

GI SPECIAL 3D29:



Mother grieves the loss of her son killed in Iraq. Another family member feels the pain. Camp Casey, Crawford Texas, Sept. 2005

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

***Something Is Seriously
Wrong With This Picture:
Sgt. Gets 15 Months Prison For
Resisting Iraq War:
Captain Gets 45 Days For Stealing
And Selling Body Armor***

It has been said of Sgt. Kevin Benderman by those in command and control at Ft. Stewart, GA., after Kevin publicly announced his refusal to deploy to Iraq a second time, that his action was "endangering" those from FT. Stewart who would be deploying to Iraq.

Officers at FT. Stewart, as well as some senior NCO's (non-commissioned officers for you non military types) along with the Hawks in the blogging community, were incessant in their condemnation of Kevin; with all of them articulating the same theme of how Kevin was endangering those who would go to Iraq by his (Kevin's) refusal to go.

Kevin is now in a military prison for the next 15 months.

(For full details and timeline on and about Kevin's position as a Conscientious Objector, trial and subsequent events, I strongly urge you to see: BendermanTimeline)

Captain Schenk, S-2 at FT. Stewart, GA. (S-2 is Army military intelligence), was busted for stealing. He was stealing the armored plates for the body armor vests the troops from FT Stewart would be wearing in Iraq. Capt Schenk was then selling those plates on E-Bay for between \$3,000 and \$4,000 a piece.

Capt. Schenk was sent to jail for 45 days behind his theft of and sale of the protective gear the troops from FT. Stewart would need in Iraq.

<p>Now I ask you, between the two men, who in fact was it that endangered the troops: Kevin, by his refusals to be a part of needless and senseless killing, like shooting kids just for climbing on a wall? Or Capt. Schenk by stealing and selling, for personal profit, those things needed to prevent injury to the troops?</p>
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For me, this presents an unanswered question: Why does a man who refuses to be a participant in what were illegal orders, in an illegal war, which was based on provable lies and deceptions, spend 15 months in a military jail; while a thief, a commissioned officer at the same base at the same time, gets caught selling the troops protective equipment and only gets 45 days in jail?

Something is seriously wrong with this picture to say the least!

This is an email Monica sent to me about life in the RCF at Ft Lewis, per a conversation with Kevin:

"The tables at the RCF mess hall were decorated with cornucopias full of fruit and nuts -- there were candy dishes full of treats in front of every inmate -- and there were three enormous ice sculptures on the serving tables.

"Kevin talked to one of the cooks who told him that the ice sculptures alone cost almost \$1000.00.

"The inmates were not allowed to eat any of the candy, nuts or fruit.

“They have to wait longer to make phone calls home today - the phones near the command center at the front of the facility are off limits to them today because that is the entrance being used by family visitors who are coming to eat with the inmates and for special military guests. The inmates are not allowed to interact with anyone who has not been approved to come visit them, so they have been kept in hiding with access to the phones only at the back of the facility.

“Kevin approached the Colonel who is commanding one of the brigades, I believe the 704th MP Brigade. He told the Col. that they had no business spending almost \$1000.00 on the ice sculptures when the showers were not working, the toilets and sinks were backing up and the windows were broken and letting cold air in throughout the living quarters of the facility.

“The Col's response was that there were two budgets, one for decorations for the mess hall, and one for maintenance, and the toilets were part of the maintenance budget. Kevin said he told him that they needed to cancel the decor budget and fix the toilets.

“Kevin also told several that he was thankful for being at the RCF, and that he was sure he wanted to stay now that he had such a beautifully decorated mess hall to eat in. He said he told every commander he could find that he was grateful for his command at Ft. Stewart having lied and manipulated evidence just to put him at Ft. Lewis so he could see everything that he had - he thought he'd seen it all until he got there, and now they had just given him more to speak out about.

“Several told Kevin that it was Thanksgiving and that he should give it a rest for one day. Fools.”

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

**“They All Need To Get Out Of
There Before Any More Of
Those Guys Die”
Local Soldier Killed**

November 21, 2005 The Associated Press

Coos Bay

A soldier whose wife and two children live in Coos Bay died from injuries suffered in Iraq, the Army said.

Spc. Vernon R. Widner, 34, and Pfc. Anthony Alex Gaunky, 19, of Sparta, Wis., both members of the 101st Airborne Division, were in a Humvee that was intentionally struck by a civilian vehicle, according to a news release from Multi-National Forces-Iraq.

Vernon Widner, 34, was well-known at Don's Diner & Ice Cream Parlor in Reedsport, where he worked as a cook for about four years, Tammy Widner said.

He joined the Army in April 2003, and Tammy Widner and her two sons moved from Reedsport to Coos Bay, where she is a certified nurse's aide at Bay Area Hospital.

Widner is also survived by his parents, Emmanuel and Sandra Widner of Redlands, Calif. Tammy Widner said she and her husband met in Redlands in 1994 and were married three years later.

The family moved to the Oregon Coast because "we wanted to get out of California and not raise our children there," she said. The boys are Cody, 11, and Dylan, 8.

Widner, 29, said she believes her husband wanted to follow in the footsteps of his father, a career Army man.

"His dad was in the Army, and it was something he thought he should do," she said. "He always wanted to do stuff like that. I know he liked it and was going to make it a career like his dad."

Widner said her husband had just returned to Iraq on what was at least his second tour of duty there. She last saw her husband, who was based in Fort Campbell, Ky., in late 2003. They kept in regular contact by computer, she said.

"I'm going to miss him playing with his boys," she said. "He was a very great dad."

Widner said she had never held a strong opinion about the war.

"I just think they all need to get out of there before any more of those guys die," she said. "He was only 34. It's young."

“I Just Wanted To See Him Come Home Safe”

November 23, 2005 By RICK KARLIN, Staff writer, Capital Newspapers

ALBANY -- Sgt. Dominic J. Sacco's luck was running out.

Two weeks before he was killed in Iraq, his Abrams tank hit a roadside bomb and he suffered a concussion, said his sister, Lisa Livingston of Schenectady.

He got a Purple Heart, but was ordered back on patrol the next day, despite cuts and headaches from the blast, she said.

On Sunday, it wasn't a bomb, but a bullet, that killed Sacco, 32.

Although the hatch on Sacco's tank was shielded by armor plates on the front and back, Sacco caught a round from the side, possibly from a sniper, Livingston said.

"They said he died instantly," she said.

Sacco stuck his head out of the tank to make sure it was on course during a patrol in Taji, Iraq, a town north of Baghdad that previously was home to a missile plant.

Sacco was the kind of sergeant who put his troops first and tried his best to make sure they were safe, his sister said.

"He always said he looked out for his men," Livingston said, recalling talks with her brother about Army life and the perils of serving in Iraq. "He was very proud of that."

It was that sense of pride, along with his easygoing nature, that Sacco will be remembered for, said Livingston and Bryan Swim, who had known Sacco since they were in first grade together at the old School 23 on Whitehall Road.

"I still consider him my best friend," Swim said.

Sacco and Swim were typical Albany kids. Sacco lived on Mereline Avenue; Swim was a few blocks away on Hampton Street. They followed the Mets and L.A. Lakers, playing baseball during the summer and Atari during the winter. They hung out at the arcade in Crossgates Mall and shot hoops at School 23.

Swim recalled his buddy's adventurous side as well: They hiked at Thacher Park and once rode their bikes across the Dunn Memorial Bridge all the way to Troy and back.

After graduating from high school in 1991, Sacco found himself at loose ends for a couple of years, Swim said. He figured joining the Army could provide some focus and direction, so he signed up in 1996. "I think he wanted a change in his life," Swim said.

Sacco went to Fort Riley, Kan., where he trained to be a tanker. Swim didn't have as much contact with his childhood friend and didn't worry a lot about his safety until the Iraq war started.

Sacco would have turned 33 on Saturday.

"I just wanted to see him come home safe," Swim said.

Sacco leaves behind his wife, Brandy Armstrong, in Kansas; a 4-year-old stepdaughter, Elissa Armstrong; and a son, Anthony Sacco, who was born in August. His former wife, Louisa Testa, lives in Colonie. His parents live in Florida.

Livingston was headed to Kansas today for funeral arrangements and to comfort Sacco's widow and children.

She is planning a memorial service for him in Albany later this year, probably around the holidays.

21-Year-Old Oregon Marine Killed In Action

November 19, 2005 The Associated Press

ALBANY, Ore. - A 21-year-old marine from Oregon was killed in Iraq Saturday, his family confirmed.

Tyler Troyer, a lance corporal with the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine G Company, was attacked by insurgents on an early morning patrol near Fallujah, his mother told the Democrat Herald in Albany.

Terri Thorpe, of Tangent, said her son was shot in the head.

Troyer, a 2002 graduate of West Albany High School, enlisted in the marines after graduation to earn money for college. "I had to sign the papers because he wasn't 18," said Thorpe.

She said the yellow ribbon adorning her yard will stay put.

"He gave his life for people that he didn't know," she said. "Whether he was right or wrong, or the war's right or wrong, I can't answer that. I don't expect anyone to understand how I'm feeling. I do expect them to show our guys in Iraq respect," she said.

Troyer is the third West Albany High student to die in Iraq.

"Our school's going to be devastated," said Susie Orsborn, principal of West Albany. "I can't believe we have another one. I just can't believe it."

He was West's only left-handed pitcher and helped lead the team to the playoffs in 2002, the first time in 41 years.

Chad Angel, who coached Troyer for one season, described him as: "Real talkative. Typical left-handed pitcher, you know? A little bit out there at times. Everybody liked him. He was everybody's friend."

He was engaged and planned to get married on the beach in Oregon when he returned early next year.

Thorpe said two marines in dress uniform arrived at her doorstep on Saturday afternoon. "The minute I opened the door, of course, obviously, you know," she said. "I screamed and yelled and fell to the floor, and so did my husband."

Tyrone L. Chisholm



November 16 2005 SavannahNOW

Sgt. Tyrone L. Chisholm wanted to make sure his two little girls had a merry Christmas.

So when he returned from Iraq for a two-week break in September, he announced to his aunt, Evelyn Wilson, that her attic was a "fire hazard" and set about clearing it out.

The next day Chisholm came home with more than \$200 in gifts. In the attic, he hid a plastic Jeep, Elmo and Winnie the Pooh toys, plus clothes for his daughters, Laionna, 3, and Chi'Kiyah, 2.

"He got up there and cleaned that attic for me, but he was really making room for those Christmas gifts," Wilson said. "He was just a good man, and he was a good dad."

Chisholm, 27, was killed Friday by a string of roadside bombs that detonated near his M-1 Abrams tank in Tal Afar, Iraq. The city is near the Syrian border, where the U.S. military has launched an attack aimed at tracking down insurgents and stopping the weapons flow from Syria.

Chisholm is the second Savannah native to be killed in Iraq since the war began in March of 2003. He was assigned to the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Carson, Colo., and was on his second deployment to Iraq.

The Groves High School graduate joined the Army after traveling overseas to visit his brother, Staff Sergeant Frederick Wilson, who was then posted in Germany.

"He was really excited about the Army. He was proud of what he was doing, and he died doing what he wanted to do: serve his country," said Delores Baron, Chisholm's aunt.

Whenever Chisholm returned to Savannah, Wilson said he looked forward to eating her home-cooked meals, which he grew up on. Barbecue, okra soup and shrimp casserole were among his favorites.

In Lamarville, where Wilson lives, she said Chisholm was considered a role model to the children.

"Everybody knew him. Everybody loved him," she said.

Chisholm returned to Iraq on Oct. 5 after securing a promise from his family they'd make sure his daughters got their Christmas presents.

At the airport, he became emotional and told Wilson he would try to get the Army to assign him to Fort Stewart, so he could be closer to home.

"It was the first time I ever saw him cry," she said. "He missed his family."

World Lost 'Perfect Kid'

November 23, 2005 By Michael P. McConnell, Daily Tribune Staff Writer

HAZEL PARK — At his parents' house in Hazel Park, John Dearing looked at pictures of his only son John W. Dearing in his National Guard uniform and tried to come to grips with the grief that seized him in waves.

"I wanted to keep him home," Dearing said as he looked at a photo of the young man the family called "J.W."

Dearing covered his face with his hand and fought back two deep sobs.

"The world lost a perfect kid," he said.

PFC John W. Dearing, 21, of Hazel Park was a gunner riding in a Humvee with five other soldiers when it ran over a land mine Monday in northern Iraq, killing him instantly. The other soldiers suffered serious burns over most of their bodies but survived.

Dearing's paternal grandmother Mary Lee Dearing watched her son as he walked off to the kitchen where relatives tried to comfort him.

"He's so angry about it," Mary Lee said. "He's angry that his only son volunteered to go over there and got killed."

J.W. was an honor student and athlete who graduated from Oscoda High School in 2003. His mother Kitty still lives there.

He had joined the reserves when he was still in high school, Mary Lee said.

"He was a good kid who graduated with all A's and loved baseball and the Atlanta Braves," she said.

A small, undecorated Christmas tree sat on the dining room table where Mary Lee gathered with some of her relatives. About a dozen pictures of J.W. were spread out on the table beneath the tree in the place where presents usually go.

They remembered how his favorite ballplayer was the Braves third baseman Chipper Jones and how he had just married his wife Amanda in June, starting out in a rented house on Garfield Street.

Amanda, a 2004 Hazel Park High School graduate, was with her parents at their house Tuesday, a short distance away from the Dearing clan.

She remembered how she found out Monday that her young husband was dead.

"I was downstairs in the basement and my dad called me up to the living room," said Amanda, 19. "I saw three National Guard officers standing there and I started bawling my eyes out. Nobody had to say a word. I knew right away."

Tuesday brought memories for Amanda. She recalled J.W.'s great sense of humor and how they hit it off as soon as they met in September 2004. They got engaged a month later.

Inside the house they shared in their brief married life, J.W. had trophies for baseball and track, she said.

"He was free spirited but he was serious when he was doing his job," Amanda Dearing said.

J.W.'s Saginaw-based Guard unit had already done a tour of duty in Egypt and he volunteered to go to Iraq after he returned.

"He moved down to Hazel Park from Oscoda to work with his uncle doing excavation work," Amanda said. "He volunteered to go to Iraq. I was worried. But he wanted to serve his country — he really believed in that — and he volunteered."

About a week after he married Amanda, J.W. began a series of deployments with his Guard unit that ended in Iraq where he celebrated his 21st birthday Sept. 10.

Amanda will talk with a counselor today who deals with grieving families, she said.

"I've had a lot of support from family and friends," she said. "I'm just trying to cope with the brutal reality of things."

The night Mary Lee Dearing found out her grandson J.W. had been killed in action, she spent a long time at the kitchen simply crying and trying to come to terms with reality of his death.

"I cried it out (Monday) night," she said.

In the darkness outside her house, a porch light cast a circle of light and illuminated part of a yellow ribbon wrapped around a large tree.

The relatives talked about what today will bring.

J.W. is to be buried at the Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly, his father said. "We'll be going up there (today) I guess," he said, running a hand through his gray hair. "We don't really have any other details yet though."

Baquba IED Wounds Four U.S. Soldiers

11/28/2005 Reuters

BAQUBA - Four U.S. soldiers were wounded in a car bomb attack on a military convoy in Baquba, north of Baghdad, on Monday, the military said. At least one vehicle was destroyed in the attack, witnesses said.

**OK. YOU GOT IT:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. Army Spc. Edward Williams of Waco, Texas, sits on a humvee above a sign that says 'danger' in Arabic in central Baghdad Oct. 26, 2005. **Some Iraqis said they hope the U.S. 'occupiers' will soon go home.** (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Mt. Shasta Soldier Dies

Nov. 23, 2005 Associated Press

MT. SHASTA, Calif. - A 21-year-old Mt. Shasta man who chose the Army over firefighting has been killed in Afghanistan.

Spc. Matthew P. Steyard died Tuesday when an improvised explosive device blew up near his Humvee while he was on patrol in the village of Shah Wali Kot, the Army said.

Steyard graduated from Mt. Shasta High School and the College of the Siskiyou's Fire Academy, but decided firefighting wasn't for him and joined the Army in September 2003, his stepfather, Richard Patrick, said Wednesday.

"He thought if he could jump out of airplanes and see the world, that's what he wanted to do," Patrick said.

Steyard was trained as an infantryman and graduated from jump school before being assigned to the 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry Regiment, which is based in Vicenza, Italy. The unit was sent to Afghanistan last winter.

Steyard told friends he wanted to pursue a career as a game warden for the state Department of Fish and Game after he left the Army.

"He just enjoyed whatever he was doing," said Jake Cole, one of Steyard's high school classmates. "I never understood why he wanted to jump out of airplanes, but he liked that. He thought it was really neat."

Steyard's high school wrestling coach, Rodney Greer, said Steyard had a "great work ethic that was a part of everything in his life. He just gave 100 percent, from zero to full throttle, nothing in between. That was the way he lived his life."

TROOP NEWS

“We Started The War Based On A Lie, And We’ll Finish It Based On A Lie”

We started the war based on a lie, and we’ll finish it based on a lie.

I say this because I am currently serving with a logistics headquarters in the Anbar province, between the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi. I am not fooled by the constant fabrication of “democracy” and “freedom” touted by our leadership at home and overseas.

November 28, 2005 Stars and Stripes

Weapons of mass destruction?

I’m still looking for them, and if you find any give me a call so we can justify our presence in Iraq.

We started the war based on a lie, and we’ll finish it based on a lie.

I say this because I am currently serving with a logistics headquarters in the Anbar province, between the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi.

I am not fooled by the constant fabrication of “democracy” and “freedom” touted by our leadership at home and overseas.

This deception is furthered by our armed forces’ belief that we can just enter ancient Mesopotamia and tell the locals about the benefits of a legislative assembly.

While our European ancestors were hanging from trees, these ancient people were writing algebra and solving quadratic equations. Now we feel compelled to strong-arm them into accepting the spoils of capitalism and “laissez-faire” society.

Don’t get me wrong, I enjoy watching Britney Spears on MTV and driving to McDonald’s, but do you honestly believe that Sunnis, Shias and Kurds want our Western ideas of entertainment and freedom imposed on them? Think again.

I’m not being negative, I’m being realistic.

The reality in Iraq is that the United States created a nightmare situation where one didn’t exist. Yes, Saddam Hussein was an evil man who lied, cheated and pillaged his own nation. But how was he different from dictators in Africa who commit massive crimes against humanity with little repercussion and sometimes support from the West?

The bottom line up front (BLUF to use a military acronym) is that Saddam was different because we used him as an excuse to go to war to make Americans "feel good" about the "War on Terrorism."

The BLUF is that our ultimate goal in 2003 was the security of Israel and the lucrative oil fields in northern and southern Iraq.

Weapons of mass destruction?

Call me when you find them. In the meantime, "bring 'em on" so we can get our "mission accomplished" and get out of this mess.

**Capt. Jeff Pirozzi
Camp Taqaddum, Iraq**

A Pentagon Guerrilla-Warfare Expert Concludes: "We Are Repeating Every Mistake We Made In Vietnam"

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

Sep. 26, 2005 By JOE KLEIN, Time Magazine [Excerpts]

More than a dozen current and former intelligence officers knowledgeable about Iraq spoke with TIME in recent weeks to share details about the conflict.

They voiced their growing frustration with a war that they feel was not properly anticipated by the Bush Administration, a war fought with insufficient resources, a war that almost all of them now believe is not winnable militarily.

"We're good at fighting armies, but we don't know how to do this," says a recently retired four-star general with Middle East experience. "We don't have enough intelligence analysts working on this problem. The Defense Intelligence Agency puts most of its emphasis and its assets on Iran, North Korea and China. The Iraqi insurgency is simply not top priority, and that's a damn shame."

From the beginning of the insurgency, U.S. military officers have tried to contact and negotiate with rebel leaders, including, as a senior Iraq expert puts it, "some of the people with blood on their hands."

The frequent replacement of U.S. military and administrative teams in Baghdad has made it difficult to develop a counterinsurgency strategy.

The accumulation of blunders has led a Pentagon guerrilla-warfare expert to conclude, "We are repeating every mistake we made in Vietnam."

The leadership in Baghdad changed yet again this year. Negroponte left Baghdad in March to become director of national intelligence. He was replaced by Zalmay Khalilzad.

But the turnover in the Iraqi government was far more important: religious Shi'ites, led by Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari, took charge, a severe irritant to many Sunnis. "The insurgents see al-Jaafari as a traitor, a man who spent the Iran-Iraq war in Iran," says a senior military officer. "And many of the best officers we have trained in the new Iraqi army--Sunnis and secular Shi'ites who served in Saddam's army--feel the same way."

Al-Jaafari did not help matters by opening diplomatic ties with Iran, apologizing for Iraq's behavior in the Iran-Iraq war and cutting economic deals with the Iranians.

Another hot debate in the intelligence community is whether to make a major change in the counterinsurgency strategy--to stop the aggressive sweeps through insurgent-riddled areas, like the recent offensive in Tall 'Afar, and try to concentrate troops and resources with the aim of improving security and living conditions in population centers like Baghdad.

"We've taken Samarra four times, and we've lost it four times," says an intelligence officer. "We need a new strategy."

But the Pentagon leadership is unlikely to support a strategy that concedes broad swaths of territory to the enemy.

In fact, none of the intelligence officers who spoke with TIME or their ranking superiors could provide a plausible road map toward stability in Iraq.

“The Soldier Was Talking About How Much The Insurgents Had Improved”

28 November 2005 By Bob Herbert, The New York Times

The disparagement of Iraqi security forces by American troops was so widespread that Mr. Murtha was surprised when one soldier "started talking about how good they are, how much they've improved, and so forth."

It was a miscommunication. The congressman soon realized that the soldier was talking about how much the insurgents had improved; how they had become more sophisticated, and thus "more deadly."

“I Would Definitely Say That Baghdad Is Enemy Territory,” Said Colonel Lanza

September 19, 2005 clairmont.info

"I would definitely say that Baghdad is enemy territory," said Colonel Lanza, a member of the first cavalry division responsible for patrolling a wide area of Baghdad with a population of 1.3 million.

Captain Peter McCulloch of the Black Watch: "The enemy is everywhere and nowhere. I see children, women and old men; the young men have vanished. But we know as the fighting has shown that we are the hated enemy. The children and the women are no longer afraid.

"One young girl in simple English said to me: 'If I were older and strong enough I would kill you.' This was no casual remark for I knew she would not have batted an eyelid in executing that oath.

"How often have we been taunted by young boys and above all girls? Their pet word is 'scum', which hits the bullseye."

On Body Counts

September 20, 2005 Ivan Eland, Commondreams.org

Other comparisons with the Vietnam War can be made. After first avoiding Vietnam-like body counts of enemy dead, wounded, and captured, the U.S. military is now doing them to demonstrate that it is winning—at the same time that increasing violence indicates that the opposite is happening.

NATIONAL DAY OF COUNTER-RECRUITMENT: December 6, 2005

Campus Antiwar Network
<http://www.campusantiwar.net>

Say No To The Solomon Amendment!

Campus Anti-War Network is calling for actions around the country to show the federal government that they cannot intimidate schools for kicking out military recruiters.

On December 6, the Supreme Court will hear the FAIR v Rumsfeld case (brought by several universities), which will decide whether schools can ban military recruiters without losing federal funding. Currently, the Solomon Amendment allows the government to cut off federal funding from schools that ban military recruiters.

This policy forces schools to accept military recruitment, even though the military's anti-gay "don't ask, don't tell" policy violates university anti-discrimination policies.

Bring The Movement For COLLEGE NOT COMBAT To Your Town!

On Dec 6, when the Supreme Court hears FAIR v Rumsfeld, students will hold protests at military recruiting stations, federal buildings and school administrative offices across the country, including in San Francisco, Seattle, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, New York City, and many other places. In Washington, D.C., a demonstration will take place on the steps of the Supreme Court.

We are proud to join the fight against anti-gay discrimination in the military. We also believe that recruitment for the war in Iraq has no place in schools. Our action comes amid increasing revelations of the horror of the Iraq occupation. Recent video footage shows that the US used chemical weapons (white phosphorus) in Fallujah, laying bare the truth about exactly who is using "weapons of mass destruction" in Iraq. Nobody should have to take part in this to pay for school! On December 6, we refuse to let the military recruit young people to kill and die in a war based on lies.

December 6 is also the one-year anniversary of Navy petty officer Pablo Paredes' refusal to board his ship in protest of the war, which sparked a national campaign that displayed and strengthened the growing refusal of soldiers to fight this war. Recently, the counter-recruitment movement won a massive victory in San Francisco, where 60% of voters approved a College Not Combat proposition to oppose military recruiters in schools and support scholarships to counteract the poverty draft — which targets the poor and people of color. Today, with the Bush administration in a growing crisis and expanding calls for immediate withdrawal, we want to spread the "College Not Combat" movement across the country!

Let's mobilize on Dec 6 to counter the military's ability to wage its illegal war, support the right of universities to oppose military recruiting on their campuses, and bring the troops home from Iraq!

**Say No to the Solomon Amendment!
COLLEGE NOT COMBAT! TROOPS OUT NOW!**

Organized by the Campus Antiwar Network

<http://www.campusantiwar.net> / RecruitersOut@yahoo.com

ENDORSED BY:

ORGANIZATIONS: Bay Area United Against War; Bloomington Peace Action Coalition; Central Vermont Peace and Justice; Cities for Peace; Free Palestine Alliance; International Action Center; International Socialist Organization; Justice in Palestine Coalition; Peninsula Raging Grannies; San Juan Peace Network; Stop the War Coalition (UK); Texans for Peace; Traprock Peace Center; Youth Against War and Racism

INDIVIDUALS: AHMED SHAWKI, editor, International Socialist Review and member, steering committee, National Council of Arab-Americans; ANTHONY ARNOVE, editor, Iraq Under Siege; BONNIE WEINSTEIN, Bay Area United Against War; BRIAN WILLSON, member, coordinating Committee, Humboldt Bay Veterans For Peace, and Commissioner, Arcata City Nuclear Free Zone and Peace Commission; CAMILO MEJIA, war resister; Carl Webb, war resister; CEYLON MOONEY, co-coordinator, Wheels of Justice Tour, Voices for Creative Nonviolence; CHARLES JENKS, Advisory Board Chair, Traprock Peace Center; CHARLES PETERSON, Holyoke Community College student assaulted for peaceful counter-recruitment; CHARLIE JACKSON, co-founder, Texans for Peace; CINDY SHEEHAN, mother of U.S. soldier killed in Iraq, who camped outside Bush's Crawford ranch to hold him accountable; DAHR JAMAIL, writer; DAVID AIRHART, Iraq war veteran and Kent State student who beat expulsion charges for peaceful counter-recruitment; DAVID ROVICS, progressive songwriter and musician; DAVID SWANSON, co-founder of AfterDowningStreet.org; DAVID ZIRIN, author, What's My Name Fool? Sports and Resistance in the United States; DENNIS KYNE, Gulf War veteran and activist; DIRK ADRIAENSENS, coordinator of SOS Iraq and member of the Executive committee of the Brussels Tribunal; HOWARD ZINN, author of People's History of the United States; M. JUNAID ALAM, co-editor of LeftHook.org; KATHY KELLY, Co-coordinator, Voices for Creative Nonviolence; LINDSAY GERMAN, convenor, Stop the War Coalition (UK); MICHAEL LETWIN, Co-Convener, NYC Labor Against the War, and Former president, UAW Local 2325; NATYLIE BALDWIN, Mt. Diablo Peace & Justice Center; NORMAN SOLOMON, author and syndicated columnist; PABLO PAREDES, war resister; PALOA PISI, publisher of Uruknet (Italy); PAT ELDER, co-founder, DC Anti-War Network; PHIL GASPER, Professor of Philosophy at Notre Dame de Namur University in California; RANDY KEHLER, Vietnam War draft noncooperator, long-time peace activist/war-tax refuser, former national coordinator, Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, co-founder and first Director of Traprock Peace Center; RANIA MASRI, writer and researcher; SHANNYN SOLLITT, Peace Activist/Educator -NetWorks Productions; TARIQ KHAN, George Mason University student assaulted and arrested for peaceful counter-recruitment; THOMAS F. BARTON, publisher of G.I. Special; TODD CHRETIEN, author of Proposition I/College Not Combat ballot initiative in San Francisco; WARD REILLY, South East National Contact - Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Veterans for Peace, Baton Rouge.

All affiliations are for identification purposes only

We welcome all organizations to endorse this day of action and/or organize with us. If you want to endorse, organize an action in your area, or learn about the action nearest you, email recruitersout@yahoo.com and check out our website at <http://www.campusantiwar.net>

Campus Antiwar Network

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

11/28/2005 Associated Press & (Xinhuanet) & Reuters & KUNA

A mortar shell fell in central Baghdad's Green Zone and two others fell nearby, just hours before Saddam Hussein's trial was set to begin. There were no report of injuries from the shelling, police Lt. Bilal Ali Majeed said.

Insurgents shot dead a leader of the Iraqi Islamic Party.

Iraqi Islamic Party members Iyad Alizi and Ali Hussein and one of their bodyguards were killed when insurgents opened fire on their car near Abu Ghraib in western Baghdad in Innaz area east of Fallujah. Alizi was one of the party's candidates for next month's parliamentary polls.

Insurgents frequently attacked Iraqi Islamic Party members since the party dropped opposition to the draft constitution two days before the Oct. 15 referendum.

KIRKUK - One Iraqi soldier was killed and another was wounded when armed fighters opened fire on their convoy south of Kirkuk on Monday, police said.

MAHAWHEEL - A local Interior Ministry official's bodyguard was killed and four people were wounded in a roadside bomb attack on a convoy they were travelling in on Monday, police said. The ministry official was unhurt.

BAGHDAD - One of Baghdad mayor's guards was shot dead on Monday in the Albaya district of Baghdad, hospital sources said.

In the Rabae Street in the western part of Baghdad, insurgents at noon Monday used machingun fire to kill two newsmen of the government-run Iraq T.V. channel. Four crew members were injured in the attack, an Iraqi police source said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“When The Soldiers Discover They Have Been Reared On A Diet Of Lies They Start To Crack”

From: JM
To: GI Special
Sent: November 28, 2005 5:28 AM
Subject: The other side of the story part 2:

“The Fellow Soldiers Called Upon The Commanding General Not To Cashier The Four Refusers”

I think this is the normal Israeli propaganda.

Remember how Hitler, in the early days, painted himself nice and the opposition evil.

The Israeli right wingers are much more expert. When they shot and killed the UN representative, Ian Hook, they said he was shielding terrorists. Remember the frightened little schoolgirl who was shot repeatedly to confirm the kill. There are men, in prison, in Israel for refusing to be in the IDF or fight in the occupied territories.

I've got reports from the Israeli opposition to the occupation saying many of the IDF develop psychological problems. Not because of fear, they have all the big weapons, but because of conscience. They suddenly realize they the Palestinians are ordinary people - not monsters.

I feel these soldiers may represent a growing number who are unable to live with what they are forced to do.

The whole society is orientated towards the belief that the IDF are heroes and the public are fed much anti-Arab/Palestinian propaganda.

There is a wide divide between reality and what official reports say.

When the soldiers discover they have been reared on a diet of lies they start to crack.

Some end up in prison for refusing to continue and others develop psychological problems. This is normal but the lies continue.

They do not have fierce battles. They Palestinians don't have many weapons - that why they have to resort to detonating explosives on themselves.

Most of the targeted killing follow careful planning. The men killed are either hit by a missile, that kills the civilians in the area as well, or shot without warning, or

killed when they are unarmed. Only infrequently is an Israeli soldier injured or killed.

The official statements put out by the IDF are illusions, cover-ups, delay tactics. In other words they are complete fabrications, lies, that people only believe because they want to.

A History Of U.S. Armed Forces Rebellions: 1. Bloods, Con't

Mr. Seitz is quoted as having stated, "The ground troops are being pulled back because the men are refusing to fight. Not one or two companies, but company after company. They're not going out on patrols, they're not answering enemy fire, they're not doing anything."

By Martin Smith (Sgt. USMC; out of service)

Writing this was about healing a really dark chapter in my life, my experience in the marine corps. The words I wrote came out of an inner pain and experience that needed to heal.

But most of all, I hope that my words in some way bring an end to this god damn war and that no one else will have to come back in a body bag.

This isn't about me, it's all about bringing the troops home now,

Martin Smith

African American troops in Vietnam used the language of black power as well. By reclaiming specific words as symbolic of black unity, troops began to express new forms of solidarity and empowerment with each other. Raising consciousness by subverting verbal expressions, troops used the expression "to blackenize" to describe the transformation that allowed GIs to express pride through cultural identity. As veteran Reginald "Malik" Edwards, who served in the marine corps from June 1965 to March 1966 at Da Nang recalls:

"When I went to Quantico, my being black, they gave me the black squad, the squad with most of the blacks, especially the militant blacks. And they started hippin' me...[T]hey hipped me to terms like "exploitation" and "oppression."...So then one day, I just told them I was black. I didn't call them blanco, they didn't have to call me Negro. That's what started to get me in trouble. I became a target. Somebody to watch."

Other words such as “bloods,” “brothers,” “togetherness,” and “unity” affirmed Black solidarity. Thus language choice became a form of informal resistance.

Black consciousness brought stinging criticism of the war, often on different terms than that of Whites, echoing the voices of dissent at home. Many soldiers developed a Third World analysis and expressed sympathy with the collective struggle by people of color against a dominant white power structure, calling Vietnam a “white man’s war.”

In an October 1970 Life magazine article, John Saar notes that half of Alpha Company’s Black soldiers were in agreement with Private First Class John Munn who states, “I have nothing against that little man out there. They’re fighting for what they believe in, and you can’t knock that...and I say what am I doing here? I can imagine a war back in the world that I’d fight and wouldn’t mind dying in—to keep your people free.”

Similarly Private First Class William C. Lewis explained in a Vietnam GI interview printed in September 1969, “Before I went to Vietnam, white dudes were all right with me...But after Vietnam I didn’t care too much for them. I still don’t. I have no respect for the Man. What I’ve seen them do to the Vietnamese people, my people, to all people, I don’t like them. I hate them, you understand?”

Another Marine explained, “I mean sometimes it has gotten to the point where they just say, forget the white man, I’m not fighting anymore.”

In a shrewd strategic move, the National Liberation Front, realizing the tension between blacks and white U.S. troops, appealed for solidarity with African American soldiers and posted signs urging them to consider who the real enemy was. One such sign read, “U.S. Negro Army Men: You are committing the same ignominious crimes to South Vietnam (word unreadable) that the KKK clique is perpetrating against your family at home.”

Other troops simply felt it was the wrong war due to the plight of Black America at home. In a survey of four hundred Black enlisted troops in Vietnam by Wallace Terry, sixty percent agreed that African Americans should not participate in the Vietnam conflict because of racial injustice at home. In addition, forty-five percent stated they believed in the use of force if necessary to protect their rights at home.

The growth of a conscious militant Black voice of the soldiers in Vietnam brought reaction. As Emmett T. Doe, Jr., a black combat veteran interviewed in Vietnam GI’s April 1968 edition, explained, “Little by little, my black brothers in the center began to unite. But when this growing sense of unity became visible to the white officers, they sought to destroy it.”

Troops of color were locked up and imprisoned in the stockades at disproportionate rates. In a 1971 study by the Justice Department given to the House Armed Services Committee, Blacks represented thirty percent of the Army and fifty-three percent of the Air Force prison populations.

Revealing the positive correlation between dissidence and military repression, the Army's prison population tripled during the war, and the Army's 1969 MacCormick Commission revealed that all its stockades were rife with prisoners "who are violently and vociferously opposed to the war in Vietnam, have no use for the Army," and are "determined dissidents."

But the combination of Black resistance, overcrowded and dilapidated facilities, and poor training of staff guards exacerbated the situation; it was a tinderbox waiting to explode. In August of 1968, major prison rebellions rocked Da Nang and Long Binh, led by Black troops.

According to Vietnam GI, 150 prisoners staged a demonstration on August 16, 1968 and took "virtual control of the brig," protesting overcrowded cells, cold food, standing at attention for excessive periods, and "the insulting 'lick-ass-or-else' attitude of the guards."

After four days, eight marines were shot for participating in the rebellion in an attempt to quell future dissidence.

A similar but bloodier uprising occurred at Long Binh Jail. According to David Cortright, overcrowded cells, no plumbing, and inexperienced guards caused a riot of over a hundred prisoners to erupt on August 30.

From the clash, sixty-five soldiers were injured, including twenty-three hospitalizations, and one white private killed.

In response, over two hundred black soldiers refused to work and a small group barricaded a part of the prison for over a month, reinventing the space as a free "liberated African state" which prided itself with "African dress and customs."

These two stockade rebellions are only examples of many similar uprisings that occurred in the military prisons stateside. These rebellions may be linked to the civilian movement to free political prisoners, the Attica Correctional Facility rebellion on September 13, 1971 and the international movement to "Free Angela Davis," in the early seventies being the most famous.

Black resistance spread far beyond the prison cells.

According to a Department of Defense publication, forty African American troops marched to the commanding officer's headquarters at Chu Lai, roughly fifty miles south of Da Nang on the South China Sea, to demand an end to discrimination in field assignments in 1971.

Race riots erupted in 1971 as well at Da Nang that lasted a week and at Camp Baxter, near the Demilitarized Zone that divided the North and South. The events at Camp Baxter left one black troop dead, and in response two hundred troops staged a protest in his memory in March.

The New York Times in February 1970 reported on a conference attended by Congressmen, military planners, and professors in which retired marine lieutenant

colonel William R. Corson created a stir by revealing that magnitude of racial tensions in Vietnam. "Murders of whites by blacks are occurring in the country right now," Corson exclaimed.

The retired generals' statement is best understood in the context of white fear and backlash towards the black power movement. From a different perspective, Private First Class William C. Lewis, interviewed in the September 1969 edition of Vietnam GI, claims that when he served in the Ninth Infantry Division, white soldiers attacked blacks and then received retribution.

At Lewis' base camp, two race riots occurred, and as tensions rose, a white southerner took aim at blacks by sharp shooting or "sniping" as a scare tactic. "When we started ripping white dudes off it stopped. You know, some Brother would walk right up to a white dude and cut their throat on the way. Just walk past him and keep on going...Then they stopped cause they knew we weren't playing," Lewis asserts.

His words reveal the severe deterioration of the U.S. war machine's fighting capacity. Not only did Vietnam become a war within, but located inside this intra-army battle, another struggle emerged that pitted blacks against whites in bloodshed and racial strife.

When they faced extreme repression, Black soldiers in Vietnam organized to resist "by any means that are necessary," as Malcolm X put it in 1965. Black power reverberated both at home and overseas.

While Black Nationalism influenced a significant layer of Black troops, it is not the only story of the experience of the "bloods."

In fact in the front, in combat, multi-ethnic solidarity began to unite across the color line. One Black veteran explained in a Frontline expose how troops overcame the divide of race:

"There was an amount of prejudice in Vietnam, but when you got out in the jungle there was no room for prejudice, because you would want your enemy to see that other silhouette that's standing beside (you) regardless of his color because he got more targets to shoot at.

"So, this is what taught me that this is just a tradition that was just passed down to us to be prejudice, to look upon people differently, because when your life is at stake, it doesn't make any difference that the man to the left or the right of you is black, yellow, red, orange, it makes no difference as long as he perform his duty and protects your back. Now this is what caused me to throw away to sit down and reanalyze a lot of concepts that I had, thoughts that I had...especially when I was in Vietnam I got...very militant--black power, brother and everything, but when I thought over my experience I came to (another)...conclusion."

For this veteran, the hold of Black Nationalism fragmented when the struggle for daily survival came to the fore.

A similar pattern of unity is told in the oral history collection *Soldados*. Miguel Lemus, who served in the 11th Cavalry from March 1967 to March 1968, for example, explains, “As for the races bit, we had to learn to get along because in time of action there was no color. In action everybody works together as a team.” Similarly Miguel Gastelo of the Americal Division, points out the sense of unity in the field in 1969, “At times the Puerto Ricans had some hassles with the negros, and the Chicanos would back the Puerto Ricans. But I should make it clear that these types of problems usually occurred in the rear, in the bush everyone was much more together.”

The racial composition of the major combat mutinies, mentioned in a previous chapter, provides another important study of the soldiers’ rebellion and reveals further evidence of the potential for multi-racial unity--but also raises further questions.

Cortright claims the mutinies he researched, “involved primarily white GIs”; however, a multi-racial composition of these mutinies is substantiated through a further investigation of the evidence.

In CBS news correspondent John Lawrence’s video documentary of Charlie Company’s rebellion in 1970, for example, he interviews only white soldiers and one Latino during the entire sixty minute footage. Yet in the background and shadows, numerous troops of color, including African American, Latino, and Asian American GIs loom.

The presentation of troops of color as marginal, active in the mutiny but relegated to the sidelines, reveals a racial bias in the journalist’s reporting.

In addition, Charlie Trujillo, a Latino veteran who served in the Americal Division in 1970, tells that an African American, named Greenwood, ignited the mutiny in his unit. “We were told that we were going in again...I, along with some of the other soldiers, told them that we refused to go in again.”

Trujillo’s interview in *Soldados*, interjects the missing narrative of troops of color in the broader historiography of the war.

It also reveals that the work process engendered unity across the divide of race in combat, a solidarity built upon “peace from below” and soldiers’ opposition to being used as cannon fodder.

Multi-racial unity, however, was not an easy alliance. Troops discovered unity out of the necessity for survival in the front. However, as Emmett T. Doe, quoted previously explained, such unity did not equate racial equality:

“I found that the prevailing attitude toward Negroes of most Army personnel, both GIs and officers, was not changed just because now we were all in a life-or-death situation. But when you are depending on everyone in order to survive, you can get along with the Devil. Most of the friendships between blacks and whites are purely token and temporary—you know expedient—simply because the order of the day is survival. Stateside, most of them would not invite you to their home.”

Further research may determine the boundaries of multi-racial unity as it emerged and on whose terms it developed.

The “bloods” of Nam were not passive victims but fought back and resisted attempts to control their lives through the divide of race.

In the rear, troops formed “rap groups” that grew into formal organizations. Cultural defiance brought unique clothing, symbols, and language that mirrored the black power movement back in the “world,” which in turn often brought reaction by the military brass.

The military stockades were disproportionately made up of people of color; however, these conditions often fueled rebellion, including riots at Long Binh and Da Nang.

While black nationalism emerged in the rear and provided a Third World critique of Vietnam as a “white man’s war” against the poor, these bonds broke down in the front when troops depended on each other to survive. Yet the problem of multi-racial unity continues unresolved—on whose terms and how far were whites willing to move on the question of racial equality?

2. Retreat!

“Charging up hills has gone right out of fashion.”

Captain Utermahlen, commanding officer of Alpha Company,
Life magazine, October 1970

The military was an institution in crisis during the final years of the Vietnam War. General Westmoreland, commander of the Armed forces in Vietnam from June 1964-June 1968, admitted in a 1977 report that rebellion from within the military ranks was a greater threat to order and discipline than civilian protest:

“External factors such as opposition to the draft, evasion of military service, interference with recruiting, and resistance to the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps on campus, all had their effect. But it was internal problems such as underground activities, racial antagonism, resistance to authority, drug abuse, absenteeism, desertion, crime, and battlefield misconduct that more directly affected the Army and brought the military justice and correctional system under broad official and public scrutiny.”

Westmoreland’s assertion reveals the various forms of informal and formal resistance to military authority that forced the Armed Forces to enact major reforms as demanded by the GI Movement.

This democratic upsurge from below, including drug use, combat refusals, fraggings, prison riots, racial tension and mutinies, developed from the horizontal leadership of the soldiers’ networks, the leveling of troops in a cooperative and non-hierarchical camaraderie, that eroded traditional military discipline.

<p>Soldiers gained a sense of independence and confidence in defying orders, because as one soldier put it, “What can they do to me: send me to Vietnam?”</p>
--

Officers in the field began to negotiate and compromise with the enlisted men because they could no longer “just hand out orders.”

What have been called “combat consultations” or “working it out” subverted the military authority as soldiers demanded to discuss, negotiate, and even modify the officers’ orders, before carrying them out.

A 1970 article in Life, a publication that was not a traditional venue of anti-war dissent, described the new “hands off” command techniques of Captain Utermahlen of Alpha Company, 1st Air Cavalry as an example of this new community of self-discipline.

The Captain did not court-martial troops who refused to go in the field. He allowed pot smoking, the wearing of peace medallions, and longer hair. He also negotiated with the troops over command policy. It was, in fact, the threat of fraggings and a near “no-confidence strike by the grunts” in his unit that transformed Utermahlen’s command style.

“These guys are no longer blindly following puppets...they want to have a say. If I ran this company like an old-time tyrant, I’d have a bunch of rebels...if they think I’m doing something grossly wrong, I’m ready to listen,” Utermahlen reveals.

Similarly, a platoon sergeant insisted in Newsweek, printed in May 1970, that command was not like training: “I’ve got to run a sort of carrot-and-stick operation...The idea I got in training was that I give an order and everyone would obey. But when I got out here [in Vietnam], I realized things weren’t that simple. I found I sort of had to negotiate things.”

Soldiers’ resistance not only destroyed the authority of the officers and NCOs but their actions played a role in disabling the Army’s ability to carry out search and destroy missions effectively. Alpha’s company’s first sergeant, according to journalist John Saar, fits the typical picture of a lifer, a “Neanderthal man...44-year-old, six-foot-two, big-bellied...with a bikinied girl tattooed over 12 inches of forearm.”

The first sergeant explained the transition that occurred in the troops’ disposition while he was in country: “Things have changed. Before, everyone was gung ho and wanted to mix it with Charlie (derogatory term for the Vietnamese revolutionary forces). Now it seems everyone’s trying to avoid him.”

In the House of Representative’s Investigation of Attempts to Subvert the U.S. Armed Service held in 1971, Mr. Ferry, a staff member of the House, entered a controversial quote into the official record made by Eric Seitz, a lawyer who performed legal aid to service personnel.

Mr. Seitz is quoted as having stated, “The ground troops are being pulled back because the men are refusing to fight. Not one or two companies, but company after company. They’re not going out on patrols, they’re not answering enemy fire, they’re not doing anything.”

Seitz's analysis paints a starkly different picture from the mainstream debates on the cause of the U.S. defeat that center on the problems with Johnson and McNamara's military planning.

Many suggest that the failure in Vietnam was simply of matter of the U.S. fighting with its hands tied as mentioned previously. Others suggest that the U.S. did not have the so-called will to win, due to the significant and historic anti-war movement that questioned the legitimacy of the war effort.

The evidence I found suggests a different cause for the cessation of the ground war.

General Westmoreland's Report of the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, 1 July 1968 to 30 June 1972; Congressional subcommittees and hearings, including the House of Representative's Investigations of Attempts to Subvert the United States Armed Forces; Colonel Heinl's candid essay in the Armed Forces Journal; Life magazine's expose of Captain Uterhahlen's Alpha Company; the mutiny in Charlie Company broadcast on national television by CBS news in 1970; and evidence of troops' self-activity, such as underground newspapers, pirate radio, and countercultural expressions; all suggest that soldiers' resistance negatively impacted the military's prosecution of the ground war.

As a result, army ground troops left Vietnam by the end of March 1973. Yet the war continued by other means as the soldiers' rebellion forced the military to shift the burden of combat to the South Vietnamese, through Nixon's Vietnamization program, and to the U.S. air force, which increased bombing raids in what is referred to as the "air war."

These shifting burdens were Nixon's "secret plan" to win the war. However, the inability to bomb North Vietnam into submission and the weakness of South Vietnamese forces to prop up the South Vietnamese government, forced U.S. forces to flee Saigon once and for all in April 1975.

The memory of the Vietnam war still lingers as a scar, exposing the weakness of U.S. empire.

Three main forces broadly contributed to the U.S. defeat--the resistance by the revolutionary forces, the wide scale of the anti-war movement, and as I argue, the soldiers' rebellion in Vietnam—a reading that is lost in the mainstream discourse on the war's final chapter.

Moreover, the soldiers' rebellion contributed to a broad array of reforms that changed the face of the Armed forces, at least superficially. President Nixon ended the draft in 1973 and began an all-volunteer Armed Forces.

According to the Department of Defense publication The U.S. Army's Transition to the All-Volunteer Force 1968-1974, the author, Robert K. Griffith, Jr., admits that internal military unrest was a factor in the military's discussions on the ending the draft.

Major liberalization policies were carried out in all branches of the military that relaxed military regulations, such as ending reveille formations, allowing modified afros and longer hair, upholding the rights of GIs to distribute underground newspapers, stopping Kitchen Patrol or KP duty (the unpopular work in the mess and chow halls), and increasing the pay for lower enlisted by over fifty percent.

As a December 1970 Time article boldly proclaimed, “humanizing the U.S. military” is a reaction “to meet...the demands of a brighter, more restive generation of young Americans who reject the artificiality of make-work chores and spit-and-polish regimen, who want to know the why of orders and the wherefore of authority.”

Likewise in a frank revelation, Major General Rogers of the U.S. army states in the same article that youth today “want to participate in decisions; they are curious. They want to know why, and they are not satisfied with answers based on faith or ‘because we’ve always done it that way.’”

Thus by connecting the soldiers’ rebellion with the reforms and changing attitudes by the military brass during the final years of the Vietnam War era, the GI movement may be seen as one of the most successful social protests and as I argue, labor insurgencies, of the late sixties and early seventies.

A 1971 New York Times article featured an aerial camera shot of a massive bulldozed and excavated peace sign in a field outside the 101st Airborne Division headquarters in South Vietnam. Such a visible sign of protest would have been unthinkable in the early years of Vietnam; but by the end of the war, the soldiers’ rebellion had forced the Army and the balance of power to land on the altered ground of soldiers’ democracy from below.

[To be continued.]

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