

GI SPECIAL 3C78:



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro]

“We Still Have Three More Sides To Fill”

There is a field back home at Ft. Stewart, Georgia. There a tree has been planted for each soldier who has been killed in Iraq. After we returned in 2003 there were only a few trees, now an entire side of the field is full of them.

My sister asked where they would plant more now that the row was complete and sadly I replied, "we still have three more sides to fill."

Oct 8th, 2005 by Sharon Jumper, Dailykos.com

Zachary Scott-Singley, currently serving as a translator in Iraq, has a blog. Here's one of his recent posts:

There are battles which need to be fought and there are battles which serve no good purpose. Afghanistan and Bin Laden lay forgotten as if they were discarded toys left by a spoiled child.

Iraq is the new frontier of poor foreign policy and poor planning. Even the soldiers can see it.

Why do you think nobody is re-enlisting? They don't want to keep leaving their families to go fight a losing battle and to die for an empty promise. The promise that somehow staying in Iraq makes America safer.

We have created a martyr factory here, and we are beginning to wade through the next Vietnam.

How wrong do you want to be before you close down shop and send the troops home? 2,000 dead? Is that wrong enough? How about 10,000?

There is a field back home at Ft. Stewart, Georgia. There a tree has been planted for each soldier who has been killed in Iraq. After we returned in 2003 there were only a few trees, now an entire side of the field is full of them.

My sister asked where they would plant more now that the row was complete and sadly I replied, "we still have three more sides to fill."

Maybe then when we have enough names for a beautiful war memorial we can leave Iraq.

Another soldier in Iraq, Daniel, posts on his blog why he hopes the Iraqi constitutional referendum fails:

I support the "no" vote in the upcoming referendum on the Iraqi charter constitution.

The vote - scheduled to take place no later than one week from today - will forge the foundation for Iraq's new democratic government. A "yes" on the fifteenth will mean the country will move ahead with general elections in December. Conversely, a "no" will dissolve the current parliament, and the whole process would restart from the beginning.

My official opinion is that the constitution needs to be defeated. The Sunni minority were underrepresented in January's elections: the result of a boycott based on an assumption the vote would be rigged and illegitimate. A disproportionate drafting committee was augmented by eleventh-hour Sunni "advisors", whose only political weapon was their ability to unite public opinion against the government when they were assassinated. It is, therefore, my belief that the process needs to be scrapped and begun anew, this time with the confidence of the Sunni voters.

Unofficially, I believe a "no" vote would negate the requirement to hold general elections in December, thus eliminating the need to detain my unit in Iraq months after our replacements arrive.

This latter reason gives me a hope to cling to that I haven't had since our own country's elections last year. Kerry's pitch to end "stop loss" was my ticket to freedom. Now, so too is the defeat of Iraq's charter constitution. That I still find cause to justify it is my only salvation from the shame of selfishness.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

US Marine Killed In Ramadi

9 October 2005 (AP)

BAGHDAD - A US Marine was killed by a roadside bomb during a US-Iraqi military offensive in western Iraq, the military said on Sunday.

The killing occurred on Saturday in the city of Ramadi, 115 kilometers west of Baghdad, where about 500 US and 400 Iraqi troops were conducting the "Mountaineer" offensive aimed at insurgents before Iraq's Oct. 15 constitutional referendum, the US military said.

The Marine was assigned to the 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward).

Resistance Attacks Troops Practicing Response To Resistance Attacks: Two U.S. Soldiers Wounded

Oct 9, 2005 By UPI

Iraqi insurgents targeted a security rehearsal for next weekend's vote on a new constitution, injuring two Iraqi and two U.S. soldiers.

A 24-hour rehearsal for referendum day was about to begin Saturday when two 107 mm rockets struck a U.S.-Iraqi base near Muqtadiya, injuring two Iraqi soldiers.

Soon after, two U.S. soldiers were injured when a rocket-propelled grenade and small-arms fire struck their patrol, the Washington Times reported Sunday.

'The enemy knows we're doing this rehearsal,' said Col. Steven Salazar, commander of the 3rd Infantry Division's Third Brigade. **[Duh.]**

Security forces practiced how to respond to a mortar attack on a checkpoint and went through a series of other exercises. They also discovered a real roadside bomb before it could do any damage, the report said.

Three Guardsmen Injured In Crash

October 09, 2005 BY WAYNE WOOLLEY, Star-Ledger Staff

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq -- Three soldiers assigned to the 50th Main Support Battalion of the New Jersey National Guard were seriously injured when their Humvee collided with a civilian tractor-trailer and overturned while protecting a convoy in southern Iraq.

Two of the soldiers injured in the accident Thursday -- Spc. Nick Zwicker, 24, of New Milford and Pfc. Ilya Berler, 27, of Valencia, Calif. -- were flown yesterday to Landstuhl Army Medical Center in Germany. Spc. Mark Bautista, 21, of Belleville was being treated at a U.S. military hospital in Baghdad and will go to Landstuhl.

Maj. Mike Lyons, the executive officer of the support battalion, said yesterday that doctors described the soldiers' injuries as serious but not life-threatening. Bautista suffered a head injury, Berler, a ruptured spleen, and Zwicker a broken pelvis. Upon their release from the German hospital, all three will return to the U.S.

The crash occurred just a week before the men were due to return to the U.S. after a 10-month deployment in Iraq, and it left their fellow troops shaken.

"It goes to show that anything can happen on the road in this place," said Spc. Juan Cruz of Guam, who was in another vehicle in the convoy. "Your whole world can turn upside down in a second."

The injured soldiers were taking part in one of the Teaneck-based support battalion's final missions, an operation to move supplies between Camp Arifjan in southern Kuwait and Forward Operating Base Speicher, which is near Tikrit, more than 400 miles to the north.

As part of the operation, which is called Vigilant Guardian, soldiers from the support battalion are responsible for protecting the convoys of units that are heading to Kuwait to end their deployments in Iraq and others that are headed in the opposite direction to begin their time in the combat zone.

The convoy that the injured soldiers were protecting was on its way into Iraq and about 40 miles north of the Kuwaiti border when the tractor-trailer hit their Humvee.

Sgt. Erik Widland, 31, of Brick was in the Humvee directly behind the one that crashed. He said the tractor-trailer driver inexplicably swerved to the right as the convoy was passing it, hitting the Humvee and causing it to roll several times.

Widland radioed for medevac helicopters.

After the choppers took the injured soldiers away, the convoy moved out and an inspection team of soldiers detained the driver of the tractor-trailer for questioning.

Devils Lake Guard Member Recovering From Hand Injury

Oct. 08, 2005 Associated Press

DEVILS LAKE, N.D. - A National Guard soldier is recovering from an injury to his left hand after a homemade bomb exploded in Iraq.

Andrew Frelich, 20, a member of the Grand Forks-based 188th Air Defense Artillery's F Battery, phoned his family after the incident Wednesday to say he was waiting to be airlifted to a medical center in Qatar.

His stepfather, Jon Jensen, said Frelich likely will be taken either to Germany or to the U.S. after that. "We're pulling for stateside," Jensen said.

Frelich did not lose his hand, but it will require treatment, said his mother, Marion Jensen. "He just needs to get to a hand specialist," she said.

Guard officials said the homemade bomb destroyed the Humvee carrying Frelich and other soldiers last Wednesday. Three were injured, but none of the injuries was considered life-threatening.

"Some just had shrapnel injuries," Guard spokesman Rob Keller said. "Two were returned to duty. All the soldiers contacted their parents and let them know they were OK."

"He was just very fortunate. He's a machine gunner. He had just sat down for a minute. He had his left hand steadying his gun," Marion Jensen said of her son.

Frelich and about 100 other soldiers of Battery F are preparing to return home after nearly a year in Iraq.

"The unit has about a month in country," Keller said Saturday. "We don't have the exact time frame. We are starting to gear up for their return."

“He Could Be Anywhere”

October 06, 2005 By Gordon Trowbridge, Army Times staff writer

BAGHDAD — Capt. Eric Kampwerth stood three feet below the road, in a hole 10 feet wide. A few days before, a 122mm rocket buried there by an Iraqi insurgent had exploded next to the parked Humvee of one of Kampwerth's platoon leaders.

“He could be anywhere,” said Kampwerth, commander of B Company of the Illinois National Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry.

He surveyed the surrounding terrain — farm fields, homes in walled compounds, reed-choked irrigation canals, and noted, “It’s too easy from here.”

Over 28 days patrolling a rural area west of Baghdad International Airport, Kampwerth’s company has found or been hit by 16 roadside bombs. The epidemic of explosions makes trying to figure out insurgent bombmakers’ tricks all the more vital — even if the puzzle pieces seem far too numerous to put together.

NO HONORABLE MISSION: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



US forces from the 3rd infantry division gather together to receive instructions from their platoon commander prior to loading onto their Humvees in an ultimately aborted raid into a neighborhood in southern Baghdad, 08 October, 2005. (AFP/David Furst)

TROOP NEWS

Military Threatens Combat-Zone Bloggers; Buried Under Red Tape And Bullshit

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, who sent this in.]

October 04, 2005 By Leo Shane III, Stars and Stripes Mideast edition

WASHINGTON — Army officials this week issued new warnings to soldiers about posting personal stories from combat zones on the Internet and taking photos at overseas bases, saying those actions could jeopardize troops' security.

The list of prohibited activities includes taking photos of Defense Department facilities, posting any official Defense Department information and releasing information detailing job responsibilities.

The message also notes that even some unclassified information "may not be appropriate for use on the Web" and directs all other questions related to prohibited activities to security managers. [Like writing that Bush is a murderous asshole and the war is for shit.]

Under current Army rules, soldier bloggers are required to register their sites with commanding officers, who have the authority to them shut down if they deem them problematic. [Like writing that Bush is a murderous asshole and the war is for shit.]

Sgt. Todd Kobus, who runs the blog site LostInIraq.com to chronicle his Massachusetts Army National Guard unit's activities there, said he has been confused and aggravated by Army's guidelines that have limited what he can write about the troops' lives overseas.

"They have managed to keep everything extremely vague," he said in an e-mail from Iraq. "The site hardly serves its original task of keeping family and friends informed of anything, aside from the prank wars that occur on the base."

Kobus said he understands the need for security and has taken many steps to make sure his site doesn't pose security risks, doing things like blotting out Iraqi troops' faces in photos.

But he still fields complaints from superiors worried about photos and stories on the site.

"All this is pretty frustrating since I have kept my site positive during the entire deployment, have never intentionally violated that giant gray area known as

OPSEC," he said. [They're after the huge number of troops that want to get the fuck out of Iraq now. You're just collateral damage.]

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.

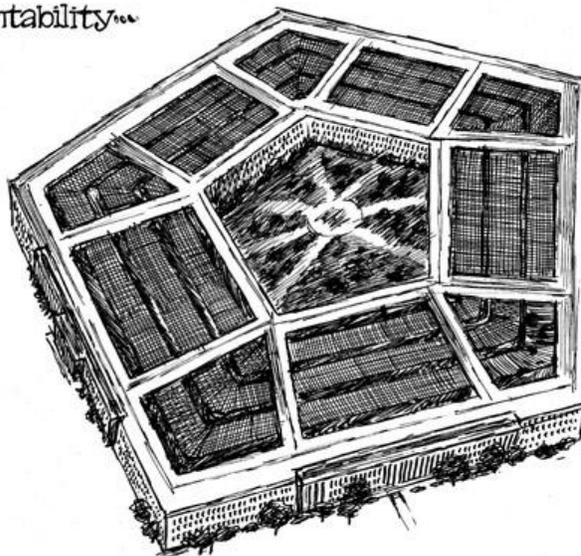
<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

Prisoner Abuse: Investigation Aims Far Too Low

Abu Ghraib Accountability...



MOZAW
© The Miami Herald



UNINDICTED CO-CONSPIRATOR

October 4, 2005 by Joseph L. Galloway, Miami Herald. [Excerpt]

Well, they finally got to the bottom of the Abu Ghraib prisoner-abuse scandal last week. An Army court martial convicted Pfc. Lynndie England and sentenced her to three years in prison and a dishonorable discharge for holding that leash, pointing with scorn and other offenses.

They've gotten to the bottom, all right. With England's conviction, that wraps up the cases against nine enlisted soldiers who starred in those terrible digital photos in 2003.

So that's it, huh?

Hogwash. BS. Nonsense.

If the lowest private fails, then others have failed in training, leading and directing that private.

The chain runs from sergeant to lieutenant to captain to lieutenant colonel to colonel to one, two, three and four stars, on to the longest serving, most arrogant secretary of defense in our history, Donald H. Rumsfeld, and beyond him to President Bush.

It's past time for responsibility to begin flowing uphill in this administration.

Predators At Work: **Recruiter On Trial For Selling IDs** **To Enlist Illegals**



04 October 2005 By Douglas Gillison, The Village Voice

This week, a general court martial is to begin at Parris Island, South Carolina, for a U.S. Marine recruiter accused of selling and delivering counterfeit documents to illegal aliens in order for them to join the service.

Gunnery Sergeant Hubert A. Lucas, 35, is one of four suspects named in a report by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, part of which was obtained by the Voice.

The report says an investigation began on August 11, 2004, after an intelligence report by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency revealed that a Marine at Camp Pendleton in California, who had admitted to entering the United States illegally and enlisting with a counterfeit green card and stolen Social Security number, identified Lucas as the individual who charged her \$250 for the documents for the purpose of effecting her fraudulent enlistment in the Marine Corps.

During an interview, the Marine told immigration authorities that she bought the counterfeit documents from people in New York City who told her they'd be delivered to a specific hotel in Miami and to await further instructions. Those eventual instructions were to enlist at the Marine recruiting sub-station in Perrine in Miami-Dade County, Florida.

According to the report, the recruit also said she "engaged in a consensual sexual relationship" with Lucas. (One of the charges against Lucas is that he housed one or more prospective recruits in his personal quarters.)

Her accusations prompted a review of recruiting activity at the Perrine sub-station. According to the report, investigators found 23 recruits who may have fraudulently entered the Marine Corps.

Twenty suspect alien registration numbers, along with Social Security numbers for all 23 recruits, were queried through federal databases. It turned out that every single one was "either completely fraudulent or assigned to a different person." The investigation later identified three more alien recruits suspected of fraudulently enlisting.

The charges against Lucas span from late 2001 to mid-2004, and include fraudulent enlistment, conspiracy to commit fraud, and dereliction of duty. Potential sanctions include dishonorable discharge, several years' jail time and forfeiture of pay, according to a Marine Corps spokesman.

There are currently about 37,500 foreign nationals from over 200 countries serving in the active duty forces and reserves.

Service by illegal immigrants is another matter entirely. The penalty for emerging from invisibility varies from case to case. Some have faced discharge and even deportation from the country they have sworn to defend.

Jack Richbourg, an immigration attorney in Memphis, says he is currently representing two African men who were not legally admitted to the U.S. and who were recently discharged from the Army.

"These people were recruited. They went in and were recruited by someone," said Richbourg. "But by hook or by crook they get into the service, and I say that that's enough."

“Fair”?

What’s Fair Got To Do With It?

03 October 2005 By John Files, The New York Times

Sgt. Todd B. Bowers, a Marine Corps reservist attending George Washington University here, has served two tours in Iraq. Sergeant Bowers said a rifle scope and goggles that his father bought for him saved his sight when he was shot in the face by a sniper last October. Mr. Bowers spent about \$900 for the equipment.

"There are a lot of people serving in the military who do not have the income to pay for some equipment," he said in a telephone interview.

**"It is not fair that those who have the money can be better prepared than others."
[Of course not. Who ever claimed that capitalism was about “fair”?]**

Pentagon Lists Units Of Possible Nerve Gas Victims

Oct. 09, 2005 American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- The Defense Department is notifying members and veterans of units listed here who may have been exposed to nerve gas during the Persian Gulf War. These units were located within a 31-mile radius of Kamisiyah, Iraq, where chemical weapons were destroyed March 4-15, 1991.

Anyone with information about the March 1991 incidents should contact DoD at 1-800-472-6719.

Units associated with the 82nd Airborne Division:

Headquarters, 82nd Airborne Division
1st Brigade Tactical Command Post
3rd Brigade Tactical Operations Center
1st and 2nd Battalions, 504th Infantry

1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 505th Infantry
4th Battalion, 325th Infantry
1st and 2nd Battalions, 319th Field Artillery
1st Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry
3rd Battalion, 73rd Armor
313th Military Intelligence Battalion
307th Medical Battalion
307th Engineer Battalion
37th Engineer Battalion

450th Civil Affairs Battalion

Units associated with the 24th Infantry Division:

Main Command Post, 24th Infantry Division

Headquarters, 197th Infantry Brigade

2nd Squadron, 4th Cavalry

24th Signal Battalion

724th Combat Support Battalion

1st Battalion, 5th Air Defense Artillery

Headquarters, 36th Engineer Group

3rd Engineer Battalion

5th Engineer Battalion

299th Engineer Battalion

362nd Engineer Company

Units associated with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault):

2nd Brigade Rear Command Post

Headquarters, 101st Aviation Brigade

1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery

Other Units:

2nd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment

Headquarters, 265th Engineer Group

Headquarters, 937th Engineer Group

12th Engineer Battalion

46th Engineer Battalion

264th Engineer Company

Tactical Command Post (TAC), XVIII Airborne Corps Artillery

1st Battalion, 181st Field Artillery

1st Battalion, 623rd Field Artillery

Headquarters, 513th Military Intelligence Brigade

Headquarters, 12th Aviation Brigade

9th Chemical Company

36th Medical Detachment

5th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital

41st Medical Hospital

47th Combat Support Hospital

47th Field Hospital

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Takes And Holds More Ground In Baghdad

October 2, 2005 By SABRINA TAVERNISE, The New York Times Company

BAGHDAD, Iraq, Oct. 1 - From her bedroom window, Nesma Abdul-Razzaq, a 43-year-old homemaker, has watched insurgents fire grenades from a patch of grass near her garden. Frequent patrols of American tanks rattle the glass. A bullet has pierced a pane.

Over the past year, insurgents have come to control large swaths of western Baghdad, including Khadra, the area where Mrs. Abdul-Razzaq lives with her husband, Monkath, and their two boys, ages 9 and 12, in a spacious two-story house. Their bedroom window looks out on elevated highways that are the main arteries into the capital from the north and west, where insurgents have built no-go zones.

Four times in recent months Mrs. Abdul-Razzaq has seen men, sometimes in masks, tramping across her outer lawn, lifting rocket-propelled grenade launchers to their shoulders. Once, several men shot at an American convoy from behind a funeral tent near her house. American troops often come to look for attackers. They have searched her house six times.

Southwest in Amariya, the area that borders the dangerous airport road, street battles between insurgents and the Iraqi police have been so intense that the two main grocery stores were badly damaged and have closed. Residents must now find food elsewhere.

Salwa Ibrahim bakes wedding cakes in her kitchen. Her husband, Ali Abbas, sells sporting goods from a storefront next door. His older brother, disabled from birth, watches television in a back room.

Until recently, the family lived largely sheltered from the violence. But insurgents have now gained a stronger foothold in the area, with some renting houses that empty out as families move away.

Assorted Resistance Action

10.9.05 Reuters & Aljazeera & By Richard A. Opiel Jr. The New York Times

SAKLAWIYA - Police said a roadside bomb exploded in Saklawiya, a village on the way between Falluja and Ramadi, targeting an Iraqi army patrol. One vehicle was destroyed.

The number of casualties was not known because the Iraqi army cordoned off the area.

BAGHDAD - Two policemen were killed and one wounded when armed fighters attacked their vehicle in western Baghdad, police said.

MOSUL - The bodyguard of Hanin Moheemmed al-Kadu, a member of the Iraqi parliament, was killed by armed fighters when he was driving his car in northern Mosul, police said.

The police said a car bomb exploded Sunday outside an apartment building used by the Badr Organization [key part of the occupation], killing two and wounding three, The Associated Press reported from Basra.

The blast occurred at about 7:30 a.m., and those who escaped injury included Hassan al-Rashid, a former governor of Basra and a senior local leader of the brigade, said Captain Mushtak Kadim of the police.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

War Child



[Thanks to Z, who sent this in.]

And the man who held onto the diaries for all those years wonders how much the world has changed since. "I know that an Iraqi mother will one day be in the same position as Mother Dang. Why are we in Iraq? I don't know. You can't know the vulgarity of war until you've been there, until you've been splattered with your friend's blood."

October 4, 2005 By David McNeill, Japan Focus

Over 35 years since returning home from the Vietnam War, a former US soldier has returned a poignant diary he recovered from a young Vietcong military doctor. The diary has sparked a patriotic revival in Vietnam, turning the two former enemies into national heroes.

"I had to do an appendix operation without enough medicine. Only a few tubes of Novocain, but the wounded young soldier never cried out or yelled. He continued to smile to encourage me. Looking at the forced smile on his dry lips, knowing his fatigue, I felt so sorry for him...I lightly stroked his hair. I would like to say to him: 'Patients like you who I cannot cure cause me the most sorrow, and their memory will not fade.'"

So begins the diary of Dang Thuy Tram, an army doctor who fought Americans in the Vietnam War and died defending her hospital from a US attack.

Since its reemergence this year after 35 years in the hands of a US veteran, the diary has become a phenomenon, selling over 300,000 copies, generating numerous translations and a television show, and sparking a wave of patriotic nostalgia among young Vietnamese.

Those who have read it say it is the most compelling, honest account yet of a conflict that killed an estimated two to three million Vietnamese and other Asians, as well as 58,000 Americans.

"She was my enemy but her words would break your heart," says Fred Whitehurst, the ex-soldier who saved the diary from the incinerator. "She is a Vietnamese Anne Frank. I know this diary will go everywhere on planet earth."

The daughter of a prosperous family of doctors, Dang volunteered for duty in a military hospital in the killing fields of Quang Ngai Province in central Vietnam in 1967. The diary begins there the following April, just after the Tet Offensive; a turning point that convinced many Americans that the war against the Communists was un-winnable, and an event that was instrumental in forcing Lyndon Johnson to abandon plans to run for a second term. Nevertheless, President Richard Nixon would widen the war by the 1970 attack on Cambodia and it would not end until 1975.

As the bombing edged closer to her hospital, the diary records the mounting horrors that Dang witnessed in prose that is by turns worldly, compassionate, and enraged.

Worn out treating badly wounded comrades with aspirin and bandages, she writes in June 1970: "The dog Nixon is foolish and crazy as he widens the war...How hateful it is! We are all humans, but some are so cruel as to want the blood of others to water their gold tree."

In another entry, she writes "death was so close" as the bombing "stripped the trees bare" and "tore houses to pieces."

Shortly before she died at age 27, that same month, bombs killed five of her patients. Dang helped move the remaining patients and staff to safety and fought

an American ground unit as it approached the now deserted hospital. “She was shot in the forehead,” says Whitehurst. “She was told to surrender but laid down a field of fire. She was killed protecting her patients and nurses, fending off the heavily armed US Army with an old Chinese SKS single-shot rifle.”

As a 22-year-old intelligence officer, Whitehurst’s job was to review recovered enemy documents; he was about to burn Dang’s apparently worthless diary – ‘about the size of a pack of cigarettes’ -- when his translator stopped him: ‘Don’t burn this one Fred, it already has fire in it.’ “I was so moved that he respected his enemy that much that I kept it,” says Whitehurst, who later had it and several other diaries translated. “It was obvious to me that this was a very beautiful person. I thought: I’ve got to get this back to her family.”

So began a remarkable journey that ended this year when Whitehurst was welcomed by the family of his old enemy ‘like a son’ and feted as a national celebrity in Vietnam.

A less likely candidate for a project of reconciliation would be hard to find.

Whitehurst was, by his own admission, the gung-ho son of a military family who, unlike many drafted US soldiers, volunteered to fight the Vietnamese Communists. “I’m a loyal American and I was raised in a very strict military family. I believed in the Domino Theory. Well it didn’t happen.”

Whitehurst says his respect for authority began to disintegrate in Vietnam and was destroyed during his subsequent career as an FBI chemist, which ended when he exposed corruption and malpractice in, among other investigations, the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

The uber-patriot became one of America’s most celebrated whistleblowers. “The FBI HQ is like something out of an old movie about the Soviet Union,” he wrote afterwards. “Everybody is terrified to breathe.”

His bitter fight with the FBI cleared a path for the publication of the diaries. “My desire all these years was to get the words back to her family, her country. Beyond this blasted thing called government there is humanity and damn it if there isn’t we’re all going to hell. Maybe I could publish a book and use any funds for some good, you know? But the FBI wouldn’t allow its agents to collaborate with communists. In the end I didn’t give a damn about the FBI.”

Now working as a lawyer, Whitehurst showed the diaries to his brother Robert, also a Vietnam Veteran who had married a Vietnamese. Robert became ‘obsessed’ with the diaries and returning to Vietnam, but like many vets, Fred was terrified of going back. “I had a lot of issues when I came home. I saw and did a lot of crap,” he says. “The memories left me crying and upset and for five years I screamed in my sleep all the time.”

The brothers took the diaries to a conference on the Vietnam War at Texas Tech University in March this year, where they met Ted Englemann, another vet looking for what he calls ‘closure’ to the war and who was traveling to Hanoi the following month. He made digital copies of the diaries and with the aid of local Quakers, tracked down Dang’s family, including her 81-year-old mother. By the time the Whitehurst brothers

visited the family this summer the diaries had been published and Fred and Dr. Dang were famous.

Initially fearful of what was waiting for them Fred Whitehurst was astonished at the welcome they received.

“We did to Hanoi what the Germans did to London in World War II. We were the invaders, for whatever reason. But the nation embraced us. The prime minister met us and thanked us. As for the family, their father went into shock after his daughter’s death from which he never recovered and that burdened the family enormously. They loved their daughter so much and still adopted me. I was treated better there than I was by my own country.”

The diary has since caused a sensation, with everyone from the legendary General Vo Nguyen Giap, who led the Vietnamese resistance from the 1940s until the liberation of Saigon in 1975, to current Prime Minister Phan van Khai having read it. Whitehurst was interviewed on state television and said the diary “belongs to the world.” Asked to explain why he would fall in love with an enemy soldier, “I said the tears on your face are the same as the tears on mine. We all cry together.”

Although not the first Vietnam War diary, many Vietnamese say Dang’s account has struck a chord with young people because it comes raw with human emotions and unvarnished by government propaganda.

Dang’s diary records the passage from the lovelorn teenager who desperately misses the mysterious ‘M’ to earnest revolutionary. Recalling the words of ‘Uncle Ho’ and Lenin, she writes, “The revolutionary is a person with a heart very rich and filled with love,” adding, “I am that way already.” “She writes the truth about her feelings, and despite everything she loved people,” says Nguyen Duc Tinh, a radio announcer from Hanoi. “It comes straight from her heart. I think a lot of young Vietnamese are impressed at the way she was ready to sacrifice her life. I hope people around the world will read it to understand the truth about the Vietnam War.”

The last entry in the diary, written days before Dang was shot, is unbearably poignant: “I am grown up and already strong in the face of hardships, but at this minute why do I want so much a mother’s hand to care for me, or really the hand of a close friend, or just that of a person I know who is all right? Please come to me and hold my hand when I am so lonely, love me and give me strength to travel all the hard sections of the road ahead...”

The youngest Dang sibling, Kim Tram, is fielding requests to publish the diary in English, Japanese, Korean, Chinese and French. Next month she will travel to the US with her mother to finally pick up her sister’s diaries from an archive in the Texas Tech University. Just 14 when her sister died, she remembers her as ‘gentle and fragile.’ “I never imagined how hard and dangerous her life was. I was not surprised to know her longing for our parents, for our home in Hanoi. But now I’ve read her words I can sense her loneliness.”

Kim Tram says she is ‘grateful’ to have met Fred Whitehurst. “I consider him a kind hearted and honest man with a mind of great depth. I really respect him. And like him.”

And the man who held onto the diaries for all those years wonders how much the world has changed since. "I know that an Iraqi mother will one day be in the same position as Mother Dang. Why are we in Iraq? I don't know. You can't know the vulgarity of war until you've been there, until you've been splattered with your friend's blood."

9/24: Apologists For The Empire Whine About "The Left"

Those who try to stifle this discussion with blustering insults and false allegations do a disservice to our movement--and also to the struggle of the Iraqi people against an illegal and immoral occupation of their country.

October 5, 2005 By Alan Maass, Socialist Worker. [Excerpt]

THIS QUESTION of the struggle in Iraq is exactly where liberals like [journalist Greg] Palast and [LA Weekly commentator Marc] Cooper insist on silence.

Cooper is explicit about why--antiwar activists can't be too radical, or they will frighten away Democratic Party politicians, the movement's only hope for having an impact.

"The peace movement," Cooper wrote in LA Weekly following the September 24 demonstrations, "can achieve its goals only by building a political coalition broad enough, forceful enough and credible enough to provoke a policy sea change. A huge proportion, if not the majority, of the Democratic Party has to be onboard."

To judge from his ill-tempered blog commentary about the protests--which directs abuse at every target to show up on his television screen as he watched the demonstration on C-SPAN--Cooper has a gripe with every part of the movement. But he saves his nastiest insults for the left--who are responsible, he believes, for driving away "not just the Kerry and Clinton types...but also outspoken critics of the war like Howard Dean, Russ Feingold and Ted Kennedy."

First of all...outspoken? And is it really the antiwar movement's fault that Howard "Now that we're there, we can't leave" Dean didn't show in Washington? Or Russ Feingold, the single Democratic senator who voted against the USA PATRIOT Act in 2001--but who last week voted to confirm John Roberts as chief justice, so he can uphold that law against every challenge?

Cooper reduces the measure of success on September 24 to how many Democratic Party politicians could be lured on stage. The answer: almost none. So the demonstrations must have been "impotent theater of self-expression."

Cooper ends the scolding with a reference to the 1963 March on Washington, and Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. Now, if my memory of Parting the Waters serves, there weren't many Democratic Party politicians on the speakers' platform that day--certainly no officials of the Kennedy administration.

Does Cooper think the civil rights movement should have moderated its words and deeds to get more Democrats alongside King? Were the more radical activists of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee to blame for driving the politicians away? Should the civil rights movement be considered a failure because of its commitment to grassroots protest and direct action, even if that angered Democratic Party leaders?

The antiwar movement today won't grow strong enough to force the politicians to end the occupation by tailoring its message to what one group of those politicians wants to hear.

No doubt, many people who attended an antiwar demonstration for the first time on September 24 were motivated mainly or solely by the desire to see U.S. troops withdrawn from Iraq as soon as possible.

But the issue of Iraqis' right to determine what happens in their own country is undeniably a legitimate question to take up--in discussions among activists; in those "mind-numbing meetings" Cooper so hates that plan antiwar activities and the future of the movement; from the speakers' platform at demonstrations.

Those who try to stifle this discussion with blustering insults and false allegations do a disservice to our movement--and also to the struggle of the Iraqi people against an illegal and immoral occupation of their country.

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. Occupation Dictatorship Arrests Another Reporter

06 October, Aljazeera

The journalist was detained at a relative's funeral

The Al-Arabiya Arab satellite news network has repeated its call for the release of one of its reporters being held by US forces in Iraq without charge.

Majed Hamid was detained by the US military more than three weeks ago along with several other men at the funeral of a relative.

"Al-Arabiya is distressed by the fact that the US military's authority in Iraq is placing itself in direct conflict with international laws and regulations pertaining to the detaining of journalists for prolonged periods without being officially charged, and denying them legal counsel," said the channel in a statement on Thursday.

Hamid has so far been unable to meet his family members, colleagues or representatives of officially recognised media groups in Iraq.

The channel further said that records show the US military has, over the past few years, detained several journalists for up to months at a time, only to release them without charge.

Hamid, who is the youngest Iraqi TV journalist in US custody in his country, also worked on a freelance basis for the Reuters news agency.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

The Thoughts Of Chairman George

October 06, 2005 Ed Naha, smirkingchimp.com. [Excerpt]

Here's Bush at his press conference this week, expounding on his highly sophisticated approach to his invasion of Iraq: "I will continue to articulate as best I can the stakes in Iraq. Iraq is a part of a global war on terror. We're facing people who have got a vision of the world which is opposite of ours. I know I've said that endlessly, and I will continue to say it because I KNOW IT'S TRUE."

Whoah! Talk about the age of enlightenment.

Here's Bush commenting on why he ignores polls (hah!): "My job is to lead and to solve problems."

Here's Bush talking about why there's been a delay in removing debris from the Hurricane zones:

"And there was some bureaucracy, some rules that prevented the debris from getting removed right off the bat. And I'll explain why, if you're interested. Okay, now that you're interested, I'll tell you. Because they didn't want to be moving federally-paid dozers on private property. Imagine cleaning up the debris and a person shows up, and says, where's my valuable china? Or, where's my valuable art?"

Dude, most poor people don't have valuable China or valuable art (Well, maybe a picture of winky Jesus or "Dogs Playing Poker."). When your house is reduced to splinters? No matter what your tax bracket? Pretty much the response is going to be: "How'd I get all these valuable toothpicks?"

Just when you think Bush has flown away from reality as far as any human being can, he surprises you and launches into warp drive, leaving all regular idiots far behind.

Here's a couple of reasons he's picked tool Harriet Miers for the Supreme Court. "I know her well enough to be able to say that she's not going to change, that 20 years from now she'll be the same person with the same philosophy that she is today."

Yo! Einstein? Even ROCKS change over twenty years.

Bush Says More Sacrifice Needed In War On Terror

[Thanks to PB who sent this in. He writes: FUNNY THAT HE'S ASKING FOR "MORE SACRIFICE" WHEN HE HASN'T SACRIFICED A DAMN THING.]

Oct 6 By Steve Holland, Reuters

President George W. Bush on Thursday rejected critics of the Iraq war who demand a U.S. pullout and cast the conflict as necessary to prevent Islamic militants from gaining a foothold for a sweeping empire.

"Wars are not won without sacrifice, and this war will require more sacrifice, more time, and more resolve. The terrorists are as brutal an enemy as we have ever faced," he said.

George Ignoring Real Terror Threat

Bush's worse mistake was to fail to recognize the locus of terrorist attacks on the USA.

Actually, it's Canada.

Every winter they send huge "Canadian cold air masses" across our undefended border, creating misery and havoc. The government has refused to act. This IS terrorism.

Furthermore, it forces us to buy more of their oil to keep warm. Talk about evildoers!

Then, when we swelter in the burning heat of summer, running our air conditioners and consuming more of their Canadian oil to keep the power plants going, then, I ask you, do they send even ONE Canadian cold air mass to help us? They do not.

Thus, they are the enemy.

Furthermore, they have some oil we badly need.

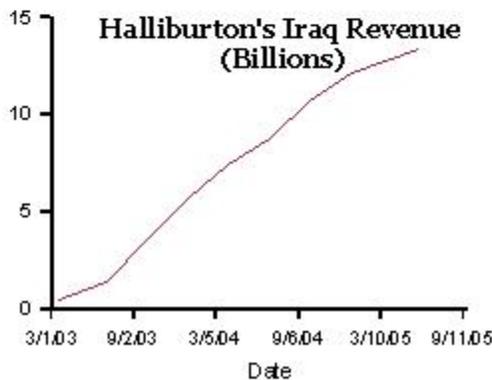
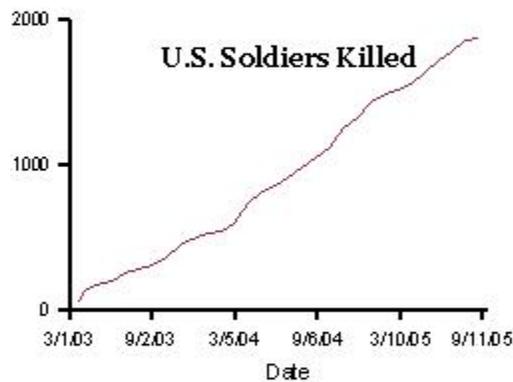
Besides, they have silly wimpy accents, unlike the manly Australians and New Zealanders, and true American patriots.

MR. HALLIBURTON: RABID RAT: DETAIN AND QUARANTINE ON SIGHT



(AFP/Getty Images/File/Joe Raedle)

**Thirty Months in Iraq
March 2003 - Sept. 2005**



Source: HalliburtonWatch.org

***Imperial Politicians Faking It:
The "Out Of Iraq Congressional
Caucus" Against Bringing The
Troops Home Now***

[As the pressure mounts to get out, the fall back position for the war apologists, as during Vietnam, is increasingly, "Yes, yes, soon, just not yet" usually followed by some utopian "exit strategy" which, at the bottom line, means, "Keep the war going." T]

From: Don Bacon Smedley Butler Society
To: GI Special
Sent: October 09, 2005 1:43 PM
Subject: Out of Iraq Congressional Caucus

Out of Iraq Congressional Caucus

Caucus: a group of people united to promote an agreed upon cause.

What is the Out of Iraq Congressional Caucus?

The Out of Iraq Congressional Caucus was created during the second week of June 2005 "to try to increase pressure on the Bush administration and Congress to end the Iraq conflict and bring American forces home. The group of progressives, led by California Reps. Maxine Waters, Lynn Woolsey and Barbara Lee, has been urging a withdrawal for some time but formalized its effort last week as part of its push to become a more forceful voice on the issue within the broader party Caucus."

What steps preceded the Caucus' formation?

In May 2005, Representative Woolsey "offered an amendment ... calling for the administration to develop a plan for the withdrawal of forces and to provide Congress with a report outlining the plan. Waters said that Woolsey's amendment is the baseline for the group and that they will push for nothing short of that. The Out of Iraq effort also comes on the immediate heels of bipartisan legislation by Reps. Walter Jones, Jr. and Dennis Kucinich calling for a timeline for troop withdrawal.

Is the Caucus calling for immediate withdrawal from Iraq?

Although the caucus is "not calling for a certain date to bring troops home," it "will turn up the volume on demands for an exit strategy through rallies, press events and in the halls of Congress. (Waters) said ultimately the group, if not satisfied with answers from the president, will come up with a timeline for withdrawal on its own."

Who are the co-founders of the Caucus?

The following Representatives are listed as co-founders: Maxine Waters, Chair; Lynn Woolsey; John Conyers; Charles Rangel; Barbara Lee; Jan Schakowsky; William Delahunt; John Lewis; and Xavier Becerra.

How many members does the Caucus have?

The Caucus currently has about fifty members.

Does the Caucus have a website?

No

Are any Caucus members calling for the immediate withdrawal of military forces from Iraq?

No

Did any Caucus members speak at the anti-war rally in Washington on September 24th, 2005, which drew half a million patriotic Americans from all over the country?

No

Has the Out of Iraq Congressional Caucus ACTUALLY DONE ANYTHING to "increase pressure on the Bush administration and Congress to end the Iraq conflict and bring American forces home?"

Hell, no.

What does that tell us?

This tells us that, beyond a few photo opportunities and some posturing, it's the same-old, same-old in Washington -- Government of the corporations, by the corporations and for the corporations -- and many of the rest of us are stuck with taxation without representation.

Why is it important that we leave Iraq?

We must leave Iraq because our occupation is doing more harm than good, and staying just makes the situation worse. For more on this, read what a Republican Representative, Ron Paul, has to say. <http://www.antiwar.com/paul/?articleid=7559>

What do the current polls tell us?

In the most recent CBS news poll, American adults, by a large margin of 59 to 36, want the United States out of Iraq as soon as possible, even if the country is not stabilized. Among Democrats, the margin rises to 73 to 24, or 3 to 1.

<p>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.</p>

Received:

SHARON RAMPANT: October Issue Of *The Other Israel* Is Out

From: The Other Israel
To: GI Special
Sent: October 09, 2005
Subject: SHARON RAMPANT - October issue The Other Israel is out

What has, and what has not changed in those months leading up to the 'Gaza Disengagement' - considered widely 'the defeat of the settler movement' and even the metamorphosis of Sharon into 'the peace camp's strong man'. Read the careful analysis of this issue's editorial overview, written by Adam Keller.

If you didn't yet, you can order a sample issue which will be sent by post, and which contains also descriptions of a multitude of actions of the ongoing struggle for Israeli public opinion: Yesh Gvul's war crime campaign, the refuseniks, aftermath of October 2000 killings, Tali Fahima.

Furthermore, you find reports of the daily struggle in the West Bank – the plight of the South Hebron Hills' cave dwellers and the peace activists who join them at high personal risk; a report about the months-long creative struggle against the Wall by the Bil'in villagers with support of Israelis and internationals. And last but not least, the TOI-staff's choice of what it thought to be Uri Avnery's most significant weekly column.

The editorial overview soon to be expected at <http://otherisrael.home.igc.org/ed.html>

First timers can order a free sample. Just send a message with subject line "free sample" and include in the mail your name and postal mailing address. From addresses in North America - send it to AICIPP@igc.org. All others please send it to otherisr@actcom.co.il

Those, already on The Other Israel's mailing list may send us the address of somebody else to whom we should send a free sample - somebody for whom you think it might be interesting, somebody who stopped reading the too big flood of daily emails about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, somebody without internet, a library where you think it would fit...

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TOI- Billboard is the 'ezine' of the independent THE OTHER ISRAEL bi-monthly peace newsletter, existing since 1983, and published by its editors Adam Keller & Beate Zilversmidt.

Visit also the archive of issues since 1994 - and scanned earlier ones of the first ten years (still under construction) <http://israelipalestinianpeace.org>

If you got this forwarded and want to subscribe <mailto:otherisr@actcom.co.il>

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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

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

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www.williambowles.info/qispecial,
<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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