

## GI SPECIAL 3D2:

### NOT GOOD: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



10.31.05: A US soldier from Bravo Company 1-87 Infantry 10th Mountain Division 1st Brigade Combat Team, in the gunners hatch of his Humvee during a patrol in western Baghdad. (AFP/David Furst)

# “That Guy Was A Real Idiot, He Blew Up Six Of Our Amtracks”

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

Referring to his battalion commander, Lt. Col. Rick Grabowski, he added, “That guy was a real idiot, he blew up six of our amtracks,” military parlance for amphibious transport vehicles. Airhart blames Grabowski’s heavy-handedness for the heavy losses in his company: out of 130 soldiers, there were 52 casualties, with 18 killed and 34 injured, many seriously.

11.1.05 By M. Junaid Alam, Left Hook [Excerpts]

The scene was replete with symbolism and loaded with emotion: on Oct. 19, students at Kent State University interrupted an on-campus Army recruiting event to protest an increasingly unpopular war.

**Unlike the four students shot and killed by National Guardsmen thirty-five years ago, however, Dave Airhart, one of the protesters, was not shot at – at least not in the United States.**

**But as a veteran of the Marine Corps who served in Guantanamo Bay, Iraq, and Afghanistan, Airhart has seen his fair share of bullets, blood, combat and casualties, and is now an eager foot soldier in the growing movement to end America's war campaign.**

The center of attention at the Oct. 19 Kent State protest, the war veteran says it was a relatively small-scale affair. The action involved about 20 students who assembled to express their opposition to the war and the military's recruitment policies near the recruiters' area. The activists belonged to the Kent State Anti-War Committee, an affiliate of the national student anti-war group, College Anti-War Network.

Airhart says he scaled an artificial rock climbing unit recruiters had set up for the day, an anti-war banner tucked underneath his shirt. Once he reached the top, he tied the banner to the wall. It read: "Kent State 4 Peace."

**"An Army recruiter started to climb up and come after me, so I climbed down the other way," he explains. Airhart said recruiters began verbally abusing him, shouting that they will "kick ass." He also added that a right-wing student tore up a female protester's sign, spit on it, and told her he should "punch her teeth out."**

Airhart – but not the recruiters or the threatening student – now faces possible disciplinary action, including suspension or even expulsion in an administration hearing to be held on Nov. 16. He is charged with being a danger to himself as well as others because, according to the administration, his descent from the wall unit via the rear side could have disrupted the hydraulics mechanism.

**Airhart is unimpressed with the accusation. "If the thing is that unstable, it shouldn't be there in the first place," he said. The anti-war veteran went on to add, "The administration is saying that I put other students at risk. Well, it is the one putting the entire campus at risk, by letting these recruiters on campus who want to use us as a supply of fresh bodies for Iraq."**

Airhart was part of this supply himself until he left the Marine Corps after four years of service. He recalls the exact day without hesitation: July 4, 2004.

**Initially stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C., he served in crucial hotspots of the "war on terror," including seven months at Guantanamo Bay, six months in Iraq, and finally, seven months in Afghanistan.**

"I always disagreed with (the Corps) after the first week of boot camp. It was not the most humane place in the world," Airhart said. But his awareness intensified as he saw the military's policies in action.

**“The mistreatment of detainees I saw at Guantanamo really started it,” he explains.**

The defining horror, however, came when the war on Iraq began. “None of us thought Bush would actually invade,” Airhart said, referring to his unit, First Battalion, Second Regiment, Charlie Company - or what he calls “the fix-it people.”

The former Marine says he saw dead bodies frequently as a result of all kinds of violence, but above all, because of American military action. “The majority of dead bodies I saw were of Iraqi women and children. And most of that was from airstrikes” he says.

Airhart, whose battalion was part of the initial invasion force, recalls a particularly harrowing experience in the early days of the war.

“Our company was coming behind Jessica Lynch’s,” he says. “We were fighting in the heart of a city and our battalion commander ordered in air strikes with an A-10,” Airhart explained. The A-10 is a subsonic ground-attack aircraft equipped with a Gatling cannon and explosive munitions.

**Referring to his battalion commander, Lt. Col. Rick Grabowski, he added, “That guy was a real idiot, he blew up six of our amtracks,” military parlance for amphibious transport vehicles. Airhart blames Grabowski’s heavy-handedness for the heavy losses in his company: out of 130 soldiers, there were 52 casualties, with 18 killed and 34 injured, many seriously.**

He also claims 80 percent of his company tested positive for depleted uranium poisoning. “They sent us in there with plastic, watch-like devices and then collected them when we left, and we never saw (the devices) again. Ultimately, they sent us back these results about DU,” he says.

**Returning to the topic of his present anti-war activism at Kent State University, the soldier turned student says, “I knew that I wanted to join the movement as soon as I got out.”**

The key problem now, he explains, is that “85 percent of students are against the war, but most of them are not active in doing anything about it. It’s not really personal enough.”

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## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

# **US Toll In Iraq In October Is Fourth Highest Of The War**

10.31.05 AFP

**WASHINGTON (AFP) - The killings of six more US soldiers in roadside explosions in Iraq raised the US death toll for October to 93, making it the fourth deadliest month for the US military since the March 2003 invasion.**

The deaths raised to 93 the number of US servicemembers who lost their lives in Iraq or as a result of wounds and injuries suffered in Iraq during the month, according to an AFP tally based on Pentagon and military casualty reports.

**The US monthly death toll was exceeded only in April 2004 when it reached 135; November 2004 when it hit 137; and January 2005 when 106 were killed, according to Pentagon figures.**

**The tolls include combat and non-combat deaths.**

Those higher death tolls were linked to major episodes in the insurgency. US forces battled uprisings in southern Iraq and the Sunni heartland city of Fallujah in April, and then stormed Fallujah in November of last year. In January, elections were held to a transitional national assembly.

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## **ENOUGH: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



10.31.05: With smoke from an ambushed Iraqi police vehicle billowing in the distance, US soldiers from Bravo Company 1-87 Infantry 10th Mountain Division 1st Brigade Combat Team take positions as they search for suspects in response to the ambush on the police convoy, in western Baghdad. (AFP/David Furst)

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## Michigan Marine Killed



11.1.05: Marine Sgt. Michael Paul Hodshire, 25, from Hillsdale County, Mich., died Sunday while on duty in Iraq, a family spokesman said. Hodshire entered basic training in 1999, four days after he graduated from North Adams-Jerome High School, Kurtz said. He was deployed in Iraq from October 2003 through June 2004, then redeployed in July 2005. (AP Photo/Kurtz Funeral Home)

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## II MEF SOLDIER KILLED IN ACTION NEAR AL HASWAH

November 1, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS  
RELEASE Number: 05-11-01C

**CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Soldier assigned to the 155th Brigade Combat Team, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), was killed in action conducting combat operations against the enemy after being attacked with an improvised explosive device during a foot patrol in the vicinity of al Haswah on Oct. 31.**

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## Northern Marianas Troops Killed

01/11/2005 Radio Australia

**Two soldiers from the Northern Marianas have died in bomb attacks in Iraq.**

Our reporter Gemma Casas says Sergeant Wilgene Lieto and Specialist Jeff Derrence Jack died on Monday in the northern city of Balad.

Officials say the two Saipan soldiers were killed while patrolling the area, about 68 kilometres north of the Iraqi capital Baghdad.

Their deaths bring to three the number of casualties from the islands' contingent serving with the United States military in Iraq.

More than 500 men and women from the Northern Marianas are currently deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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## Maryland Soldier Killed



11.1.05: This undated photo shows U.S. Army Reserve Spc. Kendell Frederick, of Randallstown, Md. Frederick, who was killed in Iraq on Oct. 19. (AP Photo/Courtesy of family)

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## Northmont Grad Killed

11/01/05 By Margo Rutledge Kissell, Dayton Daily News

CLAYTON | Adam "A.J." Johnson — a 2001 graduate of Northmont High School and member of the Army's 101st Airborne Division — has been killed in Iraq, his father said Tuesday.

A.J. Johnson had been in Iraq only about five weeks.

Randy Johnson of Clayton said two Army chaplains notified him at his home Monday night.

A.J.'s mother, Fran Johnson, lives in Brookville.

"All they said was he was in a Humvee on patrol and it went over an improvised bomb," somewhere near Baghdad, said Johnson, who is awaiting more information.

His son was stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky., and left for Iraq in late September.

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## **REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



A U.S. Army soldier in western Iraq near the Syrian border October 1, 2005.  
(USAF/Tech. Sgt. Andy Dunaway/Handout/Reuters)

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## **TROOP NEWS**

# **IRAQ VETERANS FORUM: VETS SAY NO TO WAR**

**Friday, Nov. 18, 2005, 8 pm**  
**GEORGIA TECH**

**Stamps Student Center  
Student Center Complex Stage – Commons  
350 Ferst Drive NW, Atlanta, GA  
On the Georgia Tech campus**

# IRAQ VETERAN SPEAKERS:

**MICHAEL HOFFMAN** – Marine lance corporal who served honorably in the initial invasion of Iraq and later co-founded Iraq Veterans Against the War.

**ADAM REUTER** – Trained in military intelligence and sent to Iraq 3 days after his son was born; served in the cavalry with no training for his job. Was injured in war and medically discharged.

**JUSTIN GORDON** – West Point graduate who served honorably as a field artillery captain in Iraq and subsequently concluded that the war and occupation of Iraq is counter-productive to keeping America safe from terrorism.

**CAMILO MEJIA** - One of the first Iraq war resisters imprisoned - former infantry Staff Sergeant who served in Iraq and refused to return. Subsequently served 9 months in prison, released in Feb. 2005.

**ALSO SPEAKING: Evelyn Allen, mother of Sgt. Jonathan R. Shields, KIA Fallujah, Iraq 11/12/04.**

This forum on the Iraq war is sponsored by the GA Tech Chapter of Amnesty International, Greater Atlanta Chapter 125 of Veterans For Peace, Iraq Veterans Against the War, and the Georgia Peace & Justice Coalition/Atlanta.

**Media contact: Debbie Clark, 770-855-6163, dclark@antiwar.com.**

**DIRECTIONS:** Coming from the North: Take I-75 South to Exit 250, turn right onto 10th Street, turn left onto State (Hemphill is fine, too), turn right onto First Avenue, go over some humps in the street, turn left into a pay parking lot and park, then walk over to the Student Center. Someone should be there to help point the way. The Commons Stage is located on the 1st floor of the Stamps Student Center. If coming from the South, take I-75 North to Exit 250, turn left on 10th Street, then continue as above.

**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.**

## 2-7 Fucked; Worn Down

Unity Pulls Battalion Through Anxiety, Losses

October 30, 2005 endure 10 months of battle



[San Francisco Chronicle, October 30, 2005, Pg. 17]

**The 2-7 Infantry Battalion has been trying to rein in a stubborn insurgency in Tikrit. Ten months of hunting down insurgents and high-stake diplomacy---every moment on hair-trigger alert---has worn down the troops.**

**They feel the pain of losing comrades, experience anxiety when driving on roads rigged with explosives and are frustrated because of the fighting in a country where the landscape, language and culture is unlike any they have ever encountered.**

**[They're frustrated because they're highly intelligent and understand how bad it really is, and that the mission is a lie.]**

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# **True Stories From Iraq: Christian Parenti, War Reporter, joins John Crawford, “Accidental Soldier” and Iraq Veteran**

**Housing Works Bookstore Café  
Tuesday, November 15 at 7:00 pm  
126 Crosby Street (b/w Houston & Prince)  
New York, NY 10012  
212-966-0466 xt. 1270**

Acclaimed journalist Christian Parenti, and Iraq War veteran John Crawford will share their perspectives on the continuing occupation and strife in Iraq.

**Parenti, author of THE FREEDOM: SHADOWS AND HALLUCINATIONS IN OCCUPIED IRAQ (The New Press; Nov. 3, 2005 PB) has traveled to Iraq four times as a reporter for *The Nation* magazine. He is one of the only US journalists to have “embedded” with members of the resistance, as well as with US soldiers. His latest piece, recently published, covers the complicated politics of Kurdish northern Iraq: <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20051114/parenti>**

**John Crawford, author of THE LAST TRUE STORY I'LL EVER TELL: AN ACCIDENTAL SOLDIER'S ACCOUNT OF THE WAR IN IRAQ (Riverhead Books; 2005) was called to active duty and sent to Iraq with the Florida National Guard one semester short of graduation, and only days after his honeymoon. Crawford and his National Guard unit crossed into Iraq on the first day of the invasion, and his unit stayed to patrol the city for more than a year.**

While embedded with a guard unit in Baghdad, John Crawford was befriended by Parenti as he sat writing in his journal. Upon return to the States, Parenti located a literary agent for the soldier, and a year later his book, one of the only books on the Iraq war written from a grunt's-eye-view, went on to become a New York Times bestseller.

Parenti and Crawford meet for the first time in over a year at this timely event, to discuss the realities on the ground in Iraq, for US soldiers and for the Iraqi people.

**In a media landscape dominated by talking heads far removed from the conflict, and sanitized press conferences from within the heavily fortified "Green Zone", don't miss this opportunity to hear an unvarnished account of a war and occupation that shows no signs of abating, despite a rising tide of public discontent.**

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## **500 U.S. Sailors Sent To Prison In Iraq**

November 7, 2005 Navy Times

**Five hundred Navy sailors will join forces with U.S. Army military policemen to guard detainees at a newly renovated prison facility in Iraq.**

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## **Enrollment Falling For Army ROTC**

October 31, 2005 Norfolk Virginian-Pilot

**National enrollment for the Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps has dropped 14 percent since 2002. During the same period, Army ROTC enrollment at Virginia colleges and universities has slipped about 15 percent.**

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## **Veteran Says: "I Will Not Be Bullied Or Intimidated Into Silence"**

**"Now, I've got a message for the police, and GMU authorities, and for all of the right-wing goons who helped the police brutalize me or who cheered them on. If by 'don't cause any more disturbances' they mean don't tell students the truth about the military, then I will continually cause disturbances. I will not be bullied or intimidated into silence, I will not respect or obey any order that tells me I can't exercise my own inalienable rights," said Khan.**

October 23, 2005 Bryan G. Pfeifer, Workers World

**After being "banned" from campus, Charles Peterson has been reinstated at Holyoke Community College. This victory for the entire counter-recruitment and anti-war movement came only after massive worldwide support for Peterson and resistance actions, including a march and rally on campus Oct. 6.**

The attempt to bar Peterson from the campus where he studies and works came after a counter-recruiting action there on Sept. 29. He and other members of the HCC Anti-War coalition were brutalized and Maced by campus and state cops as they were protesting Army National Guard recruiting at the student cafeteria. They also focused on the Pentagon's bigoted "Don't ask, don't tell" policy, which essentially bars LGBT persons from enlisting—in violation of the college's and the state's non-discrimination laws.

**The day after this action, Peterson was visited at his home by two state police officers, who told him he was banned from campus and would be arrested for trespassing if he entered public HCC property.** Peterson, a leading member of the coalition, is vice president for academic affairs on the Student Senate and is employed at HCC.

**The movement started a campaign that resulted in well over 1,000 calls, emails and faxes from all over the world to college president William Messner.** Many anti-war and other progressive organizations also helped by sending out statements and announcements to thousands of members on their list serves or posting these on websites, among other support actions.

The Anti-War coalition is still demanding an immediate, unconditional public apology from the college; a pledge of non-retaliation against activists; a thorough and impartial investigation; and a ban keeping military recruiters off campus.

### **Hands Off Tariq Khan!**

**Tariq Khan, a Pakistani student at George Mason University in Virginia and a former U.S. Air Force member, was assaulted by police and an ROTC member while protesting Marine recruiters on campus Sept. 29. Evidently they didn't like the sign this veteran was carrying: "Recruiters lie, don't be deceived."**

**An ROTC member ripped off his sign and police were seen choking the peaceful protester and dragging him, handcuffed, to a police car after he refused to move from the recruiter's table area. Khan has been charged with disorderly conduct, trespassing at his own university and resisting arrest. His court date is set for Nov. 14.**

Like Peterson, Khan is receiving widespread support.

**An Oct. 3 rally at George Mason to demand immediately dropping the charges against Khan drew over 150 students and allies. Hundreds, if not thousands of people, have supported Khan in various ways. This includes 129 faculty members signing a letter calling for an investigation of the police actions and of the school's policy on First Amendment rights.**

Over 550 students, faculty, staff, alumni, campus community members and other supporters have signed a "Drop all charges!" online petition. ([new.petitiononline.com/gmutariq/petition.html](http://new.petitiononline.com/gmutariq/petition.html)) And the American Civil Liberties Union is defending Khan, who is considering taking legal action against the university.

**As a result of this pressure, the university thus far has issued a statement to Khan recognizing that he was staging a peaceful protest and insisting it is committed to students' rights to free speech on campus; it also pledged to conduct an internal investigation into the conduct of the police officers against the other students involved in the Sept. 29 incident.**

Khan himself, like Peterson, is on the front lines in his own defense. At the Oct. 3 rally he declared:

**"Now, I've got a message for the police, and GMU authorities, and for all of the right-wing goons who helped the police brutalize me or who cheered them on. If by 'don't cause any more disturbances' they mean don't tell students the truth about the military, then I will continually cause disturbances. I will not be bullied or intimidated into silence, I will not respect or obey any order that tells me I can't exercise my own inalienable rights," said Khan.**

**"I will continue to stand against war, militarism, occupation and authoritarianism. And I will not acquiesce to fear tactics and bullying and stupidity and hate. The university authorities' actions against me last Thursday were their way of telling me to shut up. And my answer to them is: 'No, I will not shut up!' They don't want me to say recruiters lie. Well I'm going to say it, 'Recruiters lie!,'" concluded Khan.**

**To support the "Drop all charges, now!" demand, speak your mind to Alan G. Merten, George Mason president, at (703) 993-8700 or mail letters to: Office of the President, George Mason University, 4400 University Dr. MSN 3A1, Fairfax, VA 22030.**

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## **Lots Of Atheists In This Foxhole**

10.31.05 Army Times

**Thousands of "nonbelieving Americans" are coming to Washington this Veterans Day for the "Atheists in Foxholes" rally, sponsored by the group American Atheists to challenge the adage that "there are no atheists in foxholes." A parade and rally are planned on the National Mall that organizers say will include thousands of "atheists, freethinkers, humanists and other nonbelievers."**

"We've heard for too long the myth that 'there are no atheists in foxholes,' when in fact it's just the opposite," said Ellen Johnson, the group's president. "Atheists have served this country with distinction in all branches of the armed forces ... defending our nation, our secular Constitution and our way of life."

The guest speaker will be atheist Hans Kasten, an Army veteran of World War II and survivor of a Nazi prisoner-of-war camp. American Atheists bills itself as “a nationwide movement that defends civil rights for atheists; works for the total separation of church and state; and addresses issues of First Amendment public policy.” More information on the Veterans Day rally is online at [www.atheistfoxholes.org](http://www.atheistfoxholes.org).

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **Assorted Resistance Action**



**Police car damaged by a roadside bomb in Kirkuk November 1, 2005. Three policemen were injured in the attack in central Kirkuk. REUTERS/Slahaldeen Rasheed**

01 Nov 2005 Reuters & Aljazeera & AFP News

**BAGHDAD - Two Iraqi police commandos were wounded when their patrol came under fire in southern Baghdad.**

**BAGHDAD - One civilian was killed in eastern Baghdad when Iraqi police commandos opened fire by mistake, police said.**

**BALAD - Police in Balad, north of Baghdad, said they found two bodies, both of them shot dead. One was identified as a police officer and was found in a river; the other was found in a village nearby.**

**SAMARRA - A police officer was kidnapped from his home near Samarra, 100 km (62 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.**

**A policeman was killed when their patrol in al-Madain was attacked, south of Baghdad, Iraqi police sources said.**

In Kirkuk the city's police chief Colonel Khatab Rash, and his driver were injured when a bomber targeted the chief's convoy as it passed through an area in the centre of the city.

Six Iraqi soldiers were injured when an explosive device was detonated targeting an Iraqi army patrol in northern Baquba city.

At least three Iraqi policemen were killed in a roadside bombing near the town of Mahmudiyah.

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

## **Kirkuk Police Commander Blown Up**



**Damaged police car hit by an attacker who detonated explosives hidden beneath his clothes after lunging at the police patrol stuck in traffic, wounding the city's police commander, Col. Khatab Rash, in Kirkuk Nov. 1, 2005. (AP Photo/Yahya Ahmed)**

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**SHIA MILITIA RULES;  
ISSUES RESPECTED SAFE-  
CONDUCT CARDS**

October 31, 2005 Washington Times

Identity cards issued to members of Sheik Muqtada al-Sadr's illegal militia are brandished openly in areas controlled by the firebrand [translation: nationalist and anti-occupation, usually] cleric, reflecting widespread defiance of the central government.

Other Iraqis want the protection of the cards, which ensure the bearer safe passage in Sadr City---home to about 2 million Shiites in Baghdad---and parts of southern Iraq.

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

**“I Was In The Marine Corps  
Infantry”  
“I Learned Absolutely Nothing  
Of Value In The Rest Of The  
World”**

I would also point out that the GI Bill is only \$1004 per month. And it is only good for 36 months. That is the extent of what the military pays for your college. So if they are joining for college money, there are better and safer routes to take to afford college.

If they are just romantic thrill seeking warrior types, I'd recommend joining the Iraqi resistance for they are fighting for a more noble cause.

November 1, 2005 By RON JACOBS, CounterPunch. An Interview with Kent State's Dave Airhart

Last week, military recruiters set up a climbing wall and information table at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. The local student antiwar organization, the Kent State Antiwar Committee (KSAWC), which is part of the Campus Antiwar Network (CAN), called for a protest against the presence of the recruiters.

**To understand what happened next, I will quote from the KSAWC press release that was published in Counterpunch and elsewhere after the protest.**

*IRAQ WAR veteran and Kent State student, Dave Airhart, is under attack for opposing the war he considers "unjust" and attempting to stop any more students from being used as "cannon fodder."*

*On October 19, the Kent State Anti-War Committee (KSAWC) stood around the Army recruiters, who had brought a rock-climbing wall to entice students over to talk with them. A member of KSAWC and former Afghanistan and Iraq War veteran, David Airhart decided to show his opposition against the war by exercising his rights of free speech. After filling out liability forms Airhart climbed the rock wall.*

*Once he reached the top he took out a banner, which he held under his jacket, and draped it over the wall. The banner read: Kent, Ohio for Peace.*

*Airhart was forced to climb down the back of the wall because a recruiter was coming up the front, yelling at him. As he was climbing down another recruiter came up the back and proceeded to assault Airhart both verbally and physically by pulling his shirt, forcing him off the wall. Airhart was fined \$105. by city police for disorderly conduct and told that he will have to go to judicial affairs at the university where he will face probation or expulsion*

**I contacted David a day or two after he was cited and asked him for an interview. He agreed immediately.**

*Ron: To begin with, were you surprised at the apparent vehemence of the university's response to your action?*

David: Yes. I figured that they would be more understanding in the fact that I was using my freedom of speech to illustrate KSWAC's opposition to the war.

*Ron: What is your current status with the university and the Kent authorities?*

David: I have paid my fine with the Kent City Police. There is a Judicial Affairs hearing for my case on Nov. 8, at 1:30pm.

*Ron: Have they backed off from their threats to expel you?*

**David: It is still a possibility that I will be banned from campus indefinitely, or expelled.**

*Ron: Oh yeah, what are you studying?*

David: I am studying cultural anthropology.

*Ron: Let's go back to your military service. Why did you join the service in the first place?*

David: I watched too many war movies, and I had an overly romanticized view of what combat might be like.

*Ron: What branch were you in and did you have any special training?*

David: I was in the Marine Corps Infantry. I learned absolutely nothing of value in the rest of the world. I learned how to shoot guns and how to get yelled at a lot.



Ron: Jump school? Medic?

David: Nope.

*Ron: I see that you served in both Afghanistan and Iraq. How long were you in both places?*

David: I was in Afghanistan for 7 months, starting Christmas day of 2003, and in Iraq for 6 months, starting at the beginning of the war in March 2003.

*Ron: Did you do more than one tour either place?*

David: No.

*Ron: What was a typical week like in country?*

**David: In Iraq: Mostly doing vehicle check points where we would search vehicles for weapons. We also patrolled cities such as An-Nasiriyah. We searched homes. We would knock on the door. If nobody answered, we would break through the door. We would throw all of their stuff around looking for munitions and stuff to make bombs with.**

In Afghanistan: We didn't do much, we just guarded various prisons and manned watchtowers. I spent most of my time with a psychiatrist at this time, mostly to get out of doing stuff.

*Ron: What was your impression of the Afghani and Iraqi people?*

David: Most of the people that I met were really friendly. They seemed scared, anticipating the worst. The ones I met were cooperative.

*Ron: Did it change as you spent more time in their countries?*

David: No, not really.

*Ron: Now, the big question. What made you decide to oppose the US wars in these countries?*

David: Mostly personal reasons. Like the fact that most of the dead bodies that I saw were women and children, innocent civilians.

Also, most of my friends that were killed were killed by friendly fire from close air support.

It is obvious that there is some hidden agenda behind Bush's motivation for going to war in Iraq, because they had nothing to do with the 9-11 attacks, and there were no weapons of mass destruction.

**We should know the real reasons that we are fighting and dying over there. At the very least, we should know that, be it a good or bad reason, it is important that we**

**know why. If it is that crucial that it stays a secret, it is probably too crooked to be worth fighting for anyway.**

*Ron: Was there any one incident that you were involved in or heard about that made you decide to speak out?*

David: Mostly all the murders of innocent civilians. I guess, the different fliers and anti-war groups at Kent that appealed to me.

*Ron: I'm fifty years old and the name Kent State has a huge emotional attachment to it, because of the murders that happened there on May 4, 1970. When those students were killed by the National Guard that day I was living in Frankfurt, Germany. My dad had been stationed there since March of that year, right after he came back from Vietnam. A bunch of us students at the high school and junior high on base protested the whole thing. We were joined by GIs and Germans, who protested the invasion of Cambodia and the murders at Kent (and later that month at Jackson State in Mississippi) in their own way. Does the history of protest at Kent State influence your group's organizing?*

David: Absolutely. We feel that since we are at Kent State and have such a history of anti-war activity, we get a lot of media attention whenever we have a protest or anti-war action. We try to use that to our advantage. Unfortunately, the amount of active anti-war protesters at Kent is very small. So we also try to use the fact that Kent State has had a reputation for having a major anti-war population, we try to remind students that if they are against the war, to not be silent about it. Not only do we have a war to stop, but it would be nice to know that people are perpetuating this tradition.

*Ron: Do you find that people you talk to in your antiwar work listen to you more than your fellow antiwarriors who have never been in the service? Why or why not do you think this is?*

David: Yes, I think so. I think that anti-war statements have more of an impact if they come from someone who has been there and actually seen with their own eyes the horrible things that are going on.

*Ron: How do most people that you talk to during your antiwar work respond? I don't mean the Campus Republicans or other hardcore war supporters, but just the regular students and townspeople?*

David: Unfortunately it seems like most of them are indifferent, more concerned with personal things. This is frustrating, being that this is Kent State, and there is a lot of activist that count on Kent State to be a strong force in the antiwar movement.

*Ron: What's next?*

David: I'm going to try to keep doing things that help build the antiwar movement and to get its presence felt to as large of a population as possible. However, this time we will try to do it in a way that doesn't put any of our members at risk of being expelled. We will try to use this incident to show the administration at Kent State how terrible it is that they allow our campus to be a supplier of fresh bodies for Bush's war machine. Hopefully they will realize that it is the administration who is putting us students in

danger through allowing recruiters on campus, not KSAWC. KSAWC is trying to protect ourselves and the entire campus from being sent to die in an unjust war. We will continue to do actions that aid in removing military recruiters from campus.

**Ron: And what do you have to say to other folks who might be thinking about joining the military?**

**David: If they want, I can kill a couple of their friends and then give them some money for college, if that is what they really want. At least that way they wouldn't have to spend four miserable years in an oppressive organization where they deprive you of most of your rights and use you for whatever they feel like.**

**I would also point out that the GI Bill is only \$1004 per month. And it is only good for 36 months. That is the extent of what the military pays for your college. So if they are joining for college money, there are better and safer routes to take to afford college.**

**If they are just romantic thrill seeking warrior types, I'd recommend joining the Iraqi resistance for they are fighting for a more noble cause.**

Thanks, David. Good Luck.

**Tell Carol Cartwright, Kent State's President, to back off Dave Airhart:  
Carol.cartwright@kent.edu**

*Ron Jacobs is author of *The Way the Wind Blew: a history of the Weather Underground*, which is just republished by Verso. Jacobs' essay on Big Bill Broonzy is featured in CounterPunch's new collection on music, art and sex, *Serpents in the Garden*. He can be reached at: [rjacobs3625@charter.net](mailto:rjacobs3625@charter.net)*

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## Of Cats And Birds

From: Z  
To: GI Special  
Sent: November 01, 2005  
Subject: of cats and birds

**Heard this one as a kid in southeastern Europe (but doubt it's one of Aesop's fables):**

**A bird is singing in the grass when a cow strolls by and casually unloads, trapping the bird in the manure. he bird cries for help, attracting the attention of a cat.**

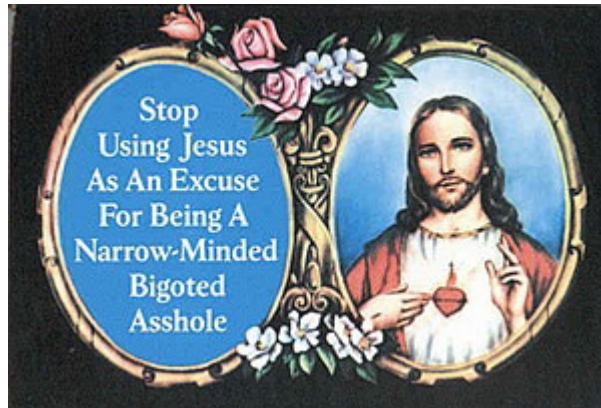
**The cat comes to the rescue, extracts the bird, cleans it off nicely, and gobbles it up.**

**The moral: The one who gets you out of shit is not necessarily your friend.**

Well, the Iraqi bird was more savvy: seems it packed an RPG under its wing, just in case.

Solidarity,  
Z

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[Thanks to John Gingerich, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

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## “This Administration Is The Righteous Focal Point Of A Growing National Anger”

Oct. 25, 2005 Karen Kwiatkowski Interviewed by Don Nash, Unknown News.

***Karen Kwiatkowski is a retired USAF lieutenant colonel, who spent her final four and a half years in uniform working at the Pentagon. [Excerpts]***

*Q. How would you describe current military and civilian leadership at Defense for all branches of U.S. service?*

**K: Politicized, emasculated, obedient to the bureaucracy and ignorant of the Constitution. There may be exceptions, but I can't think of any among those still serving.**

*Q. Does America hold any of the blame for the radicalization of Muslim extremists?*

**We do, in this way. It is the U.S. government which has made a conscious policy for well over sixty years to support anti-democratic and often corrupt dictators around the world.**

**After World War II, it was because of Cold War competition with the Soviet Union. When the Cold War ended, our sponsorship of bad leaders, especially in the**

**Middle East, again reflected our pre-World War II program -- pure imperial economics.** Hence the sustaining 80 plus year relationship with the House of Saud.

Our approach to the Middle East calls for us to support leaders like Mubarek and Sharon, as well as the leadership of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and others. We support leaders who play hardball with their citizens and others, leaders who don't take risks with real democracy. We support leaders who prefer statist and corrupt economic systems, and we don't seem to mind that those systems are incapable of providing opportunities, freedom or wealth for the citizens.

Because of this, we appear to many in the region as liars and greedy hypocrites.

**Our unconditional support for friendly despots, as well as the state of Israel -- as radical a religious state as Saudi Arabia, in many ways -- shows our true political face to the people who live and suffer under the harsh hand of these governments. In cases like these, radical behavior becomes more attractive as it is often the only thing that gets anyone to listen.**

*Q. American media maintains that America is deeply divided. Would you consider the American people to be divided, and how could the American people overcome these divisions?*

**I don't believe America is divided, certainly not into blue and red, or war and anti-war. Americans don't like stupid policies. We stand together in rejecting out-and-out stupidity, and while we like to debate alternatives, we agree that stupid and idiotic is no good.**

An example of this was seen in the American reaction to the personal behavior of Bill Clinton in his last term, which led to his impeachment. He had no defenders for his behavior in this country -- all were united in condemning his lack of control, and lack of respect for his spouse, daughter, other women, the office of the presidency, and the Congress.

Unfortunately for the current administration, we are all again united in condemning the lies that Bush and Cheney felt they had to tell to get a war they wanted on the cheap.

**No-one in the country today defends the President for his outright lying, or his unforgivable stupidity if indeed he thought he was telling the truth about his invasion of Iraq.**

No-one in the country defends the disastrous way the occupation of Iraq has been handled.

**There is no division -- we all agree, from all political viewpoints, that this administration is the righteous focal point of a growing national anger.**

**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

### Jump? How High?



Fake Iraqi President Jalal Talabani salutes Nov. 1, 2005. (AP Photo/Samir Mizban)

**So Much For That  
“Sovereignty” Bullshit:  
Iraqi “President” Admits U.S.  
Military Dictatorship Controls  
His Country:  
“I Cannot Impose My Opinion  
On Them”**

Reuters November 1, 2005

Iraqi President Jalal Talabani said in remarks published on Tuesday he would oppose the use of Iraqi territory as a launchpad for any U.S. military strike on Syria.

"I absolutely reject that Iraqi territory be used as a launchpad for any military strike against Syria or any other Arab country," Talabani told Arabic daily Asharq Al-Awsat.

**"But this is my personal opinion and my capabilities are limited in confronting America's might ... I cannot impose my opinion on them," he added in an interview.**

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

## **Terminal Brain-Death Strikes Down U.S. Reporters In Iraq**

October 30, 2005 St. Louis Post-Dispatch

**Journalists in Iraq say that deteriorating security in Iraq has made it much more difficult to provide the news coverage Americans need to understand the war and reconstruction efforts.**

**[This people all have terminal brain death. Either that or they have their faces buried in the coke like Scarface. The story, idiots, *is* the deteriorating security that makes it more difficult for you to do anything. Can we try one more time: the deteriorating security situation IS the FUCKING NEWS STORY. Hello? Earth to reporters?**

**[But oh no, you wouldn't want to report about THAT. The General might not like it, and your job is kissing his ass, right? If not, you would be reporting on the deteriorating security, wouldn't you? Up close and personal?]**

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## **The Great Reconstruction Follies Roll On**

**"The completed substations were found to be well planned, well designed and well constructed," the report says. Unfortunately, the system for distributing power from the completed substations was largely nonexistent.**

OCTOBER 30, 2005 By James Glanz, The New York Times

As the money runs out on the \$30 billion American-financed reconstruction of Iraq, the officials in charge cannot say how many planned projects they will complete, and there is no clear source for hundreds of millions of dollars a year needed to operate the projects that have been finished, according to a report to Congress released on Sunday.

**The report, by the special inspector general for Iraq reconstruction, describes an array of projects that went awry, sometimes astonishingly, like electrical substations that were built at great cost but never connected to the country's electrical grid.**

**The five electrical substations examined by the inspector general's office, which is led by Stuart Bowen Jr., were built in southern Iraq at a cost of \$28.8 million. "The completed substations were found to be well planned, well designed and well constructed," the report says. Unfortunately, the system for distributing power from the completed substations was largely nonexistent.**

**"No date for installing the distribution system was given," the report says.**

**At least 412 contractors and other civilian workers have died since the American-led invasion, 147 of them Americans.**

**Overall, the report says, there have been 4,208 death and injury claims filed through the insurance coverage that United States law requires for contractors of any nationality who work on American bases abroad. Although that number includes claims from bases around the world, the majority are believed to originate from Iraq and Afghanistan.**

Those death and injury tolls, which in the chaos of Iraq are probably underreported to begin with, especially among Iraqi contractors, have come about even though more than a quarter of the reconstruction money has actually "been spent on security costs related to the insurgency," the report says.

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## **OCCUPATION PALESTINE**

**“We Have To Kill All The Palestinians Unless They Are Resigned To Live Here As Slaves”**

November 01, 2005 By Ward Reilly Via [vvawnet@vvaw.org](mailto:vvawnet@vvaw.org)

**Now that Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is the lead story because of his remarks about Israel, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Thursday called for Iran to be expelled from the U.N., saying "a state which calls for the destruction of**



**another people cannot be a member of the United Nations."** Israeli Vice-Premier Shimon Peres said that Iran should be expelled from the United Nations as a result of his comments.

The UN released a statement, saying "Calls for violence, and for the destruction of any state, are manifestly inconsistent with any claim to be a mature and responsible member of the international community," the EU leaders said in a statement.

**Absolutely right. So let's be fair and balanced and give the Ariel Sharon and others their chance to voice their opinions:**

**-- "If only it would sink into the sea." Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin referring to Gaza, just before signing the Oslo Accords.**

**"I don't know something called International Principles. I vow that I'll burn every Palestinian child (that) will be born in this area. The Palestinian woman and child is more dangerous than the man, because the Palestinian child's existence infers that generations will go on, but the man causes limited danger. I vow that if I was just an Israeli civilian and I met a Palestinian I would burn him and I would make him suffer before killing him. With one hit I've killed 750 Palestinians (in Rafah in 1956).**

**"I wanted to encourage my soldiers by raping Arabic girls as the Palestinian women is a slave for Jews, and we do whatever we want to her and nobody tells us what we shall do but we tell others what they shall do." Ariel Sharon, current Israeli Prime Minister, in an interview with General Ouze Merham, 1956**

**"We must use terror, assassination, intimidation, land confiscation, and the cutting of all social services to rid the Galilee of its Arab population." David Ben-Gurion, Israeli Prime Minister May 1948, to the General Staff.**

**"Israel should have exploited the repression of the demonstrations in China, when world attention focused on that country, to carry out mass expulsions among the Arabs of the territories." Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli Prime Minister: Speech at Bar-Ilan University, 1989**

**"We must expel Arabs and take their places." David Ben Gurion, Israeli Prime Minister 1937, Ben Gurion and the Palestine Arabs, Oxford University Press, 1985.**

**"We have to kill all the Palestinians unless they are resigned to live here as slaves." Chairman Heilbrun of the Committee for the Re-election of General Shlomo Lahat, the Mayor of Tel Aviv, October 1983.**

**"The Palestinians" would be crushed like grasshoppers ... heads smashed against the boulders and walls." Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in a speech to Jewish settlers New York Times April 1, 1988**

**Why wasn't Israel expelled from the UN as a result of these remarks, as Peres demands of Iran?**

Please distribute as needed. Perhaps it will get to the UN and EU too.

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

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## **CLASS WAR REPORTS**

# **Class War In New Orleans**

**A local judge told me that their court expects to process a thousand evictions a day for weeks.**

**Renters still in shelters or temporary homes across the country will never see the court notice taped to the door of their home. Because they will not show up for the eviction hearing that they do not know about, their possessions will be tossed out in the street.**

October 31, 2005 Via Michelle, Veterans For Peace Discussion Group

By Bill Quigley, who teaches at Loyola University New Orleans School of Law

On Halloween night, New Orleans will be very, very dark.

Well over half the homes on the east bank of New Orleans sit vacant because they still do not have electricity. More do not have natural gas or running water. Most stoplights still do not work. Most street lights remain out.

**Fully armed National Guard troops refuse to allow over ten thousand people to even physically visit their property in the Lower Ninth Ward neighborhood. Despite the fact that people cannot come back, tens of thousands of people face eviction from their homes.**

**A local judge told me that their court expects to process a thousand evictions a day for weeks.**

**Renters still in shelters or temporary homes across the country will never see the court notice taped to the door of their home. Because they will not show up for the eviction hearing that they do not know about, their possessions will be tossed out in the street.**

In the street their possessions will sit alongside an estimated 3 million truck loads of downed trees, piles of mud, fiberglass insulation, crushed sheetrock, abandoned cars, spoiled mattresses, wet rugs, and horrifyingly smelly refrigerators full of food from August.

**There are also New Orleans renters facing evictions from landlords who want to renovate and charge higher rents to the out of town workers who populate the city. Some renters have offered to pay their rent and are still being evicted.**

Others question why they should have to pay rent for September when they were not allowed to return to New Orleans.

New Orleans, known for its culture and food and music, is now pushing away the very people who created the culture and food and music. Mardi Gras Indians live and paraded in neighborhoods that sit without electricity or water. The back room cooks for many of the most famous restaurants cannot yet return to New Orleans. Musicians remain in exile.

**Housing is scarce and rents are soaring. Over 245,000 people lost jobs in September. Public education in New Orleans has not restarted. The levees are not even up to their flawed level in August.**

Dr. Arjun Sengupta, the United Nations Human Rights Commission Special Reporter on Extreme Poverty, visited New Orleans and Baton Rouge last week. He toured the devastated areas and listened to the evacuees still in shelters and those living out of town with family.

Dr. Sengupta described current conditions as "shocking" and "gross violations of human rights."

The devastation itself is shocking, he explained, but even more shocking is that two months have passed and there is little to nothing being done to reconstruct vast areas of New Orleans. "The US is the richest nation in the history of the world. Why cannot it restore electricity and water and help people rebuild their homes and neighborhoods?

**"If the US can rebuild Afghanistan and Iraq, why not New Orleans?"**

**The longer the poor and working class of New Orleans stay away, the more likely it will be that they never return. That, some say, is exactly what those in power in New Orleans and Louisiana and the US must want.**

**Otherwise, why are they making New Orleans a ghost town?**

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## **While Soldiers Die, Oil Corporations Brag Of Record Profits**

Oct 27 By STEVE QUINN, Associated Press Writer, IRVING, Texas

**High prices for oil and natural gas propelled Exxon Mobil Corp. and Royal Dutch Shell PLC to their best quarterly results ever on Thursday, with Exxon becoming the first U.S. company ever to ring up quarterly sales of \$100 billion.**

**To put Exxon's performance into perspective, its third quarter revenue was greater than the annual gross domestic product of some of the largest oil producing nations, including the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait. The world's largest publicly traded oil company also set a U.S. profit record with net income of almost \$10 billion, according to Standard & Poor's equity market analyst Howard Silverblatt.**

**Both Exxon and Shell said their performances were buoyed by higher crude-oil and natural-gas prices, even as output suffered due to a busy hurricane season in the Gulf of Mexico.**

Exxon's net income ballooned 75 percent to \$9.92 billion, compared with \$5.68 billion a year ago. The previous oil-industry earnings record was Exxon's 2004 fourth-quarter profit of \$8.42 billion. Revenue grew to \$100.72 billion from \$76.38 billion in the prior-year period.

At Shell, third-quarter net income attributable to shareholders grew 68 percent to \$9.03 billion, compared with \$5.37 billion a year earlier. Including income attributable to minority interests, profit rose 67 percent to \$9.39 billion at the Anglo-Dutch company. Revenue rose 8 percent to \$76.44 billion, in spite of an 11 percent decline in oil and natural gas output.

**"We are capturing the benefits of high oil and gas prices and refining margins," Shell Chief Financial Officer Peter Voser said, referring to the profit margin on each barrel of crude that is refined into gasoline, diesel and jet fuel.**

Excluding certain items, Exxon's profit was \$8.3 billion, or \$1.32 per share, or slightly below the \$1.38 per share expected by analysts polled by Thomson Financial.

Shell said adjusted earnings on a current cost of supplies basis - a measurement that strips out the fluctuating value of the company's oil and gas inventories - was \$7.37 billion, sharply higher than analysts' forecasts.

**Howard Silverblatt, equity analyst at Standard & Poor's, said both the net income and sales figures are all-time records for publicly traded U.S. companies.**

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