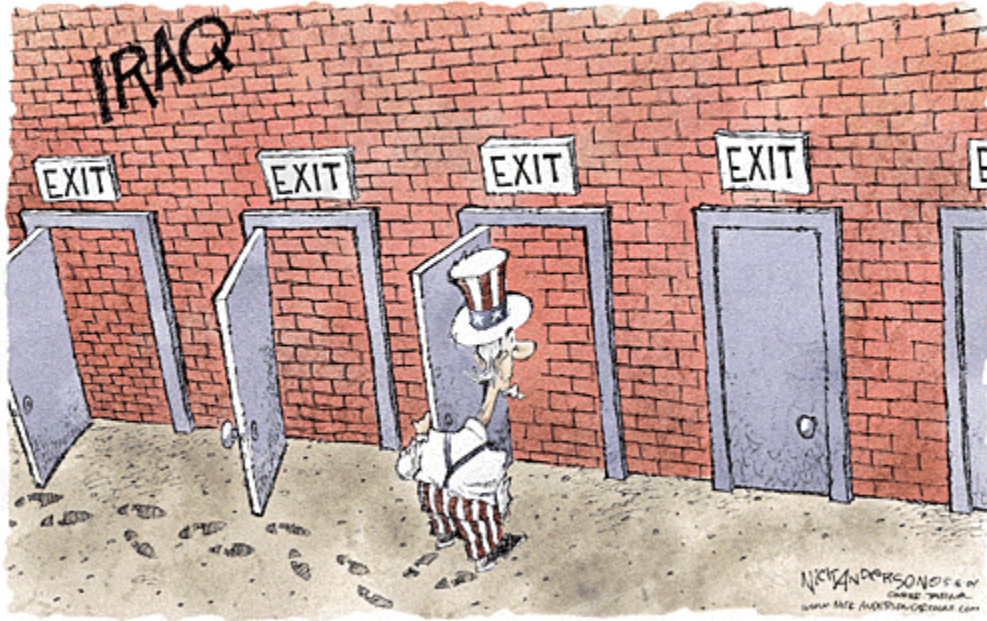


GI SPECIAL 4E22:



[DAILY WAR NEWS FOR FRIDAY, May 19, 2006]

Last Letter Home:

“J.R. Timmons Wrote That He Didn't Understand Why U.S. Soldiers Were In Afghanistan”
“He Believed That The People Of Afghanistan Could Take Care Of Themselves”

May 20, 2006 By Paul Garber, JOURNAL REPORTER, The Winston-Salem Journal



May 20, 2006 By Paul Garber, JOURNAL REPORTER, The Winston-Salem Journal

Hours after he buried his soldier son, David Timmons Sr. said yesterday that people should ask questions about the war efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I think I need answers," he said. "We ask questions, that's what America's all about."

Army Spc. David "J.R." Timmons Jr., 23, of Lewisville was one of 10 soldiers killed May 5 in a helicopter crash in eastern Afghanistan.

The soldiers were conducting combat operations in a mountainous area as part of a search for al-Qaida and Taliban militants.

The Army is still investigating the crash. Timmons said that Army officials told the family that the helicopter crashed during a sandstorm.

The elder Timmons said that his family supports the troops on the ground and their efforts to carry out the missions given to them.

But Timmons said he feels that it is his duty to ask questions of the leaders who are making the policy decisions.

"As a parent, you want war to be the last thing you do, not the first thing."

He said that the leaders must define the missions and lay out an exit strategy. If the mission changes, the leaders should let the citizens know.

"I think they owe that much to the American people," he said. "We just want to know what's going on."

Although most people direct their questions about the war to President Bush, Timmons said, more answers should come from leaders in Congress.

"It's up to the American people to push the legislative branch to hold them accountable," he said. "You can't go to war without money, and the money comes from the legislative branch."

In his last letter home, J.R. Timmons wrote that he didn't understand why U.S. soldiers were in Afghanistan and said he believed that the people of Afghanistan could take care of themselves, David Timmons said.

The letter arrived after J.R. Timmons was killed.

Although he was saddened by the loss of his son, Timmons said he was proud that his son died performing his mission as best as he could. "He's an American hero," he said. "You can put that with an exclamation point."

J.R. Timmons, a 2001 graduate of West Forsyth High School, entered basic training in January 2004 and was sent to Afghanistan in February 2006 for a planned 18-month tour of duty.

He is one of 234 U.S. soldiers who have died in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, according to statistics from the Defense Department. More than 2,400 U.S. troops have died in Iraq.

J.R. Timmons was buried in Salisbury National Cemetery, where the Army presented several medals to the family, including the Bronze Star. About 50 motorcyclists with the Patriot Guard escorted the funeral procession from Winston-Salem to Salisbury. David Timmons said he was grateful for the presence of the flag-bearing riders. "They reaffirmed my faith that we have a truly great democracy," he said.

At Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, more than 200 people packed the sanctuary during an emotional, sometimes joyful, funeral service that celebrated his life.

J.R. Timmons is survived by his father; his mother, Cynthia; a sister, Shalanta; and a grandfather, James Timmons.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

“Reports From The Pentagon Stated That Latimer Died In A Roadside Bombing”:

“‘They Told Me They Found His Body In A Bunker,’ Latimer Said”



May 12, 2006 By SANDRA McINTOSH, Daily Light Features Editor

ENNIS

When two uniformed military men come to the door in the middle of the night, it can only mean one thing.

For Richard Latimer of Ennis, it meant receiving the news that his son, Spec. Aaron P. Latimer, 26, had been killed in the line of duty earlier that same day.

“They knocked on my door Tuesday night,” Latimer said. “I just knew something bad had happened. The military doesn’t make visits in person unless something’s gone wrong.”

On Thursday evening, Latimer’s overwhelming loss still found him in a state of shock and disbelief. But, he was eager to talk about his son, the last R&R visit home and the great strides his son had made while he’d been away.

“He had a bit of trouble while he was in high school. As a young adult, he found it hard to understand the idea of getting up for work every day,” Latimer said. “He finally decided to join the Army, hoping to get some skills that he could use when his tour of duty was over. When he was home in February, everyone commented on the difference. The Army matured him and made him a good man.”

Reports from the Pentagon stated that Latimer died Tuesday, May 9, in a roadside bombing in the city of Mosul in Iraq while he was assigned to the 562nd Engineer Company, 172nd Striker Brigade Combat Team from Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

The story that was explained to Latimer on Tuesday evening was a bit different, but the outcome remained the same.

“They told me they found his body in a bunker,” Latimer said, followed by a few minutes of complete silence.

The manner in which his son’s life was taken isn’t the primary concern on Latimer’s mind at this particular moment. His priority is to get his son home - back on American soil - for a hero’s welcome and a proper burial.

“He lost his life over there,” Latimer said, his voice breaking. “I want him to get as much recognition as possible. I want him to be remembered and honored for his sacrifice.”

Latimer is hopeful the investigation into his son’s death will come to a conclusion soon.

He wants his boy home and he said he won’t rest until he gets here.

“The British Army Is Being Severely Defeated” In Basra



A burning British military vehicle in the southern city of Basra. Two British soldiers were wounded when their military vehicle was destroyed in a roadside bomb, a military spokesman. (AFP/Nawfal Hashem)

May 20, 2006 By Sami Moubayed, Asia Times [Excerpt]

DAMASCUS: Alarms are ringing in London that the British army is being severely defeated in Iraq, as the city of Basra (where its 7th Armored Brigade has been based since 2003) slips rapidly into uncontrollable sectarian violence. [Oh please. Cut the pro-occupation bullshit. "Slips uncontrollably" into anti-occupation violence is what's happening. But then, that wouldn't fit the script written in the Pentagon, would it? Check the photo. Does that look like "sectarian violence"?]

British troops can no longer travel on foot, for fear of ambushes, and have to use helicopters as taxis.

Basra, a predominantly Shi'ite city, has been won over from the British by the rebel-cleric Muqtada al-Sadr. The young rebel gained the minds and hearts of the inhabitants of Basra when he began his rebellion against the Americans, and then-prime minister Iyad Allawi, in 2004.

Muqtada found an excited crowd willing to listen to his anti-Anglo-American rhetoric in 2004-05 and was able to recruit members of the British-trained Iraqi police force in Basra into his Mehdi Army, where they now serve as undercover agents for Muqtada.

The Americans are speechless about Basra. [Rumsfeld is never "speechless" about anything, so where did this crap come from? And it's not "the Americans" because "the Americans" are now opposed to this evil war. So, for the sake of describing the real world, as distinct from this reporters' babbling: "The U.S. occupation regime and military command are pissing their pants about Basra." T]

For long, there was a conviction in the occupying forces that Basra was a relatively quiet and safe part of Iraq, because of the efficiency of the British in keeping control.

That impression has been destroyed, yet the Americans cannot send troops to Basra. This is too difficult because of their concentration in other parts of Iraq where the Sunni insurgency is raging, and because the people of Basra would not allow it.

**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. soldier in Baghdad, May 8, 2006 at scene of car bomb attack. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Three French Troops Killed, Two U.S. Soldiers Wounded

May 21 AP & by Sardar Ahmad, AFP

In one battle in Helmand province, 13 Afghan soldiers were killed and 15 injured in an eight-hour firefight Saturday, said Gen. Zahir Azimi, the Defense Ministry spokesman.

In a second firefight in the same district of Helmand on Saturday, one French and three Afghan soldiers were killed, the U.S.-led coalition said.

Among those injured were a French and an American soldier, said Capt. Drew Gibson, a spokesman for the British military.

In total, three French soldiers were killed on Saturday. The French Defense Ministry earlier announced the deaths of two special forces troops killed in neighboring Kandahar province.

France has had 200 special forces officers in southeast Afghanistan since 2003 as part of the U.S.-led coalition.

The car bomb exploded as the convoy was passing by on a main road about 100 metres (yards) from a coalition military base used to train Afghan security forces, US military spokesman Major Chris Miller said.

A US soldier was wounded Sunday. The attack was aimed at the convoy.

Utopia (TX) Soldier Killed In Afghanistan

May 11, 2006 by Cerise Merritt, The Uvalde Leader-News

The stark realities of war officially touched the normally safe enclave of Utopia at 2 a.m. Sunday, when representatives of the U.S. Army knocked on the front door of Randy and Kathy Wiekamp.

Under the circumstances, the Wiekamps must have known they were about to hear tragic news, but with three of their four sons in the Army, they couldn't be sure just what it was.

They had to wait a moment to learn that it their oldest son, Jeff, who was dead.

Sergeant Jeffery Scott Wiekamp, 23, was one of the 10 soldiers killed Friday in the crash of a CH-47 Chinook helicopter in Afghanistan. He was crew chief of the combat operation, part of campaign Operation Mountain Lion in Kunar Province.

Wiekamp graduated from Utopia High School in 2001.

Sgt. Josh Wiekamp, 22, and Specialist Jared Wiekamp, 20, also graduated from Utopia High. Each of the three brothers joined the Army shortly after completing high school. Joey, 18, will graduate from Utopia High School in three weeks, and he's undecided about his future plans.

Jeff's wife, Ashley Brown, is a sergeant in the Army. His mother, Kathy, also has one brother, Sgt. Stephen Triner, and one brother-in-law, Staff Sgt. Rollie Snow, in the Army.

Services for Jeff Wiekamp are pending, as family members await the arrival of his body. In the meantime, community members are showing their support by wrapping trees with yellow ribbons and displaying U.S. flags across the town.

"Jeff started here when he was in third grade," said teacher Lucille Wise. "He and my daughter, Kristi, were in the same class. He was such a sweet, shy kid.

"They were a very tight class, and everyone used to just try to draw him out and get him to talk. We're all going to miss him so much," she added.

"The Taliban Never Really Went Away"

May 18, 2006 CBS Broadcasting Inc. [Excerpt]

"The Taliban never really went away," CBS News Consultant Jere Van Dyk says.

"What happened was the Americans felt, and a lot of observers felt throughout the world, the Taliban were defeated very easily. But, in fact, what they did was move back into the country side, they took off their black turbans, went and became farmers, and they observed."

What the Taliban wants, ideally, Logan reports, is to fill the void in each village as U.S. forces pull out of southern Afghanistan later this year and hand over operations to NATO.

**REALLY BAD IDEA:
NO MISSION;
HOPELESS WAR:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



A U.S. soldier at a car bomb site in Kabul, Afghanistan May 21, 2006. (Ahmad Masood/Reuters)

TROOP NEWS

Bush Increasing U.S. Forces In Iraq

21/05/2006 Telegraph Group Limited

The Pentagon is sending extra troops to Iraq amid fears of an offensive by insurgents who want to destabilise the new Iraqi government.

A battalion of 650 soldiers from the United States Army's 1st Armoured Division will be moved from Kuwait as a "temporary measure."

Another Kuwait-based battalion from the same division, deployed in March, will remain, despite earlier assurances that it would leave, bringing total troop strength to 133,000.

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



The casket of Cpl. Stephen Bixler at Sacred Heart Church in Suffield, Conn., May 17, 2006. Bixler, 20, a member of the 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, was killed in action in Iraq on May 4. (AP Photo/Jessica Hill)

New York City Memorial Day Service

May 28, 1 PM: “We Need To Get Out On The Streets And Say BRING THEM HOME NOW”

Please join us for a memorial service in NYC area: on Memorial Day, May 28, MFSO, IVAW and VFP, along with others will be holding a Memorial Day Ceremony at the NYC Vietnam Veterans Memorial (55 Water Street in Manhattan) at 1 PM. The ceremony will be followed by a procession through Battery Park, with flowers to the waterfront in honor of ALL who have died in war.

May 17, 2006
Subject: Eyes Wide Open, DC event

Letter To The Editors
Staten Island Advance

Last weekend I attended the American Friends Service Committee's Eyes Wide Open Exhibit on the National Mall in Washington, DC. Sponsored by Military Families Speak Out (MFSO), Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), Veterans for Peace (VFP), and others, exhibit is of boots and shoes commemorating the casualties of the Iraq war.

It was a very moving and emotional experience for me; it was very painful to see the boots of 19 of my husband's comrades and of all the soldiers who were killed in this war and it was very painful to see the shoes of innocent Iraqi citizens also killed by the hands of what they call an administration?

I listened to the broken hearts of families who have lost loved ones as a result of this senseless, illegal war.

I heard the speeches of veterans, scarred and hurting from losing friends, and I listened to the Iraqis talking about the suffering that civilians there go through every day.

I feel we need to do more to stop these senseless deaths.

We need to get out on the streets and say BRING THEM HOME NOW.

Memorial Day is just around the corner.

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS means bringing them home now, not being made to fight unjust wars. Real support means that they are taken care of properly when they return home.

This Memorial Day, we must mourn the loss of our soldiers and innocent citizens who have died as a result of this war.

Please join us for a memorial service in NYC area: on Memorial Day, May 28, MFSO, IVAW and VFP, along with others will be holding a Memorial Day Ceremony at the NYC Vietnam Veterans Memorial (55 Water Street in Manhattan) at 1 PM.

The ceremony will be followed by a procession through Battery Park, with flowers to the waterfront in honor of ALL who have died in war.

Debra Anderson
Military Families Speak Out,
Assoc. Veterans For Peace, Chapter 034, NYC
Peace Action Staten Island.

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.

Bush Traitors Attack Plan For Tiny Increase In Troops' Pay: “White House Officials Said Lawmakers Were Too Good To The Troops”

[This 2.7% raise the Bush scum oppose doesn't even keep up with inflation, which means even if the Bush regime loses, and troops get the 2.7%, they still take a pay cut in purchasing power. There is no enemy in Iraq. Here is the enemy, at home, running the Imperial government, fucking over the troops (those that survive their stupid Imperial war that is) and laughing all the way to the bank. Somebody has to pay the price as the politicians and their super-rich backers loot the treasury to stuff their own bank accounts. Guess who?]

May 22, 2006 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer [Excerpts]

The Bush administration is balking at the 2.7 percent all-ranks pay raise approved by the House in its version of the \$512.9 billion defense authorization bill for 2007.

White House officials said lawmakers were too good to the troops and not good enough to weapons programs in approving a raise that would be half a percentage point higher than the administration's proposed 2.2 percent increase.

But in a sign of independence, the House bill increases Army and Marine Corps personnel, expands health benefits for drilling reservists, rejects an administration proposal to raise fees for retirees using the military medical system and retains the 2.7 percent pay raise instead of the 2.2 percent proposed by the administration.

“The administration proposed the 2.2 percent increase because that is what is necessary to recruit high-quality people to the armed forces,” the statement said, calling the bigger increase “unnecessary.”

But Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., the House Armed Services Committee chairman, praised the approval of the higher raise and noted that it will help to reduce the remaining gap between military and private-sector wages, which stands at about 4.5 percent.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action



A bombing attack inside a crowded restaurant popular with the police in Baghdad May 21, 2006.
REUTERS/Ceerwan Aziz

May 21 (AP) & AFP & (Reuters)

A bomber killed at least 12 people and injured 14 after detonating his explosive vest inside a downtown Baghdad restaurant popular with police officers, police said.

The 12 dead included three police officers, said Police Col. Abbas Mohammed. The restaurant was located in a two-story building Baghdad's mixed Karada neighborhood. The explosion occurred at 1:20 p.m. during the crowded lunch hour.

In Tikrit, insurgents killed two oil pipeline guards in a drive-by shooting, the interior ministry source said.

Police found the body of a policeman on Saturday near Falluja, 50 km west of Baghdad, police said. He was captured hours earlier.

An Iraqi soldier was killed and 10 wounded when guerrillas attacked checkpoints around their army base in Dhuluiya, 60 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad. Local police, describing the army unit as made up largely of ethnic Kurds, put the army's casualty toll higher.

One Iraqi policeman and one insurgent died in clashes that erupted near the town of Iskandariya, south of Baghdad, when insurgents tried to blow up a pipeline feeding a power station, police said.

Two policemen and a civilian were wounded when two roadside bombs went off in quick succession targeting a police patrol in the northern oil city of Kirkuk, 250 miles north of Baghdad, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**More Common Sense In One Email
Than Can Be Found In The Entire
Pentagon Leadership:
Lt. Gen. Chiarelli's Silly Babbling Nailed
Again**

It's like the occupiers of Iraq, and their collaborators, are in a state of self-denial... that they just won't admit that the only reason why there are so many people fighting in the armed resistance IS BECAUSE THEY ARE THERE.

From: Anonymous One
To: GI Special

Sent: May 21, 2006
Subject: Misconceptions.

I'm sure you have heard how some US Army Generals in Iraq right now, along with some other people in the Bush administration are saying that unemployment, among other things, was one of the reasons a huge number of young Iraqis have decided to join the armed resistance, like the last lines of this article:

"He [Lt Gen Peter Chiarelli] added that "disillusionment, poverty and hopelessness are the breeding grounds for violence" and that it was important "to take the angry young men off the street". 21/05/2006 Telegraph Group Limited

That really doesn't make any sense. It's as if they're saying anybody who has a job in Iraq would have no time to fight against the coalition troops, as if anyone who has a job couldn't possibly be a resistance fighter.

If anything, giving the Iraqi people jobs would actually benefit the armed resistance. More jobs mean they would get more income, that is, more money.

With more money they could buy better weapons, more food, more clothes, more vehicles, black market body armor, anything that would benefit their cause. Even if that job took up much of their free time, that doesn't mean they won't use whatever time they have left for training, planning and executing their attacks.

They could just work in the day, and later fight in the night, or vice-versa if they're working night shifts. Hell, they could spend an entire month's 'vacation' fighting their enemies non-stop.

Another suggested reason as to why there are so many members in the armed resistance is that because of Iraq's now-poor infrastructure.

As most of us already know, after Iraq was invaded and occupied, clean water and electricity (for example) have been harder to find than an Inuit in the Sahara.

Some of those who support the occupation claim that fixing Iraq's infrastructure would somehow solve their 'insurgency problem'.

Actually, it wouldn't.

If the coalition forces hadn't destroyed so much of Iraq, the resistance would be a lot more effective.

There'd be more water for them to clean their clothes and weapons with; more electricity for recording their anti-occupation videos and repairing vehicles; more materials for making their traps with; more useable clinics and hospitals for them to treat their wounded with; and so on.

It's like the occupiers of Iraq, and their collaborators, are in a state of self-denial... that they just won't admit that the only reason why there are so many people fighting in the armed resistance IS BECAUSE THEY ARE THERE.

It doesn't matter how much good an occupier has done for the nation it occupies and controls, the people who live under an unwanted occupation will always see them as enemies of their once-sovereign state.

If the occupation really did fix Iraq's infrastructure, if it really gave back all of Iraq's electricity, roads, water, hospitals, schools and whatever else the coalition took away from the Iraqi people, do you know what the resistance fighters would say to them?

"Thank you for supporting our cause in regaining our sovereignty. Can you take the next step and just leave already?"

I'm not saying they shouldn't fix it though.

They should be responsible for what they did to Iraq, and repair whatever they can. The Coalition doesn't have to occupy Iraq to fix the country's infrastructure problems after the fall of Saddam; if they really cared about the well-being of the Iraqis, they would have sent more aid-workers than soldiers and mercenaries to Iraq.

There's also that claim... that misconception that Al-Qaeda = Iraqi insurgency.

Actually, Al-Qaeda is very despised by many of the Iraqis, fighter or not. No one invited them to come.

The only reason why Al-Qaeda started to appear in Iraq was because their main enemy's there. American troops are like Al-Qaeda magnets, and unfortunately for everyone, Al-Qaeda wouldn't miss such an opportunity to kill more Americans and at the same time try to spread their influence in Iraq (remember, Saddam Hussein hated Al-Qaeda and actually banned them in Iraq).

If the occupiers leave, Al-Qaeda will eventually leave too, not only because their targets have left, but also because Iraqis hate Al-Qaeda for what they've done to the locals during the occupation (Al-Qaeda attacks on Americans and other Coalition forces leave many civilian deaths, which certainly sounds like their style).

Keep up the good work, Mister Barton. You're helping more people open their eyes to what's really happening in Iraq and the USA, resisting all the misguided 'patriotism' and misleading propaganda. You are as brave as any Iraqi or anybody else who is fighting for the future of their homeland.

[Up to this point we are in agreement. However, it requires less courage to sit at a computer keyboard than to risk ones' life fighting for the liberation of one's nation from a predatory Imperial invasion. If these newsletters are useful, that's good to know, but greater courage is required of people who resist, whether in Iraq, or the growing number of U.S. troops who are turning against this evil war. T]

Also... please forgive me for remaining anonymous.

I simply prefer to express my opinions with my identity kept secret. Make no mistake though; I am on your side, along with everyone else who wants this insane and illegal war to end.

From a Muslim reader in Brunei.

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.

**“It Is My Desire To Prevent
Other Soldiers From Having To
Deal With Corrupt And
Unethical Individuals Like
These Commanders”**



FREE KEVIN BENDERMAN NOW !

[Geocities.com]

“The General Court Martial Convening Authority blatantly abused his position of authority when he told the Ft. Stewart JAG office and the prosecuting attorneys how long my sentence would be prior to an investigation into charges they were considering against me.”

From: Monica Benderman
To: GI Special
Sent: May 19, 2006

May 16, 2006 – Congressional Briefing for Conscientious Objection
Statement made by Monica Benderman

Thank you for giving me this time today.

I would like to preface my comments to Congressional representatives by reading a statement from my husband, Kevin Benderman, a US Army Sgt. who is currently serving a 15-month sentence at the Regional Corrections Facility, Ft. Lewis, Washington.

From Kevin:

I have prepared this statement to address the injustice I have been dealt by the US Army after I made the decision to apply for Conscientious Objector status.

I made this decision after my return from Iraq where I witnessed and experienced for myself the insanity of war. What I learned from my experience is that war is a waste of humanity. We kill many people in the name of keeping the peace – an oxymoron if there ever was one. After many months of contemplation I reached the conclusion that I no longer wanted to contribute to the ultimate violence toward other human beings that war is.

I attempted to discuss my feelings with a chaplain assigned to my military unit, but I got the sense that talking with him would be a less than worthwhile way to cope with these feelings.

Ultimately, my initial impression of him proved correct when I received an email from him stating how ashamed of me he felt, and that I had displayed little moral fortitude in my decision.

The command structure of my unit was hostile towards me in their zealous need to have me prosecuted for having developed a desire to live a more peaceful, humane existence. I was ridiculed publicly, called a coward, subjected to a farce of a general court martial, and falsely imprisoned.

The company commander refused to follow military regulations in regard to my Conscientious Objector application and the battalion commander blatantly disregarded a request from a congressional representative to examine my application in an unbiased manner.

<p>The General Court Martial Convening Authority blatantly abused his position of authority when he told the Ft. Stewart JAG office and the prosecuting attorneys how long my sentence would be prior to an investigation into charges they were considering against me.</p>

This action is a flagrant violation of my right to a fair and unbiased hearing accorded me by the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

The Rear Detachment commander also tried to dredge up any other groundless charges to press against me that he could.

Two charges of Larceny were brought in to try to further tarnish my reputation, which eventually proved groundless, but not before they were used as a threat to encourage me to plead guilty to an act I did not commit.

It is my desire to prevent other soldiers from having to deal with corrupt and unethical individuals like these commanders.

I would like to see legislation passed that would prevent any type of abuses from those serving in positions of authority within the military system.

The people who voluntarily decide to wear this nation's uniform already sacrifice far more than the average citizen. Their basic civil rights should not be sacrificed as well to the unethical whims of corrupt individuals who may hold a higher rank, but exhibit far less humanity.

Any assistance in rectifying this situation would be greatly appreciated, and I would like to thank those who made it possible for me to present my remarks here today. I would also like to thank those of you who have taken time to hear what I have had to say.

**Sincerely
Sgt. Kevin Benderman**

“My Husband Violated No Regulations” “His Command Violated Many”

Statement Made By Monica Benderman

May 16, 2006 – Congressional Briefing for Conscientious Objection

My husband was scheduled for a parole hearing in February 2006. The parole board denied my husband's request for parole. The reason cited – my husband had not been “sufficiently rehabilitated.” My husband is a Conscientious Objector. What is the rehabilitation needed for someone who says he no longer will participate in war?

I will address my comments to the Members of Congress:

Each one of you is in office having been elected on the basis of promises you made. In taking that office, each one of you took an oath to honor the Constitution of this country, and you did so by swearing to your God.

An American soldier, a volunteer, takes the same oath. His commitment to that oath is based on the promises of our elected leaders. But a true leader is not someone who blindly follows laws written by men. A true leader is someone who leads with adherence to his own obligation to humanity.

If you, during your tenure and contract to serve as Congressional leaders, were asked to participate in an action that violated your own conscience and your own principles of humanity, would you take a stand against that action?

If you were to step down, no longer willing to participate in an immoral, illegal action, would you have charges brought against you?

Would you be sent to jail for your beliefs? Would you go willingly?

Would you allow this to happen to any member who serves with you who also acted on their conscience?

As a volunteer, an American soldier has every right to question the purpose of his sacrifice, and to expect that sacrifice to be honored with integrity and honesty, and to be allowed to follow his conscience when orders given violate his own principles of humanity.

Freedom of Choice is one of the most significant principles on which our country was founded. Conscientious Objection is the true exercise of a soldier's right to choose.

Do you understand what it takes to publicly declare yourself a Conscientious Objector today?

Are you aware of the process an American soldier must go through to be granted Conscientious Objector status in today's volunteer army?

My husband, Sgt. Kevin Benderman, is a ten year veteran of the US Army, and has served with distinction. He served a combat tour in Iraq and was awarded two commendation medals for his service there. While in Iraq, my husband's firsthand experiences changed him.

My husband went to war. He saw mass graves filled with dead bodies of old people, women and children. He watched dogs feeding on their bodies. How would that affect you?

He saw a young girl badly burned because of the actions of war and rather than stop to help her, war dictated that he must drive on by. How would that tear at your heart?

As he helped set up camp, his commander gave his unit an order to shoot small children if they continued to return to the top of a retaining wall to watch what the soldiers were doing. At what point would you draw the line?

What he saw and experienced appalled him, and he was angry. My husband left Iraq cold and furious at what he had been asked to do for an unjust, undefined cause, and a dedicated soldier turned against war for moral and ethical reasons as his conscience would not allow him to violate his own principles of humanity.

When he returned home, my husband and I wrote publicly about our feelings for this and all war. We spoke of the horrors, the senseless inhumanity, and the disrespect shown to the sacrifice our soldiers had made.

My husband took the course available to him and filed a Conscientious Objector application as his legal show of refusal to participate further in an immoral, inhumane action.

His command, in an effort to punish him for his humanity, and because they could not do so for the public comments that he and I had made, chose to disregard his application, and in the confusion their incompetence created found a way to put him in prison for his actions.

Kevin was found guilty of missing movement, or not getting on a plane, and sentenced to 15 months in jail, loss of all pay, reduction in rank and dishonorable discharge.

According to the lead prosecutor, the military spokesperson, and my husband's commander – "a stiff sentence was called for to send a message to other soldiers that they could not use Conscientious Objection to get out of going to war."

My husband violated no regulations.

His command violated many.

The command's flagrant disregard for military regulations and laws of humanity sent my husband to jail as a prisoner of conscience.

Times have changed – and so has Conscientious Objection. What has not changed is the constitution, the oath our volunteer soldiers take to defend it, and every American citizen's right to Freedom of Choice.

This Conscientious Objection goes beyond religious teaching. It is not dramatic. There is no epiphany. There is reality. Death is final, whether it is your own, or you cause the death of another.

No amount of field training can make up for the sights, sounds, tastes and smells of a real battlefield, and no amount of threats, intimidation and abuse from a command can change a soldier's mind when the cold hard truth of an immoral, unethical justification for war is coupled with real life sensations.

Who among us has the authority to sit in judgment of another man's conscious decision to no longer participate in killing when he has been on the frontlines of death and destruction?

Simply by being born we each have an obligation to respect the authority of life; as individual human beings with an allegiance to what is RIGHT, not an allegiance to a flag, a country, or another human being elected to a temporary position of leadership they may not have earned.

When a soldier realizes that his conscience no longer supports the oath he gave to serve in the military, it is because he has learned that what he was asked to do as a soldier violates his obligation to himself and his humanity.

My husband was scheduled for a parole hearing in February 2006. The parole board denied my husband's request for parole. The reason cited – my husband had not been "sufficiently rehabilitated." My husband is a Conscientious Objector. What is the rehabilitation needed for someone who says he no longer will participate in war?

The right to choose life over the taking of life is every man's right. Regardless if that man has volunteered to defend his country in time of war, he did not volunteer to participate in wanton, irreverent killing at the whim of a government whose leadership is quick to "pull the trigger" without giving thought to the authority of the sanctity of life.

A true American leader will stand up to laws and orders given that violate the sanctity of life and call the principles of our Constitution into question. A true American leader will let his conscience be his guide when asked to participate in actions that violate his own high standards of morality. When this leader is a soldier who has made a choice to stand against the inhumanity he has seen firsthand in a combat zone, it is up to those in Congress to see that laws are in place which give his right to conscience the respect it deserves.

I am here on behalf of my husband, Sgt. Kevin Benderman; American soldier, Prisoner of Conscience, someone I am very proud of.

My husband and others like him are in prison because our country's leaders have refused to acknowledge their responsibility to act as human beings first. My husband, a volunteer soldier, after a combat tour in Iraq, chose to put his humanity first. It is beyond my comprehension why, in this great country, my husband is in jail for simply exercising his human rights.

It is time for each of you to remember your obligation to humanity and act in a manner that is truly worthy of my husband's sacrifice.

I am strongly encouraging each of you to reflect on your responsibility and your conscience, and in doing so, I am advocating that my husband, Sgt. Kevin Benderman, be given the respect he deserves as a Conscientious Objector and an American leader who has taken a stand to defend the principles this country was founded on.

Iraq Vets' Wife Says Stop Ignoring Huge Anti-War Demonstrations

I am the wife of a recently returned Iraq veteran, who served his country dutifully, only to realize he was lied to. I am also a member of Military Families Speak Out, who along with Gold Star Families and over 1,000 veterans, including over 100 Iraq and Afghan war veterans, marched in opposition to the war and to the corrupt policies set forth by this administration.

From: Debbie Anderson
Sent: May 15, 2006

My letter to the editor of the SI Advance in regards to the close to nothing media coverage on the April 29th march was published. I don't think the one I sent out to the NY Times was published, they usually call you when they do, unless of course I missed it.

For those who do not know, the only reason we had any coverage at all in the Advance was due to the fact that a dear friend of mine placed a call in to the paper to report on the March, otherwise they would have never mentioned it.

We shouldn't have to report the story too!

Shame on them!

D. Anderson

ADVANCE SHOULD HAVE HAD BETTER COVERAGE OF ANTI-WAR MARCH

Saturday, May 13, 2006

I am appalled by the lack of appropriate news coverage of the April 29 March and Demonstration in New York City where not tens of thousands, but hundreds of thousands of citizens from all over the United States came together to demand an end to this unjust, illegal, immoral war.

We veterans, Gold Star and military families have suffered so much at the hands of this administration, some by losing loved ones and our veterans and families never being the same again.

I am the wife of a recently returned Iraq veteran, who served his country dutifully, only to realize he was lied to. I am also a member of Military Families Speak Out, who along with Gold Star Families and over 1,000 veterans, including over 100

Iraq and Afghan war veterans, marched in opposition to the war and to the corrupt policies set forth by this administration.

So when masses of U.S. citizens come out together to address the government, I think it most certainly deserves more than a few comments, minus any pictures and downplaying of the size of the event.

Maybe if we had a reporter from our newspaper, the truth would have been known. There were well over 350,000 citizens voicing their disgust in where this country is heading and how this country doesn't support our troops in the way that it should.

I think there are more Staten Islanders who are not in support of the war and would have liked to hear a more detailed description of this march.

DEBRA ANDERSON
WEST BRIGHTON

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)

OCCUPATION REPORT

***So Much For That Silly
“Sovereignty” Bullshit:
It’s Official:
New Iraqi “Government” Made In
The USA & Run By U.S.***

Occupation Military Dictatorship “Advisers”

May 21, 2006 By JOHN F. BURNS, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

Dismayed at what they have described as the Jaafari government's incompetence, American officials reversed the hands-off approach that characterized American policy as Mr. Jaafari formed his cabinet in early 2005.

During these negotiations, diplomatic sensitivities were played down as the envoy who succeeded Mr. Negroponte last summer, Zalmay Khalilzad, acted as a tireless midwife in the birthing of the new government.

An Afghan-born scholar who worked on Iraq policy in Washington prior to the invasion, Mr. Khalilzad worked closely with Mr. Maliki, the new prime minister, in reviewing candidates for crucial ministries, and shuttling between rival Iraqi party leaders in an effort to sign them up to the American vision of a national unity government.

In recent months, new efforts have been made to assign American advisers to key ministries, and American commanders have scoured their own ranks for officers with appropriate skills, seconding them to the ministries.

<p>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

Electricity Production Down, Down, Down

May 21, 2006 By JOHN F. BURNS, The New York Times Company [Excerpt]

Among those failures has been plunging electricity production, down to little more than 4,000 megawatts, lower than it was when Mr. Hussein was toppled, and a sharp drop from the 5,300 megawatts achieved as the Jaafari government took office, despite a multibillion American investment in generating capacity.

OCCUPATION HAITI

Prison Massacre By Occupation Troops Marks And Launches Preval's Inauguration

May 14, 2006 Ezili Danto, Haitian Lawyers Leadership Network via Karen Lee Wald by way of Tom Condit tomcondit@igc.org [Excerpts]

There was a demonstration inside the National Penitentiary prison earlier today (May 14, 2006) and the families on the outside were supporting the prisoners' demands.

It seems that many of the prisoners had gotten out of their prison cells, but were still within the prison walls. Many of the prisoners climbed on top of the wall-fence that surrounds the jail and were raising the bodies of some of their friends.

Apparently 7 to 12 (we've even been told 22) detainees were killed inside the prison at the National Penitentiary today. While CIMO (Haitian police) was inside putting down the prisoner riot. There are reports of the Jordanian soldiers entering the prison and shooting the unarmed prisoners (some say Chinese soldiers were also taking part in the shooting) along with the Haitian police and guards.

Apparently throughout the past week, the prisoners have been receiving more brutal beatings than usual from their guards because of their hopes, anticipation of liberation because of the inauguration.

Many of the injured were being transported to the hospital all week or simply came up disappeared, according to family members.

The families demonstrating on the outside all week are beside themselves with worry and grief.

Today, the prisoners suddenly found the cell doors open. No one knows how all the cell doors got open at around the same time, but everyone remembers the December 1, 2005 inside job where up to 107 unarmed Haitian prisoners were slaughtered by the guards while US Secretary of State Colin Powell was visiting the de facto the US imposed on Haiti.

Today, the prisoners came out of their cells and some went on top of the guard fence singing: "Ohhh, Preval, se ou menm nou t ap tan", -"Ohh, Preval you are what we were waiting for.." and while they were singing the guards started shooting them.

They continued to sing, lifting the bodies of their fallen comrades.

Some of the wounded were lifted up, so mothers and relatives who were outside starting screaming, wailing, as they recognized their sons or husbands who were among the dead and wounded bodies being lifted up by the prisoners.

The crying outside became louder than the prisoners' singing or the sustained UN/cimo soldiers shooting of the detainees. The situation outside the National Penitentiary is still not calm as of the writing of this briefing.

After the swearing-in ceremony of Rene Preval earlier today, the poor majority gathered outside, who had fought so hard to stop the UN/US occupation and Latortue's dictatorship, started chanting loudly and drowning everything else: "vle pa vle fò li tounen" - demanding Aristide's return.

The news is, the Haitian folks demonstrating, waited until after Preval was sworn in and then drowned out everything else that followed.

It's been a long day.

Haitians we talked to indicated that the de factos purposely discouraged and prevented the people who had elected Preval, especially members of the Lavalas party and those who led the resistance to the Boca Raton regime and UN occupation from attending and participating at the three official ceremonies.

But the people say they will not be UNINVITED in their own country and will not be prevented from participating in the governance of their own country by foreigners and their Haitian technocrats and that if the de facto regime and MINUSTHA prevent the people from peacefully demonstrating to demand release of the political prisoners, return of President Aristide, and the arrest of Boniface and Latortue, many more will die before the day is over.

One Haitian man outside demonstrating told us, he'd rather die standing up than live on his knees or as a zombie puppet like Boniface, Latortue and the other Haitian Group 184 Restaveks/uncle toms.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Poll: 51% Of Americans Oppose Bush Phone Records Spying

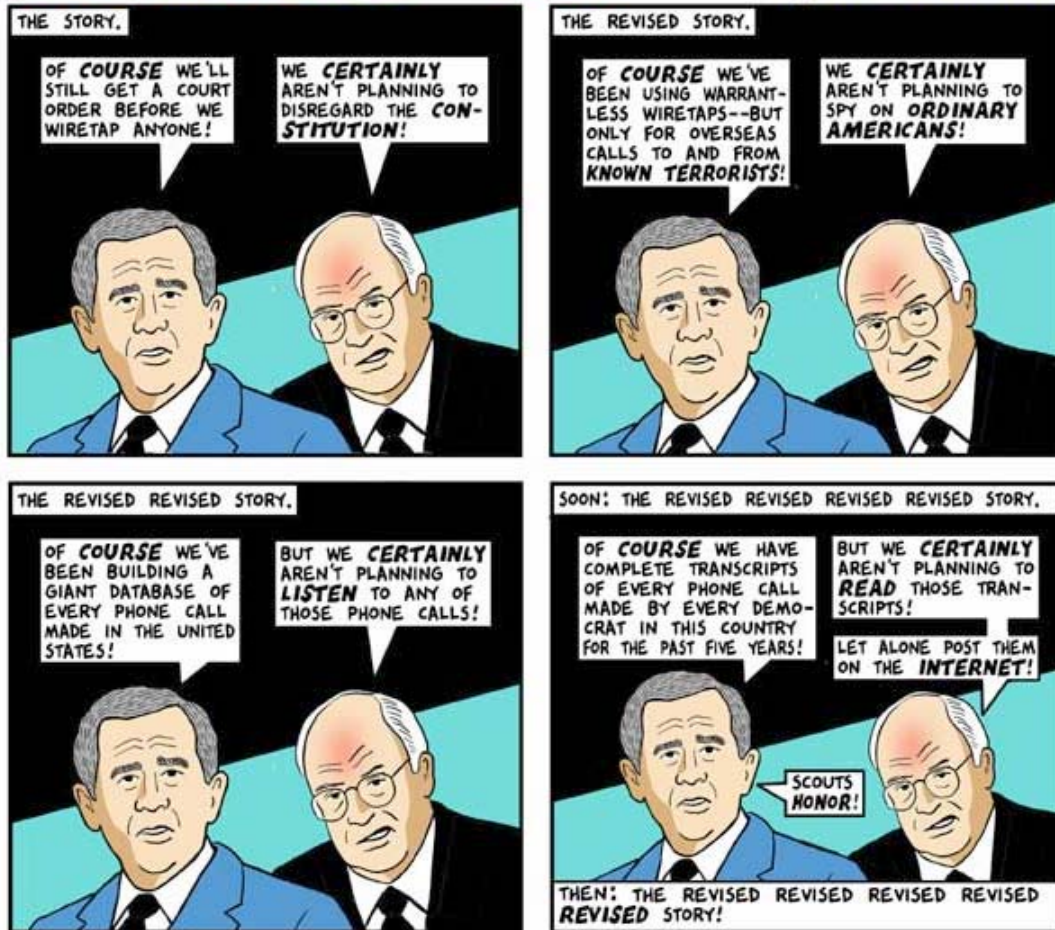
5.15.06 USA Today

A majority of Americans disapprove of a massive Pentagon database containing the records of billions of phone calls made by ordinary citizens, according to a USA TODAY/Gallup Poll.

About two-thirds are concerned that the program may signal other, not-yet-disclosed efforts to gather information on the general public.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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

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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