

GI SPECIAL 4A11:

HOW MANY MORE FOR BUSH'S WAR? BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



Last Vigil

“On the eve of the funeral, Katherine insisted on sleeping next to Jim's body, so the Marines arranged a bed and offered to stand guard through the night. She fell asleep to music she and Jim had planned to play at their formal wedding celebration when he returned.” NOVEMBER 14, 2005 TIME INC [Thanks to John Kevin Fabiani, who sent this in.]

Which Side Are *You* On?

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

I Pledge On My Honor:

To: Democrat and Republican Leaders

I will not support *any* political candidate for national office if he/she does not make the exiting of troops and contractors from Iraq *at once* a central plank in his/her campaign platform.

I would rather abstain from voting than vote for a continued occupation of Iraq.

Sincerely,

[To sign on: <http://new.petitiononline.com/brick518/petition.html>]

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Guam Soldier Killed In Mosul Accident

January 18, 2006 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 048-06

Pfc. Kasper A. Dudkiewicz, 22, of Mangilao, Guam, died in Mosul, Iraq, on Jan. 15, when his HMMWV was involved in a vehicle collision. Dudkiewicz was assigned to the 511th Military Police Company, 91st Military Police Battalion, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, N.Y.

MND-B Soldier Dies From Non-Combat Injury

January 18, 2006 MNF Release A060118b

BAGHDAD , Iraq – A Multi-National Division Baghdad Soldier died Jan. 17 from non-combat related injuries.

The incident is under investigation.

Marine In Iraq Dies From Gunshot Wound

January 17, 2006 By: North County Times

CAMP PENDLETON: Military officials in Iraq are investigating the death of a corporal who died from a gunshot wound in the city of Haditha on Saturday.

Marine Corps spokesmen at Camp Pendleton and at Camp Lejeune, N.C., said Tuesday afternoon that they could not provide any more information about the circumstances of the death of Cpl. Justin J. Watts.

The 20-year-old native of Crownsville, Md., was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment working with the I Marine Expeditionary Force in an area northwest of Baghdad.

Watts' unit was attached to the 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force from Camp Lejeune.

He joined the Marine Corps on Sept. 15, 2003, and had earned several honors, including the Combat Action Ribbon, Global War on Terror Expeditionary Medal and the Good Conduct Medal.

His death is the 270th fatality to occur among locally-based Marines serving in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion.

Seven U.S. Soldiers Wounded By Karbala IED

January 16, 2006 DPA

North of Karbala, police said a roadside bomb injured at least seven U.S. soldiers Tuesday as their patrol was passing by.

Wahkiakum Native Wounded By IED

Jan 17, 2006 By Courtney Sherwood, The Daily News

A 1991 Wahkiakum High School graduate is recovering in a U.S. military hospital in Iraq after his military convoy was hit by an improvised explosive device.

Sgt. Erik Pederson, 33, suffered nonlife-threatening flash burns to his face and neck, a superficial back injury and severe damage to his ear drums, according to his father.

"In an e-mail, he said he's sore, he can't hear nothing, and he's thankful," Robert Pederson of Bountiful, Utah, said Monday. "He was pretty well protected with the Kevlar (armor). ...The main concern is whether there will be lasting damage to his hearing."

Erik Pederson joined the Navy after high school, then left the service when his term was up. He later joined the Army National Guard and volunteered for deployment to Iraq, his father said.

Two U.S. Mercenaries Killed Near Basra; Another Wounded

1.18.06 By SAMEER N. YACOUB, Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq: A roadside bomb hit a convoy carrying a U.S. security team near the southern city of Basra, killing two American civilians and seriously wounding a third, the U.S. Embassy said. The U.S. Embassy said that coalition forces cordoned off the scene of the Basra attack, which occurred at 2 p.m., and took the wounded to a hospital.

It said the four people in the car worked for a private security firm, but did not identify it.

An Associated Press photographer at the scene said two four-wheel-drive vehicles were targeted. The scene was surrounded by heavily armed British forces, whose main base in Iraq is in Basra.

A British Ministry of Defense spokesman said the attack struck a convoy northwest of Basra.

A Reuters cameraman said he saw two four-wheel drive vehicles, one of them seriously damaged, at the scene of the attack in the al-Tariq district in northern Basra.

Witnesses said they had seen up to five casualties, all dressed in civilian clothes.

MORE:

Georgia Mercenary Killed In Roadside Bomb Attack

01/18/06 From staff, AP reports, Rome News Tribune

Richard Thomas Hickman, 52, a Cave Spring resident, was working for a private security contractor in Iraq when he was killed today in a roadside bomb attack.

A roadside bomb hit the convoy he was traveling in near the city of Basra.

He was working as an international police liaison officer (IPLO) for DynCorp International. Another American IPLO was killed, while an IPLO and an Iraqi translator were injured in the attack.

Hickman, a former Gordon County Sheriff's deputy, was working for DynCorp International training Iraqi security forces, said Maj. Clent Harris, a spokesman for the Sheriff's Office.

He joined the Gordon County Sheriff's Department in 1996 and was hired by DynCorp in March 2005.

The men were assigned to the Civilian Police Advisory Training Team (CPATT), the component of the U.S. military Multinational Security Transition Command - Iraq (MNSTC-I) responsible for the U.S.-led effort to train and equip the 135,000-member Iraqi police service. DynCorp International recruits, trains, equips, and supports the 500-member U.S. contingent of trainers through a contract with the U.S. Department of State.

His job involved training Iraqi law enforcement personnel in Basra, said Gordon County Clerk of Court Brian Brannon.

U.S. Trainer For Occupation Cops Killed

January 16, 2006 BUSINESS WIRE

Samuel E. Parlin, Jr., a retired police officer from Garden City, Georgia, was killed today in Baghdad when the armored vehicle in which he was riding was struck by an improvised explosive device. Mr. Parlin was working as an international police liaison officer (IPLO) with DynCorp International in Iraq.

The incident occurred at approximately 9:00 a.m. local time. After the attack, Mr. Parlin was transported to the 86th Combat Support Hospital, where he later died.

Mr. Parlin was a law enforcement officer for 20 years in Georgia, ending his career in 2000 with the Chatham County Police Department, where he served in the Patrol division and the Marine Patrol Unit. He also served with the Garden City Police Department and as a police officer and investigator at Fort Stewart, and was chief of police of Pembroke, Georgia.

He was a police advisor with DynCorp International in East Timor from 2000 to 2002 and returned to the company in February 2004.

Samuel Parlin was assigned to the Civilian Police Advisory Training Team (CPATT), the component of the U.S. military Multinational Security Transition Command Iraq (MNSTC-I) responsible for the U.S. led effort to train and equip the 135,000 member Iraqi police service. DynCorp International recruits, trains, equips, and supports the 500-member U.S. contingent of trainers through a contract with the U.S. Department of State.

SAM 7 Brought Down US Chopper

January 18, 2006 Pak Tribune & Jan. 17, 2006 ABC News

WASHINGTON: A Russian-made surface-to-air missile launched by anti-American insurgents brought down a US military helicopter that crashed in Iraq on Monday, US Media reported Tuesday, citing unnamed Pentagon officials.

The network said the shoot down represented "a troubling new development" because there are hundreds and possibly thousands of SA-7 missiles that remain unaccounted for in Iraq. The AH-64 Apache went down north of Baghdad, killing its two crew members and becoming the third US helicopter to be shot down in 10 days.

According to the report, the weapons had been part of Saddam Hussein's arsenal, much of which was looted after the invasion. But until now, insurgents had never successfully used them against an American aircraft.

"It could be just a lucky shot," said Gen. John Keane, the Army's acting chief of staff. "Or it could be that they have invested in a training program and they now have some qualified operators and that'll be more of a threat than it has been in the past."

Apache helicopters are designed to be able to survive attacks by missiles like the SA-7, but the military is investigating why the chopper targeted in Monday's attack did not.

Resistance Deploys New Weapon: "Aerial IEDs"

18/01/2006 By Francis Harris in Washington, Telegraph Group Limited & Pak Tribune

[Thanks to D, who sent this in.]

Any new threat to helicopters is deeply worrying for coalition forces. *Rotary-wing aircraft are widely used in Iraq and although at least 25 American aircraft have crashed in the past three years, they are considered to be safer than road transport.*

American helicopters in Iraq are facing a new threat from so-called aerial bombs, which are fired into the air from the ground and explode close to passing aircraft.

The new home-made weapons, known to the Americans as "aerial improvised explosive devices" have been used on numerous occasions.

"The enemy is adaptive. They makes changes in the way they fight, they respond to new flying tactics," Brig Edward Sinclair, a US army aviation commander, told Defense News, which first revealed the new threat.

He refused to say whether they had brought aircraft down.

The aerial devices are placed along known flight paths and are triggered when insurgents see a low-flying helicopter approaching. They are then fired to a

height of about 50ft before a proximity fuse detonates the explosive, filling the air with thousands of metal shards.

Based on old anti-aircraft or artillery shells, the bombs would have a devastating effect if detonated close to a thin-skinned helicopter.

Any new threat to helicopters is deeply worrying for coalition forces. Rotary-wing aircraft are widely used in Iraq and although at least 25 American aircraft have crashed in the past three years, they are considered to be safer than road transport.

Ambitious insurgents also know that helicopters are likely to carry more people than road vehicles and that a crash is likely to prove fatal.

In the past fortnight US forces in Iraq have lost three helicopters. In the most recent incident an Apache attack helicopter crashed on Monday, killing two crew.

Brig Sinclair, who leads a team in the US working on helicopter anti-insurgency tactics, said the army was altering flight paths and seeking new technology to counter the threat.

But another new insurgent technique is proving still harder to counter: guerrillas have begun targeting medical evacuation helicopters.

The new ambush tactic exploits an already tested formula.

Insurgents first attack an American patrol with a roadside bomb. When troops summon helicopters to evacuate the wounded, insurgents detonate further devices pre-positioned on likely helicopter landing sites.

According to Defense News, the Americans say they have lost "more than one" aircraft to this new tactic.

Insurgents are believed to be making these devices from remnants of Saddam Hussein's anti-aircraft weapons.

"An aerial IED would be another indication of the enemy's innovation and creativity." "Clearly they recognize that the publicity that surrounds a destroyed or damaged aircraft is significantly greater the publicity that surrounds a destroyed or damaged vehicle."

Military officials say insurgents step up attacks when new troops rotate in. They say the Apache pilots who were killed yesterday, and two other Army pilots shot down last week, had been only been in Iraq for about a month.

[And there you have one of the reasons Empires lose wars of occupation. The resistance troops tend not to have "been in Iraq for about a month." They've been fighting for nearly three years, gaining experience, and becoming increasingly competent, professional and well organized. And the occupation troops rotate in and out, behind the learning curve. Game over. Time to come home.]

U.S. Troops Give Resistance Some Effective Help

1.14.06 By Doug Smith, L. A. Times Staff Writer

U.S. soldiers killed an Iraqi police officer shortly after he left the station in Duluiya, about 55 miles north of Baghdad, said Capt. Mahmoud Jibouri of the Duluiya police. The officer, still in uniform, was driving home when he was shot about 3 p.m., Jibouri said.

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT A CROOKED POLITICIAN WHO LIVES IN THE WHITE HOUSE WANTS YOU THERE, SO HE WILL LOOK GOOD.

That is not a good enough reason.



12.23.05: US soldiers search a building from where a sniper shot at them during a patrol in the northern Iraqi city of Hawijah. (AFP/Filippo Monteforte)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Resistance Kills Occupation Official; Three Canadian Soldiers Wounded

15 January 2006 BBC & 1.17.06 Michael Evans, Defence Editor and Anthony Browne in Brussels, Times Online UK & By Tom Regan, The Christian Science Monitor & 18 January 2006 By Robert Scheer, The San Francisco Chronicle

A bomber has attacked a convoy of Nato soldiers in southern Afghanistan killing a Canadian official with them

This month is on pace to be the bloodiest the country has seen since the US invasion.

Thirteen people, including three Canadian soldiers, were wounded in the attack near a busy bus station in the city of Kandahar.

A witness told the BBC he heard a loud blast and saw soldiers and civilians lying hurt near an overturned vehicle.

A man claiming to speak for the Taleban says it carried out the attack.

The Canadian convoy was travelling to its base when it was attacked, police told the BBC.

Canada's Deputy Chief of Defense, Lt General Marc Dumais, said the man killed worked for Canada's foreign affairs department.

Three Canadian soldiers seriously wounded. Two of the Canadian soldiers were in critical condition, he said.

A witness contacted by the BBC described seeing a car drive into the convoy and blow up, creating an explosion loud enough to shake the windows of nearby buildings.

"I saw some soldiers lying on the ground. There were a lot of civilians as well who were being taken in the stretchers," Abdullah Jan said.

A wrecked vehicle was seen lying upside down on the road.

Lt. Col. Steve Borland, the Canadian deputy commander of the Kandahar force, said that contrary to previous years, there has been "no winter lull" in violence.

Afghanistan is seeing a surge in the previously unknown practice of bombings; 25 in four months.

A bomber threw himself in front of an Afghan army vehicle in Kandahar, 70 miles to the north, killing three soldiers and two civilians. Four more soldiers and ten civilians were also wounded.

"We are very worried now," one senior police official told the BBC. "The Taliban and al Qaeda are getting more threatening."

"What happened to the new roads and irrigation canals, the jobs we were told about?" village elders plaintively inquired of a BBC correspondent.

TROOP NEWS

“Uniforms That Rip Easily, Eyewear That Fogs Up And Fits Poorly Under Helmets, And Boots That Blister, Crack And Burst”

January 16, 2006 By Winslow T. Wheeler [Excerpts]

Many in Congress and the Pentagon boast that American soldiers and Marines have the best equipment in the world. Reports from the battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan say otherwise.

The information about the failures is not new, and solutions are long overdue.

Various reports from the Army and Marine Corps, both official and unofficial, from as early in the wars as 2002 and 2003, tell us, for example, of troops’ “dislikes,” including uniforms that rip easily, eyewear that fogs up and fits poorly under helmets, and boots that blister, crack and burst and are “poor for movement,” or as a soldier put it in an e-mail, are “truly awful and also painful.”

To address the problems, some troops are buying equipment with their own money. Such purchases include gloves, socks, flashlights, padding for backpacks, CamelBak hydration systems and weapons-cleaning equipment.

Banal items?

Perhaps to us back home, but certainly not for troops fighting in the winter mountains of Afghanistan and the desert heat of Iraq, doing whatever it takes to keep their bodies and their weapons working.

It is remarkable that the Pentagon refuses to pay for top-quality supplies while spending in excess of \$1 billion per day. The Defense Department is only now, and only

reluctantly, implementing procedures for reimbursing troops for their personal expenses — an idea thrust on it by Congress.

The most disturbing information is about infantry weapons. In one official report, 13 percent to 20 percent of soldiers reported jamming in the M4 carbine, even though many augmented their cleaning kits with special brushes and picks.

Fifty-four percent of those equipped with the M249 machine gun reported maintenance problems, and up to 35 percent did not express confidence in the weapon.

There were also complaints that the M9 pistol suffers from corrosion problems and a weak magazine spring that does not reliably feed rounds into the chamber. Complaints about poor-performing M16 magazines are also common.

Army Orders Soldiers to Shed Dragon Skin Body Armor Or Lose SGLI Death Benefits; [But U.S. Generals In Afghanistan Wear It]

01.14.2006 By Nathaniel R. Helms, Soldiers for the Truth [Excerpts]

Two deploying soldiers and a concerned mother reported Friday afternoon that the U.S. Army appears to be singling out soldiers who have purchased Pinnacle's Dragon Skin Body Armor for special treatment.

The soldiers, who are currently staging for combat operations from a secret location, reported that their commander told them if they were wearing Pinnacle Dragon Skin and were killed their beneficiaries might not receive the death benefits from their \$400,000 SGLI life insurance policies.

The soldiers were ordered to leave their privately purchased body armor at home or face the possibility of both losing their life insurance benefit and facing disciplinary action.

The soldiers asked for anonymity because they are concerned they will face retaliation for going public with the Army's apparently new directive. At the sources' requests DefenseWatch has also agreed not to reveal the unit at which the incident occurred for operational security reasons.

On Saturday morning a soldier affected by the order reported to DefenseWatch that the directive specified that "all" commercially available body armor was prohibited.

The soldier said the order came down Friday morning from Headquarters, United States Special Operations Command (HQ, USSOCOM), located at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida.

It arrived unexpectedly while his unit was preparing to deploy on combat operations. The soldier said the order was deeply disturbing to many of the men who had used their own money to purchase Dragon Skin because it will affect both their mobility and ballistic protection.

"We have to be able to move. It (Dragon Skin) is heavy, but it is made so we have mobility and the best ballistic protection out there. This is crazy. And they are threatening us with our benefits if we don't comply." he said.

The soldier reiterated Friday's reports that any soldier who refused to comply with the order and was subsequently killed in action "could" be denied the \$400,000 death benefit provided by their SGLI life insurance policy as well as face disciplinary action.

Recently Dragon Skin became an item of contention between proponents of the Interceptor OTV body armor generally issued to all service members deploying in combat theaters and its growing legion of critics.

Critics of the Interceptor OTV system say it is ineffective and inferior to Dragon Skin, as well as several other commercially available body armor systems on the market.

One of the soldiers who lost his coveted Dragon Skin is a veteran operator. He reported that his commander expressed deep regret upon issuing his orders directing him to leave his Dragon Skin body armor behind.

The commander reportedly told his subordinates that he "had no choice because the orders came from very high up" and had to be enforced, the soldier said. Another soldier's story was corroborated by his mother, who helped defray the \$6,000 cost of buying the Dragon Skin, she said.

The mother of the soldier, who hails from the Providence, Rhode Island area, said she helped pay for the Dragon Skin as a Christmas present because her son told her it was "so much better" than the Interceptor OTV they expected to be issued when arriving in country for a combat tour.

"He didn't want to use that other stuff," she said. "He told me that if anything happened to him I am supposed to raise hell."

At the time the orders were issued the two soldiers had already loaded their Dragon Skin body armor onto the pallets being used to air freight their gear into the operational theater, the soldiers said. They subsequently removed it pursuant to their orders.

Currently nine U.S. generals stationed in Afghanistan are reportedly wearing Pinnacle Dragon Skin body armor, according to company spokesman Paul Chopra.

Chopra, a retired Army chief warrant officer and 20+-year pilot in the famed 160th "Nightstalkers" Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), said his company was merely told the generals wanted to "evaluate" the body armor in a combat environment. Chopra said he did not know the names of the general officers wearing the Dragon Skin.

Pinnacle claims more than 3,000 soldiers and civilians stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan are wearing Dragon Skin body armor, Chopra said.

Several months ago *DefenseWatch* began receiving anecdotal reports from individual soldiers that they were being forced to remove all non-issue gear while in theater, including Dragon Skin body armor, boots, and various kinds of non-issue ancillary equipment.

Last year the DoD, under severe pressure from Congress, authorized a one-time \$1,000 reimbursement to soldiers who had purchased civilian equipment to supplement either inadequate or unavailable equipment they needed for combat operations.

At the time there was no restriction on what the soldiers could buy as long as it was specifically intended to offer personal protection or further their mission capabilities while in theater.

HOW MANY MORE FOR BUSH'S WAR? BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



The casket of Army Spc. Toccara Renee Green of Rosedale, Md., is carried to a gravesite at Arlington National Cemetery Aug. 26, 2005. Green was killed in an ambush in Iraq on Aug. 14 when several bombs detonated near her unit during convoy operations in Al Asad. (AP Photo/Dennis Cook)

Panic Time: U.S. Army Raises Maximum Age For Enlistment

18 Jan 2006 By Will Dunham, Reuters

The U.S. Army, which missed its fiscal 2005 recruiting goal, said on Wednesday it has raised the maximum enlistment age for new soldiers by five years to 39, greatly expanding its pool of potential recruits.

Army officials said the move did not reflect desperation to reverse recruiting shortfalls, noting the Army had achieved seven straight monthly recruiting goals despite coming up 7,000 short of last year's target of 80,000 recruits. [But let's not mention they lowered the recruiting goals. On fuck no, no desperation here.]

The Army has blamed recruiting shortfalls in part on reluctance by some potential recruits to serve in the Iraq war.

The Army, offering new financial incentives to recruits, also doubled the maximum combination of cash enlistment bonuses, up to \$40,000 for the regular Army and up to \$20,000 for the Army Reserve.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Has Closed Down Baiji Refinery: No Reopening In Sight; Other May Have To Shut Down Also

16 Jan 2006 (IRIN)

The refinery in Baiji has been shut since the end of December 2005, with no proposed timetable for reopening. The closure was due to death threats to tanker drivers and refinery workers.

"It was an inevitable decision and there is excess work in the other refineries in the country to cover this deficit," said Jihad.

But if the closure continued "soon some of them will get suffocated by the accumulated work and stop too," he warned.

Many drivers are complaining of the use of water and dyes to increase the volume and make buyers believe that fuel being sold is of a higher quality.

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

Assorted Resistance Action

1.17.06 BBC & DPA & Focus Information Agency & Press Association Ltd & ISN SECURITY WATCH & 1.18.06 By SAMEER N. YACOUB, Associated Press & Pravda.RU & Times Internet Limited & By Nelson Hernandez and Bassam Sebti, Washington Post Foreign Service & By Aseel Kami (Reuters) & By Terence Burke, Cal Perry and Mohammed Tawfeeq, CNN

Guerrillas dressed as Iraqi police have shot dead seven men who were working for a catering firm supplying security forces in Baghdad.

Eight armed men stormed into the factory and opened fire against its employees. They reportedly attacked after arriving in two cars outside a large private house where the men worked in the central business district.

Reports suggest that silencers were used in the attack.

The workers were involved in a business that supplied food for the Iraqi National Guard.

Insurgents attacked a checkpoint installed to monitor an oil pipeline, killing one guard and injuring three others south of Baghdad, witnesses said Tuesday. The witnesses said the insurgents opened fire on the checkpoint in Jirf al-Sakhar, 80 kilometres south of Baghdad, before escaping.

The Kirkuk police said that a homemade bomb in Musala Square in the northern part of the city injured eight people, including six policemen.

In Kirkuk, an attack targeted the offices of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) in the south of the city. Masked guerrillas walked into the IECI offices shooting employees at random, killing one and injuring another.

A police lieutenant was gunned killed in his car while driving through al-Baiyaa, according to Lt Mutaz Salahuddin.

Police said guerrillas killed at least 10 security guards and seized an African engineer in an ambush Wednesday in Baghdad.

The guards were killed when their heavily defended convoy of telecommunications workers was attacked by heavily armed insurgents in Baghdad's dangerous western Jami'a district, said Capt. Qassim Hussein. He said another security worker and a civilian were also wounded.

As their convoy of three or four vehicles drove along the main street in the Nafaq al-Shurta area, "a large number" of gunmen hiding in buildings opened fire as other attackers drove out of side streets, an Interior Ministry official said.

The vehicles belonged to a firm in charge of protecting employees of the Iraqna telecommunications company.

Residents earlier reported that fighters were in Nafaq al-Shurta, which literally translates as "Police Tunnel".

Uday Farouq, a passer-by wounded in the leg, told Reuters from his hospital bed: "I was on my way to work when there was a lot of shooting. I was shot before I even could run. My uncle was also wounded. I didn't know what had happened."

Mobile phones are vital in Iraq because the landline telephone network is barely operational after years of neglect, sanctions and the U.S.-led war in March 2003 to topple Saddam Hussein.

An engineer from Malawi, who was working for the mobile telephone company Iraqna, was abducted during the attack, said a police official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to talk to media.

Iraqna, a cell phone company owned by Egyptian-giant Orascom, issued a statement saying the convoy was attacked about 8 a.m. in the capital's Nafaq al-Shurta area and that the fate of the two engineers who it claimed were from Malawi and Madagascar was unknown.

Two policemen were killed and five were wounded when a bomber targeted a police patrol near the southern Baghdad home of prominent Shiite politician Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, said Col. Salman Abdul-Karim.

Police found the bodies of 11 men shot to death and wearing civilian clothes with Iraqi army and police commando ID cards on a farm in Dujail, 50 miles north of Baghdad, said police Capt. Ali al Hashmawi.

Five policemen were killed and nine others injured on Wednesday in a roadside bomb targeting their patrol in Saada township north of Baquba, 60 km northeast of Baghdad. Hospital sources said some of the injured were in a serious condition.

In a town east of Baquba in Diyala province, a roadside bomb killed three Iraqi police on patrol and one civilian. Four police officers also were wounded.

The bodies of three men, including a relative of Iraq's defense minister, were also found Wednesday with gunshot wounds to the head in a Baghdad apartment, a police official said.

Sadad al-Batah, a Sunni Arab tribal leader related to Defense Minister Saadoun al-Dulaimi, was killed along with his nephew and a third person, who was identified as an Iraqi army officer, said the official, who declined to be identified because of security reasons.

Thirty-five Iraqi men are missing Wednesday after being captured following failed bids to be accepted into a police training academy, police said.

The aspiring police trainees were seized Monday when their bus was stopped about 30 miles north of Baghdad after leaving the Iraqi capital bound for the city of Samarra, said Col. Malik al-Khezraji.

The missing men traveled to Baghdad among a group of about 230 Iraqis trying to enter a police training academy, but were not admitted and heading home when they were stopped by masked assailants.

Police said they found out about the abduction after a man fled the bus and raised the alarm. The whereabouts of the missing men was not immediately known, the AP reports.

In the town of Nibaei in northern Iraq, police found the bodies of 25 people who had been shot in the back of their heads, a police spokesman there said in an interview.

A witness told police that armed men had set up checkpoints and scanned the identity cards of passersby with the goal of killing police officers and other government employees, Lt. Raed Mahdi Khazraji of the Salah al-Din provincial police force said.

Khazraji said that the witness had been spared because he was a retired teacher.

Another group of insurgents attacked a police station in Iskandariyah, about 25 miles south of Baghdad, a spokesman for the Babil province police force said. Two officers were killed and four were wounded in the ensuing firefight, police Capt. Muthanna Ahmed said.

BAGHDAD: An Oil Ministry security officer was seriously wounded on Tuesday when gunmen ambushed his car in Baghdad, killing his driver and seriously wounding one of his guards, the government said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Got That Right

[Thanks to D, who sent this in.]

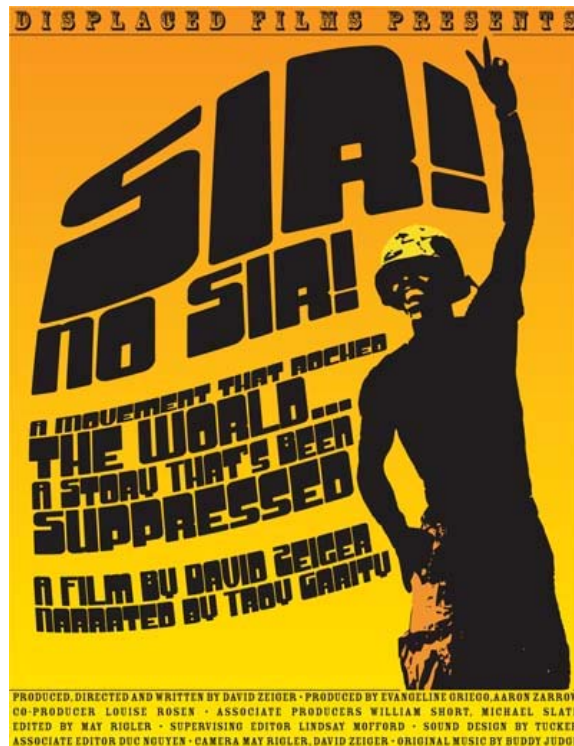
January 20, 2006 ALAN MAASS, Socialist Worker

If Iran has avoided a U.S. attack so far, one major reason is the success of the anti-occupation resistance in neighboring Iraq, which has tied down U.S. forces.

***“Veterans Wanted An End To
The War; Their Brothers In
Vietnam Agreed”***

Sir, No Sir!

An Interview With David Zeiger



[Thanks to James Starowicz, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

I ran into this small group from the GI Movement, some vets and some civilians from Fort Hood in Killeen, Texas. It became obvious to me very quickly that this was the most solid, most direct way to go after the war.

September 1, 2005 Interviewed By Jonathan Stein, Mother Jones

The Oleo Strut was a coffeehouse in Killeen, Texas, from 1968 to 1972. Like its namesake, a shock absorber in helicopter landing gear, the Oleo Strut's purpose was to help GIs land softly.

Upon returning from Vietnam to Fort Hood, shell-shocked soldiers found solace amongst the Strut's regulars, mostly fellow soldiers and a few civilian sympathizers. But it didn't take long before shell shock turned into anger, and that anger into action. The GIs turned the Oleo Strut into one of Texas's anti-war headquarters, publishing an underground anti-war newspaper, organizing boycotts, setting up a legal office, and leading peace marches.

David Zeiger was one of the civilians who helped run the Oleo Strut.

He went on to a career in political activism and today, at 55, he is a filmmaker and the director of Sir! No Sir!, a new documentary on the all-but-forgotten antiwar activities of GIs from Fort Hood to Saigon.

The GI Movement, as it was then known, was composed of both vets recently returned from Vietnam and active-duty soldiers.

They fought for peace in ways big and small, from organizing leading anti-war organizations to wearing peace signs instead of dog tags. By the early '70s, opposition to the Vietnam War within the military and amongst veterans had grown so widespread that no one could credibly claim that opposing the war meant opposing the troops. Veterans wanted an end to the war; their brothers in Vietnam agreed.

Zeiger put off making this movie for years, convinced the public didn't want to hear another story about the '60s.

What finally spurred the project was the Iraq War and the role some Vietnam vets are playing in keeping America's young men and women from seeing the same horrors they saw.

When GIs from the current war started coming home and wondering what they'd been fighting for, Zeiger's days at the Oleo Strut took on a new relevance.

His film is a remarkable interweaving of vets' stories about their intensifying resistance to the war, starting with the lone objectors of the late '60s and culminating with open disobedience throughout the ranks in the '70s.

One vet even recalls an episode from 1972 in which Military Police joined enlisted men in burning an effigy of their commanding officer.

The images that accompany such stories are just as powerful. As a young doctor is escorted into a military court for refusing to train GIs, hundreds of enlisted men lean out of nearby windows extending peace signs in support.

It's an image that the Army didn't want the American people to see then, and probably wouldn't want the American people to see today.

Sir! No Sir! won the Documentary Audience Award at the L.A. Film Festival. David Zeiger spoke with MotherJones.com from the Los Angeles office of his production company, Displaced Films.

MotherJones.com: Talk a little about your history with the GI Movement.

David Zeiger: In the late '60s I reached a point where I believed that there was really no alternative for me than to become part of the movement against the war. My opposition to the war had grown very deeply but I hadn't been really involved in anything.

I starting looking around for what was going to be the most effective place and situation to help.

I ran into this small group from the GI Movement, some vets and some civilians from Fort Hood in Killeen, Texas. It became obvious to me very quickly that this was the most solid, most direct way to go after the war.

It was a situation where people were opposing the war that no one thought would oppose the war. Not just because they were GIs. These were mostly working class guys, guys who had gone into the military out of patriotic motives or because that was just what you did. And they were becoming one of the strongest forces against the war.

MJ: What brought you back to the project, some 35 years later?

DZ: I started making films in the early '90s. I always knew that this story was one that needed to be told and had never been told. But the way I always characterized it was, "This is a film that needs to be made but I'm never going to make it." At the time, it just wasn't a film that would have much resonance for people. It would be another story from the '60s. What prompted me to make the film was September 11, and the War on Terror's segue into the Iraq War. I saw that this had suddenly become a story that would have current resonance, something that would immediately connect with what's going on today.

MJ: How did you find the veterans that appear in the film?

DZ: Several of these guys were people I knew because I had been at Fort Hood. Then there were veterans' organizations like Vietnam Veterans Against the War and Veterans For Peace—I put a call out for stories through their various means of communication.

I also ended up in touch with people nobody had ever heard of before. Their missions were so top secret they were under threat of federal prosecution if they went public with any of their stories. They came to me and basically said, “We want to finally tell our story. We haven’t been able to tell it for 35 years.” We still don’t know what will happen to them. We’ll know when the film is in theaters.

Also, Several books played a big role in keeping memory of the movement alive and giving me the foundation for the film -- especially Soldiers in Revolt by David Cortright, and A Matter of Conscience: GI Resistance Firing the Vietnam War by William Short and Willa Seidenberg.

MJ: Did it take any effort to get the veterans to open up: the public conception of the Vietnam vet is of a man too pained to talk openly about his experiences.

DZ: Yeah, that’s a very big myth.

In this situation that was not at all a problem. These are people whose stories had been suppressed and ignored since the war. They knew that their story was a story of the Vietnam War that needed to be told. For most of these veterans, it was more a matter of finally being able to tell their story, stories the overall zeitgeist was against being told. It was not a matter of reluctance.

MJ: The film has already gotten a good deal of interest in Europe. Do you anticipate that domestic interest will be as strong?

DZ: Well, yeah, how to put this? I anticipate that kind of interest, but until the film was made I think U.S. television didn’t quite get how relevant the film is in the current world. It was hard to explain that to people. Now that the film is made we’re getting much stronger interest. A big strength of the film, and what I think is going to bring it into the mainstream, is that this is historical metaphor. We don’t have to say a word about Iraq in the film for it to be clearly identified with Iraq for people. But the film can’t be shoved into the category of a propaganda film.

MJ: You mentioned that you were a civilian organizer at Fort Hood during the Vietnam War. At that time, was the civilian public widely aware of the GI Movement?

DZ: The evidence suggests that they were. As you see in the film, there were CBS Nightly News stories about the GI Movement. There is a segment in the film of Walter Cronkite talking about the GI underground press. In the state of Texas, where there was a very large anti-war movement in Austin and Houston, and the center of the Texas movement for a time was at Fort Hood.

The armed forces demonstrations were major events for the whole state. I think people knew generally that there was opposition in the military, but they didn’t know the details or how widespread it was. But it was certainly more prominent than people remember it. It has been thoroughly wiped out of any histories of the war.

MJ: How visible was the GI Movement amongst American soldiers in Southeast Asia? Were they aware that their fellow soldiers were protesting the war on bases abroad and in the States?

DZ: Yes. The GI anti-war press was everywhere. Just about every base in the world had an underground paper. *Vietnam GI* was the first GI paper. It was sent directly to Vietnam from the U.S. in press runs of 5,000 and they were getting spread all over the place because they'd be handed from person to person. Awareness of the GI Movement was at different levels but it was still very widespread.

MJ: How did the GIs manage to write and print these papers, especially when their actions were, presumably, being watched?

DZ: That was where the coffeehouse came in. (The GIs) did the work, for the most part, off base. At the Oleo Strut we had an office that they worked in and we had a printer that would print it for us.

Some of these papers would get mimeographed secretly on the military bases because the guys working on them would be clerks and they had access to the proper resources. So there was a range, from something someone had typed up and mimeographed and got out about 500 copies of, to these pretty sophisticated papers like the Fatigue Press at Fort Hood, where we'd have a press run of 10,000 copies. We'd hand them out off base but they'd also be distributed on base. Guys snuck on base and would go through barracks and put them on beds and foot lockers.

One story we didn't put in the film was about some guys at Fort Lewis near Seattle. They wanted to bring GIs to an anti-war demonstration, but they didn't have an underground paper yet. They took a bunch of leaflets on base late at night and drove around throwing the leaflets out the window. In the military, if there's litter on the base the brass doesn't pick it up; they send out the GIs out to police the base and pick it up. So the next morning they sent several companies out to pick up all this litter and before they realized what this litter was, it was too late. It's funny: repression breeds innovation.

MJ: The movie talks a lot about the GI coffeehouses and how some of them were attacked and shut down. Did GIs ever claim their First Amendment rights were being thwarted?

DZ: Yes, and there were cases that went all the way to the Supreme Court about that. The Supreme Court fairly consistently ruled that so-called "military necessity" trumped free speech. But there was a tremendous support network of lawyers during the period of the GI Movement who would help challenge these things. There were many cases of GIs challenging the military's right to not allow them to distribute the underground papers on base. No one won (laughs), but there were a lot of attempts to create change.

MJ: Another thing you discuss in the film is the FTA tour, a variety show packed with celebrities that wanted to counterbalance the pro-war Bob Hope. Where did the tour perform?

DZ: Well, it was banned from bases. What they typically did was come into military towns that had a support organization like the coffeehouses, and they would either perform at the coffeehouses, or if it was possible, in a larger venue. I know when the FTA show came to Killeen we spent months trying to get an auditorium or even an outdoor site rented to us and no one would do it. So the FTA Tour came to town and performed at the Oleo Strut, which had a capacity of maybe 200 people. Rather than doing two shows that day, they did four.

When they did their tour of Asia, which is where we got the footage for the film, they got a lot of outdoor venues and larger venues, but they were never allowed on bases. Keep in mind, these were the top Hollywood stars of the day, Jane Fonda and Donald Sutherland. They had just come off of Kluge, won a ton of awards. But of course they weren't allowed on any bases.

MJ: And the GIs who saw the shows were free enough that 800 of them could go see the show in one day?

DZ: Yeah. By 1970 and 1971, the combination of the actual organized GI Movement and the general culture of resistance that had emerged inside the military was so strong that you could openly walk around bases wearing whatever anti-war stuff you wanted to wear.

Actually, the guys in the U.S. couldn't do that as much; guys in Vietnam were doing it a lot more. But regardless, that sense of opposition, that sense of FTA, was so strong the army couldn't completely stomp down on it.

MJ: Your film never mentions John Kerry. Why?

DZ: Because so many people wanted us to put him in (laughs). That was part of it. Frankly, we didn't have him in mainly because we didn't want that to become what the film was about. The film made about his military service during the campaign, Going Upriver, has a lot of footage about his involvement with Vietnam Veterans Against the War, which is also in our film.

Ironically, that film was made to help Kerry's campaign, but if anything, it hurt it. It didn't win over anyone that was against him to begin with, but people who supported Kerry because of his anti-war stance during Vietnam saw how startlingly far he's gone in his ultimate betrayal of the stand he took in the 1960s. We thought anything like that would be distraction for this film.

MJ: Why do you think the GI Movement has faded from the public's memory of Vietnam?

DZ: There's been a number of factors. There was this whole element in the mid to late '70s of people kind of wanting to forget.

Hollywood, in depicting the war in the 1970s, never mentioned the GI Movement. Coming Home, which was a very good film in very many ways, started with a much more radical approach to what GIs had gotten into. But by the time the film was finished, it was a much more conciliatory film, and that became the theme that a lot of people latched onto about Vietnam in the '70s: Let's forget it all.

Then in the '80s, the political climate with the Reagan administration became one of rewriting the history of the war. Of course, if you're going to rewrite the history of the Vietnam War from a right-wing perspective, the GI Movement would be written out completely. Both politically and in every film made at the time, the Movement was literally written out of history.

MJ: The rewriting of history you mention seems to posit the troops as honorable American boys that supported the war, distinct from hippie protestors. Your film makes it clear that that's a false distinction, and those are false labels. What impact do you think your film will have on people from younger generations whose only experience with Vietnam is a history that has been revised?

DZ: I hope it will really shock people. I want you walk out of the theater thinking, "Holy shit! I've been lied to so thoroughly I better take a really close look at this stuff."

And it's especially important when comparing it to now. I want people to seriously question this idea that opposing the war means opposing the troops. Hopefully they will come to the conclusion that it's not a given. That's a political perspective, and it's a right-wing political perspective, a very pro-war political perspective. And it's a political perspective that undercuts any serious movement against the war, both among civilians and among GIs.

The way the Vietnam War gets summed up is that the Vietnam War was "unpopular," and that's what screwed up the GIs. So people today say, "If that's true, then if the Iraq war is unpopular it's going to screw up the Iraq GIs." Well, the Vietnam War wasn't unpopular. The Vietnam War was criminal.

MJ: One of the most compelling images from the film is the entrance to the Fort Dix stockade in New Jersey, where a sign reads, "Obedience to the Law is Freedom." Vietnam began a period in American life where that axiom could no longer be taken as faith. What do you think the long-term ramifications of Vietnam are?

DZ: That sign really summarized the Army's view of military life.

The ramifications are, if nothing else, that it's possible to go up against and defeat a very powerful empire.

One of the guys in the film made a point we didn't end up using: The United States had the biggest army in the world, the best equipped, the best trained, the best fed, and we lost.

We got beat by an indigenous force that totally undercut the ability of the United State to get a foothold in their country.

And that's a universal lesson, and that's a lesson that is extremely dangerous for any country that, despite its protestations, is in fact bent on being a world empire. It's inspiring for anyone who doesn't want to live in that sort of situation anymore.



David Zeiger

My Lai: “My Fellow Soldiers Who Went Crazy That Day”

From: Mike Boehm' Documentary *The Sound of the Violin in My Lai*

The only American casualty on that day was a black soldier, Herbert Carter, who could not stand such mad killing. He shot himself in the foot so that he could not have to take part in the massacre.

Herbert later related, “I saw an old man standing in the middle of the rice field waving at us in a friendly manner, but they shot him. I saw no Viet Cong in the village, only poor farmers running away from their burning huts, and then they shot them dead.”

HUGH THOMPSON: There was a lot of anger and anger that was not directed at the Vietnamese people, it was directed at my fellow soldiers who went crazy that day.

I'm just real sorry that my crew could not have done more. I'm extremely sorry for my fellow Americans for what happened. It wasn't right. It wasn't war. And I pray to God something like this never happens again.

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.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

U.S. Foreign Aid Agency Says Bush Full Of Shit About Iraq

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

The picture it paints is not only darker than the optimistic accounts from the White House and the Pentagon, it also gives a more complex profile of the insurgency than the straightforward "rejectionists, Saddamists and terrorists" described by George Bush.

January 18, 2006 Julian Borger in Washington, The Guardian

An official assessment drawn up by the US foreign aid agency depicts the security situation in Iraq as dire, amounting to a "social breakdown" in which criminals have "almost free rein".

The "conflict assessment" is an attachment to an invitation to contractors to bid on a project rehabilitating Iraqi cities published earlier this month by the US Agency for International Development (USAid).

The picture it paints is not only darker than the optimistic accounts from the White House and the Pentagon, it also gives a more complex profile of the insurgency than the straightforward "rejectionists, Saddamists and terrorists" described by George Bush.

The paper, whose existence was first reported by the Washington Post, argues that insurgent attacks "significantly damage the country's infrastructure and cause a tide of adverse economic and social effects that ripple across Iraq".

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.

BUSH CALLS 'OPERATION ALIENATE PAKISTAN' A SUCCESS

Airstrike Succeeded In Pissing Off Nation Of 162,000,000, President Says

January 16, 2006 The Borowitz Report

President George W. Bush said today that the U.S. airstrike in Pakistan over the weekend was part of a successful military mission called Operation Alienate Pakistan.

While the Pentagon initially had claimed that the reason for the strike was to eliminate al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, Mr. Bush revealed that the actual objective was to alienate 162,000,000 Pakistanis.

"Four years ago, I asked Pakistan if they were with us or against us," Mr. Bush told reporters. "Hopefully, Operation Alienate Pakistan has cleared that up."

But even as the president basked in the success of Operation Alienate Pakistan, some hawks in Congress wondered whether one airstrike was sufficient to incur the wrath of 162,000,000 Pakistanis.

Rep. Jean "Mean Jean" Schmidt (R-OH) took to the floor of the House of Representatives today to demand that the U.S. send additional warplanes to Pakistan to "finish the job" of angering the nation of Pakistan.

"One little airstrike is not enough to piss off a country that size," Rep. Schmidt insisted. "We should hit them again next weekend and get the job done."

For his part, President Bush seemed satisfied that the U.S. had successfully turned Pakistan into a bitter enemy and said that he was now mulling which country to alienate next.

"Over the next three years, I hope to alienate every nation on the globe," Mr. Bush said. "That's why I put John Bolton at the U.N."

Elsewhere, the Reverend Pat Robertson said that God ended the New England Patriots' Superbowl hopes to punish Massachusetts for legalizing gay marriage.

Canonization

From: John Gingerich, Veterans For Peace
Sent: January 18, 2006 5:12 PM
Subject: canonization

President George W. Bush was scheduled to visit the Methodist Church outside Washington, D.C. as part of his campaign to win back American voters.

Bush's press secretary made a visit to the Bishop, and said to him, "We've been getting a lot of bad publicity among Methodists because of Bush's response to the hurricane and the like. We'd gladly make a contribution to the church of \$1,000,000 if, during your sermon, you'd say President Bush is a saint."

The Bishop was initially reluctant but thought it over for a few moments and finally said, "The Church is in desperate need of funds. I will agree to do it."

Bush pompously showed up on the next Sunday looking especially smug, and as the service progressed the Bishop began his homily: "George Bush is petty, a self-absorbed hypocrite and a nitwit. He is a liar, a cheat, and a low-intelligence weasel. He has lied about his military record and had the gall to put himself in a jet plane landing on a carrier posing before a banner stating 'Mission Accomplished.' He invaded a country for oil and money, and is using it to lie to the American people. He is the worst example of a Methodist I've ever personally known.

But compared to Dick Cheney and some members of his cabinet, George Bush is a saint."

Received:

Tampa Bay Veterans for Peace Chapter 119

March 19th - Camp Casey at MacDill

Steering Committee Meeting

**7 - 9 PM (Thursday nights thru March)
Penera Bread, 2285 Ulmerton Rd, Clearwater, FLA**

Last weeks vote was to hold a peaceful Camp Casey Event/Rally on at the main gate of the US Central Command at MacDill AFB with the theme of "Bring them home NOW! NOT ONE MORE!" We will invite local and national speakers and entertainers for peace in Iraq and use available tabling space for secular and non-secular peace and environmental groups.

We are building a coalition of secular and non-secular groups and concerned citizens...

We have only 9 weeks to hold this event!

We need your expertise and your contacts!

Please call the VFP Committee contacts for details:

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WAGE PEACE!

"Protest that endures...is moved by a hope far more modest than that of public success: namely, the hope of preserving qualities in one's own heart and spirit that would be destroyed by acquiescence." Wendell Berry

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.

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