

GI SPECIAL 4A1:



<http://www.prairiefire.org/graphics/pp.gif>

Introducing:

Prisoners Against The War

This announcement follows a meeting between members of the Military Project Organizing Committee and Stanley Howard at Statesville Prison, Joliet, Illinois, on 12.29.05, at which time permission was given to GI Special to make known to the public the existence of and statements by members of a new organization, Prisoners Against The War.

(Thanks go to the Campaign To End The Death Penalty, <http://www.nodeathpenalty.org/>, for assistance in making the meeting happen.)

In the week leading up to the Martin Luther King, Jr. national holiday, GI Special will lead with statements written by members of Prisoners Against The War.

Organized by Stanley Howard and five other imprisoned members of the Military Project, Prisoners Against The War breaks new ground.

There has been no organization like this in recent American history. That may be an understatement, since no record of a similar organization has been found at any point in American history.

Prisoners Against The War hopes to inspire other prisoners, both in civilian and military prisons, to organize their own chapters, and spread the movement nationwide.

They report many prisoners have relatives serving in the armed forces. Other prisoners are Vietnam Veterans. To the extent allowed by prison regulations, they circulate GI Special and Traveling Soldier. They will see these issues of GI Special, and provide support to family members on the outside resisting the war.

A variety of social critics have argued that the prisons and armed forces of a given society express most nakedly the underlying class nature of the society.

An organization bringing together civilian and military prisoners can open a new window on that reality, not least by destroying the myth spread by politicians and other servants of the rich and homicidal that prisoners are mere things without humanity or redeeming social value.

For how to contact Prisoners Against The War, see information below. T

PRISONERS AGAINST THE WAR

BY: Stanley Howard, Statesville C.C., Joliet, Illinois

The Prisoners of Statesville Correctional Center in Joliet, Illinois, extends our deepest and sincere condolences to the Families and Loved Ones of those lost in the Iraq and Afghanistan war.

To show we support the troops and that we stand firmly in solidarity with the Military Project and the countless of other people, groups and organizations determined to Bring Them Home Now, we came together and formed the "Prisoners Against The War."

Being an ex-Death Row prisoner who spent 16 horrible years as an innocent man on Illinois' Death Row before being pardoned by then-Gov. George Ryan (Jan

2003), I knew President George W. Bush as the “Texecutioner” who showed no value or respect for human life.

He viciously and unsympathetically ordered over 150 people to be poisoned to death as Governor of Texas.

So when he led a military offensive aimed at ousting Saddam Hussein as President of Iraq, done under the pretext that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction, I knew then that that was a lie and whatever his agenda was, it was only going to cause a lot more deaths.

I expressed my feelings about this in my “Keeping it Real” column in the New Abolitionist (May 2003), the newsletter of the Campaign to End the Death Penalty:

“I’m not subscribing to their propaganda: ‘They just hate Americans and no one knows why.’ I’m not buying into this wacky patriotic frenzy whipped up after 9/11 that enables Bush to proclaim, ‘either you’re with us, or you’re with them’ mentality.

We need to stop this senseless cycle of violence by stopping these arm chair chief SI warmongers from sending our mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers onto battlefields to kill each other, when these same leaders cannot come together to combat starvation, AIDS, global warming, pollution, racism and etc.”

It’s said that we study history to stop repeating the errors of the past. And if that is true, then we as a civilized people living in the 21st century must come to grips with what the history of war has taught us: war causes nothing but death and destruction, and pain and suffering.

Moreover, its easy for these armchair chiefs/warmongers to declare war with the assurance that they nor their Loved Ones would never set foot on the battlefield.

It’s now a proven fact that Saddam had no WMDs nor was he attempting to reinstitute his nuclear program, and it’ s a shame that thousands of our human family members has died and are dying because of this well orchestrated lie.

The war continues even though the truth was exposed, and Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice who helped perpetrate the WMD lie was recently quoted as estimating that, ”the American military could quite possibly be in Iraq for 10 to 15 years.”

This estimate is unacceptable, ridiculous and a sign of stupidity.

And even though Bush says we should honor our Fallen Heroes by staying and completing the mission, Prisoners Against The War asserts that since the mission, Bush’s mission, was exposed to be an international crime, we’re going to honor our Fallen Heroes and those still in harms way by ending this war and Bringing Them Home Now.

10.12.05: Done at Statesville Prison:

MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY PROJECT

1. Do not "support the troops" in the abstract. We focus on support for Armed Forces resistance, giving aid and comfort to those who are against the war.
2. Are for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all occupation troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.
3. Believe that oppressed peoples and nations have the right to self-determination and the right to resist Imperial invasion and occupation.
4. Do not require others to be in complete agreement to work together with them towards common objectives.
5. Reject the idea that organizations working together on a common project must not debate differences about the best way forward for the movement. On the contrary, we encourage debate and discussion as the most useful method to arrive at the best course of action.
6. May choose to support candidates for elective office who are for immediate withdrawal from Iraq, but do not support candidates opposed to bringing our troops home now.
7. Are committed to organizational democracy. This means control of our organization by the membership, through freely elected delegates to any coordinating bodies that may be formed, whether at local, regional, or national levels. Any member in good standing may run for any position, with or without a slate. Coordinating bodies must report their actions, decisions and votes to the membership who elected them for approval or rejection.
8. Are committed to putting in time taking action in an organized way to reach out to members of the armed forces, including local community Reserve and National Guard units.
9. Are not present or former commissioned officers in the armed forces, members of the military police, or any law enforcement agency.

I understand and am in agreement with the above statement, and pledge to defend my brothers and sisters against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

(Signed)

(Date)

(Application taken by)

Stanley Howard 10/12/05
David Carter 10/12/05
Vincent Galloway 10/12/05
Maria K. Clark 10/12/05
Delandis Adams 10-12-05
Carl Rosen 10/12/05

Contacting Prisoners Against The War:

Prisoners who wish to communicate with Prisoners Against The War may write to:
Prisoners Against The War or PAW or Martin Smith, at:
PO Box 121
Champaign, IL 61824

NOTE WELL: ILLINOIS PRISON REGULATIONS FORBID INMATES FROM RECEIVING ANY MAIL FROM ANY OTHER PRISONERS ANYWHERE.

Martin Smith is not allowed to forward your letter to the prison. He is allowed to summarize the contents in his own letters.

If your prison also has rules forbidding mail from another prisoner to be sent to you, the reply will also be summarized by Martin Smith, and sent to you.

Persons not in prison at this time may write directly to Prisoners Against The War.
NOTE WELL: Nothing whatever may be enclosed in your mail other than your written or typed letter: no money or other objects may be sent.

Letters to:
Stanley Howard
Reg. # N-71620
PO Box 112
Joliet, Illinois 60434



Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Bloody Thursday

January 6, 2006 BAGHDAD (Reuters)

Thursday was one of the bloodiest days for U.S. forces in Iraq since the 2003 invasion, with 11 soldiers dying in a fresh spasm of violence that also killed 130 Iraqis, the U.S. military said on Friday.

Roadside bombs, favored by the insurgents but feared by U.S. soldiers for their devastating effectiveness, accounted for seven of the American deaths.

U.S. commanders have expressed concern in recent months at the growing use of more powerful and sophisticated bombs.

Thursday's deaths take the number of U.S. fatalities since the start of the war to oust Saddam Hussein to 2,193, according to Reuters figures.

It was the highest daily U.S. death toll since December 1, when 11 U.S. soldiers were also killed, and was also the deadliest day in Iraq overall for four months.

In Thursday's worst incident for the Americans, five soldiers died in Baghdad when a roadside bomb hit their patrol. Two more were killed in a similar incident elsewhere in Baghdad.

In Falluja, a Sunni Arab stronghold, two Marines were killed by small-arms fire in separate attacks, the U.S. military said in a statement on Friday.

Two U.S. soldiers and scores of Iraqi police recruits were killed when a bomber blew himself up in the western city of Ramadi as 1,000 men queued to be security-screened at a glass and ceramics works used as a temporary recruiting center.

Hospital sources said 70 people died and 65 wounded.

Insurgents Open Offensive In Fallujah: Many U.S. Casualties Reported

FALLUJAH, Iraq, Jan. 7 (Xinhuanet) -- Fierce clashes broke out between insurgents and US forces in the flashpoint city of Fallujah on Saturday, witnesses said.

"A sniper opened fire at a group of US soldiers, shooting four of them in al-Wahda district in central Fallujah," a local journalist told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, armed men battled with the US troops in al-Tharthar Street in the eastern part of the city as the latter tightened security measures, blocking all main entrances to the city, he added.

Earlier in the day, a roadside bomb went off near a US military patrol at about 7:30 a.m. (0430 GMT) in eastern Fallujah as a US military patrol was passing by, destroying a US Humvee, killing or wounding the soldiers aboard, the source said.

In a separate incident, local residents reported fierce clashes between US soldiers and militants in the Arba'ien Street in central Fallujah.

They said they didn't know the exact number of the casualties as the clash was heavy and both sides used different kinds of weapons.

The Sunni-dominated Fallujah, some 50 km west of Baghdad, has witnessed sporadic attacks against the U.S. and Iraqi government forces despite U.S.-Iraqi military operations in the city to stamp out insurgency.

MORE:

Local Marine Killed Near Fallujah

Jan 7 WTAE

The New Castle News is reporting that Albert Gettings, a Marine corporal from New Castle, Pa., was on patrol near Fallujah, Iraq, when his unit was ambushed.

It was also reported he was shot in the stomach.

Gettings had been in Iraq since September and was due to come home in March 2006.

MORE:

4 Wounded In Fallujah Roadside Attack: Seabees Are Now Officially Expendable Delivery People

Jan. 07, 2006 By MICHAEL NEWSOM, SUN HERALD

Four Seabees with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133 were injured Sunday when a roadside bomb exploded near Fallujah, Iraq.

All four were in a convoy with Marines when an Improvised Explosive Device hit their Humvee. Two returned to their unit, and two were taken to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. The two Seabees in the German hospital will return to Gulfport.

The four men suffered cuts, abrasions, and one had a broken limb, said Lt. Cmdr. Kyra Hawn, public affairs specialist for the 22nd Naval Construction Regiment in Gulfport.

The families of the injured have been contacted by chaplains and base personnel, Hawn said, but she said NMCB 133 would not release the names of the men since they were not killed.

She said the four injured Seabees had the foresight to radio other convoys to warn them shortly after the bomb exploded.

She said Seabees found no sign of those who planted the bomb.

"Generally, all we can say is it was insurgent forces," Hawn said. "It could be any number of groups." [Got that right. Only about 50,000 pissed off Iraqis under arms fighting the occupation, and winning. Only a few million more helping them every way they can, day and night.]]

Hawn said Seabees are more often finding themselves doing convoy work in Iraq.

"They are being used more and more to move construction supplies in conjunction with ongoing nation-building construction projects, as well as support of forward deployed Marine units," Hawn said. [The Seabees, famous for knowing how to build things, are now delivery truck drivers and security guards for the war-profiteers employed by Bush and his gang of corrupt traitors, busily grabbing billions of dollars and doing shitty, shoddy work to increase their profits. Marvelous.]

She said this varies from their typical missions.

She said Navy and Marine units are constantly changing their roles because the Global War on Terrorism is changing with them. **[OK, that's it: Lt. Cmdr. Hawn will be sent**

immediately to Ramadi, or Falluja, and assigned to convoy duty, so she can babble this silly bullshit from just a tiny little bit of first hand experience.]

The Seabees new convoy role consequently places them at risk of more IED encounters; such encounters account for the majority of U.S. troop fatalities in Iraq. [Well, finally, the very last sentence, some reality. Seabees are now officially expendable delivery people.]

Lt. Col Killed By Ramadi IED

January 7, 2006 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 018-06

Lt. Col. Michael E. McLaughlin, 44, of Mercer, Pa., died in Ar Ramadi, Iraq, on Jan. 5, when he was conducting a dismounted patrol at an Iraqi police recruiting station and an individual-borne improvised explosive device detonated near his position.

McLaughlin was assigned to the Army National Guard's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 28th Infantry Division, Washington, Pa.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



Albany, N.Y., native Lance Cpl. Paul J. Kolkhorst, an antitank assaultman, left, stands ready to advance with the Marines of Company I, 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 2 IN Qaim Nov. 15, 2005. (AP Photo/ U.S. Marine Corps, Sgt. Jerad W. Alexander)

Baghdad's Green Zone Under Mortar Rounds Attack

Jan 7 (KUNA)

Four mortar rounds rocked the Green Zone, base for the US and UK embassies, the Iraqi government and the NATO here on Saturday.

No information was made available on the inflicted damages.

Earlier, nine Iraqis were injured, including five policemen, in a car bomb explosion targeting an Iraqi police patrol in the new Baghdad area.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Wounded In Kandahar

1.3.05 Wall St. Journal

A car bomb detonated near a military convoy in Kandahar, wounding a U.S. soldier and two bystanders.

TROOP NEWS

Rumsfeld Refused To Supply Troops With Armor That Could Have Saved Lives

[Thanks to David Honish, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in. He writes: Perhaps if they had not shipped body armor that failed to meet the standards specified in the contract the outcome might have been better too?]

January 6, 2006 By MICHAEL MOSS, The New York Times Company

A secret Pentagon study has found that at least 80 percent of the marines who have been killed in Iraq from wounds to their upper body could have survived if they had extra body armor.

That armor has been available since 2003 but until recently the Pentagon has largely declined to supply it to troops despite calls from the field for additional protection, according to military officials.

The ceramic plates in vests currently worn by the majority of military personnel in Iraq cover only some of the chest and back. In at least 74 of the 93 fatal wounds that were analyzed in the Pentagon study of marines from March 2003 through June 2005, bullets and shrapnel struck the marines' shoulders, sides or areas of the torso where the plates do not reach.

Thirty-one of the deadly wounds struck the chest or back so close to the plates that simply enlarging the existing shields "would have had the potential to alter the fatal outcome," according to the study, which was obtained by The New York Times.

For the first time, the study by the military's medical examiner shows the cost in lost lives from inadequate armor, even as the Pentagon continues to publicly defend its protection of the troops.

Officials have said they are shipping the best armor to Iraq as quickly as possible. **At the same time, they have maintained that it is impossible to shield forces from the increasingly powerful improvised explosive devices used by insurgents.**

Yet the Pentagon's own study reveals the equally lethal threat of bullets.

The vulnerability of the military's body armor has been known since the start of the war, and is part of a series of problems that have surrounded the protection of American troops.

Still, the Marine Corps did not begin buying additional plates to cover the sides of their troops until this September, when it ordered 28,800 sets, Marine Corps officials acknowledge.

The Army, which has the largest force in Iraq, is still deciding what to purchase, according to Army procurement officials. They said the Army is deciding between various sizes of plates to give its 130,000 soldiers; the officials said they hope to issue contracts this month.

Additional forensic studies by the Armed Forces Medical Examiner's unit that were obtained by The Times indicate that about 340 American troops have died solely from torso wounds.

The Pentagon has been collecting the data on wounds since the beginning of the war in part to determine the effectiveness of body armor. The military's medical examiner, Craig T. Mallak, told a military panel in 2003 that the information "screams to be published." But it would take nearly two years.

The Marine Corps said it asked for the data in August 2004; but it needed to pay the medical examiner \$107,000 to have the data analyzed. Marine officials said funding and other delays resulted in the work not starting until December 2004. It finally began receiving the information by June 2005.

The shortfalls in bulletproof vests are just one of the armor problems the Pentagon continues to struggle with as the war in Iraq approaches the three-year mark, The Times has found in an ongoing examination of the military procurement system.

The production of a new armored truck called the Cougar, which military officials said has thus far withstood every insurgent attack, has fallen three months behind schedule. The small company making the truck has been beset by a host of production and legal problems.

Meanwhile, the Pentagon is still relying on another small factory in Ohio to armor all of the military's principal transport truck, the Humvee, and it remains backlogged with orders.

The facility, owned by Armor Holdings, increased production in December after reports in The Times about delays drew criticism from Congress.

But the Marine Corps said it is still waiting for about 2,000 of these vehicles to replace other Humvees in Iraq that are more lightly armored, and does not expect final delivery until June.

An initiative begun by the Pentagon nearly two years ago to speed up production by having additional firms armor new Humvees remains incomplete, Army officials said.

Body armor has gone through a succession of problems in Iraq. First, there were prolonged shortages of the plates that make the vests bulletproof.

This year, the Pentagon began replacing the plates with a stronger model that is more resistant to certain insurgent attacks.

Almost from the beginning, some soldiers asked for additional protection to stop bullets from slicing through their sides.

In the fall of 2003, when troops began hanging their crotch protectors under their arms, the Army's Rapid Equipping Force shipped several hundred plates to protect their sides and shoulders. Individual soldiers and units continued to buy their own sets.

The Times obtained the 3-page Pentagon report after a military advocacy group, Soldiers for the Truth, learned of its existence. The group posted an article about the report on its website earlier this week.

The Times delayed publication of this article for more than a week until the Pentagon confirmed the veracity of its report. Pentagon officials declined to discuss details of the wound data, saying it would aid the enemy. [That makes no

sense at all. How could the publication of this information possibly help Bush, Rumsfeld, and the rest of the scum that infest Washington DC? They're "the enemy," and not the Iraqis resisting Bush's wish to grab their country for himself and his business associates.]

"Our preliminary research suggests that as many as 42 percent of the Marine casualties who died from isolated torso injuries could have been prevented with improved protection in the areas surrounding the plated areas of the vest," the study concludes.

Another 23 percent might have been saved with side plates that extend below the arms, while 15 percent more could have benefited from shoulder plates, the report says. In all, 526 marines have been killed in combat in Iraq.

The findings and other research by military pathologists suggests that an analysis of all combat deaths in Iraq, including those of Army personnel, would show that 300 or more lives might have been saved with improved body armor.

Military officials and defense contractors said the Pentagon's procurement troubles have stemmed in part from miscalculations that underestimated the strength of the insurgency, and from years of cost-cutting that left some armoring firms on the brink of collapse as they waited for new orders.

To help defeat roadside ambushes, the military in May 2005 contracted to buy 122 Cougars whose special V-shaped hull helps deflect roadside bombs, military officials said. But the Pentagon gave the job to a small firm in South Carolina, Force Protection, that had never mass-produced vehicles. Company officials said a string of blunders has pushed the completion date to June.

A dozen prototypes shipped to Iraq have been recalled from the field to replace a failing transmission. Steel was cut to the wrong size before the truck's design drawings were perfected. Several managers have left the firm.

Company officials said they also lost time in an inter-service skirmish. The Army, which is buying the bulk of the vehicles, asked for its trucks to be delivered before the Marine vehicles, and company officials said that move upended their production process until the Army agreed to get back in line behind the marines. "It is what it is, and we're running as fast as we can to change it," Gordon McGilton, the company's chief executive, said in an interview at its plant in Ladson, S.C.

On July 5, two former employees brought a federal false claims case that accuses Force Protection of falsifying records to cover up defective workmanship. They allege that the actions "compromise the immediate and long term integrity of the vehicles and result in a deficient product," according to legal documents filed under seal in the United States District Court in Charleston and obtained by The Times.

The legal claim also accuses the company of falsifying records to deceive the military into believing the firm could meet the production deadlines. The United

States Attorney's office in South Carolina declined to comment on the case. The Marine Corps says the Justice Department did not notify it about the case until December.

**“That’s how much I give a shit about
dead U.S. troops.”**



**TRAITOR
ENEMY DOMESTIC
SOLDIER-KILLING RAT
UNFIT FOR COMMAND**

Critically Wounded Daphne Soldier Improving

January 7, 2006 WKRN

TIBBIE, Ala. A Daphne soldier critically wounded by an explosion in Iraq this week is now breathing on his own, but he remains in the intensive care unit of a U-S military hospital in Germany, according to his father.

Paul Raines Senior said Sgt. Paul Douglas Raines Junior was removed from a respirator yesterday.

The blast, which sent shrapnel into the right side of Sgt. Raines' body and skull, also broke his arm in at least six places.

Paul Rains Senior said the Army contacted his family Tuesday and prepared them for the worst, but he said family members believe he will survive.

The soldier will be transported today to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D-C, where his family plans to join.

Sgt. Raines deployed with the Army's 101st Airborne Division to Iraq in September. He also served during Operation Enduring Freedom in 2003.

Silly Command Trying To Shut Down Troops' Criticisms Of The War

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

"The ones that stay up are completely patriotic and innocuous, and they're fine if you want to read the flag-waving and how everything's peachy keen in Iraq," said Hartley, who is back in New Paltz after two years stationed in Iraq.

"Is it over? No way, as long as there are soldiers and the Internet. People will always be starting blogs and get shut down, and then someone else starts one," Hartley said.

January 2, 2006 BY JOSEPH MALLIA, STAFF WRITER, Newsday Inc. [Excerpts]

Letters home filled with tales of death and danger, bravery and boredom are a wartime certainty.

And now, as hundreds of soldiers overseas have started keeping Internet journals about the heat, the homesickness, the bloodshed, word speeds from the battlefield faster than ever.

More and more, though, U.S. military commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan are clamping down on these military Web logs, known as milblogs.

Nowadays, milbloggers "get shut down almost as fast as they're set up," said New York Army National Guard Spc. Jason Christopher Hartley, 31, of upstate New Paltz, who believes something is lost as the grunt's-eye take on Tikrit or Kabul is silenced or sanitized.

Hartley last January was among the first active-duty combat troops demoted and fined for security violations on his blog, justanothersoldier.com.

Throughout last year, the Army, Marines, Air Force and Navy tightened control on bloggers by requiring them to register through the chain of command and by creating special security squads to monitor milblogs.

"The ones that stay up are completely patriotic and innocuous, and they're fine if you want to read the flag-waving and how everything's peachy keen in Iraq," said Hartley, who is back in New Paltz after two years stationed in Iraq.

The military, at first unaware of the milblogging trend, last year began targeting bloggers with warnings, punctuated by high-profile disciplinary action.

Hartley was fined \$1,000 and demoted from sergeant. Others also have been disciplined, including Pfc. Leonard Clark, an Arizona national guardsman serving in Iraq who was demoted from specialist and fined \$1,640 in August for putting classified information on his blog.

In Hartley's case, the Army said he should not have described his unit's flight route into Iraq because that could help the enemy shoot down U.S. aircraft. And, the Army said, Hartley should not have disclosed that the last three bullets he loaded into his weapon's magazine were always tracers, because that could tip an enemy to time an attack just as an American soldier is reloading.

Despite those charges, Hartley asserts he did not put any American troops at risk. He believes the Army's real concern was his satiric tone.

"Photos of the week of cute Iraqi kids who I want to shoot," he captioned one set of snapshots on his blog in 2004.

"Something I cannot reiterate often enough is how monumentally misbehaved Iraqi street kids are," Hartley's blog continued. "But some of them are just so darn cute, you can't help but want to squeeze their little faces; until they suffocate."

The Army took him literally, even though Hartley said he was aiming his satire at those who believe Iraqi civilians' lives have little value.

Some of Hartley's readers got the point. Others did not.

One of Hartley's Web entries on April 24, 2004, carried a photograph of an Iraqi man's partially burned corpse clothed in a bloodied white tunic. Hartley's photo caption was a take on the "I [heart] New York City" slogan. His version: "I (heart) Dead Civilians."

In response, a visitor wrote: "Is this a joke or what? This whole blogg gives a bad taste in the mouth."

Hartley replied, "It leaves a bad taste in your mouth? That's sorta the point."

Another blog reader, with the moniker Alberto, defended the shock-blog: "The point of being so graphic it's to see what a war really is. Good blog, keep it up!"

In general, observers say, soldiers' online musings are less and less compelling.

There's less of the informal, often coarse language; one soldier speaking to another - that gave a feeling of authenticity and attracted thousands of readers both in and out of the military, said Jon Peede, director of Operation Homecoming, a National Endowment

for the Arts program that gives writing instruction to U.S. troops and is creating a collection of their blogs, letters and essays.

Seymour Hersh, the reporter who broke stories on the My Lai Massacre during the Vietnam War and torture at Abu Ghraib prison outside Baghdad, said military commanders can't control the flow of information by shutting down soldiers' blogs.

"There's a tremendous communication underground. (Soldiers) talk, they send e-mails, photos," Hersh said from his Washington, D.C., office. "The Army is wasting its time."

Milblogs remain popular. mudvillegazette.com claimed more than 700,000 page views in 2005, with blackfive.net not far behind. And michaelyon.blogspot is ranked in the top 100 (No. 81) of the 8 million blogs tracked by Technorati.com.

But with stricter controls now in place, the milblogosphere's freewheeling days likely are limited.

Some critics of the censorship say it could be harder for American soldiers to publicly raise questions about the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the success or failure of the war effort, and the "stop-loss" policy that forces soldiers to remain after enlistment contracts expire.

But a complete milblog blackout may never succeed.

"Is it over? No way, as long as there are soldiers and the Internet. People will always be starting blogs and get shut down, and then someone else starts one," Hartley said.

"In my generation, or younger, everyone's all about spilling their guts on the Internet."

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)

An Urgent Appeal To California National Guard Members:

Help Bring All The Troops Home Now!

From: Jacqueline Thomason
To: GI Special
Sent: January 03, 2006

Thanks for all the work you do to give voice to soldiers and their families.

I'm writing to ask for your help.

Code Pink, along with many other organizations (see below), is working to bring the National Guard Home. This is part of the overall campaign to bring ALL the troops home.

In California, a resolution, AJR 36, will come before the California Assembly soon. Loni Hancock is the author of this resolution, and it is currently co-authored by 16 other members of the assembly.

In support of this resolution we have already collected more than 5,000 signatures. Eleven City Councils and two counties have passed resolutions in support as well. We continue to obtain signatures on the petition and are working with California cities with the intention of passing the resolution in more cities by the time the resolution comes to a vote.

We think it is important for women and men who are of have been serving in the California National Guard to share their views and experience speak on this issue as spokespersons for the campaign

I'm hoping that you have some contacts with people in the California National Guard who would be interested. If so, please give them my email and cell phone number and ask them to contact me.

Again, thanks for your great work.

PeaceOut!

Jackie

Some of the organizations co-sponsoring the campaign to Bring the National Guard Home in California:

Veterans for Peace
Gold Star Families for Peace
Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors
The Raging Grannies
Physicians for Social Responsibility

Grandmothers for Peace
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
Green Party
Mount Diablo Peace Center
Out Against the War
Coalition for World Peace
American Friends Service Committee
United for Peace and Justice
California Peace Action

Jackie Thomason
CCCO – Oakland jackiett@mindspring.com
510-332-5998

If you would like to make a donation to help the GI Rights Hotline continue to provide free services, visit <http://www.objector.org/girights/donation.html>.

The GI Rights Hotline
(800) 394-9544
www.girights.org

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Joins Army Day Celebration

7.05 AFP

BAGHDAD: Iraq's fledgling military marked Army Day Friday to the sound of mortar and rocket fire, highlighting the tough battle the troops face to bring security to the country. Waving Iraqi flags, some 800 soldiers from the army's 10 divisions paraded in front of senior Iraqi government and U.S. officials as marching music played inside Baghdad's fortified Green Zone.

Saddam's theatrical gunshots were replaced by real mortar fire.

One mortar round, fired by rebels, even struck about a 100 meters away but did not explode, said an AFP correspondent at the scene.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

#1: The Soldiers Internationale

From: Clancy S
To: GI Special
Sent: December 29, 2005
Subject: L'Internationale

Here is a translation of the 'Soldiers Internationale' that Max circulated as sung by French radical GIs in 1871. Translated by a friend of mine.

First, here is the authentic original text, slightly different from what you sent, but not much. The parenthesized numbers refer to the notes below.

Les rois nous saoulaient de fumées
Paix entre nous, guerre aux tyrans
Appliquons (1) la grève aux armées
Crosse en l'air,(2) et rompons (3) les rangs

S'ils s'obstinent, ces cannibales
A faire de nous des héros
Ils sauront bientôt que nos balles
Sont pour nos propres généraux.

C'est la lutte finale
groupons nous (4) et demain
L'Internationale sera le genre humain

Translation:

**The kings made us drunk with dreams.
Peace between us, war to the tyrants!
We should declare strikes for armies!
Let's put down our guns and break ranks!**

**If they insist, these cannibals,
On making heroes of us,**

**They will soon learn that our bullets
Are for our own generals!**

**It's the ultimate battle
Let us unite and tomorrow
The Internationale will be the human race.**

(1) Crosse en air means: (wooden) stock in the air, i.e. turn your rifles upside down, implying we won't fight, i.e. we're going on strike.

(2) Appliquons (very close to decretions in your version: to decree, order, announce) and rompons (to break, literally) are both 1st person plural, thus we should do (something).

(3) "Let's band together" I think transmits the exact meaning, esp. in the context.

MORE:

#2: The Soldiers' Internationale

From: John Gingerich, Veterans For Peace
To: GI Special
Sent: December 28, 2005
Subject: song in French

I had to send the French song you had in your letter around to have it translated. I thought you might want to include this one for those of us that do not read or speak French...

Hi!

This is 'loose' translation, I've added some bits in brackets hoping it will be a little more clear. If you go to

www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/INTERNAT.html you get all the info on the history of the song and different versions in different languages; the translations are not word for word though.

This is the fifth (or sixth?) verse of the original French text.

**The kings make us drunk with their (gun) smoke,
(Let's declare) peace between ourselves and war on tyrants.
Let's call for the armies to go on strike
Rifles upside-down let's break ranks!**

**If those cannibals insist
On making heroes of us
They will soon discover that our bullets
Are for our own generals.**

**This is the final struggle
Stand together and tomorrow
L'Internationale will be the Human Race!**

In the 1950s you could have wound up in jail, or even in the gas-chamber for spreading this sort of information!

SEWING THE WIND: 2003 REAPING THE WHIRLWIND: 2006



Traffic along Jadriya Bridge in Baghdad at a standstill, as US soldiers from the 1st Armored Division conduct checks of all vehicles coming into the city on Saturday May 31, 2003. Iraqis have to contend with the mobile checkpoints and security checks following the fall of Saddam Hussein. (AP Photo/Ali Haider)

[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, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab 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? You'd want that in your home town, right?]

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



The Traitor Bush Boasts He Will Defy The Law

1.5.06 By Sidney Blumenthal, Salon.com [Excerpt]

Last week, when Bush signed the military appropriations bill containing the amendment forbidding torture that he and Vice President Cheney had fought against, he added his own "signing statement" to it.

It amounted to a waiver, authorized by him alone, that he could and would disobey this law whenever he chose.

He wrote: "The executive branch shall construe Title X in Division A of the Act, relating to detainees, in a manner consistent with the constitutional authority of the President to supervise the unitary executive branch and as Commander in Chief and consistent with the constitutional limitations on the judicial power, which will assist in achieving the shared objective of the Congress and the President, evidenced in Title X, of protecting the American people from further terrorist attacks."

In short, the president, in the name of national security, claiming to protect the country from terrorism, under war powers granted to him by himself, would follow the law to the extent that he decided he would.

**LIAR
TRAITOR
SOLDIER-KILLER
DOMESTIC ENEMY
UNFIT FOR COMMAND**



The traitor Bush infesting the South Lawn at the White House. (AFP/Paul J. Richards)

Yeah

Dec. 31, 2005 By Dave Barry, Tribune Media Services [Excerpt]

Also heating up in November is the debate over Iraq, with even Vice President Dick Cheney joining in, fueling rumors that he is still alive.

President Bush makes a series of strong speeches, stating that while he “will not impugn the patriotism” of those who oppose his administration's policies, they are “traitor scum.”

This outrages congressional Democrats, who respond with a two-pronged strategy of 1) demanding that the troops be brought home, and 2) voting overwhelmingly against a resolution to bring the troops home.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

“I Was Sentenced To Prison For 15 Years After Being Convicted Of Selling \$20 Worth Of Heroin”



Photo © Martin Lueders

manila.indymedia.org

January 5, 2006 by Beverly Henry, The Baltimore Sun.

Beverly Henry is an inmate at Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla, Calif. She may be reached via e-mail through the Progressive Media Project at pmproj@progressive.org

Like Betsy Ross, I sew American flags. But I do my work for 55 cents an hour in an assembly line inside the Central California Women's Facility, one of the largest women's prisons in the world.

I was sentenced to prison for 15 years after being convicted of selling \$20 worth of heroin to an undercover cop. I sew flags to buy toiletries and food.

From the time I was a little girl, I was taught to put my hand over my heart when pledging allegiance to the flag. I emphatically believed in the values of independence, freedom and equality the flag represents. But as time went on and I grew older, I learned that these values do not apply equally to all Americans.

As a black girl, I attended segregated schools without enough resources to provide a quality education. As an adult, I struggled continuously with drug addiction, but there were no resources available for me to get help. Instead, I was sent to prison.

My experience resonates with the historical reality for black people. We always have had unequal access to resources that would have allowed us to provide for our families and make our communities prosper. Nearly one-fourth of all black folks in America live below the poverty line, twice the national average.

America has become a country that imprisons those it fails, blaming poverty, drug addiction or homelessness on individuals rather than recognizing and addressing the conditions that give rise to them.

In California, more than 70 percent of women in prison are serving time for nonviolent, property or drug-related offenses.

The 3,000 women in my prison are disproportionately poor and minority. Prison marks the separation in our society between the haves and the have-nots, between those who walk free and those of us held captive.

Instead of using prisons as a supposed solution to social problems, we should reallocate our resources to invest in every person in America so that each one of us can have access to food and water, to housing and health care, to quality education and well-paying jobs.

Betsy Ross, who was born Jan. 1, 1752, sewed a flag that represented a vision of an equal and just society. And we, as Americans, pledge allegiance to a flag I sew, dedicating ourselves to "one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

To honor this flag at the start of this year, we must resolve to make America a country where all people can thrive.

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.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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

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

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

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