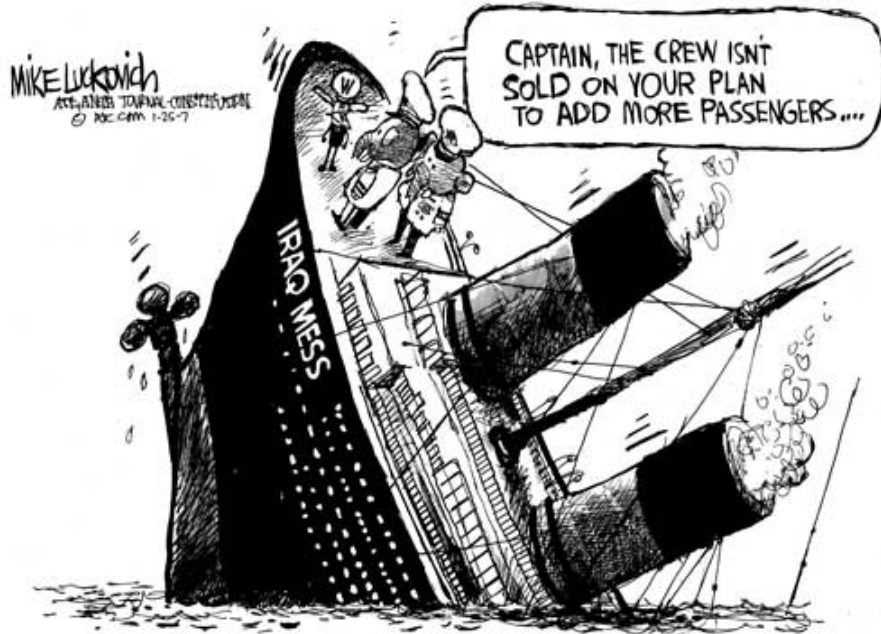


## GI SPECIAL 5A30:



**““He Is The One Who  
Killed My Son,’ She Said  
Of The President”**

**“The War Did Not Make Any  
Sense To Him” “He Feared He’d  
Die, For No Good Reason”**

**“Things Are So Bad, Worse Than  
They Show On The News”**



Sgt. Victor Langarica shares happier times with his daughter Devina and his mother, Pearl Lucas, about three years ago. Family photo

01/25/07 By CRAIG SCHNEIDER, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Sgt. Victor Langarica was gung ho about the war effort after the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, said family members.

"He wanted to do something to support his country," said his uncle, Rudy Lucas.

**But after serving nine months in Afghanistan and a month in Iraq, Langarica returned to his Decatur home with a changed attitude, said his mother, Pearl Lucas. He was quiet, she said, and haunted by memories of maimed children.**

**As the war effort turned more toward Iraq, he turned more against the war effort. And when he was called to return to Iraq last summer, he did not want to go. He feared he'd die, for no good reason, his mother said.**

On Saturday, Langarica, an Army mechanic, was among 12 soldiers killed when their Black Hawk helicopter crashed in Baghdad.

**More than 90 Georgian soldiers have died in the war, according to The Associated Press.**

This week, Pearl Lucas' Decatur home has become a sad greeting place for neighbors, friends and family coming to pay their respects to the 29-year-old who volunteered with his church to paint people's homes.

"The nightmare that I was running away from ... came true," said Pearl Lucas, who is 52.

**His mother is more than grieving — she is bitter.**

**She has lost faith in this war and sees her son's death as senseless.**

Pearl Lucas recalled that after her son was recalled to Iraq last August, he returned for a short leave in November. She held Thanksgiving dinner a week early, but the family could not bring much gladness out of him.

**"He told me, 'Mom, I don't think I'm going to make it back. Things are so bad, worse than they show on the news,' "his mother recalled.**

She said she told him, "I am going to be a very angry mother if you don't make it back."

She reminded him he had two young children to raise. But in her heart, she said, she believed him.

**Soon after, Victor visited his uncle in Virginia. Rudy Lucas, whom Victor called "Dad," recalled that the young man was unhappy about returning to Iraq.**

**"The war did not make any sense to him," Rudy Lucas said. He said the two took a lot of pictures "because he was almost sure that he wouldn't make it back."**

Pearl Lucas said she was shocked when her only son told her six years ago that he was enlisting in the Army. "It was a blow for me," she recalled. Her son had always been a good student, enjoying people and sports and helping others. He wanted to become a doctor, but the schooling proved too much for him, giving him an ulcer and forcing him to leave that dream behind.

In May 2001 he joined the Army. Then came 9/11 and the rest, as his mother says, is history.

She said she spoke to him Friday, for the last time. His 6-year-old daughter, Devina, picked up the phone and told her father she wanted him home soon.

"He was weeping like crazy," his mother said.

**Like a lot of parents who have lost children in Iraq, Pearl Lucas is angry at Bush.**

**"He is the one who killed my son," she said of the president. "There is nothing he can tell me to make me feel better."**

Now she wants answers: What exactly happened to that helicopter? What was the mission? She wants a full report. She said her son's body will be back in Georgia this weekend, and military officials have advised her not to have an open casket. But she said she will look anyway.

Pearl Lucas worries about her son's two children. He was divorced twice, and has a 2-year-old son. She said his second wife is in the Army and she doesn't want her going to Iraq.

Pearl Lucas also worries about herself. She has a history of heart problems and high blood pressure. These past few days have sickened her. She's not eating.

"I don't know when I'll rebound," she said.

**MORE**

# **“I Don’t Understand Why Bush Is Doing This To Us”**

## **“If I Die, I Won’t Know Why I Died, If It Was For Oil Or For Revenge”**

Feb. 5, 2007 By Weston Kosova, Newsweek [Excerpts]

A twice-divorced single father of a young son and daughter, [Cpl. Victor Langarica] had joined the Army hoping to gain the skills that would lead to higher pay than he made at Home Depot. His mother and ex-wives looked after the kids while he was overseas.

He was proud of the nine months he served in combat in Afghanistan after 9/11, but the experience left the lighthearted 29-year-old sullen and fearful. Once he was surprised by an Afghan soldier who put a gun to his head. Just as the soldier was about to fire, a fellow American shot the Afghan dead. He never found out who had saved his life, but thought of him as an angel.

**Unlike most of the others who died in the crash, Langarica was regular Army. But when he got his deployment papers to Iraq, he didn’t want to go.**

**The invasion made no sense to him. “I don’t understand why Bush is doing this to us” his mother, Pearl Lucas, recalled his saying. “If I die, I won’t know why I died, if it was for oil or for revenge.”**

Langarica arrived in Iraq last September. His fears about the dangers were justified.

Stationed in southern Baghdad, he worked as a heavy-equipment mechanic and shouldn’t have been in the thick of combat. But his job required him to repair Humvees and other vehicles that had broken down in the streets, amid gunfire and missile attacks. One day, as he lay under a vehicle performing a repair, a bullet grazed the top of his scalp.

In November, Langarica was granted a two-week leave. He returned to the United States to visit his mother and daughter in Decatur, Ga., and his son in Brunswick, Md.

He told relatives that he dreaded returning. His aunt urged him to desert the Army and seek refuge in Nicaragua, where she and his mother were born. But Langarica was determined to finish out his tour, and returned to Iraq.

Before he left, he told friends he didn’t think he was going to see them again. He had already convinced himself he was “an angel of God—no matter what happens I will always be around.” In a letter to his mother in 2003, he had confided, “I know it sounds crazy, but I really believe I am (an angel).”

The night before the helicopter flight, he called home for the last time, certain that he would die the next day.

"You better make it," his mother told him. "Your kids are waiting here for you."

She put his 6-year-old daughter, Devina, on the phone to talk with him. When he got back on the line with his mother, he was crying.

"I will remember you every second," he said.

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## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

### **Sgt. Killed By Baghdad IED**



Sgt. Alexander Fuller, 21, of Centerville, died Jan. 25, 2007, when the Humvee he was riding in struck an improvised explosive device in Baghdad. (AP Photo/Fuller family photo)

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### **Neenah-Area Soldier Loses Life In Iraq**

Jan 29, 2007 (AP)

NEENAH, Wis. Family members have learned that a Neenah area soldier has died in Iraq.

Military officials informed the family that Jon B. St. John II, 25, was killed Saturday by an explosive device near Baghdad, said Tim O'Connell, director of O'Connell Funeral Services in Little Chute, which is handling arrangements.

O'Connell, contacted Monday night by The Associated Press, said he would be meeting with the family Tuesday.

Jon St. John Sr. told The Post-Crescent of Appleton that the family was notified of the death Sunday, and they were told the body would be returned home within a few days.

His son was based with an Army cavalry unit in Fort Hood, Texas.

**Sixty-nine Wisconsin residents have died as a result of service in Iraq.**

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## **A Double Shock For Marine's Parents: They Didn't Know Son, 19, Was In Iraq Until After He Died**

Jan. 24, 2007 BY MATT PEIKEN, Pioneer Press

**The parents of a U.S. Marine from northern Wisconsin didn't know their son was serving in Iraq until they received a call telling them he'd been killed.**

Lance Cpl. Andrew Matus, 19, who grew up about 110 miles northeast of the Twin Cities, in Weyerhaeuser, was reportedly shot Sunday in Anbar province. His parents learned of his death that night, but the Pentagon hasn't released details.

"His sister knew he was there, but he didn't want anyone else to know," Matus' grandmother, Virginia Matus, of Bruce, Wis., said by phone Tuesday. "They thought he was on a ship somewhere transporting supplies. They figured he'd eventually be sent over there, but they didn't know until they got the call."

Many in the Matus family have served in the military, including both grandparents on Andrew Matus' father's side, Matus' father and two uncles, said Virginia Matus, who served in the Army domestically during World War II. Still, she said, the family worried when Andrew Matus declared his intention to enlist long before his 2005 graduation from Weyerhaeuser High School.

"Everybody tried to talk him out of it," Virginia Matus said. "My youngest son tried talking him out of it. He said, 'You're going to see dying and wounded people, and it's not going to be a pretty sight,' but he was bound as heck to go."

Andrew Matus was an athletic, avid sportsman, often attending gun shows with his father, Virginia Matus said. He was a natural mechanic, she added, and "could fix anything." He designed and built furniture and games to raise money for community programs.

"If anybody ever asked him to do anything, he'd be more than happy to help out," Todd Solberg, the school's principal, said.

Because of his craftsmanship and mechanical abilities, teachers at his high school honored him as Technology Education Student of the Year in 2005.

"He's probably the best mechanic I ever saw," said Richard Manor, a technology education teacher at the school. "If you needed a part, he'd make the parts. He was very talented."

**He is the 68th Wisconsin member of the military to die in the Iraq war.**

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## Local Soldier Killed In Iraq

1.24.07 By Ben Sutherly, Staff Writer, Dayton Daily News

A Vandalia-Butler High School graduate was killed Monday in Mosul, Iraq, eight days after becoming a father, the Department of Defense confirmed Thursday.

Army Spc. Nicholas P. Brown, 24, died after an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle.

Brown is survived by his wife, Sara, 21, of Dayton and their son, Nicholas Brown II, born Jan. 14. Sara moved from Fort Bliss, Texas, to Dayton during her pregnancy to be closer to family while her husband was deployed, the family said.

Days before his death, Brown came home to Dayton from Iraq to see his son.

"It was a blessing that he was able to briefly see his newborn son Nicholas before returning to Iraq" last week, Brown's family said in a prepared statement. "Sara will treasure forever those moments together."

The infantryman was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, at Fort Bliss, according to the Defense Department. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

"Nick was very proud to serve his country," his family said. "He enjoyed playing pool, being with friends and taking care of his family."

Brown joined the Army Reserves in 2001 before switching to active duty in November 2004, according to his family.

He deployed to Iraq in late October, said Jean Offutt, public affairs officer at Fort Bliss. Deployments usually last one year, she said.

"We appreciate everyone's thoughts, prayers, and support, but ask that you allow us this time to grieve in private," the family said.

**Brown is the second soldier with Miami Valley ties killed in the past week in Iraq.**

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## *A Death On Haifa Street*

# The Hideous Daily Grind Of A Hopeless War: “‘Help!’ Came The Shout. ‘Man Down’”



Army soldiers and medics carried Sergeant Leija to an armored vehicle after he was shot in the head. Robert Nickelsberg/Getty Images for The New York Times

January 29, 2007 By DAMIEN CAVE, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD, Jan. 28 — Staff Sgt. Hector Leija scanned the kitchen, searching for illegal weapons. One wall away, in an apartment next door, a scared Shiite family huddled around a space heater, cradling an infant.

It was after 9 a.m. on Wednesday, on Haifa Street in central Baghdad, and the crack-crack of machine-gun fire had been rattling since dawn.

The joint military effort has been billed as the first step toward an Iraqi takeover of security. But this morning, in the two dark, third-floor apartments on Haifa Street, that promise seemed distant.

“Help!” came the shout. “Man down.”

“Sergeant Leija got hit in the head,” yelled Specialist Evan Woollis, 25, his voice carrying into the apartment with the Iraqi family. The soldiers from the sergeant’s platoon, part of the Third Stryker Brigade Combat Team, rushed from one apartment to the other.

In the narrow kitchen, a single bullet hole could be seen in a tinted glass window facing north.

The platoon’s leader, Sgt. First Class Marc Biletski, ordered his men to get down, away from every window, and to pull Sergeant Leija out of the kitchen and into the living room.



“O.K., everybody, let’s relax,” Sergeant Biletski said. But he was shaking from his shoulder to his hand.

Relaxing was just not possible. Fifteen feet of floor and a three-inch-high metal doorjamb stood between where Sergeant Leija fell and the living room, out of the line of fire. Gunshots popped in bursts, their source obscured by echoes off the concrete buildings.

“Don’t freak out on me, Doc,” Sergeant Biletski shouted to the platoon medic, Pfc. Aaron Barnum, who was frantically yanking at Sergeant Leija’s flak jacket to take the weight off his chest. “Don’t freak out.”

Two minutes later, three soldiers rushed to help, dragging the sergeant from the kitchen. A medevac team then rushed in and carried him to a Stryker armored vehicle outside, around 9:20. He moaned as they carried him down the stairs on a stretcher.

The men of the platoon remained in the living room, frozen in shock. They had a problem. Sergeant Leija’s helmet, flak jacket, gear and weapon, along with that of at least one other soldier, were still in the exposed area of the kitchen. They needed to be recovered. But how?

“We don’t know if there’s friendlies in that building,” said Sgt. Richard Coleman, referring to the concrete complex a few feet away from where Sergeant Leija had been shot. Sergeant Biletski, 39, decided to wait. He called for another unit to search and clear the building next door.

The additional unit needed time, and got lost. The men sat still. Sergeant B, as his soldiers called him, was near the wall farthest from the kitchen, out of sight from the room’s wide, shaded window. Sergeant Woollis, Private Barnum, Sergeant Coleman and Specialist Terry Wilson sat around him.

Together, alone, trapped in a dark room with the blood of their comrade on the floor, they tried to piece together what had happened. Maybe the sniper saw Sergeant Leija’s silhouette in the window and fired. Or maybe the shot was accidental, they said, fired from below by Iraqi Army soldiers who had been moving between the buildings.

Sergeant Woollis cited the available evidence — an entrance wound just below the helmet with an exit wound above. He said the shot must have been fired from the ground.

**The Iraqis were not supposed to even be there yet. The plan had been for Sergeant Leija’s squad to work alongside an Iraqi Army unit all day. But after arriving late at the first building, the Iraqis jumped ahead, leaving the Americans and pushing north without searching dozens of apartments in the area.**

**The Iraqi soldiers below the kitchen window had once again skipped forward.**

**But Sergeant Leija’s squad had no communication links with their Iraqi counterparts, and because it was an Iraqi operation — as senior officers repeatedly emphasized — the Americans could not order the Iraqis to get back in line. There was nothing they could do.**

9:40 a.m.

An Iraqi soldier rushed in and then stopped, seemingly surprised by the Americans sitting around him. He stood in the middle of the darkened living room, inches away from bloody bandages on the carpet.

“Get away from the window!”

The soldiers yelled at their interpreter, a masked Iraqi whom they called Santana. Between their shouts and his urgent Arabic, the Iraqi soldier got the message. He slowly walked away.

“What part of ‘sniper’ don’t you understand?” Sergeant Biletski yelled. The other soldiers cursed and called the Iraqis idiots. They were still not sure whether an Iraqi soldier was responsible for Sergeant Leija’s wound, but they said the last thing they wanted was another casualty. In a moment of emotion, Private Barnum said, “I won’t treat him if he’s hit.”

When the second Iraqi left, an airless silence returned. The dark left people alone to grieve. “You O.K.?” Sergeant B asked each soldier. A few nods. A few yeses.

Private Barnum stood up, facing the kitchen, eager to bring back the gear left. One foot back, the other forward, he stood like a sprinter. “I can get that stuff, Sergeant,” he said. “I can get it.”

The building next door had still not been cleared by Americans. The answer was no.

“I can’t lose another man,” Sergeant B said. “If I did, I failed. I already failed once. I’m not going to fail again.”

The room went quiet. Faces turned away. “You didn’t fail, sir,” said one of the men, his voice disguised by the sound of fighting back tears. “You didn’t fail.”

9:55 a.m.

The piercing cry of an infant was easily identifiable, even as the gunfire outside intensified. It came from the apartment next door. The Iraqi Army had been there, too. In an interview before Sergeant Leija was shot, the three young Iraqis there said that their father had been taken by the soldiers.

“Someone from over there” — they pointed back away from Haifa Street, toward the rows of mud-brick slums — “told them we had weapons,” said a young man, who seemed to be about 18.

He was sitting on a couch. To his right, his older sister clutched an infant in a blanket; his younger sister, about 16, sat on the other side.

**Earlier that morning, an Iraqi boy of about 8 ran up to Sergeant Leija. He wanted to tell the Americans about terrorists hiding in the slums behind the apartment buildings on Haifa Street’s eastern side.**

**Sergeant Leija, an easygoing 27-year-old from Raymondville, Tex., ignored him. He and some of his soldiers said it was impossible to know whether the boy had legitimate information or would lead them to an ambush.**

**That summed up intelligence in Iraq, they said: there is always the threat of being set up, for an attack or an Iraqi's own agenda.**

10:50 a.m.

Sergeant Coleman tried using a mop to get the gear, and failed. It was too far away. With more than an hour elapsed since the attack, and after no signs of another shot through the kitchen window, Sergeant B agreed to let Private Barnum make a mad dash for the equipment.

Private Barnum waited for several minutes in the doorway, peeking around the corner, stalling. Then he dove forward, pushing himself up against the wall near the window to cut down the angle, pausing, then darting back to the camouflaged kit.

Crack — a single gunshot. Private Barnum looked back at the kitchen window, his eyes squeezed with fear. His pace quickened. He cleared the weapons' chambers and tossed them to the living room. Then he threw the flak jackets and bolt cutters.

He picked up Sergeant Leija's helmet, cradled it in his arms, then made the final dangerous move back to the living room, his fatigues indelibly stained with his friend's blood. There were no cheers to greet him. It was a brave act borne of horror, and the men seemed eager to go.

As Private Barnum gingerly wrapped the helmet in a towel, it tipped and blood spilled out.

11:15 a.m.

Sergeant B sat down on a chair outside the two apartments and used the radio to find out if they would be heading back to base or moving forward. He was told to stay put until after an airstrike on a building 500 yards away.

The platoon, looking for cover, returned to the Iraqis' apartment, where they found the family as they were before — on the couch, in the dark, around the heater.

Specialist Wilson continued the conversation he started before the gunshot two hours earlier. The young Iraqi man said again that the Iraqi Army had taken his father. "Will you come back to help?" he asked.

"We didn't take him," Specialist Wilson said. "The I.A. took him. If he didn't do anything wrong, he should be back."

The Iraqi family nodded, as if they had heard this before.

And now the airstrike was coming.

Sergeant B told the family that they should go into a back room for safety. He asked if they wanted to take the heater with them (they did not), and he reminded everyone to keep their mouths open to protect their inner ears against the airstrike's shockwave.

A boom, then another even louder explosion hit, shaking dust from the walls. One of blasts came from a mortar shell that hit the building, the soldier said. The family stayed, but for the Americans, it was time to go.

12:30 p.m.

Over the next few hours, the platoon combined sprints across open alleyways with bouts of rest in empty makeshift homes. Under what sounded like constant gunfire, the soldiers moved behind the Iraqi soldiers, staying close.

At one point, the Iraqis detained a man who they said had videos of himself shooting American soldiers. The Iraqi soldiers slapped him in the head as they walked him past.

About an hour later, a sniper wounded two Iraqi soldiers who were mingling outside a squat apartment like teenagers at a 7-11. Private Barnum wrapped their wounds with American bandages. He and the rest of the platoon had been inside, taking cover.

"Stay away from the windows," Sergeant B kept repeating. The point was clear: don't let it happen again. Don't fail.

4 p.m.

Downstairs in the lobby of a mostly abandoned high rise on Haifa Street, the sergeant and his men sat on the floor, exhausted. They were waiting for their Stryker to return so they could head back to base.

**In 14 hours, they had moved through a stretch of eight buildings on Haifa Street. They had been scheduled to clear 18. [At that rate, assuming many, many more platoons doing the work, they should be finished in 20 or 30 years.]**

Upstairs, Iraqi soldiers searched rooms and made themselves at home in empty apartments. Many were spacious, even luxurious, with elevators opening into wide hallways and grand living rooms splashed with afternoon sun.

Under Saddam Hussein, Haifa Street had been favored by Baath Party officials and wealthy foreigners. The current residents seemed to have fled in an instant; in one apartment, a full container of shaving cream was left in the bathroom. In that apartment's living room, a band of Iraqi soldiers settled in, relaxing on blue upholstered couches and listening to a soccer game on a radio they found in a closet.

They looked comfortable, like they were waiting to be called to dinner.

Sergeant B and Specialist Woollis, meanwhile, talked about what they would eat when they got back to their homes in California. The consensus was chili dogs and burgers.

Sergeant B also said he missed his 13-year-old son, who was growing up without him, playing football, learning to become a man with an absentee father.

After 17 years in the Army, he said, he was thinking that maybe his family had put up with enough.

“I don’t see how you can do this,” he said, “and not be damaged.”

A few hours later, the word came in: Sergeant Leija had died.

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## **U.S. Humvee Blown Up In Albu Hatim; Casualties Not Announced**

Jan. 29 (Xinhua)

A roadside bomb went off near a U.S. patrol in the Albu Hatim area in the southwest of Falluja, damaging a U.S. Humvee, according to the source.

It was not clear whether the U.S. troops sustained any casualty by the blast, the source said, adding that the U.S. troops sealed off the area.

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### **REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



US soldiers inspect the scene following a car bomb explosion in Baghdad, Nov. 12, 2006, that killed two and injured six Iraqis. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

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## **SOMALIA WAR REPORTS**

# This One Ain't Over Either

1.29.07 Wall St. Journal

The Somali government [translation: the collaborators installed by Bush] blamed Mogadishu violence on ousted Islamists after two police stations were attacked.

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## TROOP NEWS

### GET THE MESSAGE?



Iraq Veterans Against The War call for U.S. troops to pull out of Iraq as thousands of anti-war protesters march around the U.S. Capitol in Washington, January 27, 2007. REUTERS/Joshua Roberts (UNITED STATES)

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**Iraq Veterans Condemn The  
Occupation:  
“Our Presence Will Always Inflamm  
Insurgency”**

# **“The People Are Fighting For Their Country”**

## **“Military Occupation Is Not, Will Not, And Can Never, Benefit The People Of Iraq”**

January 26, 2007 By Jessica Zamiara, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

BURLINGTON, Vt.--Approximately 130 people packed the City Hall auditorium January 19 for “Bring the Troops Home Now!” a panel discussion featuring Iraq Veterans Against the War members Drew Cameron and Matt Howard; Burlington Mayor and Progressive Party member Bob Kiss; state Sen. Ginny Lyons; and International Socialist Organization member Helen Scott.

**Cameron and Howard both received standing ovations after telling their stories of the U.S. military’s insufficient support of troops at war and at home, and of their personal transformations into antiwar activists.**

Howard, a two-tour veteran of Iraq, said his time spent in the Middle East was “chaotic from the first second.”

**Speaking of the escalating Iraqi resistance, he commented, “Our presence will always inflame insurgency. The people are fighting for their country.”**

Helen Scott spoke of the connections between U.S. imperialist aims and oil corporation greed in the Middle East, pointing out the hypocritical history of the United States’ involvement in Iraq.

**Drew Cameron summed up the sentiment in the room when he stated, “Military occupation is not, will not, and can never, benefit the people of Iraq.”**

To hear these words come from a veteran upped the morale in the room tenfold. That morale continued through to the next day where, in Montpelier, Vt., approximately 350 people marched from the City Hall to the Vermont state house.

Speakers at the rally included Cameron and Howard, as well as Marine Sgt. Liam Madden, who celebrated his last day as an active duty soldier by calling for his brothers and sisters to come home now and bring an end to this brutal occupation.

As Matt Howard stated, “We can’t win a crime, we can only stop it.”

**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 VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR

## BENEFIT HAPPY HOUR

Come support your local chapter of IVAW and hear about the amazing work we are doing to bring the troops home now!

### ★ WHEN

**Sunday, February 18th 5pm~Midnight**  
(President's Day Weekend)

### ★ WHERE

**Rocky Sullivan's at 129 Lexington. 212-725-3871**  
Between 28th & 29th St., a block away from the 6 train.

### ★ ADMISSION

**Donation of \$15** at the door includes happy hour prices all night.

### ★ PROGRAM

- **John McDonagh** Host of **Radio Free Eirean** and periodic veterans program on **WBAL**.
- **Iraq veterans** speak out.
- Iraqi testimonial read by a member of **Adalah-NY Middle East Crisis Committee**.
- Political comedy - **Randy Credico** and others.
- **Music** at 8pm.



IVAW.ORG

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[Thanks to Justice For Gordon Gentle, who sent this in. Rose Gentle's son was killed in Iraq, and she has dedicated herself to campaigning for the immediate withdrawal of all occupation troops from Iraq. T]

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## **A “Groundswell Of Activism In Support Of Antiwar Veterans And Especially Active-Duty Soldiers Who Want To Resist The War”**

January 26, 2007 Socialist Worker, Editorial [Excerpts

During the Vietnam War, the Tet Offensive at the beginning of 1968 proved to most people that the U.S. was losing, but the U.S. establishment--both Democrats and Republicans--continued to concoct “new ways forward,” usually involving an escalation or spreading of the war, for years afterward, all in the face of increasing public opposition.

**The U.S. was eventually forced out of Vietnam, but only after the scale and character of the protests--most importantly, within the military itself--became impossible for the politicians to defy.**

**The way ahead is being shown by the groundswell of activism in support of antiwar veterans and especially active-duty soldiers who want to resist the war.**

Antiwar groups everywhere can find ways to aid these struggles--and reach out to wider groups of people who want to show their opposition.

In the process, opponents of the Iraq war will be confronted by its connections to the larger U.S. "war on terror"--whether in the form of the U.S.-led war on Afghanistan, or Washington's support for the Israeli war on the Palestinian people, or racist scapegoating of Muslims and Arabs felt here at home.

**No one in Washington can be trusted to end the war on Iraq.**

**What matters is the stand we all take--against war and empire.**

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



**FreakingNews.com**

There's always some way to work out the problems.

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!

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## **Petraeus' Cluster Fuck Coming Apart Before It Starts:**

# **Equipment For “Surge” Troops Missing; Troops “Short Thousands Of Vehicles, Armor Kits And Other Equipment” “We Don’t Have The (Armor) Kits, And We Don’t Have The Trucks” Deployed Units Have “Shortages Of Specific Ranks And Job Skills”**

**Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, the new top U.S. commander in Iraq, has requested that additional combat brigades move into Iraq as quickly as possible. But accelerated deployments would mean less time for units to train and fill out their ranks.**

January 30, 2007 By Ann Scott Tyson, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

**Boosting U.S. troop levels in Iraq by 21,500 would create major logistical hurdles for the Army and Marine Corps, which are short thousands of vehicles, armor kits and other equipment needed to supply the extra forces, U.S. officials said.**

President Bush’s plan to send five additional U.S. combat brigades into Iraq has left the Army and Marines scrambling to ensure that the troops could be supported with the necessary armored vehicles, jamming devices, radios and other gear, as well as lodging and other logistics.

Trucks are in particularly short supply. For example, the Army would need 1,500 specially outfitted -- known as "up-armored" -- 2 1/2 -ton and five-ton trucks in Iraq for the incoming units, said Lt. Gen. Stephen Speakes, the Army’s deputy chief of staff for force development.

"We don’t have the (armor) kits, and we don’t have the trucks," Speakes said in an interview. He said it will take the Army months, probably until summer, to supply and outfit the additional trucks. As a result, he said, combat units flowing into Iraq would have to share the trucks assigned to units now there, leading to increased use and maintenance.

Speakes said that although another type of vehicle -- the up-armored Humvee -- continues to be in short supply Army-wide, there would be "adequate" numbers for

incoming forces, and each brigade would receive 400 fully outfitted Humvees. But he said that to meet the need, the Army would have to draw down pre-positioned stocks that would then not be available for other contingencies.

**Still, U.S. commanders privately expressed doubts that Iraq-bound units would receive a full complement of Humvees. "It's inevitable that that has to happen, unless five brigades of up-armored Humvees fall out of the sky," one senior Army official said of the feared shortfall.**

He expects that some units would have to rely more heavily on Bradley Fighting Vehicles and tanks that, although highly protective, are intimidating and therefore less effective for many counterinsurgency missions.

Adding to the crunch, the U.S. government has agreed to sell 600 up-armored Humvees to Iraq this year for its security forces. Such sales "better not be at the expense of the American soldier or Marine," Speakes told defense reporters recently, saying U.S. military needs must take priority.

Living facilities in Iraq are another concern for the additional troops, who would be concentrated in Baghdad, Army officials said. The U.S. military has closed or handed over to Iraqi forces about half of the 110 bases established there after the U.S.-led invasion in 2003.

Decisions are being made on where to base incoming units in Baghdad, but it is likely that, at least in the short term, they would be placed in existing facilities, officials said.

**Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, the new top U.S. commander in Iraq, has requested that additional combat brigades move into Iraq as quickly as possible.**

**But accelerated deployments would mean less time for units to train and fill out their ranks.**

**Brigades are required to have an aggregate number of soldiers before deploying but may still face shortages of specific ranks and job skills.**

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## **F22's Electronic Surveillance Screwed In Baghdad**

1.29.07 Aviation Week & Space Technology

Essential electronic surveillance systems used by the F-22 may be too sensitive — overwhelmed by the density of U.S. and allied emitters — to be useful in the electronically polluted environment of Baghdad.

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

# Assorted Resistance Action

Jan. 29 (Xinhua) & Reuters

An Iraqi army soldier and a policeman were killed on Monday in separate incidents in the restive city of Fallujah, some 50 km west of Baghdad, local police source said.

"An Iraqi army soldier was shot dead at about 9:00 a.m. (0600 GMT) by sniper gunshot while manning a checkpoint in the western entrance of Fallujah City," the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

U.S. and Iraqi forces immediately blocked the checkpoint and cordoned off the surrounding area, he said.

In a separate incident, three guerrillas in a car showered a policeman with bullets and killed him near his house in the Mualimeen neighborhood in Fallujah, said the source.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded two policemen near Qahtan Square in Qadisiya district in southwestern Baghdad, police said.

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

## FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

# ***A Voice From The Past Answers A Lying Traitor: Cheney's Bullshit Is 35 Years Old: He Says Opposition To War Hurts Troops Morale***

1.25.07 Washington Post

Vice President Dick Cheney said that the administration has achieved "enormous successes" in Iraq but complained that critics and the media "are so eager to write off this effort or declare it a failure" that they are undermining U.S. troops in a war zone.

**MORE:**

## **In 1971, A Sailor In Vietnam Told The Vice-President To Fuck Off**

**“What does demoralize me is the feeling that I am being manipulated by the present Administration for political gains, and what is called “saving face.” And I find your rhetoric frequently the most demoralizing of all.”**

[From: THE SPITTING IMAGE: MYTH, MEMORY, AND THE LEGACY OF VIETNAM;  
by Jerry Lembcke; New York University Press; New York; 1998]

I am writing in response to your criticisms of war critics, which was printed in the Pacific Stars and Stripes Saturday, April 3, 1971. The Stars and Stripes gave the following account of your speech at the 25th anniversary meeting of the Veterans Administration Volunteer Service:

**“Vice President Spiro T. Agnew accused Indochina war critics Thursday of demoralizing American soldiers in the front lines and scorning those who return home..... They have been told almost daily... that they are fighting in a “worthless” and “immoral” cause.**

“Agnew... said American soldiers in no other war “have had to fight the lonely fight of the Vietnam veterans. . . . This encouragement has come to them — not from Hanoi Hannah, but from some of the leading members of the United States Senate, prestigious columnists and news commentators, academic figures, some church organizations as well as assorted radicals, draft card burners and street demonstrators.”

**“I am an Ensign in the U.S. Navy. I have been in Vietnam one month.**

**“In reference to the above quote .... I do feel that I am involved with a worthless and immoral cause, and I feel that we should get out of Vietnam now — totally.**

**“It does not demoralize me to hear United States Senators, prestigious columnists, etc. say this....**

**“In fact, it bolsters my faith in the American people to hear this....**

**“What does demoralize me is the feeling that I am being manipulated by the present Administration for political gains, and what is called “saving face.”**

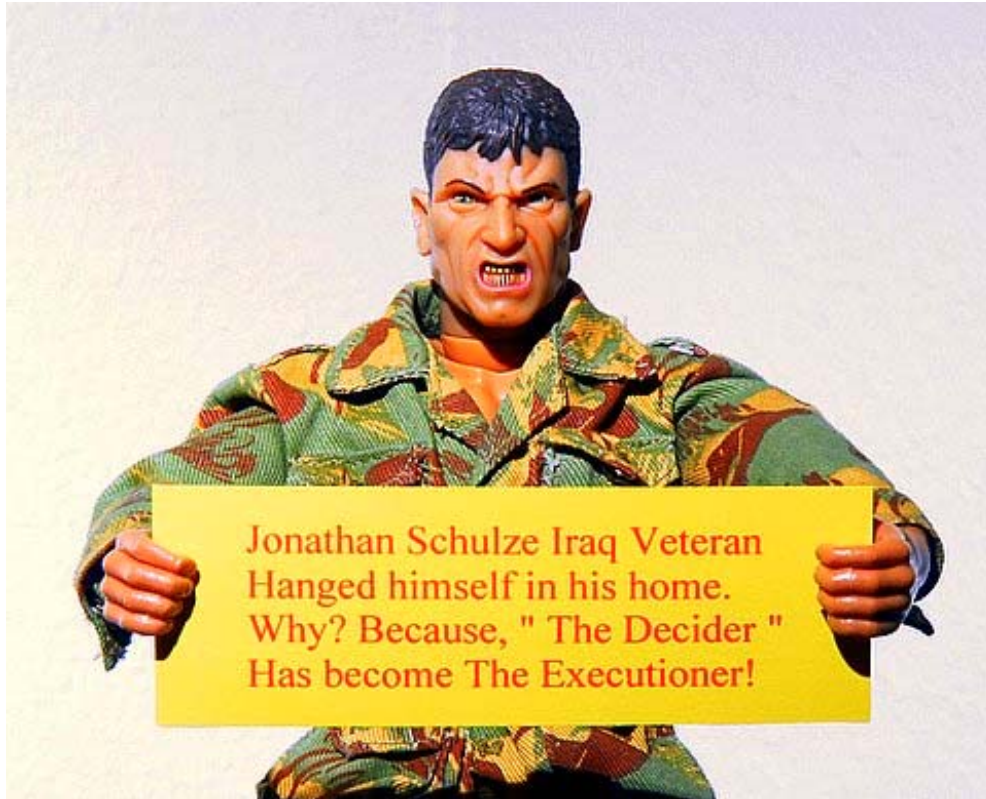
**“And I find your rhetoric frequently the most demoralizing of all.**

“An Open Letter to Spiro Agnew”  
Gene Powers  
ICC Republic of Vietnam  
Box 101 Code 31A  
FPO San Francisco 96626

April 10, 1971”

Gene Power’s “Open Letter to Spiro Agnew” was found in the records of the Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam (SMC), located in the State Historical Society Library in Madison, Wisconsin. The letter had been sent to the National Peace Action Coalition and forwarded to SMC. Pacific Stars and Stripes was a military newspaper that was widely available to soldiers throughout Southeast Asia during 11w Vietnam War.

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**IMPEACH BUSH FOR CRIMES AGAINST EVERYTHING**

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](mailto:hastiemike@earthlink.net)) T)

**“I Thought I Was Fighting For  
Justice...When All I Was**

# Fighting For Was Halliburton And Oil”

## Holding Congress’ Feet To The Fire- January 27th In DC

Back on the stage, the strongest statements of the anti-imperialist type came from the vets and military families, specifically the Iraq Veterans Against the War.

**"I thought I was fighting for justice...when all I was fighting for was Halliburton and oil” is the line I recall. Of course, it’s not new, but it had a particularly strong resonance that afternoon when spoken by a young man who has seen more than his share of bloodshed for reasons only the greediest of humanity could believe in.**

From: Ron Jacobs  
To: GI Special  
Sent: January 28, 2007

It was relatively early on Saturday the 27th of January when I got to the Mall in Washington DC. The bus ride from Asheville had been bearable--I even got a few hours of sleep. The early morning crowd was small--in fact it wasn't even a crowd; just a bunch of folks setting up tables and sound technicians fiddling with wires and knobs on stage. Oh yeah, there were a few police congregating as they do before an event sipping coffee and Philistine to their commander tell them what to do.

The weather was warming up to the eventual 55 degrees it would peak at that day. I chose a bench to sit on near 5th and Pennsylvania to watch the morning unfold.

By 10 o'clock the crowd had grown to at least thirty or forty thousand. One of the several squares that gravel foot paths divide the mall into was about one-half full.

Over the years I've figured out that each square holds about 100,000 people when they are packed in. Multiple newspapers were being distributed representing the multitude of views represented. Socialists to Stalinists to pray-for-peace groups. Left Democrats, libertarians and pacifists. The usual suspects and pretty much everyone with a smile on their face.

**By the time the speeches began around 11:00 one and a half squares were full of people. In other words, there were around 150,000 folks at the rally by then.**

And they continued to pour in from the subway stops and every single side street that feeds into the Mall. The speakers began with a few prayers and spiritual suggestions. From there they built to a finale from representatives of a number of antiwar veterans groups, Jesse Jackson and some movie actors, including Jane Fonda.



Delegations that chose to represent their towns and cities on their banners and signs included folks from Fulton County, PA, Tampa, FL, Des Moines, Detroit, MI, and Chicago, to name just a few.

Elderly couples walked with handmade signs while young children ran between their legs. Teens and young adults shared their message of peace not war through a variety of signs, colorful at times in design and sometimes even language. Multitudes of middle-aged men and women exchanged war stories from protests past while enjoying and appreciating the presence of the tens of thousands of people younger than themselves.

The politics from the stage were primarily from the left liberal side of the spectrum. Let's push the Democrats to keep their word was the general tone of the voices behind the microphone. Impeachment calls were also quite popular.

Occasionally the message was a little stronger, as in let's hold these suckers' feet to the fire. After all, we voted for them because we want them to end the war.

Among the anti-imperialists the conversation ranged from a probably correct cynical view that the Democrats would fail to produce anything but a series of non-binding resolutions to the view that even those resolutions would be so watered down that their intention would be unclear at best.

**Back on the stage, the strongest statements of the anti-imperialist type came from the vets and military families, specifically the Iraq Veterans Against the War.**

**"I thought I was fighting for justice...when all I was fighting for was Halliburton and oil" is the line I recall. Of course, it's not new, but it had a particularly strong resonance that afternoon when spoken by a young man who has seen more than his share of bloodshed for reasons only the greediest of humanity could believe in.**

And still the people kept coming from the subways and the streets.

As the organizers announced the logistics of the march I walked down to where the veterans groups and others were lining up to form its front lines. I joined thousands of people making their way to Third and Jefferson. The idea was to line up behind the front of the parade.

However, since there were so many people and such a small space for them to line up, the situation became confused. Police had closed off several parking lots and grassy areas near the march starting point for some reason known only to them. They patrolled the areas they had closed off with chain link and those yellow plastic ribbons they use with dogs.

Eventually, people took matters into their own hands and created other ways to join in the march without waiting.

As I waited, a woman walked by with a sign reading "Another Management Consultant for Peace." The reflecting pool had a thin layer of ice on it and hundreds of people sitting and standing around it as they wait for a place opens where they can join in the march.

**After about a half hour I made it into the march near the Senate Office Building. Hundreds of protesters were sitting on the balcony and stairs of the building and some had hung their banners there. Police sat nervously in their cars.**

Given the amount of confusion and the size of the crowds, it's too bad that the protest didn't take place on a work day. If it had, official Washington would have been shut down for a bit. That's something to think about.

I left the balcony of the Senate Office Building and headed further up the hill. It became apparent that the march route circled the Capitol. While I wandered in and out of a drum corps and dancers, I got into a conversation with a fellow marcher about the number of Dylan quotes I had seen on placards.

She then pointed to a banner that a group was carrying just ahead of our position that had the most relevant one of them all: "Come Senators, congressmen, please heed the call...." I nodded, wished her well, and walked on ahead, the next line of the song playing in my head..."Don't stand in the doorways, Don't block up the hall...."

I'm not sure why, but every other building after the Senate Office Building on the march route was guarded by police who refused to let people even get on the steps.

The Supreme Court Building had a group of folks dressed in prison jumpsuits performing a skit about Gitmo. Around the corner a Dixieland band played jazz and Pete Seeger songs.

**As I headed into the final stretch of my walk I looked at the quarter of a million people all around me and remembered the words of one of the speakers (and I paraphrase): "This can not be the culmination of our efforts, it must be the beginning."**

**Amen, I thought, Amen.**

**After all, it's the movement that has put people in the streets and every other pressure point in our fragile republic that forced Congress to even consider challenging Mr. Bush's escalation.**

**It also that movement that's going to get the troops out of there.**

**The focus was on the Capitol January 27th.**

**It will be on the Pentagon on March 17th.**

**MORE:**

# “People Spread Out Beyond The Barriers The Washington Police Had Set Up To Contain Us”

January 29, 2007 Jeeni Criscenzo [Excerpts]

Let's get this straight, right up front - I'm fed up with the flat out liar, liar press underreporting the numbers of people who were part of the rally and march in Washington, DC today. Tens of thousands??!! - What is this, a new way to count? If there were over 500,000 people gathered in the mall, I suppose you can truthfully say that there were "tens of thousands" - like FIFTY tens of thousands!!! Sure, any number over 20,000 can accurately be called "tens of thousands". It's become a joke - this refusal to give a real count on the numbers who participate in these peace marches.

**Our representatives in Congress know about it. I don't know if this ever happened before - where HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS of American citizens literally encircled the capitol building. It was an activist surge of monumental proportions.**

I was there, in the heart of it and as a seasoned demonstrator I noted unique aspects of this event that filled me with hope.

Maybe it was the huge turnout of young people that gave this march a different feeling than any previous demonstrations. I'd estimate that close to half of the people around me were under 30 and that lent a different energy.

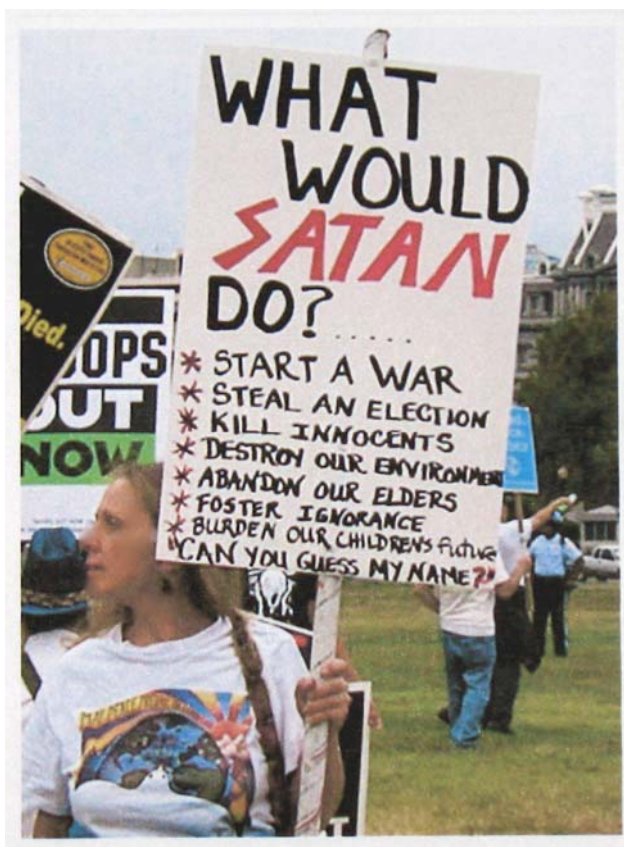
**There was a more fluid nature to the event - it felt more like a swarm than a march. People spread out beyond the barriers the Washington police had set up to contain us. Thousands morphed into spectators by leaving the march to claim turf along the Senate and House office buildings.**

No one was obnoxious or destructive - they simply took over the "People's House" with their presence. They sat on the steps, perched on the walls, stood triumphantly along the sidewalks as we surged by.

My friend Barbara who was serving as a marshall at the front of the march tells me that the original plan had been to have the marchers process up half of the street on Constitution Ave. and then make a U-turn back on the opposite side of the street.

Maybe if there really were only "tens of thousands", this plan would have worked. But a surge of half a million people doesn't make U-turns! Apparently Congresswoman Maxine Waters told the police to remove the buses blockading us from completing our trek around the capitol complex and the police complied. Compared to the wall of riot-gear clad police that I've encountered in past demonstrations from Miami to Boston, I wasn't even conscious of a major police presence. I'm certain they were there, but they were not in your face.

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[Thanks To Dennis Serdel, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

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

### **NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

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

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

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or

send to [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org):. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential. Same to unsubscribe.

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

### **GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out**

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<http://imagineaworldof.blogspot.com/>; <http://qi-special.iraq-news.de>;

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

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