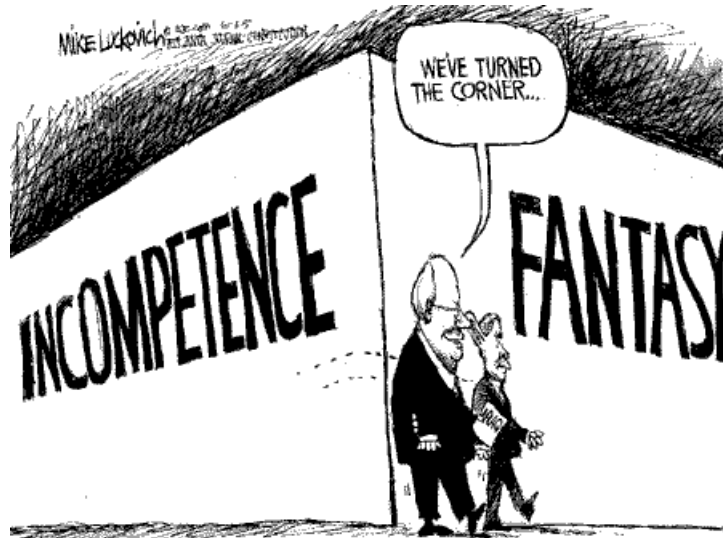


GI SPECIAL 4C6:



[Thanks to PB, who sent this in: img.coxnewsweb.com]

Bush Has Lost His Army: “The Soldiers He Lionizes And Hides Behind Have Run Out Of Patience With Him”

01 March 2006 William Rivers Pitt, Truthout Perspective [Excerpt]

Continued sacrifice by the country's men and women in uniform, now, is truly the sticky wicket. A new Zogby International poll of US troops in Iraq has a full 72% stating flatly that America should be out of Iraq within a year. 29% of those troops polled believe America should pull out of Iraq immediately.

A whopping 93% of troops polled believe the occupation of Iraq had nothing whatsoever to do with finding and destroying weapons of mass destruction.

So much for all of Mr. Bush's canned, choreographed, fake-turkey photo ops with the soldiers.

The soldiers he lionizes and hides behind, even while he slashes their benefits, have run out of patience with him.

This is not a surprise. 2,298 American soldiers have been killed in Iraq, and tens of thousands more have been horribly and permanently wounded. Those who remain unscathed see, every day, the horrors of war that have ripped through the Iraqi populace. They have seen the bodies, the blood, and have themselves participated under orders in the killings.

They have seen their friends die.

They have been deployed, and redeployed, and redeployed again. One in ten of them suffer from post-traumatic stress syndrome, a number sure to rise as time passes.

More than any other Americans, these soldiers have been lied to about this war.

The numbers speak volumes. They have had enough.

Are 72% Of U.S. Troops “Traitors”?

March 4, 2006 Alex Sabbeth, Consortium News.com

The new Zogby poll gauging the opinions of American troops in Iraq has drawn attention mostly because it finds that 72 percent believe the United States should withdraw in a year or less and only 23 percent favor George W. Bush's plan to "stay the course."

Despite this confusion over the reasons for the war, the poll exploded another myth promoted by the administration and its media allies; that Americans are unpatriotic if they criticize Bush's policies, because to do so would damage troop morale.

It turns out the troops want the war brought to a quick end because they have concluded it's unwinnable based on their own experiences, not from the carping of home side naysayers, often denounced as "traitors" by Bush's supporters.

It seems somehow that 72 percent of the U.S. soldiers stationed in Iraq have become "traitors," too.

<p>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</p>

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

Stanwood Sgt. Serving Second Tour In Iraq Killed: Army Veteran Father Condemns Bush

"Right now the only way I could have any respect for President Bush is if he would volunteer his daughters to go over there now and take my son's place. That would restore my faith in his commitment and his belief in this action," Matheny, an Army veteran, said.

February 22, 2006 By MIKE BARBER, P-I REPORTER

Tuesday night, as his former wife made her way to his Stanwood home to mourn the loss of their only child in Iraq, 50-year-old Chuck Matheny could not contain his anguish.

"Right now the only way I could have any respect for President Bush is if he would volunteer his daughters to go over there now and take my son's place. That would restore my faith in his commitment and his belief in this action," Matheny, an Army veteran, said.

On Saturday, Sgt. Charles E. Matheny, IV, 23, of Stanwood was killed in Baghdad when a roadside bomb blew up his Humvee. It was his second tour in Iraq with his unit from the Fort Hood, Texas-based 4th Infantry Division.

"On the morning of the 18th, at 7:30, his Humvee, number two in the convoy, rolled past something in the road that looked like a rock but was an armor-piercing cluster bomb," Chuck Matheny said. "And it blew the lower half of my son's body to smithereens. He died instantly."

Matheny, a 2000 graduate of Arlington High School, joined the Army in 2001. He was the only child of Chuck Matheny, a union electrician, and Dedi Noble, who works for the city of Everett. The two met while serving together in the same Army battalion in which their son was serving when he died.

Noble didn't offer the strong views on the war that her former husband did. But she said both respected their son's character that drove him to serve.

"He gave it his all. There are going to be children and grandchildren born in this world because of my son. He was the one who, because he didn't have a wife or children, volunteered to keep those who did from going on convoys," she said.

"I've heard from every soldier who knew him," she said Tuesday night.

Matheny's dad said his son "was not one who would walk away from a challenge or a dare, or a chance to make me or his mom proud of him. He wanted to live up to a high standard in my eyes and his mother's eyes."

Though a mechanic, he accompanied the infantry in convoys to repair vehicles and was based at a forward operating base when he died.

Last night, the spouses of Matheny's fellow soldiers at Fort Hood were looking for his girlfriend, she said.

"My son told me about her before he left but said 'I can't get involved, it's not right,' to do that before going off to war," Nobel said. But then he added, "If she's still available when I get back, she's the one."

In addition to his parents, Matheny is survived by his stepmother, Lisa Matheny; and stepfather David Noble.

Noble last heard from her son last Friday. She said she realizes now "my son knew he was going to die."

The phone call was different. She was at her office talking with others when the phone rang and said, "There's the kid. What does he need, razor blades? Cookies?"

Usually it was just chit-chat during his regular check in. This time when she asked, he said, "Oh Mom, you know how it is over here. It is just not good Mom, but I'm OK."

He asked if she had received paperwork he sent regarding power-of-attorney should he be killed or wounded.

Instead of just "bye," it was: "I want to tell you guys I love you so much. I have to go now. Bye."

Matheny's roommate later told her he immediately wrote a three-page letter to his dad, then mailed it and went out and joined the convoy. The letter is still in the mail.

Insurgent Sniper Shoots Dead US Soldier In Dhuluiyah

March 05, 2006 Xinhua

Insurgent snipers killed a U.S. soldier in Dhuluiyah town of northern Iraq on Sunday, witnesses said.

"A sniper shot dead a U.S. soldier in the Sorah intersection in central Dhuluiyah town while the U.S. troops were near an Iraqi army checkpoint at the site," a witness told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

The attack prompted U.S. troops to open fire randomly, wounding three civilians and damaging four cars and several shops, the witness added.

U.S. soldiers backed by helicopters immediately searched the surrounding buildings and orchards, detaining some suspected civilians before they pulled out of the town, the witnesses said.

**REALLY BAD IDEA:
NO MISSION;
HOPELESS WAR**



A U.S. soldier stands guard on an armored vehicle, as an Iraqi civilian waits at a check point, in Baghdad March 3, 2006. (AP Photo/Manish Swarup)

AC-130s Gunships Deployed

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in. He writes: ACCORDING TO PACE, THINGS ARE BETTER THAN LAST YEAR. SO WHY ARE THEY SENDING BACK THE AC-130 IF THINGS ARE GOING SO WELL??]

Mar 3 By CHARLES J. HANLEY, AP Special Correspondent

The U.S. Air Force has begun moving heavily armed AC-130 airplanes, the lethal "flying gunships" of the Vietnam War, to a base in Iraq as commanders search for new tools to counter the Iraqi resistance, The Associated Press has learned.

An AP reporter saw the first of the turboprop-driven aircraft after it landed at the airfield this week. Four are expected.

The gunships were designed primarily for battlefield use to place saturated fire on massed troops.

In Vietnam, for example, they were deployed against North Vietnamese supply convoys along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, where the Air Force claimed to have destroyed 10,000 trucks over several years. **[Right. That's one of the reason the U.S. won the war on Vietnam.]**

The use of AC-130s in places like Fallujah, urban settings where insurgents may be among crowded populations of noncombatants, has been criticized by human rights groups.

Notes From A Lost War:

British Occupation Forces Reduced To Minimal Force Protection

March 06 2006 IAN BRUCE, Defence Correspondent, Herald & Time

The Army plans to withdraw 1200 soldiers from three of the four southern Iraqi provinces under its control this year to free up scarce manpower and air transport resources for the UK's new Afghan deployment.

In the meantime, commanders have been told to minimise further casualties by restricting patrols to those necessary for maintaining the security of bases and essential "ration runs" from the logistics hub at Shaiba, south of Basra, to outlying locations.

Dr Mustafa Alani, an expert in security and terrorism studies at the Gulf Research Centre in Dubai, said British forces had already been "marginalised" by religious and militia groups in southern Iraq.

"Withdrawal may not solve the internal security problem of opposition to what many Iraqis regard as foreign invaders.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Canadian Soldier Killed By Afghan With Axe

[Thanks to Liz Burbank for posting.]

4 March 2006 Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

A Canadian soldier suffered a serious head wound after an attack by an axe-wielding man in southern Afghanistan on Saturday.

"Initial reports from the Department of National Defence said the Canadian was shot. But military officials in Kandahar later said the soldier was hit in the back of the head with the axe while attending a meeting with Afghan elders in Gumbad, 70 kilometres north of Kandahar.

"Canadian soldiers shot and killed the attacker. Moments later, a second assailant tossed a grenade at the group. Afghan forces shot at the man, but he managed to escape."

TROOP NEWS

“We Hold Ourselves Accountable, And Sometimes Cannot Live With The Pain”

01 March 2006 By Garrett Reppenhagen, Truthout Statement

Written testimony of Garrett Reppenhagen, returned Iraq War Veteran; submitted to the House Appropriations Subcommittee for Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on issues concerning Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs.

I joined the Army in August of 2001 and became a Cavalry Scout at Ft. Knox, Kentucky. I was indoctrinated into a military that I was proud of and had the courage to serve because I trusted that the government of the United States would use me in a responsible and necessary manner.

I was on leave from a deployment in Kosovo when the Iraq War began. I watched in dread, waiting for a layover flight at Dallas/Ft. Worth airport, when the ultimatum for Saddam and his sons to surrender ran out. Bradleys crossed the line into Iraq, and Baghdad was exploding on the televisions. Surrounding me were a crowd of people cheering like the Cowboys just won the Super Bowl. I started to feel like the reality of war and the policies of the administration were not as honest as they appeared.

In February of 2004, it was my turn to go to war.

I was with 2-63 AR 1st Infantry Division stationed in Baquba, Iraq, as a Sniper in a six-man team. During my year there, I saw a lack of effort by our government to provide the US Soldier with the ability to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. As events unfolded, like Abu Ghraib and the battles in Fallujah, a growing resentment of the Iraqi people swelled the support for the insurgency. Our mission there became impossible.

We turned all our missions into surviving Iraq for a year.

Missions like counter ambush, counter mortar, road clearing and house raids.

No longer were we able to attempt reconstruction operations.

The alienation of the people we were supposed to be trying to hand democracy to increased and the Improvised Explosive Devices, Rocket Propelled Grenade Ambushes and mortar attacks increased.

I left Iraq, eventually was honorably discharged after a ten month involuntary extension, and returned home to begin working for veteran advocacy. I have a growing network of friends who are veterans and deal with all the major veteran organizations.

I frequently visit Walter Reed and speak to a dozen veterans struggling with PTSD and other forms of mental illness. It is a constant frustration to see these men and women treated without proper care and respect. And the problem is only growing.

These soldiers are returning and overcoming the most unimaginable physical and mental disabilities. But the question they all eventually begin to ask is "Why?"

With the growing public opinion being that war was not only wrong, but also based on lies, the soldier who was sent to fight has a conflict with the fact that his sacrifice had no meaning.

The lack of meaning ultimately creates a breakdown of character that is fundamental in a soldier's degradation of mental health. Because the war is so "wrong," it can create not just a guilt of the traumatic experience in Iraq, it also makes the soldiers shameful of the people they have become.

These soldiers return home to ticker tape parades and "thank you's," when the soldier many times feels like a criminal.

Most hold on to the ideal that it was a noble cause, to protect their character from the damaging truth. However eventually, over time, that protective bubble will pop.

If it is years down the road, the buildup of stress will be more harmful.

Whether conscious of it or not, because these soldiers are never punished by society and their leaders are not being held accountable, the veteran takes on self-destructive habits and sometimes commits suicide.

We hold ourselves accountable, and sometimes cannot live with the pain.

The longer we continue the conflict in Iraq, the worse the injuries to our soldiers will become.

We need to remove our military from a war it should have never been involved in.

Without the use of our military in honest operations, the psychological impact on our service members will be unavoidable. Trauma from war is another injury of combat and is a natural reaction to being in a violent environment. Added with the loss of meaning, it can be severe.

The only way to put an end to it is to withdraw troops immediately from Iraq and bring them home now.

The following is a piece of the last letter SPC Douglas Barber, an Iraq War Veteran, wrote before taking his own life in January 2006:

All is not okay or right for those of us who return home alive and supposedly well. What looks like normalcy and readjustment is only an illusion to be revealed by time and torment. Some soldiers come home missing limbs and other parts of their bodies. Still others will live with permanent scars from horrific events that no one other than those who served will ever understand.

We come home from war trying to put our lives back together but some cannot stand the memories and decide that death is better. They kill themselves because they are so haunted by seeing children killed and whole families wiped out.

They ask themselves how you put a price tag on someone else's life.

The question goes unanswered as they become another casualty of the war. Heroes become another statistic to America and they are another little article relegated to the back of a newspaper.

Still others come home to nothing.

Families have abandoned them: husbands and wives have left these soldiers, and so have parents as well.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder has become the norm amongst these soldiers because they don't know how to cope with returning to a society that will never understand what they have had to endure to liberate another country.

SPC. Douglas Barber

“I Saw Him Last As He Walked Into His Barracks As The Full Moon Rose” “Forever, I Will See Him There In Every Moon”

22 Feb 2006 From Celeste Zappala Via VetPax [Excerpt]

Dear Friends,

Sadly the third anniversary of the start of the war in Iraq approaches with Iraq literally in flames. We knew that this war would open the gates of hell: now tens of thousands of people have paid for that "miscalculation" with their lives: and Peace in the World drifts ever further away.

Last year we marked the second anniversary at Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, NC.-so much has happened in these past three years, nearly everyday there seems to be a sad anniversary to mark .

For me March 6, 2004 marks the last day I saw Sherwood alive.

I make myself remember his last sweet words and feel his strong hug; that way I keep his being close to me and always in the reach of my memory.

I did not know at that moment it would be the last time I would touch him as a living being. I saw him last as he walked into his barracks as the full moon rose.

Forever, I will see him there in every moon.

Army Failing Families Of Wounded:

[What Else Is New?]

February 28, 2006, Alec Barker, Philadelphia Inquirer

A former Army officer whose duties included informing families that their loved ones had been injured in combat writes that the Army needs to update its antiquated procedures.

While fatalities are handled by trained notification officials that meet the high standards of such a solemn duty, notifications of non-fatal wounds are typically delegated to the soldiers rear detachment, a small, stay-behind group at the unit's duty station that frequently does not have the training or resources to properly notify and assist families of seriously injured soldiers.

Rice Coming After AWOL Marine Who Rejected Iraq War

2.28.06 Salt Lake Tribune

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice reportedly has asked the Lebanese government for the extradition of U.S. Marine Wassef Ali Hassoun. The request, reported by Lebanon's Daily Star newspaper, would be the first time the U.S. government has shown it believes Hassoun is in Lebanon.

He disappeared from his Utah home while on leave in December 2004. At the time, it was reported he opposed the war on Iraq.

Army Won't Replace Or Refit Broken Down Tanks, Bradleys

2.28.06 National Journal's CongressDailyAM

Army leaders sliced nearly \$3 billion from their latest wartime supplemental spending request under last-minute orders from the White House, forgoing money needed to upgrade a hard-worn fleet of heavy tanks and armored vehicles, defense sources disclosed.

The budget-cutting decision is expected to shut down production lines, at least temporarily, on the Abrams tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicle, resulting in long modernization delays for the aging platforms and perhaps thousands of layoffs around the country.

The Pentagon? Tell The Truth? What A Silly Idea

2.28.06 Joseph L. Galloway, Miami Herald

Instead of working as swiftly to get the truth out as the enemy does to broadcast its lies and propaganda, the Pentagon's response has been to hire a public relations firm to pay Iraqi reporters to produce good news, to secretly pay Iraqi newspapers to publish stories written by American military personnel and to merge public relations with psychological warfare.

Instead of blaming the press for America's bad press, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld might consider reexamining the message that American policies, American actions and American mistakes are sending not just to Iraqis and other Muslims but to the entire world.

The truth might set you free.

Guard Units In Nine States May Have Had Spying Initiatives: “A Nationwide Effort To Monitor The Activities Of U.S. Citizens”

[Thanks to Alycia Barr for sending in. She writes: This is some serious stuff that people in every state named as a 'Fusion Center' should read, then start writing their representatives as to just what units in their state was (or is) involved. My reps from PA will be hearing from me shortly.]

Mar. 01, 2006 By Edwin Garcia, Mercury News Sacramento Bureau

SACRAMENTO: A special California National Guard unit that was disbanded last year amid suspicion it was engaged in domestic spying may have been part of a nationwide effort to monitor the activities of U.S. citizens, a state senator charged Tuesday.

Internal National Guard documents seem to suggest, according to Sen. Joe Dunn, D-Garden Grove, that Guard units in nine other states may have had similar spying initiatives when California's unit became public last summer.

“Because they were all created at about the same time and, to the best of our knowledge thus far seemingly engaged in similar activity, including domestic surveillance activities,” Dunn said, “we could only conclude that it had been part of a concentrated or coordinated effort to create such units around the country.”

The unit formed in California, first reported by the Mercury News in June, had been given "broad authority" to monitor, analyze and distribute data on potential terrorist threats.

Top Guard officials, the Mercury News learned then, were involved in tracking a Mother's Day anti-war rally organized by families of slain U.S. soldiers.

The 1878 Posse Comitatus Act bars the U.S. military from domestic law enforcement unless responding to specific circumstances. But no such law exists for Guard troops in California.

The documents include a two-page memorandum from the National Guard Bureau, which coordinates Guard activities across the country. Dunn said the memo, with the subject line "Existing 'Fusion Center' concepts in the States and Territories," acknowledged the presence of such centers in California, Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Pennsylvania, Washington and West Virginia.

The memo, written by the National Guard Bureau's Robert Jennings, includes a line about how policies should include a thorough legal review "to maintain the strict separation between federal and state missions."

Dunn interpreted the statement as the National Guard's admission that it was fully aware there was a federal law against spying but that it didn't apply to state units.

"We are still trying to answer the question of where exactly the idea and the push behind the creation of such units came from," Dunn said, adding, "We have met with great resistance to gaining access to such information."

The California unit was quietly dismantled in November, bringing a sigh of relief to the anti-war groups, until they learned of the latest developments from Dunn.

"This is a story that doesn't seem to end," said Ruth Robertson of Palo Alto, a member of the Raging Grannies who wasn't surprised to know that similar units may have existed in other states.

Recruiter Says: "It's Just Common Sense That No One Wants To Join The Military These Days"

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

January 15, 2006 Associated Press

SOUTH PORTLAND, Maine: Military recruiters in Maine and nationwide are having a tough time reaching their goals despite increased signing bonuses and relaxed age limits and education requirements.

And with U.S. casualties mounting in Iraq, the job isn't getting any easier, said Staff Sgt. James Gilbert, who spends hours calling potential recruits and is used to rejection.

Gilbert, who works in the Army's South Portland recruiting station, is feeling a growing frustration over the decline in enlistments.

"If there was no war, guaranteed, the Army would be overflowed," Gilbert said. "But now the marks have hit 1,000, 1,500, 2,000, 2,100 dead. It's just common sense that no one wants to join the military these days."

"Recruiters today for the Army and the Marine Corps have about the toughest jobs that there are in the military," Segal said. "They are not making the numbers, and I don't see that improving tremendously over the next year."

He spends hours making introductory calls, and while some people are polite, he's become accustomed to rejection.

"Don't call here," he said, mimicking a reaction he often hears. "You're a blank, blank, blank."

Visiting high schools isn't much easier, and some school districts are taking steps to limit visits by military recruiters.

The Portland School Committee recently voted to restrict military recruiters to seven high school visits a year. That move followed the district's decision to let students opt off a list that a 2001 federal law requires schools to give recruiters.

Gilbert sounded optimistic before a recent visit to South Portland High School, where he had previously enlisted a self-described "band geek" with hopes of joining an Army band. It helps the recruitment process when a student enlists.

"Usually it snowballs to our advantage," he said.

But Gilbert wasn't too happy with the reception he got at the school.

He hoped there would be an announcement about his visit, but he was told that didn't happen. And he wanted to set up in the cafeteria, where he could interact with more students, but instead was assigned to the career center.

The career center's walls were covered with pennants from colleges such as Colby, Northeastern and Cornell, with only a small corner dedicated to students' military service options.

Gilbert said his recruiting station was nearing the end of a tough period.

For the recruiting month that ended last week, the station's seven recruiters had a quota of 12 contracts, but ended up with just one.

But the next recruiting month looks more promising, Gilbert said, noting the station exceeded its quota for the period that ended in December. [Nothing like looking backward to get false hope.]

War Profiteers Target Walter Reed

3.1.06 Washington Times

Lawmakers and military officials are calling for an investigation into a \$120 million contract at Walter Reed Army Medical Center that will replace hundreds of federal union workers.

A Government Accountability Office ruling Feb. 21 upheld the Army's contract award to IAP Worldwide Services, although the Army initially determined that using federal, in-house employees would be most feasible.

IAP would provide administrative, managerial and operational support services at the hospital.

Demand DU Testing For NY Vets!

3/5/06 Middletown Times Herald Record

Since 1991, the U.S. has deployed munitions made from radioactive depleted uranium, exposing U.S. soldiers and countless civilians to excessive radiation. It is used in projectiles, and built into armored vehicles. Most exposure is a result of inhalation of dust particles so small they are able to pass through the most sophisticated respirators.

Particles can travel anywhere in the body, causing high rates of cancer and birth defects.

More than half of Gulf War vets suffer undefined illnesses and more than 10,000 have died from mysterious causes.

With the help of Juan Gonzalez of the New York Daily News, 10 New York Army National Guard soldiers were tested for depleted uranium after their return from the current Iraq war. Half tested positive.

A Testing/Care/Registry Bill (A9116) is in the Assembly that would ensure screening for our National Guard soldiers.

Contact your state representatives and urge them to support this bill.

George Weber

**Veterans for Peace
Tappan Zee Chapter 060
Warwick**

MORE:

February 26, 2006
Letters To The Editor
Staten Island Advance

I have written these pages previously on the parallels between this War on Iraq and the previous Vietnam War.

My latest conclusion is that the use of munitions and hardened armor plating made with depleted uranium, we are repeating history.

I remember too well my generation struggling with the effects of Agent Orange, long unrecognized by the Veterans Administration and the Department of Defense.

When our military indiscriminately sprayed the jungles of Southeast Asia, poisoning the land and indigenous peoples with dioxin, it also made our military gravely ill.

We saw seriously ill Vietnam War veterans ignored by their government and they produced children with sometimes severe unexplained birth defects.

Now Agent Orange is officially recognized as being a possible cause. Problem is, it is too late for many veterans and their families.

Likewise, I am hearing many 1991 Gulf War veterans are suffering unexplained illnesses and producing children with severe birth defects. Approximately 375 tons of depleted uranium was used during that conflict.

Now in this current conflict, are our troops being poisoned again? I don't know, but many experts including Major Doug Rokke (U.S. Pentagon Depleted Uranium Project) claim this is just the case.

Some estimates in this Iraq/Afghanistan war period claim that over 2,200 tons of poisonous "depleted uranium" have been used.

On Feb. 7, many veterans and military families from across New York State went to Albany on behalf of a bill in the Assembly (A-9116).

Many have made the observation that our state militia (National Guard) has been deployed to some of these areas of potential contamination.

Veterans from the Bronx have already tested positive for "depleted uranium" poisoning, including Gerard Matthew, whose wife has given birth to a baby daughter with severe birth defects post-deployment.

Many realize the uphill fight in Albany and the necessity of a Republican sponsor in the State Senate for this bill to become law.

So please contact Sen. John Marchi for sponsorship. The bill would establish an expert task-force, a health registry for National Guard and monitoring of their health, including proper testing.

GEORGE McANANAMA LIVINGSTON
[Member, Veterans For Peace]

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Anti-Government Armed Demonstration In Kut



People gather to shout anti-government slogans during a demonstration in Kut March 5, 2006. Thousands of Kut residents took to the streets to protest against the fuel shortage and hike in gasoline prices. (AP Photo/Razak Jaber)

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

Assorted Resistance Action

March 5, 2006 By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, (AP) & AFP News & AlJazeera

South of the capital, a policeman was killed in a drive-by shooting in Musayyib.

Two Iraqi soldiers were also killed by anti-occupation fighters who fired on their vehicle in Tikrit on Sunday

A policeman was killed in gunfire in Baghdad.

Collaborator Politician Killed



Kirkuk March 5, 2006: The local Iraqi Communist Party leader was killed outside his office, police said. Since the invasion in 2003, the Iraqi Communist Party has opposed the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops, and has asked and received jobs in the Occupation government. (AP Photo/Yahya Ahmed)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**Have You Talked With Him About The
War?
Why Not?
Wrong Occupation?
Wrong Class?**

Easier To Pretend He Isn't There?

He's All You've Got Left:

**And Shut Up With The Empty
Meaningless Bullshit About How You
"Support' Him When You Won't Lift A
Finger To Reach Out To Him:
It Means Nothing Except What A Useless
Empty Hypocrite You Are.**

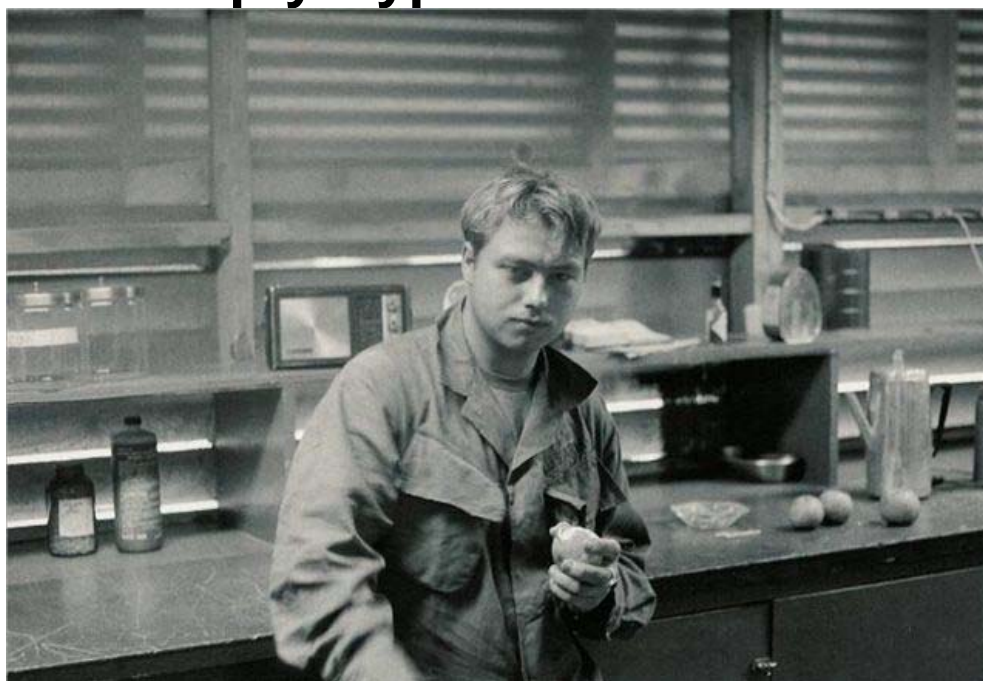


Photo from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

**While Onlookers Do Nothing, People Are
Taking Their Last Breath**

From: Mike Hastie

To: GI Special
Sent: March 05, 2006
Subject: While Onlookers Do Nothing, People Are Taking Their Last Breath

To G. I. Special:

America will change when America has enough pain accumulated to become willing to change.

Everyday I see America falling apart, in every area of society. Case in point: I read on the Internet that a homeless man was set on fire in a Boston Park.

Last week, a high school student shot another student four times at Roseburg High School, in Roseburg, Oregon. Methamphetamine is an explosive epidemic in the United States. Pornography is getting to be as popular as religion in America. Pretty soon, there will be video cameras in public bathrooms.

The entertainment of violence has become an obsessive national pastime in America. Violent video games are given as Christmas presents, and people think nothing of it.

Forty-five million Americans do not have health care.

Since 1965, the U.S. government has bombed, sent missiles into, or military troops into over 25 countries around the world.

The war in Iraq is going to break America. The war in Iraq is killing thousands of innocent people.

I saw a homeless cat on the street the other day, who had a sign around its neck that said, "Stop The War." And then, there is Hurricane Katrina, etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc.....

My biggest complaint, is there are millions and millions of American people who know this is going on, but they choose to sit on their butts and do nothing. They want peace organizations to do the fighting for them. They sit at Starbucks, put cream in their coffee, and analyze the problems in the world.

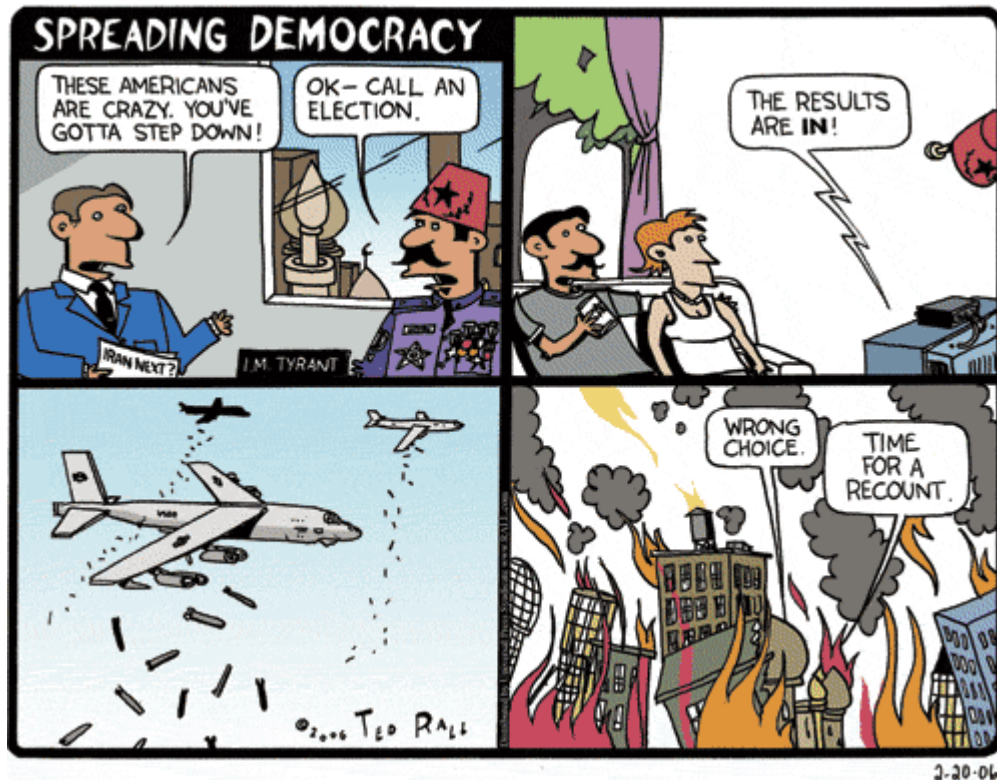
I'm the peace activist in my family, and isn't it nice they don't have to do this. People think there are still free lunches in this country.

I truly believe, if Many More People do not join the peace movement, Saddam Hussein will have the last laugh.

Like I said at the beginning, America will change when America has enough pain accumulated to become willing to change.

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran**

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.



[Thanks to David Honish, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

“Thirty New Terrorist Organizations Have Emerged Since The September 11, 2001, Attacks, Outpacing U.S. Efforts To Crush The Threat”

03/02/06 Washington Times

Thirty new terrorist organizations have emerged since the September 11, 2001, attacks, outpacing U.S. efforts to crush the threat, said Brig. Gen. Robert L. Caslen, the Pentagon's deputy director for the war on terrorism.

"We are not killing them faster than they are being created," Gen. Caslen told a gathering at the Woodrow Wilson Center yesterday, warning that the war could take decades to resolve.

The Defense Department now has defined the nature of the war, he said. The enemy, he said, is "a transnational movement of extremist organizations, networks and individuals that use violence and terrorism as a means to promote their end."

It is not a global insurgency, the general said.

"We do not go as far as to say it is a global insurgency, because it lacks a centralized command and control," he said.

Groups such as al Qaeda, though, are constantly trying to increase their capabilities, and in some cases are outstripping the United States, Gen. Caslen said.

**Comment:
By Alycia Barr
[Her son served in Iraq]**

From: Alycia A. Barr
To: GI Special
Sent: March 05, 2006
Subject: Re: 30 New Terrorist Orgs.

The only sense to be made out of what he says is that there is a clear pattern of denying reality, a disorder that seems to be shared throughout the military and this administration.

Thought it was interesting how Caslen states terrorist orgs. have "accelerated because of it's capabilities to communicate" then won't call it "a global insurgency because it lacks command and control."

It appears to me that since the US does supposedly have both command and control that we would be the "global insurgency" he speaks of.

If our system of communication is so good then how come these inept groups are whipping our butts in both Afghanistan and Iraq and it's our recruiting and retention that is down?

His comment "We are not killing them faster than they are being created" tells me these orgs. ARE meeting their recruitment goals and then some (all without a command and control).

Facts will bear out we kill a lot more of them than they do us.

Funny thing is it's our recruiting that has suffered the most. Not just by numbers enlisted but by the forced acceptance in the quality of lowered standards to join.

So while their manpower and technology steadily improves (according to our own military's reports) ours continues to deteriorate, and we're supposed to believe we can win this war how?

In Peace and Humanity,
Alycia A. Barr

“The Chance Of Long-Term Bases Is Exactly Nil At This Point”

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in.]

March 3, 2006 Socialist Worker

PATRICK COCKBURN is the Iraq correspondent for Britain's Independent newspaper. He spoke with Socialist Worker's LEE SUSTAR about the situation in Iraq following the bombing.

LS: SO WHERE does all this leave the U.S. occupation? There's a bipartisan consensus in support of preserving long-term U.S. bases in Iraq, but is this possible?

PC: THERE AREN'T going to be bases in the long term. Bases that are going to have mortar bombs lobbed at them every second day?

One of the many problems is that while the extent of the deterioration of the situation in Iraq is sometimes appreciated in Washington, it's always six months or a year behind the times. This isn't just true of the administration itself, but of the Democrats, commentators and a lot of the media.

They're going to have bases? Where? Who's going to support these bases? Is there going to be a base in Kurdistan? The rest of the Iraqis aren't going to like that. In Shia areas, they will be attacked. In Sunni areas, they will be attacked.

This is something people talked about a few years ago, but the chance of long-term bases is exactly nil at this point.

LS: THERE ARE reports that U.S. military commanders are working with Sunni tribal leaders and even resistance groups to try to negotiate peace in various localities.

THAT IS exaggerated. I think that people underestimate the degree to which the insurgent organizations have put down roots.

They also think they are going to win, because they think the U.S. is going to withdraw. So they don't have any reason to stop fighting; quite the contrary.

I think at the beginning, a lot of the insurgent organizations thought that the U.S. would only have come to Iraq with a large army if it were planning to stay for a long time. They thought there was going to be a long occupation. They're rather surprised to discover that there are likely to be large troop withdrawals. So they don't really have a reason to negotiate an end to the fighting.

Then we have the hardy perennial, local tribal leaders. This label is often dubious, because some of them have power, and some of them don't. Sometimes it's unclear who is a tribal leader in Iraq. Some were paraded by Saddam, some just announce that they're tribal leaders.

Often, they want benefits from the U.S. or somebody else; usually money. All claim they have secretly got control of their neighborhood. Most of the time, this turns out to be entirely untrue. And often, when they get involved in these negotiations, they get killed.

Remember, these insurgent organizations have been around for more than two years, and they're not going to simply evaporate.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Welcome To Liberated Iraq: U.S. Stopping All "Reconstruction" Except Prisons; "Building Jails Is Not Necessarily Your Best Image"

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

Feb 28, 2006 By Sue Fleming (Reuters)

The U.S. State Department is winding down its \$20 billion reconstruction program in Iraq and the only new rebuilding money in its latest budget request is for prisons, officials said on Tuesday.

State Department Iraq coordinator James Jeffrey told reporters he was asking Congress for \$100 million for prisons but no other big building projects were in the pipeline for the

department's 2006 supplemental and 2007 budget requests for Iraq, which total just over \$4 billion.

"This is the one bit of construction we will be doing; \$100 million for additional bed capacity for the Iraqi legal system," he said.

Experts on Iraq reconstruction said it was notable that the only new rebuilding money was for prisons after the public relations disaster caused by the eruption of the scandal at Abu Ghraib prison where U.S. forces abused Iraqi inmates.

"For a country like the United States that is promoting the advancement of freedom, building jails is not necessarily your best image," said Rick Barton of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. [No, but its at least honest.]

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

**“Sunnis And Shia Have Been
Showing Solidarity These Last Few
Days In A Big Way”**



Head of the government's Sunni Endowment agency, Sheik Ahmed Abdul Ghafour al-Samaraie, centre, and senior staff member for Muqtada al-Sadr, Fadhil al-Sharaa, second right, raise hands, in Baghdad March 5, 2006, after issuing a joint appeal for Muslim unity and the protection of religious sites. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

February 27, 2006 Baghdad Burning, Riverbendblog.blogspot.com [Excerpt]

It does not feel like civil war because Sunnis and Shia have been showing solidarity these last few days in a big way.

I don't mean the clerics or the religious zealots or the politicians- but the average person.

Our neighborhood is mixed and Sunnis and Shia alike have been outraged with the attacks on mosques and shrines. The telephones have been down, but we've agreed upon a very primitive communication arrangement. Should any house in the area come under siege, someone would fire in the air three times. If firing in the air isn't an option, then someone inside the house would have to try to communicate trouble from the rooftop.

The mosques also have a code when they're in trouble, i.e. under attack, the man who does the call for prayer calls out "Allahu Akbar" three times until people from the area can come help protect the mosque or someone gets involved.

U.S., Iraq Looking For Investors Willing To Die

2.28.06 Los Angeles Times

A seminar, sponsored by the U.S. Commerce Department and the Iraqi-American Chamber of Commerce, was billed as "Doing Business in Iraq."

A better title might have been "Think Twice About Doing Business in Iraq."

Forget issues such as intellectual property protections and import duties.

Insurance companies won't cover cargo shipped into the country. Ostensibly simple transactions like bank transfers are fiendishly difficult, forcing foreigners to carry large sums of cash. Kidnapping is an occupational hazard.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bullshit TV Ads Try To Get Bush Some War Support

[Thanks to Phil G who sent this in. He writes: They're still trying to sell the war like soap powder. I don't think it's going to wash.]

February 28, 2006 By Mike Dorning, Washington bureau, Chicago Tribune

WASHINGTON: In an early sign of the imagery that may flood the nation's television screens as congressional elections approach this fall, a conservative political group closely aligned with the Bush administration has launched a blitz of television ads to shore up sagging public support for the war in Iraq.

The television commercials feature vivid portraits of smoke pouring from the World Trade Center and the aftermath of terrorist attacks in Madrid and London as veterans of the Iraq war and parents of fallen soldiers make the case for continuing the U.S. military campaign in Iraq.

In what appears to be a test before the advertising campaign is rolled out to a broader audience, the political group Progress for America spent more than \$1 million to air the commercials in Minnesota over a two week period, according to a source familiar with the ad buy.

The commercials feature testimonials from members of Families United in Support of Our Troops and Their Mission, an advocacy group of Iraq veterans and their families founded by Chuck Larson, a Iowa legislator and former state Republican party chairman who served in Iraq as an Army reservist.

Though the ads feature the words of veterans and family members, their messages match familiar White House talking points on the war: that the nation must be in Iraq to fight terrorists who would otherwise attack America at home and that the effort is progressing well.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

GET THE MESSAGE?



Indian protesters rally against Bush in Mumbai March 2, 2006. REUTERS/Punit Paranjpe



March 2, 2006: Caricature of U.S. President George W. Bush during a protest in the southern Indian city of Bangalore. Where gas from a U.S. chemical plant choked thousands to death. REUTERS/Jagadeesh Nv

Received:

**Subject: Blair Says God Agreed He Should Attack
Iraq**

From: JM
To: GI Special
Sent: March 05, 2006
Subject: Blair Says God Agreed He Should Attack Iraq

It's good that Blair knows the situation.

Has he got a well tailored, asbestos, suite ready for when he dies? He'll need it - to protect him from those fires in hell. He'll be at home there, with the American leaders, who also blame God for their sins.

They never stop to consider how God will react to people who say he supports lies, murder, and torture.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

http://robinlea.com/GI_Special/, <http://gi-special.iraq-news.de>,
<http://www.williambowles.info/gispecial/2006/index.html>
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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