

GI SPECIAL 4H9:



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

60% Of Americans Disapprove Bush On Iraq War

8.3.06 Los Angeles Times

A Times/Bloomberg poll found discontent with President Bush's leadership on a variety of key fronts, including the war in Iraq, with 60 percent disapproval, and the economy, with 59 percent disapproval.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Dies

8.8.06 The Associated Press

A U.S. soldier died of wounds sustained in fighting, the U.S. military said Tuesday.

U.S. Marine From Winter Haven Killed

August 2, 2006 Kelly Griffith, Sentinel Staff Writer

WINTER HAVEN: Sgt. Christian B. Williams, a decorated U.S. Marine, was killed in Iraq on Saturday.

Family members of the 27-year-old Winter Haven native got the news Monday and said Tuesday that they were too grief-stricken to talk to reporters, but a relative said Williams loved his military service.

Williams was killed during combat operations in Al Anbar province, where he was assigned as a light-armored-vehicle section leader. Details of the combat were unavailable.

Williams joined the Marine Corps in October 2000 and was assigned to the 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force out of Twentynine Palms, Calif.

The unit's typical duties involve riding in or on armored vehicles and scouting out areas to gather intelligence, among other things.

Bellevue Soldier Recovering After Iraq Explosion

August 4, 2006 Gannett Wisconsin Newspapers

GREEN BAY: Sgt. Jeff Vorpahl's parents are expected to return to Wisconsin today knowing their son is on the road to recovery after being wounded in Iraq.

Vorpahl, 29, was wounded July 24 by a roadside bomb explosion while on convoy duty near Tallil, Iraq. He was serving with the Wisconsin National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry. Spc. Stephen Castner, 27, of Cedarburg was killed in the same attack.

"Jeff's progressing well," said Laurie Welter, Vorpahl's mom. "He's up and about every day. He's improving every day."

Welter said she expects her son will be treated at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., for the next month.

"He's got more surgeries ahead of him," Welter said by phone from Washington this week. She has declined to publicly discuss the nature or extent of her son's injuries, calling it a family matter.

"We just really want to thank the community for all their support," Welter added.

Vorpahl, 29, lives in Bellevue with his wife, Mandy, his daughter, Justice, 10, and his 7-year-old stepson, David. Before being deployed a year ago, Vorpahl installed glass for H.J. Martin & Sons in Green Bay and attended local technical colleges.

Welcome To Sadr City: Have A Tomato [Or A Rock]

August 7, 2006 Patrick Fort, AFP [Excerpt]

BAGHDAD: "Why does he always have to choose the suckiest road?" mutters Sergeant First Class Daniel Odom, with a swear, as his shuddering Humvee follows the lead vehicle of his patrol over trash and potholes and into Sadr City, the teeming stronghold of Baghdad's Shia militias.

Above, the pitiless summer sun beats down on the imposing American jeep's armored carapace, heating the fetid air in the street to 45 degrees. Below, an odor of decay rises from the market trash and goat droppings crushed under its wheels as it negotiates the narrow alleyways.

"Damn. Fuck this place!" The shout comes from above, where roof gunner Specialist Marcus Bedell has just taken a ripe tomato full in the face. He swivels his gun, remaining alert to the danger that the next attack might be more deadly; an ambush, a sniper or a suicide bomber.

More than two months after an elected coalition government took over in Iraq, the black-clad fighters of Sadr's Mehdi Army militia still openly carry weapons on the streets of their stronghold.

At parades over the weekend its fighters chanted "Death to America" and trampled on a dusty Stars and Stripes painted on the road. They brandished Kalashnikovs and rocket launchers and chanted their support for Lebanon's Hezbollah guerrillas.

Privately also, some Mehdi militiamen expect they will come into conflict once again with US forces, some of them looking back in nostalgia to their so-called "intifada" in Najaf.

"If the American army deploys again in Sadr city, it will face attacks and we're expecting big clashes," one Sadr supporter said this week.

Sometimes the team conducts joint patrols with the Iraqis, and sometimes they roll out on their own to conduct hair-raising inspection tours of Iraqi Army checkpoints. The patrol route is dangerous.

"I try to spot any kind of anomaly, a displaced rock, a pile of trash that's too neat, loose dirt, a strange bump, cars too low looking heavy, people wearing too many clothes for the weather. And the rooftops. Not so much the road," says Odom's driver, 26-year-old Specialist Kevin Capazzi.

"If it goes boom it goes boom. If we do everything right and it happens, then it happens," says Odom, whose 6ft 4in (190 cm) 235lb (110 kilo) frame, helmet and body armor take up a lot of space in the sweltering confines of the Humvee.

Sweat runs down his neck and the air-conditioning struggles to cope.

"The AC just cools your left hand up to your left elbow," he jokes, as rocks thrown by children and teenagers batter the vehicle, clattering harmlessly off the armor plating.

"Sometimes it sounds like bullets," says Odom. "It's more a game for the small kids, but the ones who throw rocks today might throw grenades tomorrow."

The Noose Tightens: "But For Everything That I Eat, I Can't Help Thinking Of Whoever Drove It Here"

Aug. 4, 2006 By Rebecca Santana, AP [Excerpts]

CAMP ANACONDA

There was no Diet Coke today at the dining facility. For a few seconds, I was a little irritated. I try to limit my caffeine intake and keep it to one Diet Coke a day, but I do look forward to my soda with a little ice.

After a few seconds I remembered that just about all the food that is eaten on this base is driven by truck, possibly from Kuwait to the south or Turkey to the north.

And those truck drivers — many from neighboring countries such as Saudi Arabia or Jordan — take horrible risks driving on roads that are filled with homemade bombs set by insurgents and ambushes set up by people wanting to steal their loads.

So every time that something such as Diet Coke doesn't make it to the dining facility or the mail doesn't arrive or there's no sour cream for the baked potatoes, it could mean that a driver out on the roads of Iraq is dead.

Of course, it could mean that an order wasn't put in on time or there was a shortage of sour cream, but there's always a strong chance that the food convoy was ambushed.

The military has taken steps to cut down on the number of convoys on the roads, including building water purification centers at different bases so bottled water doesn't have to be imported.

The military tries to take care of the soldiers who are usually spending a year of their lives over here by giving them good meals instead of forcing them to eat the packaged food called "Meals Ready to Eat" that are often found on the battlefield.

Also, troops who are well taken care of also tend to stay in the military. But for everything that I eat, I can't help thinking of whoever drove it here.

FUTILE EXERCISE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



A U.S. soldier sits on a tank near the scene of two roadside bomb attacks in the Saiidiya district south of Baghdad July 15, 2006. REUTERS/Mahmoud Raouf Mahmoud (IRAQ)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Soldiers' Last Trip Not The One They Planned

July 25, 2006 By Justin Willett, Staff writer, The Fayetteville (NC) Observer

The last time 1st Sgt. Martin Humphreys spoke to 1st Sgt. Christopher C. Rafferty, the friends discussed taking a golf and boating trip to Florida during an R&R break scheduled for November.

The soldiers, who had known each other since the mid-1990s, were deployed to separate camps in Afghanistan with Fort Bragg's 37th Engineer Battalion.

Their last discussion, which was Thursday, included talk about their families.

Rafferty offered Humphreys a phone card to call his family, which is vacationing in Europe.

Barely four hours after the call, the 37-year-old Rafferty was mortally wounded when his camp came under attack. He died Friday in Sharana, Afghanistan.

"He offered me a \$30 phone card to call my family," Humphreys said. "I ended up using it to call his wife the next day."

Humphreys escorted Rafferty's body home from Afghanistan on Monday.

Rafferty, of Brownsville, Pa., had a wife and two daughters, Humphreys said, and they were always on his mind. Rafferty's daughters wrote messages on a T-shirt for their dad to take with him on his deployment.

"We love you, Dad," the girls wrote. "Come home soon."

"He wore it all the way to Afghanistan," Humphreys said.

Capt. Richard Ojeda, the rear-detachment commander for the 37th, said Rafferty lived the Army values.

"He was a phenomenal first sergeant," he said. "It is extremely hard on every soldier in the battalion.

"When you lose one, it's always got to be the best one. It does weigh hard on the soldiers."

Rafferty is the 16th soldier stationed at Fort Bragg, or with ties to the Cape Fear region, who has died in Iraq or Afghanistan this year.

He is the fourth soldier to die in Afghanistan since May 19. The other three were assigned to Fort Bragg's 7th Special Forces Group.

Rafferty's unit, the 37th Engineer Battalion, is part of the 20th Engineer Brigade.

Two of the brigade's battalions, the 37th and 27th, deployed to Afghanistan in March, Ojeda said. The mission of the 37th was to build roads and base camps. The 27th searched roads and cleared land mines.

The 20th Engineer Brigade is the Army's only parachute engineer brigade. Its units were in Kuwait on Sept. 11, 2001, and have been deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan ever since.

Ojeda said Rafferty, who served for 18 years, did tours in Kosovo and Iraq before going to Afghanistan.

Humphreys said they were fighting a "forgotten war" in Afghanistan. "There's really no media coverage in Afghanistan," he said. "Just small bits (of news) come out of there. But the soldiers over there are being injured and being killed."

Humphreys met Rafferty when the two were squad leaders. Shortly after meeting, the two became platoon sergeants. Humphreys is left with memories of a good friend. "He was always there when you needed a friend," he said.

"When I would be upset or get frustrated with my job, he would be the voice of reason. I just want him to know that he died doing what he believed was right."

Assorted Resistance Action

Aug 8 AFP & VOA News

Insurgents attacked the main NATO base in southern Afghanistan with three rockets, causing no injury to people or property, the spokesman for the alliance said on Monday.

The target of the late Sunday attack was Kandahar Air Field, a sprawling base in the southern Kandahar province, and is home to some 10,000 international troops and civilians, said Maj. Scott Lundy, a NATO spokesman. He would not disclose where the missiles hit exactly.

Three Afghan soldiers and a civilian were wounded in the southeastern province of Khost on Tuesday when an army vehicle headed for Kabul was struck by a roadside remote-controlled bomb, police said.

In another attack late Monday in the southeastern province of Paktika one insurgent was killed while four others and a policeman were wounded following a short battle, said provincial spokesman Sayed Jamal.

In eastern Khost province, at least two Afghan soldiers and a civilian were wounded when an army vehicle was struck by a roadside bomb.

TROOP NEWS

“The People That Support Us Now Are The Ones Trying To Get Us Home” BRING HOME THE 172ND STRYKER COMBAT BRIGADE!



[<http://www.bringhome172nd.org/stryker/>]

[Thanks to D for sending in, and to Katherine GY for organizing the content.]

[Excerpts from: <http://www.bringhome172nd.org/stryker/>]

On July 26th, the men and women of the 172nd Stryker Combat Brigade prepared to end their unit's deployment to Iraq. This unit of 3,800 Americans had endured the fight for a year, distinguishing itself as an essential and effective factor in bringing stability to the North of Iraq. A small number of the brigade had taken the first steps back on U.S. soil, arriving to their base near Fairbanks, Alaska, while many others were already in Kuwait waiting to board homebound planes.

With these successes behind them, their flak vests packed, personal items sent stateside, and their Stryker Armored Vehicles turned over to other newly-arrived units, this battle brigade was able to breathe a sigh of relief and prepare to Go Home.

The following day, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld gave his approval to extend the 172nd Brigade's deployment in Iraq. Instead of greeting their loved ones, the Strykers will help to fight the insurgency in Baghdad.

Below are the voices of some of the people affected by this re-deployment...

According To My Husband, Most Of Them Feel: “The People That Support Us Now Are The Ones Trying To Get Us Home”

I heard them say morale is high. And that the soldiers complaining are just bad eggs. HA! Nice way to appreciate them, call them liars on top of it.

I'm done with this administration, it feels simply like a dictatorship. No one listens to our country anymore. It's everybody's country but ours.

Submitted Sun 30 July , 9:25 PM CST

I support my husband 100%. Different soldiers like different support, but according to my husband, most of them feel: "the people that support us now are the ones trying to get us home".

My husband and I feel like it was a slap in the face.

He says their minds are at home.

He says he doesn't know anyone that isn't crushed.

Some people are deciding to accept it and just pray for the best, but he and I refuse to be quiet about this immoral violation. It's a total lack of respect for our servicemen and women.

I'm so upset. We were so close to holding each other. I spent a year, everyday, on the edge of my seat waiting for the love of my life, and the government tells us he's still expendable and possibly never going to be safe.

I feel they earned home.

No award, medal or pep talk can make up for what was just ripped away. I want to do what I can to keep the abuse of this brigade at a minimum. All we wanted was to cuddle, to be in each others presence, something these decision makers all have.

I pray that our voice makes a difference, but I have heard the military lie to keep things hush hush.

I heard them say morale is high. And that the soldiers complaining are just bad eggs. HA! Nice way to appreciate them, call them liars on top of it.

My husband is irreplaceable and we're both in a nightmare right now. They spent a year earning home, their government led them to believe they were just about to grasp it, and then stripped it away so carelessly when so many other options could have been considered.

As a young marriage, his whole deployment felt almost like we would never be together. Then that feeling started to clear. Well, now it's back full force. All I want is the man I love, and by human right, he should be here now. It did not have to come to this.

I have no doubt in my mind that more forces can help Baghdad, but it shouldn't have been these guys. They are done in there minds.

We did not in a million years think the government would exercise this use of power over the guys that keep them running. It's cruel. Had it been a month in advance, it wouldn't have been so bad, but people were in the midst of coming home, some already were home.

My husband was just unlucky enough to be picked as the last wave and now has to sacrifice more of his life.

He's beginning to lose faith in what he used to hold so dear. I don't know what to do but this is sickening. They were coming back, so many of them in good shape, now they have to risk that for nearly another deployment.

I'm done with this administration, it feels simply like a dictatorship. No one listens to our country anymore. It's everybody's country but ours.

“I Have Never Felt So Betrayed And Sickened In My Entire Life”

Submitted Tue 01 August , 8:45 AM CST

I first would like to say thank you for this website and to all who have shared their stories. I like many others have been waiting on pins and needles for 1 year. My husband is with the Stryker brigade and was due to fly home today.

I have never felt so betrayed and sickened in my entire life.

Our poor men and women in Iraq have been undermined and treated inhumanely.

I agree that if we were all informed a few months back that this was a possibility it would have been easier. We would not have liked it but we could understand a little better. To have these men be days from home both physically and mentally is heartwrenching.

I have been married for 14 years to my best friend! We have 2 children; a 12 year old boy and a 1 year old girl. Our 12 year old has Autism and understands the world in black and white, not grey.

We tried for our baby girl for 6 years. In November of 2004 it finally happened while we were stationed in Ft. Wainwright. We were so excited with so many plans. With our son he was deployed to Korea the first year of his life so this was going to be special. We finally had our dream of being stationed in Arizona where my family is. Structure is so important for children with Autism. After 17 years in the military this was what we had wanted.

Of course with 2 weeks until we moved my husbands orders were deleted and he was off to Iraq. What a blow!! We understood though and this was his duty so we had no choice but to accept this. My son and I moved to Arizona and my daughter was born 4 days before my husband deployed to Mosul.

This was a very difficult deployment for all of us. We had many before but not as dangerous as this one. Not one night went by that I ever had a sound sleep knowing he was there. Finally the day was coming and he and all the troops were coming home, yea!!

My son was ecstatic and finally I was able to sleep again knowing it was just a matter of days. We were worried because he lost his last spot for his job in AZ but had new orders so we were finally making all the plans.

I went to bed Wednesday night and at 3:00 am the phone rang and my husband told me the news of the extension.

I was not prepared for what was coming next; Baghdad! I kept telling him to stop lying to me, why was he saying all this stuff to me. I was half asleep and could not comprehend this.

My blood literally ran cold when I realized this was no joke. I laid there till the sun rose and could not get warm. I was sick to my stomach and felt so alone all of a sudden. Many of our lives changed that night for all of us. My son cried and cried the next morning. Like I said he understands black and white but not grey; there was no explaining this to him.

I played the answering machine over and over from the day before. My husband had so much excitement in his voice. He couldn't wait to be back with his wonderful son and his beautiful daughter that he was looking forward to getting to know. This just can not be happening. I am so devastated as we all are.

There are no words to describe what we are all feeling. I am so sad to think our soldiers were so close to home and then BAM!! Gone with a signature. They have done their jobs, send them home!

Thank you to all who have written and shared their personnel stories. It really does help to know you are not alone. Family is wonderful but only other military wives and the soldiers truly comprehend this awful situation.

Our troops are exhausted. How much more do they have to give of themselves before enough is enough?

I do not want one soldier there but I know plenty who have not even been there once. What is the sense of having a troop that is already so spent physically and mentally?

God Bless our troops!! Please send them home soon and safe.

MORE:

Capitalism At Work:

Airlines Pile On: They Help The Bush Regime Fuck Over The 172nd By Grabbing Their Money

August 08, 2006 By Karen Jowers, Army Times Staff writer [Excerpt]

Thirteen Democrats in Congress have asked an airline association to intercede on behalf of soldiers who may lose money after having to cancel or postpone vacations because their tour in Iraq was extended.

The lawmakers said they have been told that in many cases, airlines have chosen to not allow the service members to cancel their reservations, and will not provide refunds.

In some cases, instead of a refund, credits for travel have been offered. But some service members may not be able to travel within the required time period, and may have to pay transfer fees and price increases.

**“It’s Not Like Soldiers Are Sitting
Around Cursing The Ones Who
Went To Canada -- They
Understand Why Someone Would
Not Want To Go To Iraq”**

[Thanks to Elaine B., who sent this in.]

August 6, 2006 Meredith May, San Francisco Chronicle Staff Writer [Excerpts]

Toronto: Army Pvt. Ryan Johnson drove off his Mojave Desert base at 3 a.m.

Sgt. Patrick Hart told his Army superiors he was going to watch one last Buffalo Bills football game.

Marine police officer Christian Kjar of Santa Barbara got permission to leave his base in North Carolina to visit a mall.

Rather than go to the Iraq war, all three went to Canada, where a small community of military deserters is growing as the conflict drags on. They are drawn by Canada's history of helping Vietnam War-era draft evaders and the country's open opposition to the war.

Once across the border, they are met by a network of Vietnam War-era draft evaders, Quakers and anti-war activists, who are waiting with lawyers, free housing, job offers and organic groceries.

On the streets of Toronto, 35,000 people have signed a petition to grant the ex-service members amnesty.

They tend to be small-town America guys who volunteered for service, hoping the military would get them out of dead-end jobs and pay for the colleges and doctor visits their families could never afford.

Lawyers in Toronto and Vancouver have compared numbers and say they collectively have met with 200 Americans who have abandoned their units.

In a legal first, 25 of them have applied to become political refugees, a protected status that Canada has never granted to an American. Refugee status is typically reserved for those living in nondemocratic countries who can prove they would be persecuted for their politics, race, religion or membership in a specific social group. Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board has denied every deserter's claim thus far, sending the issue to the courts.

"The soldiers who are underground are watching his case," [Toronto attorney Jeffrey] House said. "If we prevail, you'll see hundreds more showing up in Canada."

"But I realized it's not like the United States up here," Kjar said. "Canadians are much more supportive."

Back in the Bay Area, the deserters don't get much sympathy from men like 28-year-old Army Spc. Joshua Erickson of Petaluma, who was jolted out of civilian life as an organic farmer last year to serve in Kuwait. He is a member of the Individual Ready Reserve, a nonactive pool of troops who have finished their service but can be called back in an emergency.

"It's not like soldiers are sitting around cursing the ones who went to Canada -- they understand why someone would not want to go to Iraq," Erickson said. "But everyone is scared, everyone has family problems. Why don't they have to play by the rules?"

Today, Canadian immigration seekers must apply from outside the United States and prove they have needed job skills and healthy bank accounts. The process can take two years or more.

Staying AWOL that long in the United States was not an option for soldier-on-the-run Darryl Anderson of Ontario (San Bernardino County).

Pvt. Anderson said he supported the war at first but changed his mind after he was ordered to shoot at a car speeding toward his checkpoint in Baghdad. He held his fire and saw the car was carrying a family with two small children.

"I did the right thing because they were innocent, but my superior said I should have fired anyway," Anderson said. "Right then I decided I'm not going to fire my weapon unless I absolutely have to."

He thought he had to when the tank he was riding in came under fire a few days later and he suffered a shrapnel wound in his side. He tried to shoot back, but his gun's safety lock was on, and he saw that he almost shot a young boy who was running with a stick.

"I thought, 'That's just a kid running scared like I am right now,' " Anderson said. "That's when I realized no matter how good my stance is, I am going to kill innocent people. There's no way I can stop it."

Anderson returned to his mother's house in December 2004 with a Purple Heart and a second deployment order for Iraq.

During his Christmas leave, he told her what had happened in Iraq. Together they decided she would drive him over the Canadian border.

The Real Enemy At Work
[Clue: The Real Enemy Is Not In Iraq]
Unending Billions In War Profits For
Bush's Buddies:
But Wounded Vets Must Beg For
Toothpaste And Wheelchairs

[Thanks to Anna B, who sent this in 8.3.06] [Excerpt]

Dear Friend,

Act now!

The Buffalo VA Hospital, like many veterans' hospitals, is missing crucial supplies and equipment, including everything from toothpaste to wheelchairs - not to mention goods that would make vets' hospital stays more pleasant, like newspaper and magazine subscriptions.

Jeremy Lewis
Iraq Veteran
IAVA Representative

Man Attacks Times Square Recruiting Station

August 8, 2006 BY DANIELLE WARD AND CARRIE MELAGO, DAILY NEWS WRITERS

A Long Island man was nabbed yesterday for throwing rocks at the armed forces recruiting station in Times Square, breaking a huge window at the Crossroads of the World, cops said.

Richard Kurdt, 36, of Centereach allegedly stood in front of the walk-in center on Broadway and hurled three stones into the window shortly after 7 a.m.

The rocks caused thousands of dollars in damage, shattering a large window and a video screen that shows armed services commercials, cops said.

Kurdt admitted to cops that he'd thrown the rocks, saying he wanted to stymie recruitment efforts and prevent people from enlisting in the military, a police source said.

A spokeswoman for the center said the facility, which doesn't open until 9 a.m., was empty at the time.

Kurdt was charged with second-degree criminal mischief and criminal tampering. A woman who answered the phone at Kurdt's home declined comment.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Top Cleric Warns Of Popular Uprising In South Iraq

July 28, 2006 Azzaman,

Security conditions are worsening in several cities in southern Iraq amid reports of clashes between Shiite militias and the British troops in the region.

In at least three big cities, Basra, Amara and Diwaniya, the militias are almost in full control and have clashed with foreign troop or bombed their bases.

Shiite religious leaders in the holy city of Najaf are reported to have warned the government of Nouri al-Maliki that they may no longer be able to contain the masses and prevent a popular uprising in the absence of security.

"Conditions have aggravated a great deal and reaching the climax," warned Basheer al-Najafi, one of the four main ayatollahs in the Shiite religious leadership which includes grand ayatollah Ali Sistani.

Najafi said it was time the security file in Iraq was handed over to the local authorities. Najafi did not explicitly call for the withdrawal of foreign troops but made it clear that the Iraqis were no longer willing to accept their presence.

"We are afraid that the day of a massive popular uprising is approaching that will result in grave and unpredictable consequences," he warned in a statement.

Najafi said neither the government nor the foreign troops were interested in meeting the urgent needs of the Iraqi people.

He said all promises to improve public services were broken along with the pledges to battle rampant unemployment.

Assorted Resistance Action

08/08/06 ITV & The Associated Press & Reuters

Two roadside bombs in Tikrit killed a policeman.

A police sergeant was shot dead in his car in Baghdad, police said.

A police commando was wounded when a roadside bomb went off near his patrol in the eastern Zayouna district of Baghdad, police said.

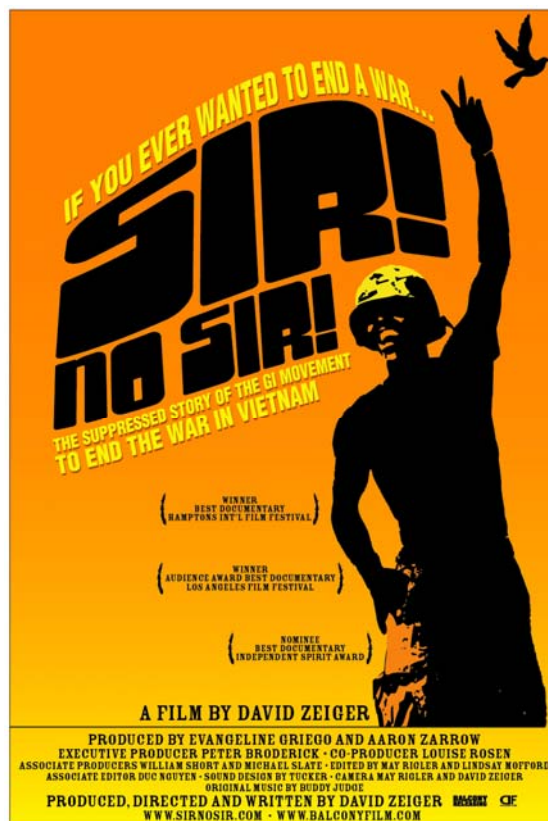
Guerrillas killed a police lieutenant colonel and wounded his brother in Falluja, 50 km (35 miles) west of Baghdad, police said.

The bodies of seven people wearing military uniforms were found shot dead in a small town 30 km (20 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“It Was A Movement No One
Expected, Least Of All Those In It”.
“And By 1971 It Had, In The Words Of
One Colonel, Infested The Entire Armed
Services”**



GI Resistance: Sir! No Sir! on DVD

Aug 6, 2006 New York City Labor Against The War

A Film About The GI Movement Against The War In Vietnam.

In the 1960's an anti-war movement emerged that altered the course of history.

This movement didn't take place on college campuses, but in barracks and on aircraft carriers. It flourished in army stockades, navy brigs and in the dingy towns that surround military bases.

It penetrated elite military colleges like West Point.

And it spread throughout the battlefields of Vietnam.

It was a movement no one expected, least of all those in it. Hundreds went to prison and thousands into exile. And by 1971 it had, in the words of one colonel, infested the entire armed services.

Yet today few people know about the GI movement against the war in Vietnam.

The Vietnam War has been the subject of hundreds of films, both fiction and non-fiction, but this story, the story of the rebellion of thousands of American soldiers against the war-has never been told in film.

This is certainly not for lack of evidence.

By the Pentagon's own figures, 503,926 "incidents of desertion" occurred between 1966 and 1971; officers were being "fragged"(killed with fragmentation grenades by their own troops) at an alarming rate; and by 1971 entire units were refusing to go into battle in unprecedented numbers.

In the course of a few short years, over 100 underground newspapers were published by soldiers around the world; local and national antiwar GI organizations were joined by thousands; thousands more demonstrated against the war at every major base in the world in 1970 and 1971, including in Vietnam itself; stockades and federal prisons were filling up with soldiers jailed for their opposition to the war and the military.

Yet few today know of these history-changing events.

Sir! No Sir! will change all that.

The film does four things:

1) Brings to life the history of the GI movement through the stories of those who were part of it;

2) Reveals the explosion of defiance that the movement gave birth to with never-before-seen archival material;

3) Explores the profound impact that movement had on the military and the war itself; and

4) The feature, 90 minute version, also tells the story of how and why the GI Movement has been erased from the public memory.

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

The Sir! No Sir! DVD is on sale now, exclusively at www.sirnosir.com.

Also available will be a Soundtrack CD (which includes the entire song from the FTA Show, "Soldier We Love You"), theatrical posters, tee shirts, and the DVD of "A Night of Ferocious Joy," a film by me about the first hip-hop antiwar concert against the "War on Terror."

What Happens In The Field, Stays In The Field



From: Richard Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: August 03, 2006
Subject: What Happens In he Field, Stays In The Field

What Happens In The Field, Stays In The Field

Mike Hastie

Vietnam Veteran
August 3, 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)

“It’s Going Lousy Sir”

From: David Honish, Veterans For Peace
To: GI Special
Sent: August 01, 2006
Subject: Perhaps it made a difference?

It was JUN 1982.

Ariel Sharon was making headlines in Lebanon. I was at North Ft Hood with the TX National Guard. I can't recall if I was still a Spec 5, or the Army had eliminated that rank and made me a sergeant by then?

It was relatively easy duty with HHC 49 AD. Unlike the poor mech infantry and tankers, the division HQ company spent most of the two weeks in cantonment at North Ft Hood in GP Medium tents on concrete slabs. Cold beer at the branch PX was within walking distance. HQ company went "to the field" for only 3 days of the two week training cycle in those days.

During the second week of training HQ company practiced a tactical convoy on the graveled surface of Old Georgetown Rd to our assigned grid square for our token three days of "field duty." Since the move from cantonment was scheduled for 6pm, G-3 could claim that we were practicing a "night movement" even though it was light until 9 pm.

A couple days later I was struggling to hang a 36 gallon Lister bag simply because I was told to do so. The presence of the 500 gallon 'water buffalo' trailer about a hundred meters away at the mess section made the medical section's Lister bag nothing more than an unused waste of my time.

While rigging rope to suspend the bag from a tree, I was interrupted by the Assistant Division Commander strolling alone to see how the troops were doing. He asked a rhetorical "How are things going?"

The expected reply was probably some minor bitching about the mess section not providing us with enough ice to keep our beer cold. Instead, I took him seriously. I told him "It's going lousy sir."

I went on to tell him that we were a Division HQ with lots of electronic emissions that could be tracked. Soviet capability at the time was able to locate us by our emissions in

15 min or so, and their doctrine called for artillery strikes on any emitter that remained in place for 30 minutes.

Theoretically, our company should have been able to displace and relocate every half hour to avoid getting our shit blown away. Instead, we had been in the same location for three days, and still had not set up our medical section because we had spent the last couple days on details clearing brush and erecting tents for the G-2 & G-3 Sections. The ADC told me I had given him something to think about, and he promised to look into it.

Two months after annual training that year, we got some new orders during a weekend drill. By order of the Division Commander, ALL units, INCLUDING SUPPORT ELEMENTS, would starting immediately spend at least one of every three weekend drills IN THE FIELD. In addition, ALL units in the division WOULD SPEND THE ENTIRE TWO WEEKS OF ANNUAL TRAINING IN THE FIELD.

My section sergeant showed me the new orders, and joked about needing me to bribe him to keep the secret that I was the guy who was responsible for prodding command into stepped up training. He implied that I might be lynched if word got out that it was my big mouth that had changed our goofing off into actual training.

I left the National Guard in 1985 when it became obvious to me that the Reagan administration had changed our mission from backstopping NATO to one of preparing to go to war over oil.

In AUG 2004 the 49th Armor Division of the TX National Guard was deactivated and once again became the 36th Infantry Division. It seems that our tanks were no longer needed to reinforce Germany, but could be used to make up losses in Iraq. It was also easier to activate small units of infantry for duty in Iraq than to take forces from a reserve component armor division.

It sucks to be them, but maybe they are a little bit better trained than they would have been because a loud mouthed medic lipped off to a general 20 years earlier? If it resulted in just one better trained soldier surviving now, it was worth all the extra field time with the chiggers and the ticks that my spoiled rear echelon peers had to serve all those years ago because of my big mouth.

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)

“You Cant Stop The ‘Raging Granny’”



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

OCCUPATION REPORT

Take Your Pick

06 August 2006 By Aparisim Ghosh, Time Magazine [Excerpt]

But the relief is temporary; most of us still have to negotiate the Highway of Death. Recently the highway has become less deadly - perhaps the only place in Baghdad that can make such a claim.

U.S. officials claim the decline in attacks as a victory for military strategy, attributing it to the greatly increased visibility of Iraqi soldiers along the road.

My contacts in the insurgency offer an alternative, equally plausible explanation: there are fewer U.S. patrols and convoys on the road than before, fewer targets to attack.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE/LEBANON

ZIONIST MATH

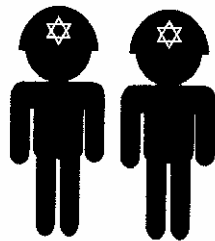
prepared by Al-Awda NY



**ONE
Zionist
P.O.W in
Palestine**



- **135 Dead Palestinians**
- **245 injured Palestinians**
- **Most of the 1.4 million Gaza residents deprived of electricity and water**
- **Same Gaza residents deprived of medical and humanitarian aid**



**TWO
Zionist
P.O.W.s in
Lebanon**



- **Over 800 Dead Lebanese**
- **At least 1,600 severely injured Civilians**
- **900,000 Lebanese people displaced (1/4 population)**
- **Indiscriminate destruction of infrastructure**
- **Blockading Humanitarian Aid and Relief Efforts**
- **Intentional targeting of U.N. "Peacekeeping Troops" and Aid workers**

IT SIMPLY DOESN'T ADD UP

The truth is that the scope and intensity of the current Zionist aggression required months of planning to carry out. The "kidnappings" were a random excuse to trigger these well planned operations against the people of Gaza and Lebanon

[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."]

“It’s Not Like Fighting Palestinians In Gaza,’ Explains Sgt. Yoshua”

Aug. 07, 2006 By TIM MCGIRK/AVIVIM, NORTHERN ISRAEL, Time [Excerpt]

A young Israeli tank commander who calls himself Sgt. Yoshua knows what awaits him in Lebanon. When his 82nd Battalion crossed the border a few days back, every imaginable threat seemed to pop up in front of him. Three of the four tanks in his unit encountered landmines, missile fire and snipers. Yoshua's best friend, a guitar-player, was in one of the tanks hit by a missile and lost both his legs. Three others were killed.

"It's not like fighting Palestinians in Gaza," explains Sgt. Yoshua, a gaunt, bearded young soldier. "Hizballah has better weapons. They're highly-organized and, I don't know if the word is fearless or crazy, but they'll stand right in front of the tank, and fire at us."

“It's Easy To Look Tough Rolling Through Refugee Camps In The World’s Most Heavily Armored Tank”

It was a good plot twist: one minute the IDF is stomping around Gaza blasting amateurs, when something taps it on the shoulder, and there's Hezbollah, looking like Godzilla in a headscarf.

July 23rd By Gary Brecher, eXile [eXcerpts]

God, I love watching CNN right now. Watching that needlenose whiner Anderson Cooper, trying not to state the obvious: Hezbollah is not only winning every round of this fight, but it was bound to win from the start.

The rest of you idiots actually seem to take Cooper seriously when he talks about how the IDF is going to "expel Hezbollah from Southern Lebanon." Christ, Hezbollah IS Southern Lebanon. You might as well try to expel ants.

[W]e're not dealing with a few bad apples or bad luck. We're dealing with demographics, and demographics has no more mercy than a glacier. For a hundred years Lebanon has been shifting from a Maronite-Christian country with a bunch of non-Christian minorities (the Druze -- my personal favorites, the Sunni, the Shia) to a Muslim country with a Christian minority that's trying to emigrate as fast as it can fake up its resume for Uncle Sam's Migras. That part of the war is over, and Islam won.

And Hezbollah has great soldiers. That's one reason I can't help liking them.

They're some of the most underrated soldiers on earth facing what I consider the most overrated military force on earth, the IDF.

The Israelis have been coasting on their reputation for a long time, but way back in Gulf War I it was clear they made their record like a Don King fighter, padding their Win column against a bunch of bums.

When I saw those pitiful Arab "soldiers" crawling toward US camera crews on their hands and knees to surrender, the first thing that went through my head was, "Whoa, so that's the kind of opponent the Israelis have been showboating against? Well Hell, my high school marching band could've beaten those Arab chickenshits!"

I'm not alone in that conclusion either. One of the top US commanders in GW I called the IDF "a bunch of arrogant pricks who wouldn't last ten minutes on a European battlefield." Well, that bit about a "European battlefield" is another sad case of our NATO obsession, but the point is, the IDF doesn't deserve its rep.

It did once, back in 1948 and during Suez, when it was manned by double-tough survivors of the European Jews who were determined to show up the book-nerd stereotype by kicking ass from Haifa to Damascus. Those dudes were truly tough.

But we're talking demographics again, dude. Passage of time, plus difference in birthrate, means that by now the IDF has a thin, real thin, crust of Ashkenazi brains'n'brawn on top and a bunch of flabby mama's boys under them.

Meanwhile, Israel admitted every loser from Russia or Ukraine or Yemen who could claim a grandpa who liked carp or a grandma who carried the overprotective gene or whatever, anything that could make them look Jewish. Half of them were just lying to get out of their native Hellholes, and none of them were willing to die for Israel the way that kick-ass first generation was.

As long as the IDF was beating up on Hamas down in Gaza, it could hide its weakness most of the time. Not all of the time -- pretty sloppy, letting Hamas commandos tunnel right into that base, blast a tank and kidnap poor baby Shalit right while he was thinking up his next capsule review. Still, except for the occasional slip, the IDF was safe in its F-16s and Merkavas, facing Pals with nothing but rifles and old RPGs.

It's easy to look tough rolling through refugee camps in the world's most heavily armored tank.

But as you may recall, those tanks got a real different reception when they chased Hezbollah's raiding party back into Lebanon after the Hezzies killed three IDF soldiers and kidnapped another two. The IDF mid-ranking commanders had to act fast because the Gaza command was taking heat for not pursuing Shalit's kidnapers fast enough. So they shouted, "Charge!" and the first Merkava steamed over the border.

Guess how far it got. Ten meters. Ten goddamn meters. Then KABOOM! A Hezbollah mine or shaped charge turned it into a very expensive oven, with four crew killed. Another IDF soldier died trying to rescue them. So within a few minutes the IDF had lost eight men.

As far as I know, Hezbollah's losses were zero.

It was a good plot twist: one minute the IDF is stomping around Gaza blasting amateurs, when something taps it on the shoulder, and there's Hezbollah, looking like Godzilla in a headscarf. Pretty funny moment, something almost Abbot & Costello about it.

No army enjoys getting invited to a second front just when it was starting to enjoy itself on the first one. Even the Wehrmacht rank and file was bummed when they heard they were getting shipped from the beaches of the Mediterranean to Russia.

And the IDF was no happier when they realized they had to quit using Gaza as a speed bag to spar with an enemy that could kill eight IDF guys in a few seconds.

The way Israel is conducting the war right now is the worst of both worlds: it's too bloody and not bloody enough at the same time. Give me a second to explain what I mean by that.

At the moment that skinny nasal-voiced jerk Anderson Cooper is saying Israel's killed about 320 Lebanese, vs. 36 Israelis dead.

Now actually that's a perfectly standard count for asymmetrical warfare; the technologically superior force usually kills about ten of the guerrillas for every one of its own losses.

But in PR terms, this war has been a disaster for Israel, a can't win scenario. Just try this experiment: watch CNN with the sound off for a few minutes.

Without that non-stop pro-Israel commentary, you'll see what the whole world outside the US sees: non-stop video feed of terrified Lebanese civvies fleeing in terror, crying on camera, hugging their bloodied-up kids.

Then there's a shot of the IDF zooming around in their Merkavas and US-supplied SP 155mms, blasting dry hills or doing dirt donuts on some local's wrecked house.

Ask yourself this question:

WHAT'S MISSING FROM THIS PICTURE?

It'll come to you after a minute: you never, ever see an armed Hezbollah fighter. They're there, all right. You better believe it.

They've killed at least 20 IDF troops, and they're the real reason, the only reason, the IDF isn't invading all-out: because those Hezbollah apprentice martyrs are dug in, waiting and hoping and praying for the IDF to steam into the kill zones they've been polishing since Israel quit Lebanon in 2000.

So call'em crazy if it makes you feel better, but don't call'em stupid. Better yet, get used to calling'em "Sir."



A Merkava nose dive

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.

A Zionist Massacre In A Wheatfield

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in. She writes: Israel can't say the second family mentioned was killed by mistake. They were riddled with bullets, at close range, in a wheat field.]

2 August 2006 By Joseph Barrak, Agence France Presse

BAALBEK, Lebanon: "We are safe", Awad Jamaledin told his friend by phone before the missiles crashed into his house. It was just before dawn and near the end of Israel's airborne commando raids on Wednesday close to the city of Baalbek in eastern Lebanon.

His body and those of his 18-year-old son Hussein, four nephews and a relative were strewn in the garden of his house where they had been hiding from the air strikes during the commando attack. [Increasing numbers of dead seem to have been hiding in the garden to avoid being buried alive as houses are targetted. J.]

"I was just on the phone with Awad to ask what was going on in his neighbourhood. He said there were helicopters and bombardments, but that they were quite far away," Abdel Rahim Haidar told AFP.

"Then nothing. His phone just died. This morning we all ran to his house and found this terrible, terrible sight," he said.

In the garden, women wailed as they held the bodies of the dead. One man held a Koran, reading verses loudly. "Israel is immoral," screamed a young woman. "Come and take a picture of the crimes of (US President George) Bush," another woman told an AFP photographer on the scene.

In a wheatfield not far from the area, the bloodied bodies of a woman and her five children, aged between three and seventeen, lay in a Bedouin tent. The bodies of Maha Shaaban Al-Issa, 40, and her children were riddled with bullets, mostly in the head and the chest. Her husband and two remaining children were critically wounded and taken to hospital.

Witnesses told AFP that an Israeli helicopter had dropped the commandos at the Dar Al-Hekmah hospital before it was forced to clear the area because of Hezbollah fire. The gunship then headed to a nearby wheatfield to await the end of the commando operation.

"The Bedouin family ran out of their tent because they were terrified from the Israeli helicopter, then they were all shot. Their relatives and friends in nearby tents escaped unharmed because they stayed inside," said a neighbour who did not wish to be identified. Their bodies were returned to the tent where they were covered with blankets, an AFP correspondent on the scene said.

The commando operation, the most northerly ground attack by Israeli forces since the start of the crisis on July 12, left 14 civilians, including seven children, dead and more than 20 others wounded.

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.

Received:

The Great New York City Power Failure

From: Katie GY
To: GI Special
Sent: August 03, 2006 4:56 PM
Subject: From an NYT article re: the sweltering weather

“At Jimbo’s Bar and Restaurant on Astoria Boulevard, the owner, George Bountouvas, went through a painfully familiar routine, throwing away the spoiled meat, eggs and milk in his kitchen and then sending the cooks home for the day. The bartender kept some beers on ice, but only a few regulars bothered to step through the door.

‘We’re able to go to the moon,’ Mr. Bountouvas fumed. “We’re able to throw bombs on other countries. But we can’t keep the lights on.”

Amen.

Received:

“I Think Bush Can Go To Hell And Burn With The Rest Of His Regime”

From: SR
To: GI Special
Sent: August 03, 2006

i think what you are doing is right i mean by having this page and articles.

I think Bush can go to hell and burn with the rest of his regime. They had no business in Iraq and need to get out. They need to be accounted for the murders, massacres, rapes and everything else which is a whole lot that went on in Iraq, and now Lebanon.

Thank you. Keep supporting this and show the true terrorists and the real liars and murderers who comply with the US GOV.

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