

GI SPECIAL 4B15:



Monica And Kevin Benderman (guillemette.typepad.com/)

MP Says: “I Know Kevin Benderman: “He’s A Good Man”

[Yesterdays' GI Special carried news from Ft. Lewis, Washington, of a demonstration calling for the release of Sgt. Kevin Benderman, imprisoned there for opposing the war in Iraq, and refusing to return there for a second deployment based on what he experienced during the first one.

[This is more news of that demonstration. T]

From: Judy Linehan
To: GI Special
Sent: February 15, 2006

Subject: Re: GI Special 4B14: Free Sgt. Kevin Benderman

Actually the real story of the day at the Fort Lewis overpass was about the MP who came by & said, "I know Kevin Benderman: he's a good man."

He then went on to reveal he works at the stockade where Kevin's held & believes the charges are "Bullshit!"

That's what needed to get into print.

Irregardless though, it further buoyed everyone involved, as did Monica's letter.

The people who "troll" that bridge genuinely believe they own it because they tied it up in yellow ribbons.

They're an interesting lot, right out of a bad fairy tale. A regular OSOT wears a jacket that says, "Kill 'em all & let God sort it out" - not exactly a commanding figure.

Take care of yourself & thanks for all you do.

Judy Linehan, MFSO

REPLY: It's Sgt. Benderman, MFSO, and people like you who are doing what has to be done. GI Special can report it, but decent, honorable people taking action deserve the thanks. For more about the fight to free Kevin Benderman, go to www.bendermantimeline.com. T]



The Ft. Lewis overpass demonstration (www.olybolog.net)

MORE:

MEMO OF 13 FEBRUARY 2006

From: Monica Benderman

To: GI Special
Sent: February 15, 2006
Subject: Re: MEMO OF 13 FEBRUARY 2006

13 February 2006

**MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD THRU Commander, Regional Correction Facility,
Fort Lewis. Washington 98433**

**FOR U.S. Army Clemency and Parole Board, 1941 Jefferson Davis Highway 2nd
Floor, Arlington, Virginia 22202-4508.**

**SUBJECT: Parole/Clemency Request in the Case of United States vs. Kevin M.
Benderman**

**I am respectfully requesting early release, by way of parole or reduction of
sentence to time served.**

**In a different type of service, I have given 10 years to the U.S. Army, always
placing the Army's needs before my own. Until my tour of duty in Iraq, I enjoyed
my responsibilities as an NCO, and thought myself reasonably good at them.
However, when I realized I could no longer perform those duties, I applied for
conscientious objector status. Both CO status, and the procedure for obtaining it,
are expressly recognized by Army regulations.**

**Even without acting on my CO application, my command made the decision to
prosecute me for desertion and missing movement. As I understand the law and
practice concerning CO applications; until my application was decided, I should
have been assigned no duties which set me up for charges--whether desertion,
missing movement, or anything else.**

**Laying the CO regulations to one side, however, I did not desert my unit or miss
the movements of my unit--the two charges brought against me. Why not?
Because CSM Samuel L. Coston released me on 7 January 2005 at 1800 hours, at
the conclusion of a meeting between us. CSM Coston had ordered me to report to
him, for the purpose of discussing my reasons for applying for conscientious
objector status. During that interview, CSM Coston ordered me to complete my
conscientious objector application! CSM Coston's order, to complete my
conscientious objector application, was fully consistent with Army regulations, as
both he and I understood them; namely, that my status with the Army was "on
hold," until that application had been acted upon. Yet, charges against me were
commenced before my CO application had been acted upon.**

**A belated denial of my CO application, based upon claimed "insincerity," was
supposed to justify this illegal prosecution. Of course, it didn't, but merely gave
me the opportunity to prove my sincerity the old fashioned way--by going to
prison, rather than continuing my military service, and winding up in the same
compromising situation I'd found myself previously in Iraq. Simply put, the only
reason I'm in jail is because I wouldn't return to Iraq. Based upon my actual
experience in Iraq, I applied for a CO exemption from my remaining service
obligation.**

My legal situation, as I understood it then (and now): I could have avoided or aborted prosecution at any time before conviction, simply by agreeing to get on a plane to Iraq and rejoin my unit. I would not do this, for all the reasons stated in my CO application. Having thus proved beyond doubt the sincerity of my CO application, by going to prison rather than serving further in the Army; there is nothing more for the Army to do with me, except to release me from further military obligation.

These are the plain facts of my case--why I believe I should be granted early release. After all, what did I actually do (or omit)? I filed a CO application to exempt myself from further military service. The logic of such applications requires me to refuse further service. Although I was never put in a position of refusing orders; the Army brought me up on charges and convicted me anyway, thereby giving me an opportunity to prove the sincerity of my application--beyond all possible doubt!

I have spent six months thinking about all that has happened. Considering the official (and unofficial) disapproval of my actions, I've remained open to the possibility that I might have done something wrong--or at least gone about things in the wrong way. I'm still waiting for someone to point out to me what I did incorrectly; what procedures I didn't follow; and what orders I didn't obey. If none can be pointed out, how likely is it there are any?

After giving my country ten years of honorable service, I came to the conclusion--probably in Iraq; no doubt because of my service there--that I could no longer participate in war. For this, and this alone, my personal integrity and character have been attacked, in a continuous and blatant manner. Perhaps separation from service is implicit in a CO application of any sort. If it is, then all the more reason for both Army and me to make a clean break, rather than have the Army trying to hold onto me, as it were, via incarceration. All things considered, maybe that's the best way of looking at the matter: CO application means separation; so why not let me and the Army separate, as amicably as we can. We're obviously no longer suited to each other. Rather than resist this conclusion, let's embrace it and act on it!

Upon my release, I intend to resume taking care of my family and helping veterans and the military community in two ways:

--by helping them become reacquainted with their families and friends; and,

--by helping them adjust to life after deployments to combat zones.

I will be residing with my wife, Monica Benderman, in our home in Hinesville, Georgia. Gainfully employed by then, I'll be supporting Monica, as well as continuing to assist our three young adult children with the challenges they face. My incarceration has placed severe financial and emotional hardships upon my family and me--all resulting from conduct (a CO application), expressly authorized by law.

I will be working with Evans Media USA. My position will be Director of Fund raising, raising and allocating funds--

--for programs designed to assist veterans and active duty military personnel who are experiencing PTSD and related medical and emotional problems; or,

--who are in need of legal or personal counseling.

These programs will assist veterans and military personnel in overcoming obstacles, which prevent them from making the difficult transition from combat or other military service to the stateside service or the civilian sector--thereby helping them to lead normal lives, without the stigma which often comes with being unable to cope with emotional distress.

The best use of my time and talents, I believe: to help veterans and military personnel, who are unable to receive the proper medical and psychological treatment through normal channels. Such treatment that has become necessary, due to sacrifices they have made, which have earned them the right to the best care available. Rather than expecting government to do everything for us military and former military; I believe we need to help each other. Our country has provided much for my family and me. My family and I feel this is the best way for us to continue to serve our country, and to help those who have contributed to its defense and security.

Prior to incarceration, I had enrolled in a criminal justice program; a program I intend to resume upon my release. Incarceration has not allowed me to continue my studies in criminal justice. Resuming my studies in criminal justice--so many vets and even active duty personnel have legal involvement--would surely benefit me directly in my chosen vocation, sketched above.

In conclusion, may I thank the board for their kind attention in listening to me and considering the proposed early release.

Respectfully,

**Kevin M Benderman
Inmate RCF
Ft. Lewis, WA.**

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

Scott County Marine Killed

February 15, 2006 SCOTT COUNTY (WATE)

A Marine from Scott County has been killed while he was serving in Iraq.

Cpl. Rusty Washam just turned 21 on Saturday. He was recently promoted to corporal.

He had been overseas since early last fall.

His family told 6 News three uniformed officers brought them the news Tuesday night.

On Wednesday, the family is expecting a chaplain and officer to visit, telling them details of their son's death.

Family members tell 6 News they're proud and still in shock. His mother says she last spoke to Rusty on his birthday, telling him to be careful. She says his last words to her were, "I love you, Mom."

The Washams have two other sons in the military. One is in the Army and one is in the Air Force.

Washam attended Scott High School in Scott County.

Louisiana Marine killed

2.15.06 The Associated Press

WEST MONROE, La. - A Marine from northeastern Louisiana was killed in Iraq when a suicide bomber rammed a military vehicle he was traveling in, the man's family said.

Matthew Ron Barnes' family was notified Tuesday by the military of the death of the 20-year-old serviceman.

"He operated out of a Humvee," said Barnes' brother. "Apparently, what we understand, it was rammed by a suicide bomber; the automobile drove into them."

Barnes, whose family lives around West Monroe, was a student at the University of Louisiana at Monroe until he joined the Marines in May 2004, according to his aunt, Rita Dispenza.

"He went over in August last year and he was due back over here the middle of next month," Rick Barnes said.

Soldier Dies In D.C. Of Ramadi Burns

February 15, 2006 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 138-06

Spc. Felipe J. Garcia Villareal, 26, of Burke, Va., died at Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 12, of injuries sustained in Ramadi, Iraq on Feb. 9, when his tent caught fire. Garcia Villareal was assigned to the 54th Engineer Battalion, 130th Engineer Brigade, Warner Barracks, Bamberg, Germany.

U.S. Military Supply Convoy Attacked



A truck burns after an attack by insurgents on a highway west of Baghdad February 15, 2006. Police said the truck, loaded with goods, was on its way to an American military base when the attack took place, killing the driver.
REUTERS/Stringer

No Croats Croaked

15 February 2006 Turkish Weekly

There were no Croatian casualties in recent attacks on truck convoys in Iraq, the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration said on Tuesday.

The first convoy was attacked near Samara despite being escorted by multinational troops, while the second was attacked near the US military base Anaconda north of Baghdad.

Occupation Forces Reduced To Movement By Copter Taxis: Road Travel Cut Off By Resistance

2.15.06 Los Angeles Times

With roads in Iraq often too dangerous to travel, U.S. troops and civilians use about 100 helicopters to taxi around the country. There are no flight schedules, for obvious security reasons, and trips are made up daily as need occurs.

**IMPOSSIBLE MISSION
FUTILE EXERCISE
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**



U.S. Marine Pfc. Ruben Almaraz, of Surprise, Arizona in the open back of a humvee in Ramadi, Feb. 10, 2006. **Violence in parts of this insurgent stronghold is so intense that U.S. forces rarely venture out on foot.** (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

TROOP NEWS

Backstabbing Democratic Party Rats Trash Iraq War Veteran:

“For Me, This Is A Second Betrayal”

“First, My Government Misused And Mismatched The Military In Iraq, And Now My Own Party Is Afraid To Support Candidates Like Me”

[He Is Considered Unfit To Be In The “Exclusive Club”]

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in.]

Mr. Hackett was widely criticized last year [by Bush loving shit-eating scum] for using indecent language to describe President Bush. Last month, state Republicans attacked Mr. Hackett for saying their party had been hijacked by religious extremists who he said "aren't a whole lot different than Osama bin Laden."

2.15.06 By DAN SEWELL, AP & 2.14.06 By IAN URBINA, New York Times Company & Feb 14, 2006 By Tom Dickenson, Rollingstone.com

Paul Hackett, an Iraq war veteran and popular Democratic candidate in Ohio's closely watched Senate contest, said yesterday that he was dropping out of the race and leaving politics altogether as a result of pressure from party leaders.

"It is an outrage that the Democratic Party has forced Hackett out of the race," adds Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America PAC director Jon Smoltz.

"Hackett brought credibility on the number one issue facing the nation, the war in Iraq. The Democratic Party loses credibility on that issue because he is no longer running, and because they had a hand in his decision."

Mr. Hackett staged a surprisingly strong Congressional run last year in an overwhelmingly Republican district and gained national prominence for his scathing criticism of the Bush administration's handling of the Iraq War.

It was his performance in the Congressional race that led party leaders to recruit him for the Senate race. But for the last two weeks, he said, state and national Democratic Party leaders have urged him to drop his Senate campaign and again run for Congress.

Hackett said he was pressured by party leaders to drop out of the Senate primary and run for the House against Republican Rep. Jean Schmidt instead.

National Democratic leaders, especially Sen. Charles Schumer, added to that pressure by telling his top fundraisers to stop sending money, Hackett said.

"My donor base and host base on both coasts was contacted by elected officials and asked to stop giving," Hackett told The Associated Press on Tuesday. "The original promise to me from Schumer was that I would have no financial concerns. It went from that to Senator Schumer actually working against my ability to raise money."

He said he was outraged to learn that party leaders were calling his donors and asking them to stop giving and said he would not enter the Second District Congressional race.

"For me, this is a second betrayal," Mr. Hackett said. "First, my government misused and mismanaged the military in Iraq, and now my own party is afraid to support candidates like me."

Jennifer Duffy, who analyzes Senate races for the Cook Political Report, said that part of what made Democratic leaders nervous about Mr. Hackett was what had also made him so popular with voters.

"Hackett is seen by many as a straight talker, and he became an icon to the liberal bloggers because he says exactly what they have wished they would hear from a politician," Ms. Duffy said.

"On the other hand, the Senate is still an exclusive club, and the party expects a certain level of decorum that Hackett has not always shown."

Mr. Hackett was widely criticized last year [by Bush loving shit-eating scum] for using indecent language to describe President Bush. [Wrong. It is impossible to find language sufficiently indecent to describe Bush.]

Last month, state Republicans attacked Mr. Hackett for saying their party had been hijacked by religious extremists who he said "aren't a whole lot different than Osama bin Laden."

Iraqi Resistance Movement Trembles In Fear: **Deploying U.S. Commanders Getting Five Days Classroom Training In Counter-Insurgency**

In a new effort to shift the military focus from war-fighting to winning Iraqi hearts and minds, commanders and their staffs coming to Iraq must now spend five days in a class studying counter-insurgency theory, techniques and intelligence.

Congress Trembles With Amazement At The Secretary Of The Army's Penetrating Analysis

2.15.06 Defense Today

Army Secretary Francis Harvey said if Congress provided more money to the Army, the service might be able to accelerate procurement of weapons systems.

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



The body of U.S. Marine Sgt. David Coullard, killed in Iraq Aug. 1, is escorted out of St. Paul's Church in Glastonbury, Conn. Aug. 11, 2005. Sgt. Coullard's mother, Anita Dziejdzic, center rear, is followed by her husband, Greg Dziejdzic. (A Photo/Rick Hartford, POOL)

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action



A damaged police vehicle after a car bomb attack in Baghdad February 15, 2006. Three policemen were killed in the attack targeting a police patrol in a residential district, police said. REUTERS/Thaier al-Sudani

2/15/2006 (AP) & DPA & Reuters & (KUNA)

A parked car bomb exploded as a police patrol passed, killing four policemen and wounding another in northern Baghdad, said Lt. Nadhim Nasser.

Another car bomb blast near Baghdad's University of Technology, an area with a heavy police presence, wounded three policemen.

An explosives-rigged vehicle blew up near a gas station as an Iraqi police patrol passed in downtown Baghdad's Karradah area, wounding five policemen and three civilians, said Maj. Abbas Mohammed.

Guerrillas firing from two cars shot and killed a police captain and his driver, also a policeman, in Baghdad's Sadiyah neighborhood, said police Lt. Aqil Fadil.

Insurgents attacked a convoy of trucks carrying supplies to a US base near Abu Ghraib, west of Baghdad setting two of them on fire. The police said there were no casualties in the fire that engulfed the trucks.

Two traffic policemen were wounded when a car bomb went off targeting police commandos in central Baghdad, police said.

Two trucks laden with wood for U.S. forces burned in western Baghdad, police and witnesses said. The cause of the fire was not clear, police added.

A spokesman for the British forces in Basra said three Iraqis working at the British military base in Basra had been captured by unknown militants while on their way to work.

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)

Basra: Armed Demonstration Against The Occupation



A protest against the British forces in Basra February 14, 2006. Local officials in southern Iraq have voted to maintain a boycott of British-led forces after the release of a video showing British troops beating Iraqi teenagers in 2004, officials said on Tuesday. REUTERS/Atef Hassan

Get The Message?



Iraqis protest against British occupation forces in Basra, February 14, 2006.
REUTERS/Atef Hassan

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. Occupation Command Finds Another Way To Help Resistance Recruit Soldiers

2.15.06 New York Times, February 15, 2006

U.S. commanders in Iraq are worried that the overcrowded Abu Ghraib prison has become a breeding ground for extremist leaders and a school for terrorist foot soldiers.

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



Iraqi citizens exit their tent to be searched during an operation by foreign fighters from the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and Iraqi soldiers in the village of Abu Rayat, February 4, 2006. REUTERS/Bob Strong

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

"In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit," said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay's Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday's raid. "Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead."

West Point Study Finds U.S. Military Action Helping “Radical Muslims” Duh.

February 15, 2006 By John Diamond, USA Today

The United States should rely more on indirect propaganda and allies in the Middle East, because the current military strategy is only helping radical Muslims, according to a West Point critique of U.S. terror policy.

“Direct engagement with the United States has been good for the jihadi movement,” said the report by the Combating Terrorism Center at the U.S. military academy.

OCCUPATION HAITI

“A Military Occupation That Has Spent The Last Two Years Terrorizing The Population”

February 17, 2006 By Helen Scott, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Mainstream media reports claim that Cité Soleil and other pro-Lavalas areas of Port-au-Prince are ruled by armed “bandits.”

But the main source of violence are the peacekeepers, known as the United Nations Mission for the Stabilization of Haiti (MINUSTAH) and led by Brazilian troops, who have kept the poor under a state of siege.

Human rights groups have documented civilian massacres, rapes, intimidation and machine gun attacks on homes, schools and hospitals by MINUSTAH soldiers.

Haiti’s “democratic elections” took place under a military occupation that has spent the last two years terrorizing the population and crushing democracy following the coup against Aristide.

Yet despite their best efforts, the Haitian elite and its U.S. and UN champions were unable to quell the aspirations of the country’s poor, who turned out to vote for René Préval as a symbol of opposition to the coup regime.

Clayonne Derogene, a single, unemployed mother from Bel Air, one of the capital's slums, explained how her anger at the U.S. supported **[translation: U.S. organized, funded, and implemented]** coup against Aristide in 2004 motivated her to rise at dawn and wait hours to participate in the election. "I couldn't miss the vote, I had to vote for Préval," Derogene said. "[T]he way they took Aristide away from us...Préval is like a retribution."

Aristide watched from exile in South Africa. His still-popular party, Lavalas Family, didn't run in the elections because the coup regime failed to decriminalize the organization.

Lavalas continues to be persecuted. Hundreds of supporters of Lavalas remain in prison without charges or trials, including high-profile former minister Yvon Neptune, popular folk singer So An (Annette Auguste), and, until recently, popular activist priest Father Gerald Jean-Juste, who would have been the Lavalas candidate.

Jean-Juste, who has leukemia, told the Haitian Lawyers Leadership Network last summer that "he was suffocating from the repression, the massacres, the arbitrary incarcerations, the humiliations of Bush's regime change and occupation in Haiti suffered by the people." Meanwhile, CIA-trained death squad murderers like Guy Phillippe, Jean "Tatoune" Baptiste and Louis Jodel Chamblain, run free.

Late last month, a New York Times article broke the U.S. media's wall of denial and confirmed what Haitians have long believed: the U.S. government (with France and Canada) conspired with right-wingers and the Haitian business elite to replace Aristide with a puppet regime, Gerard Latortue's "national unity" government, which consists, as left-wing writer Peter Hallward puts it, "exclusively of members of the traditional elite."

As Haiti Progres newspaper reported, "Despite their squabbles, the ruling groups continue to collaborate in cracking down on the Haitian people, who overwhelmingly reject the February 29th coup."

Préval was running for Lespwa (Haitian for 'hope'), but he was strongly associated with Aristide. If he faces a runoff against the second-place finisher, former conservative President Leslie Manigat, Préval is expected to win easily.

But even had he won outright in the first round, his position is unenviable.

The press is already calling on him to "end the conflict" between rich and poor; and he has said he will encourage foreign investment, which means agreeing to the privatization and sweatshop plans typified by the International Cooperation Framework.

Ominously, the National Endowment for Democracy declared Venezuela, Haiti, Ecuador and Bolivia its "priorities" for 2006.

Lespwa may represent hope for Haiti's poor, but the only way their aspirations will be met is nationwide opposition to imperialism and neoliberalism.

MORE:

Preval Swears Loyalty To Private Property

"The Haitian people are frustrated," Mr. Préval said. "They have a right to be frustrated. And they have the right to protest. But we must respect private property. We must respect the law. We must respect the rights of others. 15 February 2006, By Ginger Thompson and Amy Bracken, The New York Times

MORE:

Occupation Dictatorship Orders Haitians Not To Let Aristide Come Home

15 February 2006 By Brian Concannon, Truthout Perspective [Excerpt]

On Tuesday afternoon, Mr. Preval claimed that he had proof that he won 54% of the vote, and that the Electoral Council fraudulently reduced his number.

Shortly after Mr. Preval's announcement, Haitian television broadcast such proof: thousands of ballots, most of them Preval votes, dumped in a remote area near Cite Soleil.

A large number of tally sheets from polling centers are not being counted. 254 sheets were destroyed, reportedly by gangs from political parties opposed to Preval. 5 04 tally sheets reportedly lack the codes needed to enter them officially.

The missing tally sheets probably represent about 190,000 votes, over 9% of the total votes cast, and according to the UN, disproportionately affect poor areas that support Preval.

Although there are international observers on the ground, they do not reassure Haitian voters. The observation delegations are organized and funded by the US, Canada and France, the three countries that led the overthrow of Haiti's Constitutional government in February 2004.

With good reason, Haitians wonder whether countries that spent millions of dollars two years ago to remove the president they elected will make much effort to install their latest choice.

The Bush administration fanned the fires of distrust last Friday, just as concerns about the count were rising, by signaling its continued intention to intervene in Haiti's affairs.

White House spokesperson Scott McClellan publicly warned Mr. Preval that if he is installed as president, he should not allow President Aristide back from his exile in South Africa.

The US, obviously, has no right to tell another country not to let a citizen return.

In this case, Mr. Preval, even as president, would not have the right to exclude Mr. Aristide: as Mr. Preval has noted, Haiti's constitution prohibits involuntary exile.

OCCUPATION PUERTO RICO

“The FBI Was Confronted By Independence Supporters, Students And Socialists”

February 17, 2006 By Héctor Reyes, Socialist Worker

JUST FOUR months after the FBI assassinated Puerto Rican independence activist Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, agents were back persecuting other independence activists. On February 10, the Feds raided and ransacked five homes and the office of a faith-based community organization active around affordable housing issues.

FBI officials claimed the raids helped thwart a potential “domestic terrorist attack.” Dozens of agents, many from a special squad based in Miami, confiscated files, computers, fax machines and cell phones. While no one was arrested, several people were detained and kept handcuffed for hours.

In the Río Piedras sector of the capital, the FBI was confronted by independence supporters, students and socialists. Agents proceeded to push back the crowd and used pepper spray indiscriminately, even directly on the faces of journalists covering the confrontation.

Yet in a public statement, the FBI had the nerve to say that the crowd was pepper-sprayed “to protect members of the media.”

The people targeted by the FBI belonged to Rompiendo el Perímetro (REP, Breaking the Perimeter), a new coalition formed after Ojeda Ríos' murder. The REP has organized public protests across the island demanding a full investigation into the death of Ríos, who was shot and left to bleed to death by the FBI.

The FBI's actions this month were so offensive that even Puerto Rico's Gov. Aníbal Acevedo Vilá was forced to distance himself, claiming no prior knowledge and declaring that "there is no justification for the use of excessive force."

The FBI claims that it was attempting to pre-empt a terrorist attack by the defunct Boricua People's Army, known as the Macheteros, which Ojeda Ríos was a leader of, and which was accused of a \$7 million Wells Fargo heist in Connecticut in 1983.

According to the FBI's press statement, the alleged attack by the Macheteros, "where explosive devices were to be utilized, was directed at privately owned interests in Puerto Rico, as well as the general public." But this is more of the same manipulation that the Bush administration has used to justify its atrocities and the trampling of rights at home and abroad.

As former Puerto Rican Independentist Party legislator David Noriega said in a San Juan radio interview, "The only logical explanation for this atrocity is that there is some kind of cruelty, an anti-Puerto Rican feeling, because after all they are unleashing their anger...against a people that kicked them out of Vieques."

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

“No Honorable Man Would Accept This State Of Affairs For Long”

Feb 14, 2006 Kim Murphy, Times Staff Writer

BEIT HANOUN, Gaza Strip: It was just before 2:30 a.m. when the Israeli F-16 came screaming out of the darkness. Salah Shawwa, a 72-year-old retired farmer, said he knew precisely because he was lingering late over a Danielle Steele novel, feeling guilty for not switching off the light.

It prepared him for when the first missile hit the bridge outside his front gate. Shawwa dived out of bed and ran for the hall. The shockwave from the second rocket sent a hail of rubble tumbling onto the bed he had just fled. The third and fourth volleys busted through his bedroom wall and brought the roof and rafters tumbling around his ears, he said.

"They claim since the Israeli withdrawal that Gaza has become free," Shawwa said one day last week, sitting on a plastic chair in the yard outside the ruins of his house. "(But) they have been bombarding us like this day and night."

Leaflets dropped over northern Gaza urged residents to report militants to the Israelis and warned that anyone entering the Israeli-declared buffer zone after 6 p.m. would be shelled or shot.

"They are declaring unilaterally the new border of Israel," said Shawwa, whose home was hit by the concussion and shrapnel of a missile intended to destroy the nearby bridge, which Israelis believe the militants use to get to the border. "They open the border, they close the border. They permit, and they withdraw permission. No honorable man would accept this state of affairs for long."

In the end, many Palestinians say the Israeli withdrawal did little or nothing to remove the tight circle that has held 1.3 million Gazans on this sandy strip.

The area vacated by the former settlements in the north is a nighttime killing zone, they say, and a newly reopened border crossing into Egypt imposes formidable restrictions on young Palestinian men seeking to leave.

"With this disengagement, Israel has put Gaza in a bigger prison," said Issam Younis, director of the Al Mezan Center for Human Rights.

"You know, the main manifestation of the occupation since 1967 has been the restrictions on movement. Talking about the era before the intifada, the occupation was on the checkpoints, on the borders, control of the entrance and exit of Palestinians and their goods. And you see, they still have full control over this movement, and over the borders," he said.

"That's what makes this disengagement not a political process, it's a pure strategic Israeli security plan," he said.

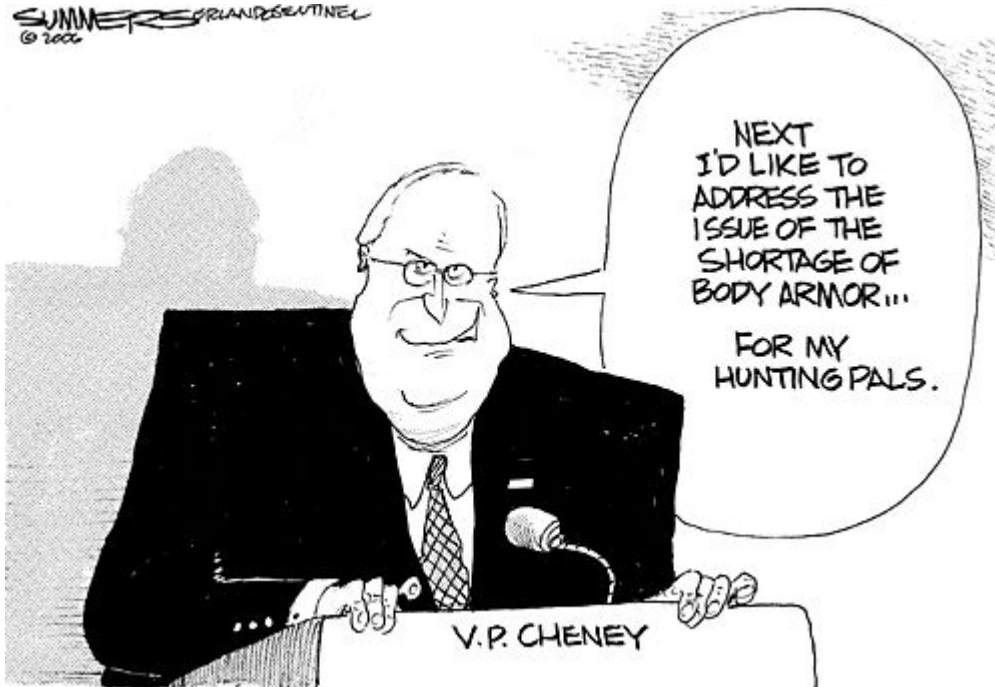
"Personally, I don't feel any change whatsoever in this area since the withdrawal," said the younger Zaneen.

As he spoke, the doors and windows in his house rattled from the explosions outside. He and his father exchanged nervous glances. "Basically, the war has started all over again."

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by a foreign power, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The foreign army is Israeli; the occupied nation is Palestine.]

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to Katherine Y, who sent this in.]

MORE:

[Thanks to JW, who sent in]

**LIBERALS SUDDENLY O.K. WITH JUDGE SCALIA
HUNTING WITH CHENEY**

MORE:

Cheney adviser Mary Matalin said of her boss, "He didn't do anything he wasn't supposed to do." Of course he did, Ms. Matalin, he shot Harry Whittington. Molly Ivins, February 14, 2006, TruthDig

Still Another Super-Secret Program Used By Bush Traitors To Spy On U.S. Citizens

14 February 2006 UPI

Washington: A former NSA employee said Tuesday there is another ongoing top-secret surveillance program that might have violated millions of Americans' Constitutional rights.

Russell D. Tice told the House Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations he has concerns about a "special access" electronic surveillance program that he characterized as far more wide-ranging than the warrantless wiretapping recently exposed by the New York Times but he is forbidden from discussing the program with Congress.

Tice said he believes it violates the Constitution's protection against unlawful search and seizures but has no way of sharing the information without breaking classification laws. He is not even allowed to tell the congressional intelligence committees, members or their staff, because they lack high enough clearance.

Neither could he brief the inspector general of the NSA because that office is not cleared to hear the information, he said.

Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Christopher Shays, R-Conn., and Dennis Kucinich, D-Ohio, said they believe a few members of the Armed Services Committee are cleared for the information, but they said believe their committee and the intelligence committees have jurisdiction to hear the allegations.

"Congressman Kucinich wants Congressman Shays to hold a hearing (on the program)," said Doug Gordon, Kucinich's spokesman. "Obviously it would have to take place in some kind of a closed hearing. But Congress has a role to play in oversight.

"The (Bush) administration does not get to decide what Congress can and can not hear."

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

Imperial Democrat Feingold Just Loves The Patriot Act

15 February 2006 By Senator Russ Feingold, Truthout Perspective [Excerpt]

Mr. President, because I was the only Senator to vote against the Patriot Act in 2001, I want to be very clear from the start.

I am not opposed to reauthorization of the Patriot Act. I supported the bipartisan, compromise reauthorization bill that the Senate passed last July without a single Senator objecting. I believe that bill should become law.

The Senate reauthorization bill is not a perfect bill, but it is a good bill. If that were the bill we had considered back in December or the bill we were considering today, I would speak in support of it. In fact, we could have completed the

process of reauthorizing the Patriot Act months ago if the House had taken up the bill that the Senate approved without any objections.

I also want to respond to those who argue that people who are continuing to call for a better reauthorization package want to let the Patriot Act expire. That is nonsense. Not a single member of this body is calling for any provision of the Patriot Act to expire.

There are any number of ways that we can reauthorize the Act while amending its most problematic provisions and I am not prepared to support reauthorization without adequate reforms.

Received:

Interview With Eric Ahlberg, U.S. Army Veteran

From: JF
To: GI Special
Sent: February 15, 2006
Subject: Interview with Eric Ahlberg, U.S. Army veteran.

Interview with Eric Ahlberg, U.S. Army veteran.

Good Stuff.

Please keep up the good work.

REPLY: The credit goes to Iraq veteran Eric Ahlberg; he saw reality and said so. T

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

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