

GI SPECIAL 4J11:



PARTICULARLY IN TEXAS!

Intellectually challenged persons should take caution to not mistake antiwar demonstrators for pacifists. PARTICULARLY IN TEXAS!

From: David Honish, Veteran
To: GI Special
Sent: October 10, 2006
Subject: Fear and Loathing in Lewisville

A few months ago I reported in GI Special a Memorial Day action in Denton [Texas], during which one driver expressed disagreement with our antiwar message by swerving at me in their Suburban.

I remarked at the time that if I had been allowed more reaction time, they would have lost some paint. Such premeditated reactions are easier said than done.

Thursday OCT 5 was the day of a local The World Can't Wait event outside the office of our present congressman. The official weather service report for DFW said the high was 91 degrees that day. It was hotter still standing next to the freeway with no shade. Hot temperatures, and hotter still tempers.

The demonstrators numbered about 40 early in the afternoon. Our ranks were thinned as some of the older demonstrators and those who brought small children limited their exposure to the heat.

I remarked to others that if GI's could hump 70 lbs of ammo and water while patrolling Iraq in 125 degree heat, then I could stand here until the last demonstrator left.

I was at the front of our line of demonstrators strung out along 80 yards of the frontage road. I had asked some to not bunch up, so that passing traffic would be able to read most of our signs.

As it turned out, there was a tactical reason not to bunch up as well.

Pre-planned reactions don't mean much when a guy doing 30 mph on the frontage road suddenly floors it and veers on the grass directly at you. The reflex is to evade. As he zoomed passed me I loudly questioned his intellect and the legitimacy of his birth.

Nothing like military training to expand one's vocabulary of vulgarity.

Mr. Road Rage continued to swerve in and out of the line of demonstrators behind me.

At the end of the line stood a burly demonstrator with a wooden protest sign instead of just posterboard. When the driver bore down on him, he tossed his sign one way and jumped the other way. Car and sign collided. The car took minor body damage. The sign had a wooden caricature of GW's head decapitated.

Not bright enough to flee the scene of his attempted assault, Mr. Road Rage circled back through the parking lot behind the demonstrators for a second run at us up the frontage road.

As he was circling back, I got my inverted flag half rolled up on the staff so I could swing it more freely.

Demonstrators with children hustled them up the bank towards the trees at the edge of the parking lot.

I gripped my flagstaff with the aluminum eagle on top as if it was a fixed bayonet. When Mr. Road Rage swerved at me a second time, I stood my ground instead of jumping clear. He lost paint, and my eagle got a flat spot on his head from the friction of metal against metal.

Still not bright enough to flee after his second attack, Mr. Road Rage screeched to a stop past our line of demonstrators.

Blocking one of the two frontage road lanes with his parked car, he stalked back towards the demonstrators. Myself and two other guys cut him off behind his car, blocking him from the other demonstrators. He cursed us loudly and whined about his scratched car.

We suggested that using a motor vehicle as a deadly weapon in attempted aggravated assault might just be a bit more serious than scratched paint.

He tried to claim that it was a loss of steering control, rather than a deliberate assault upon us.

Yeah, right.

Especially circling back for that second run at us.

He cursed us some more and shouted, "Why don't you go fight for your country?" One of the guys behind me shouted back, "I AM fighting for my country, AND my Constitution!"

The burly guy with the broken sign pointed out that I was wearing a Veterans For Peace t-shirt and woodland BDU trousers that might indicate to Mr. Road Rage that I had already dabbled in the military lifestyle.

While Mr. Road Rage struggled to process this information, he noticed me writing down his license plate number. He also noticed a female demonstrator retrieving a cell phone from her car.

At that point he decided to unblock the frontage road with his speedy departure.

Although Mr. Road Rage had not requested any DNA samples, myself and the other two guys who confronted him provided him with saliva. Lacking proper lab specimen containers, the three of us settled for the surface of his car.

Lewisville PD earlier that day had a patrol car observing the event for the first hour or so. He apparently got bored and left?

When we used the cell phone to notify 911 about Mr. Road Rage, they again dispatched a car to overwatch the demonstration. This officer seemed surprised when we advised him we wished to prosecute Mr. Road Rage for attempted assault.

Dispatch had apparently not told him of our 911 call, and only directed him to overwatch the demonstration?

After listening to our multiple witness accounts, he suggested that the guy with the wooden sign might be considered at fault for tossing his sign at the guy trying to run him down.

Since Mr. Road Rage was no longer present, and none of the demonstrators were bleeding, the cop did not seem too eager to follow up on our complaint. His suggestion was that we move farther away from the road, "because not everybody might agree with what you have to say."

Ironically, the demonstration had started out on the sidewalk. We were forced to the edge of the frontage road when the congressman's office building turned on their lawn sprinklers to drive us off. Apparently water restrictions against daytime use of sprinklers are selectively enforced in Lewisville?

Afterwards, I regretted that children present may have witnessed adults behaving badly.

I would have regretted it still more had Mr. Road Rage in his champagne colored Pontiac, Texas plate number 660-DJZ not suffered any consequences for his actions.

Intellectually challenged persons should take caution to not mistake antiwar demonstrators for pacifists.

PARTICULARLY IN TEXAS!

I wonder if I could sharpen those eagle wings to a knife edge?

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Three More Marines Killed In Al Anbar

11 October 2006 Multi-National Division West PAO RELEASE No. 20061011-02

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq: Three Marines assigned to 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division died Monday from enemy action while operating in Al Anbar Province.

U.S. Soldier Killed Near Tikrit

10 October 2006 Multi-National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20061010-01

TIKRIT, Iraq: A Task Force Lightning Soldier based out of Fort Bragg, North Carolina, attached to 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, died of wounds sustained from an explosion while on a vehicle patrol Sunday, Oct. 8, north of the city of Tikrit.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Baghdad

Oct 9 Reuters Limited

A U.S. soldier was killed when guerrillas attacked his patrol in eastern Baghdad on Monday, the U.S. military said.

New Hampshire Soldier Killed



Cpl. Nicholas Arvanitis of Salem, N.H., was killed Oct. 6, 2006, while on patrol with special forces in Iraq. (AP Photo/family via Lawrence Eagle-Tribune)

Tazwell Soldier Killed In Iraq

Oct 9, 2006 By JIM TALBERT, Media General News Service

TAZEWELL: A Tazewell County native died Saturday in combat in Iraq.

The Department of Defense had released no details Monday, but family members confirmed that Brandon Asbury, 21, died in al Anbar Province during combat operations with the 4th Infantry Division on Oct. 7.

Kelly Perdue said Monday her brother came from a military family. Their father, Walt Asbury, serves in the Army National Guard.

Brandon Asbury married a girl from Texas, and they resided near the division's home base at Fort Hood, Texas, Perdue said.

Asbury was a member of the Tazewell High band and Green T singers while attending Tazewell High School, Perdue said. He was homecoming king during his senior year.

Perdue said that Asbury's body will be brought back to Texas for burial. A memorial service will be held in Tazewell at a later date.

Asbury is the second Tazewell County native to die in combat in Iraq since U.S. forces invaded the country in 2003.

Asbury and fellow members of the Virginia Army National Guard's B Company 276th Engineer Battalion returned to Tazewell County last year from a year in Iraq that saw his unit involved in combat against insurgents in Mosul.

At least two Guardsmen from Asbury's unit were wounded during that tour. Specialist Dean Schwartz lost a leg during a rocket attack on his truck in the summer of 2004, and Sgt. Kyle Wright was among those injured in a suicide bomb attack on a mess hall in December 2004.

Marshalltown National Guard Soldier Killed In Iraq

October 04, 2006 By KEN BLACK, The Times-Republican & October 7, 2006 By Kathryn Fiegen, Iowa City Press-Citizen

Two Iowa National Guard soldiers, including one from Marshalltown, were killed during combat operations Iraq, a Guard spokesman said Monday.

Staff Sgt. Scott E. Nisely, 48, of Marshalltown, and Spc. Kampha B. Sourivong, 20, of Iowa City, were killed Saturday near Al Asad, Iraq, the Guard said in a news release.

Of Nisely, Hapgood said, he was "the oldest soldier we've lost on the global war on terror."

Nisely and Sourivong, both members of the Iowa Falls-based Company C, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry, were providing convoy security west of Baghdad when insurgents attacked them with small arms fire, said Lt. Col. Greg Hapgood, a Guard spokesman.

Nisely and Sourivong both died at the scene from their injuries.

Nisely enlisted with the 133rd in 2002 and was mobilized for Operation Iraqi Freedom in September 2005. The unit arrived in Iraq in early May.

Nisely, a 1976 graduate of Syracuse, Neb., High School, is survived by his wife, Geri, a son, Justin, and a daughter, Sarah.

Sourivong was a 2004 graduate of Iowa City West High School.

Sourivong graduated from West High in 2004. In February 2004, he enlisted with Iowa National Guard Company B, 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry of Iowa City. In September 2005, he was mobilized for Operation Iraqi Freedom with Company C, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry out of Waterloo. He arrived in Iraq in early May 2006.

On Friday, a long, somber motorcade accompanied Sourivong's flag-draped casket in a white hearse from the Eastern Iowa Airport in Cedar Rapids to Gay & Ciha Funeral and Cremation Service, 2720 Muscatine Ave. A few people at the airport saluted the casket as it passed by.

A funeral service with military honors is set for 2 p.m. Sunday at the City High auditorium.

Other survivors include his father, Maliphone; his sister, Elizabeth Marie; and his brother, Neal Andrew Vasey.

Tony Daniels, 22, is a friend of the family and was best friends with Neal Vasey for about 13 years. He said he visited the family often to play video games with Sourivong and his brother.

"I know this weekend is going to be pretty hard," Daniels said. "It's just hard to know he's gone."

Daniels also said he and his friends were thinking of getting tattoos in Sourivong's honor.

At City High, Sourivong will receive a three-volley salute from seven members of the honor guard as a part of the service. "Taps" also will be played at the funeral.

He is survived by his father and mother, Malphone P. and Patty K. Sourivong, of Iowa City, two sisters and a brother.

Nisely and Sourivong are the 43rd and 44th Iowans killed in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Marines Honor Fallen Brother With Final Farewell

Oct. 8, 2006 Story by Cpl. Brian Reimers, Regimental Combat Team 5 Newsletter

CAMP BAHARIA, Iraq: Hundreds stood at attention as a bugler played "Taps" to honor a fallen brother.

Lance Cpl Christopher B Cosgrove III was killed in action Oct. 1 while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. He served as a rifleman with C Company, 1st Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5.

"Lance Cpl. Cosgrove is one of those young men and Marines who you meet during the course of your life and the course of your Marine Corps career who immediately strikes in you the reasons why you joined," said Lt Col. Christopher A. Landro, battalion commander, from Kennesaw, Ga.

Cosgrove, 23, was remembered most by his closest friends and fellow Marines as a man who had a strong passion for being a Marine.

"Chris truly loved the Marine Corps, and he let everyone know it, whether it was with his three Marine Corps tattoos or the fifty stickers he had on his car," said Lance Cpl. Kyle C. Witty, a rifleman from Montville, N.J.

When he received word that another unit was going to be heading to Iraq and that they were looking for volunteers, he didn't hesitate to make the quick decision to deploy.

"Chris was one of the first to volunteer," said 24-year-old Witty. "At that moment I knew that I was going to volunteer too, to go to Iraq with my brother,"

"He could have taken the safe route and stayed home and avoided the war, but that was not the style of a man who had devoted himself to causes since he was in high school," said Maj. Vaughn L. Ward, C Company Commander, from Arlington, Va. "For him there was no choice. The path was clear and he knew exactly what he must do."

A constant smile and upbeat personality kept Marines close to him. He was known for his abilities to make the best of any situation and appreciate the life he loved so much.

"I always looked forward to seeing him, as I knew his proud attitude could cheer anyone up," said the 37-year-old Ward. "He was a solid Marine with an infectious smile who made the Marines around him smile, no matter how difficult the circumstances."

The battalion honored Cosgrove with a memorial consisting of a helmet sitting on top of a rifle and identification tags resting next to a pair of combat boots. Marines spoke about memories of their fallen brother and one by one paid their last respects in front of his memorial.

"Chris was a man who loved all and was loved by all," said 22-year-old Lance Cpl. Remigiusz Wojdala, a rifleman from Denville, N.J. "Although he is not physically with us, he will always live in our hearts and minds. Lance Cpl. Cosgrove has been permanently reassigned to his last duty station permanently where he will be guarding the gates of heaven."

Cosgrove was from Cedar Knolls, N.J., and graduated from Whippany Park High School in 2001. He enlisted into the Marine Corps Reserve in May of 2004 and reported to Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., for basic training. Upon graduation he reported to the Infantry Training Battalion at Camp Geiger, N.C., where he obtained the military occupational specialty of rifleman.

He later checked into G Company, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division. In Dec. 2005, Cosgrove volunteered to deploy with 1st Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment to Iraq and support the War on Terrorism. While operating in Fallujah, he

served as a rifleman, assistant automatic rifleman and an automatic rifleman. Before deploying with the unit, he graduated from Monmouth University with a degree in history.

His personal awards and decorations include the Purple Heart Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

Shreveport Marine Killed In Iraq

10/10/06 AP

SHREVEPORT, La.: A Shreveport Marine, with barely a year of service under his belt, has been killed in Iraq.

Family members say Lance Corporal John Edward Hale, who'd been in the war-torn country for three months, died Friday when an improvised explosive device detonated near his patrol in the Anbar Province.

Funeral arrangements are pending the return of his remains to the United States, which could take two weeks.

Montevideo Soldier Wounded In Iraq Bombing

10/10/2006 The Associated Press

The parents of a soldier from Montevideo said Monday they've been notified that their son was wounded in a roadside bombing Saturday in Iraq.

Sue Winters said her son, Army Sgt. Jared Winters, 27, was on patrol in an armored Humvee near Balad, Iraq, when he was wounded.

Winters said she and her husband, Curtis, were told that her son suffered leg and other injuries. The family was told that two other soldiers in the vehicle were not seriously injured. She said she hoped to speak to him soon and was told he may be flown back to the United States later this week.

She said her son has been in Iraq for nearly a year and his unit was going to be returning to the United States next month. Jared Winters enlisted in the National Guard just after graduating from Montevideo High School in 1997, went on active duty in the U.S. Army in 2001. He is with the 29th Field Artillery based at Ft. Carson, Colo.

Former Gautier Resident Being Treated For Wounds Suffered In Iraq

10/10/2006 OCEAN SPRINGS, Miss. (AP)

A soldier who attended high school in Gautier has been hospitalized in Washington, D.C., for treatment of wounds suffered last week in Iraq, according to his grandparents.

Spc. Bradley Davis, 23, received injuries to his shoulders, chest, stomach and hips during a mortar attack by insurgents in Hit, west of Baghdad, said his grandfather, Jason Noble of Ocean Springs.

Davis, whose duties included transporting troops to and from combat areas, had stopped with several other soldiers to repair their armored vehicle when the attack happened, Noble said Monday.

"They had been in an eight-hour firefight and were returning to their area, which was supposed to be a secured zone," Noble said. "They had just taken their body armor off, and within 10 seconds, the mortar rounds came in and hit them."

Several other soldiers were wounded during the attack, Noble said.

Davis has undergone four surgeries since being wounded, and doctors have given him a prognosis of fair, Noble said.

Although his condition is still critical, Davis is improving, he said.

Noble and his wife, Margaret, said it is a miracle their grandson survived.

"He's a very Christian boy," Margaret Noble said. "He told me, 'I just told God to take care of me the best He could.'"

Davis attended Gautier High School for two years before transferring to Northshore High School in Slidell, La., where he lived with his father, an Army colonel then stationed in New Orleans.

Davis joined the Army after graduation and left for Iraq last January.

"He was upbeat every time I talked to him," Jason Noble said.

"He didn't tell us much about the fighting," Margaret Noble said. "He just said it was getting worse there every day, heavier fighting because of insurgents."

Noble said Davis' mother, Valerie Favre, still lives in Gautier and is now with her son as he recovers in Washington, D.C.

Resistance Attack Destroys Huge Occupation Ammunition Dump In South Baghdad



Mushroom cloud over Baghdad as huge explosions Oct. 11, 2006 destroyed an ammunition depot at a U.S. base in southern Baghdad on Tuesday night, setting off a series of explosions from detonating tank and artillery shells that shook buildings miles away. (AP Photo/Dusan Vranic)

[Not mentioned here, CNN reported at 6 pm that earlier in the day, the ammunition dump was attacked by “indirect fire” from resistance soldiers. T]

10-10-2006 (AFP)

A fire erupted in an ammunition store at an United States military base in Baghdad, a spokesman said, triggering massive explosions that could be heard across the war-torn Iraqi capital.

Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Withington of the 4th Infantry Division told AFP that military and civilian personnel had been evacuated from Forward Operating Base Falcon without injury but that the fire was continuing to burn.

"We have a fire," he said. "An ammunition holding area caught on fire. It's in our operating base in the Rasheed area of the city. The ammunition holding area contains tank and artillery rounds as well as small arms ammunition."

The blaze broke out at around 10:40 pm (1940 GMT) and Baghdad was rocked by a series of loud explosions. Iraqi officials appeared on state television to urge calm and prevent rumours of an attack from spreading.

The damage appeared to have been contained within the base, the US spokesman said, although Iraqi officials said that shells "cooking off" in the fire had crashed down in five districts in the south of the city.

State television showed live pictures of a blazing inferno and ordnance exploding skywards, but there was no immediate news of civilian casualties outside the base.

Two hours after the fire broke out a regular drumbeat of explosions could still be heard five kilometres (2.4 miles) away in the city centre, a barrage more intense than Baghdad's daily diet of car bombs and mortar strikes.

"All coalition forces and workers at the base were safely evacuated. At this time, no injuries have been reported," a coalition news release said.

"Baghdad Joint Coordination Center alerted Iraqi authorities who notified Iraqi citizens in the area of the fire and subsequent detonations. The damage to the area will not degrade the operational capability of MND-B."

U.S. Patrol Attack In Samarra; Casualties Not Announced, But Idiot In Command Arrests 10 Cops On Way To Training

Oct 10 By Ghazwan al-Juburi, Tikrit (VOI)

An explosive charge went off at a U.S. patrol convoy near the Iraqi town of Samarra on Tuesday morning prompting the U.S. forces to detain 10 Iraqi policemen who happened to be near the area, a security source in Tikrit said.

"The explosive device went off at the U.S. patrol near Samarra (south of Tikrit) this morning and damaged one of the patrol vehicles," the source told the independent news agency Voices of Iraq (VOI).

"It was not clear if there were U.S. casualties," he added.

The source said the U.S. soldiers cut off the road and detained 10 Iraqi policemen who were on their way to a training course in Tikrit.

The policemen were not released yet, he said

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. soldiers from Alfa company 1-17 IN regiment of the 172th brigade in eastern Baghdad, Oct. 3, 2006. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Army Gave Him His Dreams; Combat Took His Life

October 05, 2006 Kristen Reed and Tanya Caldwell, The Orlando Sentinel

Angelo Vaccaro, a combat medic in Afghanistan, called home last week to have some much-needed supplies sent overseas: Sour Patch Kids, Twizzlers, pepperoncini and beef jerky.

His mother, Linda, had it all boxed up and ready to go at her Deltona home when she got a call early Tuesday from the mother of Angelo's wife, telling her she shouldn't go to work. 'Two men from the military are here,' Debbie Cipolla told her, 'about Angelo.'

Linda Vaccaro hung up the phone and screamed. By the time two soldiers reached her door in Deltona about 6 a.m., she was numb.

Her 23-year-old son, who had loved the Army since he was a child and collected everything G.I. Joe, had been hit by a rocket-propelled grenade as he was trying to recover wounded soldiers in eastern Kunar province, near Pakistan.

He died instantly, military officials said.

'I asked if it was a dream, if they were sure it was my son,' Linda Vaccaro said Wednesday. 'They said yes. They really don't have to say much, because they know once they show up you already know what they're going to say.'

Spc. Angelo Vaccaro had served in the Army since March 2004. He had worked his way up to head medic of his unit and was about to earn a promotion.

'Once he got those stripes he would've been safe,' his father Ray Vaccaro said, shaking his head. 'He wouldn't have been on the front lines anymore.'

But that might not have stopped his son anyhow. According to a military news conference, Angelo Vaccaro begged his commanders to let him help the wounded Monday near the Korengal Valley, even though he had just returned from a mission.

Vaccaro's parents said he hated leaving his unit, even when he went on vacation back home. 'When he was on leave and he found out one of his men died, he cried,' Ray Vaccaro said. 'He said he should've been there.'

Vaccaro, the youngest of four children, had dreamed of becoming a physician's assistant. His tour was supposed to end in February but he re-enlisted so he could continue his education with the Army.

His mother, a nurse, said her son had finally found his niche.

His parents were so proud of the work he was doing during Operation Enduring Freedom. They beamed Wednesday when flipping through photographs of him tending to wounds. His father looked at one of his son with a grassy mountainscape in the background. 'That's his smirk,' he said.

His parents said the Army had given their son the drive to make a better life for himself. In the mountains of Afghanistan he had found the direction he needed after a troubled youth. Every time he came home, his parents could see the difference.

'The last time he came home from Afghanistan, he was a man,' his father said.

Vaccaro's childhood friend, Kenny English, said it got Vaccaro away from some bad crowds and people who weren't going anywhere in their lives.

But during his last trip home two months ago, Vaccaro feared returning to the war zone, English said.

Vaccaro told him about being caught in firefights, about being pinned down on the side of a mountain. Vaccaro told him the missions were scary 'because you don't know if you're coming home.'

'He went in to the Army to save his life and who would have thought it would be the thing to take it,' English wrote in a memorial to his friend on MySpace, a popular social-networking Web site.

Vaccaro was one of two Americans who died Monday along with one Afghan soldier in a gunfight with militants, the U.S. military said. Three U.S. soldiers were wounded. 'The soldiers were operating as part of a combat patrol that made contact with enemy extremists,' a military statement said.

As of Saturday, 278 U.S. military personnel had died in and around Afghanistan, and 24 Floridians had died as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. Despite the violence, Vaccaro's parents told him that he needed to take care of the people in Afghanistan.

'We'll be home waiting for you,' Ray Vaccaro said.

Vaccaro's new bride, Dana, also was waiting for him. Reached by phone, she was too emotional Wednesday to say much about the man she married in January. The two wed in a small courthouse service just weeks before his unit was deployed.

'We figured we could do the ceremony and stuff when he got back,' Dana Cipolla said between sobs.

Vaccaro was often awarded for his valor during his service. He has received the Purple Heart, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Services Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Overseas Service Ribbon and the Combat Medical Badge. Vaccaro was assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.

The family is expecting to be sent Vaccaro's many medals. And he'll receive the promotion he was due.

'When we receive him, that's when it's going to hit home,' his father said.

Assorted Resistance Action

Oct. 10 Reuters & Associated Press

A remote-control bomb planted on a parked bicycle hit a police bus in the Afghan capital wounding more than 10 policemen and several civilians.

The explosion during the morning rush hour in the crowded city is the latest in an increasing series of bombings.

"I just heard an explosion and saw a big plume of smoke," said Barat Noori, who works in a nearby bakery. He helped the injured policemen and civilians into taxis that took them to the hospital.

Police at the scene picked through the twisted remains of the bicycle bomb. The windows on the bus were shattered but it was not otherwise heavily damaged, and police drove it away about an hour after the 8 am attack.

"They are targeting police," said Jan Agha, a police officer at the scene. Agha complained that his \$50 monthly salary was not worth the increasing risks that police are facing.

TROOP NEWS

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



U.S. Air Force and Army medics unload dead and wounded troops off a Black Hawk helicopter at the Air Force Theater Hospital at Balad Air Base. (U.S. Air Force/Airman 1st Class Andrew Oquendo/Handout/Reuters)

**Poll Of Veterans Of Wars On Iraq And
Afghanistan Finds Troops Suffered
From Shitty Equipment And Serious
Problems At Home;**

“Among National Guard Or Reserve Veterans, 32 Percent Said Their Families Experienced Economic Hardship”

[Thanks to Don Bacon, The Smedley Butler Society, who sent this in.]

WASHINGTON, Oct. 4 /PRNewswire [Excerpts]

A new poll released today of American service men and women who served in Iraq and Afghanistan shows that at the start of heavy combat (2003 and 2004), nearly half of our troops reported they did not have "up-armored" vehicles that would be considered mission capable.

According to the poll, conducted by VoteVets.org Action Fund, the clear majority of veterans, both active duty personnel as well as National Guard and Reservists, believe the Army and Marines are over-extended in Iraq and Afghanistan, having endured extensions of duty and stop-loss orders as the U.S. military increased operations abroad.

When the veterans polled returned home, many encountered emotional and physical health problems as well as economic hardship, indicating that the impact of their service extends beyond their tour of duty.

Nearly half of all veterans (42 percent) reported that their equipment did not meet the military standard that requires a unit to be at least 90 percent operational.

Only 52 and 49 percent of veterans serving in 2003 and 2004 respectively reported their equipment was operational *compared to 61 percent of those who served in 2005 and later.*

[Hello? That means in 2005 “and later” 39% are saying their equipment was not up to standard!]

Thirty-five percent of veterans said their trucks were not up-armored at all and 10 percent said the trucks were up-armored with scrap metal.

One-fifth of veterans have been impacted by stop-loss regulations or extensions and the majority believes the Army and Marine Corps are overextended.

Twenty percent of respondents said their unit was extended past its original time frame.

Thirteen percent of all veterans say they were affected by stop-loss regulations, including 14 percent of National Guard and Reservists.

Overall, 63 percent of all Iraq or Afghanistan veterans believe the Army and Marine Corps are overextended at this time, including 67 percent of Army and Marine veterans and 66 percent of veterans who experienced ground combat.

When these soldiers returned home, many encountered emotional and physical health problems as well as economic hardship resulting from their service.

One in four veterans has experienced nightmares since returning, including 33 percent of Army and Marines veterans and 36 percent of combat veterans.

A fifth of all veterans (21 percent) and a quarter of Army and Marines (26 percent) and ground combat veterans (27 percent) say they have felt more stress now than before they left for war.

Among National Guard or Reserve veterans, 32 percent said their families experienced economic hardship; 25 percent feel more stress now than before the war; 32 percent experienced more extreme highs and lows; and 30 percent experienced nightmares.

Despite similar military experiences, Reservists do not have access to the same health care as active duty personnel. Given how many veterans have sought some sort of care or assistance, it is no surprise that veterans across the board believe National Guard and Reservists deserve access to TriCare, the medical coverage provided to active duty personnel.

Seventy nine percent of all veterans agree that National Guard and Reserve veterans ought to have the same access to Tri-Care as active duty men and women, including 80 percent of Army or Marines respondents, 81 percent of combat veterans, and 83 percent of Reservists and National Guard veterans.

The poll, which included 453 respondents, was conducted by Lake Research Partners between September 6 and 19, 2006. Respondents varied by political affiliation: 47 percent of veterans in the poll identified themselves as Republicans, 17 percent Democrats, and 22 percent as Independents, while 14 percent declined to answer. For more information on VoteVets.org Action Fund and the poll, please visit <http://www.VoteVets.org>.

***An Offer You Can't Refuse:* Commanding General Of Occupation Forces In Afghanistan Says His Troops Can Execute Him Next Spring**

October 05, 2006 By Jim Krane, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan: NATO took over eastern Afghanistan from U.S.-led forces Thursday, assuming control of 12,000 American troops and extending its military role to the entire country.

The commander of the NATO-led force, British Gen. David Richards, who was promoted to a four-star general Thursday, called the move “historic” in a ceremony also attended by President Hamid Karzai and Army Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry.

The handover “illustrates the enduring commitment of NATO and its international partners to the future of this great country,” said Richards, who now holds the British military’s highest rank.

“If by next spring these improvements are not evident then I will be surrendering to whoever wants to put me up against a wall,” he told reporters after the ceremony.

Chair Of Senate Armed Services Committee Says U.S. Occupation Command Is Losing The Battle Of Baghdad

October 05, 2006 By Rick Maze, Army Times Staff writer

Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee offered bleak assessments Thursday of the situation in Iraq and of chances of any near-term withdrawal of U.S. forces.

Sen. John Warner, R-Va., the armed services committee chairman, said Iraq “is simply drifting sideways” because the new government has been unable to exercise the reins of power or find a way to disarm the secular militias that are endangering lives.

Warner flatly declared that the U.S. is “losing” the Baghdad campaign as the number of casualties continues to rise.

“War grinds on and we taking distressing tolls of life and limb every day,” he said.

“The U.S. Army Recruited More Than 2,600 Soldiers Under New Lower Aptitude Standards This Year”

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

Oct 9, 2006 The Associated Press

WASHINGTON: The U.S. Army recruited more than 2,600 soldiers under new lower aptitude standards this year, helping the service beat its goal of 80,000 recruits in the throes of an unpopular war and mounting casualties.

The recruiting mark comes a year after the Army missed its recruitment target by the widest margin since 1979, which had triggered a boost in the number of recruiters, increased bonuses, and changes in standards.

According to statistics obtained by The Associated Press, 3.8 percent of the first-time recruits scored below certain aptitude levels. In previous years, the Army had allowed only 2 percent of its recruits to have low aptitude scores. That limit was increased last year to 4 percent, the maximum allowed by the Defense Department.

About two-thirds of the recruits qualified for a bonus: an average of \$11,000 each. Some in highly valued specialties, such as special operations forces, can get up to \$40,000 in extra cash.

The Army National Guard and the Army Reserve both fell slightly short of their recruiting goals. The Reserves recruited 25,378 of the targeted 25,500; and the Guard recruited 69,042 of the targeted 70,000.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

10/10/2006 The Associated Press & (Reuters)

The body of the brother of a Baghdad police brigadier was also found shot dead, tied to a lamppost in Buhriz, 35 miles north of the capital, police said. Authorities later found the body of another of his brothers, also shot, in the street.

Guerrillas killed a police captain in Mosul, police said.

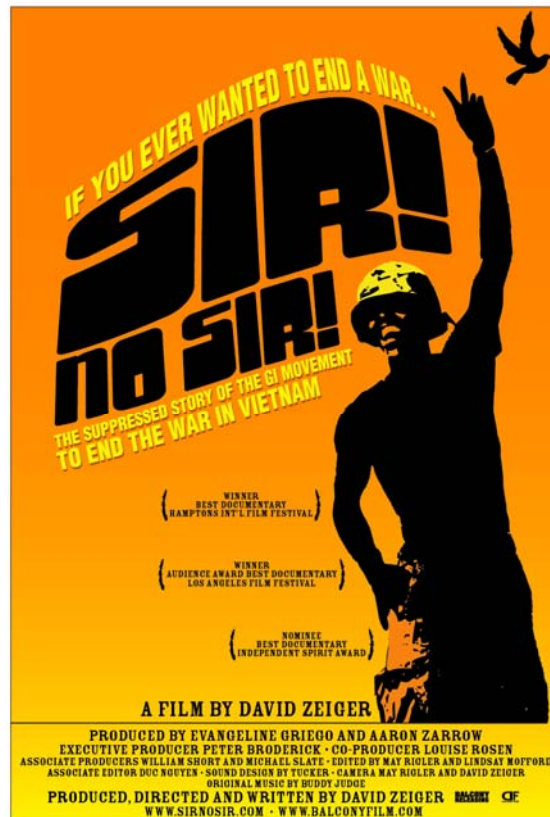
Guerrillas killed a policeman on Monday near the city of Hilla, 100 km (60 miles) south of Baghdad and killed two policemen on Monday in the oil city of Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents attacked the car of a senior Iraqi army officer, killing a bodyguard, in the town of Balad 80 km (50 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

***Sir, No Sir:* “The Untold Story Of The GI Movement To End The War In Vietnam”**



A point was reached where the resistance became infectious, almost unstoppable. It spread from barracks to aircraft carriers, from army stockades and navy briggs into the conservative military towns where GIs were stationed. Even elite colleges like West Point were affected by revolt. Thousands of defiant soldiers went to prison. Thousands went into exile in Canada and Sweden.

April 3, 2006 Paul Rockwell, InMotion Magazine [Excerpts]

“General, your tank is a mighty vehicle.
It shatters the forest and crushes a hundred men.
But it has one defect:
It needs drivers.

**General, a man is quite expendable.
He can fly and he can kill.
But he has one defect:
He can think.”
-- Bertolt Brecht**

When award-winning actors Jane Fonda and Donald Sutherland organized an anti-war review, touring U.S. military bases and towns around the world, the GI rebellion against the war in Vietnam was already in full force.

In one theatrical episode, evoking laughter and applause from thousands of soldiers and Marines, Fonda played the part of an aide to President Richard Nixon.

“Richard,” she exclaims. “There’s a terrible demonstration going on outside.”

Nixon replies: “Oh, there’s always a demonstration going on outside.”

Fonda: “But Richard. This one is completely out of control. They’re storming the White House.”

“Oh, I think I better call out the 3rd Marines.” Nixon exclaims.

“You, can’t, Richard,” says Fonda.

“Why not?” says Nixon.

She answers: “Because they ARE the 3rd Marines!”

“Sir, No Sir,” the untold story of the GI movement to end the war in Vietnam, is a documentary. It’s not a work of nostalgia. It’s an activist film, and it comes at a time when GI resistance to the current war is spreading throughout the United States.

There are more than 100 films -- fiction and nonfiction -- about the war in Vietnam. Not one deals seriously with the most pivotal events of the time -- the anti-war actions of GIs within the military.

The three-decade blackout of GI resistance is not due to any lack of evidence. Information about the resistance has always been available. According to the Pentagon, over 500,000 incidents of desertion took place between 1966 and 1977. Officers were fragged. Entire units refused to enter battle.

Large social movements create their own “committees of correspondence” -- communication systems beyond the control of power-holders and police authority.

Despite prison sentences, police spies, agent provocateurs, vigilante bombing of their offices, coffeehouses and underground papers sprung up in the dusty, often remote towns that surrounded U.S. military bases throughout the world. “Just about every base in the world had an underground paper,” Director Zeiger tells us in Mother Jones.

When the first coffeehouse opened in Columbia, South Carolina, near Fort Jackson, an average of six hundred GIs visited each week. Moved by the courage and audacity of soldiers for peace, civilians raised funds to help operate the coffeehouses and to provide legal defense.

When local proprietors, like Tyrell Jewelers near Fort Hood, fleeced GIs, GI boycotts were common.

At one point, the Department of Defense tripled its purchase of non-union produce in order to break the United Farm Workers boycott. American GIs, many from the fields and barrios of California, immediately joined the Farm Worker pickets. Mocking signs appeared on military bases saying "Officers Buy Lettuce." The GI movement was a profoundly class-conscious movement.

A counter-culture blossomed inside the military. Affinity groups, like "The Buddies" and "The Freaks" were formed. Afros, rock and soul music, bracelets and beads, the use of peace signs and clenched fists -- a culture antithetical to the totalitarian culture of military life -- proliferated. Prison riots in the stockades, from Fort Dix to the Marine brig in Da Nang, were common by 1970.

In response to a detested recruitment slogan -- "Fun, Travel, Adventure" -- GIs named one periodical "FTA," which meant "Fuck The Army." When GIs ceased to cooperate with superiors, the military lost control of culture and communication.

Military attacks on GI rights -- the right to hold meetings, to read papers, to think for themselves, to resist illegal orders -- did not subdue the growing anti-military movement. Repression actually widened the resistance.

Like Pablo Paredes, Kevin Benderman, Kelly Dougherty, Camilo Mejia -- to name a few war resisters of our time -- the GI resisters of the 60s and 70s showed incredible courage. Pvt. David Samas, one of the Fort Hood Three, who refused to serve in Vietnam, said in one impassioned speech: "We have not been scared. We have not been in the least shaken from our paths. Even if physical violence is used against us, we will fight back...the GI should be reached somehow. He doesn't want to fight. He has no reason to risk his life. And the peace movement is dedicated to his safety."

In July 1970 forty combat officers sent a letter to the commander-in-chief. If the war continues, they wrote, "young Americans in the military will simply refuse en masse to cooperate." That's exactly what happened.

Nothing is so fearful to power-holders as non-cooperation.

In 1971, even the Armed Forces Journal published an article by a former Marine Colonel, entitled, "The collapse of the Armed Forces."

A point was reached where the resistance became infectious, almost unstoppable. It spread from barracks to aircraft carriers, from army stockades and navy brigs into the conservative military towns where GIs were stationed. Even elite colleges like West Point were affected by revolt. Thousands of defiant soldiers went to prison. Thousands went into exile in Canada and Sweden.

In the end the GI anti-war movement -- enlisted youth, draftees, poor kids from ghettos, farms and barrios--paralyzed the biggest death machine of modern times.

In short, people power altered the course of history. (The book "Soldiers In Revolt," by David Cortright, makes an excellent companion to "Sir, No Sir.")

"Sir, No Sir" is organized around the testimony of prominent war resisters. Yes, there are a lot of talking heads in "Sir, No Sir." But their revelations, backed with images and footage of rebellion, are unforgettable. We meet Donald Duncan, the decorated member of the Green Berets, who resigned in defiance in 1963 after 15 months of service in Vietnam. His article in Ramparts, "I Quit," generated great excitement in the student movement.

We also meet Howard Levy, the Green Beret medic who refused to use medical practices as a political tactic in war. His court martial caused a huge impact on GI and civilian consciousness. The troops supported him.

"When the court martial began on base," he tells us on film, "it was the most remarkable thing when hundreds and hundreds would hang out of the windows of the barracks and give me the V-sign, or give me the clenched fist. Something had changed here, something very important was happening."

That something was GI revolt.

Thousands of separate, individual acts of moral defiance eventually merged into a collective movement with a specific goal: end the war.

"Sir, No Sir" is not a preachy film. Geiger does not lecture us; he tells a story.

Yet we cannot afford to miss the built-in lesson from the eventual triumph of the GI resistance, a lesson that goes against media ideology and conventional wisdom.

Of course times have changed. The '60s are over. And while every generation determines its own destiny in its own way, while history itself is but "a light on the stern" - it is still true that "The spirit of the people is greater than man's technology."

"Sir, No Sir" is a work of hope.

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 about the first hip-hop antiwar concert against the "War on Terror."

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward GI Special 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 or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

WHY GIVE THEM SIX MORE MONTHS WHEN THEY'VE "SUBSTANTIALLY FAILED?" [THIS BILL HAS BEEN PAID: IN GI BLOOD]

From: Don Bacon; smedleybutlersociety@msn.com
To: GI Special
Sent: October 09, 2006
Subject: THE BILL HAS BEEN PAID

THIS IS FUNNY--

"My doctor gave me six months to live, but when I couldn't pay the bill he gave me six months more." Walter Matthau

THIS ISN'T FUNNY--

Rumsfeld: "**We don't know if a war would last six days, six weeks or six months.**" (February 27, 2003, DOD DefenseLink)

Rumsfeld: "**Just six months after the war began in Iraq, there has also been measurable progress on that front.**" (September 25, 2003, DOD DefenseLink)

General Casey: "This is a decisive period for everyone and everyone knows it. **The next six months will determine the future of Iraq,**" Casey said in a statement after attending two days of closed-door meetings in Warsaw. (October 5, 2006, Turkish Press)

General Richards, the top NATO commander in Afghanistan, warned Sunday that if the lives of Afghans don't improve within the next six months a majority of them

could switch their allegiance to the Taliban. (October 9, 2006, Christian Science Monitor)

It has now been almost six months (of the new Iraqi government), and what we have seen are bitter disputes, wrangling and paralysis.

Meanwhile, the violence has gotten worse, sectarian tensions have risen steeply and ethnic cleansing is now in full swing. There is really no functioning government south of Kurdistan, only power vacuums that have been filled by factions, militias and strongmen.

It is time to call an end to the tests, the six-month trials, the waiting and watching, and to recognize that the Iraqi government has failed. It is also time to face the terrible reality that America's mission in Iraq has substantially failed. (October 16 issue of Newsweek)

Nearly five years after the U.S. military drove the Taliban out of Afghanistan, total victory appears as distant and remote as the long-embattled nation itself. In fact, after several years of relative calm, the Taliban and al-Qaida have staged a dramatic comeback, adopting the insurgent tactics that have been perfected with deadly efficiency in Iraq. . . .

In the meantime, soldiers on the ground are eagerly looking forward to Afghanistan's upcoming winter when, because of the harsh conditions, there's normally been a break in the violence. In Afghanistan, unfortunately, there is always next spring. (October 4, 2006, NBC News)

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

OCCUPATION REPORT

***Good News For The Iraqi
Resistance!!***

U.S. Occupation Commands' Stupid Tactics Recruit Even More Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops



An U.S. soldier from Alfa company 1-17 regiment of the 172th brigade orders a woman into a house where weapons and propaganda material were found in eastern Baghdad, Oct. 3, 2006. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)

[The “propaganda material”? “Pictures on the floor of Shiite clerics Muqtada al-Sadr and late Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr” the AP writers says.

[The “weapons”? Every household in Iraq has weapons. Duh.

[By these standards, there are only about 3 million more Iraqis in Baghdad to arrest like these citizens have been.]

[Fair is fair. Let’s bring 150,000 Iraqis over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, butcher their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it “sovereign,” and “detain” anybody who doesn’t like it in some prison without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.]

[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?]

OCCUPATION ISN’T LIBERATION

BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to Z and Phil G who sent this in.]

WHEN OSAMA TALKS, BUSH LISTENS

October 09, 2006 By Don Bacon; smedleybutlersociety@msn.com

"The most important thing is that the jihad continues with steadfastness ... indeed, prolonging the war is in our interest," says the writer, who goes by the name Atiyah. The letter, released last week, was recovered in the rubble of the Iraqi house where Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, former leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq, was killed by a US bomb in June. (October 6, 2006, Christian Science Monitor)

"I will not withdraw, even if Laura and Barney are the only ones supporting me." (George Bush, quoted in Bob Woodward's new book: State of Denial)

"When a man's best friend is his dog, that dog has a problem."-- Edward Abbey

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Welcome To Occupied New Orleans: **Guard Troops Shoot Man Holding A Cell Phone:** **Stupid Excuse: “It Looked Like A Gun”**

[Right. And New York City cops killed a man holding his keys in his own apartment building. They said that looked like a gun too. Sure it did.]

October 10, 2006 By Janet McConnaughey, Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS: Two Louisiana National Guard soldiers shot a man who they say refused to stop and drop an object in his hand, the first time any guard member patrolling the city has opened fire, officials said.

The man was wounded in the upper torso near his back, and his injury was not considered life-threatening, police said.

Sgt. Robert Lawrence, 21, an Iraq war veteran, and his patrol partner, Pfc. James Neely, were called over by people who pointed out a vehicle, saying its driver “was involved either in a dispute or a hit-and-run,” he said.

“When the suspect got out of the vehicle, he had something in his hand that our soldiers perceived to be a weapon,” Schneider said. “So our soldiers took defensive positions, and ordered him to stop and drop what he had. He continued on.”

Schneider said the soldiers fired twice; a shot fired by Lawrence hit the man.

Major Ed Bush, another Guard spokesman, said the object in the man’s hand turned out to be a cell phone, “but it looked like a gun.” [Right. It’s the latest cell phone design. Just like a handgun. Sure.]

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