

GI SPECIAL 5A17:



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

“We Will Not Be Silent While Thousands Die” “If The War Is To End, There Needs To Be A Movement From Within The Military”

January 17, 2007 By Noam N. Levey, L.A. Times Staff Writer [Excerpts]

A group of service members came to Capitol Hill on Tuesday armed with signatures from more than 1,000 military personnel who oppose the war.

"We will not be silent while thousands die," said Sgt. Liam Madden, a 22-year-old active-duty Marine and Iraq war veteran who is helping lead the effort to organize resistance to the war from inside the military.

Madden and other service members leading the campaign, which they are calling Appeal for Redress, urged Congress to stop the troop escalation and find a way to begin bringing forces home from Iraq.

"If the war is to end, there needs to be a movement from within the military that is heard from," Madden said Tuesday.

"The movement in the military is growing just as the movement grew in the military 30 years ago," said David Cline, president of Veterans for Peace, a St. Louis-based group founded more than two decades ago.

MORE:

Military Protest Against The War: Two Navy Men Organize From Within



Jonathan Hutto, left, and David Rogers, who serve in the Navy, organized the Appeal For Redress, encouraging active duty troops to expression their opposition to the war in Iraq. (By Jay Paul For The Washington Post)

January 16, 2007 By Linton Weeks, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

NORFOLK, Jan. 15 -- For Jonathan Hutto and David Rogers, life has become something of a surreality show.

The two Navy men, comrades in arms, are waging a war against a war.

Working from within, Hutto, Rogers and others have established AppealforRedress.org , that enables active-duty, reserve and National Guard troops to appeal directly to Congress to withdraw military personnel from Iraq.

All of this comes at a time when President Bush is sending even more troops to war.

"Just because you joined the military doesn't mean your constitutional rights are suspended," said Hutto, a petty officer third class and 1999 Howard University graduate. "True patriotism is having a questioning attitude about the government."

Redress in this situation means relief, he said. "Relief from this war."

Hutto, 29, works in communications on an aircraft carrier. Rogers, 34, is quartermaster on a frigate.

They've been friends since boot camp three years ago. Neither has served in Iraq. But they say 60 percent of the signers have served in the war.

The signers are not lawbreakers, deserters or conscientious objectors, Hutto says. They believe in obeying orders.

Some, however, are reticent to appear in public. Organizers estimated that about two dozen active-duty members showed up at the Norfolk event, in a church near the naval base here. Hutto pointed out that many of the signers do not live in the Norfolk area.

In between fielding phone calls and hanging banners for the rally, Hutto and Rogers paused for a moment in a downtown park on Sunday. A memorial to Martin Luther King Jr. loomed in the sunny distance. Both men wore Martin Luther King Jr. pins.

The idea for the within-the-ranks antiwar group came after Hutto read "Soldiers in Revolt: GI Resistance During the Vietnam War" by David Cortright. Hutto showed the book to Rogers. They invited Cortright to come to Norfolk.

"I was so impressed by the seriousness of the discussion," said Cortright, who teaches peace studies at the University of Notre Dame. He said it takes guts for active military members to speak out. "But they do it respectfully."

A specialist 4 during Vietnam, Cortright said there were hundreds of active-military antiwar groups by 1970. "They published underground newspapers, ran coffeehouses, organized demonstrations and protests," he said. He recalled that in 1969, a petition signed by more than 1,300 active-duty military people -- calling for a national protest against the Vietnam War -- ran in the New York Times.

A widely circulated appeal for redress is a new wrinkle made possible by the Internet. The plea is simply stated. Here is the nut: 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. The site is also sponsored by Iraq Veterans Against the War, Veterans for Peace and Military Families Speak Out.

Hutto launched the Web site in October. Signers include:

Kevin Torres, 23, from Brooklyn, a sergeant in the 101st Airborne who has served two tours in Iraq. "I felt like with our being there, we were making more enemies," he said. "The people hated us. They wanted us out of the city."

And Liam Madden, 22, a Marine sergeant from Vermont. He spent seven months on the ground in Iraq. "I saw Iraq struggling to get on its feet and failing to do so - - despite the best efforts of American military," he said. "I have nothing against the military or my experience. It's the policy I oppose."

Though Madden was braced for some sort of retribution, formal or informal, after he went public with his opposition to the war, "it never came," he said. "I give credit to my chain of command. After all, the appeal for redress is legal."

Madden helped to launch the site last fall.

A portion is devoted to the rights and responsibilities of people in military service. A Defense Department directive allows members of the military to send a protected communication to a member of Congress on any matter without blowback.

Hutto and Rogers are aware that the Navy could become more directly involved if the United States turns its attention toward Iran. "I would go, with serious questions," Hutto said. "And with a bit of sorrow."

And, he said, "I would go because I'm in solidarity with the men and women I serve with."

Rogers agreed, though he said the whole affair -- being an antiwar warrior -- reminds him of the novel "Catch-22."

Neither sailor will be in Washington on Tuesday for the presentation of the appeals. Following previous orders, they both are headed to sea.

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

2 Soldiers Killed In Al Anbar

17 January 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070117-07

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – One Soldier assigned to Regimental Combat Team 5 died Monday and one Soldier assigned to 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division died today from wounds sustained due to enemy action while operating in Al Anbar Province.

Gloucester Mourns Death Of Its Soldier

January 12, 2007 BY STEPHANIE HEINATZ, Hampton Roads Daily Press

U.S. flags flew along Gloucester's quaint Main Street on Thursday. 'They're all out for him,' said Vicky Gunn of Gunn's Body Shop.

The county is in mourning, she said.

Gunn didn't know Army Spc. Eric Thomas Caldwell, a 22-year-old from Gloucester killed in Iraq on Sunday, after his unit was attacked by small-arms fire. But her heart goes out to his mother - Vanessa Caldwell, formerly Vanessa Robins - with whom she grew up in Gloucester.

'Everybody who grew up around here knew the Robinses,' said Cathy Tomlinson of Main Street's Tomlinson Exterminating Services.

Vanessa Caldwell was one of 12 children. Her father, Earl Robins, owned a small gas station in the heart of Main Street and later worked for years as the service manager at a local car and truck dealership.

One of his sons has taken his place at the dealership. Other children opened small businesses of their own. A daughter-in-law has been involved with the high school for years. And over time, because of the 12 kids, the family has grown with spouses and nearly 30 grandchildren.

'It's going to be a packed memorial,' said Charlotte Tomlinson, who also works at the exterminating business.

The service is scheduled for 3 p.m. Sunday at First Presbyterian Church on Main Street. Caldwell will be buried at 1 p.m. Wednesday in Arlington National Cemetery.

And it won't be just family packing the service.

Charlotte Tomlinson says Gloucester is one of those places where there's a closeness among the residents. There's a feeling of family between neighbors and a sense of personal loss when anyone, especially a young person, is killed.

'It hits close to home,' she said, pointing to the American flag that she made sure to fly Thursday. 'Everybody's talking about it. Everybody wants to reach out to the family.'

Many young men and women have traded life in the county for a career in the military. Many have been to Iraq and Afghanistan.

But Caldwell's death was the first time that someone from Gloucester had been killed fighting in today's war.

'He has a cousin who's in basic training right now,' Charlotte Tomlinson said. She said she learned that Thursday morning ,when she ran into Caldwell's uncle in Wal-Mart.

Because Caldwell finished high school in 2003, the students enrolled today were too young to know him, said Layton Beverage, principal of Gloucester High School.

'It does bring it home, though,' Beverage said. 'It gives Gloucester a connection.

'He's one of many young men and women who made the sacrifice for this country. But he walked these halls. He sat in these classrooms. He talked to these teachers.'

Beverage plans to have a moment of silence at the school today in honor of Caldwell.

Six years ago, Susan Gardner was Caldwell's earth science teacher.

'He was a really good, nice kid,' Gardner said. 'He would come and just talk to me after class about things going on in his life.'

When he left for Army basic training, Gardner told him to feel free to write her while he was away: 'He did. He sent me a letter. It just said general stuff, that he was there and things were OK.'

Two Foreign Occupation Troops Wounded In Basra; Nationality Not Announced

17 Jan 2007 Reuters

BASRA - A roadside bomb wounded two coalition force soldiers in the southern city of Basra, a British Military spokeswoman said. She declined to confirm the nationality of the wounded but most of the foreign forces in Basra are British.

A cameraman of al-Aalam satellite channel was also detained by British forces for "acting suspiciously" as he was taking footage at the scene, a British spokesman, said.

Four Occupation Workers Killed, One American;

Reporter's Lying Bullshit Hides Who They Were Working For: Madeline Albright

[The reporter calls these members of a "democracy group." That's more than a lie, it's an obscenity. Guess who these people were representing. Guess who the "Chairman" of the National Democratic Institute is, as their web site entitles her. Why, none other than Madeline Albright. "NDI Chairman Madeleine Albright" the web site has it. You remember her?

(May/June 1999, in an interview on '60 Minutes', Leslie Stahl asked Madeleine Albright: "I understand that 500,000 Iraqi children have died due to our sanctions...was it worth it?" Albright replied, "It was worth it.")

Ain't payback something? And long overdue.

1.17.07 By SAMEER N. YACOUB, (AP)

A convoy carrying members of a U.S. democracy group was ambushed by gunmen, and four of the workers, including an American woman, were killed, an official said.

The three-car convoy belonged to the National Democratic Institute, and among the dead was an American, a Hungarian, a Croatian and an Iraqi, said Les Campbell, the group's Middle East director.

FUTILE EXERCISE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



A U.S. soldier collects traffic cones as soldiers lift the security cordon around central Baghdad neighborhood Karradah Oct. 31, 2006. (AP Photo/Hadi Mizban)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Huge Increase In Resistance Attacks Since 2005

Jan 16 AFP

The number of direct fire attacks soared from 1,558 in 2005 to 4,542 in 2006; improvised explosive device attacks were up from 783 to 1,677 in the same period; and the number of suicide attacks rose from 27 in 2005 to 139 in 2006.

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Army Sgt. Thomas E. Vandling Jr., 26, of Bellevue, Pa., at the Church of the Assumption in Bellevue, Pa., Jan. 12, 2007. Vandling died of injuries after an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle while he was on combat patrol in Iraq on Monday. (AP Photo/Gene J. Puskar)

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U.S. ARMY SOLDIER COMFORTS a child fatally wounded in a car bomb blast Monday in Mosul, northwest of

**No More Of Bush's War For Them,
Ever:**

Slovakia Begins To Pull Out Troops From Iraq

PRAGUE, Jan. 16 (Xinhua)

Slovak Defense Minister Frantisek Kasicky said on Tuesday his country had begun to withdraw its troops from Iraq, according to news reaching here from Bratislava, capital of Slovakia.

Kasicky said the first part of Slovak contingent and their equipment has left Iraq and moved to Kuwait. The rest of the troops would be pulled out by the end of February.

Slovakia would leave 11 army officers in Iraq to help train the Iraqi army, said the defense minister.

“It’s A Belief Of The Soldiers I’ve Talked To That Any Troop Increase Over Here, It’s Just Going To Be More Sitting Ducks, More Targets”

January 11th, 2007 Democracy Now [Excerpts]

In an Democracy Now! exclusive, we go to Iraq to speak with Army Sergeant Ronn Cantu who is serving his second tour in Iraq.

He joins us on the phone from Iraq.

AMY GOODMAN: We go first to Iraq.

My next guest, Sergeant Ronn Cantu, is an Army sergeant serving his second tour of duty in Iraq right now.

He recently signed a petition to Congress, known as an Appeal for Redress, calling for the withdrawal of US troops.

The appeal will be delivered to Capitol Hill next week.

Sergeant Cantu is a member of Iraq Veterans Against the War.

He started the website forum, soldiervoices.net, to give soldiers a forum to speak about the Iraq war, now joining us on the line from Iraq.

It is very brave of you to join us, Sergeant Cantu.

SGT. RONN CANTU: Yeah, but I'm scared out of my mind right now. (inaudible) over here.

AMY GOODMAN: *Why are you scared?*

SGT. RONN CANTU: I don't really want to go into that. All I really want to say, because I shouldn't be doing this -- all I want to say is, right now American soldiers are dying in a Sunni-Shiite civil war, a sectarian civil war -- that's a fact, based on my personal observations.

Soldiers' hands are tied to defend themselves. Every time a soldier fires his weapon, he has to sign paperwork making sure it was justified. I want to stress that soldiers want to go on the offensive, but everything we're doing here is on the defense.

And it's a belief of the soldiers I've talked to that any troop increase over here, it's just going to be more sitting ducks, more targets.

Everything we're doing is reactive.

People go out on patrols, and they're sitting ducks until somebody strikes first.

There was a story relayed to me by somebody I know -- I don't want to give his name -- a soldier was shot in the face, and nobody fired back, because they couldn't see where it was coming from.

That's what this has come down to, and that's just plain fact.

I'm sorry, (inaudible) --

AMY GOODMAN: *Sergeant Cantu, can you explain the Appeal for Redress that you've signed?*

SGT. RONN CANTU: All it is is a -- it's just that one of the rights that soldiers have is the right to communicate unfettered with their elected member of Congress, and it's just about a troop withdrawal. I mean, the Appeal for Redress website is pretty straightforward. If anybody's in there, very straightforward.

AMY GOODMAN: *Do you have support in Iraq, where you are, among your cavalry division?*

SGT. RONN CANTU: I'm sorry?

AMY GOODMAN: *Do you have support in the First Cavalry Division for your call for the troops to come home?*

SGT. RONN CANTU: A lot of people still aren't even aware of it, the appeal.

AMY GOODMAN: *And what are you demanding of the President, of the Congress right now? Sergeant Cantu? Sergeant Cantu, are you there?*

[End, nothing further heard from Iraq.]

You're listening to an exclusive live broadcast with Sergeant Ronn Cantu. He is one of over 1,000 soldiers who have signed what is called an Appeal to Redress, which will be delivered on Capitol Hill on Martin Luther King's birthday, calling for the troops to be called home.

All of the uniformed endorsers are calling on Congress to bring the troops home.

Uranium Killing Italian Troops

There are similar reports from soldiers' associations in Belgium, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands.

[Thanks to Al Jacoma, Veterans For Peace & The Military Project, who sent this in.

10 January 2007 By Christian Fraser, BBC News, Rome

Italian soldiers are still dying following exposure to depleted uranium in the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo, their relatives say.

Troops who served during the wars in the 1990s believe they have contracted cancer and other serious illnesses from extended exposure to the munitions.

The US says it fired around 40,000 depleted uranium rounds during the Bosnian and Kosovo conflicts.

A pressure group says 50 veterans have died and another 200 are seriously ill.

Depleted uranium is used on the tips of bullets and shells. Because of its density it can pierce the armour plating on tanks. But when it explodes it often leaves a footprint of chemically poisonous and radioactive dust.

The Italians who served in Bosnia and Kosovo were involved in the clear-up of battlefields and came into close contact with exploded ammunition.

The association representing the soldiers, known as Anavafaf, says many of those who have died or are ill have contracted cancer.

In 2002 the Italian defence ministry published a report compiled by independent scientists which found a higher than average number of servicemen were suffering from cancer.

It said there was an excessive number of Hodgkin's disease victims among Italian Balkan peacekeepers.

A number of children fathered by the soldiers have been born with disabilities.

There are similar reports from soldiers' associations in Belgium, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands.

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!!!!

A Message To Bush From A US Navy Hospital Corpsman 69-73:

FUCK YOU!

Re: Bush: War Skeptics 'Proposing Nothing'

"To oppose everything while proposing nothing is irresponsible," Bush said. Jan 14, DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press Writer

Dear George,

Here is a response from a certified "war skeptic."

FUCK YOU!

Go to Iraq, get out of the Green Zone, and see what life is like for people in Iraq and for the soldiers you've sent there. Stay a few days -- no quick photo op and back home. Be sure you drink the water.

Then go to Walter Reed Army Hospital and visit the ortho ward. Not just a quick little photo op, but stay there for a week. You can do it. You stay in Crawford for a week or more and the government keeps going. So go to Walter Reed--or better yet, go to a burn unit at a military hospital.

Don't do the glad-handing politician bullshit. Go around and empty urine bags. Learn how to check I.V.'s. See if their pain meds are enough.

Hear the moans. See the disgusting sights. Smell the smell.

Then when you're done, go to a V.A. hospital and ask to visit a "back ward."

No photo op, here either, prez. Spend another week.

See the guys from Nam and Gulf War I and who knows where else their government sent them. No photos. No talking. Just listen. And tend to them.

Turn them in their beds to keep them from getting bed sores. Check their feeding tubes. Empty their colostomy bags.

THEN come back and say this war is worth one more person's life or health or family.

Come back and tell us that if you can.

If you can't, get the hell out of here.

Mike Ferner
US Navy Hospital Corpsman 69-73

Sgt. In Playboy Harassed By Brass:

Pants-Pissing Idiots Relieve Her Of Duties



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Michelle Manhart with the February issue of Playboy magazine. (AP Photo)

[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, and Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in. Honish writes: That's one way to get out of a second tour in SW Asia. Binh writes: The USAF brass apparently has nothing better to do than scan Playboy...]

January 12, 2007 Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO - An Air Force staff sergeant who posed nude for Playboy magazine has been relieved of her duties while the military investigates, officials said Thursday.

In February's issue, hitting newsstands this week, Michelle Manhart is photographed in uniform yelling and holding weapons under the headline "Tough Love." The following pages show her partially clothed, wearing her dog tags while working out, as well as completely nude.

"This staff sergeant's alleged action does not meet the high standards we expect of our Airmen, nor does it comply with the Air Force's core values of integrity, service before self, and excellence in all we do," Oscar Balladares, spokesman for Lackland Air Force Base, said in a statement. **[What a brain-dead fool. They ought to use her on recruiting posters. Most likely the Playboy item shows considerable excellence and is indeed a public service. As for "integrity," the officers who went peeping at her in Playboy would be well advised to have less to say about that.]**

Manhart told Playboy that she considers herself as standing up for her rights.

"Of what I did, nothing is wrong, so I didn't anticipate anything, of course," Manhart, 30, told The Associated Press.

"I didn't do anything wrong, so I didn't think it would be a major issue."

Manhart, who is married with two children, joined the Air Force in 1994, spending time in Kuwait in 2002. She trains Airmen at Lackland.

Posing for Playboy merits a possible discharge while recruiters found guilty of sexual misconduct (sexually assaulting enlistees) are merely reprimanded by a reduction in rank or forfeiture of pay. So according to the U.S. Air Force's "high standards" of integrity and excellence, a recruiter violating a woman's body has more integrity than a sergeant doing what she wishes with her own. Maybe it's time to question who really is lacking integrity here. January 16, 2007 Vanessa Valenti, Altnet.org via Katherine GY, The Military Project

Despicable VA Filth Breaking Own Rules To Deny Veterans Their Benefits: “They’ve Been Jerking (Veterans) Around”

Jan 7, 2007 The Associated Press

GREENSBORO, N.C. -- The Department of Veterans Affairs is not properly considering statements from veterans' private physicians when determining a disability rating, relying instead on its own physicians who aren't as favorable to their claims, according to veterans and others.

Such decisions violate the so-called "treating-physician rule," which calls for the VA to give preferential weight to statements from a veteran's private physician, they said.

"I've been working with the VA with a lot of my (patients)," said Fred McQueen Jr., a physician in Hamlet. "With the VA, I can't make them accept (my statements). I've sent them pages from textbooks and articles, and they don't pay any attention.

“They've been jerking (veterans) around.”

The News & Record of Greensboro said the VA has not responded to its numerous questions from about its disability compensation/pension program.

One of McQueen's patients, Joel Brigman, served in the Army from 1961 to 1964 and worked with Nike Hercules surface-to-air missiles, the key ground defense against hypothetical waves of Soviet bombers. Maintenance and cleaning required Brigman to use chemicals such as trichloroethylene, benzene and toluene, all of which were used in the toxic defoliant Agent Orange and are toxic themselves.

Brigman now suffers from adult-onset diabetes, eye and skin problems, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and leg neuropathy -- all symptoms associated with exposure to the chemicals.

"I wouldn't want nobody else to go through, I'll tell you, what I've been through," Brigman said. "I had so many problems they couldn't list 'em all on the medical record, but it all leads right back to the chemicals in Agent Orange."

McQueen said he has given the Department of Veterans Affairs no fewer than eight statements attesting to the fact that Brigman's diabetes and other conditions were caused by his military exposure to these chemicals.

The VA, relying instead on its own physicians, has repeatedly refused to give Brigman the 100 percent disability rating he is seeking, he said.

"Mr. Brigman is just one of many," said McQueen, a former Army doctor.

Brigman's attorney, Craig Kabatchnick, worked for the VA from 1990 to 1995 and defended the department against veterans' disability claims. He says the "treating-physician rule" was followed more conscientiously then. Increasingly, he says, it's being ignored.

"They don't want to hear anything a civilian doctor says," McQueen said.

Bush's New Iraq Plan A Gold Mine For War Profiteers; "\$2 Million In Office Furnishings Alone"

January 15, 2007 By JAMES GLANZ, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD, Jan. 14 — As part of its latest plan to stabilize Iraq, the United States intends to more than double the number of regional reconstruction teams and to add nearly 400 specialists for existing and new teams, in fields from politics and the rule of law to agribusiness and veterinary care, according to an official outline of the plan.

The document, provided to The New York Times by a critic of the plan, lays out what an American official familiar with its contents calls simply "the playbook," giving detailed estimates of the costs to be incurred by various teams as a result of the changes.

About \$250,000, for example, is set aside for new office furnishings for a team in the southern city of Basra, which is supposed to receive 25 additional specialists.

Some of the projected costs may raise eyebrows. Around the country, for example, the United States plans to spend more than \$2 million in office furnishings alone as part of the plan. More than \$7 million is budgeted for

information technology, apparently including computers. Some of that money may be used to support existing team members.

The new plans could become a windfall for more than computer and furniture companies.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

“American Troops Are The Enemy Troops”

“If The Mahdi Army Is Attacked, They Will Defend Themselves”

Jan. 13, 2007 By Leila Fadel and Zaineb Obeid, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Mahdi Army militia members have stopped wearing their black uniforms, hidden their weapons and abandoned their checkpoints in an apparent effort to lower their profile in Baghdad in advance of the arrival of U.S. reinforcements.

"We have explicit directions to keep a low profile . . . not to confront, not to be dragged into a fight and to calm things down," said one official who received the orders from the anti-American [translation: pro-American but anti-occupation nationalist] cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

"If the Mahdi Army is attacked, they will defend themselves," said Sheikh Abdul Razzaq al-Nidawi, a senior al-Sadr official in Najaf.

"American troops are the enemy troops . . . if the Americans want armed resistance, we are ready, but we will work hard not to get involved in an armed opposition and we will work hard to endure the pressure even if we make sacrifices to keep our people and country safe."

Mahdi Army sources said that their heavy weaponry had been moved from Sadr City or hidden since the announcement.

"We expect the American troops or even some Iraqi troops to besiege Sadr City," said Raed Mohammed, a 37-year-old taxi driver.

The Mahdi Army is seen by Baghdad civilians as the people's resistance against an American occupation.

Sunnis in the mixed neighborhood of Zaiyouna on the east side of the Tigris also have taken to hiding their weapons. They, too, said they plan to brandish them again when the plan has ended.

"The new security plan was crafted to get rid of the Sunnis and the resistance in Baghdad," said Sinan Abdullah, 30, a Sunni plastics trader in Zaiyouna.

"Instead of dissolving the militias, the government starts with the Sunnis first. I have one sentence for Bush, 'You have dealt with the wrong people.'"

U.S. Military Authorized To Kill Al-Sadr? [What Else Could "Target" Mean?]

1.14.07 Boston Globe

U.S. military officials say the Bush administration has given them new authority to target leaders of political and religious militias in Iraq, including the powerful Shiite Muslim cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

Such a showdown, key to Bush's plan to increase the number of U.S. troops in Baghdad, could spark a deadly confrontation with Shiite militias, which enjoy widespread popularity in Shiite neighborhoods.

It could also erode support for the fragile government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, who has agreed to the plan.

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

Assorted Resistance Action

17 Jan 2007 Reuters & MSNBC News Services & AP

Police found the body of a policeman strangled on Tuesday in the town of Iskandariya, 40 km (25 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

In Baghdad a roadside bomb struck a downtown commercial district, injuring a policeman. Police also said they found the body of an Iraqi policeman whose hands and legs had been bound hanging by electric wire, two days after he was captured while going to his home in the same area.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol killed a policeman and wounded three others in the busy area of Bab al- Sharji in central Baghdad, police said.

A bomber driving a truck packed with explosives killed 10 people and wounded 42 at a police station in central Kirkuk on Wednesday, causing part of the sand-colored station to collapse, police and a hospital source said.

A police source said many buildings in the area bombed in Kirkuk on Wednesday suffered severe damage and rescuers were still searching for victims.

One resident told Reuters he saw many casualties lying in the street and several buildings collapsed.

A local government official in Mansour district of Baghdad was captured and four of his guards were killed in western Baghdad, police said.

An Iraqi soldier was killed in a clash between the Iraqi army and guerrillas in the Yarmuk district of western Baghdad, a police source said.

**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

Troops Will Die Because Bush Doesn't Have A Clue To The Obvious: "The Guerrillas Are Not Outsiders"

Jan 14, 2007 By Juan Cole, The Mercury News [Excerpt]

The president cannot seem to let go of his fixation on Al-Qaida, a minor actor in Iraq, and his determination to confront Iran and Syria.

He still assumes that the insurgents are outsiders to their neighborhoods and that U.S. troops can chase away the miscreants and keep them out, acting as a sort of neighborhood watch in khaki.

Guerrilla movements can succeed against much wealthier, more populous and better-armed enemies, as happened in Algeria in the late 1950s through 1962 when the National Liberation Front expelled the French.

The real question is not America's supposed superiority (which so far has not brought it victory) but what exactly the resources and tactics of the enemy are and whether they can be defeated.

The answer to the second question is ``No."

President Bush in his speech Wednesday imagined that guerrillas were coming into neighborhoods in Baghdad and in the cities of Al-Anbar province from the outside.

He suggested that, as the solution to this problem, U.S. and Iraqi troops should clear them out and then hold the city quarters for some time, to stop them from coming back.

But the guerrillas are not outsiders.

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.

“History Is Littered With Powerful Men Who Thought They Could Batter Their Way To Victory Against The Odds”

11 January 2007 Robert Fisk, The Independent (UK) [Excerpts]

It is de rigueur, these days, to recall Vietnam, the false victories, the body counts, the torture and the murders but history is littered with powerful men who thought they could batter their way to victory against the odds.

Napoleon comes to mind; not the emperor who retreated from Moscow, but the man who believed the wild guerrilleros of French-occupied Spain could be liquidated.

He tortured them, he executed them, he propped up a local Spanish administration of what we would now call Quislings, al-Malikis to a man.

He rightly accused his enemies Moore and Wellington of supporting the insurgents.

And when faced with defeat, Napoleon took the personal decision "to relaunch the machine" and advanced to recapture Madrid, just as Bush intends to recapture Baghdad.

Of course, it ended in disaster. And George Bush is no Napoleon Bonaparte.

NIXON'S OPERATION MENU vs. BUSH'S OPERATION SURGE



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: January 15, 2007

NIXON'S OPERATION MENU vs. BUSH'S OPERATION SURGE

"I ask for your support for the brave men fighting tonight halfway around the world, not for territory, not for glory, but that their younger brothers and their sons and your sons can have a chance to grow up in a world of peace and freedom, and justice."

Richard M. Nixon

President of the United States
Washington, D.C.
April 30, 1970

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

MUTINY AT INVERGORDON

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

The Invergordon mutiny shook the confidence of a government. It revealed the class character of the navy and the contempt in which the government held its lower ranks.

That is why discontent among military families today sends a shiver down Tony Blair's spine.

30 September 2006 Socialist Worker (Britain) [Excerpts]

Seventy five years ago a mutiny by sailors against cuts imposed by a right wing Labour prime minister rocked the British establishment. Matt Perry looks at the events:

In September 1931, the crews of the largest warships of the Atlantic fleet of the Royal Navy ignored their orders.

The unrest was quickly hushed up by the government and the story is relatively unknown.

Severe pay cuts for the armed services caused the mutiny.

The second Labour government was in a deep crisis without a parliamentary majority. It faced a world economic slump.

The City of London was pulling the plug on the government and a financial crisis was spreading from continental Europe, threatening the pound.

On 31 July, the government-appointed committee on national expenditure deliberately exaggerated the situation. It demanded £120 million of savings - £96 million to come from cuts.

In order to restore the confidence of big business, the Labour government was advised to push through vicious cuts in the dole and pay for the armed services.

Because it was split, the cabinet resigned. But the prime minister Ramsay MacDonald and the chancellor Philip Snowden were determined to push through the cuts. They formed a "national government" with the Conservatives and Liberals, after being invited to do so by the king. MacDonald called a snap general election and posed as the saviour of the country. The sense of crisis, the confusion over MacDonald's defection and the media campaign reduced the parliamentary Labour Party to a rump of 46 MPs.

The deep class divisions running below the surface of British society were intensified in the Royal Navy.

Recruitment was particularly heavy in areas that had suffered from mass unemployment in the 1920s, including shipbuilding and mining areas such as the north east of England and South Wales.

The commissioned officers on the other hand came to the profession through the public schools and Dartmouth Naval College.

Aboard ship they had separate quarters, better food and servants to look after them. Marines held discipline on the ship and they were the last line of defence for the officers.

Divide and rule, coercion, appeals to patriotism and the lure of promotion were used to keep the crews from organising themselves. Sailors were not allowed to speak openly of their grievances. They therefore feared that they would be denounced and their chances of small but vital improvements in pay would be lost.

They could only form welfare committees to organise the benevolent societies in case of retirement, injury or death.

Because of a decade of cuts and high rents in naval towns, many sailors were on the breadline, especially those with large families. One round of cuts even proscribed them from using toilet roll excessively.

The new national government spent some time finalising the details of the cuts in naval pay. Sailors were not consulted.

When the character of the cuts became public they were such a shock that even many officers thought them to be outrageous.

The daily wage of an able seaman who had joined the service before 1925 was to fall from four shillings to three shillings and that of an ordinary seaman from two shillings nine pence to two shillings. Some of the lowest paid in the navy were losing 25 percent of their pay.

The sailors heard the news of the proposals through rumours and the press. Many could not believe it.

Most of the Royal Navy Atlantic fleet, some 16 warships, had been taking part in manoeuvres in the North Sea. They had gathered in Cromarty Firth, the inlet of sea north of Inverness.

It included the Hood, the Royal Navy's largest warship. The nearest town, where the sailors took their shore leave, was Invergordon.

On Sunday 13 September, those who went ashore confirmed the rumours that had been circulating.

An impromptu mass meeting took place at a canteen that the men frequented in Invergordon. The agitation was such that discussions were transformed when some men leapt onto the tables to address wider audiences.

The same thing happened for those taking their shore leave on the Monday. Confusion as to what to do reigned. Some suggested requisitioning a train and taking their grievances to London.

Another suggestion was going to Lossiemouth and burning down Ramsay MacDonald's home.

Anger was also directed against Austin Chamberlain, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who had agreed to the cuts.

Despite the whirl of emotion, the sailors resolved on passive resistance or strike action as the only way that they could get their message across. When sailors returned to their ships, they were in high spirits with many of them drunk. On some ships they conducted meetings on the deck.

On the cold Monday morning, the captains read out the official communiqué about the cuts.

On the York, the captain misguidedly suggested that the married men could ease the financial pain if their wives took in washing to earn money. One man shouted from the back, "You fat bastard! How would you like your old woman to crash out the dirties?"

On the Nelson, after the announcement of the cuts and that the ship would be going on exercises the next morning, one of the torpedo men shouted, "No it won't, sir."

On Tuesday 15 September, when several of the crews received their orders, they simply failed to carry them out.

For many this was an important distinction. They were not refusing orders or mutinying, which was after all subject to the most severe punishment. There were clear limits to the lengths that the men were willing to go but their action spread rapidly and pulled the vast majority behind it.

This was not a case that could be put down to isolated indiscipline, easily suppressed by the marines. It was a powerful expression of collective grievances. Even many of the marines joined the strike.

On the Hood and the Nelson, they followed ordinary duties but refused to put to sea.

On the Valiant and the Rodney, they only carried out essential duties, such as safety procedures, but without recognising the authority of their officers.

Crowds assembled on the forecastle with cheering, speeches and singing.

The logic of the speeches was compelling - if we stick together they'll have to give in eventually.

On the Rodney, a group of sailors found a piano and manoeuvred it onto the deck for a singsong. They played "The Red Flag" repeatedly. Rear Admiral Tomkinson was forced to cancel the exercises.

He sent a flurry of telegrams to the Sea Lords of the Admiralty as the situation grew more serious.

On Wednesday morning the strike grew in strength.

Tomkinson believed that if force was used against the sailors matters would escalate. At 11.48 on Wednesday morning, his telegram to his superiors indicated that immediate concessions were necessary otherwise things would get entirely out of hand.

Now he was hearing of threats of sabotage.

Tomkinson proposed concessions to those on the older rates of pay and to extend the marriage allowance to those under 25 years of age. The cabinet accepted these measures and the mutiny was diffused. The fleet sailed on Wednesday evening.

The action of the sailors had dented the prestige of the MacDonald government, which was forced to make concessions to the sailors. It was also forced to abandon the Gold Standard shortly after the mutiny. Public sector workers and the unemployed took up the fight against the cuts.

After a series of demonstrations, hunger marches and even riots of the unemployed, the cuts in the dole were eventually rescinded in the budget of 1934.

The concessions over pay were a significant victory for the rank and file in the navy.

But the generals and government sought their revenge. Dozens of ringleaders of the mutiny were jailed and more were dispersed or purged from the service.

The Communist Daily Worker newspaper, which had given unconditional support to the mutiny, was raided and its printer, business manager and editorial board were arrested under the Incitement to Mutiny Act of 1797.

In order to wipe the memory of the mutiny clean, there was no official inquiry, no court martials and the name of the fleet was changed to the Home Fleet.

Our rulers would rather mutinies were forgotten.

Yet mutinies have been a crucial part of opposition to war. The mutinies of the Russian army and navy were a key element in the Russian Revolution of 1917 that meant that Russia withdrew from the First World War. The armistice at the end of the First World War was signed days after a naval mutiny at Kiel spread throughout the German fleet and into the army.

Mutinies, most notably that of the French navy in the Black Sea, stalled foreign imperialist intervention against the Soviet regime after the First World War.

More recently, the refusal of US troops in fight in Vietnam paralysed the US military machine and was one of the reasons why president Richard Nixon had to abandon that bloody conflict.

Although more limited than these examples, the Invergordon mutiny shook the confidence of a government.

It revealed the class character of the navy and the contempt in which the government held its lower ranks.

That is why discontent among military families today sends a shiver down Tony Blair's spine.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

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)

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