

## GI SPECIAL 4J29:

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UNITED FEATURE SYN



"...ON SECOND THOUGHT, MAYBE ITS NOT SUCH A GOOD IDEA TO TEACH THEM HOW TO USE THOSE THINGS..."

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[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in.]

**Service Members' Web  
Site Says Get Out Of  
Iraq;  
"Will The Government Want To  
Make A Bunch Of Martyrs  
Here?"**



**10.26.06: Liam Madden of Bellows Falls, Vt., said he doesn't think he would've joined the Marines if he had known the government would lie to start a war on Iraq. The 22-year-old sergeant, who spent seven months in Iraq, is part of a group of service members who are protesting the war by organizing around the Appeal for Redress. (AP Photo/Courtesy of Liam Madden)**

**If the government did find a legal basis upon which to charge service members who sign the statement on the group's Web site, officials would then have to decide if it was worth the political and public relations risks of going after service members opposed to the war, even if what they are doing is ultimately judged to be illegal.**

**"There's a lot of fuzziness in it," Fidell said. "Clearly the issue is, will the government want to make a bunch of martyrs here?"**

October 26, 2006 By Gordon Lubold, Navy Times Staff writer

**A group of active-duty military members are taking their legal lives into their own hands as they openly question the war in Iraq.**

**The group, which calls itself An Appeal for Redress, has received the electronic signatures of dozens of active-duty service members who say it's time to redeploy U.S. forces from Iraq.**

On its Web site, [<http://www.appealforredress.org/>], the group has posted a statement that it describes as "patriotic and respectful in tone," which service members can sign and send to Congress.

"As a patriotic American proud to serve the nation in uniform, I respectfully urge my political leaders in Congress to support the prompt withdrawal of all American military forces and bases from Iraq," the statement reads.

"Staying in Iraq will not work and is not worth the price. It is time for the U.S. troops to come home."

**One of the people behind the site is Navy Seaman Jonathan Hutto, based in Norfolk, Va., who believes the current debate about the war in Iraq includes everyone but the people who matter the most.**

**“We’ve heard many voices, we heard from some politicians, some activists and pundits,” he said in a phone interview Oct. 23. “We haven’t heard from the men and women who actually serve and I think that’s a constituency that has to be heard from.”**

**Hutto said there are “thousands of men and women” in uniform who believe it is time to end the war. His Web site has received over 100 names so far, but he expects to get far more.**

**The media have already taken notice; Hutto and others involved in the group have appeared on cable news programs and in other national newspapers.**

**Hutto is one of two active-duty service members who wrote opinion columns touting the effort that were first published in the Oct. 30 issues of Marine Corps Times and Navy Times.**

The group’s push for redeployment from Iraq comes two weeks before the Nov. 7 congressional elections and at a time when debate over the war is raging. A majority of Americans oppose the war, according to various recent polls, and many Republicans have joined Democrats in calling for a new direction in the Iraq war.

The group cites a clause in the Military Whistleblower Protection Act, Defense Department Directive 7050.6, that affords service members the right to communicate with a member of Congress.

If a service member runs into problems anyway, the group advises them to get a lawyer.

**“If the command tries to retaliate against you for exercising your free speech rights, get some legal assistance,” reads a statement on the Web site.**

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., a former Air Force Reserve judge has raised concerns about the war in Iraq, but said vocal complaints by active-duty members represent a “disturbing trend” that threatens to erode the cohesiveness of the military. **[A consummation devoutly to be wished. That’s exactly what stopped the war on Vietnam.]**

**“We’ve had a long tradition making sure the military doesn’t engage in political debate,” Graham said. “We don’t need a Democratic army and a Republican army.” [He’s 100% right about that. Since both parties are for the Imperial wars, Iraq first and foremost, that would be useless. We need a movement in the military 100% opposed to all wars for Empire, 100% opposed to the politicians who kill troops to sustain the Empire, and 100% opposed to the corporate suits who buy the politicians so they can fill their own pockets with the wealth they grab from the blood of those who serve in their wars of Empire. Including rats like Graham.]**

Eugene Fidell, who teaches military justice at American University in Washington and frequently represents active-duty military members in legal cases, said the service members who are speaking out are in largely uncharted waters.

The Uniform Code of Military Justice states that service members can speak out, but cannot attack the “war aims” of a particular effort, Fidell said. “My reading of this suggests that there is nothing here that attacks the war aims of the United States,” he said.

**If the government did find a legal basis upon which to charge service members who sign the statement on the group’s Web site, officials would then have to decide if it was worth the political and public relations risks of going after service members opposed to the war, even if what they are doing is ultimately judged to be illegal.**

“There’s a lot of fuzziness in it,” Fidell said. “Clearly the issue is, will the government want to make a bunch of martyrs here?”

**An Appeal for Redress:**  
**<http://www.appealforredress.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**

## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

### **One Marine Killed In Al Anbar**

28 October 2006 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE  
No. 20061028-01

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

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### **Ex-Clevelander Among Soldiers From U.S. Killed Saturday In Iraq**

October 18, 2006 John P. Coyne, Plain Dealer Reporter

A former Clevelander serving in Iraq was among three servicemen killed Saturday when a roadside bomb exploded near their armored vehicle.

First Sgt. Charles M. King, 48, was a career soldier who was scheduled to return home next month, said his mother, Gladys King, who, with her husband, Charles, still lives in the same Lee-Miles neighborhood where their son grew up.

The soldiers were assigned to the 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division out of Fort Hood, Texas. The unit was deployed to Iraq last November.

King was the senior officer in a convoy on a resupply mission when the vehicle was hit near Baghdad. His sister, Gail King, said she was told by an Army captain that because of his rank, her brother did not have to accompany the convoy, but felt obliged to offer his experience to the younger soldiers.

"He said he could not in good faith send his soldiers on a mission unless he did it himself," said King's fiancée, Dana Canedy, a former Plain Dealer reporter now working at the New York Times. "He made sure every one of his soldiers took leave before he would take his leave," she said.

King, who joined the Army in 1987, also served in Iraq in 1990-91 as part of Operation Desert Storm.

King attended Cuyahoga Community College and received an associate of arts degree from Chamberlain Junior College in Boston. He also attended the Art Institute of Chicago.

He worked as a fashion illustrator in Montgomery, Ala., and as an ad illustrator for a newspaper in Mobile, Ala. before joining the Army in his late 20s, his sister said.

While in the Army, he became intrigued by the heroism of the 761st Tank Battalion, an all-black unit that served in World War II. His interest in the unit prompted him to create several illustrations depicting it in battle.

A collection of his work was part of a Black History Month display at the Pentagon in 1998. More of his artwork is now being exhibited at military museums at Fort Lewis near Tacoma, Wash., and at Fort Knox, Ky.

King and Canedy, who lives in New York, have a 6-month-old son, Jordan Canedy King, whom King saw for the first time last month. He also has a daughter, Christina, 15, of Killeen, Texas.

"He wrote a 200-page journal to the baby while he was in Iraq, telling him everything he thought he would need to know to grow up," Canedy said. "Everything from his favorite Bible verses, why he wanted to have a baby, why he wanted to be a soldier, and how to treat women.

"He started the journal with a letter to me saying, 'This is the letter every soldier should write.'

"And he ended it with a letter to his son saying, "I will do my best to make you and your mother proud."

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## **E. Kentucky Soldier Dies In Iraq**

Oct. 20, 2006 Kentucky.com

**MOUNT STERLING:** An Eastern Kentucky soldier has died from combat-related injuries in Iraq, military officials said yesterday.

Staff Sgt. Garth Sizemore, 31, of Mount Sterling, died Tuesday after he was shot by enemy forces during patrol in Baghdad, the Department of Defense said.

Sizemore was assigned to 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division out of Schweinfurt, Germany.

Sizemore attended Montgomery County High School and Morehead State University before enlisting seven years ago, his father, Glenn Sizemore, of Mount Sterling said in an interview yesterday.

Glenn Sizemore said there were many factors behind his son's decision to join the military: "Too many reasons go into a decision like that."

"He was always mature, always thinking for himself," he said of his only child.

Sizemore said he hadn't seen his son, who married less than a year ago, since he was stationed in Germany three years ago.

Growing up, Garth Sizemore was passionate about the rugged outdoors and enjoyed camping, kayaking and rappelling. He loved rock music and learned to play the guitar.

Shannon White, principal of Montgomery County High School, said that Garth Sizemore was a "real quiet-natured, good-hearted kind of fellow."

Sizemore took classes in agriculture and was very active in the Future Farmers of America chapter at the high school, said White, a former vocational agriculture teacher who taught Sizemore when Sizemore was a freshman at Montgomery County High in 1990. Sizemore attended the high school for three years, White said.

Glenn Sizemore said that more than anything, he admired his son's sense of independence.

"He made his own decisions and lived with his own decisions," he said.

Funeral services had not been scheduled.

Forty-five soldiers from Kentucky have died in Iraq since 2003.

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## Polish Helicopter Shot Down; Two Wounded

28 October 2006 Multi-National Corps Iraq PAO RELEASE No. 20061028-03

BAGHDAD – On Oct. 28 an MI-24 Polish helicopter made an emergency landing in the vicinity of As Suwayrah, south of Baghdad.

The helicopter received small arms fire wounding one Coalition and one Iraqi Army Soldier. The pilot landed at the nearest landing zone which was secured by the Iraqi Army. The wounded Soldiers were medically evacuated to the 28th CSH in Baghdad and are currently in stable condition.

There was no significant damage to the aircraft and the area was secured throughout the emergency landing and medevac operation.

Polish aircraft were flying in support of a cordon and search operation conducted by 3 Brigade, 8 IA division soldiers when the incident occurred.

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**REALLY BAD IDEA:  
NO MISSION;  
HOPELESS WAR:  
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. soldiers at the scene of a car bomb attack in Baghdad October 21, 2006.  
REUTERS/Mohammed Ameen (IRAQ)

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed In Uruzgan, 8 Wounded: Nationality Not Announced**

October 29, 2006 (AP)

On Sunday, a roadside blast killed one NATO soldier and wounded eight in Uruzgan, the alliance said. Three civilians were wounded. The nationalities of the slain and wounded soldiers were not disclosed.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

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



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

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# IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

## COMMENT UNNECESSARY



A resident looks at a U.S. soldier standing guard outside a shop in Baghdad October 25, 2006. REUTERS/Namir Noor-Eldeen (IRAQ)

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## Assorted Resistance Action

October 28, 2006 CNN & Reuters

**Insurgents captured 11 Iraqi soldiers travelling in a minibus at a fake checkpoint in the town of Udhaim 100 km (60 miles) north of Baghdad on Saturday.**

The soldiers were wearing civilian clothes and were taken out of the bus at gunpoint after the guerrillas found their military IDs.

The abduction took place in Udhaim, some 50 kilometres north of Baquba, a town which has witnessed recent attacks against Iraq's US-trained forces.

Insurgents on Saturday morning killed an Iraqi soldier and wounded three others in an attack on a joint Iraqi army and police patrol, a Kirkuk police official said.

A roadside bomb targeting security forces guarding an oil industry facility wounded two police officers in eastern Baghdad, police said.

One Iraqi soldier was killed and three wounded when they raided a house in Hawija, 70 km (43 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, and clashed with guerrillas inside.

A private security guard from Nepal was wounded when guerrillas attacked an electricity power unit in Nasiriya, 375 km (235 miles) south of Baghdad.

MAHDUDIYA: A roadside bomb exploded near an Iraqi police patrol, killing one policeman and wounding three, police said.

A car bomb exploded near a municipal building in Dujail, wounding five people including a policeman in the town, 90 km (55 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

FALLUJA: Police said at least two soldiers and one civilian were killed in clashes between Iraqi army and insurgents. Another three civilians were wounded.

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

## **“Protecting Iraq Is Our Aim And Getting The Occupation Forces Out Is Our Aim Too”**

Oct 28 (KUNA)

Shiite leader Muqtada Al-Sadr on Saturday warned his supporters from being sucked into a Shiite-Shiite or Shiite-Sunni conflict in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities.

**In a press statement distributed here, Al-Sadr who leads Al-Mahdi army expressed his "utmost rejection" of having a Shiite-Shiite or Shiite-Sunni war or Iraqis fighting one another for any reason.**

**"Protecting Iraq is our aim and getting the occupation forces out is our aim too," he added.**

Al-Sadr urged his supporters not to commit attacks in Baghdad or other Iraqi cities. He asked them to protect themselves.

“Shiite and Sunnis are brothers in Iraq, and any assault on any Iraqi means assaulting Al-Sadr.”

Al-Sadr said if he is to be killed or arrested his supporters must stay committed to their religion and faith, remain united and protect Iraq.

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# **“Get The Fuck Off Our Backs”**



Residents attend a rally in Baghdad's Sadr city October 29, 2006. Thousands of people took to the streets in Sadr City on Saturday to protest against a security clampdown imposed on the city for the fifth day running in a hunt for a U.S. soldier who went missing in Baghdad last week. REUTERS/Kareem Raheem (IRAQ)

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## **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

# **“A Huge Number Of GIs Were Involved In Protesting Vietnam”**



05.10.06 Felicia Feaster, Creative Loafing Media [Excerpts]

**In some ways, former Atlanta-based filmmaker David Zeiger's (The Band) documentary on Vietnam soldiers is like smelling salts passed beneath the nose of a fainting victim.**

**The men and women interviewed in Sir! No Sir! began the war Yankee Doodle style, convinced of the righteousness of the war, and of killing for Uncle Sam's cause. A former Green Beret hoped that, as there was for the men who came before him, "a war for me."**

**As the war continued and the depravity of the tactics escalated, these same soldiers had to weigh their own sense of right and wrong, good and evil against the politicians and generals. Murder, it turns out, is not an easy thing for good people to do.**

**Ultimately, the version of morality offered by the politicians and generals lost.**

Career soldiers, West Point grads and kids who grew up in gung-ho military families suddenly felt the very earth of America falling away beneath their feet. Many of them began to speak out against the war and were thrown with their brethren into a military stockade in San Francisco's Presidio. Others began underground newspapers and anti-war coffee shops, often on the very military bases that were training them for battle. Many, like the former servicemen in Winter Soldier and anti-war activists like Jane Fonda, who is interviewed in Zeiger's film, spoke out publicly.

In a formula that sounds relevant today, they were made to feel that questioning the political policies of their country meant they were somehow anti-American or unpatriotic.

Zeiger demonstrates the viral nature of protest during Vietnam, and how news of one soldier going AWOL or protesting against the war would then inspire similar defections.

Best of all, Sir! No Sir! is a revisionist tale that counters a deceptive version of history -- that it was the dirty, draft-dodging hippies who defined the anti-war movement.

**The documentary offers the fresh insight that a huge number of GIs were involved in protesting Vietnam.**

**It is a redemptive portrait of Americans. Compassionate and moral with a deep sense of personal responsibility, they were compelled to speak out when they saw something was wrong.**

**If we can learn from the past, Americans will speak out again.**

**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](http://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."**

## **So Sorry**

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

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### **So Sorry**

**Met a man at the post office  
said "I think we were right  
to invade Iraq,  
but when I say we,**

I don't mean me  
or my family."

Met a man at the gas station,  
said "We have to fight  
the terrorists,  
but when I say we,  
I don't mean me  
or my family."

Met a man at the hardware store  
said "We got to kill them  
in Iraq instead of here,  
but when I say we,  
I don't mean me  
or my family."

Met a man at the bank  
said "We got to  
stabilize the Middle East,  
but when I say we,  
I don't mean me  
or my family."

Met a friend at a funeral,  
his boy was killed in Iraq,  
the triangle flag  
was given to him,  
he just shook his head  
and looked away.

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**“No One Should Expect The  
Democrats To Honor A Promise  
They Never Made:  
To Put An End To George  
Bush’s Wars For Oil And  
Empire”**

October 27, 2006 Editorial, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

THE ESCALATING carnage in Iraq and rising U.S. casualties are turning the November congressional election into a referendum on the war and on one-party Republican rule in all branches of government.

Millions of people who all along opposed the occupation of Iraq and the Bush agenda will take heart from the Republicans' crisis, and look to the election as a signal that there will be a change in the U.S. government's disastrous war policy.

It's a pleasure to see the arrogant Republicans sputter and suffer.

But several facts should be kept in mind.

First, a "change" in U.S. strategy and tactics in Iraq is not the same thing as ending the occupation: quite the contrary, under the scenarios being discussed in Washington today.

**And second, no one should expect the Democrats to honor a promise they never made: to put an end to George Bush's wars for oil and empire.**

**No leading Democrat will do more than complain about the Bush administration's tactics--which is why legislation to fund the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan typically passes both houses of Congress with unanimous or near-unanimous votes.**

During every election campaign, the mainstream media focus on the horse race between Republican and Democratic candidates leads to an exaggeration of the differences between the two main parties in U.S. politics. In reality, the differences between them are small when you compare them to the fundamental similarities that unite Republicans and Democrats.

Focusing on those differences obscures how government policy--especially on the most important questions, like war and imperialism--is determined by a bipartisan consensus among the political establishment, with only the narrowest spectrum of debate.

Thus, the likely Democratic victory in November may disguise the fact that a change in U.S. strategy in Iraq is a certainty--whichever party wins and by whatever margin.

Democrats have long claimed that the Bush administration's obsession with Iraq was taking attention away from the "real" war on terror. Now, Republicans can be heard echoing the same rhetoric, and the administration-appointed task force headed by James Baker is reportedly preparing the "course correction."

"The options cited most frequently in Washington," reported the Washington Times, a reliable mouthpiece of the right wing, "include the partition of Iraq into three ethnic- or faith-based regions, and a phased withdrawal of U.S. troops, with some remaining in neighboring countries to deal with major threats."

Both these "options" are most associated with the Democrats who have been pushing them for years.

**As for the formula of "phased withdrawal," "with some (troops) remaining in neighboring countries," that, of course, is the "redeployment" proposal of**

Democratic Rep. John Murtha. The Murtha plan for “withdrawal” has a flip side--escalate the use of U.S. air power to quell any unrest in Iraq that threatens U.S. interests in the region.

The air strikes of the Murtha plan would add to the death toll among Iraqis, now estimated at more than half a million according to a Johns Hopkins research study.

Ultimately, none of the “fresh ideas” about Iraq proposed from the Washington establishment have the least hope of ending unrest and violence in Iraq, because each has, as its overriding aim, the main source of that unrest and violence: defense of U.S. interests in the Middle East at the expense of the people of Iraq.

A Democratic victory in November--if it takes place--will raise the hopes of many millions of people who want the Iraq war and occupation to end.

But the Democrats won't put forward an antiwar alternative, because their party is committed to the same imperialist goals as the Republicans.

The urgent need remains to rebuild an antiwar movement that opposes the imposition of U.S. military, political and economic power anywhere in the world, no matter what political party is in charge.

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## Death March



From: Mike Hastie



To: GI Special  
Sent: October 23, 2006  
Subject: Death March

### **Death March**

**Everyday you march to commemorate the dead.  
You march and march until the American people  
get it -- their DEAD! The war in Iraq is DEAD!**

**By Christmas, there will be 3,000 American  
soldiers in cemeteries clear across America.**

**What did they die for?**

**The White House is a Mental Hospital,  
and that is why we must march,  
because our government is mentally  
ill.**

**You march and march, because we are  
sick of war.**

**Mike Hastie  
U.S. Army Medic  
Vietnam 1970-71  
October 23, 2006**

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

**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](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org):. Name, I.D., withheld on  
request. Replies confidential. Same to unsubscribe.**

## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

# **Welcome To “Sovereign” Iraq:**

# Where Thousands Of Foreigners With Weapons Demand To See Your Papers, Or Else



A U.S. occupation soldier from the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team demands to see the identification card of an Iraqi citizen walking down the street in Baghdad, October 29, 2006. REUTERS/Mahmoud Raouf Raouf (IRAQ)

**[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqi troops over here to the USA. They can stop anybody they want any time they want for any reason or no reason at all, at gunpoint ; 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!**

# **“I Asked Him Whether It Would Become Worse If The American Military Withdrew”**

## **“‘What Could Be Worse?’ He Asked, Knitting His Brow”**

October 29, 2006 By Anthony Shadid, The Washington Post Company [Excerpts]

There was an almost forgettable exchange earlier this month in the Iraqi National Assembly, itself on the fringe of relevance in today's disintegrating Iraq. Lawmakers debated whether legislation should be submitted to a committee to determine if it was compatible with Islam. Ideas were put forth, as well as criticism.

Why not a committee to determine whether legislation endorses democratic principles? one asked. In stepped Mahmoud Mashadani, the assembly's speaker, to settle the dispute.

"Any law or decision that goes against Islam, we'll put it under the kundara!" he thundered.

"God is greatest!" lawmakers shouted back, in a rare moment of agreement between Sunni and Shiite Muslims.

Kundara means shoe, and the bit of bluster by Mashadani said a lot about Baghdad today.

It had been almost a year since I was in the Iraqi capital, where I worked as a reporter in the days of Saddam Hussein, the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, and the occupation, guerrilla war and religious resurgence that followed. On my return, it was difficult to grasp how atomized and violent the 1,250-year-old city has become. Even on the worst days, I had always found Baghdad's most redeeming quality to be its resilience, a tenacious refusal among people I met over three years to surrender to the chaos unleashed when the Americans arrived.

That resilience is gone, overwhelmed by civil war, anarchy or whatever term could possibly fit. Baghdad now is convulsed by hatred, paralyzed by suspicion; fear has forced many to leave.

The commotion in the streets -- goods spilling across sidewalks, traffic snarled under a searing sun -- once prompted the uninitiated to conclude that Baghdad was reviving. Of course, they were seeing the city through a windshield, the often angry voices on the streets inaudible.

Today, with traffic dwindling, stores shuttered and streets empty by nightfall, that conceit no longer holds.

**Even the propaganda, once ubiquitous and often incongruous, is gone.**

One piece I recalled from two years ago: a map of Iraq divided into three colored bands. In white, it read, "Progress." In red, "Iraq." In white again, "Prosperity."

The promises are now more modest: "However strong the wind," reads a new poster of a woman clutching her child, "it will pass."

More indicative of the mood, perhaps, was one of the old banners still hanging. Faded and draped over a building scarred with craters from the invasion, it was an ad for the U.S.-funded Iraqi network, al-Iraqiya. In Arabic, its slogan reads, "Prepare your eyes for more."

I had first met Karima Salman during the U.S. invasion.

When I visited last year, the street, still one of the safer ones in Baghdad, exuded a veneer of normalcy. Makeshift markets overflowed with goods piled on rickety stands: socks imported from China, T-shirts from Syria and stacks of shoes, sunglasses and lingerie. Down the street were toys: plastic guns, a Barbie knockoff in a black veil, and a pirate carrying an AK-47 and a grenade. There was a "Super Mega Heavy Metal Fighter" action figure and a doll that, when squeezed, played "It's a Small World."

On this day, the metal stands were empty, as were the streets.

"Praise God," Karima said as I asked how she was. In a moment, her smile faded as she realized the absurdity of her words.

"Of course, it's not good," she said, shaking her head. "There's nothing that's ever happened like what's happening in Iraq."

On June 23, 2005, three car bombs detonated in Karrada, outside her home, wrecking the Abdul-Rasul Ali mosque and spraying shrapnel that sliced into the forearm of one of her five daughters, Hiba. Friends at school nicknamed her "Shrapnel Hiba." Two months ago, yet another bomb hurled glass through their window, cutting the head of Hiba's twin sister, Duaa. Four stitches sealed the wound.

Over that time, Karima lost her job as a maid at the Palm Hotel, where she had earned about \$33 a month.

"People are too scared to come," she said matter of factly.

I had come to know Wamidh Nadhme in 2002, before the invasion. A professor of political science at Baghdad University, he was a forthright voice in those tense, uneasy days when Hussein was still in power. He tried to speak with complete honesty despite the possible consequences of doing so in a police state.

**I asked him whether it would become worse if the American military withdrew.**

**He looked at me for a moment without saying anything, as though he were a little confused.**

**"What could be worse?" he asked, knitting his brow.**

I saw Wamidh again a week later, and the question had lingered with him. "I sometimes wonder what I would do if I were the Americans," he said over a traditional Ramadan dinner. His answer seemed to hurt him. "I have no idea, really."

"It's like a volcano that has erupted. How do you stop that?"

On April 9, 2003, Firdaus Square became the lasting image of the U.S. entry into Baghdad. In its center was a metal statue of Hussein in a suit, his arm outstretched in socialist realist fashion.

I looked out on the square. On one side were rows of concrete barricades and barbed wire, having faded almost organically into the landscape.

In another direction, a billboard read: "Terrorism has no religion." Across the street, a poster portraying Iraqi police pleaded: "We are the heroes fighting for the sake of Baghdad." In the middle of the square, on the stone perch where Hussein's statue once stood, were torn scraps of other posters: "Your voice," "the nation," "patriotism," "dialogue," "building the future."

The words were isolated, without context, like fragments of a clay tablet.



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

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## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in.]

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## CLASS WAR REPORTS

### Mexico The 27th:

# **Three People Assassinated, Eleven Wounded, Two Missing: The APPO Installs 1,000 Barricades In Broad Daylight; PRI Militants And Police Respond With 21 Armed Attacks**



D.R. 2006 El Universal

October 28, 2006 By Diego Enrique Osorno, Special to The Narco News Bulletin

**OAXACA CITY:** In the face of a renewed civil strike established in this capital city yesterday by the Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca (APPO), groups of gunmen linked to three municipal mayors from the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) launched a “cleansing” of the barricades and building occupations that opponents of PRI Governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz have been maintaining for months.

**The result:** three people killed, eleven wounded, two disappeared, one detained by the Ministerial Police and hundreds of shell casings left scattered along the streets as a testimony to the 21 shootouts that occurred yesterday in the city.

This capital city has already been under a sort of siege for 154 days, but since 6:00 yesterday morning the city was now truly besieged, just as the APPO leadership collective had warned would happen as part of their attempts to win the ouster of the PRI governor.

And so around 1,000 barricades were installed in broad daylight throughout the city, as part of the dissident strategy seeking to demonstrate that “ungovernability” is a fact in the southern state.

Just before 10 a.m., the first of the twenty-one armed attacks on the rebels’ self-defense fortifications (and more were coming out as this article went to press) was reported.

There were four main points attacked almost simultaneously at 4:00 in the afternoon: one was San Juan Chapultepec, another was Colonia del Maestro, the third the around the State Prosecutors’ office, occupied more than three months ago by the dissidents, and finally, the barricade on Calicanto Street, in the nearby city of Santa Lucia del Camino.

It would be in this last site where the most violent confrontation of the afternoon would take place, when a group of PRI militants showed up to tear down the barricades together with officers of the Santa Lucia del Camino municipal police, who carried R-15 rifles.

Repelling the attack with sticks and rocks, the APPO neighborhood group sent out an alert to the rest of the neighborhood residents, who started to arrive. Journalists did the same, and did not stop their coverage of the shooting, which continued for more than an hour.

During one incursion by protesters trying to set fire to one of the houses that the neighbors were being attacked from, U.S. documentary filmmaker Brad Will was mortally wounded in the pit of his stomach.

In the municipality of Santa Maria Coyotepec, two hours later, another group of “neighborhood residents,” also armed with high-powered firearms, arrived at the area surrounding the state capital building and police facilities to “remove” a hundred teachers who had been camped out in the occupied state buildings for three months.

Two other people died from gunshots: a teacher, Emilio Alonso Fabián, from the Los Loxicha region; and a neighborhood resident named Esteban López Zurita. Upon hearing of the violent events, National Peasant-Farmer Federation (CNC in its Spanish initials, a PRI organization) leader Elpidio Concha denied he had been present but admitted to having spoken with Santa Lucía del Camino residents about the necessity of defending and rescuing the capital.

He claimed that among the people who intervened, “there had been PAN militants as well as PRI, as well as common citizens,” and stated his desire that after this event “federal forces come in at last and restore peace.”

Meanwhile, the mayor of Santa Lucia del Camino, Jaime Martínez Feria, acknowledged that the armed men in civilian clothes were “police acting in legitimate defense against the threat of an occupation of City Hall.”

For its part, the state government criticized the fact that, “a few days away from the agreed upon return to classes by the teachers’ union, members of radical APPO groups led by Flavio Sosa Villavicencio would unleash a day of violence and provocation



against residents of the capital and neighboring communities with the clear goal of blocking the changing course of the conflict with these organizations.”

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# **Brad Will, New York Documentary Filmmaker And Indymedia Reporter, Assassinated By Pro-Government Gunshot In Oaxaca While Reporting The Story: Photographer Oswaldo Ramirez Wounded In Attack By Shooters For Ulises Ruiz Ortiz In Santa Lucia Del Camino**



Brad Will in Chetumal, Quintana Roo: Photo: D.R. 2006 Narco News

October 27, 2006 By Al Giordano, Narco News Bulletin [Excerpts]

Brad Will, 36, a documentary filmmaker and reporter for Indymedia in New York, Bolivia and Brazil, died today of a gunshot to the chest when pro-government attackers opened fire on a barricade in the neighborhood of Santa Lucia del Camino, on the outskirts of Oaxaca, Mexico. He died with his video camera in his hands.

**Brad went to Oaxaca in early October to document the story that Commercial Media simulators like Rebecca Romero of Associated Press distort instead of**

**report: the story of a people sick and tired of repression and injustice, who takes back the government that rightfully is theirs.**

In that context, his assassination is also a consequence of what happens when independent media must do the work that Big Media fails to do: to tell the truth. My friend and colleague since 1996 when we labored together at 88.7 FM Steal This Radio on New York's Lower East Side, I bumped into him again in Bolivia in 2004 during a public reception held by the Narco News School of Authentic Journalism, and again on the Yucatán peninsula last January where he came to cover the beginnings of the Zapatista Other Campaign: Brad died to bring the authentic story to the world.

**Brad went to Oaxaca in early October knowing, assuming and sharing the risks of reporting the story. His final published article, on October 17, titled "Death in Oaxaca," reported the assassination of Alejandro García Hernández on the barricades set up by the Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca (APPO, in its Spanish initials). Brad wrote:**

"...went walking back from alejandros barricade with a group of supporters who came from an outlying district a half hour away—went walking with angry folk on their way to the morgue—went inside and saw him—haven't seen too many bodies in my life—eats you up—a stack of nameless corpses in the corner—about the number who had died—no refrigeration—the smell—they had to open his skull to pull the bullet out—walked back with him and his people

"...and now alejandro waits in the zocalo—like the others at their plantones—hes waiting for an impasse, a change, an exit, a way forward, a way out, a solution—waiting for the earth to shift and open—waiting for november when he can sit with his loved ones on the day of the dead and share food and drink and a song—waiting for the plaza to turn itself over to him and burst—he will only wait until morning but tonight he is waiting for the governor and his lot to never come back—one more death—one more martyr in a dirty war—one more time to cry and hurt—one more time to know power and its ugly head—one more bullet cracks the night—one more night at the barricades—some keep the fires—others curl up and sleep—but all of them are with him as he rests one last night at his watch..."

Last September 26, Brad, on his way to Mexico, wrote me:

"hey al  
it brad from nyc—it would be great to get yr narco contacts in oaxaca—i am headed there and want to connect with as many folks as posible—are you in df?—i should be stopping though there and it would be great to go out for a drink  
solid  
brad"

Knowing of Brad's hard luck covering other stories (he had been beaten by police in New York and in Brazil doing this important but dangerous work), his difficulty with the Spanish language, and of the greater risk for independent reporters who haven't been embedded over time (and thus known by the people) in Oaxaca, I pleaded with him not to go, to instead go to Atenco and report on the story there of the arrival of Zapatista comandantes:

Brad replied that same night, undeterred:

I was not surprised that he decided to go to Oaxaca anyway. Brad had always taken risks: whether riding freight train box cars across the North American plain, or bunkering in his Fifth Street squat in 1996 when police and the wrecking ball invaded, his life had been one of courage. I gave him my cell phone number in case of emergency.

Also sharing the risks today in Santa Lucia del Camino, Oaxaca was photographer Oswaldo Ramírez of the daily Milenio, wounded by gunfire.

**It was Milenio reporter Diego Enrique Osorno who confirmed the news of Brad's death at 4:30 this afternoon. He also said that in another corner of the city, outside the state prosecutor's office, gunmen fired at other APPO members, that three were wounded, and that one schoolteacher is reported dead, but was unable so far to confirm that report.**

Brad Will was known and liked throughout the hemisphere, and in its media centers from New York to Sao Paulo to Mexico City. Tonight his body lies in the same Oaxaca morgue he visited and wrote about last week.

He will not go silently into the long night of repression that the illegitimate governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz, President Vicente Fox and his illegitimate successor Felipe Calderon have created in Oaxaca, and, indeed, in so much of Mexico.

**It was inevitable that soon an international reporter would join the growing list of the assassinated under the repressive regimes of Mexico (others had already been raped and beaten in Atenco, only to be deported from the country last May). Tonight it was Brad, doing the responsible and urgent work, video camera in hand, of breaking the Commercial Media blockade.**

**Tonight, from the Oaxaca City Morgue, Brad Will shouts "Ya Basta!" – Enough Already! – to the death and suffering imposed (as Brad, a thoughtful and serious anarchist, understood) by an economic system, the capitalist system.**

**His death will be avenged when that system is destroyed.**

And Brad Will's ultimate sacrifice exposes the Mexican regime for the brutal authoritarian violence that the Commercial Media hides from the world, and thus speeds the day that justice will come from below and sweep out the regimes of pain and repression that system requires. Brad gave his life tonight so that you and I could know the truth. We owe him to act upon it, and to share the risks that he took. Goodbye, old friend. Your sacrifice will not be in vain.

**Update, 10:30 p.m. Oaxaca: The Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca (APPO) has confirmed that schoolteacher Emilio Alfonso Fabián has died from three bullet wounds after an attack by shooters for Ulises Ruiz Ortiz outside the state government palace.**

Kristin Bricker reported for this story from Sonora



Brad Will's Assassins, identified by El Universal: Juan Carlos Soriano Velasco (red tshirt), a police officer known as "the Grasshopper"; Manuel Aguilar (dark jacket), city personnel director; and public safety chief Avel Santiago Zárate (red shirt) Photo: D.R. 2006 El Universal

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