

GI SPECIAL 3D17:



Diane Benson speaks at a "Bring the Troops Home" rally Oct. 25, 2003, put on by Alaskans for Peace and Justice at Town Square in Anchorage. MARC LESTER / Daily News archive 2003

“Stop-Loss Is A Very Ugly Lie”

“They Drafted My Son So He Could Go Over There And Get Blown Up”

November 16, 2005 By MEGAN HOLLAND and JULIA O'MALLEY, Anchorage Daily News

The soldier son of an Anchorage poet, playwright and anti-war activist was critically injured in Iraq two weeks into a second tour of duty he did not want to serve, his mother said.

Latseen Benson, in the 101st Airborne, was struck Sunday by a roadside bomb in Tikrit, north of Bagdad. Monday night, the 26-year-old he had not regained consciousness, Diane Benson said from her Eagle River home.

Benson said her son's first four-year tour was over Oct. 31 and that he was forced to extend his service under the controversial Stop-Loss Program.

"My son is now fighting for his life with half a body left," Benson said.

Latseen lost his legs and possibly part of an arm on Sunday, and was in a coma Tuesday night in a hospital in Germany, according to Ruth Sheridan, a family friend.

Diane Benson said she wrote letters to U.S. Rep. Don Young, Sen. Lisa Murkowski and Sen. Ted Stevens asking them to intercede after his first tour, so her son could return home. She was not successful. Latseen decided he couldn't abandon the rest of the soldiers in his unit, who were also forced to serve the extra time.

"This is criminal when we have people who are not willing to step up to the plate to take over," she said. "It must not be that critical when nobody wants to serve."

According to the article, Latseen Benson's first name is the Tlingit word for "strong." The young man, the father of a preschool-age son, described his plans for returning home, which included martial arts study and dirt-biking.

Diane Benson said her son had plans in January to attend college in Texas and marry his girlfriend, before he was ordered to serve until 2007.

"Stop-Loss is a very ugly lie," she said. "They drafted my son so he could go over there and get blown up."

President Bush's speech in Anchorage on Monday added to Benson's anger and heartache.

"I would have appreciated a little house call while he was here," she said. "To tell me why a very fine boy has to be fighting for his life."

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

5 Marines Killed As U.S. Pushes Sweep In Western Iraq

November 16, 2005 By KIRK SEMPLE, The New York Times Company

UBAYDI, Iraq, Nov 16 - Five Marines were killed and 11 were wounded this morning while they searched a house on the outskirts of this town in western Anbar Province, officials said. It was the deadliest day for American troops since beginning a wide sweep of several towns along the Euphrates River near the Syrian border on Nov. 5.

According to several Marines who were briefed on the events, a squad had just entered a farmhouse in northern Ubaydi when a huge explosion occurred, possibly caused by a booby-trapped homemade bomb that insurgents had planted.

According to a Marine officer who spoke with survivors, the squad was then attacked with small arms fire and grenades by insurgents hiding in the house.

The Marines entered the town on Monday morning and immediately met stiff resistance from insurgents bunkered in buildings. Two Marines died and nine were wounded that day, most by homemade bombs, though some in street-to-street fighting. At least one Iraqi Army soldier and two civilians were also wounded on Monday.

"The place was rigged to explode, the whole city," said Lt. Col. Dale Alford, commander of the Third Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment.

MARINE DIES FROM AL KARMAH VBIED

November 16, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
NEWS RELEASE Number: 05-11-25C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Marine assigned to Regimental Combat Team 8, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), was killed in action by a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack while conducting combat operations against the enemy near Al Karmah, Nov. 15.

TASK FORCE BAGHDAD SOLDIER DIES

November 16, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
NEWS RELEASE Number: 05-11-26C

BAGHDAD, Iraq — On Nov. 16, a Task Force Baghdad Soldier died of wounds sustained in an improvised explosive device attack northwest of Baghdad Nov. 15.

Report: Son Of Westerly Woman Killed

November 16, 2005 turnto10.com

The son of a Westerly woman was killed while serving in Iraq, according to a newspaper report.

Lance Cpl. Nickolas David Schiavoni was killed Tuesday by a suicide car bomber, the Marine's mother, Stephany Kern, told NBC 10 media partner The Westerly Sun.

Kern said the Marines notified her of her son's death Tuesday night.

She said it was his second tour of duty in Iraq.

"(The Marine officers) said it was a suicide car bomber. I didn't ask other questions. I just didn't ask exactly how," Kern told the Sun.

Schiavoni, 26, grew up in Haverhill, Mass., a community north of Boston. He leaves a wife and two children, ages 3 and 5.

War Claims 14th Long Island Son: "You Could Tell He Was Getting Scared"

November 10, 2005 BY WIL CRUZ, STAFF WRITER, Newsday Inc.

Army Spc. Robert Pope was stationed in Iraq, and dreamed of marrying his fiancée in a church. But he had another concern, too: her security.

So he married Lynnea, 24, in June by proxy, his family said.

"God forbid, if anything happened to him, he wanted her and (her 5-year-old son) Dylan to be taken care of," said Pope's father, Robert Sr., of East Islip. "He loved them very much."

Pope, 22, who was scheduled to come home in March, was killed Monday by a roadside bomb in Baghdad.

"I really thought he'd make it home," his mother, Regina, 47, said tearfully. "He was a hero; he didn't have to die, though."

The U.S. Department of Defense told the family Tuesday that Pope was on foot patrol Monday when at 5:15 p.m. Baghdad time a car bomb detonated, the department said.

A specialist assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment in Fort Carson, Colo., Pope and three other soldiers - ages 19 to 28 - were killed in the attack.

Pope, who graduated from East Islip High School in 2001 and attended Suffolk County Community College, enlisted in the Army in March 2003, motivated by the events of Sept. 11, 2001, his family said.

"It meant a lot to him, what he was doing," said Pope's father, Robert, 47.

"He thought he was doing the right thing over there, but at the same time he was looking to come home and do the right thing by his family."

Regina Pope, an aide at an elementary school, said her oldest child came home one day and told his parents he had joined the military - a decision they supported. "He just felt like he had to do this," she said.

Robert Pope, a millwright, said almost simultaneously: "He felt his country needed it."

Pope became the 14th soldier from Long Island and the second in as many weeks to die in the war in Iraq, the U.S. Department of Defense has said.

Two weeks before he was killed, Pope's face was scraped by shrapnel when another roadside bomb exploded nearby, his family said.

"You could tell he was getting scared," Regina said of that incident. Pope wasn't badly hurt, but was even more eager to return home.

Pope regularly sent letters home to his family, which perused them yesterday as pictures of Pope were sprawled across a coffee table in their living room.

"I love you all very much," he wrote in one letter. "Please try not to worry; I'll be fine."

The photos showed Pope as a tight end for the East Islip High School Redmen, of Pope with Lynnea and Dylan, and as a soldier in boot camp.

Pope had just booked a Caribbean cruise, a vacation that would follow a wedding ceremony with his wife at the Huntington Town House in August, Regina Pope said.

At home, Pope doted on his sister, Kaitlyn, 14, who has cerebral palsy, his father said. "He just idolized her, loved her," he said. "She meant everything in the world to him."

Now the Pope family - his parents, sister and two brothers - is awaiting his body. Funeral arrangements will follow.

Mixed in with the sorrow, Robert Pope yesterday recalled watching New York Giants and Jets football games with his son over beers and laughs.

He was a great son," he said with a smile. "He was just terrific in every way."

Edmond Soldier Killed

Soldier's Mother Heads Up Blue Star Group

November 1, 2005 ChannelOklahoma.com

EDMOND, Okla. Edmond is mourning one of its Hometown Heroes.

David Martin was killed Monday in Iraq, according to officials. The 21-year-old graduated from Edmond North High School in 2002 and was a member of the 101st Airborne Division.

Martin is the son of the president of a local group that sent care packages to soldiers. Jan Martin is the president of the Blue Star Mothers.

"When she talked about the soldiers, she didn't just talk about her own sons, but they were all her sons in a way," said Oklahoma Army National Guard spokeswoman Cathy Tillman.

David's younger brother Daniel also enlisted in the Army last week.

"She's just really in shock right now," Tillman said. "It's going to take her a few days to process what's going on."

"A lot of her life is dedicated to supporting soldiers and to have her son gone ... it's going to make it really difficult," she added. "We were talking about it. We'd love to see her stay involved in the program, but it would be understandable if that would be too much to bear."

Martin had been in Iraq for only a month.

One Year Later: Fallujah Not Conquered Yet

11.16.05 Christian Science Monitor

One year after U.S. Marines launched the most ferocious urban assault since the Vietnam War—emptying the city of Fallujah to root out entrenched insurgents—the battle for the city has yet to be won. Last February, U.S. commanders declared Fallujah the "safest" city in Iraq.

Yet, despite a constant U.S. and Iraqi military presence and the strictest security measures of any Iraqi city, insurgents have begun filtering back, and the prevailing calm veneer of a city on the mend can disappear in a flash.

Though attacks are limited, roadside bombs are increasingly common, and Marines say teenagers are being paid to throw grenades.

Insurgency “Watching Our Every Move”

11.16.05 Los Angeles Times

U.S. authorities say "There is a huge network of intelligence operatives over there who are watching our every move.

And they are watching every time we recruit an Iraqi to come back and inform to us about where he has been and what he has seen," says one Justice Department counter-terrorism official.

"And every time we have been able to do that, the person has ended up dead."

[Yeah, the German Army had that little problem in France and Italy, among other places, during World War II. It's what happens when people decide to fight against a foreign Imperial occupation and for their freedom. They are, of course, right to do so.]

LETHAL ENVIRONMENT: IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. Marines with the 1st Marine Regiment and Iraqi occupation soldiers in Haditha October 5. REUTERS/USMC/Cpl. Adam C. Schnell/Handout

Notes From A Lost War:

Welcome To Mogadishu: Have A Nice Day

17 November 2005 By Kim Sengupta, APN Holdings NZ Ltd

American soldiers are seldom seen on the streets of Baghdad now, even the entrance to the Green Zone is manned by bemused looking Georgian troops.

The Iraqi police are in evidence outside, but so are increasing numbers of militias running their own checkpoints.

Men in balaclavas or wrap-around sunglasses and headbands, with leather mittens and an array of weapons.

An American official acknowledged: "It is getting more and more like Mogadishu every day out there."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Car Bomb Hits U.S. Convoy In Kandahar: Confusion Over Casualties



16 November 2005 Reuters

A car bomber has struck a US military convoy in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar.

Three American soldiers were slightly wounded in the rush-hour attack in the centre of the city on Wednesday, said Kandahar Governor Assadullah Khalid. A spokesperson for Kandahar's governor denied that there had been casualties among US forces.

Witnesses, however, told Aljazeera's correspondent in Kabul that two US soldiers had been killed in the attack.

US soldiers cordoned off the scene of the attack, and a witness said an American vehicle was on fire. A US military official confirmed the attack, but gave no further details.

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)

TROOP NEWS

American Attitudes On Iraq Similar To Those About Vietnam In 1970

11.16.05 USA Today

Americans' attitudes toward Iraq and the course ahead are strikingly similar to public attitudes toward the Vietnam War in the spring of 1970, a pivotal year in that conflict and a time of enormous domestic unrest. [And, let us not forget, when the U.S. soldiers rebelled wholesale against the Vietnam War, which is what finally made it impossible for the Imperial politicians in Washington DC to keep it going.]

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.

Victory For Anti-War Iraq Vet At Kent State!

November 16, 2005, Kent State University, Ohio, Via Traprockpeace.org

The Kent State Antiwar Committee (KSAWC) announced its victory over campus repression at a news conference at Kent State.

The university had been taking David Airhart, a student and veteran of Guantanamo Bay and the Iraq War, to a disciplinary hearing for his having

unfurled a peace banner at the top of a rock climbing wall erected on campus by military recruiters on October 29, 2005.

At 5:30 PM on November 15th, Airhart learned from his lawyer that the university was canceling the hearing set for the 16th. (Charges will be expunged from his record, according to the university, after a mediation meeting.)

Nicole Robinson of KSAWC, a chapter of the Campus Antiwar Network, moderated the news conference. Giving prepared remarks were students Amanda John, David Airhart, David Pittman, and Nicole Robinson. Media covering the news conference included ITN television (UK), the Cleveland Plain Dealer, NPR, through its local affiliate, and Channel 2 TV in Kent.

After the news conference, students gathered for a brief outdoor rally on this cold, blustery afternoon. Students read public statements of support that had been provided by antiwar activists, veterans, professors, writer, students and organizations.

Further, over 950 people signed an online petition in support of David Airhart, and hundreds of more signed petitions gathered by students with the Campus Antiwar Network on campuses coast to coast.

Speakers noted the national call by the Campus Antiwar Network for counter-recruitment actions on December 6th. All of the public statements of support, along with the transcript of David Airhart's previous talk in Chicago on November 5, 2005, KSAWC's October 29th report, and several media reports are found at http://www.traprockpeace.org/kent_state_students/

After the rally, Nicole Robinson led a tour of the memorials to students slain by National Guard soldiers on May 4, 1970.



Celebrating At Kent State (Eric Ruder photo)



www.ivaw.net

Piece Of Shit Recruiter Calls Iraq Vet A “Little Bitch” Gets His Worthless Ass Forced Out Of Classroom

From: Tim Goodrich Co-founder, Iraq Veterans Against the War: Western Region

To: GI Special

Sent: November 16, 2005

Subject: writings

Last week, I was able to go back to my hometown of North Tonawanda, NY (a suburb of Buffalo) in order to give a speech at the annual dinner for the Western New York Peace Center. While there, I took had the opportunity to go back to my high school and do some “Truth in Recruiting”.

I came prepared with various printouts such as opt out forms and pamphlets that informed students on how to protect themselves from false recruiting promises. Throughout the day, I presented to five different classes and stood outside the cafeteria for three periods.

While talking to one of the students outside the cafeteria, I realized a Marine recruiter was approaching. Sergeant Williams listened for a while and we struck up a conversation after the student left. The conversation was friendly, but became a bit tense when he learned what I was doing.

I told him that I was not against recruiters, but I wanted to make sure the students were able to make an informed decision if they decided to enlist.

Well, apparently, he still didn't like this idea too much. He began telling the kids that the opt out forms won't help at all (which is partially true since recruiters also garner personal info from the ASVAB and SAT).

But here's the kicker: He told one female student the best way for the recruiters not to call her was for her to call them herself.

I was in disbelief.

We all know as soon as that student calls, and even if she asks to be taken off the list, the recruiter will do one of two things: 1) Strike up a friendly conversation to overcome objections to the military, or 2) get her information, which they may not have had before, and start calling her.

To top it all off, Sergeant Williams told me that I was a “disgrace to the military” and that I was a “little bitch.” And we let our children go to school with people like this prowling the hallways? Unbelievable.

When it came time for my final presentation, Sgt. Williams tried to sit in on the class. However, after informing the three teachers there of what he had said earlier, he was forced from the classroom.

Final Score:

Truth: 1

Recruiter: 0

MORE:

“We're In A No-Win Situation”



North Tonawanda native Tim Goodrich says he co-founded Iraq Veterans Against the War after seeing "other side" of bombing. Derek Gee/Buffalo News

11/11/2005 By ANTHONY CARDINALE, Buffalo News Staff Reporter

North Tonawanda native Tim Goodrich told 315 peace activists Thursday evening how he repudiated his Air Force role in the bombing of Iraq and co-founded Iraq Veterans Against the War.

It was the Iraqi people who won his heart when he returned as a civilian and met mothers who had lost their sons in the war, Goodrich said during the annual dinner of the Western New York Peace Center in the Buffalo Convention Center.

"After I was honorably discharged in 2003, I laid low," said Goodrich, 25, now of Los Angeles. "Global Exchange contacted me about going to Iraq on a fact-finding mission. I got to see the other side of what happens when the bombs drop."

Goodrich said he spent two weeks in and around Baghdad, witnessing deplorable conditions in the hospitals.

"I also met with some of the women that had lost their children because of what we termed 'collateral damage,' " he said. "And, seeing the crying mothers' eyes looking you in the face - it's not an easy thing to remember. Especially knowing you were part of the military and part of the mission."

He said he returned in a state of shock to his home, which at the time was in Oklahoma City. "I remember driving down the road in my nice car and thinking, "These people in Iraq, they have nothing," " Goodrich said, his voice cracking.

"But yet they were so gracious. They'd reached out to me in ways that I've never had Americans reach out to me. And they had every reason to hate me."

Reared in North Tonawanda, Goodrich had wanted to join the military since he was 5 years old. Later he covered a whole wall of his room with pictures of fighter jets. He joined the Air Force after graduating from North Tonawanda High School in 1998.

"I did some truth-in-recruiting work in five classes at my high school today," he said. "The recruiters give you a "dream sheet" - like, in your dreams you get to go where you want to go."

Goodrich was eventually sent overseas three times. The first was to Saudi Arabia as a maintenance technician for the AWACS aircraft that were patrolling Iraq's no-fly zone in March 2001.

The second time was to Afghanistan after Sept. 11, 2001, to provide direct combat support of B-1 bombers. The final time was to Iraq to assist in the intensified bombing during the fall of 2002, as America prepared to invade the country.

After returning from the Global Exchange mission in Iraq in January 2004, Goodrich spoke against the war and co-founded Iraq Veterans Against the War.

"We're in a no-win situation," Goodrich said.

"If we pull out, we don't know what's going to happen. But if we stay, we know what will happen - more violence in Iraq. The best way to support our troops is to bring them home."

Colin Eager, executive director of the Peace Center, said this was the largest turnout ever for the annual dinner.

"We are winning," he said. "The only reason Iraq is being discussed in Congress is because of the efforts of groups like ours. We are the reason that we are winning."

“They Wanted Numbers Of Terrorists, Apprehended At FOB CALSU, So They Could Brief That To The General”

Very few of them had foreign I.D.'s. There were people working with me who would -- in an effort to sort of cook the books, you know they would find a Koran on the guy and the Koran was printed in Algeria, and they would mark him down as an Algerian, or you know guys would come in with a black shirt and khaki pants and they would say, well, this is the Hezbollah uniform and they would mark him down as a Lebanese, which was ridiculous, but -- you know.

November 15th, 2005 Democracy Now! [Excerpts]

With deep remorse, former U.S. Army interrogator Specialist Tony Lagouranis talks about his own involvement with abusing detainees in Iraq and torture carried out by the Navy Seals.

AMY GOODMAN: Can you talk about that? And who you understood the people who were dead to be?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, a lot of them were certainly insurgents. You know, a lot of them had weapons. They had hand grenades, they had ammo vests, but a lot of them weren't, either. We had women and children, old men, young boys. So, you know, it's hard to say.

I think initially, the reason that we were doing this was they were trying to find foreign fighters. They were trying to prove that there were a lot of foreign fighters in Fallujah.

So, mainly, that's what we were going for, but most of them really didn't have I.D.'s but maybe half of them had I.D.'s.

Very few of them had foreign I.D.'s. There were people working with me who would -- in an effort to sort of cook the books, you know they would find a Koran on the guy and the Koran was printed in Algeria, and they would mark him down as an Algerian, or you know guys would come in with a black shirt and khaki pants and they would say, well, this is the Hezbollah uniform and they would mark him down as a Lebanese, which was ridiculous, but -- you know.

AMY GOODMAN: So, what did you say?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, I was only a specialist, so actually, you know, I did say something to the staff sergeant, who was really in charge, and you know, I just got yelled down you know, shot down.

AMY GOODMAN: What do you mean shot down?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, he just told me, just put me in my place. He said, this is not for you to decide. I'm saying he's Lebanese, he's Lebanese. That's it.

AMY GOODMAN: What about the women and kids?

TONY LAGOURANIS: I don't know. I mean, I don't know, I would get a kid burnt to a crisp. I don't know. I don't know what to say. We had women and children.

AMY GOODMAN: Did you have discussions about that?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Not really. No. I mean, we just sort of like noted it. Too bad, a kid died. Too bad, we had a woman. We didn't really talk about that.

AMY GOODMAN: How many people would you estimate died in Fallujah.

TONY LAGOURANIS: I have no idea. I don't know. I remember hearing the -- a number of 10,000 out there from the marines, but I don't know if that's accurate.

AMY GOODMAN: And could you estimate how many of them were what the U.S. Military calls "insurgents"?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, I think we probably got-- we got a small number, we got 500 bodies. And from that sample, I would say about 20% of them actually had weapons on them. But -- so, who knows. I don't know. I imagine, I think most people left Fallujah who weren't going to stay there and fight. But I really don't know. I cannot really say.

AMY GOODMAN: We're talking to Tony Lagouranis, former U.S. Army interrogator.

AMY GOODMAN: If it you could once again repeat what it is you saw there in Babel. Who were the forces involved, and what they were doing?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, I was interrogating at the detention facility at Forward Operating Base, CALSU. I was getting prisoners that were arrested by Force Recon marines, and they -- every time Force Recon went on a raid, they would bring back prisoners who were bruised with broken bones, sometimes with burns. They were pretty brutal to these guys, and I would ask the prisoners what happened, you know, how they received these wounds, and they would tell me that it was after their capture, while they were subdued, while they were handcuffed and they were being questioned by the force recon marines.

AMY GOODMAN: And what did they say happened to them?

TONY LAGOURANIS: They were being punched, kicked, you know, hit with -- as I said the back of an axe head. One guy was forced to sit on an exhaust pipe of a humvee. I

would check out that story with other people that they had been arrested with, and they were consistent. So, I tended to believe what they were telling me.

AMY GOODMAN: What do you mean one was forced to sit on the exhaust pipe on the back of a humvee. So, what would happen to him?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, he had a giant blister, third degree burn on the back of his leg.

AMY GOODMAN: Because it was so hot?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Right.

AMY GOODMAN: And then at this point, you're supposed to question them?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Right. So I was supposed to interrogate these guys. Yeah.

AMY GOODMAN: And how do you go about doing that, as they're in front of you with broken bones, beaten, smashed, punched, burned?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, as you know, as I said, this was really late in the year, and I had really sort of given up using any harsh tactics, so, I was trying to get these guys to trust me, telling them I'm going to help them out, which I really couldn't help anybody out at that place, because everyone they arrested, innocent or guilty, no matter what I said, they would just send them to Abu Ghraib anyway. But --

AMY GOODMAN: What do you mean?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, you know, the interrogators-- I'm the only person who is going to talk to this guy. There's no officer that's going to talk to him. The person who decides whether to let them go or keep them is not going to interrogate them. So, my recommendation should count for something, you know, but it didn't at FOB CALSU with the 24th MEW Marines.

Basically everybody who came to the prison, they determined, they were a terrorist, they were guilty and they would send them to Abu Ghraib.

AMY GOODMAN: What did you determine?

TONY LAGOURANIS: That like 98% of these guys had not done anything.

I mean, they were picking up people for the stupidest things like -- there's one guy they picked up, they stopped him at a checkpoint, just a routine stop, and he had a shovel in his trunk, and he had a cell phone in his pocket. They said, well, you can use the shovel to bury an IED, you can use the cell phone to detonate it. He didn't have any explosives in his car, he had no weapons, nothing. They had no reason to believe that he was setting IED's other than the shovel and cell phone. That was the kind of prisoner they were bringing us.

AMY GOODMAN: Did you ever call for a stop to this, or ask to speak to a higher up? Tony Lagouranis.

TONY LAGOURANIS: I did all the time. You know, at that point, I was like so pissed at the military for what they were doing, you know. And you know, I was yelling at the chief warrant officer marine who was in charge of the defense facility. I was making an issue about it to the major of the Marines, and the lieutenant colonel who was the JAG guy who was in charge of release, who organize keeping the prisoners. I mean, but they just wouldn't listen. You know?

They wanted numbers. They wanted numbers of terrorists, apprehended at FOB CALSU, so they could brief that to the general?

AMY GOODMAN: Who was the general?

TONY LAGOURANIS: I don't know. Who knows. But you know, they were trying to impress somebody, so they wanted to say that we arrested this many terrorists. When I would say they were innocent in my interrogation reports, they would send the prisoner up to Abu Ghraib without my interrogation report. They would just send him up with no paperwork.

AMY GOODMAN: Who was in charge there, who was your immediate superior?

TONY LAGOURANIS: My immediate superior was an army -- my team leader, an army sergeant, the guy in charge of the detention facility or rather the intelligence operations was Chief Warrant Officer Kern. He was a marine.

AMY GOODMAN: And he was holding back your interrogation reports?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Whether it was him or somebody higher up, I don't know. But I know that he was the guy we were submitting the interrogation reports to.

I was also submitting abuse reports at FOB CALSU. I really suspected that those didn't really get investigated.

AMY GOODMAN: What do you mean by abuse reports?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, any time I see abuse or prisoner tells me about abuse, I'm supposed to write a report about it. So that it can be investigated, and you know, see who abused them or whatever. I would send that up through the chain of command, but I don't think they were doing anything with these abuse reports. In the army, when you send this up, it should go to C.I.D., which is Criminal Investigations Division, I don't know what the 'D' stands for, division or department.

I talked to those departments, those guys, five times in Iraq. I talked to them after I came back to Fort Gordon, Georgia. After I did an interview with Frontline, and told Frontline the same things that I told you, the C.I.D. Called me up and said we ran your name through the system, and we don't have any reports from you. Why didn't you report this stuff? So, like, I don't know what's happening to these abuse reports but I don't think they have been investigated.

AMY GOODMAN: Who called you?

TONY LAGOURANIS: His name was special agent Kerr from C.I.D.

AMY GOODMAN: There's a term in the military, but also in civilian society, Tony, called 'moral courage.' Can you talk about what that means to you?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, I don't know if I'm really the right person to talk about that, Amy. I don't know.

AMY GOODMAN: Well --

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, I sort of feel like, you know, I didn't really have enough of it over there. You know? Don't know.

AMY GOODMAN: What when you look back now, do you wish you had done?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, you know, we were trained to do interrogations according to the Geneva Conventions with enemy prisoners of war. And we trained using role players using a conventional army prisoner, and also a terrorist organization, and we treated both of them as though they were enemy prisoners of war. We weren't allowed to cross any lines. So, I don't know why I allowed the army to order me to go against my training, and against my better judgment and against my own moral judgment. But I did. I should have just said no.

AMY GOODMAN: Do you feel like there's something that you can do now?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, I guess talking about it on television is one thing. I don't know.

AMY GOODMAN: Would you say when you see the court-martial of a few low-level soldiers, would you say that will start to stop the abuse, or how high up do you feel it goes?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, it obviously goes right up to the Pentagon, because they were issuing the interrogation rules of engagement, and the interrogation rules of engagement are not in accordance with the army field manual and not in accordance with the Geneva conventions. So, it's all the way up. You know, obviously, Lindsey England and Grainer, these guys -- you know, they needed to be punished, but it's not just them. It's -- it should have gone all the way up the chain.

AMY GOODMAN: Are you concerned about being retaliated against for speaking out?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Sure. Yeah. I think, you know, that when C.I.D. called me, when special agent Kerr called me after the Frontline interview is that the army was going to try to prosecute me. I'm a little bit more worried about some, just, like a navy SEAL. Or some marine is going to decide he hates me because I'm talking about this stuff, and come in to my house. I have been getting hate emails. My mom has received hate phone calls.

AMY GOODMAN: Yet you're speaking out?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Sure. Yeah.

AMY GOODMAN: Because --

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, I feel like that's what my duty is right now, and I sort of want to correct some wrongs that I might have done.

AMY GOODMAN: And to someone who is in Iraq right now, what would you say to them, and what would you say to Iraqis?

TONY LAGOURANIS: Well, I'd like to apologize to Iraq honestly, because I think we have done so many things wrong over there. I think the military guys wanted to go over there and really liberate Iraq, and we have just really screwed it up. So, that's terrible, but to the military guys in Iraq, I would say, follow your conscience, and don't do what everybody else is doing just because it seems like that's the right thing to do. It's not.

AMY GOODMAN: Tony Lagouranis, I want to thank you very much for being with us, former US Army interrogator in Iraq for a year. Thanks for speaking out.

TONY LAGOURANIS: Thank you, Amy.

Asshole Scumbag Guard Attacks Two Students For Asking Questions

November 18, 2005 Socialist Worker

CHICAGO--Retired Chicago police officer Leon Bowens, now a security guard at Harold Washington College (HWC), forcibly dragged two students out of a November 9 job fair for the "crime" of asking questions.

Antiwar students attended the job fair to alert other students that they may not be getting a truthful pitch from military recruiters increasingly desperate to overcome recruiting shortfalls.

We attended holding no banners or signs and asked polite questions of the recruiters. In fact, when campus security told the antiwar students to leave, one recruiter defended our presence there.

Bowens dragged student Jenell Holden out of the fair by his arm when he began videotaping the guard's threats. Then Bowens and his assistant Herbert Wilson went for Angie Haban, another student, each grabbing her by an arm, dragging her outside and elbowing her in the chin.

This manhandling of individuals engaged in polite conversations is part of a campaign of hostility toward antiwar students wishing to exercise their freedom of speech.

Call HWC President John Wozniak at 312-553-5834 to demand the firing of Bowens for his unprovoked assault. [And if that doesn't cut it, maybe it's time to have a discussion with him in the parking lot, as they say in New York City.]

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

Nov 16 (Reuters) & Aljazeera

MOSUL - Three Iraqi policemen from the Facility Protection Service, a government-run security force, were killed in Mosul, police said.

MOSUL - A traffic policeman was killed by armed fighters in Mosul, police said.

BAIJI - The head of Baiji police was seriously wounded with five of his bodyguards when a roadside bomb went off near his motorcade in Baiji, police said.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

OCCUPATION REPORT

Criminals Discovered In Command Of U.S. Iraq Forces

14/11/05 USA Today

The Iraqi army and multinational forces violated international law during military operations in western Iraq last month by arresting doctors and occupying medical facilities, a U.N. report said Monday.

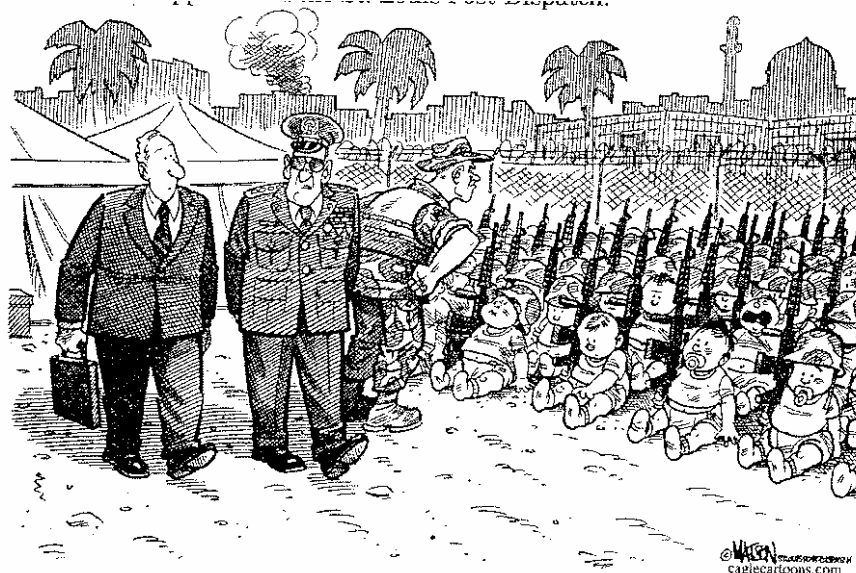
Covering the period of Sept. 1 to Oct. 31, it said the United Nations has repeatedly sought to draw attention to the issue of detained doctors and occupied medical

facilities during October military operations in Anbar. "Such actions are contrary to international law governing armed conflict and in any event they constitute a denial of the protection of international human rights law," the report said.

MORE

Civilian hospitals organized to give care to the wounded and sick, the infirm and maternity cases, may in no circumstances be the object of attack, but shall at all times be respected and protected by the Parties to the conflict. (GC, Art. 19)

Persons regularly and solely engaged in the operation and administration of civilian hospitals, including the personnel engaged in the search for, removal and transporting of and caring for wounded and sick civilians, the infirm and maternity cases, shall be respected and protected.



"TELL THE PRESIDENT THERE WON'T BE A FULLY TRAINED, FULLY FUNCTIONING IRAQI ARMY FOR ANOTHER 18 TO 22 YEARS."

Bush Regime Traitors Order U.S. Occupation Troops To Violate U.S. Declaration Of Independence

November 18, 2005 ANTHONY ARNOVE, Socialist Worker [Excerpt]

U.S. soldiers have also taken to quartering troops in Iraqi homes and schools.

“Requisitioning homes or other buildings has been widespread in Iraq for U.S. troops on missions who stay far away from bases, sometimes for several days or weeks,” the Associated Press reports.

“They broke into my house before Ramadan and they are still there,” Dhiya Hamid al-Karbuli recounted to a reporter. “We were not able to tolerate seeing them damage our house in front of our very eyes...I was afraid to ask them to leave.” “Marines have been making camp in seized houses,” the New York Times reported from Husayba, the site of a major assault in November 2005, in which “[f]ighter jets streaked overhead, dropping 500-pound bombs” on the town.

Neither the Associated Press nor the Times seemed to have remembered that the quartering of troops was one of the primary complaints of American colonists against King George and the British--as described in the Declaration of Independence:

“He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power. He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation: For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us: For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States...”

U.S. Troops Ordered To Hand Out Spoiled Food For Propaganda Photos: “People Wanted To Kill The Americans’ Translator”

November 17, 2005 By Scott Peterson, The Christian Science Monitor [Excerpts]

Even Hibba, standing on a neighbor's balcony, was hit in the right arm with a piece of shrapnel, which affected her ability to write. Now healed, she laughingly describes how her schoolmates nicknamed her Hibba Fragment.

The aftermath of the bombings provides a glimpse of the contradictions of wartime Iraq.

An American unit showed up. "(They) began to distribute water and military food, but it was expired, so all the people threw this away," recalls Amal, 16, who began about that time to write again in her wartime diary, to satisfy her "ambition to get my voice to the world."

The US troops asked their translator to take photos of them handing out the aid. "People wanted to kill the Americans' translator," says Amal.

"(The Americans) should be cautious about that," says Methboub. "They came to the exact same place where a lot of people were killed. They shouldn't do that."

Daughter Zainab, 17, recently married Ali, a former Iraqi soldier who joined the nascent police force - the institution of the new Iraq most heavily targeted by insurgents. Despite several threats, he kept with the force.

But when a fellow cop's wife was shot dead days after that policeman ignored a death threat, Ali took seriously the next threat he received and left his job immediately. Zainab, who now lives with Ali, no longer goes to high school for fear that she could be killed or kidnapped.

"The police chief told him: 'If we say we can protect you, we would be lying,' " says Methboub, noting that six or seven of Ali's associates have been assassinated. He continues with security work, but his new job may be even more dangerous.

Collaborator Cops Tortured By Collaborator Secret Police

11/16/05 kfmb

At least four Iraqi policemen were treated at Yarmouk Hospital for injuries they said were suffered in beatings by men who identified themselves as Interior Ministry commandos after they were stopped Monday on patrol in the Dora neighborhood of southwest Baghdad.

An Associated Press photographer and an AP Television News cameraman saw long, thin black and blue bruises and welts on their backs and shoulders. None of them appeared to be so seriously injured as to require hospitalization.

The men were visibly nervous and refused to speak in detail about their ordeal, fearing reprisals.

They told AP journalists that they were blindfolded and taken to an unknown location but were released after the "Americans interfered." They refused to give their names or say more.

Occupation Torturers Peeled Skin Of Prisoners' Bodies:

Occupation High Officials Mouth Lame Bullshit About “Some Kind Of Torture” And Poor “Management”

11/16/05 kfmb & 17 November 2005 Aljazeera & By Kim Sengupta, APN Holdings NZ Ltd

Iraq's government faces calls for an international inquiry into abuse at a secret prison in Baghdad where inmates were reportedly tortured, beaten and starved.

"These men were in a very bad way. They have obviously been tortured, some had been there a long time and they were very frightened," said an officer calling himself Yasin.

He would not give any other name: "I don't want to end up in one of these rooms myself."

Hussein Kamal, Iraq's deputy interior minister, told CNN television he saw evidence of torture.

"I saw signs of physical abuse by brutal beating. One or two detainees were paralysed. And some had their skin peeled off various parts of their body."

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari confirmed that more than 173 Interior Ministry prisoners were found malnourished and possibly tortured by government security forces at a Baghdad lockup Sunday.

"I was informed that there were 173 detainees held at an Interior Ministry prison and they appear to be malnourished.

"There is also *some talk* that they were subjected to *some kind of torture*," al-Jaafari told reporters.

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said U.S. and Iraqi forces went into the facility in Baghdad suspecting that *individuals there might not have been appropriately handled or managed*, and "they found things that concerned them."

Vincent Cannistraro, a former chief of CIA counter-terrorism, said: "they set up little teams of Seals and Special Forces with teams of Iraqis, working with people who were former senior intelligence people under the Saddam regime."

Travelling through the Iraqi capital one would meet Moqtada al-Sadr's Mehdi army; fellow Shiites from the Badr Brigade; the Kurdish Peshmarga and a variety of Western and Iraqi security guards.

Then there are Iraqi soldiers and policemen and Government paramilitaries equally "tooled up" - the special police commandos and the Wolf Brigade of the Ministry of Interior.

Many of these units have been created, trained and armed by the Americans. According to reports, US\$3 billion out of a US\$87 billion Iraq appropriation that Congress approved last year was earmarked for the creation of paramilitary units to fight the insurgency.

His next charge - "they're clearly cooking up joint teams to Phoenix-type things, like they did in Vietnam" - draws protestations of outrage from the American military. The CIA's Phoenix programme targeted and assassinated Viet Cong suspects and sympathisers.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to PB, who sent this in]

**Rumsfeld Says Clinton Policy Justified
Attack On Iraq**

11.16.05 Washington Times

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld lashed out at critics of the Iraq war, citing the words of former President Clinton and his aides, who, like President Bush, said intelligence reports showed that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction and was a threat to the United States. [For once, he's 100% right.]



[Thanks to Z, who sent this in.]

CLASS WAR REPORTS

France 2005: Riots Are A Class Act: Often They're The Only Alternative

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

Amid the charred chassis and broken glass there is a vital point of principle to salvage: in certain conditions rioting is not just justified but may also be necessary, and effective. From the poll tax demonstrations to Soweto, history is littered with such cases; what were the French and American revolutions but riots endowed by Enlightenment principles and then blessed by history?

November 14, 2005 Gary Younge, Guardian

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress," said the African American abolitionist Frederick Douglass. "Those who profess to favour freedom and yet depreciate agitation are men who want crops without ploughing up the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters ... Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."

By the end of last week it looked as though the fortnight of struggle between minority French youth and the police might actually have yielded some progress.

Condemning the rioters is easy. They shot at the police, killed an innocent man, trashed businesses, rammed a car into a retirement home, and torched countless cars (given that 400 cars are burned on an average New Year's Eve in France, this was not quite as remarkable as some made out).

But shield your ears from the awful roaring waters for a moment and take a look at the ocean.

Those who wondered what French youth had to gain by taking to the streets should ask what they had to lose. Unemployed, socially excluded, harassed by the police and condemned to poor housing, they live on estates that are essentially open prisons.

Statistically invisible (it is against the law and republican principle to collect data based on race or ethnicity) and politically unrepresented (mainland France does not have a single non-white MP), their aim has been simply to get their plight acknowledged. And they succeeded.

Even as the French politicians talked tough, the state was suing for peace with the offer of greater social justice.

The government unrolled a package of measures that would give career guidance and work placements to all unemployed people under 25 in some of the poorest suburbs; there would be tax breaks for companies who set up on sink estates; a $\text{€}1,000$ (£675) lump sum for jobless people who returned to work as well as $\text{€}150$ a month for a year; 5,000 extra teachers and educational assistants; 10,000 scholarships to encourage academic achievers to stay at school; and 10 boarding schools for those who want to leave their estates to study.

"We need to respond strongly and quickly to the undeniable problems facing many inhabitants of the deprived neighbourhoods," said President Chirac. From the man who once said that immigrants had breached the "threshold of tolerance" and were sending French workers "mad" with their "noise and smell" this was progress indeed.

And the reality is that none of this would have happened without riots.

There was no petition these young people could have signed, no peaceful march they could have held, no letter they could have written to their MPs that would have produced these results.

Amid the charred chassis and broken glass there is a vital point of principle to salvage: in certain conditions rioting is not just justified but may also be necessary, and effective. From the poll tax demonstrations to Soweto, history is littered with such cases; what were the French and American revolutions but riots endowed by Enlightenment principles and then blessed by history?

When all non-violent, democratic means of achieving a just end are unavailable, redundant or exhausted, rioting is justifiable. When state agencies charged with protecting communities fail to do so or actually attack them, it may be necessary in self-defence.

After the 1967 riots in American cities, President Johnson set up the Kerner commission. It concluded: "What white Americans have never fully understood - but what the Negro can never forget - is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it."

How else was such a damning indictment of racial discrimination in the US ever going to land on the president's desk?

Following the inner-city riots across Britain in 1981, Lord Scarman argued that "urgent action" was needed to prevent racial disadvantage becoming an "endemic, ineradicable disease threatening the very survival of our society". His conclusions weren't perfect. But the kernel of a message black Britons had been trying to hammer home for decades suddenly took centre stage. A few years later Michael Heseltine wrote a report into the disturbances in Toxteth entitled It Takes a Riot.

Rioting should be neither celebrated nor fetishised, because ultimately it is a sign not of strength but weakness. Like a strike, it is often the last and most desperate weapon available to those with the least power.

Rioting is a class act. Wealthy people don't do it because either they have the levers of democracy at their disposal, or they can rely on the state or private security firms to do their violent work for them, if need be.

MORE:

“We Only Know How To Speak With Fire”

November 18, 2005 MURRAY SMITH, Ligue Communiste Revolutionaire (LCR), Socialist Worker [Excerpt]

The term “riot,” which has come to be applied to the revolt, is in fact misleading.

The revolt is the work of gangs of youth who know each other and who consciously turn their anger into acts of destruction of property--burning cars, schools, shops, buses--and attacks on the hated police.

As one young man put it to the Madrid daily El Pais: “We don’t have words to explain what we feel. We only know how to speak with fire.”

Of course, there is a negative side to this revolt. It is easy enough to see that wreaking havoc in their own neighborhoods causes damage to their neighbors and families. This can and is being exploited by the government to divide their communities between generations and between those of French descent and immigrant descent.

But when the despair of those to whom society offers no future explodes in revolt, it rarely does so in a neat, tidy and “politically correct” way.

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.

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