

GI SPECIAL 3D45:

**WELCOME TO LIBERATED IRAQ:
IRAQI CITIZENS ARRESTED BY
FOREIGN OCCUPATION TROOPS FOR
“SUSPICIOUS WALKING”**



A US soldier arrests Iraqis that were suspiciously walking near a polling place in Mahmudiyah, south of Baghdad. (AFP/Samuel Aranda)

**“I Am The Mother Off
Phillip Hewett Killed In
Iraq 16th July 05”**

From: SUSAN SMITH

To: GI Special

Sent: December 14, 2005

Subject: I am the mother off Phillip Hewett killed in Iraq 16th July 05

I have read with interest your messages on your site and must say that I agree with what is written.

The thing that I find sad is that there are so many people in both our countrys that want the troops out of Iraq and yet our governments won't listen to us

We all live in a democracy and that is what we keep being told they are trying to do in Iraq a bit off a joke when we have not got freedom of speech ourselves and our governments wont listen to there own people.

My son joined the army to protect this country and yet he died in a country to make our governments richer not to give Iraq democracy

Best Wishes

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Manhattan Soldier Killed



Sgt. Charles L. Floyd Jr., 28, of Manhattan, N.Y., was killed Dec. 10, 2005, in Taji when his unit was attacked. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

Y-S Man Injured

December 14, 2005 By Daniel Witter, Appeal-Democrat

Those people close to Sgt. Steven Marfill say he's a quiet man who is more comfortable in the woods fishing than he is in the middle of a big city.

Marfill, 26, is a big man who likes to work out, friends say. He thinks the world of his wife, Shelly, who lives in Yuba City, and his grandmother, Iris Heal, of Oregon House, and loves working on his truck when he is home.

"He hates the city life," said Shelly. "He's more of a country boy. He loves being at home."

About four years ago, Marfill joined the U.S. Army in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

He's served two tours of duty in Iraq spanning 30 months.

But Friday, while Marfill was out on a patrol in Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonated a car bomb that killed one American soldier and wounded 11 other soldiers, including Marfill.

Marfill suffered serious injuries and is in very critical condition, according to Bruce and Christina Mullen, friends of the Marfills.

Marfill suffered damage to his liver, lungs, legs and right abdomen, which took shrapnel from the explosion, Bruce Mullen said.

His current tour of duty was scheduled to end next month, said Mullen.

Marfill is currently being treated at a U.S. military hospital in Germany and may be returning to the United States this week, but Mullen expects his friend will be hospitalized at a stateside military hospital for a month.

Shelly Marfill and Heal will fly to Washington, D.C., to greet Marfill when he arrives sometime this week.

"We're going to be leaving just as soon as we get the word," Heal said. He could be back by Wednesday.

"I'm going to stay with him until he gets better," said Shelly.

The Army sergeant was based at Fort Irwin in Southern California before he was deployed to Iraq.

Discussing Marfill's personality evokes warm feelings from those who know him.

"He's a really big guy and a caring guy," Mullen said.

Heal raised Marfill from the time he was seven years old, when his mother passed away. Marfill has always maintained a personable side to him that people readily accept, Heal said.

"He's a gentle person," Heal said. "Everybody that I know of likes him. He's very likable and outgoing."

Marfill attended the Yuba College Fire Academy and volunteered with the Fire Department in Oregon House, according to Heal.

"He wanted to do something to make a difference," his grandmother said.

She remembers one time when Marfill came home from serving overseas and didn't tell Heal beforehand because he wanted to surprise her.

"He walked in with a bouquet of flowers," she said. "That's just the way he is."

Shelly and Steven married about a year ago and plan to hold another, larger wedding in June, Shelly Marfill said. The thought helps her through, along with the support of friends.

"He always puts us first," Shelly said of herself and Heal. "Our happiness is important to him. He thrives off our happiness. I never met anyone like him."

TROOP NEWS

40% Of Military Families Oppose Iraq War: 61% Of All Americans Want Troops Out Now Or "In The Next Few Months"

12.13.05 Zogby.com

The survey showed the war in Iraq is far and away the most important issue to voters. A majority of Democrats (60%) say they "strongly oppose" it, as do 41% of union households and 40% of those households containing a member of the military.

"President Bush wanted his presidency to be all about the war in Iraq, and that's exactly what it is," Mr. Zogby said.

A plurality (48%) said the U.S. should begin a phased pull-out from Iraq in the next few months, while just 13% said a withdrawal should start immediately because U.S. soldiers are now the target of the insurgency.

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.

**“I Volunteered Nine Years Ago,
But I Have To Say I Was Wrong
To Go To Iraq. It Was For The
Interests Of The Multinational
Companies”**



Cindy Sheehan and Rose Gentle, mothers who have both lost sons in Iraq, embrace at the International Peace Conference (Pic: Guy Smallman)

December 13, 2005 Socialistworker.co.uk

**THE INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCE
London 10th December 2005**

One of the most inspiring parts of the conference was the session on the campaigns by military families against the war in the US and Britain.

Chris Nineham from the Stop the War Coalition has assisted the military families campaign.

He told the conference that a leaked document from the Ministry of Defence revealed that there is a 7,000 shortfall in the Territorial Army and that recruitment to the Scottish regiments is at a standstill.

"Over the coming months Stop the War groups should be strengthening our work with the military families and with members of the armed forces who are coming out against the occupation," he said.

Many of the family representatives who spoke at the conference said that their loved ones had been sent to fight and die on a lie.

"We were told there was a mad man who threatened us all," said John Miller, whose son Simon was killed in Iraq. "But the mad man turned out to be the man in charge of our country."

Kelly Dougherty served in the US National Guard for eight years and spent a year in Iraq. "On Monday we would go to an orphanage to hand out sweets," she said. "But you couldn't help wondering if they were orphans because of the bombs we dropped.

"When we conduct bombing raids we report that 70 insurgents have been killed and we ignore the children blown apart by our bombs."

She said there were now over 300 Iraq veterans who had come together to oppose the war and occupation.

There was a standing ovation for Cindy Sheehan, whose son Casey was killed in Iraq. Earlier this year she helped to reinvigorated the anti-war movement in the US by camping outside George Bush's ranch, demanding the right to ask the president why her son died.

She denounced the "war criminals who reside at 10 Downing Street and 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue".

"US vice-president Dick Cheney had five deferments from military service during Vietnam," she continued. "The president went AWOL from the Alabama National Guard. These are the despicable cowards who misuse our sons."

She too called for the immediate end of the occupation, adding, "It is arrogant and -racist to say the Iraqis can't run their own country."

As well as endorsing the initiatives taken by the wider anti-war movement, the session highlighted a focus on supporting soldiers who refuse to fight.

One of them, Ben Griffin, told delegates, "Until June this year I was a soldier in the SAS and was serving in Iraq. What's going on there is like a gold rush town in 19th century America.

"The indigenous people are having a way of life forced on them on the one side, on the other multinational corporations are plundering resources and making money out of the people's misery.

"Look at what's happened over the last eight years. In 1997 we were told we would have an ethical foreign policy. Now we have become the lap dogs of US imperialism.

"We are supposedly fighting for democracy, but Tony Blair is ripping apart democracy at home.

"I volunteered nine years ago, but I have to say I was wrong to go to Iraq. I have recovered broken bodies from the battlefield and all for what? It was for the interests of the multinational companies.

"I volunteered for the army. But the Iraqis didn't volunteer for ten years of sanctions, to be invaded, for the destruction of their country or for production sharing agreements that drain the country's oil wealth.

"They didn't volunteer to have thousands of mercenaries roaming the country and doing what they want. They didn't volunteer for white phosphorous, Abu Ghraib or Guantanamo.

"You face a moral dilemma in the army. You are trained to follow orders, but you also have a moral obligation to do what is right. Standing by while others commit crimes makes you guilty as well.

"And history has shown that using the excuse that you were only following orders is unacceptable."

Many speakers renewed the calls for protests across Britain on the day when tragically the 100th British soldier is killed.

Speakers in the session were Cindy Sheehan, Rose Gentle, Medea Benjamin, Kelly Dougherty, Reg Keys, Peter Brierley, Ben Griffin, John Miller and Chris Nineham. It was chaired by Andrew Burgin and Judy Linehan.

As Returning Troops Kill Themselves:

“Veterans Affairs Had To Stop Scheduling Appointments Because Of A Lack Of Staff Or A Shortage Of Funds”

Veterans in several states have found that Veterans Affairs had to stop scheduling appointments because of a lack of staff or a shortage of funds, said Steve Robinson of the National Gulf War Resource Center.

Dec. 08, 2005 BY DAVID MCLEMORE, The Dallas Morning News [Excerpts]

DALLAS - Not all the wounds received in Iraq are visible. Not all the combat deaths occur on the battlefield. For Capt. Michael Pelkey, the war followed him home.

After a year in the Persian Gulf region, Pelkey returned to Fort Sill, Okla., in July 2003. He quickly immersed himself in a new job and began getting reacquainted with his wife and infant son.

Then came the terrifying nightmares of the death and destruction he had seen in Iraq - and the inexplicable anxiety he felt in the safety of home. He grew forgetful. He began sleeping with a loaded 9mm handgun.

On Nov. 5, 2004, a week after an off-post therapist determined that he had post-traumatic stress syndrome, Pelkey shot himself in the chest and died.

"Michael wasn't in Iraq, but in his mind, he was there day in and day out," said his widow, Stefanie Pelkey of Spring, Texas. "He'd never discuss the details of his experiences in Iraq, but they changed him forever. What killed my husband was a wound of war."

Since combat operations began in Iraq in March 2003, 45 soldiers have killed themselves in Iraq, and an additional two dozen committed suicide after returning home, the Army has confirmed.

Veterans in several states have found that Veterans Affairs had to stop scheduling appointments because of a lack of staff or a shortage of funds, said Steve Robinson of the National Gulf War Resource Center.

"For the Guard and reserve, it's particularly bad," he said. "Their soldiers are separated from the Defense Department support system almost immediately after deployment and sent home to VA hospitals and clinics that are already overwhelmed and backlogged.

"Soldiers and families now get information on combat stress and effects before and after deployments. They learn how to prepare themselves," Pelkey said.

"But coordination in the military is horrible. Things happen at local commands, but there should be an Army-wide program that carries the weight ... from the top."

And the stigma of reaching out for help still remains a substantial barrier, she said.

"That's the biggest problem," she said. "Until the leaders - and I mean the Joint Chiefs and the president and Donald Rumsfeld, recognize PTSD as a wound of war and step up to the plate and push for more care, it's not going to filter down. And our soldiers won't let their guard down."

Pelkey's efforts to have her husband's death recorded as a casualty of war have proved fruitless to date. The Pentagon has refused her petition, saying he died more than a year after his tour.

"PTSD doesn't always show up until a year has passed," she said. "I'm not giving up, though. I want my son to know why his daddy died. And I don't want this to happen to other military families. I don't want it to just be another suicide in the Army."

[Now, where is the enemy? Iraq? Or running the government in Washington DC?]

“More Than Half Of Reservists Report That They Face A Loss Of Income When Mobilized”

December 13, 2005 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer [Excerpts]

With negotiators about to wrap up work on the 2006 defense authorization bill, 74 members of the House have made a final plea for inclusion of a Senate-passed provision to protect the income of mobilized reservists.

The House and Senate versions of the defense bill include similar provisions creating a new benefit for National Guard and reserve members whose military pay is less than they receive in their private-sector jobs. Both plans would provide a monthly minimum of \$50 and maximum of \$3,000 for those who suffer income losses when mobilized, but there are large differences in eligibility.

The Senate was more generous; its plan would begin income-replacement payments starting after six months of mobilization.

The House bill would not start payments until after 18 months of mobilization, which would exclude most National Guard and reserve members called up for Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom.

More than half of reservists report that they face a loss of income when mobilized for long periods of active duty because their military pay is less than their civilian pay. The average income loss is \$4,400 per year.

At the same time, recruitment rates for the year are currently 24 percent below normal for the Army National Guard and 20 percent below normal for the Army Reserve.

Worthless Piece Of Shit Recruiter In Action

December 16, 2005

In Boston, more than 80 people--including high school students, and members of the Stop the Wars Coalition and the Raging Grannies--protested outside a downtown military recruitment center.

When one recruiter shouted at a gay high school activist that "I do not kill people--except pieces of shit like you!" a crowd gathered to loudly call the recruiter out for being a bigot.

The Domestic Enemies Strike Again: **Military Retirees Getting Fucked: Huge Hike In TRICARE Fees**

12.12.05 Colorado Springs Gazette

Defense Department officials have drafted plans to raise Tricare medical insurance enrollment fees and deductibles sharply over the next three years for military retirees under age 65 and their families, about 3 million beneficiaries.

If the changes are adopted, annual enrollment fees for Tricare Prime, the military's managed care option, would triple by October 2008 for working-age retired officers and double for enlisted retirees.

General Investigated Over Murder Of Prisoner

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

December 15, 2005 Andrew Meldrum in Pretoria, The Guardian

The general who led 4,000 French peacekeepers in Ivory Coast is being investigated for allegedly ordering the murder of an Ivorian prisoner.

Henri Poncet, a four-star general, was yesterday placed "under investigation", a step short of being charged, for complicity in the killing on May 13 of Firmin Mahé who was allegedly suffocated by two French soldiers in the back of an armoured vehicle, according to the French defence ministry.

The two soldiers face murder charges. Ivory Coast has been in turmoil since 2002, when rebels seized the northern part of the country.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action:



The political headquarters of Iraq's former Prime Minister Ali Abdul Amir Allawi after the building was attacked by protestors in Nasiriya December 14, 2005. (Stringer/Reuters)

12/14/2005 By PATRICK QUINN, Associated Press & (KUNA) & (Reuters)

Small explosive devices damaged three empty polling stations in the restive western city of Falluja, police said. No one was hurt but 4,000 ballot papers were stolen.

Two police officers were killed and four others were injured by a roadside bomb that exploded next to an Interior Ministry patrol in northern Mosul, the city's Jumhuri hospital said.

An Iraqi policeman was killed in a bomb blast in Baghdad on Wednesday, according to the Iraqi police.

It added in a statement a road-side bomb went off when an Iraqi police vehicle was passing near Sebaa' bank in central Baghdad.

The blast killed one policeman and injured two others.

In the town of Nassiriya protesters burned down a campaign office for Iyad Allawi, a secular leader who has mounted a strong challenge to the ruling Shi'ite Islamist bloc.

A Trade Ministry employee was shot dead in Baiji, police said.

Guess Who's In Charge

12.14.05 Aljazeera

In the western city of Ramadi, where anti-American rebels had promised to defend polling stations, resistance soldiers patrolled some streets.

“The Resistance Is Not Short Of Money And Arms Because They Are Being Supplied By The Sunni World”

12.13.05 An interview with Seymour Hersh by Scott Horton, Antiwar.com [Excerpt]

You know, 90 percent of the Islamic world is Sunni, if you add in Indonesia and Southeast India.

The Sunnis are very dominant in Muslim culture, and there is a lot of anxiety about the spread of, the only nation that's dominated, Middle East or Islamic nation, that's dominated by the Shia is Iran, right now, since the ayatollah took over in the coup there two and a half decades ago.

So here you have Iranian-style Shi'ism spreading clearly into, at least the southern portions, much of Iraq if Mahdi wins the elections.

And that is alarming to Sunnis.

What's happening, and this is something that just doesn't get reported very much, is that the Sunni world, particularly, even the neighbors, particularly Saudi Arabia, which has a Shi'ite minority that is quite agitated (most of them concentrated in the eastern provinces where the oil fields are), you have Egypt where, which is Sunni-dominated Egypt, and even Jordan, all of which are very concerned about the spread of Shi'ism into neighboring Iraq.

So right now, I've been told, that there is, for example, that there is a major construction company in Saudi Arabia that contributes some funds to charities or other groups that funnel money into the Sunni resistance.

The resistance is not short of money and arms because they are being supplied by the Sunni world.

What we don't understand is, though it's right in front of us, is as we fight this war, this seemingly internal war is an external war.

The Sunni world does not want to see the Shi'ites get control of Iraq.

And so you have that on top of everything else, which is enormously complicated and difficult.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Big Oil Vs. Silly Neo-Con Fantasies

Our major oil companies, who have been exploiting foreign oil by less drastic means since 1943 in Arabia, find the Bush approach to be utterly blind to the realities of the world.

12/12/05 By James Houle, ICH [Excerpts]

Ms Amy Jaffe, who coordinated the State Department report, has explained that Big Oil prefers state control of Iraq's oil over an outright sell-off of the oil resources as would occur under privatization.

Furthermore, US oil companies are not warm to any plan that would undermine OPEC and the current high oil prices. Ms. Jaffe said: "I'm not sure that if I'm the chair of an American oil company, and you put me on a lie detector test, I could say high oil prices are bad for me for my company."

Given the heat coming from the wiser heads in the US oil industry and the opposition of the Iraqis, Bremer quickly removed oil from his hit list of national assets to be privatized in a hurry.

In September of 2003 the newly installed Oil Minister Ibrahim Bahr al-Uloum, earlier an advisor at the State Department, said privatization of production was not an option. While he favored some type of PSA, he thought it unlikely that Big Oil would come back to Iraq until there was better security in the country.

Insurgents responsible for the sabotage are quoted as saying, "Look, you're losing your country and you're losing your resources to a bunch of wealthy billionaires who want to take you over and make your life miserable."

The increasing attacks upon the oil infrastructure suggest that it is downright delusional to believe, as senior US policy makers seem to, that military force is a reasonable tool for securing access to petroleum resources.

Our major oil companies, who have been exploiting foreign oil by less drastic means since 1943 in Arabia, find the Bush approach to be utterly blind to the realities of the world.

Serious question has been posed concerning the suitability of Production Service Agreements for Iraq.

A British study by the Platform Group recently concluded in their "Crude Designs: The Rip-Off of Iraq's Oil Wealth" that PSAs are really not much different than the old concession agreements such as were signed by King Faisal way back in the 1920s.

While the country appears to retain ownership of the oil resources symbolically, the international oil companies effectively run the operation, decide the production levels, which fields to exploit and how quickly.

Only 12% of the world's oil reserves are still under PSAs and this does not include any of the major producers in the Middle East, such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iran. Russia signed some PSAs in the 1990s, had a bad experience and is unlikely to repeat it.

The Arab Emirates and Venezuela, the two other big producers, do not use the PSA type contract either, though they have allowed some foreign investment in their oil by other means. These 7 countries, counting Iraq, hold 72% of the world's oil reserves.

"Countries with reserves the size of Iraq's' do not use PSAs because they do not need them. They are able to finance their oil industry themselves on far better terms," the Platform Study concludes.

The alternative to PSAs is for INOC [Iraq National Oil Company] to maintain full ownership over both currently producing and newly developed oil fields and to finance rehabilitation and future exploitation through international loans. The financial advantages of this approach are considerable. The extent of many of Iraq's still-undeveloped oil fields is well established, making it relatively easy to get international

loans for their development, should Iraq find it difficult to pay the capital costs of oil sector expansion directly from their operating budget.

A major fear of many observers is that the Iraqi government will quickly negotiate PSAs at terms that are decidedly unfavorable for Iraq over the long term. In such negotiations, Big Oil will understandably demand contractual conditions that reflect current risks and insecurities and the high costs protecting their employees.

However, this may not give adequate weight to the fact that over the 25-year life of these PSAs, such instability would not be expected to persist.

Should this fast sell-off take place, we can expect a continued insurgency, this time targeting the foreign oil companies.

Will the big and well-experienced international oil companies rush into such ventures with a weak and unrepresentative government, knowing they will be highly unpopular with most Iraqis?

Will instability and greed hold back development of Iraq's oil wealth or will Big Oil recognize their long-term interests are better served in ways that show fairer and equitable benefits to all involved?

After all, Big Oil has come to terms with strong national oil companies before, in Saudi Arabia, in Kuwait, and in Venezuela, and seems to be making a comfortable profit. Meanwhile, they have quietly sent a few of their experts to work with the Iraqis on rehabilitation projects and reservoir studies in places where it is relatively safe while they await a more stable political environment.

Perhaps the intelligence and far-sightedness of Big Oil will save both the US and the Iraqis from the simple-minded ideologues and the plain-ass stupidity of our current Administration.

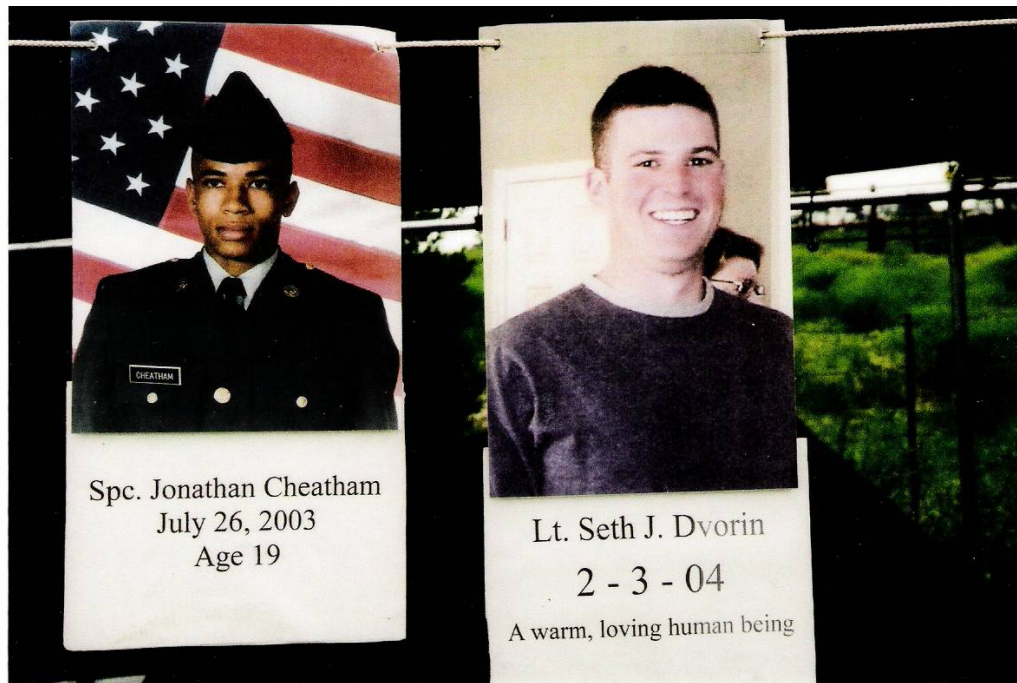
What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

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

1st Grade



Camp Casey, Crawford Texas, 2005

Photo 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)

From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: December 13, 2005
Subject: 1st Grade

The Vietnamese were the good guys in their own country, and the United States Government was the bad guy in Vietnam.

It's a simple statement, kind of like two plus two equals four.

When I leave this dimension of reality, and move on, I will always remember the simplicity of my childhood. If I eat an apple every day for four days, I will have eaten four apples.

I always liked arithmetic in school. I wonder what two plus two will equal when the Iraq War is over.

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71**

58,000 American soldiers were killed in the Vietnam War, their average age was 19--from the senior prom to Vietnam.

Tookie



Steve Bell On The Execution of Stanley 'Tookie' Williams

From: Z
To: GI Special
Sent: December 14, 2005
Subject: tookie

"What a state of society is that which knows of no better instrument for its own defense than the hangman, and which proclaims . . . its own brutality as eternal law? . . . Is there not a necessity for deeply reflecting upon an alteration of the system that breeds these crimes, instead of glorifying the hangman who executes a lot of criminals to make room only for the supply of new ones?"

Karl Marx, 1853

Solidarity
Z

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR; RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS.



12.8.05: An Iraqi man forced to open his home to US marines from 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marines Regiment during a house-to-house raid in the village of Abu Qusayb, west of Baghdad. (AFP/Mauricio Lima)

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqis over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it "sovereign" and "detain" anybody who doesn't like it in some prison without any changes being filed against them, or any trial.]

[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to occupy their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that?]

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

**“What Would You Call Someone Who
Wants To Hand Over Control Of Iraq**

To A Group Of Terrorists That Made Its Reputation By Blowing Up American Embassies?" "I'd Call Him President Bush"

14 December 2005 By William Rivers Pitt, Truthout Perspective [Excerpt]

Paul Mulshine, writing last week for the New Jersey Star-Ledger, encapsulates this amazing turn of events. "What would you call someone who wants to hand over control of Iraq to a group of terrorists that first made its reputation by blowing up a couple of American embassies?" wrote Mulshine.

"I'd call him President Bush. The group is called the Dawa party. In the early 1980s, Dawa terrorists bombed our embassies in Kuwait and in Lebanon. They were universally recognized as vicious America-hating, Iranian-supported terrorists.

"Now they're part of the coalition that is expected to win control of the new Iraqi parliament in Thursday's elections."

"The other coalition partners aren't much better," continued Mulshine. "The sanest group on the Shi'a side is the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. A 1984 Washington Post story portrayed the group, known by its initials SCIRI, as 'a kind of parent organization for four operational terrorist groups.'

"SCIRI was founded in Iran a couple of years earlier by the Ayatollah Khomeini with the goal of taking control of Iraq. Now, they're about to do so, courtesy of George W. Bush."

A sharp indictment of SCIRI and its ties to Iran and terrorism can be found, of all places, within the pages of the report put forth by the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. This commission, put together to investigate the events of and leading up to September 11, heard expert testimony from Mark Gasiorowski, professor of Political Science and Director of International Studies at Louisiana State University.

In his testimony, Gasiorowski stated, "From the early 1980s until about 1996, Iran was directly involved in a wide variety of terrorist activities. It provided extensive support to Islamist terrorist groups such as Hezbollah (in Lebanon), Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), the Afghan Northern Alliance and its precursors."

Gasiorowski goes on to state that Iran continues to support several terrorist groups, and includes SCIRI among them. "They are most strongly committed to Hezbollah and SCIRI," said Gasiorowski, "with which they have worked closely for over 20 years."

Excellent. It seems the best path to electoral victory in Iraq, besides kissing babies and avoiding assassins, involves a long history of terrorism and extreme violence against the United States.

Former CIA agent Bob Baer stated in Mulshine's article, "So now we have a Shia terrorist state. Was this worth \$6 billion a month?"

Almost certainly, we will hear apologists for both the Bush administration and the invasion downplay the incredible terrorist histories of the groups about to take over the Iraqi government. "Sure they were terrorists," we will hear, "but they're OK now."

In other words, they are terrorists, but they are our terrorists.

Saddam Hussein was our terrorist in Iraq for years, so long as he directed his terrorism primarily at Iran. Osama bin Laden was our terrorist in Afghanistan for years, so long as he directed his terrorism at the Soviet Union. Anyone seeing a pattern developing here?

It is amazing to consider that Americans, who have almost completely lost faith in the vote as an effective means of political participation at home, are somehow expected to believe that this vote will solve Iraq's incredible problems.

One wonders how long it will be before the Vanishing Voter Project opens an office in Baghdad. In Iraq, of course, vanishing voters carry an entirely different meaning.

Don't get your hopes up come Friday.

The worst possible outcome will involve horrific bloodshed and unrest. The best possible outcome will place two notoriously deadly terrorist organizations in charge of Iraq.

Was this trip really necessary?

<p>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bubble Bubba



Gary Hershorn/Reuters

December 14, 2005 By MAUREEN DOWD, New York Times

WASHINGTON

Never ask a guy who's in a bubble if he's in a bubble. He can't answer. 'Cause he's in a bubble.

But the NBC anchor Brian Williams gamely gave it a shot, showing the president the Newsweek cover picturing him trapped in a bubble.

"This says you're in a bubble," Brian told W. "You have a very small circle of advisers now. Is that true? Do you feel in a bubble?"

"No, I don't feel in a bubble," Bubble Boy replied, unable to see the bubble because he's in it. "I feel like I'm getting really good advice from very capable people and that people from all walks of life have informed me and informed those who advise me." He added, "I'm very aware of what's going on."

He swiftly contradicted himself by admitting that "this is the first time I'm seeing this magazine" (his version of his dad's Newsweek "Wimp Factor" cover) and that he doesn't read newsmagazines.

The anchor and the anchorite spent a few anodyne moments probing the depths of what it's like to be president. "I just talked to the president-elect of Honduras," W. said. "A lot of my job is foreign policy, and I spend an enormous amount of time with leaders from other countries."

Brian struggled to learn whether W. read anything except one-page memos. Talking about his mom, Bubble Boy returned to the idea of the bubble: "If I'm in a

bubble, well, if there is such thing as a bubble, she's the one who can penetrate it."

"I'll tell the guys at Newsweek," the anchor said impishly.

"Is that who put the bubble story?" W. asked. First he didn't know about it, and now he's forgotten it already? That's the alluring, memory-cleansing beauty of the bubble.

The idea that W. is getting good advice from very capable people is silly - administration officials have blown it on everything from the occupation and natural disasters to torture. In the bubble, they can torture while saying they don't. They can pretend that Iraqi forces are stronger than they are. They can try to frighten people with talk of Al Qaeda's dream of a new Islamic caliphate - their latest attempt to scare Americans into supporting the war they ginned up.

"Whether or not it needed to happen," the president told the anchor, "I'm still convinced it needed to happen." The Bubble Boy can even contradict himself and not notice.

W.'s contention that he's informed by people from all walks of life is a joke, as is his wacky assertion that he can "reach out" to the public more than Abraham Lincoln because he has Air Force One. Lincoln actually went to the front in his war, with Minié balls whizzing by. No phony turkey for him.

The president may fly over all walks of life in Air Force One or drive by them and hide behind dark-tinted windows. In his bubble, he floats through a comforting world of doting women, respectful military audiences, loyal Republican donors and screened partisan groups, with protesters, Democrats, journalists, critics and coffins of dead soldiers kept at bay.

(He has probably even been shielded from the outrage of John and Stacey Holley, both Army veterans, who were shocked to learn that their only child, Matthew, killed in Iraq, would be arriving in San Diego as freight on a commercial airliner.)

The president's bubble requires constant care. It's not easy to keep out huge tragedies like Katrina, or flawed policies like Iraq.

As Newsweek noted, a foreign diplomat "was startled when Secretary of State Rice warned him not to lay bad news on the president. 'Don't upset him,' she said."

Heaven forbid. Don't burst his bubble.

HILLARY SUPPORTS GIVING FLAGS RIGHT TO VOTE:

Attempt To Position Herself As Centrist, Observers Say

December 12, 2005 The Borowitz Report

Having already supported a constitutional amendment banning flag-burning, Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-New York) raised the ante today, proposing a new amendment that would give flags the right to vote.

At a press conference in Washington, Sen. Clinton proposed universal suffrage for the red, white and blue in what some observers called a canny maneuver to position herself as a centrist.

"It's been said that these colors don't run," Sen. Clinton told reporters. "In recognition of that, these colors should vote."

By proposing that flags be given the right to vote, Sen. Clinton may be securing her political future, since American flags are estimated to number in the billions and the lion's share of them would presumably vote for her out of gratitude.

Not to be outdone, President Bush held a press conference today to announce that he favored a constitutional amendment giving flags the right to bear arms.

"If someone tries to burn a flag, the flag should have the right to defend itself, and that means shoot to kill," Mr. Bush said.

Sen. Clinton also addressed the flag-burning issue later in the day, proposing universal health care for all flags who are burn victims.

She added that more government money was needed to give flags the housing, education, and job training they need in today's competitive world economy.

"It takes a village to raise a flag," she said.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

The Silly Colonel Doesn't Have A Clue

December 16, 2005 By Paul D'Amato, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

DO AMERICAN officials really believe their own lies? That crossed my mind when I read this statement by U.S. Army Col. Mark McKnight, who delivered a eulogy in November to commemorate the handing over of Saddam Hussein's largest Palace Complex to the Iraqi puppet regime.

"The Iraqi people," he said, "will continue to move forward toward a sovereign Iraq, an Iraq where an elite few can no longer erect expensive and ornate palaces like these while the majority of the people suffer in fear and poverty."

The whistling of the dud mortar overhead as he spoke--sending generals scrambling for cover--seemed a fitting catcall to this piece of hypocrisy.

But I want to focus on the part about erecting expensive palaces.

Perhaps Col. McKnight wasn't aware of the fact that there are 341 billionaires in the U.S. whose combined assets now exceed a trillion dollars--that's a one with 12 zeros after it. On the top-ten list along with Bill Gates and Warren Buffet is Robson Walton, an heir of Sam Walton of Wal-Mart fame, a company notorious for paying its non-union employees low wages and lousy benefits.

Perhaps he didn't know that a corporate CEO's average compensation now ranks at 431 times the average pay of a production worker. The biggest gains have gone to the CEOs of military contractors. According to a new Institute for Policy Studies report, their pay went up by 200 percent since 9/11.

And speaking of U.S. palaces, the following is from Richard Conniff's A Natural History of the Rich: A Field Guide: "When a New Yorker was building a 43,000-square-foot third or possibly fourth home on the ocean in Palm Beach, her main complaint was that the bedroom closet was so small. 'It's as big as my living room,' the architect protested, to which the owner replied, 'Why do you live in such a small house?'"

Home developer Dwight Schar--your average, run-of-the-millionaire guy--spent \$70 million on his 26,000-square-foot Palm Beach estate, which boasts 18 bathrooms, a movie theater, and a walk-in humidior.

But why have only three or four land palaces when you can have flying and floating ones, too? Business Week reports that the rich are now spending as much as \$125 million to buy their own personal wide-body passenger jets, "outfitting them with everything from his-and-hers bathrooms to onboard movie theaters."

Microsoft cofounder Paul Allen owns a 414-foot yacht. "You really are nobody," a financial manager claims to have overheard the publisher of a yachting magazine say, "unless you have a full-sized basketball court in the back of your boat." Allen's has a lot more than that--including a garage, a movie theater, a concert hall and a recording studio.

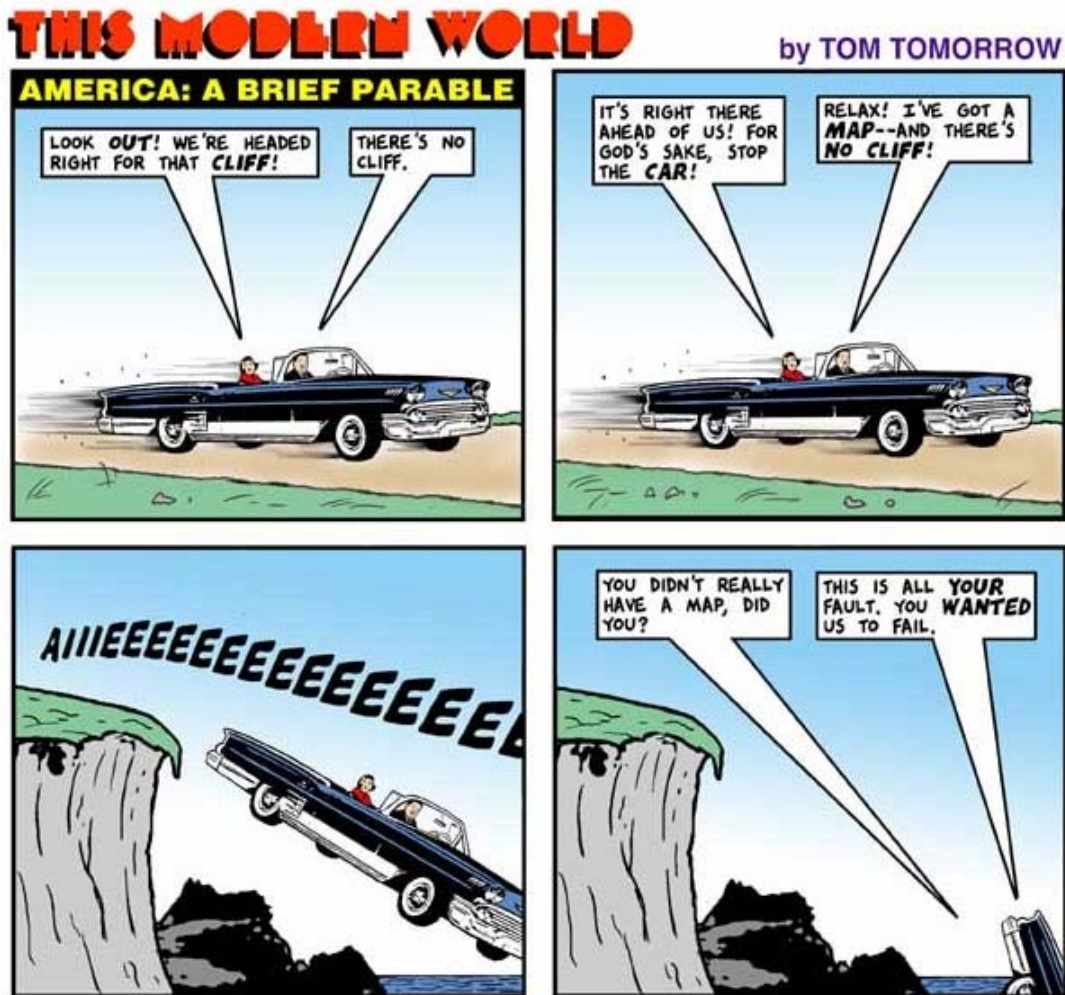
Meanwhile, the majority of Americans "suffer in fear and poverty."

The latest outrage?

The Supreme Court ruled on behalf of the Bush administration that the government can garnish Social Security checks to pay for delinquent student loans.

According to an AP report: "The unanimous decision went against a disabled 67-year-old Seattle man who lives in public housing and had sued, claiming he needed all of his \$874 monthly check to pay for food and medicine. James Lockhart's benefits had been cut by 15 percent to cover debts he incurred for college in the 1980s. He has about \$77,000 in unpaid loans."

What people like James Lockhart fail to understand is that their money is needed to pay military contractor CEOs like David Brooks.



Toledo City Government And Cops Just Love The Nazis

December 16, 2005 By Jason Bechtel and Patrick Dyer, Socialist Worker

TOLEDO, Ohio--A massive police presence to protect a neo-Nazi rally here December 11 led to the arrest of 30 antiracists, including several who were pulled over by cops far from the actual protest.

The National Socialist Movement, a swastika-wearing Nazi organization, was run out of town October 15 by a crowd of largely African American protesters, who, when attacked by police, fought back. This time, city officials used overwhelming force--including 500 police officers, many of them on horseback--to try to intimidate demonstrators.

The real story turned out not to be the neo-Nazi rally, but the trampling of civil rights that occurred in the name of public safety. An injunction granted by a judge December 9 essentially put the city under martial law for a day.

Under the judge's order, protests were banned anywhere outside of the designated police perimeter around 1 Government Center, the site of the Nazi rally.

Everyone entering the site was required to leave behind anything deemed "threatening" by police. Signs could not have sticks or poles attached. Everyone had to walk through a metal detector.

Finally, everyone was required to stand in front of a video camera for documentation.

In spite of this police state atmosphere, 150 people defied police intimidation and showed up to protest the Nazis.

And although everyone at the protest had passed through tight security, police methodically walked a line of horses along the barricades, forcing the protesters to back up. Anyone who did not do so quickly was arrested.

According to a legal observer, every time a protester would insult the police, officers on horseback and on foot would make an incursion into the crowd and apprehend that person. Meanwhile, horses were being maneuvered inside the crowd, often slamming into and nearly trampling protesters.

Two of the protesters arrested were Latinos from Lansing, Mich., who police claimed matched the descriptions of two individuals at the October riot. It can be proved that they were nowhere near Toledo on that day--but racial profiling became a convenient excuse for the police to arrest at will.

These tactics had both the direct effect of removing protesters from the site and the follow-up effect of intimidation, which drove many to leave early to avoid arrest. The police succeeded in decimating our forces and, in the process, succeeded in shredding our civil rights.

In the coming days, as bails are posted and charges are dropped and plead down, a class-action lawsuit against the city and the police department must materialize. If Toledo can get away with these heavy-handed tactics to protect Nazis without repercussions, then other cities will do likewise.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

UNCONQUERED. UNCONQUERABLE.



PICTUREPEOPLE-L@LISTSERV.DFN.DE

[Thanks to John Gingerich, Veterans For Peace, for sending in.]

[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.]

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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

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