

GI SPECIAL 4E29:

Veterans For Peace, Los Angeles Chapter, Set Up 2,758 Crosses, Stars Of David, And Crescents For Memorial Day.



Ryan Messenger, left, a US Marine scheduled for deployment in Iraq in January 2007, stops with his girlfriend Erika Tryon, from 29 Palms, Calif., to place the name of a friend that died in Iraq on a cross in a memorial honoring troops killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, on Santa Monica beach in Santa Monica, Calif., May 27, 2006. (AP Photo/Stefano Paltera)

“I Know Without A Doubt That God Wants Us To Be Here”

From: keith powell
To: Traveling Soldier & GI Special
Sent: Friday, May 26, 2006 2:53 AM
Subject: from a soldier in Iraq

To whom it may concern,

Sometimes the key to peace in the world is not being passive. You guys all want lives to be saved, which is a good motive, but you're going about it all the wrong way.

Being a national guard soldier here in Iraq, I have had many opportunities to think about this war and what's going on.

It was very frustrating for me to leave a wife, and also to delay my studies.

It would be easy to jump on the evil Bush bandwagon, cause this definitely inconveniences me, but deep down inside I know that is wrong. If we left this country more lives would be lost, and the country would be much more violent than it is now. We do not need to stay here longer than we need to, but that day has not come yet.

When the Iraqis are ready to take over, then we can all pack our bags and go home. Your method for peace in the world will only bring more killing. It doesn't matter whether we found WMD's here, Saddam was an evil tyrant who killed tens of thousands of people.

Many of the Iraqis here are so grateful we are here. One of them commented to me, "We love Bush.... We are so grateful he allowed us to be freed from Saddam." It is a hard thing to be here and to lose American lives, but it is the right thing to do.

I know without a doubt that God wants us to be here, as Mr. Blair has mentioned. The easiest thing to do is not always the right thing to do. Well, unfortunately I don't have more time.

But I just wanted to let you know some thoughts from a soldier on the battlefield.

I understand why some soldiers don't support the war, but unfortunately I think they get led astray by the liberal media, and for radicals such as Mrs. Sheehan.

What a horrible thing she is doing.

SPC Powell

MORE:

Reply: T

Thanks for writing in. By your service you have more than earned the right to your political point of view, and to express it to anybody, any time.

There is one problem.

I assume that if someone accused you of being a brainless robot, blindly following what Bush says, you would rightly be very angry. Such a comment directed towards you, as you face death in battle, would be extremely foul, and dishonorable.

But at the end of your letter that is exactly what you say about soldiers serving in Iraq who disagree with you and oppose this war.

“I understand why some soldiers don’t support the war, but unfortunately I think they get led astray by the liberal media, and for radicals such as Mrs. Sheehan.”

You’re saying that like so many stupid sheep, they have been led astray.

By their sacrifice, they have also earned respect, not insults, or the condescending assumption they are fools.

Below are three items you may wish to think over.

Come home safe.

T

#1: 72% Of U.S. Troops In Iraq Say Get Out By 12.31.06

2.28.06 Zogby.com & John Zogby, HuffingtonPost.com.

A first-ever survey of U.S. troops on the ground fighting a war overseas has revealed surprising findings, not the least of which is that an overwhelming majority of 72% of American troops in Iraq think the U.S. should exit the country within the next year.

Further, a new Le Moyne College/Zogby International survey shows that more than one in four (29%) thought the U.S. should pull its troops immediately.

The Le Moyne College/Zogby Poll shows just one in five troops want to heed Bush call to stay “as long as they are needed”

#2: Only 1% Of Iraqis Said They Trust U.S.- Led Coalition Forces For Their Personal Protection.

April 29, 2006 Bruce Wallace, Washington Post

Baghdad: A majority of Iraqis say their country is in dismal economic shape and getting worse, with 3 of 4 respondents also describing security in the country as poor, according to a new poll conducted by a conservative American think tank.

Only 1 percent said they trust U.S.-led coalition forces for their personal protection.

The results were culled from 2,804 face-to-face interviews from across the country by the International Republican Institute in Washington.

#3:

“After Spending A Year In Iraq, I Have Found That The Iraqis Are Not A Threat Or The Enemy”

“We Do Not Know What We Are Fighting For Anymore; We Do Not Know What Our Mission Is”

Army Times
April 24, 2006
Letters To The Editor

I am a soldier about to embark on my second tour in Iraq.

My first tour started in November 2003. When we arrived, Saddam Hussein was on the loose. In December, he was caught.

When I came into the military, I signed a contract that said I would defend this country against all threats, foreign and domestic.

After spending a year in Iraq, I have found that the Iraqis are not a threat or the enemy. I did find that we are the threat and the enemy to them.

They acted as we would if someone came into America and said we are going to change your ways.

I feel this war is no longer about taking out a threat. But I believe it is about securing oil commerce for the future.

Securing this country and stabilizing it would mean oil contracts and people lining their pockets with money from the oil that my friends have been wounded for and have died for.

I hear the president speak with the press and tell them things to appease them and to divert them to a different subject.

What I don't see is the president having a conference with the soldiers who have fought on the ground in Iraq.

We do not know what we are fighting for anymore; we do not know what our mission is.

I am not alone in this thought. My boys need to know what they may possibly die for.

Is it for a few extra bucks for Halliburton subsidiary KBR?

Is it about the oil?

Is it for America?

How will this war help my family in the future?

**Staff Sgt. Christopher Galka
Rainier, Wash.**

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

Kansas Marine Killed In Anbar

05/18/2006 The Hutchinson News

LIBERAL: Lance Cpl. Jose Santos Marin Dominguez Jr., 22, died May 14, 2006, while on combat duty in Al Anbar Province, Iraq.

He was born April 19, 1984, in Juarez, Mexico, the son of Jose and Oliva Dominguez Marin. He graduated from Liberal High School in 2003. A longtime resident of Liberal, he entered the U.S. Marine Corps on Oct. 27, 2003. He was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, based in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

Survivors include: his parents, Tyrone, Okla.; a brother, Tomas Marin, Tyron, Okla.; two sisters, Araceli Marin and Sarai Marin, both of Tyrone, Okla.; grandparents, Francisco and Gabina Marin, Liberal, and Ascunion Dominguez, El Paso, Texas; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his grandmother, Margarita Dominguez.

Funeral will be at noon Sunday at Iglesia DeCristo Maranatha Church, Liberal, with Pastor Jorge Gutierrez presiding. Friends may call after 10 a.m. Sunday at the church. Burial will be in Restlawn Cemetery, Liberal.

In lieu of flowers and plants, memorials may be sent to the Cimarron Chapter of the American Red Cross, in care of Kitch-Brenneman Funeral Home, 1212 West 2nd, Liberal, KS 67901.

Suffern High School Remembers Fallen Marine

May 16, 2006 By SUZAN CLARKE, THE JOURNAL NEWS

SUFFERN: While Gus and Vasiliki Vahaviolos prepared to receive their son's body, friends and teachers of the young Marine who died in a tank accident in Iraq remembered him fondly yesterday.

Cpl. Steven Vahaviolos, 21, of Airmont drowned Thursday when the M1A1 battle tank in which he and three other members of his company were riding ran into a canal.

Suffern High School, from where Vahaviolos graduated in 2003, had a moment of silence before first period.

The family yesterday was awaiting the arrival of Vahaviolos' body, and planned a burial within a few days.

More than 2,400 service members have died since the start of the Iraq war, according to the Department of Defense.

Vahaviolos' death was the third casualty in Iraq of a military service member from Rockland.

Notes From A Lost War:

**“The Only Thing That I’ve Seen
Get Any Better Here Is The**

Weapons They're Using Against Us"

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

26 May 2006 BY TOM LASSETER, Knight Ridder Newspapers [Excerpts]

"I think there's a perception . . . sometimes that the people of Basra and the militias are separate," Brig. Gen. James Everard, who commands the British brigade in Basra] said.

"Actually, the people of Basra and the militia are the same thing."

[Lt. Col. David] Labouchere used similar logic in explaining why he didn't send troops to crack down on militia members in the town of Majar al Kabir, north of Basra, after suspected militiamen from there fired 44 mortar and rocket rounds at his base this month.

"I look at them and say, 'Shall I go and clean it up?' And I think I'm just going to piss them off and drive them away from democracy," Labouchere said. "Will I have done good for the people of al Majar? Probably not. I will have just radicalized them."

Two days earlier, a British patrol had driven up to a police station in southern Basra to try to persuade the police there to go on a joint patrol. The police refused.

Standing outside the station, in the heat of the day, Cpl. Patrick Owens shrugged his shoulders.

"It's hard to know who the militia is; it's hard to tell between them and the local police force," Owens said.

"The only thing that I've seen get any better here is the weapons they're using against us."

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)

**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. Marines from the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment's Kilo Company patrol in Ramadi April 17, 2006. (AP Photo/Todd Pitman)

**100 Special Forces Troops Launch
Daring Night Raid;**

Two Donkeys Killed

28 May 2006 By Rupert Hamer, Defence Correspondent, Sunday Mirror (UK)

SAS troops blew up the wrong house, destroyed three cars and ran over two donkeys during a bungled night-time raid in Iraq.

Fifty British and US Special Forces swooped on a home, thought to be where a terror cell was hiding 20 SA16 surface-to-air missiles and an SA80 assault gun.

Acting on information from US intelligence, the SAS abseiled from a helicopter on to the roof and blew in the roof and walls.

They then arrested two Iraqi brothers, who were later found to be totally innocent.

Squaddies have dubbed the mission at Majar Al Kabir, near Basra, "A Donkey Too Far," after the failed WW2 operation made into the movie A Bridge Too Far.

A Whitehall source said: "An armoured column hit a donkey on the way in and a Challenger II crushed cars as it turned around. Then an armoured vehicle ran over another donkey."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Rocket Attack Hits Canadian Base

May 28, 2006 Jim Farrell, CanWest News Service; Edmonton Journal

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan -- As Canadian soldiers spent a fourth day sweeping through villages west of Kandahar in search of Taliban fighters, insurgents launched a rocket attack Saturday on the Canadians' home base.

No one was injured when a lone rocket hit the sprawling Kandahar Air Field coalition base at 11:03 p.m.

A loud roar echoed over the base when the rocket exploded, followed by the deafening howl from a public address that meant everyone had to go to the concrete bunkers for protection against any subsequent attacks.

Forty minutes later, with no more rockets hitting the base, the public address system sounded the all clear.

Saturday's attack marked the sixth time this year the base has been hit by rockets. To date no one has been injured although in one attack a British Harrier jet fighter

was damaged and another attack hit an unoccupied welding shop which subsequently burned to the ground.

To prevent insurgents from adjusting their aim in future attacks, the military forbids the publication of any information about the location of hits.

“The Battle Will Be Lost”

May 28 by Sardar Ahmad, AFP

"Corrupted people holding on to government posts have caused the ordinary population to distance themselves from the central government," said local politician and regional expert Mohammad Akbar Khakrizwal.

"The Taliban already have control over some districts and this will reach the cities," he predicted, shaking his head sadly. "The battle will be lost."

TROOP NEWS

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



April 28, 2005 National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 152

Veterans Confront “Little Dick” At L.S.U.



[Photo by Ward Reilly]

From: Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace
To: GI Special
Sent: May 28, 2006
Subject: Little Dick Greeted Warmly at Louisiana State on Friday

Vice President (and Chief U.S. War Criminal) "Little Dick" Cheney was greeted warmly at Louisiana State University on Friday, when he showed up in his very-well armored limousine to speak to LSU graduates.

Hundreds of faculty and students refused to stand or applaud during Cheney's speech, as he stated that "America is winning the war on terror". He also mentioned LSU's national championship in football (uhhhh Dick, that was 3 years ago)

Members of Iraq Veterans Against the War, Veterans For Peace, & Vietnam Veterans Against the War attended the demonstration in support of students, who thought that the university could have found a better speaker, considering the times and the AMAZINGLY GREAT JOB the administration did during hurricane Katrina.

With an 18% approval rating, we are sure it was really hard to book Little Dick as a speaker. Coincidentally, Cheney spoke in the same building that was used as the triage center after the disaster, another large bit of irony.

Some students showed up to receive their diplomas wearing hunters orange vests, and hundreds of pins saying "Jail Bush & Cheney" and "Make Levees Not War" were handed out by Ward Reilly of VFP.

CORNERED RAT



REUTERS/Joshua Roberts

Thanks A Lot, Asshole

"Now the Class of 2006 will leave for the battlefield." Bush at West Point graduation
5.28.06

**Slaughtering Civilians?
Of Course!
In An Imperial War Of Occupation
Against A People Who Want To Be
Free, That's What You Do**

[Duh]

Some analysts, however, say the killings of civilians also reflect frustration among young troops fighting a difficult war with no end in sight. They say these young fighters have been thrust into an alien culture for repeated tours in a war whose strategy many of them do not understand.

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

May 28, 2006 By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Haditha, site of a major hydroelectric dam, has long been considered a tough case. It is among a string of Euphrates Valley towns used by insurgents and foreign fighters to infiltrate from Syria to reach Baghdad and the Sunni heartland.

Many Marines have complained to journalists that they conduct repeated sweeps through villages to drive out the insurgents, who then reappear when the Americans leave. That has bred a sense of frustration among troops fighting a difficult war with no end in sight.

[No shit. Somebody ought to explain the situation: there is no hope whatever of “driving out the insurgents.” Can you imagine how stupid a British general would have sounded if he had been spewing silly bullshit in 1776 about “driving out the insurgents” from Lexington and Concord? The Iraqis are fighting for their national independence against a foreign Imperial invasion and occupation. They are as right to do so as American patriots were right to fight the British in 1776.]

An Associated Press journalist who traveled in Haditha last June with a Marine unit not involved in the November killings saw a Marine urinate on the kitchen floor of a home and on another occasion saw insults chalked in English on the gate of an Arab home. The reporter asked a Marine commander about the incident and was told it would be investigated.

Some analysts, however, say the killings of civilians also reflect frustration among young troops fighting a difficult war with no end in sight. They say these young fighters have been thrust into an alien culture for repeated tours in a war whose strategy many of them do not understand.

"What we're seeing more of now, and these incidents will increase monthly, is the end result of fuzzy, imprecise national direction combined with situational ethics at the highest levels of this government," said retired Air Force Col. Mike Turner, a former planner at the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

[Z writes: Ishikawa and Kuroshima would understand: insert troops into a hell on earth and there's no way to prevent atrocities. Yet the real fiends in their capital suites are never spattered with a single drop of blood. Solidarity, Z]

“There’s A Lot Of Dissent In The Army About The Legality Of War” Major General Says He Doesn’t Want Anti-War Soldiers In Iraq!!!

“If you have such a person in your unit you have to discuss things with them... you do not necessarily want people with you if they have that particular view,” he added.

28 May 2006 BBC

Justin Hugheston-Roberts was the solicitor for Flight Lieutenant Malcolm Kendall-Smith who was sentenced to eight months in prison for refusing to follow orders in connection with a deployment to Iraq.

He said: “I am approached regularly by people who are seeking to absent themselves from service. There has been an increase, a definite upturn.”

Military law expert Gilbert Blades, who represents soldiers at courts martial, said the numbers leaving because of Iraq were often obscured as they were not counted as conscientious objectors.

“One can't help thinking that what's behind every absence is the problem in Iraq and I would think that if the real truth was told, then the Iraq problem has contributed to a huge number of people going absent,” he told BBC Radio Five Live.

Former SAS member Ben Griffin was allowed to leave the military after telling his commanding officer he was not prepared to return to Iraq because of what he believed were illegal acts being carried out by US forces.

Mr Griffin would never have considered deserting but says his views are shared by many others in the British military.

He told the BBC: “There's a lot of dissent in the Army about the legality of the war and concerns that they're spending too much time there.”

Major General Patrick Cordingley, who commanded the 7th Armoured Brigade “Desert Rats” in the first Gulf war, said servicemen's views on Iraq prompted some to leave but “good leadership” would stop it reaching epidemic proportions.

He said those who had been to Iraq before or whose families were unhappy about them going were among those who might not want to serve there.

“If you have such a person in your unit you have to discuss things with them... you do not necessarily want people with you if they have that particular view,” he added.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Prominent Collaborator Killed



Dead collaborator Osama al-Jadaan helped occupation "track down insurgents." (AP Photo/Samir Mizban, File)

5.28.06 By KIM GAMEL, Associated Press

A tribal chief who challenged Iraq's most feared terrorist and sent fighters to help U.S. troops in western Iraq died in a hail of bullets today, the latest victim of an apparent insurgent campaign against Sunni Arabs who work with Americans.

U.S. troops also raised a scout force from al-Jadaan's followers known as the "Desert Protectors" to track down insurgents living under the protection of a rival tribe in Qaim and in a cluster of nearby towns that U.S. officials said was a staging area for smuggling weapons, ammunition and fighters into Iraq.

Sheik Osama al-Jadaan, who was ambushed by gunmen as he was being driven in Baghdad's Mansour district, a predominantly Sunni Arab area. Al-Jadaan's driver and one of his bodyguards also were killed, police Lt. Maitham Abdul Razzaq said.

Al-Jadaan was a leader of the Karabila tribe, which has thousands of members in Anbar province, an insurgent hotbed stretching from west of Baghdad to the Syrian border. He had announced an agreement with the U.S.-backed Iraqi government to help security forces track down al-Qaida members and foreign fighters.

U.S. troops also raised a scout force from al-Jadaan's followers known as the "Desert Protectors" to help find insurgents living under the protection of a rival tribe in Qaim and a cluster of nearby towns in Anbar.

Al-Jadaan claimed in March that his people had captured hundreds of foreign fighters and handed them over to authorities. He also issued a warning to al-Qaida in Iraq's

leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who is blamed for many of the country's worst terror bombings.

"Under my leadership and that of our brothers in other tribes, we are getting close to the shelter of this terrorist," al-Jadaan said. "We will capture him soon."

The drive, dubbed Operation Tribal Chivalry, was designed to secure Iraq's borders with Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia to prevent foreign fighters from sneaking in.

Assorted Resistance Action

28th May, 2006 Irish Sun & AFP

Two roadside bombings in Baghdad killed four policemen and wounded five people.

Attackers ambushed the convoy of the office manager of the Diyala police chief south of Baqouba, wounding the colonel and killing five of his guards.

A policeman was shot to death and two officers were wounded north of Tikrit.

A bomb went off around 8:00 am (0400 GMT) in the upscale Karrada neighborhood in central Baghdad and killed one policeman and wounded 12 others.

Just to the west of the city, the governor's convoy was attacked and raked with bullets, killing a bodyguard and wounding five others, including two police, while governor Ibrahim Hassan al-Bajalan, himself, was unhurt.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

U.S. Latino Troops Dishonored By Politicians

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

28 May 2006 By Fernando Suarez del Solar, Gold Star Father, Truthout Op Ed [excerpt]

How ironic that thousands of Latino and Latina soldiers and marines have died in the name of the stars and stripes, and today the government represented by that

flag offends Latinos in the United States by militarizing the border and passing discriminatory laws.

Are we to ignore the contributions made by immigrants to this great nation?

On any of the many war monuments to past wars we can find hundreds if not thousands of Latino names. Each served with pride and each was praised by politicians at the time.

But what is happening now?

Not only are they dishonored, but abusive and immoral proposals for immigration reform insult their relatives and families.

When French Troops Mutinied Against Their Government's Imperial War For Algeria

[Thanks to NB, who sent this in.]

27 May 2006 By Martin Evans, Socialist Worker (UK) [Excerpts]

Martin Evans writes on the forgotten rebellion by French conscripts 50 years ago.

In April 1956 the 22 year old Georges Mattéi received his call up papers to go and fight in Algeria, just like thousands of young men across France. Corsican in origin, and on holiday in Italy, Mattéi agonised about what to do.

Instinctively anti-authoritarian and anti-militarist, he was paradoxically, as he admitted many years later, fascinated by war. Guilty that he had been too young for the anti-Nazi French resistance movement, he wanted to test himself in the heat of battle. He wanted to see if he was manly enough to stand the intensity of actual combat.

Making his way back to France, Mattéi rejoined his unit, an Alpine regiment from the Grenoble region, at Dreux just outside of Paris.

There in the barracks he was amazed to encounter widespread anti-war feeling, even if the reservists' motives did not generally stem from any automatic identification with the Algerian liberation struggle.

Yes, a minority were politicised. But most had no desire to go and fight in what had already become known as a "dirty war", because they had jobs and families.

The mood of protest and insubordination was, therefore, endemic.

Men went absent without leave for days. Officers were attacked, including one general who was kidnapped. Orders were ignored. Military discipline was non-existent. On the troop trains down to Marseille soldiers pulled the brake cord on numerous occasions to stop them.

This movement had begun the previous September after the government had recalled its reservists. Under French law, all men who had completed military service were on standby for the next three years to fight at a moment's notice.

At Lyon station there were violent clashes between reservists and the riot police, as soldiers refused to be herded into trains taking them to Marseille. The following month reservists would not leave the Richepanse barracks, openly flouting officers' orders. This rebellion was only finally overcome when riot police forced the soldiers onto waiting lorries.

Such protests were repeated with even greater intensity in the spring of 1956.

The most violent incident took place at Grenoble railway station on 18 May. Opponents of the war had called for a large scale demonstration to prevent the troops' departure.

Supported by hundreds of local communists and trade unionists, the prolonged clashes were not broken up until midnight. People lay across the tracks chanting "they must not go", a scenario replicated in Saint-Nazaire, Angers, Port-de-Bouc, Voiron and Brive.

This was a huge anti-war movement involving over 20,000 men, but within the press these events went unreported. The journalist Jean-Marie Boeglin covered the reservists' rebellion for the Union de Reims, a leading provincial daily.

He witnessed the anti-war protests in Rouen and Grenoble at first hand. Yet his editor was not interested. The paper did everything it could to minimise coverage. Boeglin's articles were cut because they were seen to be sabotaging the war on "Algerian terrorism".

The road to the reservists' protest movement began on 1 November 1954 with a nationalist insurrection in Algeria led by the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN).

The FLN, led by the likes of Ahmed Ben Bella and Mohamed Boudiaf, saw violence as the only way to end colonial rule. Their strategy was simple: by creating a climate of insecurity through terrorism they wanted to bring the Algerian question to the attention of the world and thereby isolate France diplomatically.

For the French army, the Algerian uprising was the latest in a series of bloody colonial wars that had begun with Indochina, and had continued with Morocco and Tunisia. However, while in the latter cases the French had eventually been forced to withdraw, Algeria was a case apart.

Invaded in 1830, it was annexed not as a colony but as an integral part of France. In theory France was divided by the Mediterranean, just as Paris was divided by the river

Seine. Generations of French school children were told that Algeria was made up of three French departments, no different to Brittany or Normandy.

On top of this was the presence of one million settlers out of a population of ten million – poor whites for the most part who came from France, and also from Malta, Italy and Spain.

For all these reasons the reaction of François Mitterrand, France's interior minister at the time and later the president of France, to the FLN uprising was typical. For him the revolt threatened the unity of the republic, and the only possible response was war.

Such attitudes explain why news from Algeria during the course of 1955 became depressingly familiar. The cycle of violence and counter-violence went from bad to worse. On 3 April, the government declared a state of emergency.

Algeria was a major issue during the general election that took place on 2 January 1956, which was narrowly won by the Republican Front, a coalition led by the Socialist Party.

The new prime minister, Guy Mollet, himself a resistance veteran, had called the Algerian conflict a stupid war without an obvious exit. "Peace in Algeria" was the Republican Front's slogan, which although general and vague certainly did not suggest any intensification of the conflict.

But when Mollet went to Algiers on 6 February he got a very rough reception from the settlers. They manhandled him and bombarded him with tomatoes and rotten eggs. Funny though this image was, in truth the whole experience traumatised Mollet. Immediately he saw Algeria in a new light, through the prism of appeasement.

Unlike the Czechs in 1938, the settlers were not going to be sold down the river to the FLN, a "fanatical minority who were being manipulated by general Nasser in Egypt, the new Hitler".

Moreover, Mollet claimed, French republicanism was playing a progressive role in Algeria. This civilising mission, conjured as a liberal colonial humanism miles away from nasty right wing imperialism, was allegedly bringing the values of the French Revolution and the Enlightenment to a backward native population.

On these grounds, abandoning Algeria was out of the question. To this end, 12 March saw 455 deputies, including the Communists, vote for special powers that gave the Socialist administration the licence to use whatever means necessary to snuff out the FLN.

Added to this, on 11 April Mollet recalled conscripts of 1951-4 and extended military service from 18 to 27 months. The result was that by the end of 1956, some 450,000 soldiers were in Algeria.

In the meantime the French media endlessly recycled stock images whereby wanton FLN destruction was contrasted with the good work of the French in aiding the local population through the building of roads and hospitals.

Few now doubted that France was at war, even if what was taking place was referred to as a law and order problem.

So what was the stance of the Communist Party? With one in four of the electorate voting for it, the party was unquestionably the largest force on the left. Previously the party had opposed the Indochina war and in -theory it adhered to Russian revolutionary Lenin's dictum about supporting anti-colonial struggles.

Yet its leadership felt ambivalent about the FLN which was not Communist. It was a nationalist organisation that was deemed potentially too pro-US.

Allied to this, the Communist Party did not want to be seen as anti-patriotic and give anti-Communists the pretext for dissolving the party, as had been done in 1939 after the signing of the Nazi-Soviet pact.

The party opposed any illegal opposition to the war and did not support the reservists' revolt.

Nobody must desert was the line. Communists called up to fight were told that they had to go to Algeria and try, if possible, to organise opposition over there.

Yet, as Georges Mattéi found out, this was impossible. Once in Algeria, the army ruthlessly conditioned the reservists. Inevitably too, Mattéi recalled, the war against the FLN had a brutalising effect, creating an "us and them" situation where soldiers were fighting not to defend colonialism, but to save their own skins.

The reservists served for six months in Algeria. Most returned in early 1957, at which point accounts of atrocities began to filter out. A group of priests published letters from reservists that catalogued the reality of the dirty war – torture, summary executions, the burning of villages.

Mattéi himself was introspective and aggressive. What saved him was writing an eyewitness account for the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre's review, *Les Temps Modernes*.

In contrast to most reservists, who continued to turn in on themselves, this allowed him to purge his anger. Thereafter he was determined to make a stand, forming a veterans' anti-war organisation before eventually working with the FLN in France, crossing over to side with the very people he had been shooting at in 1956.

*Martin Evans is professor in contemporary European history at the University of Portsmouth and author of *The Memory of Resistance: French Opposition to the Algerian War 1954-62*.*

Tortured By Saddam Hussein,

Now She Fights The Occupation: “There Is No Civil War Among Iraqi People Themselves” “This Is Really The Fighting Of Iraqi Resistance Against The Occupation Forces”

GEORGE NEGUS: You were imprisoned and tortured under Saddam, right?

HAIFA ZANGANA: I was, yeah.

GEORGE NEGUS: How badly? Can you give us some picture?

HAIFA ZANGANA: Terrible. It was terrible. It was something beyond imagination and it is still happening. The same thing is happening now in Iraq. So we are against this continuity of torture. This is why we fought Saddam's regime. We did not fight for 35 years to replace it by another torturer.

05/25/06 Dateline SBS, Information Clearing House [Excerpt]

Haifa Zangana is an Iraqi, she is also a writer and an activist for women's rights in her savagely battered homeland.

She was an opponent of Saddam Hussein and his regime; indeed, she was imprisoned and tortured by the dictator.

GEORGE NEGUS: You have said that the series of interim governments that have occurred over the last few years, since the invasion, have been a total disaster. What about the latest attempt at a government? The new government of national unity?

HAIFA ZANGANA: Hardly anything has changed really. What we are witnessing in this new government is almost the cloning of the same people, or the same sectarian and ethnic divide they were establishing under Paul Bremer, the ex-ambassador of Iraq.

GEORGE NEGUS: Will it work as a government? You're making it sound like a puppet government.

HAIFA ZANGANA: It is a puppet government nothing more or less. I don't think it is going to accomplish anything different than the previous one. They are on the receiving end of orders from the unexpected visits by Condoleezza Rice, Jack Straw previously, and to orders from Bush and Blair.

GEORGE NEGUS: So you don't see it as a true attempt at an Iraqi government at all?

HAIFA ZANGANA: It isn't at all.

It is not even a government even. It is a government of the green zone. It is an occupation government. An occupation government, no matter what it does, it doesn't represent people and their aspirations.

People have the right to rule themselves.

GEORGE NEGUS: Are you saying that life in Iraq is no better or in fact worse than it was under Saddam Hussein, the dictator?

HAIFA ZANGANA: He is not our moral yardstick on any level regarding political government with political attitudes at all and invasion. So better or worse, we are entitled to democracy as much as any other country. And democracy the way we understand it is not taking place at the moment.

GEORGE NEGUS: You were imprisoned and tortured under Saddam, right?

HAIFA ZANGANA: I was, yeah.

GEORGE NEGUS: How badly? Can you give us some picture?

HAIFA ZANGANA: Terrible. It was terrible. It was something beyond imagination and it is still happening. The same thing is happening now in Iraq. So we are against this continuity of torture. This is why we fought Saddam's regime. We did not fight for 35 years to replace it by another torturer.

GEORGE NEGUS: I guess what a lot of people in the West would say, particularly government leaders and leaders of the coalition, is that you can say this now. Could you say this in Iraq now? Where you couldn't criticise Saddam without finding yourself in prison and tortured, now can your voice be heard in Iraq?

HAIFA ZANGANA: No, you can't actually. Iraqis inside Iraq cannot say what I'm saying at the moment here. I'm saying it because I am here. I feel safe and secure.

I would not be able to.

Because whoever voicing any issue against the occupation in Iraq is targeted.

We have the academics being targeted, we have hundreds of our scientists being killed, academics, lectures, professors, whoever. Journalists we have the biggest campaign of killing journalists. Fiction writers; we have a fiction writer who'd been imprisoned for three years, not even saying a word about anything.

GEORGE NEGUS: So if you are am saying in Iraq what you are saying to me now, would be a victim, you would be a target of that kind of treatment?

HAIFA ZANGANA: Yes, definitely.

GEORGE NEGUS: Doesn't that leave Iraq and people like yourself in a no-win situation? If you listen to Condoleezza Rice, she says that all that has gone wrong, the thousands of mistakes that she has acknowledged has occurred is worth it - to get rid of Saddam, it was worth it.

HAIFA ZANGANA: This is a total farce. And it is continuing what we heard from Madeline Albright, before that when Iraq was under sanctions, when 500,000 children were killed or died because, as a consequence of the harsh sanctions on Iraqi people. 500,000 children were killed and she said that the price was worth it.

And here is Condoleezza Rice repeating the same thing. "We are only committing mistakes in Iraq."

It is not mistakes. When you kill a person this is a crime, you do not call it a mistake. So crimes are committed in Iraq every day. In fact there is an Iraqi being killed at the minute where we're talking now.

One Iraqi per every five minutes killed as a consequence, direct consequence of the occupation.

So we are asking for the withdrawal of troops and immediate withdrawal - not to go on for 5 years or 10 years and prolonging, putting a timetable to it. The way they walked in the troops, they have to leave.

GEORGE NEGUS: Let's talk about that. Because in the last few days Tony Blair has talked about the withdrawal of troops, George Bush has talked about the withdrawal of troops, Blair has gone so far as to say maybe by the end of the year all the British and American troops will be out, I suppose that means Australian, except for a couple of key areas like Baghdad and the West. What would occur if there was this withdrawal that you say Iraqis want, if that was to happen in the next six months?

HAIFA ZANGANA: To start with, we have to make it clear that the withdrawal that Tony Blair's talking about, or Bush, is different about the withdrawal we're talking about.

I am talking about the complete withdrawal of troops.

That doesn't mean they go around and build bases, American bases in Iraq which they are doing at the moment. There are more than 14 bases building. And there is the biggest embassy in the world.

And no signing of long-term binding agreements, not on behalf of Iraqi people but on behalf of these interim governments or the puppet governments at the moment. This is second.

Third - there should be a compensation for all the crimes being committed against Iraqi people, whether in life or the destruction of the country.

So we're talking about a different kind of withdrawal.

They said the country is going to descend into civil war. But we it have already. Those occupation forces there, they are encouraging it because they are emphasising the force of one militia against the other, even supplying weapons to certain militias against the other. So who is encouraging civil war?

There is no civil war among Iraqi people themselves. There are the militias fighting.

And there is another kind of war which no-one is talking about.

This is really the fighting of Iraqi resistance against the occupation forces.

GEORGE NEGUS: How do you draw the line, then, between a terrorist and an insurgent, and an insurgent and a resistance fighter?

HAIFA ZANGANA: There are differences.

I'm talking about 80 attacks per day, average, which has being really constant for the last two years and targeting American and British troops. This is, for me, pure resistance.

I cannot really believe this is terrorist acts or any civilian act, attacking civilians.

This is Iraqi national movement demanding liberation, independence and building our own country, the democracy as we see it democracy because we are desperate for democracy and we want to do it that way. Not by shock and awe.

GEORGE NEGUS: In the meantime, is there anything - from your contacts, which are regular, and your visits to Iraq - is there anything vaguely resembling normality about life? How would you describe life in Iraq?

HAIFA ZANGANA: Whenever I talk to an Iraqi, I ask, "How are you today?" they say "Well, thanks God, we're still in one piece."

“When Bush Says ‘We’re Coming To Liberate You,’ It’s Absurd To Expect People In That Part Of The World To Take Us Seriously”

May 25, 2006 A Tomdispatch Interview with Andrew Bacevich, Tomdispatch [Excerpts]

We are not who we believe we are and, in some sense, others perceive us more accurately than we do ourselves.

The President has described a version of history -- as did Clinton, by the way -- beginning with World War II in which the United States is the liberator, Americans are the bringers of freedom. There is truth to that narrative, but it's not the whole truth; and, quite frankly, it's not the truth that matters a lick, let's say, to the Islamic world today.

Muslims don't give a darn that we brought Hitler or the Third Reich to its knees.

What they're aware of is all kinds of other behavior, particularly in their neck of the woods, that had nothing to do with spreading democracy and freedom, that had everything to do with power, with trying to establish relations that maximized the benefit to the United States and American society.

We don't have to let our hearts bleed about that. That's the way politics works, but let's not delude ourselves either.

When President George W. Bush says, "America stands for freedom and liberty, and we're coming to liberate you," it's absurd to expect people in that part of the world to take us seriously.

That's not what they've seen and known and experienced in dealing with the United States.

If we just toss Bush out and bring in... Who?

Senator Clinton or John McCain? Will things be different? Somehow, I don't think so.

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.

Darfur: **It's About The Oil, Of Course:** **What Else?**

5.6.06 Socialist Worker (Canada)

The chorus is growing for western intervention in Darfur, western Sudan.

And without question the situation in that region is desperate. A civil war has left one million homeless. The death toll could reach 250,000 by the end of the year.

But the western powers are largely to blame for the crisis in the first place.

From the late 19th century on, Britain and to some extent France exercised control over much of the region, including Sudan. Britain gradually relinquished its direct control, but as was its practice, did so in such a way to leave a divided country, laying the basis for "divide-and Conquer" neocolonialism.

In 1946-7, Britain handed south Sudan to the north Sudanese elite of local plantation owners, without any Consultation with the south. The south's representatives in the new legislative assembly were hand-picked by the British. The divisions sewn broke out soon after formal independence in 1956, leading to the outbreak of a vicious civil war.

The meddling by the west did not end with independence. In 1986, the IMF declared Sudan "bankrupt" and withdrew all its loans. Half a million people died of famine, and three years later the military seized power.

In 1991 the US halted grain shipments to the country in retaliation for Sudan not backing its invasion of Iraq, in spite of the fact that a famine was raging in the country.

Sudan is one more example of a country driven into chaos by generations of imperialism.

And just like Iraq and Afghanistan, there are deeper reasons why the western powers are now thinking of intervention.

The country has two billion barrels of recoverable oil, and currently produces 250,000 barrels a day. Securing a US-friendly government in Sudan would keep that oil under western control, on the shores of the Red Sea opposite that other pillar of US power, Saudi Arabia.

In addition to all of this, we should have learned by now that "humanitarian intervention" by western powers leads only to chaos, death and destruction.

The US and its allies have been in Iraq since 1991. One and a half million are dead and counting.

US interference in Afghanistan began in the early 1980s. The country is now in permanent chaos.

Military intervention there has not been the answer: it is not the answer in Sudan.

As Charlie Kimber from Socialist Worker in Britain says, "A mere one per cent of the money spent on war in Iraq could save all the lives in Darfur and millions of others throughout Africa. Why can't there be a rain of food and medicine in Sudan rather than bombs on Iraq?"

OCCUPATION REPORT

Resistance Attacks Cut Baghdad Petroleum Supplies

5/28/2006 Anatolia.com

BAGHDAD: As Iraq's brutal summer heat sends temperatures soaring above 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit), a dire shortage of petroleum products is damaging the economy and cutting electricity supplies in Baghdad to new lows.

"In addition to attacks on pipelines, trucks carrying petroleum products are in the sights of the rebels. Some gas stations had to close after their drivers refused to go pick up gasoline and other products stored in the dangerous areas around Baghdad," said Assem Jihad.

Sabotage of the oil infrastructure is also ongoing, aggravating the situation, he added, nothing there had been two attacks in the past week on pipelines to the north and south of the capital.

"Two units of the Baiji refinery were closed last week and this cut production," said Jihad, who also reported a fire in the offshore terminal of Khor al-Amaya in the Gulf.

Since the US-led invasion of March 2003, Baghdad residents have always suffered from a lack of electricity, with some neighborhoods receiving power only one hour out of five.

Welcome To Liberated Baghdad: Running Water 1 Hour A Day

24 May 2006 By Anna Badkhen, The San Francisco Chronicle [Excerpts]

Baghdad - "Leaving aside security," Kassim the carpet salesman asked rhetorically, "when you come home, what do you need?" He ticked off the answers on the fingers on his right hand: "Electricity. Water. Food."

"Getting any of this in Baghdad is a problem," he said.

The Iraqi Shiite's elegant, two-story house in the busy central Baghdad district of Karrada gets power four hours a day - "one hour on, six hours off," said Kassim, a divorced father of three.

Running water is available for one hour, between 1 and 2 in the morning. Kassim pours the water into giant plastic jugs he stores in his bathroom, kitchen and on the rooftop.

"It's a good thing that I go to bed late," he said.

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

No Problem

24 May 2006 By Anna Badkhen, The San Francisco Chronicle [Excerpts]

In the predominantly Shiite, largely poverty-stricken eastern Baghdad, religious leaders like the firebrand Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr feed off the popular disenchantment with the collapsed infrastructure, using it to draw support for their militias, said Col. Tom Vail, commander of the 506th Regimental Combat Team of the 101st Airborne Division, which patrols this area.

"They get their power from the deprivation on the east side of Baghdad," said Vail, whose combat team controls most of eastern Baghdad.

"They want to show that all good things come from Muqtada al-Sadr's militia and all the bad things come from the (U.S.-led) coalition."

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Bush's Bird Flu Containment

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

In an attempt to thwart the spread of bird flu, President George W. Bush has bombed the Canary Islands.

Turkey is next.

Received:

CORRECTION!

From: Ron Jacobs
To: GI Special
Sent: May 28, 2006

IN my piece on blocking military shipments in Olympia, WA. the person named Rosaire was incorrectly identified as a woman.

Can you please run a correction.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

Recent GI Special issues archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org/> .

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/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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