

GI SPECIAL 3C44:



Martin Rowson 2005 [Thanks to NB who sent this in.]
martin.rowson1@ntlworld.com

**Gulf Guard Soldiers:
“They Want To Come
Home And Help Their
Families, Friends And
Communities”**

**[This letter is posed at Bring Them Home Now,
<http://www.bringthemhomenow.com/> Check it out!]**

September 4. 2005

My cousin is in Iraq with the 1-155th Infantry Battalion of the Mississippi National Guard.

The majority of them are from the Mississippi Gulf Coast and are desperate for news of their families and friends.

His father, who lives in Mississippi, has tried unsuccessfully to contact national news organizations, including the Jackson, MS Clarion-Ledger, to publicize their plight as a human interest story in order to spur some action toward getting those men home.

The members of the Louisiana National Guard and the Mississippi National Guard must perform their mission in Iraq while under the stress of having little to no news of their home states, which makes for an even more dangerous situation for them.

Please write something about them and get the message out that they want to come home and help their families, friends and communities.

Sincerely,
VS
Austin, TX

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 British Soldiers Killed In Basra Blast

[Thanks to Rose Gentle, who sent this in.]

September 5, 2005 James Sturcke, Guardian Newspapers Limited

Two British soldiers were killed by an explosion in Iraq today, the Ministry of Defence confirmed.

An MoD spokesman said the soldiers died following a roadside explosion in Basra province, where British troops have been stationed, this morning.

The soldiers were travelling in an armoured Land Rover five miles east of Shaiba when the device exploded at 11.30am (0830BST).

**ENOUGH.
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.**



A British soldier patrols the al-Zubeir area, about 20 kilometers west of Basra, southern Iraq, Sept. 5, 2005.

Veteran Soldier From Missouri Dies Of Combat-Related Injuries

August 31, 2005 Matt Wagner, News-Leader

An Army special operations soldier who grew up riding four-wheelers and dirt bikes in rural Dallas County has died from combat-related injuries he suffered last week in western Iraq.

Sgt. 1st Class Obediah "Obie" Kolath, 32, and three other soldiers were patrolling in Husaybah when a bomb exploded near them, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

Kolath of Louisburg was seriously injured and was taken to the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. His comrades were killed in the blast.

Army spokeswoman Maj. Elizabeth Robbins said the attack occurred shortly after 11 p.m. Iraq time, but she was uncertain if the soldiers were in a vehicle or on foot.

Kolath died Sunday, joining nearly 1,900 U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq since President Bush ordered the country's invasion in March 2003.

"He was a very brave soldier and a kind-hearted person," said Brian Hudson, Kolath's best friend for 22 years.

Kolath was born Dec. 1, 1972, in Jefferson City and graduated from Skyline High School near Urbana in 1991.

Valdosta Pilot Killed

September 1, 2005 Saeed Ahmed – Staff, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

A pilot from Valdosta was killed when the helicopter he was in came under hostile fire in northern Iraq, the military said Wednesday night.

Chief Warrant Officer Dennis P. Hay, 32, died Monday when the helicopter he was riding in was attacked by small-arms fire from insurgents while flying over Tal Afar.

Hay, who grew up in Georgia, was living in Colorado Springs, Colo., where he was assigned to the 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment in Fort Carson.

He was married and had a son and a daughter, said Army spokesman James Hill.

Soldier From Houston Killed In Bomb Attack

Aug. 28, 2005 Associated Press

A Houston soldier was among three service members killed when a bomb exploded near their position in Iraq, the Department of Defense said.

Master Sgt. Ivica Jerak, 42, of Houston was assigned to the U.S. Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Jerak was a native of the former Republic of Yugoslavia and joined the Army as a combat medic in 1988, according to a release from the military.

Four U.S. Soldiers Wounded By Baghdad Car Bomb



A U.S. military Humvee burns after being struck by a car bomb attack in Baghdad September 5, 2005. REUTERS/Mohammed Ameen

Sep 5 By Sebastian Alison (Reuters)

The U.S. military said a car bomb strike against U.S. vehicles in Baghdad wounded four U.S. soldiers.



Baghdad, Sept. 5, 2005. Four U.S. Soldiers were wounded in a car bomb attack on a military convoy. A U.S. military Humvee was burned. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

Helicopter Down Near Tuz

09/05/05 MNF Release A050904a

TIKRIT, Iraq – A Task Force Liberty helicopter made a controlled landing near Tuz at about 2:30 a.m. Sept. 4.

The site has been secured by Coalition Forces for the recovery of the aircraft.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Mass Soldier Killed In Baylough

September 4, 2005 Associated Press

NEWBURYPORT, Mass. Family and friends are mourning the death of a Massachusetts soldier killed last week in Afghanistan.

First Lieutenant Derek Hines of Newburyport was killed September First when his unit came under attack by small arms fire.

The Department of Defense said the 25-year-old was conducting security operations in Baylough, Afghanistan.

Baltimore Man Killed

Aug 30, 2005 (WJZ) Baltimore, MD

23-year-old Staff Sgt Damion Campbell was killed in Afghanistan.

Damion was known as a scholar, athlete, and ROTC super star.

TROOP NEWS

No Backslapping Necessary For Troops In Mississippi

Sep 5 By BRIAN SKOLOFF, Associated Press Writer

The group [185th Aviation Brigade] is now flying 42 choppers out of the Trent Lott National Guard Training Complex here, delivering food, water, ice, diapers and baby food to people stranded in the bayou.

Communication is a mess here, pilots say. Crews are flying into areas with chopper loads of bottled water and MRE's — meals ready to eat — and finding supplies have already been delivered.

"If they say they've already got stuff, we just fly around until we find someone who needs it," said pilot Michael Fair, a chief warrant officer with the Ohio National Guard.

The helicopter crews are given drop locations, then they're on their own.

"There's no communications out there. We don't know much until we get on the ground," said pilot Michael Bess, also of the Ohio National Guard. "If they've already got something, we just circle around the area looking for people who are stranded."

Col. Brad MacNealy of the Mississippi National Guard said planning for aid drops is intense and confusing because very few messages get from the outlying areas where folks are stranded with the base's main operation center.

"In Iraq, we had to and did a lot more detailed planning because we were being shot at," he said. "Here, it's touch and go."

But one thing truly separates this mission from Iraq, where commanders are constantly giving "a lot of motivational speeches, slapping soldiers on the backs," MacNealy added.

"I have never seen the morale any higher anywhere in the world. You don't have to motivate anybody here. They know their mission. We're here to help our neighbors," he said. "Every time they go out and see a woman crying because she just got food and water for her children, they come back fired up."

And troops here share at least one other thing in common with the stranded, hungry and thirsty masses.

"These guys are subsisting on the same rations we're bringing out to the people," said the Mississippi National Guard's Col. Greg Kennedy. "Even so, as tough as it is, not one complaint, not one single complaint from anyone."

MORE:

“People Are A Lot More Upbeat Than When We Were Getting Ready To Deploy To Iraq”

Sep 04, 2005 Michael Levenson and Raja Mishra, Boston Globe

Hours after some of them stood at a grave in Rutland, Vt., yesterday and helped bury a master sergeant killed in Iraq, members of the Vermont National Guard, many of them fresh off their own tours in Iraq, prepared to leave for another mission: to try to restore order to the lawless streets of New Orleans.

Another soldier who served in Iraq, Sergeant Timothy Perrin, 24, from Williston, Vt., outside Burlington, said he was eager to serve close to home.

"It's more the intended goal of the National Guard; it's more what I was picturing when I signed the dotted line," said Perrin, who has been working part time at a Guard armory since returning from Baghdad.

"People are a lot more upbeat than when we were getting ready to deploy to Iraq."

Sergeant Francis Estey, 25, from Arlington, Vt., agreed.

"It's a good mission," he said in a telephone interview from a Vermont National Guard armory.

"It's something I'm excited to do, just to go down there and help people in our country, rather than all the way across the world. I feel like I'm doing something here at home."

HOW TO HELP: Veterans For Peace Hurricane Relief: Update; “Noble In Deed. Noble In Purpose”

<p>Red Cross is very disorganized and the volunteers are working hard on the ground but command has not adequately supplied the communities. Survivors and family are not being cataloged by the RC because in times of "disaster" per RC policy.</p>

September 05, 2005 maia thomas

Support VFP Camp Casey in Covington, LA

Daryl and I arrived in Covington on Sunday evening. We are stationed at the Pineview Middle school and are working with both the Red Cross and Veterans for Peace, who are parked in the parking lot, offering support.

There is still a need for volunteers here.

People are still being bussed out of NO and are in shock and many need medical care, which is not available. The hospital is only taking patients on life support. There is special needs shelter but they will only take people who need electric medical supplies. they are many sick people here.

We have been working nonstop providing care to evacuees with dementia, brain injury, premature labor, autism, cystic fibrosis, incontinence, congestive heart failure. This is all taking place on the floor of a school cafeteria w/ almost no medical supplies. sanitation is marginal, to put it politely.

Red Cross is very disorganized and the volunteers are working hard on the ground but command has not adequately supplied the communities. Survivors and family are not being cataloged by the RC because in times of "disaster" per RC policy.

At this point we are planning to be back in Austin on Thursday. Today Vets for Peace is taking their school bus (Daryl will be on it) into downtown NO to bring in supplies and bring out about 30 people.

If you feel the urge to come to Covington, they do need you and are working well with the Red Cross volunteers here. However, only come if you are prepared to do the dirty, unglamorous work. I mean really UNGLAMOROUS.

Things we need;

new flat sheets

pillows

air mattresses

cots

wash cloths

towels

blankets

pump hand sanitizer (hospital grade, if possible)

vinyl exam gloves

zinc oxide ointment

chucks- flat disposable absorbent pads

pump hand soap

laundry detergent

water

Gatorade

Pedialyte

children's books and toys

Please DO NOT send; dirty, old or winter used clothing, high heeled shoes, paperback books.

THINK about what you send. Does a person in 96 degree heat and survival mode need it?

We have a constant need for ice so if you can think of a way to get a truck load of it here, do so.

Again, military and Red Cross, are here but not adequate. This needs to be a citizen effort.

I have limited net and phone access, so don't be concerned if I don't reply.

Mail / FedEx / deliver supplies to:

**Ward Reilly
645 Kimbro Dr.
Baton Rouge, LA 70808-6041**

Vets For Peace Site Updated: \$10K Raised headed into NOLA.

The VFP site is updated now, with the directions on shipments to Ward Reilly (a VFP member) in Baton Rouge, and news that the bus is headed into NOLA tomorrow with supplies, and will evacuate people.

Plus, they've launched a new bulletin board: <http://www.vfproadtrips.org/katrina>

And they're posting updates in a couple of places on the site:

<http://vfproadtrips.org/real.htm>

<http://www.vfproadtrips.org/katrinaNews.htm>

The support for a genuine citizen-run, DIY effort is just fantastic.

They've raised \$10,000 so far, and truckloads of supplies continue to arrive.

Please direct cash donations directly to their website, as you're putting the funds directly in the hands of the people using them on the ground.

Submitted by jp on Mon, 2005-09-05 00:05.

Marq reports this most important news in the yahoo group thread, I am posting it here with a few observations....

I just spoke with Mr. Reilly and he says that he is receiving stuff and then coordinating it being taken out to Covington which is 60 miles away.

He also said no need to send gasoline or take it their in trucks but top off every chance you get. He can't host anymore people at his house right now, just store stuff til he gets it to Covington.

He is in VFP, was at camp Casey and is a good friend of Buddy and Annie

Cheers,
Marg

Having someone in Baton Rouge is very important to the effort of sending supplies onto Covington. Now supplies can get to Baton Rouge via Fed Ex, UPS, and U.S. Mail.

Mr. Reilly is extremely vital to this whole effort because the outside world has a location to send direct.

What might be important now is to get trucks and people there who can drive them over. He may also need more space to store things.

We shall see. Mr Reilly is truly a gift from Heaven. We need to find more like Mr. Reilly in Baton Rouge.

Might contact Baton Rouge message boards and ask for more truck, and driver support going to Covington.

These VFP members are the very best this country has to offer.

Truly amazing wonderful people. Their true purpose has been found in peace and service for those who stand in need.

Noble in deed. Noble in purpose. True examples offered for all VETS, everywhere.

From Dennis this morning;

Here is the preliminary contact information for Covington, Louisiana

Gordon Soderberg gordonsoderberg@mac.com

707-536-3001 is the direct line to the Veterans for Peace Bus
www.vfpoadtrips.org

Dennis Kyne d_kyne@hotmail.com 408-646-7251

we are establishing a distribution line that has already proven to be functional

We have distributed thousands of tons of foods and supplies in the past two days,

We have only been here for two days. Thank you for the support, we have supplied baby formula to hungry infants, and we have provided basic human needs, to others.

We are upholding the United Declaration of Human Rights, the whole world should be here,

and if you can't come, support us by sending anything you can to 645 Kimbro Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808 attn vfp chapter 116 c/o Ward Reilly

or donating diaper money at www.vfpoadtrips.org

peace.
dennis



(<http://www.whatreallyhappened.com>)

IG Investigating Tillman's Death

August 24, 2005 Washington Post

The Defense Department's inspector general is reviewing the Army's investigations into the friendly-fire death of former NFL player Patrick Tillman after repeated assertions from the soldier's family that the probes did not hold officials accountable for wrongdoing and did not fully explain the shooting in Afghanistan last year.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

NO CIVIL WAR HERE, DESPITE GEORGE'S BEST EFFORTS



Protesters carrying posters of *Shia* cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and Iraqi flags rally in mainly *Sunni* town of Ramadi, Sept. 5, 2005. About 1,500 people rallied to protest against the draft constitution. (AP Photo/Bilal Hussein)

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

Insurgents Seize Key Town

Many of the towns along the river have appeared to be heavily under the insurgents' domination, despite repeated Marine offenses along the river since May. Residents and Marines have described insurgents escaping ahead of the offensives, and returning when the offensives are over.

September 5, 2005 By Ellen Knickmeyer, Washington Post Foreign Service

BAGHDAD, Sept. 5 -- Abu Musab Zarqawi's foreign-led Al Qaeda in Iraq took open control of a key western town at the Syrian border, deploying its guerrilla fighters in the streets and flying Zarqawi's black banner from rooftops, witnesses, residents and others in the city and surrounding villages said.

A sign newly posted at the entrance of Qaim declared, "Welcome to the Islamic Kingdom of Qaim." A statement posted in mosques described Qaim as an "Islamic kingdom liberated from the occupation."

U.S. Marine spokesman Capt. Jeffrey Pool said Marines had no word of any unusual activity in Qaim, but added it was possible that insurgents were acting in areas out of Americans' sight.

Many of the towns along the river have appeared to be heavily under the insurgents' domination, despite repeated Marine offenses along the river since May. Residents and Marines have described insurgents escaping ahead of the offensives, and returning when the offensives are over.

It was unclear whether any Iraqi forces were in Qaim. A Zarqawi fighter said any Marines and Iraqi forces had left Qaim, with "nothing left of their crosses."

Armed insurgent fighters.openly traveled Qaim's streets. The fighters included both Iraqis and foreigners, including Afghans. Fighters manned checkpoints on the four entrances to the city.

Resistance Attack In Force On Interior Ministry: Death Squad Headquarters Hit Hard

Sep 5 By Sebastian Alison (Reuters) & Aljazeera & (UPI)

Up to 30 armed fighters in 10 cars fired on Iraq's interior ministry at dawn on Monday, killing two police and wounding five, ministry sources said, in what appeared a carefully coordinated attack on a sensitive target.

"Two policemen were killed and five wounded," an Interior Ministry source told Reuters, adding that the armed fighters had used rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and automatic rifles in the attack at 6:15 a.m. (0215 GMT).

It was the biggest challenge to the Iraqi government to date, in terms of the target and the timing, one week after the General Assembly passed a new Constitution for Iraq.

The attack was the latest of a number of large, military-style raids by insurgents, appearing on the streets in numbers, which the government and U.S. military say are partly a propaganda exercise to show the strength the rebels can muster.

The Interior Ministry has been accused by Iraq's Sunni Arab minority of close ties to sectarian Shi'ite militias and of running death squads. Stories of employees of former state employees and other Sunnis being arrested by police and then found dead are common.

On Sunday, the influential Muslim Clerics Association said it had discovered the bodies of two Sunni clerics and three other men in a morgue in Baghdad, three days after they were arrested by Interior Ministry troops.

Assorted Resistance Action

Sep 5 By Sebastian Alison (Reuters) & Aljazeera & Xinhuanet & Arabic News

In the western town of Hit, a bomber in a car killed three Iraqi soldiers, the Iraqi government said in a statement. It added that 16 soldiers were wounded and three insurgents killed.

A Turkish driver was killed in a missile attack near Iraqi city of Belet when he was carrying prefabricated huts to the Americans.

One Iraqi police man was killed and two others injured in a booby trapped car explosion led by one bomber near one inspection point in Alexandria city south of Baghdad.

Three contractors with the US army were captured while they were leaving al-Taji air base, according to a police source.

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



Pipeline outside Baji, near Tikrit, Sept. 5, 2005. Insurgents detonated a gas pipeline connecting Ujil field with Baji refinery. (AP Photo/Bassim Daham)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Mike would like to note that plenty of white people were encountered 'looting' for supplies. He says that many of the police were ignoring this kind of looting.
September 05, 2005 Ward Reilly, Via Vietnam Veterans Against The War

New Orleans

From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: September 05, 2005

The truth lies not with the people who were not there, but with the survivors who were.

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran

“Hold These Criminals Accountable For Their Actions”

From: Phil Gasper
To: GI Special
Sent: September 05, 2005

The pictures and stories from New Orleans almost defy belief. Even with several days warning, the authorities failed to provide tens of thousands of people-mostly, of course, African American-with any way of leaving before Hurricane Katrina struck.

After disaster had engulfed the city, it took several more days before the most basic emergency relief arrived.

Instead, the Bush administration blamed the victims of this catastrophe for staying, even though most had no way to leave, and then announced a shoot-to-kill policy against "looters" desperately seeking food and water to survive.

This response goes beyond mere incompetence and indifference-it is criminal to the highest degree.

In the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels wrote: "the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an overriding law.

"It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him."

The US ruling class is worse than unfit. It is responsible for the death of 10,000 people in Louisiana and proved incapable of even feeding the survivors.

It's past time to hold these criminals accountable for their actions.

Phil Gasper
Berkeley, CA

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.

Then And Now

From: Z
To: GI Special
Sent: September 05, 2005

Excerpted from an editorial in The Independent, 9/5/05:

After the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco, federal aid arrived within two days. A century later, New Orleans had to wait five days before an all-out relief operation was launched. The more information emerges, the more irresponsible the federal authorities appear.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

FEMA Sabotages Relief & Communication Help

Sept. 4, 2005 Transcript NBC News, Interview by TIM RUSSERT

Aaron Broussard, the president of Jefferson Parish:

Sir, they were told like me, every single day, "The cavalry's coming," on a federal level, "The cavalry's coming, the cavalry's coming, the cavalry's coming." I have just begun to hear the hoofs of the cavalry. The cavalry's still not here yet, but I've begun to hear the hoofs, and we're almost a week out.

Let me give you just three quick examples.

We had Wal-Mart deliver three trucks of water, trailer trucks of water. FEMA turned them back. They said we didn't need them. This was a week ago.

FEMA--we had 1,000 gallons of diesel fuel on a Coast Guard vessel docked in my parish. The Coast Guard said, "Come get the fuel right away." When we got there with our trucks, they got a word. "FEMA says don't give you the fuel."

Yesterday--yesterday--FEMA comes in and cuts all of our emergency communication lines. They cut them without notice. Our sheriff, Harry Lee, goes back in, he reconnects the line. He posts armed guards on our line and says, "No one is getting near these lines." [Hopefully with shoot-to-kill orders.]

MORE:

*Harry Truman school. 5417 Ehret Road Marrero, LA 70072 Jefferson County
Phone: (504) 341-0961 Don Boyle and Danny Walker are at Harry Truman Middle School in Marrero LA, under MARITAL law...living in feces and filth..ppl are dying around him..the GOVT won't let him go....they are DYING..all 60..they had 362 down to 60 still alive...no water, no ice... September 4, 2005, Jeff Wells, Rigorous Intuition*

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)

Government Terror Unleashed In New Orleans:

Bywater Evacuated At Gunpoint; “NEW ORLEANS HAS BEEN TAKEN OVER BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. BEWARE, THIS MAY COME TO A NEIGHBORHOOD NEAR YOU”

We are being forced out of our city, with no word as to if and when we will be allowed to return. We've been wondering what they would do after enough people were forced to die of starvation. Population reduction has been accomplished.

The people locked down in the city have no idea that supplies are sitting just outside the city and being turned away.

Sep. 04, 2005 by Andrea Garland, Get Your Act On and member, Green Party of Louisiana via New Orleans Indymedia.org

(reposted by Christian Roselund)

The entire city of New Orleans is under evacuation orders. I just spoke to my friend Daniel in the Bywater (9th ward). He reports that unmarked police vehicles (cadillacs) are driving through the neighborhood with SWAT team police armed with 'big black machine guns' telling people through bullhorns they are under orders to evacuate and must leave the city now.

People in that neighborhood are being told to go to the big pool on the corner of Lesseps and St. Claude (this is one block from my house) to be airlifted out, tho people are allowed to leave by their own means if they can.

He reports helicopters all over the place of all kinds - everything from large Army helicopters with guns to Red Cross helicopters - they are swooping down low in the neighborhood and 'buzzing' houses - he said one just flew low enough over him to blow shingles off the roof.

He is starting to see National Guardsmen marching through the streets with guns to make sure people obey evacuation orders.

He wanted to get into a neighbor's house to save their dog that is locked up in there, but was told by a National Guardsman that unless he has keys to the house, if he tries to break the door in he will be shot on the spot.

He also reported that Dr. Bob, Bywater artist, was beaten by NOPD who thought he was a looter - they beat him up severely and took his weapons.

We are being forced out of our city, with no word as to if and when we will be allowed to return. We've been wondering what they would do after enough people were forced to die of starvation. Population reduction has been accomplished.

Here are the updates I was working on before this latest call from Daniel:

Yesterday I finally spoke with my best friend Daniel who stayed in New Orleans as he finally was able to make a call on his cell phone. He was calling from the upstairs of the house he lives in, sitting on the porch with an AK-47 in his lap. More details on that call to follow.

He just left me a message about 5 minutes ago telling me that there are cops driving around the neighborhood with bullhorns telling everyone that there is a mandatory evacuation and EVERYONE must go.

There are helicopters all over the skies. He is not sure if they are just trying to scare people into leaving, or if they are serious, but he has found a ride and they are leaving the city.

We do not yet know how this will affect our plans to return to the city.

We will be monitoring the situation as we drive towards New Orleans today and will assess our plans when we arrive in Baton Rouge, our first stop before heading into the city. If we are not able to gain access to the city - which we will still try to do - we will be assisting with relief efforts in Baton Rouge and Covington, where there are hundreds of thousands of refugees from New Orleans in desperate need of assistance.

Some people have asked for a physical address to send money to, so here are two places you can do this. Our good friend Ward Reilly, who will act as our Baton Rouge liason and staging ground, can cash checks for us (we will not have access to bank machines in New Orleans to cash checks!).

The best and easiest thing to do is send a check or money order made out to Ward Reilly and note on the check that it is for Get Your Act On.

Please send to:

Ward Reilly
645 Kimbo Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

People that are on their way to Louisiana to help or want to come down - right now we do not advise people to try to enter the city of New Orleans until we know

better what the situation is, especially with the breaking news about the forced evacuations. However, there are hundreds and thousands of refugees in the areas around New Orleans, and there is a desperate need for help there.

Daniel says that in 6 days they have not seen or received any help. In 6 days they saw one policeman - flying through the neighborhood in a police car at 40 miles an hour.

He reported that for the first two days after the storm, Wildlife and Fisheries were rescuing people from the flooded out lower 9th ward, blocks from my house and his house by boat - and just dropping the people off on the dry side of the levy, with no food or water or anywhere to go.

He said that after two days the boats just stopped coming. He had no idea why until I explained the situation with the National Guard to him, and that the rescue boats were told to stand down and stop rescuing people.

The people locked down in the city have no idea that supplies are sitting just outside the city and being turned away.

The only reason they have food is they managed to gather what they could from friends' apartments, etc., but again, no one has come to help them or bring them food. Other than the people left stranded in the neighborhood, it has been completely abandoned by all official entities.

Here is a bit of heart breaking news. There is only one radio station people can receive in the city. Daniel said that people trapped in their attics in the lower 9th ward have been calling the station saying where they are and asking that some one come get them.

But there is no one to come. Those that are not already dead are dying. Daniel estimates that there are easily some 40-50,000 people dead in their homes in the lower 9th ward. I can not imagine listening to this on the radio, knowing that these peoples pleas are falling on deaf ears. They have simply been left to die.

Now, as with others we have had contact with in New Orleans, the people are afraid to leave their homes because of the National Guard, who have permission to shoot anyone on the spot.

There are many more small details Daniel relayed, but I do not have time for them all now. Just to say that he confirms reports we have received about supplies and relief not getting through. Apparently some assistance is starting to get into the city, but not to the poor neighborhoods.

OK, I have to go now - we need to get on the road towards New Orleans. We will be stopping in Baton Rouge where we will be meeting up with Daniel (they have found a car to get out of the city) and we will then assess the situation and take things from there.

It looks more and more like we will not be able to enter the city without the extreme likelihood of being killed in the process.

So we will regroup in Baton Rouge and start relief efforts with the refugees already there and the rest of the people being airlifted out of New Orleans.

If we deem it at all possible, we will still try to enter the city of New Orleans, but we will not put ourselves in the position of being killed as then we can be of no help to anyone.

SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT WHAT IS GOING ON.

WHY DID OUR GOVERNMENT DELIBERATELY STARVE THE POOR PEOPLE OF NEW ORLEANS?

WHY ARE THEY FORCING US OUT OF OUR CITY AND DO THEY PLAN ON 'GIVING IT BACK'?

QUESTIONS NEED TO BE ASKED AND ANSWERS GIVEN. WILL THE REFUGEES BE GIVEN ANY FOOD AND WATER NOW? WHAT ARE THEIR PLANS FOR THE PEOPLE THAT MANAGED TO STAY ALIVE.

NEW ORLEANS HAS BEEN TAKEN OVER BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. BEWARE, THIS MAY COME TO A NEIGHBORHOOD NEAR YOU.



Tanisha Blevin, 5, holds the hand of Nita LaGarde, 105, as they are evacuated from the Convention Center in New Orleans, La., Sept. 3, 2005. Hundreds of people waited days to be evacuated. (AP Photo/Eric Gay)

Boycott St. Petersburg, Florida:

Racist Thug Cops Out Of Control; Anti-War Demonstrators Arrested; No One Is Safe

The Uhurus initially had two complaints: the arrest of three of their members after a quarrel with the police and customers in a BayWalk bar, and the center's dress code for shoppers, which they argued was discriminatory because it prohibited styles like wearing caps sideways.

Then they protested BayWalk's barring a 16-year-old African-American boy accused of passing drugs to a girl; he said he had simply been giving the girl his phone number.

September 2, 2005 By LYNN WADDELL, The New York Times

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla., Sept. 1 - A man with a bullhorn stood inside a corral of metal barricades, leading protesters in a chant: "Business is a privilege! Free speech is a right!"

The police handcuffed a young man who had been violating a noise ordinance by beating a drum, and the chants turned to "Let him go!" Four men dressed largely in black taunted officers with a Nazi salute.

Such was the gantlet that thousands of people had to run one recent Saturday night to catch a movie or grab a bite in downtown St. Petersburg.

Since it opened five years ago, BayWalk, an open-air shopping, dining and entertainment complex near the shores of Tampa Bay, has pumped life into downtown and symbolized the city's desire to be seen as something other than a quiet hub for retirees. But in the process, it has also become a kind of town square: the public sidewalk outside its entrance is the best spot to find an audience if you are someone with something to protest.

The police put up the barricades in late July after BayWalk complained that demonstrators were blocking access to businesses and forcing some to close early every Saturday, protest night. The purpose of the barricades, the police said, was to prevent pedestrians from spilling into the street. But they were perceived by some as an effort to restrict the demonstrations.

So what had been a low-key group of about 20 people each weekend became a roaring crowd of about 100 - angry, drumbeating, sign-waving, many wearing free-speech stickers alongside stickers bearing the number of troops who had died in Iraq.

After the barricades were put up, six other groups and a city councilwoman made appearances with the antiwar group, St. Pete for Peace. The police have arrested

six protesters, including a 13-year-old, mostly on trespassing charges, and issued several tickets for noise violations and, to drivers beeping in solidarity with the protest, for improper use of a horn.

Mayor Rick Baker said he was satisfied with the city's handling of events. "I think everything we've done so far has worked," Mr. Baker said. "The important thing is to maintain balance, and I think we're maintaining balance pretty well."

But Councilman John Lasita said the barricades "exacerbated whatever situation that we have there."

"Now we can't put the worms back in the can," Mr. Lasita said, "or the bite back in the apple."

As an alternative to barricades, the City Council has recommended that the street outside BayWalk's main entrance be closed to cars on weekend nights, a way to give shoppers and protesters alike more room.

That idea has met resistance from yet another group: the police themselves, who say it would be hard to enforce and require more officers. [Of course, since the objective is to shut up the anti-war demonstration. Duh. See below about who's behind the campaign to close them down.]]

The antiwar and free-speech protesters are hardly the only ones to have used BayWalk as their stage. A group of homeless people caroled anti-corporate Christmas songs outside BayWalk in the first year after it opened. The People's International Democratic Uhuru Movement later protested for eight months, coordinating with the antiwar group by agreeing to demonstrate on Friday nights rather than Saturday.

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Then they protested BayWalk's barring a 16-year-old African-American boy accused of passing drugs to a girl; he said he had simply been giving the girl his phone number.

Shortly after that, bikers threatened to crash the Uhurus' protest with one in support of the police. Less than a month later, BayWalk management relaxed the dress code, and the Uhurus stopped demonstrating.

Last summer the Sembler Company, which owns BayWalk, asked the city to restrict protests to zones that would be established across the street from the entrance and to bar demonstrations even there during the busiest hours. The city leaned that way for a time but, after much public debate, backed away.

Mark Kamleiter, a lawyer for one of the arrested protesters, says he is troubled by what he describes as the police's aggressiveness and arbitrary manner in applying the law.

"Do you really think they are going to ticket a wedding party that goes down the street blowing their horns?" Mr. Kamleiter said.

Some members of St. Pete for Peace say the real reason for all the concern is that the Sembler Company is owned by Mel Sembler, a major Republican fund-raiser who is now ambassador to Italy.

Members of St. Pete for Peace said they would continue their demonstrations, whether in a closed street or on a barricaded sidewalk.

"You have to ask President Bush what the timeline is," said Barbara Sieling, a 50-year-old insurance agent who was standing outside BayWalk videotaping police officers as they cited a protester for playing a rudimentary drum. Ms. Sieling looked over her viewfinder and smiled.

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9.5.05 stpeteforpeace.org

As you all know, we have had a difficult time in regards to FREE SPEECH here in this area of Florida. Our local peace group, St. Pete for Peace that has had members that have been arrested within the past month has finally made the national mainstream news with an article in the New York Times describing our plight.

Last night two of our peace members were driving across the Gandy Bridge from Tampa to St. Petersburg to attend last night's peace action in front of the Baywalk Center.

Bishop John and his sister Mary are familiar faces at local peace actions and are also Veterans for Peace members.

They were pulled over by St. Petersburg Police after leaving a gas station. The policeman knew Bishop John's name and said his name when he asked for his driver's license.

After he ran the computer check on the license, he then told Bishop John that he could not drive his car as his driver's license was not valid. When Bishop John asked him why, the officer could not tell him. The officer did not return the license, but did tell John and Mary that he would drive off first and they were free to go.

John and Mary returned home to Plant City over 40 miles away without attending the peace action last night. Bishop John then went to the Internet to find the link to check the validity of his driver's license. The Internet link revealed that his license was indeed valid and he was not in arrears for tickets or moving violations and that everything was in order.

FLORIDA DMV--CHECK YOUR LICENSE HERE:
<https://www6.hsmv.state.fl.us/dlcheck/dlchecking>

THIS CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE AND TO ANYONE!

Be sure to check out an equivalent link for your state, keep it locked in your favorites and print out a page that says your license is valid before you go to any peace action or gathering.

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Boycott St. Petersburg, Florida: Racist Thug Cops Out Of Control; It Just Get Worse; More Crime By Scumbags In Blue Reported

At its core, the First Amendment protects political speech, and a public sidewalk is a traditional site of public protest. Some St. Petersburg police officers don't get that or don't want to.

September 4, 2005 By ROBYN E. BLUMNER, St. Petersburg Times Perspective
Columnist

The night the Lightning won the Stanley Cup in 2004, downtown Tampa erupted in a cacophony of enthusiastic horn-blowing. Police were everywhere directing pedestrians, guiding cars, but not one officer I passed had any objection to the celebratory noise being made by fans leaning on their horns.

Contrast that to the tickets given drivers who tap their car horns in support of the antiwar protesters at BayWalk in St. Petersburg.

So, expressing yourself with your horn is just dandy if you are a hockey fan. But using your horn to express concern over the deaths of American soldiers and innocent Iraqis is strictly prohibited and you will be forcibly quieted by police.

Nice priorities.

I spent the evening of Saturday, Aug. 27 at BayWalk, watching the entirety of the weekly St. Pete for Peace demonstration. At its peak, there were probably 100 or so protesters, many standing with antiwar and anti-Bush signs and banners. A couple of demonstrators chanted with megaphones. As far as I could tell, the demonstrators didn't try to engage BayWalk's customers who walked by - unless they were provoked by someone loudly dissenting. And despite the removal of the barricades (a wise decision by whoever made it), pedestrians had no problem moving unimpeded on the sidewalk or the crosswalk.

Security abounded, though. I counted at least 10 St. Petersburg police officers on foot patrol and a number of BayWalk security personnel - all helping to keep order and keep protester toes off BayWalk property. Two officers were acting as crossing guards, stopping cars in front of the crosswalk on Second Avenue N. It looked to me like a reasonable solution to the concern over pedestrian safety.

While the police and protesters mostly stayed out of each other's way, I observed continued hostility by some officers, who approached protesters in a surly and aggressive manner and issued hypertechnical citations.

On Aug. 20, eyewitnesses say, three people were cited for unlawful horn use in support of the protest. One of those was Dr. Elizabeth E. Valentine, a clinical psychologist and consultant, who said she was ticketed after tapping on her horn to express support for getting out of Iraq.

The 64-year-old Valentine, from St. Petersburg, said she was "totally perplexed" and initially had no idea why police pulled her over. After being told, she was stunned. "I had no thought that (what I did) was irresponsible. To me this is customary. You respond to people holding signs," said Valentine, who noted that she was in a commercial area and not disturbing any residents. Valentine plans on fighting the ticket. "All of a sudden people have to worry about what they believe in," she said.

The next weekend, I observed Margaret Lakas get arrested - handcuffs and all - for annoying an officer by tapping out a rhythmic ditty with her horn in unity with protesters as drove by.

According to the police report, Lakas was charged with "obstruction" for failing to quit beeping when ordered to do so and for stopping her car in the crosswalk. I watched the arrest unfold. Police were motioning for her to stop and move over, and she was complying with those orders, though she continued to tap her horn. I also witnessed a driver in the car behind her get ticketed for a horn tap or two.

While this was going on, the steady bass thumping out of Wet Willie's was so loud that I had to raise my voice to the person next to me to be heard.

Noisy music was all around, but the protesters were warned not to make any - at least not with instruments. Police claim that the playing of instruments by demonstrators violates the city's noise pollution ordinance.

Not quite.

While the ordinance does limit the playing of instruments on public property after 8 p.m., it specifically exempts "public speaking and public assembly activities." Even Mark Winn, the chief assistant city attorney, agreed that the ordinance "probably" doesn't apply to the BayWalk protests.

But the clear language of the law didn't help 16-year-old Peter Likins, who blew a shofar (an instrument made from a ram's horn) at the start of the Aug. 27 protest at about 7:30 p.m. As Peter explains, the shofar is used in the Jewish faith "to call people to a gathering."

An officer, according to Peter, told him to stop because he was violating the noise ordinance. When Peter responded that the ordinance wasn't applicable, Peter claims the officer just kept repeating, "you better cut it out." Peter put the instrument down rather than get arrested.

Making music to make a political point should be at least as tolerable as the pounding club music emanating from BayWalk's open-air bars; and car horns for peace should be granted the same latitude as those of excited sports fans.

At its core, the First Amendment protects political speech, and a public sidewalk is a traditional site of public protest. Some St. Petersburg police officers don't get that or don't want to.

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