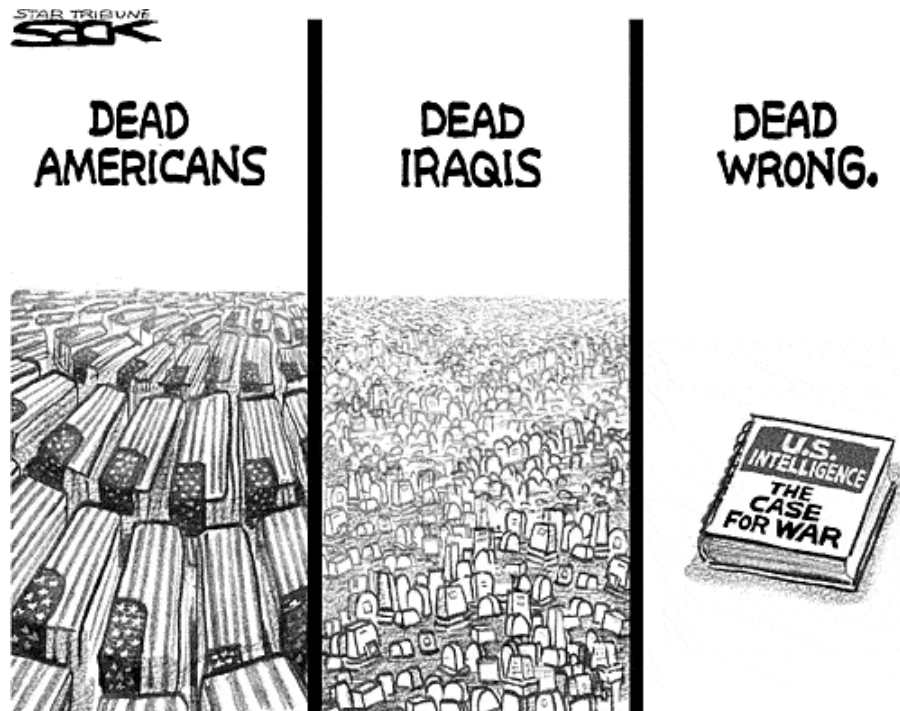


GI SPECIAL 411:



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

“The Surrender And Sack Of Abu Naji Is A Preview Of What’s To Come”

“The Bloodsoaked Folly Of Bush And Blair’s War Howls Toward Its Miserable End”

Don Rumsfeld is fond of historical analogies when pontificating about Iraq; he particularly favors comparisons to the Nazi era and the Allied occupation of Germany after World War II.

Unfortunately, any historian will tell you that Rummy's parallels are invariably false, even ludicrous. So we thought we'd give the beleaguered Pentagon warlord a more accurate and telling analogy to chew on.

Try this one, Don.

Imagine that British occupation troops in, say, Hanover, had been forced to abandon a major base, under fire, and retreat into guerrilla operations in the Black Forest - in 1948, three years after the fall of the Nazi regime.

And that as soon as the Brits made their undignified bug-out, the base had been devoured by looters while the local, Allies-backed authorities simply melted away and an extremist, virulently anti-Western militia moved into the power vacuum.

What would they have called that, Don?

"Measurable progress on the road to democracy?" "Another achieved metric of our highly successful post-war plan?"

Or would they have said, back in those more plain-spoken, Harry Truman days, that it was "a major defeat, a humiliating strategic reversal, foreshadowing a far greater disaster?"

You'd have to wait a long time - perhaps to the end of the "Long War" - to get a straight answer from Rumsfeld on that one, but this precise scenario, transposed from Lower Saxony to Maysan province, unfolded in Iraq last week, when British forces abandoned their base at Abu Naji and disappeared into the desert wastes and marshes along the Iranian border.

The move was largely ignored by the American media, but the implications are enormous.

The UK contingent of the invading coalition has always been the proverbial canary in the mine shaft: if they can't make a go of things in what we've long been told is the "secure south," where friendly Shiites hold absolute sway, then the entire misbegotten Bush-Blair enterprise is well and truly FUBAR.

The Queen's Royal Hussars, 1,200-strong, abruptly decamped from the three-year-old base last Thursday after taking constant mortar and missile fire for months from those same friendly Shiites.

The move was touted as part of a long-planned, eventual turnover of security in the region to the Coalition-backed Iraqi central government, but there was just one problem: the Brits forgot to tell the Iraqis they were checking out early - and in a hurry.

"British forces evacuated the military headquarters without coordination with the Iraqi forces," Dhaffar Jabbar, spokesman for the Maysan governor, told Reuters on Thursday, as looters began moving into the camp in the wake of the British withdrawal.

A unit of Iraqi government troops mutinied when told to keep order at the base - and instead attacked a military post of their own army.

By Friday, the locals had torn the place to pieces, carting away more than \$500,000 worth of equipment and fixtures that the British had left behind.

After that initial, ineffectual show of force, the Iraqi "authorities" stepped aside and watched helplessly as the looters taunted them and cheered the "great victory" over the Western invaders.

The largely notional - if not fictional - power of the Baghdad central government simply vanished while the forces of hardline cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, which already controls the local government, stepped forward to proclaim its triumph and guide the victory celebrations in the nearby provincial capital, Amarah.

"This is the first city that has kicked out the occupier!" blared Sadr-supplied loudspeakers to streets filled with revelers, as the Washington Post noted in a solid - but deeply buried - story on the retreat.

British officials were understandably a bit sniffy about the humiliation.

First, they denied there was any problem with the handover at all: the Iraqis had been notified (a whole 24 hours in advance, apparently), the exchange of authority was brisk and efficient, and the Iraqis had "secured the base," military spokesman Major Charlie Burbridge insisted to AP.

But when reports of the looting at Abu Naji began pouring in, British officers simply washed their hands of the nasty business. The camp was now "the property of the Maysan authorities and Iraqi Forces (are) in attendance," said Burbridge; therefore, Her Majesty's military would have no more comment on the matter.

In this casual - not to mention callous - dismissal of the chaos spawned in wake of the Hussars' departure, we can see in miniature the philosophy now being writ large across the country in the Bush administration's "Iraqization" policy: "We broke it; you fix it."

And where are Her Majesty's Hussars now?

Six hundred of them have dispersed into guerrilla bands in the wilderness, where they will survive on helicopter drops of supplies while they patrol the Iranian border.

The ostensible reason behind this extraordinary operation is two-fold, said the doughty Burbridge: first, to find out if the Bush administration is up to its usual mendacious hijinks in claiming that the evildoers in Iran are fuelling the insurgency among the happily liberated Iraqi people; and second, to do a little more of that Iraqization window dressing before finally getting the hell out of Dodge completely, beginning sometime next year, according to reports across the UK media spectrum.

Yes, a few hundred men wandering through the wasteland, dependent on air-dropped rations, will certainly be able to seal off an almost 300-mile border riddled with centuries-old smuggling routes.

And modern-day Desert Rats rolling up in bristling Land Rovers to isolated villages where Shiite clans span both borders will no doubt be gathering a lot of actionable intelligence from the locals. And of course it is much easier to "train Iraqi border guards" on the fly in the wild than at a long-established base with full amenities and, er, training facilities.

In other words, the British move makes no sense - if you accept the official spin at face value, i.e., that it's an act of careful deliberation aimed at furthering the Coalition's stated goals of a free, secure, democratic Iraq.

But those in the reality-based community will see it for what it is: a panicky, patchwork reaction to events and forces far beyond the Coalition's intentions or control.

The other six hundred Hussars driven out of Abu Naji have retreated to the main British camp at Basra - another "safe" city that has now degenerated into a level of violence approaching the hellish chaos of Baghdad, the Independent reports.

British troops who once walked the streets freely, lightly armed, wearing red berets instead of helmets, are now largely confined to the base, except for excursions to help Iraqi government forces in pitched battles against the Shiite militias that control the city.

Just a few months ago, the UK's Ministry of Defence was churning out "good news" PR stories about life at Abu Naji - such as the whimsical tale of the troop's pet goat, Ben, a lovable rogue always getting into scrapes with the regiment's crusty sergeant major, even though the soldiers "knew he had a soft spot for Ben."

The goat, we were told, had enjoyed visits from such distinguished guests as the Iraqi prime minister and the Duke of Kent.

Now this supposed oasis of British power has been destroyed, with the Coalition-trained Iraqi troops meant to secure it either fading into the shadows or actively joining in with the rampaging crowds and extremist militias.

Meanwhile, the Hussars are reducing to roaming the countryside on vague, pointless, impossible missions, killing time, killing people - and being killed - until the inevitable collapse of the whole shebang.

The goat is gone. The canary is dying.

The surrender and sack of Abu Naji is a preview of what's to come, on a much larger scale of death and chaos, as the bloodsoaked folly of Bush and Blair's war howls toward its miserable end.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

TWO SERVICEMEMBERS KILLED IN AL ANBAR AUG. 30

8/31/2006 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 06-08-03CL

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq: One Marine assigned to Regimental Combat Team 5 and one Soldier assigned to 1st Marine Logistics Group died from wounds sustained due to enemy action while operating in Al Anbar Province August 30.

Soldier With Minnesota Ties Killed

Sep. 01, 2006 Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS: The father of a Minneapolis man reported by the Pentagon to have been killed by a bomb in Iraq said Thursday that he's still holding out hope as he awaits confirmation of his son's death.

Major Nathan Banks, a spokesman at the Pentagon, said earlier Thursday that Specialist Qixing Lee, 20, was one of four soldiers killed Sunday afternoon when a bomb exploded while they were on foot patrol in Taji, Iraq, north of Baghdad.

But Lee's father, Chedrua Yanlecheuyin, a Minneapolis man who fought for the U.S. during the Vietnam War, told the St. Paul Pioneer Press that he hadn't received any details or confirmation from the military that his son was dead.

"Maybe 1 percent chance (he's still alive)," Chedrua Yanlecheuyin said. "I want to know for sure."

When contacted by the Pioneer Press, an official at the Pentagon office that handles death notifications for soldiers said he had Qixing Lee's name on an internal list but said nothing had been officially confirmed or announced.

Qixing Lee was with the 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, based out of Fort Hood, Texas. His father said he was sent to Iraq in March and was due back home in October.

Another Soldier From Minnesota-Based Brigade Is Killed

August 31, 2006 Chao Xiong, Star Tribune

A soldier from the Minnesota-based 1st Brigade, 34th Infantry Division was killed in Iraq Wednesday afternoon by an improvised explosive device, military officials said today.

The soldier was not identified pending notification of next of kin. The hometown of the soldier was not released.

The 1st Brigade, 34th Infantry Division is located throughout Minnesota and is headquartered in Stillwater. It has more than 5,000 soldiers from 22 states. Of those 5,000, 2,600 are from Minnesota.

The unit's mission is to safeguard logistics convoys and bases throughout Iraq, said Minnesota National Guard spokesman, Maj. Kevin Olson. It is headquartered in south-central Iraq, he said.

Soldier Mourns Loss Of Husband Killed In Iraq



8.31.06 By Angel Albert, KSFY

A northwest Iowa couple joined the Army together and served at the same time in Iraq, but now a wife grieves the loss of her husband, Army Private First Class William Thorne. He was killed last Thursday in Iraq by a roadside bomb.

"He was in the army a year and 20 days," says Thorne's wife, Army Private First Class Corey Thorne. It's been less than a week since Corey Thorne had a couple of unexpected visitors come to her family's home.

"Two members of the Army came and told me the news," she says. For the first time, the 25 year old soldier realized she was a widow and had lost the love of her life. "Every moment he always made me laugh. It didn't matter what the moment was, he always made me laugh, always made me happy," Corey says.

The couple had big plans. It was why they decided to join the Army together. "We had a lot of dreams. We wanted to adopt a child and we figured if we joined the Army we would be able to save money and adopt a child, one that we always dreamed of having," she says.

Corey was on a two week break from serving in Iraq when she got the news, but now she says she can't imagine going back without her husband.

"I am not sure if I'll have to go back to Iraq or not. I do have a contract, what's gonna happen with that yet I'm unaware and I'm still undecided on all of that," Corey says.

Meanwhile, she's preparing to bury her 26 year old fallen war hero in her hometown of Hospers, Iowa this Saturday. Funeral services will be held Saturday morning in Orange City. Burial will take place in Hospers with full military honors.

Blue Hill Soldier Wounded By Roadside Bomb

August 31, 2006 Written by Ellen Hathaway, Ellsworth American, Inc

BLUE HILL: Cpl. Brian Smith Jr. of Blue Hill was wounded in Iraq last week.

He has been serving in the Marine Corps Reserves with the 1st Platoon of Alpha Company 125 Unit 72180 out of Topsham. He has been in Iraq since March.

In a phone interview, his wife, Jennifer, said she is not sure where the accident took place, but that Smith was driving a military vehicle, a Humvee, when it hit an IED (improvised explosive device) in the road. There were four men in the vehicle, all military personnel, but only Smith and one passenger, Luke Reardon, were injured.

According to Jennifer Smith, Reardon sustained head injuries, a concussion and a skull fracture, however, he was "up walking around" after the accident.

Brian Smith received a shrapnel injury to the right arm, which cut a major artery. He had surgery at a military hospital in Basaria in Iraq, where military surgeons grafted a vein taken from his leg into his arm.

He was then airlifted to Germany for further surgery and will be flown back to a military hospital in the United States for additional surgery and recovery.

"I talked to him," Jennifer Smith said on Friday. "He's able to move his finger, but his biceps muscle is not there. They are taking care of him well. He's very lucky, it could have been worse. Thank God."

Smith is a 2001 graduate of George Stevens Academy who has served in Japan, South Korea and the Phillipines. He was in Blue Hill on leave in January awaiting the delivery of his son, Haven Alexander. At that time, he was anticipating deployment to Iraq where, as an infantry team leader, he would lead foot patrols in the area near Fallujah.

The couple also has an 8-year-old daughter, Raine O'Connor.

The community responded immediately to the news of Smith's injury. Of herself, Jennifer said, "The support is great." She said she had been receiving phone calls all day on Friday when people heard the news.

"He's fine," she said of her husband. "He's OK. He said it's a miracle they saved him and they saved his arm."

FUTILE EXERCISE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



US soldiers patrol a street in Baghdad's Ghazaliya neighborhood August 15.
(AFP/File/Thibault Malterre)

British Diplomats Survive Baghdad Bombing

Aug 31, 2006 BAGHDAD (Reuters)

A convoy of British diplomats and guards was blasted by a roadside bomb in western Baghdad on Thursday but the British embassy said no one was injured.

"An incident occurred this morning involving British embassy personnel travelling outside the International Zone," an embassy spokesman said in a statement. "There were no injuries."

Iraqi police sources said two people were hurt in the attack in the Mansour district. It is close to the International Zone, better known as the Green Zone, a fortified area that houses the British and U.S. embassies and much of the Iraqi government.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Dutch F-16 Pilot Killed In Crash

8.31.06 Reuters

A Dutch pilot died on Thursday when his F-16 fighter plane crashed in southern Afghanistan, apparently in an accident, the defense ministry said.

"The plane was flying at a great height when the accident occurred, which means it can be ruled out that the craft was shot down. We therefore assume it was an accident," the ministry said in a statement.

The ministry said the plane crashed in the province of Ghazni, where it was supporting NATO peacekeeping troops on their way to southern Afghanistan where they took over from a U.S.-led force last month.

The plane was found by a U.S. rescue team and the Dutch air force has launched an investigation into the accident, the ministry said.

The 29-year-old pilot is the third Dutchman to die in Afghanistan, after two were among 12 killed in a helicopter accident in July.

Assorted Resistance Action

Aug. 31 (Xinhua)

Anti-government militants carried out an attack on police convoy in southern Afghanistan Thursday, leaving the attacker himself killed and three policemen wounded, a local police official said.

"A convoy of police was moving in Shahjoi district of southern Zabul province this morning when a man rammed his car to the convoy, and the explosion killed the attacker himself and injured three policemen," a senior police official in the province Jilani Khan told Xinhua.

The incident took place around 11:30 a.m. (0700 GMT), he added.

Three rockets hit central Kabul, capital of Afghanistan, early on Thursday, but caused no casualties. A Xinhua reporter saw two exploded rockets leave craters on the ground, while the police said another one was unexploded.

The attacks happened at around at 3:00 a.m. local time (2230 GMT on Wednesday), and the rockets were apparently launched from an unknown place in eastern Kabul.

One explosion was before a building of Biz Malluhan, a senior commander with the Defense Ministry, and the other was beside a cinema, about 1-2 km from the building.

Some Afghan soldiers with machine-guns, who seemingly were safety guards of the building, stood before it.

Deteriorating Security In Ghazni Province

30 Aug 2006 United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) [Excerpt]

Due to deteriorating security in Ghazni province, food assistance to flood-affected population could not be delivered in three of the four affected districts.

Due to threats of insurgents' attacks, WFP was only able to distribute 16 mt of the 68 mt of food committed for Jaghuri district, which is relatively calm. WFP is in consultation with the ARCS (Afghan Red Crescent Society) to find ways for a secure and timely distribution in these insecure areas.

TROOP NEWS

Bush Sends More U.S. Troops To Iraq Slaughterhouse: Up 13,000 To 140,000

Aug 31 By Will Dunham (Reuters)

The United States has expanded its force in Iraq to 140,000 troops, the most since January and 13,000 more than five weeks ago, the Pentagon said on Thursday, amid relentless violence in Baghdad and elsewhere.

As American troops continue to fight a tenacious insurgency nearly 3 1/2 years into the war, U.S. military deaths in Iraq reached at least 62 in August -- increasing from 43 in July and ending three straight monthly declines.

August's total still was about average for a war in which about 64 U.S. troops have died per month.

There have been 2,635 U.S. military deaths since war began in March 2003, and another 19,773 troops have been wounded in action, the Pentagon said.

**SGT. KEVIN BENDERMAN
RELEASED FROM FT. LEWIS
MILITARY CORRECTIONS
FACILITY:
“Flagrant Violations Against Military
Regulations As Well As Human
Rights Were Evident On The Part Of
The Command And Cadre”**



[Prisonersoverseas.com]

During his service at Ft. Stewart in preparation for a second deployment to Iraq, Sgt. Benderman witnessed continued abuse of the soldiers he served with, faulty training methods and corruption on the part of a command who demanded respect from their units while continually violating their own oath of office and the regulations they had sworn to uphold.

August 30, 2006 Topia.net/kevinbenderman.html

Kevin Benderman was released last week from imprisonment at Fort Lewis, Washington. He immediately flew home to be reunited with his wife Monica and the rest of his family in Hinesville, Georgia. After taking some private time with their family, Kevin and Monica have issued a press release to officially announce his homecoming and thank supporters. Welcome home, Kevin!

On July 27, 2005, in a military court martial held at Ft. Stewart, Georgia, Sgt. Kevin Benderman was convicted of Missing Movement for allegedly refusing to board a plane for a second deployment to Iraq.

Sgt. Benderman had filed an application for Conscientious Objector status in 2004.

This application was ignored, mishandled, and disrespected by every level of command in an effort to punish this 10-year veteran for exercising his rights and making a choice of conscience against the wishes of his command. Sgt. Benderman did not fit the military mold of a Conscientious Objector - he did not cite religious verses, he could not recount his moment of epiphany - but Sgt. Benderman did listen to his conscience.

During his combat tour in Iraq, his conscience told him that orders given by his command were questionable and positioned soldiers in his unit in avoidably hazardous situations.

During his service at Ft. Stewart in preparation for a second deployment to Iraq, Sgt. Benderman witnessed continued abuse of the soldiers he served with, faulty training methods and corruption on the part of a command who demanded respect from their units while continually violating their own oath of office and the regulations they had sworn to uphold.

Sgt. Benderman took his oath as an NCO seriously, defending the soldiers he served with, speaking out against the actions of a corrupt command and adhering to the UCMJ in the process.

Sgt. Benderman exercised his rights as a citizen of the United States, and a volunteer in defense of the Constitution on which this country was founded. Acting on his conscience, and demonstrating his Freedom to Choose the principles on which he would serve, he took the legal remedy available to him and filed for Conscientious Objector status on the basis of morality and ethics.

He could no longer participate in a war in which the actions of commanders and leaders violated International and National Laws, as well as the Laws of Humanity.

Recognizing that all war is the same - he spoke out against further abuse of these laws in the name of Freedom and Democracy.

Sgt. Benderman received a 15-month prison sentence and has been confined at the Ft. Lewis Regional Corrections Facility, Ft. Lewis, WA since August 1, 2005.

During his time at Ft. Lewis Sgt. Benderman continued to face abuses of his Constitutional Rights, and witnessed more of the same against others who served time as well.

Flagrant violations against military regulations as well as human rights were evident on the part of the command and cadre at the military Regional Corrections Facility where he was incarcerated. These violations have been documented and have been brought to the attention of military investigators as well as Congressional Representatives.

One week ago, Sgt. Benderman was released from confinement and has returned home. His case is currently on appeal with the briefs to be considered sometime in late October 2006.

Kevin and Monica would like to thank everyone for their support over this past year, and hope that you will continue to support them with their future projects.

In the months to come they will be addressing the specifics of Kevin's case and their experiences of the past year of his confinement. They will be speaking about their positions on Conscientious Objection, changes they believe must be made regarding soldiers' rights and working to give our veterans the respect they deserve for the service they have been given.

They will also be addressing their goals for working to return to the foundation of our country - the Constitution; recalling the principles and freedoms the founders of this country envisioned over 200 years ago.

For initial information regarding interviews or speaking opportunities or to learn more about ways in which you can support their efforts, please contact Kevin and Monica at mdawnb@coastalnow.net.

To learn about Kevin's case and their work please visit www.BendermanDefense.org and please find new essays by both Kevin and Monica, information regarding their upcoming projects, and more information on fund-raising and support assistance at Benderman Defense Trust.

Need Money Now?

Sailors, Marines Who Owe More Than 30% Of Income To Lenders Can't Be Sent To Bush's Wars: "I Have Guys Guarding My Gate Here When They Should Be Deployed In Iraq,' Patton Said"

August 31, 2006 By Thomas Watkins, Associated Press

SAN DIEGO: With a family to feed and no money for groceries, Navy Yeoman 2nd Class Damon LaForce recently did something the military is trying to crack down on: He went to one of the many payday-lending businesses near his base for an instant loan.

Essentially, he borrowed against his next paycheck: After showing his military ID and a proof of address, LaForce wrote the lender a postdated check for \$300. Five minutes later, the sailor walked out with \$255 cash in his pocket.

"It was easy," LaForce said.

The \$45 charge for his two-week loan would amount to an annual interest rate of a staggering 459 percent.

The Center for Responsible Lending, a nonprofit group seeking stricter industry controls, says that one in five service members took out such a loan in 2004, and that someone who borrows \$325 pays an average of \$800 in charges.

Patton said the Navy is worried that payday loans are contributing to the surge in the number of sailors who cannot be sent into duty overseas because of financial problems.

Under Navy rules, sailors whose debts are more than 30 percent of their income cannot be sent overseas, because their financial problems could distract them from their duties or, worse, make them vulnerable to bribery. [This applies whether or not the debt is a *payday* loan.]

Patton said since 2000, the number of sailors and Marines barred from deployment because of financial problems has climbed 1,600 percent, straining an already stretched military.

Security clearances were denied or revoked because of financial difficulties for some 2,000 sailors last year, and the trend is similar in other services, he said.

“I have guys guarding my gate here when they should be deployed in Iraq,” Patton said.

Many payday loan businesses are clustered near military installations, with nearly two dozen of them around Camp Pendleton, the Marine base north of San Diego.

“I’m pretty smart and have a college degree, but maybe it’s a defense mechanism where you don’t let yourself calculate how much it really costs,” said Kim Czaja, the wife of a San Diego sailor who borrowed \$300 and ended up paying more than \$1,000 in fees.

***Check This Bullshit;* General In Command Of Iraq Forces Says He Can See The Future; But The Dimwit Is “Surprised” About What’s Happening Today**

8.31.06 Los Angeles Times & Christian Science Monitor

Iraqi security forces will need an additional year to 18 months before they can take over from American troops, the top U.S. commander in Iraq, Army Gen. George W. Casey, said.

Two days this week of fierce firefights between a Shiite militia and government forces in Diwaniyah, a usually calm town south of Baghdad, left at least 80 dead and an unknown number wounded.

The top U.S. commander in Iraq said the battle came as a "surprise."

[He will also be surprised when the troops decide this evil, pointless, lost war has gone on long enough, and, as in Vietnam, and act to stop it. See “Sir No Sir” below.]

More Fraud Found In Guantanamo Detentions

8.31.06 Boston Globe

Scores of detainees at the Guantanamo Bay prison have been accused of belonging to terrorist networks posing as humanitarian organizations, according to transcripts of military hearings.

Many of these detainees worked for groups with established terrorist links, but others were employees of legally recognized Muslim charities that are considered mainstream in the Middle East, are not on the State Department's terrorist list and employ relief workers around the globe.

Some defense lawyers say these cases show that the U.S. military is stretching the evidence to justify the continued detention of prisoners.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

August 31, 2006 The Age Company Ltd. & Reuters & By REBECCA SANTANA, The Associated Press

In the capital, gunmen shot and killed a member of the oil ministry's security service and wounded another as the two were driving in a northeastern neighbourhood, police said.

A car bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol killed four police commandos and wounded 11 people, including five policemen, Interior Ministry sources said. The bomb in eastern Baghdad's Mashtal district went off by a petrol station, where a line of cars was waiting for petrol.

Three people were wounded, including one policeman, when guerrillas threw hand grenades at a communication centre in central Falluja, 50 km (32 miles) west of Baghdad, police said. One of the attackers was killed, police said.

An Iraqi soldier wearing civilian clothing was shot and killed while walking in the city of Mosul, 225 miles northwest of Baghdad.

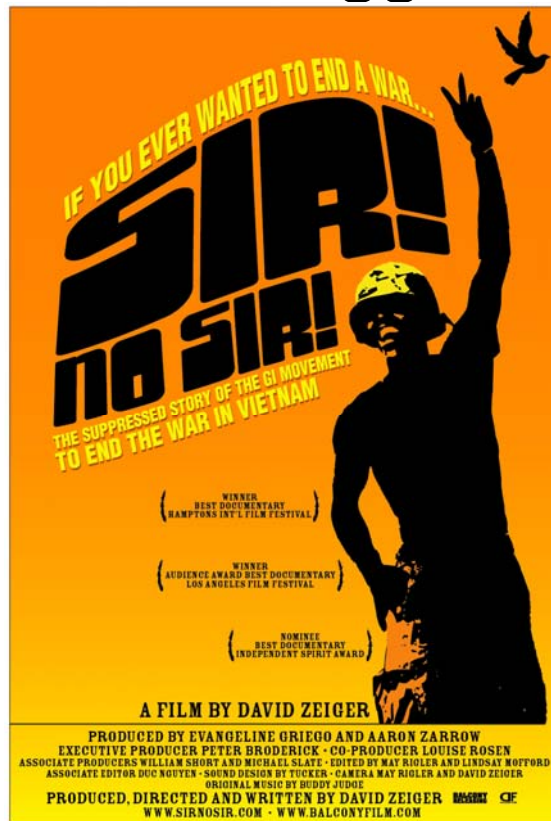
NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“Hundreds, Even Thousands Of
Combat Vets Going Public With
Their Disgust And Outrage Was
No Less Staggering”**



June 9, 2006 Michael Phillips, Chicago Tribune movie critic

In "First Blood," Sylvester Stallone's Rambo seethed about "all those maggots" who lined up at the airport to spit on him upon returning from the war he wasn't allowed to win. The public bought it.

Without disrespecting the real-world Vietnam vets who couldn't get the time of day from their country after coming home, the absorbing new documentary "Sir! No Sir!" honors those who fought, then questioned the morality of that fight, then joined the national protest.

David Zeiger's film is straightforward in terms of technique. News footage from the 1960s and early 1970s connects the talking-heads interviews with the primary subjects, and the whole project has an unassuming, coffeehouse air to it. It's appropriate: The director spent part of the Vietnam War era in and around an off-base coffeehouse in Killeen, Texas, near Ft. Hood.

There and at many other such places, vets gathered, organized underground newsletter projects, dreamed up revolts small and large.

Not all ex-military figures interviewed in "Sir! No Sir!" fought in the first place. Louis Font, considered the first-ever West Point graduate to refuse to fight, says on camera that he could not support "a war of aggression."

Neither Font nor Zeiger draw obvious parallels to the morality of the nation's current war of aggression. No need.

Pentagon estimates cite more than 500,000 cases of desertion during the Vietnam War.

"Sir! No Sir!" reminds us that while that number was high, hundreds, even thousands of combat vets going public with their disgust and outrage was no less staggering.

Late in the film, a surprising assertion comes from sociologist Jerry Lembcke, a vet who wrote a book ("The Spitting Image") in which he claims to have found no recorded instances of hippies (or whomever) spitting on returning vets--the Rambo business.

While "none" sounds as dubious as "countless," this much is clear:

Those who control the image flow and shape the myths control the war itself. At least for a while.

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

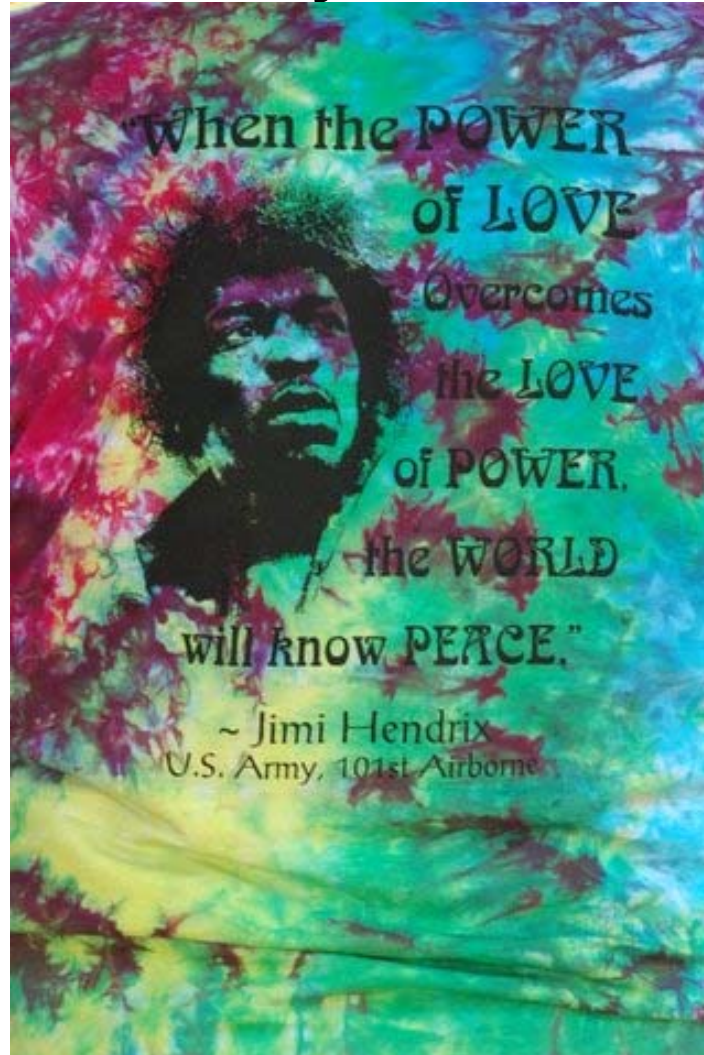
**The Sir! No Sir! DVD is on sale now, exclusively at
www.sirnosir.com.**

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."

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.

Tie-Dye Truth



From: Richard Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: August 30, 2006
Subject: Tie-dye Truth

While the so-called Hippies were dropping drugs in the Sixties, the U.S. Government was dropping Napalm on innocent Vietnamese villages all across Vietnam.

That's War!!

No Rules!!

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
August 30, 2006

Photo 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)

OCCUPATION REPORT

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



Foreign fighters from the U.S. armed forces force Iraqi citizens to be photographed for occupation security purposes inside their own homes, in Ramadi, June 26, 2006. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqis over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses and make them pose for security photos, 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.]

[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They 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?]

"In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit," said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay's Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday's raid. "Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead."

OCCUPATION PALESTINE/LEBANON

Zionist Scumbags Dumped 90,000 Cluster Bombs On Lebanon After They Knew Cease Fire Was Coming; Terrorists Refuses To Lift Military Blockade Of Lebanon



Cluster bombs are causing injuries and deaths daily, the UN says

30 August 2006 BBC NEWS

The UN's humanitarian chief has accused Israel of "completely immoral" use of cluster bombs in Lebanon.

UN clearance experts had so far found 100,000 unexploded cluster bomblets at 359 separate sites, Jan Egeland said. Mr Egeland described the fresh statistics as "shocking new information".

"What's shocking and completely immoral is: 90% of the cluster bomb strikes occurred in the last 72 hours of the conflict, when we knew there would be a resolution," he said.

Mr Egeland added: "Cluster bombs have affected large areas - lots of homes, lots of farmland. They will be with us for many months, possibly years.

"Every day, people are maimed, wounded and killed by these weapons. It shouldn't have happened."

Earlier this week the US state department launched an inquiry into whether Israel misused US-made cluster bombs in Lebanon during the conflict. **[There was no misuse at all. The terrorists intended to kill every Lebanese man, woman, and child they possibly could, and with a cease fire coming, simply took a practical step to make sure their campaign of extermination continued after the formal cease fire took effect.]**

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert rebuffed UN chief Kofi Annan's calls for a swift end to Israel's air and sea blockade of Lebanon.

“Either Patience And Vigilance, Or Submission”

8.30.06 Motasem A Dalloul, Aljazeera.net [excerpts]

Ahmed Bahar, the former deputy and acting speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), considers the kidnapping of the parliamentarians as well as an alleged assassination attempt against Ismail Haniya, the prime minister, part of a conspiracy to undermine the Hamas-led Palestinian government (PG).

MD: Do you fear being seized by Israeli forces?

Yes, of course. The occupation troops may imprison or assassinate me because they want to disrupt the work of the PLC completely.

Israel has maintained a siege and crackdown on Palestinian territories after fighters in the Gaza Strip infiltrated southern Israel and captured an Israeli soldier.

MD: Are you working towards getting this siege lifted?

We have two bitter choices ahead of us: Either patience and vigilance, or submission.

But I think that we won't submit or make any change in our stance as this will be considered betraying the Palestinian voters who elected us and our political platform of national resistance to Israeli occupation.

Our people who live in Palestine and practised resistance by their hands and lived long years under the Israeli occupation recognise clearly what such a programme means. We are determined to follow this path.

[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."]

Local Government Workers Give A Days Wage To Lebanese People

August 10,2006 Sendika.Org Via New York CITY Labor Against The War

The workers of the Bahelievler town's local government of Istanbul gave a day's wage to solidarity with the people of Lebanon.

The announcement of this solidarity move from labor was revealed in the celebration of signing a contract between the union and the local government of Bahelievler in Istanbul. The workers announced that one of the requirements of being an organized force was to be on the side of the oppressed.

One day's wage that will be deducted from the workers will be sent to the region in Lebanon devastated by the Israelis.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

While Troops Die, War Profiteers And Oil Executive Grab Mountains Of Money

[Thanks to Z and Phil G, who sent this in. Z writes: pigs at the trough.]

"In past wars, there were efforts to limit war profiteering. We're having the reverse here. We're having people treating it as their own little bonanza."

Spreading democracy to Iraq is far-fetched when defense and oil CEOs speed its decay at home. They are all in it for themselves, at our expense.

August 30, 2006 By Derrick Z. Jackson, Boston Globe Columnist [Excerpts] & By Andrew Taylor, Associated Press & August 31, 2006 by Emad Mekay, Inter Press Service

MORE THAN 2,600 US soldiers have died in Iraq. July's toll for Iraqi civilians was 3,500, the deadliest month of the US occupation.

If you add in the tens of thousands of deaths from the 2003 invasion (we do not know the exact number because the Pentagon won't comment), researchers will inevitably say that the body count has crossed 100,000.

Just as odorous, a mountain of corporate cash grows next to the piles of bodies.

"CEOs (chief executive officers) in the defense and oil industries have been able to translate war and rising oil prices into personal jackpots," says the new report "Executive Excess 2006," a 60-page study by the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington and the Boston-based United for a Fair Economy.

It found that the top 34 CEOs combined have earned almost a billion dollars since the 9/11 attacks on the United States. This would have been enough money to employ and support more than a million Iraqis for a year to rebuild their country.

As soldiers have died in displaying personal patriotism, the pay gap between soldiers and defense CEOs has exploded. Before 9/11, the gap between CEOs of publicly traded companies and army privates was already a galling 190 to 1. Today, it is 308 to 1.

The average army private makes \$25,000 a year. The defence executives' average compensation jumped from 3.6 million during the pre-9/11 period of 1998-2001 to 7.2 million dollars during the post-9/11 period of 2002-2005.

"Did this surprise us? No, because we've been watching since Sept. 11," said Betsy Leondar-Wright, communications director for United for a Fair Economy.

“While the rest of us were worrying about terrorism and mourning the people who died, the CEOs were maneuvering their companies to take advantage of fear and changing oil supply, not just for competition but for personal enrichment.”

The top profiteers after 9/11 were the CEOs of United Technologies (\$200 million), General Dynamics (\$65 million), Lockheed Martin (\$50 million), and Halliburton (\$49 million).

Other firms where CEO pay the last four years added up to \$25 million to \$45 million were Textron, Engineered Support Systems, Computer Sciences, Alliant Techsystems, Armor Holding, Boeing, Health Net, ITT Industries, Northrop Grumman, Oshkosh Truck, URS, and Raytheon.

While Army privates died overseas earning \$25,000 a year, David Brooks, the disgraced former CEO of body-armor maker DHB, made \$192 million in stock sales in 2004. He staged a reported \$10 million bat mitzvah for his daughter. [Not mentioned here: a lot of the body armor his corporation produced was found to be defective.]

The 2005 pay package for Halliburton CEO David Lesar, head of the firm that most symbolizes the occupation's waste, overcharges, and ghost charges on no-bid contracts, was \$26 million, according to the report's analysis of federal Securities and Exchange Commission filings.

“Those examples take the cake, especially because it's all related to their government contracts, which is money straight out of the taxpayer's pocket,” Leondar-Wright said.

The Executive Excess report, with the help of the Wall Street Journal's 2006 survey of executive compensation, made similar observations of oil executives as their firms enjoy record profits during war.

In 2005, the top 15 U.S. oil industry CEOs got a 50 percent raise over 2004. They now average 32.7 million dollars, compared with 11.6 million dollars for all CEOs of large U.S. firms, the report finds.

The top three highest-paid U.S. oil chiefs in 2005 were William Greehey of Valero Energy at 95.2 million dollars, followed by Ray R. Irani of Occidental Petroleum at 84 million dollars and Lee Raymond, the outgoing CEO of ExxonMobil, at 69.7 million dollars.

The pay gap between the average oil and gas CEO and the average oil worker is 518 to 1.

Since 1990, the overall CEO-worker pay gap in the United States has grown from 107-to-1 to last year's 411-to-1, said the report

The report said that the typical oil construction laborer would have to work 4,279 years to match the \$95 million pay last year for Valero Energy CEO William Greehey.

There is no sense of shared sacrifice, no sense that we're all in this together."

Spreading democracy to Iraq is far-fetched when defense and oil CEOs speed its decay at home. They are all in it for themselves, at our expense.

The chief executives of corporations making big profits from the war on terror are enjoying far bigger pay increases than CEOs of nondefense companies, according to a study by two liberal groups.

The study, conducted by the Institute for Policy Studies and United for a Fair Economy, found that, on average, CEOs of corporations with extensive defense contracts are getting paid about double what they made before Sept. 11, 2001.

CEOs of other large corporations — without big stakes in the war — have averaged pay gains of 6 percent during the same period, the study said.

The highest paid defense CEO, George David of United Technologies Corp. — which makes Black Hawk helicopters and jet engines — took in \$31.9 million in 2005. That actually represented a big cut in pay from the \$88.3 million he made in 2004.

The study focused on the pay of the CEOs of the 34 publicly traded U.S. corporations that were among the top 100 defense contractors in 2005 and for which defense contracts made up more than 10 percent of revenues.

Between 2001 and 2005, the profits for the 34 companies have climbed 189 percent. Profits for U.S. corporations as a whole rose 76 percent.

Stock price gains for defense contractors have averaged 48 percent while the overall stock market has remained flat. Stock market gains translate into higher pay for executives, who often reap windfalls from stock options.

Another highly paid CEO is Jay Gellert, CEO of Health Net Inc., which provides managed health care to dependents of military personnel as well as Pentagon retirees. In the years immediately before Sept. 11, 2001, Gellert didn't break \$1 million in compensation.

Gellert made \$11.6 million last year after a big jump in military contracts that the company said in its SEC filings resulted from "a rise in demand for private sector services as a direct result of continued and heightened military activity."

"Why not say that if it's a contract with taxpayer dollars, they can't go to excessive CEO pay," said Betsy Leondar-Wright of United for a Fair Economy.

"In past wars, there were efforts to limit war profiteering. We're having the reverse here. We're having people treating it as their own little bonanza."

MORE:

While Troops Die For The Imperial Pigs On Top, The Rest Of Us Get Less

[Thanks to Dennis Serdel, who sent this in.]

August 30, 2006 New York Times

If you're still harboring the notion that the economy is "good," prepare to be disabused.

Even the best number from yesterday's Census Bureau report for 2005 is bad news for most Americans. It shows that median income rose 1.1 percent last year, to \$46,326, the first increase since it peaked in 1999. But the entire increase is attributable to the 23 million households headed by someone over age 65. So the gain is likely from investment income and Social Security, not wages and salaries.

For the other 91 million households, the median dropped, by half a percent, or \$275.

Incomes for the under-65 crowd were hurt by a decline in wages and salaries among full-time working men for the second year in a row, and among full-time working women for the third straight year.

In all, median income for the under-65 group was \$2,000 lower in 2005 than in 2001, when the last recession bottomed out.

And among the poor, 43 percent were living below half the poverty line in 2005 — \$7,800 for a family of three. That's the highest percentage of people in "deep poverty" since the government started keeping track of those numbers in 1975.

As for the uninsured, their ranks grew in 2005 by 1.3 million people, to a record 46.6 million, or 15.9 percent.

That's also worse than the recession year 2001, reflecting the rising costs of health coverage and a dearth of initiatives to help families and companies cope with the burden.

For the first time since 1998, the percentage of uninsured children increased in 2005.

Capitalism At Work:

Corporate Profits Highest In 40 Years:

Workers Share Lowest In 60 Years

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

As a result, wages and salaries now make up the lowest share of the nation's gross domestic product since the government began recording the data in 1947, while corporate profits have climbed to their highest share since the 1960's.

August 28, 2006 By STEVEN GREENHOUSE and DAVID LEONHARDT, N.Y. Times
[Excerpts]

With the economy beginning to slow, the current expansion has a chance to become the first sustained period of economic growth since World War II that fails to offer a prolonged increase in real wages for most workers.

The median hourly wage for American workers has declined 2 percent since 2003, after factoring in inflation.

The drop has been especially notable, economists say, because productivity, the amount that an average worker produces in an hour and the basic wellspring of a nation's living standards, has risen steadily over the same period.

As a result, wages and salaries now make up the lowest share of the nation's gross domestic product since the government began recording the data in 1947, while corporate profits have climbed to their highest share since the 1960's.

UBS, the investment bank, recently described the current period as "the golden era of profitability."

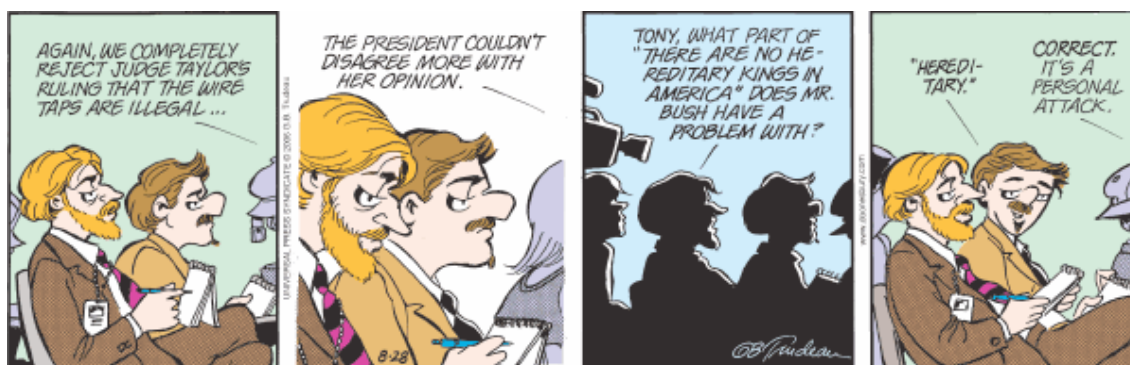
Until the last year, stagnating wages were somewhat offset by the rising value of benefits, especially health insurance, which caused overall compensation for most Americans to continue increasing. Since last summer, however, the value of workers' benefits has also failed to keep pace with inflation, according to government data.

Trade unions are much weaker than they once were, while the buying power of the minimum wage is at a 50-year low.

Over the last year, the value of employee benefits has risen only 3.4 percent, while inflation has exceeded 4 percent, according to the Labor Department.

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.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to Phil Gasper]

Received:

“Can You Really Not See?”

From: J
To: GI Special
Sent: August 31, 2006
Subject: What are they going to do about it?

Dear GI Special,

Came across a pretty comprehensive statement of the "problem" we Israelis and Americans are up against.

Can You Really Not See? [By Amira Hass, September 01, 2006, Haaretz]

“Could it be that you do not know what is happening 15 minutes from your faculties and offices?

Is it plausible that you support the system in which Hebrew soldiers, at checkpoints in the heart of the West Bank, are letting tens of thousands of people wait everyday for hours upon hours under the blazing sun, while selecting: residents of Nablus and Tul Karm are not allowed through, 35-year-olds and under - yallah, back to Jenin, residents of the Salem village are not even allowed to be here, a sick woman who skipped the line must learn a lesson and will be purposefully detained for hours.

Machsom Watch's site is available for all; in it are countless such testimonies and worse, a day by day routine.

But it cannot be that those who are appalled over every swastika painted on a Jewish grave in France and over every anti-Semitic headline in a Spanish local newspaper will not know how to reach this information, and will not be appalled and outraged.

“As Jews we all enjoy the privilege Israel gives us, what makes us all collaborators.

“The question is what does every one of us do in an active and direct daily manner to minimize cooperation with a dispossessing, suppressing regime that never has its fill.

“Signing a petition and tutting will not do.

“Israel is a democracy for its Jews. We are not in danger of our lives, we will not be jailed in concentration camps, our livelihood will not be damaged and recreation in the countryside or abroad will not be denied to us.

“Therefore, the burden of collaboration and direct responsibility is immeasurably heavy.”

There you have the "problem" confronting ordinary Israelis.

What are they going to do about it?

I don't know. I'm confronting the problem of my country's aggression in Afghanistan and Iraq, and its enablement of all of the above crimes in Palestine.

Is it possible that we Americans do not know? No, it is not possible. What are they going to do about it?

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

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