

## GI SPECIAL 4L9:



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

**“Next Time I Go To Iraq  
Perhaps I Should Wear A  
Bright Red Coat”**

**“Would You Not Rise Up To  
Protect And Defend Your House  
And Your Neighborhood If  
Someone Invaded Your Country?”**

# **“Personally I Have A Hard Time Believing That If I Was An Iraqi That I Wouldn't Be Doing Everything In My Power To Kill And Maim As Many Americans As Possible”**

12/08/06 By Philip Martin, LewRockwell.com

**Philip Martin has been a Marine for 2 years. He is in the infantry (a "grunt"), and spent 7 months in the al-Anbar province of Iraq.**

He went on more than 180 combat patrols in and outside of the city of Fallujah, where he was hit with 2 IEDs (luckily never injured) and was involved in a number of firefights.

He is currently stationed in Twentynine Palms, CA, and due to return to Iraq for a second deployment in April 2007. He is 21-years-old.

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**I'm sick and tired of this patriotic, nationalistic and fascist crap.**

I stood through a memorial service today for a young Marine that was killed in Iraq back in April. During this memorial a number of people spoke about the guy and about his sacrifice for the country.

**How do you justify 'sacrificing' your life for a war which is not only illegal, but is being prosecuted to the extent where the only thing keeping us there is one man's power, and his ego.**

A recent Marine Corps intelligence report that was leaked said that the war in the al-Anbar province is unwinnable. It said that there was nothing we could do to win the hearts and minds, or the military operations in that area.

So I wonder, why are we still there?

Democracy is not forced upon people at gunpoint. It's the result of forward thinking individuals who take the initiative and risks to give their fellow countrymen a better way of life.

**When I joined I took an oath.**

**In that oath I swore to protect the Constitution of the United States.**

I didn't swear to build democracies in countries on the other side of the world under the guise of "national security."

**I didn't join the military to be part of an Orwellian ("1984") war machine that is in an obligatory war against whoever the state deems the enemy to be so that the populace can be controlled and riled up in a pro-nationalistic frenzy to support any new and oppressive law that will be the key to destroying the enemy.**

**Example given – the Patriot Act.**

So aptly named, and totally against all that the constitution stands for.

President Bush used the reactionary nature of our society to bring our country together and to infuse into the national psyche a need to give up their little-used rights in the hope to make our nation a little safer. The same scare tactics he used to win elections.

He drones on and on about how America and the world would be a less safe place if we weren't killing Iraqis, and that we'd have to fight the terrorists at home if we weren't abroad. In our modern day emotive society this strategy (or strategery?) works, or had worked, up until last month's elections.

My point in this; to show that America was never nationalistic. If anything they were Statalistic (giving their allegiance to the state of their residence). This is shown in the fact that the founders created states with fully capable and independent governments and not provinces that were just a division of the federal government.

**These men believed that America was a place where imperialistic values would be non-existent.**

Where the people trying to make their lives better by working hard, thinking, inventing and using the free market would tie up so much of normal life that imperialistic colonization and the fighting of wars thousands of miles away for interests that are not our own would be avoided. They believed this expansion of power could be left to the European nations, the England, France and Spain of their time.

**However this recent, and current influx of nationalistic feeling has created an environment where giving up your rights, going to a foreign country to fight a people who did not ask for us to be there, nor did their leader do anything to warrant us being there, and dying would be considered honorable and heroic.**

**I don't believe it anymore.**

I don't believe it's right for any American to go along with it anymore.

Yes I know that we in the military are bound by the UCMJ and somehow don't fall under the Constitution (the very thing we're suppose to be defending) but sooner or later there is a decision that every American soldier, marine, airmen and seamen makes to allow themselves to be sent to a war that is against every fiber this country was founded on.

I know that when April rolls around I will be thinking long and hard on that decision. Even though we in the military are just doing as we're told we still have the moral and ethical obligation to choose to do as we're told, or to say, "No, that isn't right." I believe that if more troopers like me and the professional military, the officers and commanders, start standing up and saying that they won't let themselves or their troops go to this

illegal war people will start standing up and realizing what the heck is going on over there.

**The sad fact of the matter is that we are not fighting terrorists in Iraq.**

**We are fighting the Iraqi people who feel like a conquered and occupied people.**

**Personally I have a hard time believing that if I was an Iraqi that I wouldn't be doing everything in my power to kill and maim as many Americans as possible.**

**I know that the vast majority of Americans would not be happy with the Canadian government, or any other foreign government, liberating us from the clutches of George W. Bush, even though a large number of us would like that, and forcing us to accept their system of government.**

**Would not millions of Americans rise up and fight back?**

**Would you not rise up to protect and defend your house and your neighborhood if someone invaded your country?**

**But we send thousands of troops to a foreign country to do just that.**

**How is it moral to fight a people who are just trying to defend their homes and families?**

**I think next time I go to Iraq perhaps I should wear a bright red coat and carry a Brown Bess instead of my digitalized utilities and M16.**

Notice I never once used the word homeland in any of this. I have a secondary point I want to bring up now. Never once was the term homeland ever used to describe the country of America until Mr. Bush began the department of homeland security after the 9/11 attacks.

Taking a 20th century history class will teach us that the most notable countries in the last century that referred to their country in this way were Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia.

Hitler used the term fatherland to drum up support, nationalistic support, for his growing war machine. He used the nationalism he created in the minds of the Germans to justify the sacrifice of their livelihood to build the war machine to get back their power from the oppressive restrictions the English and French had put on them at Versailles. This is the same feeling that has been virulently infecting the American psyche in the last hundred years. This is the same feeling that consoles a mother after her son is killed in an attempt to prosecute an aggressor's war 10,000 miles away. It's also known as Patriotism these days, but I say, "No more."

No more nationalistic inanity, no more passing it off as patriotism. Patriotism is learning, and educating oneself to understand what their country really stands for.

I heard a lot during the memorial service about how the dead Marine did so much good for others and how his helping others was like a little microcosm of America helping

because we have the power to do so. Well if we have the power to help people why aren't we helping in Darfur where hundreds of thousands of people have died in the last 10 years. Saddam was convicted and sentenced to death for killing 143 Shiites who conspired to assassinate him. (I know all you "patriotic" Americans would be calling for the heads of anyone who conspired to assassinate supreme leader Bush).

And yet we spend upwards of 1 trillion dollars and nearing 3,000 lives to help these Iraqis when they don't even want us there. Not to mention we don't have the legal justification to be there.

I guess we should wait around for the omnipotent W Bush to decide who we should use our superpowerdom to help next.

It's about time to throw him and the rest of the fascists out.

Moreover it's about time to start educating Americans about their past and history, and letting them know that imperialistic leaders are not what the founders of this great country wanted.

Philip Martin

**Declared Bill Ehrhart, a Marine in Vietnam:**

**In grade school we learned about the redcoats, the nasty British soldiers that tried to stifle our freedom.... Subconsciously, but not very subconsciously, I began increasingly to have the feeling that I was a redcoat. I think it was one of the most staggering realizations of my life.**

**One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.**

**Mike Hastie  
U.S. Army Medic  
Vietnam 1970-71  
December 13, 2004**

**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**

## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

# California Marine Killed In Haditha

November 29, 2006 By William Cole, The Honolulu Advertiser

At least three Hawaii Marines have been killed by snipers in Haditha, Iraq, since early October, reflecting an increase in the insurgent tactic in that area of western Anbar province.

Lance Cpl. Jeromy D. West, 20, became the third when he was struck Saturday while standing guard on a roof-top, his family said.

The California man was the fourth Marine with the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment to be killed in western Iraq in less than a week.

Three other Marines, Lance Cpl. Joshua C. Alonzo, 21; Pfc. Heath Warner, 19; and Lance Cpl. James R. Davenport, 20, died when a roadside bomb hit their Humvee Nov. 22.

West played football and baseball all four years at Hamilton High School near his hometown of Aguanga, Calif., a rural area and horse country where West was well known, said his stepfather, Ron Klopf.

West played center and middle linebacker on the varsity football team.

"He's not a big guy, but he's tough as hell, and that's where they put him, in the middle," Klopf said.

That trait carried through into his decision to join the Marine Corps at the age of 17, three months shy of his 18th birthday.

"He felt that would be the hardest (of the military services)," Klopf said. "He didn't want to take anything easy."

"We're doing OK," Klopf said. "We're real proud of him. ... When a kid that's 20 years gets killed, it affects hundreds and hundreds of people, and when you mount it up to almost 3,000 (killed in Iraq), it's like 300,000 that get affected. It's one of those things where every single death affects a lot of people." Klopf said his stepson "did a great job" in Iraq. "He's a hero."

Hawai'i was West's first duty station. The single Marine had deployed to Afghanistan previously.

"He couldn't really talk about that on the phone. He was real respectful of the rules," the stepfather said.

**"(But) I said I heard it might be calming down over there, and he said, 'No, absolutely not.'"**

**About 1,000 Hawai'i Marines are on a seven-month tour in western Iraq that began in September. Fifteen have been killed.**

West and Klopf would go deep-sea fishing every time West visited California. His stepbrother, Andrew Klopf, is based at Pearl Harbor on the submarine USS Columbia.

West decided against college in the short term, telling his stepfather he wasn't ready for the coursework, and wanted to be in the Marines for four years before going to college and, hopefully, playing football. "We allowed him to (join the Marines). He wanted to protect his country," Klopf said.

"We just want to make sure everybody knows what a great kid he was."

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



172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team soldier inspects a car at a checkpoint on the edge of Baghdad's Sadr City, Oct. 26, 2006. (AP Photo/Samir Mizban)

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**AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

**“Anger At Americans Is Growing”**

# “The Taliban And Its Allies Draw On What Appears To Be An Almost Inexhaustible Supply Of Potential Foot Soldiers”

**"The Taliban have created a shadow government in a number of provinces — people going to Taliban governors rather than centrally appointed governors on rule-of-law issues."**

December 9, 2006 By Laura King and David Holley, L.A. Times Staff Writers [Excerpts]

Popular support for the central government is faltering, and Western military allies are deeply divided over how best to combat the insurgency.

Militants have built a network of bases in the tribal hinterlands that straddle the frontier with Pakistan.

"They can come and go pretty much undetected," acknowledged U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Michael T. Harrison Sr., who is overseeing the training and equipping of the struggling Afghan national army.

Nearly 180 NATO and allied troops have been killed in fighting this year in Afghanistan.

The number of casualties has been enough to ignite public debate over the Afghan mission in several NATO countries, including Canada, which has more than 2,000 troops deployed, mostly in the violent south, the traditional seat of Taliban power.

In October, a NATO airstrike in the south killed more than 30 civilians, most thought to be nomadic herders. Civilian deaths account for about one-quarter of the fatalities this year and heighten Afghans' resentment of the foreign military forces while feeding a gnawing sense of insecurity.

But

"Recruitment is not a problem for them — not a problem at all," said Ayesha Siddiq, an independent security analyst in Pakistan.

Viktor Korgun, an analyst with the Russian Academy of Sciences who has had long experience in Afghan affairs, describes the insurgents as "a fresh new generation ... copying the skills and ways of the armed resistance groups in Iraq."

"Their support network has improved, and in some areas they've been able to operate and control roads and villages and the like," said Seth Jones, a counterinsurgency expert at the Rand Corp. who was recently in Afghanistan for field research.



**"The Taliban have created a shadow government in a number of provinces — people going to Taliban governors rather than centrally appointed governors on rule-of-law issues."**

**The Taliban holds sway in much of the border province of Zabol, several Afghan and Western officials say. And in other provinces, including Kandahar and Helmand, the insurgents operate freely outside major cities and towns.**

Particularly in dirt-poor rural areas, many Afghans believe their daily lot has improved little since Taliban times, and tend to cast the blame on the same Americans they once hailed as liberators.

"People previously were repelled by the fanaticism of the Taliban, but anger at Americans is growing," said Talat Masood, a retired Pakistani general who is now an independent analyst.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

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



Casket of Marine Lance Cpl. Michael Schwarz after funeral services in Carlstadt, N.J., Dec. 8, 2006. Schwarz, 20, of Carlstadt died Nov. 27, 2006, from wounds he sustained in Iraq's Anbar province. He was a member of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment at Camp Lejeune. (AP Photo/Mike Derer)

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# Dissatisfaction With Bush Handling Of War In Iraq At All-Time High Of 71%

Nov 9 2006 AP

"Just 27% of Americans approve of Bush actions in Iraq, down from a low of 31% in November." The survey was taken Monday thru Wednesday of this current week.

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## Families Of KIA Must Pay Huge Bills To See Documents About How Their Loved Ones Died

[Thanks to N, who sent this in. He writes: People such as Rose Gentle are being charged as much as £600 to see the official information as to how their loved ones died in Bush's and Blair's quasi war. (But if they think they can put off people such as Rose Gentle, they're making a big mistake!)]

**"This is completely wrong. I can barely believe that they are charging families money to see the official documents relating to the circumstances surrounding the death of their loved ones. These sorts of documents should be made freely available," he said.**

05/12/2006 By Graeme Wilson, Political Correspondent, Telegraph Media Group Limited (UK)

**Families of troops killed in Iraq have been forced to spend hundreds of pounds to buy documents during the inquests into their deaths, a Government minister admitted last night.**

**In one case, the father of a soldier who was killed while serving his country had to hand over £600 [\$1170 U.S.] to get access to official papers about the circumstances surrounding his son's death.**

The charges imposed on grieving relatives were revealed yesterday by Harriet Harman, the constitutional affairs minister, after she held a private meeting with the families of 11 servicemen and women who died in Iraq.

Miss Harman conceded she had been surprised to be told that families had been asked to pay for documents. She said relatives at the meeting had told her they had been

given some of the documents relating to the deaths but noticed that the coroner and Ministry of Defence lawyers had huge sheaves of additional papers.

"They were told that if they wanted that pile of documents they had to pay by the page. One man said he had had to pay £600," she said.

"We have to look into this. Nobody at the meeting thought it was fair that families were having to pay for documents that the coroner and the Army have got."

**The charges were condemned last night by Rose Gentle, whose son Gordon was serving in the 1 Bn The Royal Highland Fusiliers when he was killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq in 2004. Mrs Gentle was told yesterday that his inquest will finally be held in March 2007.**

**"I think it is absolutely scandalous that the families should be asked to pay for these documents. Haven't they been through enough already without being asked to pay out like this?" she said. "I would hope the Government will step in and sort this out. We can't have a situation where relatives are handing over hundreds of pounds."**

There was also criticism from Andrew Burgin, spokesman for the Military Families Against the War campaign group.

**"This is completely wrong. I can barely believe that they are charging families money to see the official documents relating to the circumstances surrounding the death of their loved ones. These sorts of documents should be made freely available," he said.**

News of the charges are the latest blow for families who have been forced to wait years for an inquest into the deaths of service personnel killed in Iraq.

Ministers originally pledged to tackle the delays after The Daily Telegraph revealed in May that there was a backlog of around 60 inquests, some dating back to the first days of the Iraq war in March 2003.

The problem built up because the bodies of soldiers are usually flown into RAF Brize Norton, Oxon, which meant their inquests have to be heard by Sir Nicholas Gardiner, the Oxfordshire coroner.

Miss Harman responded by appointing three extra coroners to help Sir Nicholas handle the cases. But by October the backlog of inquests into deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan had almost doubled to 111 and still included around two dozen dating from 2003.

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**“Lack Of Care, The Lack Of Caring, And Their Absolute Shitty Attitude Towards The Vets”**

# **“EXPOSE THESE SONS OF BITCHES For The Crappy Services They Render”**

November 23, 2006 Windbear, firebase-news

THIS SEEMS TO BE A VERY ON-GOING PROBLEM AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL....

THE VA CLINIC located in DOTHAN ALABAMA (southeastern part of the state) is a private clinic, which is contracted out to the VA, offering (supposedly!!) “outstanding” medical services for the veteran population, in and around the Houston-Henry-Dale Counties area,

HOWEVER reality hits home, when one walks into this overpriced “piece of architecture” and discovers that the VA is so damn cheap that all they can provide are a few nurses (mostly LVN/LPN level) and a few nurse practitioners, and a doctor who should have retired sometime in the last century.

End result: less than mediocre treatment, if your luck enough to even get an appointment.

**First, one must get past a clerk, who feels she possesses the authority to determine who is “sick enough” to merit seeing a nurse or the doctor.**

**IF you get in through the door, the average time with a caretaker a Vet is allowed adds up to roughly 5 minutes, if your lucky.**

A few days ago, I received a phone call from the VA regional Hospital in Montgomery, or more specifically, a “patient advocate” who was following up on a letter I posted directly to Washington, and the IG's office, concerning the lack of care, the lack of caring, and their absolute shitty attitude towards the vets; unbelievable that the very people providing their jobs and income, are the very ones they discriminate against .... makes no sense whatsoever.

I was “promised” by this phone-caller that things would change ... and better care would be offered. Hopefully, sometime within my potential lifetime!!!

What will it take?

**EXPOSE THESE SONS OF BITCHES for the crappy services they render.**

**Carry a digital camera with you, and snap pix every time you go in there. If you can secrete a micro video-cam in, take voice and videos of the actions, of the people and how they respond to the vets. If you can catch a picture or two of the treatment areas (cleanliness, proper facilities, etc) DO IT, and lets post them for the world to see... ONLINE!!!**

I would venture to bet, that if exposed, we'll see some major changes at the local level real fast.... fear works wonders, for fools who won't otherwise change...

One thing these people will find out is ... piss me off, and I'll return the favor, in spades! PASS IT ON.....

MORE:

## ***Used And Thrown Away: How VA Rats Tried To Ship Wounded Soldier To A Nursing Home; And How His Wife Fought Them And Won!***



Corey Briest holds his son, Connor, and daughter, Kylie, at Casa Colina rehabilitation hospital in Pomona, Calif. Briest was moved to the hospital after his family complained about care he received at a VA hospital.

**Since that move, he has begun talking. He is starting to walk again. He is interacting more with his family every day.**

**"I think that shows Diane and Jenny's expectations weren't too high," Herseth says. "And I'm sure the VA is pleased that he is making progress. But they have**

**to answer the question, 'Why wasn't he making progress in one of our four top polytrauma centers in the country?' “**

November 21, 2006 By Steve Young, The Argus Leader

POMONA, Calif. - On a December afternoon in 2005, Sgt. Corey Briest sacrificed his ambitions, his dreams - his very well-being - to a roadside bomb and a patriot's sense of duty.

**For that, his wife and mother say, the Yankton National Guardsman should have come home to a hero's welcome and the best medicine available to America's wounded soldiers.**

**Instead, Jenny Briest and Diane Briest say their husband and son received inadequate care at a Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Minneapolis. They say staff there shortchanged him on his therapy, tried to shuffle him off to a nursing-home setting and basically gave up on his recovery from a traumatic brain injury.**

“It's sickening to me,” Jenny Briest, 24, says as she sits at the kitchen table of her rented home next to the private Casa Colina rehabilitation hospital in Pomona where her husband now is being treated.

**“He was fighting in the line of duty; then we have to fight for him just to get good care. It's very disappointing.”**

VA officials in Minneapolis dispute the Briests' characterization of medical care and service there. But the family's disappointment has resulted in an inquiry by the Inspector General's office in the Department of Veterans Affairs. It also has drawn in South Dakota's congressional delegation, particularly Rep. Stephanie Herseth, whose Southeast Area director, Mark Gerhardt, is a good friend of Diane Briest.

The family's complaints center on what they think was unsatisfactory treatment Corey Briest received during the five months he was at the VA Medical Center's polytrauma unit in Minneapolis.

**It's a concern that Herseth and other political leaders say could be playing out in other injured soldiers' families, too, especially if the influx of brain-injured soldiers is putting a strain on a VA budget that already is underfunded.**

**The big fear, Herseth says, is that such a strain could translate into decisions by the VA to opt for less costly nursing home care for soldiers who haven't fully reached their recovery potential.**

**“If Jenny and Diane hadn't been vigilant, I fear the VA would have made a decision that was not in Corey's best interest based on budget constraints,” Herseth says.**

At the same time they have battled the VA, the Briests have been critical of the South Dakota National Guard's efforts after Corey's injury.

Maj. Gen. Michael Gorman, head of the state National Guard, acknowledges the Briest case has been a public relations problem for him. "But the fact remains," Gorman says, "that everybody in our organization, their main concern is to do the best we can, not only by Corey but by the family."

That didn't seem so clear to Jenny Briest last Dec. 4 when she learned that her husband had been injured near Baghdad.

**Doctors told her she needed to get to her husband's bedside quickly, that his time appeared short.**

After waiting two days for the Department of Defense and National Guard to get her a plane ride, she enlisted Herseth's help to get a private plane to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., where Corey Briest had been flown.

**"The Army was telling me they would get me over there," she says. "But on Monday, they didn't have a flight for me. On Tuesday, they didn't have a flight for me."**

Nor did she see anyone from the South Dakota National Guard until two days after she learned her husband was injured. Jenny Briest understands that Gorman's staff had to deal with two deaths in Corey's unit - Charlie Battery, 1st Battalion of the 147th Field Artillery. Still, she thought she would have seen someone.

The frustration of that memory rings in Gorman's voice as well. The Wounded in Action branch of the Pentagon typically handles communicating with families of injured service members, he says. Somehow, there was a glitch in the Briest case. And the South Dakota National Guard didn't even learn who was wounded that first day, Gorman says.

"We did change the way we do things because of this first incident," he says.

There would be other issues for Jenny and Diane Briest with the National Guard. But their greatest frustration centered around Corey's long stay at the VA center in Minneapolis.

**In a journal they keep on a Web site called Caring Bridge, the women have detailed a list of complaints, starting his first night at the center, when they say Corey was left alone in his room and ended up coughing off his tracheotomy mask, covering himself in sweat and mucus.**

**In the weeks and months ahead, they say some of the nursing assistants at the center were careless and injured Corey when moving him. They say he routinely missed therapy sessions because staffers didn't get him there on time or because therapists cut sessions short to leave for other assignments.**

**"Never once did I dream he would end up giving 95 percent of his life for his country, only to end up being basically abandoned and subjected to a setting where everything is 'just good enough,' "** Diane Briest says.

Minneapolis VA officials dispute many of the charges. Dr. Barbara Sigford, chief of physical medicine and rehabilitation at the center, says staffing there is good, and rescheduling missed sessions isn't an issue.

"I understand that they were frustrated," Sigford says. "I do know, generally speaking, that families coming into our polytrauma rehabilitation centers are very stressed, and they find different ways of coping with and managing that stress.

"Some of these families cope ... by being angry at the treatment teams instead of being angry at the brain injury. I don't want to make that sound like an excuse; we need to do what we can to support the family. But because of their grief, they can be aligned against the team instead of the brain injury."

**[Check those three paragraphs just above. Piece of shit Sigford spins and spins, trying to smear the family as, in plain language, deluded, whining trouble-makers: "stressed," "angry," and "aligned against the team." That's an accusation they interfered with his treatment, so it's their fault. Everything is their fault. If any further proof were needed, this rancid smear means Sigford isn't fit to practice volleyball, let alone medicine. Just another lying suit.]**

But the Briests dispute that was the case in their situation.

And last month, the Inspector General's office contacted them as part of an inquiry into the complaints. Herseth, who sits on the House Veterans Affairs Committee, says the agency's interest probably was piqued after she discussed Briest's situation with Defense Department staff, or after she and Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., sought permission from the Department of Defense to allow Briest to be moved to a private rehabilitation hospital.

Sigford says the VA Medical Center welcomes such scrutiny. "I'm very pleased to see they are jumping in and reviewing and responding to a family's concern," she says. **[Right. Covering up the effort to stick this soldier in a nursing home must be even more fun than a sharp stick in the eye.]**

**The Briests say they told the Inspector General investigators that VA officials made it clear early on that they didn't think Corey was progressing significantly enough in his recovery. The implication, Jenny Briest says, was that he should go into extended care - a nursing home.**

**"They didn't even give him a chance to recover," she says.**

**Herseth went unannounced to the medical center in March. She saw the long-term care unit, which the Briests said the hospital staff was pushing for Corey.**

**"This floor had veterans who had served in World War II and Korea," she says. "This was a long-term care unit. It appeared they got some therapy, but just enough to maintain them."**

Sigford says the staff never intended to send Corey Briest to an extended care unit and she didn't hear anyone tell the family that.



Sigord also says staff in Minneapolis and elsewhere have not been overwhelmed by the influx of brain-injured soldiers. In fact, she points out an Inspector General's report released in July that looked at the health status of and services for veterans with traumatic brain injuries. The study found that VA patients had similar outcomes as far as overall well-being, functional status and social integration when compared with a matched group of brain-injured patients from the private sector.

**But the Inspector General's report also noted that the VA needed improvement in long-term case management and in providing additional support to families.**

That family support issue is a critical one to Diane and Jenny Briest, who say they have often been accused of being unrealistic about Corey's ability to recover.

**Diane Briest says she was told by Steven Kleinglass, Minneapolis VA center director, that the family's expectations for Corey's recovery "were too high."**

**"We were pretty shocked to hear that," she says. "We have never once placed demands on how we thought Corey should be improving or expressed any expectations on what his improvement should be. We fully understand that there is little room to recover from a traumatic brain injury."**

Sigord doesn't know what Kleinglass told them, but says, "it sounds uncharacteristic to me."

The Briests say the lack of support also played out in a battle with Defense Department and VA officials over their assessment of Corey's post-injury military status - a process that is called "medical boards."

In that process, the military determines whether an injured soldier is fit to return to duty. If not, he or she can be medically discharged, retired or placed in a medical hold. The decision affects the kinds and amount of care and therapy provided, Herseth says.

Corey Briest wasn't going back to duty. But the Briests worried that if he were medically retired, he would remain on the military's health insurance program but would be ineligible for important cognitive therapy that would help him to regain his personality.

They sought help from Herseth, Johnson, even doctors who had cared for Corey, to stop the process and keep him from losing therapy he still needed.

But that effort was hurt after representatives from the South Dakota National Guard visited the Minneapolis center last spring, the Briest women say. The National Guard's follow-up report on his care was so positive that "instead of helping us, the South Dakota National Guard helped to push along" the process, Diane Briest says.

That was not the National Guard's intention, Gorman says. They had come to Minneapolis to help pursue concerns the family had about Corey's care.

"There were missed appointments, and the family told us cleanliness there was bad," Gorman says. "The man in charge of that visit for us wrote a very comprehensive response to me of what exactly he thought was and wasn't happening. It wasn't all glowing. But certainly, it was never my intent to have them hurry this ... along."

Eventually, thanks again to Johnson and Herseth, Corey's medical status was put on hold, the level of therapy continued, and he was allowed to transfer to the private hospital in Pomona last June so he could continue his therapy under the military health plan, Jenny Briest says.

**Since that move, he has begun talking. He is starting to walk again. He is interacting more with his family every day.**

**“I think that shows Diane and Jenny's expectations weren't too high,” Herseth says. “And I'm sure the VA is pleased that he is making progress. But they have to answer the question, 'Why wasn't he making progress in one of our four top polytrauma centers in the country?’ “**

When she does bring her husband and their two children home to Yankton, Corey will continue to need therapy. At some point, they probably will need care for him in the home, especially on those occasions when she can't be there.

But those decisions are for tomorrow.

**Today, Diane Briest says, the message they want to get out is much bigger than simply a difference of opinion about the care given her son.**

**“How many thousands of soldiers get injured, and who's taking care of them?” she says. “What's being done? That's what is important to us. I'm not sure people would like to know the answers.”**

**[Same old story. Used up, thrown away, and the politicians couldn't care less. To repeat for the 3,466<sup>th</sup> time, there is no enemy in Iraq. Iraqis and U.S. troops have a common enemy. That common enemy owns and operates the Imperial government in Washington DC for their own profit. That common enemy started this war of conquest on a platform of lies, because they couldn't tell the truth: this war was about making money for them, and nothing else. Payback is overdue. T]**

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

# **Bottom-Feeding Scum-Sucking Shit-Eating Landlord Changes Locks On Wounded Marine's**

# **New Apartment After Taking His Deposit: “This Is A Business. This Is Not A Charity” “A UPS Driver Arrived To Deliver His Wheelchair, But Daniels Had To Turn Him Away”**

December 3, 2006 BY GRAHAM RAYMAN, Newsday Staff Writer

Iraq war veteran Jamel Daniels, who lost a leg to a roadside bomb, expected to move into his new Coney Island apartment on Friday.

Instead, the Manhattan native is embroiled in a dispute with a Brooklyn real estate company over whether the apartment is actually his to rent.

Daniels, 27, said the company, Brooklyn Estates and Properties, took his \$2,600 deposit for the one-bedroom apartment at 2838 Stillwell Ave., gave him the keys and let him move in furniture. But the owner of the company insists it was all a big mistake.

"I saw the apartment as proof that I was moving forward in my life," Daniels said. "It was the start of a new chapter."

Daniels, a Marine corporal, was wounded on Jan. 31, 2005, when a roadside bomb exploded under his Humvee as he returned to base on the last patrol of his eight-month deployment. The bomb - made of 16 155-mm artillery shells - killed three other Marines and seriously wounded a fourth.

Daniels spent 16 months undergoing intense rehabilitation at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Doctors supplied him with a high-tech prosthesis on the left leg and also had to permanently fuse his right ankle.

While at Walter Reed, he was profiled in a book about wounded troops. He also met Vice President Dick Cheney.

Since he returned to New York in the summer, he has applied to Columbia University and New York University. He hopes to major in speech pathology.

At the same time, he and Jessica, his wife of three years, have separated, as Daniels works through the trauma that he experienced.

"It's taken a toll on my life," he said. "You can't sleep, you get nightmares, cold sweats. It's something else."

Last month, Daniels found an advertisement online for the one-bedroom apartment at 2838 Stillwell Ave.

**After a real estate agent gave him the OK, Daniels said, he bought \$5,000 worth of furniture and moved some of it into the place on Nov. 24.**

**Later that day he got a phone message from the agent saying a mistake had been made. Subsequently, Brooklyn Estates said his credit wasn't good enough.**

For now, Daniels is living at the nonprofit Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Club on the East Side, where he pays \$25 a night to share a small room.

"I just don't understand how a person could tell you one thing, and then all of a sudden, the apartment isn't yours," he said.

**Daniels' friend, Victor Mencia, 27, of the Lower East Side, said the realty office threatened to go to court if he didn't remove his possessions.**

"I think it's ridiculous because they promised this man, who has gone through enough and got his hopes up and then pretty much just put him on the street overnight," Mencia said.

Inga Barkovich, the owner of the real estate company, vigorously defended her office's conduct. She said the agent, Larisa Ferraro, erred in promising the apartment to Daniels. Ferraro, who did not return calls, has been fired, she said. Barkovich said Daniels signed a lease but a company representative did not.

**The building owner, Gregan Equities of Brooklyn, rejected the application because Daniels' credit score was too low, said Barkovich, who then tried to return his deposit but said he wouldn't take it.**

**"Would you rent to somebody who you did not feel comfortable with?" she said. "This is a business. This is not a charity. Maybe he should go and ask city housing to provide him with an apartment." [Maybe Barkovich could be transported to Ramadi, and given a nice little home a few miles from the nearest U.S. outpost, with a huge U.S. flag flying from the roof, and a life size photo of George Bush decorating the front door with a big sign, "Here To Stay." Do you suppose that might produce an attitude adjustment? At the least there would be one less piece of shit in the landlord business.]**

**Daniels said if he accepted the deposit back, he wouldn't have any recourse. He also said the credit issues were minor and that he received a substantial settlement through his military insurance.**

Paul Bregianos, an official with Gregan, did not return a phone call seeking comment.

**Last night, when Daniels visited the apartment with a friend, he found that the locks had been changed.**

As he left, a UPS driver arrived to deliver his wheelchair, but Daniels had to turn him away.

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## Army In New York City “Losing To An Air Force Of Many” A Terrorist Plot?



An Army of One is losing to an air force of many. Visitors rest on the electronic billboard of the military recruiting station in Times Square. [New York Times photo.]

December 7, 2006 By JAMES BARRON, The New York Times

Uncle Sam does not want the crowd that hangs out at the military recruiting center in Times Square.

Nor does Uncle Sam believe that this crowd should be all it can be.

Morning after morning, hours after reveille, the crowd mills about aimlessly. It checks out the Paramount Building across the street. It enjoys a morning snack. It watches the traffic, and the people.

This crowd is a flock of pigeons. As the recruiters have discovered, these pigeons are nothing like old soldiers. They neither die nor fade away. They spend their days hunkered down on the roof of the recruiting center, despite the military's efforts to drive them off.

Last month the contractor who maintains the little metal-and-glass building between 43rd and 44th Streets installed a noise-producing contraption that was supposed to shoo the pigeons away.

The device came with four speakers, fewer than some home-theater setups have, but enough to blast bird noises every 10 minutes or so. The noises — the calls of predators, even the sounds of pigeons being attacked — are supposed to scare the pigeons, or at least make them pay attention.

Everybody does pay attention to the noise, it seems — everybody but the pigeons. Pedestrians shake their heads at the idea of woodsy sound effects in the urban jungle. The pigeons, having abandoned the southern end of the recruiting station roof, where the speakers are, stay put on the northern end.

At 9:16 a.m. Monday, amid a burst of recorded bird calls, the crowd was as thick as second lieutenants at an officers' club breakfast.

The pigeons converged on the pavement north of the recruiting station at 9:23 for a snack. A passer-by had dropped some corn on the pavement. By 9:24, most of them had flown back to the roof. There they were at 9:25, when the speakers played another round of bird noises. Four pigeons flew in and joined the crowd.

All this raised a question: Is the sound system working?

“That’s why I’m thinking two more speakers,” said Leonardo Reis, who works for the contractor, LAR Industries of Amityville, N.Y.

If six-speaker sound does not make a difference, Mr. Reis said he would propose putting spikes on the roof as a deterrent to the pigeons and the mess they create.

That was on Monday. Yesterday, he said that the sound system could not accommodate the additional speakers and that he had changed the sounds it was producing. He also said the manufacturer had sent him chemicals that are supposed to help repel the pigeons. But he had not had time to apply the chemicals on the roof of the recruiting station.

**Andrew D. Blechman, the author of “Pigeons: The Fascinating Saga of the World’s Most Revered and Reviled Bird” (Grove Press, 2006), said that by taking the offensive against pigeons in Times Square, the military had forgotten what pigeons had done for the armed forces in the past. “One million pigeons served in World War I and World War II,” he said. “They were decorated veterans. They saved thousands of soldiers’ lives delivering critical messages. They were celebrated upon return. A lot of them came back on troop carriers.”**

And not as stowaways. He said that on orders from Gen. John J. Pershing, one pigeon was given a berth on a troopship returning from World War I.

Of course, the recruiting center is hardly the first institution in New York to take an unconventional approach to pigeon control. The Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, for example, relied on the descendants of parakeets from Argentina that settled in the cemetery’s stone gate after escaping from a shipment bound for a pet shop in the 1960s, at what was then Idlewild Airport.

“They’re very territorial,” said Ken Taylor, the cemetery’s vice president for operations. “They kept the pigeons away from the structure.”

But there are signs of détente, or maybe an avian truce. “We noticed the pigeons are coming back,” Mr. Taylor said. “They’re starting to coexist.” The parakeets, he said, are “starting to tolerate the pigeons.”

The Air Force recruiter assigned to the Times Square recruiting station, Tech. Sgt. Danny Ulch, said the bird sounds made him laugh — and think of London. Mayor Ken Livingstone has put a premium on evicting pigeons from Trafalgar Square, spending \$423,000 since 2003 on two hawks and a handler.

“England pays big money, but they get predatory birds,” said Sergeant Ulch, who arrived in Times Square last month after three years as a recruiter in the Chicago area. “We took the nonharmful route, and it’s not working very well. It seems like there are a hundred million pigeons here.”

The owner of the company that made the speaker system questioned whether a Times Square pigeon would react to the recorded sound of, say, a peregrine falcon.

“Maybe they’ve never seen one or been attacked by one,” said the owner, Joe Seid, whose Chicago company, Bird-X, makes 40 products for people with pigeon trouble.

He also said the pigeons’ noisy habitat was a problem.

“You’ve got a lot of tumult there,” he said. “Birds that are used to a lot of racket, they may be less sensitive to sounds in general.”

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

# **Brothers**

From: Dennis Serdel  
To: GI Special  
Sent: December 09, 2006  
Subject: Brothers

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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### **Brothers**

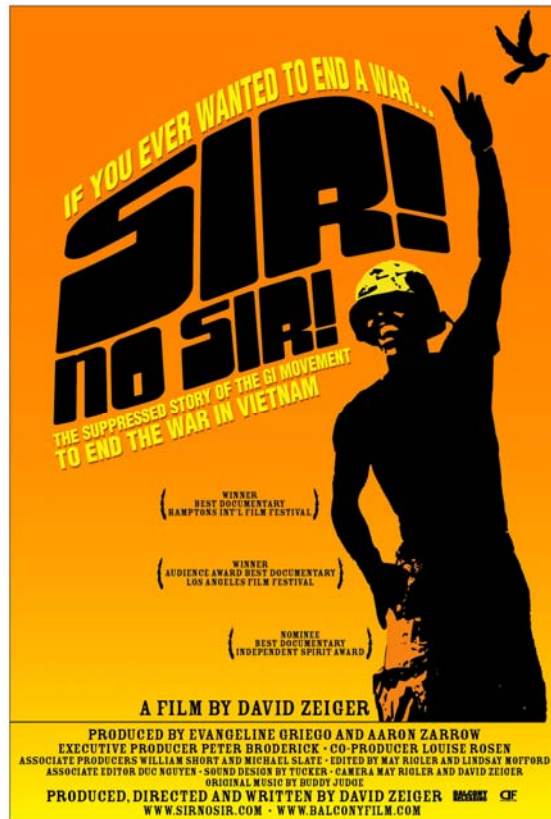
**It is hell to fight  
when you are a soldier dunked in oil**

grabbing a raghead to wipe off the oil  
from goggles so he can see  
through goggles darkly  
blowing his nose out so he can breathe  
takes a woman's scarf  
to clean the oil from his lips and face  
then the brutal desert wind  
stirs up the sand  
he points his 16 at an old man's head  
to see if it still works  
but his rifle needs cleaning  
blows up in front of him  
then he steps on a landmine  
that blows off both feet  
he is covered with his blood  
oil and sand  
as a sniper takes aim  
and shoots off his hand  
so he shifts his 16  
as Iraqi kids stone him  
one hits his chin  
as a woman screams at him  
his face is blood oil and sand  
as he moves on the ground  
an old man sets him on fire  
as his buddies shoot the kids  
the woman and old man  
but farther away  
they hear cheers for the martyrs  
but the soldiers are Not fighting  
for America or Iraq  
they are Not fighting  
for Democracy or Oil  
they are just fighting  
for each other.

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



# “The War Was Protested Almost As Vigorously Within The Military As Without”



Geoff Pevere, Toronto Star

It's said that history is written by the victors, but the history of Vietnam challenged in former anti-war activist David Zeiger's documentary *Sir! No Sir!* has been written by losers powerful enough to build myth out of truth.

The myth, of course, is the prevailing neo-conservative one that paints the Vietnam anti-war movement as an act of left-wing hippie disloyalty perpetrated against veterans who fought for their country only to be spat upon back in America.

**Bull, says Zeiger's movie, which interviews dozens of ex-soldiers and unearths a wealth of archival footage to suggest the war was protested almost as vigorously within the military as without, and the reason why this has been forgotten owes as much to current politics as collective amnesia.**

Jane Fonda appears to remind us that even her enduringly controversial role in protesting the war was only made possible because of support within the fighting forces.

Beginning with the recollections of veterans who organized poetry readings and demonstrations to protest America's intensifying war effort, the film gathers momentum and fury as it recounts escalating dissent in the ranks that led to "fragging" (attacks on officers) in combat zones, as well as marches, arrests and military trials at home. Between '66 and '71, the Pentagon itself recorded over a half million "incidents of desertion."

The effect of Zeiger's act of recovered historical memory is as stirring as it is relevant: without ever mentioning Iraq, Bush, Afghanistan or even John Kerry, the movie lands like a grenade lobbed directly in the present.

**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."

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

**Demands For Military Reform:  
1903**  
**“The Right Of All Soldiers Of Whatever  
Position To Engage In Criticism And In  
Free Speech At All Times And Under All  
Circumstances”**

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

From: Robert Fantina, "Desertion and the American Soldier, 1776-2006."

In the book's final pages, Fantina writes:

"The following list of military reforms was suggested in 1903:

- 1. Private soldiers to receive a substantial increase in pay.**
2. The employment of trained cooks.
- 3. Recognition of the right of all soldiers of whatever position to engage in criticism and in free speech at all times and under all circumstances.**
4. All the food a soldier wishes to eat, instead of being limited as at present, to an inadequate 'ration.'
5. Absolute amnesty to all deserters from the army and navy. **[Hard to imagine now, but back then it was presumed that people who wished to be in the armed service because they believed in a war made the best troops, and if people didn't wish to serve, it must be a bad war. 1903 was the year U.S. troops were getting killed fighting Philippine citizens resisting the U.S. occupation of their country, and who were being butchered by the tens of thousands for daring to resist the kindly U.S. Empire. Sound familiar? The Empire has a long, bloody history of killing others who want their freedom. T]**
6. The erection of modern sanitary buildings at all places where troops are quartered.
7. Service in the army to be limited to two years.
- 8. Abolition of military salutes and all other imbecile and servile practices.**
9. Thorough practice in mobility, rapid field movements, quick concentration, with special attention to supplying the troops promptly and regularly with abundant, wholesome nourishing food.
- 10. All soldiers and officers, whatsoever, to eat exactly the same food, and to be housed or quartered alike at all times and in all places.**
11. Prohibition of all forms of torture and violence."

## **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))

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

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### Received:

## **“THE ARMY PAINT IS LOUSY”**

From: Max Watts  
To: GI Special  
Sent: December 06, 2006

RE ADAM KELLER: [GI Special 4L6]

**WHEN ASKED, DURING COURT-MARTIAL, IF HE HAD STOLEN ARMY PAINT TO PAINT "DON'T SERVE IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES" ONTO 117 [Israeli] TANKS, OTHER VEHICLES, ADAM REPLIED: “OF COURSE NOT, I BROUGHT MY OWN. THE ARMY PAINT IS LOUSY.”**

### **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/qispecial/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/maqalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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