

GI SPECIAL 4K3:



**“A Growing Number Of
Active-Duty Service
Members Are
Expressing Their
Opposition To The
Occupation Of Iraq”**

“There Are Circumstances Which Justify And Even Morally Obligate Service Members To Oppose A Government Policy”

From: Liam Madden
To: GI Special
Sent: November 01, 2006

By Liam Madden, Sergeant USMC

Recently it has come to light that a growing number of active-duty service members are expressing their opposition to the occupation of Iraq.

The main vehicle of this effort has been the appeal for redress, a web site that provides service members a confidential and legal means of communicating their concerns to members of congress.

Throughout the several interviews I have done with various media outlets, a few valid questions have been raised.

“When is it okay for service members to vocally oppose a war? If the troops opposed every conflict we engaged in, then it could seriously undermine the military’s effectiveness.” And “How and why should I help?”

The first question is a legitimate concern for both civilian and military persons interested but not entirely sold on the appeal for redress. Certainly military personnel can’t oppose any conflict for any reason. If we did, the unit cohesion and discipline that makes us so effective would be diminished.

However, there are circumstances which justify and even morally obligate service members to oppose a government policy.

I believe that the criteria for military personnel’s opposition to the Iraq occupation and the rationale that makes our grievance justified are the following:

1) The shifting reasons we initially invaded Iraq. First the claim of WMD’s and then the imaginary links to Al Qaeda, how long can either the incompetence of our policy makers, or possibly worse, their deceit be tolerated?

When will we decide to do what we do best, stand up and defend our principles?

2) The human cost.

When a long period of time passes and very little to no tangible positive results can be seen, it is justified to question the conduct and logic of this occupation.

Too many Service members and civilians are dying for the results we are getting.

3) The Iraqi people and government want us to leave. (According to recent independent and state department polls up to 71% of Iraqis favor US withdrawal within a year or earlier.)

They feel, as do many experts, that the US presence is aggravating the violence.

If our staying makes the situation worse, and provokes more anti-American sentiment, then it is undoubtedly justified and logical for service members to advocate the withdrawal of American Forces.

4) Who is paying for the war?

Over \$350 billion has been spent with money the government doesn't have.

The "emergency" funding that keeps getting passed is not factored into the national budget, drastically increasing the national deficit and burdening future generations with the payment of this fruitless war.

Depending on your personal situation there are different ways you can help bring about an end to this occupation.

Everyone:

*Dismiss the voice that tells you that your opinion doesn't count. That is not true, just wait and see.

Service members who oppose the war but don't want their careers to suffer:

***Go to www.appealforredress.org. Read the DOD directives on your rights. Fill out an appeal. It is confidential and completely legal.**

Service Members who want to be more involved in the appeal for redress movement:

*Get 4 or 5 friends to sign appeals, tell them to get 4 or 5 of their friends and so on.

*Contact the people at the appeal for redress and tell them you want to be more involved.

*Hold film showings, write articles, and be creative. Step out of your comfort zone a little, very little gets accomplished until people start doing that. Above all, stay legal!

Service members currently in Iraq:

*Sign the appeal.

*Try to put your opinions on hold until you return; do not undermine the effectiveness of your unit. When lives are at risk, unit cohesion means more than personal belief.

Civilians and family members:

*Tell the people you know who are currently serving about the appeal. Whether it is your son, husband, father, wife or your neighbor's brother, spread the word to military personnel.

*Donate to the appeal for redress, nothing extravagant, what you can spare is appreciated.

*Write your congressmen and tell him or her that you support the appeal for redress

*Be creative, be supportive, be vocal and bring the troops home.

Semper Fidelis,

Liam Madden
Sergeant USMC
Only1liam@hotmail.com

The Appeal:
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

Baghdad Soldier Dies In Non-Combat Related Incident

Nov. 2, 2006 Multi-National Division Baghdad PAO RELEASE No. 20061102-02

BAGHDAD: A Multi-National Division Baghdad Soldier died at approximately 10:30 a.m. today in a non-combat related incident north of Baghdad.

Marine Killed In Iraq Rushed To Boot Camp After Chelsea High

Oct. 24, 2006 Associated Press

CHELSEA, Mich.: Lance Cpl. Cliff Collinsworth was so eager to join the Marines that he left for boot camp days after graduating from Chelsea High School two years ago.

The 20-year-old was killed Saturday during his second tour of duty in Iraq when a roadside bomb hit his Humvee near Ramadi, his family said.

Marine Lance Cpl. Nicholas J. Manoukian, 22, of Lathrup Village, also died in the attack. Both were part of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment of the 2nd Marine Division, based at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

"He wanted to be a Marine for a long time, and it was a great thing for him," Collinsworth's 22-year-old sister, Melissa Collinsworth, told The Ann Arbor News. She said he hoped to attend college and teach history.

Collinsworth wrestled and played defensive lineman on the Chelsea High football team. Wrestling coach Kerry Kargel also worked with the middle school football team and said Collinsworth wrestled to improve his football skills. "He would always ask me, 'Will it make me tougher, coach? Will it make me tougher?'" Kargel said.

"When Cliff returned after his first tour of duty, he was very proud to be a Marine," said teacher Marlene Segal. "Cliff wanted the teachers to share in his success, and teachers appreciate that. Cliff left Chelsea as a kid and came back a man."

School did not always come easily to Collinsworth, but he worked hard to graduate on time, said Chelsea High Principal Ron Mead.

"Cliff was always very personable with a quick smile," Mead said. "Joining the military seemed to be a great match for Cliff. The last time he was in the building in uniform with the recruiters, he looked great, shared that things were going well and expressed more confidence in himself that I had seen before."

Collinsworth returned to Iraq on Sept. 7 for a second tour after having six months in the United States, his sister said.

Manoukian was a radio operator and also was on his second tour in Iraq. He married his high school girlfriend during a home leave in July.

"I'm happy that I got to live with him," his wife, Danielle Manoukian, told The Oakland Press of Pontiac. "He was a person who would give and give. He was the first to volunteer. I just feel so privileged that I got to love somebody so much and he loved me so much."

"My dream for Nick was college," said his mother, Mary Manoukian Calhoun. "He had such a kind, generous heart, and he gave the tightest, best hugs in world. I can't imagine living the rest of my life without him."

Notes From A Lost War:

“The Civilians Looked At Them Coldly”

November 2, 2006 By C.J. Chivers, The New York Times

Petty Officer 3rd Class Dustin Kirby clutched the wounded marine's empty helmet. His hands were coated in blood. Sweat ran down his face, which he was trying to keep straight but kept twisting into a snarl.

He held up the helmet and flipped it, exposing the inside. It was lined with blood and splinters of bone.

"The round hit him," he said, pausing to point at a tiny hole that aligned roughly with a man's temple. "Right here."

Kirby, 22, is a corpsman, the trauma medic who is assigned to the 2nd Mobile Assault Platoon of Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines. Everyone calls him Doc. He had just finished treating a marine who had been shot by an Iraqi sniper.

"It was 7.62 millimeter," he continued. "Armor piercing." He reached into his pocket and retrieved the bullet, which he had found. "The impact with the Kevlar stopped most of it," he said. "But it tore through, hit his head, went through and came out."

He put the bullet into his breast pocket, to give to an intelligence team later. Sweat kept rolling off his face, mixed with tears. His voice was almost cracking, but he managed to control it and keep it deep. "When I got there, there wasn't much I could do," he said.

Then he nodded. He seemed to be talking to himself. "I kept him breathing," he said.

He looked at Lance Corporal Matias Tafoya, his driver, and raised his voice. It was almost a shout. "When I told you that I do not let people die on me, I meant it," he said, "I meant it."

He scanned the Iraqi houses, perhaps 150 meters, or 500 feet, away, on the other side of a fetid green canal. Marines were all around, pressed to the ground, peering from behind machine gun turrets or bracing against their armored vehicles, aiming rifles at where they thought the sniper was.

The sniper had made a single shot just as the marines were leaving a rural settlement on the western edge of Karma, a city near Falluja in Anbar Province.

The marines had been searching several houses on this side of the canal, where they found five Kalashnikov assault rifles and bomb components, and were getting back into their vehicles when everyone heard the shot. It was a single, loud crack.

No one was precisely sure where it had come from. Everyone knew precisely where it hit. It struck a marine who was peering out of the first vehicle's gun turret. He collapsed.

Kirby rushed to him and found him breathing. He bandaged his head as the vehicle lurched away. Soon he helped load the wounded marine onto a helicopter, which touched down beside the convoy within 12 minutes of the shot.

Once the helicopter lifted away, Doc Kirby ran back to his vehicle, ready to treat anyone else. He was thinking about the marine he had already treated.

"If I had gone with him," he said, and glanced to where the helicopter had flown away, over the line of date palms at the end of a field. His voice softened. "But I'm not with him," he said.

He turned, faced a reporter and spoke loudly again. "In situations and times like this, I am bound to start yelling and shouting furiously," he said. "Don't think I am losing my mind."

He held his bloody hands before his face, to examine them. They were shaking. He made fists so tight his veins bulged.

"His name was Lance Corporal Colin Smith," he said. "He said a prayer today right before we came out, too."

"Every time before we go out, we say a prayer," Doc Kirby said. "It is a prayer for serenity. It says a lot about things that do pertain to us in this kind of environment."

The only sounds were Kirby's voice and the vehicle's engine thrumming. He recited the prayer. There were a few moments of silence. "It's a platoon kind of thing, if you know what I mean," he said.

He listened to his radio headset and looked at Tafoya, relaying word of the marines' movements. "Right now the grunts are performing a hard hit on a house," he said. He turned back to the subject of Smith.

"The best news I can throw at anybody right now, and that I am throwing to myself as often as I can, is that his eyes were okay," he said. "They were both responsive. And he was breathing. And he had a pulse."

He listened to his radio. "Two houses they've hit so far have both been swept and cleared."

After a few minutes he started talking again. "You see, having a good platoon, one that you know real well, it's both a gift and a curse. And Smith? Smith has been with me since I was..."

He stopped. "He was my roommate before we left," he said.

He refilled his lungs and raised his voice. "His dad was his best friend," he said. "He's got the cutest little blond girlfriend, and she freaks out every time we call because she's so happy to hear from him."

He sat quietly again. A few minutes passed. "The first casualty we had here - his name was James Hirlston - he was his good friend."

"Hirlston got shot in the head, too," he said.

Then he was back to the subject of Smith, 19.

"I really thank God that he was breathing when I got to him, because it means that I can do something with him," Kirby said. "It helps. People ask you, 'What are you doing? What are you doing?' It helps, because if he's breathing, you're doing something."

There had been many Iraqi civilians outside a few minutes before the sniper made his shot. Most of them had disappeared. Now an Iraqi woman walked calmly between the sniper and the marines, as if nothing had happened.

She passed down the street.

Kirby began to list the schools he had attended to be ready for this moment. Some he had paid for himself, he said, to be extra prepared. At one military course, an advanced trauma treatment program he had taken before deploying, he said the instructors gave each corpsman a live pig.

"The idea is to work with live tissue," he said. "You get a pig and you keep it alive. And every time I did something to help him, they would wound him again. So you see what shock does, and what happens when more wounds are received by a wounded creature."

"My pig?" he said. "They shot him twice in the face with a 9-millimeter pistol, and then six times with an AK-47 and then twice with a 12-gauge shotgun. And then he was set on fire."

"I kept him alive for 15 hours," Kirby said. "That was my pig."

He paused. "Smith is my friend." He looked at his bloody hands. "You got some water?" he said. "I want some water. I just want to wash my wedding band."

He listened to the tactical radio. The platoon was sweeping houses, but could not find the sniper.

The company started to move. It stopped at another house. The marines were questioning five Iraqi men. Kirby watched from the road, waiting for the next call.

"I would like to say that I am a good man," he said. "But seeing this now, what happened to Smith, I want to hurt people. You know what I mean?"

The marines had not fired a shot. The marines took one of the five men into custody, mounted their vehicles and drove back to Outpost Omar, their company base, passing knots of Iraqi civilians on the way. The civilians looked at them coldly.

Inside the wire, First Lieutenant Scott Burlison, the company commander, gathered the group and told them that Smith was alive and in surgery. He was critical, but stable. They hoped to fly him to Germany.

Kirby had scrubbed himself clean. A big marine stepped forward with a small Bible, and the platoon huddled. He began with Psalm 91, Verses 5 and 11.

"Thou shall not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day," said the big marine, Lance Corporal Daniel Nicholson. "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

Then he asked for the Lord to look after Lance Corporal Smith and whatever was ahead, and to take care of everyone who was still in the platoon. "Help us, Lord," he said. "We need your help. It's the only way we're going to get through this."

Kirby stood in the corner, his arm looped over a marine. "Amen," he said. There were some hugs, and then the marines and their Doc went back to their bunks and their guns.

THIS IS NOT A SATIRE: **Iraq A 'Work Of Art In Progress'** **Says U.S. General After 49 Die**

[Thanks to Clancy Sigal, who sent this in.]

November 3, 2006 Julian Borger in Washington, The Guardian

An American general in Baghdad called Iraq a "work of art" in progress yesterday in one of the most extraordinary attempts by the US military leadership to put a positive spin on the worsening violence.

On a day in which 49 people were killed or found dead around the country, Major General William Caldwell, the chief military spokesman, argued that Iraq was in transition, a process that was "not always a pleasant thing to watch.

"Every great work of art goes through messy phases while it is in transition. A lump of clay can become a sculpture. Blobs of paint become paintings which inspire," Maj Gen Caldwell told journalists in Baghdad's fortified green zone.

Maj Gen Caldwell was speaking after a series of public disagreements between Washington and the Iraqi prime minister, Nuri al-Maliki, over proposed benchmarks for his government's performance, and over a recent US raid on a Shia district of Baghdad.

Maj Gen Caldwell described friction between the Baghdad government and Washington as "misunderstandings".

**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 US soldier at a snap checkpoint setup in Baghdad's Karada district. (AFP/Ahmad Al-Rubaye)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Killed, 8 Wounded In Uruzgan

11.1.06 The Associated Press

A roadside bomb blast killed one U.S. soldier and injured eight in Uruzgan province, a military official said Thursday.

One American Special Forces soldier died in the blast. Eight other soldiers and an interpreter were injured.

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Lance Corporal Eduardo Lopez, killed on October 19 in Iraq, at St. Paul cemetery in Montgomery, Illinois, October 30, 2006. REUTERS/Frank Polich (UNITED STATES)

“We At Home Cannot Trust The Pentagon To Bring Them Home At The End Of This Extension”

“We Face Each And Every Day Fearing That Unwanted Knock On The Door”

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

November 01, 2006 By Karen Jowers, Army Times Staff writer

A national organization of about 3,000 people with family members or loved ones in the military has asked for a meeting with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to speak their minds about the war in Iraq.

Representatives of the group Military Families Speak Out will deliver a petition to Rumsfeld and Congress calling for an end to the “backdoor draft” and for all troops to be brought home now.

Examples of this “backdoor draft,” they say, are troop extensions, stop-loss orders, involuntary recalls and multiple deployments to Iraq.

“As Secretary of Defense, it is not only your job but your moral duty to hear what they have to say and to answer questions that they have,” wrote Nancy Lessin and Charley Richardson, co-founders of Military Families Speak Out, in the Oct. 30 letter to Rumsfeld in which they ask for a Nov. 9 meeting.

The group says it will exhibit flags and photographs on the National Mall in Washington on Veterans Day in honor of the American troops and Iraqi men, women and children who have died in the war.

The group has been vocal in its opposition to the war, testifying before Congress, and holding a vigil on Capitol Hill to make its views known to lawmakers and others and marching from Walter Reed Army Medical Center to the White House.

Among those expected to come to Washington are some family members of troops in the 172nd Stryker Brigade and the 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division; the Marine Corps Individual Ready Reserve at risk for recall; those serving multiple deployments; National Guard families; and others.

Along with the letter to Rumsfeld, some family members have sent statements, including Rich Moniak of Juneau, Alaska, whose son Michael is in the 172nd.

Members of that brigade were told in late July that their combat tours were being extended in Iraq, just days before they were due to return home.

“They are still in Baghdad, and we at home cannot trust the Pentagon to bring them home at the end of this extension,” Moniak said.

“Instead, we face each and every day fearing that unwanted knock on the door or a late night phone call. The redeployment is a symptom of the larger failures of this war and occupation.”

GI Coffeehouse Opens In Watertown, N.Y., Near Fort Drum

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

November 3, 2006 Socialist Worker

TOD ENSIGN, the director of New York City-based Citizen Soldier, has started a GI coffeehouse in Watertown, N.Y., near Fort Drum.

During Vietnam, GI coffeehouses gave soldiers a place to hang out, listen to music and talk, about the war, the growing movement against it and everything else they didn't feel they could discuss freely under the watchful eye of their superiors on base.

Ensign spoke to Socialist Worker about the Different Drummer Café.

WHAT ARE your plans for the Different Drummer Café?

THIS BASE is relatively new. Fort Drum has become an important Army base in the last 10 years. They have three brigades up here, almost 14,000 troops, and they are heavily deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan. And in March, a whole brigade is coming back from Iraq.

One of the things I'd like to develop is a big celebration to welcome them home, be glad they're back, and then try to work with families here to see if we can get an effort underway to have them not go back.

The Army is trying to figure out ways to not send people on multiple tours because it's sending morale into the toilet.

I did an event up here at the community college, and two women came whose husbands were both in Iraq. One was Black, and one was white, and I was able to get them talking about what they are experiencing, and urged them to come down to the coffeehouse.

I also want people to start writing for the coffeehouse Web site, differentdrummercafe.org, so it can have some real-time reporting on what's happening here.

It's going to take some work. There's a lot of paranoia here. The base is completely closed. You can't just walk onto the base. Years ago, we used to just go on the base and set out GI newspapers, but it's different now at all active-combat bases.

Partly, this lockdown was in response to 9/11, but now it's become standard operating procedure. That means it's harder to have contact; you can't just go to the commissary and talk with people. Passing out materials is virtually impossible. It makes it a lot more difficult.

HOW DID you choose this base?

INITIALLY, WE were considering Fort Bragg, but the thing I liked about Fort Drum is that there's a core of people here. Veterans for Peace has several members that are pretty enthusiastic about the project.

Another thing I like about it is that there's very little going on here. There's no club in town, for example, that has live music on a regular basis. There's no bookstore up here. Thursday night is going to be talent night, so people can get up and sing, do comedy, rap, whatever.

That's an attraction.

Bragg has a lot more stuff going on, as you would expect. There are several coffeehouses there; not GI coffeehouses, but commercial coffeehouses that feature almost nightly entertainment with singers and the kind of stuff that we want to have here. So if we can break out into these communities, we have the field to ourselves.

One thing that surprised me was that I expected to have trouble advertising in the base newspaper.

It turns out that these base newspapers are what they call "civilian enterprise publications" because they are owned by businesspeople. They sell ads and make a lot of money off them because they don't pay for reporting; the military provides them with low-level, so-called reporters who feed them copy. The command maintains nominal editorial control, but I'm sure it's more than nominal.

The local newspaper here, the Watertown Daily Times, handles the classified and display ads for the base newspaper. It's called the Fort Drum Blizzard. I was really pleased that they put our ad on page 2, and so we are on the base to that extent. The question is how many soldiers will see that and possibly turn out.

The real nut to crack is how to reach and work with an all-volunteer force. To what degree are the lessons of the Vietnam period relevant, and to what degree are they irrelevant?

Who are we dealing with now in terms of leadership among soldiers? And how has that whole idea of a contract affected the willingness of soldiers to say I'm not an indentured servant here, I'm a citizen, I have rights. What is the level of expectation among those soldiers? And what is the level of paranoia and fear?

DO YOU already have people on base who you're working with?

A MOTHER came in today whose son is AWOL and is going back, so I'm working with at least one case there now. But at this point, I could not say that we have even a small

core of soldiers on the base who have said to us that they want us to come in and want our help and support.

But I recently re-read David Cortright's book *Soldiers in Revolt*, and the fact is that the first GI coffeehouse, which was started by Fred Gardner and Donna Mickleson near Fort Jackson, was a similar deal. They went there in late 1967 and opened up a spot in Columbia, S.C., near the base. They put up a sign and spread the word as best they could. And soldiers started coming in to that coffeehouse--about 600 a week within the first few months.

I really hope that this will succeed and then lead to other efforts elsewhere. Maybe there will be things that each of us experience, and we can share; something people do elsewhere that's highly effective we can do here and vice versa.

To be honest, this has to grow into more than a single base. I think that would begin to change the military's response. There was a Stars and Stripes poll conducted in Iraq some time ago, and 30 percent of soldiers said bring us home immediately, and another 39 percent said set a date within a year. So 70 percent of the force is saying that they want out now or very soon.

What does that mean?

It doesn't mean shit to the command, but it says something about the potential audience for what we're doing.

Throw Away Soldiers:
**“When You Join The Army, They
Tell You That They Got Your Back
‘Till The End”**
**“From My Experience, It’s Not
Been That Way”**

The U.S. government, however, denied Binion's claim that he has post-traumatic stress disorder. He is facing the second round of an appeals process that regularly takes four to six months.

October 29, 2006 James Janega and Amer Madhani, Chicago Tribune [Excerpts]

CHICAGO: It's been more than three years since Martin Binion navigated minefields and sniper fire as he made his way to Baghdad with a combat assault team in the opening days of the Iraq war.

Now the former U.S. Army soldier is trying to make it through the Veterans Affairs system, and Binion, 33, is barely getting by. He has flirted with homelessness, been turned down for more than a dozen jobs, and is trying to be treated for post-traumatic stress disorder.

Hoping to end the pervasive problems faced by earlier generations of veterans in accessing services, the veterans support group Amvets opened a national symposium in Chicago to address issues facing young veterans. The goal is to present Congress with a new set of policy priorities after the November elections.

An online survey of 600 veterans unveiled by the group hinted at what those priorities would be. It found eight in 10 veterans felt more could be done to help troops leave the military and join the civilian workforce. Nearly four in 10 felt underemployed, and two-thirds had trouble accessing disability benefits in a veterans affairs system most agree is overwhelmed to the point that soldiers like Binion have fallen through the cracks.

"When you join the Army, they tell you that they got your back 'till the end," Binion said. "From my experience, it's not been that way."

Demands for health-care services by veterans have climbed by 34 percent since 2000, while a third of soldiers who returned from Iraq in the first two years of the war required mental health services within a year of ending their deployment, according to the New England Journal of Medicine.

Meanwhile, veterans groups forecast a \$1 billion shortfall in health-care funding for veterans in 2007, according to independent analysis by Amvets, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

"When this war started, there was a level of anticipation and planning that was insufficient," said Velma Hart, national finance director for Amvets and organizer of the symposium in Rosemont, Ill. "You're going to have a unique set of circumstances that if you're not geared up beforehand, they're going to overwhelm you. And I think that's what we're starting to see."

Binion is still haunted by much of what he encountered on the battlefield, including the horrific sight of dismembered bodies, the unbearable stench of dead bodies cooking in the desert sun, and the image of one Iraqi soldier who died while clutching a photo of his family.

The trauma from the experience, Binion said, has led to night sweats, nightmares, depression, a fear of crowds, uncontrollable anger and other behavioral changes that are telltale signs of post-traumatic stress disorder.

He is seeing two Veterans Affairs counselors for the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, he said.

When he came home from Iraq two years ago, he found that his infant daughter no longer recognized him and would push away from him when he tried to hold her.

When he went to sleep, he sometimes had nightmares in which he dreamed he was under attack. On several occasions, he unknowingly struck his wife while having these nightmares. Binion's marriage ultimately fell apart as a result of these behavioral changes.

The U.S. government, however, denied Binion's claim that he has post-traumatic stress disorder. He is facing the second round of an appeals process that regularly takes four to six months.

After two years of moving from one family member's house to another, he has settled in his parents' South Shore home, contributing to their expenses with his \$631 in monthly disability pay from the government.

He has applied for veterans set-aside jobs at the CTA, the post office, the water company and elsewhere without luck. To move out of his parents' home, he has applied for a studio apartment at a Catholic Charities facility, where rent would amount to more than half of his disability pay - far too much, he said.

With his G.I. Bill education benefits dwindling and his parents thinking of moving, his future is freighted with uncertainty, and he says the veterans benefits he counts on are locked away in a bureaucracy he calls "numb" and "impersonal."

"Things are getting worse and worse," he said. "I do what I can. It's not enough."

U.S. Soldier Killed Herself After Objecting To Interrogation Techniques

[Thanks to Veterans Against The Iraq War, Anna Bradly, Phil G and Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

November 01, 2006 By Greg Mitchell, Editor & Publisher

The true stories of how American troops, killed in Iraq, actually died keep spilling out this week.

On Tuesday, we explored the case of Kenny Stanton Jr., murdered last month by our allies, the Iraqi police, though the military didn't make that known at the time.

Now we learn that one of the first female soldiers killed in Iraq died by her own hand after objecting to interrogation techniques used on prisoners.

She was Army specialist Alyssa Peterson, 27, a Flagstaff, Ariz., native serving with C Company, 311th Military Intelligence BN, 101st Airborne. Peterson was an Arabic-speaking interrogator assigned to the prison at our air base in troubled Tal-Afar in

northwestern Iraq. According to official records, she died on Sept. 15, 2003, from a “non-hostile weapons discharge.”

She was only the third American woman killed in Iraq, so her death drew wide press attention. A “non-hostile weapons discharge” leading to death is not unusual in Iraq, often quite accidental, so this one apparently raised few eyebrows.

The Arizona Republic, three days after her death, reported that Army officials “said that a number of possible scenarios are being considered, including Peterson's own weapon discharging, the weapon of another soldier discharging, or the accidental shooting of Peterson by an Iraqi civilian.”

But in this case, a longtime radio and newspaper reporter named Kevin Elston, unsatisfied with the public story, decided to probe deeper in 2005, "just on a hunch," he told E&P today.

He made "hundreds of phone calls" to the military and couldn't get anywhere, so he filed a Freedom of Information Act request.

When the documents of the official investigation of her death arrived, they contained bombshell revelations.

Here's what the Flagstaff public radio station, KNAU, where Elston now works, reported yesterday:

“Peterson objected to the interrogation techniques used on prisoners. She refused to participate after only two nights working in the unit known as the cage. Army spokespersons for her unit have refused to describe the interrogation techniques Alyssa objected to. They say all records of those techniques have now been destroyed. ...”.

She was then assigned to the base gate, where she monitored Iraqi guards, and sent to suicide prevention training. “But on the night of September 15th, 2003, Army investigators concluded she shot and killed herself with her service rifle,” the documents disclose.

The Army talked to some of Peterson's colleagues. Asked to summarize their comments, Elston told E&P: "The reactions to the suicide were that she was having a difficult time separating her personal feelings from her professional duties.

“That was the consistent point in the testimonies, that she objected to the interrogation techniques, without describing what those techniques were.”

Elston said that the documents also refer to a suicide note found on her body, which suggested that she found it ironic that suicide prevention training had taught her how to commit suicide. He has now filed another FOIA request for a copy of the actual note.

Peterson's father, Rich Peterson, has said: “Alyssa volunteered to change assignments with someone who did not want to go to Iraq.”

Peterson, a devout Mormon, had graduated from Flagstaff High School and earned a psychology degree from Northern Arizona University on a military scholarship. She was trained in interrogation techniques at Fort Huachuca in Arizona, and was sent to the Middle East in 2003.

The Arizona Republic article had opened: "Friends say Army Spc. Alyssa R. Peterson of Flagstaff always had an amazing ability to learn foreign languages.

"Peterson became fluent in Dutch even before she went on an 18-month Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints mission to the Netherlands in the late 1990s. Then, she cruised through her Arabic courses at the military's Defense Language Institute in Monterey, Calif., shortly after enlisting in July 2001.

"With that under her belt, she was off to Iraq to conduct interrogations and translate enemy documents."

On a "fallen heroes" message board on the Web, Mary W. Black of Flagstaff wrote, "The very day Alyssa died, her Father was talking to me at the Post Office where we both work, in Flagstaff, Ariz., telling me he had a premonition and was very worried about his daughter who was in the military on the other side of the world. The next day he was notified while on the job by two army officers. Never has a daughter been so missed or so loved than she was and has been by her Father since that fateful September day in 2003. He has been the most broken man I have ever seen."

An A.W. from Los Angeles wrote: "I met Alyssa only once during a weekend surfing trip while she was at DLI. Although our encounter was brief, she made a lasting impression. We did not know each other well, but I was blown away by her genuine, sincere, sweet nature. I don't know how else to put it-- she was just nice. ... I was devastated to here of her death. I couldn't understand why it had to happen to such a wonderful person."

Finally, Daryl K. Tabor of Ashland City, Tenn., who had met her as a journalist in Iraq for the Kentucky New Era paper in Hopkinsville:

"Since learning of her death, I cannot get the image of the last time I saw her out of my mind. We were walking out of the tent in Kuwait to be briefed on our flights into Iraq as I stepped aside to let her out first. Her smile was brighter than the hot desert sun. Peterson was the only soldier I interacted with that I know died in Iraq. I am truly sorry I had to know any."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

11/1/2006 By CHRISTOPHER BODEEN, The Associated Press & Reuters & (AFP)

Explosions continued to rock the central district of Baghdad near the defence and interior ministries and the Green Zone.

A roadside bomb exploded on Iraq's most heavily guarded Tigris River bridge, seriously wounding Judge Naeim al-Equeli, who was the top jurist for courts in western Baghdad.

Guerrillas attacked a police patrol killing three policemen and wounding two others in Baquba. Guerrillas set up a fake security checkpoint and killed the drivers of two fuel trucks and kidnapped three other people near Baquba.

Guerrillas killed five people in two fuel trucks after they set up a fake checkpoint in Udham, 60 km (40 miles) north of Baquba.

Sarkot Hikmat Shawkat, a policeman from the city's Oil Protection Police, was cut down in a drive-by shooting, said police Captain Imad Jassim.

A sniper wounded a policeman near the police headquarters in Kirkuk, the Joint Coordination Centre said.

Guerrillas attacked a police patrol and killed three policemen and wounded another in central Baghdad.

Guerrillas captured police Colonel Khalid Ibrahim on Wednesday in the al-Selekh area in northern Baghdad.

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

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

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

Rowe After Rowe After Rowe



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: November 02, 2006
Subject: Rowe after Rowe after Rowe

Rowe after Rowe after Rowe

**Arlington Northwest in Seattle 2006.
These men and women died in Iraq
for what they believed was right.
The man who sent them was
AWOL from his national guard
unit during the Vietnam War.
Vice-President Dick Cheney
had 5 deferments to stay out of
the military during the Vietnam War.
He had other priorities.
Collegiate wrestling was the closest
Donald Rumsfeld ever came to combat.
Rowe after Rowe after Rowe.
Condolesszza Rice had an oil tanker
named after her. When she speaks,
you can see the damage control in her face.
John Ashcroft never served.
Paul Wolfowitz now serves the World Bank.
Richard Pearle never served. When he spoke**

in Portland, Oregon last year, someone in the audience threw two shoes at him.

And then, there is Karl Rowe.

The Architect.

Bush's top political adviser.

A man who never served, but one of the worst political hitmen in Bush's America.

There are so many more, sending men and women off to war.

Rowe after Rowe after Rowe...

When you don't study history, your beliefs are born in the moment.

Mike Hastie

Vietnam Veteran

November 2, 2006

The greatest purveyor of violence in the world today is my own government.

Martin Luther King, Jr., April 1967

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)

Darfur:

Fools And Bush Stooges Call For Military Intervention: It's About The Oil [Duh] And It Really Worked In Iraq, Didn't It?

And there are now reports that oil deposits in the Sudan are even greater than in Saudi Arabia. So clearly there is already competition for resources in the area, however large or small they may be.

Tellingly, one of the strongest voices for intervention, for sending increased UN troops and increased U.S. involvement, has been the pro-Israel lobby.

October 13, 2006 Interview With Dennis Brutus, by Lee Sustar, Socialist Worker
[Excerpts]

DENNIS BRUTUS is a veteran of the South African liberation struggle, a leading figure in the global justice movement and a world-renowned poet. Imprisoned along with Nelson Mandela, Brutus led the movement to isolate racist South Africa from international sports--and since the fall of apartheid, he's been a prominent opponent of the African National Congress (ANC) government's neoliberal, pro-market policies.

Brutus spoke with LEE SUSTAR about the political situation in Africa today, focusing especially on the crisis in Darfur, where African Union (AU) troops are already deployed, and which has prompted calls for U.S. or United Nations (UN) intervention.

IS THERE A CASE for humanitarian intervention in Darfur?

WELL, there are people dying, and at a very great rate. Some of it is starvation, some of it is a lack of water, but some of it is killing by gangsters on both sides. The question is trying to identify the elements in the struggle, and right now, I don't think there are any good guys.

But the presence of the African Union troops, plus the possibility of the UN troops, is not going to solve the problem.

My position is that you don't send in the military. You don't send in killers to stop the killing, when they themselves are, in some ways, implicated in the process.

I keep saying, and I am glad to see it finally beginning to appear as part of the debate--that one of the central issues in the Sudan is that: a) the Chinese are in there; and b) the Chinese have got more franchise rights for oil exploration in the Sudan than any of the Western powers.

So, of course, to the West, the government in Khartoum are the bad guys.

Certainly, it appears that the Khartoum military have allowed the development of paramilitary forces, so they can do things and still claim not to be guilty. This is where the Janjaweed militia comes in.

This is the usual trick of the West. You create a monster, whether you call it Vietcong or Mau-Mau, or something else. Once you've chosen your side, you start demonizing the other side, particularly if you intend intervention.

I wish I could say there is a just solution in Sudan at this stage. But I think there are very suspect figures on both sides. The problem is very complicated, because it is very old and involves all kinds of tribal loyalties that we don't even understand.

There are also very ancient conflicts that derive mainly from that fact that some people are pastoral, but other people are nomadic. In the past, these people worked out arrangements among themselves, which were largely territorial, but also seasonal; that is, when you could move your cattle or whatever.

But the modern conflict is about resources, and who is going to be in power to give out the franchises to exploit the oil.

It seems to me that, dominant on the whole agenda, are three elements. One is the notion of the New American Century, in which the U.S. is supposed to dominate the globe and control access to the resources.

Point two: Everybody recognizes that China is the next superpower on the horizon. The third, and perhaps most significant point, is that China knows it will have the biggest, most gluttonous appetite for oil the world has ever seen.

Afghanistan is a neighbor of China, and, of course, the U.S. is there. One of the big fights is access to the energy in the Caspian Sea basin.

Also, the U.S. is nervous that it can't predict how Saudi Arabia will behave in the future.

And there are now reports that oil deposits in the Sudan are even greater than in Saudi Arabia. So clearly there is already competition for resources in the area, however large or small they may be.

Tellingly, one of the strongest voices for intervention, for sending increased UN troops and increased U.S. involvement, has been the pro-Israel lobby.

We have to go back to the Project for a New American Century document, which says that it's not sufficient for Israel to be sitting on a portion of the land in the Middle East. They see the U.S. dominating a region that includes Palestine, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan.

As messy and bloody and murderous as the situation is, I don't believe we should endorse an increased military presence in Sudan if it will have the effect of giving the U.S. an even stronger position there.

Already, the United States is now setting up a military operation for Africa on the scale of what it calls its "Mediterranean operation."

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.

Will The Babbling Fools Admit They Were Full Of Shit?

Remember all that hysterical idiocy coming from the world's stupidest people about how Bush was going to launch a military attack Iran just before the election?

Remember all the “proof” they offered for their delusional ravings, about how the U.S. Navy was (gasp) sending (gasp) warships to (double gasp) waters near Iran?

Let’s see how many will come forward and apologize.

T

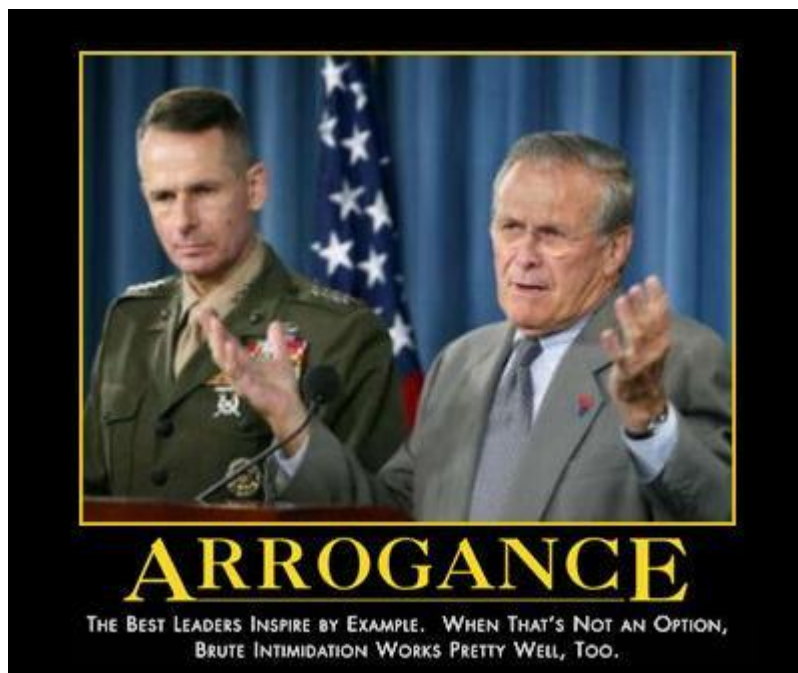
U.S. Led Exercise In Persian Gulf

10.31.06 New York Times

More than two dozen countries, including three Persian Gulf states, practiced intercepting and searching vessels suspected of trafficking in unconventional weapons in major military maneuvers that emphasized their coordination and willingness to aggressively block the spread of arms.

The daylong exercise, about 20 miles outside Iranian territorial waters, seemed to signal to Iran, too, that a coalition of Western powers and neighboring states was intent on denying it access to nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, even on its doorstep.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

Kerry Found With Duct Tape Over Mouth

November 1, 2006 The Borowitz Report

Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass), the 2004 Democratic nominee for President, was discovered today in a broom closet at Democratic National Committee headquarters in Washington, his hands bound behind his back and a strip of duct tape over his mouth.

The discovery of Sen. Kerry ended a nationwide manhunt after the former presidential candidate vanished Tuesday afternoon en route to an appearance on CNN's "The Situation Room" with Wolf Blitzer.

Sen. Kerry, who created controversy on Monday by telling a group of California students that people unable to succeed in the U.S. educational system would likely "get stuck in Iraq," said that he was walking towards CNN studios in Washington when an unknown person came upon him from behind and chloroformed him.

"The next thing I knew, I was tied up in a closet with this duct tape over my mouth," Kerry said. "It's too bad, because I had a lot of awesome things to say on CNN."

Moments after the discovery of Sen. Kerry in the DNC's broom closet, Washington police called party chairman Howard Dean in for questioning.

"We knew that Gov. Dean had a motivation for silencing Sen. Kerry," said Washington, D.C. police detective Delmore Gleason. "Plus, as a former doctor, he had access to chloroform."

After being questioned by police, however, Gov. Dean told reporters he had "no involvement" in the drugging of the talkative Sen. Kerry.

"When I learned that somebody had put John Kerry to sleep, all I could think was, turnabout is fair play," Gov. Dean said.

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)

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

GI Special issues are archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

<http://www.williambowles.info/gispecial/2006/index.html>;

http://robinlea.com/GI_Special/; <http://imagineaworldof.blogspot.com/>; <http://gi-special.iraq-news.de>;

http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/;

<http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>; <http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/gi-special.htm>

GI Special distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **GI Special has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is GI Special endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice** Go to: www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.