

GI SPECIAL 4D11:



Iraq Veterans Against The War

Veterans-Survivors March: Mobile To New Orleans, March 14 - 19, 2006

Photo © 2006 Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace

“I’ve Lost Part Of My Son”

“Don’t Worry, Mom, We Aim Low With The Kids”

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

March 26, 2006

Letters To The Editor

The Dallas Morning News

President Bush says we will be in Iraq beyond his presidency. He tells us we will be there until victory is achieved but cannot tell us what victory is.

My son is home on leave for the first time in 18 months.

He has been to Afghanistan once and Iraq twice.

He is 21 and has the empty, soulless eyes of someone who has seen too much.

He talks vaguely of killing. He tells of recovering tanks and Humvees still drenched with his buddies' blood. When he did guard duty, he told me, "Don't worry, Mom, we aim low with the kids."

Nine in his unit have been medically discharged with post-traumatic stress syndrome – and these are mechanics.

If you still believe in this president and this war, choose which of your children will be the next to go.

I lost a part of my son over there. That's all you get, America.

Elizabeth Dawson,
Red Oak

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

One Soldier Killed, One Wounded In Tal Afar

April 10, 2006 Stars and Stripes

A 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division soldier was killed by a roadside bomb while on a patrol in Tal Afar, Iraq, on Saturday, military officials said Sunday.

One other American soldier was wounded in the incident and was being treated at the combat support hospital in Mosul.

According to military officials, the incident occurred while the soldiers were conducting a foot patrol in the northern Iraq city.

The 1st Brigade, based in Germany, deployed to Iraq in January.

SOLDIER DIES FROM WOUNDS IN AL ANBAR PROVINCE

4/10/2006 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS Release
Number: 06-04-01C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq: A Soldier assigned to Regimental Combat Team 7 died from wounds sustained due to enemy action while operating in al Anbar Province April 8.

TWO SOLDIERS KILLED IN AL ANBAR PROVINCE

4/10/2006 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS Release
Number 06-04-01CP

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq: Two Soldiers assigned to 2/28 Brigade Combat Team died due to enemy action while operating in al Anbar Province April 9.

Plant City Man Dies



Jody Missildine died Saturday while serving in the U.S. Army in Iraq.

April 10, 2006 By ABBIE VANSICKLE, St. Petersburg Times

PLANT CITY - Jody Missildine left home for the Army last spring, just a week after he graduated from Plant City High School. His grandparents had raised him. He didn't want them to have to pay for college, and besides, he hoped to travel.

Saturday, a roadside bomb in Iraq exploded near Missildine's humvee, killing him, his family said. He was 19.

"He still had the rest of his life to decide what he wanted to do," said his grandmother, Shirley Missildine.

The family got the news Saturday in their Plant City home. They said they had not yet been told where Missildine was when he died.

Five Hour Battle In Fallujah: Many Killed & Wounded; U.S. Military Vehicle Knocked Out: U.S. Casualties Not Announced

April 10 (KUNA)

Armed insurgents and government forces on Monday engaged in fierce fighting in the town of Fallouja west of the Iraqi capital killing at least 10 people, a source of the interior ministry said.

At least 60 people were wounded in the five-hour battle that ended at sundown, the source told KUNA.

Hospital sources in Fallouja said 10 Iraqis including six army soldiers were killed in the clashes, and witnesses said policemen were seen involved in evacuation of casualties from the scenes of the fighting.

Situation in the town turned calm after the guerrillas withdrew, he said, adding that the fighting broke out when the armed men attacked an American Army patrol, inflicting casualties and knocking out one vehicle.

Notes From A Lost War:

**“They’re Crafty, I’ll Give ‘Em
That”
Resistance Uses Mannequins &
Pigeons:**

“That's The Nature And Beauty Of An Insurgency -- They Capitalize On Their Strengths To Hit Our Weaknesses”

April 9, 2006 RAMADI, Iraq (AP)

On an eerie, battle-scarred street in this blown-out urban war zone, a mannequin with painted black hair stares silently at U.S. Marines hunkered down in sandbagged observation posts atop buildings a few blocks away.

It's the latest insurgent ruse in an evolving war pitting the world's most powerful military against guerrilla fighters using their most effective weapon: ingenuity.

Insurgents in Ramadi recently have flown kites over U.S. troops to align mortar-fire, released pigeons to give away U.S. troop movements and staged attacks at fake funeral processions complete with rocket-stuffed coffins, U.S. forces deployed here say.

"They're crafty, I'll give 'em that," said Marine Cpl. John Strobridge, 20, of Orlando, Florida, as his Humvee passed the mannequin along one of the most bomb-infested roads in town, a street Americans call Route Michigan.

"Gun it! Gun it!" he shouted to his driver as the vehicle crossed a frequently targeted intersection.

The mannequin first popped up a few weeks ago in the courtyard of a secondary school near a collapsed building. The simple figure appears to be made of wood, with a white shirt and blue pants painted on. Two white arms hang down, carrying a briefcase.

"We kind of laugh at it. We don't know why they do it," Strobridge said.

"But I think the idea is, we get used to looking at the mannequin, and then one day there's a real person standing there" -- with an AK-47 or a rocket launcher.

Marines said there's no point stopping to take it down. The road is too dangerous, and such bizarre sites often are booby-trapped.

At the bottom of a light pole beside another mannequin elsewhere in the city, the sleeve of an American MRE military ration package was found concealing a bomb.

A Marine intelligence officer, who declined to be identified because he is not authorized to speak to the media, said insurgents had placed other booby-trapped mannequins on roadsides, hoping U.S. forces would believe they were corpses and stop to check on them. He said they had used the same trick with real corpses.

In recent weeks, Marines found a human leg in the road with a pressure-switch bomb set to go off when it was picked up.

"The enemy will always try different things to try to get us to bite on. They're very smart," Capt. Andrew Del Gaudio, 30, commander of Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, said during an interview at Government Center, a sandbagged fortress topped with camouflage netting that serves as headquarters to the provincial government.

"They sit there and watch us, observe us for weeks at a time, see how we operate and how we react to things," said Del Gaudio, of Mount Laurel, New Jersey. "Then they try to place obstacles in our path."

Marines stationed at Government Center, which came under a two-hour sustained attack Saturday by dozens of gunmen, say insurgents regularly creep through the abandoned, shot-up buildings surrounding it, storing ammunition in empty houses and firing rockets, mortars and automatic weapons.

Sometimes insurgents will shine flashlights at U.S. guard posts, trying to blind Marines' night-vision goggles. Guerrillas have been seen crawling slowly on their bellies, trying to lay bombs.

Insurgent snipers -- hiding in tall buildings -- are a constant threat. One was spotted -- and subsequently fired upon -- observing a U.S. position with binoculars through a hole left in a wall where a single brick had been removed from under a window.

The most dangerous threat, however, remains roadside bombs -- hidden in trash, potholes, piles of dirt or dead animal carcasses.

U.S. forces regularly sweep the roads for bombs, and insurgents sometimes try to remove them, then replace them.

Another tactic: dropping a harmless piece of trash by the roadside one day, planting explosives in it the next, then arming it later and triggering it from blocks away with a cordless telephone.

Marine and Army officials said guerrilla fighters also fly kites that signal to other fighters where U.S. soldiers are, to help them direct their fire, and Del Gaudio said insurgents have released flocks of pigeons into the air as an American or Iraqi patrol goes by so that other fighters know where U.S. forces are.

Carlos Goetz, 29, of Miami, Florida, said insurgents also have used mosque loudspeakers to signal impending attacks.

"They'll call for blood drives in the hospital or say there's gonna be a funeral procession, and seven out of 10 times that's code for an attack," Goetz said.

That apparently bore true one day last week, when an assault on Government Center -- two mortars and some small arms fire -- was preceded by a funeral announcement broadcast from minarets.

Goetz said insurgents in Ramadi have held funeral processions carrying a coffin through the streets. They set the coffin down behind a wall, whipped out assault rifles and rocket-launchers and began attacking U.S. positions, Goetz said.

"Firepower-wise they're no match for us, but that's the nature and beauty of an insurgency -- they capitalize on their strengths to hit our weaknesses," Del Gaudio said.

Insurgents in Ramadi have destroyed the city's cell phone towers and land lines, cutting off a key avenue for locals to tip off U.S. and Iraqi forces of guerrilla activities.

People sympathetic to U.S. or Iraqi troops are especially targeted by insurgents, who have issued warnings with black spray paint on villa walls calling for collaborators to be killed.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Assorted Resistance Action

April 9, 2006 Associated Press

An attack outside an army base in the east wounded six Afghan soldiers, officials said.

The first of the twin blasts in central Kandahar hit a convoy of Afghan army trucks. It caused no casualties and only minor damage to the vehicles, said army officer Khair Mohammed, who blamed the Taliban for both attacks.

The second bomb exploded about 10 minutes later, once the soldiers were searching the surrounding area along with police. That explosion wounded three police officers, three soldiers and five civilians, he said.

U.S. Military Secrets For Sale Cheap At Afghan Bazaar

<p>The briefing said that efforts against Afghan officials were coordinated with U.S. special operations teams and must be approved by top commanders as well as military lawyers who apply unspecified criteria set by Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld.</p>

April 10, 2006 By Paul Watson, L.A. Times Staff Writer

BAGRAM, Afghanistan

No more than 200 yards from the main gate of the sprawling U.S. base here, stolen computer drives containing classified military assessments of enemy targets, names of corrupt Afghan officials and descriptions of American defenses are on sale in the local bazaar.

Shop owners at the bazaar say Afghan cleaners, garbage collectors and other workers from the base arrive each day offering purloined goods, including knives, watches, refrigerators, packets of Viagra and flash memory drives taken from military laptops.

The drives, smaller than a pack of chewing gum, are sold as used equipment.

The thefts of computer drives have the potential to expose military secrets as well as Social Security numbers and other identifying information of military personnel.

A reporter recently obtained several drives at the bazaar that contained documents marked "Secret."

The contents included documents that were potentially embarrassing to Pakistan, a U.S. ally, presentations that named suspected militants targeted for "kill or capture" and discussions of U.S. efforts to "remove" or "marginalize" Afghan government officials whom the military considered "problem makers."

The drives also included deployment rosters and other documents that identified nearly 700 U.S. service members and their Social Security numbers, information that identity thieves could use to open credit card accounts in soldiers' names.

After choosing the name of an army captain at random, a reporter using the Internet was able to obtain detailed information on the woman, including her home address in Maryland and the license plate numbers of her 2003 Jeep Liberty sport utility vehicle and 1998 Harley Davidson XL883 Hugger motorcycle.

Troops serving overseas would be particularly vulnerable to attempts at identity theft because keeping track of their bank and credit records is difficult, said Jay Foley, co-executive director of the Identity Theft Resource Center in San Diego.

"It's absolutely absurd that this is happening in any way, shape or form," Foley said. "There's absolutely no reason for anyone in the military to have that kind of information on a flash drive and then have it out of their possession."

A flash drive also contained a classified briefing about the capabilities and limitations of a "man portable counter-mortar radar" used to find the source of guerrilla mortar rounds. A map pinpoints the U.S. camps and bases in Iraq where the sophisticated radar was deployed in March 2004.

Lt. Mike Cody, a spokesman for the U.S. forces here, declined to comment on the computer drives or their content.

"We do not discuss issues that involve or could affect operational security," he said.
[Guess what. He doesn't have much "operational security" left not to comment on.]

Workers are supposed to be frisked as they leave the base, but they have various ways of deceiving guards, such as hiding computer drives behind photo IDs that they wear in holders around their necks, shop owners said.

Others claim that U.S. soldiers illegally sell military property and help move it off the base, saying they need the money to pay bills back home.

One of the computer drives stolen from Bagram contained a series of slides prepared for a January 2005 briefing of American military officials that identified several Afghan governors and police chiefs as "problem makers" involved in kidnappings, the opium trade and attacks on allied troops with improvised bombs.

The chart showed the U.S. military's preferred methods of dealing with the men: "remove from office; if unable marginalize."

A chart dated Jan. 2, 2005, listed five Afghans as "Tier One Warlords." It identified Afghanistan's former defense minister Mohammed Qassim Fahim, current military chief of staff Abdul Rashid Dostum and counter-narcotics chief Gen. Mohammed Daoud as being involved in the narcotics trade. All three have denied committing crimes.

Another slide presentation identified 12 governors, police chiefs and lower-ranking officials that the U.S. military wanted removed from office. The men were involved in activities including drug trafficking, recruiting of Taliban fighters and active support for Taliban commanders, according to the presentation, which also named the military's preferred replacements.

The briefing said that efforts against Afghan officials were coordinated with U.S. special operations teams and must be approved by top commanders as well as military lawyers who apply unspecified criteria set by Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld.

The military also weighs any ties that any official has to President Hamid Karzai and members of his Cabinet or warlords, as well as the risk of destabilization when deciding which officials should be removed, the presentation said.

One of the men on the military's removal list, Sher Mohammed Akhundzada, was replaced in December as governor of Helmand province in southern Afghanistan. After removing him from the governor's office, Karzai appointed Akhundzada to Afghanistan's Senate. The U.S. military believed the governor, who was caught with almost 20,000 pounds of opium in his office last summer, to be a heroin trafficker.

The provincial police chief in Helmand, Abdul Rahman Jan, whom U.S. forces suspect of providing security for narcotics shipments, kept his job.

Though U.S. officials continue to praise Pakistan as a loyal ally in the war on terrorism, several documents on the flash drives show the military has struggled to break militant command and supply lines traced to Pakistan. Some of the documents also accused Pakistan's security forces of helping militants launch cross-border attacks on U.S. and allied forces.

Other documents on the computer drives listed senior Taliban commanders and "facilitators" living in Pakistan. The Pakistani government strenuously denies allegations by the Afghan government that it is harboring Taliban and other guerrilla fighters.

An August 2004 computer slide presentation marked "Secret" outlined "obstacles to success" along the border and accused Pakistan of making "false and inaccurate reports of border incidents." It also complained of political and military inertia in Pakistan.

Half a year later, other documents indicated that little progress had been made. A classified document from early 2005 listing "Target Objectives" said U.S. forces must "interdict the supply of IEDs (improvised explosive devices) from Pakistan" and "interdict infiltration routes from Pakistan."

A special operations task force map highlighting militants' infiltration routes from Pakistan in early 2005 included this comment from a U.S. military commander: "Pakistani border forces (should) cease assisting cross border insurgent activities."

TROOP NEWS

Retired General Wants Rumsfeld Out: Calls Iraq "An Invented War"

The decision to invade Iraq, he wrote, "was done with a casualness and swagger that are the special province of those who have never had to execute these missions, or bury the results."

April 10, 2006 By THOM SHANKER, The New York Times

The three-star Marine Corps general who was the military's top operations officer before the invasion of Iraq expressed regret, in an essay published Sunday, that he did not more energetically question those who had ordered the nation to war. He also urged active-duty officers to speak out now if they had doubts about the war.

Lt. Gen. Gregory Newbold, who retired in late 2002, also called for replacing Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and "many others unwilling to

fundamentally change their approach." He is the third retired senior officer in recent weeks to demand that Mr. Rumsfeld step down.

In the essay, in this week's issue of Time magazine, General Newbold wrote, "I now regret that I did not more openly challenge those who were determined to invade a country whose actions were peripheral to the real threat: Al Qaeda."

The decision to invade Iraq, he wrote, "was done with a casualness and swagger that are the special province of those who have never had to execute these missions, or bury the results."

Though some active-duty officers will say in private that they disagree with Mr. Rumsfeld's handling of Iraq, none have spoken out publicly.

They attribute their silence to respect for civilian control of the military, as set in the Constitution, but some also say they know it would be professional suicide to speak up.

"The officer corps is willing to sacrifice their lives for their country, but not their careers," said one combat veteran who says the Pentagon's civilian leadership made serious mistakes in Iraq, but has declined to voice his concerns for attribution.

General Newbold served as director of operations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 2000 through the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and the war in Afghanistan. He left military service in late 2002, as the Defense Department was deep into planning for the March 2003 invasion of Iraq.

"I retired from the military four months before the invasion, in part because of my opposition to those who had used 9/11's tragedy to hijack our security policy," General Newbold wrote.

His generation of officers thought it had learned from Vietnam that "we must never again stand by quietly while those ignorant of and casual about war lead us into another one and then mismanage the conduct of it," General Newbold wrote.

The "consequence of the military's quiescence" in the current environment, he wrote, "was that a fundamentally flawed plan was executed for an invented war, while pursuing the real enemy, Al Qaeda, became a secondary effort."

Fed Up With Endless Wars, Officers Getting Out

04/08/2006 Sig Christenson, Express-News Military Writer

Army Capt. Jeanne Hull put in her walking papers after 10 months in Bosnia and logging back-to-back stints in Mosul and Baghdad that ran two years.

Tired of war and ready for something new, the West Point graduate set her sights on graduate school. She wasn't alone.

"A lot a lot of my classmates, if they are not out already, a lot of them want to get out," said Hull, 27, of Colorado Springs, Colo.

The Army expects to be short 2,500 captains and majors this year, with the number rising to 3,300 in 2007. These officers are the Army's seed corn, the people who 10 years from now should be leading battalions and brigades.

"We're ruining an Army that took us 30 years to build," Republican maverick Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., told a group of reporters at a recent conference.

The hard part is convincing officers to stay in after enduring two and even three combat deployments.

In the National Guard, which has played a significant role in the occupation, the number of first-term and career enlistees staying in exceeded the guard's goal from 2001 through 2003, but fell short by 835 soldiers in 2004.

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



The casket of U.S. Marine Sgt. David Coullard is carried from St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church in Glastonbury, Conn., Aug. 11, 2005. Coullard was killed while serving in Iraq. (AP Photo/Bob Child)

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

**WELCOME TO RAMADI
HAVE A NICE DAY**



A resistance soldier patrols a street in Ramadi April 10, 2006.

Resistance Attack Takes Control Of The Centre Of Ramadi

4.10.06 Reuters

The resistance troops took control of the centre of the insurgent stronghold of Ramadi on April 8, mounting attacks on local government buildings, according to unconfirmed reports.

Television footage taken by an amateur cameraman and obtained by Reuters showed armed men in the streets of the city using rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and machine-guns to attack the governor building in the centre of the city and two other government buildings in the eastern and western sides of the city. REUTERS/Stringer

Assorted Resistance Action

3.10.06 AP

Guerrillas in Basra killed a policeman after storming his home, and in Karbala, two on a motorcycle killed another policeman at a checkpoint Sunday, police said.

In eastern Baghdad, a bystander was wounded in the crossfire after guards at police Gen. Khazim Khalaf's home responded to an attack by guerrillas. Khalaf was home at the time of the attack but unharmed, police said.

Two policemen were killed and several wounded in clashes with guerrillas at a checkpoint in Amariyah.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“Dozens Of Soldiers At Fort Bliss
Pointed Out An Obvious Logical
Shortcoming”**

**[And the apologists for Bush are peddling the same old bullshit today about Iraq.
T]**

4-10-06 By Scott Laderman, History News Network [Excerpt]

Of course, critics of U.S. policy, such as dozens of soldiers at Fort Bliss, Texas, pointed out an obvious logical shortcoming in the bloodbath hypothesis.

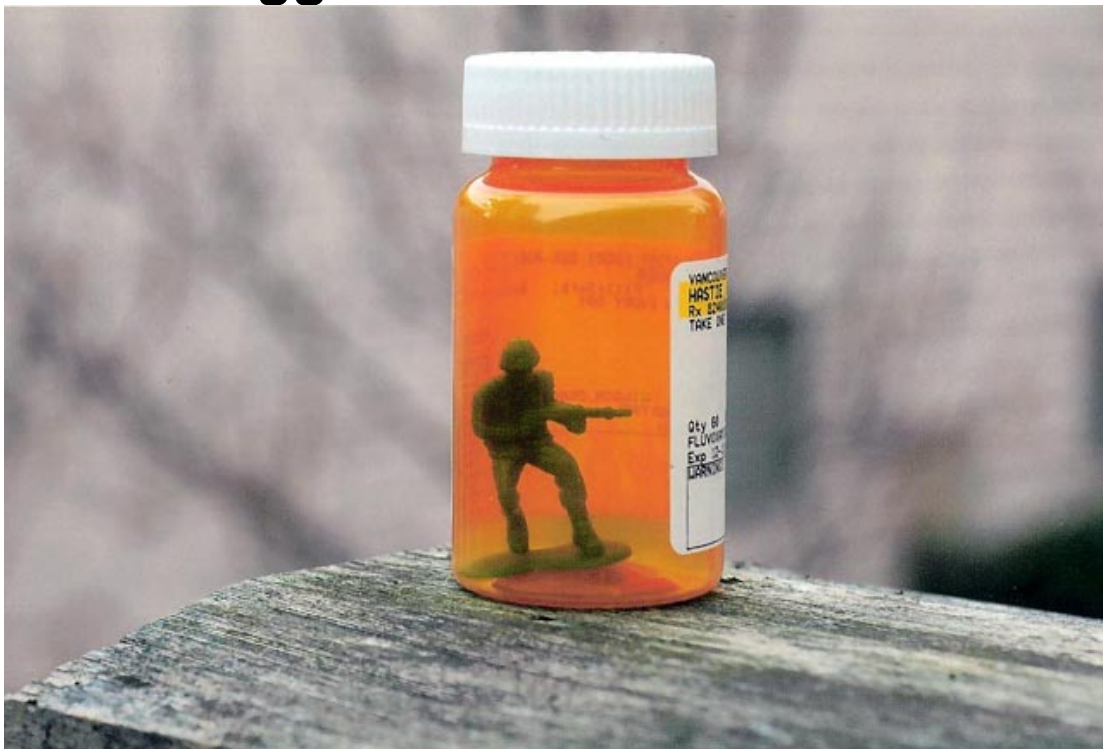
“No one wants to witness a 'blood bath' in Viet Nam,” the soldiers wrote in a letter to President Nixon in November 1969.

“The slaughter which you predict will occur upon our withdrawal is certainly an ugly possibility.

But the slaughter in which we are now participating has already cost 40,000 American lives and hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese lives.... We urge you to end our part in this massacre.”

Letter from Thomas J. Burke, et al., to Richard M. Nixon, November 26, 1969, Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, White House Central Files, Subject Files: Speeches (Gen), Box 113, Folder: SP3-56/Con, 11/6/69 -- 2/16/70, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland

The ‘Support The Troops’ Stickers Are The Biggest Lies I Have Ever Seen



From: Richard Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: April 09, 2006

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOOM

Second and Third tours in Iraq.

George Bush does not support the troops.

When I was in Vietnam, I saw the soldiers who had been in Vietnam for second and third tours. Some of them were so burned out, they became a liability.

They had seen way too much, and the war had taken a heavy toll on their lives.

The general public has absolutely no idea of the trauma these soldiers will face when they come home, let alone the people who served one deployment.

Soldiers who served in Iraq need all of the help this government can give. VA cutbacks will not be tolerated.

Two months ago, a Vietnam veteran friend of mine went to a motel and hung himself. He did not get the help he needed. I have heard this story from Vietnam veterans over and over again for the past 35 years.

The "Support the Troops" stickers are the biggest lies I have ever seen.

My God, how quickly the American people forget the lies of the Vietnam War.

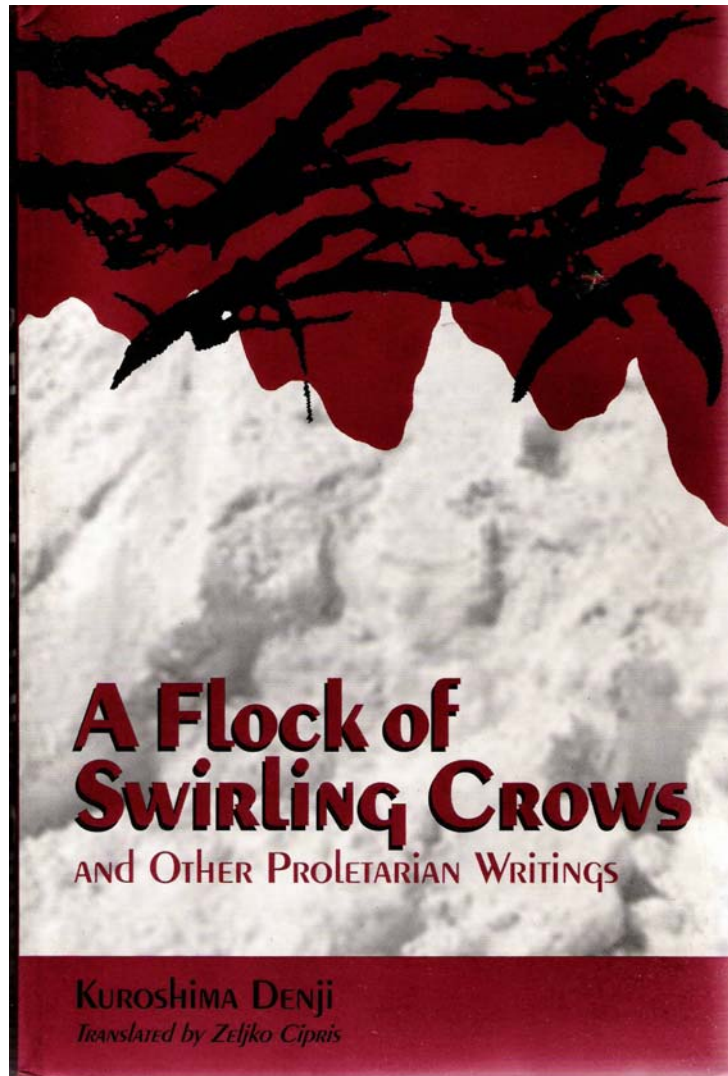
Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran

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

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

**“The Officers Were Scared Of Our
Guns Turning Against Them So They
Fired First!”**

**“Next Time We Won’t Let Them Fire
The First Shot. We’ll Skewer Their
Hearts Before We Let That Happen!”**



MILITARIZED STREETS, a fact-based novel researched in China, was banned by the Japanese imperial government in 1930 and censored by the US occupation authorities in 1945.

According to a prominent literary historian, Donald Keene, “it may well be the most absorbing work to have been fostered by the proletarian literature movement.”

A full translation by Zeljko Cipris from the Japanese will be found in Denji Kuroshima, *A Flock of Swirling Crows & Other Proletarian Writings*, published by the University of Hawaii Press, 2005.

“Kuroshima Denji emerges from the ranks of unhonored prophets in these lively and engaging translations. The translator rescues an oeuvre lost not only in the West but also in its native Japan.

“We find in these works a cinema verité view of class brutality and war that contrasts with the fairy-tale Japan the Beautiful promoted by Japan's rulers and

their American patrons. This collection, spanning the years 1925-1930, is recommended for anyone studying the crucial run-up to the era of Japanese imperial war in Asia and fascism at home.” – Moss Roberts, New York University

“A superbly translated collection of fiction by a Japanese proletarian writer, a work of artistry and integrity.” – Norma Field, University of Chicago

The scene: Tsinan (Jinan), China

Time: spring 1928, during a Japanese military intervention

Author: Denji Kuroshima (1898-1943), a soldier in Japan’s imperial army during the Siberian Intervention who became a lifelong antimilitarist and anti-imperialist

Chapter 32

This day again a desperate and vicious assault was launched. At three in the afternoon, surrounded by trash, Kakimoto was shot through the shoulder by a bullet come flying from behind the fort wall. Along with a jolting truck full of wounded men, he arrived at a hospital.

All the hospitals were overflowing with casualties.

More kept steadily coming in, on stretchers or on foot, and were crammed into the already crowded rooms. Even parts of isolation wards were occupied by the wounded.

Kakimoto was put into a room in the charity ward whose Chinese patients had been driven out. It contained iron beds stripped of white paint, stained straw mattresses, and blankets stinking of puss. There were no sheets. It was worse than the ordinary rooms.

Screams of thirst, pain, and death struggles were calling to each other as if from cages. The ferocity of the fighting was fully manifest in the number of the wounded and their unrestrained cries.

“Infantry close to the gates are getting killed by shrapnel. Our artillery’s firing like mad but their aim’s all wrong. Our own shells are exploding over our heads.” A stretcher bearer bringing in the wounded grumbled bitterly beside the beds.

“They must be using the shells the Southern Army left behind.”

“Maybe so. That’s screwing up the range and so they’re killing the infantry with friendly fire.”

“Damn! That’s all we need. As if the war didn’t stink from the start!”

No sooner was one truckload of the wounded brought in and the clatter of the stretcher bearers’ shoes subsided, than the next truck drove groaning up before the doctors could attend to even a third of the wounded. Again the stretcher bearers stamped noisily in weighed down by the casualties.

“The X regiment is getting hit the worst. Nine killed already. It’s because the CO is trying to outdo everyone else.”

The stretcher bearer newly arrived next to Kakimoto’s bed was whispering in a deep voice to the wounded man he had brought in.

“The officers’ ambition can only be achieved by using us as their stepping-stones! At Lushun they piled up a mountain of corpses. And the general responsible is worshipped as a god!”

Kakimoto was vaguely listening. The X regiment was his.

Turning he saw that the man being lifted into the bed was Kuroiwa from his company. His trousers had been removed, and the tourniquet bound around his leg was stiff with black blood.

He and his comrades had been forced into a reckless charge for the sake of the commander’s ambition and competitiveness. They were falling before their comrades’ eyes. “Occupied by X’s battalion!” “Seized by Y’s company!” Such reports ignite the vanity of people called “commanders.”

“It’s because they do the impossible. They’re hotshots showing they can pull off what nobody else can do!” The anger in Kuroiwa’s voice was even stronger than the pain from his wound.

“They’re squeezing the last drops of energy out of the soldiers in all the units, aren’t they?” Kakimoto suddenly put in from the side.

The stretcher bearer looked at him with quiet surprise. Kuroiwa, recognizing Kakimoto, faintly smiled. “That may be so.”

“Of course it’s so! All these countless wounded... Wars are where commanders compete to see who’s more ambitious. Wars are designed that way. So we drive out all the Chinese soldiers. We lose our arms and legs serving as the commanders’ stepping-stones. Ha! And the commanders, in turn, are incited from above by their hunger for medals. On top of the high and mighty you’ve always got those who’re even higher and mightier.”

“While we’re the ones at the very bottom.”

“Right. And heavy rocks are piled on top of us threefold and fourfold! Sons of bitches!”

A cheerful army doctor was calmly treating the wounded, smiling pleasantly at their pain, their screams, the thrashing arms and legs. Using scissors, he cut through a shirt stuck to the skin with clotted blood.

“‘A general triumphs, ten thousand men fall.’ Is that it?” Overhearing the soldiers’ complaints, he lightly hummed the proverb as though chanting a Chinese poem. Kakimoto was treated by this doctor. Next he was dressed in a new white hospital gown.

The fort was captured the following day before noon. He heard about it while sitting up in bed. The pain from the wound had gradually eased. The injured shoulder did not in the least keep him from walking. On the third day, Kitani and Yamashita came to visit him.

“Hey, Kakimoto, how goes it?” Kitani shouted in a rough, husky voice. “Sure enough, Takatori and the others were murdered! All five were found on the bank beside the Huang Ho, devoured by dogs, their bones sticking out.”

Kakimoto had sensed that such a thing might have happened. Yet actually hearing it stabbed sharply at his heart. “So that was it. There was a reason for the nightmare that night!”

“All five have now been brought to the morgue.”

“Who the hell were they killed by?!” Kuroiwa asked. “Who did it? Is the murderer known?”

“Quiet! What’s the use of asking?” Kitani gravely waved his arm. “We know without being told. He did it!”

“He?”

“He did it!”

For a time they remained silent.

Kakimoto, his arm slung from his wounded shoulder like a toy, walked to the morgue with Kitani and Yamashita. Kuroiwa with his shattered thighbone could not move.

The city, visible from the hospital courtyard, was devastated. Even so, the trampled, muddied grass was trying to rise again. The acacias, in spite of the wind, were greener than ever. A large crowd of nurses, doctors, soldiers and townspeople was gathered outside the entrance and windows of the morgue. Rising on tiptoe, they were trying to view the gnawed remains of the five.

The bodies of Takatori and his comrades were already decomposed from the heat. The unbearable sour stench of decayed flesh, mingled with incense smoke, assailed the sense of smell. It was impossible to tell which was Takatori, which Nasu, which Tamada. They were covered with white cloth. The men had been shot and abandoned. Until the search party’s arrival, their bodies seem to have been feasted on by packs of shaggy stray dogs.

“So that’s what those damned hands brought them to!” muttered Yamashita. “But how could these bodies have let us know that this had been done to them?” he asked bewildered.

“That’s something I can’t explain at all,” said Kitani. “But the officers were scared of our guns turning against them so they fired first! To safeguard their interests, they’ll sacrifice anyone and never look back!”

The three crossed a grassy bank and came to a meadow with a trench dug in it. In the shade of a large acacia a funeral pyre was being prepared.

“One wrong move and we might have been killed too,” whispered Kitani, jumping across the trench.

“They’re afraid of us. But next time, the day we pick up the sword, we won’t let them fire the first shot. We’ll skewer their hearts before we let that happen!”

“Workers Of All Countries, Unite!”



Japanese anti-imperialist poster from late 1920s, by the Alliance Against Intervention in China. (Ohara Institute for Social Research, Hosei University)

[With respect and thanks to the brother who sent in these excerpts and graphics. T)

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

2003: Sowing The Wind 2006: Reaping The Whirlwind



A U.S. Army digger destroys homes in Ramadi June 3, 2003. Soldiers said that U.S. officers stationed nearby suspected that insurgents were in these homes, and it was decided to tear them down. REUTERS/Aladin Abdel Naby

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqis over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, tear down 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?]

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

***The Great Iraqi Collaborator Troop
Training Fiasco Rolls On:
“At This Rate, Our Companies Will Be
Reduced To Single Platoons”
“We Depend On The Americans For
Everything”***

April 10, 2006 Associated Press

The troops didn't go far, the mission didn't last long and the neighborhood wasn't the most dangerous in town. But when Iraqi army troops moved out on a recent patrol in central Ramadi, they took a crucial step forward, rolling out in their own armored Humvees for the first time.

Ahmed praised the newly arrived vehicles, but expressed a deep concern for lack of other equipment.

Although his men had uniforms, kneepads, and aging Kalashnikov rifles, they have no mortars, sniper rifles or rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

Capt. Jabar, an Iraqi commander who directed Ahmed's movements from base, agreed.

“The insurgents are better armed than us,” Jabar said. “The Humvees will help. And we can still fight them, but we depend on the Americans for everything” - medics, logistics, firepower, air support.

Jabar said his 90-man company had only two sets of night-vision goggles.

Another Iraqi commander, who made similar complaints about equipment at an army recruiting drive in Ramadi last week, said his unit had to share armored vests to go on patrols.

Barela said American commanders were aware of the complaints - and Iraqi soldiers' concerns over pay - but ultimately, those were issues for the Iraqi Defense Ministry to overcome.

The U.S. command in Baghdad says the Iraqi army numbers about 111,000 troops, and is expected to reach full strength of 130,000 next year.

But they are struggling to retain those who've already joined up. Some quit because of the hazards of duty, others because of low pay.

Iraqi troops deployed here get one week of vacation after every three-week stint. "Every month, two, three, five members of each company don't come back," Jabar said.

"At this rate, our companies will be reduced to single platoons."

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)

The Great Iraqi Collaborator Troop Training Fiasco Rolls On: "Soldiers Also Expressed Concern That Iraqi Troops Were Still Incapable Of Controlling The Violence"

April 10, 2006 By Antonio Castaneda, Associated Press [Excerpt]

BAGHDAD, Iraq: A month ago, areas of western Baghdad were testament to the U.S. strategy of handing over security responsibility. Iraqi soldiers manned checkpoints while U.S. troops carefully kept their distance.

But American soldiers have again hit the streets of west Baghdad neighborhoods such as Shula and Ghazaliyah, shouldering a larger security burden amid tensions between Sunnis and Shiites.

Since early March, Brown and soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 71st Cavalry have done daily foot and vehicle patrols that usually last 12 hours per day.

Soldiers also expressed concern that Iraqi troops were still incapable of controlling the violence. Some said Iraqi soldiers tend to cluster around checkpoints rather than walking regular beats through neighborhoods.

The reintroduction of greater numbers of U.S. forces had also tested some relationships with Iraqi soldiers.

“To be perfectly honest, they were a little (angry) that we came back into their sector,” said Ford. “It’s getting to a point where they don’t want or need us. It’s unfortunate because we have a lot of assets to bring to the table.”

CLASS WAR REPORTS

The Top 1% Got 33% Of All U.S. Wealth: The Bottom 50% Got 2.5% And Falling

4.5.06 By CHRISTOPHER CONKEY, The Wall St. Journal

WASHINGTON: The share of net worth held by the wealthiest 1% of American families rose slightly after inflation between 2001 and 2004, according to new figures from the Federal Reserve.

The top 1% held 33.4% of the nation’s net worth in 2004, up from 32.7% in 2001, but still lower than a peak of 34.6% in 1995

The survey identified 715 families in the top 1%, corresponding to 1.1 million nationwide, and said the minimum net worth for the group was \$6 million.

In 2004, the wealthiest percent owned 70% of bonds, 51% of stocks and 62.3% of business assets.

After the richest 1%, the Fed found that the next wealthiest 9% of families held 36.1% of net worth in 2004, down from 37.1% in 2001.

Below them, families in the top 50% to 90% held 27.9% of net worth in 2004, a slight increase from 2001, while families in the bottom half saw their share fall to 2.5% of net worth in 2004 from 2.8% in 2001.

Between 1989 and 2004, the figures show, families in the top 1% saw their share of net worth rise to 33.4% from 30.1%, while families in the bottom half saw their share fall to 2.5% from 3%.

In the report, Mr. Kennickell noted that “wealth moved in relative terms to the upper half of the distribution during this time.”

“No,” Mr. Piñeda Said. “We Are Not Criminals”

10 April 2006 By Maria Newman, The New York Times

Hundreds of thousands of immigrants and their supporters marched today in more than 100 cities throughout the country, casting off the old fears of their illegal status to assert that they have a right to a humane life in this country.

The marches were taking place in big cities like Washington, Houston, Los Angeles, Phoenix, New York City and Atlanta, and in smaller communities like Hyde Park, N.Y., Garden City, Kan., and Belle Glade, Fla. Some of the marchers invoked the tactics and slogans of the civil rights era, and others were trying out a new voice for an emerging constituency that in the very recent past has hidden from authority because of their lack of papers, afraid to speak up, willing to work for wages that American citizens will not accept.

In Madison, Wis., a rally drew 25,000, organizers said. The police, who estimated the crowd to be closer to 10,000, nevertheless said it was one of the largest rallies they have seen in 10 years there.

One man, José Piñeda, 30, who works at the American Girl doll factory in Madison and was at the rally with his wife and two young children, was asked if they were not afraid to march in a rally where they might be identified as illegal and therefore subject to capture or prosecution by authorities.

“No,” Mr. Piñeda said. “We are not criminals.”

Students And Workers Whip The French Government: They Surrender In The Face Of Demonstrations By Millions

April 10, 2006 By Molly Moore, Washington Post Foreign Service

PARIS, April 10 -- French President Jacques Chirac's government Monday withdrew a controversial youth employment law that had ignited more than a month of protests and violence on the streets of Paris and other cities.

Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin, the author of the law, announced he was backing down from the measure, saying that he believes both unions and businesses misunderstood his intentions. "I'm sorry about that," he said in an announcement. Villepin said the upheaval over the law "reveals a social anxiety" in France and said the government will work with unions and businesses to "prepare for the future of our country."

Student union leaders exulted in their victory and said they planned to go ahead with a previously planned march on Tuesday.

The law, which would have allowed companies to fire young workers under the age of 26 any time during their first two years of employment, set off weeks of strikes and demonstrations -- several of which ended with youths burning cars and vandalizing shops in central Paris.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

<http://www.williambowles.info/qispecial/2006/index.html>;

http://robinlea.com/GI_Special/; <http://qi-special.iraq-news.de>;

http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/; <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>;

<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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