

GI SPECIAL 3D26:



FREE KEVIN BENDERMAN NOW !

lanotinournamela.blogspot.com

**“For All Of The Soldiers
Who Have Died”**

**From: Monica Benderman
To: GI Special
Sent: November 24, 2005**

For all of the soldiers who have died at the hands of these people -- for all of the soldiers who suffer irreparable wounds, internal and external, because these people don't care about anyone except themselves -- Kevin has faced everything that he has - and it's time for these people to pay the piper.

With the letter to Bush that Kevin sent last November [see below], he clearly told Bush and his commanders what he intended to do. He said no more -- that one letter was all he needed.

On December 22, 2004, I clearly told the American people what they were allowing these people to do to our soldiers and their families in an Open Letter to Our Leaders. [See below.] There was nothing more that needed to be said. Words weren't going to do it -- actions were.

We spent one year silently taking everything they could throw at us, because of those two letters - and we documented everything - sworn statements, testimonies that contradicted each other, counseling statements that were meant to shut Kevin up, legal motions filed that were designed to keep Kevin's voice from being heard in the court room -- the year is over -and now they will face what they did.

We believe we have all the evidence we need, and we hope the BendermanTimeline website will serve as the showcase for what we have to say.

Thank you for supporting us - and for staying connected. Lots of people, because we didn't openly speak out, thought we didn't know, and thought we couldn't see. We saw -- but it's faith in what isn't seen, and trust in what cannot be said, that brings the best results.

Hopefully we will accomplish what we set out to do when we started.

If we do - it will make everything we have been through worth something for the sacrifice. And -- it should be what brings Kevin home -- soon.

Thanks again.
Happy Thanksgiving.
Monica and Kevin Benderman

“There Is Incredible Waste In The Military Process, Beginning With Lives, And Ending With Honor”

Open Letter to Our Leaders From A Concerned Iraq War Soldier:



Monica and Sgt. Kevin Benderman

www.selvesandothers.org

December 22, 2004: Sgt. Kevin and Monica Benderman, 3rd Infantry Division -- Ft. Stewart, GA

I am writing to you because you have been elected to serve the people. I am one of those people, my family is one family in America.

We are just a family, we care about each other, we work hard and we believe in good things. We have a modest income, not much, but enough to give us what we need. Like most American families, we struggle with the way things are these days. We try to justify that our votes have mattered, our voices are heard, our opinions count, all the while watching decisions being made, unable to recognize the “voice of the people” in the final outcome.

I have worked for years serving those whom I felt called to serve, our elderly. I have fought hard for them, to ensure that they receive the respect they deserve, not only from family, but from community as well. But now, I have left my fight for the elderly, to do what I can to help in a more significant effort.

My husband works with an equal amount of passion. Everything that he has been asked to do by his employer, he has done.

Everywhere he has had to go, he has gone with the trust that the words of his employer are honest, and committed to his needs and the needs of his fellow workers.

Lies.

My husband has had faith in an employer who cares more about the American lifestyle than its people. My husband is an American Soldier.

My husband deserves so much more than what he has been given in return by his country. I deserve more, my children do.

The families of all the soldiers who have VOLUNTEERED to serve and now are asked to fight in a war that is not about defending this country deserve more.

This country has disrespected them at every turn. This country has and is failing them. It is failing all who have given with faith, who have fought for the right thing, who have been led in their commitment with the false promises and empty words of our leadership.

This is the fight I take on now, and my husband joins me.

Now, I write to show you some of the specifics of the last year of disrespect that my husband and I have seen, as his unit has prepared for a possible return deployment to Iraq.

Our soldiers are putting their lives on the line. Our VOLUNTEER army is sacrificing its integrity to fight for a cause that has lost its meaning, in a country that did nothing to America before we chose to invade it and occupy it in the name of democracy.

As they serve in the most dangerous situations, we hear how they are supported, how our government fights to give them everything they need. We see no pictures of the sacrifice. That is hidden, and our media is ordered not to show it. We see only words and videos of politicians speaking boldly about supporting our military, and honoring their service with all the best equipment, supplies, and motivation.

We see nothing of the loss, the destruction: It is kept from us.

We have seen faulty leadership. We have seen a company commander who is not strong enough to understand that the men he leads do not “sweat the small stuff.” They have been in hell, and survived.

The small stuff means nothing when you have a choice of fighting over petty paperwork issues or leaving for the day to spend time with your family. We have experienced this commander's frustration repeatedly.

When a Private 1st Class received a DUI one weekend, off post, this commander decided that he would punish his entire unit by forcing them to participate in training classes on their weekend, an illegal order that was promptly disobeyed by most of the NCO's in the unit.

There is an Army regulation that states, “extra training or instruction is used when a soldier's duty performance has been substandard or deficient.” This company commander tried to threaten these soldiers with what is known as an “Article 15,” for having disobeyed his order. When the soldiers demanded that they be given a Court Martial so that they could defend their actions, the company commander withdrew from the fight.

In a later situation, this same Company Commander was quite irritated when a bag that he was to have prepared and maintained with his equipment could not be found. Many soldiers had observed the commander leave with his bag, and yet he

insisted that he could not be responsible, that a soldier had taken it. He ordered the entire unit to stay at the Company headquarters until 10:30 at night, as discipline for his not being able to monitor his own equipment. Again, more than 15 soldiers appealed this order.

Military radios are a sensitive piece of equipment. They must be kept under lock and key when not being used, and in most units, they are kept in the Arms Room along with the weapons that the soldiers are registered to use. When there is a deployment, training mission, qualifying day, the soldiers must sign the weapons out of the room, and return them for verification after use. This procedure is also followed with the radios. Except in the situation of this particular unit.

Radios have been lost, or missing on several occasions, because this Company Commander does not see the need to assign anyone to be responsible for them. When he discovers them missing, temper tantrums ensue, and soldiers who have had nothing to do with the radios are disciplined in his rage. But this Commander will not take responsibility for his actions.

Almost a month ago, this unit was sent to the rifle range for a weekend of qualifying. Supplies being what they are, the soldiers could not perform any night firings. There is not enough ammunition available.

On Sunday, soldiers watched while their Company Commander prepared to qualify. He could not. It is required that a soldier fire a minimum of 26 rounds into the bulls-eye area of the target in order to qualify. This Commander could not get 15 rounds on the target, let alone near the bulls-eye. Finally, at the end of the day, the 1st Sergeant of the unit had to spot for the commander, and he returned a target with 29 rounds on the bulls-eye.

The 1st Sergeant, when questioned by the Training Room NCO regarding the validity of the target, ordered that NCO to document that the company commander had qualified. The Training Room NCO refused the order, saying that the 1st Sergeant would have to accept that responsibility.

This same Company Commander and 1st Sergeant have asked the Training Room NCO on several occasions to "pencil-whip" the training reports that are being sent on to the Battalion Command. This is a new Company, and they are having quite a bit of trouble getting organized. The Battalion Command is never satisfied with the reports, and the numbers regarding soldiers' training records.

Rather than do what is needed to improve the actual training programs, this Company Commander files misrepresentations of facts.

After the initial experience of the Iraq invasion, the Defense Department determined that it was time to make the Army more streamlined and moveable. In January of this year, they took several units offline in order to redesign them. The Company that my husband was reassigned to was one of these new companies. There was talk about the change for several months, dates changed, soldiers changed. Finally, as the brigade was preparing for its rotation to the National Training Center in California, the Command decided it was time to make the change. All soldiers would travel to California with their

original assignment and return as part of their new units. These changes are still trying to situate, and as a result, soldiers' needs are still not being met.

While in California, Company Commanders participated in “cat fights” over who actually commanded which units. These temper tantrums repeatedly flared up in front of the soldiers they were supposed to be leading.

When the units returned from California at the end of June, there were no headquarters prepared for the new support units to report to or work out of. They set up temporary offices in old motor pools, with nothing but desks and chairs. There were no phones, no computers, no paper, and no idea whose command they fell under. Now, almost 5 months later, when these soldiers should be concentrating on training, they are finally getting offices in shape, only to have to break them down to load them into Conex boxes to prepare for their possible deployment.

The Training Room NCO finally received his laptop computer last month. His responsibility is to take care of all the training records, and qualification records for the almost 200 soldiers in his unit. In the office itself, there are now 5 laptops, with printers. There is only one printer cartridge, and it is in the office of the 1st Sergeant. He has a habit of becoming very upset when a report he has asked for is not on his desk, but when the Training Room NCO suggests that he has to use the 1st Sergeant's printer since it is the only one with a cartridge, the response is that “no one is allowed in my office, or using my equipment.”

There could be more supplies, if the Supply Sergeant could have been given access to an account to be able to purchase what the unit needed.

Three weeks ago, the 1st Sergeant ordered the soldiers in the unit to mark all the duffle bags that they would have to pack for deployment, and the markings were to be in Tan and Black paint. Unfortunately, the company had no money to purchase the paint, so part of the order was that the soldiers had to buy their own paint, paint their bags over the weekend and have them at the company the following Monday. What is wrong with this picture?

Once again, most soldiers disobeyed what they saw to be an illegal order.

The Training Room NCO reported the order to the Brigade Sergeant Major on that Monday, who informed the 1st Sergeant that he could not order soldiers to buy paint. His response, the Army had not given the unit any means to purchase what they needed. The Supply Sergeant was finally issued a debit card to use for Company purchases, unfortunately, he was not allowed to activate it for an additional week, and since that time it has been de-activated. In the meantime, it became time for the soldiers to mark these same bags with an additional marking, this time with large width bright orange tape. Once again, they were ordered to purchase the tape, for the Company had none to supply.

Interestingly enough, there are some supplies that seem to be in an over-abundance in the military. We are quite concerned with this matter, as we have seen this on more than one installation. The infantry soldiers spend about two weeks out of every month in the field training.

During this time, they remain in the field, usually training sites that are in remote parts of the installations they are stationed at. While they are training, the support units bring all the supplies they will need out to the field in military semi-trucks. Supplies include army cots, food for every meal, canned fruits and vegetables, fresh produce, condiments, industrial sized cans of coffee, powdered creamer, etc., plates, napkins, cups, plastic ware, everything a soldier would need for a two week stay in the field.

At the end of the training period, the semi trucks return to the garrison area and DISPOSE of EVERYTHING THAT WAS NOT USED DURING THE FIELD PROBLEM.

Army cots are disposed of, canned fruits and vegetables that could be returned to the storage building, unopened cans of coffee, paper products, EVERYTHING leftover is thrown away. This is taxpayers' money, my money, our soldiers' money, being thrown away.

The armored vehicles, Bradley fighting vehicles and tanks that our soldiers use are in no better condition than the organization. The waiting period for most parts is still longer than two weeks in most cases. The equipment is not to the standard that our government would like people to believe. Most of the equipment was damaged during the first tours in Iraq, as it was not made to withstand the heat and sand of the Iraqi deserts, and the waiting period for repairs in Iraq was so long that there were times when mechanics pieced parts together, to make the equipment last longer.

General Sanchez himself wrote to our administration about the failure to provide adequate supplies for repairs of equipment and vehicles last February. Not much has changed. Civilians are responsible for much of the maintenance on the vehicles that are not deployed or being used in a training field problem. Civilians work 4 day weeks, and are paid 3 times what our soldiers are paid for the same work. Soldiers defer to the civilians in many aspects of vehicle services which makes it difficult for soldiers in the field and in combat to be able to deal with the repairs needed as efficiently and accurately as they could if they actually had to do the work offline as well.

Commanders demand reports giving a 90% readiness on vehicles when that number is actually closer to 60%, and even at that, there are many vehicles with only partial system function.

Security on our military installations has deteriorated in the last 8 months. It was about that long ago that our government decided to contract the security of the military installations to private security firms in an effort to free more soldiers to train for combat. Prior to that time, soldiers were assigned periods of gate duty, and routinely patrolled all access points to each installation.

As a rule, all personally owned vehicles of military members and their families must be registered on post and bear a decal indicating this. When vehicles approach access gates, each is stopped, decals are checked along with military identification cards of all vehicle occupants. If someone does not carry a military ID card, they may present a driver's license for identification purposes. All vehicles that do not bear a military decal must be stopped, and vehicle registrations, insurance cards, and driver identifications are verified and a temporary pass to the installation is issued. No vehicles carrying any

weapons are allowed through the gates, and any trucks and trailers must pass through a separate gate equipped with x-ray machines. There should be routine safety checks of vehicles, in which a vehicle is stopped and searched inside and out, to deter any who might consider passing through the gate with contraband items.

Since the civilian contractors have taken over, security checks at these gates have become quite haphazard. There have been many times when guards merely hold ID cards, and don't even look to verify the information. There have been times when trucks have been allowed to pass through without security checks.

Last month, a soldier was shot and killed on Ft. Stewart, in the evening of a weekend night, the victim of a drive by shooting. This is appalling, and un-nerving. The security guards were obviously not doing their job. This weekend, we carried a rifle, in a case, across post to the rifle range on the other side of the installation. We placed the rifle case in the rear of the truck, in the open, and drove through the gate. No one even questioned the rifle. They looked briefly at our ID's and let us through without one glance at the rifle. These are the people that our government has hired to secure our military installations.

Soldiers are being told how lucky they are and how much they are going to love being in Iraq.

They are being told that they will have air conditioning, and heat, and larger cots.

They are told that the meals they will have will be almost like home, and that there will be internet access in Iraq, so that they can take college courses for military credit while they are there.

They have very low morale now.

The chaplain here works overtime, and it is difficult to get access to him. He spends so much time counseling soldiers to prepare for this deployment.

Their way to boost morale is to assure the soldiers of how much they will have over there, and how good it will be.

After all the misrepresentations they have already experienced, and with leadership being what it is, how can they trust anything now?

The war was based on misrepresentations, and the manipulations are continuing.

Today brought a briefing from West Point cadets to the enlisted soldiers. The briefing was on "Selective Perception." Veteran soldiers from this Iraq war, were given a lesson by students who have yet to see a battlefield, on how to alter the reality of what these soldiers see in combat. They are being taught to recreate their reality, the reality being shown the American public is being created by politicians, and somewhere in between, the reality is that soldiers are dying, civilians are dying, and a country is being destroyed for no good reason.

The story of this war is no different at any level. In the grand design, it was destined to fail before the invasion happened. The government of America is failing to support the service of our military men and women, and it is denying the sacrifice of those same soldiers and their families in the manner in which it leads the American people.

When the American people are shown the truth of the sacrifice our soldiers make, when they are told the truth of the manner in which our government fails to support those soldiers, and their families, when they see the destruction that this war has actually caused, in vivid Technicolor reality, then, perhaps the war will be called to a close, our soldiers brought home where they belong, and Americans will come together in strength against this ever happening again. The discipline of our leadership is a farce, the support of our leadership is a farce, and the truth needs to be shown to everyone who can make a difference.

The illusion is that the war is going well. The illusion is that our soldiers are strongly motivated and emotionally prepared for what they have volunteered to face. The illusion is that we are actually giving the Iraqis their freedom. The illusion is that we in America have that freedom to give. The illusion is that we are taking care of those who are making the greatest sacrifice. The illusion is that our government cares about any of the humanity involved in this war. The illusion is that this war is right.

The truth is different:

When the passion and commitment of our government equals the salary they have voted for themselves, when the campaign promises are no longer forgotten after the elections, when I can look a senator in the eye, or a president, or a secretary of defense, and know that he will remember words he spoke to me in the truth of his actions, THEN AND ONLY THEN, will our government begin to come close to deserving what all of our soldiers and their families have sacrificed in the name of freedom for America.

Then the illusion may begin to fade and truth become strong.

The war is wrong.

Our soldiers are not receiving the support they and their families need.

There is incredible waste in the military process, beginning with lives, and ending with honor.

We, as Americans, cannot give the Iraqis their freedom. Freedom is earned, and it is the Iraqis who will have to do the fighting, if it is truly freedom that they want.

Until America leaves Iraq to the Iraqis, and brings its soldiers home, freedom cannot begin to materialize for the Iraqi people. Soldiers are dying, civilians are dying, and America is the perpetrator.

The only support that we should be giving our soldiers now, is in bringing them all home, where they can defend what is their duty to defend... their families, their country, and their honor.

**Someone has to be strong enough to stand against the illusion and tell the truth.
And Americans have to be strong enough to bear witness to what they are told.**

**Sgt. Kevin and Monica Benderman
3rd Infantry Division -- Ft. Stewart, GA**

THE ENEMY DOMESTIC

**November 20, 2004
To: George W. Bush
From: SGT Kevin M. Benderman**

When are you going to tell the truth to the people of the United States?

Why don't you tell them why you want to be in Iraq so bad?

I was there for six months and I did not see the first weapon of mass destruction. I did receive orders from the company commander to shoot children if they threw small rocks at us and that was when I figured out that the entire thing was way over the line.

Over 1200 soldiers have died in Iraq so that you can have a couple billion more dollars, that should make you feel very good about yourself.

The soldiers that have died for this sham that you have put over on the American people are so much more deserving than that. You are not worth the dust off of their boots.

If you truly had respect for the military and the people that serve then you would not continue to kill them in your war.

I joined the Army to protect my country and not to be a mercenary for a political despot.

If you wish to put me in prison because of my views then you should make room for about 75% of the military.

And while you are at make some room for yourself and about half of your administration. You are responsible for what happened at Abu Gharaib and you are shirking your responsibility.

The commander in chief is not above the UCMJ, as you would like to believe.

I want to fulfill my contract that says I joined the Army to protect my country against all enemies foreign and domestic, and as far as I am concerned you are a domestic enemy of the United States.

You care nothing for this country; you just care about the profits that are to be made from the oil in Iraq. That much is evident to me from the way the contracts were passed out to Halliburton and KBR. It must be nice to have the deck stacked in your favor by the president of the USA.

Since you are raising the debt ceiling of America so that we can pay the bills that you have run up, why don't you forgive the debts of every one in the armed forces since they are the ones that are making it possible for you to make billions from the oil from Iraq.

Sincerely,
SGT Kevin M. Benderman



bellacio.org

[Please visit the websites at www.BendermanTimeline.com and www.BendermanDefense.org Monica and Kevin Benderman may be reached at mdawnb@coastalnow.net]

Most Decorated Green Beret Commander Transfers Medal to Kevin Benderman, GI War Resister

www.bendermandefense.org

Lt. Co. James Bo Gritz received the below award on 22 Feb. 1967 for heroism not involving actual conflict with an armed enemy in the Republic of Vietnam. He was serving as deputy commander of a mobile guerilla task force at the time.

Lt. Col. Gritz transferred this award to Sgt. Kevin Benderman, citing “Sgt. Benderman’s moral courage, above and beyond the call of duty, resulting in the severest of punishment for himself, are in keeping with the very highest humanitarian traditions and reflect great credit upon himself and the spirit of leadership and sacrifice within America’s Armed Forces.”

Lt. Col. Gritz has been called “THE” American Soldier, by Gen. William Westmoreland, and is the most decorated Green Beret Commander having been awarded 62 valor citations.

Sgt. Benderman receives this honor with pride, and with respect for what it represents.



Award of the Soldier’s Medal to Sgt. Kevin Benderman (Regular Army)

**By Direction and Authority of We the People,
this highest award for valor not Involving deadly force, is transferred from the
undersigned recipient to Sgt. Kevin Benderman this 29th Day of July 2005.**

**Lt. Col. James Bo Gritz
Regular Army US Spl. Fcs. (Ret.)**

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we’ll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing

resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Two Soldiers Killed By IED Near Baghdad

November 25, 2005 Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Two soldiers were killed Thursday by a roadside bomb southwest of Baghdad, the U.S. command announced. The latest deaths brought the two-day toll for the American military to at least six.

Soldier From Niagara Falls Killed

November 25, 2005 Associated Press

NIAGARA FALLS, N.Y. A 25-year-old Army sergeant from western New York has been killed in Iraq while trying to rescue wounded soldiers.

The family of Staff Sgt. Aram Bass was told by military officials Wednesday Bass was killed when he came under firebomb attack in Baghdad, according to a report Friday in The Buffalo News.

Bass was a member of the 101st Airborne Division based in Fort Campbell, Ky. In September, he was deployed to Iraq.

His uncle, Donald Bass, told The Buffalo News the sergeant and his commanding officer were trying to evacuate soldiers wounded by a firebomb when a second bomb hit.

The Niagara Catholic High School graduate served for about three years in the Marines before enlisting in the Army. "This is what I have to do," Donald Bass recalled his nephew saying before his deployment.

Now, said the uncle, "I'm in pain ... I'm in disbelief. It's almost surreal, and it feels like I'm watching this on TV."

Family members described Bass as a strong and fun-loving family man and loyal friend. He is survived by his wife, parents and several brothers and sisters.

TASK FORCE BAGHDAD SOLDIER KILLED IN TANK ACCIDENT

November 25, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
NEWS RELEASE Number: 05-11-43C

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A Task Force Baghdad Soldier was killed when an M1 Abrams tank was involved in a single-vehicle accident south of Baghdad Nov. 24.

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION FUTILE EXERCISE BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



US soldiers from Alpha Company, TF 4-64, 3rd Infantry Division patrol rural areas surrounding central Baghdad, October 18, 2005. (AFP/File/David Furst)

4 Guardsmen In Iraq Injured In Attack

Nov. 25, 2005 Associated Press

SAGINAW, Mich. - An attack that killed one Michigan soldier in Iraq also burned four others.

Injured were Sgt. Spencer Akers of Tustin, 29; Sgt. Dwayne Dreasky, 31, of Lansing; Sgt. Matthew Webber, 23, of Stanwood; and Spc. Joshua Youman, 25, of Flushing.

All four - members of the National Guard's Saginaw-based 125th Infantry Regiment - were listed in critical condition Thursday in Landstuhl, Germany, WJRT-TV in Flint reported.

The National Guard said the men were being transported to Fort Sam Houston's burn unit in Texas. The soldiers were injured when their Humvee hit a land mine.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Afghan Enemy Grows Fiercer: '05 Bloodiest Year Since U.S. Invaded: General Full Of Shit

November 17, 2005, USA Today

U.S. Special Forces soldiers hunting Taliban and foreign fighters in southern Afghanistan say they are encountering a fiercer and more organized adversary than last year, and one that is far from being near collapse as predicted by an American general in April.

The commander and officers of the 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group-an elite counterinsurgency unit known as the Desert Eagles-provided the assessment in a recent video-teleconference from Kandahar.

The report calls into question plans to replace most, if not all, U.S. forces in the volatile south next year with NATO troops that will not conduct the same aggressive counterinsurgency operations.

The Special Operations battalion known as the Desert Eagles, in a candid assessment of the enemy it faces on its fourth Afghan tour, finds a reinvigorated adversary. The unit operates in four provinces in the south. Last year, the fighting was less frequent and generally lasted only as long as it took to call in air support. The situation is different now, when insurgents fight until the last man.

“The Security Situation Is Slowly Deteriorating”

25 November 2005 By Andrew North, BBC News

The BBC spoke to a number of Afghan police and security officials around the country and in Kabul, as well as to international workers in different fields.

All those in government positions requested anonymity.

"We are very worried now," said one senior police officer in eastern Afghanistan.

One senior UN official said: "We never imagined we would still be talking about a Taliban insurgency four years on.

"We have got to admit the current approach is not working."

Concern is especially high among humanitarian workers.

"The aid community loses more people here than in any other crisis area of the world," said a senior representative of the Afghan NGO Safety Office, which provides security advice to such agencies across the country.

Unlike many other places, he said, NGOs here were often specifically targeted.

So far this year, 30 people involved in aid projects - either as direct employees or as contractors - have died in violence, according to Anso figures. That compares to 24 last year. And these statistics do not include people involved in road building projects.

"The security situation is slowly deteriorating," Paul Barker, country director for aid agency Care International, told the BBC.

He has got a longer view than most, having worked here for the past seven years.

More than 30,000 troops for a new Afghan national army have been trained by the US, French and British, and many have been operating with the US forces for some time.

But it is a long way from being a force that can operate independently. The Pentagon has aired plans to start withdrawing up to 4,000 US troops next year.

Four years after the US military arrived here, doubts are growing about its ability to defeat the insurgency.

"Next spring, we'll all be listening again to the coalition saying the Taliban are finished and on the run," said one aid worker.

TROOP NEWS

The Gold Star Families For Peace

Another dad got in touch with me this week to tell me that they are sadly burying their son on the Saturday after Thanksgiving this year. The Gold Star Families for Peace are handling their losses with grace, courage and integrity. The Bush crime family and their cronies can take lessons from them. This administration full of

neocon crooks has ruined the holidays for so many people worldwide. I don't know how they can choke down their turkey!

24 November 2005 By Cindy Sheehan, Truthout Perspective[Excerpt]

I have met so many amazing, loving, and delightful people since I started my quest to end the occupation of Iraq. My Gold Star Families are especially dear to me.

In their tragedies they have found a way to bring their horrible grief to the forefront of the American consciousness and help America see the terrible price some of us have had to pay.

One of my Gold Star Moms had her son commit suicide two years ago as George was smirking serving the plastic turkey.

Another dad got in touch with me this week to tell me that they are sadly burying their son on the Saturday after Thanksgiving this year. The Gold Star Families for Peace are handling their losses with grace, courage and integrity. The Bush crime family and their cronies can take lessons from them. This administration full of neocon crooks has ruined the holidays for so many people worldwide. I don't know how they can choke down their turkey!

I am profoundly grateful for the life of my son Casey Austin.

He always lived his life with grace, courage and integrity. His life has been a model for me in my resolve to bring his buddies home alive. Unlike George, Casey never got anything handed to him on a silver platter.

Casey put himself on a silver platter and handed his young life over to save the lives of his buddies. I am not grateful for the way he died and the too many others who have tragically come home in flag-draped coffins, too. The atrocity has to end before too many more families experience the emptiness of a chair at the family table that once rang with laughter and now rings with sighs and forced, mostly false, mirth.

Since Camp Casey, I do have hope that one of these days our holidays will have real joy and laughter again. I have hope that America is ready to take back our rights, freedoms and responsibilities. I have hope that people will be held accountable for the needless death and destruction they have caused the world. I am intensely grateful for the return of hope.

I also have high hopes that we are at a unique point in history where we will be able to change the paradigm of our existence from one of perpetual war and killing to one of perpetual love and peace. This will be the best blessing that a mom could ever ask for! Maybe next year!

“My Son Should Never Have Been Sent To Iraq”

[Thanks to NB, who sent this in. He writes: This could be worth including. Go Rose Gentle!!]

25 November 2005 By Terri Judd, Independent News and Media Limited

The families of soldiers killed in Iraq have called on the High Court to support their fight for a public inquiry into whether Tony Blair took the country to war "based on a series of lies".

"All I want is for the Prime Minister to tell the truth about the war," said Rose Gentle, whose son Gordon, 19, of the Royal Highland Fusiliers was killed in June last year. In a statement to the court, Mrs Gentle, who is the first of six named applicants, added, if there was no legal basis for the war, "my son should never have been sent to Iraq and would still be alive today".

Andrew Burgin, of the Stop the War Coalition, said as many as 20 families were supporting the case and they were optimistic but realistic about their chances of winning.

Among them is Beverley Clarke whose son, David, was killed when his tank was fired upon by another Challenger in a "friendly-fire" incident in 2003. Last night, an Army Board of Inquiry formally acknowledged errors were made and recommended better training.

The families believe the decision to go to war because Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction was "based on a series of lies" and was "an illegal act". With the British military death toll currently standing at 98, Mr Singh told the judge the case raised issues "of profound public importance and of widespread public interest", and the public inquiry should determine "the basis on which the UK actually went to war".

“We Are Grinding Down Our Force Structure To The Point Where We Have No Force Structure”

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

A crucial question is the commitment of units anticipating their third tours in Iraq. That, Betros says, is when the Vietnam-era HArmy began to fall apart.
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November 25, 2005 By Dave Moniz, Matt Kelley and Steven Komarow, USA Today

Iraq and Afghanistan are putting an extra \$8 billion per year of wear and tear on military equipment, according to a report in April from the Congressional Budget Office. Military trucks are being driven at 10 times their peacetime rates; armored vehicles are being used at five times their peacetime rates and helicopters are being flown at twice their usual rates.

Shortages have cropped up in Iraq, such as a lack of protective armor for troops' bodies and vehicles. Troops also faced shortages of spare parts such as truck tires, and weapons such as machine guns, according to a series of GAO reports.

Gary Motsek, who manages the Army's program to repair war-torn equipment, says the Army has to repair or rebuild virtually everything that goes to Iraq.

Nowhere is the war's stress more evident than with the people who make up the military's "boots on the ground" services.

The ground forces - the Army and Marines - are racing to make Iraq stable before the troops wear out and leave, says Dan Christman, a retired Army lieutenant general who served during the Persian Gulf War in 1991.

Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., said last week that the United States went into Iraq with too few troops and doesn't have sufficient forces to maintain current levels.

"We are grinding down our force structure to the point where we have no force structure," Hagel said.

"We're holding our breath in hopes we can steer through this," says Col. Lance Betros, head of West Point's history department.

A crucial question is the commitment of units anticipating their third tours in Iraq. That, Betros says, is when the Vietnam-era HHAmy began to fall apart.

Army units are failing to meet Pentagon guidelines to spend two years at home for every year overseas. When the Army's 101st Airborne Division returned to Iraq this year, it was after an 18-month rest. The 3rd Infantry Division, which is also on its second tour, had a 15-month break.

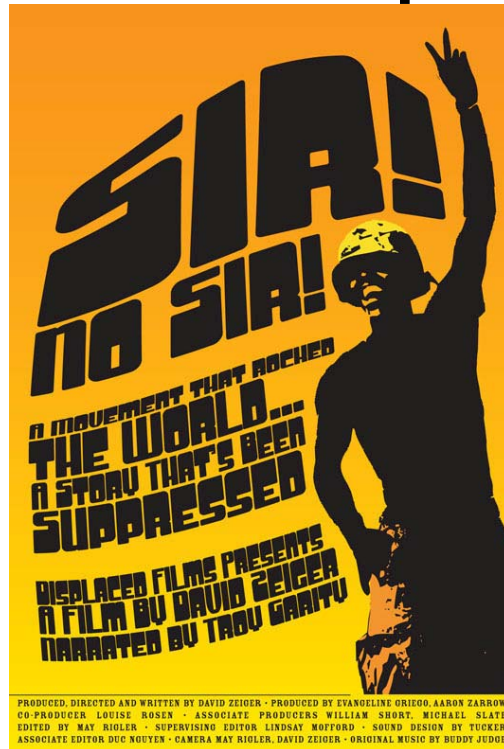
Recruiting is at a crisis level for the Army. The active-duty Army and the part-time Army National Guard and Army Reserve all missed their 2005 recruiting goals by 8 percent to 20 percent. The three fell short by a combined 24,000 enlistees.

[This Is Not A Satire] Bush Seeks To Secure Sahara Desert

November 17, 2005, Washington Times

The Bush administration will spend \$500 million over five years on an expanded program to secure a vast new front in its global war on terrorism: the Sahara Desert.

Sir! No Sir!: Update



November 21, 2005 From David Zeiger

Dear Friends of Sir! No Sir!

We have just come off a very successful fall festival run, during which Sir! No Sir! was awarded Best Documentary at the Hamptons International Film Festival and Best Film on War and Peace at the Vermont International Film Festival.

The film has also been nominated for a Gotham Award from the Independent Feature Project. Gotham winners will be announced on November 30 at a ceremony in New York.

And overseas, Sir! No Sir! is being showcased on the popular BBC program Newsnight Review with Kirsty Walk.

Along with an interview with myself, there are clips and discussion of the film by a panel of guests. The program, which is promoting the BBC Storyville broadcast of Sir! No Sir! on December 5, will be streamed online starting Friday, November 18, for one week at

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/newsnight/review/default.stm>

Go to the "Latest Programme" section and enjoy the show.

While we are preparing for the theatrical release of Sir! No Sir!, we are arranging a limited number of private screenings to raise money to finance the widest possible release.

You can help us by hosting a special screening, which could be in a living room or elsewhere. These screenings will be by invitation only to a select number of people whose donations will facilitate the film's distribution.

Key individuals in the film or on the filmmaking team may be able to attend. If you can help us by organizing such a screening, please email me.

And in December, check out our newly designed and updated web site, www.sirnosir.com.

Stay tuned...
David Zeiger

"Sir! No Sir!" combines exceptional artistry and insightful analysis with great story telling. This is no facile agitprop piece, but a careful dissection of a growing military rebellion that permanently altered American society, but has largely been forgotten.

International Documentary Magazine

Audience Award Best Documentary--Los Angeles Film Festival
Jury Award Best Documentary--Hamptons International Film Festival
Jury Award Best Film on War and Peace--Vermont International Film Festival

www.sirnosir.com
Displaced Films
3421 Fernwood Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90039
323-906-9249
323-913-0683 fax

The Scum Of The Earth

November 17, 2005, New York Daily News

Soldiers in remote outposts in Afghanistan are seething after the arrests of a dozen service members caught stealing mail meant for troops in harm's way. Last weekend, three soldiers at Bagram Airfield's post office, where mail is processed, were found guilty in court-martials of mail theft and drew sentences ranging from four to 30 months in the stockade, were stripped of rank and pay, and will be dishonorably discharged. Action against the remaining nine suspects is pending.

A Taste Of History: 1970



A U.S. INFANTRY COMPANY JUST CAME THROUGH HERE

IF YOU HAD BEEN VIETNAMESE---

We might have burned your house
We might have shot your dog
We might have shot you...
We might have raped your wife and daughter
We might have turned you over to your government for torture
We might have taken souvenirs from your property
We might have shot things up a bit...
We might have done ALL these things to you and your whole
TOWN!

IF it doesn't bother you that American soldiers
do these things every day to the Vietnamese simply because
they are "Gooks", THEN picture yourself as one of the silent
VICTIMS.

HELP US TO END THE WAR BEFORE THEY TURN YOUR SON INTO A BUTCHER...
or a corpse.

VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR
100 Street Avenue, New York City, New York 10019

[Thanks to Joe Urgo, VVAW-AI, who sent this in.]

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

24 November 2005 Aljazeera & Nov 25, 2005 dpa & Aljazeera

In an overnight attack four soldiers were killed by unidentified armed fighters near Howaija, 50 kilometres west of Kirkuk, an Iraqi army source said. Army officer Amr Hassan said they opened fire on an Iraqi army vehicle.

The dead included a top army officer in Howaija and two civilian passers-by.

In Fallujah, west of Baghdad, armed fighters shot dead an Iraqi truck driver on Friday and set fire to his truck on the highway. The victim was working for a U.S. base in the region.

Near Baiji, north central Iraq, two Iraqi soldiers were killed and seven wounded by a roadside bomb, while further north, near Hawijah, five people were shot dead, three of them soldiers, when armed men opened fire on an army vehicle.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

The Case For Cutting And Running

[Thanks to PB, who sent this.]

December 2005 By Nir Rosen, Atlantic Monthly [Excerpts]

At some point—whether sooner or later—U.S. troops will leave Iraq.

I have spent much of the occupation reporting from Baghdad, Kirkuk, Mosul, Fallujah, and elsewhere in the country, and I can tell you that a growing majority of Iraqis would like it to be sooner.

As the occupation wears on, more and more Iraqis chafe at its failure to provide stability or even electricity, and they have grown to hate the explosions, gunfire, and constant

war, and also the daily annoyances: having to wait hours in traffic because the Americans have closed off half the city; having to sit in that traffic behind a U.S. military vehicle pointing its weapons at them; having to endure constant searches and arrests.

Would the withdrawal of U.S. troops ignite a civil war between Sunnis and Shiites?

No. That civil war is already under way—in large part because of the American presence.

The longer the United States stays, the more it fuels Sunni hostility toward Shiite “collaborators.” Were America not in Iraq, Sunni leaders could negotiate and participate without fear that they themselves would be branded traitors and collaborators by their constituents.

Sunni leaders have said this in official public statements; leaders of the resistance have told me the same thing in private.

The Iraqi government, which is currently dominated by Shiites, would lose its quisling stigma. Iraq’s security forces, also primarily Shiite, would no longer be working on behalf of foreign infidels against fellow Iraqis, but would be able to function independently and recruit Sunnis to a truly national force. The mere announcement of an intended U.S. withdrawal would allow Sunnis to come to the table and participate in defining the new Iraq.

But if American troops aren’t in Baghdad, what’s to stop the Sunnis from launching an assault and seizing control of the city?

Sunni forces could not mount such an assault.

Most important, Iraqi nationalism—not intramural rivalry—is the chief motivator for both Shiites and Sunnis.

Most insurgency groups view themselves as waging a muqawama—a resistance—rather than a jihad. This is evident in their names and in their propaganda.

For instance, the units commanded by the Association of Muslim Scholars are named after the 1920 revolt against the British. Others have names such as Iraqi Islamic Army and Flame of Iraq. They display the Iraqi flag rather than a flag of jihad. Insurgent attacks are meant primarily to punish those who have collaborated with the Americans and to deter future collaboration.

Wouldn’t a U.S. withdrawal embolden the insurgency?

No. If the occupation were to end so, too, would the insurgency.

After all, what the resistance movement has been resisting is the occupation. Who would the insurgents fight if the enemy left?

<p>When I asked Sunni Arab fighters and the clerics who support them why they were fighting, they all gave me the same one-word answer: intiqam—revenge.</p>

Revenge for the destruction of their homes, for the shame they felt when Americans forced them to the ground and stepped on them, for the killing of their friends and relatives by U.S. soldiers either in combat or during raids.

But what about the foreign jihadi element of the resistance? Wouldn't it be empowered by a U.S. withdrawal?

The foreign jihadi element—commanded by the likes of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi—is numerically insignificant; the bulk of the resistance has no connection to al-Qaeda or its offshoots. (Zarqawi and his followers have benefited greatly from U.S. propaganda blaming him for all attacks in Iraq, because he is now seen by Arabs around the world as more powerful than he is; we have been his best recruiting tool.)

It is true that the Sunni resistance welcomed the foreign fighters (and to some extent still do), because they were far more willing to die than indigenous Iraqis were.

But what Zarqawi wants fundamentally conflicts with what Iraqi Sunnis want: Zarqawi seeks reestablishment of the Muslim caliphate and a Manichean confrontation with infidels around the world, to last until Judgment Day; the mainstream Iraqi resistance just wants the Americans out.

If U.S. forces were to leave, the foreigners in Zarqawi's movement would find little support--and perhaps significant animosity-- among Iraqi Sunnis, who want wealth and power not jihad until death.

They have already lost much of their support: many Iraqis have begun turning on them. In the heavily Shia Sadr City foreign jihadis had burning tires placed around their necks.

The foreigners have not managed to establish themselves decisively in any large cities. Even at the height of their power in Fallujah they could control only one neighborhood, the Julan, and they were hated by the city's resistance council. Today foreign fighters hide in small villages and are used opportunistically by the nationalist resistance.

Would Iran effectively take over Iraq?

No.

Iraqis are fiercely nationalist—even the country's Shiites resent Iranian meddling. (It is true that some Iraqi Shiites view Iran as an ally, because many of their leaders found safe haven there when exiled by Saddam—but thousands of other Iraqi Shiites experienced years of misery as prisoners of war in Iran.)

Even in southeastern towns near the border I encountered only hostility toward Iran.

What about the goal of creating a secular democracy in Iraq that respects the rights of women and non-Muslims?

Give it up. It's not going to happen.

Apart from the Kurds, who revel in their secularism, Iraqis overwhelmingly seek a Muslim state. Although Iraq may have been officially secular during the 1970s and 1980s, Saddam encouraged Islamism during the 1990s, and the difficulties of the past decades have strengthened the resurgence of Islam.

In the absence of an other social institutions, the mosques and the clergy assumed the dominant role in Iraq following the invasion.

Even Baathist resistance leaders told me they have returned to Islam to atone for their sins under Saddam.

Most Shiites, too, follow one cleric or another. Ayatollah al-Sistani--supposedly a moderate—wants Islam to be the source of law.

The invasion of Iraq has led to a theocracy, which can only grow more hostile to America as long as soldiers are present.

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.

When The “Liberators” And The “Liberated’ Are Torturers

When the "liberators" and the "liberated" are torturers, doing their work in the same places and (usually by proxy for the Americans) the same manners in which Saddam once did, there isn't any skin left to peel off the face of the occupation's purpose or credibility. November 16, 2005, PIERRE TRISTAM, CounterPunch

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Not Guilty: The Israeli Captain Who Put 17 Bullets Into A Palestinian Schoolgirl

"This was the cold-blooded murder of a girl. The soldier murdered her once and the court has murdered her again. What is the message? They are telling their soldiers to kill Palestinian children."

11/16/2005 By Chris McGreal, Palestine Monitor/The Guardian

An Israeli army officer who fired the entire magazine of his automatic rifle into a 13-year-old Palestinian girl and then said he would have done the same even if she had been three years old was acquitted on all charges by a military court yesterday.

The soldier, who has only been identified as "Captain R", was charged with relatively minor offences for the killing of Iman al-Hams who was shot 17 times as she ventured near an Israeli army post near Rafah refugee camp in Gaza a year ago.

The manner of Iman's killing, and the revelation of a tape recording in which the captain is warned that she was just a child who was "scared to death", made the shooting one of the most controversial since the Palestinian intifada erupted five years ago even though hundreds of other children have also died.

After the verdict, Iman's father, Samir al-Hams, said the army never intended to hold the soldier accountable.

"They did not charge him with Iman's murder, only with small offences, and now they say he is innocent of those even though he shot my daughter so many times," he said.

"This was the cold-blooded murder of a girl. The soldier murdered her once and the court has murdered her again. What is the message? They are telling their soldiers to kill Palestinian children."

THE FUTURE CONFRONTS THE PAST



A Palestinian school girl confronts a Zionist soldier at a checkpoint that Palestinian children daily have to cross on their way to school in the Palestinian old city of Hebron Nov. 24, 2005. Palestinians protest what they consider to be unnecessarily intrusive searches of the children on their way to school. (AP Photo/Nasser Shiyoukhi)

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

Received:

Information Request Re “G.I. Reporter”

From: Gene Glazer geneandalice@comcast.net

Sent: November 25, 2005

Subject: RE: VFPD GI Special 3D25: "My Husband Will Not Be Silenced"

Do you have the e-mail address for G.I. Reporter??

Thanx
Stay strong
Keep on submitting your truth revealing articles.
Wage peace

gene
[Veterans For Peace]

REPLY: Sorry, don't have that information. Can anybody help brother Gene with the info?

Received:

Socialist Crap

From: A
To: GI Special
Sent: November 21, 2005
Subject: Socialist Crap

Take your socialist crap and shove it up your ass.

REPLY: Guess that makes you anti-social(ist). T

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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

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

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

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