

GI SPECIAL 3C51:



Soldier Murdered in Afghanistan: “The Officers Are Dealing In Drugs”

August 23, 2005 by Mike Rogers, LewRockwell.com

At Camp Casey, I met a man named Juan Torres who had a compelling story to tell. It was a story about his son, named Juan Torres Jr., who was officially listed as the 134th US soldier to die in Afghanistan.

Juan Torres Jr. was a 25-year-old Specialist in the Army Reserve. He was assigned to the 453rd Transportation Company based out of Houston, Texas.



The US Army has reported that Juan Torres Jr. died at Bagram Air Force Base on July 12th, 2004 due to a single gunshot wound to the head. His death was listed as a non-combat related injury. The Army also claimed to have investigated the death of Juan Torres Jr. and reached the conclusion that his death was suicide.

But here is where the story takes a most horrifying and repulsive turn; here is where the story turns into an abomination that will nauseate any American who has ever served – or known someone who has served – in our once proud Armed Forces.

Shortly before his death, Juan Torres Jr. had called his father from Bagram Air Force Base. Juan Jr. was overwhelmed with fear. He was distraught because of rampant drug abuse, drug dealing, and trafficking among officers and enlisted men inside of Bagram. He was especially upset that officers, as high up as Captains, were involved with this drug trafficking and their superior officers were doing nothing to put a stop to it.

Juan Torres Sr. does not speak English particularly well. In fact, his English is sometimes difficult to understand. I videotaped an interview with Juan Torres Sr. Here is a transcript of that interview about his recollections of the final telephone call he had from his son, Juan Torres Jr.:

"My son said, 'Daddy, there's a lot of drugs here. The officers are dealing in drugs. I don't like it. I talked to all my friends and told them 'Don't use drugs' because it's really terrible here.'

I told my son, to say nothing to anybody. I told him that he only had a little bit more time until he could come back. I begged him to be quiet. But he said he couldn't. He said, 'But, Daddy, these are American soldiers, they are not supposed to be doing this. I have to try to stop them.'"

"My son worked everyday from 6:00 PM to 6:00 AM. But the day before he died some officer changed my son's working hours. They changed his schedule and told him to go off duty at 6:00 PM and come in at 6:00 AM. The next day, when my son didn't report for duty in the morning, they reported that he died.

"The Army claims that he shot himself in the head while taking a shower. That doesn't make sense. They murdered him inside the shower. When he was taking a shower, and he couldn't defend himself because he was unarmed, he was shot in the head."

"I want to name the people who did this. One is a sergeant, and one is a captain. I sent lots of letters to congress, lots of letters to the Pentagon, but no one is interested. Nobody helps me; maybe it's because my son is Hispanic, maybe because I don't speak English so good. Or maybe no one helps because everyday lots of soldiers die."

"The military claimed that that they closed the investigation of my son's death on September, 24, 2004 – about two months after my son died. But these people lied. "

"They sent me many letters saying that they investigated but one of my son's co-workers from his office told me, 'Mr. Torres, I'm sorry but nobody ever investigated your son's death because we didn't have the people to do it – we were so undermanned. Lots of soldiers are dying and I'm so very sorry.'"

"First I got an anonymous phone call from a soldier who knew what had actually happened to my son. I have now spoken with over three-dozen soldiers who told me what really happened. But they are afraid that if they say their names, that something bad will happen to them or their families."

"I don't know what to do. I'm only waiting for God to give me justice. My son served this country since he was 17 years old. He was first sent to Kosovo. He served this country for eight years and then was murdered by American soldiers who are dealing in drugs and smuggling drugs from Afghanistan because he was getting ready to report them.

"And the worst part about it is that the US Army refuses to investigate and claims that my son committed suicide. That's a lie. He was murdered because he was going to report the drug business at Bagram Airbase."

Juan Torres Sr. I feel for you and your family. You think that no one listens to you but I did. And for what it's worth, I want to help you to get this story out and to do whatever I can to get you justice.

And for you, dear reader, this is just one more story among the many; just one more story about a desertion, a suicide, a death; another disaster for a family. This is the story of just one more death in George W. Bush's book of dying for a noble cause. This is just one more story about the decline of the United States. It's a snapshot of what our military has become; it is a mirror of American society today.

Thank you George W. Bush. Thank you for keeping America free and for keeping our military great.

Could anyone read the above and not wonder how much longer it will be until the US military collapses like a house of rotten toothpicks?

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



Soldiers from the Third Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tiger Squadron, Apache Troop. Pfc. Jose Cevallos, center, of El Monte, California, lookout. Pfc. Larry Cramer of Vestao, New York, communicates, Tal Afar Sept. 11, 2005. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

Local Man Injured

09/12/05 By Ellen Robinson, Sidney Herald

B. J. Houchen, Sidney, was injured while serving with his National Guard Unit in Iraq this week.

According to information reported to his mother, Carla Houchen, Sidney, he was injured by a roadside bomb that exploded while they were on patrol.

His injuries are said to be non-life threatening.

"He has his life, his sight and his limbs. We are very thankful for that," Carla Houchen said.

Because of his injuries, he was flown to Ramstein, Germany, to the military hospital, where he underwent surgery Wednesday night to remove shrapnel from his calf and thigh. He had another surgery Thursday night, which removed a piece of shrapnel from his chest.

Another piece of shrapnel remains lodged in his chest, which will be removed with another surgery.

Houchen was able to call his family to tell them about the injury himself.

"I think it's wonderful they let him tell us instead of having someone call to tell us about his injury," Houchen's mother said.

Doctors are assessing his condition to determine if they will remove the shrapnel still in his chest in Ramstein, or if he will be flown back to the states for the surgery.

He is expected to be flown to Fort Lewis, Wash., sometime in the next week. Arrangements will be made for his family to see him once he arrives at Fort Lewis.

Occupation Office In Basra Attacked

September 12 2005 By Nawfal Hashim, Independent Online & (KUNA)

Basra - Iraqi rebels launched an overnight rocket attack on the United States consulate in the southern city of Basra.

Four 107mm Chinese-built rockets slammed into ousted dictator Saddam Hussein's former Basra palace which houses both the US and the British consulates, a Western diplomat said.

Eyewitnesses contacted by KUNA said they heard the thud of about eight mortar rounds inside the compound.

"There were no casualties or injuries, and no significant structural damage," according to the US embassy.

Elite Restaurant For Foreign Forces Blown Up

12/09/2005 (AFP) & The Associated Press

A huge car bomb exploded outside a popular restaurant in Baghdad's upscale Mansour neighborhood Monday night, witnesses said. Two people were killed and 15 wounded.

The source said a senior oil ministry official, Mohammad Abu Dhi, was among the wounded, updating an earlier casualty toll of 12 wounded from a defence ministry official.

The targeted restaurant, Al-Saa, has a contract with foreign forces in Iraq.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

“Man Down, Man Down”

September 11, 2005 By Tim Albone, Baylough, Afghanistan, The Sunday Times – World

IT WAS just after midnight when the radio crackled and a shout of “Man down, man down” came over the airwaves. The signal was weak and the voice barely audible, but the message to the men of Kelts platoon of the US Army’s 503rd Airborne was painfully clear.

Earlier that evening a patrol of 16 Americans and 25 Afghan soldiers and police had set off from their mud compound at Baylough, in Afghanistan’s restive southern province of Zabul, to stake out the house of Mullah Toor Manan, a local Taliban commander.

The Afghans covered the front of the house; Captain Mike Kloepper, the commanding officer, and Lieutenant Derek Hines, 25, his second-in-command, took the back.

The sound of gunfire alerted the men at base that something was wrong. Then came the message on the radio.

Manan, number 15 on America’s most wanted list, had apparently been alerted by sounds outside and he and his bodyguard burst out of the back of the house. Before they were both shot and killed they unloaded several rounds — one of which went through Hines’s left shoulder, passing through his chest. He and his Afghan interpreter died.

Hines was the 51st US soldier to die in hostile fire in Afghanistan this year, the highest annual number since the 2001 invasion.

We Have Good News And Bad News

9.12.05 New York Times

Soldiers who fired at the Afghan defense minister's convoy were not trying to assassinate him as initially believed, but were shooting at other troops they were angry with, a government spokesman said.

Nine soldiers have been arrested in connection with the incident.

TROOP NEWS

“What Exactly Have I Done Over There?”

“Why Am I Over There?”

<p>There were people fighting for their lives — and the lives of their brothers, their sons, their daughters. Their families had been killed through this combat and they're trying to protect their family.</p>

2.16.05 BY CHARLOTTE IRELAND, Socialist Worker (Canada)

Specialist Darrell Anderson, who recently left the US Army and sought refuge in Canada, spoke at a War Resisters' meeting on Monday night in Toronto to a packed out room. This is what he had to say:

Being raised in America, you're always taught that your forefathers came to America for freedom. You're raised up with your hand over your heart, pledging allegiance to the flag. You're raised up to believe in your country and what it stands for.

Later on I needed money for college to better my life, and the army was the way to do that. So I joined the army. At that time I thought that if they were going to send me to war it would be to defend my country and protect my family and that there'd be honour and pride in that.

I got deployed to Iraq and when I got there the everyday life of these soldiers is — no sleep, wives/girlfriends leaving them, losing touch with family members, friends dying, and at any second of the day you could die.

You've got Humvees that aren't armoured, and you're driving through the streets at 5:00AM in the morning, hoping that today is not the day that you're going to get blown up.

On a few occasions we were under fire and a car drove over the safety barrier that we had set up. The protocol procedure is that you open fire. And the car came and my NCO officer says: Why didn't you open fire?" and I said: "I feel no danger and I believe it's a family."

They said: We don't care, next time you open fire — that's what we have to do."

And so that night I started questioning what was going on.

They told me that if you're fired upon, that everyone in the street is a criminal and that they should be shot.

I point my weapon at a young boy and. I pull my trigger but my weapon is on safe. So I turn to fire and I turn to him again, but then I think; "What am I doing? What kind of situation am I being put in? Do people — does the government care what they are putting these young men through?"

A few days later we were in a vehicle and one of my good friends took a shrapnel from a rocket-propelled grenade. He fell into the Humvee all bloody and dying, blood coming out of his mouth.

When I came back to the States, people said: "Thank you for what you are doing for your country." I thought that I would come back with pride and honour but it was more like a deep depression of "What exactly have I done over there?" Then you go through the nightmares.

People want to thank you, but you don't want it, you want to say you're sorry for what you've seen and for what's going on over there.

You start to question "Why am I over there?"

And people will tell you: "Weapons of mass destruction".

Well I was over there and there were no weapons of mass destruction.

There were people fighting for their lives — and the lives of their brothers, their sons, their daughters. Their families had been killed through this combat and they're trying to protect their family.

So then they say: "It's to bring democracy to the people." But there's bad stuff going on in other parts of the world — but they don't have oil or other resources that we need, so we go to the place where we could benefit from this economically.

They say: "We're bringing democracy to help these people".

Our democracy doesn't even work in the United States. It's more a plutocracy — money, corruption, everything.

All this came to me when I was home for Christmas. And then I thought: “What can I do? Can I go back to this? Can I be a part of this? Everybody’s going to think I’m a coward, a traitor to my country.”

So I looked at the paths. If I go back to Iraq and I fight this war, at the end of this road I’m going to have \$50,000 for college, a house, money to provide for a family. And then the other way, it’s going to be freedom.

I’m going to be able to live the rest of my life with my head up high, knowing that I wasn’t a part of the killing of innocent people.

And so I chose to go to Canada.

There are people who say: “You were just a coward, you didn’t want to fight in the war.” Well I went to the war, I was willing to give my life. I received a purple heart for being injured in combat.

And then they say: “Well you are just scared”.

If people would open their eyes and see, before it’s at their front door, before their son or their daughter is in combat and they come back and tell them straight to their face: “Mom, Dad, they are killing innocent people over there. Our country does not care if we live or die over there.”

They say: “If you turn your back on your country you’re not American.” Well, America was founded on people escaping something for freedom. I believe that I am more American than anybody in the United States who is staying there, turning their back and not standing up and doing something against this.

Bush Regime Disarming National Guards

The Pentagon forgets that Congress, not the executive branch, is vested by the Constitution to determine the organization, staffing, equipment and doctrine of our military forces. The president and his Cabinet get to command the forces raised by Congress.

September 12, 2005
Letters To The Editor
Army Times

Recent announcements from the Pentagon reveal that the true purpose of the base realignment and closure process is to stealthily disarm the National Guard and emasculate the reserves.

One-third of the Guard's aircraft are being taken away, even from units now in combat in Iraq. Combat divisions are being downsized to mini-brigade size.

The equipment of Army Reserve units is being left in Iraq and nothing issued to replace it.

Mega reserve centers will replace local ones, and reservists will require temporary duty funds to attend meetings.

Aside from some offhand remarks from Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, Congress and the American people are being kept in the dark, like mushrooms, over this alleged transformation of our national defense.

This is particularly onerous as the reserve and Guard have never before in our history been asked to do so much, have done far more than ever expected and are doing it under fire as the demise is being perpetrated behind their backs.

The Pentagon forgets that Congress, not the executive branch, is vested by the Constitution to determine the organization, staffing, equipment and doctrine of our military forces. The president and his Cabinet get to command the forces raised by Congress.

Given the transformation and the devastating consequences of its success, Congress needs to review and restrict the authority given the executive branch in this vital area of our national existence.

Lt. Col. Gordon S Fowkes (ret.)
Sugar Land, Texas

That Ain't My Dog

September 12, 2005 Robert Kagan, Washington Post

A senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, commenting on growing antiwar sentiment in America, writes: "You would think that no more than six or seven people ever supported going to war in Iraq."

In fact, support for removing Saddam Hussein by force was widespread from the late 1990s through the spring of 2003, among Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives, as well as neoconservatives.

**61% Of Americans Want Spending
On Iraq War Cut:
52% Don't Trust Bush To Do Right**

12 September 2005 AFP

The latest opinion poll by Newsweek magazine found that just 38 percent approve of Bush's job performance, while 52 percent of respondents no longer trust him to make the right decisions in a foreign or domestic crisis.

And a survey by Time magazine suggested 61 percent of Americans thought the government should cut its spending in Iraq to help pay for post-Katrina reconstruction.

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.

Mississippi Guard Refused Leave To Help Desperate Families At Home: “Tapped Out And Cannot Send Troops”

[Thanks to Don Bacon, Smedley Butler Society, who sent this in.]

09/11/05 By Washington Post

BAGHDAD - Scores of Mississippi National Guardsmen in Iraq who lost their homes to Hurricane Katrina have been refused even 15-day leaves to aid their displaced families, told by commanders there are too few U.S. troops in Iraq to spare them, according to guardsmen.

About 600 members of the Mississippi Guard's 155th Brigade Combat Team, posted south of Baghdad, live in the parts of southern Mississippi and southeast Louisiana hit hardest by Katrina, Maj. Neil F. Murphy Jr., a spokesman with the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, said by e-mail Saturday. The brigade is attached to the expeditionary force.

Guard members and relatives said in e-mails or telephone interviews that virtually all of the roughly 300 soldiers of the 155th Brigade's B and C companies had their homes destroyed or severely damaged in the hurricane.

Eighty Mississippi Guard members have been granted emergency leave, Murphy said.

The rest have been refused leave, told by their brigade command that all other forward operating bases "are tapped out and cannot send troops," one Mississippi Guard member wrote in an e-mail that was shared by a family member.

Pentagon Assholes Send Civilian Debt Collector After Wounded Iraq Vet: “How Can You Treat Someone Like That?”

September 12, 2005 By Karen Jowers, Army Times staff writer

Two years after retired Army Staff Sgt. Ryan Kelly lost his right leg below the knee to a roadside bomb in Iraq, he says he is still fighting a war — in Washington.

His battle is with the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, which overpaid him by \$1,700, demanded reimbursement and then referred his debt to a collection agency.

“If we had a credit check right now, it would be pretty painful,” Kelly said. “How can you treat someone like that?”

Kelly's situation has caught the attention of Congress, which has ordered the Government Accountability Office to look into his and other similar cases.

“Whether the debts are valid or not, we should not be reporting our war heroes to collection agencies,” said Gayle Fischer, an assistant director for forensic audits and special investigations in the GAO.

Kelly said his problems arose when he was medically retired in August 2004. He did not receive his leave pay or travel pay and, at some point, the Army put him back on active duty. He got a check he assumed was reimbursement for the leave.

During that time, he and his wife were moving from Texas to Arizona, and he did not get his documentation in a timely manner. He got one or two letters from DFAS and tried to call to straighten it out, with no success. At the beginning of the year, he got the letter about the collection action.

The 25-year-old called the GAO and the House Government Reform Committee, which asked questions that led DFAS to look into the situation and eventually suspend the collection action.

One-Third Of Guard Units Short Basic Equipment: “Especially Low On Medical Supplies”

9.12.05 By Greg Jaffe, Wall St. Journal

Last week in New Orleans, private Jonathan Wallace, of the Arkansas National Guard, said he had been back for a few months but all his equipment hadn't yet arrived.

“Some of my stuff got blown up” in Iraq and has yet to be replaced, Private Wallace said. He said he is “especially low on medical supplies.”

In July, the Government Accountability Office, Congress's oversight arm, found that one-third of National Guard units were “short of basic equipment” because they had given up equipment to units that were preparing to go to Iraq in the coming months.

***Straws In The Wind:* Republican Mayors Against The War: “We've Done Our Job. Let's Come On Home”**

[Thanks to Anna Bradley, who sent this in.]

September 10, 2005 By Paul J. Nyden, Staff writer, The Charleston Gazette

Charleston Mayor Danny Jones and South Charleston Mayor Richie Robb are both military veterans. Both served in Vietnam. Both are Republicans.

Both also voice deep criticisms of today's war in Iraq.

On Thursday, South Charleston City Council President Dayton Griffith, also an Army veteran, will introduce a resolution asking federal government leaders "to take all steps necessary to terminate America's military occupation of Iraq as of Dec. 31 or on another date certain."

Jones, who served in the Marine Corps in Danang, has a 16-year-old son. "I would not want him involved in this enterprise."

Jones believes the "only reason there is not a massive protest against this war is that there is no draft. If we had a draft, there would be blood in the streets, just like there was when I was in high school and when I was in Vietnam.

"It makes me sad and angry. We are going to pay for this war for the rest of my life. It is needless. I am Republican. I play the stock market. I watch Fox News. I am a libertarian Republican. I believe in free enterprise. I believe the market works well 80 percent of the time," Jones said.

Robb expects some will oppose his resolution and, like the debate during the Vietnam War, argue it shows disrespect for our troops.

"I disagree. They're fighting for freedom. That freedom means our freedom to dissent from government policy. **I have the greatest amount of sympathy for people putting their lives on the line for bad policy.**"

"A lot of Republicans are saying, 'We've done our job. Let's come on home.'"

“Stop-Loss Is A Term That Makes Most Soldiers Cringe” “We Won’t Last At This Pace, Regardless Of What The Politicians Say”

September 12, 2005

By Spc. Joshua Forman, Army Times. The writer is a 20-year-old infantryman who has been in the Army a little more than two years. He deployed to Iraq with the 3rd Infantry Division last January.

I tell my friends and family that I am living in one of Saddam’s former palaces, and they think that I am living the good life.

I don’t tell them that the plumbing is horrible and frequently broken. Of course, that is when we actually have power in the building — whether our own generator is overworked to the point of being inoperable or we’ve been given a “brand new” generator that just won’t work at all.

I guess it is too much to ask the KBR employees, who make six figures for being over here compared to my \$2,000 a month, to actually work on the generator so we have power.

After all, it's not their problem. They have power.

Congressmen can talk all they want about giving away \$30,000 and \$40,000 bonuses for people to join or stay in the Army, but what about the soldiers who are already in the service and not ready to re-enlist? All we're getting is a 3 percent pay increase each year, which is designed to offset inflation.

Most soldiers are living paycheck to paycheck, not to mention young families on welfare or other programs.

We work in an environment where we are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, especially while deployed to Iraq. We have 30 days of paid vacation time a year, although we have no say in when we take our leave. During the leave that I took prior to this deployment, I didn't get a chance to see very much of my family or friends due to the fact that both my parents work and all of my friends are in college.

I will not get a chance to see my younger brother when I go home on midtour leave, because he will be gone for his first year of college.

While deployed, I have to watch people like New York Yankee Alex Rodriguez make \$25 million a year to play a game, while I wake up each morning not knowing what might happen to me or the soldiers with whom I work.

Each day, I put my life on the line along with the soldiers I work with and soldiers across Iraq. We put up with the kind of things that no one in the civilian world would deal with. We also do not have the luxury of quitting our jobs.

I accept this because I love my country and stand behind American values, but once my time is up in the Regular Army, I plan to get out and move on with a career in the civilian world so that I can support a family comfortably.

The scenario of supporting a family and raising children just does not seem probable if I stay in the military. An 18-year-old kid out of high school can go to college and look at his choices and plainly see that a technical job at a company will be safer and pay more than anything the military can currently provide.

Soldiers in the infantry take pride in what they do regardless of what they may say, but when comparing the duties and responsibilities to the pay and benefits, it just doesn't equal out.

Every job out there has pros and cons, but at least a civilian can make the choice to leave his job if he truly dislikes the direction he is headed.

Stop-loss is a term that makes most soldiers cringe.

My unit is made up mostly of veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom I who took Baghdad. A majority of those soldiers are under stop-loss and were forced into their second deployment. I lived in the barracks with soldiers who missed the cutoff date for stop-loss by a week, and I have seen what a crushing blow that can be for a soldier.

These second tours are taking a toll on this all-volunteer Army.

We won't last at this pace, regardless of what the politicians say.

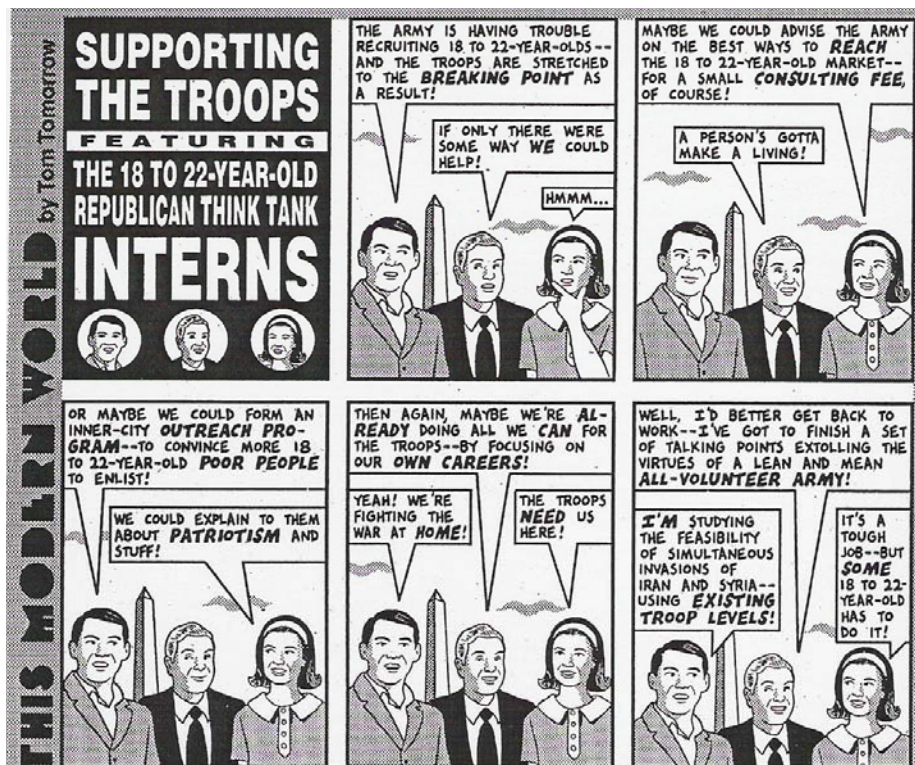
It's easy to make decisions like these when you're hiding under the blanket of the very freedom we provide.

The Army wonders publicly why it cannot meet enlistment and retention goals and why the divorce rate is so high among active-duty soldiers.

I find it hard to believe the Army didn't plan for those problems before.

The soldiers in the Army need something other than a re-enlistment bonus. They need a larger pay raise each year and quite a bit more than an extra \$500 a month while deployed.

Happier soldiers will increase enlistment. People will talk.



IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Majority Of Iraqis Reject Bush Federalism

September 11, 2005 By Hana Al-Bayat, AL-AHRAM (Egypt)

Whatever US and Iraqi officials argue, the majority of Iraqis remain opposed to sectarianism and, by extension, federalism.

According to a July 2005 survey conducted by the International Republican Institute 69 per cent of Iraqis from across the country want the constitution to establish "a strong central government" while only 22 per cent want it to give "significant powers to regional governments". Even in the south, with its majority Shia population, 25 per cent want federalism while 66 per cent reject it.

When Al-Ahram Weekly raised these concerns with James Jeffrey, senior adviser to Condoleezza Rice, he said the US administration was, "at the end of the day", only seeking to assist Iraq's sovereign government.

"The administration advised the government to conduct a national census of the population before submitting the draft for a referendum, but the security situation did not permit it," he said.

In other words this sovereign government, which cannot conduct a census, facing intense US pressure to meet the timetable imposed by Washington, has declared itself confident enough to consult the population on a document that will shape Iraq's future for generations to come.

Assorted Resistance Action

Sept 12 (Reuters) & Aljazeera 9.11

FALLUJA - At least six Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded by a roadside bomb that hit their convoy in Falluja, 50 km (32 miles) west of Baghdad, a police source said.

KIRKUK - Two policemen were killed by armed fighters in the downtown Wasiti district of Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of the capital. Police Lieutenant Colonel Yadikar Mohammed said the dead, a father and his son, were in charge of guarding the city governor's office.

IS'HAQI - A senior judge from the northern Iraqi town of al-Dawr was assassinated with his brother by armed fighters in the nearby town of Is'haqi on Sunday, police said.

ISKANDARIYA - An Iraqi contractor working for the U.S. military was found dead 75 km (47 miles) south of Baghdad. Police said he had been blindfolded and handcuffed.

A gun battle in Baghdad left 12 insurgents and an unknown number of officers dead, police officials said.

A second group of police officers was also ambushed en route to the scene, and fought a battle with insurgents that left one police officer dead and 28 wounded..

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

"Don't stick a knife in me ten inches, pull it out six, and tell me we've made progress." - Malcolm X

September 11, 2005

September 11, 2005 Riverbend, Baghdad burning, Baghdad, Iraq

It has been four years today. How does it feel four years later?

For the 3,000 victims in America, more than 100,000 have died in Iraq.

Tens of thousands of others are being detained for interrogation and torture. Our homes have been raided, our cities are constantly being bombed and Iraq has fallen back decades, and for several years to come we will suffer under the influence of the extremism we didn't know prior to the war.

As I write this, Tel Afar, a small place north of Mosul, is being bombed. Dozens of people are going to be buried under their homes in the dead of the night. Their water and electricity have been cut off for days.

It doesn't seem to matter much though because they don't live in a wonderful skyscraper in a glamorous city. They are, quite simply, farmers and herders not worth a second thought.

Four years later and the War on Terror (or is it the War of Terror?) has been won:

Score:

Al-Qaeda – 3,000

America – 100,000+

Congratulations.

The Imploding Empire

September 11, 2005 Gary Steven Corseri, Dissident Voice [Excerpt]

The American Empire failed its people and American predatory capitalism has failed.

We could not fight a war based on mendacity in the Middle East, and protect the Empire at home. The word for these times, the basic metaphor, is implosion: the WTC towers imploded and the two-foot thick flood walls that held back the vast lake and the sea imploded, and the levees sank.

And soon the Empire's vast tentacles will begin to contract, salted with the wounds of defeat. And the troops will come home.

***Vis consili expers mole ruit sua*, Horace wrote about another empire two thousand years ago. "Brute force, bereft of wisdom, falls to ruins of its own weight." And he continued:**

Vim temperatam di quoque provehunt in maius; idem odere vires omne nefas animo moventes.

Rome's most popular poet put the matter squarely: "Power tempered with wisdom, even the gods make greater. But might that in its soul is bent on all impiety, they hate."

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.

**“Join The Anti-War Movement,
Like It Is A Fire Escape”**

If common sense people don't put non-stop pressure on this administration, and all the ball-less Democrats who are in the same bobsled, we will all be in row boats, wondering where the National Guard is.

From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: September 11, 2005

This whole thing is, "One Flew Over The White House."

Sometimes I wake up, and I think I'm in a mental hospital. I have nightmares that Bush and his Robocops are coming to get me for shock therapy. I feel like I may be in a cattle car, and I hear dogs barking.

Everything about this government is a Twilight Zone. Things are stacking up so high, they appear to be leaning. From the falling Twin Towers, to the wars in Afghanistan, and Iraq, to Hurricane Katrina in four short years.

In poker, that is a dead man's hand.

By the time the American people pay for all this, we will all have government debit cards issued to us

I wonder if the pro-Bush, pro-war, pro-Disneyland, anti-global warming people will ever get this? I heard Al Gore give a two hour power-point presentation on global warming last week, that would have made non-believers buy a bag of ice on the way home, and not know why.

I'm 60, and I feel like I have lived 10 lifetimes. I was born two months before the bombs were dropped on Hiroshima, and Nagasaki.

My mother was born the year the unsinkable Titanic was sunk. Sometimes, I think that is the way Bush feels about everything--unsinkable. He is a man that never has enough lifeboats. New York was unsinkable, Iraq is unsinkable, New Orleans is unsinkable, our economy is unsinkable, and while this madness is going on, there is another hurricane headed for the Atlantic Coast.

If common sense people don't put non-stop pressure on this administration, and all the ball-less Democrats who are in the same bobsled, we will all be in row boats, wondering where the National Guard is.

It will never happen again, it will never happen here, don't worry, this thing is unsinkable.

The United States Government is running out of lifeboats.

You reap what you sow, I don't care if you have an I.Q. of 180.

If more people don't join the peace movement, and take their attitudes to the street, the party will be over.

We could all be looters and shooters, or wind up floating in the water with the lights out.

People need to join the Anti-war movement, like it is a fire escape.

As Bob Dylan once wrote, "The truth was obscure, too profound and too pure; to live it, you have to explode."

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
Another unsinkable war
September 11, 2005**

OCCUPATION REPORT

Tal Afar: Resistance Fighters Escape; Occupation Sets Up Concentration Camp For Civilian Survivors

"The American forces and Iraqi soldiers ordered us to leave our houses," said Khudair Yas, 50, a Tall Afar resident living in the camp. "We left without extra clothes or food to a camp which has become like a prison."

September 12, 2005 By Borzou Daragahi, Los Angeles Times & September 11, 2005
Juan Cole, Informed Comment & Aljazeera

Most of the rebels appear to have fled into the countryside before U.S. and Iraqi forces entered.

The offensive drew fire from some government critics who charged that such operations served more to exacerbate tensions in the city with a mixed Shiite and Sunni population and divert attention from the government's failings to rebuild the country than to defeat the insurgency.

"What is going on there is nothing but a sectarian purge within an official cover," said Adnan Dulaimi, a Sunni Arab leader, told reporters. "This kind of policy would bring nothing but more bloodshed, more chaos, and more destruction to Iraq."

Tall Afar residents at the camp outside the city described dire conditions, with more than 550 families crowded into 500 tents set up by overburdened relief workers.

They described demolished homes and charged that children were killed in the fighting. They complained of being harassed by Iraqi soldiers and left without medical care in the camp, which they said soldiers would not let them leave.

"The American forces and Iraqi soldiers ordered us to leave our houses," said Khudair Yas, 50, a Tall Afar resident living in the camp. "We left without extra clothes or food to a camp which has become like a prison."

Ali Aubo, the director of a human rights group based in Mosul, east of Tal Afar, said conditions were desperate at a makeshift refugee camp on Tal Afar's western side, with little drinking water or food.

Iraqi troops took the lead in the ground assault in the northern Turkmen city of Tal Afar, in an attempt by the US to showcase newly trained Iraqi army units.

The problem is that they are perceived as mostly Shiite, and the Tal Afar campaign is targeting Sunni Turkmen neighborhoods. So the mayor has resigned in protest of a "sectarian" operation.

<p style="text-align: center;">OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

Silly Saadoun Full Of Shit

September 11, 2005 Juan Cole, Informed Comment

The Iraqis say that they have closed the border with Syria, but in reality this move just means a couple of regular checkpoints are not longer admitting legal entrants. The long Syrian border with Iraq stretches through desert and other rugged territory and cannot actually be closed by decree.

Defense Minister Saadoun Dulaimi turns out to be something of a braggart, since he threatened that after Tal Afar similar operations would be launched against Ramadi, Qaim, and other Sunni Arab cities.

In fact, if Dulaimi just openly took a walk in Adhamiyah in West Baghdad, he would be killed on sight. So until he has control of his own capital, he would be advised not to brandish unrealistic threats.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

German Plane Carrying Katrina Aid Turned Back

Sept. 10, 2005 AP

BERLIN - A German military plane carrying 15 tons of military rations for survivors of Hurricane Katrina was sent back by U.S. authorities, officials said Saturday.

The plane was turned away Thursday because it did not have the required authorization, a German government spokesman said.

The spokesman said U.S. authorities had since given approval for future aid flights, but it was unclear whether the German military would try again to deliver the rations.

Since Hurricane Katrina struck the United States, many international donors have complained of frustration that bureaucratic entanglements have hindered shipments to the United States.



Welcome To Occupied New Orleans

09 September 2005 Democracy Now! [Excerpt]

Jacque Soohen: I have to say that both for me and the other journalist who was with me, both of us who have covered the Iraq war, this was one of the more frightening situations, because they really - I really had the impression that they were willing to shoot anybody and anything. They were incredibly energized, incredibly amped up, and also that that whole area was very lawless, as was said, but the police had a fear and they were willing to - really willing to intimidate anybody who was there.

What was eerie was also, though, it looked a lot like Iraq.

I mean, the only times that we did see National Guard, they were patrolling the streets in the same way in the Ninth Ward, whereas in downtown area, they were perhaps more friendly, talking to people, etc.

In that area of the city, it very much looked like an occupied city. They were walking in formation. They had their guns out and pointed at the houses. So it was kind of - it was very frightening to see that in our country.

FEMA HEAD REFUSES TO BE EVACUATED FROM OFFICE 'You'll Never Take Me Alive,' Says Shotgun-Wielding Brown

September 11, 2005 The Borowitz Report

A tense standoff continued in Washington, D.C. today as Federal Emergency Management Agency head **Michael Brown** refused to be evacuated from his office at FEMA headquarters.

The White House made the call to evacuate Mr. Brown from his office after it decided that his decision to remain there posed a threat to everyone in the Gulf region.

Agents from the Department of Homeland Security first approached Mr. Brown's office over the weekend, urging him to evacuate and offering to help him empty out his desk and pack up his files.

"We offered to move him to another office far away from the FEMA building, where he could do no harm," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "We told him that he would have a nice desk, a telephone and a secretary, and that he could spend all day rewriting his resume."

The Homeland Security agents had hoped that the evacuation of the FEMA chief would proceed without incident, but instead of an agreeable team player, the Michael Brown they encountered was a shotgun-wielding madman who doggedly refused to budge.

"You bastards!" shrieked a visibly unhinged Mr. Brown. "You'll never take me alive!"

As the standoff moved into its third day, Mr. Brown told reporters that he had enough food and water to remain in his office for another six months and that it was unfair to evacuate him after "only one major screw-up."

"They would never do this to Rumsfeld," he said.

Elsewhere, climatologists said today that President Bush's approval rating is now below sea level and should remain there for at least three years.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Resistance Attacks On Iraqi Oil Pipelines Are Wonderful For U.S. Oil Corporations' Profits; Peace Would Be A Disaster

[As the oil fields used by American oil corporations fail, thanks to keeping Iraqi oil off the market, their profits go up anyhow. Peace in Iraq, with corresponding recovery and expansion of Iraqi oil production, would ruin them.]

7.26.05 By Bhushan Bahree, Wall St. Journal

At Shell, despite an expected 3% fall in production, higher oil prices are expected to boost exploration and production profits by 43% in the second quarter and lift companywide earnings once again when the company reports on Thursday, Deutsche Bank estimates.

Chevron and ConocoPhillips are both expected to turn in record quarterly profits due to high oil prices and strong down-stream operations, particularly U.S. refining margins.

Oil and natural-gas production is expected to fall 7% at Chevron, which will report Friday, as normal field declines and an absence of any large new projects take a toll. Production should get a boost later this year with the start-up of a large deepwater offshore West Africa project.

Still, Chevron is likely to report an 11% increase in earnings, says energy analyst Fadel Gheit at Oppenheimer, because of high commodity prices.

'What else do you expect if you have \$50 oil?' he asks. "If you don't have a record (quarter), you better go find another business to be in."

Received:

Racist Hysteria; Racist Lies

From: JF
To: GI Special
Sent: September 12, 2005 5:53 AM
Subject: Racist Hysteria; Racist Lies

Dear GI Special,

Thanks for the story titled "Racist Hysteria; Racist Lies" by Gary Younge in Baton Rouge. The so-called mainstream media prints this trash as fact, without even checking it.

Reminds of the "Viet Vets Spat Upon!" myth, although that one was manufactured after the fact. You did a wonderful job reporting the real source of the spit (Jack Ofield in GI SPECIAL 3C36A) : American Legionnaires and VsFW!

If it weren't for your gathering the facts these scurrilous lies would just hang there... in fact do hang there still, for all those who don't read the GI Special.

It's a good thing what you're doing. Please keep up the good work.

[Thanks for your encouragement. Everybody can help get the word around. T]

Received:

***Shit In Their Pants;*
A Poem For Mike Hastie**

From: NL, Mayfield Australia
To: GI Special
Sent: September 12, 2005
Subject: shit in their pants

"It's happening... I want to smell the shit in their pants."
(Mike Hastie, GI Special 3C50)

If I had a dollar- whoooweee!

I'd walk across the sludgy sea
to drink
with Mike Hastie.

I'd go further than that:
I'd raise the dead,
unjustly killed-
Gordon Gentle, Casey Sheehan, more, all of them-

I would listen to them,
all night long, and every day, as they
condemn,
these liars that live today.

I would learn their names, their stories
their desires, their hopes,
who their mothers are,
and bring them back to life again.

And then, if there was enough time
before the last dime ran out-
I'd turn on the interactive TV and bury
Bush. Blair. Bechtel. Halliburton. All their friends.
Again, again, again, without end.

But I'm a slow old bastard,
and now I remember:
I don't need their dollars,
just friends.

They burned Fallujah,
flooded New Orleans.
Robbed us with six-guns, fooled us with fountain pens.
Fuck them. Never, ever, again.

Smell the shit and taste the optimism: a blend of
oil from Venezuela,
medicine from Cuba, and
resistance from Iraq. That's what keeps me walking/

Web Copies:

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

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

**<http://gi-special.iraq-news.de>, <http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/>,
www.williambowles.info/gispecial,
<http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/gi-special.htm>**

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