

GI SPECIAL 5A14:



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

Troops Resist The War: “The Most Significant Movement Of Organized And Dissident GIs Seen In America Since 1969”

**“My Entire Team Feels The Same
Way I Do. And The Other Battalion
(Trainers) That I Have Come Across
Feel That Way, Including My
Commanders”**

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in. He writes: A very positive development.]

The Appeal for Redress, surfacing only in late October, has taken anti-Iraq War sentiment that's been simmering within the ranks and surfaced it as a mainstream plea backed by the enormous moral authority of active-duty personnel.

"To the politicians who say we need two or three months to consider this or that plan, we ask: What do you say looking in the eye of one of those whose child is killed in those two or three months?"

January 8, 2007 By Marc Cooper, The Nation [Excerpts]

Mark Dearden chooses his words with extreme precision. And not just with the deliberateness of a 36-year-old with a BA from Brigham Young, an MA in public health from Tulane and an MD from George Washington University.

Dearden is also an active-duty lieutenant commander in the Navy who joined in 1997 and is still considering the possibility of a lifetime military career. "So this was a very difficult decision for me to come to," he says in a quiet, thoughtful voice. "I don't take this decision lightly."

Nor should he.

Just a few weeks ago Dearden took the dramatic step of signing a petition to Congress--what's being called by its organizers an Appeal for Redress--opposing the war in Iraq and calling for the withdrawal of US troops.

When the Appeal is delivered to Capitol Hill in mid-January, all the names of its almost 1,000 uniformed endorsers will be seen by members of Congress, if they care to look.

But with his Nation interview, Dearden is now going public. And while the military cannot take reprisals against those who have supported the Appeal, many of the signers agree that there are an infinite number of ways they can be punished, including internal evaluations, denial of promotions and harsh assignments or postings.

"I'm expressing a right of people in the military to contact their elected representatives, and I have done nothing illegal or disrespectful," says Dearden, now an anesthesiology resident at the Naval Medical Center in San Diego.

After two tours in Iraq attached to a Marine battalion, including participation in the initial 2003 invasion, Dearden says that signing the Appeal gave him "closure" on what he describes as very tough deployments. "It gave me peace," he says.

Dearden has indeed joined the most significant movement of organized and dissident GIs seen in America since 1969, when 1,366 active-duty service members signed a full-page ad in the New York Times calling for an end to the Vietnam War.

The Appeal for Redress, surfacing only in late October, has taken anti-Iraq War sentiment that's been simmering within the ranks and surfaced it as a mainstream plea backed by the enormous moral authority of active-duty personnel.

It's an undeniable barometer of rising military dissent and provides a strong argument that the best way to support the troops is to recognize their demand to be withdrawn from Iraq.

The Appeal was posted as a simple three-sentence statement on a website managed by a Navy seaman:

“As a patriotic American proud to serve the nation in uniform, I respectfully urge my political leaders in Congress to support the prompt withdrawal of all American military forces and bases from Iraq. Staying in Iraq will not work and is not worth the price. It is time for U.S. troops to come home.”

The Appeal comes as the natural culmination of previous flickerings of military discontent with official Iraq policy.

The bogging down of the war, along with the Bush Administration's use of a "backdoor draft"--the extension of tours of duty and an unprecedented call-up of active and inactive reserves--has stoked the discontent.

Two years ago, some two dozen Army reservists refused to carry out a supply mission in Iraq, complaining that their vehicles were unsafe. Twenty Florida National Guard members petitioned their commanders to bring the troops home. In Kansas, Army reserve family members collected 8,000 signatures on a website protesting extended tours.

While figures are difficult to confirm, counselors at the GI Rights Hotline estimate that as many as 1,000 or more troops and reservists go AWOL every month, not wanting to serve in Iraq. About 200 to 300 have fled to Canada, according to military rights lawyers. And in a half-dozen or so high-profile cases, uniformed personnel are facing court-martial and jail for refusing deployment to Iraq.

Therein resides the power of the Appeal for Redress.

Almost three-quarters of the signers are active duty (the rest are reserves), and include several dozen officers, of whom a handful are colonels.

Interviews with more than two dozen signers, both in Iraq and on domestic US military bases from Fort Stewart in the east to Hawaii's Hickam Air Force Base, reveal a movement that includes low-level grunts and high-ranking officers, as well as a rich diversity of racial, economic and educational backgrounds. The signers offered a variety of motivations--ideological, practical, strategic and moral--but all agreed the war was no longer worth fighting and that the troops should be brought home.

As the debate on Iraq sharpens in the wake of the Baker-Hamilton report and as a new Democratic Congress is seated, the collective voice of active-duty opponents of the war is likely to add considerable clout to the antiwar movement.

This Martin Luther King holiday weekend, members of the Appeal will appear on Capitol Hill to formally present the petition to Congress to press their case.

For an all-volunteer force, says Eugene Fidell, president of the National Institute of Military Justice, "it's simply unprecedented."

The inspiration to create the Appeal came to 29-year-old Seaman Jonathan Hutto earlier this year while he was floating off Iraq on the aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt.

Born into an Atlanta family of civil rights activists, a former student body president at Howard University, and someone who had worked with Amnesty International and the ACLU, Hutto was not the most typical of Navy enlistees when he joined up in 2003. But with \$48,000 in student loans to pay off and with a young child to support, he thought the Navy would be a "good transition."

As the war in Iraq worsened, Hutto felt he could no longer maintain his silence. He had an impeccable service record, having been named "sailor of the quarter" among his junior enlisted shipmates. But he had to do something to come out against a war he thought immoral and unnecessary.

That's when one of his former professors sent him a thirty-year anniversary copy of *Soldiers in Revolt* by David Cortright. Now a Notre Dame professor and one of America's leading peace activists, Cortright wrote his book as a chronicle of the 1960s GI movement he helped to found.

"The title alone just hit me," says Hutto, as we talk in a Washington-area coffeehouse, on a day he's off duty from his Norfolk base. "This was all new to me. And I got to thinking, What's to prevent active-duty folks from doing the same sort of thing right now?"

Hutto immediately contacted Cortright and started talking over the idea of the Appeal with a few close friends. Last June Hutto organized a Friday night screening of the antiwar documentary *Sir! No Sir!* at the local YMCA just off the Norfolk naval base. Filmmaker David Zeiger's documentary reconstructs the GI movement of the Vietnam era. Cortright came as guest speaker and found a receptive crowd of about seventy-five.

One of those who attended the talk was 22-year-old Liam Madden, who had joined the Marines in 2002. "I was visiting a friend in Norfolk and thought we were going to a bar," he remembers. Instead, his buddy took him to the YMCA event and they caught the last half of Cortright's speech.

Madden had already completed an Iraq tour in Anbar province with an all-reserve unit and had come back disillusioned with the war.

"If anything, it convinced me that no tangible results could be achieved in Iraq," he says. "No one was safer. No one was happier because we were there."

Hutto, Madden, Cortright and a few others moved ahead with the idea of the Appeal. On October 29 Hutto published an op-ed piece announcing it in the Navy Times. Three days earlier the Appeal had appeared on the Web.

"Amazing," is how Cortright describes the chain of events that grew out of that YMCA meeting. "That encounter alone was one of the most fascinating moments of my last thirty-five years," he says over lunch in Washington. "Even I wasn't prepared for the depth and intensity of feeling against this war by so many active-duty members. I'm stunned. It's been moving so fast we can barely think it through."

Cortright sees an enhanced if not central political role for the rising active-duty movement. "They have been there and seen it, seen the disaster," he says.

"It's much more real for them than for others in the peace movement. MoveOn and other groups got focused on the election while vets, families and active-duty folks are still suffering the burdens of the war."

He adds, "Some of our liberal friends will again soon start focusing on the '08 election. So these active-duty folks over the next two years could become a key force in pushing for withdrawal."

The most compelling voices among the active dissenters who have signed the Appeal are those of troops still on the front lines in Iraq.

Among them is a thirtysomething Army major, a Distinguished Military Graduate from a prestigious Southern university. Now on his second tour, "Major Frank," as I will call him, was first deployed to Baghdad just weeks after the 2003 invasion. "I believed wholeheartedly in the mission to oust Saddam Hussein," he says, "and would have been proud to die liberating Iraq from the evil dictator, because at the same time I felt I was protecting my country and my family (from) weapons of mass destruction."

Now, Frank says, he sees no point in the war, and no end. His Iraqi unit is 97 percent Shiite and is sympathetic to the extremist militia of fundamentalist cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

"We are merely being used as military pawns in a political struggle for Iraq," he says. "So, yes! I am opposed to our brave men and women dying every day for nothing because we cannot control this civil war." "I proudly joined the Appeal for Redress out of the sense of hopelessness that I had inside for what we are actually doing here," he says.

He's angry with both the Bush Administration and the top brass in Iraq. "They sit behind their desks in the Green Zone and filter reports to their bosses. No one wants to admit that we are failing."

Frank says he's quite open about his views, and finds overwhelming support for them among his fellow soldiers. "Yes, yes, yes," he says, "My entire team feels the same way I do. And the other battalion (trainers) that I have come across feel that way, including my commanders.... In fact, I have not had one person in the last five months disagree with me. The typical response is, 'I know what you mean.'"

That sentiment was, indeed, echoed by an Army officer and signer of the Appeal who wanted to be identified only by his real last name. Lieutenant Smith, a 24-year-old Kansan deployed with an infantry unit in Baghdad, joined up six years ago not only because he saw the military as a route to pay for college but also because he felt it was an obligation to "pay back" America for the opportunities it affords.

His doubts about the war, strong from the beginning, only hardened. "I became very angry after two friends from college were killed, both in their 20s," Smith says. "I started to wonder what they had died for. Both were killed by roadside bombs near the area where my unit operates now. And when I found out about them before I deployed, my outlook changed. I started to lose any sense of satisfaction with what I was doing for the Army because what I was doing was in some roundabout way supporting what had just killed two friends."

Smith says it was his stateside father-in-law who directed him to the online Appeal.

Smith had heard about another Army lieutenant, Ehren Watada, who has been resisting deployment to Iraq on the grounds that the war is unconstitutional and who now faces court-martial. But that was not a route he wished to travel. "I have an antiwar history from college," Smith says.

"But I hate what Lieutenant Ehren Watada did and the way he did it. I wanted a way to say I thought the war was wrong without looking like a coward." At the same time, however, Smith says that he wants his voice to be heard. "I hope the Appeal will cement in the mind of Congress growing unrest about the war," he says.

"Congress got a mandate from Americans that the war was not popular, and now they can get an official mandate from troops serving abroad that we feel the same way but are limited in the way we can express it."

Some within the ranks have been more outspoken about that discontent, mostly as a product of accelerated politicization and radicalization while in uniform.

Take the case of 28-year-old Californian Ronn Cantu, an Army sergeant stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. Both his grandfathers served in the Army, his father was drafted into Vietnam and Cantu himself enlisted in 1998 as a self-described "Bush conservative."

After serving out his contract, Cantu re-enlisted in March 2003. "I was in junior college studying journalism but couldn't re-adjust to civilian life. And as a journalism major I was constantly watching and reading the news, and I got totally sold that Iraq was a threat, that it had WMD, that it was going to erase America off the map."

Next thing he knew, Cantu was attached to an infantry unit in Iraq.

In charge of ammo, and after making more than 300 harrowing convoys, he had seen enough. He voted against Bush in 2004 and now strongly opposes the war.

While still on active duty he has not only signed the Appeal but has joined Iraq Veterans Against the War. On its website he's a contributor of pointed essays bucking Bush Administration policy.

He's also started his own website--soldiervoices.net--where he's running his own freewheeling online GI forum.

A firm supporter of troop withdrawal, Cantu has nevertheless enlisted for three more years and is currently preparing for a second tour of Iraq.

"I'm going back with a job in military intelligence. It's a job that I think can help end the war," he says. "Working in human intelligence, I will be able to talk to Iraqis and that way find and hear the truth."

Marc Train, 19, is an Army grunt stationed at Fort Stewart, Georgia, and a signer of the Appeal. A native of Salina, Kansas, Train joined the Army right out of high school, convinced that he had no other real career prospects.

Some of his comrades in the Third Infantry Division are scheduled to deploy to Iraq for a staggering third tour of duty. For Train, it will be his first--if he doesn't refuse. He says he wasn't very political before enlisting, but now he's been radicalized. He realizes now he joined the Army only to get a job and that he's grown suspicious of the Administration's motives for war in Iraq. "I think it's all about oil," he says. Train has made clear to his superiors that he's not happy about deploying to Iraq and might refuse to step over the line when the mobilization order becomes effective in January. He's already lost the security clearance for the intelligence job he was trained for, and he's now enmeshed in a series of official investigations. "I want separation from the Army because I don't want to be just a cog in the machine. I've registered as a member of the Socialist Party USA."

Asked whether he will refuse duty if not given the discharge he seeks, Train answers: "That's a very strong question for me, a very strong consideration. Right now, I'm about 70 percent leaning toward not going."

Some expert observers of military affairs, like Robert Hodierno, senior managing editor of Army Times Publishing, argue that the numbers of active-duty soldiers and sailors who have signed on to the Appeal and expressed some sort of public dissent aren't impressive. "Dissent of that nature represents but a small percentage of the people in uniform," Hodierno says, pointing out that 1.4 million serve in the armed forces. "What we are sensing is a great deal of disenchantment with the way the war has been fought, not whether it is or is not an unjust war."

But Kelly Dougherty, co-chair of the board of Iraq Veterans Against the War, who served with the Colorado Army National Guard in Iraq in 2003-04, says that critics like Hodierno are underestimating the level of dissent in the ranks. "Critics will say 800 or 1,000 signers isn't significant. I think it is," she says from her Philadelphia headquarters.

"For everyone who has heard about the Appeal there are so many dozens of others who agree with it but have not heard about it or agree with it but are intimidated by the military."

The military, meanwhile, has so far taken a hands-off approach to the Appeal. None of the active-duty personnel interviewed for this piece reported any reprisals. "The only

official word I've gotten came from my public affairs officer," said Appeal founder Hutto. "He told me the rules: Don't do anything while in uniform or while on duty. And that was that."

Commander Chris Sims, spokesman for the Atlantic Fleet Naval Air Force, says that Hutto violates no military regulations if he's off-duty when speaking out. And Pentagon spokesman Maj. Stewart Upton, when asked about the Appeal, said: "Members of the armed forces are free to communicate with Congress in a lawful manner that doesn't violate the Uniform Code of Military Justice."

Lawyer J.E. McNeil at the GI Rights Hotline is convinced that the benign response from the higher command reflects the level of doubt that currently permeates the military.

"There are enough people in the military who agree with these guys is why they are not getting much flak," she says. "I think there's a lot of sympathy among officers. We talk to them all the time. And while a lot of them don't want to stand up publicly, we know they admire those who have signed the Appeal. Admire them and support them."

One barometer of discontent is the sheer number of calls and inquiries that keep pouring in to the GI Rights Hotline, holding steady for the past year at about 3,000 a month. From the National Lawyers Guild Military Law Task Force comes a similar report. "There's no let-up, we're swamped all the time," says San Francisco-based co-chair Marti Hiken. "And whenever a reserve unit is activated, our phones begin ringing off the hook. We hear from people who didn't even know they were still in the reserves and can't understand what's happening to them."

That so-called backdoor draft, the mobilizing not only of National Guard and Army reserves but even of the Individual Ready Reserve (the IRR was called up for the first time since the Gulf War) has been a major catalyst for the military antiwar movement. It helped fuel the founding of Military Families Speak Out (MFSO) four years ago and has since helped it grow to include more than 3,000 families.

Two years before the media focused the spotlight on Cindy Sheehan, the Gold Star mother who camped out for weeks at a time near Crawford, Texas, trying to confront George W. Bush on the reasons for her son Casey's death in Iraq, Nancy Lessin and her husband, Charley Richardson--with a son in the Marines--began publicly campaigning against the war. One of the organizations sponsoring the Appeal, MFSO brought a few dozen military families to the Washington Mall on Veterans Day weekend to lobby for a meeting with Defense Secretary Rumsfeld. By the time their plane touched the ground, however, Rumsfeld had been dumped and instead they met with a representative of incoming House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Lessin, who works as a safety and health coordinator for the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, describes that meeting as cordial but unsatisfying. She expresses fear that even with an incoming Democratic Congress, or maybe as a result of it, there will be too much room for distraction.

Whether it moves toward impeachment or the convening of protracted hearings or endless debate over the Baker-Hamilton report, Lessin argues it's all beside the central point.

"What we are looking for from Congress is action, not words," says Lessin. "We're worried the Democrats will focus the headlines on hearings, on how bad the management of the war has been--but we know that already.

"To the politicians who say we need two or three months to consider this or that plan, we ask: What do you say looking in the eye of one of those whose child is killed in those two or three months?"

Soon, some of those Congress members will have the opportunity to look in the eyes of not only the parents but also the troops.

Appeal organizers, working on the Martin Luther King Day appearance on the Hill, are hoping to help galvanize Democratic support for a more explicit pro-withdrawal position.

Phil Waste, a 67-year-old retired elevator repairman turned activist with MFSO, with three sons and two grandchildren who have served or are currently deployed in Iraq, thinks the window of opportunity for Democrats to take up the call of organized active-duty dissidents is narrow.

If the new Congressional majority dawdles over the war, the Democrats will become targets of the antiwar protesters.

"I think those who say they oppose this war have to act now, not months from now," he says. "And I am most definitely talking about the Democrats. This past election was a referendum on the war, and that mandate better be heeded. If not, two years from now they will be out on their butts. And I along with everyone else I know will work my ass off to see that happen."

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

One U.S. Soldier Killed, Four Wounded By Baghdad IED

14 January 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070114-21

BAGHDAD – An improvised explosive device detonated on a Multi-National Division – Baghdad patrol, killing one Soldier near the center of the Iraqi capital Jan. 14.

The unit was conducting a route clearance mission when their patrol struck the improvised explosive device, killing one Soldier and wounding four others.

One Task Force Lightning Soldier Killed, One Wounded In Northern Iraq

Jan. 14, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070114-22

TIKRIT, Iraq – A Task Force Lightning Soldier assigned to the 105th Engineer Group, died of wounds Saturday as a result of an explosion while conducting operations in northern Iraq.

One other Soldier was wounded and transported to a Coalition force medical treatment facility.

Marine Kills Himself In Amriyah: “The Soldier Uttered Words Saying He Was Sad And Miserable”

A U.S. marine took his own life by putting a bullet through his head on Sunday morning near the restive city of Fallujah, local police source said.

"Early in the morning, a marine took the pistol of an Iraqi policeman in the police station of Amriyah town just south of Fallujah, and put a bullet in his head," the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

"The soldier uttered words saying he was sad and miserable," the source said.

The U.S. troops kept the policeman who gave the marine the pistol for several hours, but released him later, he added.

Three U.S. helicopters landed at the police station and one of them evacuated the marine's body, he said.

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO
COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS
EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS
TIME, EXCEPT THAT A TRAITOR WHO LIVES
IN THE WHITE HOUSE WANTS YOU THERE**
That is not a good enough reason



A U.S. armoured vehicle in Baghdad October 30, 2006. REUTERS/Namir Noor-Eldeen

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

**“Somalia, 75% Pastoral With Six
Major Clans And Hundreds Of Sub-
Clans, Is Now In Civil-War Mode”
“Blowback Will Be Inevitable - And
Bloody”**

Jan 12, 2007 By Pepe Escobar, Asia Times [Excerpt]

With some aplomb, the White House/Pentagon axis has managed to turn Somalia into the new Afghanistan, in more ways than one and just in time for Bush's announcement of his escalation-tainted "new way forward".

The Pentagon maintained it had "credible" intelligence before it decided to strike alleged al-Qaeda-infested villages in southern Somalia. This is highly suspect.

The intelligence was provided by unsavory, corrupt Ethiopian dictator Meles Zenawi - who came up with the clever plot of concocting a fictitious jihad conducted by "neo-Taliban" in Somalia and selling it handsomely to the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Pentagon.

He's now posing as a prime US ally in the "war on terror", just as Uzbekistan's Islam Karimov did in the autumn of 2001.

Zenawi's US-trained Ethiopian troops, the ones who invaded Somalia, are infested with CIA operatives and Special Forces - all of them flown in from the strategic US-controlled (since September 11, 2003) Camp Le Monier in Djibouti.

Arab media are having a field day reporting that Somali President Abdullahi Yusuf, a reconverted warlord "elected" by fellow warlords (all armed by the US) and then legitimized by the United Nations, told African journalists in Mogadishu that the US had the right to bomb "anywhere in the world".

According to the Kenyan newspaper The Daily Nation, this new US campaign of targeted assassinations has in fact killed scores of civilians.

But with the help of Ethiopia's dictatorship - whose soldiers it trained - Washington is being rewarded with one more client regime, and a crucial foothold in the Horn of Africa, right on the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea, very close to the Red Sea and literally next door to Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Or is it that simple?

Somalia, 75% pastoral with six major clans and hundreds of sub-clans, is now in civil-war mode.

Millions of Somalis live in neighboring Kenya, and support the deposed, moderate Islamic Union Courts. Kenya will be convulsed.

Blowback will be inevitable - and bloody. "Long war" marketers and profiteers could not but rejoice.

MORE:

Somali Capital Awash In War And Rage At Ethiopia, U.S., & Collaborators

1.12.07 Washington Pos & 1.11.07 New York Times

Mogadishu erupted in violence Wednesday morning after insurgents attacked a transitional government [Bush proxies] barracks during the night and soldiers responded by sealing off large sections of the city, searching house to house for weapons.

A messy, low-level battle for control of Mogadishu continued Wednesday, as a fighter shot a rocket-propelled grenade at a convoy of Ethiopian [pro-Bush] trucks passing through the Somali capital.

TROOP NEWS

How Many More For Bush's War? Bring Them All Home Now



The casket of Specialist Dustin Donica, a U.S. soldier killed in Iraq in Houston January 8, 2007. Donica has been widely reported in the US media as the 3,000th American soldier killed in the Iraq war. REUTERS/Richard Carson

**“I Was In Iraq For 13 Months.
Aren't Human Lives More Valuable
Than Oil?”**

January 12, 2007 NY1 Discussion Board, More Troops To Iraq

I was in Iraq for 13 months.

Those people who support sending more troops, should wake up, 9/11 has nothing to do with Iraq.

We have done more damages to Iraq than Saddam Hussein !!!

Aren't human lives more valuable than oil?

Maxz

People who I consider friends have been to Iraq ----and they shouldn't have had to risk their lives to make Bush's pals at Halliburton richer and more powerful. This war is a total betrayal of the military.

If anything, the additional troops won't have the body armor they need and will just be more sitting ducks.

If we want to save more lives, we need to bring the troops home IMMEDIATELY. Also, we owe the Iraqis reparations, because we have destroyed a once prosperous nation through sanctions and an illegal war.

My late father was a Vietnam vet and he predicted this unwinnable guerilla war. We need to stop this tragedy NOW.

Katherine, Crown Heights

New Jersey National Guard General Shifts Blame To Bush For Stop-Lossing Troops; Tells Angry Military Families He Has “No Power To Stop It” [Thereby Implying If He Did, He Would!]

January 14, 2007 By REBECCA SANTANA, ASSOCIATED PRESS

WEST ORANGE -- Family members of New Jersey soldiers who will be staying four months longer than expected in Iraq voiced their anger and disappointment to state officials, including Governor Corzine, who met with them Saturday.

The extension, announced Thursday, will affect 159 members of the New Jersey Army National Guard currently in Iraq; 148 of the soldiers are New Jersey residents; the rest are from Delaware, New York and Pennsylvania.

One of the biggest complaints from frustrated relatives during the meeting at the West Orange armory was that soldiers in Iraq learned of the extension either through the media or through family members, who were alerted Thursday.

"I spoke to my son this morning and he said, 'Mom, we don't know nothing. These are just rumors. I'm coming home in March,' " said Rosa Rosado, 42, of Newark, whose son Joseph Rosado, 24, is serving in Iraq. "Just to think, he has to go four more months and put his life on the line, and they are not even letting him know."

The captains for the two guard units listened in to the meeting via a telephone conference call. At one point, Maj. Gen. Glenn Rieth, New Jersey's adjutant general, asked the captains whether the units had received official notification, and the reply was negative.

Rieth stressed to the crowd that state officials had nothing to do with the extension and have

"I will tell you this: the decision has been made," Rieth said. "This is a presidential decision at a national level."

***“We Want Our Soldiers Home
Where They Belong”***
**As Bush Sends More Troops, Other
Governments Cut Back;
Stupid C. Rice Caught Lying, As
Usual**

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in. He writes: PRETTY SOON, IT'LL BE "ARMY OF ONE" IN IRAQ.]

Jan 12 By WILLIAM J. KOLE, Associated Press Writer

"As for the future shape in the coalition, there continue to be coalition forces operating in Iraq," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Thursday in Washington.

"The South Koreans, the Japanese, others have re-upped their forces again to continue operating in Iraq. And there is a NATO training mission for officers in Iraq. And so, I think you'll continue to see that kind of international support."

Fact check: South Korea, the current No. 3 contributor, plans to halve its 2,300-member contingent in the northern city of Irbil by April, and is under pressure from parliament to devise a plan for a complete withdrawal by year's end.

And Japan has not "re-upped" yet, though news reports Friday said the Japanese government was considering extending a special law that authorizes the deployment of its 600-member humanitarian mission for another year.

Japan's military involvement has been unpopular with the public. Some say it violates the nation's pacifist constitution and makes Japan a terrorist target.

"I feel like it's going to go in the same direction as the Vietnam War," said Yoshikazu Nagashima, 57, who runs a trading company in Tokyo. "Japan should withdraw from Iraq. There is no benefit in staying."

Denmark is also trying to scale back its 470-troop contingent serving near the southern city of Basra.

Six Danish soldiers have been killed since the 2003 deployment, and recent surveys show six in 10 Danes want out of Iraq.

Ordinary citizens in Slovakia, which is bringing home its 103 soldiers early next month, know the feeling.

"It's an American war, and we have nothing to do with it," said Mikulas Krkolak, a bartender in Bratislava, summing up the souring mood in many coalition countries.

"We are such a small country. Why we should have troops in every corner of the world?" asked Helena Bitovova, 40, a high school teacher.

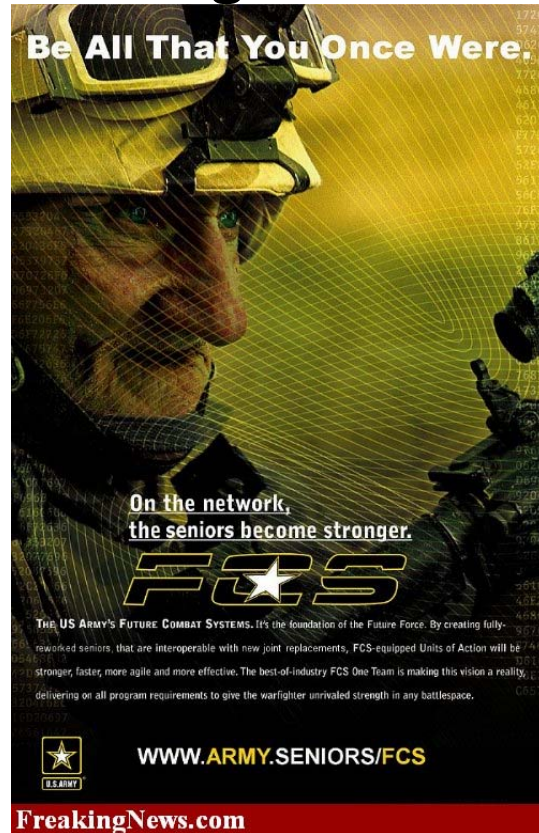
"We want our soldiers home where they belong."

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)

SENIOR CALL-UP APPROVED!!! Bring The Yougin's Home, NOW!!



1/8/2007 Veterans For Peace Discussion

A number of us, Old Foggie, 'Nam Vets have tried to Re-Enlist, not to mention the 'Raging Grannies.' Now With The Escalation We Can Save The little 'chimps' Butt, before we Indict the Whole Bunch!!!!

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

“Crucially, They Agree On Being Iraqi Nationalists Who Want The Americans Out”

Jan 12, 2007 By Pepe Escobar, Asia Times [Excerpt]

The overwhelming majority of Iraqis, Sunni and Shi'ite, want the US out, and as soon as possible.

A rape of Iraq's oil wealth enshrined by a Parliament-approved oil law would certainly lead to national unrest. For the moment it's fair to assume the US is taking no chances in its backroom deals, as the SCIRI's support for the new law, via Vice President Adil Abdul Mahdi, is practically assured. Da'wa must be in the process of being bribed to death.

But Muqtada is another story.

He is close to some Sunni factions. They are getting closer.

And crucially, they agree on being Iraqi nationalists who want the Americans out.

There's a very strong possibility of the Sadrists joining the muqawama [Sunni based resistance] in the event the oil law is approved.

A Message From Najaf: “Occupation Is A Form Of War” “Any Escalation In This Type Of War, The Resistance Is Going To Escalate, Too”

January 11th, 2007 Democracy Now [Excerpts]

AMY GOODMAN: We go now to Najaf. Sami Rasouli is there.

He is an Iraqi American currently living in Najaf. He grew up in Iraq, left in the late '70s, eventually moved to the United States, lived in Minneapolis, where he opened a restaurant serving Middle Eastern cuisine. It was a watering hole for people particularly concerned about the war.

In November 2004, nearly 30 years after leaving Iraq, Sami returned home to help rebuild his country. He is currently a member of and established the Muslim Peacemakers Team in Najaf.

Can you respond to President Bush calling for 20,000 more troops -- apparently this has already begun -- to be moved into Iraq?

SAMI RASOULI: Thank you, Amy, and good to hear your voice and part of your program here in Najaf.

Actually, Amy, for the last four days, I couldn't get a shower, because there is no electricity, there is no heating, so water's so cold in this harsh winter in Iraq, because Iraq has a continental climate that's very cold in the winter and very hot in the summer.

So as I speak to you, I really stink.

And as the increasing prices in the economy that's collapsing stink and the Iraqi government policy stinks, even the American policy, that so-called surge in Iraq, stinks, too, because, as you know and Iraqis know and the others, that the occupation is a form of war.

So any escalation in this type of war, the resistance is going to escalate, too.

Assorted Resistance Action

14 Jan 2007 Reuters & German Press Agency & Xinhua

Guerrillas killed an army captain in central Mosul and two brothers working as guards for Iraqiya state television on Saturday in Doura district in southern Baghdad, an employee at Iraqiya said.

Four police officers wounded when an explosive device was detonated near a police patrol in central Baghdad.

Three Iraqi soldiers were killed and two others wounded when a roadside bomb detonated near their patrol in Fallujah city.

Two policemen were killed and a police major was wounded by guerrillas in Basra.

Four Iraqi policemen were killed in clashes with guerrillas in Madaen, just south of Baghdad.

Anti-occupation fighters captured two Iraqi army officers and a soldier at a fake checkpoint in Balad, 80 km (50 miles) north of Baghdad.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation's ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is

not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. Frederick Douglas, 1852

Baghdad: Battle Of The Bulge For A Surging U.S. Imperialism **“The Strategic Thinking Behind The Surge Is Based On A Combination Of Delusion, Wishful Thinking, And Desperation”**

In the face of this escalation, Congressional Democrats stand united – united against cutting off funding for the war, that is. They want what Bush wants: permanent bases and a pro-U.S. government in Iraq.

January 9, 2007 By Pham Binh, Editor of Traveling Soldier and recent graduate of Hunter College, NYC.

Denying the reality of impending defeat and ignoring the advice of his generals, the Leader decided on “a last big push” to win the war.

For anyone old enough to remember, this was the Battle of the Bulge, Hitler’s last-ditch and temporarily successful counterattack in 1944 to reverse the Reich’s fortunes in the Second World War. Ignorant of history as ever, Bush is taking a page from the Führer’s book by sending 20,000 more troops to Iraq.

Despite all the media speculation about how the Iraq Study Group, Rumsfeld’s resignation, the appointment of Robert Gates, and the victory of the Democrats in the mid-term elections would effect the Iraq war, Bush was already talking to his senior advisers about “a last big push” less than two weeks after the Republicans received their thumpin’ at the polls.

The main goal of the escalation is to smash Baghdad’s Sunni resistance and neutralize the Mahdi Army, the grassroots Shia militia of anti-occupation cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr. Once the militias are under control, the U.S. will be able to cobble together a puppet government with enough Shia, Kurdish, and Sunni support to sustain itself.

Mission accomplished. Maybe this time Bush will skip the flight suit and the banner.

Like the Battle of the Bulge, the strategic thinking behind the surge is based on a combination of delusion, wishful thinking, and desperation.

Short of inventing a time machine, the U.S. cannot undo the process that led to the rise of the sectarian militias in the first place.

After invading Iraq, the U.S. dissolved the entire Iraqi state machine in 2003 – not only were its police and military units disbanded, but tens of thousands of teachers, social workers, and white-collar government employees were fired as well when the institutions that employed them were abolished.

At this point, grassroots militias and resistance groups formed, many of them led or organized by former soldiers of the Iraqi army, to fight the occupier and provide security for local neighborhoods.

The Sunni and Shia resistance converged briefly in April of 2004, when the U.S. simultaneously battled with the Mahdi Army after closing down a Sadrist newspaper and launched an assault on Fallujah to punish the townspeople for lynching four American mercenaries and burning their bodies.

Units from Iraq's newly formed collaborator army units mutinied after encountering huge Shia crowds in Baghdad appealing to them not to join the attack. Shiites began donating blood en masse for their Sunni brethren in Fallujah at local mosques, while Sunnis cheered the Mahdi Army's courage.

A joint Sunni-Shia march from Baghdad forced its way past a U.S. military blockade of Fallujah to deliver food and medicine while demonstrators chanted: "No Sunnis, no Shiites, yes for Islamic unity! We are Sunni and Shiite brothers and will never sell our country!"

Washington had met its match in the form a united Iraqi resistance. A sweating, nervous, defensive Bush appeared at a White House press conference, admitting that Iraqis, "are not happy they're occupied" and that "I wouldn't be happy if I were occupied either." By the end of April, the U.S. military withdrew from Fallujah and ended its confrontation with the Mahdi Army.

Faced with its nightmare of a united Iraqi resistance, Washington opted for the oldest trick in the colonial playbook: divide and rule.

The U.S. military successfully fought the Mahdi Army and the Fallujah resistance separately later on in 2004: the former in August in the Shia holy city of Najaf and the latter within days of Bush's re-election. While the battle of Najaf ended in a draw, Fallujah was flattened by American firepower. Anyone who was too old, too weak, too poor, or too stubborn to leave the city was killed in the assault.

Despite these successes, it was not enough to win the war.

Without enough troops of its own to control the country, the U.S. sought to pit one wing of the population against the other.

In early 2005, reports surfaced in the corporate media that the U.S. was going to unleash the "Salvadoran option" in Iraq – arming, training, and using Shia death squads to fight Sunni resistance fighters. The policy turned out to be, to use a Bushism, a "catastrophic success." By using Shia and Kurdish forces against Sunnis and vice-

versa, the U.S. unleashed a cycle of violence that has led to full-blown civil war, which has claimed the lives of thousands on all sides, seen to massive car-bombings of civilian neighborhoods, and led to bloody attacks on mosques.

In November 2005, the White House announced it had a “Strategy for Victory” in Iraq. The strategy was to “secure, hold, and build,” meaning the military would clear an area of resistance fighters, hold it along with Iraqi collaborator forces to prevent the return of the resistance, and begin rebuilding infrastructure in attempt to bribe Iraqis into supporting, or at least being indifferent to, the occupation.

In summer of 2006, a campaign to reign in the Sunni and Shia militias in Baghdad modeled on the “Strategy for Victory,” Operation Forward Together, was declared a failure by the U.S. military. Attacks on U.S. forces spiked sharply and sectarian attacks rose 22 percent during the operation.

The “hold” and “build” phases of the operation were complete failures because of a shortage of Iraqi collaborator units.

More fundamentally, the resistance and the population can not be separated, one cannot be “cleared” while the other remains. That’s why the only ground the U.S. can hold in Iraq is the ground beneath the feet of its soldiers.

So what impact will the surge have?

Before we can answer that, we have to understand that the surge is not just about troop levels. U.S. imperialism itself is surging in the Middle East. This becomes clear when we look at the totality of the situation.

Bush has finally come around to the reality that the U.S. military is not large enough to fulfill the ambitions of the ruling class. He has ordered Robert Gates to draw up plans to expand the ranks of the military by tens of thousands every year for the next two-to-four years.

He will undoubtedly get the support of the new Democratic Congress, whose enthusiasm for American world domination is matched only by the Republican incompetence in maintaining it.

Today, U.S. forces are currently stationed in large bases on the outskirts of large population centers.

Bush’s new plan would mean more invasive, aggressive tactics by U.S. forces, and the prolonged occupation of Baghdad’s densely populated neighborhoods. Given that a majority of both Sunni and Shia support attacks on occupation forces, this is a recipe for tremendous and pointless bloodshed.

To win the Battle of the Bulge in Baghdad, Bush is replacing his top commander in Iraq, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., with Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus.

Casey was an advocate of Bush’s earlier strategy of getting Iraqi troops to do the dirty work of fighting the resistance while (very) slowly withdrawing U.S. forces, whereas

Petraeus advocates using brute American force to smash the resistance and letting the Iraqis collaborator forces mop up later.

Bush is also replacing Gen. John P. Abizaid who heads Central Command, the nerve center for U.S. forces in the Middle East, with Admiral William Fallon, head of Pacific Command.

The admiral's appointment points to the last element in U.S. imperialism's surge: the navy.

In fall of 2006, two minesweepers, two mine-hunters, a cruiser, and a submarine were ordered to be ready to deploy by October 1 while the Chief of Naval Operations ordered an update on plans to blockade two Iranian ports in the Persian Gulf. In December of 2006, the Eisenhower carrier strike group, which includes three escort ships and an attack submarine, entered the Persian Gulf and will be joined by the American carrier Stennis and two British mine-hunters in January of this year. This build-up is clearly aimed at Iran, which might try to block oil shipments in the Straits of Hormuz if its nuclear facilities are attacked by the U.S.

The effects of the naval surge are already being felt in Somalia, where 31 civilians have been killed by air-strikes launched from the decks of the Eisenhower aimed at "Al Qaeda" (translation: Islamist anti-U.S. militias).

In the face of this escalation, Congressional Democrats stand united – united against cutting off funding for the war, that is.

They want what Bush wants: permanent bases and a pro-U.S. government in Iraq.

But they have the same problem he does: they have no realistic strategy for achieving these war aims, but they cannot afford defeat at the hands of the resistance either.

This is why the new Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi has promised "intense scrutiny" of, rather than opposition to, the new war plan. Translation: please don't screw it up this time, Mr. President.

Congressional Democrats can be sorted on a spectrum of capitulation – with Senator Ted Kennedy making an ineffective threat to pass a legislation barring funding for a surge at one end and Senator Joe Biden claiming that Congress can do nothing at the other.

So while the Democrats display make excuses, tens of thousands will be marching in the streets of Washington, D.C. on January 27 to demand that the Democrats live up to the expectations of the people who voted them into power by ending the war now.

MORE:

“The Imminent Death Of 20,000 Men”

Jan 12, 2007 By Pepe Escobar, Asia Times [Excerpt]

*"I see the imminent death of 20,000 men,
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds...
O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth."*

Hamlet, Act IV;

According to White House spin part of President George W Bush's book list during the summer of 2006.

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

“America Is Acting Like A Colonial Power In Iraq. But The Age Of Colonialism Is Over”

January 12, 2007 By Zbigniew Brzezinski, The Washington Post [Excerpt]

The speech reflects a profound misunderstanding of our era.

America is acting like a colonial power in Iraq. But the age of colonialism is over.

Waging a colonial war in the post-colonial age is self-defeating.

That is the fatal flaw of Bush's policy.

Bush Isolates Himself Further

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in. He writes: Deep splits in the ruling class.]

Jan 11 by Jim Lobe, (IPS) [Excerpts]

President George W. Bush's decision to escalate U.S. military intervention in Iraq and issue new threats against Syria and Iran appears to have left him politically more isolated than ever.

Both Democrats and Republicans expressed regret that Bush appeared to reject the central recommendations of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group (ISG), particularly its call to gradually withdraw U.S. combat troops, tie future support for the Iraqi government to its efforts at healing the sectarian divide, and directly engage Iran and Syria, along with Baghdad's other neighbours, to stabilise the country.

At the same time, military analysts said the 21,500 troops Bush plans to add to the 132,000 already deployed to Iraq were unlikely to succeed in their mission to pacify Baghdad and al Anbar province.

As many as a dozen Republican senators are expected to vote as early as next week for a resolution proposed by the Senate Democratic leadership expressing disapproval of the troop increase, or "surge".

Others, including Sen. Chuck Hagel and, remarkably, the party's most right-wing candidate for the 2008 presidential nomination, Sen. Sam Brownback, said they opposed the surge.

Hagel is a conservative whose outspoken opposition to Bush's Middle East policy has until now made him the darkest horse in the race for the 2008 presidential nomination. He told Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during a Foreign Relations Committee hearing Thursday that he considered Bush's strategy, particularly his new threats against Syria and Iran, to be "the most dangerous foreign policy blunder in this country since Vietnam -- if it's carried out."

OCCUPATION REPORT

A Peek Behind The Bullshit

Jan 12, 2007 By Pepe Escobar, Asia Times [Excerpt]

Muhammad al-Askari, the military adviser to Maliki, justified the bombing of Haifa Street as crucial to the killing of "50 terrorists".

Anyone familiar with the Sunni Arab resistance knows they would never be dumb enough to concentrate 50 top fighters in a single Baghdad street in full view of US firepower.

The battle of Haifa Street actually fits into Maliki's preferred developing pattern: systematic ethnic cleansing of Sunni areas by the heavily militia-infiltrated, and US-trained, Iraqi army.

***Good News For The Iraqi
Resistance!!***
**U.S. Occupation Commands'
Stupid Tactics Recruit Even More
Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops**



A man removes a destroyed door at his home in Baghdad's Sadr City, Iraq Jan. 11, 2007. According to residents, US forces raiding their neighborhood in the middle of the night broke down doors without warning to enter and search their homes, terrifying their families. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

[There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and busting into their houses by force to arouse an intense desire to kill you in the patriotic, self-respecting civilians who live there.

But your commanders know that, don't they? Don't they?]

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

***So Much For That Silly Stupid, Lying
“Sovereignty” Bullshit #1***
**Iraqi Prime Minister’s First Choice To
Command His Troops In Baghdad
“Vetoed” By Occupation Military
Dictatorship;
[The Faithful Dog Obeys]**

1/14/2007 Qassim Abdul-Zahra, Bassem Mroue, Associated Press

Three Iraqi generals told The Associated Press that the Iraqi commander who will lead the Baghdad security mission was the government's second choice and only got the job after the U.S. military objected to the first officer named to the post by Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

On Wednesday, Iraqi military officials said al-Maliki had chosen Lt. Gen. Abboud Gambar a week ago as commander of the new security plan in the capital, where sectarian bloodshed built to a crescendo at the end of last year, with more than 100 people killed on many days.

On Saturday, three Iraqi generals, who spoke on condition of anonymity because Gambar's appointment had not been publicly confirmed, said al-Maliki's first choice — Lt. Gen. Mohan al-Freiji — had been vetoed by American officials.

***So Much For That Silly Stupid, Lying
“Sovereignty” Bullshit #2***
**Iraq Foreign Minister Says Turn
Loose Of Iranian Diplomats
[Arrested And Being “Interrogated”
In Iraq By U.S. Troops Without Iraqi
Knowledge Or Consent]**

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

January 14, 2007 By KIM GAMEL, BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)

The Iraqi foreign minister called Sunday for the release of five Iranians detained by U.S. forces in what he said was a legitimate mission in northern Iraq, but he stressed that foreign intervention to help insurgents would not be tolerated. **[Guess what. They're not released, of course. Imagine that.]**

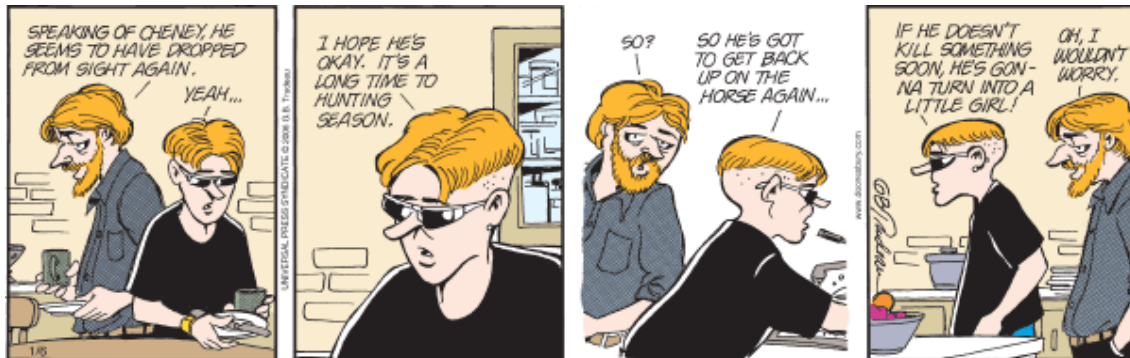
The U.S. military said the five Iranians detained last week in the Kurdish-controlled northern city of Irbil were connected to an Iranian Revolutionary Guard faction that funds and arms insurgents in Iraq.

Zebari, a Kurd, said those detained had been working in a liaison office issuing travel permits for the local population, and he reiterated that the office was in the process of being regularized into a consulate.

"Well, we have asked for their release," he told CNN.

"They are being interrogated by the U.S. forces. But we have established all the information that this office has been there for many years with the approval of the Kurdish regional authorities with their knowledge of the Iraqi government."

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

Received:

“We Want To Be Able To Hear About Every Fallen Soldier”

From: Miller, Jim
To: GI Special

Sent: January 09, 2007
Subject: David Zeiger

I got your e-mail from David. I put together the education and outreach for Iraq For Sale: The War Profiteers. We have now been funded to put together a tribute video for the fallen soldiers of Iraq. Below is an outline of what we are doing. I have been talking with several organizations and spreading the word so that as many family and loved ones of the fallen soldiers can participate. If you could help spread the word we would greatly appreciate it.

Best,
Jim

Brave New Foundation is putting together an Iraq Veterans Memorial video to commemorate the 4th anniversary of the Iraq War and we would like your help. The piece that we want to create will be a tribute to the courageous men and women who have given their lives during this war.

The idea behind this project is similar to the idea that created the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the AIDS Quilt. This project will be a moving memorial that enables the viewer to better understand the people behind the faces. We are asking that the family, friends or loved ones of these men and women send us a 60 second video about their loved one along with a photo. 60 seconds is not a lot of time to sum up the accomplishments of these heroes.

We want to be able to hear about every fallen soldier, so we ask that you tell us about the things they most cherished, the things you most cherished about them and how they would like to be remembered. This video will serve as a reminder to the world about these great men and women. Our goal is to unveil this video on March 20th, so please have your videos sent in by February 26th. For more information please write to Jim Miller at jim@bravenewfoundation.org. The video will be made available on the internet for free once completed and will remain on a site devoted to fallen Iraq Veterans. Thank you.

Jim Miller, Executive Director
Brave New Foundation
10510 Culver Blvd, Culver City, CA 90232
310-204-0448 ext138

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