

GI SPECIAL 4F17:

How Many More For Imperial War?



Minnesota Army National Guard Spc. Brent W. Koch, 22, of Morton, Minn., died in Iraq on June 16, 2006, of injuries sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle in Ad Diwaniyah, Iraq. (AP Photo/Courtesy of the family)

**“They Are Grumbling”
“They’re Over There Unhappy
With What Is Going On,
Displeased With The Policy;
And They’re Opposing The
War”**

June 15th, 2006 Democracy Now [Excerpt]

We speak with Peter Laufer, a Vietnam war resister and author of the new book, "Mission Rejected: U.S. Soldiers Who Say No to Iraq."

AMY GOODMAN: Can you talk about the number of men and women who have refused to go to Iraq to begin with or to redeploy – or Afghanistan?

PETER LAUFFER: It's an incredibly important question, Amy, and we really don't have any way to have a hard figure on that total.

But, anecdotally -- as I did the research for the book and talked to one after another of these soldiers rejecting the mission -- anecdotally, I would have to say the numbers are big and growing because they talk to me about members of their unit who, even if they're not overtly rejecting the war by disobeying orders, or going AWOL, or deserting, or filing for conscientious objector status, they are grumbling.

They're over there unhappy with what is going on, displeased with the policy; and they're opposing the war.

MORE:

“He And His Whole Platoon Don't Want To Go Back”

16 June 2006 By Medea Benjamin, Truthout Interview [Excerpt]

Diane Wilson, a founding member of CODEPINK, announced at the Mother's Day peace vigil in Washington, DC, on May 14 that she was going on a hunger strike to bring the troops home from Iraq and invited others to join her. The Troops Home Fast, which will begin on July 4, has already attracted hundreds of supporters.

Medea: Do you have family members fighting in Iraq?

Diane: I've got nephews there, and my daughter's fiancé is a gunner who already served in Iraq and is about to be sent back again.

He told me about the checkpoints, how they once shot up an innocent family.

He's totally traumatized.

When I told him about the fast idea, he encouraged me to do it.

He and his whole platoon don't want to go back.

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

Death Number 2500: He Was More Than A Number

June 16, 2006 By John Hoellwarth, Army Times staff writer [Excerpts]

The 2,500th member of the U.S. armed forces killed since the war in Iraq began is a Marine from California, the Defense Department announced today.

Cpl. Michael Estrella, of Hemet, was killed June 14 during combat operations in Anbar Province, Iraq, the Defense Department said.

A field radio operator by military specialty, Estrella was assigned to India Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, at the time of his death. His unit has been in Iraq since March.

Estrella was on his second combat deployment when he was killed.

The U.S. suffered its 2,000th casualty in late October, when statistical data showed that more than half of the fallen were under age 25.

Estrella, at 20, had already earned the Combat Action Ribbon, National Defense Medal, Afghanistan and Iraq Campaign Medals, and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal at the time of his death.

Injured Soldier

6.12.06 WEAU

An Eau Claire Memorial graduate and former teacher is in a German hospital after being injured in a roadside bomb attack in Iraq.

Petty Officer First Class Dean Berlin suffered four cracked bones in his back, cracked bones in his neck and a broken shoulder, according to his father, Cecil.

Cecil Berlin says his son is expected to be transferred back to the United States Friday. At that time, he, along with Petty Officer Berlin's wife, Amy, and their four children will come to visit after receiving the news late Monday.

"I could hardly understand him," Berlin's father said. "I asked if he was sick. He said there was a problem. I said roadside bomb? He said yes."

Berlin's wife and children currently live in Rock Falls in Dunn county.

Eyewitness To Blast That Injured CBS News Team

June 8, 2006 Bucks County Courier Times [Excerpt]

LANDSTUHL, Germany

Sitting in a hospital room at the large Army Regional Medical Center here, Specialist Kenneth Snipes talks about what he remembers of the car bomb that ripped through the convoy in which he was riding in Baghdad last week.

The 22-year-old soldier from Lakeview, S.C., a member of the 112th Infantry out of Fort Hood, Texas, had been on convoy duty before. It was routine, if one could believe that there was anything routine about driving in a convoy in Baghdad.

Riding convoys is the most hazardous duty in Iraq. Every convoy is a potential target for the insurgents' roadside bombs. Their IEDs (improvised explosive devices) are their major means of inflicting casualties upon U.S. and coalition forces.

They lack the numbers and firepower to stand and fight, so they use electronic devices to detonate lethal bombs from afar as a convoy drives by. [He gets it, unlike the idiots who yowl about cowardly Iraqis.]

Snipes remembers that the convoy had stopped a couple of times, and soldiers had gotten out of the vehicles to check the area.

On the last such stop, he later learned, a nearby parked vehicle, apparently packed with explosives, was detonated. His back was toward the vehicle, about 20 or 25 meters away, when he heard the blast. He instinctively turned his head in its direction and the explosion slammed into his face.

His mouth and nose were severely damaged. He lost some teeth. He didn't want to be photographed. He had difficulty speaking.

He was not the only casualty.

Other soldiers were hit, two members of a CBS-TV news team were killed and reporter Kimberly Dozier was seriously injured.

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



U.S. soldiers at the scene after a car bomb exploded in Mosul, May 31, 2006. (Khaled al-Mosy/Reuters)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

G.I. Sniper Found And Killed

6.15.06 New York Daily News

An Army sniper was discovered in his hiding place and killed by enemy fighters in the rugged mountains of Afghanistan's Kunar province on the eve of a major U.S.-led operation to crush a Taliban uprising.

Officials have not released the soldier's name but confirmed he was from the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, N.Y.

Assorted Resistance Action

June 16, 2006 By Jason Straziuso, Associated Press & 14 June 2006, By Joan Smith.
The Seattle Post-Intelligencer

On Friday, Taliban militants attacked a coalition patrol in southern Uruzgan province, forcing troops to retreat to a nearby compound to fire back with mortars and call in air support, said coalition spokesman Maj. Quentin Innis. No soldiers were hurt, although it was unclear whether there were any casualties among the militants.

A coalition convoy also was ambushed in nearby Zabul province but no casualties were reported, he said.

The Taliban are back. Less than five years after British and US troops drove them out of Afghanistan, they are launching increasingly audacious attacks, including an ambush of British troops in Helmand province last weekend.

“The Taliban Have Gone From Operating In Company-Size Units Of About 100 Men Last Year To Battalion-Size Units Of About 400 Men This Year”

June 18, 2006 By Thomas E. Ricks, Washington Post Staff Writer

As fighting in Afghanistan has intensified over the past three months, the U.S. military has conducted 340 airstrikes there, more than twice the 160 carried out in the much higher-profile war in Iraq, according to data from the Central Command, the U.S. military headquarters for the Middle East.

The airstrikes appear to have increased in recent days as the United States and its allies have launched counteroffensives against the Taliban in the south and southeast, strafing and bombing a stronghold in Uruzgan province and pounding an area near Khost with 500-pound bombs.

The airstrikes between early March and late May concentrated on two areas -- the provinces of the south-central mountains that are the Taliban's major redoubt and eastern Afghanistan near the border with Pakistan, where al-Qaeda and its allies

operate. But U.S. warplanes have also hit targets near the capital of Kabul, near the main U.S. base at Bagram, and near other major cities such as Jalalabad and Ghazni.

The attacks have been executed by aircraft ranging from large B-52 bombers to small Predator drones, and have employed attacks including 2,000-pound bombs and strafing.

Retired Army Gen. Barry McCaffrey, who recently returned from a visit to Afghanistan, said the Taliban have gone from operating in company-size units of about 100 men last year to battalion-size units of about 400 men this year.

The enemy in Afghanistan is "adaptive" and "very smart," Freakley said. One tactic they have used lately to counter U.S. dominance in the air is to withdraw, when fighting, into compounds where civilians are located, which has resulted in civilian deaths in two sets of airstrikes near Kandahar.

The spate of recent civilian deaths caused by the bombing has hurt the U.S. image in Afghanistan.

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)

Big Surprise! **U.S. Occupation Relies On Local Rapists, Torturers And Mass Murderers**

6.16.06 Boston Globe

A sensitive United Nations report that has been shelved for the past 18 months accuses leading Afghan politicians and officials of orchestrating massacres, torture, mass rape and other war crimes in the country over 23 years of conflict.

Human rights activists involved in producing the report say that the international body has been worried about identifying former warlords who are now in positions of power and who could upset Afghanistan's fragile political balance.

Among those identified in the report are an ethnic Uzbek warlord whom President Hamid Karzai appointed as an adviser and several former mujahideen commanders who were elected last fall to the country's new parliament

“They Do Not Have The Right To Shoot At Afghans. Let Them Shoot At People In Their Own Country, Not Here”

3.25.06 Socialist Worker (Canada)

“I don't hate Canadians. But I cannot forgive them. You cannot come to our country and kill us.”

These were the heart-rending words of Semen Gul, grieving widow of Nasrat Ali Hassan, gunned down by Canadian troops in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

“You say sorry” she said to the journalist from the Toronto Star. “What does sorry mean to me? Will sorry feed my children?”

This weekend the Toronto Star reported that Nasrat Mi Hassan, a 45-year- old tin pot maker and father of six, was shot and killed without warning by Canadian troops, while returning to his home in a rickshaw with his family.

In the post-shooting spin control, military officials played the terrorism card, telling the Globe and Mail that “. . .former Taliban and other insurgents (were) eager to exploit any incident in order to incite violence against coalition troops” and reiterating the insulting racist notion that Afghans were incapable of rebuilding their country without western help.

To appease outraged Afghans and Canadians alike, the soldier who fired on Hassan and his family was removed from duty pending investigation, and the death was antiseptically conveyed to the media as “regrettable”.

Semen Gul, Hassans bereaved wife, made a point of telling the Toronto Star that she did not think all Canadians were bad. But in the midst of her anguish, she asked hard questions: if “sorry” was going to feed her children, and why troops were behaving as if all Afghans were Al-Qaeda or Taliban.

She maintained that if the Canadians had given any kind of warning, the rickshaw driver would have stopped.

“They do not have the right to shoot at Afghans. Let them shoot at people in their own country, not here,” she told the Star.

Tuesday March 14, Nasrat Au Hassan was driving a motorized rickshaw coming back, with his family, from dinner at the home of a relative in Kandahar, Afghanistan. There were seven people packed in with him.

As it rounded a corner, in the black of night, a Canadian-staffed road block was just 15 metres away. Somehow, the Canadians saw this rickshaw as a threat, even though its top speed is a hardly threatening 20 kilometres per hour.

The Toronto Star quoted Hassan’s widow Semen Gul saying; “I lived for many years in Iran. I know all about police checkpoints. We were not stopped by the Afghans. And there was no warning shot from the Canadians, no shouting, no shots fired in the air, no light shining on us. There was only this sudden gunfire, three shots, and my husband falling out of the rickshaw into the street.”

There are conflicting reports about what happened next. According to one source, her husband lay bleeding to death on the street for 15 minutes, while Canadian soldiers remained holed up behind the checkpoint. According to another source, a Canadian medic did attend to the fallen man, but determined that his injuries were not life-threatening.

All agree, however, that the Canadians did nothing to get the wounded man to a hospital. He was taken there eventually, not by the Canadian troops who had shot him, but by Afghan police.

TROOP NEWS

**“When I Was In Iraq, We Were Killing Innocent People For Oil”
“It Was Obvious They Didn’t Want Us There”**

Jun 18 By CAROLYN THOMPSON, Associated Press Writer

A group of American military deserters publicly embraced their new lives in Canada on Saturday with the support of “peace mom” Cindy Sheehan, who said she wished the son she lost in Iraq was among them.

“They’re trying to deport me,” said Darrell Anderson of Lexington, Ky., who arrived in Canada by way of Niagara Falls in January 2005. He spent seven months in Iraq with the Army’s 1st Armored Division and received a purple heart following a roadside bomb attack before deciding during a leave he would not go back.

“When I was in Iraq, we were killing innocent people for oil. It was obvious they didn’t want us there,” said Anderson, 24, who is petitioning to remain in Canada.

The gathering at a park in the town of Fort Erie, across the border from Buffalo, N.Y., was organized by peace groups on both sides of the border.

“They say we’re traitors, we’re deserters,” said former Marine Chris Magaoay, 20, of the Hawaiian island of Maui.

“No, I’m a Marine and I stand up for what I believe in, and I believe the Constitution of the United States of America is being pushed aside as a scrap piece of paper.”

The soldiers thanked Canadians for their hospitality and were cheered by about 100 in an audience that included Iraq veterans opposed to the war and Vietnam-era resisters who sought refuge in Canada decades earlier.

Sheehan, who energized the anti-war movement last summer with her monthlong protest outside President Bush’s Texas ranch, said she has spent time with many of the resisters.

“They’re moral human beings who don’t want to go to Iraq and kill innocent people to line the pockets of George Bush and the war machine,” she said.

Mission Rejected: U.S. Soldiers Who Say No To Iraq

06/15/06 Democracy Now! [Excerpts]

Jeremy Hinzman, a veteran of the war in Afghanistan who fled to Canada to avoid fighting in Iraq; Aidan Delgado, who became a conscientious objector after fighting in Iraq; and Camilo Mejia, the first Iraq War veteran sent to prison for refusing to fight.

AMY GOODMAN: We begin with Jeremy Hinzman.

JEREMY HINZMAN: Based on all the pretenses and rationale that we – we, the U.S., gave for invading, none of them held true.

And there were no weapons, there was no link between the secular Baathists, Al Qaeda, and the fundamentalist Islamic terrorists, and the notion of installing a puppet regime doesn’t really sound like democracy to me.

And I just couldn't bring myself to kill or be killed for the sake of that.

AMY GOODMAN: Aidan Delgado.

AIDAN DELGADO: The idea to become an objector before was kind of abstract, you know, 'cause you're not really a soldier, you're just going to these weekend drills. But then when you're in war and you're seeing it face to face, it becomes much more immediate and you just can't ignore it anymore.

And, ultimately, I was at such ill ease and so miserable in the conflict doing what I was doing, that ultimately I had to, and that's when I – I turned in my weapon and said, "take this back. I want to become a conscientious objector."

AMY GOODMAN: Camilo Mejia.

CAMILO MEJIA: You see yourself in a situation where you end up doing really, really bad things, and those are the kind of things that soldiers who come home and, you know, they're, you know, they're not missing any body parts – have to deal with. You know?

I mean, you see that soldiers come home and, you know, they're not physically injured and you think they're fine and you're completely wrong. There's a lot of things that we have to deal with that people don't even know about, you know—things that we carry in our hearts and in our memory. And a lot of times soldiers don't deal with that for a long time, you know.

I see it happen too often, you know, especially when you go to prison, and you start going to see counselors and stuff like that, you know, they tell you without you even knowing it that you had P.T.S.D. and, you know, other psychological problems that you didn't know you even had. And that's one of those things, you know?

I mean, you see yourself in a hostile situation, you see somebody with a weapon and you shoot without asking questions or anything, and next thing you know you just killed a child. You know?

Or, you know, you get into a firefight and you shoot at the enemy, and then at the end, you see a lot of civilians who were caught in the middle are dead, you know, and maybe the guys who started shooting at you just got away.

So, it's a lot of stuff that, you know, you just question, you know. Once you have the time and, you know, you come to terms with what you have done, it just haunts you. For some people it happens soon, for some people it takes longer. But, you know, sooner or later, you're always accountable for your actions.

Straws In The Wind:

Glynn County, Georgia, Turns Against The War

[Thanks to D who sent this in.]

Jun 13, 2006 By JOE OVERBY, The Brunswick News

Robert Randall of Brunswick and other concerned Glynn County residents have decided enough is enough and want American forces in Iraq to come home.

"A sizable amount of people in Glynn County ... agree that we need to be getting out of Iraq," Randall said.

It is that opinion that prompted him and others to organize GlynnPeace, a group pushing for an end to the war.

Randall said he hopes GlynnPeace can be an outlet and voice for local opposition to the war.

"We're looking to become, how would you say, a magnet for that sentiment to gravitate toward," he said.

The group opposes the war in Iraq on numerous levels, including its cost in lives. The death toll has already topped 2,450, and that's just American lives, he said. Upwards of 10,000 Iraqis have died.

There is also the monetary cost of waging war, he said.

"It creates a situation where we're not able to meet the human needs that exist within our own country," Randall said.

GlynnPeace has adopted a resolution to end the U.S. military presence in Iraq and is currently looking for organizations in the community with which to discuss its plan.

"We're trying to identify groups within the community that we can go to with the resolution," Randall said.

GlynnPeace has received support from veterans who have joined their cause.

"I think it gives a first-hand perspective," said Cathy Browning, a member of GlynnPeace.

"They have seen the good, the bad and the ugly. They have come back and made a decision based on their own experiences. That gives us a direct link to what's going on."

So far, Randall said, "All the response locally has been positive."

Such a response in southeast Georgia, an area of the country known for conservatism and patriotism, may come as a surprise to some, but not to Randall.

"So far, I don't think it's presented us with any real problems beyond the problem of perception," Randall said. "Those folks (that oppose the war) think, erroneously, that they're in the minority."

The effort to influence Congress is bipartisan, he said.

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



The casket of Sgt. Daniel Gionet, St. Patrick's Church, June 16, 2006, in Pelham, N.H. Gionet, a newlywed and Army medic, was killed June 4, 2006, when an explosion hit his tank in Taji, Iraq. He was 23. (AP Photo/Cheryl Senter)

Fuck Your Sgt. Or Die?

Swift said she ended up having a sexual relationship with her immediate supervisor, but it wasn't her choice. "In a combat situation, your squad leader is deciding whether you live or die," she said in an interview with the Register-Guard newspaper on Wednesday. "If he wants you to run across a minefield, you run across a minefield."

June 15, 2006 Associated Press, EUGENE, Ore

An Oregon soldier who was arrested after refusing to deploy with her Army unit to Iraq for a second tour says she was coerced into a sexual relationship with her immediate supervisor.

Suzanne Swift, a specialist with the 54th Military Police Co. based at Fort Lewis, Wash., said three sergeants began propositioning her for sex shortly after she arrived in Iraq in February 2004.

Swift said she ended up having a sexual relationship with her immediate supervisor, but it wasn't her choice.

"In a combat situation, your squad leader is deciding whether you live or die," she said in an interview with the Register-Guard newspaper on Wednesday. "If he wants you to run across a minefield, you run across a minefield."

Swift remained in Iraq until February 2005. When her unit was redeployed to Iraq in January 2006, she refused to go and remained in Oregon, citing the harassment as a reason.

Swift's attorney, Larry Hildes, said his client's commanding officer, Lt. Col. James Switzer, assured him that he planned a criminal investigation into the harassment allegations.

Hildes said that when Swift complained to the appropriate Army authority, an equal opportunity officer, her complaints were ignored. For rejecting the sexual advances of two men, Swift said she was publicly humiliated and forced to do extra work.

Swift said she believes the military is now taking her allegations seriously. She is back in the barracks with her company, which returned in April from its second tour in Iraq.

While Swift said she didn't discuss sexual harassment with the other women in her unit, she's certain she wasn't the only one targeted.

"Nobody talks about it," she said.

Church Offers Sanctuary To Troops Who Refuse Imperial War Duty

June 15, 2006 By MIKE BARBER, Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Prompted by a Fort Lewis Army officer's decision to refuse to fight in Iraq, the First United Methodist Church of Tacoma has declared itself a sanctuary for servicemen and servicewomen who also don't want to go to Iraq.

The 300-member congregation's administrative council voted last weekend to open its doors beginning this Saturday after 1st Lt. Ehren Watada announced that he thinks the war in Iraq is illegal and that he has sought to resign his commission.

A statement from the church on Wednesday said that service members "who are unable to deploy to combat areas for reasons of conscience" can find protection behind its doors.

"Our initiative was because of Lieutenant Watada's gesture and a clear sense that we have, as a reconciling congregation, deeply involved in justice issues throughout the city, that any war, particularly this one, is inconsistent with Christian teachings," the Rev. Monty Smith said Wednesday night.

Smith said the church stands "in solidarity" with others who hold similar social-justice convictions. The church essentially is providing a protective space and resources to those contemplating whether to resist deployment to Iraq, he said.

The church, at 423 Martin Luther King Jr. Way in Tacoma's Hilltop neighborhood, has a long history of supporting social justice since opening its doors in 1876.

Ft. Sam Houston Gets Shut Off Notice For Unpaid Electricity Bills

June 16, 2006 Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO

Fort Sam Houston has received 1,300 utility service termination notices for delinquent bill payments, which officials blamed on a major budget shortfall. CPS Energy warned commanders at the post to pay \$4.2 million by Wednesday or risk losing power.

"Who would imagine us not paying our bill?" said Col. Wendy Martinson, Fort Sam Houston's garrison commander. "I worry about it. I can't sleep at night." The post, which trains medics, faces a \$26 million budget shortfall this year — a problem that officials said is symptomatic of the financial woes facing posts worldwide.

Post spokesman Phil Reidinger said CPS is working with post officials until the supplemental budget comes through.

"From my vantage point, they know we're not going anywhere," he said. "We're not going to skip town."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

18 Jun 2006 Reuters

Militants on Saturday evening ambushed and killed a policeman near his house in Najaf, 160 km (100 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Ansar al-Sunna said on Sunday it has captured an Iraqi woman translator whom it accuses of working as a spy for the US army.

"Your brothers the heroes of (the northern city of) Kirkuk were able to take hostage one of the most important collaborators of the rafida," the group said in an internet statement, using a pejorative term to refer to the Shia majority in Iraq.

"She is named Salma Jassem Hammadi and works as a translator in the large US base in Tikrit... and gathers information on the mujahedeen in Kirkuk," said the statement, the authenticity of which could not be independently verified.

The statement said the translator would be "submitted to an investigation", and that "after finishing the inquiry and taking advantage of the information" gathered, it would broadcast a video of Hammadi and another woman translator it identified only as Mayyada. It gave no further details on the second translator.

The group posted on its site photos of Hammadi apparently taken at the US base in Tikrit and a document it said was printed by "the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution".

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

87% Of Iraqis Want U.S. Troops To Get Out

6.16.06 Los Angeles Times

Iraq's prime minister says he wants Iraqis to take over security from the U.S.-led coalition in 18 months, and a recent poll found that 87 percent of ordinary Iraqis want a timeline for the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Why Doesn't The Resistance Recognize GI Peace Passports?

From: Jim H
To: vvawnet@vvaw.org [Vietnam Veterans Against The War]
Sent: June 18, 2006
Subject: Iraq peace passport?

Do you'all remember back in 1973? When there was a Peace Pass printed in Vietnamese in the VVAW [Vietnam Veterans Against The War] paper?

GI's were supposed to clip it out and carry it in Vietnam.

If captured they then present it to the enemy. It said in Vietnamese that "I am an antiwar GI," "I will not follow illegal orders," and "will not harm innocent civilians." Or something like that.

Is it time for such a thing today?

Two more GI's captured, as POW's we can only hope.

Iraq is not Vietnam, true.

But what if 1 of the factions fighting us in Iraq was to accept these Peace Passports?

What if Iran recognized Peace Passports?

There is a shooting war, and a political war. Right now I shooting war.

As a practical thing this may not do anyone any good. However if I was a POW in Iraq, I'd sure would want to try if I had one in my pocket.

But besides practical reasons, there are other reasons to do this.

How to go about doing it?

There are lots of Iraqi's in the USA where dialogue might begin and connect with who knows what faction in Iraq. And this faction might some day hold one of our guys.

HONOR THE WARRIOR, NOT THE WAR

Vietnam Veterans Against the War
Fighting for Veterans, Peace and Justice since 1967
www.vvaw.org



You Want To Stop This War? Stop Muzzling The Iraq Veterans

Comment: T

The major anti war formations have a disgraceful, disgusting track record. They have consistently, implacably, stupidly refused to put Iraq Veterans front and center as the best, most effective speakers at mass rallies against the war.

Sure they stick one or two up there for a few minutes, after the political gas bags, ego-maniacal movement “leaders,” and other assorted types in love with their own precious words bore everybody to death with their endless blathering, shrieking, tedious bullshit.

Lauffer, below, understands this reality.

As for the self-appointed “leaders” of the movement against the war, they have a different agenda: promoting themselves, and the politicians they spend so much time sucking up to. The most shameless traitors among them were out promoting Kerry for President as he was demanding another 40,000 troops be sent to Iraq.

They couldn't care less how many U.S. troops or Iraqis end up as dead meat.

If they wanted to build a movement to stop the war, they'd give it's most effective speakers the spotlight and they would at least pretend to have some interest in reaching out to active duty troops, National Guard members, and members of the armed forces reserves, who are turning against the war in ever increasing numbers.

But they have not lifted a finger to do that. The reality is that every time their lips move to babble about how much they care about the troops, they lie in their teeth. They hate and fear the troops. That's why they won't go near them. That's why they refuse to initiate any actions to reach out to them.

By their works shall ye know them, and by the works of these fakers, know that they betray the cause, over, and over, and over again.

06/15/06 Democracy Now! [Excerpts]

Peter Lauffer is author of this new book called: Mission Rejected: U.S. Soldiers Who Say No to Iraq. He was a Vietnam war resister and a former NBC news correspondent.

“You cannot impugn the credibility of those who signed up for the military, served, and come back and say this was wrong, the same way you can impugn the point of view, say, of you and me if we stand on the street corner with a sign that says stop the war.

“We’re different than those who come back.

“Their credibility is phenomenal in the argument against the war.”

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

Book Review:

“Continuous, Inescapable Combat Will Drive 98 Percent Of All Men Insane”

“The Other 2 Percent Were Crazy When They Got There”

From: David Honish, Veterans For Peace

To: GI Special

Sent: June 15, 2006 Subject: BOOK REVIEW

“What Jim had seen tallied with the studies conducted after the Second World War by military historian General S.L.A. Marshall. He interviewed thousands of American infantrymen and concluded that only 15 to 20 percent of them had actually shot to kill. The rest had fired high or not fired at all, busying themselves however else they could.

“And 98 percent of the soldiers who did shoot to kill were later found to have been deeply traumatized by their actions. The other 2 percent were diagnosed as "aggressive psychopathic personalities," who basically didn't mind killing people under any circumstances, at home or abroad.

“The conclusion, in the words of LTC Dave Grossman of the Killology Research Group, was that "there is something about continuous, inescapable combat which

will drive 98 percent of all men insane, and the other 2 percent were crazy when they got there."

The preceding is an excerpt from the book "The Men Who Stare At Goats," by Jon Ronson.

It is a sometimes amusing, sometimes creepy, and always interesting book on a very serious subject. It is a true story of one officer's quest, at Army expense, to find healing for his Viet Nam experience.

His two year study of every available form of alternative therapy resulted in the writing of the Army's "First Earth Battalion Manual."

This was not a traditional Army manual with measured objectives. First Earth Battalion was seen as one possible course of action, to which the Army leadership was exposed.

This resulted in two divergent schools of thought, dubbed the white ninjas and the black ninjas.

The black ninjas evolved into the psyops and intell folks that ordered the "softening for interrogation" of the prisoners at Gitmo, Abu Ghraib, and elsewhere. Also examined are the roots of such torture in the CIA's 1950's MK-ULTRA program of "terminal interrogation" of subjects with the use of drugs.

Infrasonic weapons capable of inducing "mind control," diarrhea, or even death are discussed. It is speculated that such weapons are currently in use in Iraq, and perhaps also against dissidents in the USA as well?

This book is 259 pages that you will be glad that you went to the library or book store to get a copy of it.

“We, The Occupied, Know Very Well That Occupiers Speak A Different Language From Us”

June 14, 2006 Haifa Zangana, guardian.co.uk [Excerpt]

Occupiers choose to see the people in the occupied country through their handmade filters. Occupiers often speak a different language to those occupied. Their power is an amalgam of military might, arrogance and ignorance, and this has manifested itself openly during Bush's visit to the green zone.

In the next few days, occupation military spokesman will issue a series of statements reporting the success of their assault on Baghdad. We will be told that “insurgents” and “terrorists” have been killed.

We, the occupied, know very well that occupiers speak a different language from us. For instance, women and children killed in the Haditha massacre and many other places in occupied Iraq were called “insurgents” and “terrorists”.

Running On Empty: **“A Fundamental Misunderstanding Of The Nature Of War Itself”**

[Thanks to Lee Sustar, for sending this in. He writes: This is part of laying the groundwork for a post-Iraq debacle comeback for US imperialism--how about a national service requirement, with military or civilian tasks, to repackage the draft? Almost certainly linked with a let's-rebuild-America rhetoric during the next recession from a Kerry or McCain.]

And the ground forces proposed both in that budget and in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review would support a long-term deployment of only about 18 brigade combat teams (each comprising about 3,500 troops). At the height of the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, by contrast, the United States had more than 20 brigade combat teams deployed to combat zones, and even these were not enough to pacify and rebuild those countries.

By Frederick W. Kagan, Jul/Aug 2006 Foreign Affairs [Excerpts]

The cuts of the late 1990s had made it difficult for the military to retain experienced and talented officers in all of the services. After taking office, Bush and Rumsfeld, following the advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, proposed to address this problem by investing in military quality-of-life initiatives: pay raises and improvements to health care, housing, military schools, and so on.

The idea was to encourage skilled service members to delay retirement by closing the gap in quality of life between the military and civilian society.

According to a recent report by the Government Accountability Office, the cost of compensation for the active-duty military has risen by 29 percent since 2000, driven in large measure by a 69 percent increase in military health-care expenses. It now costs an average of \$112,000 to maintain one service member on active duty for one year, and the total annual compensation cost for the active-duty force, which was \$123 billion in 2000, had grown to \$158 billion by 2004.

Such numbers make it all too easy to argue that personnel increases are just too expensive.

This is not to argue that quality-of-life improvements were not necessary to help the military retain its senior personnel; they were. But they were not sufficient to address the general manpower shortage.

The quality of life enjoyed by U.S. troops is affected just as dramatically by the length of their combat tours as it is by their housing, salaries, and health care. Solving one problem at the expense of the other is unlikely to succeed -- indeed, it has not: high numbers of young officers have begun leaving the force despite the new incentives.

Over the long term, it seems certain that the repeated and back-to-back deployments made necessary by the military's ground-troop shortage will erode morale (and therefore recruiting and retention rates) faster than quality-of-life improvements will restore it. Maintaining a skilled, motivated volunteer military requires addressing both aspects of the problem.

Unless the United States rapidly withdraws from Iraq, moreover, there is no sign of relief on the horizon. Although the administration has permitted the army to maintain nearly 30,000 extra soldiers in its ranks for the past several years, the president's budget for next year requires the army to shed those additional troops.

And the ground forces proposed both in that budget and in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review would support a long-term deployment of only about 18 brigade combat teams (each comprising about 3,500 troops).

At the height of the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, by contrast, the United States had more than 20 brigade combat teams deployed to combat zones, and even these were not enough to pacify and rebuild those countries.

It is hardly a secret that the U.S. Army and the Marine Corps are short on troops; senior officers and analysts regularly refer to the problem when discussing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan or when explaining U.S. options -- or the lack thereof.

Lieutenant General John Vines, who stepped down as commander of U.S. ground forces in Iraq at the beginning of this year, has pointed out that many U.S. soldiers are now on their third or fourth tour of duty in Iraq. "The war has been going on nearly as long as the Second World War and we're asking a lot of the forces," he said in April.

What is hard to understand is why Washington has steadfastly refused to address the issue.

The decision to develop a method of war that relies for success primarily on identifying and destroying targets rather than occupying territory therefore reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of war itself.

Such a method focuses too much effort on what should be a subordinate part of war -- destruction -- and ignores other critical aspects of war, without which that destruction itself has little meaning.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

It's Official! **Imperial Democrats And Republicans Vote 98-1 To Keep On Killing More U.S. Troops And Iraqis: Part 1**

6.15.06 Iraqwar

The Senate Thursday sent President Bush an emergency spending bill meeting his funding requests for America's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The 98-1 vote on the \$94.5 billion House-Senate compromise legislation gave much-needed funds to support U.S. troops overseas [translation: to make it possible to go on killing more U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.]

Only Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., voted against it.

The bill would bring to almost \$320 billion the tally for the campaign in Iraq and \$89 billion for the one in Afghanistan.

MORE:

It's Official! **Imperial Democrats And Republicans Vote 93-6 To Keep On**

Killing More U.S. Troops And Iraqis: Part 2

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in. He writes: **NO ONE IN THEIR CAMP WANTS AN IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OR AN IMMEDIATE END TO THE WAR:** *"In both the House and Senate, Democrats appear to be divided into three camps. Some want troops to leave Iraq this year. Others object to setting any kind of timetable. A number of them want the United States to start redeploying forces by year's end but don't want to set a date when all troops should be out."*]

June 16, 2006 By Liz Sidoti, Associated Press

The Senate soundly rejected a call to withdraw combat troops by year's end by shelving a proposal that would allow "only forces that are critical to completing the mission of standing up Iraqi security forces" to remain in Iraq in 2007.

That vote was 93-6, but Democrats assailed the Republican maneuver that led to the vote as political gamesmanship and promised further debate next week on a proposal to start redeploying troops this year.

In both the House and Senate, Democrats appear to be divided into three camps. Some want troops to leave Iraq this year. Others object to setting any kind of timetable. A number of them want the United States to start redeploying forces by year's end but don't want to set a date when all troops should be out.

Bush Has A New Iraq Plan: Get The Collaborators To Come Up With A New Iraq Plan

June 18, 2006 Rosa Brooks, Los Angeles Times [Excerpt]

FINALLY! The Bush administration has a plan for Iraq.

A new one, I mean. The old plan — accept flowers from grateful Iraqis, locate WMD, create democracy and the rule of law, depart in five months — had definite appeal, but it didn't work out.

The new plan is that we're going to get the Iraqis to come up with a plan.

That's why the president paid a surprise visit to Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Maliki this week. Perhaps sensing that Maliki's response to a cheery "See you shortly!" from George W. Bush might be something along the lines of "Not if I see you first," Bush dropped in on Baghdad's Green Zone unannounced, giving Maliki only five minutes' notice of his arrival.

That's leadership for you. As the president explained: "One reason I went to Iraq yesterday, no matter how secretive the trip was, was to get a firsthand feel for how those people are thinking over there.... I understand leadership.... You've got to have a plan. And that's what I found in Iraq."

In fact, he found that the Iraqis have a "plan to succeed," "a robust plan" and "a plan to improve security." They also have a "plan to bring militias and other armed groups under government control," a plan a "plan ... to improve the Iraqi judicial system," "a plan to revitalize the Iraqi economy" and "plans on electricity and energy."

The president may have mentioned other nifty Iraqi plans too, but after I got past 20 references to the word "plan" in the transcript of Bush's post-Baghdad news conference, I lost count. (The president also managed to use some form of the word "success" 33 times.)

But let's not get distracted here.

The bottom line, for you doubters, is that Bush really does have a new Iraq plan. It consists of making it "clear to the government there that ... it's really up to them to put a plan in place and execute it."

Now is that a plan or what?

Americans Fed Up With Rumsfeld: He's As Unpopular As Bush

June 15, 2006 By Nancy Benac, Associated Press

While Rumsfeld still may have Bush in his corner, people seem to have grown disenchanted with his job performance. Folksy and confident, Rumsfeld was wildly popular in the months after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and the rapid victory in Afghanistan.

Four years ago, roughly two-thirds of Americans approved of his job performance; those numbers had slipped to 42 percent by this January and to just a third by April, making him about as unpopular as his boss.

LIAR

TRAITOR SOLDIER-KILLER DOMESTIC ENEMY UNFIT FOR COMMAND



March 28, 2006 REUTERS/Yuri Gripas

GEORGE BUSH: POLITICAL GENIUS The Commander-in-Chief Speaks

June 15, 2006 By Nedra Pickler, Associated Press

President Bush, just back from Iraq, dismissed calls for a U.S. withdrawal as election-year politics and refused to give a timetable or benchmark for success that would allow troops to come home.

He defended the decision not to tell the prime minister that the U.S. president was in his country until five minutes before they met *and denied that it was because of any concern about [Prime Minister] al-Maliki's inner circle.*

"I'm a high-value target *for some,*" Bush said. "I think if there was ample notification that I was coming, perhaps it would have given somebody a chance to plan, and we just didn't want to take that risk."

[OK, he says he's not worried about the Iraqi government killing him, or worried about them tipping off the insurgents. Subtracting those possibilities, who else is

left in Baghdad that might consider him a “high value target”? Other than Iraqis? Well, there’s the officers and enlisted ranks of the United States armed forces in Iraq. You’re afraid of the troops? Say it ain’t so, George.]

Bush Says He Will Disrupt Rumsfeld, Cheney, Rice & Blair

June 15, 2006 By Nedra Pickler, Associated Press

“The terrorists are vulnerable, and we will strike their network and disrupt their operations and continue to bring their leaders to justice,” Bush said.

ACLU Goes After The “True Threats To Our Country”

June 15, 2006 By Lolita C. Baldor, Associated Press

The American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit in federal court Wednesday demanding more information about a Defense Department database that collected information on anti-war groups and U.S. citizens.

The lawsuit asks that the Defense Department turn over records it collected in its TALON database, a system developed by the Air Force in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks as a way to collect information about possible terrorist threats.

“These actions violate the rule of law and strike a severe blow against our Constitution.” Steven Brown, executive director of the ACLU chapter in Rhode Island, noted the lawsuit was filed as Rhode Island lawmakers are considering legislation that could give state and local police expanded access to residents’ telephone and Internet records.

“The sooner that government officials understand that monitoring First Amendment activity is none of its business, the safer we will be from true threats to our country,” Brown said.

Vultures Gather Around Somalia; Elite Scum In Nearby Nations Want To Invade

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in. He writes. I CAN HEAR THE LIBERALS NOW: YOU NEED PEACEKEEPS BECAUSE YOU ARE TOO DUMB AND TOO ISLAMIC TO RULE YOURSELVES PROPERLY...]

Jun 15 By MOHAMED OLAD HASSAN, Associated Press Writer

Hundreds of supporters of the Islamic group that holds Somalia's capital and much of the south demonstrated Thursday against a proposal to deploy foreign peacekeepers.

A day earlier, the country's weak transitional parliament approved the deployment of Ugandan and Sudanese peacekeepers to help it establish stability and its authority.

That could set the government up for a confrontation with the Islamic fighters, who have repeatedly rejected the idea of foreign troops.

The Islamic group, accused by the United States of harboring al-Qaida, portrays itself as free of links to Somalia's past turmoil and capable of bringing order and unity.

Received:

“The Path OUT!”

From: N
To: GI Special
Sent: June 18, 2006
Subject: The path to success (in Iraq)

The Secretary of the US Navy, at the Naval War College in Rhode Island: "My question to the panel is, What is the path to success in Iraq?"

My answer:

The path OUT!

“This Man I Would Like To Meet”

From: JM
To: GI Special
Sent: June 16, 2006
Subject: Comment

“When The Leaders Of The West Today Talk About ‘Human Rights’, The Only Human Right They Really Care For Is The Right To Property” -- Al-Intiqad’s Interview With Swedish Activist And Writer Jan Myrdal:

Terrific.

This man I would like to meet.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

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http://robinlea.com/GI_Special/; <http://imagineaworldof.blogspot.com/>; <http://gi-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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