

GI SPECIAL 4D23:



[Vietnam Days: Thanks to Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

“Most Of The Guys In His Unit Assume The War Is Based On Lies And That It’s All About Oil”

“Unit Cohesion Can Serve To Make Rebellion Even More Intense”

Braga says most of the guys in his unit assume the war is based on lies and that it's all about oil, but they won't get involved in peace activism because "They say, 'You can't change anything.' "But if you read history you see that usually people already have changed things," he says.

“Movements have made lots of things happen.”

May 8, 2006, By Christian Parenti, The Nation [Excerpts]

“I remember they had this formation to tell us we were going to Iraq,” recalls Fernando Braga, a skinny, unassuming 23-year-old Iraq vet who is still enlisted in the New York National Guard.

Braga, now a poet and student at CUNY's Hunter College, says he became politicized well before the war, when he helped his immigrant mother clean rich people's homes.

“My company is really anti-authoritarian. Guys would regularly skip formations and insult the NCOs. So I thought nobody would go. But, like, everybody went!”

And since everybody went, so did Braga. “I had to go. I wasn't going to leave these guys.”

This egalitarian mingling and the intense camaraderie, plus decent pay, housing for family and constant training opportunities, can make military life look a lot better than the atomized, segregated, economically stagnant world outside.

And all of this creates a deep-seated sense of loyalty to the military, even among those who oppose its wars.

On the other hand, [David] Cline, Braga and other activist vets all point out that unit cohesion can cut two ways: It works like Kryptonite to stop rebellion, but after a tipping point unit cohesion can serve to make rebellion even more intense.

To illustrate the point, Braga recalls the story of the 343rd Quartermaster Company, from Rock Hill, South Carolina.

In October 2004 this Army Reserve unit (Braga worked alongside them at times) refused what they called a “suicide mission” to deliver fuel in a convoy of old, unarmored trucks.

Eighteen drivers from the 343rd were arrested, but the media storm that followed--a whole company had openly refused orders!--helped pressure the military into delivering armor and retrofitting its trucks and Humvees.

The rebellion of the 343rd also pointed out the pragmatism of resistance.

“Hey, protesting could save your life,” says Braga. “I've seen it happen. The 343rd and that soldier who asked Rumsfeld that question about the body armor, those two things got the military to pay attention and buy decent armor.”

If 1960s activism was fueled by disillusioned outrage, then today's activism is fettered by a type of world-weary cynicism.

Braga says most of the guys in his unit assume the war is based on lies and that it's all about oil, but they won't get involved in peace activism because “They say, 'You can't change anything.'”

“But if you read history you see that usually people already have changed things,” he says.

“Movements have made lots of things happen.”

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

Humvee “Destroyed” By IED In Baghdad



A road side bomb explosion destroyed a U.S. humvee Saturday April 22, 2006, in Baghdad. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

Roadside Bomb Kills 4, Possibly 5, U.S. Soldiers South Of Baghdad

22 Apr 2006 (Reuters) & QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press Writer

A roadside bomb killed four U.S. soldiers on combat patrol south of Baghdad on Saturday, the U.S. military said in a statement.

Five U.S. soldiers were killed Saturday.

A fifth soldier died of injuries suffered in a roadside bomb attack south of Baghdad, the U.S. command said in a separate statement. It was unclear whether the soldier was fatally wounded in the same attack that killed the four others.

Soldier From Miami-Dade Killed By Bomb

April 14, 2006 Local 6

MIAMI: A soldier from Miami-Dade County was killed when a bomb exploded near his vehicle during combat operations in Iraq, military officials said Friday.

Pfc. Roland E. Calderon-Ascencio, 21, died after the improvised bomb detonated near his Humvee on Wednesday in Misiab, Iraq, the Department of Defense said.

Also killed was Spc. Scott M. Bandhold, 37, of North Merrick, N.Y. The soldiers were assigned to 1st Battalion, 67th Armored Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

Calderon, of Perrine in southwest Miami-Dade County, is survived by his wife Mirta and 9-month-old twin boys, Rolandito and A.J., who live in Killeen, Texas. Family members said the couple met as Army recruits.

Born in California, Calderon and his family moved to El Salvador when he was 2 before settling in South Florida when he was 5.

His decision to join the Army surprised the family, said his father, Saul Rauda, who served in the military in El Salvador.

"When he said he was joining the military, we were all stunned," Rauda told the South Florida Sun-Sentinel. "We all tried to convince him not to go. All of us. But he said it was his duty to his country and that he was going to get a free education so none of us would have to work."

After he severely injured his ankle in a childhood biking accident, Calderon focused on academics instead of sports, eventually making the honor roll at Southridge High School, his mother said. But before enlisting in 2004, he spent weeks jogging to lose weight, she said.

"He wanted to be a poet, a businessman, even a model at one point," Rosa Milagros Ascencio said. "The military thing came from nowhere."

Calderon deployed to Iraq on Nov. 27, and last called home on Jan. 29 to ask his mother to send him Doritos, which he used as poker chips in card games with other soldiers, family members said.

Asheville GI Killed: Hess Had Only 16 Weeks Left In Iraq



April 14, 2006 by John Boyle, CITIZEN-TIMES

ASHEVILLE — Kenny Hess called his mom Monday night from Iraq, and for once he had plenty of time to talk.

No other soldiers were queued up to use the phones, so he talked at length about his friends over there, their missions, about the constant strain of life in a hostile country.

“He told me he had 16 weeks left till he could come home,” said Kathy Blackwell, Kenny’s mom. “He said he was counting down the days. He was very stressed, probably more stressed than he had ever been in his life.”

About 10 p.m. Iraq time, Kenny told her he had to hang up.

“He said he had to get off the phone because they had a big mission the next day and he had to get up at 4 or 5 a.m.,” said Blackwell, a Madison County resident.

Hess didn’t survive that mission in Rawah, Iraq.

“Spc. Kenneth D. Hess, 26, of Asheville, N.C., died in Rawah, Iraq, on April 11, as the result of a suicide bomber attack while Hess was conducting a dismounted patrol,” reads a Department of Defense news release. “Hess was assigned to the 4th Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Fort Wainwright, Alaska.”

A news release from Fort Wainwright states that two other soldiers were wounded when a suicide bomber detonated a bomb near Hess’ patrol at 2:54 p.m. Tuesday, Iraq time. One soldier was seriously injured and evacuated to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany for treatment, the release stated. The other soldier also was evacuated to Landstuhl but is now listed as not seriously injured.

Hess is the eighth soldier from Western North Carolina or with ties to the area to die in the war on terror and the fourth this year.

'He was a good kid'

Hess' father, Terry Hess, a senior supervisor with Buncombe County Public Schools Transportation Services, said his son "hated it in Iraq," especially the hot weather. He had been there since August and was determined and proud to fight terrorists there rather than in America.

"He was a good kid," Hess said, sitting in the living room of his Beaverdam home. "He was stubborn. If he didn't want to do something, it was like trying to move a mountain."

Kenny Hess grew up in Haw Creek and attended Reynolds High School. He joined the Army six years ago and lived in Alaska with his wife, April.

"He was a very protective big brother," said Tandace Taylor, Kenny Hess' younger sister, tears welling in her eyes. "He held my hand on the way to school on my first day of kindergarten and made sure I got there OK. He always stuck up for me."

As a kid, Kenny Hess loved baseball, was an avid camper, liked fast cars and taking things apart and putting them back together. He dropped out of school and later earned a general equivalency diploma.

As his dad says, he ran with the wrong crowd for a while. "The Army, it really changed his life," Terry Hess said.

At first, the Army wouldn't take Kenny Hess. "He kept after them and kept after them," Hess said. "There was a colonel at Fort Jackson who said, 'If he's that persistent, then we need people like him.'"

Terry Hess said his son is survived by his wife and a 10-year-old son, Alex Nelson, from a previous relationship. Tandace said Kenny and April planned on having a baby when he got home from Iraq.

Kenny Hess planned on making a career out of the Army. "He made a dang good soldier," his father said. "He was so proud to serve his country."

The family takes solace in their faith in God and that Kenny, too, was a Christian.

"I don't understand why this happened — we prayed for him every day and asked God to watch over him," Hess said, fighting back tears. "But I know it's part of God's plan. I don't know how, but I trust in the Lord."

Family, Friends Mourn Soldier From Bertie

April 14, 2006 By LAUREN KING, The Virginian-Pilot

WINDSOR, N.C.: Flags flew at half-staff in honor of a soldier from Bertie County who was killed Saturday when a roadside bomb detonated near his vehicle in Rawah, Iraq.

U.S. Army Spc. Shawn R. Creighton, 21, was the only soldier injured in the attack, Maj. Kirk Gohlke said.

He is survived by his parents, a brother, two sisters and a tight knit extended family.

Creighton was raised in Bertie County. His first move away from home was when he headed to Georgia for basic training in July 2003 shortly after graduating from Bertie High School.

"He had signed up before he graduated," said Cola Ward, his stepfather. He later was assigned to Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

Though thousands of miles from home, Creighton managed to re-create a little bit of his childhood when he called his great-grandmother to ask how to make snow creams, treats made out of snow and milk, for his fellow soldiers.

"I had reminded him to make sure he froze whatever leftovers he had, but he said, 'No, all I have to do is raise the window,' " said Mabel Jernigan, a smile stretching across her face.

On Thursday afternoon, four generations sat in front of the Wards' home outside Windsor, swapping stories about Creighton. It's something they have been doing all week with strangers and friends.

"I've had people come up and say, 'Did you know I didn't have money for my medicine and he paid for it?'" Donna Ward, his mother, said.

"He did a lot more than I ever knew."

One of his friends from Alaska called the Wards to tell them how much their son had done for her. "She said, 'I just had to tell you something,'" his mother said.

"The only word I could ever use to describe your son is "awesome."

She told Ward she was a waitress and that Creighton had heard she was having trouble paying her bills. He came in to eat at one of her tables, then left behind a \$100 tip.

Creighton's generosity also extended to his younger sister, whom he "spoiled rotten," Donna Ward said. Every time he came home for a visit, he had something for his 16-year-old sister, Nancy Rose Ward.

Last month, he sent her three roses in time for her junior ring dance: one rose for every year he had been in the Army.

The family also recalled some of Creighton's crazier exploits: launching water balloons filled with shaving cream from an upstairs window; playing paint ball wars in the woods

behind the house; and once, accidentally, lighting himself on fire, causing second- and third-degree burns.

"He was extremely danger-prone," Donna Ward said. "He was danger-prone because he never slowed down.... He was always the one to say, 'Let's go do something.'"

She said his Army photo is misleading. The serious soldier in front of the American flag is not the son she knows.

"That's not really him; he's too serious there," his mother said. "He's got more of an impish smile. ... And he's got that impish smile because he's always up to something."

Creighton's last visit home was in January, when he celebrated his 21st birthday. The family held a pig-picking in his honor.

"I'm glad we did that," she said. "That's a good memory."

He headed back to Iraq in February for a second tour and was scheduled to leave in August.

Once out of the Army, Creighton was planning to pursue a job with the drug task force.

"He was just a good kid," his mother said.

In the background, a laugh erupted among the family.

"They're telling funny stories about Shawn," she said.

"Those are the things I have to remember."

Funeral arrangements were still being made Thursday, but the tentative plan was to hold a visitation at an Aulander funeral home Tuesday evening and have the funeral Wednesday afternoon at Bertie High School.

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)

Ramadi:

“As U.S. And Iraqi Troops Withdrew From The Area On Foot, Insurgents Maneuvered Around Them”



U.S. and Iraqi soldiers crouch on a road during a street battle as insurgent gunfire echoes around them April 22, 2006 in Ramadi. U.S. and Iraqi forces fought an hour-long gun battle with insurgents Saturday in Ramadi, firing automatic weapons from rooftops at small guerrilla teams maneuvering around them in alleyways and an abandoned fairground. (AP Photo/Todd Pitman)

Apr 22 By TODD PITMAN, Associated Press Writer

U.S. and Iraqi forces fought an hour-long gunbattle with insurgents Saturday in this city west of the Iraqi capital, firing automatic weapons from rooftops at small guerrilla teams maneuvering around them in alleyways and an abandoned fairground.

U.S. Lt. Brett Blalock, 30, of Fernandina Beach, Fla., said four insurgents were believed killed. The body of one gunman in a white robe lay in a street beside a red trash bin.

As U.S. and Iraqi troops withdrew from the area on foot, insurgents maneuvered around them. U.S. and Iraqi soldiers provided covering fire as their colleagues ran down roads as bullets whisked overhead and ricocheted off houses.

After the Americans reached a U.S. observation post, a mortar round exploded several hundred yards away, sending a plume of gray smoke up into the air.



A U.S. soldier runs down a street as smoke grenades cover his path, during sporadic shooting ahead of a gunbattle with insurgents April 22, 2006 in Ramadi. U.S. and Iraqi forces fought an hour-long gunbattle with insurgents Saturday in Ramadi, firing automatic weapons from rooftops at small guerrilla teams maneuvering around them in alleyways and an abandoned fairground. (AP Photo Todd/Pitman)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Four Canadian Soldiers Killed BY IED

April 22, 2006 By Robert Birsel, (Reuters) & April 17, 2006 By Paul Garwood, Associated Press

Four Canadian soldiers were killed in southern Afghanistan on Saturday when their vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb, a Canadian military spokesman said.

"All of the occupants of the vehicle were killed," said the spokesman, Lieutenant Mark MacIntyre.

In Kandahar city, a roadside bomb exploded Monday, destroying a police car and wounding four officers.

TROOP NEWS

“Set The Record Straight About The GI Movement To End The War In Vietnam”



"Sir! No Sir!" Director David Zeiger with actress/activist Jane Fonda, at the IFC Center on Monday, 4.17.06. Photo by Brian Brooks/indieWIRE

April 20, 2006 by Eugene Hernandez, Indiewire.com/movies

Any indie filmmaker would love to have an Oscar winning actress hyping their new film; the presence of a celebrity can command serious media attention. This week, actress and activist Jane Fonda has been making the media rounds, from Good Morning America, Larry King Live, and The View, to an appearance at the IFC Center on Monday.

While she is also hawking a paperback version of her recent memoir, Fonda has also been talking a bit about David Zeiger's "Sir! No Sir!", the acclaimed documentary that attempts to set the record straight about the GI movement to end the war in Vietnam.

"In my mind it takes a special kind of courage to risk your life in another country, for your own country," Fonda explained Monday night after a screening of the film at the IFC Center in New York, where the film opened this week (it also had a brief, recent two-week run in San Francisco).

"The men and women who came back and spoke out were a special kind of hero," Fonda added.

The actress, who drew considerable criticism for her opposition to the war at the time, met filmmaker Zeiger and veteran/activist David Cline at the Oleo Strut coffeehouse frequented by veterans in Texas, back in 1971. Decades later she appeared in the movie and continues to support it.

"This movie shows that (troops) were against the war," Fonda said Monday, "This was bedrock America." And she added, "It speaks to the men and women who are in Iraq now, it gives them courage."

Winner of the best documentary prize at last year's Hampton's International Film Festival and audience award winner for documentary at the Los Angeles Film Festival, the movie was also nominated for best doc at this year's Independent Spirit Awards. It made nearly \$13,000 in its first week in San Francisco.

It will head to Denver and Madison, WI next weekend, with bookings in Los Angeles, Nashville, Atlanta, Austin, D.C., Chicago, Boston and other cities scheduled for next month.

Greg Kendall of the film's distributor Balcony Releasing told indieWIRE that he was tipped off to the film by consultant Peter Broderick, an executive producer of the movie. He explained that the support from Fonda, and the additional media exposure, are a boon to the film, adding that he is targeting the film to activists.

"It's not just a movie," Kendall explained, "They are trying to do much more -- it is a rallying point for activist groups, (which is) essential to the theatrical life of the film and (the) enormous non-theatrical life it's going to have as well."

"Finally, now this story can be told because it needs to be told," director Zeiger said Monday night at the IFC Center screening.

"Had I made this film in the 1990s it would have fallen on deaf ears. It is a bittersweet situation -- I hope that the film plays a small part in people looking at the war today, and GI's today, in a different light."

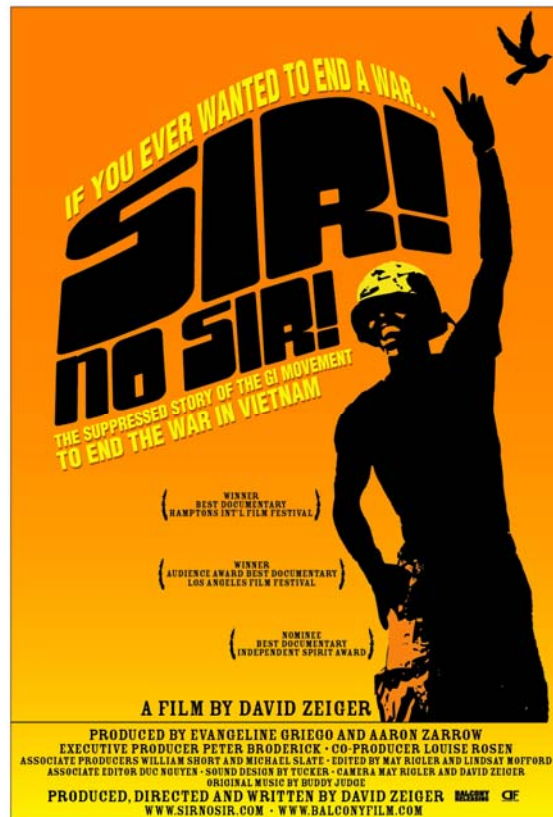
Sir! No Sir!:
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Advance tickets on sale NOW through the IFC box office

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Check out the trailer at www.sirnosir.com

Please contact max@riseup.net or celia@riseup.net for posters, postcards and flyers to help promote this event!



“Nice Trade, Sir”

[Thanks to A & K, Veterans For Peace]

As President Bush gets off the helicopter at the White House, he is carrying a baby pig under each arm.

The Marine guard snaps to attention, salutes, and says: "Nice pigs, sir."

The President replies: "These are not pigs, these are authentic Texan Razorback Hogs. I got one for Vice-president Cheney, and I got one for Defense Secretary Rumsfeld."

The Marine again snaps to attention, salutes, and says, "Nice trade, sir."

IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR

PRESENTS

SOLDIERS SPEAK OUT!!

A discussion with combat veterans
and conscientious objectors

Friday, April 28, 2006

5:00 - 7:00 pm

The Community Church
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IVAW.ORG

More Than 400 Wisconsin Army National Guard Soldiers Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse

April 22, 2006 MILWAUKEE (AP)

MILWAUKEE (AP) Friends and family members on Saturday celebrated 430 members of the Wisconsin Army National Guard as the soldiers deployed for a year of service in Iraq and surrounding areas.

More than 2,000 people were on hand at Mitchell International Airport to send off the soldiers, members of the 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery, with headquarters in Milwaukee and units in Sussex, Plymouth and Two Rivers.

The battalion was to spend several months training at Camp Shelby, Miss. before going overseas for a year.

With this latest deployment, the state has sent roughly three-fourths of the Guard's 9,700-members to serve on active duty since the terrorist attacks in 2001. The 1157th Transportation Company of Oshkosh will begin active duty in June with about 160 soldiers

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT A CROOKED POLITICIAN WHO LIVES IN THE WHITE HOUSE WANTS YOU THERE, SO HE WILL LOOK GOOD.

That is not a good enough reason.



U.S. army soldiers use metal detectors as they search for weapons caches in Baghdad April 22, 2006. REUTERS/Thaier Al-Sudani

More Generals Slip In The Knife: “Rumsfeld Is A Useless Piece Of Shit, But....”

4.17.06 USA Today

Four retired generals said that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld should not be pressured to quit in wartime, even as three of them accused him of leadership and management errors in Iraq.

The allegations ranged from fostering a culture of mistrust to disregarding crucial requests for more troops.

Gen. Pace Does Not Eat Crap Sandwiches

April 11, 2006 J.D. Henderson, Intel-dump.com\ [Excerpt]

I also think it wrong that some people accuse Gen. Pace of eating crap sandwiches every day, sandwiches that are served up by Rumsfeld.

People can question Gen. Pace's honesty, integrity, and loyalty to the Constitution. They can accuse him of being a partisan hack in a military that should be apolitical. They can accuse him of placing more value on his career advancement than he attaches to the lives of his soldiers and marines.

But it is wrong to accuse Gen. Pace of eating crap sandwiches.

Because I've heard he doesn't even like bread. He sure seems to like cheese though.

U.S. Army Suicides At Highest Since '93

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

April 22, 2006 Chicago Tribune

WASHINGTON, D.C.: The number of U.S. Army soldiers who took their own lives increased last year to the highest total since 1993, despite a growing effort by the Army to detect and prevent suicides.

In 2005, a total of 83 soldiers committed suicide, compared with 67 in 2004, and 60 in 2003, the year U.S.-led forces invaded Iraq. Four other deaths in 2005 are being investigated as possible suicides but have not yet been confirmed. The totals include active duty Army soldiers and deployed National Guard and Reserve troops. The Army recorded 90 suicides in 1993.

Of the confirmed suicides last year, 25 were soldiers deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan--which amounts to 40 percent of the 64 suicides by soldiers in Iraq since the conflict began.

The suicide rate for the Army has fluctuated over the past 25 years, from a high of 15.8 per 100,000 in 1985 to a low of 9.1 per 100,000 in 2001.

“The Whole Fucking Bunch Did A Fucking Poor Job” “So, As Usual, The Grunts Pay The Price”

April 20, 2006 By Bryan Bender, Globe Staff [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON: The war of words between Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld and former generals has spread to the lower ranks as soldiers, recent war vets, and Pentagon civilians alike use a growing number of Web logs on the Internet to sound off on their current and former bosses.

Many who run the independent sites, which tend to defend the Iraq war against criticism by politicians and media, are backing Rumsfeld, while some bloggers, most writing under assumed names, have joined the call for a fresh start.

But in the relative safety of anonymity, some military bloggers have fanned the controversy swirling around their civilian bosses.

One man, describing himself as a helicopter pilot, "Outlaw 13," who posts on guidons.blogspot.com, wrote that "a lot of folks in the head shed have heartburn with" Rumsfeld.

Others posting comments don't hold their fire: "The whole (expletive) bunch, from the (secretary of defense) on down did a (expletive)-poor job. So, as usual, the grunts pay the price," wrote another blogger on the site.

There are hundreds of milblogs, and the Pentagon, which has cautiously supported some of them but also has deep concerns about the ability to control them, recently ordered a top level advisory panel to study the issue.

"A portion of the milblog world has morphed into debating how things should get done," said Charlie, an Army officer who also writes for op-for.com.

For other military bloggers, however, the Rumsfeld controversy is fair game.

War Hogs Brag About Their Profits

April 20, 2006 New York Times

Three of the nation's largest diversified manufacturers said that their profits topped Wall Street forecasts in the first quarter, helped by strong spending in the military and aerospace sectors. The three companies-General Dynamics, Honeywell International and United Technologies-each reported that profit and revenue rose by more than 10 percent.

Murdering Mercenary Profiteers Get New Pentagon Contract [Why Not? They Fit Right In]

April 19, 2006 London Financial Times

Aegis Specialist Risk Management, the private security company headed by Tim Spicer, a controversial former Scots Guard, has had a lucrative Iraqi contract renewed by the U.S. defense department.

The renewal comes despite an ongoing investigation by the U.S. military into the origins of an internet video clip bearing the name "Aegis" that shows machine gun fire against civilian vehicles in Iraq.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

“The Promise Of Freedom Has Turned Into A Contemptuous Occupation”

“Turn The Anniversary Of The Occupation Into One Of National Resistance”

“The promise of freedom has turned into a contemptuous occupation. The promise of prosperity turned into abject poverty and struggle for survival,” it added.

April 10, 2006 By Salem Arif and Abdulhussein Ghazal, Azzaman [Excerpts]

The third anniversary of the U.S. occupation of Baghdad and the removal of its dictator Saddam Hussein was declared a ‘National Day’ by the government. But it passed without any festivities.

On the contrary, thousands of people went to the streets in Mosul, Iraq’s second largest city denouncing the occupation and condemning the government for declaring the day (April 9) a national holiday.

No doubt Iraqis are not unanimous in their view of the U.S. invasion, which some may still see as ‘liberation’.

But for the majority of Iraqis, April 9, the day U.S. troops entered Baghdad three years ago forcing Saddam Hussein to flee, is a reminder of little more than death, car bombs, kidnappings and continuing military operations.

There were demonstrations in the southern city of Basra praising the day because it helped the country get rid of its former tormentor, Saddam Hussein. Iraqi Shiite leaders, though disappointed with the course of events, are apparently happy to have Saddam removed from power.

Iraqi Sunnis, who have fiercely resisted U.S. occupation, turning their areas into rebel strongholds, denounced the day and vowed to turn it from ‘a day of occupation to a day of resistance.’

Sunni political factions have lashed out at the government for declaring April 9 a holiday.

“This is an anniversary of the occupation of the country and not its liberation,” said the Iraqi Islamic Party, a major Sunni group.

The party, along with other Sunni groups issued a statement in which it said Iraqis “are capable of turning the anniversary of the occupation into one of national resistance.”

“It (the occupation) has turned into a disaster,” declared Abdulsalam al-Kubaisi of the powerful Sunni Muslim Scholars Commission.

No one, whether the U.S., the government, the Shiites, the Sunnis or anti-U.S. armed group, can claim to be in control of most of Iraq, including Baghdad.

Central government’s police and military forces and the ‘mighty’ U.S. troops have even failed to secure the districts neighboring the green-zone they have taken as headquarters and refuge in Baghdad.

“Iraqis have harvested nothing but chaff. The promises made to them were nothing but lies and lies for which our people have paid a direct price for,” said the statement by Sunni parties.

“The promise of freedom has turned into a contemptuous occupation. The promise of prosperity turned into abject poverty and struggle for survival,” it added.

It said instead the “abundance” the U.S. promised to bring along, there is now “scarcity” in almost everything except for the scores of mutilated corpses discovered everyday and streams of innocent blood.

Three years after the occupation, the statement said, Iraq stands “on the verge of civil war”.

It was “ridiculous and shameful” for the government to declare April 9 a national holiday, the statement said.

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

Assorted Resistance Action

April 22, 2006 (AP) & Bahrain News Agency & Reuters & By Kim Sengupta and Thair Shaikh, Independent News and Media Limited

In eastern Baghdad, a roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol near al-Mashtal Bridge exploded at 9:15 a.m., wounding two policemen, said police Lt. Bilal Ali.

Two policemen were wounded when a roadside bomb exploded near a government office in Mahaweel, 75 km (50 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

In a separate incident, security commander General Salam al- Maamouri survived an attempt on his life when a roadside bomb exploded in front of his convoy in Khatona, near al-Mahaweel.

Three policemen were wounded when a roadside bomb struck their patrol in western Baghdad, police said.

In Baghdad's northern district of Azamiyah, guerrillas shot up a police patrol, killing one officer.

In Mosul, four policemen and a member of the public were killed

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“The Generals’ Revolt Is Not Just
Against Rumsfeld, But Is Aimed At
The Man Who Appointed Him”**



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

April 15, 2006 by Patrick J. Buchanan, V Report [Excerpt]

In just two weeks, six retired U.S. Marine and Army generals have denounced the Pentagon planning for the war in Iraq and called for the resignation or firing of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

Washington Post columnist David Ignatius, who travels often to Iraq and supports the war, says that the generals mirror the views of 75 percent of the officers in the field, and probably more.

This is a vote of no confidence in the leadership of the U.S. armed forces by senior officers once responsible for carrying out the orders of that leadership.

It is hard to recall a situation in history where retired U.S. Army and Marine Corps generals, almost all of whom had major commands in a war yet underway, denounced the civilian leadership and called on the president to fire his secretary for war.

As those generals must be aware, their revolt cannot but send a message to friend and enemy alike that the U.S. high command is deeply divided, that U.S. policy is floundering, that the loss of Iraq impends if the civilian leadership at the Pentagon is not changed.

The generals have sent an unmistakable message to Commander in Chief George W. Bush: Get rid of Rumsfeld, or you will lose the war.

Whatever one thinks of the Iraq war, dismissal of Rumsfeld in response to a clamor created by ex-generals would mark Bush as a weak if not fatally compromised president. He will have capitulated to a generals' coup. Will he then have to clear Rumsfeld's successor with them?

Bush will begin to look like Czar Nicholas in 1916.

And there is an unstated message of the Generals' Revolt. If Iraq collapses in chaos and sectarian war, and is perceived as another U.S. defeat, they are saying: We are not going to carry the can. The first volley in a "Who Lost Iraq?" war of recriminations has been fired.

In the last analysis, the Generals' Revolt is not just against Rumsfeld, but is aimed at the man who appointed him and has stood by him for three years of a guerrilla war the Pentagon did not predict or expect.

“Americans’ Traditional Resistance To Any Military Interference Into Civilian Affairs May Be Waning”

“The Terms ‘Impeachment’, ‘Censuring’, ‘Removal From Power’ Have Now Become A Common Lexicon”

April 14, 2006 by Anwaar Hussain, Malakandsky.blogspot.com [Excerpts]

Given these treacherous times, there are increasing indications that Americans' traditional and strong resistance to any military interference into civilian affairs may be waning.

The time may not be very far when they start re-thinking the appeal and need of that resistance. Indeed, many may already be comparing the military's principled competence with the shenanigans and uselessness of their elected officials, and finding the former more capable.

American public's unease too is now increasing in a direct proportion to the top military brass's voicing of its opinion.

The terms ‘impeachment’, ‘censuring’, ‘removal from power’ etc. have now become a common lexicon not just in the fringe media.

Never before has the threat of disorder occasioned by an increasingly isolated Chief Executive so precipitated with each passing day. Needless to say that the inept civilian leadership, on all sides of the American political spectrum, direly necessitates a strong headship in these troubled times.

With the current US administration getting the lowest ever job approval ratings from American public; the country now suffers from a deep pessimism about politicians and government after years of false promises and outright lies.

Ruling politicians and their proposals seem rotten and repetitive.

With surfacing of reports of vote rigging in the last elections, the American voters now seem to have also given up hope of finding answers through the ballot.

Even a cursory glance at the alternative media shows that an increasing number of Americans have come to view the chief function of their government as inventing a security threat and then turning the job over to the military.

If that be the case, some may argue, why not remove the corrupt middlemen and entrust the task directly to the military.

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.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Zionist Soldiers “Seriously Shot One Child In His Head”

21 April 2006, 21:44 Ghassan Bannoura, IMEMC

Friday evening, Israeli soldiers invaded the Deheishe refugee camp, in the West Bank city of Bethlehem, clashed with dozens of youth, and seriously shot one child in his head.

The child, identified as Khaled Ali Al Masry, 15, was transferred to Beit Jala Governmental Hospital, in Bethlehem.

Medical sources at the hospital informed the IMEMC that the child suffered a critical head injury, and was admitted to the intensive care unit. He suffered a contusion and a fracture in his skull.

The source added that the child was transferred later on to the Governmental Hospital in Hebron due to the seriousness of his condition.

Earlier on Friday, soldiers invaded Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahour and Al Khader town all near Bethlehem. A total of 29 Palestinians were arrested on Friday in the West Bank areas of Bethlehem, Nablus, Hebron, Qalqilia and Jenin.

Assorted Resistance Action

21 April 2006 IMEMC & Agencies & Ma'an News

Ma'an: The Ahmed Abu Ar-Rish Brigades, a military wing affiliated to Fatah, have claimed responsibility for a cocktail bomb that exploded in an Israeli military vehicle near the police station and hospital in Nablus early on Friday morning.

In a statement, the Ahmed Abu Ar-Rish Brigades confirmed that this operation was in response to the Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people, emphasizing that they will continue their resistance.

The Ahmed Abul Reesh Brigades, an offshoot of the Fatah Movement in Palestine, fired eight shells at the Israeli Negev towns of Sderot and Majdal, and towards an Israeli military outpost in central Gaza over the past 24 hours.

In a statement the armed wing said that on Thursday it launched three shells at Majdal city.

In another statement the same armed wing said that it hit an Israeli military outpost east of Bureij refugee camp, midnight Wednesday, with three missiles, and indicated that the post was used to protect a military airport close to the area.

In a third statement the same Brigades declared that one of its groups hit Sderot settlement late last night with two shells.

The armed wing clarified that those attacks were in retaliation to constant Israeli aggressions in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Israeli forces have fired over 2,500 artillery shells and missiles into Gaza this month, killing 27 Palestinians, including three children.

Gaza-Ma'an: The Nasser Salah Ad-Din Brigades, a military wing of the Popular Resistance Committees, has fired a homemade projectile at the Israeli military post east of the Kissufim crossing.

In a statement, the Nasser Salah Ad-Din Brigades confirmed that they launched the projectile at the Israeli post at 6:50am on Friday. The Brigades confirmed that the launching operation was in response to the Israeli bombardment on the north of the Gaza Strip and the Israeli incursions in the West Bank.

[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.]

CLASS WAR REPORTS

“Hang The King” “The King Will Burn!”

April 17, 21, & 22 By BINAJ GURUBACHARYA, KATMANDU, Nepal (AP)

Nepali security opened fire on tens of thousands of protesters marching toward the royal palace Saturday in defiance of a curfew, as opposition leaders rejected the king's proposals for restoring democracy.

The anti-royalist sentiment was as thick as the smoke. "We will hang Gyanendra over flames - the king will burn!" Arjun Prasad, 22, declared as he stood near a flaming pile of tires.

Police fired rubber bullets and live ammunition and beat people with bamboo batons. Red Cross officials said dozens of people were badly hurt in the clash, which occurred about 3 miles from the royal palace in the heart of this Himalayan nation.

"Security forces opened fire on the crowd without warning, wounding many of us," said Ganesh Shrestha, who was shot in the arm.

At nearby Norvic Hospital, injured people calling for treatment crowded the hallways. Umesh Dhakal, of the Nepalese Red Cross Society, said 243 people were injured, with 39 requiring hospitalization. Many were hurt in stampedes as they tried to flee.

The violence erupted after an alliance of seven opposition parties rejected King Gyanendra's offer to allow them to nominate a prime minister and form a government.

Protests died down quickly in the afternoon when it started to rain and hail. By early evening, most demonstrators had retreated to narrow alleys or gone home.

Authorities later cut mobile phone services in Katmandu, a telecommunications official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation. Protest organizers have repeatedly used mobile phones and text messages to rally demonstrators during more than two weeks of protests.

About 50,000 people also protested in the resort town of Pokhara, 125 miles west of Katmandu, urging the opposition parties not to give in to the king's offer.

In addition, many demonstrators are increasingly demanding that he give up all his power, something the king is clearly loathe to do.

Opposition leaders, however, saw little in the speech to resolve the crisis, which began when the king seized power in February 2005, saying he needed to crush the Maoist insurgency.

They noted the king fell short of a key opposition demand - the return of parliament and creation of a special assembly to write a constitution.

Most opposition leaders want a constitution that would make the king a ceremonial figure or eliminate the monarchy entirely.

But they saw other problems too: Under the new plan, the king would retain an undefined political role in a constitutional monarchy and apparently keep control of the military.

Protesters have filled the streets daily, leaving the country paralyzed, stores emptied of goods and the situation dangerously volatile. Security forces firing at protesters have killed at least 14, and wounded many more.

"We have won the battle, but we still must win the war," said Grihendra Shrestha, one of the marchers.

At Kalanki, protesters claimed an area on the street with a message scrawled in large red and white letters that read, "Martyrs' square, long live the martyrs."

They waved the flags of opposition political parties and chanted, "Long live democracy! The blood of the martyrs will not go to waste!"

At the Model Hospital, where many of the wounded protesters were taken, doctors wore black bands to protest the shootings.

"It was terrible," said Dr. Sarita Pandey. He said 66 wounded people, eight in critical condition, were brought in Thursday. The injured included a 10-year-old boy with a gunshot wound and 5-year-old beaten by police, he said.

Nepal's Hindu royal dynasty was once revered as godlike, and the recent chants of "Hang the King" are a major departure from past protests, like the 1990 uprising that led the king's older brother to introduce democracy.

Chavez Says No Oil For Blood

April 20, 2006 Miami Herald

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez warned that his government would blow up its own oil fields if the United States were to attack the country.

Received:

Reporter Looking For Blackwater Information

From: Bill Sizemore: Bill.Sizemore@pilotonline.com
To: GI Special
Sent: April 19, 2006
Subject: Blackwater

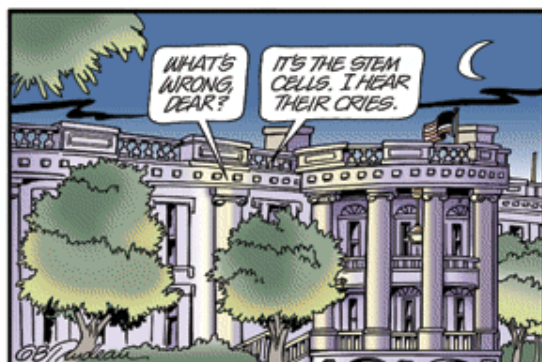
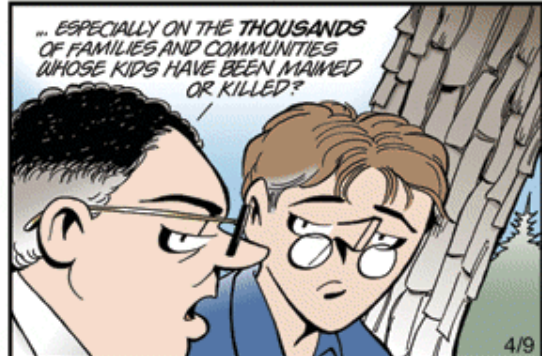
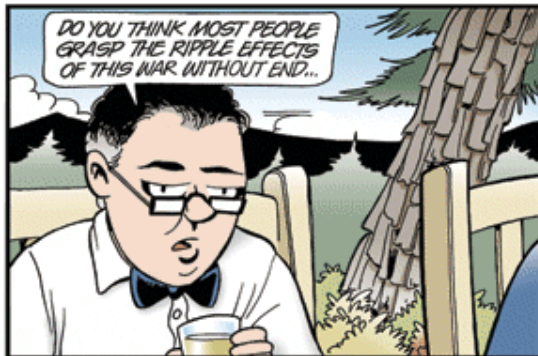
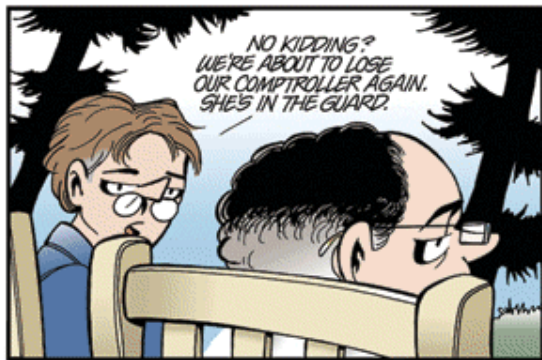
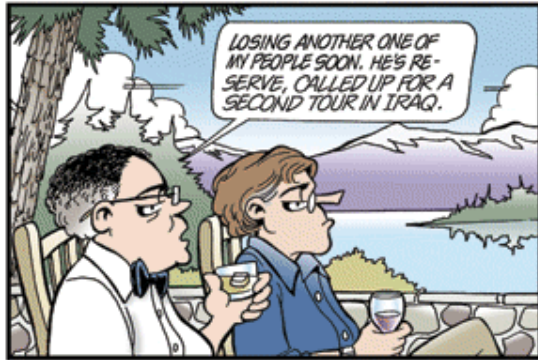
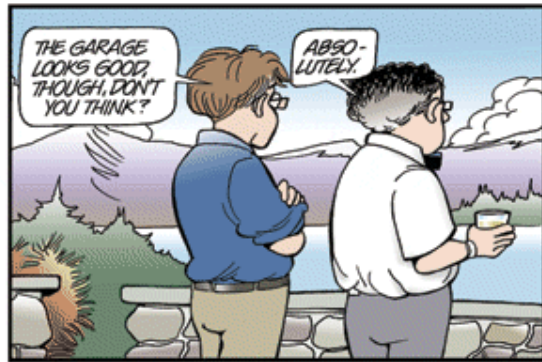
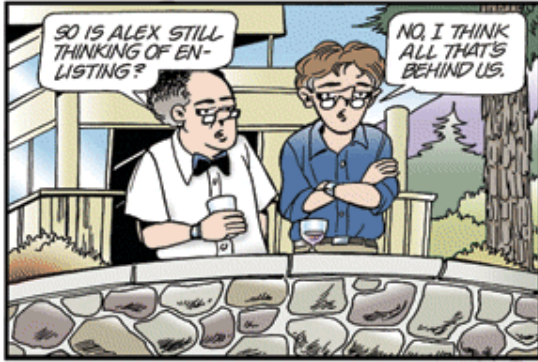
Tom Palumbo gave me your e-mail address.

I'm a reporter at The Virginian-Pilot working on an in-depth story about Blackwater USA and the private military industry.

I'm looking for sources who have either worked for Blackwater or have had some interaction with them. If you have any ideas, I'd love to hear them.

Thanks,
Bill Sizemore

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

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

http://robinlea.com/GI_Special/; <http://imagineaworldof.blogspot.com/>; <http://qi-special.iraq-news.de>; http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/;
<http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>; <http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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