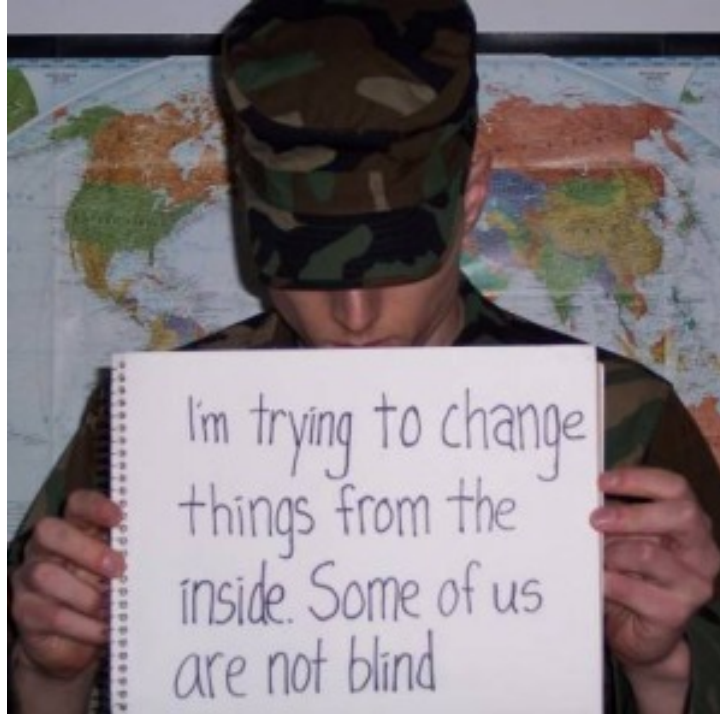


GI SPECIAL 4J25:



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

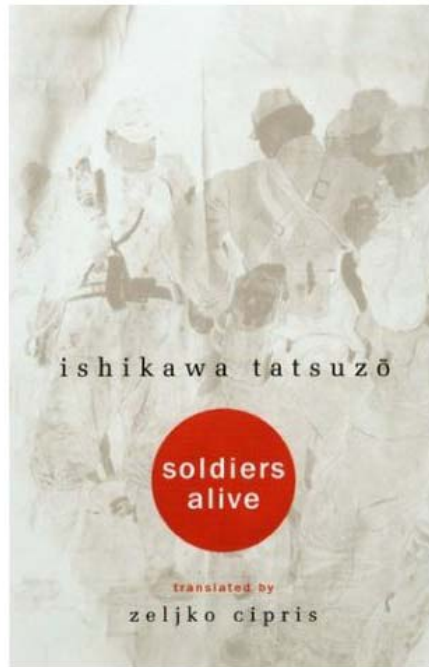
Great Moments In U.S. Military History: The Slaughter Of The Falluja Firemen

10.24.06 Reuters

U.S. troops pulled over a fire truck and killed four Iraqi firefighters in a case of mistaken identity on Monday after a report that a fire truck had been hijacked in western Falluja, the military said.

The firefighters, who U.S. troops first believed were armed insurgents, were responding to a call.

Ishikawa and Kuroshima would understand: insert troops into a hell on earth and there's no way to prevent atrocities. Yet the real fiends in their capital suites are never spattered with a single drop of blood. Solidarity, Z



IRAQ WAR REPORTS

2 Marines Killed In Al Anbar

24 October 2006 Multi-National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20061024-05

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq: Two Marines assigned to Regimental Combat Team 5 died Monday from injuries sustained due to enemy action while operating in Al Anbar Province.

Sailor Killed In Al Anbar

Oct. 24, 2006 MULTINATIONAL FORCE WEST PAO RELEASE No. 20061024-06

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq: One Sailor assigned to Regimental Combat Team 7 died Monday from enemy action while operating in Al Anbar Province.

Baghdad Soldier Dies From Wounds Following IED Attack

Oct. 24, 2006 MULTINATIONAL FORCE WEST PAO RELEASE No. 20061024-09

BAGHDAD: A Multi-National Division Baghdad Soldier died at approximately 2:15 a.m. today from wounds he received when his patrol was struck by an improvised-explosive device in central Baghdad.

Soldier Had Turned His Life Around When Killed



Jonathan Lootens: *The sergeant, 25, on his second Iraq war tour, also served in Afghanistan*

10.18.2006 By Gregg K. Kakesako, Honolulu Star-Bulletin

Sgt. Jonathan Lootens was to go home on a three-week leave next month, which would have meant spending Thanksgiving with his family in New York.

But Lootens, 25, of Lyons, N.Y., was killed in Iraq on Sunday when a roadside bomb exploded near the Humvee where he served as a turret gunner.

This was his second combat tour in Iraq, his family told the Associated Press yesterday. He also had served in Afghanistan with the 25th Infantry Division, where he was assigned in September 2002.

Killed in the same incident was 1st Lt. Joshua Deese, 25, of Robeson, N.C. Both soldiers were assigned to the 25th Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team's 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment. They died in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, where the bulk of the nearly 7,500 soldiers from Wahiawa have been stationed since September.

This brings to six the number of soldiers in Schofield's 25th Infantry Division who have been killed since the 3rd Brigade Combat Team arrived in Iraq last month.

Lootens' father, Robert Lootens, told the Associated Press that his son had been awarded a medal for saving another soldier's life. He said his son had enlisted after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

He is also survived by his mother, Deborah Qualtieri, and sister Andrea Ralyea.

"You could easily say that Jon had a very troubled youth," Ralyea told the Associated Press. "He frequently walked on the wrong side of the law, and the point where he joined the military, it was either military or prison. Sept. 11 was the straw that broke the camel's back."

The Army changed Lootens and gave him a sense of purpose and identity, Ralyea said.

"Jonathan did a complete 180," she said. "It became obvious that this was the kind of regimen and discipline that he needed in his life, and he just ate it up ... he very quickly found direction and set goals for himself."

His mother said it was important to her son to fight with his men. "He wanted to defend his country and defend his family," she said.

Deese enlisted in the Army three years ago this month, and was assigned to Schofield Barracks in 2004.

Spc. John Edward Wood 1968-2006



10/14/2006 The Chanute Tribune

Spc. John Edward Wood, 37, Humboldt, was killed in action Saturday, Oct. 7, 2006 at Baghdad, Iraq.

He was born Oct. 8, 1968 at Camden, Mo., to Clyde Edward and May Laura Hallock Wood.

He grew up in several communities in Southeast Kansas, including Mapleton, Blue Mound and Iola. He graduated from Jayhawk-Linn High School in 1987.

On Jan. 23, 1993, he married Lannette L. Arn at Uniontown. They made their home in Redfield, Mildred and LaHarpe before moving to Humboldt in 2006. He has served in the Kansas Army National Guard since 1988. He was deployed in 2004 with the Kansas Army National Guard's 891st Engineer Battalion serving in Iraq with the 110th Engineer Battalion out of Kansas City, Mo.

He enjoyed fishing, hunting, camping, all outdoor hobbies and working on cars.

He worked in the oil fields most of his life.

Survivors include his wife, of the home; four children, Wayne, Kimberly, Dannielle and Lila; his mother, May Rhodes, Duncan, Ariz.; a brother, Lyon Twomley, Boulder, Colo.; two sisters, Nora Billingsley, Duncan, Ariz., Shelley Cole, Humboldt.

He was preceded in death by his father, a sister, Mary Beth Wood, and a brother, William Twomley.

Graveside service will be 10 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 19, in Dayton Cemetery south of Mapleton, pastor Kelley Zellner officiating.

Contributions to the John E. Wood Memorial Fund may be left with the funeral home or Piqua State Bank.

Bicknell's Death Stuns Teammates

October 24, 2006 By Wesley Lyle, Montgomery Advertiser

PRATTVILLE: The reality still hasn't set in for the friends and former teammates of Stephen Bicknell.

Two days after the 19-year-old Army private was killed in Iraq, those close to the 2005 Prattville High School graduate still struggled to comprehend the loss.

"I found out (Monday) night, and it really shook me up," said Caleb Glass, a former teammate and member of the Class of 2005. "I couldn't go to bed. I was up until 5 a.m., trying to find out more.

"My brothers have been in the military for years, and I have other family members (serving). But this is the first close person I've lost. The seniors on (the 2004) team were close. We were a family. He was a brother to me."

Bicknell was a receiver and backup quarterback for Prattville's 2004 state runner-up team. Head coach Bill Clark informed his team of his death Tuesday morning. Many of the seniors already knew.

"A lot of the seniors played with him," Clark said. "There's a sense of disbelief when something like this happens to someone so young. It was hard for the players to accept, just like it was for the coaches when we found out (Monday night)."

For Prattville quarterbacks coach and former Jeff Davis assistant Tommy Goodson, the news moved him to make contact with former players. "You remember Ted Bryant," Goodson said of the former Jeff Davis football and baseball standout. "When I heard the news, the first thing I did was call him and several other guys I hadn't talked to in awhile. I just didn't want to go another day without talking to them.

"Ted and I haven't spoken in a year or so, and I didn't really know how to get in touch with him. Once I found him, I told him what had happened and explained that I just wanted to take the time to get in touch with some guys. You can't take the time you have for granted."

Goodson said he and Bicknell had e-mailed each other earlier in the year. "I didn't know his name the first year," said Goodson, who came to Prattville in 2003, Bicknell's junior season. "I just knew him as Vegas. That's what everyone called him because that's where his family had been stationed before they came here.

"There's still a picture in the training room from his senior year. It's of five students at a game. Each of them has a letter painted on them to spell out Vegas. I think of him every time I see it."

Senior quarterback Larry Smith remembered Bicknell as a leader. "He took me under his wing my sophomore year," Smith said. "(Hearing this news) hit me hard. I got the phone call, but I couldn't believe it. Stephen was just a good all around person." Smith became Prattville's starting quarterback as a sophomore, while Bicknell played receiver and backup quarterback. Bicknell was never bitter about backing up a sophomore.

"Even though he was the backup quarterback, he always prepared like he would be the starter," Goodson said. "His senior year, he came in and led us to four victories against the Montgomery schools. When Larry was healthy again, he gave up the position. He never complained about it, he just moved back to receiver. He was the ultimate team player."

When he did get his chance to play, Bicknell was ready. Smith went down with an injury in the fifth game of the 2004 season, the beginning of a crucial stretch of region games for the Lions. "He came in against JD after Larry got hurt," Clark said. "We were behind, but he stepped in and led us. He worked hard, waited his time and led us to four victories at Cramton Bowl."

Following the rally against JD, Bicknell started in three straight wins over G.W. Carver, Sidney Lanier and Robert E. Lee at Cramton Bowl.

Justin Bailey, a 2006 Prattville graduate, played three seasons with Bicknell and grew up with Bicknell's widow Miranda. "I fell to my knees and started praying," Bailey said of hearing the news for the first time. "I prayed for his family. I've known Miranda forever, since we were in kindergarden. And I know he was everything to his mother (Linda). I'm still dumbstruck by this."

Miranda Bicknell graduated from Prattville last spring and is expecting her first child.

"It's been doubly bad," Clark said. "Stephen played for us and Miranda was one of our athletic trainers. It's just bad all around. We started the Stephen Bicknell memorial fund (Tuesday) to raise money for Miranda and the baby." Those interested in contributing should call the main Prattville High office at 365-8804 or call the athletic department secretary at 361-3865.

Glass said he and another former teammate, Jonathan Kohn, want to compile some momentos for the Bicknell family. "We're going to try to get up with the other seniors and see what we can get together and give to the family," Glass said. "That way, his baby will have something to remember him by."

Bicknell is the second former Clark player to be killed in Iraq since June. Army Sgt. Carlos Pernell, a member of Clark's first team at Prattville, was killed in June.

Florida Marine Killed In Anbar



Marine Cpl. Joshua Charles Watkins, 25, of Jacksonville, Fla., was one of four North Carolina-based Marines who died Oct. 21, 2006, during combat in Anbar province. (AP Photo/The Watkins family via The Florida Times-Union)

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO
COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS
EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS
TIME, EXCEPT THAT A CROOKED
POLITICIAN WHO LIVES IN THE WHITE
HOUSE WANTS YOU THERE, SO HE WILL
LOOK GOOD FOR THE NOVEMBER
ELECTIONS:
That is not a good enough reason.**



A U.S. soldier, with 1st Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 506th Regimental Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, patrols the streets of the Shaab neighborhood, in northeast Baghdad, October 2, 2006. (U.S. Navy/Mass

Vancouver Soldier Injured In Iraq When Mortar Shell Hit Vehicle

October 24, 2006 By DEAN BAKER, Columbian staff writer

A Vancouver soldier suffered wounds to his eye, jaw and face recently in Iraq and was recovering Monday at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

Staff Sgt. John P. Kaiser Jr., 28, was wounded by a 120mm mortar round that landed in front of a hatch on a Stryker vehicle where he was standing, said a neighbor, Linda Kelly. She wasn't sure of details of the event, and family members weren't available for comment.

Kelly said family members asked her to speak for them.

"He told his unit what to do and had them all under cover," she said. "He was a squad leader. He was the only one hit."

Kaiser, a 1997 graduate of Washougal High School, is the son of John and Dianna Kaiser, of Washougal, and husband of Tina Kaiser, of Vancouver. He has two stepchildren, Casey and Daniel.

He suffered injuries to his face and shoulder, Kelly said. He lost his right eye, suffered broken facial bones and jaw and lost five teeth. He also was hit by scrap metal in his face and suffered nerve damage, Kelly said.

Kaiser, who has nine years of service, was serving with the 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, assigned to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team (Stryker). The unit was deployed to Iraq from Fort Lewis. Kaiser was on his second tour in the Mideast, having served earlier in Kuwait.

Stryker units are equipped with eight-wheeled, medium-weight armored vehicles that are faster and more transportable than tanks and armored vehicles.

Kelly said Kaiser's father and wife had left for Walter Reed, where Kaiser recently was transferred from an Army hospital in Germany after being treated first in Iraq. She said neighbors plan to decorate the neighborhood with yellow ribbons, to lend support when the soldier comes home. She didn't know when that will be, she said.

An account has been set up at Washington Mutual Bank in support of the family, Kelly said.

Marine From Watkins Glen Wounded In Iraq

October 24, 2006 Star-Gazette

WATKINS GLEN: A Watkins Glen native who was on his third tour of duty in Iraq with the Marines was wounded when his vehicle struck a roadside bomb, his father said Monday.

Sgt. Michael B. Yuhasz, 31, son of Michael A. and Carol Yuhasz of Watkins Glen, suffered forehead lacerations, a broken shoulder and a cracked kneecap when his Humvee was flipped Oct. 11 by the explosion, his father said.

Yuhasz, a 12-year Marine veteran, volunteered for his three tours in Iraq and had been in the country for only three weeks this time when his vehicle was bombed while he was on patrol near the Iraq-Syria border, his father said.

Yuhasz, a 1993 graduate of Watkins Glen High School, returned to the United States over the weekend and is recovering at a Marine base in California, said Michael A. Yuhasz. He said doctors don't know if or when his son will be able to return to active duty.

Cedar Springs Grad Wounded By Bomb In Iraq

October 21, 2006 By Pat Shellenbarger, The Grand Rapids Press

CEDAR SPRINGS: One thing Kyle Earl's family wants you to know: He's not the kind of guy looking for glory and certainly not sympathy.

"If you were to ask Kyle, I'd say he'd tell you he's not a hero," stepfather Rick Doherty said. "He is just a Marine who was doing his job."

The Cedar Springs-area family was notified this week that Earl, 20, was injured by a roadside bomb in Iraq's Al Anbar Province west of Baghdad. The exact nature and severity of his injuries remained unclear.

"We're waiting for updates," Doherty said. "I guess the best they can say is he's still alive."

Earl, a Marine lance corporal, was flown to a U.S. military hospital in Germany and was expected to arrive soon at Andrews Air Force Base near Washington, D.C. From there, he will be taken to another military hospital, although his stepfather said he did not yet know which one.

Earl was driving a Humvee in a convoy Tuesday morning when an improvised explosive device was detonated beneath the vehicle. Of the five Marines in the Humvee, Earl was the most seriously injured, Doherty said. Two other Marines received less-serious injuries, and one Marine pulled Earl from the damaged Humvee.

His parents, Rick and Monica Doherty, were notified Tuesday he was injured, and they received a call from him later that day.

"We're trying not to get too involved in the nature of his injuries," Rick Doherty said, adding that his stepson's injuries have "multiple, different aspects. He's got some severe injuries."

Earl, a 2005 graduate of Cedar Springs High School, wanted to join the Marines since he was in the fifth grade, Doherty recalled. He ran track in high school and is an avid hunter, fisherman and NASCAR fan.

Mike Annerino, Cedar Springs High School dean of students, described him as "a real good, friendly person."

U.S. Soldier Captured

24 Oct 2006 Reuters

A U.S. soldier missing on Monday was captured by insurgents while visiting a relative's house in Baghdad outside the fortified Green Zone compound, the U.S. military confirmed on Tuesday.

It said the soldier, a linguist assigned to a reconstruction team, was handcuffed and forced into a vehicle. The soldier, whose name has not been released, was reported missing on Monday. He was last seen early Monday afternoon at the Green Zone.

TROOP NEWS

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

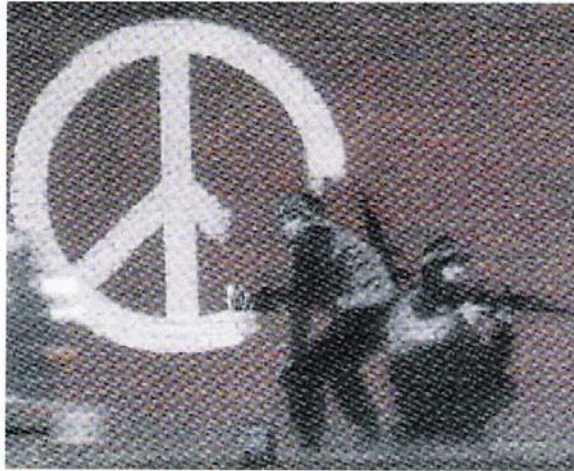


[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

RESISTANCE WHERE IT COUNTS:

HOW ANTI-WAR SOLDIERS WHO SERVED IN IRAQ
ORGANIZED AGAINST THE WAR ON THE FRONT LINES

JEFF ENGLEHART, JOE HATCHER and GARETT REPPENHAGEN
1st Infantry Division, Diyala Province, Iraq, 2004 - 2005



THERE HAS TO BE A POINT
WHEN WE REACH A HIGH
ENOUGH NUMBER OF
TROOPS IN OUR PEACE
EFFORT THAT A UNIFIED
BOYCOTT OF ALL MILITARY
ACTION WILL HAVE A
DESIRED EFFECT

- SOLDIER X

Find out what you can do to support the G.I. Movement!

JUDSON MEMORIAL CHURCH
55 WASHINGTON SQUARE SOUTH, NEW YORK CITY
7:00 - 9:00 P.M.
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2006

SPONSORED BY: THE MILITARY PROJECT,
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IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR (IVAW)-NYC CHAPTER

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GI SPECIAL, TRAVELING SOLDIER, VETERANS FOR PEACE (NYC - CHAPTER 34)
AFTER DOWNING STREET, BRING THE RUCKUS (NYC), LEFT TURN,
NOT IN OUR NAME (NYC), WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE

FOR MORE INFORMATION: CONTACT@MILITARYPROJECT.ORG

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

Anti-War Activists Stand Up For Freedom Of Speech

[Thanks to Elaine Brower and Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in.]

October 24, 2006 By MAURA YATES. Staten Island ADVANCE STAFF WRITER

A group of nearly 100 anti-war activists, most wearing black T-shirts with the legend "We Will Not Be Silent," boarded two evening ferryboats yesterday to exercise their right to free speech.

The event, which brought together several anti-war groups from around the city, was organized in response to an Oct. 9 incident on the Staten Island Ferry.

Stephanie Schwartz, a Hunter College student from Manhattan, said she was warned by Coast Guard security officers not to wear the shirt, with Arabic writing and the English translation, on the boat anymore, due to security concerns.

Ms. Schwartz said her experience was a reminder of the racial profiling experienced by Muslims across the country and the world, including a similar incident in August when a man wearing the shirt was made to cover up before boarding a Jet Blue flight.

"Everywhere they go, people are suspicious of them," she said. "It's unacceptable to frighten people this way."

"It's not a free democracy when people aren't able to wear a T-shirt," said Mike May of Peace Action of Staten Island.

"Any protest against taking away our civil liberties is worth it," said Elaine Brower of Great Kills.

Coast Guard spokesman Chief Tom Sperduto said he was aware of Ms. Schwartz's claim, but said the Coast Guard personnel on the boat that day denied telling Ms. Schwartz that she shouldn't wear the shirt.

Instead, he said, after being approached by a concerned passenger who pointed it out, the Coast Guardsmen told the passenger that Ms. Schwartz was not breaking a law.

"It's our policy in the Coast Guard that anyone is allowed to wear whatever they want," Sperduto said.

The slogan "We Will Not Be Silent" is said to derive from the White Rose dissident group, which opposed Nazi rule in Germany.

"This is the First Amendment," said Angelo Vega of the Bronx, gesturing to his shirt.
"How can you equate this with terrorism?"

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Rebels Stage Military Parade In Ramadi



October 22, 2006 Azzaman

Iraqi rebels have conducted a military parade in the city of Ramadi, west of Baghdad, to mark the setting up of what they call 'the Islamic Emirate' of Iraq.

The parade was organized by Majlis Shora al-Mujahideen, the Mujahideen Shora Council, in which thousands of fighters and hundreds of vehicles took part.

The parade continued for two consecutive days last week (Thursday and Friday), residents said.

The rebels brandished their weapons which included rocket launchers other heavy weapons as well as light arms.

Clad in black uniforms, they raised placards vowing to continue fighting U.S. occupiers and the current Iraqi government led by a Shiite and Kurdish coalition.

The parade was a show of force by the rebels and an indication that they have the region west of Baghdad under their control despite massive deployment and use of force by U.S. occupation troops.

Fearing retaliation by U.S. troops, many families are reported to have fled Ramadi, which is the capital of the Province of Anbar, the largest among Iraq's 18 provinces.

Eyewitness said the staging of the parade in the heart of Ramadi signaled that the rebels have had the upper hand in recent fighting in Iraq.

Other major towns west of Baghdad are also said to be in rebel hands.

In one of the outskirts of Haditha, for example, fighting is reported to be raging between U.S. troops and the rebels who have barricaded themselves inside the city.

They are lying in ambush and waiting for U.S. troops to enter the city, the witnesses said.

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

**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

At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation's ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. Frederick Douglas, 1852

“I Didn’t Realize That Many Soldiers In Vietnam Eventually Just Refused To Fight”



6.10.06 Meredith, Meredith Downtown [Excerpt]

As long as my internet is still working, I saw a good movie last night. Sir! No Sir! is a documentary about the GI movement against the Vietnam War.

I had never heard of this movement, so the film was a real eye-opener for me. I didn't realize that many soldiers in Vietnam eventually just refused to fight, and that this contributed to the ending of the war.

If you're interested, the website for Sir! No Sir! contains archival materials from the GI movement, including some interesting audio files, as well as links to blogs of current objectors.

**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."

Arlington Northwest Near Seattle, Washington



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: October 23, 2006
Subject: Arlington Northwest near Seattle, Washington

Arlington Northwest Near Seattle, Washington

**American children
and the reality of war.**

**For every American soldier killed in Iraq,
countless children are psychologically**

traumatized for the rest of their lives.

Every child in Iraq will be traumatized for the rest of their lives.

**The Bush White House is a Horror House—
killing as fast as they can.**

**When I left Vietnam
in September 1971,
the Vietnamese people hated us.**

**After the war was over, the U.S. Government
established an economic embargo for 20
years, which kept on killing
the Vietnamese people.**

**If the American people knew the
truth about the Vietnam War,
they would have panic attacks.**

Iraq will be no different.

**What do the American people think "Shock
an Awe" is?**

War is about killing everything.

There's no rules in warfare.

When I came back from Vietnam, I went native.

**And, as I write these words,
I am constantly reminded
that "I" was the enemy in Vietnam.**

Knowing that, has made me a free man.

**The U.S. Government
no longer owns my belief system.**

**I've been let out
of the Horror House.**

**Mike Hastie
1st Squadron 10th Cavalry
4th Infantry Division
Vietnam 1970-71**

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)

“Iraqis Do Not Want To Live Under Occupation”

“The Occupation Is The Source Of The Resistance”

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

24 October 2006 Anthony Arnove, Electronic Iraq

Each day the occupation of Iraq goes on, the situation for most Iraqis gets worse.

The trend is unmistakable, and has persisted through each of the many "turning points" announced by the Bush administration and its handpicked Iraqi clients, and then duly reported by a still overly deferential establishment media.

Consider the following:

In August 2006, the New York Times reported that "the number of daily strikes against American and Iraqi security forces has doubled since January."

The Times quoted "a senior Defense Department official who agreed to discuss the issue only on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak for attribution" as saying, "The insurgency has gotten worse by almost all measures, with insurgent attacks at historically high levels...."

“The insurgency has more public support and is demonstrably more capable in numbers of people active and in its ability to direct violence than at any point in time.”

The number of bodies that were processed in the central Baghdad morgue in May 2006 was double that of May 2005. But the May toll was soon surpassed by new records in the summer and early fall of 2006.

By September 2006, Iraq Body Count's conservative estimates put the civilian Iraqi death toll at between 43,269 and 48,046. The real number, as research by the Lancet indicates, is likely far higher than that. The Lancet now estimates some 655,000 "excess deaths" of Iraqis since the U.S. invasion of March 2003.

The number of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq passed two thousand seven hundred in September 2006.

While the average monthly death toll for U.S. soldiers briefly declined in the spring of 2006, largely because so many troops had effectively retreated to their increasingly fortified bases, since then "the number of Americans wounded has soared," and October is now on course to be the third deadliest month on record for U.S. troops in Iraq.

Prices of ordinary goods, including basic staples of the Iraqi diet, have spiraled higher, making life even more miserable for most Iraqis.

"Fuel and electricity prices are up more than 270 percent from last year's, according to Iraqi government figures," the New York Times notes. "Tea in some markets has quadrupled, egg prices have doubled, and all over the country the daily routine now includes a new question: What can be done without?...."

The inflation rate has reached 70 percent a year, up from 32 percent last year. Wages are flat, banks are barely functioning and the consensus among many American and Iraqi officials is that inflation is most likely to accelerate.... A gallon of gasoline cost as little as 4 cents in November (2005). Now, after the International Monetary Fund pushed the Oil Ministry to cut its subsidies, the official price is about 67 cents. The spike has come as a shock to Iraqis, who make only about \$150 a month on average--if they have jobs."

Population displacement has accelerated, with more than 800,000 Iraqis -- including many doctors, teachers, and professionals -- fleeing to Jordan, Syria, and other countries. As the Los Angeles Times observes, "The U.S. military says violence in Iraq is concentrated in Baghdad, but statistics show that it has roiled the whole country."

By summer 2006, many Iraqis reported being afraid to go to mosques because of fear of sectarian attacks. As Edward Wong reported in the New York Times, "Exploding sectarian violence has undermined the mosque's traditional role as a gathering place, further unraveling the country's communal fabric. Mosque attendance has plummeted, according to clerics and government officials, as tens of thousands of Iraqis ... choose to pray at home out of safety concerns. Gatherings at Friday Prayer are sometimes one-tenth the size of what they once were, and parents no longer send their children to mosques for spiritual lessons."

None of these examples, though, can convey just how intolerable Iraq has become under occupation or the extent to which life for most Iraqis has been disrupted.

Even President Bush now finds it hard to deny how bad things have become in Iraq, leading to some discussions about a "new strategy" for Iraq, including perhaps the partition of Iraq into three states or federated autonomous zones or the redeployment of troops in the Middle East.

These discussions have been motivated by the growing recognition on the part of a number of military planners that Washington's Plan B in Iraq is failing.

Plan A had been the staggeringly arrogant idea that the United States would invade Iraq, quickly topple the dictatorship, install a stable client government, and then--having radically changed the balance of power in the Middle East--march on from Baghdad to confront the regimes of Iran and Syria.

With that dream in tatters, the United States turned to Plan B: the manipulation of sectarian divisions in Iraq to form a Shia and Kurdish coalition government that would isolate the Sunnis (though the United States would seek to co-opt as much of their political leadership as possible) and impose order in the country.

This government would serve the intended client role--if less effectively than Washington had hoped--allowing the U.S. to gain at least some foothold in Iraq and claim victory.

But Plan B has not worked as Washington intended.

The new Iraqi government has proved incapable of imposing order in Iraq. In addition, Nuri al-Maliki and his Shia Dawa party have maintained close ties with Iran, the country seen as perhaps the greatest challenger to U.S. interests in the Middle East and western and central Asia.

Having invaded Iraq intending to weaken Iran and Syria, to strengthen its position and that of Israel and its Arab allies in the region, the United States instead achieved the opposite.

Nonetheless, the United States has continued to pursue Plan B--while still looking for some way to achieve the maximal objectives that drove its 2003 invasion.

The proposal to break up Iraq--a possible Plan C--is likely to gain more ground, though, as Plan B brings only diminishing returns. The United States could conclude that a divided Iraq is easier to control than a united Iraq aligned in a hostile Shia bloc with Iran. Or it may find other, more dangerous, ways of pursuing its original objectives, specifically by broadening the war in an effort to isolate Iran or topple its regime, thus breaking up the feared Shia alliance.

The new position in which Washington finds itself could encourage the U.S. government to pursue a number of dangerous strategies, including: escalation of troop levels in Iraq; intensified "pacification" campaigns in Baghdad and other major cities (the so-called "El Salvador option"); greater use of air power against Iraqis; and an expansion of the field of conflict to include other countries seen as abetting the resistance in Iraq, most importantly Syria and Iran (as we recently saw with the U.S.-sponsored Israeli assault on Lebanon).

But all of these strategies will never overcome the basic facts that Iraqis do not want to live under occupation, that the occupation is the source of the resistance Washington seeks to destroy, and that each day its actions only fuel more anger and resentment.

New polls from the State Department and the University of Maryland's Program on International Policy Attitudes show decisively that a strong majority of Iraqis, whether they are Shia or Sunni want U.S. troops to leave Iraq immediately; feel less safe as a result of the occupation; think the occupation is spurring not suppressing sectarian strife;

and support armed attacks on occupying troops and Iraqi security forces, who are seen not as independent but as collaborating with the occupation.

That is, if it were up to ordinary Iraqis, the occupation would end.

The polls reveal what we knew all along, though: the occupation of Iraq is intended not to bring democracy to Iraq, but to deny it, as the U.S. pursues imperial aims that have nothing to do with any of the stated reasons -- whether for going into Iraq in the first place (WMD, 9-11, al-Qaeda, preemption) or for staying (spreading democracy, combating terrorism, stopping civil war, rebuilding Iraq).

Instead, the U.S. is staying on Iraq in pursuit of military bases, control of vital oil and natural gas resources, projection of power in the region and globally, and legitimizing U.S. imperial might.

Bush officials speak openly about maintaining current troop levels in Iraq until 2010 or beyond.

The real question now is: how many more Iraqis will die, how many more wars will be launched, how many more U.S. soldiers will kill or be killed in this criminal war?

Anthony Arnove is the author of Iraq: The Logic of Withdrawal (New Press), forthcoming this January in an updated paperback edition from the American Empire Project Series (Metropolitan Books).

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

The Divine Right to Kill: Silly General Grabs Ahold Of Both Cheeks And Holds On Tight

From: Don Bacon, The Smedley Butler Society
To: GI Special
Sent: October 20, 2006
Subject: The Divine Right to Kill

Silly General grabs ahold of both cheeks and holds on tight:

Pace: Rumsfeld Is Inspired By God

(October 19, 2006, news24.com)

Miami: The top US general on Thursday defended the leadership of defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld, saying it is inspired by God.

"He leads in a way that the good Lord tells him is best for our country," said marine General Peter Pace, chair of the joint chiefs of staff.

Rumsfeld is "a man whose patriotism focus, energy, drive, is exceeded by no one else I know ... quite simply, he works harder than anybody else in our building", Pace said at a ceremony in Miami.

General Butler: Even God Was Brought Into It

"In the World War, we used propaganda to make the boys accept conscription. They were made to feel ashamed if they didn't join the army.

"So vicious was this war propaganda that even God was brought into it. With few exceptions our clergymen joined in the clamor to kill, kill, kill.

"To kill the Germans. God is on our side...it is His will that the Germans be killed.

"And in Germany, the good pastors called upon the Germans to kill the allies...to please the same God.

"That was a part of the general propaganda, built up to make people war conscious and murder conscious."

(Major General Smedley Butler, USMC, 1935)

MORE:

Rumsfeld's Dogs Lick His Hand At Southern Command

October 20, 2006 Capitol Hill Blue

The top US general defended the leadership of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, saying it is inspired by God.

"He leads in a way that the good Lord tells him is best for our country," said Marine General Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Rumsfeld has faced a storm of criticism and calls for his resignation, largely over his handling of the Iraq war.

But he got a strong show of support from the military establishment at Thursday's ceremony, where Navy Admiral James Stavridis took over Southcom's command from General Bantz Craddock.

"He comes to work everyday with a single-minded focus to make this country safe," said Stavridis who was a senior aide to Rumsfeld before taking on the Southcom job.

"We're lucky as a nation that he continues to serve with such passion and such integrity and such determination and such brilliance," said Stavridis,

As head of Southcom, Stavridis will be responsible for military cooperation with Latin American countries, and will be in charge of the Guantanamo US military base in Cuba where more than 400 "war on terror" detainees are being held.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Life In Prison For Faking Drivers License Test

October 13, 2006 By Rachel Odes, Socialist Worker

MEMBERS OF the group Families to Amend California's Three Strikes (FACTS), as well as Green Party members, gathered outside a Los Angeles courtroom September 14 to call attention to one of the many victims of California's "three strikes" law.

Santos Reyes has already served nine years in prison for committing a third "strike" offense; in this case, taking a DMV test under a false identity so a cousin who could not speak English could get a driver's license.

For this "crime," he has been sentenced to 26 years to life.

The hearing on September 14 was the result of a rare victory for Reyes. An appeals court allowed him to challenge the circumstances of his second conviction, which was for attempted robbery in 1986. If the judge rules that he was falsely convicted in that case, then his subsequent offense would no longer be considered a last "strike," and the severe sentence could be revisited.

Santos Reyes' first strike was stealing a radio in 1981, when he was 17 years old. This conviction counted as a first strike, although judges are given discretion over whether to count such offenses towards a third strike.

Legal advisers to Reyes don't believe the circumstances of the second conviction will raise enough questions to overturn the three-strikes sentence.

Instead, they hope to call attention to the draconian three-strikes sentencing law itself--using Santos Reyes' case to show of how such policies allow defendants accused of crimes of poverty to end up with life sentences.

In their work, FACTS members highlight the many cases that involve a third strike of petty theft--stealing a loaf of bread, a slice of pizza or videotapes, for example. Their work also shows that the swelling of California's prisons is due primarily to the conviction of those who commit victimless crimes, like using drugs.

At last count, California's prisons were 70 percent over capacity.

This has become such a crisis that Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger just declared the prison system to be in a state of emergency, which means he now can send inmates to other states' prisons and pay those governments to house them. Prisoners don't have to give their consent to be moved across the country, and they can be held there for five years or more.

But Schwarzenegger can't complain about the crisis. Two years ago, he campaigned against Proposition 66, which would have reformed the three-strikes law: since then, he has kept the prisons filled to the brim and the rest of the state's social programs in the red.

Peter Camejo and Donna Warren, the Green Party's candidates for governor and lieutenant governor, spoke at the press conference outside Reyes' hearing September 14, arguing for a much different policy that puts the needs of Californians ahead of "tough-on-crime" scapegoating.

As Warren explained, "The two parties of greed have created this problem, and the poor and people of color are the ones who suffer. We have to organize to be part of the solution."

Homeland Stupidity

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

October 12, 2006 By Michael Hampton, Homelandstupidity.us [Excerpts]

After a screwup by government bureaucrats spending federal homeland security money in which they embarrassed themselves by accidentally selling off the \$8,000 copier they'd just acquired for pennies on the dollar, the bureaucrats are,

instead of being sensible and moving on, are being even more stupid and preparing to spend even more money to get “their” copier back.

But the story of the copier reveals these bureaucrats aren’t your garden variety stupid. They’re colossally, phenomenally, incredibly stupid.

Ted Anderson, Ken Dahlstedt and Don Munks, Skagit County (Wash.) Commissioners, spent \$8,000 of federal homeland security grant money they were expecting in order to buy a state-of-the-art copier for the county’s new emergency response van.

A van they hadn’t yet bought.

That’s right, these morons put the cart before the horse, or in this case, the copier before the van it was going to be used in.

And I haven’t even gotten into the question of why an emergency response van needs a \$8,000 copier, when presumably, in an emergency, a \$100 inkjet copier/printer/scanner off the local computer store’s shelf would do.

Anyway, so “Skagit County’s own version of Moe, Larry and Curly” decide to stick the copier in a warehouse. The warehouse where the county keeps surplus items. Do you see it coming yet?

Yes, you’re right. The county did have a surplus auction, and sold off the copier to a local businessman, who reportedly paid \$250 for it, about three cents on the dollar.

After about a month goes by Skagit County officials decide they should get the copier returned. The county reportedly offered \$5,000 to buy back it’s \$8,000 copier.

“No thanks,” said the businessman who’d bought it.

So now Skagit County officials will spend God only knows how much money as they sue the businessman in an effort to force him to give the copier back.

So, let’s recap the math for you. After the auction, the county was out \$7,750. It then offered another \$5,000 to buy the copier back. I wouldn’t sell it for that low either. Now the city will spend many more thousands of dollars on lawyers to force this guy to give back the copier. You can be sure it will be more than \$5,000.

OCCUPATION REPORT

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

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



AShi'ite mosque destroyed by U.S. forces in Baghdad October 20, 2006, killing one person and detaining two, police and witnesses said. REUTERS/Namir Noor-Eldeen (IRAQ)

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqis over here to the USA. They can destroy U.S. churches, kill and arrest people they find in them, 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?]

"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 ISN'T LIBERATION

BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!

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