

GI SPECIAL 4A16:

ENOUGH: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



The coffin of U.S. Army Sgt. Myla Maravillosa during her funeral Jan. 19, 2006 in Inabanga, in Bohol province in central Philippines. Sgt. Maravillosa was the first Filipino-American woman killed in Iraq. (AP Photo/Pat Roque)

**“Sergeant Papadatos
Said The Mission Was
Failing”**

**“He Also Felt He Was
Being Lied To”**



Sergeant Greg Papadatos, an Army medic in the National Guard, on a subway platform near his home in Queens. (Ozier Muhammad/The New York Times)

[Excerpt from a story about several “sergeants, all deployed with the First Battalion, 69th Infantry, of the New York National Guard, who were part of a wave of roughly 700 guardsmen who landed at Fort Dix in New Jersey in early September for several days of reorientation before dispersing across the region.”]

January 15, 2006 By JEFFREY GETTLEMAN, The New York Times Company
[Excerpts]

[U]nlike active duty troops, who come home to a base together, the part-time soldiers come home alone.

Their arrival is usually quiet, like Sergeant Papadatos's first lonely steps in his apartment-for-one in Astoria, Queens...

They do not have the built-in support of peers or chaplains or mental health professionals who are all part of base life. Meanwhile, a lot changed while they were away, including levels of public support for the war they fought.

Military studies already indicate that nearly one in five returning soldiers struggle with depression, anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder. Many veterans suspect the numbers are much higher. Military officials said they were especially concerned about National Guard soldiers and reservists who, according to a recent Army Medical Department study, have higher rates of post-deployment stress.

The duffel bag landed on the floor with a thud.

Greg Papadatos, a 42-year-old, 148-pound Army medic, looked around.

The walls of his apartment were full of holes. The bathroom did not have any toilet paper. The floors were fuzzy with dust.

He had just returned from a year in Iraq, but no one had bothered to pick him up at the bus station or clean his apartment.

"I knew coming home was going to be anticlimactic," he said. "But I didn't think this anticlimactic."

He took off his camouflage cap, ran his finger around its rim and inspected the puffy knuckles of his right hand, which, in a fit of frustration, he smashed into a street sign a few days before.

"It was either punch a sign or punch a captain," he said. Sergeant Papadatos admitted he had some adjusting to do.

Unlike many other soldiers, who said they still believe in the mission, Sergeant Papadatos said the mission was failing.

He also felt he was being lied to.

He recalled standing in a battalion formation and listening to a general link Iraq to the Sept. 11 attacks. "How stupid do they think we are?" he said.

He said needless deaths were caused every day by everything from a failure to coordinate with Iraqi paramedics to insurgents' slipping through coalition fingers.

"I could get harassed for saying this, I could get teased, but they can't really punish me," said Sergeant Papadatos, who is still in the National Guard.

As soon as he arrived at Fort Dix, Sergeant Papadatos told a social worker he thought he had P.T.S.D.

The social worker handed him a multiple-choice survey: Have you ever had any experience that was so frightening, horrible, or upsetting that, in the past month, you were constantly on guard; had nightmares; or thought about it when you did not want to?

For Sergeant Papadatos, it was all of the above.

A few days later, he slugged the street sign, breaking a bone in his hand.

"They won't give me the slightest bit of thought unless I kill somebody," he said, "and maybe not even then."

In December, Sergeant Papadatos asked for help again. He went to the veterans' hospital in Manhattan and was told to complete another survey, his fourth.

He had questions about the questions, but the secretary administering the test could not answer them and he got frustrated.

She said that he was acting "nasty."

"That's when I exploded," he said. "I started yelling, 'Nasty? Nasty? I'll show you nasty. You stupid desk bound slug!' "

Several men escorted him out. When he got home a few hours later, he crawled into bed.

"I felt like I had accomplished nothing for the day," he said. "Except making a fool of myself."

Since then, he has had surgery on a knee injured in a fall in Iraq. And he has managed to see a psychiatrist and was encouraged by the idea of group therapy, which he may begin soon.

"Did you know they have a group just for medics?" he said, a trace of enthusiasm sneaking into his voice.

But the enthusiasm can disappear as quickly as it comes.

During a snowfall last month, he watched the snowflakes sink past his windows. He did not leave his apartment for three days.

"It's unfortunate that I live alone," he said. "Because on a day like that, I needed someone to grab me by the scruff of my neck and take me outside and say, 'Go on, Greg, just play in the snow, you'll feel better if you play in the snow.'"

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Two U.S. Airmen Killed, One Wounded By Taji Convoy Attack

1.23.06 AP

Two U.S. airmen were killed and a third was wounded in an attack on a convoy Sunday near Taji, where a U.S. air base is located 12 miles north of Baghdad, the military said.

U.S. Soldier Killed By Roadside Bomb In Baghdad

01/23/06 MNF Release A060123d

BAGHDAD, Iraq: A Multi-National Division Baghdad Soldier was killed by a roadside bomb in southwest Baghdad while on a dismounted patrol Jan. 23.

Local Soldier Killed In Iraq Family Recalls Him As Playful As 'Tigger'



Clifton Yazzie

Jan 23, 2006 By Erny Zah, The Daily Times

FRUITLAND --- A 23-year-old Fruitland soldier has been killed in Iraq, with his mourning family fondly remembering him as "a playful ol' Tigger."

Clifton Yazzie, a sergeant in the Army's 101st Airborne, was killed Friday while serving his second tour of duty in Iraq, according to his family.

Jeanette Yazzie, 46, said she was watching television when uniformed military personnel knocked on her door and gave her news about her son.

"I was wanting to hear that he was hurt or injured, not that he passed away over there," she said Sunday, with about 50 friends and family gathered around her home in Fruitland to show support.

Yazzie's wife received a similar visit while at her grandmother's house in Hogback.

"He was a loving person and a devoted father," said Michelle Yazzie, 21.

"It's going to be hard raising them by myself," she said, holding back the tears as best she could.

Clifton Yazzie was a 2001 graduate of Kirtland Central High School. In his senior year, he was part of the state championship basketball team.

He belonged to the Apostolic Faith Tabernacle in Fruitland.

Yazzie had always wanted to be a soldier, his mother said.

As a child, he used to take tree limbs and sticks and turn them into guns to play war, she said.

Enlisting in the military is somewhat of a family tradition.

His father, Clifford "C.Y." Yazzie, 52, tried counting all the relatives that served in the military. He named some brothers that served in the Vietnam War, some nephews and then he stopped counting.

"He was always talking to his uncle," he said. That particular uncle served in Vietnam.

Clifton Yazzie enlisted for his first Iraqi tour in 2001, and then reenlisted in July 2005, after being home in Fruitland for about five months.

"It was his job," his wife explained. "It's also what he had to do for his family."

But when Yazzie was at home, he was a "lovable ol' Tigger," his father said.

Clifton Yazzie's wife's aunt, Christina Tso, 32, of Kirtland, agreed.

She said Yazzie was the highlight of family engagements because of his playful personality.

"When the adults would be in one room talking, he'd be in the other room with the kids," the soldier's wife recalled.

Yazzie's youthful actions and personality also showed while he was in Iraq.

In December 2004, Michael Frank, Yazzie's platoon leader, wrote a letter addressed to the family.

"He has a great sense of humor and is always making me laugh," Frank wrote.

"He keeps everyone young over here."

"I liked his goofiness," Michelle Yazzie recalled. "He reminded me of Tigger by jumping

around and being happy all the time."

When Yazzie was in Iraq, his mother said, he liked to catch bugs. In addition, he loved to read about dinosaurs and study reptiles.

The fascination for reptiles is a trait that has been passed on to his daughter, she said.

"He loved chasing snakes and lizards. Now his daughter likes that," the mother said, telling a story how Chaynitta almost caught a snake.

"She wants a pet snake now," Michelle Yazzie said.

Michelle and Clifton met at a high school dance at Kirtland. Michelle, who was in junior high at the time, said she sneaked into the dance and that's when she saw Clifton. He came up and talked to her, but that wasn't their first encounter.

She said he used to see him at a laundromat and "he always stared." She would see Clifton and his mother's green van and say, "Oh no, they're back."

They dated off and on throughout high school.

Michelle Yazzie said it was his personality and smile that won her over, but her aunt sees it a little differently.

"He never gave up," she noted.

They both recalled a time when Clifton went to see Michelle at her grandmother's home in Hogback.

Michelle went to hide in the house when she saw his vehicle approaching the house.

"We were instructed to close the gate," the aunt said with a laugh.

But the closed gate only served as a stopping point for the car, not Clifton. He simply climbed over the gate and proceeded to ask to see Michelle.

The couple were to celebrate their fourth anniversary on April 15 and had plans to renew their vows this spring during a planned family vacation to Las Vegas, Nev.

"Clifton was trying to save up money to renew our vows," Michelle said.

The couple didn't have a "big church" wedding, so she hoped that renewing their vows would prove to people that they did love each other.

"I'd talk to him and he'd say, 'We'll have the wedding we never had. We'll have the wedding pictures we never had,'" Michelle said tearfully.

When her son was home last year, Jeanette Yazzie said they butchered two sheep in his honor.

He would call from Iraq and ask how many sheep were going to be scarified in his honor when he returned home the next time, she said smiling.

One of Yazzie's favorite things to do when he was homes was to change into his old pants and shirt and butcher sheep, Michelle recalled.

"He'd come back smelling like sheep," his wife said, smiling. "The kidneys were his favorite part," his mother said.

She remembered the last time she spoke to her son. She didn't openly cry on the phone, though she let her emotions flow after the call ended because she missed him so much.

Clifton Yazzie also spoke to his father on the phone.

"He wanted everyone to love each other again," the father said. "I don't know if he saw something (about us) or not, but that's what he wanted to see."

Clifton Yazzie, who would have celebrated his birthday on 24th birthday on Feb. 20, was a member of the Mud clan and was born for Zuni clan. His maternal grandfather is of the Red Running into Water clan and his paternal grandfather is of the Salt clan.

Memorial services are pending.

U.S. Base Mortared In Fallujah

1.23.06 DPA

In Fallujah, insurgents launched a mortar attack on a US military base.

Notes From A Lost War:

**“We Have Almost No Support
From The Local People”**

**“It's Like An Elephant Trying To
Catch A Mouse”**

“Long Live The Resistance”

“We're The Baiji Heroes, We Still Resist”

"They have the place locked down," Kidd said of the insurgents. "We have almost no support from the local people. We talk to 1,000 people and one will come forward." First Sgt. Robert Goudy, of Bulldog Company, summed up the soldiers' frustration in fighting an elusive enemy: "It's like an elephant trying to catch a mouse."

Outside, on a wall along a trash-strewn street, graffiti declare: "Long live the resistance" and "We're the Baiji heroes, we still resist."

January 19, 2006 By Ann Scott Tyson, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

BAIJI, Iraq -- Pfc. Robyn Houston fires bursts of bullets into the air as his Humvee swerves around a pothole and lurches over a highway median. His convoy bears down on oncoming traffic, forcing Iraqi cars to swerve onto a dirt shoulder.

Roadside bombs "are really bad here!" the vehicle's commander, Staff Sgt. Sean Davis, 30, of Crestview, Fla., shouts over the gunfire and growl of the Humvee. "We're firing warning shots to get them off the road!"

It's a tactic Davis and his platoon resort to daily to avoid deadly explosions in Baiji, a Sunni Arab city long neglected by American forces and still firmly in the grip of insurgents, soldiers here say.

In the first month after the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division took over security duties in northern Iraq in late fall, roadside bombs killed or wounded more than a quarter of the 34-man platoon.

Baiji has emerged as a critical priority for the U.S. military because of its importance to Iraq's oil industry, a fact underscored last month when insurgent threats forced officials to shut down the country's biggest oil refinery here, which handles 200,000 barrels a day.

But the city was virtually unknown territory when Davis's platoon -- part of Bulldog Company of the 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment -- and hundreds of other 101st Airborne soldiers were dispatched into the heart of Baiji for the first time last fall, Army officers here say. The knowledge deficit has proven to be deadly.

Meanwhile, Davis's platoon resorts to do-it-yourself tactics to try to stay safe.

They scour their base for concrete, mixing it with water and pouring it into potholes where insurgents could hide improvised bombs. [Only about 26,893 potholes to go.]

"I've been trying to find some Quikrete" concrete mix, said Sgt. 1st Class Danny Kidd, 36, of Fulton, N.Y., who like many in his unit is surprised by the intensity of attacks.

Other soldiers have mounted shrieking police sirens on their Humvees to clear Iraqi traffic off the roads.

"It's definitely more dangerous this time around," agreed Spec. David Jones, 24, of New York, on his second tour in Iraq with the platoon. "I didn't expect to lose so many friends so soon."

Heavy-handed sweeps through Baiji by U.S. forces in 2003 and 2004 left many people angry, frightened and humiliated, residents say.

"Most of the people fighting the Americans tell me they do nothing for us but destroy the houses and capture people," Adil Faez Jeel, a director at the Baiji refinery, said of the U.S. forces. "There are no jobs, no water, no electricity."

Meanwhile, U.S. military convoys passing Baiji along the main north-south highway from Baghdad to Mosul have killed some residents in hit-and-run accidents, according to local leaders. "A lot of people from my tribe are dead, and I don't know what to say," said Ghaeb Nafos Hamed Khalaf, leader of the Qaysi tribe, one of the largest in Baiji.

About 150 Iraqi soldiers oversee checkpoints around the city but have failed to stop the attacks.

Inside Baiji, the police are ineffective: they often sleep on night duty, U.S. officers said.

The police and army "are fence-sitters: they don't like the coalition or insurgents, and they're just trying to stay alive," said 1st Lt. Billy Bobbitt, 24, of Woodstown, N.J., an Army intelligence officer in Baiji. "We're already on our second police chief. The other one was going to be fired, but then he got blown up" by a roadside bomb.

Many residents, fearful of insurgent threats, refuse to tell U.S. soldiers who is planting the bombs in their neighborhoods. Insurgents target Iraqis who work for Americans; one man who cleaned toilets at the U.S. base was recently beheaded, Baiji residents and a U.S. officer said.

"When Saddam was in power, we used to go to Mosul, to Tikrit, to Baghdad. . . . It was safer all over," said Salah Aub Ramadan Obaydi, 65, a retired teacher, serving tea and pastries to visiting American soldiers in the curtained sitting room of his east Baiji home. Now "people get shot every day and no one cares."

Outside, on a wall along a trash-strewn street, graffiti declare: "Long live the resistance" and "We're the Baiji heroes, we still resist."

The soldiers go door to door, seeking to identify and photograph all military-age males as part of a tedious effort to figure out who's who. Iraqis oblige, sometimes grudgingly.

No one offers information on attackers.

"They have the place locked down," Kidd said of the insurgents. "We have almost no support from the local people. We talk to 1,000 people and one will come forward."

First Sgt. Robert Goudy, of Bulldog Company, summed up the soldiers' frustration in fighting an elusive enemy: "It's like an elephant trying to catch a mouse."

At the home of Ghaeb, the Qaysi tribal leader, Capt. Matt Bartlett leans forward and directs a piercing gaze at the sheik, who is dressed in a gold tasseled robe and red-checked headdress.

"You may know, down past that bridge four of my soldiers were killed," says Bartlett, the 29-year-old company commander, of Montville, N.J., his voice low and tense.

Ghaeb bursts into rapid-fire Arabic. "From the bridge to the island is not my area!" he says, gesturing toward the Tigris flowing just beyond his courtyard.

Bartlett wasn't impressed. "They are scared of us and of being seen with us," he explained later. "They go along with the status quo."

A few weeks before, Bartlett and others recalled, the captain and one of his platoon leaders, 1st Lt. Dennis W. Zilinski, of Freehold, N.J., had visited the neighborhood to try to gain information from Ghaeb about a cell of bomb-makers. Zilinski, an amiable young officer and captain of his West Point swim team, brought toys for Ghaeb's children and traded high-fives with them.

The sheik was holding a large gathering and was unavailable, they were told. The American convoy tried to turn around, but Iraqi cars blocked the way and people waved the soldiers down an alternative, dirt route along the Tigris nicknamed "Smugglers' Road."

"It was weird," Bartlett recalled thinking. A few hundred yards down the road, bordered by fields, the convoy was hit by a massive explosion.

Behind the blast, Goudy jumped out of his Humvee and ran forward toward the huge cloud of smoke and debris. As it cleared, he was confused by what he found.

"I saw this big piece of flesh and thought it was a goat or cow. I thought, 'Wow, these guys put an IED in a dead animal,' " he recalled. He went on, hoping to find his men sitting in the truck. But as he got closer, he recalled, "I didn't see the truck. I started seeing limbs and body parts." Goudy tripped over what was left of one soldier. Then he found the only survivor of the five soldiers in the Humvee, blinded and screaming.

"It was horrible," Bartlett said. "We had to pick up body parts 200 meters away." The Humvee was "ripped in half and shredded," he said, by a monster bomb later found to contain 1,000 pounds of explosives and two antitank mines, with a 155mm artillery round on top.

The attack left the platoon outraged.

"I felt so angry and violated," said Goudy, of Clarksville, Tenn. "We all wanted to go out and tear up the city, kick down the doors, shoot the civilians, blow up the mosque." Goudy and others were convinced Iraqis living nearby knew about the bomb but did nothing to warn them.

Sitting at a wooden table outside his crowded bunk, Sgt. John Coleman, of Greenwood, S.C., dismantled a machine gun for cleaning and recalled his lost mates.

There was Zilinski with his upbeat charisma, and the husky, 5-foot-3 Spec. Dominic J. Hinton, 24, of Jacksonville, Tex., who beamed with pride over his two young children and called home every few days. Staff Sgt. Edward Karolasz, 25, of Powder Springs, N.J., was a rare squad leader who cultivated friendships with the men under him. But it was Cpl. Jonathan F. Blair, of Fort Wayne, Ind., the tattooed and tough-looking machine-gunner, who galvanized the men with a note he left behind:

"Don't blame anyone for my death, as much as you may want to. It was my decision, my life and my choice. . . . To all the boys still fighting -- keep going, stay strong, and remember you'll all be home soon."

Coleman paused from wiping down the gun. "If we leave and this place falls apart, they will have died in vain," he said.

[The Sgt. still doesn't get it. The place is very well organized indeed, which is the content of this whole report. It's organized by Iraqi patriots to fight a foreign military dictatorship imposed by a foreign political leadership that every Iraqi knows came there for one reason and one reason only: to grab their oil. They fight for their right to national independence, exactly like Sgt. Coleman would fight 150,000 Iraqi troops occupying the USA and his home town. In either case, every occupation soldier sent to fight an evil war of Empire does indeed die in vain. The Iraqis and the U.S. troops have a common enemy: the politicians in Washington DC. Draw the obvious conclusion.]

TROOP NEWS

**“We're Supposed To Be The
Finest Fighting Team In The World
And We Are Getting The Leftovers
From The Army”**

Jan 23, 2006 by Jeeni Criscenzo, Dailykos.com [Excerpt]

This Saturday afternoon I walked over to the beach by Oceanside Pier to join the Vets for Peace in their Arlington West Memorial. It took the volunteers hours to set up the 2,200 crosses in the sand, each honored with a candle set in a red plastic cup.

There were many more Marines at this event than I've seen at previous memorials. You know them immediately, their posture is so straight, their heads shaved, their bodies in perfect shape. And they are all so damn young!

Something dramatic has changed in the year since I first came to Oceanside to write about Arlington West. There was no bravado in these Marines. There was no heckling from the passerbys. And there were twice as many crosses in the sand.

One Marine said he'd come down to see one last sunset on the beach; he was shipping out on Sunday. He told me that he'd joined the Marines because he needed a job. He had a baby daughter to support. I looked him straight in the eyes and said, "I want you to know, while you are over there, that there are many of us here who are showing our support for you by trying to end this war, so you can get back home to your daughter." I looked at this handsome young father and prayed I would never see his name on a cross in the sand.

A nineteen-year-old, who had already served in Fallujah, told me that just about everyone in Camp Pendleton would be in the Middle East by February. I watched respectfully as he looked over the field of crosses and wondered what horrors his sad eyes had seen.

When he spoke, I had to read his lips, his voice was so low, "Some of those crosses have my buddies' names on them. Thank you for doing this Ma'am."

In response to my question about the stories I'd heard about our troops not having the best body armor, a Marine scoffed, "We're supposed to be the finest fighting team in the world and we are getting the leftovers from the Army! They tell us they don't have the budget!"

He looked at me and I saw the eyes of someone realizing he'd been betrayed.

2,600 Minnesota Troops Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse

01/23/06 By Melissa Cox, Hibbing DailyTribune

CAMP SHELBY, Miss.:

Minnesota National Guard soldiers being deployed this spring in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom will mark the largest single National Guard overseas deployment since

World War II. It will also be the largest Minnesota National Guard mobilization since the Korean War.

2,600 members of the First Brigade Combat Team, based out of Minneapolis, were preparing for their deployment.

The soldiers are from communities across the state including Hibbing, Duluth, Crookston, New Ulm, St. Paul, Fairmont, Bemidji, Alexandria, Brooklyn Park, Cottage Grove, Detroit Lakes and Winona.

Their primary mission will be to provide convey escorts for trucks that will bring supplies such as fuel and water from Kuwait, Lebanon and Turkey and distribute it throughout the country.

Dayton noted that about one-fourth of the troops or 24 percent were returning for their second tour of duty in Iraq or Afghanistan.

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.



12:05: US soldiers patrol on the outskirts of Tikrit, Iraq. (AFP/File/Filippo Monteforte)

“We Found That The Desert Uniform “Glowed” In The Night”

January 23, 2006, Army Times

I have seen the new ACU and it looks “neon” to me. It would not blend in with any type of terrain.

My National Guard company was deployed in 2004 throughout Iraq and worked in several terrains. The platoon I was with was outside Baghdad, along the river.

We found that the desert uniform “glowed” in the night, so we wore our BDUs and blended in well. We worked in six-man recon teams in the woods and villages and were never compromised.

I am glad I will retire soon and not be forced to purchase this uniform. I will miss the Army greatly but not this monstrosity.

Staff Sgt. J.T. Cox
Romulus, Mich.

Halliburton Knew Troops’ Water Was Contaminated

1.23.06 Washington Post, January 23, 2006

Troops and civilians at a U.S. military base in Iraq were exposed to contaminated water last year, and employees for the responsible contractor, Halliburton Co., could not get their company to inform camp residents, according to interviews and internal company documents.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Iraq Resistance Attacks Jumped 29% In 2005

1.23.06 By Rick Jervis, USA TODAY, January 23, 2006

The number of attacks against coalition troops, Iraqi security forces and civilians increased 29 percent last year, and insurgents are increasingly targeting Iraqis. Insurgents launched 34,131 attacks last year, up from 26,496 the year before, according to U.S. military figures released Sunday.

Assorted Resistance Action



Wreckage of a police car after a bomber's attack, Jan. 23, 2006, in front of the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad targeted a police patrol. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

1.23.06 AP & (KUNA) & Reuters & UPI & DPA

A bomber targeted a police patrol near the Iranian Embassy, which is close to the checkpoint into the Green Zone known as the "Assassins' Gate," said the top Baghdad police officer, Maj. Gen. Abdul-Razaq al-Samarie.

Two policeman were killed and four more policemen wounded, al-Samarie said.

The explosion was so powerful that it flung the bomber's car and a nearby police pickup truck to the other side of the road, The Washington Post reported.

BAGHDAD: Two policemen were killed and three wounded when a car bomb exploded in the southern Dora district of the capital, police said.

Iraqi police officer Captain Mohammad Jasem Al-Thabit told KUNA, "member of the new Iraqi Parliament Jaber Khalifa Jaber escaped an assassination attempt early today in an armed attack on the Jidadiya causeway in Baghdad." He added, "The armed attack resulted in the death of one of his bodyguards and the injury of his son Ammar."

Eleswhere, Director of the Iraqi National computer institute also escaped an assassination attempt in an armed attack on his car west Baghdad.

Meanwhile, a bomb explosion near a electrical plant in al-Baladiyat early Monday resulted in the death of an Iraqi soldier.

MOSUL: An Iraqi army soldier was killed and one wounded when their patrol was struck by a roadside bomb in eastern Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

AD-DAWR: Police said guerrillas killed a female employee working for a U.S. army base in the town of Ad-Dawr, 150 km (90 miles) north of the capital.

Two bombs in Kirkuk killed one policemen and injured six.

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

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)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Sir! No, Sir!

A Lost History:

**“Troops In Vietnam Refused Orders
To Patrol”**

**“Naval Ships Were Monkey
Wrenched”**

“Thousands Of GIs Signed Petitions Against The War”



Mutiny--Sit-down strike of 27 prisoners at the Presidio Stockade over the killing of a prisoner by a guard. They were charged with Mutiny, a capital offense.

Reviewed by Paul Cox, Citizen Soldier, at www.citizen-soldier.org [Check it out]

Donald Duncan, Howard Levy, Susan Schnall, and Keith Mather are names that do not, as far as I know, appear in any high school or college history texts that survey the Vietnam War. But they should.

Sir! No, Sir! is lost history excavated, displayed, and annotated. Filmmaker David Zieger presents some of the highlights of the diffuse but exceedingly important anti-war and anti-military movement by active-duty servicemen and servicewomen during the Vietnam War.

Most texts minimally cover the anti-war movement, generally focusing on a few seminal events such as the 1968 Chicago police riot, the large mobilizations, or draft-card burners--and generally take a neutral to semi-hostile tone.

But nary a word is spent on the actions of these early four and thousands of others who as active duty GI's gave the brass that good old late night indigestion.

Duncan's high-profile resignation from the Green Beanies, and Dr. Levy's refusal to train Special Forces medics for Vietnam were the first indications that all was not well in the ranks, and Dave Zieger's film captures very well the immense importance of their stands.

The brass saw the GI Movement as one of several elements of the poor morale that very quickly dragged down the effectiveness of the US fighting forces in Vietnam. Drugs and desertions were the two other critical morale indicators, but it was the organizers and barracks lawyers who were going to bring down the house of cards upon which military discipline was built.

Zeiger, himself a GI activist at Fort Hood, effectively uses the available footage and still graphics to tell a compelling story about the resistance within the military. He also filmed numerous very moving interviews with people who were central to these events.

Duncan, about his tour in Vietnam: "I was really proud of what I thought I was doing. The problem I had was realizing that what I was doing wasn't right. I was doing it right, but I wasn't doing right. As bad as the (torture of prisoners) was, the cynicism that attached to it was the part that was really sickening."

Mather, about his arrest during the Presidio Nine's high-profile resignation from the military: "I had nothing to lose, and I had no idea what was going to come. That's a free place, a really free place, you know? You don't know what's going to happen or where you are going, but you know what you are doing."

Schnall, an army nurse who helped organize the first anti-war demonstration by and for GI's and veterans: "I remembered hearing about the B-52 bombers that were dropping leaflets on Vietnam, urging the Vietnamese to defect. And I thought, if they can do it overseas, then we can hire a small private plane and load it up with leaflets and drop them over bases in the San Francisco Bay Area."

The film makes clear that organizers and resisters sometimes paid heavy prices. Levy spent 3 years in prison; Schnall was court-martialed for wearing her uniform to a demonstration; Mather escaped the Presidio stockade and spent 18 years in exile in Canada, then 5 months at Leavenworth when he was arrested back in the States in 1984.

A marine activist was gunned down in Oceanside; the Fort Hood Three got 5 years and dishonorable discharges for refusing orders to Vietnam; two black marines were given 6-10 years for organizing a meeting to discuss whether black GIs should go to Vietnam.

Still, the GI movement eventually reached from Germany to Cambodia, from Fort Bliss to West Point. Nearly 300 underground newspapers were printed and distributed surreptitiously by GI's during the war. Coffee houses, bookstores, and off-base "safe houses" sprung up all over, supported by veterans and civilian anti-war activists. Civilian lawyers were recruited to help with the legal problems.

Jane Fonda, Donald Sutherland and others mounted the FTA show that toured the US, Europe, and Asia. They played to tens of thousands of enthusiastic GIs, carrying an unequivocal anti-war, anti-military, anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-imperial message.

Ultimately, anti-war sentiments, faltering "morale," and a general lack of enthusiasm for the idea of being the last man to die in Vietnam, led to a near breakdown of fighting ability within the military.

GI's refused to deploy to the Democratic Convention in 1968. Troops in Vietnam refused orders to patrol. The military admits to more than 1600 instances of fragging.

Naval ships were monkey wrenched. Thousands of GIs signed petitions against the war. At least 500,000 deserted. Added to the hundreds of thousands of young men who avoided or resisted the draft, these realities eventually forced Nixon to pull troops out of Vietnam as surely as any other pressure.

The Vietnamese were courageous and steadfast, and were not going to give up; but it wasn't our economy or even the general lack of popularity of the war: it was, as Billy Dean Smith says in the film, "the low state of morale among enlisted men."

Sir! No, Sir! skims the surface of the GI movement, touching some highlights, leaving others unexamined. For example, the first attempt at organizing a union of active duty GI's isn't mentioned. It was started at Fort Sill by Andy Stapp and others as the American Servicemen's Union (ASU). Important support organizations the United States Servicemen's Fund (USSF) and Pacific Counseling Service (PCS) also aren't mentioned. But all provided crucial funding, legal aid, and organizing expertise to dozens if not hundreds of GI initiatives throughout the world.

David Cortright's 1975 book Soldiers in Revolt, recently reprinted by Haymarket Press, and Richard Moser's The New Winter Soldiers are two sources of more detail about the GI movement for those who wish to learn, or revisit, those times.

Still, Zeiger picked many important events of the GI movement, and when the film was screened this summer at the Veterans for Peace conference in Dallas, some young Iraq vets and resisters present were delighted to learn of that history, having had no clue of its existence. Resurrected history, presented in this well-paced format, will be a useful addition to any history curriculum. It may even enjoy a modest commercial run if the filmmakers can get it marketed.

For me, a survivor of Vietnam but a veteran of the GI movement, the film captured my own activist compulsion when former and current activist David Cline described his disillusionment with the war: "You find out that it's all lies, they are just lying to the American people. And your silence just means you are a part of keeping that lie going. I couldn't stop; I couldn't be silent. I felt I had a responsibility to my friends, and to the country, in general. And to advocate for the Vietnamese (who were) fighting for their country."

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.

“Civil Disobedience Is Not Our Problem”

“Our Problem Is Civil Obedience”



“Our problem is that people are obedient while the jails are full of petty thieves, and all the while the grand thieves are running the country. That's our problem.”

January 21, 2006 By Mike Ferner, Lewrockwell.com

On New Year's Day, I decided to start 2006 out with a public protest against the war. Little did I know how public it would become.

My younger brother and I (he was only the wheelman, led astray) tagged three highway overpasses near Toledo with "TROOPS OUT NOW!"

Suburban cops with too much time on their hands and citizens with cell phones being what they were, we were soon pulled over by five (no kidding) patrol cars and arrested on no fewer than five felonies each.

For those of you who haven't been paying attention to how state legislatures protect us from crime, in the late 90's in Ohio it became a felony to spraypaint a public building (called "getting tough on gangs") AND a felony to possess a can of spraypaint in the commission of that crime ("possession of criminal tools" says the Ohio Revised Code).

We spent that night in jail and the next day appeared, shackled together, before a judge who set bond at (this is all for real, pals) \$3,000 each, no 10% business.

Earlier this week we went to one suburban court, plead to misdemeanors, and found out how much the Ohio Dept. of Transportation (ODOT) charges for the "preliminary" repair of each overpass (grey paint), \$600, with the final repair bill due at our sentencing next month. Technically, that includes up to 90 days in jail.

Today we went to the second suburban court and my brother plead to misdemeanors.

I, on the other hand decided that if I'm going to pay that kind of money and face time in the cooler, I'm at least going to have a trial and speak my mind about the war. I've now been "bound over to the grand jury" (which may mean something to those of you who watch cop shows) for a trial in county common pleas court on the remaining felony charges.

Finally, our local paper, the Toledo Blade, ran an editorial last week titled "Defacing a reputation," referring to my time on city council and what it considered acceptable war protests, opining that I went too far with the spraypaint. Below is my response to the paper and our fellow citizens.

Response:

The Blade was gracious enough to list me in the company of some civilly disobedient heroes, indicating my behavior fell woefully short of those honorable standards.

Spray paint wasn't invented in Gandhi's day, but might he at some point have scrawled "Brits Out Now" with whitewash and a brush? One might think so.

"But why break the law," people ask? "What about this war troubles you enough to break the law?"

In one word: images.

Images that never leave me.

Images of young soldiers and marines lying in row upon row of hospital beds. Images of picking shrapnel out of Mike Ramsack's backside...dressing Bob Butikofer's wounds every day and trying not to make him scream...changing colostomy bags on guys hoping they won't defecate out the hole in their guts caused by a gunshot wound to the abdomen...trying to give a brain scan to a young soldier missing his entire left temporal lobe...

Images of eating in the chow hall as dozens of patients in wheelchairs, on crutches, missing arms and legs and eyes line up for dinner...Images of a young man sitting silent and broken in a corner of the psych ward.

And there are other, more recent images from my trips to Iraq that I cannot forget. Images of the kids I met on the streets of Baghdad, and the ones in Abu Siffa who shared their chicken and rice dinner with an American journalist two days after a cruise missile blew their orange grove to bits. Images of Fatima in the Sa'adoon St. copy shop who told me how beautiful she thought her country was and how she hoped there would be no war. Images of the young U.S. Army sergeant from West Virginia I accompanied on patrol one night near Balad, who answered my question, "why are you in Iraq?" with a tired shrug saying, "I really don't know." And his partner from North Dakota, just as bone-tired, who answered simply, "oil."

I see these images every day. And I know that the young men in that Navy hospital 35 years ago, just like the ones I met last year in Iraq, are getting killed and maimed for a preposterous lie. As my blood boils I tell my government to "BRING THEM HOME NOW!" by writing letters, signing petitions, speaking, and yes, painting highway overpasses.

Our government is not only causing great suffering by this war, it is also violating dozens of international and domestic laws. See the Veterans For Peace "Case for Impeachment" for a partial list. As citizens we are complicit in these crimes and suffering.

That is why historian Howard Zinn's words make more sense to me each day this war continues:

"Civil disobedience is not our problem. Our problem is civil obedience.

"Our problem is that people all over the world have obeyed the dictates of the leaders of their government and have gone to war, and millions have been killed because of this obedience..."

"Our problem is that people are obedient all over the world in the face of poverty and starvation and stupidity, and war, and cruelty.

"Our problem is that people are obedient while the jails are full of petty thieves, and all the while the grand thieves are running the country. That's our problem."

The most important mistake I made on New Year's Day was not that I painted "Troops Out Now" on overpasses, it was choosing a form of civil disobedience not many people are comfortable adopting.

If you believe we must end this war, what kind of civil disobedience would you choose? Refuse to pay part of your taxes this April?

Sit in at a Congressional office?

Organize a strike?

Or will we be content to speak quietly, watching the petty criminals go to jail while the grand criminals continue the slaughter in our name?

January 21, 2006

Mike Ferner served as a Navy Corpsman from 1969 to 73, was discharged as a conscientious objector, and is a member of Veterans For Peace. He would like to add that any contributions to his legal defense fund above \$5 will be returned.

OCCUPATION REPORT

How Bad Is It?

January 23, 2006 By Nick Wadhams, Associated Press

There have been some reported cases of insurgents using interpreters as spies to report troop operations and other information from U.S. bases, where most live under close supervision.

As a result, they are allowed to carry no electronic devices, though some have televisions in their rooms. Cell phones and knives with blades longer than 4 inches also are out. So are USB drives, computer disks and CDs.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

“Torquemada Cheney Was Torturing Logic Again”

January 21, 2006 By MAUREEN DOWD, New York Times [Excerpts]

When Fox News asked him about the fresh Osama audiotape, Mr. Cheney sounded like Mr. Moviefone. "Probably low production values," he said.

Osama may not have graduated to DVD's, but he has stayed alive, despite W.'s threat way back in the era of dial-up connections to smoke him out and hunt him down.

The fact that federal snoopers are all over reporters, monitoring their phone calls, shows the sorry state of our intelligence. Even F.B.I. agents feel as if they have been wasting their time rummaging through library cards and tracing numbers that turn out to be Pizza Huts.

Officials first indicated that the U.S. had killed Ayman al-Zawahiri in a bombing in Pakistan last week, or at least his son-in-law or a friend of his son-in-law, or maybe the guy who delivered a kabob to him. Yesterday, Al Qaeda released a tape of Zawahiri's greatest verse hits, poetry for jihadists, like "Tears in the Eyes of Time."

Torquemada Cheney was torturing logic again in a speech to a conservative think tank in New York.

"Some have suggested that by liberating Iraq from Saddam Hussein, we simply stirred up a hornets' nest," he said. "They overlook a fundamental fact: we were not in Iraq on Sept. 11, 2001, and the terrorists hit us anyway."

Yeah, Dick, because they weren't in Iraq, either.

RABID RAT



Cheney Jan. 19, 2005 in New York. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

WW III

[From original via MR]

Bush and Cheney are sitting in a bar.

A guy walks in and asks the barman, "Isn't that Bush and Cheney sitting over there?"

The barman says, "Yep, that's them."

So the guy walks over and says, "Wow, this is a real honor. What are you two doing in here?"

Bush says, "We're planning WW III."

And the guy says, "Really? What's going to happen?"

Bush says, "Well, we're going to kill 140 million Muslims this time and one blonde with big tits."

The guy exclaimed, "A blonde with big tits?" "Why kill a blonde with big tits?"

Bush turns to Cheney and says, "See, I told you no one would worry about the 140 million Muslims!"

Received:

RE: Soldiers' Wife Asks: "How Can All These Lies Be Stopped?"

From: BM

To: GI Special

Sent: January 23, 2006

Subject: GI SPECIAL 4A14 Soldiers' Wife Asks: "How Can All These Lies Be Stopped?"

I doubt if this person is genuinely a conscientious objector. There is nothing in this article that indicates this person is against harming another person, or that he, or his wife, have a generous, kind heart. As evidence to the contrary, I quote her statement, "I can guarantee that if it was some muslim, or buddhist that they would be shown more respect."

Muslims are not shown respect. They should be, of course, but anyone who reads any paper, liberal or conservative, should be aware of a great deal of hatred for them. This has been going on by many years by these "born-again Christians," of which this man is a member.

I am an appreciative subscriber to uruk, but I disagree with the assertions made in this article on behalf of the soldier and his wife.

BM

Front Royal, VA

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

The following have 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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