

GI SPECIAL 4L5:



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

**Welcome To Vietraq:
Collaborator Troops
Incompetent;
Guerrillas Know All About
Operation In Advance And Set
Trap;
U.S. Command Brags About
Body Count & Fake “Success”**

The offensive was initially billed by U.S. officials in Baghdad as an Iraqi-led success and a case study in support of the Pentagon's increasing reliance on using American troops as military advisors as a way to shift security responsibilities to Iraqi soldiers.

But interviews at their joint Rustamiya base with U.S. advisors and Iraqi soldiers involved in Friday's battle revealed a different story. The operation was hastily prepared and badly executed, they said, and plans to let the Iraqis take the lead in the battle were quickly scrapped.

December 4, 2006 By Solomon Moore, L. A. Times Staff Writer [Excerpts]

BURSTS of AK-47 fire hissed past them from several directions at once, showering the U.S. and Iraqi soldiers with pulverized cement and slapping spider-web fractures into their Humvees' bullet-resistant glass turret-guards.

The joint security forces, undertaking what officials described as a major counterinsurgency operation, were in pursuit of 70 "high-value targets" in Baghdad's crowded Fadhil quarter, a Sunni Arab neighborhood of multistory tenements along the east bank of the Tigris River.

Instead, the soldiers of the Iraqi army's 9th Mechanized Division and their American trainers had walked into a deadly ambush Friday.

From upper-story apartments, insurgents stopped the soldiers' advance with grenades and shoulder-fired rockets. Others launched coordinated mortar strikes, hitting one of two nearby Iraqi field posts.

By the time the 11-hour battle was over, one Iraqi soldier had been killed and six others wounded, including one who shot himself in the foot. A U.S. soldier was also wounded and, according to American troops interviewed, additional casualties were averted only because U.S. Apache attack helicopters were called in and American trainers shot their way out of the ambush.

"Fear took over" among the Iraqis, Staff Sgt. Michael Baxter said.

"They refused to move. We were yelling at them to move," he said. "I grabbed one guy and shoved him into a building. I was saying, 'God get me out of this, because these guys are going to get me killed.' "

The offensive was initially billed by U.S. officials in Baghdad as an Iraqi-led success and a case study in support of the Pentagon's increasing reliance on using American troops as military advisors as a way to shift security responsibilities to Iraqi soldiers.

But interviews at their joint Rustamiya base with U.S. advisors and Iraqi soldiers involved in Friday's battle revealed a different story. The operation was hastily prepared and badly executed, they said, and plans to let the Iraqis take the lead in the battle were quickly scrapped.

"It started out that way," Baxter said. "But five minutes into it, we had to take over."

Staffed with veterans of the Iraq-Iran war of the 1980s and equipped with a complement of refurbished Soviet tanks and American Humvees, the 4,000-soldier 9th division is considered Iraq's best hope for an eventual U.S. troop withdrawal.

But confusion swiftly reigned as insurgents in Fadhil pummeled dismounted Iraqi troops and their American advisors. U.S. radio jammers seeking to hinder communications between insurgents ended up blocking the Iraqi soldiers' walkie-talkies, forcing them to use unreliable cellphone signals to stay in contact. Voice commands were lost amid the explosions and gunfire echoing off the walls.

At one point, U.S. and Iraqi troops piled into a Humvee to escape the hail of insurgent bullets pinging off the armor cladding.

"I was pulling people in," said Army Sgt. 1st Class Kent McQueen. "We were all bunched in there together with the gunner. It was like a game of Twister."

An insurgent tried to throw a grenade into a Humvee's top hatch, but it bounced off and exploded on the ground.

At times, the overwhelmed Iraqi soldiers fired wildly, sweeping their machine-gun barrels across friendly and insurgent targets alike, witnesses said.

"I had to throw bullet casings at them to get their attention," said Sgt. 1st Class Agustin Mendoza, another U.S. trainer who manned a Humvee gun turret during the battle. "They had no weapons discipline."

"A round hit the glass shield of my turret behind me," Mendoza said. "I hit a guy down the alley and a propane tank. It exploded in a big fireball."

The number of insurgents in the area was estimated at more than 100. Soldiers said they killed 20 and detained 43 others, including three foreign fighters. [There it is. Don't mean shit; never did. That's why what used to be called Saigon isn't called Richard Nixon City.]

No count was made of the number of civilians killed in the densely populated neighborhood, but U.S. and Iraqi soldiers acknowledged a significant amount of "collateral damage."

Apache helicopters beat down on the dilapidated tenements, drilling hundreds of .50-caliber rounds into concrete walls and rooftops. At least twice they unleashed Hellfire missiles, shattering walls and rooftops with flashing thunderclaps. On the ground, Iraqi T-55 tank commanders fired their main guns down the narrow alleyways, smashing structures into an avalanche of bricks.

McQueen felt something jerk his head back violently and then pressed his finger into a bullet-sized dent in his Kevlar helmet.

At one point he noticed Iraqi soldiers in their armored Humvees pulling away in panic.

"I tried to halt the Iraqi army trucks to stop the trucks to give us cover," he said. "The driver gives me this dumb look."

"In August, when we started Operation Together Forward to secure Baghdad, we called on a bunch of units to assist," said U.S. Army Col. Douglass S. Heckman, the commander for the 9th Division Military Transition Team. "This division was the only one that moved into the operation. The others balked."

But Friday's battle suggested that even Iraq's best trained and equipped division is far from having the ability to operate independently.

Heckman said attrition and liberal leave policies meant that only 68% of the 9th division is even on duty at any given time. Another American advisor complained that the division had only 65% of the weapons and other equipment that it had been allocated by the U.S.

"And it's not just my guys," said the advisor, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "As I look across the division MiTT teams, they all tell me the same thing. Some of them have 50% of their equipment, some have 75%, but it's the same thing all over Iraq."

Despite efforts to get more financial support from the Iraqi Defense Ministry, the division stays operational only with help from the U.S. military, which provides everything from food to batteries.

The operation was proposed by the Iraqi Defense Ministry and approved by U.S. Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr., the top commander in Iraq, only hours before it was carried out.

"We could have used two more days to plan," said U.S. Army Maj. Thomas J. Boczar, who organized the strike with Iraqi division commanders.

Iraqi army Col. Bassim Mohammed, assigned to the division's reconnaissance company, said he learned about the mission only three hours before it began at 4 a.m. Friday.

"We didn't do any reconnaissance. Nobody was briefed on the area. We didn't know the area 100%," Mohammed said. Units that went into Fadhil hadn't plotted egress routes, he said.

U.S. advisors said impending operations were often kept secret because of infiltrators within Iraqi ranks.

But Boczar suggested that insurgents knew the attack was coming. Aerial drone footage captured before the assault appeared to show them positioning themselves in preparation for the raid, he said.

"This was a coordinated, complex attack," Boczar said of the insurgent ambush. "And the way they maneuvered shows us that they were ready for us."

Having learned from previous encounters that rooftop snipers would be exposed to U.S. helicopters, insurgents fired out of second- and third-story apartments. And like the U.S. troops who called in helicopters for air support, the insurgents staging the ambush called on others to strike Iraqi army positions with mortar rounds.

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Mathew Stanton acknowledged that it was a tough fight, but said he was all right with that.

"It was hard. I understand that," Stanton said shrugging his shoulders. But he was satisfied.

"You know what? We're not going to be here forever."

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Four Killed In Anbar Helicopter Crash

04 December 2006 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory
RELEASE No. 20061204-14 & AP

A Sea Knight helicopter carrying 16 Marines went down west of the Iraqi capital in Anbar, killing four of them.

The twin-rotor CH-46 helicopter from 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing made the emergency water landing Sunday near the shore of Lake Qadisiyah.

Thirteen of the individuals on board were accounted for yesterday, including the body of one Marine who was recovered from the water after the emergency landing. Twelve passengers survived; a Marine was pulled from the water but attempts to resuscitate him were unsuccessful.

The bodies of three missing Marines were found in a subsequent search, the military said.

MORE:

One MIA In Copter Crash

December 04, 2006 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory No. 1230-06

The Department of Defense today announced the identity of a soldier currently listed as Duty Status Whereabouts Unknown (DUSTWUN) while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Spc. Dustin M. Adkins, 22, of Finger, Tenn., has been unaccounted for since Dec. 3 in Haditha, Iraq, when the Chinook helicopter he was in made an emergency landing. He is assigned to the Group Support Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group, Fort Campbell, Ky.

Two Minnesotans Killed In Iraq



Spec. Corey J. Rystad, 20, killed Dec. 2, 2006, in Iraq when a bomb exploded near his vehicle on patrol near Fallujah. (AP Photo/Minnesota National Guard)



Spec. Bryan McDonough, 22, killed Dec. 2, 2006, in Iraq when a bomb exploded near his vehicle on patrol near Fallujah. (AP Photo/Minnesota National Guard)

12/4/2006 The Associated Press

Two Minnesota National Guard soldiers were killed in Iraq this weekend, family members and news reports said Sunday night.

Bryan T. McDonough, 22, of Maplewood, was a specialist in the Minnesota National Guard.

Cory Rystad, 20, of Red Lake Falls, was a member of a Minnesota National Guard unit from the Crookston and Thief River Falls areas, the Grand Forks (N.D.) Herald reported. He joined immediately after he graduated from high school in 2004.

The National Guard in Minnesota said the men were assigned to B Company, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry which is based in Crookston. They were on patrol December 2, near Fallujah when an IED detonated near their vehicle.

"It happened yesterday, but we weren't notified until this morning," his older brother, David Rystad, told the Herald Sunday night.

"Between training and everything, he's been gone since the end of last October," David Rystad said. He spent time in Mississippi training before he left for Iraq in March.

"He was home on leave in June," David Rystad said. "That was the last time we saw him."

Cory Rystad also had an older sister and a younger brother.

Andrew Bertilrud, a classmate and friend, said Rystad went to Duluth with him when he was home on leave to help Bertilrud find an apartment.

"He was always ready to help people," Bertilrud said. "He'd do anything for you."

McDonough's parents said that McDonough was killed in Fallujah on Saturday when he was hit by an improvised explosive device, and that the family was notified Sunday morning.

His father, Thomas McDonough, told the Star Tribune the 2002 graduate of Roseville Area High School was sent to Iraq in March. He had been taking classes at St. Cloud Technical College before his deployment, his father said.

"There's no other place I would rather be. Putting everything on the line to defend my country is something I wanted to do and am proud to be here," McDonough wrote on his page on the popular Web site MySpace.com.

"When I get out of the sandbox, I will be going back to college; hopefully I can finish it up before Uncle Sam has another mission for us," he also wrote.

Several friends posted messages on his page Saturday hailing McDonough as a true American hero and vowing he'll never be forgotten.

The deaths raised the number of people with strong Minnesota ties who have died in connection with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to 47.

FUTILE EXERCISE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



10.25.06: A US soldier searches the trunk of a car at a spot checkpoint setup in the Karada district of central Baghdad. (AFP/Wisam Sami)

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

TROOP NEWS

**“The Movement Inside The U.S.
Military Of Resistance To The
Occupation Of Iraq Is Not Sitting
Back And Waiting For Congress
To Stop The War”**



Jonathan Hutto

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

November 17, 2006 By John Catalinotto, Workers World [Excerpt]

If the reaction of some active-duty and veteran GIs is any indication, the movement inside the U.S. military of resistance to the occupation of Iraq is not sitting back and waiting for Congress to stop the war. They are continuing to organize and struggle.

Workers World spoke with Navy Seaman Jonathan Hutto, based in Norfolk, Va., who is a key organizer of the "Appeal for Redress." This is a petition meant for active-duty GIs that expresses their dissent over the continued occupation of Iraq.

For Hutto, born and raised in Atlanta and reared on stories of the civil rights movement, Nov. 13 was a big day. "They began work today on the Martin Luther King Jr. memorial," he said. "I am moved by this, by King taking a place where there are memorials to Washington, Lincoln and Jefferson. Theirs were dedicated to presidents. King's is dedicated to justice and peace.

"That's the vein in which we want to present this appeal," the 29-year-old Howard University graduate continued. "Not as military members breaking a law, but upholding our duty to participate in democracy. We will affirm that duty and that right."

Hutto asserted: "To those who say military members cannot speak, I say that only under a fascist dictatorship could people be stopped from raising their voices. As children growing up we studied the history of the Freedom Rides. The Supreme Court said segregation was illegal. The Freedom Riders said, 'We're going to ride these buses integrated.'

We in the armed forces also have the legal right to appeal to Congress without being punished."

The appeal, which can be found and signed by GIs at www.appealforredress.org, reads: "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. Staying in Iraq will not work and is not worth the price. It is time for U.S. troops to come home."

Hutto says that GIs in the United States but also those stationed in Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Germany, Italy and Japan have signed the petition.

The organizers are going through the names carefully and have confirmed 700 active-duty GIs. They hope to collect at least 2,000 before presenting them to Congress.

Asked about the impact of the recent elections, Hutto said: "In terms of the cause of the 'thumping,' Iraq was the number one issue on people's minds. The vote was a result of people's feelings about the occupation. They want change. They see that the war is draining tax dollars and people out of their communities. Many of their youths are killed, even more severely mangled and disfigured. The advance of technology and body armor saves lives, but the troops come back with injuries that will wreck their lives.

"I see myself as a human rights defender," Hutto said. "We have to point out the overwhelming destruction of the Iraqi people. A Johns Hopkins report said 650,000 were killed.

"It's no wonder life is dangerous there for U.S. troops. Sixty-one percent of Iraqi people said they support the killing of U.S. soldiers. That's because the service member is an occupier. The Iraqis don't see the occupation as something that brought health care or jobs to their community."

Active-Duty Military "Support And Thank" Vietnam Veterans Against The War At Kentucky State Fair

By Carol Rawert Trainer, Fall 2006 The Veteran, Vietnam Veterans Against The War. [Excerpt] Carol Rawert Trainer is a Vietnam-era vet (USAF, A1C, 1965–68) and a member of VVAW.

VVAW was well represented at the Kentucky State Fair from August 17 to 26, 2006. As a Vietnam-era vet and the wife of a Vietnam vet, I participated in the Louisville Peace Action Community booth, whose theme was "Support the Troops: Stop the War."

On each day of the fair, our booth had volunteer veterans working in shifts from morning to night. We distributed VVAW and IVAW brochures along with other related materials.

For the most part, we were supported and thanked by the public, including active-duty military and veterans, but of course, there were a few disparaging statements.

MORE:

Cincinnati: “We Received An Overwhelming Reception Of Cheers, Thumbs Up, And Peace Signs”



New VVAW Chapter Moving Forward in Cincinnati: Jerry Smith, Paul Davis & Marty Webster at the end of the 4th of July parade in Cincinnati. This is the first time VVAW has had representation in the parade in over 30 years.

By Marty Webster, Fall 2006 *The Veteran*, Vietnam Veterans Against The War. Marty Webster is the VVAW Ohio regional contact for Cincinnati. He is currently the coordinator of the Ohio Valley regional chapter of VVAW.

Marching through the streets of Cincinnati on the Fourth of July was an awesome and emotional experience. We received an overwhelming reception of cheers, thumbs up, and peace signs.

When people saw our banner, they actually were coming down off of their porches and joining others along the parade route to give us standing ovations.

I have never experienced anything like it in my life.

HONOR THE WARRIOR, NOT THE WAR

Vietnam Veterans Against the War
Fighting for Veterans, Peace and Justice since 1967
www.vvaw.org



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



The casket of U.S. Army Spc. Eric Rivera is carried out during funeral services in Atlantic City, N.J., Dec. 2, 2006. Rivera was killed while serving in Iraq and is the first resort resident to die in the Iraq war. (AP Photo/Mary Godleski)

Feds Forced To Pay \$2 Million To Former Army Lieutenant Terrorized By Government Rats: Falsely Accused Of Islamic Terrorism

BRANDON MAYFIELD: Well, that was a long and dark period in my past. And those are some pretty dark memories: the days I spent in lockdown, in shakedown, in shackles and chains.

And it was a pretty dark, horrific time, even after our release. I mean, it's the hardest time that myself and my family have had to endure ever.

November 30th, 2006 Democracy Now! [Excerpts]

The U.S. government has agreed to pay \$2 million and issue a written apology to a Muslim attorney in Oregon who was jailed two years ago after the FBI mistakenly linked him to the Madrid train bombings.

Brandon Mayfield sued the FBI alleging that his civil rights had been violated and that he was arrested in part because he is a Muslim convert.

The FBI ignored warnings from Spanish authorities that the fingerprints were not Mayfield's. Prior to his arrest, the FBI used the Patriot Act to break into his home and office and to electronically monitor his conversations.

In a Democracy Now! National broadcast exclusive, Brandon Mayfield and his wife, Mona, join us from Portland.

Mayfield, who is a former Army lieutenant, sued the FBI alleging that his civil rights had been violated and that he was arrested in part because he is a Muslim convert.

AMY GOODMAN: But why don't we start with Brandon Mayfield? First, can you respond to the \$2 million that your family is being awarded?

BRANDON MAYFIELD: Obviously, we're happy with the settlement.

And as you're aware, that was a -- it was a settlement for the money damages, and it allowed us to continue to focus on the most important part of the case, and that was the challenge of the constitutionality of the PATRIOT Act.

JUAN GONZALEZ: And for many of our listeners and viewers who are not familiar with your case, could you go through what happened initially, your initial contact with the FBI, and what were the circumstances around your arrest?

BRANDON MAYFIELD: Well, initially, my family and I, Mona and I, were suspicious that we were being followed, monitored, surveilled, if you will, actually even before the Madrid, Spain bombing. And that was back in March of 2004.

And in April of that year, we were actually seeing telltale signs that somebody had been in our house that had burglarized our home, such as doors that were left unbolted -- that is, where we would lock the bottom lock and not bolt it, we would come home and find the bolt locked.

Blinds that were left closed, we would come back and find them partially opened.

And even freshly vacuumed carpets, we would find footprints in the house that, by custom, we didn't wear shoes in the home. So that's our unofficial contact with

the FBI. And that created a great deal of paranoia, fear and suspicion, even before I was actually arrested on May 6 of 2004.

AMY GOODMAN: Now, this was after the Madrid train bombing. So what happened after the bombings? Did this, kind of what you believed was surveillance at the time, intensify? Did you contact the authorities to see what was happening, who was possibly coming into your house?

BRANDON MAYFIELD: Well, initially we thought maybe we were being actually burglarized, that there were burglars in our home. And in fact, that's kind of the way we characterized their break-in.

It was certainly a sneak-and-peek to us, but for their, the FBI, local FBI's ineptitude, we wouldn't have known that they were in our home.

But once they did, it created a great deal of fear and suspicion.

And I think at one point, I myself even made a point to try to contact the local authorities. I called the police or one of their dispatch units. And I didn't have an officer come to our home, but at some point, as the intensity increased, I had a good suspicion that it might be the local Federal Bureau of Investigation.

JUAN GONZALEZ: And in retrospect, what would have drawn the FBI to you, other than the fact that you are both Muslim? Were there any other activities that you were involved in that caught their attention?

BRANDON MAYFIELD: It's hard for me to speculate, except that the FBI has denied that this was motivated -- my arrest was motivated by any religious factor, yet if you look at the affidavit that was submitted in support of my arrest warrant, the search warrant, it mentioned things such as I was followed to the local mosque, a place of worship and prayer, I advertised in a Muslim yellow pages, my wife was Egyptian, that I represented a Muslim client.

And so, I think that would answer your question. But why would you mention these things, other than there's some kind of insinuation that being Muslim somehow equates to being a terrorist?

AMY GOODMAN: Then talk about what happened after the bombings, when you were directly confronted, when you were arrested by the FBI.

BRANDON MAYFIELD: Well, if you're talking to me, actually Mona and I both were accosted -- I, at my office, and her, at our home --actually simultaneously, at the same time.

However, I think it was probably shortly after 10:00, Mona's my legal assistant. She helps me out at the office. On that particular day on May 6, I had taken the kids to school. I was at the office. I was preparing for a -- I believe it was a wrongful death suit that I was handling, had a lot of files. I think I called her. Did I call you that morning, ask you when you were coming in?

MONA MAYFIELD: Yeah.

BRANDON MAYFIELD: I must have called her about 9:00, 9:30, sometime in that timeframe.

I got an unexpected knock on the door, because I usually don't take clients unless it's by appointment. And strangely enough, I saw a man and a woman standing there, looking self-important, thinking that they were maybe trying to sell me something. And I thought I would just say, "Hi," you know, "what is it that you need? I'm busy," and have them be on their way.

But instead they forcefully pushed their way into my office.

And at that point, I told them -- I mean, they identified themselves, said they were FBI agents, said they wanted to talk to me.

And I kind of motioned for them to step out of my office. And I said, "If you want to talk to me, just -- if you want to, you could put your questions in writing, and I may or may not get back to you."

And at that point, then they continued to push their way into my office and eventually handcuffed me and identified that they were going to arrest me.

AMY GOODMAN: And Mona, what happened to you at home?

MONA MAYFIELD: Actually, about between 10:00 and 10:15, I heard a knock at the door, and through the window -- I have a window in my living room where I could see briefly what's outside, and I thought maybe it was the mailman or -- you know, I just could see blue suits -- or maybe Jehovah Witness or something of that nature.

So I opened the door, and I asked if could help, you know, "May I help you?" And they said that they had a few questions for me.

And I believe I asked them who they were. They said they were the FBI. I said I'm not interested in talking to them. They said, "This is different," and "Your husband's fingerprint was found on a bag in Madrid." I believe that's what they said.

And at that point, it was surreal. I mean, I was in shock. I knew it wasn't true. The first thing that came to mind is either this is truly a mistake or they are framing him. That's really what I thought at the time.

And so, they -- I had to let them in.

They came in, and they were in the house searching the home for about six hours, while they called it "containing the situation," put me in the dining room at the dining room table.

They proceeded to ask me questions. I don't really recall what they were asking me, and I really didn't have anything to say. There was nothing to say. I knew he hadn't been anywhere. I know he wasn't involved in anything. I just kept telling them that I really didn't have anything to say to them and we hadn't done anything. So they proceeded to search the home.

JUAN GONZALEZ: Did they take you in, as well, into their headquarters eventually and arrest you, as well, or just searched the home and take materials from your house?

MONA MAYFIELD: No. They just searched the home and took materials from the house.

At that point, I actually -- they were there, like I said, between 10:00 and a quarter after. I had to go pick up my children at school, and it was approximately 3:00 in the afternoon, and they were still there. I eventually had to -- I asked if I could leave and go pick up my children. They told me if I left, I could not come back if they were still there, because once I left, I could not come home.

BRANDON MAYFIELD: Well, that was a long and dark period in my past. And those are some pretty dark memories: the days I spent in lockdown, in shakedown, in shackles and chains.

And it was a pretty dark, horrific time, even after our release. I mean, it's the hardest time that myself and my family have had to endure ever.

AMY GOODMAN: You said you were shackled and chained. Explain exactly the circumstances you were held in for the two weeks that you were imprisoned, Brandon Mayfield.

BRANDON MAYFIELD: Okay. I was in the Multnomah County Detention Center, and it's fairly close to the federal courthouse. And I was first taken into custody of the federal marshals. Then they turned me over to the jailers at the detention center. I was put down into a maximum security situation, where you're in a five-by-eight cell, 24 hours a day. You can come out for approximately one hour a day.

JUAN GONZALEZ: Can I ask you, when you were held for that two-week period, were you ever brought before a judge at all? In other words, were you being held prior to being charged with something, or were you being held as a material witness?

BRANDON MAYFIELD: Yes, exactly. I was being held as a material witness. The FISA Act of 1978, it allowed the federal government to basically spy on us if the primary purpose was to gather foreign intelligence, if they could say the suspect was tied to foreign agents, if it was for a foreign intelligence-gathering purpose. PATRIOT Act of 2001 amended that standard, and now they can spy on us if the significant purpose is for intelligence gathering. It's no longer primary, it's no longer foreign purpose.

So virtually for anything they want, they don't have to have the standard of probable cause that a crime has been committed to get a search warrant for an arrest, or for a search or an arrest.

But FISA also undermines that probable cause -- not FISA, the Material Witness Statute of 1984.

That's the statute under which I was arrested, and it's the statute that Ashcroft and company have used to further abuse our time-honored rights, because this administration is using the material witness not as a tool for securing somebody's

testimony, they're using it to lock up individuals that they suspect of terror or committing a crime. And it's a misuse of the prosecutorial process.

AMY GOODMAN: In looking back on the case now, it's clear, and from the big report that came out, almost 300 pages, that Spanish officials were raising serious questions about the fingerprints, from the beginning, on the blue bag, but that the FBI was rather insistent. Finally, they link the fingerprints to an Algerian named Ouhnane Daoud, who was among a group of militants, The Oregonian writes, who blew themselves up in April as police were raiding their suburban Madrid apartment.

The FBI agent in charge in Portland, Robert Jordan, told the Indianapolis Star, quote, "If a similar investigation was being conducted and we were provided a fingerprint identification, we would do exactly what we did in the case of Mr. Mayfield. Of course," he said, "we regret what happened to Mr. Mayfield, but, again, we are proud of what we did here." Your response to that, Brandon Mayfield?

BRANDON MAYFIELD: Okay, my response to that is, Hamdallah, thank God that I was released, and God bless the Spanish police and their good police work.

But for them fingering Ouhnane Daoud, as you said, probably I would still be languishing in jail or labeled as an enemy combatant somewhere.

MORE:

**“And Then People Come Secretly To Your House, And They Secretly Break Into Your House. And They Secretly Put In Listening Devices”
“They’ve Stolen The Most Sacred Part Of Our Lives”**

November 30, 2006 BRYAN DENSON, The Oregonian [Excerpts]

Brandon Mayfield, the Portland-area lawyer wrongly linked to the deadly Madrid, Spain, train bombings of 2004, accepted a \$2 million settlement Wednesday in his lawsuit against the federal government, setting up a legal showdown over the constitutionality of the USA Patriot Act. The government also agreed to destroy all materials seized from Mayfield's home and office.

At a news conference Wednesday in a downtown Portland high-rise, the lean, bespectacled lawyer likened his ordeal to an Orwellian nightmare.

"I am talking about the George Orwell frightening brave new world in which Big Brother is constantly watching you, complete with 24-hour surveillance, thought control and doublespeak," Mayfield said. "Where war means peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength. Where torture is morality. And an act that strips you of your civil rights could be called a Patriot Act."

"To this date," Mayfield said, "the government has refused to tell us where they placed their electronic listening devices and cameras, leaving myself and family to forever wonder if they were listening to our most private conversations, watching our most intimate interactions."

[Lawyer Gerry] Spence told reporters Wednesday that the Patriot Act should worry all Americans.

"We have some secret agents," he said on a conference line from Jackson Hole, Wyo., "who file secret papers that we can never see. And they're filed in a secret proceeding, and no right is given to the citizens . . .

"And out of those secret papers comes a secret order. And then people come secretly to your house, and they secretly break into your house. And they secretly put in listening devices.

"So that secretly the entire lives of these people become the property -- not of us, not of the parties, not of the citizens -- but our private lives become the property of the United States government. . . . So that this becomes their asset.

"They've stolen the most sacred part of our lives."

Charges Dismissed Against Anti-War Grannies



Dec. 01, 2006 By Joseph A. Gambardello, INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

A judge dismissed defiant-trespass charges against 11 anti-war grandmothers who had refused to leave a Center City military recruiting office in June after trying to enlist to replace troops serving in Iraq.

Municipal Court Judge Deborah Griffin said the charge did not apply because the women - including poet Sonia Sanchez and Lillian Willoughby, a 91-year-old wheelchair-bound South Jersey Quaker - were in a public place and did nothing except refuse a request to leave.

About 75 people rallied in support of the 11 Granny Peace Brigade members outside the Community Court at 1401 Arch St. before their appearance.

Defense lawyer Paul Messing argued that the women were engaged in constitutionally protected free speech when they tried to enlist, and he quoted from a Pennsylvania Superior Court decision that quoted Thomas Jefferson saying, "a little rebellion now and then is a good thing."

The women had faced up to 90 days in jail and a fine of \$500 if they had been convicted.

Some of the women spent six days in jail after they blocked the Federal Building in Center City shortly after the war started in 2003.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

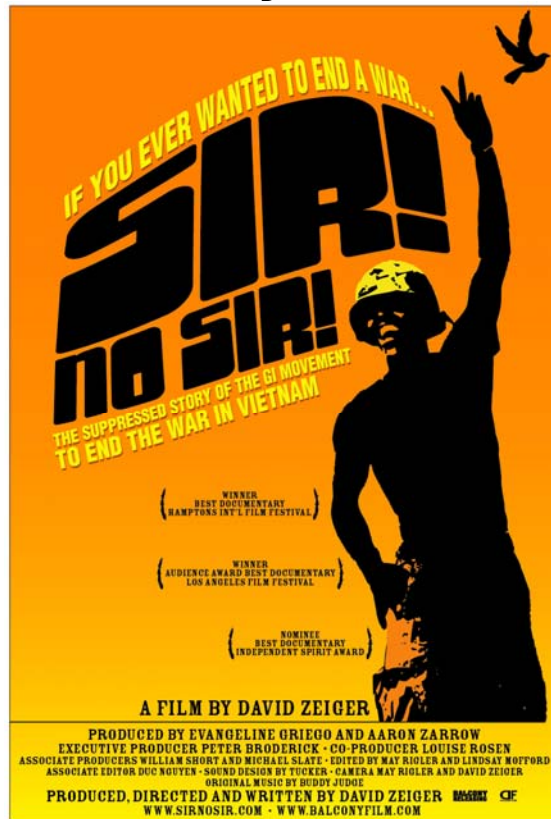
Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

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

“A Unique Antiwar Movement During The Vietnam Era In The Military Itself”



Lee Grant , The San Diego Union-Tribune

"Soldier boy / Oh, my little soldier boy / I'll be true to you"

The engrossing documentary "Sir! No Sir!" utilizes that great Shirelles hit from the '60s as a backdrop to its story of a unique antiwar movement during the Vietnam era that took place not on the streets or the campuses, but in the military itself.

Whether you support the invasion of Iraq or not, "Sir! No Sir!" touches a contemporary nerve -- body counts then, body counts now; scandals involving deaths of innocent civilians then, scandals now.

The brisk film captures the chill-inducing sound of helicopters that Francis Ford Coppola bled into "Apocalypse Now," the best Vietnam War picture. In "Sir! No Sir!," though, there's no Robert Duvall loving "the smell of napalm in the morning."

These are, instead, real GIs -- a Green Beret who resigned in protest, a doctor assigned to train medics court-martialed and imprisoned, a West Point graduate who refused to fight.

They were young then, more than middle-aged now and still carrying the baggage. One says to the camera, "What's the pride in being a veteran of something so wrong?"

Soldier boy, "Sir! No Sir!" is true to you.

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

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

Also available will be a Soundtrack CD (which includes the entire song from the FTA Show, "Soldier We Love You"), theatrical posters, tee shirts, and the DVD of "A Night of Ferocious Joy," a film about the first hip-hop antiwar concert against the "War on Terror."

Tunnel Rat



From: Richard Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: December 03, 2006 12:24 AM

Subject: Tunnel Rat

Tunnel Rat

After you have been betrayed by your government for serving in a war for the cause of profit, you become a tunnel rat in your own country.

The world is no longer safe.

For years I hid in the closet of my mind. One day, I simply came out of the tunnel. I could no longer remain silent. I had to bear witness for the soldiers I saw die in Vietnam.

My anger motivated me to give their lives meaning, and to expose the lies that ever sent them to Vietnam. The entire Vietnam War was staged, and I was the disposable cannon fodder, who would either die in country, or self-destruct once I got back to the States.

That almost happened.

I can't tell you why I do what I do.

I am driven by a force that will not let the dead die.

My betrayal is a universal betrayal.

Those guilty of these political incest crimes have to be brought to justice.

They cannot be remembered for any great accomplishment, while Vietnam Veterans continue to commit suicide.

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
December 2, 2006**

Photo and caption 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)

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 email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

“Every Single American Who Dies In Iraq, Who Is Injured In Iraq, Dies For Nothing”
“He Didn’t Die For Freedom, He Didn’t Die To Defend His Country, He Died To Occupy Iraq”
“They Should Leave Today”

November 27th, 2006 Democracy Now! [Excerpts]

[Interview of] Nir Rosen, a freelance writer and a fellow at the New America Foundation. He is the author of “In the Belly of the Green Bird: The Triumph of the Martyrs in Iraq.” His latest article is called “Anatomy of a Civil War: Iraq’s descent into chaos.” It was published in the November/December issue of Boston Review. He returned from the Middle East on Sunday.

As for the Bush and Maliki meeting, I think both Bush and Maliki are absolutely irrelevant in Iraq.

Neither one of them has any power.

Maliki has no militia to speak of. Bush has militia, the American army, one of the many militias operating in Iraq.

But the American Army is lost in Iraq, as it has been since it arrived.

Striking at Sunnis, striking at Shias, striking at mostly innocent people. Unable to distinguish between anybody, certainly unable to wield any power, except on the immediate street corner where it’s located.

So, it just doesn’t matter.

There is this romantic idea lately that you could have a coup and replace the Maliki regime with somebody else, because Iraq has a history of coups.

But, Iraq's history of coups, occurred when Baghdad was the only large city in the country, and you could simply switch leader in Baghdad and you'd have a new leader.

Now you have about 10 or 12 city states in Iraq: Mosul, Baghdad, Kirkuk, Basra, Amara, Ramadi, each one is disconnected from other, each one controlled by its own militias.

You could put anybody you wanted in Baghdad, it just wouldn't make a difference outside of Baghdad. And the guy you put in Baghdad would have to have power in Baghdad, which means street power, which means Muqtada al-Sadr.

AMY GOODMAN: Well, let's talk about Muqtada al-Sadr. You've been in Iraq a long time. And now the newspapers of the weekend saying Muqtada al-Sadr replaces Osama Bin Laden as the world's great enemy. Tell us who he is, and your experience of him over the years.

NIR ROSEN: Well, he arose from seemingly nowhere, although he comes from a very important clerical family. It's believed that his father, Muhammad Sadeq Sadr was killed by Baathists in 1999.

AMY GOODMAN: That's who Sadr city is named for?

NIR ROSEN: Yes. And, Muqtada very quickly became the voice of the disenfranchised, poor, Shia majority, especially young men. Virtually every single young Shia male in Iraq supports Muqtada Sadr today.

And certainly his men dominate the police, they dominate the army.

He's been very anti-American [translation: anti-Bush occupation of Iraq] from the beginning, very nationalistic, unlike perhaps, Abdul Aziz Hakim, of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, who was perceived as coming on the back of American tanks, and being sort of sponsored by Iranians.

Muqtada can claim he's always been there and suffered with the Iraqi people. He can disparage Ayatollah al-Sistani for being the quietest, for being Iranian-born. He has a national's credentials. And for quite a while, he was actually fighting alongside Sunni resistance members.

In 2004, you had Muqtada's people supporting the Sunni resistance in Fallujah, you had Sunni resistance helping Muqtada's people in Najaf, in Sadr City, and there was a brief moment where you thought that there could be Sunni/Shia unity against the Americans at least.

And if there was anything good that the American's had done it was to unite the Sunni's and Shia's against them.

AMY GOODMAN: You describe in the piece you did for Boston Review, The Anatomy of a Civil War, which is over 40-pages, an experience you had when he came speak, not knowing actually that he'd be speaking, and who the people were with him.

NIR ROSEN: It was like being at a Michael Jackson concert. There were more than 10,000 people in the mosque, Kufa Mosque, just outside Najaf. And the crowd went just crazy when they saw him.

They have the support of hundreds of thousands of people. Men and women, women were there and they were just as excited as men. I'd never seen so many children in a Mosque before. The crowds just went crazy when they saw him, and afterwards, they all rushed the fence to shout their support for him.

AMY GOODMAN: So, Nir Rosen, what do you expect now with Bush and Maliki, two people you say don't have power, meeting. Muqtada al-Sadr saying he's going to pull out all of the representatives if Maliki does have this meeting with President Bush. Maliki goes into Sadr City and he's stoned, or they throw stones at his convoy.

NIR ROSEN: Well, Muqtada is still the main supporter for the Maliki government, and they do have an alliance, and Muqtada's militia is kind of Maliki's militia. Maliki belongs to the Da'wa party which has no real militia of its own. I think people in Sadr city were just very upset because they have suffered so many attacks. Although they do criticize Maliki for being a collaborator, in the sense that he leads the government that the Americans support, but then again Muqtada Sadr has people in the government.

He can really get the largest number of Iraqis on the street willing to fight with the snap of his fingers.

AMY GOODMAN: And, what did he say that day?

NIR ROSEN: His primary message was directed at the Americans, an anti-occupation message.

There's been a shift lately since the Americans realized that Iraq is a failure, of blaming the Iraqi's. The Iraqi's need to step up, the Iraqi's have to choose democracy, the Iraqi's have to choose freedom. It is very popular for us to blame the Iraqi's for the chaos that we've brought upon them. And, I think this will perhaps be something for the cameras in the US's intent by Bush to show that he's going to make Maliki, you know, seize the reigns of his country, or something absurd like that, because Maliki has no power of his own.

AMY GOODMAN: And the discussion of possible direct negotiations of Iran and Syria and the possibility that that's what the Iraq Study Group is going to recommend?

NIR ROSEN: I think it's clear that they will, and that I think it's great that the US talks to Iran and Syria, its long over do. However, there is this belief that Iran and Syria have and have had this huge role in the violence in Iraq. And I just don't think that's true. If anything, Iran and Syria have always been concerned about the instability in Iraq. They are the neighbors of Iraq and if anybody can be threatened by the instability, it's them.

But, Iran isn't sponsoring the violence, neither is Syria. And so the belief that foreign countries can make things better I think is naïve, because the violence in Iraq has its own internal logic.

Power isn't in the green zone, power isn't in Iran, in Syria, in Jordan. It's not in the White House.

AMY GOODMAN: What is Dick Cheney doing in Saudi Arabia?

NIR ROSEN: Well, some of it has to do with the Palestinians I believe. He's hoping that the Saudis can do something. I think this is just desperation.

AMY GOODMAN: Finally, Nir Rosen, in speaking with people, in speaking with many Iraqis and living there, what you think needs to be the solution right now.

NIR ROSEN: There is no solution. We've destroyed Iraq and we've destroyed the region, and Americans need to know this.

This isn't Rwanda where we can just sit back and watch the Hutus and Tutsis kill each other, and be like wow this is terrible should we do something? We destroyed Iraq.

We've managed to make Saddam Hussein look good even to Shias at this point.

AMY GOODMAN: Do you think troop withdrawal now, if not an answer, a necessity?

NIR ROSEN: Troop withdrawal, if I was an American, then I would want troop withdrawal, because why are Americans dying in Iraq?

Every single American who dies in Iraq, who is injured in Iraq, dies for nothing.

He didn't die for freedom, he didn't die to defend his country, he died to occupy Iraq.

And if withdrawal the troops you'll have less Americans killing Iraqis.

Everyday the Americans are there they kill innocent Iraqis, they torture innocent Iraqis, and the occupy Iraqis and terrorize Iraqis.

They should leave today.

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

“Oil Smuggling Abetted By Corrupt Iraqi Officials Is Netting Insurgents \$100m A Year”

Dec. 4, 2006 Julian Borger in Washington, David Pallister; The Guardian [Excerpt]

The Iraqi government is in danger of being brought down by the wholesale smuggling of the nation's oil and other forms of corruption that together represent a "second insurgency", according to a senior US official. Stuart Bowen, who has been in charge of auditing Iraq's faltering reconstruction since 2004, said corruption had reached such levels that it threatened the survival of the state.

"There is a huge smuggling problem. It is the No 1 issue," Mr Bowen told the Guardian. **The pipelines that are meant to take the oil north have been blown up, so the only way to export it is by road. "That leaves it vulnerable to smuggling," he said, as truckers sell their cargoes on the black market.**

Mr Bowen, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (Sigir), cites Iraqi figures showing that the "virtual pandemic" of corruption costs the country \$4bn a year, and some of that money goes straight to the Iraqi government's enemies.

A US government report has concluded that oil smuggling abetted by corrupt Iraqi officials is netting insurgents \$100m a year, helping to make them financially self-sustaining.

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

U.S. Ambassador To Iraq Says Don't Be Bush's Pawns

“We implore all Iraqis not to become pawns of those who seek to destroy you and your country.” U.S. Ambassador Zalmay, Dec 4, 2006, The Associated Press

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

Bush: Heckuva Job, Al-Maliki; President's Words of Praise May Mean Iraqi Premier is Through

December 3, 2006 The Borowitz Report

In a meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki today, President George W. Bush reportedly told him that he had his “full support” and that he was doing “a heckuva job,” indicating that Mr. al-Maliki’s tenure in office may soon be over.

In the hours leading up to the meeting with the president, Mr. al-Maliki was reportedly dreading hearing any words of praise from Mr. Bush, knowing that similar compliments paid to former FEMA chief Michael Brown and former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld had immediately preceded their ousters.

“I want him to say ‘your job is hanging by a thread’ or ‘you totally suck,’” Mr. Maliki reportedly told a close associate. “Anything but ‘heckuva job.’”

But moments after the meeting with Mr. Bush in which the president pledged his full support for the Iraqi prime minister, an ashen-faced Mr. Maliki emerged, telling reporters, “I guess I better go to Kinkos and start copying my resume.”

While Messrs. Brown and Rumsfeld are two of the most famous former staffers of the president who received his praise as a prelude to getting the boot, over twenty thousand lesser-known former Bush employees gathered this weekend for their annual convention in Scottsdale, Arizona, to focus on networking and job retraining.

“I was trimming the hedges and the president said I was doing a heckuva job,” said Blanton Kellard, a former gardener at the president’s Crawford ranch. “That’s when I knew I was toast.”

Elsewhere, for the first time since the U.S. invasion in 2003, the number of car bombs in Baghdad now exceeds the number of cars.

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://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/maqalat/english/gi-special.htm>

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