

GI SPECIAL 4F23:

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. Army soldiers keep a watch in Ramadi, June 19, 2006. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

Military Families Have Had Enough: “I Think We Need To Get Out Of There. People Are Getting Killed Needlessly”

June 21, 2006 By Kimberly Hefling, Associated Press [Excerpts]

JOHNSTOWN, Pa.

While Staff Sgt. Randy Myers was dodging roadside bombs in Iraq, his congressman was calling the war a lost cause.

At a welcome home ceremony this week for Myers and other troops from the Johnstown, Pa.-based 876th Engineer Battalion, the crowd cheered when a Murtha aide welcomed the troops on the congressman's behalf.

Myers said he backs Murtha, an opinion echoed by a number of other troops and their families. Several share his frustration with the conflict.

“I’m not sure we’re doing a whole lot of good,” Myers, 46, said of the U.S. presence in Iraq. “Everybody thinks we are. We’re trying to, but we’re not going to change what they want to do, and if they don’t want to change, they’re not gonna.”

Doubts about Iraq have surfaced in the region. A Quinnipiac University Poll released Wednesday found that 25 percent in southwest Pennsylvania said all troops should be withdrawn from Iraq, while 38 percent in Pittsburgh and its surrounding suburbs said they should all be withdrawn.

“I would like them out of there,” said Bonnie Shable, 53, whose husband, Army Sgt. 1st Class James Shable, served in Vietnam and Iraq and returned home with the battalion this week.

“I think we’ve done what we’re going to do over there and it’s time for everybody to come home.”

“I just believe everything he says is very true,” said Cindy Saylor, 49, whose 19-year-old son was among those who returned home.

“I think we need to get out of there. People are getting killed needlessly.”

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

MARINE DIES FROM WOUNDS IN AL ANBAR

6/26/2006 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 6/26/2006

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq: A Marine assigned to Regimental Combat Team 5 died from wounds sustained due to enemy action while operating in Al Anbar Province today.

Washington State Soldier Dies Of April 11 Wounds

June 26, 2006 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 603-06

Pfc. Devon J. Gibbons, 19, of Port Orchard, Wash., died on June 23, in the Brooke Army Medical Center, San Antonio, Texas, of injuries sustained on April 11 when an improvised explosive device detonated near his Bradley Fighting Vehicle during combat operations in Taji, Iraq.

Gibbons was assigned to the 10th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

Father's Day Letter Precedes Oregon Soldier's Death; "It's Time For Our Troops To Come Home"

June 20, 2006 SUZANNE PARDINGTON, The Oregonian

MILWAUKIE, OREGON

22-year-old Milwaukie soldier known for his big grin and love of hunting and fishing died Friday in an ambush in Iraq.

The day before he was killed, the family of Army Spc. Robert Jones received a brief letter telling his father that he loved and missed him. He couldn't find a Father's Day card in Iraq, Jones explained.

"I couldn't ask for a better father than you," he wrote. "I just want to say thank you."

On Friday, Jones and other soldiers on patrol in Baghdad walked into an ambush. Jones died instantly in an explosion, according to a military spokesman.

When Jerry and Brenda Dowell came home to their Milwaukie apartment on Saturday evening, relatives and a military officer and chaplain were waiting with the bad news: Their son was gone.

As soon as she saw the military uniforms, Brenda fell to her knees with her head on the ground, screaming, "No!"

He is the 59th soldier with ties to Oregon to die in the current conflicts in Iraq and the Middle East.

Family friend Kathy Walker said the Dowells were overwhelmed with grief and did not want to talk publicly Monday about their son.

Jones, who was called Bobby, graduated from Rex Putnam High School in 2002, Walker said. He joined the military in 2003 because he wanted to serve his country and get help paying for college.

"He was scared, but he wanted to stand up for his country," said his aunt, Gloria Rehart. "He was very proud to be a soldier. He wanted to fight for his country."

He served with Company C of the Army's 40th Engineers Battalion. His service included stops in Germany and Kuwait.

Rehart and Walker shared memories of Jones on Monday.

He loved being active, especially hunting and fishing with his father and brother, they said. He liked sports but didn't play on school teams. He spent a lot of time with his tight-knit family.

"He was a perfect child; a child anyone would love to have," Rehart said. "He picked people up when they were down."

Because his father is disabled, Jones helped support the family financially. When he was home on leave in April, he bought his mother a computer so she could communicate with him overseas and know that he was OK.

He and his 20-year-old brother, Jerry Jones, were very close and wanted to start their own business together someday.

"No matter where Bobby went, he had a grin from ear to ear," Walker said. "You just think about him, and there's always a story to make you smile."

He recently signed up for two more years, and it was his second tour in Iraq. He was supposed to be there for only about a month to give other soldiers a break, Walker said. He was then expected to return to Kuwait, where he had served before coming home for a three-week leave that ended April 18.

"It's time for our troops to come home," Rehart said. "Everybody pray to bring them home safely."

A memorial service has not be scheduled. Donations are being accepted at Washington Mutual branches for an account in Brenda Dowell's name.

Willis Soldier Killed On Second Tour Of Duty In War Zone:

“I Didn’t Think They Would Send Him Back Again After He Had Already Been There A Year”

June 21, 2006 By ARMANDO VILLAGRANCA, Houston Chronicle

For the past two days, Maria Catalina Ramirez's living room in Willis has become more sanctuary than home as family members gather to pray, recite the rosary and comfort the 47-year-old mother who lost her son over the weekend to a bomb blast in Iraq.

"I feel like my heart has been cut open. All I feel is pain," she said Tuesday.

Army Sgt. Reyes Ramirez, 23, was killed Saturday when an improvised explosive device blew up near his vehicle in Ar Ramadi, Iraq. It was his second tour of duty in the war-torn country, his mother said.

"It's so hard because I didn't think they would send him back again after he had already been there a year," she said. "I just want to die."

Ramirez was assigned to the 40th Engineer Battalion in Baumholder, Germany.

A graduate of Willis High School, Ramirez joined the Army when he was 18. He had served a year in Iraq when he posted in Germany.

In her living room, Maria Catalina Ramirez built a small altar for her son. The altar is quite simple, she said. It has a single candle, a crucifix and La Virgen de Guadalupe. Amid the religious items are two photos of Ramirez, one in uniform taken in Iraq and the other in civilian clothes in Germany.

During his last trip home in February, the mother said, Ramirez spent time with his family, which included his father, Marco Julio Ramirez, and his 21-year-old sister, Maricela.

The mother said she noticed changes: He was harder than he had been in previous visits. She said he would not say much about the war because he didn't want her to worry.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Helicopter Down, Pilot Killed

June 24, 2006 By Martin Weil, Washington Post Staff Writer

A high school wrestling teammate remembered Heathe Craig as someone who was constantly ready with a helping hand.

Craig, 28, an Army staff sergeant, was offering that helping hand in Afghanistan on Wednesday when, according to the Pentagon, something went wrong with his evacuation helicopter and he was killed.

Craig grew up in Mechanicsville, Va., near Richmond, and was one of the better wrestlers in his area while a student at Mechanicsville's Lee-Davis High School.

"He was a great wrestler, great guy," said teammate Ryan Miles. "A good friend, and a good teammate" who was "always there to support anybody who needed it."

In his junior year, Craig was 16-6 in the 119-pound class.

He had wanted to fly helicopters since he joined the Army and was close to qualifying as a pilot, his grandfather Daniel Sloan said last night. "He was happy at his work, and he enjoyed it," he said.

The Pentagon said that another soldier, Pfc. Brian J. Bradbury, 22, of St. Joseph, Mo., was in combat near Naray, Afghanistan, and died after encountering enemy small-arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades.

Craig, who listed his home town as Severn, according to the Pentagon, died "when his UH-60 helicopter hoist malfunctioned" while attempting to evacuate Bradbury.

Craig was assigned to the 159th Air Ambulance Medical Company, based in Wiesbaden, Germany.

Craig was married and lived in Germany, his grandfather said. He and his wife, Judith, had a son and a daughter.

Survivors include his mother and father and a brother, according to the grandfather.

"He grew up," his grandfather said last night, "to be a man. That's all I can say."

TWO FOREIGN SOLDIERS KILLED, ONE WOUNDED IN PANJWAYI; NATIONALITY NOT ANNOUNCED

6/25/2006 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 06-06-02CE & 26/06/06 TINI TRAN, Associated Press

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan: Two Coalition members died and one was injured June 24 as Afghan and Coalition forces battled enemy small arms and

rocket propelled grenade fire for four hours in the Panjwayi District of Kandahar Province.

The joint force was conducting combat operations as part of Operation Mountain Thrust.

Foreign Soldier Killed In Pech: Nationality Not Announced

26/06/06 TINI TRAN, Associated Press

A U.S. led coalition soldier has been killed fighting insurgents in eastern Afghanistan.

The soldier was fatally wounded Sunday during combat operations in the Pech district of Kunar province, the U.S.-led coalition said in a statement.

His nationality was not released pending notification of his family.

“There Is An Awful Feeling That Everything Is Lurching Downward”

Occupation Regimes Losing Confidence In U.S. Oil Company Man Running Afghan Government

June 26, 2006 By Pamela Constable, The Washington Post Company [Excerpts]

Many Afghans and some foreign supporters say they are losing faith in President Hamid Karzai's government, which is besieged by an escalating insurgency and endemic corruption and is unable to protect or administer large areas of the country.

While no one is suggesting that any imminent withdrawal of foreign military or economic support is likely, some European governments -- which do not share Washington's investment in Afghanistan as a role model for a modern Muslim democracy -- have begun to question the wisdom of costly long-term economic commitments and the risk of ongoing high battlefield casualties.

"There is an awful feeling that everything is lurching downward," said a Western diplomat, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

"Nearly five years on, there is no rule of law, no accountability. The Afghans know it is all a charade, and they see us as not only complicit but actively involved. You cannot fight a terror war and build a weak state at the same time, and it was a terrible mistake to think we could."

Aides to Karzai said the president has been unfairly criticized.

The aides said that while Afghans have a right to be impatient with the slow pace of institutional reforms and alarmed by the growing insurgent threat, the foreign powers often failed to treat Karzai as a legitimate president and tried to micromanage his government.

In case you missed it someplace along the way, the U.S. employee running the Afghan collaborator "government," which governs nothing, is the above mentioned Hamid Karzai, a former employee of Unocal Corporation, the parent company of Union Oil Company of California. T

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR; RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



An Afghan citizen holds his hands up to show he has no weapons before being searched by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Mathew Banaszewski from the 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division near a US fortified position on a mountain side at Helmand Province, south Afghanistan, June 21, 2006. (AP Photo/Rodrigo Abd)

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Afghans over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, butcher

their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it “sovereign,” and “detain” anybody who doesn’t like it in some prison without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.]

[The Afghans actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it’s bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You’d want that in your home town, right?]

Notes From A Lost War:

“The Provincial Capitals Have Become Like Green Zones”

[Thanks to Lee Sustar, who sent this in.]

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| <p>The lack of security is a direct consequence of the small numbers of Western forces on the ground. Quite apart from the countryside, they have failed to secure even the major cities and highways so that aid agencies can work.</p> |
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June 22, 2006 By Ahmed Rashid, The New York Review of Books [Excerpts]

It is now five years since George W. Bush declared victory in Afghanistan and said that the terrorists were smashed. Since the Bonn meeting, in late 2001, a smorgasbord of international military and development forces has been increasing in size.

How is it, then, that Afghanistan is near collapse once again?

Inside the scaffolding there is still only the barest shell.

One consequence has been a revived Taliban movement that has made a third of the country ungovernable.

NATO's supreme commander, the American general James Jones, is fond of saying that Afghanistan's main problem is drugs, not the Taliban.

At a conference in Madrid on May 17, General Jones made an impassioned plea to the twenty-six NATO countries who are sending troops to Afghanistan this summer to end the national restrictions that they impose on their own forces. There are now some seventy-one restrictions on how the forces can be used, he said, making it extremely difficult for the commander of ISAF to run an effective military campaign—whether it's winning people's sympathies or fighting the Taliban.

The American government has demanded that NATO become more active, because, I was told, the beleaguered Donald Rumsfeld is desperate to bring some American troops home by November's congressional elections.

Around three thousand of the 23,000 US troops now deployed in Afghanistan are scheduled to return home this summer and Western intelligence officials say several thousand more may depart before November.

As recently as a year ago, the main Taliban groups were composed of a few dozen fighters; now each group includes hundreds of heavily armed men equipped with motorbikes, cars, and horses.

In the south, they operate with impunity just outside the provincial capitals, which have become like Green Zones.

Approximately 1,500 Afghan security guards and civilians were killed by the Taliban last year and some three hundred already this year. There have been forty suicide bombings during the past nine months, compared to five in the preceding five years.

Some 295 US soldiers and four CIA officials have been killed in Afghanistan since September 11, 2001 —140 by hostile action.

They thus have been able to prepare increasingly deadly ambushes for Afghan and Western troops.

The lack of security is a direct consequence of the small numbers of Western forces on the ground. Quite apart from the countryside, they have failed to secure even the major cities and highways so that aid agencies can work.

The effectiveness of the American campaign against al-Qaeda, meanwhile, is itself questionable, since the group's two top leaders, Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, remain at large.

The Americans claim to have caught numerous leaders they describe as Number Three in the al-Qaeda hierarchy, although every time a Number Three is caught another seems to take his place.

In Afghanistan the biggest USAID contractor for education is Creative Associates International, a Washington, D.C.–based consulting company that has close connections to both the Pentagon and the State Department. In 2003 it received a \$60 million contract from USAID to develop primary education in Afghanistan.

The Washington Post, in recent reports, has described the failure of this project. Primary schools built at a cost of \$174,000 each could have been built by Afghan contractors for \$20,000 or less.

Bush Regime's Afghan Dictator Loses His Mind In Public

6.26.06 USA Today, June 26, 2006

Afghan President Hamid Karzai said the Taliban doesn't pose a long-term threat to his country's stability.

TROOP NEWS

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



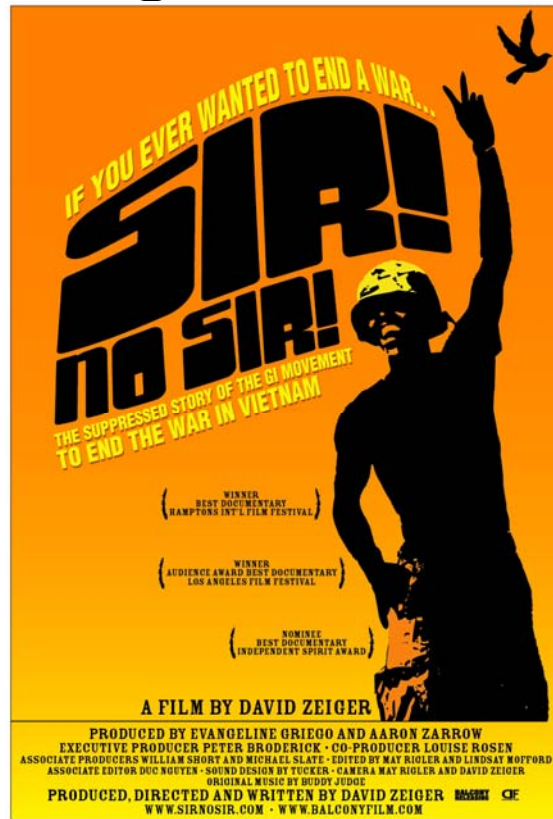
The casket of Marine Sgt. Mark Smykowski at Arlington National Cemetery June 20, 2006. Smykowski died June 6, 2006 in Al Anbar province, Iraq. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

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)

“Support Those Inside The Military Today Who Are Taking The Courageous Stand Of Opposing The Wars In Iraq And Afghanistan”



From: Sir! No Sir! David Zeiger [displaced@mindspring.com] & Celia Alario [celia@riseup.net]

To: GI Special

Sent: June 22, 2006

Subject: Important News on Sir! No Sir! DVD Release from Director David Zeiger

Dear Partners and Friends of Sir! No Sir!,

As we continue our third month of rolling out Sir! No Sir! in theaters throughout the country, I wanted to report on our progress and announce the initial release of the film on DVD July 15th.

If you've been following the web site, you know that the film has been extremely well received by the press, from Manohla Dargis of the New York Times to Kenneth Turran of the Los Angeles Times and over 50 newspapers, magazines and web sites.

Most have spoken to the particular significance of the film for the Iraq war.

This is true as well of the few who have attacked the film. As we point out on our web site at: http://www.sirnosir.com/home_filmpress_main.html you know how good your film is by who attacks it—and we've drawn a few impressive ones (like the New York Post).

Please take a minute to peruse the reviews on the site, and also go to http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/sir_no_sir/ for a wonderful overview. They make enjoyable reading.

But what's been most significant about the theatrical run so far has been the work done by all of you, and the energy and enthusiasm you have put into making this a film that can impact the political landscape of this country.

The Iraq Veterans Against the War fundraising premieres in Oakland and New York were tremendous successes, each drawing over 500 people. Several of the veterans who are in the film have spoken at dozens of screenings, along with members of IVAW and representatives of local groups.

Our campaign with IVAW and other groups to get 500 DVDs into soldiers' hands is well underway.

Recently a soldier in Iraq who does a weekly podcast devoted one whole show to Sir! No Sir! and Dave Rabbit's pirate radio show in Vietnam, Radio First Termer, and over a dozen DVDs have spread throughout his company.

And in a stunning example of life-imitating-art-imitating-life, retired Army Colonel and antiwar activist Ann Wright was detained two hours for distributing postcards at Fort McNair promoting the Washington DC run of the film. The MP who detained her said she was distributing "seditious material."

The main result of the theatrical release is that the profile and general knowledge of—and enthusiasm for—Sir! No Sir! is extremely high—but that is outstripping the actual number of people who are coming to the theaters to see the film.

This wasn't completely unexpected.

The film has played so far in over 40 cities, and through June and July will be in at least 20 more. It also opens in theaters in Canada in July. In most cities it has played for at least one week, and in some it has run up to a full month. But while the number of people who are coming to the theaters to see the film is in the tens of thousands, there are hundreds of thousands—even millions—who are now aware of and interested in the film.

So our next phase of distribution is aimed at bridging that gap.

July 15 will start the initial “limited release” of Sir! No Sir! on DVD for \$19.95+\$4.95 shipping and handling (available everywhere but in Canada).

This is “limited” in two ways.

First, it will only be for sale on our web site, www.sirnosir.com; second, it will include the film, theatrical trailer and Punk Ass Crusade flash animation—but no other extras. There will also be DVDs of Sir! No Sir! available at an institutional rate for schools, universities and libraries.

Along with the DVD, we will be selling a CD soundtrack that includes “Soldier We Love You,” Rita Martinson’s stunning anthem that rivets audiences at every screening of the film. And as part of our goal to make www.sirnosir.com the place to go for material on GI resistance past and present, we will soon be adding several books and additional films for sale there as well.

In October, our video distributor will release a retail DVD of Sir! No Sir! that will be loaded with extras, including several stories of GI resistance that didn’t make it into the film and extended scenes from other films from that time. That DVD will be available in stores and on the web everywhere.

We know that many of you will want to organize house parties and public screenings, including benefits for your organization.

We want to encourage and help make those happen, starting with the first DVD in July. For public screenings (not in a home), the activist rate will be \$100. In lieu of that, however, we are working on creating a mechanism for groups to sell DVDs at the event itself—either by setting up a computer station for online orders, or by receiving advance copies of the DVD and selling them on the spot (and retaining a portion of the selling price).

Either way, you will be able to both use and support the film, which is still far from having paid for itself.

In that light, recently Dick Underhill of Veterans for Peace proposed to us a national day of house parties and public screenings—including near (and on!) military bases—of Sir! No Sir! around the time of Veterans Day, November 11th.

I like that idea very much, and have spoken with VFP president Dave Cline and others about some preliminary ideas.

This could become a day of support for GI resisters then and now—make it a day in which the film is used in a nationally coordinated way to raise awareness of and support those inside the military today who are taking the courageous stand of opposing the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In preparation for all of this, I have a couple of questions I hope you can respond to by July 1st:**

Would you or your organization be able to help publicize the DVD release in July, on your web site with links and with email blasts?

Are you interested in sponsoring and organizing for a day of nationally coordinated screenings and events with Sir! No Sir! around Veterans Day? How would you envision a day like that?

Thank you again, and I very much look forward to hearing back from you.

David Zeiger

"Sir! No Sir!" combines exceptional artistry and insightful analysis with great story telling. This is no facile agitprop piece, but a careful dissection of a growing military rebellion that permanently altered American society, but has largely been forgotten. ~
International Documentary Magazine

Nominated for the Independent Spirit Award for Best Documentary
Audience Award Best Documentary--Los Angeles Film Festival
Jury Award Best Documentary--Hamptons International Film Festival
Seeds of War Award--Full Frame Documentary Film Festival
Jury Award Best Film on War and Peace--Vermont International Film Festival
Nominated for a Gotham Award and International Documentary Association Award

Sir! No Sir!:
At A Theatre Near You!
To find it: <http://www.sirnosir.com/>

Panic At The Pentagon: **Maximum Enlistment Age Upped To** **42**

By Melissa Vogt, Army Times staff writer

The Army has again raised its age limit for active-duty and Army Reserve recruits in hopes of expanding its pool of potential soldiers.

The new maximum enlistment age is 42 for both components, Recruiting Command announced Wednesday.

In January, the Army began allowing recruits for active duty as old as 40. Previously no one older than 35 was allowed to enlist.

The Army Reserve age limit also was previously 35, but it had been raised to 40 in March 2005.

More than 1,000 individuals older than 35 have enlisted in the Army and Army Reserve since the age limits were raised, according to Recruiting Command.

Raising recruit age limits was part of a package of recruiting changes aimed at avoiding a repeat of last fiscal year's recruiting shortfall. The Army ended the year 8 percent below its annual goal of bringing in 80,000 people.

Stupid Generals Engineered Iraq Disaster

6.20.06 Erik Swabb, Baltimore Sun]

The military deserves its fair share of blame for shortcomings in Iraq.

Because of the failure of the top military leadership to institutionalize the lessons of the Vietnam War, initial U.S. forces in Iraq were not prepared to wage counterinsurgency.

Rumsfeld Babbles More Silly Bullshit

6.20.06 Washington Post

During an odd interview, Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld cited poor memory, loose office procedures, and a general distraction with "the wars" in Iraq and Afghanistan to explain why he was unsure how his department came to nearly squander \$30 billion leasing several hundred new tanker aircraft that its own experts had decided were not needed.

Wars Force Army Equipment Costs To Triple

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in. He writes: THE DOWNSIDE OF HAVING THE MOST HIGH-TECH MILITARY IN THE WORLD: HAVING TO PAY FOR IT.]

6.26.06 By LOLITA C. BALDOR, Associated Press Writer

The annual cost of replacing, repairing and upgrading Army equipment in Iraq and Afghanistan is expected to more than triple next year to more than \$17 billion, according to Army documents obtained by the Associated Press.

From 2002 to 2006, the Army spent an average of \$4 billion a year in annual equipment costs. But as the war takes a harder toll on the military, that number is projected to balloon to more than \$12 billion for the federal budget year that starts next Oct. 1, the documents show.

The Marine Corps has said in recent testimony before Congress that it would need nearly \$12 billion to replace and repair all the equipment worn out or lost to combat in the past four years. So far, the Marines have received \$1.6 billion toward those costs to replace and repair the equipment.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

June 25 (Reuters) & June 26, 2006 Xinhua & (KUNA) & Reuters & The Associated Press & by Ammar Karim, AFP News

A car bomber killed a police commando and wounded nine people in an attack on a police checkpoint in Baghdad's eastern Zayouna district, police said.

An insurgent sniper shot dead an Iraqi soldier at an army checkpoint on Monday, a police source said.

The attack occurred at about 9:30 a.m. (0530 GMT) at a checkpoint manned by the Iraqi army near the main Fallujah bridge.

The attack prompted the Iraqi soldiers to return fire, wounding two pedestrians, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. U.S. and Iraqi troops blocked the bridge for more than one hour after the attack, the source said.

An Iraqi soldier was shot dead by guerrillas in Muqdadiya north of Baaquba in Diyala.

Guerrillas killed a policeman on Sunday in Kut.

A policeman was killed and six people wounded -- four police and two insurgents -- in clashes in Mosul, police said.

A policeman and a civilian were wounded when a roadside bomb exploded near a police patrol in Mosul.

A bomb outside a shop killed a policeman and wounded five people. Police had gone to recover the body of a Shi'ite man killed in Baquba.

The body of a policeman was found with bullet wounds in his head and chest near Falluja, 50 km (30 miles) west of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents shot dead two undercover policemen and their driver in their car in Iskandariya 40 km (25 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Gunmen attacked a convoy assigned to Iraq's most senior Sunni Arab politician Monday, killing one bodyguard, police said.

Adnan al-Dulaimi, head of the Iraq Accordance [collaborator] Front, was not in any of the vehicles. It was the second such incident involving an al-Dulaimi convoy, the last occurred in March.

Five Iraqi army soldiers were killed when a car bomb exploded beside their patrol in Baghdad's western Ameriyah neighbourhood, the interior ministry official said.

In the southern Saydiyah neighbourhood, a bomber blew himself up at a police commando checkpoint, killing three commandos.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“The New World Order” **The Bush Piranha Machine**



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special

Sent: June 24, 2006
Subject: "The New World Order"

"The New World Order"

Iraqoil is the justification for the denial of murder.

It is the same lie that called an Indian a " Savage," the black man a " Nigger," and the Vietnamese a " Gook."

Spare the rod, and you don't reap the spoils.

America is becoming a mental hospital.

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
June 24, 2006**

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

“75% Of His Guys Wanted Out Immediately”

June 20, 2006 From: Debbie Anderson, Veterans For Peace

"Different branches had quite different sentiments on the question, the poll shows. While 89% of reserves and 82% of those in the National Guard said the U.S. should leave Iraq within a year, 58% of Marines think so." [Quote from Zogby poll of U.S. troops in Iraq.]

My husband served from October of 2004-September of 2005 and towards the end of their tour he said that at least 75% of his guys wanted out immediately, while a small percentage were unsure and the others wanted to stay the course.

“Iraqi Sovereignty Is As Fictitious As Any Fairy Tale Ever Penned By The Brothers Grimm”

June 26, 2006 By Scott Ritter, AlterNet [Excerpt]

The myth of sovereignty:

Imagine the president of the United States flying to Russia, China, England, France or just about any other nation on the planet, landing at an airport on supposedly sovereign territory, being driven under heavy U.S. military protection to the U.S. Embassy, and then with some five minutes notification, summoning the highest elected official of that nation to the U.S. Embassy for a meeting.

It would never happen, unless of course the nation in question is Iraq, where Iraqi sovereignty continues to be hyped as a reality when in fact it is as fictitious as any fairy tale ever penned by the Brothers Grimm.

For all of the talk of a free Iraq, the fact is Iraq remains very much an occupied nation where the United States (and its ever decreasing "coalition of the willing") gets to call all the shots.

Iraqi military policy is made by the United States.

Its borders are controlled by the United States.

Its economy is controlled largely by the United States.

In fact, there simply isn't a single major indicator of actual sovereignty in Iraq today that can be said to be free of overwhelming American control.

Iraqi ministers continue to be shot at by coalition forces, and Iraqi police are powerless to investigate criminal activities carried out by American troops (or their mercenary counterparts, the so-called "Private Military Contractors").

The reality of this myth is that the timeline for the departure of American troops from Iraq is being debated (and decided) in Washington, D.C., not Baghdad.

Of course, as with everything in Iraq, the final vote will be made by the people of Iraq.

But these votes will be cast in bullets, not ballots, and will bring with them not only the departure of American troops from Iraq, but also the demise of any Iraqi government foolish enough to align itself with a nation that violates international law by planning and waging an illegal war of aggression, and continues to conduct an increasingly brutal (and equally illegitimate) occupation.

Their Barbarism, And Ours

June 21, 2006 by Norman Solomon, CommonDreams [Excerpt]

The Baghdad bureau chief of the New York Times could not have been any clearer.

"The story really takes us back into the 8th century, a truly barbaric world," John Burns said.

He was speaking Tuesday night on the PBS "NewsHour With Jim Lehrer," describing what happened to two U.S. soldiers whose bodies had just been found.

Evidently they were victims of atrocities, and no one should doubt in the slightest that the words of horror used by Burns to describe the "barbaric murders" were totally appropriate.

The problem is that Burns and his mass-media colleagues don't talk that way when the cruelties are inflicted by the U.S. military -- as if dropping bombs on civilians from thousands of feet in the air is a civilized way to terrorize and kill.

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.

No Comment Necessary

#1

From: Sherwood
To: GI Special
Sent: June 20, 2006
Subject: cry babies

What a bunch of cry babies.

When you sign the oath to go into the military, you know you are fighting for your country. If you can't do it, then don't go in in the first place.

Yes, maybe we should just wait until they're at our shores and then think about what we're going to do. Boy, there's a good idea.

I'm sick of people complaining about the war. Get off your highhorse and get down to reality. War is brutal, terrible, and ugly. Tough.

It's a good thing you cry babies weren't around in WWI or WWII or we never would have had the guts to continue and stop those thugs.

I suppose we should just all sit down and hope they don't come after us and if we try to be good maybe they'll leave us alone.

Wake up, people!!

We're talking about Islamic terrorists who would rather cut off your head and be done with it as talk to you.

#2

From: GI Special
To: Sherwood
Sent: June 26, 2006
Subject: Re: cry babies

Thanks for sending.

Please send your term, branch of military service and combat experience for publication with your letter.

T

#3

From: Sherwood
To: GI Special
Sent: June 26, 2006
Subject: Re: cry babies

United States Air Force, 1976 to 1985.



[Thanks to James Starowicz, Veterans For Peace]

**“All the war-propaganda,
all the screaming and lies and hatred,
comes invariably from people
who are not fighting.”
George Orwell**

OCCUPATION REPORT

British Occupation Force “Powerless” With “Little Control Over Events In The Region”

25 June 2006 By Kim Sengupta and Raymond Whitaker, Independent News and Media Limited [Excerpts]

British forces are facing rising violence among Shia Muslim factions in southern Iraq, but are powerless to contain it, military and diplomatic sources have told The Independent on Sunday.

Both British and Iraqi authorities were seeking to play down the situation, they added.

Last week, as the Foreign Secretary, Margaret Beckett, was declaring that the withdrawal of British forces from parts of Iraq was evidence of "mission accomplished", the senior British commander in the country disclosed that the security situation in Basra had deteriorated.

Since a spate of bomb attacks against them last autumn, British forces have largely kept out of the centre of Basra.

While there was a co-ordinated announcement last week that Iraqi security forces would soon take responsibility for Muthanna, a province bordering Saudi Arabia, the Iraqi authorities suddenly announced the next day that the more volatile Maysan province, where British soldiers have been killed this year, would also be handed over.

The relatively small number of British troops in the two provinces will not be brought home, but will be deployed in Basra, where Mr Maliki declared a state of emergency during a visit from the capital last month.

The decision, which he said was taken in response to the growing violence, is said to have caught British officials by surprise.

It was seen as a flexing of muscle by the new Prime Minister, but also emphasises how little control Britain has over events in the region.

U.S. Ambassador To Iraq Says Fallen Iraqi Resistance Troops Will Be Respected

"Those who've lost their lives to liberate this country and provide a historic opportunity, their sacrifice will be respected," he said. SABRINA TAVERNISE, NY Times June 25, quoting The American ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad

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

Army Cancels War Profiteers' Contract For New Iraqi Prison

6.20.06 New York Times

The Army Corps of Engineers said Monday that it had canceled a \$99.1 million contract with Parsons, one of the largest companies working in Iraq, to build a prison north of Baghdad after the firm fell more than two years behind schedule, threatened to go millions of dollars over budget and essentially abandoned the construction site.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**“Outpost Attack Almost Legitimate”
“It Took Courage”
“It Was Not A Cowardly Act”**

[Thanks to John Spritzler for posting.]

06.25.06 Ofer Shelah, Ynetnews.com [Excerpts]

It may not be nice to say, but world will have hard time condemning Kerem Shalom attack.

Palestinian sources call Sunday morning's attack on an IDF outpost near the Gaza border "Operation Fading Illusion".

The Palestinian propagandists who coined the phrase had something else in mind, but Israel would also be wise to take note of the name: In many ways it describes the reality that will be created here after all the illusions the government has been selling us these past three years – realignment, separation fence, us here – them there – are put into place.

The attack on Kerem Shalom was conducted from deep inside the Palestinian consensus. And it may not be nice to say, but the world will have a hard time condemning it. It was an attack on soldiers, it took courage.

It was not a cowardly act.

As much as it may disgust us, it is seen – against the recent, successive reports of civilian deaths as a result of IDF artillery – as almost legitimate. This significantly reduces the options available to Israel's government, the IDF and the media when responding to the attack.

This is what we can expect, even if we assassinate the entire Hamas upper echelon and attack Gaza without differentiating between soldiers and civilians. We have no control over areas we don't have forces in (and even in areas where we do have forces, we don't really have control, as we discovered over all these years in south Lebanon, Gaza and the West Bank).

A border institutes routine. Outposts on the other side are immovable targets. With a border, there is time to plan and prepare. Run-of-the-mill patrols, routine, the daily burnout and every eventless day that passes turn this huge, immobile army into an easy target.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

“Partners” To Bush: Fuck Off

6.21.06 Christian Science Monitor

Administration officials, from President Bush on down, have urged repeatedly that it is time for other countries to abide by their pledges of financial aid to Iraq. Only \$3.5 billion of some \$14.6 billion pledged for Iraq has been paid.

Schwarzenegger To Bush; Fuck Off: Rejects Request For More Troops

June 26, 2006 By Aaron C. Davis and Scott Lindlaw, Associated Press, SACRAMENTO

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger this week rejected a request from the Bush administration to send an additional 1,500 National Guard troops to the Mexican border, the governor's office confirmed Friday.

The revelation that California had been asked to supply long-term forces suggested Bush's plan to rely on voluntary deployments from all 50 states may be running into trouble.

Bush had proposed staffing the deployment largely with troops who would cycle through the southern border states for two-week or three-week assignments. Troops would do those rotations, the administration said, in place of their annually scheduled training exercises.

According to one of the California Guard officials, only a handful of states have signed a document agreeing to do so.

Without help from the other states, Arizona would likely have to deploy nearly a third of its entire force to the border to meet the Bush administration's quota. California, by comparison, has been asked to send less than 5 percent of its force to the border.

Schwarzenegger last month refused to send the troops in place of their annual exercises, which the state must pay a share of. He also refused to deploy the troops until the administration signed a document agreeing to pay 100 percent of the deployment costs, which could top \$1.4 billion nationally.

Tony Snow On The 2,500 US Troops Killed In Iraq: "It's A Number"

[Thanks to NB, who sent this in. He writes: Zero is just a number too, Mr. Snow. It represents the number of children of members of the Cabinet (UK as well as US) serving in this quasi-war of Bush's and Blair's]

June 15, 2006 LIZ SIDOTI, Associated Press

The United States has absorbed the deaths of 2,500 troops in the three-year conflict, which began when a U.S.-led invasion toppled Saddam Hussein, but quickly turned sour in the face of a brutal insurgency.

Reacting to the new milestone on combat deaths, White House press secretary Tony Snow said, "It's a number."

It's Official: Cheney Brain Dead

6.20.06 Washington Post

Vice President Cheney yesterday defended his much-criticized claim a year ago that the Iraq insurgency was in its "last throes."

PIECE OF SHIT



(AFP/Don Emmert)

Received:

“Death As A Way Of Life”

From: FL
To: GI Special
Sent: June 20, 2006
Subject: Death as a way of life

Dear GI Special,

Thanks for publishing "Statement Of A Holocaust Survivor", the speech given by Suzanne Weiss in Toronto.

There's one line in her speech which put the whole thing in perspective :

'Zionism imposes on the Israeli people an eternal war against their neighbors in a climate of hatred and fear.'

Defense of a foreign policy rooted in injustice requires perpetual warfare. And that's exactly what the neocons have imported from Israel for us here in the United States. To be sure our foreign policy is rife with injustice on its own, but the explicit acceptance of perpetual warfare, of "death as a way of life", as the Israeli writer David Grossman terms it, is perhaps what the "neo" stands for in "neocon".

It is past time that we stood up on our hind legs and just said no, not only to the aggression in Iraq and Iran, but to the decades old aggression of the Israelis, bankrolled and enabled all these years by the USofA.

Life doesn't have to be this way.

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:

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

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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