

**GI SPECIAL 4L7:**

# **“The Battlefield Brings Itself Home”**

**From: A [Her husband is a veteran of the Iraq War. T]**

To: GI Special

Sent: December 04, 2006

Hi T,

I want to thank-you so much for your continued effort to end this mess. Thank God, or another higher power for hopefully (yes, I DID vote), putting people in power to end this mess.

I read your emails daily, and look forward to them always. T, when I really was alone, and felt no one else understood, you were in many ways, a lifeline.

I'm so sorry about my recent lack of contact.

**[X] has been home for a little over a year. I thought I should tell you about the aftermath and fallout due to his duty.**

**First of all and foremost, I want to stress that I am so much more fortunate in my situation than so many others. My man is alive. He is in one piece, at least physically. He is home. I thank God for that every single day.**

**However, there is an underbelly to this travesty of a "war", that most people will fail to see just yet, I'm afraid. I know that you will understand.**

**There are those of us who loved our men with heart and soul, as supportive wives and loved ones do. We sent them off, and got the little medals at the "Family Readiness" ceremonies.**

**I will never, ever in my life forget the day at [Base X], [xxx], 2004 before he left.**

He had just put on his Desert Camos. He had just gotten them, as had the rest of the unit.

I didn't know what A+ meant on his boots, and he told me he had done well in a damn class. It is his blood type, but I didn't think about that. I didn't know that's what they did.

We were in the parking lot. I was there to the last day and minute I could be. I looked into that man's eyes and he told me that he would come home to me. He did, Thomas, but he wasn't him anymore when he came back.

I was faithful.

I lived in two different time zones.

I corresponded with you when I learned of crap his unit was doing with regard to the vehicles he was out on the road with. I did all of those things, and my life line was this damn computer screen for well over a year.

He never went out on a mission without telling me beforehand, and never came home without calling from MWR tent or IM'ng when back.

I never left the house unless he did. I couldn't.

I tried. I did go when I had to, and I did my best.

I hated when he went on night missions tho, cause I would never be able to hear he was back safe until after I had to go to work. God, that just about killed me. I would not usually hear from him til at least 11:00 am. By that time, I was out doing my job as best I could manage.

I am not going to try to describe how I felt when he came home a year ago. Thomas, that would be impossible. Other than the birth of my son, that was the best day of my life. Nuff said, ok?

However, there was alot of crap that went on over there while he was there... frankly due to lack of preparedness and command that most loved ones are absolutely not aware of.

That has been the biggest cause of the destruction in marriages and relationships.

[X] did not come home the same man.

I've waited a year for that man to re-emerge. He is gone. He will never come back to me.

I now have to start my life over again.

What people need to know is this, though. I am doing this with great guilt.

**At what point does a woman who loves a man with her heart and soul give up on him because he served his country and is now a different person?**

**I don't know why he is different. He can't tell me or won't. He tells me that there are things I could never understand. He's in every sense probably right. I can't. I am not a Soldier. I am only the woman who loves one.**

**However, how long must I wait for him to truly come back to *me* now that he is physically here?**

**My heart is broken, as is our relationship. [X] and I have loved each other for over ten years, and still do.**

**There are a lot of undocumented casualties of this so-called war.**

**I don't know what to think, but I have to move on. I've given him being home a year.**

**I love him. I am writing this tonite after being at his Unit Christmas party all day, so you know, I don't give up easily.**

**However, when it's time to quit, it's time. He's not the same man.**

**I've tried so hard. We are losing our house, I have to save myself. He won't save us.**

**Anyway, I just wanted you to know, that yes, hell yes, the battlefield there is in every way, morally, socially, and most importantly, humanly wrong.**

**But as you well know, the battlefield brings itself home.**

Thank-you again for your unending effort to fight this totally demoralizing mess, T

**A**

**Reply:**

There have to be God knows how many thousands going through the same thing; hurting, not knowing what to do or where to turn, or how to think about what's going on.

They need to read what you have written. Nothing worse than feeling alone, as if nobody else is going through this. That doubles or triples the horror, and somebody out there suffering in silence can take hope and inspiration from what you have written. Thank you for permission to publish your letter.

It seems to me you are one of the most intelligent, sensitive, courageous, clear headed, caring people walking the face of the earth, and that anybody not blind or fucked up will see that. Nobody can tell you at what point to cut your losses and move on. But one thing for sure, you a person to be loved and cherished and you are not destined to be alone.

If another family member facing a similar situation would like to be in touch with A for mutual support, you can send an email to A, C/O GI Special at the upper left address on this page, and it will get forwarded on to A.

Your letter will *not* be published, unless you make a specific written request for publication. If you do make that request, all identifying information will be removed to protect your privacy, as was done in A's letter. T

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## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

# **10 U.S. Troops Killed In Iraq Wednesday**

12-06-06 (Dow Jones) & MSNBC

Ten U.S. troops were killed in Iraq on Wednesday, MSNBC reported, citing a military official in Iraq.

Five were killed in an attack in the north, and five were killed in a second attack in Anbar province, NBC News reported.

More than 2,900 U.S. military men and women have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

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## **2nd Soldier Killed In Baghdad Sunday**

06 December 2006 Multi-National Corps Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE  
No. 20061206-04

BAGHDAD - A Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldier was killed during combat operations in the Iraqi capital Dec. 3.

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## **Camp Lejeune Marine Killed In Iraq**

December 6, 2006 Associated Press

ALGONAC, Mich. - A Michigan native who was serving his second tour of duty has died in Iraq, his family said.

Lance Cpl. Thomas Echols, 21, of Shepherdsville, Ky., was serving with the 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment in Fallujah, Iraq. He was stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

His grandfather, Don Wight, of Algonac, said Echols' wife, Allyson, is expecting the couple's first child in April. Echols spent his childhood in St. Clair, moved to Sault Ste. Marie with his family as a teenager and later moved to Kentucky with his family.

Wight said his grandson was a devoted Michigan fan.

"I'm an MSU grad. He's a died-in-the-wool University of Michigan fan," Echols told the Times Herald of Port Huron. "Anything he could find that was U of M memorabilia, he had it. ... He was just a good, fun-loving young man."

Echols' father, Kurt Echols, of Naples, Fla., said he supported his son's decision to join the Marines after graduating from high school in 2004.

Wight said his grandson had hoped that serving in the military would help him find a career path.

Childhood friend Tim Zamboroski, of Port Huron, said he felt like he had lost a brother. The two played Nintendo, backyard baseball and were active outdoors together as children.

"I think he was pretty happy with serving the country," Zamboroski said. "I'm gonna miss him."

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## Soldier Killed In Iraq

12/6/2006 KARE-11

The Minnesota National Guard has lost its third member in five days in Iraq.

Nick Turcotte of Maple Grove was killed in a non-combat vehicle accident Monday morning.

Turcotte was in an armored security vehicle that was escorting a convoy of soldiers near Nasiriyah when his vehicle overturned.

"It looks like this was an accident," Lt. Col Kevin Olson said. "The vehicle rolled over . it was not the result of hostile fire."

Two Minnesotans were killed Saturday by a roadside bomb. That explosion also left two other men wounded.

"It has been a very difficult week for the Minnesota National Guard, but it hasn't been nearly as difficult as it has been for the families of those soldiers that have died," Olson said.

"Certainly it has not been as difficult as it is for those 26 hundred Minnesota National Guard soldiers that are in Iraq today."

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## **Soldier From Warren Killed In Iraq Explosion**

Dec. 06, 2006 AP

WARREN - A soldier from Warren who attended the University of Akron died Monday after being wounded in a mortar round explosion in Iraq.

Spc. Marco Miller, 36, was on guard duty when he was hit by shrapnel and taken to a medical facility in Germany.

Family members from Warren visited him there before the 36-year-old paratrooper was removed from life support early Tuesday.

Miller, who served during the first Gulf War, was on active duty for six years and spent the last five years in the Reserves.

He was considering signing up for another six-year term, said his mother, Renee Daniels of Warren.

Miller had a 4-month-old daughter he never saw.

He attended Warren G. Harding High School and the University of Akron.

He and his brother Demond moved to Florida in 1994, where Miller started a production company.

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## **Vacherie Soldier Killed In Iraq**

12/06/06 AP

THIBODAUX, La. -- A 26-year-old soldier was killed while on a mission in Iraq, family members have confirmed.

The family of Sgt. Jay Ryan Gauthreaux, a graduate of St. James High School, was notified Monday of his death by military officials, Michael Gauthreaux, the victim's father, said Tuesday.

The U.S. Department of Defense has not yet released confirmation of Gauthreaux's death, nor supplied details about how he died.

Michael Gauthreaux, of Gonzales, said a soldier and a military chaplain visited him Monday and told him that his son had been "on a mission," at the time of his death.

This most recent tour of duty in Iraq was his second foray to that country, said his sister, Monique Bergeron of Thibodaux.

Gauthreaux is survived by his 4-year-old son, Devin, the family said.

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## **Roadside Bomb Blast Kills Son Of Local Man**

December 01, 2006 By Bill Robinson, Register News Writer

Theodore "Coty" West, a 23-year-old private first class with the U.S. Army's 1st Cavalry Division and son of a Berea man, died Wednesday in Iraq when a roadside bomb exploded near his vehicle, the Army announced Friday.

He had been in Iraq for less than a month.

According to a statement from his family released by the Fort Knox media relations office, West, was married on July 8 to Jennifer L. Gregory.

West's father and stepmother, Bill and Mary Ann West, live in Berea. West's mother, Rene Brandenburg, lives in Arlington, Texas.

Arrangements are pending at Oldham, Roberts and Powell Funeral Home in Richmond.

West also leaves behind three brothers and a sister.

After school, West worked as an equipment operator and foreman in the family's energy and construction business and on the family farm before deciding to enlist in the Army in 2005.

"He loved the outdoors, horses, hunting and fishing," his family's statement said. "He also enjoyed working on and operating equipment, trucks, and cars.

"Coty was a thoughtful, caring man who made everyone he met feel special and loved. He volunteered for military service because he wanted to make a difference in the world and keep those he loved safe.

"He had a deep love and respect for his fellow soldiers, especially those of his 2-5, Bravo Company. Coty believed his job was to protect those he loved and cared about the most, calling his military duty 'my watch,'" his family said.

In letters home, "He continually said that he believed in his job, that he was good at his job and that he would not let those he loved or the fellow soldiers in his company down."

His family said, "We are very proud of Coty, his many accomplishments, his pride in what he did and his loving attitude toward life.

"We are extremely grateful that our lives were blessed and enriched with Coty for the short time we had him. We wish everyone to know that he was very important and special to us all and that Coty and his life mattered.

"His life and time made a difference. We are still dealing with the grief of his loss and thank everyone for their prayers during this incredibly difficult time."

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## **British Soldier Injured After Armed Clashes In Basra**

BASRA, Dec 6 (KUNA)

A British soldier was injured Wednesday after armed clashes between British troops and an armed group in the city of Basra in southern Iraq.

A statement by British Spokesman for the Armed Forces did not give any other details, however it added the injured soldier was transferred to British field hospital for treatment.

Meanwhile, the Spokesman said earlier this morning one of the British bases stationed at Shatt Al-Arab hotel was attacked by mortar shells and that no injuries were reported.

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## **UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. soldiers on an armoured vehicle on a road in Baghdad October 25, 2006.  
REUTERS/Namir Noor-Eldeen (IRAQ)

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# AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

## **Two Americans, Four Afghans Killed In Bombing**

Dec 6, 2006 The Associated Press

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan - A bomber blew himself up outside a compound for security contractors in southern Afghanistan on Wednesday, killing two Americans and four Afghans, a company official and witnesses said.

The bomber attacked on foot as the men left the Kandahar city compound of the Houston-based security company USPI, said Rohullah Khan, an official with the company.

The blast went off opposite the offices of the Canadian Provincial Reconstruction Team, a military team charged with rebuilding efforts in the area.

Three others were wounded, he said.

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### **Notes From A Lost War:**

## **Inside The Resistance: “The Taliban Will Be A Leader, But The Main Engine Will Be Dissatisfied Tribes And Warlords”**

[Thanks to Dennis Serdel, who sent this in.]

**Abdul Jalil's multiple roles include coordinating between the Taliban and those government officials who are sympathetic to the resistance.**

**He relates how, when he has to travel in high-risk areas, a friendly, highly placed government official from Kandahar takes him in his jeep - complete with official license plates. He adds that much of the material he sources comes from the government.**

December 4, 2006 By Syed Saleem Shahzad, Asia Times [Excerpts]

KARACHI - Huge swaths of the Pashtun heartland in southwestern Afghanistan are now sympathetic to the Taliban-led resistance against foreign troops and the Hamid Karzai-led administration in Kabul. The Taliban have strongholds in most villages and they prove their presence through daily attacks.

The soul of the southwest is the town of Kandahar, in the province of the same name. All surrounding districts are highly volatile, especially the Panjwai area, the strategic center of the Taliban near Kandahar.

There have only been a few isolated attacks in Kandahar itself, and driving through the city it appears to be very much a stronghold of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. NATO vehicles are everywhere, and when they pass through the main arteries they occupy both lanes to cut off potential suicide vehicles. Taxi drivers and private motorists immediately pull off the road when they see NATO vehicles approaching.

All major roads and intersections are manned by Afghan police and the Afghan National Army. On the surface, Kabul appears to be in full control of Kandahar and its administration under no threat.

Appearances can be deceptive, though.

Abdul Jalil lives in a middle-class neighborhood of Kandahar, although he is regarded as a true son of the soil. He was a middle-ranking official during the Taliban regime of 1996-2001.

After the fall of Kandahar he chose to lie low; when he did visit his family he did so in secret. Over time he started to move around Kandahar more openly, but always declined any renewed association with the Taliban. In the past few months, though, the situation changed dramatically.

**"We used to avoid visiting public places. We were afraid of speaking in favor of the Taliban. Now you can see I move all around. I go to the marketplaces and openly introduce myself as a Talib," Abdul Jalil told Asia Times Online at his home, where several other Taliban also live.**

But these men are not fighters. They have been assigned by the Taliban's command center in Panjwai district to provide logistical support.

For obvious reasons, Abdul Jalil was not prepared to go into too much detail about precise Taliban activities. But what can be gleaned is that hundreds of others in Kandahar like Abdul Jalil have been drawn back into the ranks of the Taliban.

The main reason for this is the change in mood in the Pashtun areas, from being ambivalent - if not even hostile - toward the Taliban, to fully supporting them.

Almost all the tribes of the Pashtun heartland of Kandahar, Helmand and Uruzgan provinces, the traditional rulers of modern Afghanistan since the 18th century, feel that they are now politically deprived and that the occupying forces do not trust them.

**Repeated aerial bombings of civilians have also played right into the Taliban's hands and ordinary people, tired of being innocent targets over the years, now welcome the Taliban's foot soldiers.**

**Thus people like Abdul Jalil, who had been prepared to abandon the Taliban, are once again active in the movement.**

Two of Abdul Jalil's house guests were Mehmood and Hamid, both in their late 20s, about the same age as their host, who appeared to be senior to them in matters related to the Taliban. All three were educated in Kandahar madrassas (seminaries) and, from their appearance, were obviously clerics.

Mehmood and Hamid had been assigned to collect donations from Afghan philanthropists, traders and businessmen and arrange money, satellite-telephone pre-paid cards, blankets, clothes and food for Taliban fighters in various districts around Kandahar and Panjwai.

**"Brother, the situation has changed now," said Mehmood. "We go out and ask for contributions for the resistance and come back with our pockets full of money and resources. Some traders have taken on the responsibility of recharging credit in satellite phones and they supply prepaid cards worth Rs3,000 [US\$50] every month. Others purchase blankets and jackets, vegetables, meat and flour, and some contribute cash. We supply all this to different fronts."**

Hamid and Mehmood pointed out that the restoration of these networks had made the Taliban much more effective, organized and in good morale.

Abdul Jalil is also associated with the Taliban's logistics, but his responsibilities are more tactical in that he is helping prepare for next year's primary objective, the capture of Kandahar, and then in mobilizing all major forces in southwestern Afghanistan to unseat the Kabul government.

For this, Abdul Jalil is well suited. He is trained in guerrilla urban warfare, especially in the use of improvised explosive devices, a skill he learned in Pakistan's North Waziristan tribal area.

**Abdul Jalil's multiple roles include coordinating between the Taliban and those government officials who are sympathetic to the resistance.**

**He relates how, when he has to travel in high-risk areas, a friendly, highly placed government official from Kandahar takes him in his jeep - complete with official license plates. He adds that much of the material he sources comes from the government.**

Commenting on the Taliban's tactics, he said, "We follow the techniques of remote-controlled explosive devices used by the Iraqi resistance.

But our technology is different. The Iraqis improvise with various explosive materials and then link it to a remote control.

"Our source of explosives is anti-personal and anti-tank mines. These were in the possession of various warlords who looted them after the fall of the communist government in Kabul (early 1990s). They either sold or donated the mines to us," said Abdul Jalil.

**"These mines are our main source and we link them with remote controls and effectively blow up our targets.**

**But this is not the only source - the other source is American bombs.**

"Many of the bombs they drop from the air do not explode. I am an expert in defusing these unexploded bombs, and there are many others like me. We extract all the explosives inside the bomb shells and use them for sacrifice attacks," said Abdul Jalil.

Over endless cups of tea, Abdul Jalil, Mehmood and Hamid discussed the various colors of the Taliban-led resistance.

**"The Taliban will be ready to mobilize next summer, but the lead role will be played by local tribes and pro-government warlords. All tribes, including the one Hamid Karzai belongs to (Durrani), do not support the Kabul government. The Taliban will be a leader, but the main engine will be dissatisfied tribes and warlords," said Abdul Jalil.**

The three men stressed that during the winter lull in fighting, the Taliban would focus on establishing better coordination among their rank and file and in improving their links in the government. Secret arms dumps would also be restocked.

**Along with colleague Qamar Yousufzai, we planned to travel to Musa Killa, where, after a prolonged fight and siege by the Taliban, British forces evacuated the area and handed over control to tribal elders.**

Abdul Jalil pointed out that the two of us should not travel alone in a taxi. While this correspondent could pass for an Afghan, Qamar looked Pakistani. We therefore decided to share a taxi with several other people.

As soon as we left Kandahar, the driver began playing a cassette tape of Pashtu music. Immediately one of the passengers objected, and demanded that the tape be ejected and his played instead. So we then traveled along to the sounds of Taliban jihadist songs (but with no music) condemning the United States in particular and the West in general.

This was followed by a tape extolling the Prophet Mohammed and attacking cartoons published in the West that ridiculed him. The singer vowed that revenge would be taken by defeating the Americans in Afghanistan.

**On the way to Helmand province we passed through several official checkpoints, but the Afghan police didn't check anything, only demanding that the driver pay 10 Pakistani rupees.**

"This is not an octroi (toll). This is pure extortion by the police and we pay because we do not have any option," the driver muttered. The Afghan police do not have a good

reputation among the masses. They are notorious for being involved in extortion, and they love to shake down strangers. They are not beyond kidnapping, and even assassination.

As the taxi approached the district of Gerishk and the last police checkpoint before Taliban country, the passenger who had supplied the tapes asked with a smile, "Now tell me, who are you are and why you are going to Musa Killa?"

"I am a journalist and want to see how the Taliban manage their areas and how they operate," I told him, fully aware that he must be Taliban.

"Oh, a journalist ... you mean the people who play with danger. Meet me, I also play the same game," he said with a laugh but without providing his name.

But he was not joking. He turned out to be part of the Taliban structure in Helmand coordinating activities between Taliban strongholds in the province and Taliban pockets in Kandahar city.

**The Taliban in Helmand are expected to play a central role in the planned fall of Kandahar. Many top field commanders are already concentrated there and Taliban leader Mullah Omar is expected to spend some time in the province making formal tribal arrangements that will unify all tribes under one pro-Taliban flag.**

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## TROOP NEWS

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



Hearse carrying the body of Philippine-born U.S. Army staff sergeant Richwell Doria, during his funeral procession in Dagupan city, Philippines, Dec. 5, 2006. Doria was killed Nov. 7 near Kirkuk, Iraq, by small arms fire during an air assault and rescue mission, the U.S. embassy said in a statement. (AP Photo)

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **Assorted Resistance Action**

06 Dec 2006 Reuters & The Associated Press

Guerrillas killed a police officer on his way to work in Hawija, 70 km (40 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, police said.

Police found the headless body of an army officer on Monday in Mosul, police said.

Guerrillas attacked a police brigadier, wounding him and killing his driver in a drive-by shooting in al-Mansour district in west-central Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.

Brig. Muhssin Qassim al-Yassiri, head of a security force that guards the Education Ministry, narrowly escaped an assassination attempt when militants opened fire on his vehicle in west Baghdad, killing his driver, a police officer said on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to talk to the media.

<p><b>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</b></p>
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### **“They Are Defeated In Iraq”**

Dec 6, 2006 The Associated Press

**Falah Shanshal, a Shiite lawmaker, said 115 of parliament's 275 legislators have signed a statement rejecting the U.N. Security Council's vote to extend the mandate of the 160,000 multinational forces in Iraq for another year, beginning Jan. 1.**

**“We demand to set a timetable for the withdrawal of these forces from Iraq,” a statement by the lawmakers said. They have made similar protests before without any result.**

Some Iraqis, while critical of U.S. strategy in Iraq, said they feared any new policy would lead to more suffering for their country.

“They (U.S. officials) are defeated in Iraq. So they are trying to seek for an outlet to get out of their plight in Iraq. And I think the outlet will be at the expense of the Iraqi people,” Maan al-Obeidi, a professor and political analyst at al-Nahrain University in Baghdad, told AP Television News.

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

# **Just Say No**

From: Dennis Serdel  
To: GI Special  
Sent: December 06, 2006  
Subject: Just Say No

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

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### **Just Say No**

**It's a greasy grimy shithouse door  
that he walks through into Afghanistan  
Johnny is told by the local War Lord  
just let me be and everything is fine  
or I'll send you back through that shithouse door  
in a body bag and you are only 21 years old  
there is so much more to life than fighting all the time  
think about that girl that could say yes  
have two children and work on the midnight shift  
Johnny looks around and all he can see  
is a barren land as a funeral carries death  
on a well worn path to a graveyard land  
a shithouse called Afghanistan  
Welcome to Death University  
where they promised you money to get a degree  
We will blow you up like we blew up Buddha  
he was very old and you are only 21 years old  
Hands off our poppy growers and dealers too  
unless you want some to get through the war  
in a brown purple haze that is just another way**

to kill you too so just say No.  
Johnny, you're green and you just don't know  
what you walked into is dead man's row.  
Did you hear signs of American votes  
to hell with the war, let's bring them all home.  
Did you hear about the signs in Vietnam  
that the VC wrote in the jungles and boonies  
"Soldiers, go this way, you no get hurt"  
with an arrow pointing which way to go  
I am your arrow, your warlord telling you  
which way to go, your war is lost  
all you have to do is say No to your Boss  
think about that girl that may say yes  
in a wedding dress and a groom standing tall  
bubbles of champagne looking forward to life  
with children, grandchildren and growing old  
We beat the Russians thanks to you  
but thanks to you we have beat you too.

## **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.

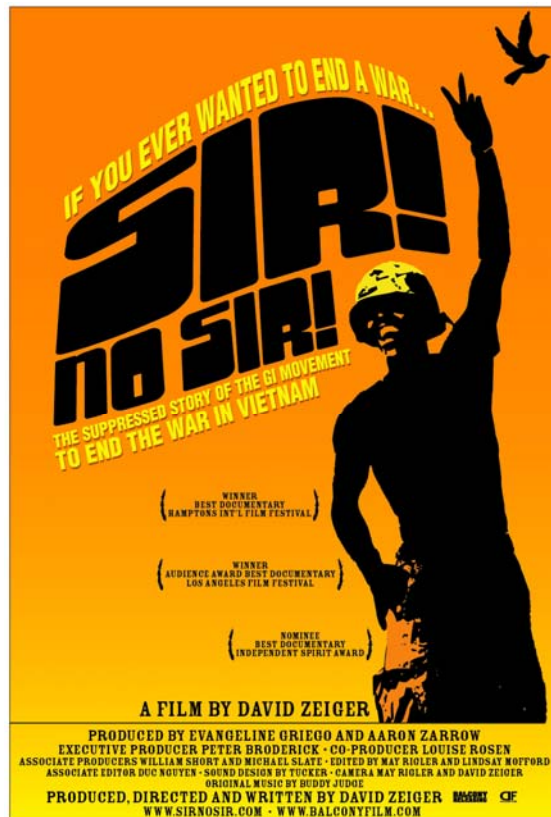
<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! ([www.ivaw.net](http://www.ivaw.net))

**“In The 1960’s An Anti-War  
Movement Emerged That Altered  
The Course Of History And It  
Spread Throughout The  
Battlefields Of Vietnam”**



# SUPPORT THE GI MOVEMENT & END THE WAR, AGAIN

“GI Resistance, A Movement That  
Has The Direct Power To End This  
War”



[Thanks to David Solnit, who sent this in.]

By David Zeiger. David Zeiger, director of the Film Sir! No Sir! was an organizer in the GI coffeehouse movement against the war in Vietnam.

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*General, man is very useful.  
He can fly and he can kill.  
But he has one defect: He can think.*

This poem by Bertold Brecht was an anthem of the widespread GI Movement against the Vietnam War, and thirty years later it still resonates.

**Today there is a growing GI movement against the War in Iraq.**

**It has the potential to tremendously impact the War in Iraq and end US foreign policies of empire. But it needs our help.**

**On December 8-10, there will be three days of action across the US to show widespread public support for the courageous troops that resist. Educational events, rallies, marches and vigils will take place around the US.**

**In the 1960's an anti-war movement emerged that altered the course of history. This movement didn't take place on college campuses, but in barracks and on aircraft carriers. It flourished in Army stockades, Navy brigs and in the dingy towns that surround military bases. It penetrated elite military colleges like West Point. And it spread throughout the battlefields of Vietnam.**

**It was a movement no one expected, least of all those in it.**

**Hundreds went to prison and thousands into exile.**

**And by 1971 it had, in the words of one colonel, infested the entire armed services.**

I was part of that movement during the 60's, and have an intimate connection with it. For two years I worked as a civilian at the Oleo Strut in Killeen, Texas—one of dozens of coffeehouses that were opened near military bases to support the efforts of antiwar soldiers.

I helped organize demonstrations of over 1,000 soldiers against the war and the military; I worked with guys from small towns and urban ghettos who had joined the military and gone to Vietnam out of a deep sense of duty and now risked their lives and futures to end the war; and I helped defend them when they were jailed for their antiwar activities.

**I made the film *Sir! No Sir!*, released earlier this year, to tell this suppressed story of the GI Movement.**

Today the new GI resistance movement is growing -- more soldiers are going public with their opposition, thousands are going AWOL, the first GI coffeehouse opened recently (with internet!), and the antiwar movement is realizing that supporting these soldiers is the next step.

**It's time for us to escalate public pressure and action in support of the growing movement of thousands of courageous men and women soldiers who have in many different ways followed their conscience -- upholding international law, taking a principled stand against unjust, illegal war and occupation and standing up for their rights.**

Widespread public support and pressure will help create true support for courageous troops facing isolation and repression, and help protect their civil liberties and human rights.

**Like the GI Coffeehouses of the 60's and 70's, showing widespread public support for soldiers who resist is one of the best ways those of us outside the military can encourage the growing momentum of GI resistance, a movement that has the direct power to end this war.**

**Those of us outside the military must match their bravery by escalating our support for all GI resisters. They've got to know we're out here for them!**

Supporting GI resistance, together with counter recruitment and draft resistance, is key to stopping illegal war and occupation ourselves. If the government can't recruit or draft enough new troops, and if troops refuse illegal immoral orders, it will help end the war and occupation and help prevent the next one.

The December 8-10 Days of Action calls for: 1) Support for War Objectors 2) Protect the Right to Conscientious Objection 3) Protect the Liberties & Human Rights of GI's 4) Sanctuary for War Objectors.

**Support the actions or events in your area or organize an event, like showing Sir! No Sir! to a house party of friends or your local community.**

**If not now, when? If not us, who?**

*Visit <http://www.CourageToResist.org> for more information or to contribute to this campaign.*

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

**The Sir! No Sir! DVD is on sale now, exclusively at [www.sirnosir.com](http://www.sirnosir.com).**

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

**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**

# The Death Of A Pro-War Conservative Or The Day I Got Away With Murder



“My humvee's front left tire was blown out, the front end was crushed...”

**But for those of us who believed in the war at first (like most of the country), we enlisted to be defenders of the American people, not storm troopers in an American-run police state in a country across the planet.**

**And I believe it's the soldiers/seamen/airmen/marines who enlisted with patriotism in mind that feel the most like I feel.**

11/18/2006 by Ronn Cantu, Iraq Veterans Against The War

Vividly I remember the 15th of May, 2004. It had been business as usual and we were heading home from FOB Warhorse in Baquba. By "home" I mean FOB Normandy in the small town of Muqdadiyah, and by "we" I mean Support Platoon, 2-2 Infantry. Ramrods!

We had gone to Warhorse to fill our fuel trucks and pick up a two-day supply of food. We did this every other day for almost the entire year we were in Iraq and so that day was nothing new. Improvised explosive devices (IED) were the norm, as was small-arms fire. It had been two months since we started our convoy operations and we had learned how to avoid, or at least minimize, the damage done to our vehicles by IED.

Our strategy was to drive as fast as possible down the center of the road. Ok, so we had to force the local drivers off the road at times. We weren't concerned about them, just ourselves.

And for the record, I still credit this technique for the survival of everyone in the platoon, but I'm digressing.

I was driving the rearmost vehicle with the convoy commander, my platoon leader, and I was dozing off behind the wheel again (those of you who were drivers in Iraq can probably empathize) when

\*\*\*BOOOOOM\*\*\*

I looked up in time to see the largest fireball I had ever seen in my entire life engulf one of our fuel trucks just ahead of my vehicle. Our fuel trucks had been filled while we were at Warhorse and each truck was carrying 2,350 gallons of diesel fuel and it was my belief, at that moment in time, that one of our trucks had exploded.

I was in such a state of shock that I didn't realize that the driver of the 5-ton gun truck in front of me had slammed on the brakes. I hit mine too late to stop in time and had to swerve sharply to the right to avoid smashing into the gun truck, but my rearview mirror was ripped off by the 5-ton's bumper in the process and I ended up coming to a stop to the right of the truck and not in a position to pull the rear security that the rear vehicle is responsible for.

From here it starts to get hazy and I lose track of when exactly certain events took place. So much was happening at the same time and these events took place two-and-a-half years ago this month. But I do remember it was total chaos.

And I remember every weapon in the convoy coming to life. Bullets were flying at everything and nothing at the same time. I was firing my M16 at a house near where the IED had detonated. I didn't really have a target, I was just shooting at the house for the sake of shooting. I saw a white horse in a field and shot at it twice, but it didn't go down and I questioned whether I was actually hitting it. I shot at some clothes on a clothesline and at a satellite dish on one of the houses.

All for the sake of making a statement.

**Now an IED had gone off in our convoy a few days before all of this and we didn't fire a single round. It was the belief of the chain of command, as well as me at the time, that if we responded to these attacks violently, then the citizens would eventually get fed up and not allow the insurgents to place IEDs in front of their homes or in their neighborhoods.**

**And like that, the phrase "make a statement" became our unwritten Golden Rule.**

I don't remember how long we were shooting, but .50-caliber machine guns, an Mk-19 Automatic Grenade Launcher, an M240B and several M16s were firing at everything while the convoy was stopped. I guess a white pickup truck was trying to speed away and it got shot up. I didn't see it.

I saw the horse I had shot was running around in circles, dragging its rear legs.

During the time when all the shooting was going on, our medic was trying to treat the two soldiers who were in the fuel truck.

Now, sometimes you have to give your enemy credit, you really do.

**This particular IED was something we hadn't encountered before (and ended up not encountering the rest of our tour - thank God). It was simply a 55-gallon drum full of gasoline that was wired to explode.**

**The fireball I saw wasn't the fuel truck, it was the IED itself. With artillery shell IEDs, you always stand the chance that the fragmentation will simply miss you. We had a lot of our trucks scarred by shrapnel, but the soldiers driving those trucks typically came out unscathed.**

**However, all the armor in the world isn't going to save you when a tidal wave of flaming fuel comes splashing through your window.**

But both soldiers were able to evacuate the fuel truck and were being treated by our medic. And here's where it really starts to get fuzzy and I completely lose track of what happened but I remember a Special Forces team showing up to assist us with security and aid of the wounded soldiers. I remember seeing one of the SF guys with this huge head of hair and I remember thinking to myself how I wanted his hair. They came, did their thing, and left.

And at some point one of our Fuel Section non-commissioned officers yelled for everyone to get away from the burning fuel truck. That was pandemonium. Every vehicle started backing up at high rates of speed and anyone who has ever driven any military vehicle knows that rear visibility is always an issue.

The gun truck quickly backed up, and I started to follow suit in my humvee, but I didn't realize soldiers were trying to climb in the back and I ended up hitting one and knocking him down. He was fine, but I ran over his M16 and destroyed it. I started yelling for the people behind me to either get in the truck or get the out of the way. I looked forward just in time to see our second fuel truck slam into my humvee.

My humvee's front left tire was blown out, the front end was crushed and since I never bothered to get into the vehicle completely, my door slammed onto my leg, pinning it as the fuel truck started pushing my humvee back. Humvees are big trucks, but those fueler HEMTT (Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck) are bigger trucks. The driver had hit me and didn't even realize it at first. He let off the gas long enough for me to free my leg and back up my vehicle, but the damage was done. The humvee couldn't be driven back to our FOB and had to be towed.

At some point, another soldier and I started pulling rear security when a vehicle started coming up behind our disabled convoy at a high rate of speed. He wasn't that far away and I knew he could see an american military truck in flames or at least all the black smoke.

I raised my weapon and aimed at the vehicle hoping that he would see the gesture and get the idea to stop, but he didn't. I knew I had to fire a warning shot but if he couldn't

see me aiming at him, how would he see (or hear) me firing into the air? I aimed at the windshield.

I knew better than to aim at the driver. I didn't want to kill him, just give him a warning. So I aimed at the center of the windshield about the time I heard someone behind me yell to shoot.

And so I fired my weapon.

The vehicle fishtailed a little bit and came to a stop. Good. But then a woman jumped out of the rear seat and started screaming. Not screaming in anger, but more like wailing.

"Oh no," I thought to myself. I turned to the other soldier pulling rear security.

"I think you got someone," he said to me.

In all, about four people piled out of the car and I realized that the vehicle was full and that my bullet must have hit someone.

Going over where the bullet went through the windshield, we figured the bullet hit the person in the neck or face. The woman kept screaming and even though she was between 150 and 200 meters away, she might as well have been in my head. They pulled the man out of the back seat by his legs and stared at him as he lay on the ground.

No one just stands around watching someone bleed like that unless they are certain nothing can be done.

My first instinct was to run out there and apologize profusely while trying to render first aid, but I knew I needed a team to wander that far off.

"Doc!" My voice was trembling as I called out for our medic and went to find him. "Doc, I think I hurt someone!"

But I was told that we were going to worry about us, and then worry about them. The medic was still patching up the passenger of the fuel truck, though not much can be done for burns in that type of environment.

I went back to the rear of the convoy in time to see the vehicle speed off. The other soldier who was pulling rear security said they put the man in the trunk and turned around. That's it.

And I remember seeing the horse lying lifelessly on its side.

Immediately afterwards, I remember thinking that I was going to go to jail, that I had just murdered someone who posed no particular threat to me and I was angry. Why didn't they stop?

Couldn't they see all the black smoke and the burning vehicle? Didn't they see American soldiers firing weapons at everything? They weren't that far away. Word of

my shot had gotten around and one of my superiors even gave me the nickname "sniper."

At first the guilt was almost debilitating.

I told a few friends and a few family members about the incident. I wanted to confess but also wanted to be judged, but at the same time I was also glad to be alive. As time wore on, I was able to put the incident behind me. Even though my first thought was of myself and how I was going to go to jail, it turned out that I had done the right thing, given the circumstances.

So that left me with nothing to think about except the man I had shot.

And the more I thought about it, the more I realized I shouldn't, but I couldn't help it. Who was he? He was probably just someone who woke up that morning in his bed and assumed that he would end his day in the same place. When he ate lunch that day, I'm sure he thought he'd have dinner too. Isn't that what we all assume?

Instead, he got into a car (was he heading home?). He was alive, and then in the course of less than a second, he wasn't, and lives were destroyed.

And who was the screaming woman? Was it his wife? His sister? His mother? Was he old enough to have a daughter that age? I never got a good look at him. Who was the driver and the other people in the car? Friends? Relatives? I felt (and still feel) that I owed him a certain something so that his life would not be lost in vain.

Many times have I visualized myself in that vehicle when the bullet went through the windshield. I don't think it would have made much of a sound. Just a small hole would have appeared in the windshield, maybe there would have been a slight cracking sound... and then someone's head explodes.

And it made me think about life in general and how senseless something like war is.

After all, don't we all wake up at the beginning of the day assuming we'll go to sleep at the end? When we eat breakfast, don't we think we'll eat lunch and dinner that day too? Don't we all assume we'll live to "old age?" Or at least long enough to see 40? 30? 25? 20?

My mother once pointed out how funny it was that all war is... is people killing each other. I went over possible definitions for the word war in my head, and every single one of them could be dispelled.

I think Websters defined war as "Armed conflict between two nations," but that's not always true. I came to realize that my mother coined the definition for the word "war."

War is simply people killing each other. What a silly concept!

When I took my two weeks of mid-tour leave, I went back to the college campus where I had worked on the college newspaper. My former instructors asked me if I wanted to do a guest opinion piece on my experiences overseas and I agreed.



I wrote about the above incident because, again, I wanted to confess.

While in the newsroom, I was looking over the archives and I came across the last article I had written for the paper.

It was another opinion piece about how proud I was to be going back into the Army to fight the good fight. It was a sharp contrast to the piece I ended up writing while on leave.

People are quick to disregard the Vietnam-Iraq comparison by saying that this is an all-volunteer Army. This is true.

But most of our soldiers were misled or simply flat out lied to in order to volunteer.

A lot of soldiers enlist out of a baser need (money for school, economic security, job security, the desire to kill another human being) than for patriotism.

**But for those of us who believed in the war at first (like most of the country), we enlisted to be defenders of the American people, not storm troopers in an American-run police state in a country across the planet.**

**And I believe it's the soldiers/seamen/airmen/marines who enlisted with patriotism in mind that feel the most like I feel.**

**It's almost ridiculous to hear generals and armchair generals say that we need to put the Iraqis first and things of that nature.**

**When I was still in Iraq, word came down from higher that we were going to start driving the speed limit and stop driving down the center of the roads. My platoon consciously made the decision to ignore that order.**

**To the average combat arms soldier in Iraq, it is quickly realized that they are set up for failure and the idea that he is going to survive at any cost quickly becomes his priority.**

**"Better to be judged by twelve than carried out by six" becomes his new maxim, and I don't see any of these new policies spouted by politicians and generals trickling down to the lowest rung of the military ladder where the single most thought in a soldier's mind is "Please God don't let me die."**

**In hindsight, it's almost scary how quickly after leaving Iraq that I had forgotten everything I realized while I was there.**

**It didn't come back to me until I learned I was going back.**



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**“They Want The Occupation To End, They’ve Been Demanding And Begging That It End, And They’ve Been Fighting It”**  
**“If Americans Weren’t There, American Soldiers Wouldn’t Be Getting Killed And Wounded For Absolutely Nothing”**

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

December 8, 2006 Interview of Nir Rosen by Eric Ruder, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

NIR ROSEN is a journalist who spent the last year in Iraq. He was born in New York City and has worked as an independent writer, photographer and filmmaker in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia and elsewhere. A fellow at the New America Foundation, his new book about Iraq is called *In the Belly of the Green Bird: The Triumph of the Martyrs in Iraq*.

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*GEORGE BUSH is still talking about the U.S. staying in Iraq until the “job is done.” Is Bush’s vision of victory still achievable?*

**THE GEORGE Bush vision was never achievable. This is a faith-based war.**

Neither he nor his advisors ever knew what Iraq was about. They just looked to impose their ideology.

The war itself and the toppling of Saddam Hussein were obviously very easy to win. But Iraq was lost in reality on the day that the U.S. won because of a whole series of things that happened.

Every single step they took in Iraq was criminal, not to mention the fact of the occupation itself, which was a brutal and traumatic experience for most Iraqis, involving Abu Ghraib every single day, with thousands of horrifying stories of killings, beatings and humiliation of innocent people.

**Iraq is completely lost.**

*ACCORDING TO the U.S. military itself, the vast majority of armed attacks in Iraq were directed at U.S. forces or the Iraqi police and army--though sectarian violence was causing more casualties. Do you think this is still the case today, and how would you characterize the resistance to U.S. forces?*

THE RESISTANCE still exists and is quite strong, as we see from the fact that the Americans are suffering their worst casualties ever these last couple months.

*CURRENTLY, MANY Democrats and Republicans blame Iraqis for the violence in Iraq. They say the Bush administration "coddled" Iraq, and that nothing will improve so long as Iraqis reject democracy and want to kill each other. What's your take on this?*

THIS HAS been infuriating me recently. We never "coddled" the Iraqis. We've been punishing them from the beginning.

The people who supported the war and now realize it's a huge screw-up, instead of blaming themselves or the Americans who are the criminals in all this, have taken to blaming the Iraqis for not wanting democracy or not choosing democracy.

They say, "We can't do it for them, they have to do it for themselves." But we did do this to them.

**Democrats like the idea of threatening the Iraqis, saying that we're going to leave unless they get their act together. But they've been begging us to leave for a couple of years now.**

So it's not like we are doing them a favor, or that we're threatening them with our departure.

**They want the occupation to end, they've been demanding and begging that it end, and they've been fighting it.**

*SOME PEOPLE who are antiwar hesitate to call for an immediate U.S. withdrawal because they think this will worsen the conflict. What do you think?*

You have Americans dying every day, the argument goes, and if the Iraqis weren't killing the Americans, then maybe they'd killing more Iraqis. But then again, the Americans are also killing Iraqis every day, so it probably balances out.

So my first argument about why I'm for immediate withdrawal is that if the Americans weren't in Iraq, they wouldn't have killed five Iraqi children in Ramadi a few days ago. They wouldn't be killing Iraqis every single day; terrorizing them, occupying them, oppressing them.

At least do no harm, don't hurt people, and an occupation is not a benign thing, it's a horribly humiliating and painful, in a physical sense.

And if Americans weren't there, American soldiers wouldn't be getting killed and wounded for absolutely nothing.

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

## **DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

# **New Rumsfeld Memo Urges Firing Rumsfeld: Calls Axing Self Key to Iraq Strategy**

December 4, 2006 The Borowitz Report

In a newly leaked memo written by former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld just hours before he resigned from his position, Mr. Rumsfeld proposes firing himself as the cornerstone of a new strategy for the war in Iraq.

The memo offers fascinating insight into the thought process of the embattled Mr. Rumsfeld, who suggests that victory in Iraq would only be possible if he were canned first.

"We must demonstrate to the American people that we are serious about winning the war in Iraq," Mr. Rumsfeld writes in the memo. "And one surefire way to do that would be by firing my ass."

Mr. Rumsfeld goes on to say that his dismissal would result in "jubilation" among Democrats and Republicans alike, "not to mention Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds."

The memo offers other intriguing suggestions for shifting the strategy in Iraq, including a proposal to leak a different memo penned by Mr. Rumsfeld every day for the foreseeable future.

“By leaking memos written by me, we will succeed in taking the American people’s minds off of how crappy things are going in Iraq and will instead make them see that I was right about everything all along,” Mr. Rumsfeld writes in the memo.

While the precise source of the newly leaked memo remains unclear, the document was faxed to major news organizations last night with a cover letter signed by someone calling himself Ronald Dumsfeld.

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

### 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://qi-special.iraq-news.de>;

[http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi\\_special/](http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/); <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>;

<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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