

GI SPECIAL 5B21:

The Real Flag In Vietnam And Iraq



The Real Flag in Vietnam and Iraq

**This is what I served for in Vietnam.
This was my god-damn mission.**

**When I was hospitalized in 1980,
in a padded cell, this was my
straightjacket.**

**This is the truth I kept buried
for so many wasted years of my life.**

**When I was in that padded cell,
I remembered the teenage boys
who died for the god-damn Rich.
We were all shot in the back by
our own government 6,000 miles
away in Washington, D.C.**

Betrayal was the bullet that murdered

thousands of us when we came home
from the Nam.

Iraq will be exactly the same.

Shrapnel in the heart,
at close range.

I was blind, but now I see.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
February 18, 2007

Photo 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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Resistance Attack OVERRUNS U.S. Combat Post In Tarmiyah; Two U.S. Soldiers Killed, 17 Wounded

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

19 Feb 2007 BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) & Reuters & Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070219-13

Insurgents staged a bold daylight assault against a U.S. combat post Monday - first striking with a suicide car bombing, then firing on soldiers pinned down in a former Iraqi police station.

At least two Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers were killed and 17 wounded, the military said.

The head-on attack north of Baghdad was notable for both its tactics and target.

Insurgents have mostly used hit-and-run ambushes, roadside bombs or mortars on U.S. troops and avoided direct assaults on fortified military compounds to avoid U.S. firepower.

It also appeared to fit a pattern emerging among the militants: trying to hit U.S. forces harder outside the capital rather than confront them on the streets during a massive American-led security operation.

"Insurgent forces executed a coordinated attack" is how the U.S. military statement described the raid on the outpost in Tarmiyah, about 30 miles north of Baghdad. It added that a car bombing began the fight, but military authorities declined to give further details.

Witnesses and local authorities offered a fuller picture. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to media and feared reprisals.

According to their accounts, at least one car - and possibly others - rigged with explosives was driven on a kamikaze mission at dawn into the concrete outer barriers around the Army base, a former Iraqi police station taken over by American troops late last year.

The blasts ignited stored fuel, they said. Soon, parts of the base were ablaze and under gunfire, but the size of the insurgent force was unclear.

It also was not known whether the militants suffered casualties.

U.S. helicopters evacuated wounded soldiers from the compound - located in the center of the town of more than 20,000 residents - while the fight raged, according to the local accounts. By nightfall, U.S. troops had cordoned off streets around the post.

Residents said the attack may have been prompted by fears that U.S. forces would begin house-to-house searches through the town, which has not been considered a stronghold of militant activity.

Three U.S. Troops Killed By IED Southwest Of Baghdad

19 February 2007 By VOA News

The U.S. military says three Army soldiers were killed Monday in a roadside bombing, southwest of Baghdad.

Marine Killed In Anbar

19 February 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory
RELEASE No. 20070219-06

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Marine assigned to Multi-National Force-West was killed Feb. 17 while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar Province.

Another Marine Killed In Anbar

19 February 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory
RELEASE No. 20070219-18

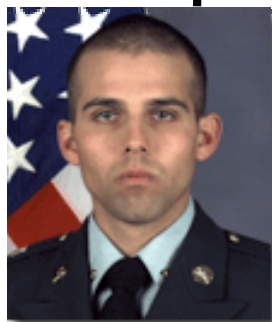
CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Marine assigned to Multi-National Force-West was killed Feb. 18 while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar Province.

Soldier Killed In Anbar

19 February 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory
RELEASE No. 20070219-17

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Soldier assigned to Multi-National Force-West was killed Feb. 18 while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar Province.

Family Says Las Cruces Soldier Dies In Iraq



Las Cruces Sun-News

02/19/2007 LAS CRUCES, N.M. (AP)

A 27-year-old Las Cruces soldier has died in Iraq, but his father says the family doesn't have details yet.

Army Sgt. Matthew Apuan died of a head wound. He is the 27th New Mexican killed while serving in Iraq.

The soldier's father, Charles Apuan, says he was notified late Sunday by a military chaplain. He says he hopes for more details later in the week.

The elder Apuan said his son was a tank gunner with the First Cavalry Division based at Fort Hood, Texas, and was on his second tour of duty in Iraq.

He was stationed at Camp Falcon on Baghdad's south side but soldiers recently were temporarily deployed to various areas.

Apuan graduated from Mayfield High School in 1998.

He joined the Army in March 2001.

“If The U.S. Military Cannot Use Their Helicopters To Pinpoint The Pockets Of Resistance, Their Strategy To Defeat The Insurgency Is In Real Trouble”

[What, and it wasn't "in real trouble" before this? In what dream world might that be?]

Feb 19, 2007 AP [Excerpts]

At least seven U.S. helicopters have crashed or been forced down by hostile fire since Jan. 20, killing 28 troops and civilians.

The New York Times reported Sunday that in several of the downings, multiple weapons systems had included shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles, heavy machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and unguided rockets that can't be diverted by American helicopters' anti-heat-seeking flares.

Presumably, by firing such a range of weapons at the same time, insurgents could confuse pilots and leave them more vulnerable to getting hit.

At a congressional hearing in Washington, Gen. James Conway, the head of the Marines Corps, said the Marine CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter that went down Feb. 7 had not properly released its anti-missile defensive measures. There could be several reasons for that, including defective machinery.

But it could also indicate that insurgents used a type of missile the aircraft's defenses were not primed for.

Whether the insurgents have new weapons or not, their ability to bring down the U.S. helicopters shows “resilience and efficiency,” and poses a new challenge, said Mohammad Kadri Said, a retired general now at the Cairo-based Al Ahram Center for Strategic Studies.

“If they (the U.S. military) cannot use their helicopters to pinpoint the pockets of resistance, their strategy to defeat the insurgency is in real trouble,” he said.

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO
COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS
EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS
TIME, EXCEPT THAT A TRAITOR WHO LIVES
IN THE WHITE HOUSE WANTS YOU THERE**

That is not a good enough reason



2.16.07: A US soldier takes cover in the shovel of a bulldozer during a sustained gunfight in northern Baghdad. (AFP/File/David Furst)

Notes From A Lost War:

**Resistance Gunfire Answers
Reporters Question**

February 19, 2007 By KIM GAMEL, AP

SAMARRA, Iraq - The Humvees set out from the forward operating base, forcing cars and trucks to the side of the road to avoid car bombs. We head south to Samarra.

We rolled past men wearing dishdashas, traditional Arab robes, staring quietly from storefronts _ where everything from wedding gowns to tires to bananas, cauliflower and radishes were on display.

It was Saturday _ market day _ and the streets were bustling. I felt an urge to ask the driver to pull over so I could check out some deep red rugs with intricate traditional patterns. Western reporters in Iraq are largely confined to heavily guarded compounds and armored cars, and rarely venture out onto the street.

But we were on a schedule. So I settled for leaning back _ at least as far as my body armor would let me _ and taking in the sights of this ancient city in the Sunni heartland north of Baghdad.

We drove past ducks paddling around a marshy pond. Then we crossed a bridge spanning the Tigris River, on top of one of two dams that help irrigate one of the country's main agricultural regions. The dam was protected by heavy security.

On our left was the concrete shell of a former private hospital. It's off a short secured stretch of road that the U.S. troops here call the Green Zone - after its larger and more famous namesake, the heavily fortified area in Baghdad that houses the Iraqi government and the American embassy.

The commander, who acted as our tour guide, told me over my headphones to look forward. We were approaching the ruins of the Askariya shrine, one of Shiite Islam's holiest places. It was bombed a year ago, reducing its glorious golden dome to a pile of rubble. A second blue-and-gold dome at the site was untouched. It, and a golden minaret, still sparkled against the blue sky. The compound is surrounded by a high tiled wall.

Lt. Col. Viet X. Luong, the commander of the 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, offered to lend me his interpreter so I could talk with some Iraqis on the street. I eagerly climbed out of the tan armored vehicle to follow them into a convenience store: here was my chance to spend a few minutes outside my cocoon of armor and security.

But talking to ordinary Iraqis on the street is no simple task.

We approached the shop's cashier.

But he politely declined to answer questions, putting his hand to his chest in apology and saying that he didn't want to be seen associating with Americans. That, he explained, would make him a target for the insurgents hiding on the outskirts of the city.

It told him, through the interpreter, that I understood the situation and didn't want to cause him any problems.

A tall man wearing a black traditional Arab robe and a red-and-white checkered headdress stopped outside the store and agreed to talk to us. I asked him about the situation in Samarra, 60 miles north of Baghdad.

As he started to answer, we heard a burst of machine gun fire. A bullet from a sniper struck a pile of bricks in front of us. We all ran back into the store.

After about 10 minutes of sporadic fire, the shooting finally stopped.

A little girl playing in the street nearby was lightly wounded by the gunfire _ there was blood on her pink jumpsuit. The soldiers gave her first aid along with a stuffed animal and candy to cheer her up.

It was a minor attack, the kind that seldom finds its way into the news. But it's an example of the violence Iraqis face every day.

Before we left, I glanced back at the man I almost got to interview about life in Samarra.

He nodded and gave me a sardonic smile, as if to say: You have your answer.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Iowa Soldier Dies In Afghanistan



Travis Vaughn

February 19, 2007 By WILLIAM PETROSKI, REGISTER STAFF WRITER

U.S. Army Spc. Travis Vaughn of Cedar Falls was among eight American soldiers killed Sunday in a military helicopter crash in Afghanistan, family members and friends confirmed Monday.

He was the 52nd person with Iowa ties to have died in Iraq or Afghanistan since March 2003.

“He was a real solid kid,” said the Rev. John Fuller, pastor of Prairie Lakes Church in Cedar Falls, who learned of Vaughn’s death Sunday morning. Fuller married Vaughn and his wife, Heather, in an Iowa ceremony two years ago. The couple had lived near the Fort Campbell, Ky., military base.

“He came into Heather’s life and he became Christian. Heather had a son and he really took on the father’s role. He was a good father and a good husband,” Fuller said.

Vaughn was the son of Christine Vaughn and Brad Vaughn, according to the Waterloo Courier. His in-laws, Rod and Elaine Reinertson of Waterloo, headed to the Fort Campbell area to be with their daughter after they learned of his death.

“They are still in the pretty numb stage,” Pastor Fuller said Monday. Funeral arrangements are pending, but will be held at Prairie Lakes, a Baptist-affiliated church, after the soldier’s body is returned to Iowa, he said.

Vaughn was a 1999 graduate of Cedar Falls High School, school officials said. His stepmother, Kandi Vaughn of Reinbeck, told the Associated Press that Travis had grown up in Cedar Falls and had joined the Army about three years ago. His stepson, Taylin, is 5 years old.

“It’s like a bad dream” she said. “You say a little prayer for the people you see, the pictures you see on TV and you say a little prayer for the family. Now it is us.”

Kandi Vaughn said that Travis had loved to tear his toys apart when he was a child, and he could do the same with the Army’s Chinook helicopter.

“He was really a good kid. He really changed his life around when he decided to go into the Army. He just gave it his all,” she said.

Resistance Captures Bakwa; Collaborator Police Run Away

02/19/07 AMIR SHAH, AP & RTTNews

Afghan police abandoned a volatile western district Monday a day after a roadside bomb killed four officers - the second time this month the government has lost control of a town in the area.

Gen. Abdul Wahab Walizada, the Afghan army's western corps commander, said police had left Farah province's small Bakwa town Monday, but would not say whether Taliban militants in the area had taken control.

Baryalaj Khan, spokesman for the Farah police chief, said they had lost contact with police in Bakwa since 11:30 a.m.

The police forces fled into nearby forests when the Taliban insurgents entered the town, the governor said.

The retreat followed Sunday's bombing of a car carrying the police chief on his return from destroying poppy fields. He was unharmed, but four officers in the vehicle were killed and two wounded when a roadside bomb hit the vehicle carrying them.

Resistance Attacks Occupation Convoy With Heavy Weapons Inside Kandahar City For First Time; “Several Armoured Vehicles Were Damaged, Forcing The Convoy To Stop Again”

2007/02/19 BBC NEWS

Insurgents have launched their heaviest attack to date on the southern Afghan city of Kandahar, targeting a Canadian army convoy. None of the NATO-led forces were hurt, but the Canadians say their fire killed an Afghan policeman and a civilian in clashes that followed.

Taleban forces said they carried out the attack.

Recently, insurgents including the Taleban have staged several attacks in Kandahar but this is believed to be the first time they have deployed heavy weapons in the city.

The BBC's Charles Haviland in Kabul says that if this is true, it marks a new and bolder type of attack inside the city which is the Islamic militants' traditional heartland.

The insurgents struck shortly before midnight using rocket-propelled grenades and small arms to attack a Canadian convoy which was crossing the city.

A Canadian military spokesman told the BBC several armoured vehicles were damaged, forcing the convoy to stop again.

It then came under renewed small arms fire and the spokesman said two local people were killed by Canadian retaliatory fire.

The Taliban said they had killed some of the NATO forces, but the spokesman denied this.

The deaths of ordinary Afghans at the hands of foreign forces have fuelled resentment in the south of the country, our correspondent says.

Only on Saturday two others died in similar circumstances. also in Kandahar, he adds.

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Marine Cpl. Thomas E. Saba at the Moravian Cemetery, Feb. 16, 2007 in the Staten Island borough of New York. Saba died Feb 7, 2006 when the helicopter he was flying in crashed while supporting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

**“After My Experiences In The
War, I Realized That There Is No
Enemy”**

“People Like To Say That People Against The War Don’t Support The Troops, But I Think They Do More Than Anybody Else”

February 2, 2007 By ELIZABETH SCHULTE, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

SIGNIFICANTLY, ANTIWAR veterans had a strong presence at the demonstration, [in Washington DC January 27] reflecting increased organizing in recent months, including among active-duty soldiers.

“What you’re seeing is the outgrowth of what four years of war and imperialism breeds within society, and that’s resistance and dissent,” said Jonathan Hutto, who is one of the originators of the Appeal for Redress petition campaign for active-duty military personnel. [And who, by the way, is a member of the United States Navy.]

“In the spirit of what the GI movement was during the Vietnam War, that dissent is now growing within the active ranks of the military.

“The only way we’re going to be able to stop this war is when those men and women who are called to serve again begin to question, begin to probe, begin to criticize, begin to resist, begin to stop the war machine.”

This was the first antiwar march for Adrienne Kinne, a former member of the Army.

“I was really hoping with the Democrats taking Congress that Bush would finally realize that he needed to make some changes,” said Kinne, who joined Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) on the day of march. “But the changes he’s making are in the completely wrong direction.”

“I just can’t sit back and not do anything anymore...I always thought that these antiwar marches were a little bit too ‘out there’ for me, so I wasn’t really sure whether or not they were appropriate, but I definitely think this is awesome, a great demonstration of people supporting the troops.

“People like to say that people against the war don’t support the troops, but I think they do more than anybody else.”

Like Kinne, Timothy Baker joined the IVAW during the protest.

Baker just got out of the Army after serving two tours in Iraq--one for 16 months and another for 12.

“It’s a wonderful experience just to be a part of this, to be a part of history, to say I spoke out when something needed to be said,” Baker said.

Many protesters were thinking about how to put the pressure on Democrats to put up a real fight against Bush.

“The way we look at it is that Congress can’t oppose the war and fund it at the same time,” said Larry Syverson of Military Families Speak Out (MFSO), who has three sons in the military. “The November elections showed a mandate against the war, but Bush is ignoring it. Now we have a Democratic Congress--they have the purse strings--so we’re turning our backs on the White House and marching on Congress.”

In Los Angeles, 3,000 people gathered for a protest that marched from Democratic Party headquarters to the Federal Building. The rally ended with Vietnam-era soldier-activist Ron Kovic, musician Tom Morello and antiwar activist Cindy Sheehan. “This is just the beginning,” said Kovic. “You all will take this country back!”

Hart Vigés of the IVAW served a year in Iraq with the 82nd Airborne Division. “After my experiences in the war, I realized that there is no enemy,” said Vigés. “The humanity that is lost in war has to be gained back.”

In San Diego, 2,000 demonstrators marched downtown on January 27 in the largest antiwar gathering in this city since the U.S. invasion almost four years ago.

Demonstrators included many who were new to antiwar protests, veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, along with long-time activists.

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

Liars At Work; “There Is Enough Present Funding To Redeploy Back To The US”

February 19, 2007 Veterans For Peace [Excerpts]

There are those who claim to end funding for the war will undercut the troops and place them in greater danger. This reasoning is flawed thinking.

They are undercut by a failed policy.

They are undercut by the lack of a clear and achievable mission.

They are undercut by asking them to continue to occupy a country the U.S. should have never invaded.

They were undercut by the half truths and out right lies that sent them to Iraq in 2003.

There is enough present funding to redeploy back to the US.

Bring Them Home Now, and Take Care of Them When They Get Here!

Widow Of KIA Says “And Then I Go To The Funerals Of The Local Guys And I'm Like, This Is Just Stupid”



Marilyn Adams talks about the loss of her husband, Pennsylvania National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Brent Adams, while in the family room in Wexford, Pa., Feb. 1, 2007.

'I'm torn,' she said about the war in Iraq. 'Should we finish the job? And then I go to the funerals of the local guys and I'm like, this is just stupid ... I don't think we're going to finish it there. I don't think there's a finishing point. They're getting more efficient at killing us, that's a direct quote from the president.' (AP Photo/Keith Srakocic)

YOU AND YOUR BLOOD BRUTHER GEORGE BUSH. ONE DAY YOUS WIL PAY



Its not
MY
sons
blood
on my
hands
IS IT ?

[This is a message to Americans from Rose Gentle. Her son Gordon was killed in Iraq. She leads a campaign to bring all the Scots and other troops home from Iraq, now. Her words carry more weight, and contain more truth, than 5000 pages of bullshit from the politicians. T]

From: Rose Gentle
To: GI Special
Sent: February 17, 2007 4:15 AM
Subject: TONY BLIAR

**NO ITS OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS BLOOD
BUT YOU ARE THE ONE THAT IS TO BLAME FOR THAT**

**YOU WILL BE REMBERD FOR THE KILLING OF 132 BRITISH TROOPS AND ALL
THE INICENT PEOPLE OF IRAQ.**

**YOU AND YOUR BLOOD BRUTHER GEORGE BUSH. ONE DAY YOUS WIL PAY
FOR THIS AND THE FAMILIES WILL GET JUSTICE,**

I HOPE THIS DAY WILL BE SOON. AND I PRAY NIGHT AND DAY FOR THIS.

**MILITRY FAMILIES IN GB ARE GOING TO CAMP OUT SIDE YOU HOUSE NEXT
WEEK MR BLAIR SO WE WILL SEE YOU THERE.**

**ROSE GENTLE
CO FOUNDER OF MILITRY FAMILIES
JUSTICEFORGORDONGENTLE@YAHOO.CO.UK**

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action



A destroyed police vehicle after a bomb attacks in Baghdad, February 19, 2007.
REUTERS/Thaier al-Sudani

2.19.07 Reuters

Two policemen were killed while four others were wounded after the convoy of Iraqi Oil Minister Hussain al-Shahristani was hit by a roadside bomb in Baiji, police said.

In Baghdad's southern suburb of Zaafaraniya, twin roadside bombs targeting a police patrol killed three policemen.

To the north of Baghdad, a car bomber targeting the house of a local army chief killed five people, including a soldier, and wounded 10. One car bomb hit the blast walls outside his house, then a bomber blew up his truck near the house, witnesses said.

In Ramadi, capital of Anbar, two bombers killed 11 people when they targeted the house of Sattar al-Buzayi, a tribal leader who has led a government-backed effort to fight insurgents.

A policeman was killed and three others wounded when explosives inside a booby-trapped house they were searching detonated in the northern Iraqi town of Tal Afar, police said.

Guerrillas attacked a police checkpoint on Sunday, killing three and wounding four near Tikrit, 175 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

The governor of central Salahaddin province escaped unharmed after a roadside bomb targeting his convoy killed three of his bodyguards and wounded four, Governor Mohammad Hamoud al-Qaisi told reporters.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Declared Bill Ehrhart, a marine in Vietnam:

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

"We Are In The Trenches That Will One Day Be Your Graves"

By Katherine GY, The Military Project

**How could I mourn my father and refuse to care
for my brothers and sisters?**

**Orange you glad that you caused me pain
and multiplied in me the anger of Thomas Paine?
You're party to capital gain.
I reverse what has been ingrained--your shame.**

I refuse to forget what you should regret...and refuse to admit.

**We are in the trenches that will one day be your graves...
get used to it. Breathe the poison,**

and my enjoyment.

"I Am An Infantry Veteran"

**“All Soldiers Swore To Protect Our
Constitution ‘Against ALL Enemies,
Both Foreign AND Domestic’”
“Today Our Worst Enemy Is Domestic,
And Time Is Running Out”**

An Open Letter To Congress,
from a Concerned Citizen
by Ward Reilly
2-18-2007

Dear Members of Congress,

Greetings from a common United States citizen.

I am an Infantry veteran, having volunteered for the military from 1971 to 1974, and I grew up during the Viet Nam era, the most tumultuous time in our history, until now.

I write to you today in regards to the elections on November 7, 2006, and about how you must now save our nation.

On election day, we, the voting citizens of your nation, your boss, ordered you to stop the war in Iraq, and to do it now. We handed you our power, THE power, to do a job.

My dear members of Congress, our nation, and indeed the whole world, knows what we elected you to do.

We want you to stop the war in Iraq. Period. Not after you debate with the President about sending MORE troops to Iraq. Not after President Bush is gone. NOW.

"We The People" have asked you in Congress, those that have chosen to be our employees, to stop this war in Iraq. It is not up for debate. It's called "Democracy". It's what happens when WE, the boss, tell you, our employees, what to do.

We voted the war machine out.

This is not a political matter...oh, how I wish this were only a political matter...but it is far more serious than just sleazy U.S. politics. We, as a nation, have committed war crimes of the foulest kind, and we continue to commit genocide as long as our military is in Iraq.

The way to end it is simple. Cease fire, troops out, money in. Apologize to the world, and repair what we have destroyed.

We have allowed a handful of men, the smallest of the small, to manipulate our nation into war against a completely innocent nation. Egomaniacs with full bank accounts, and blood on their hands.

"Oooooops" can NEVER be our foreign policy when it comes to warfare....and this war was no accident...it was planned long before 9-11.

What we on the street see in our country today is this;

President Bush, V.P. Cheney, Secretary Rumsfeld, Security Advisor Rice, and Secretary Powell, telling 237 choreographed lies and misstatements in the fall of 2002, and the winter of 2003, in order to turn this country against Iraq. Lies which were all documented by Rep. Henry Waxman, in his "Iraq On The Record" House document from March 16, 2004.

We see the identity of a CIA agent exposed by Bush and Cheney, a felony.

We see Bush and Cheney spying on our own citizens without warrants. A felony.

We see the kidnapping and torture of people that were neither tried nor convicted of anything. A serious felony by U.S. law.

We see innocent U.S. citizens imprisoned for being Muslims.

"Guilty until proven innocent" is not the policy I swore to protect when I was an infantryman, nor the laws you have all sworn to protect.

We see a 5-year, no-bid-contract to a company that Dick Cheney still gets income from, a felony.

We see "free speech zones" for those that speak out, and we see protestors being arrested and investigated for opposing the war.

We see a proud Iraqi nation that has not had regular water, sewage, electricity, food, or medicine, for 4 years.

We see a 100,000-man mercenary army (that we are paying for) in Iraq, besides our 140,000 regular soldiers... so what we really have in Iraq now is a quarter-million man army.

We see our Bill of Rights in the toilet, and those are rights that every U.S. soldier that ever gave up his or her life in combat, died for. And combat deaths come hard.

It is time for "Lady Justice" to uncover her breast.

We, as a nation, must now talk about the murder of innocent Iraqi citizens, and the murder of our own U.S. soldiers, sent to fight under false pretense.

None of those deaths would have happened if the last Congress had done it's job, which is, in part, to insure that "Oooooops" isn't our official foreign policy position AFTER we have launched a preventive war.

I suggest to you all to read and review the Constitution. Please learn what the Constitution and the Bill Of Rights mean, and protect them.

Under no circumstances do the President and Vice President have the authority to rewrite our laws.

Those two officials, our employees, must not be allowed to get away with starting a war with deception and lies, which they did.

If Bush and Cheney are allowed to finish their terms and NOT face justice for their crimes, then our nation is gone. Plain and simple.

If Bush and Cheney are allowed to stroll off into the sunset in 2009, we will have shown the world that we don't care about anything but ourselves, and that the U.S. system of freedom, equality, and democracy, does not exist.

Congress, you can save our country by doing the right thing, or you can seal our doom, by showing the world that our "democratic vote" means nothing, by allowing this disaster in Iraq to continue.

I despair to think what the world will do to us for doing what we have done in the Middle East, if we don't stop it now. My children deserve to not be hated wherever they may go, because of the actions of our politicians, or for simply being United States citizens.

On the eve of the bombing of Baghdad, President Bush said, and I quote, "First, we will demonstrate to the people of Iraq, and the world, that the United States, and the coalition, aspire to liberate, NOT TO OCCUPY IRAQ." That is why the Iraqis allowed Bush/Cheney to do what we did, in the beginning of the "war". They believed him, as did many in this country.

"Not to occupy Iraq". Oooops.

Congress, know this; a war can never be "WON" when war-crimes were committed, and lies were told, in order to start that war.

The Iraq War was lost before it ever started, because of the ideology involved. Just ask the English about the American Revolution, or the Germans about WWII. Powerful militaries, invading innocent nations.

Congress, PLEASE do your job, and stop this war. We ask you, and we order you.

"Oooooops" has meant death and destruction to hundreds of thousands of INNOCENT people.

Innocent people are dying, and so is our nation. You can save it.

If you don't, you will force us to act, and to act aggressively.

All soldiers swore, as did you, to protect our Constitution "against ALL enemies, both foreign AND domestic".

Today our worst enemy is domestic, and time is running out.

Ward Reilly
645 Kimbro Drive
Baton Rouge, Louisiana...70808
First Infantry Division, 1971-1974

Troops Invited:

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 email contact@militaryproject.org:. Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe.

“The Only Good War, Righteous War, Is The Class War”

“In My War, More Returning Troops Died From Suicide Than Were Lost In The War”

“Our Enemies Are Not Islam Fundamentalists, Dictators, Communists, Competitors, Brown Eyes, Red Heads, Or People Opposed To War, But The Beast We Live Within”

“American Domestic And Foreign Affairs Are About Squashing Democracy Wherever It Rears Its Ugly Head”

What these protests can not become is a focus on replacing the “Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld junta,” peace, stopping a specific war, or some other too narrow of a focus, so that we end with folding our tents and returning home to perpetuate the ascendancy of corporate America.

These protests and demonstrations must become not skirmishes but a war to build new institutions where social, political, and economic relations are based on human values.

[Thanks to Ward Reilly [Veterans For Peace] who sent this in.]

March 10, 2003 By Al McKinnis, Dissident Voice [Excerpts]

The following is a letter from Al McKinnis, an ex-Marine and auto worker in Minnesota, to his long-dead Uncle Earl, a Marine who died in the Bataan Death March, reflecting on what has become of his uncle’s country in the years since he made the ultimate sacrifice.

This letter offers profound, stirring insights into what has happened to the society and what we must do about it.

The letter appeared in the UAW Local 879 newsletter and in Al’s local newspaper.

Dear Uncle Earl,

The American ideals (liberty, justice, freedom, independence) and working peoples’ values (equality, democracy, and solidarity) which you fought and died for as a 20-year-old Marine, at the Death March of Bataan, continue to be attacked.

I thought of you last week when some coworkers and a company security guard accosted a friend passing out notices for an anti-war rally, exercising the very rights you died to defend and perpetuate for them. Actually the first thing I thought was great, there are Nazis in the building.

I’ve also thought of you recently as America’s foreign and domestic affairs continue to create what can only be described with the name history has given your battle, to recognize its horrific event: death march.

Changing domestic opinion through lies and provocation was so easy that, shortly after your passing, we institutionalized secrecy and passed the decision to wage war onto a single individual, the president.

Since then there have been some 200 executive-directed military excursions.

Your war is sometimes referred to as “the good war.”

As it turns out, the only good war, righteous war, is the class war.

Government by and for wealthy Americans to control working people has ascended by copying corporate, autocratic power hierarchies, buying the Constitution, giving them power over individuals, and building cadres of boot lickers--"privileged citizens."

Democracy and representation are not possible within that infrastructure. Fear and distraction, through these constant military excursions, corporate America's theft of individual rights, foreign affairs attacking humanity to take money from the poorest of human beings and pitting us against each other is our new world society of top down social control.

A society of corporate values (dog eat dog, "leaders," and kill to accumulate others' money).

You wouldn't believe your old neighborhood. For every 10 farms, there are now about 1. About 5 large corporations control what was lost. By influencing elected officials and intimidating the marketplace, prices for corn and beans are kept so low that family farms are gone.

And after we leave the farms to work at corporate factories, we subsidize, through taxes, the rat that forced us off the farm!

From my earliest memories and continuing without exception, every U.S. president at an inaugural address or State of the Union speech hoists a finger to declare that "we are Number One" (competition, not equality). Raise your confederate flag, Brother!

Neoliberalism, what corporate America wants us to believe is its missionary work, is simply taking money from the earth's poorest people.

I always thought interest rates reflected risk. Corporate America's money center banks lend money to the poorest countries while being guaranteed by taxpayers. The money goes to Swiss bank accounts, with the debt left for the poorest of people who never agreed to the debt. Voila, a new client king is born and hate for Americans accelerates.

Shortly after your passing, Brazil was remade in our image (the image as defined by and for corporate America). After a generation plus 10 years as corporate America's star student of neoliberalism, 70% of its people are in poverty, and it ranks fourth from the bottom out of every nation on the planet for income-gap disparity.

This is where capitalism is taking us.

America's working class now enjoys a living standard equal to that of 1960. And it takes a two income household to accomplish that!

I don't know what my grandson's generation will do. Guess they'll have to sacrifice their first born to become three income households.

It is the French and other European labor institutions now fighting our "Labor Against War" campaigns as we are castrated, having given up our right to strike.

American domestic and foreign affairs are about squashing democracy wherever it rears its ugly head.

U.S. government-like labor institutions and other power hierarchies prefer one-on-one decision-making models, deciding what's best for their subjects.

If we were to promote democracy, our military assistance would go to Zapatistas, the other side at Columbia, Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya etc.

If it was our policy to promote and support democracy, corporate America would not demand a "Military Governor" as part of its conquest of Iraq. As it turns out there is no difference between capitalism and communism in their shared view that working people are renewable resources.

Back to the war.

Peace in our new society is nothing more than a break in the action. As are all Empires, we are not just feared, but hated.

That hate is derived from corporate values.

Working peoples' values, once labor union values, were stolen as quickly as they surfaced. Shortly after "the good war," labor unions institutionalized corporate-copied power hierarchies, giving up, catastrophically, the right to strike outside of the contract term. So unions today attend to corporate America's agenda with cadres of "privileged citizens."

As it turns out, our enemies are not Islam fundamentalists, dictators, communists, competitors, brown eyes, red heads, or people opposed to war, but the beast we live within.

So what this war protesting is all about is the recognition that war is just a piece of an even larger effort to wipe out remnants of human values, once union values (solidarity, equality and democracy).

It's a demonstration of solidarity in building a movement for social justice, bringing together working people, environmental efforts and peace activism.

It is a protest of degradations to social safety nets to the benefit of corporate welfare.

It's a protest against social control from afar, its arrogance and disrespect for using fear, even death, to minimize job security, health care and education for unnecessary profits.

It's about self-determination and autonomy for all peoples of the world. It's about protesting racism, refusing to accept corporate America's assertion that we have yet another people to hate.

And it's about supporting our troops. How do we support our troops when they return home? Less than one in ten jobs are living-wage union jobs, and starting wages, not ending wages, are the height of our career-wage levels (relative to buying power)!

Union jobs have been cut in half twice since the "good war." This week a former governor died. Shortly after your passing, he sent National Guard troops to keep scabs off picket lines.

Today we support our troops by having governors send National Guard troops to bust picket lines!

In our last war, one in four were disabled. All wake up worried about chemical effects corporate America's government refuses to acknowledge.

In my war, more returning troops died from suicide than were lost in the war. That's how we support troops today.

What these protests can not become is a focus on replacing the "Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld junta," peace, stopping a specific war, or some other too narrow of a focus, so that we end with folding our tents and returning home to perpetuate the ascendancy of corporate America.

These protests and demonstrations must become not skirmishes but a war to build new institutions where social, political, and economic relations are based on human values.

We can not allow our energy to be claimed by a politician or a political party.

There is no difference between republican and democratic party conflicts of interest, which for them today are actually fiduciary responsibilities to the wealth that "picked" them as party candidates.

The first thing our last democrat president did when endorsed as party candidate was to throw out its platform and report for service to corporate America.

The only thing that has ever worked for us is strikes, growing when necessary to general strikes.

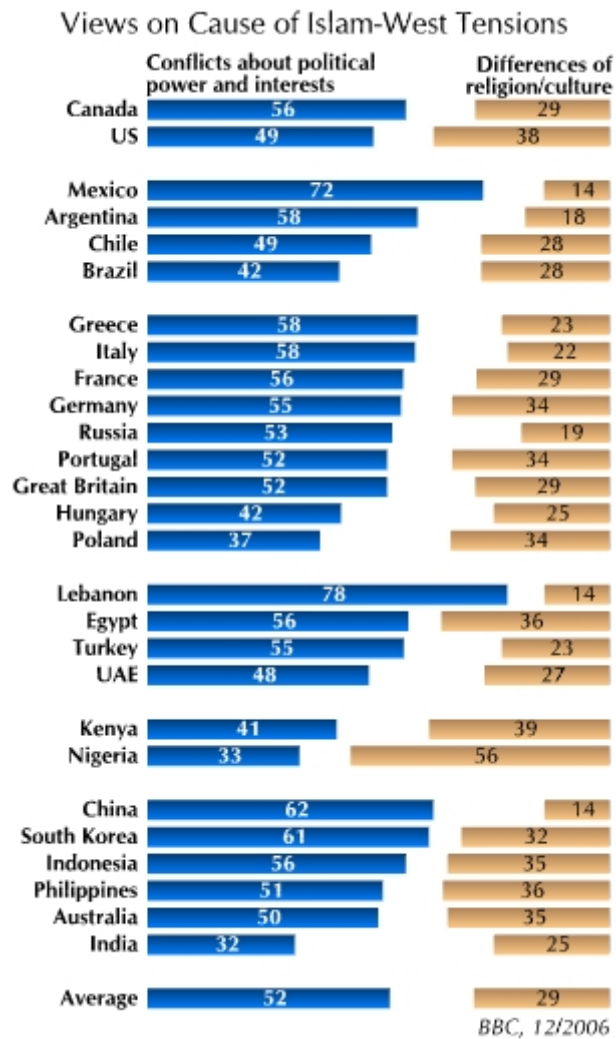
Your great grandfather's Populist Movement died when politicians became a focus. The civil rights movement ended, in a sense, with an end game--a Constitutional amendment.

Our labor "leaders" tell us that once union values are idealistic. As it turns out, dreaming is the belief that corporate values have a place in our world.

Semper Fidelis

Al McKinnis

The “Global Public” Not Buying Bush’s Stupid “Clash Of Civilizations” Bullshit: “The Global Public Believes That Tensions Between Islam And The West Arise From Conflicts Over Political Power And Interests”



February 19th, 2007 PIPA/WorldPublicOpinion.org (by way of Tom Condit)

The global public believes that tensions between Islam and the West arise from conflicts over political power and interests and not from differences of religion and culture, according to a BBC World Service poll across 27 countries.

While three in ten (29%) believe religious or cultural differences are the cause of tensions, a slight majority (52%) say tensions are due to conflicting interests.

The idea that violent conflict is inevitable between Islam and the West is mainly rejected by Muslims, non-Muslims and Westerners alike. While more than a quarter of all respondents (28%) think that violent conflict is inevitable, twice as many (56%) believe that “common ground can be found.”

“Most people around the world clearly reject the idea that Islam and the West are caught in an inevitable clash of civilizations,” said Steven Kull, director of the Program on International Policy Attitudes at the University of Maryland.

Countries with the largest majorities believing that Islam and the West can find common ground include Italy (78%), Great Britain (77%), Canada (73%), Mexico (69%) and France (69%).

A strong majority of Americans (64%) also think it is possible to find common ground, though about a third (31%) believe violent conflict is inevitable.

Worldwide, Muslims (55%) are somewhat more certain than Christians (51%) that the problem mostly derives from political conflict. This is a widely held view in Lebanon (78%), Egypt (57%), Indonesia (56%) and Turkey (55%) as well as in the United Arab Emirates (48% vs. 27% cultural differences).

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<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)

CLASS WAR REPORTS

U.S., Britain Ranked Last In Child Welfare

[Thanks to AH, who sent this in.]

Feb 14, 2007 AP

BERLIN - The United States and Britain ranked at the bottom of a U.N. survey of child welfare in 21 wealthy countries that assessed everything from infant mortality to whether children ate dinner with their parents or were bullied at school.

The Netherlands, followed by Sweden, Denmark and Finland, finished at the top of the rankings, while the U.S. was 20th and Britain 21st, according to the report released Wednesday by UNICEF in Germany.

One of the study's researchers, Jonathan Bradshaw, said children fared worse in the U.S. and Britain — despite high overall levels of national wealth — because of greater economic inequality and poor levels of public support for families.

“What they have in common are very high levels of inequality, very high levels of child poverty, which is also associated with inequality, and in rather different ways poorly developed services to families with children,” said Bradshaw, a professor of social policy at the University of York in Britain.

“They don't invest as much in children as continental European countries do,” he said, citing the lack of day care services in both countries and poorer health coverage and preventative care for children in the U.S.

The United States finished last in the health and safety category, based on infant mortality, vaccinations for childhood diseases, deaths from injuries and accidents before age 19, and whether children reported fighting in the past year or being bullied in the previous two months.

The U.S. was second to worst, behind only Hungary, for its infant mortality rate of 7 per 1,000 births. The rate, a standard indicator of children's health and prenatal care, is under 3 in Japan.

The study ranked the countries in six categories, based on national statistics: material well-being, health and safety, education, peer and family relationships, behaviors and risks, and young people's own subjective sense of well-being. Both the U.S. and Britain were in the bottom two-thirds of five of the six categories.

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