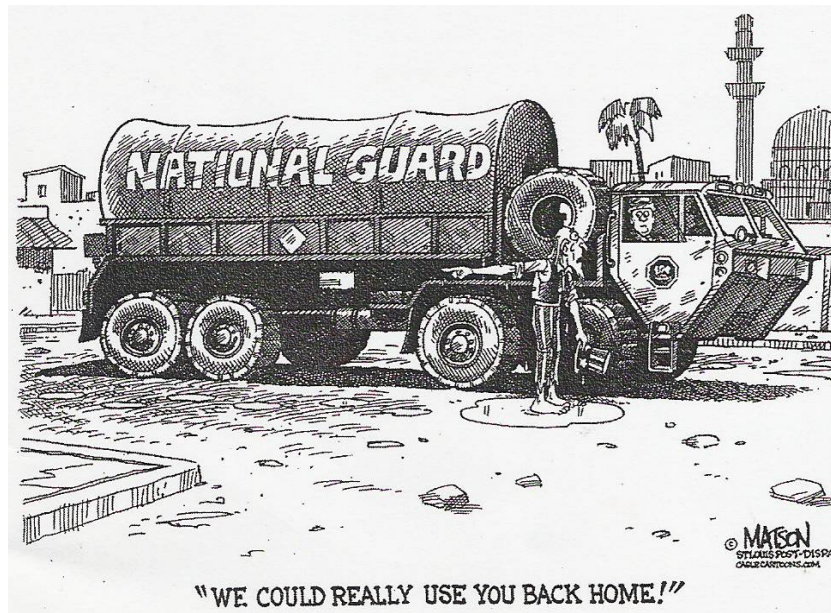


GI SPECIAL 3C56:



Army Times 9.12.05

“Unlike You, Not Every Soldier In Iraq Is Proud Of The Blood On His Hands”

When I joined the United States Army I swore an oath to “serve and protect the Constitution of the United States,” not an ignorant greedy little fuck like George Bush or any of his court jesters in the White House.

Webster’s defines the act of sedition as “rebellion or incitement: actions or words intended to provoke or incite rebellion against government authority.” If what you are saying means that I am accused of opposing this current and criminal regime, and desperately hope for swift and drastic change, well...at least you used the word right.

From: J.D. Engelhardt, aka: hEkLe
To: GI Special
Sent: September 14, 2005
Subject: some new shit

Man, I got some shit for you if you wanna use it. I thoroughly enjoyed writing it. I hope I equally piss off and thrill a bunch of readers.

What happened was I received some hateful comments on our site. This is my reply.

Jeff

THE COMMENTS:

Anonymous said...

you are the biggest pussy i have ever heard of!

get the fuck out of here!

11:37 PM

Matthew Schelberg said...

Dear Sir,

I enjoyed reading your article. However, I am curious as to what Army unit you served with in Iraq. As a Marine Corps Reservist who did one tour in Iraq with 4th Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion in 2003, your observations seem very strange to me. They are observations and opinions I have not found shared by any other OIF veteran I have met in the two years that I have been back.

In what areas of the country did you serve to have "never once saw a terrorist with extreme inclinations for senseless bloodshed"? Does targeting Shia civilians with car bombs count as "extreme" in your eyes? Are the "angry farmers and shop keepers" the people who manufacture the car bombs that have slain thousands of innocent Iraqis?

Please let me know what areas of the country you operated in, as I am very interested to learn more about your experiences. What was your job in 1st ID? To what unit were you assigned? Who was your company commander? What date did your unit rotate back to the States? Thanks again for your service. I look forward to hearing from you.

Semper Fidelis,
Cpl Matthew Schelberg
Bravo Co, 4th LAR BN., 4th MARDIV

Anonymous said...

You are a traitorous scumbag. I am on my 3rd tour here and I can dispute every one of your seditious lies. I also wonder how much combat you, a specialist, ever saw. You are a weak miserable excuse for a man and I can assure you the American people will not support your attempts to threaten the security of the United States and further endanger its citizens by your reckless aiding, abetting and encouraging the enemy in their efforts to defeat our forces.

11:53 PM

USMC IN IRAQ said...

CPL

Please do not address this scumbag as "sir". You are 100 times the man he is. In answer to some of your questions. He was a pogue specialist-HENCE NOT INFANTRY MOS - whose extent of combat was watching (and complainming about) the USMC success at Fallujah. He was apparently a driver or a gunner on a HMMWV for a VIP. By his own account he describes watching the battle -not participating -of course No not him! He's too big a seditious pussy to help win the war. He's too busy trying to defeat us by offering support to the enemy. He is devoid of honor and not worth your time. He will pass into ignoble anonymity like his fellow traitors. Nobody respects a coward or a loser. He's both.

3:31 AM

REPLY:

I have recently received some negative, hateful comments about the last piece I wrote titled FINDING CLOSURE.

Although they sign on as anonymous, they appear to be soldiers in Iraq. Although one Marine Corp Corporal was very polite and intelligent, others seemed extremely angry about my anti-war views. While normally I simply ignore some of the hateful comments we receive on this site, I have decided this time the integrity of Fight To Survive needed to be defended against what appears to be an unchecked, right winged jingoistic agenda.

What I find to be commonplace is the people who label me a traitor, call me a coward, and then accuse me of sedition are always the misinformed, close minded, naïve and ignorant soldiers who have been deceived by their chain of command, from the President all the way down to the lowest level, into believing in a twisted cause to establish a world police force across the globe under the guise of a war against terrorism.

I have received cynical and even very hateful criticism for as long as I have written on this website. It has never deterred my train of thought nor has it frustrated me. By receiving hateful comments is how I know I am doing my part to bring some level of consciousness to the table.

While I was in the army I was labeled a problem simply because I did not believe in the war, and I was vocal about it.

What I cannot fathom is the soldiers out there who not only cannot see the obvious truths of this war, but actually get angry when they know of one who disagrees with the military and government's war-gospel.

I never could understand how anyone involved with the Iraqi OCCUPATION could whole-heartedly support it. The foul machinations behind it should be crystal clear, but then again military brain washing is rampant and seems to affect everyone with a myopic scope of reality.

When I was finally caught for my writing in November of last year, the Command Sergeant Major wanted to court-marshal me under his firm belief that what I was writing was "aiding and embedding the enemy". However, a court-marshal was not possible after our written material was sent through military intelligence and came back clean. You see, my intentions are not to help the Iraqi insurgency but only to raise the awareness of what I went through and what I saw during Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

I do not regret anything I have written, but I do wish to make one thing clear. CPL Mathew Shelberg made a very valid point when he asked, "In what areas of the country did you serve to have "never once saw a terrorist with extreme inclinations for senseless bloodshed"? Does targeting Shia civilians with car bombs count as "extreme" in your eyes? Are the "angry farmers and shop keepers" the people who manufacture the car bombs that have slain thousands of innocent Iraqis?"

My year of combat from February 2004 through February 2005 was spent with 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division in Baquba, Iraq--centralized in the Sunni Triangle--35 miles northeast of Baghdad. I specifically remember two weeks in the month of July where our sector had the most car bomb attacks in all of Iraq.

So I do know the maniacal savagery that was wreaked because of the insurgency's tactics. I wish to correct myself by not recognizing car bomb attacks, or any attack that would kill or maim innocent civilians, as indeed an act of terrorism. It is very true that acts of terrorism are occurring in the war in Iraq. But what I would like to make clear is that our involvement in this war is like trying to extinguish a lit match with gasoline. I do not see how terrorism can be snubbed out using conventional warfare. Some of the insurgents' attacks such as suicide bombers, car bombs, and arbitrary assassinations are unfortunately taking the lives of innocent civilians. This is always wrong.

But what needs to be understood is the primary targets of these violent acts are either the Iraqi forces that we empowered or the US military presence exclusively.

The Iraqi insurrection, in itself, is what I believe to be an honest rebellion.

Because it is a guerrilla war against an illegal occupation enforced by our conventional military force, with far superior weapons and technology, it seems obvious that acts of terrorism are also acts of desperation.

One would have to study terrorism for what it is: political violence or the threat of violence, especially bombing, kidnapping, and assassination, carried out for political purposes. One would have to wonder why international factions of terrorist cells, especially those located in the Middle East, would target the people of America.

But what is commonly ignored is the role the United States government takes in aggravating terrorist acts through our hegemonic stranglehold on those regions of the world.

With no other means to attract world attention for the economic desperation these third-world regions face, and no way to effectively counter a military superpower, it is no wonder these extremist factions choose terrorism to fight back. Is it right? Certainly not, but then again, neither are economic sanctions and the corporate subsidization of localized goods (oil) and services that our government is notorious for generating.

Terrorism should never be accepted by any rational person or society and is certainly an immoral act, but to say that the US government is clean of all responsibility of terrorism is very naïve.

Like Noam Chomsky says, “The best way to end terrorism is to stop participating in it.”

I never meant to deny the presence of terrorist acts in Iraq, and I apologize for not making myself clearer in this manner.

I just grow more and more aggravated every day listening to George W. Bush spout out loads of propagandist bullshit convincing this country to live a life of absolute xenophobic fear, and using that word “TERRORISM” to do it. Just the word “TERRORISM” has become derogatory.

Sure, terrorism does exist in our society, much like it has been prevalent throughout human history. However, to use this natural fear to control the masses of people is irresponsible and wrong.

Because of the Bush Administration, we are now locked into a new “Red Scare”, where the draconian standards of the Patriot Act are absolute dogma and unchecked racism and bigotry can run amuck.

A new era of McCarthyism is at the threshold of the freedoms and liberties that makes this country so great. The future is always uncertain, but in these menacing times, with an all-powerful fascist oligarch posing under the banner of Jesus and the American Way of Life, there seems to be little hope for a sane and rational tomorrow.

So for some of you brainwashed idiots out there who would dare to accuse me of cowardice and treason, I say this: How dare you point the finger!

I am not the enemy, as I have honorably served this country and did everything in my power to serve and defend the Constitution of the United States.

I believe whole heartedly in the great monument of mankind this country could be if only it were not managed by thieves and crooks. The American people are among the most noble and kind-hearted and decent in all the world, which is why we should never let our current deranged government run out of control.

I must admit that your frequent use of the word “sedition” both surprises and humors me. That must be a big word for you. Did you happen to read it somewhere, or was its terrorist connotation ever so monotonously drilled into your head in boot camp?

Perhaps you removed a “seditious” leader in Level 7 of your new Tom Clancy shoot’em up video game.

Whatever the case may be, perhaps you have a valid point. Webster’s defines the act of sedition as “rebellion or incitement: actions or words intended to provoke or incite rebellion against government authority.” If what you are saying means that I am accused of opposing this current and criminal regime, and desperately hope for swift and drastic change, well...at least you used the word right.

When I joined the United States Army I swore an oath to “serve and protect the Constitution of the United States”, not an ignorant greedy little fuck like George Bush or any of his court jesters in the White House.

And by writing and speaking against his policies and his war and his grossly high death tolls, I know in my heart that I am still, to this day, fighting to protect all the constitutional rights that his administration is robbing from us everyday.

So where do you fit in as a soldier in the United States military? Are you just a hired gun, a hit man, robbing profit and power from impoverished third world countries? How can you sleep at night knowing that perhaps a stray bullet fired from your gun blew the brains out of an innocent baby or mother only a few clay buildings away? Do you call that war? Do you call that right?

If you can disprove the experiences that I have shared with readers of this site, than do it. I fucking dare you. Because I know what I have said at times can be emotional or raw, but it is always right and true. If you are too ignorant or blind to see the realities of this war, there may still be some hope left for you to learn.

If you honestly support the decisions of your officers and your commander-in-chief, than you honestly support the war that has killed over one hundred thousand innocent Iraqi civilians and almost two-thousand fellow soldiers. If it is this illegitimate war and death that you honestly support, than I feel sorry for you, for you are surely no better than the criminals in the White House who are truly responsible for holding the smoking gun.

And to try to discredit me as a “scumbag pogue” who never saw combat will do you no good. I was a 19 delta reconnaissance scout in a cavalry scout platoon, a combat MOS that not one of you automated brainwashed grunts can deny.

My job was no different than yours in many ways. If you even bothered to read the rest of this website you would surely understand that the authors of this site have seen our fair share. We didn't just pull this out of our collective asses, we actually experienced it. Just because you don't believe it doesn't mean it didn't happen. And unlike you, not every soldier in Iraq is proud of the blood on his hands.

I hope someday you find solace for the orders you have had to execute, for the carnage you helped take part in, and for the pride you wear supporting this bloodbath. Until then, you can only hope for an epiphany, something that stands out as completely immoral, that convinces you of the inhumanity of this war.

I don't know how much more proof you need. The criminal outrage of Abu Gharib, the absolute massacre of Fallujah, the stray .50 caliber bullets or 40 millimeter grenades or tank rounds fired in highly packed urban areas, five hundred pound bombs dropped on innocent homes, the use of 25 millimeter depleted uranium rounds, the inhumane use of white phosphorus, the hate and the blood and the misunderstandings...this is the war and the system that you support.

If you choose to be that programmed automaton that will follow along in this debacle like a lemming off a cliff, than the real pity should be on you.

J.D. Engelhardt
aka: hEkLe
www.ftssoldier.blogspot.com

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

4 Alaska Soldiers Injured; Three In Attacks On Strykers

September 17, 2005 Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Inc.

The 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team from the Fort Wainwright and Fort Richardson Army posts has suffered its first injuries in combat.

Four U.S. Army Alaska soldiers assigned to the brigade suffered minor injuries in three separate incidents on the same day in Iraq this week, according to Army officials.

Two soldiers were injured when their Stryker vehicle was hit by a vehicle equipped with an improvised explosive device Sunday near Rawah, about 240 miles northwest of Baghdad. The vehicle sustained minor damage.

Another soldier was injured in a separate attack involving an explosive device while riding in a Stryker near Mosul.

And in a separate incident, a soldier was injured when he was shot in the back in a drive-by shooting while conducting a foot patrol in Mosul. The soldier's body armor stopped the bullet.

The brigade is operating in northern Iraq, primarily in the Mosul area.

WIPEOUT



A truck used to supply U.S. military forces burns in Baghdad September 17, 2005. Police said armed fighters in Baghdad attacked at least five trucks used to carry supplies to U.S. military forces, killing at least one man and destroying the vehicles. (Thaier al-Sudani/Reuters)

**Falls High Graduate Loses Leg:
“Thank God, He's Alive And Not Another One
Of Those Soldiers Coming Home To Bury”**

09/17/05 By Marilyn Miller, Beacon Journal staff writer

Army Sgt. Joseph F. Gross and his wife, Irene, were making plans for the future. He wanted to get out of the service and start a family.

In 1999, three years after graduating from Cuyahoga Falls High School, Gross joined the Army, and he expected to get out in March 2006. Instead, he was sent to Iraq in August for a one-year deployment.

With the recent rash of bombings in Iraq, Sgt. Gross, 28, tried to reassure his wife of five months that everything would be OK.

"We talked every two days, if only for a few minutes. I spoke with him on Tuesday, when he called to say he was fine and not to worry," she said.

But the next day, Irene Gross got a call from a stranger.

It was a captain telling her Joseph was alive, but had been injured in "an incident."

"I was told he was in the last vehicle of a four-vehicle Humvee convoy when his vehicle was attacked by a suicide bomber about 6 a.m. Wednesday," his wife said.

The military told her that a suicide bomber had pulled up from behind and slammed his vehicle into the Humvee. The bomb blast came up through the bottom of the Humvee, near where her husband was seated in the back.

Three soldiers were in the vehicle; the other two suffered minor injuries.

After learning her husband was alive but had to have his foot amputated, she could no longer listen.

"I was devastated, but grateful he survived," she said. "I started crying my eyes out and couldn't finish the conversation. I was so upset, I handed the phone to my mother to get the rest of the details."

She said she didn't learn until the next day the true extent of his injuries.

"He had gotten progressively worse, and his right leg was amputated just below the knee," she said. "His leg was amputated in the field, his left leg was fractured, and he couldn't open his eyes because of second-degree burns to his face."

Her husband was taken to a U.S. military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, but is to be flown to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio today. He's expected to be hospitalized for a month.

Irene Gross is to fly to San Antonio today from upstate New York; Joseph's mother and his sister are to fly today from the Akron-Canton Airport. His father is to go later.

Sgt. Gross' family said the former Boy Scout and altar boy was a natural for the service.

"He was always protective of his younger sister and two brothers," said his mother, Debbie Greathouse of Akron. "He would go out of his way to do anything for anybody

and wouldn't even think twice about it. He's always been very loving and kind. He's just an awesome person."

His sister, Amanda Gross of Cuyahoga Falls, called him strait-laced. "He always did exactly what he was told to do. When he joined the service, we knew he'd fit in," she said. "He's always been active and outdoorsy."

She said once she and her siblings took a short cut to school and were chased by a dog.

"My younger brother's (Stevie's) book bag was ripped to shreds. When I suggested we go back home, because I was scared, he (Joseph) told us since our parents told us to go straight to school, that's what we had to do," she said. "We were under attack by a vicious dog, but he led the way and got us to school safely. He also didn't want to be late.

"He was always punctual. Of course we did learn a lesson -- we never went that way again."

She said her first reaction to the news about her brother was: "Thank God, he's alive and not another one of those soldiers coming home to bury."

Irene Gross said she plans to stay with her husband for the month he is recuperating in Texas.

"I can't wait to see him. I haven't been able to talk to him yet," she said. "I will feel a lot better when I get there and can be by his side."

3 U.S. Armored Vehicles Destroyed Near Abu G; Three More Damaged Casualties Not Announced

17 September 2005 By SLOBODAN LEKIC (AP)

BAGHDAD - A car bomber attacked a US convoy near Abu Ghraib prison west of Baghdad on Saturday, destroying three vehicles, and insurgents shelled the notorious lockup with seven mortar rounds, police said.

In the same area, insurgents fired rocket-propelled grenades at a second US convoy, damaging three armored vehicles, said police Lt. Alaa Hussein.

An Interior Ministry source confirmed the incident but said it was not possible for Iraqis to approach the scene as US troops cordoned off the area.

Falluja Car Bomb Hits Joint US-Iraqi Convoy; Two Military Vehicles Destroyed; Many Dead

Sept. 17 (Xinhuanet) & AP

A car bomber blew himself up near a joint US and Iraqi military convoy in Fallujah on Saturday, witnesses said.

"A suicide bomber drove his explosive packed car into a joint US and Iraqi convoy in the industrial area in Fallujah, destroying two vehicles belong to the Iraqi army," Abdul-Rahman, a local resident told Xinhua.

All the soldiers aboard were either killed or wounded, he said, adding that the blast also killed a civilian and wounded two others.

US and Iraqi troops blocked the entrances of the city, surrounding and isolating al-Shurta and Jughaifi neighborhoods, he said.

“The Insurgents Own It 95 Percent Of The Time”

Sep 15, 2005 Jill Carroll and Dan Murphy, Christian Science Monitor [Excerpt]

Colonel Lang says that when the US masses troops, as in Tal Afar, it's always going to win, but that it doesn't have enough troops to deny insurgents sanctuary elsewhere, essentially shifting the problem around.

"The insurgents are increasingly creating redoubt areas, the kinds of places we can't go without stripping people from elsewhere and entering in large numbers," says Lang. "Therefore the insurgents own it 95 percent of the time. The object of the drill for the guerrillas is not to fight head-to-head, but to wait until they have an advantage."

That's what happened in much of the Western portion of the Sunni-dominated Anbar province this year. In a major operation there last March, US Marines swept through Hit and other cities, and encountered little resistance as insurgents melted away.

At the time, Marine commanders fretted about what would happen when they rotated out at the end of the month, and were replaced by other Marine units with about 1,000 fewer troops.

Officers and enlisted men at the time said they worried that their replacements would be in greater danger because of their smaller size. Roads wouldn't be patrolled as often to keep them clear of concealed bombs.

At least 40 US troops have been killed in Western Anbar since the start of August.

**Guess Who's Worried
Guess Who Isn't
Guess Why
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



A U.S. soldier from the Stryker brigade during a patrol in Mosul, northern Iraq, July 29, 2005. REUTERS/Andrea Comas

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Assorted Resistance Action

17 September 2005 Aljazeera

Rebels have killed three policemen, including a district police chief, in the Afghan capital Kabul, the interior ministry said.

The suspected fighters from the ousted Taliban group ambushed the police chief of Kabul's Musayi district as he was on patrol late Friday, interior ministry spokesman Lutfullah Mashal confirmed.

It is believed to be the first time a senior police official has been killed in Kabul since the Islamic Taliban movement was overthrown by US forces and Afghan militiamen in late 2001.

"Musayi police chief and two policemen were killed and two other police were wounded last night after they were ambushed by enemies of peace," Mashal said.

Police surrounded the area but the attackers managed to flee the site, which is in Kabul's suburbs around 10 kilometres (six miles) from the city centre.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. paratroopers from the 82nd airborne and a truck carrying Afghan national Army soldiers drive in the Wardak Province of Afghanistan Sept. 12, 2005. **The U.S. military have added troops to Afghanistan to boost security during the country's parliamentary elections on Sept. 18.** (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)

TROOP NEWS

**“Come To DC On The 24th Of
This Month And Stand Up And
Be Counted”**

If George is so hell bent on freedom and democracy for Iraq, then why doesn't he practice it here in America? Up to 62 percent of Americans believe that what George has done in Iraq is a mistake and we should begin to bring our troops home. Well, George, 62 percent is a clear majority and you should begin to listen to the people who pay your salary.

17 September 2005 By Cindy Sheehan, Truthout Perspective

It has been one month, one week, and 4 days since I sat in a ditch in Crawford, Texas. My request was very simple: I wanted to speak to the man who has sent over a million of our young people over to fight, kill, and die in a country that was absolutely no threat to the United States of America. I wanted to ask him: "What is the Noble Cause that you keep talking about?"

Well, we all know now that George Bush never came down the road to talk to me. Thank God!

Many people have been saying that I am the "spark," "catalyst," "face of the anti-war movement," etc. I beg to differ. George Bush and his arrogant advisers are the spark that lit the prairie fire of peace activism that has swept over America and the entire world.

If he had met with me that fateful day in August it would not have been good for him (because I knew he was going to lie and I would have advertised that fact) but it would have had less of an impact on the peace movement if he had.

Upon reflection on the events of this past August, I have come up with two reasons why George could not meet with me: He is a coward and there is no Noble Cause.

If George had as much courage and integrity in his entire body as Casey had in his pinky, he would have met with me. But, ironically, if George had that much courage and integrity he never would have preemptively invaded a practically defenseless country. His sycophantic cabinet and hangers-on are also incontrovertible evidence that he is a coward. No one had better dare disagree with him.

How dare a mom from Vacaville, California, have the nerve to contradict the emperor of Prairie Chapel Road!??

All of the "Noble Cause" reasons that George has variously given for the invasion and continued illegal occupation of a sovereign nation are also patently false and ridiculous.

He has been claiming recently (since he admitted a long time ago that Iraq had no WMDs or links to 9/11) that this occupation of Iraq is spreading "freedom and democracy" in the Middle East.

Really? Does he have any idea that the constitution that the Iraqi governing body is working on is based on Sharia and that it undermines the freedoms of women? Does he realize that for over 50 years women had equal rights with men in Iraq? Does George realize (of course he does) that the puppet government the US put in place in Iraq is

comprised of the very same people who encouraged the invasion to line their own pockets? What kind of freedom and democracy is this?

If George is so hell bent on freedom and democracy for Iraq, then why doesn't he practice it here in America? Up to 62 percent of Americans believe that what George has done in Iraq is a mistake and we should begin to bring our troops home. Well, George, 62 percent is a clear majority and you should begin to listen to the people who pay your salary.

He has also claimed that what we are doing in Iraq is "making America safer." Another statement that is easier to disprove than the "freedom and democracy" baloney. To disprove this little bit of deception, all we have to do is look at the Gulf States.

Ask the people of New Orleans, especially, if they feel safer. By misappropriating all of our personnel, equipment and pouring billions of dollars into the sands of Iraq, George has made our country more vulnerable to attack by outside forces.

Also, from the cold and callous statements of people like Michael Chertoff and George's own mama, the people of New Orleans seem to be "acceptable" collateral damage to the ruling elite of this country. It is my humble opinion that the only thing that will make America safer is to get George and his unfeeling and dangerously incompetent supporters out of our White House.

We all now know the reason that we are in Iraq. George told us so from a break he was taking from Crawford in San Diego on the same day that Katrina was hitting the Gulf States: it is for oil. It is so George, Dick, and their evil buddies can rape more profits from our children's flesh and blood.

This is not a Noble Cause - as a matter of fact, it is the most ignoble cause for any war that has ever been waged.

We as Americans knew either in the front of our brains, or in the back of our consciousness, that this war was to feed the corporations.

15 brave young Americans have been killed so far this month while our attention has been focused, and rightfully so, on the Gulf States. Over 200 innocent and unfortunate Iraqis have been killed in this week alone.

How much more blood are we as Americans going to allow George, Congress, and the corporations to spill before we demand an end to this war and an accounting for the lives that have been needlessly ruined?

It is also time to stop hemorrhaging money in Iraq. I witnessed the abject poverty and sense of abandonment the less fortunate people of New Orleans were living in even before the levees broke. It is time to start pumping hope back into our own communities. It is time to start taking care of Americans.

How many millions of our tax dollars are we going to allow George, Congress and the corporations to misuse and waste in Iraq?

Not one more drop of blood. Not one more life. Not one more penny for killing.

If you love our country and want to see a change for the better, come to DC on the 24th of this month and stand up and be counted for peace. The entire world is counting on you.

Marine On Leave Says Being In Iraq Was Like Being In Hell

September 13, 2005 Associated Press

HANCOCK, Mich. A U-S marine on leave from Iraq says he's relieved to be home but would return if ordered to do so.

Twenty-one-year-old Lance Corporal Aron Jarvi is an air defense gunner. He returned to the Upper Peninsula's Hancock last week after a seven-month deployment in Al Asad.

He compares being in Iraq to being in hell. He recalls the heat and says "everybody's always trying to kill you."

He says communicating with loved ones was difficult and he often couldn't call or e-mail for a month at a time.

After two weeks with his family, Jarvi is scheduled to return to a military base in North Carolina.

***Dealing With Loss Of His Legs:* Soldier Refuses To Fake It For The Brassholes**

September 17, 2005 By MIKE FRANCIS, special contributor from The Oregonian

SAN ANTONIO -- Christian Bagge knew it was bad from the reactions of his fellow Oregon National Guard soldiers that early June morning in the remote Iraq desert south of Kirkuk.

"Some people were saying, 'It's fine,'" he said. "Others were saying, 'Oh my God.'"

Months later on a sunny Sunday, Bagge shifts his body on the sofa in his apartment. His left leg dangles, wrapped in a silicone sleeve that stops short of where his ankle would be. His right leg ends at the knee.

His voice exudes the confidence of a young man whose new wife sits in a chair across the room, scratching the ears of their blond Labrador mix. It's a long way from this comfortable room to the dusty place on the other side of the planet, where Bagge thought he was going to die.

"(Spc. Richard) Chance was holding me. I remember wanting somebody to be there with me. I was thinking of my wife, my family. I was making things right in my mind before I died."

Bagge, who grew up in The Dalles before moving to Eugene, shook his head.

"The pain and everything just consumes you."

The attack occurred during a wave of violence that swept Iraq in June. The convoy of three Humvees was returning to Forward Operating Base Warrior near Kirkuk, a strategically important city because it is a regional oil capital ringed by refineries. The soldiers' mission was to check a road for explosives that might have been planted overnight. A bomb exploded and disabled the first Humvee, and when the other two pulled up to provide security, a second bomb damaged the third Humvee.

In addition to Bagge, the bomb severely injured platoon leader 2nd Lt. Timothy Bomke of Portland and wounded eight others. The soldiers were members of Ontario-based Alpha Company, which is part of the La Grande-based 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry.

The rocks and grit have worked their way out of Bagge's face, but his inner left arm bears a scar that looks like the trail of an angry, 10-inch centipede.

The soldiers never saw who detonated the bombs, but Bagge is convinced by the timing of the second blast that the insurgents had night-vision goggles to help see when he opened his door.

Soldiers pulled Bagge from the vehicle and laid him on the desert floor. He fought to stay conscious for 90 minutes until a helicopter arrived to take him to Balad, his first stop on the way back to the United States.

In San Antonio, Christian and Melissa Bagge, who married in March when he was home in Oregon on leave, have settled into a routine. Most mornings, they go to the Brooke Army Medical Center, where doctors and therapists monitor his recovery. At the center, Christian Bagge works his upper body like an athlete, dipping between the parallel bars, building his biceps by curling weights and flexing his chest muscles with butterfly exercises.

He, Melissa and his doctors are deciding how to respond to the growth of spurs where the amputated bones are trying to regenerate themselves. If the pain remains sharp and persistent, doctors might have to shave the bones. That would set back his recovery, but Bagge said he is taking the long view. He'll take the surgery over a lifetime of pain.

At some point, with or without surgery, he will start teaching his body how to maneuver in prosthetic legs.

"My first priority is to learn to walk. Then I want to learn to run," he said. "Then I want to get a leg with a flexible ankle so I can relearn to play the drums again."

Taking a seat behind the drum kit is a goal, somewhere down Bagge's long road back. For now, he fights discouragement, which sometimes afflicts him when he realizes he'll never be able to do the things he used to take for granted.

"I will never feel the sand between my toes on the beach," he said.

Bagge no longer is a member of the Oregon National Guard. He joined the active Army and technically is stationed at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio as a member of the medical hold unit. He changed his status with the help of U.S. Rep. Greg Walden, R-Ore., who intervened to make sure the Bagges could stay together while he recovers in San Antonio.

Bagge was promoted to staff sergeant and recently was awarded the Purple Heart. But the award ceremony made him angry.

"They said they didn't want the public to be disturbed," he said. "They said they wanted it to be 'soft on the eyes.'"

The military men handling the ceremony made him a special pair of long pants, stitched up to conceal the stumps of his legs. They asked him to wear them to the ceremony.

Bagge said, "Fine." He wheeled in the next day in his shorts.

"I want to show what I've done," he said. "I'm proud of it."

In the period between amputation and prosthetics, he gets around in his chair or by crawling. He can hoist himself in and out of a car seat and from chair to chair. Most days, he focuses on the task at hand, drawing on his faith for encouragement. But sometimes, he said, he feels "robbed and cheated" to know the things he'll never do again.

He never fired his weapon in anger in Iraq. But he said he'd have no problem killing the men who left him this way.

Was it worth it? Was the cause in Iraq worth his suffering?

"I want people to hear me say, 'Yes, it was worth it,' " he said. "But the honest part of me says I would do anything to get my legs back. I think that's selfish."

For the Kurds of northern Iraq who have benefited from the removal of Saddam Hussein and look forward to limited self-rule, Bagge knows the cost isn't too high.

"They would say, 'My freedom is worth his legs,'" Bagge said. "I'm just personally confused about the cost. First it was Afghanistan. Then it was weapons of mass destruction. Then it was Saddam Hussein. Then it was freedom."

"I have to pick one in my mind," he said. And he's settled on freedom for the people of Iraq.

In the near term, Bagge is working hard to regain some measure of his own freedom. And he and Melissa, who married hurriedly in Las Vegas, are looking forward to having a big church ceremony next March.

They have many questions, and sometimes, they have doubts. But they have each other, and they have faith.

Fuck What The Troops Need: We'll Take What We Want: Pentagon Parasites Charge Sex, Breast Implants, Etc. To DoD Credit Cards

[Thanks to Liz Burbank for posting this one.]

Sep 15, 2005 By Hope Yen Associated Press Writer

Lawmakers and watchdog groups worry that allowing federal employees to charge up to \$250,000 on their government-issued credit cards for Hurricane Katrina-related expenses will lead to a repeat of past abuses.

Some of the cards in the past were used to pay for prostitutes, gambling activity, even breast implants, government audits have shown.

In recent years, several GAO audits found hundreds of thousands of dollars of improper expenditures at the Pentagon and other agencies, from purchases of remote control helicopters and airline tickets to Palm Pilots and \$2,500 flat-panel computer monitors. Someone even bought a dog.

Navy personnel also in 2002 used separate government travel cards to hire prostitutes at brothels, gamble and attend New York Yankees and Los Angeles Lakers games. One civil employee ran up nearly \$35,000 in personal expenses over two years, including breast enlargement surgery for his girlfriend.

As recently as last year, the GAO cited continuing oversight problems at the Veterans Health Administration and said it had no way of knowing - without conducting specific audits - whether improvements at other agencies are actually in effect and working.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action



U.S. military vehicles drive by a burning truck following a roadside bomb attack in western Baghdad on the Ghazaliya Khadraa highway that targeted four trucks loaded with food supplies for Americans on Sept. 17, 2005. Two of the drivers are Sudanese and believed to be dead according to Iraqi police. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

17 September 2005 (AP) & KUNA & By SLOBODAN LEKIC, AP & AFP

Iraqi police in Samarra, north of Baghdad, said they found the body of an Iraqi contractor who worked for the US military. The man was handcuffed and blindfolded and shot in the head, police Capt. Laith Muhammed said.

Four cars were used to attack a checkpoint in Tikrit. An Iraqi soldier was killed and three others were injured in the incident.

Armed fighters in western Baghdad attacked a convoy of four trucks carrying food for the U.S. military. Two Sudanese drivers were killed, police and hospital sources said.

Three Iraqi soldiers were wounded when a patrol was hit by a car bomb in Baquaba.

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

The Mehdi Anti-Occupation Army Is Well Trained, Well Supplied, And Effective: Might Be A Good Time For U.S. Troops To Come Back Home, While Alive



A member of al-Mehdi army, left, the militia of Shiite anti-occupation cleric Muqtada al Sadr, looks on as an Iraqi pilgrim claps his hands in Baghdad, Sept. 17 2005, on his way to attend the annual religious commemoration for the Mid of Shaban, Islamic month. (AP Photo/Mohammed Hato)

Al-Mehdi Army Takes Over Security In Kathimiyah

17 September 2005 Aljazeera

More than 300 followers of the influential Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr travelled from Baghdad's Sadr City to the Kathimiyah neighbourhood, where attacks on Wednesday killed 160 people, among them day labourers assembled to find jobs.

The Iraqi government was "responsible for the security deterioration, and (we say to them) if they cannot protect Iraqis, then let Iraqis protect themselves," Hazem al-Araji, a senior al-Sadr aide, told The Associated Press.

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

Have They No Shame? **Fiendish Foreign Terrorists Disguise Themselves As Iraqi Kids!**



This photograph shows terrorists from anywhere but Iraq in action. After spending the early part of the day engaging in human sacrifices, eating fried babies, torturing puppy dogs, brainwashing the simpleminded childish Iraqi locals into hating American freedom, and worshipping the devil, the fiendish foreign infiltrating evildoers cleverly disguised themselves as Iraqi youngsters as they shout and clap their hands, walking on the tread of an US army tank damaged by a road side bomb in Ramadi, Sept. 17, 2005.

Saturday's attack occurred after three straight days of bombings and shootings in Baghdad and elsewhere, in an stunning outburst of resistance activity. (AP Photo/Bilal Hussein)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

"A free people ought not only to be armed and disciplined but they should have sufficient arms and ammunition to maintain independence from any who might attempt to abuse them, *which would include their own government.*" George Washington

"The constitutions of most of our states assert that all power is inherent in the people. *That it is their right and duty to be at all times, armed.*" Thomas Jefferson

[Thanks to Mike Whitney for the quotes.]

“The Only Terrorists Here Were With The Federal Government”

September 16, 2005 Naomi Archer, Alternative Press Review. [Excerpt]

“The Administration of this country needs to be put on trial for human rights violations and treason against the people of the gulf coast region; as well as negligent homicide for every person left in this region to die.” Noah, Emergency Medical Technician-B with the Common Ground Wellness Center, Algiers, New Orleans

The New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) has a solid reputation... of corruption and lawlessness.

Now that the Army has backed out of their community policing efforts, the state and local officials have taken their place. Among the police involved: our friends from NYPD – New York Police Department. **Now, it seems like everyone and their brother had a NYPD shirt following 9/11 but their driving through Algiers in an unmarked black van openly brandishing shotguns fell short in the community relations department.**

Did anyone bother to tell them the only terrorists here were with the Federal government?

OCCUPATION REPORT

General Says “The Insurgents Are Fighting Very Effectively Without US Military Advisors To Train Them”

Many US officers in Iraq, especially at company and field grade levels, know that while they are winning every tactical battle, they are losing strategically.

August 9, 2005 By William E. Odom, Nieman Watchdog. [Excerpt] **Lieutenant General William E. Odom, U.S. Army (Ret.), is a Senior Fellow with Hudson Institute and a professor at Yale University in Comparative Politics.**

On training the Iraq military and police. The insurgents are fighting very effectively without US or European military advisors to train them.

Why don't the soldiers and police in the present Iraqi regime's service do their duty as well? Because they are uncertain about committing their lives to this regime. They are being asked to take a political stand, just as the insurgents are. Political consolidation, not military-technical consolidation, is the issue.

On not supporting our troops by debating an early pullout:

Many US officers in Iraq, especially at company and field grade levels, know that while they are winning every tactical battle, they are losing strategically.

Look at John Kerry's utterly absurd position during the presidential campaign. He said "It's the wrong war, in the wrong place, at the wrong time," but then went on to explain how he expected to win it anyway.

Even the voter with no interest in foreign affairs was able to recognize it as an absurdity. If it was the wrong war at the wrong place and time, then it was never in our interest to fight. If that is true, what has changed to make it in our interest?

Silly Man Says Everybody Will Invade Iraq If U.S. Withdraws: Collaborator Talabani Crazy As A Shit-House Rat

September 13, 2005 By Cihan News Agency

If US troops withdraw from Iraq, the Turkish army will soon enter the country Iraqi President Jalal Talabani claimed Monday.

Responding to questions from the news agency, Talabani told, "Russia has been opposed to the presence of US troops in Iraq since the beginning. If the US troops withdraw from Iraq today, Turkey will enter Kerkuk (Kirkuk) under the pretense of defending Turkmen. Who can guarantee that countries like Iran and Syria will not occupy Iraq? Henceforth, the US troops are in Iraq for our benefit."

SHIT-HOUSE RAT



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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

The Foreign Tyrants Are Gone: Time To Organize, Arm And Fight The Local Tyrants



Palestinians run as security forces sent by the corrupt thugs who run the Palestinian government open fire as they try to seal a hole in the border wall with Egypt in the Rafah Refugee camp, in the southern Gaza Strip, Sept. 17, 2005. **Thousands have crossed between Gaza and Egypt in recent days, virtually without controls, in order to shop or reunite with relatives after years of separation.** (AP Photo/Khalil Hamra)

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by a foreign power, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The foreign army is Israeli; the occupied nation is Palestine.]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Katrina Erodes Support In U.S. For Iraq War; Public Wants War Spending Cut Now

September 15, 2005 JOHN HARWOOD, Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON -- Hurricane Katrina has accelerated the erosion in public support for the Iraq war as President Bush's core of supporters dwindles and economic pessimism turns Americans' attention inward.

A new Wall Street Journal/NBC News Poll shows that cutting spending on Iraq is Americans' top choice for financing the recovery from Katrina.

Shaken by high gas prices and bracing for further jolts, Americans have turned negative about Mr. Bush across the board -- on handling the economy, foreign policy, and even the war on terrorism.

The president's overall approval has fallen to a record-low for Mr. Bush of 40%, reflecting a shrunken core of base supporters.

A plurality of Americans has favored reducing troop levels in Iraq for most of the year. Now, 55% favor bringing soldiers home, while just 36% back Mr. Bush's position that current levels should be maintained to help secure peace and stability.

"His standing to prosecute that case has been made more difficult," says Republican pollster Bill McInturff, who helps conduct the journal/NBC Poll. Adds Democratic counterpart Peter Hart: It's "going to be very hard to just move straight forward" on Iraq.

Some 60% say rebuilding the Gulf Coast should be a higher national priority than establishing democracy in Iraq; 5% say Iraq, while 34% say the two are equally important.

The White House says the administration can handle both at once, but by 51%-37% Americans say the Iraq war wasn't worth its human and financial costs.

The proportion of Republicans disapproving of Mr. Bush's job performance has doubled to 15% from 7% in January, with pronounced defections among moderates within Mr. Bush's party.

Katrina has contributed to that decline in support.

By a 58%-38% margin, Americans say they are dissatisfied with the Bush administration's response to the catastrophe. Reflecting the absence of the traditional rally behind the commander in chief during national emergencies, just 48% approve of the president's handling of the matter; 80% approved of how he handled the

aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, while 64% backed the actions of his father, President George H.W. Bush, following Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

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.

Laugh Or Cry??

From: AandK
Sent: September 15, 2005
Subject: laugh or cry???

Q: What is George W. Bush's position on Roe vs. Wade?

A: He really didn't care how people got out of New Orleans.

Bush Allies Sentence Young Woman To Beheading For Killing Man Who Tried To Rape Her

September 15, 2005 Via ZANU-PF, Anti-Allawi-group

Al Raya, Qatar

Al Raya reported on September 14 that a young woman is waiting to be executed for killing a man who tried to rape her. The independent newspaper, reporting from the Saudi Arabian 'Arab News' said:

"The young woman was convicted of killing a man while trying to defend herself from being raped." The Saudi newspaper - which withheld the name, age and nationality of the woman - added that several attempts were made for get the deceased's family to pardon the young girl and renounce the verdict, but they all failed.

Saoud al-Atibi, an officer and warden of Abha prison in Saudi Arabia said: "The young woman spent six years and doesn't know what her fate is, whether she will die or be pardoned."

Atibi added: "Her health has deteriorated during the last period, she isolated herself from the world and became extremely depressed." A human rights group also tried to intervene on behalf of the woman, but their efforts also failed.

The Saudi newspaper added that although rape is condemned in general, some people consider it to be ridiculous to defend rape victims.

It was also reported that Saudi Arabia applies capital punishment for convicted killers by beheading them with a sword.

The family of the victim killed can determine the fate of his killer either by letting the verdict take its course or by demanding a ransom, after which the killer is pardoned.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Get The Message?



Paraguayans march during a demonstration in downtown Asuncion September 17, 2005 while protesting against the presence of U.S. troops and reservists. **The sign reads, 'Yankee troops. What are they here for?'** REUTERS/Rene Gonzalez

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)

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

All GI Special issues archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org/> .

The following have also posted issues; there may be others:

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

www.williambowles.info/gispecial,

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

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