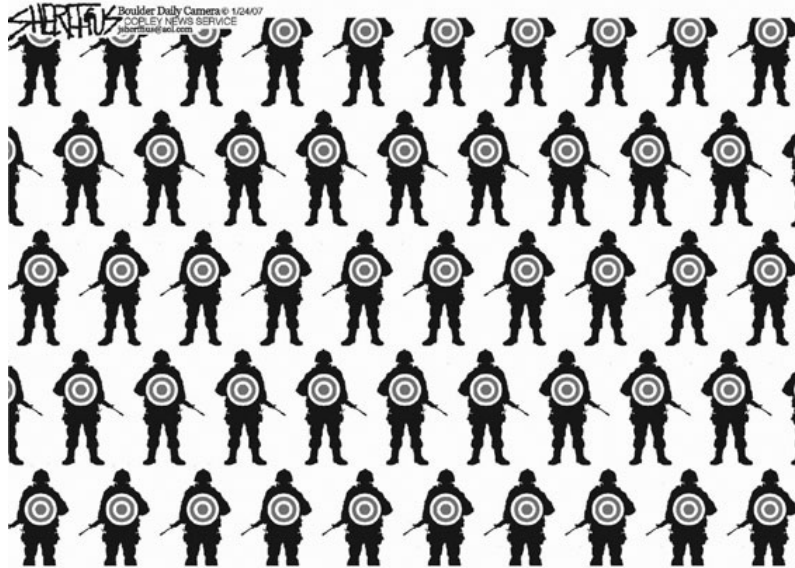


GI SPECIAL 5B25:

**150,000 REASONS TO BRING THEM ALL HOME
NOW**



[Thanks to Katherine GY, The Military Project]

**“The Only Thing You
Can Do For Me Is Bring
My Fellow Soldiers
Home”**

**“This War Is Over. It’s Time To
Bring The Troops Home”**

FOREST GROVE - "This is the first time I've ever done this," said Tina Bean, visibly nervous as she faced the standing-room only crowd at the Pacific University auditorium Monday night. It was clear she wished she were somewhere else.

Once she started talking, it became clear she wished she'd never been to the place that prompted her decision to step forward - Iraq.

Her voice shaking and her eyes welling with tears, the 1999 Tigard High School graduate alluded only briefly to a mortar attack that cut short her tour in Iraq almost a year ago.

Suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, she has to rely on medication to get by. And even then, she is irritable and fearful of crowds.

Not even the snowfall this winter offered peace. The flurries evoked a powerful image burned into her brain: that of ashes emanating from the pits in which body parts were burned.

"I haven't seen a single one of my friends since I've been home, because I don't want them to see me like this," she said, fighting tears. "I can't look at myself in the mirror without feeling disgusted.

"I feel like I'm broken into a million pieces. I'll never be the person I was."

Only moments earlier, the crowd of about 200 men, women and students - including several from Yamhill County, some with direct ties to the war or military - had been buzzing with chatter. But the comments by Bean, the opening speaker at the two-hour town hall meeting on the U.S. war effort, jolted the audience into humbled silence.

One of the angriest denunciations of the war came from another war veteran, Wayne Backlund of Hillsboro.

Tall, sporting neatly buzzed red hair and walking with a limp, he was shipped to Iraq in 2003 and subsequently wounded. Loaded up on meds just so he could face the audience, he said he felt like strangling 100 people at the VA hospital, because one question about forthcoming benefits would elicit that many answers.

He's struggled not only for his own benefits, but for medical care for his family. He has seven children.

"I love children, and believe me, I killed a lot of them over there," he said, drawing gasps from the audience. "And I hate myself for it."

The remarks by Backlund and Bean drew thunderous applause. About half of those attending gave the speakers a standing ovation.

Backlund returned to his front-row chair after he was finished, one leg shaking repeatedly after he sat down.

Bean said she wasn't up for hanging around.

She concluded her talk by saying, "The only thing you can do for me is bring my fellow soldiers home. This war is over. It's time to bring the troops home."

Then she turned from the podium, her face streaked with tears, and left the room. The applause continued long after she had made her way out.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

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



Members of the U.S. Army 2nd Brigade 82nd Airborne Division on patrol in central Baghdad Feb. 17, 2007. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed) , 2/17/07). [Thanks to D, who sent this in.]

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Resistance Leader Delighted Blair Sending More Occupation Troops: “More Troops Means More Will Be Killed, And That Would Make Us Happy; We’re Happy For Them To Come”

Feb 23, 2007 By Sophie Walker and Paul Majendie (Reuters)

The government has decided to send a fresh wave of troops to Afghanistan before an expected spring offensive by the Taliban, which reacted by threatening to step up suicide bomb attacks on NATO forces.

Defence Secretary Des Browne said in a statement on Friday that the government took its decision after failing to persuade other NATO members to send reinforcements to Helmand province, the southern region where a Taliban insurgency flared last year.

Taliban commander Mullah Dadullah told Channel 4 News “More troops means more will be killed, and that would make us happy; we’re happy for them to come.”

Nominee For Stupidest General Of 2007, So Far

February 24, 2007 Graham Thomson, CanWest News Service

Soldiers at Strong Point Centre are expecting a busy spring.

“We haven’t seen any action yet but I think we will,” said Warrant Officer Wayne Evans.

However, the Canadian commander, Brig.-Gen. Tim Grant doesn’t believe Canadians are in for the same kind of intense fighting as last year.

“I don’t believe we’ll see it but we’re certainly prepared for it,” said Grant on Friday after touring several of the Canadian strong points.

“The reason I say I don’t believe we’ll see it is we’re taking some proactive steps to dislocate and disrupt Taliban activities based on lessons we learned last year.”

WARLORD HEKMATYAR TO WARLORD BUSH: GET OFF MY TURF

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

Feb 22 By Sayed Salahuddin, Reuters

An Afghan warlord on a U.S. wanted list has said the United States does not have the capacity to stay for long in Afghanistan and he predicts it will pull out at the same time as it withdraws from Iraq.

Denouncing the United States as “the mother of problems,” Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a former prime minister whose forces operate in southeastern areas near Pakistan, said Afghanistan’s turmoil would not end until U.S. forces left the region.

“As long as America remains in Afghanistan and in the region, war and problems will continue,” he said in a copy of a video tape obtained by Reuters on Thursday.

“I can say with full assurance and confidence that America does not have the ability to stay for a long period in Afghanistan...,” he said.

Wearing a black turban, the bespectacled and heavily-bearded Hekmatyar said America’s allies had sent troops to Afghanistan and Iraq out of fear of Washington.

But he said a rift was emerging among them over whether they should stay on there. “My analysis is that America (will) pull out from Iraq and Afghanistan simultaneously and the withdrawal perhaps will happen this year,” he declared.

Hekmatyar is on a U.S. government wanted list and leads an insurgency force separately from the Taliban Islamic movement against the Afghan government and foreign troops under the command of NATO and the U.S. military.

His forces mostly operate in the rugged southeastern areas bordering Pakistan.

Hekmatyar was America’s largest recipient of aid in the 1980s during the Soviet invasion.

His group of fighters helped bring about a Soviet withdrawal after ten years of occupation and the loss of some 15,000 soldiers and Hekmatyar advised U.S. and NATO troops to do likewise and pull out.

“The occupying forces...have only one successful way and ... that is to pull out of Afghanistan as soon as possible,” he added.

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Bush Regime Used Bases In Ethiopia To Attack Somalia

2.23.07 New York Times

The U.S. military quietly waged a campaign from Ethiopia last month to capture or kill top Islamic militants in the Horn of Africa, including the use of an airstrip in eastern Ethiopia to mount airstrikes against them in neighboring Somalia, according to American officials.

The close and largely clandestine relationship with Ethiopia also included significant sharing of intelligence on the Islamic militants' positions and information from American spy satellites with the Ethiopian military.

Members of a secret American Special Operations unit, Task Force 88, were deployed in Ethiopia and Kenya, and ventured into Somalia, the officials said.

TROOP NEWS

National Guard Troops Betrayed Again: Pentagon Lied About Limiting Deployment To 12 Months

Feb 23, 2007 By Lolita C. Baldor - The Associated Press [Excerpts]

Army National Guard combat units that go to Iraq or Afghanistan through much of the next two years will be on active duty for longer than 12 months despite the Pentagon's pledge to try limiting deployments to a year, Army and Guard officials say.

The effort to shorten tours of duty to a year from the current 18 months or so was designed to ease the strain on troops and their families, in part by jamming more war preparation into the soldiers' routine monthly training exercises at home.

However, Army and National Guard leaders told The Associated Press that efforts to transfer more training to the states so soldiers can train at home will not be possible in time to benefit the thousands of troops going to war this year and in 2008.

That is because states don't have the equipment, soldiers or plans they need to do the extra training, officials said.

Guard soldiers typically travel to military centers around the country for up to six months of training before heading to the battlefield for a year, a total of 18 months on active duty.

Stretched by the demands of nearly five years at war and facing growing public discontent, the Pentagon decided last month to limit Guard deployments to one year at a time. Guard units would train for about two months away from home just before deploying, then spend 10 months on the battlefield under the plan.

The Pentagon also has abandoned its cumulative 24-month limit on the time a citizen-soldier could serve on active duty in the Iraq and Afghan wars.

However, military observers say letting Guard soldiers be tapped more frequently could strain families and hurt recruitment.

MORE:

Bush's Wars Destroying Military Families; Guard And Reserve Troops Hardest Hit

[Thanks to Jason Y, who sent this in.]

Even many active-duty military families, used to the difficulties of deployments, are reeling as soldiers are being sent again and again to war zones, with only the smallest pause in between.

February 23, 2007 By LIZETTE ALVAREZ, The New York Times [Excerpts]

Hundreds of thousands of soldiers and loved ones have endured long, sometimes repeated separations that test the fragility of their relationships in unforeseen ways.

The situation is likely to grow worse as the military increases the number of troops in Iraq in coming months.

The Pentagon announced Wednesday that it was planning to send more than 14,000 National Guard troops back to Iraq next year, causing widespread concern among reservists.

Nearly a third of the troops who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan have done more than one tour of duty.

Most families and soldiers cope, sometimes heroically. But these separations have also left a trail of badly strained or broken unions, many severed by adultery or sexual addictions; burdened spouses, some of whom are reaching for antidepressants; financial turmoil brought on by rising debts, lost wages and overspending; emotionally bruised children whose grades sometimes plummet; and anxious parents who at times turn on each other.

Hardest hit are the reservists and their families, who never bargained on long absences, sometimes as long as 18 months, and who lack the support network of full-fledged members of the military.

“Since my husband has been gone, I have potty-trained two kids, my oldest started preschool, a kid learned to walk and talk, plus the baby is not sleeping that well,” said Lori Jorgenson, 30, whose husband, a captain in the Minnesota National Guard, has been deployed since November 2005 and recently had his tour extended another four months. “I am very burnt out.”

In the next couple of months, Ms. Jorgenson, who has three young children, has to get a loan, buy a house and move out of their apartment.

Even many active-duty military families, used to the difficulties of deployments, are reeling as soldiers are being sent again and again to war zones, with only the smallest pause in between.

The unrelenting fear of death or injury, mental health problems, the lack of recuperative downtime between deployments and the changes that await when a soldier comes home hover over every household.

“Prior to 9/11, the deployments were not wartime related,” said Kristin Henderson, a military spouse whose husband served as a Navy chaplain in Iraq and Afghanistan and whose recent book “While They’re at War” explores the impact of today’s deployments. “There were separation issues, but there was no anticipatory grief and no fear and no medical overload.”

It is common for spouses to wind up on antidepressants, Ms. Henderson said, a situation made worse by the repeat deployments. The more deployments, the less time that families have to mend before the stress sets in again, she added.

Ms. Henderson recalled having a panic attack in church while her husband was away and crying in the shower most mornings so no one would see her.

“The common misconception,” she said, “is that the more you do this, the better you get. That is not true.”

Some therapists say they are bracing for this year's divorces. Mary Coe, a marriage and family therapist working near Fort Campbell, an Army base on the border of Kentucky and Tennessee, said she was seeing "many, many divorces" right now. The 101st Airborne Division recently returned from its second deployment with an astonishing level of rage, she said.

"Now we are seeing 15- to 20-year marriages not making it, and these are families that survived 20 years of deployments," Dr. Coe said.

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



The casket of Army Staff Sgt Alan W. Shaw, of Little Rock, Ark. at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Va., Feb. 22, 2007. Shaw, died Feb. 9 in Baqubah, Iraq, of wounds suffered from an explosion during breaching operations. (AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

**Nyack Fundraiser For Iraq
Veterans Against The War
This Sunday, Feb. 25, 1 p.m. at the
Nyack Center**

IVAW Members/Poets:

Fernando Braga And Michael Blake

Message from The Fellowship of Reconciliation

Pass this on to a friend

Iraq Veterans Against the War invites you to support our New Orleans Deployment in March to muck houses in the Lower 9th Ward.

The main objectives of Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) are threefold:

Bring the troops home now.

Support Iraqi reconstruction in whatever way possible.

Support our veterans and our troops now and upon their return home.

VIEW: BBC videos -- Katrina March '06 and Soldiers Speak Out -- two films on the military narrated by those who've lived and fought in war zones. Open discussion after the showing.

SPOKEN WORD: poetry, stories on war -- read by veterans who wrote them.

Host: Dan Wilcox is a poet, photographer, and active member of Veterans for Peace in Albany, New York.

Featured Poet: Gerald McCarthy is a member of Veterans for Peace and Vietnam Veterans Against the War. His books include "War Story," "Shoetown," and the forthcoming "The Light Has No Tongue." Recent poetry publications include: War Literature & The Arts, American War Poetry, Italian Americana, The North American Review, and Hawaii Pacific Review.

Additional VFP readers include Sam Weinreb (WWII), Dayl Wise (Vietnam), Jim Murphy (Vietnam), and others. After the performance, there will be an open mike session for any poets wishing to read.

OPEN DISCUSSION: What can we do? Opinions and comments from the youngest to the oldest will be encouraged & welcomed.

The Nyack Center is located at 58 Depew Avenue in Nyack (corner of Depew Ave. & South Broadway).

Suggested donation \$20, students \$5.

For more information, contact Jim Murphy at mandm11@optonline.net or 845-358-5709.

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

**“I Served In Iraq And Survived Being
Shot In The Head”**

**“I Came Back To Walter Reed And
Survived A Different Kind Of Hell”**

**“After I Was Shot, I Was No Longer Of
Any Use To The U.S. Military, And They
Made That Very Apparent”**

[Thanks to Katherine GY, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

February 23, 2007 By Brady van Engelen, HuffingtonPost.com

I served in Iraq and survived being shot in the head.

I came back to Walter Reed and survived a different kind of hell.

The Washington Post's articles exposing the conditions of Walter Reed Army Medical Center has prompted much media attention. The attention is refreshing for those of us who have long been appalled by this neglect and betrayal by the government.

After I was shot, I was no longer of any use to the U.S. Military, and they made that very apparent. The conditions I witnessed during my eight months at Walter Reed, when I lived in Building 38, which is comparable to the now-infamous Building 18, made it clear that the care I had been guaranteed in return for my sacrifice was an empty promise.

Our wars have been void of any political accountability and -- as usual -- media attention has not prompted any meaningful political action. It has been announced that there will be "investigations" into conditions at Walter Reed.

This is insulting. Anything short of calling for the immediate resignation of those responsible for this care is insulting.

I am tired of our President, his Cabinet, and Members of Congress ducking accountability and proposing hollow legislation that does nothing to affect the status quo.

Yesterday, White House Press Secretary Tony Snow announced that it was up to those who "work on the other side of the river" to get the bottom of the mess at Walter Reed –

Excuse me?

I served in Iraq at the orders of the President -- my Commander in Chief.

I will not sit by and allow our President and his Press Secretary to punt responsibility over to the Pentagon when the pressure begins to mount. It is the responsibility of the Commander in Chief to ensure that we are properly cared for before we fight, as we fight, and when we come home.

Walter Reed has been the quintessential campaign stop/photo-op for countless elected officials since the start of our most wars. They have already seen this first hand and have chosen to ignore it.

Congress also needs a reality check. The solutions offered to date have been nothing more than hollow, quick fixes.

The system we have in place is broken.

We cannot fix this system by simply throwing money at it. Instead, we need to completely overhaul the existing, antiquated programs that ignore the specific needs of our newest generation of veterans.

A system designed for World War II veterans or a 19-year-old GI can never be sufficiently adequate or comprehensive to meet the needs of a 33-year-old guardsman or any of the 16,000 single mothers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are extremely violent, and it is certain that more of us will return home with irrevocable physical and mental injuries.

Less 0.5% of the US population has served in Iraq and Afghanistan -- we represent too small a portion of the US population to fight for change alone.

The American public needs to step up.

They have indicated their discontent for the war in Iraq and now it's time for them to make clear their disgust with the way America treats service members.

**Despicable Cowardly
Congressional Scum Have Anti-
War Veteran Arrested;**

“Demeanor” & “Vocalizations” Make Them Piss Their Pants

[Thanks to Ben Chitty, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, who sent this in.]

Date: 23 Feb 2007
From: Carol Manuel

Yesterday (2/22/07), Tom Palumbo, member of Veterans for Peace, was arrested in Va. Beach outside the office of Congresswoman Thelma Drake of VA (2nd District) while trying to deliver letters asking her to stop the escalation of war in Iraq.

The incident was reported (somewhat inaccurately) in the Friday edition (2/23/07) of the Virginian-Pilot (article attached).

I was informed of this incident by eyewitness Ann Williams of Va. Beach who was there outside Drake's office with Tom and the others (a small group of 10 people).

Tom was released on his own recognizance and will be in court March 26th to face the charge of criminal trespassing.

I felt you should know about this.

It just shows how broken our system of government is when elected officials lock the door on peaceful citizens –and – worse - when a citizen is arrested for criminal trespassing for sitting on a sidewalk curb waiting to speak to a member of Congress.

Sincerely,

Carol Manuel
Virginia Beach, VA
Military Families Speak Out
Tidewater Peace Alliance

This is an eyewitness report, correcting what was reported in the newspaper:

The police “spokesperson” wasn’t even there so she doesn’t realize that her sequence of events is off--

10 of us assembled peacefully in the parking lot several yards away from the office before 12 noon -- no one in the office could possibly have seen our “demeanor” from that distance, which was peaceful.

A man claiming to be the land lord was there in a flash, blocking part of the lot with his big Mercedes even before we could all walk across the lot to the door, as tho he were waiting for us.

They obviously knew ahead of time.

We think one of the office staff is on the Move On e-mail list. He was hostile and disrespectful to William, a six-year Vet who has served in Iraq. (William was one of the group.)

By the time we walked across the lot to the door we had been locked out & the people inside ran & hid.

Running from constituents! Running from Truth!

They are in denial about the irreparable harm Thelma Drake's unequivocal support for the Decider's policies have done to Active Duty and Veterans. Yet they insist on escalating troops & creating more chaos, death and destruction.

Tom sat down quietly on the sidewalk with his sign & back to Thelma's door, saying he would wait until Thelma or one of her staff members became available.

We did not start "vocalizing" until we had 3 speeches, from Tom, William & the mother of the AD Marine which was well AFTER the landlord arrived & well AFTER we were locked out.

So how could we have been "scaring" them by our "demeanor" & "vocalizations" before that point?

They twist the facts to suit their own agenda & hide the fact they weren't doing their job which is to be available to their constituents. They forget who pays their salaries. Our Constitutional rights were intentionally violated by their actions and violent responses.

All they had to do was listen to us for five minutes & accept the petitions on Thelma's behalf. We've been there several times before without incident.

But to lock out citizens & disrespect Vets is a despicable and cowardly act on their part.

MORE:

Virginia Beach Rat Cops Invent New Crime: Scaring Congressional Assholes "By Their Demeanor, Their

Vocalizations” While Waiting To Hand In A Petition

February 23, 2007 By STEVE STONE, The Virginian-Pilot

VIRGINIA BEACH - An anti-war protester was arrested Thursday after refusing to leave private property.

Army veteran Tom Palumbo, a member of Veterans for Peace, and seven other people went to the office of Rep. Thelma Drake, R-2nd District, about noon.

Palumbo said he and the others had planned to deliver letters “asking her to take a stand against the escalation of the war” in Iraq. Instead, they found that staff members inside had locked the doors.

Margie Long, a police spokeswoman, said “these protesters were basically scaring them by their demeanor, their vocalizations.”

She said a staff member called the management of the building, in the 4700 block of Euclid Road.

“The owner showed up and asked the people to get off the property,” Long said.

Police officers arrived and ordered the protesters to leave. All but one did.

Long said Palumbo sat down in front of the door to Drake’s office and told officers, “If you want me to leave, you’re going to have to arrest me.”

They did.

Palumbo said he was charged with criminal trespass and was released on his own recognizance. He is scheduled to appear in court March 26 and said he plans to fight the charge.

“It shouldn’t be trespassing to petition a member of Congress,” he said.

[OK, too harsh. After all, the cops were just doing their job. Their job is protecting private property. Period.]

British Says No More Bullshit War; 60,000 March In London

24 February 2007 BBC

Some 60,000 joined the march from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square, according to organisers.

On Friday relatives of soldiers killed in Iraq set up camp outside Downing Street to protest against the war.

Stop the War Coalition activist Lindsey German said: "We know that many people are coming to the view that the government is addicted to war."



Protestors march during the Troops Out of Iraq demonstration in London February 24, 2007. REUTERS/Luke MacGregor (BRITAIN)

While Her Husband Serves His Third Tour In Iraq, North Carolina Woman Faces Two Years In Prison For Throwing A Cup Of Ice At A Road Hog



A Stafford County jury convicted Jessica Hall, 25, of maliciously throwing a missile into an occupied vehicle. (By Carol Guzy -- The Washington Post)

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

February 18, 2007 By Theresa Vargas, Washington Post Staff Writer

To the locals, it's the "McMissile" case.

And like the name, the details of it spill forth like a bad joke: A woman is driving north on Interstate 95. Three kids squirm in the back seat, and her sister, six months pregnant and having early contractions, sits in the front.

The stress starts to simmer. Traffic slows, then crawls, then creeps. More stress.

A car cuts in front of her, then scoots away. A short time later, it darts in again. She can no longer take it. She veers onto the shoulder and speeds up. Wham! She tosses a large McDonald's cup filled with ice into the other car.

"From my side, I heard a whoomp," recalled the woman's sister, LaJeanna Porter, 27. "I was like, 'I know you didn't throw that cup.' She said, 'Yes I did.' "

Neither woman foresaw the seemingly supersize repercussions of that misguided moment July 2.

No one was injured, but the cup launcher, Jessica Hall, 25, of Jacksonville, N.C., was charged and convicted by a Stafford County jury of maliciously throwing a missile into an occupied vehicle, a felony in Virginia.

The instructions given to the jury said that "any physical object can be considered a missile. A missile can be propelled by any force, including throwing."

Hall, a mother of three young children whose husband is serving his third tour in Iraq, has spent more than a month in jail.

The jury sentenced her to two years in prison, the minimum, and a judge will formally impose a sentence Wednesday. Under state law, the judge can only decrease the jury's sentence.

"We didn't think it would go this far," Hall said in an interview at the Rappahannock Regional Jail. "Two years! What did I do?"

There are two versions of what happened that day. The occupants of both cars agree on this: It was hot, the kind of hot in which legs stick to leather seats, and the traffic was barely moving, slowed by a fatal crash up the road in Prince William County.

In one car, driver Pete Ballin, 36, and girlfriend Eliza Fowle, 28, were heading home to the District after visiting her father in North Carolina. They said they were maneuvering through the stalled traffic, not even noticing Hall until the Mickey-D moment.

"I guess we inadvertently merged back in front of her," Fowle said. "She apparently took that as some sort of aggressive maneuver on our part."

The next thing they knew, Fowle said, Hall was pulling up in the emergency lane and “chucking a big, supersized McDonald’s cup at us.” It flew diagonally across Ballin and onto Fowle. “It was gross and sticky and got all over me and the front of our car, the dashboard and the windshield,” Fowle said.

Hall, whose family was driving from North Carolina to New York for a family party, saw the situation differently. She said she had never driven that route and was trying to keep up with her father’s truck when Ballin cut in front of her the second time, causing her to swerve onto the shoulder. She said she was worried because her sister’s bulging belly almost slammed into the dashboard.

Hall’s next move was wrong, she said, but she felt provoked.

“It was past me ignoring him. I’m not going to lie; I was cursing him,” she said. “I took the McDonald’s cup. I tossed it over my car.”

She never fathomed that it would land her in jail for the first time in her life, wearing a standard-issue jumpsuit frayed up both legs and learning to curl her hair using toilet paper. Not even when she saw Ballin talking to the state trooper up the highway, or when she was arrested and released on her own recognizance, or even when a trial date was set for Jan. 3.

Even when Ballin testified, Hall said, “I’m thinking about what I’m going to cook when I get home.”

“I passed out when they said guilty, two years,” she added. “I became a convicted felon.”

Fowle stands by the couple’s decision to report the crime but concedes that even she and Ballin were surprised at the conviction.

“I think that this is way too much of a punishment for her actions. This is just to me absolutely ridiculous,” Fowle said. Community service would have made more sense, she said. “It’s something that’s going to make someone realize I did screw up, and I’m going to remember this, and I’m not going to do something like this again.”

Hall’s attorney, public defender Terence Patton, did not return calls for comment. Nor did Commonwealth’s Attorney Daniel M. Chichester or Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney George Elsasser, who handled the case.

Elsasser argued in court that had Ballin been hit by the drink, he might have gotten into a serious accident with injuries. Hall also was found guilty of reckless driving, assault against Ballin and assault and battery against Fowle. For her conviction on those charges, the jury recommended she be fined \$1,000.

According to court documents, Hall is unemployed and, with her husband’s salary, the couple takes in \$30,384 a year. She receives \$388 a month in food stamps.

“It doesn’t seem right for her not to be around,” said Porter, who is watching one of Hall’s three children, ages 4, 6 and 8. The younger two are with their grandparents. “We just

hope that whatever they do, don't let them keep her. Without her, I don't know what I'll do."

Hall said she has cried every day she has spent locked up and wakes most days to find clumps of hair on her pillow from the stress. She shares a cell with two other women and spends 19 hours a day in the cell, she said.

When Hall talks about the incident, she sometimes jokes about how she will only fly over Virginia from now on and says other inmates sometimes throw things in her direction and say, "Watch out McMissile."

But in other moments, when she talks about the reality of a felony conviction, her expression goes blank. She was supposed to start nursing school the day after she was sent to jail, and she wonders what job she will be able to get once potential employers do a background check.

"Now people are going to see me as an angry, road rage, convicted felon. And it really upsets me," she said. "I must have been wrong . . . but seriously, God. Lesson learned. Lesson learned is one hour in this place."

MORE:

Marine Wife Spared Prison For Throwing Ice

Feb 22, 2007 The Associated Press

STAFFORD, Va. — The woman who was sentenced to probation for hurling a McDonald's cup of ice into a car that cut her off in traffic is the wife of a Marine serving in Iraq, according to an article in Thursday's Washington Post.

Jessica Hall, 25, is married to Cpl. Cardell Carson, who is with Camp Lejeune, N.C.-based 2nd Marine Division, the newspaper reported. He is on his third tour in Iraq.

Hall, who was sentenced on Wednesday, could have gotten two years behind bars after being convicted last month of maliciously throwing a missile — the cup of ice — into an occupied vehicle in what was dubbed the "McMissile" case. No one was injured in the incident last July on Interstate 95.

Hall thanked Judge Frank A. Hoss Jr. and wept after he put her on probation for five years. She has been in jail since Jan. 4.

Prosecutor Daniel M. Chichester wanted her sent to prison, saying, "It is important to remember that it is not what is thrown but the danger created by that act that Virginia law seeks to protect against."

Hall said traffic had slowed to a crawl when another car cut her off twice, once causing her to swerve onto the shoulder. She flung the cup of ice into the other car, and it landed all over the driver's girlfriend.

Army Files New Charges In Watada Court-Martial

[Yes, of course they have. Was it only a couple weeks ago some fools were writing triumphal articles about how the case was won and the army wouldn't dare refile the charges?

[With the exception of Courage To Resist, which discussed the fact openly and critically in a New York City meeting, most of those campaigning for him are still silent about his wish to go kill people in Afghanistan. What would one have made of a U.S. officer who objected to killing Cambodians for Nixon, but was perfectly happy to go kill Vietnamese?

[In his favor, he has always been honest and open about his views, but the people who fail to make clear what his politics are exhibit the most despicable opportunism.

[Neither dead U.S. troops in Afghanistan nor dead Afghans produced by Bush's other Imperial war are anything to be silent about, unless, of course, one is in favor of both kinds of killing there and takes political responsibility for both, in which case the silence is both odious, Imperial, and understandable. T]

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

February 24, 2007 By Christian Hill, The Olympian [Excerpts]

The Army has filed a new round of charges against a Fort Lewis officer who refused to deploy to Iraq and spoke out publicly against the war, resurrecting a high-profile case aborted by a mistrial two weeks ago.

In a widely expected move, the Army on Friday filed the same charges against Lt. Ehren Watada that were brought against him in the wake of his refusal to board a plane bound for the Middle East on June 22.

Watada is charged with missing troop movement and conduct unbecoming an officer for statements critical of the Bush administration and the war that he made in speeches and to journalists.

Double jeopardy doesn't apply in this case because the court-martial didn't reach a "point of finality," said Leslie Kaye, a Fort Lewis spokeswoman. As a result, "The Army, or the government, has the authority to bring the case anew, which it did today," she said.

The Army and defense team had subpoenaed two journalists to verify the accuracy of the statements they attributed to Watada during interviews. But their testimony wasn't

needed because in the pretrial agreement, Watada admitted to making those and other statements that served as the basis for the misconduct charge.

Without another agreement, which was the source of the mistrial, "it is a possibility that the reporters will be called," Kaye said. She reiterated that the Army would not ask for notes, tapes or the identity of anonymous sources.

Still, one of the subpoenaed journalists, Sarah Olson, a radio producer and independent journalist based in Oakland, Calif., has raised public concerns about her ability to gain the trust of sources if she participates in the prosecution of one of them.

A Predator Does What Comes Naturally; Recruiter Stole Identities From Fellow Troops To Pocket \$120,000

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

February 23, 2007 By PETER BACQUY, Media General News Service

A Virginia National Guard soldier used his access to military personnel records to steal identities and commit more than \$120,000 in bank fraud, federal officials said yesterday.

Spc. Jerry A. Crockett, 28, of Triangle pleaded guilty Tuesday in federal court in Alexandria to bank fraud and aggravated identity-theft charges. He faces up to 32 years in prison.

The Virginia Guard is taking steps to discharge Crockett, according to the Guard's Col. Robert H. Simpson.

A former Marine, Crockett joined the Virginia Army Guard last January and worked from May through August as a recruiter aide in Alexandria.

In his duties, Crockett had access to the Guard's Northern Virginia recruiting files, which contained names, addresses, birth dates, Social Security numbers and other personal identifying information, according to the plea agreement.

"We weren't fully digital in the recruiting system last year," Simpson said, "so recruiters had paper copies and that's where he got access."

Crockett admitted to stealing identities from the Guard recruiting office and other sources, according to court records.

In a scheme that began before he joined the Virginia Guard, Crockett opened bank accounts at four financial institutions, court records said. He then deposited bogus checks from the fraudulent accounts into other bank accounts.

Writing checks or using automated teller machines, he withdrew funds before the phony checks bounced, the plea agreement said.

From April 2005 through Aug. 25, 2006, Crockett opened more than 200 bank accounts and deposited more than 50 counterfeit and fraudulent checks, the agreement said, ultimately obtaining more than \$120,000.

"There were apparently 15 Guardsmen (affected), none of whom lost money," Simpson said.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

02/24/07 AP & VOI & Reuters

On Monday, two bombers in Ramadi killed 11 people when they targeted the house of Sattar al-Buzayi, who has led the anti-insurgent drive and is backed by the government in Baghdad and the U.S. military.

Insurgents earlier stormed an Iraqi police checkpoint near Baghdad airport, killing eight policemen and wounding two more in a bold challenge to a U.S.-backed security crackdown in the capital.

The attack on the police checkpoint in an area not far from the main U.S. military headquarters in Baghdad underlined the hurdles faced by Iraqi security forces who are often out-gunned by increasingly sophisticated insurgents.

"It was a brazen attack," said Captain Curtis Kellogg, a U.S. military spokesman. "It was definitely coordinated. We expect this type of thing to continue. They will try to test the Iraqi and U.S. security forces."

[Hey Captain, it's a fucking war. What, you were expecting a limp-dick attack instead of a "brazen" attack? "Brazen" means "Marked by flagrant and insolent audacity." Well gee, Shithead Kellogg is all bent out of shape because the resistance fighters are "insolent." He thinks the Iraqis are supposed to kiss his ass for occupying their country for George W. Bush, and if they fight back they're being "insolent"? Yeah, that's what King George thought about the Americans in 1776 too. "Insolent." Well, with that attitude, "spokesman" Kellogg would have made a perfect Redcoat. Which is exactly what his is, a foul, despicable, dishonorable Redcoat, serving his Imperial master in Washington DC.]

[And it would appear that with Imperial arrogance goes Imperial stupidity: the resistance is “testing” the occupation he says? News flash: the war is lost, and most everybody knows it by now, except brass-kisser Kellogg. That said, in fairness, take note of the fact that idiots like this help the resistance. The stupider the U.S. officer, the better the resistance does. T]

Eight to 10 guerrillas attacked the checkpoint in two vehicles. Militants in the first one got out firing assault rifles and throwing hand grenades at the policemen.

The second vehicle was forced into a ditch where it was cordoned off on suspicion it could be a car bomb.

Two militants were killed in the firefight.

A car bomb in Jadriya, in southern Baghdad, exploded at a traffic circle near the homes of Iraq's president Jalal Talabani and leading Shi'ite politician [translation: collaborator] Abdul- Aziz al-Hakim.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

February 25, 1968: Stupid Asshole General Anniversary



FTG

Carl Bunin Peace History February 19-25

Discussing the war capacity of North Vietnam, a country that had been fighting for 23 years and had just staged the massive, successful Tet Offensive, U.S. General William C. Westmoreland stated, “I do not believe Hanoi can hold up under a long war.”

OCCUPATION REPORT

Idiots In Command Of Occupation Piss Off Their Only Powerful Collaborator Ally And A Few Million Other Iraqis Also



Supporters of Iraqi Shi'ite leader Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim carry posters of the Hakim family during a protest march against the arrest of Ammar al-Hakim and the abuse of his traveling companions by foreign occupation troops from the USA in Diwaniya, 180 km (112 miles) south of Baghdad, February 24, 2007.

Iraqis took to the streets of Shi'ite towns and cities on Saturday to protest over the capture of the eldest son of Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim, one of Iraq's most powerful Shi'ite leaders. His possessions were seized and he was kept in captivity for 12 hours. His guards were treated like criminals and roughed up. REUTERS/Imad al-Khozai

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

Blair Loses Basra

The suspicion grows that Mr Blair did not withdraw them because to do so would be too gross an admission of failure and of soldiers' lives uselessly lost.

23 February 2007 By Patrick Cockburn, Independent News and Media Limited
[Excerpts]

The partial British military withdrawal from southern Iraq announced by Tony Blair this week follows political and military failure, and is not because of any improvement in local security, say specialists on Iraq.

In a comment entitled "The British Defeat in Iraq" the pre-eminent American analyst on Iraq, Anthony Cordesman of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, in Washington, asserts that British forces lost control of the situation in and around Basra by the second half of 2005.

There is no doubt the deterioration in the situation is contrary to the rosy picture presented by Downing Street.

"By September 2006, British forces needed to deploy a convoy of Warrior armoured vehicles to ferry police trainers to a single police station and deliver a consignment of toys to a nearby hospital." Some British army positions were being hit by more mortar bombs than anywhere else in Iraq.

Why is the British Army still in south Iraq and what good does it do there?

The suspicion grows that Mr Blair did not withdraw them because to do so would be too gross an admission of failure and of soldiers' lives uselessly lost.

It would also have left the US embarrassingly bereft of allies.

Reidar Visser, an expert on Basra, says after all the publicity about the British "soft" approach in Basra in 2003, local people began to notice that the soldiers were less and less in the streets and the militias were taking over.

"This, in turn, created a situation where critics claim the sole remaining objective of the British forces in Iraq is to hold out and maintain a physical presence somewhere within the borders of the governorates in the south formally left under their control, while at the same minimising their own casualties." Mr Visser said.

In other words, British soldiers have stayed and died in southern Iraq, and will continue to do so, because Mr Blair finds it too embarrassing to end what has become a symbolic presence and withdraw them.

Petraeus In Command; The Usual Stupid Lies

February 23, 2007 New York Times

The much anticipated effort to wrest Baghdad streets from the control of militias and insurgents has been presented in news conferences and public statements as an Iraqi-led operation.

But on the streets, the joint patrols seem little different from those of the past few years:

A handful of Iraqis, acting at the direction of a larger group of Americans, opening drawers and closets and looking behind furniture as they searched for banned weapons or other contraband.

OCCUPATION EAST TIMOR

Second E Timorese Man Dies After Clash With Australian Troops

[Thanks to J, who sent this in. She writes: I've no idea why the Aussie government is calling its troops, in E Timor, a defence force. Defence against what - arrows fired, by irate citizens, in their own country?

[Trouble is John "the con" Howard thinks Asians are uneducated children wanting "big white father" to help them - in exchange for - oil. Naturally "big white father" will expect the Timorese to be content with only a small share of the oil revenues.

[Howard wants to be like his hero Bush (with a bit of Israel thrown in) so neighbouring countries suffer. --- J.]

2.24.07: ABC News on Line

A second East Timorese national has died from his injuries after an incident at the Dili camp's airport on Friday morning.

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) says its soldiers were attacked with steel arrows after responding to a disturbance, and defended themselves by firing shots on two occasions.

One man was confirmed dead last night and the second died in hospital this morning.

A third man is still being treated and is in a stable condition.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Imperials Democrats Latest Bullshit: Keep On Killing U.S. Troops And Iraqis Until March 31, 2008



[These assholes are up to their neck in blood, and so are those who promote their deadly plans to kill more. T]

24 February 2007 By Jennifer Loven, The Associated Press

Brushing aside criticism from the White House, Senate Democrats said Friday their next challenge to President Bush's Iraq war policy would require the gradual withdrawal of U.S. combat troops beginning within 120 days.

As currently drafted, the Democratic legislation says the military "shall commence phased redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq not later than 120 days" after the bill's enactment.

The goal is to complete the withdrawal by March 31, 2008.

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)

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.

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