insurgents were driven from Tal Afar, the United States scaled back. But the small number of U.S. soldiers remaining — along with the new Iraqi soldiers — were unable to prevent the insurgents from returning.

“The enemy had sensed a reduction of U.S. forces,” said Col. H.R. McMaster, commander of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, which was rushed here from Baghdad, 260 miles to the southeast, earlier this year. **[“Sensed?” What, he thinks they can’t count, and instead use some mystical telepathic “sensing.?”]**

Now McMaster's regiment — which oversees Tal Afar as well as more than 185 miles of Syrian border — is trying to uproot insurgents who have averaged over 150 attacks per month, an exceptionally high rate for a city of some 200,000 people.

After U.S. forces crushed the insurgents in Tal Afar last fall, only about 500 American soldiers were left to guard the city, which was mostly in the hands of the Iraqis. But the insurgent ranks swelled, allowing them to control entire neighborhoods.

"We've taken away the enemy's main strengths: their ability to hide in the population," McMaster said. [Don't laugh. He doesn't get it. The "enemy" is the population.]

Tal Afar, located about five miles from the U.S. military's Camp Sykes, is one of the most inaccessible areas in the country. In the last month, the U.S. military has only allowed one embedded reporter — for the German magazine "Armored Gun Trucks of the U.S. Army in Iraq" — inside the city.

The city's sectarian troubles also attracted the attention of national Shiite leaders who oppose the U.S. military. Clerics loyal to the radical preacher Muqtada al-Sadr regularly mention the "suffering" of Tal Afar's people in sermons around the country.

Al-Sadr's movement regularly collects donations of food and medical supplies in mosques in Baghdad, Kufa and other cities to deliver them to Shiites in Tal Afar.

All this requires the U.S. military to walk a fine line to avoid any sign of favoritism.

The Americans have repeatedly denied allegations that they favor the city's Kurds — the most pro-American of Iraq's ethnic groups. An Iraqi army division with about 8,000 soldiers was stationed in the area recently.

But U.S. officials acknowledge that Kurds form a disproportionate percentage of the troops, who have yet to face the insurgents on their own.

Notes From A Lost War:

Iraq Statistics Tell Grim Story

Therefore, either the U.S. estimates of casualties inflicted on the insurgents are vastly inflated, or the insurgents are able to recruit within Iraq at a level that at the very least keeps track with their losses, and even if they are losing large numbers of experienced, highly trained cadres, they are able to replace them almost immediately with no discernible strain on their ability to sustain their current level of operations.

August 8, 2005 By Martin Sieff, UPI Senior News Analyst

WASHINGTON -- If the U.S. Army and its Iraqi allies are killing as many insurgents as reports indicate they are per month, why is the insurgency intensifying instead of collapsing?

But a study of the best figures and estimates available publicly suggests that the level of attrition reported and widely believed to be inflicted on the insurgents is in reality a lot less than the figures indicate.

For if the figures widely quoted are accurate, then the insurgency should be either collapsing already or, at the very least, shrinking dramatically in its resources and capabilities as its combat units and intelligence networks should have been suffering unsustainable attrition.

Retired Gen. Jack Keane, the former Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, attracted widespread publicity on July 25 when he told a meeting at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, as reported in The Washington Times, that more than 50,000 insurgents had been killed since the start of the insurgency. Afterwards, official administration spokesmen refused to confirm that figure.

Gen. Keane was not speaking inappropriately or inaccurately. According to estimates widely used by the U.S. armed forces in Iraq, and reflected in the weekly statistical update issued by the IIP, 21,000 insurgents have been detained or killed in Iraq in the 11 months from Sept. 1, 2004 to July 31, 2005 and 43,500 from May 1, 2003 to the end of July this year. Those figures are not much lower than the one announced by Gen. Keane, who would have had access to more confidential and detailed data.

And it is also a matter of record that the prison population in Iraq, overwhelmingly consisting of suspected insurgents, peaked in July at 15,000 according to the figures collected and released by the Iraq Index Project of the Brookings Institution, its highest level since the United States and its allies toppled Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in April 2003.

Indeed, the IIP monitored a dramatic boost in the total figures of those jailed from 10,783 in June to 15,000 in July. That increase would certainly fit the vastly stepped up rhythm and scale of counter-insurgency operations by the U.S. armed forces and the new Iraqi security forces in May and June.

Yet other figures from the same predominantly U.S. sources contradict this apparently encouraging trend.

For if the numbers of those killed and detained to a large degree does reflect accurately casualties inflicted on the insurgents, they would have been losing such high proportions of their manpower that their scale of operations and the number of combatants they can deploy should be falling dramatically. But this is not the case.

U.S. estimates of both raw figures and also of the overall effectiveness of the insurgency has it climbing remorselessly upward throughout this year, especially in the past three months from May through July.

A CNN headline Friday reflected this widespread, and probably accurate appraisal: it said, "Insurgency on rise in Western Iraq"

After falling from 18,000 in January and February and down to 16,000 in March and April, the U.S. estimate of the strength of the insurgency quietly crept up again from 15,000-20,000 for June to "No more than 20,000" in July, the IIP reported.

Yet the U.S. military has also reported or estimated the number of insurgents detained or killed as 21,000 since Sept. 1, 2004, and 2,000 per month through May, June and July.

If the figures for the past three months are accurate, the insurgents have been losing 10 percent of their real strength per month, or almost one third in only three months, but the continued rise in the number of casualties they are inflicting on U.S. and allied Iraqi forces strongly suggests that, on the contrary, they are maintaining their strength or even extending it:

That view, incidentally is also held by several U.S. Army analysts who have spoken on condition of anonymity to UPI.

Therefore, either the U.S. estimates of casualties inflicted on the insurgents are vastly inflated, or the insurgents are able to recruit within Iraq at a level that at the very least keeps track with their losses, and even if they are losing large numbers of experienced, highly trained cadres, they are able to replace them almost immediately with no discernible strain on their ability to sustain their current level of operations.

The latter explanation, while possible, appears unlikely. It is not hard for any insurgency to replace activists lost in attacks very easily and quickly in terms of absolute numbers. But the loss of combat veterans and leaders cannot be replaced overnight.

This may yet prove to be the case in Iraq, but it has not happened yet.

For not only have U.S. estimates of overall insurgent strength risen by 20 percent in only two months, but the overall level of casualties inflicted both on U.S. forces and the new Iraqi security forces has been remorselessly rising throughout this year too, as the IIP has documented and as reported in UPI's weekly "Iraq Benchmarks" analysis.

That can only mean that the insurgents have not been suffering devastating attrition rates over the past few months as the estimates of those killed and wounded suggest. And that in turn suggests that the estimates are very inaccurate, as invariably happens in all wars, given their scale, messiness and complexity.

Therefore, either many of those being killed and detained are not insurgents at all or, far more likely, they are indeed, but in general they are just foot soldiers being scooped up.

Most alarmingly of all, the figures suggest that the insurgency is able to operate and organize among a far wider cross section of the Sunni Muslim minority in Iraq

than the widely quoted estimates have suggested, and that it enjoys a far broader popular support base in the Sunni community

This, in fact, is the conclusion reached by several U.S. military analysts, speaking on condition of anonymity to UPI.

It appears, therefore, that the figures quoted are as accurate and reliable as it is possible for them to be in such a situation.

But it is the conclusions to be drawn from them that make the grimmest reading.

CRAWFORD TEXAS WAR REPORTS

An Honorable U.S. Marine In Action



Cindy Sheehan (L) stands next to Jeff Key in the midst of a mock graveyard adjacent to U.S. President George W. Bush's ranch near Crawford, Texas August 30, 2005.

Key, a resident of Los Angeles, California, is a U.S. Marine who has served in Iraq and is awaiting discharge. Reuters/Mannie Garcia

Good By To Crawford

Aug 30th, 2005 By Cindy Sheehan, Daily Kos

While George golfed yesterday, the worst hurricane ever struck New Orleans; oil went up to over 68.00/barrel; and an American soldier was killed in the charade and cataclysmic occupation of Iraq.

The soldier's family doesn't even know what's going to hit them yet. The death is "Pending Notification." I continually ask myself: "How do George Bush and other death-mongers live with themselves?"

While George vacations and bikes and golfs his way to the lowest poll numbers since Richard Nixon, other "patriots" are wrapping themselves in the Stars and Stripes and going along with the farce that the mission from hell: Killing more people in Iraq, because so many have already been killed" is somehow a good thing ordained by God.

I can live with myself, but trust me, sleep does not come easily to me these days.

Yesterday at Camp Casey was, again naturally, an amazing day. Dennis Means from the A.I.M. came with a group of Native American musicians and they made a presentation to me. He gave me a shawl in the tradition of Tecumseh and he pinned a brooch of 5 stars on it from "One chief to another." He also said we should all change our last names to Sheehan and he will be known as: Dennis Means Sheehan! Sheehan is Gaelic for "Peace" which I think is such a cool thing, and not a coincidence. Casey Sheehan's sacrifice will stand for peace forever.

I missed the candlelight vigil at Camp Casey I last night, but I heard that the counter-protestors came over and held vigil with us for our killed heroes.

I heard it was beautiful and life-affirming.

This is what Camp Casey does for us: it transforms bitter anger into righteous, productive anger. It turns hate into love. It brings people together in new love and cements mature relationships. It brings other people together who would normally not ever meet and makes them lifelong soul-friends. It heals broken hearts and mends broken souls.

I know Camp Casey has healed my broken soul and heart. A veteran from the Iraq tragedy told me that he is now cured of any bad feelings he had.

Just another day at Camp Casey.

I must admit when I sat down in the ditch on August 6th, I thought to myself: "Self, what the hell did you do? Texas in August? A ditch filled with fire ants, rattle snakes, and chiggers? Pooping in a bucket? Dodging lightening bolts and heat exhaustion?"

But I knew I would have to suffer it through to the end. I knew that the people of Iraq and our soldiers have it far worse than we did. I thought as long as I could have plenty of water and an occasional shower at the Peace House, that I would survive.

What I never thought, however, was that I would grow to love it here: That I would be so overwhelmed by the magnitude of love and support I receive that I would be depressed to leave Camp Casey. I don't want to leave, but I know that for the Camp Casey movement to keep growing, we have to leave Crawford and take Camp Casey to the people.

Tonight I will write to look back on the good times, less than good times and the miracles that occurred here in Crawford. But I want to thank one person for the best "vacation" and most amazing experience I have ever had: George Bush:

Thank you George for not meeting with me on August 6th and thank you for being the motivation for Camp Casey. I know you don't want Camp Casey to come to the place you reside between vacations, so I would suggest you bring our troops home immediately.

But most of all: thank you my son. Thank you for living the kind of life that inspires people to work for peace and justice. Thank you for choosing me to be your mom. Thank you for being the embodiment of love and thank you for being the inspiration for the Camp Casey movement.

I promise you it won't end until all of your buddies are brought home. And I promise I will fight for your unborn nieces and nephews and the rest of the children of the world, so they won't be misused and abused by corrupt leadership like you and your buddies were.

I love you Casey.

Iraq Vet At Camp Casey Says: "I Am Still Defending The Country Today - From Enemies Within"

August 29, 2005 Kevin Zeese, DemocracyRising [Excerpt]

An Iraq war veteran who told how when he was 17 he took an oath to defend and protect the United States and in his anti-war advocacy says "I am still defending the country today - from enemies within. We're all patriots here today."

Another voice a Latino who lost his nephew in Iraq who focused on the class realities of the war, what some have described as an "economic draft" and he described as "the false nobleman of today declaring a false noble cause fought by the poor who have no choices for the wealthiest to get wealthier."

Sheehan who has faced personal attacks and false barbs provides the backbone of the Camp Casey Movement proclaiming: "smear away because we aren't going away."

TROOP NEWS

SCOTLAND: Gold Star Mother Leads Bikers Against The War: “For Justice You Dont Stop”

[This is a message to Americans from Rose Gentle. Her son was killed in Iraq. She leads a campaign to bring all the Scots and other troops home from Iraq, now.]

From: Rose Gentle
To: GI Special
Sent: August 30, 2005 9:49 AM

it was hard but i did it

i have not whent on a bike for 16 years

but for justice you dont stop

rose





Update On Wounded Soldier

Sent: August 29, 2005

To: GI Special

Subject: RE: **Update on wounded soldier**

Hello, I know everyone has spoken to me and referred me to different places with James Webb and the update on him; he is on a waiting list to have spinal surgery; the therapy and shots didn't work.

He is doing good but the PTSD classes are really good. I would advise any soldier needed them they are helping James.

As you know James's friends and family have reached out to get help for James. The problem about all the programs are everyone referred soldiers to program after program and only a few are can help very few.

I don't know if the funds are low - but if that is the case - we should help build the programs up so they will be able to help all soldiers. They are a lot coming home wounded due to the roadside bombs and the hummers are unsafe - updated number is 16,000 the VA is having to process that is a lot - so help the soldiers on what you can do.

I would like to take this time to thank each one that helped James Webb, he is my only son and a great warrior, well now a Veteran of Foreign War.

You all have helped him in different ways.

My heart goes out all programs and all the soldiers and their families. God Bless America.

Sincerely,
Jackie Gibson

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

30 August 2005 Aljazeera.Net & (AP) & (CNN) & (Reuters) & LA Times, Borzu Daragahi

On Tuesday, hundreds of Sunnis rallied three miles north of Ramadi to denounce the proposed constitution.

Protesters carried portraits of former dictator Saddam Hussein and radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, who also opposes the draft, along with banners reading "No to federalism, no to dividing Iraq."

Armed fighters have killed a security official in Iraq's North Oil Company and a companion traveling with him in a car at Kirkuk, a police source said on Tuesday.

Mohammad Rashad, a lieutenant-colonel with the country's special oil protection force, was shot dead on Tuesday by armed men in front of his house in oil-rich Kirkuk in northern Iraq. His bodyguard was also killed, police said.

Armed men also shot dead Major Diya Hilal Taha, chief of Al-Ghazalia police station in western Baghdad when they opened fire on his patrol. His three bodyguards were wounded.

One policeman was killed and four others wounded when a car bomber blew himself up next to a police checkpoint close to al-Tharthar.

A car bomber struck a police patrol in the city of Samarra, 60 miles north of Baghdad, killing two officers, a spokesman said.

Mohammed Radhi al-Hayderi, the brother of Baghdad's former governor Ali al-Hayderi, was killed in the western Baghdad neighborhood of al-Jihad when unknown militants opened fire, killing him in his civilian car as he was heading to work, said Baghdad emergency police.

In the second incident, Gen. Nu'man Selman Thabit, an Interior Ministry assigned to the Iraqi Electoral Commission, was assassinated Monday at noon in the northeast Baghdad neighborhood of Wazeeriya when guerrillas opened fire on his civilian car, Baghdad emergency police said.

Armed fighters killed a traffic police commander in the Adhamiya neighborhood and a police officer in the Amariya district.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“But Whatever. It's Just People, Right?”

30 August 2005 By William Rivers Pitt, Truthout Perspective [Excerpt]

George W. Bush coughed up his latest rationale for continuing the Iraq war - I think this is the fourth or fifth one of these to this point - by saying that because so many American soldiers have been killed, we have to keep sending American soldiers to get killed as a means of honoring the American soldiers who have been killed.

3,000 members of the Louisiana National Guard's 256th Brigade, who serve as the front-line saviors when natural disasters strike their home state, sit today in Iraq and can only watch helplessly as the storm batters their neighbors and friends.

Back in June, the New Orleans district of the US Army Corps of Engineers absorbed a record \$71.2 million reduction in federal funding. This was an epic reduction for one fiscal year.

A story from the Dolan Media news wire reported at the time that, "The cuts mean major hurricane and flood protection projects will not be awarded to local engineering firms. Also, a study to determine ways to protect the region from a Category 5 hurricane has been shelved for now."

But whatever. It's just people, right?

“Now - And Then”

From: NB
To: GI Special
Sent: August 30, 2005 3:07 AM

Subject: Now - and then

A US General, Iraq 2005:

On a news briefing the big Star General said he visited the troops in Iraq and moral was good, better than ever - everyone of them and he said one of the female soldier came up to him and thanked him for letting her have the tour to help in Iraq.

(from the GI Special, 30th August 2005)

The poet Siegfried Sassoon, 1917:

*"Good morning! Good morning!", the General said
when we met him last week on our way up to the line;
Now the soldiers and officers are most of 'em dead,
or they're cursing the Staff for incompetent swine.*

*"He's a cheery old card", said Harry to Jack,
as they trudged up to Arras with rifle and pack.*

But he did for them both, with his plan of attack.

What's changed?

“Civil War” Is Only The Latest Smokescreen. Don't Fall For It

August 30, 2005 By David Hungerford, Anti-Allawi-group [Excerpt]

The principal division at this time in Iraqi society is not among these so-called "Kurds, Shiites, and Sunnis." It is between resistance and collaboration. All of the so-called factions in the "civil war" scenario are collaborators.

The "Shiites" are mainly two parties, al-Dawa and the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq. They are the biggest groups in the puppet parliament, which makes them collaborators, i.e., traitors. To compound those sins they were set up and are controlled by Iran. Hence they collaborate at one point with U.S. imperialism and the next with Iranian expansionism.

It is not a workable strategy but that's what they do.

The real force that represents the Shiite masses is the al-Sadr movement, which is patriotic and close to the resistance despite its occasional flirtations with the puppet "government."

As for the "Sunnis" in this fantasy, they are only such elements as can be gotten to collaborate with the invader. They have no real cohesion or base and constantly fall out with the other factions.

The reason people fall for this nonsense is the extraordinary blindness in the west to the fact of the resistance.

This is the main force in the war, the determinative factor.

Iraq is their country and they have a right to fight for it. The people are stronger than imperialism and they will win.

Look, it's simple: the resistance is going to win and the collaborators will have to get out of Dodge when the invader is gone.

"Civil war" is only the latest smokescreen. Don't fall for it.

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.

***Mission Dishonorable:* “Honor The Dead By Prosecuting The Criminals”**

August 27, 2005 Anthony Wade, Opednews.com [Excerpt]

Lie # 5 – Protestors weaken troop morale.

Truth – This is a most insidious lie.

Troop morale is low because we have not provided the troops with enough support, equipment or body armor. Troop morale is low because they realize they are in a mess.

Troop morale is low because they realize their Commander in Chief sent them into harms way for lies.

Soldiers fight to protect the very right of dissent so it is completely disingenuous to then say dissent lowers morale.

Lie # 10 – We must honor the sacrifice of the dead, by killing more people.

Truth – This is at the heart of Cindy Sheehan’s protest. There is nothing honorable about killing more young men and women to somehow make up for the others who died before them.

The issue is simple.

If you have a just cause, and the mission is not over, then you honor your dead by completing the mission.

In this case however, the war was based on lies, making the mission dishonorable.

You do not honor the fallen by allowing anymore unnecessary deaths to occur for the same lie.

Instead, you honor the dead by prosecuting the criminals who lied to congress to go to war, that led to their deaths. You honor their memory by assuming their mother knows a bit more about them then you do.

You honor them by bringing them home before one more child dies for the lies that started this war.

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)

OCCUPATION REPORT

Occupation Follies Roll On: **Iraq Constitution Drafted By US In English, Translated To Arabic!**

28 Aug 2005 By Ellen Knickmeyer and Jonathan Finer, Washington Post

BAGHDAD, Aug. 22 -- Iraq's Shiite Muslim majority and its Kurdish allies moved Monday toward fundamentally reshaping their nation, submitting a proposed constitution that would create a loose federation with strongly Islamic national laws.

Negotiators here described American officials as playing a major role in the draft. U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad shuttled among Iraqi leaders, pushing late Monday for the inclusion of Sunnis in talks, negotiators said.

U.S. Embassy staff members worked from a Kurdish party headquarters to help type up the draft and translate changes from English to Arabic for Iraqi lawmakers, negotiators said.

MORE:

Last Helicopter Out Of Baghdad

8.29.05 Ghaith Abdul-Ahad, The Guardian

A few weeks ago, a Kurdish parliamentarian told me, as we stood in the middle of the Iraqi parliament in the green zone, that 'we (politicians) don't know what's happening in the streets outside and the people outside don't care about what are we doing here because of the violence they are suffering from'.

Pointing at the parliamentarians around him, he said: 'They will all be fighting for the last seat on the American helicopter fleeing the green zone when the American leave. For us, the Kurds, we will just go up in the mountains.'

MORE:

\$25 Million Bid If You'll Just Sign This Nice New Constitution

8.30.05 Focus 1 News

Baghdad. The United States have offered to Sunni representatives USD 75 Million to sign the draft Constitution of Iraq, RIA Novosti announced, citing information of source close to the Constitutional Committee of the country, published in the Saudi daily Al Vatan.

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

Winning More Friends:

For The Armed Resistance That Is



A man looks at a broken front door following a raid by U.S. troops in Baghdad August 12, 2005. Residents of a house on Baghdad's Palestine Street said that U.S. soldiers searched their home at 0300 local time Friday morning (2300 GMT), breaking open the front door, ransacking the interior, and torching their car. REUTERS/Thaier Al-Sudani

There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and busting into their houses by force and violence to arouse an intense desire to kill you in the patriotic, self-respecting civilians who live there.

But your commanders know that, don't they? Don't they?

Collaborator Parliament Can't Punish Absentees: Too Many Absent

30.08.05 APN Holdings NZ Ltd

BAGHDAD - Iraq's parliament proposed a law on Monday to sack members of the National Assembly who repeatedly failed to turn up for work -- but the decision was put on hold because too many were absent to hold a vote.

Poor attendance in the chamber has raised questions over parliament members, who officials say are paid much higher salaries than average Iraqis.

Iraq's Doomed Police Training

8.30.05 Paula Broadwell Boston Globe

Training Iraqis in Jordan to serve as cops in their country will fail for three reasons---The wary, uncommitted recruits are immature and lackadaisical about the mission; the parsimonious training is inadequate; and accountability once recruits return to Iraq is inconsistent at best and lacks the return on investment that one might expect.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

**Boycott Florida's Hell Hole;
The Tyrants Of St. Petersburg Hate Free
Speech;
Cops Out Of Control:
*Take Your Vacation Anywhere Else***



Photo Bob Van Wyck

Aug. 27 Stpeteforpeace.org

Barricades Down, But Harassment Continues

The removal of barricades at Baywalk this weekend was a positive development. About 130 people from all over the Tampa Bay area came out to peacefully voice their dissent.

Unfortunately, St. Pete Police continued to harass the demonstrators.

Two more people were ticketed for honking their car horns in support of the protesters. One such person was handcuffed and taken away in a police cruiser. Additionally, a young activist playing a traditional religious instrument was told to stop or face a citation - this done in the name of noise concerns.

All the while, music was blaring from Baywalk's bars above.

In another sign of uneven application of the law, two of our signs were maliciously destroyed by Baywalk patrons, but at least one of the instigators was not even questioned by the police.

**WELCOME TO ST. PETERSBURG. FLORIDA
HAVE A NICE DAY**



Photo Bob Van Wyck

MORE:

**Free Speech?
An 'Infestation'**

August 21, 2005 By ROBYN E. BLUMNER, St. Petersburg Times Perspective Columnist

We hear the call to "get involved" all the time. From the 1970s-era summons to "Think globally, act locally," to MTV's Rock the Vote, we are told that it is our civic duty to educate ourselves about political issues and become more active citizens.

Public officials bemoan the insuperable apathy of the electorate. But they don't really mean it. The greatest burr in an official's side is when a citizen becomes truly informed and starts challenging the status quo. "Gadfly" is pejorative for a reason.

Protesters are greeted with this same contempt. Citizen activists who actually care about an issue enough to stand in a public place, exposed to the elements, with nothing fancier than words on a placard expressing their views, are usually considered rabble-rousing troublemakers, if not a little nutty.

This is how a group of antiwar activists in St. Petersburg has been treated. The group, St. Pete for Peace, has been showing up on most Saturday nights for the past 2 1/2 years to protest on a public sidewalk outside BayWalk, St. Petersburg's popular dining, shopping and entertainment venue.

They hold signs denouncing the Iraq war and hand out leaflets to passers-by. These few dozen of our neighbors understand and embody the role of citizen and should be applauded for "acting locally." But the city has reacted as if they are an infestation.

Because BayWalk businesses have complained that the protesters affect their walk-in traffic, all kinds of ideas have been floated to drive away the menace.

Under the excuse that pedestrians are endangered by the protesters' presence - the city says there are no traffic-accident statistics to back this up - city officials first considered designating the sidewalk as a "no-protest" zone.

After that idea was dropped because it was blatantly unconstitutional, an equally noxious one took its place.

Craig Sher, president and CEO of the Sembler Co., the company that owns and manages BayWalk, would like the city to transfer the sidewalk to his group. Once it was put under private control, the protesters could be run off as trespassers.

So far, to the credit of City Council members, the city has let the sidewalk remain a place of public protest, but new recommendations are being formulated by city staff to address the pedestrian safety issues, including a fine option of closing the street in front of the disputed sidewalk to cars on busy Friday and Saturday nights. In the meantime, metal barricades have been erected at the site to direct pedestrian traffic.

The barricades have antagonized the protesters, but I'm less concerned about the new steel dividers than the harassing arrests. On Aug. 6, a 13-year-old protester was arrested for "obstructing a sidewalk," and Michael O'Neill, 33, was arrested while videotaping the scene.

O'Neill was arrested for "trespass." He claims he was standing on a spot on the sidewalk that BayWalk security had told him is public. He says he believes he was arrested because he refused a St. Petersburg police officer's demands for identification.

The officer's report says O'Neill was arrested on BayWalk property when he failed to move after multiple warnings. (George Kajtsa, public information officer for the St. Petersburg Police Department, says you basically need a tape measure to discern the difference between the public part and the private part of the sidewalk at BayWalk.)

I asked St. Petersburg Police Chief Chuck Harmon why a 13-year-old should be taken away in handcuffs for such a petty transgression as sidewalk blocking. Harmon defended the arrest by saying that when confronted by an officer and told to move along, the young man "let loose this string of profanities at the officer."

As troubling as this boy's potty mouth might be, the use of profane language is not a crime. Right?

Wrong, asserted Harmon, who said that the disorderly conduct statute gives police the power to arrest anyone using offensive language. "Police officers can't be the ones offended," Harmon said, "but if an officer notices that a mother is covering her child's ears, then there is a violation of the statute."

I relayed to the chief the seminal U.S. Supreme Court decision of Cohen vs. California, in which a man prosecuted for wearing a jacket that read "F___ the Draft" had his criminal conviction set aside because his speech was deemed constitutionally protected. "One man's vulgarity is another's lyric," the court famously held.

But Harmon had no interest in First Amendment jurisprudence. He insisted that verbal offense is an illegal act and he had successfully arrested many people over the years on those grounds.

Later, Harmon called to clarify that the 13-year-old "was charged with obstructing (a sidewalk), having nothing to do with disorderly conduct or his language." But he didn't back away from the view that one's manner of speech could land one in the pokey.

In St. Petersburg at least, police officers are apparently not schooled in the finer points of the First Amendment. According to Sam Walker, professor of criminal justice at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, police typically receive "pretty spotty" training in free speech issues.

It shows.

Public protests can be inconvenient, annoying and noisy affairs. But our Constitution has chosen the mess of freedom and democracy over the order that comes with repression.

When police address protesters in an aggressive manner and resort to hypertechnical arrests for minor offenses, they are creating an intimidating environment in an effort to discourage future demonstrations.

Our community's priorities are clear: It's commerce over conversation at BayWalk, where our areas's most active and engaged citizens are decidedly not welcome.

MORE:

Police Crack Down On St. Petersburg Anti-War Protesters Once Again: Passing Motorists Also Ticketed For Honking Their Car Horns

8.30.05 By Carol Schiffler, St. Pete For Peace

Last week was a little too much for management.

Maybe it was the sight of 247 people having a better time protesting than consuming.

Maybe it was the fact that the live street music caused Wet Willies' patrons to miss a drink or two on their way to a staggering stupor.

Maybe, no, probably, the sight of an empowered citizenry scares Them (as in, capital-"T"- "Them") so much that violating the Constitution seems like a small price to pay when compared with the alternative.

And that alternative is real democracy, as opposed to the camera-ready kind which plays well against a backdrop of flags and puppet governments (including our own).

August 20th when the group numbered less than half that (yet more than had ever been before the arrests), the police again harassed the group by selective enforcement of a noise ordinance.

Whatever the reason, the call from "the authorities" came in on Friday...no drums, no noisemakers, no musical instruments in front of Baywalk...selectively enforced, of course, as I expect state-sanctioned, consumer-oriented events such as First Friday and New Year's Eve will remain blissfully free from police harassment.

Not so during this evening's activities.

Protesters were greeted with flyers, courtesy of the St. Pete police department (which apparently is still allowed to pass out leaflets wherever it wants to - unlike anti-war demonstrators) informing participants that, should they brandish so much as a

kazoo, they would be subject to a \$30.00 fine. With each subsequent warning, fines would increase to a maximum of \$500.00. After that, there would be arrests.

Interestingly enough, the police omitted the quasi-arrest procedure part from their flyer.

That would be the procedure where anyone spotted with a pair of rhythm sticks would be surrounded by no less than five of St. Pete's finest, escorted to a cruiser and detained prior to receiving his or her ticket. They also neglected to warn people who drove by and honked their horn in support, about the \$75.00 fine they would receive in exchange for their First Amendment rights.

There really are motorists who were stopped and fined for honking in support of Saturday night's anti-war demonstration. There really are at least three people who were stopped, searched and fined for tapping rhythm sticks together.

And this really isn't 1984, or some feudal fiefdom deep in the heart of post-plague Europe. It's 2005 on a warm summer day in St. Petersburg, Florida where on any given Saturday, your average taxpaying citizen can observe the many ways in which law enforcement can be utilized to defend them against stuff like...oh, say, the Constitution, for example.

Undeterred, protesters used their hands, their bull horns, and their voices to simulate musical instruments.

Dancing and chanting punctuated the three incidences of police intimidation. The First Amendment Chorus serenaded Baywalk patrons, cops and media alike with parodies of "Jingle Bells"(How was I to know; Free speech is a crime Everywhere we go; Now I'm doing time; When I'm outta here; I'll be free to talk Unless I'm somewhere near; St. Pete or Baywalk) and "This Land is Your Land" (We're fine in this spot; Just not in that spot; Or was it that spot? Uh, no I think not. I'd ask directions, but they won't tell me; Which space belongs to you and me).

The Radical Cheerleaders kept the crowd energized throughout the night while several errant soap bubbles provided by the mysterious Revolutionary Bubble Brigade, strayed deep onto Baywalk property, apparently ignoring attempts to confine them behind the barricades.

At one point, during the third rhythm-stick related detention, the police shut down vehicular access to Baywalk. We are pretty sure the economic impact to small businesses that resulted from this totally capricious action by the authorities won't be mentioned by the press or acknowledged by Baywalk's landlord, Sembler Co. Perhaps the police assumed that Baywalk patrons would find the flashing blue lights and metals bars lining the sidewalk more attractive for consumers. Perhaps they thought that the sight of a uniformed authority figure patting down people in the middle of the road would add to the upscale Baywalk ambience.

It is important to understand how completely arbitrary the laws in this country are. Those who live in poverty have always known this. It is hypocritically applied to those who don't support the existing power structure and blatantly disregarded when it stands in the

way of the CEO feeding trough. And it is the little things that we've dismissed as "not our problem" that lead to corruption, oppression, war and imperialism.

Every time we have seen the law exercised, instead of justice, and not opposed it, every time we have seen one group of people marginalized at the expense of another and not spoken up, every time we have been tempted to overlook an act of petty tyranny in our own streets, we have allowed the power machine to crank up a notch.

And the failure to respond to these issues (issues that affect others, but not us) is what puts us in the position we're in today...typically that position is spread-eagled against a police cruiser being searched for drumsticks of mass destruction, while meanwhile, on the other side of the world, thousand of innocent civilians are struggling to decide if they should risk being shot to death at a military checkpoint in order to merely feed their family.

There are no Baywalks in Baghdad, and shopping in Iraq is now an exercise that may cost you your life.

So the fight for free speech will continue at Baywalk on Saturday nights. And this one stretch of public sidewalk will continue to be utilized to express opposition to U.S. wars and imperialism.

We must remain energized, focused and committed to send a clear message to those who would put profits before people, and that message sounds something like the old popular protest chant, "The People, united, will never be defeated."

MORE:

ACLU Enters Protest Fray

August 9, 2005 Baynews9.com

The American Civil Liberties Union has entered the fray on behalf of six protestors arrested outside BayWalk Saturday night.

The ALCU has come to the defense of an anti-war organization, St. Pete for Peace, which was founded in 2003 to protest the war in Iraq. The group has been protesting at BayWalk for several Saturday nights.

For the last few weeks, St. Petersburg has set up a barrier in BayWalk, dividing protestors from visitors. The city says the barrier allows visitors to cross the road safely.

Protestors say the barrier is the city's way of trying to take away their right to free speech. They say they will continue their Saturday night protests and are also considering their legal options.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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

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The following that we know of have also posted issues:

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

www.williambowles.info/gispecial,

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

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