

## GI SPECIAL 4A22:



[www.ics.uci.edu](http://www.ics.uci.edu)

**New York City Activists  
Reach Out To Troops:  
“The First Time Since The  
Vietnam Era That This Kind Of  
Work Has Been Organized”**

**As a Veteran, it meant a great deal to me to be able to participate in this outreach work. The importance of getting more soldiers involved in the anti-war movement cannot be overstated. Their voices are critical and must be heard. Their participation is crucial and has to be brought forward.**

1.31.05 By Ron Ruiz, The Military Project

**On January 7th members of Veterans For Peace and the Military Project engaged in a morning of outreach action with soldiers coming for a meeting of an Army reserve unit in New York City. This reserve unit has many Iraq combat veterans among their ranks.**

**The action was organized by NYC Chapter 034 of Veterans For Peace. Chapter President Peter Bronson participated in the action, and has worked on the chapter outreach committee planning it since the idea was first approved by the Chapter in 2005.**

Everyone gathered in a parking lot in front of the unit's building at 6:30 am. There were two entrances at the side and one at the front of the building. We covered all the entrances and approached the soldiers as they walked towards us.

**We distributed postcards containing information on the different areas of work that we are involved in (GI rights, VA benefits, Stop-Loss, Bring Them Home Now) and links to veteran and military family group websites. GI rights factsheets were also distributed. An hour was spent speaking with around 80 soldiers.**

**I am very happy to report that the response from the soldiers was overwhelmingly positive. We were successful in distributing the information in a very friendly and receptive environment.**

I was able to get into a few conversations about the work we're involved in. There was real interest expressed by several soldiers about Veterans For Peace, the Military Project and the information we gave them.

**As a Veteran, it meant a great deal to me to be able to participate in this outreach work. The importance of getting more soldiers involved in the anti-war movement cannot be overstated. Their voices are critical and must be heard. Their participation is crucial and has to be brought forward.**

**In response to the positive results we achieved on our outreach action with the soldiers, the first time since the Vietnam era that this kind of work has been organized, we are preparing for more outreach contact with other units.**

**MORE:**

# Anti-War Activists Want Action Now To Reach Out To The Troops

**Comment: T**

GI Special 4A15: A Soldier With Tears In His Eyes, reported a soldier in Iraq with tears in his eyes apologized to an Iraqi family after he and others were ordered to break into their house, trashing their possessions and roughing up the family that lived there. This is from the comment that introduced the article

**“The real news is about a soldier with tears in his eyes.**

**“Bush, Rumsfeld, and the rest of the scum who infest Washington have no clue what this means.**

**“Unfortunately, neither do the leaders of the U.S. “anti-war” movement. They have a nearly perfect record of helping Bush keep the war going by refusing to find and offer aid and comfort to anti-war troops in the reserve and National Guard units in their own home towns, or to active duty troops in U.S. military bases. The organizers of the Ft. Bragg rallies are an honorable exception.”**

**In response:**

From: David Rovics  
To: GI Special  
Sent: January 23 & 24, 2006

**Jan 23:**

**so who's gonna do that?**

**i hope someone(s) will step up to the plate.**

**you're absolutely right.**

**the movement was much bigger in the 60's and early 70's and did a lot more work with returning vets.**

**in fact, as you've mentioned often, vets made up a huge percentage of the anti-war movement back then, which is probably why a lot more got done. i'd only say that we need to build the anti-war movement, it needs to grow massively, and diversify it's tactics, but i'm not sure whether slugging it is gonna help. it is us.**

**what are we doing? keep up the great work, thomas.**

Jan 24:

there were anti-war coffeehouses outside of most military bases in the late 60's/early 70's i've heard. we need that again yesterday...

David Rovics

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From: JB  
To: DA  
Subject: a soldier with tears in his eyes.....  
Date: 23 Jan 2006

D, can you send me the email address of the person who sent this to you?

I'd like to talk to the person who wrote the stuff in bold brackets at the top, about the anti-war movement refusing go find and offer aid and comfort to anti-war troops in the reserve and National Guard units in their own home towns, or to active duty troops in U.S. military bases.

*I think that's a great idea and I'd like to know more about how to do that.*

## Send Your Outreach News

If you read this and organize something to reach out to troops where you are, please send the news to GI Special, [thomasfbarton@earthlink.net](mailto:thomasfbarton@earthlink.net), to encourage others. Now it is time for us to follow the instruction of the prophet: Go thou and do likewise.

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

### Local Soldier Killed

1.25.06 Wheeling News-Register

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky.

A Fort Campbell soldier from Valley Grove died when a roadside bomb exploded near his patrol during combat operations near Mahmudiyah, Iraq, the Army said Tuesday.

Sgt. Matthew D. Hunter, 31, of Valley Grove, died in Baghdad on Monday, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

He was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell.

He was a health care specialist, according to officials at Fort Campbell.

Hunter joined the Army in 1995 and arrived at Fort Campbell in June 2004.

He was a graduate of Wheeling Park High School.

Hunter is survived by his wife and stepdaughter, Wendy and Meredith Hunter; his mother, Kathy Kinney of Wheeling; and his father, Frederick Hunter of Glen Dale, according to Fort Campbell.

**There have been 111 soldiers from Fort Campbell killed in the Iraq war.**

Approximately 20,600 soldiers from Fort Campbell are currently deployed, and nearly 20,000 of those are from the 101st Airborne Division.

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## Iraq Blast Killed Noncom From San Antonio

01/25/2006 Sig Christenson, Express-News Military Writer

Brian McElroy stayed under the radar, whether as a Churchill High School senior a decade ago or an Air Force noncommissioned officer known for his quick mind and wit.

But that habitual low profile wasn't enough this week. Insurgents detonated a roadside bomb near Taji, a hotbed of the guerrilla war in Iraq, killing McElroy and Tech. Sgt. Jason L. Norton, 32, of Miami, Okla.

**A staff sergeant, McElroy, 28, of San Antonio and Norton had been in Iraq about three months. Their deaths Sunday made them the 10th and 11th airmen to die in Iraq since the invasion, and among four to perish since the Air Force began providing troops for convoy escort duty 1 1/2 years ago.**

Three have come from the Alaska base. Airman 1st Class Carl L. Anderson Jr., 21, of Georgetown, S.C., was killed Aug. 29, 2004, near Mosul.

**McElroy is the 12th San Antonian to be killed in Iraq. At least 193 Texans have died in Iraq since the war began, the Associated Press reported.**

Norton and McElroy were in convoy when an improvised explosive device detonated near their vehicle.

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## 101st Sergeant Killed By Bomb

January 28, 2006 By HEATHER DONAHOE, The Leaf Chronicle

Just a few hours after Staff Sgt. Micheal Durbin was killed in Iraq, his wife, Janelle, received the bouquet of flowers he had ordered several days earlier.

Jerry Micheal Durbin Jr., 26, a 101st Airborne soldier, died Wednesday in Baghdad after a roadside bomb detonated while he was on patrol, Fort Campbell officials said Friday

"I talked with him the morning he died," Janelle Durbin said Friday night. "He called and said they were going out on some missions and that he'd be back in a few days. He always called to say he loved me before he left on missions."

Durbin, a native of Spring, Texas, was an infantryman assigned to B Company, 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, according to a Fort Campbell news release.

He lived in Clarksville with Janelle and daughters Alyssa and Hayley and son Austin.

Janelle and Micheal Durbin met in 1999 while they were working at a Houston computer store. They would have celebrated their fifth wedding anniversary next month.

"He was the whole package, the perfect man," she said, recalling their first meeting. "He was so handsome and strong and tall. He had this amazing deep voice.

He had so much fun with our kids, kept everyone laughing"

Mrs. Durbin said hearing of her husband's death was "the most horrible experience I could ever imagine."

"Wednesday night at 10:08 the doorbell rang, and I knew," she said. "I saw the two officers, and I knew what it meant. I just kept hoping they had made a mistake."

Micheal Durbin also is survived by his parents, Jerry Sr. and Teresa Durbin of Houston.

Micheal Durbin had been in the Army since 2001 and earned numerous awards and decorations, including a Purple Heart and Bronze Star medals.

**To date, 115 soldiers from Fort Campbell have been killed while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.**

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# Waipahu Marine Dies In Crash in Iraq



Lewis Calapini

January 25, 2006 By Karen Blakeman, Advertiser Staff Writer

Marine Private Lewis T.D. Calapini, assigned to Camp Lejeune, N.C., was killed in a vehicle accident near Al Taqaddum.

**Calapini's death brings to at least 52 the number of Marines, soldiers and sailors with ties to Hawai'i who have been killed in Iraq or Afghanistan in the past year.**

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## British Soldier Killed In Maysan

30 January 2006 BBC

**A British soldier has been killed in Iraq after coming under small arms fire, the Ministry of Defence said.**

The incident happened in Maysan Province at 0840 GMT on Monday, the ministry said. The soldier was from the 7th Armoured Brigade, serving with the 1st Battalion The Highlanders.

"It is with very deep regret that we can confirm that one UK soldier from the 7th Armoured Brigade serving with the first Battalion, the Highlanders, subsequently died of his injuries," the ministry said.

The 1st Battalion The Highlanders was deployed to Iraq in October 2005 and is due to stay until May.



**Demonstrators protest against the British army in front of the British Consulate Jan. 29, 2006, in Basra.** About 1,500 Iraqis protested outside the British consulate on Sunday over the recent arrests of several Iraqi policemen. The protesters demanded the release of five men who were among 14 arrested by British and Iraqi forces Tuesday. (AP Photo/Nabil al-Jurani)

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## **U.S. Outpost In Falluja Destroyed; Casualties Not Announced**

Jan. 30 (Xinhuanet)

Guerrillas attacked a house used by U.S. soldiers as a base in eastern Fallujah on Monday, witnesses said.

"Armed men surrounded a house used by American soldiers as base and opened heavy fire for 15 minutes at about 9:00 a.m. (0600 GMT) in the Annaz area," the witnesses told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

**The attackers destroyed the house with the U.S. soldiers inside and fled the scene, added the witnesses.**

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## **Italian Soldier Wounded In Convoy Attack**

1.30.06 (KUNA)



**The Italian unit, part of the Multi-National Force (MNF) in Iraq, said one of its soldiers was injured by a roadside bomb that targeted a three-vehicle Italian army convoy.**

The soldier's injury, said the unit, was minor with only some shrapnel that was removed from his arm.

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**UNWELCOME:  
UNWANTED:  
NO SANE MISSION:  
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



US military soldiers take cover at the parking lot of a central bus station Jan. 26, 2006, in Baghdad. (AP Photo / Khalid Mohammed)

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## **Bomb Targets Danish-Iraqi Military**

January 30th, 2006 By ABBAS FAYADH, Associated Press Writer & PAUL GARWOOD, Associated Press Writer

A roadside bomb targeted a joint Danish-Iraqi military patrol north of Basra on Monday, the first attack on Danish troops since protests against a Danish newspaper for publishing widely criticized caricatures of Islam's prophet.

The roadside bomb, which occurred as the troops crossed a bridge in a rural area about 60 miles north of Basra, Iraq's second-largest city, wounding one Iraqi policeman.

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## TROOP NEWS

# Caught In The Act

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

## **THE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES WILL BE IN CONTROL OF AS MUCH AS HALF OF IRAQ BY THE END OF 2006**

**FORT BRAGG, N.C. --** The former commander of coalition ground troops in Iraq said Thursday he believes that by the end of the year, Iraqi forces will be in control of as much as half the country.

"What's going on in Iraq is a brutal, bloody struggle," said Lt. Gen. John R. Vines, who until last week was head of the Multi-National Corps Iraq, making him the second highest ranking general in the country.

**"The tide is turning, and we're beginning to win."**

<http://www.armytimes.com/story.php?f=1-292925-1495444.php>

## **THE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES WILL BE IN CONTROL OF THE MAJORITY OF IRAQ BY THE END OF 2004**

Q: Well, I guess the bottom line is will Iraqi security forces -- when will you have enough trained and equipped Iraqi security forces to take over the local control that we've talked about in Iraq to achieve their goal of getting the insurgents out of this mess? Will it be by December? Will it be by the elections in January?

GEN SHARP: Gen. Casey has taken a look at the plan to what we believe the equipment delivery will be and the training schedule.

**And he believes that, based upon that, he will be able to be at what his definition of local control is for the majority of the country, not the entire part of the country.**

There's going to be areas out there that we're not going to be able to get the local control by the end of December [2004].

<http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2004/tr20040920-1322.html>

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# **The Criminal Gen. R. Sanchez Ordered Cover-Up And Falsification Of Report On Cause Of Female Soldiers' Deaths In Iraq**

[Thanks to Clancy Sigal, who sent this in.]

**For example, Maj. Gen. Walter Wojdakowski, Sanchez's top deputy in Iraq, saw "dehydration" listed as the cause of death on the death certificate of a female master sergeant in September 2003. Under orders from Sanchez, he directed that the cause of death no longer be listed, Karpinski stated. The official explanation for this was to protect the women's privacy rights.**

30 January 2006 By Marjorie Cohn, Truthout Perspective [Excerpts]

**In a startling revelation, the former commander of Abu Ghraib prison testified that Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, former senior US military commander in Iraq, gave orders to cover up the cause of death for some female American soldiers serving in Iraq.**

Last week, Col. Janis Karpinski told a panel of judges at the Commission of Inquiry for Crimes against Humanity Committed by the Bush Administration in New York that several women had died of dehydration because they refused to drink liquids late in the day. They were afraid of being assaulted or even raped by male soldiers if they had to use the women's latrine after dark.

The latrine for female soldiers at Camp Victory wasn't located near their barracks, so they had to go outside if they needed to use the bathroom. "There were no lights near any of their facilities, so women were doubly easy targets in the dark of the night," Karpinski told retired US Army Col. David Hackworth in a September 2004 interview. It was there that male soldiers assaulted and raped women soldiers. So the women took matters into their own hands. They didn't drink in the late afternoon so they wouldn't have to urinate at night. They didn't get raped. But some died of dehydration in the desert heat, Karpinski said.

**Karpinski testified that a surgeon for the coalition's joint task force said in a briefing that "women in fear of getting up in the hours of darkness to go out to the port-a-lets or the latrines were not drinking liquids after 3 or 4 in the afternoon,**

and in 120 degree heat or warmer, because there was no air-conditioning at most of the facilities, they were dying from dehydration in their sleep."

"And rather than make everybody aware of that, because that's shocking, and as a leader if that's not shocking to you then you're not much of a leader. what they told the surgeon to do is don't brief those details anymore. And don't say specifically that they're women. You can provide that in a written report but don't brief it in the open anymore."

For example, Maj. Gen. Walter Wojdakowski, Sanchez's top deputy in Iraq, saw "dehydration" listed as the cause of death on the death certificate of a female master sergeant in September 2003. Under orders from Sanchez, he directed that the cause of death no longer be listed, Karpinski stated. The official explanation for this was to protect the women's privacy rights.

Sanchez's attitude was: "The women asked to be here, so now let them take what comes with the territory," Karpinski quoted him as saying.

Karpinski told me that Sanchez, who was her boss, was very sensitive to the political ramifications of everything he did. She thinks it likely that when the information about the cause of these women's deaths was passed to the Pentagon, Donald Rumsfeld ordered that the details not be released.

"That's how Rumsfeld works," she said.

"It was out of control," Karpinski told a group of students at Thomas Jefferson School of Law last October.

There was an 800 number women could use to report sexual assaults. But no one had a phone, she added. And no one answered that number, which was based in the United States. Any woman who successfully connected to it would get a recording. Even after more than 83 incidents were reported during a six-month period in Iraq and Kuwait, the 24-hour rape hot line was still answered by a machine that told callers to leave a message.

"There were countless such situations all over the theater of operations, Iraq and Kuwait, because female soldiers didn't have a voice, individually or collectively," Karpinski told Hackworth. "Even as a general I didn't have a voice with Sanchez, so I know what the soldiers were facing. Sanchez did not want to hear about female soldier requirements and/or issues."

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## **“Soldiers Volunteer To Deploy Just To Get Away From What They Face On A Daily Basis”**

Letters To The Editor  
Army Times

The Army needed a study from Rand Corp. just to tell it what 90 percent of the soldiers already know (“Overwork is troops’ biggest stress, study finds,” Jan. 2)?

It should be obvious, when soldiers volunteer to deploy just to get away from what they face on a daily basis.

I’m very close to retirement, and what I look forward to the most are normal, decent working hours. It doesn’t matter if a soldier has an “easy” military occupational specialty, if the first formation is at 0530 and he don’t leave until 1700. That is one long day, no matter how you slice it.

Long days take their toll, especially when we all know there’s a better, smarter way of doing business.

Sadly, the leaders in the position to make sweeping changes will get hammered if they “rock the boat” too much.

For most soldiers, morning physical training is the culprit for robbing them of their sleep.

Yes, we need to stay in shape, and I guess the only time our bodies respond is during sleep deprivation. Sure, we could conduct PT during the duty day and still get our work done, but we may have to trim a few minutes off our many redundant meetings and “check-the-block” classes.

Add the fact that the Army wants us to continue our civilian education, spend quality time with our families and maybe volunteer in our community, if we can squeeze it in.

Could you put a little more on my plate?

Sure, old-timers were tough enough to deal with it. But if we can work smarter, but spend less time doing it, why don’t we?

We used to throw spears in the Roman Empire, too, but found an easier, more effective way to fight.

Staff Sgt. Robert Boland  
Fort Gordon, Ga.

### **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](http://www.ivaw.net))

**“Were They Terrorists Fighting  
Against America? Or Men  
Fighting To Protect Their  
Homes?”**

**“I Mean, How Would We Feel If  
They Came Over And Started  
Something Here?”**



Los Angeles Times / Luis Sinco via AP

The photo of the 'Marlboro Man' in Fallujah became a symbol of the Iraq conflict when it ran in newspapers across America in 2004. Los Angeles Times photo, 2004, by Luis Sinco

[Thanks to Clancy Sigal, who sent this in.]

**There was no time for such questions in Fallujah. But now, at night, when he can't sleep, Miller thinks of the men he saw through his rifle scope, and wonders: Were they terrorists fighting against America? Or men fighting to protect their homes?**

**"I mean, how would we feel if they came over and started something here?" he asked. "I'm glad that I fought for my country. But looking back on it, I wouldn't do it all over again."**

January 29, 2006 Matthew B. Stannard, San Francisco Chronicle Staff Writer [Excerpts]

**Pike County, Ky. -- BATTLE SCARS: The photo of the 'Marlboro Man' in Fallujah became a symbol of the Iraq conflict when it ran in newspapers across America in 2004. Now the soldier has returned home to Kentucky, where he battles the demons of post-traumatic stress**

**The photograph hit the world on Nov. 10, 2004: a close-cropped shot of a U.S. Marine in Iraq, his face smeared with blood and dirt, a cigarette dangling from his lips, smoke curling across weary eyes.**

**It was an instant icon, with Dan Rather calling it "the best war photograph in recent years." About 100 newspapers ran the photo, dubbing the anonymous warrior the "Marlboro Man."**

The man in the photograph is James Blake Miller, now 21, and he is an icon, although in ways Rather probably never imagined.

He's quieter now -- easier to anger. He turns to fight at the sound of a backfire, can't look at fireworks without thinking of fire raining down on a city. He has trouble sleeping, and when he does, his fingers twitch on invisible triggers.

The diagnosis: post-traumatic stress disorder.

**His life in Kentucky, before and after the clicking shutter, says as much about hundreds of thousands of new American war veterans as his famous photograph said about that one bad day in Fallujah, a photo Miller cannot see as an icon.**

**"I don't see a whole lot," he said. "I see a day I won't care to remember, but that I'll never forget."**

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**James Blake Miller was born in Pike County in the hills of eastern Kentucky, where Daniel Boone is said to have walked and where moonshine is still consumed. An average family here makes about \$24,000; the only decent-paying jobs are down at the coal mine.**

Miller got his first name from his father, who got it from his and back into family history. But folks called him Blake, the middle name his parents heard on the television show "Dynasty."

**His paternal grandfather was a Marine in '53; a heavy smoker, like most of the men in the family, he died of cancer before he was 40. The man Miller grew up calling "Papaw" was his grandmother's second husband, an Army vet of Vietnam.**

**Sometimes, Papaw would get crying drunk and start telling the story about the boy who came into the camp in Vietnam one night, and how they had to shoot him. Then he would stop speaking, and look at the little boys hanging on his every word. "You've had enough, Joe Lee," his wife would say then. "It's time to go to bed."**

**"It wasn't that he liked to drink; that was how he dealt with it," Miller said.**

Miller grew up in Jonancy, a tiny hamlet 20 miles from the county seat of Pikeville. He got his first job, washing cars at the local auto dealership, at age 13, about a year after he took up smoking.

Before long, he began working in a body shop, where the owner told him the most extraordinary thing: Miller could get his auto body repair certification for free, just by joining the military. A Marine recruiter offered more: insurance, housing, college money.

"I thought, 'Well, damn, that's amazing,' " Miller said. "Hell, here I am, 18 years old, I can have all this in the palm of my hands just by giving them four years."

Following his grandfather's footsteps, he went infantry, and left for boot camp in November 2002. Four months later, the war in Iraq broke out.

"Before I knew it," Miller said, "I was thrown into the mix without even thinking about it."

Miller was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment of the 2nd Marine Division, based in Camp Lejeune, N.C.

"Right before we got ready to leave for Iraq, I guess I was a little nervous. I started smoking more, I went from about a pack-and-a-half a day to 2 1/2 packs a day," he said. "When we got to Iraq ... I was smoking 5 1/2 packs."

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For a while, Iraq didn't seem all that bad. Miller and his fellow Marines settled into a routine in Anbar province in western Iraq, setting up hiding places among the palms and sand, and watching for the white pickups that insurgents would use to plant bombs and fire mortars.

There also was time for candy and laughter with the Iraqi children who came running to see the American troops. Miller felt like he was helping.

**Then, on Nov. 5, 2004, in the middle of a sandstorm, the Marines got the word that they might be heading for an assault on Fallujah, at the time, the capital of the Iraqi insurgency.**

No American forces had gone inside the city in months. And now Miller would be among the first. He had been a Marine for less than two years.



"It puts butterflies in my stomach right now," he said. "I don't know if you can describe it. I don't think words can."

The days before the assault were an intense blur of training, preparation and fear. But there was one bright spot, when Miller ran into a good friend in the chow hall; Demarkus Brown, a 22-year-old from Virginia.

Miller met Brown in infantry school, when the smiling African American introduced himself to the white Kentucky native with a grinning, "What's up, cracker?"

Miller quickly realized Brown didn't mean the word seriously -- didn't mean much of anything seriously. Brown liked to party all hours and go dancing, then call Miller to come pick him up.

"It didn't matter what you told him or how shitty it was," Miller said. "He was always the one guy who had a smile on his face."

But one thing Brown took seriously was music: He loved raves and techno music, and Miller played bluegrass on bass and guitar. Their styles somehow harmonized, and they became close friends.

Now they were together outside Fallujah.

The night before U.S. forces went into the city, Miller gathered with his fellow Marines and led them by memory through a passage from the Bible, John 14:2-3.

"In my Father's house, there are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I leave this place and go there to prepare a place for you, so that where I may be, you may be also."

The assault on Fallujah began Nov. 8, 2004, when U.S. planes, using a combination of high explosives and burning white phosphorus, hammered the city in advance of the artillery push. Miller was under fire from the moment he stepped out of the personnel carrier.

It lasted into Nov. 9, the day that, for a while, would make Miller's face the most famous in Iraq.

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As Miller remembers that day, he was on a rooftop taking fire and calling for support on his radio, a 20-pound piece of equipment that he had to lug around along with nine extra batteries, hundreds of extra rounds of ammunition, and a couple of cartons of cigarettes.

As insurgent bullets from a nearby building pinged off the roof, a horrified Miller heard footsteps coming up the stairs behind him. He raised his rifle and barely had time to halt when he saw it was embedded Los Angeles Times photographer Luis Sinco. Miller returned to his radio, guiding two tanks to his position. When they opened fire, he said, the thunder left his body numb, but the building housing the attackers had collapsed. Later, he said, they would find about 40 bodies in the rubble.

"I was never so happy in all my life to take that handset away from my head," Miller said. "I lit up a fucking cigarette."

His ear was bleeding from the sound of the tank firing. Miller still can't hear out of his right ear. His nose bled from a nick he took when his rifle scope and radio got tangled up midfire. He looked at the sunrise and wondered how many more of those he would see.

**He was vaguely aware that elsewhere on the rooftop, Sinco was taking pictures.**

**At a briefing the next day, Miller's gunnery sergeant walked up to him, grinning, and said: "Would you believe you're the most famous fucking Marine in the Marine Corps right now? Believe it or not, your ugly mug just went all over the U.S."**

The Marines wanted to pull him out of Fallujah at that point, Miller said, not wanting the very public poster boy to die in combat. But he stayed.

He won't talk about the weeks that followed. He only mentions moments, like still frames from a film. The day his column barely survived an ambush, escaping through a broken door as bullets struck near their feet. The morning he woke up to discover that a cat had taken up residence in the open chest cavity of an Iraqi body nearby, consuming it from within.

The day he discovered that Demarkus Brown had been killed.

"When we found out, I told a couple of my buddies who were close to him, too. We just sat around, and we didn't say much at all," Miller said. "You didn't have the heart to cry."

But it wasn't those terrible benchmarks that affected him the most, Miller said. It was the daily chore of war: the times he had to raise his rifle, peer through the scope and squeeze the trigger to launch a bullet, not at a target, not at a distant white truck, but at another human being.

"It's one thing to be shot at, and you shoot a couple rounds back, just trying to suppress somebody else," Miller said. "It's another thing when you see a human being shooting a round at you, knowing that you're shooting back with the intent to kill them. You're looking through a scope at somebody. It's totally different. You can make out a guy's eyes."

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When Miller returned to America, he brought back a big duffel bag packed with numerous letters and gifts from those who had seen his photo. It was only later that he discovered he'd brought home some of the war, too.

None of the Marines talked much about the strain that war puts on one's emotions, Miller said. The "wizards," military psychologists, gave the returning troops a briefing on the subject, but nobody paid much attention. Even guys who were taking antidepressants to help them sleep didn't think much about the long-term consequences.

**"What the hell are those people going to do once they get out? They ride it out until they get an honorable discharge, and then they're never diagnosed with anything," Miller said. "How the hell are you going to do anything for them after that? And that's how so many of these guys are ending up on the damn streets."**

Miller dismissed the early signs, too.

When he and his buddies reacted to a truck backfire by dropping into a combat stance and raising imaginary rifles, well, that was to be expected. And when his wife, Jessica, the childhood sweetheart whom Miller had married in June, told him he was tightening his arm around her neck in the night, that was strange, but he figured it would pass. So would the nightmares he began to have about Iraq, things that had happened, things that hadn't.

Then one day, while visiting his wife at her college dorm in Pikeville, Miller looked out the window and clearly saw the body of an Iraqi sprawled out on the sidewalk. He turned away.

"I said, 'Look, honey, I just got to get out of here.' I couldn't even tell her at the time what had happened," he said. "(I thought), 'Well, that's it. That's my little spaz I'm supposed to have that the psychiatrists were talking about ... I'm glad I got it out of the way.'"

But he hadn't. Jessica, a psychology student, tried to help with a visualization technique. But when he looked inside himself, Miller found a kind of demonic door guarded by a twisted figure in a black cloak. Under the cloak's hood, he spotted the snarling face of the teufelhund, a Marine Corps icon: the devil dog.

"So I come out again, without closing the door," he said. "After all this happened, my nightmares started getting a lot fucking worse."

**Finally, Miller went to a military psychiatrist, who diagnosed him with signs of post-traumatic stress disorder. Miller thought that meant he could not be deployed. But in early September, he joined a group of Marines headed to police New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.**

**"I really didn't want to go. ... There was a possibility we would be shooting people," he said. "We could be going into another (urban warfare) environment just like Iraq, except this would actually be U.S. citizens.**

**"Here we go, Fallujah 2, right here in the states."**

Not long after they arrived, as Hurricane Rita bore down on them, the Marines were packed into the amphibious assault ship Iwo Jima to wait out the storm offshore. And one day, as Miller headed for the smoke deck with a Marlboro, a passing sailor made a whistling sound just like a rocket-propelled grenade.

**"I don't remember grabbing him. I don't remember putting him against the bulkhead. I don't remember getting him down on the floor. I don't remember getting on top of him. I don't remember doing any of that shit," Miller said. "That was like the last straw."**

**On Nov. 10, 2005, the Marine Corps' 230th birthday and one year to the day after the Marlboro Man picture appeared in the Los Angeles Times, Miller was honorably discharged after a medical review. His military career was over.**

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Miller returned to eastern Kentucky, the place he had spent years trying to escape. He wanted the familiarity and safety of the people and land he'd known since birth.

"Maybe it made me think twice about what I had lost," he said. "What I was really missing."

In a way, though, his family is still missing Blake Miller, the Miller who left Kentucky for Iraq a couple of years ago.

The man who left was easygoing, quick to laugh, happy to sit in a relative's house and eat and smoke and talk. The man who came back is quick to anger, they say, and is quiet. He still smiles often but does not easily laugh.

And when he takes a seat in his adoptive grandmother's home, amid her collection of ceramic Christ figurines, it is in a chair that faces the door.

Mildred Childers, who owns those figurines, sees Miller's difficulties as a crisis of faith.

**She still remembers Miller's call just before the assault on Fallujah, and his terrible question: "How can people go to church and be a Christian and kill people in Iraq?"**

"He was raised where that's one of the Ten Commandments, do not kill," she said. "I think it's hard for a soldier to go to war and have that embedded in them from small children up, and you go over there and you've got to do it to stay alive."

**Recently, some of his Marine buddies have been calling Miller up, crying drunk, and remembering their war experiences. Just like Papaw Joe Lee used to do when Miller was a boy.**

"There's a lot of Vietnam vets ... they don't heal until 30, 40 years down the road," Miller said. "People bottle it up, become angry, easily temperamental, and hell, before you know it, these are the people who are snapping on you."

Jessica interrupted. "You're already like that," she said.

**She recalled her own first glimpse of the Marlboro Man, an image seen through tears of relief that he was alive, and misery at how worn he looked.**

**"Some people thought it was sexy, and we thought, 'Oh, my God, he's in the middle of a war, close to death.' We just couldn't understand how some people could look at it like that," she said. "But I guess for some people it was glory, like patriotism."**

She looked at her quiet husband through the smoke drifting from his right hand.

**"But when it comes out and there's actually a personality behind that picture, and that personality, he has to deal with all the war, and all he's done, people don't want to know how hard it actually is," she said.**

**"This is the dark side of the reality of war. ... People don't want to know the Marlboro Man has PTSD."**

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Chronicle / Michael Macor

Blake Miller, who received an honorable discharge after two tours of duty in Iraq, walks the property he grew up on in Jonancy, Ky., a small town in the eastern part of the state. Chronicle photo by Michael Macor

Miller stood outside his father's home in Jonancy, looking over the beaten mobile homes, the rows of corn, potatoes and cabbage. For a change, he wasn't smoking; he's down to a pack-and-a-half a day.

"There ain't a goddamn thing around here," he said. "My whole life, all I did was watch my old man bust his ass."

It was why he joined the Marines; why part of him wishes he could go back.

"My whole life, all I've ever known is working on cars, doing body work, cutting grass, manual labor, you know? It was something different," he said. "You always hear those commercials: it's not just a job, it's an adventure. It was, you know?"

**On the other hand, Miller isn't sure he'd want to go back to combat; nor sure he'd ever let any kid of his enlist. He has mixed feelings about the oversized copy of the Marlboro Man picture proudly displayed in the lobby of the Marine recruiting station in Pikeville.**

**Some of his relatives and friends are against the war; others see it as a fight against terrorism.**

**Miller himself seems torn; proud of the troops fighting for freedom, but wondering whether there was a peaceful way, to find terrorists in Iraq without invading.**

**There was no time for such questions in Fallujah. But now, at night, when he can't sleep, Miller thinks of the men he saw through his rifle scope, and wonders: Were they terrorists fighting against America? Or men fighting to protect their homes?**

**"I mean, how would we feel if they came over and started something here?" he asked. "I'm glad that I fought for my country. But looking back on it, I wouldn't do it all over again."**

It helps, sometimes, to talk about it. Last week, Miller did what he hopes other veterans do: He had his first visit with a Veterans Administration counselor.

"I've got my whole life ahead of me," he said. "I'm too young to lay down and quit; too young to let anything beat me."

**Down the road, Miller hopes to start a business. For now, he is waiting for his disability benefits to kick in. Maybe then, he and Jessica can afford the big wedding they had always wanted. She already has her white wedding dress. He still intends to wear his Marine Corps blues.**



Chronicle / Michael Macor

Miller has reduced his habit to a pack-and-a-half a day, the same as before the military. He increased to two-and-a-half packs right before going to Iraq and more than five in the battle zone. Chronicle photo by Michael Macor

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **Assorted Resistance Action**



Demonstrators protest against the British army by burning a British flag Jan. 29, 2006, in Basra. About 1,500 Iraqis protested outside the British consulate on Sunday over the recent arrests of several Iraqi policemen. The protesters demanded the release of five men who were among 14 arrested by British and Iraqi forces Tuesday. (AP Photo/Nabil al-Jurani)

1.30.06 AP & (KUNA) & (Reuters) & By PAUL GARWOOD, Associated Press Writer

**A car bomber plowed into a police commando headquarters in Baghdad. Police say one officer died and more than 30 others were wounded.**

**Three Iraqi soldiers were killed on Monday in northern Iraq's Kirkuk city. In a press statement, a police source said the soldiers were part of a force designated with securing oil facilities.**

**Two policemen were killed and 30 were wounded when a bomber in a car attacked a commando headquarters where police were training in the southern city of Nassiriya on Monday, police said.**

**Insurgents hurled 10 mortar rounds late Sunday night at the Habaniyah military base.**

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

## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

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



U.S. Marines from the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit search Iraqi citizens forced to stop at a roadblock near Hit January 28, 2006. REUTERS/Bob Strong

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

**[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]**

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



## CLASS WAR REPORTS

# ***Mass Murderers At Work: Congress Passes Bill To Cut Off Medical Care For Children & Low Income People***

30 January 2006 By Robert Pear, The New York Times

**Millions of low-income people would have to pay more for health care under a bill worked out by Congress, and some of them would forgo care or drop out of Medicaid because of the higher co-payments and premiums, the Congressional Budget Office says in a new report.**

The bill gives states sweeping new authority to charge premiums and co-payments under Medicaid.

**"In response to the new premiums, some beneficiaries would not apply for Medicaid, would leave the program or would become ineligible due to nonpayment," the Congressional Budget Office said in its report, completed Friday night.**

"C.B.O. estimates that about 45,000 enrollees would lose coverage in fiscal year 2010 and that 65,000 would lose coverage in fiscal year 2015 because of the imposition of premiums."

***"About 60 percent of those losing coverage would be children."***

The budget office predicted that 13 million low-income people, about a fifth of Medicaid recipients, would face new or higher co-payments for medical services like doctor's visits and hospital care.

"About one-third of those affected would be children, and almost half would be individuals with income below the poverty level," the report said in addressing co-payments for prescription drugs.

***Under the bill, states could end Medicaid coverage for people who failed to pay premiums for 60 days or more.***

***Doctors and hospitals could deny services to Medicaid beneficiaries who did not make the required co-payments.***

*The budget office said the new co-payments would save money by reducing the use of medical services.*

*"About 80 percent of the savings from higher cost-sharing would be due to decreased use of services," the report said.*

The official estimates take into account the fact that "savings from the reduced use of certain services could be partly offset by higher spending in other areas, such as emergency room visits." [And funerals, let's not forget that. At least the coffins for the kids will be small ones.]

**What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to [thomasfbarton@earthlink.net](mailto:thomasfbarton@earthlink.net). Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.**

## **Predators In Congress Have Increased Their Own Pay 23% Since They Last Raised Minimum Wage**

30 January 2006 By David R. Francis, The Christian Science Monitor

Since members of Congress last voted to boost the minimum wage, they have raised their own pay by 23 percent. Last October, the Senate voted 51 to 49 to hike the minimum wage, but it would have taken a supermajority of 60 votes to pass.

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## **Top 1% Grabbing More And More Of U.S. Corporate Wealth: Everybody Else Losing**

For every group below the top 1 percent, shares of corporate wealth have declined since 1991.

January 29, 2006 By DAVID CAY JOHNSTON, New York Times

New government data indicate that the concentration of corporate wealth among the highest-income Americans grew significantly in 2003, as a trend that began in 1991 accelerated in the first year that President Bush and Congress cut taxes on capital.

**In 2003 the top 1 percent of households owned 57.5 percent of corporate wealth, up from 53.4 percent the year before, according to a Congressional Budget Office analysis of the latest income tax data. The top group's share of corporate wealth has grown by half since 1991, when it was 38.7 percent.**

In 2003, incomes in the top 1 percent of households ranged from \$237,000 to several billion dollars.

**For every group below the top 1 percent, shares of corporate wealth have declined since 1991.**

These declines ranged from 12.7 percent for those on the 96th to 99th rungs on the income ladder to 57 percent for the poorest fifth of Americans, who made less than \$16,300 and together owned 0.6 percent of corporate wealth in 2003, down from 1.4 percent in 1991.

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## **While Soldiers Die For Oil**

# **Exxon Mobil Racks Up Biggest Profits In U.S. History: Profits Up 40%; Income Taxes Not**

30 January 2006 By Simon Romero and John Holusha, The New York Times

**Exxon Mobil, the nation's largest energy company, today reported a 27 percent surge in profits for the fourth quarter as elevated fuel prices gave rise to the most lucrative year ever for an American company, with profits in 2005 reaching \$36.13 billion and revenue \$371 billion.**

Exxon's profits are expected to generate new scrutiny of the company's operations in Washington, where legislators have recently expressed concern over Big Oil's good fortune as soaring oil and natural gas prices pressure consumers.

***Exxon said its profits climbed more than 40 percent last year, while its tax bill rose only 14 percent.***

**Exxon's revenue last year allowed it to surpass Wal-Mart as the largest company in the United States, and by some measures Exxon became richer than some of world's largest oil-producing nations.**

For instance, its revenue of \$371 billion surpassed the gross domestic product of \$245 billion for Indonesia, an OPEC member and the world's fourth most populous country with 242 million people.

### **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](http://www.ivaw.net))

### **GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out**

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

[http://robinlea.com/GI\\_Special/](http://robinlea.com/GI_Special/), <http://gi-special.iraq-news.de>,  
<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/>, [www.williambowles.info/gispecial](http://www.williambowles.info/gispecial),  
[http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi\\_special/](http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/), <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>,  
<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/gi-special.htm>

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