

GI SPECIAL 5B26:



Iraq veterans protest the war in Washington, DC

Who'll Stop the War?

“Returning Soldiers Played A Pivotal Role In Building The Peace Movement”

“That’s The Forbidden History We Cannot Know — Because It’s The Formula For Ending Wars”

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War, who sent this in.]

A Le Moyne College/Zogby poll conducted last February found that 72 percent of active duty military personnel wanted a complete pullout from Iraq by the end of 2006.

Last Saturday a contingent of active-duty service personnel marched as participants in a massive anti-war rally in Washington, DC.

2.07 By Michael I. Niman, Artvoice.com. [Excerpts]

This article was inspired by the award-winning documentary film *Sir No Sir*

Current Vietnam myths don't accurately address why and how that war ended.

First there was the "peace with honor" line pushed by Richard Nixon. Then there was the blame game. We could have "won" if we weren't wimps—with "winning," I assume, meaning destroying Vietnam in its entirety and forcing the US-created South Vietnamese dictatorship on whatever poor souls survived a thermonuclear holocaust. ("Bomb Hanoi" was the pro-war battle cry.)

Then there was the admission that the war was lost, but with the caveat that it was lost at home. The peaceniks ruined our will to "stay the course." This theory gives the peace movement full blame or credit for finally ending the war, depending on how you look at it.

History, however, is far more complex.

Ultimately the war ended because US armed forces just stopped fighting.

A 1975 study published in *The Journal of Social Issues* documents how US troops, proportionally, opposed the war more than college students.

In the end, some troops rioted, a few killed their commanding officers (fratricide emerged as the leading cause of death for lieutenants), up to 33,000 a year went AWOL and an overwhelming number of active-duty grunts refused orders and simply would not fight.

The military was in shambles.

It was impossible to continue the ground war, while the air war was politically untenable without the ground war to justify it.

The war ended when the peace movement and the military became one and the same.

In fact, returning soldiers played a pivotal role in building the peace movement.

Veterans placed anti-war ads in newspapers as early as 1965.

That's the forbidden history we cannot know—because it's the formula for ending wars.

For the pro-war crowd, the image of the hippie spitting on the returning soldier has become the iconic image of the Vietnam war.

Oddly, however, this “image” exists despite the absence of any photographic evidence of a single spitting incident. Vietnam veteran and sociology professor Jerry Lembcke spent years chasing this myth, eventually writing a comprehensive historical study, *The Spitting Image: Myth, Memory, and the Legacy of Vietnam*, published by NYU Press (1998).

Lembcke found an odd similarity to many of the spitting stories. The incident often happened to returning soldiers as they arrived at the San Francisco airport, with a young hippie woman doing the spitting.

In doing his research, however, he found no news stories about soldiers being spit upon, even though the press was generally hostile to the anti-war movement.

Likewise, he couldn't find any reports documenting such incidents, though stories of pro-war demonstrators spitting on peace activists were plentiful. And even though the supposed incidents usually occurred in well policed airports, no one was arrested for spitting on a vet.

Lembcke's study shows that “stories of veterans being abused by anti-war activists only surfaced years after the abuses were alleged to have happened.”

Myths of soldiers being abused by peace activists have long been mainstays in pro-war propaganda, with early examples coming from the Nazis, who compared their opponents to mythological peace activists who supposedly attacked and degraded returning veterans from World War I. This turned out to be a winning formula for marginalizing dissent and has been used around the world ever since.

Then there's the Hanoi Jane myth: Like the other peace activists who hated our troops, Jane Fonda was a traitor.

It's a little-known fact that Fonda went to Vietnam, like her pro-war nemesis Bob Hope, as an entertainer performing in front of as many as 60,000 soldiers at a single event—a number that would have turned Hope green with envy. Fonda toured with anti-war activists who appeared with her on stage.

And the GI audience cheered wildly as they performed their Fuck the Army show.

Another lost piece of history is the story of the GI underground press.

According to the Department of Defense, active-duty, Vietnam-era service personnel had published 245 anti-war newsletters and newspapers by 1972, with their editors, writers, distributors and even readers risking court-martial and jail. There was even a GI-run pirate anti-war radio station operating for a short time in Saigon.

Government officials took the threat of the GI peace movement extremely seriously, going as far as to court-martial an officer in 1971 for distributing copies of the Declaration of Independence at McChord Air Force Base. The base's underground newspaper reported the case.

That same year, 380 military and civilian police were called in to Travis Air Force Base to combat an anti-war rebellion that resulted in the burning of the Officer's Club and the arrest of 135 GIs.

Also in 1971, the Armed Forces Journal published a study entitled "The Collapse of the Armed Forces" documenting a virtual global uprising by US combat troops.

Government studies produced at this time document that 32 percent of active-duty service personnel participated in some form of resistance ranging from going AWOL to attacking officers. A report issued by the Army documents 86 officers murdered by their troops in that one branch of the service. Attacks injured another 700.

In 1972 the House Armed Services Committee reported hundreds of cases of sabotage disabling Navy equipment, including major instances of arson on two ships. The vessel dispatched to replace one of these fire-damaged ships was delayed by an onboard riot. Another ship was disabled a few weeks later by a strike. Meanwhile court-martialed service personnel were rioting in military stockades around the world.

As 1972 rolled to a close, it became clear to the Nixon administration that "staying the course" in Vietnam was no longer an option.

More and more, the war the military was fighting was not against the Vietnamese.

We had met the enemy and he was us.

Fast-forward to Iraq.

A Le Moyne College/Zogby poll conducted last February found that 72 percent of active duty military personnel wanted a complete pullout from Iraq by the end of 2006.

Last Saturday a contingent of active-duty service personnel marched as participants in a massive anti-war rally in Washington, DC.

Last week 1,171 active-duty service personnel signed an "Appeal for Redress" demanding that the US Congress support an immediate withdrawal of US troops from Iraq. Sixty percent of the signatories had fought in Iraq.

There are also a growing number of in-your-face deserters living both in Canada and underground in the US. One such war resister, Carl Webb, went as far as to maintain a Web site while he was on the run. The military ended this embarrassing situation not by finding and prosecuting him, but by discharging him, albeit dishonorably.

People who feel that today's volunteer military is less likely to engage in resistance and disobedience need to look back at another little-known fact about the Vietnam war.

According to David Cortright, author of *Soldiers in Revolt: GI Resistance During the Vietnam War* (Haymarket Books, 2005), enlisted troops were more likely to resist fighting than were draftees. Many joined out of patriotism and were sorely disappointed with the reality on the ground in Vietnam. Others, like today's volunteers, were victims of an economic draft.

Also, during the Vietnam war, once soldiers served on one tour of duty, they were done with Vietnam. In the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, however, almost one third of the 1.4 million service members who were deployed to the war zones were deployed at least twice — and many considered their second rounds more or less as a draft.

And finally, there's the National Guard—the “weekend warriors,” many attracted by educational benefits, who signed up primarily to serve their communities during natural disasters. The National Guard was never a part of the Vietnam equation. It's where George W. Bush hid out during the Vietnam war, before finally going AWOL himself.

Today National Guard troops from all 50 states and Puerto Rico are dying in Afghanistan and Iraq. Others are having their lives upended. They didn't sign up for this. In effect, they, like the stopgap veterans, are draftees. And for the most part they don't support this war or this president.

Resisting the command to put your own life in peril when you don't see a reason to do so is an expression of sanity.

We have a right to support sanity over insanity.

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward GI Special along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Beavercreek Man Dies Nearly A Year After Being Shot In Iraq

February 25, 2007 By Margo Rutledge Kissell, Staff Writer; Cox Ohio Publishing

INDIANAPOLIS — A morphine drip kept Ethan Biggers comfortable as a steady stream of relatives and friends came to his hospital room to say goodbye — including two men he served with in Iraq who brought him his Purple Heart.

The Army specialist's service to his country has come to an end.

In recent days, the walls of his fourth-floor room at the Richard L. Roudebush Veterans Affairs Medical Center had become a memorial to the life of the 22-year-old Beavercreek soldier. He died early Saturday morning after spending nearly a year in a coma after he was shot in the head during his second tour of duty in Iraq.

His family filled the room with large photos of special moments and people in Ethan's life in case he woke up.

But as the family approached the March 5 anniversary of his injury, they realized that wasn't going to happen.

Because Ethan never filled out a living will, they struggled with one of the most difficult questions imaginable: What would Ethan want?

He had given his father, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base physicist Rand Biggers, power of attorney, enabling him to make decisions about his medical care. But Ethan outlived his father. Rand died in a traffic accident last July.

Before his death, Rand was clearly conflicted about the decision that awaited.

"I won't leave him in a vegetative state," he said. "I want to give him and God enough time."

It was Matt, the twin brother who joined the Army with Ethan and held his hand during the nine-hour flight home from Germany after he was wounded, who finally decided that it was time to let his brother go.

Ethan's older sister, Liza, prayed for a sign they were making the right decision.

What would Ethan want?

As Ethan's health took a turn for the worse and his fever spiked to 104 degrees, she had her answer. Matt had Ethan's feeding tube removed on Feb. 13.

The Biggers family has struggled to make sense of a year marked by the birth in June of a son Ethan will never know, and the death of the father he idolized.

They've struggled with the awesome task of deciding how long to keep him alive.

"Now I think it gives us some peace with Ethan," Liza said last week. "We feel like my dad's there waiting."

Q: How Do You Know Your War Is Lost?

A: When You Have To Use Artillery To Defend Yourself In The Capital Of The Invaded Nation

2.25.07 (AFP)

Overnight, US artillery responded to insurgent mortar fire in the rural southern suburb of Boaita, rocking Baghdad with a series of thundering blasts.

UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



US soldiers take positions as a fire fight with insurgents broke out in Baqouba, 60 kilometers northeast of Baghdad Jan. 14, 2007. The U.S. military also said an American soldier died Saturday from wounds sustained in an explosion in northern Iraq. (AP Photo)

Notes From A Lost War:

“I Think There Will Always Be People Who Don’t Want Us To Be Here”

“And Whenever We Show Up The Bad Guys Leave, Anyway”

February 21, 2007 By Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpts]

IBRAHIM BIN ALI, Iraq -- The mud sucked at the soldiers' boots as they crept across the wet pasture after dawn. To their right, Humvees and tanks tracked the soldiers' progress from a narrow dirt road. To their left and in front stood cinder-block huts, shaded by date palm trees, where they believed the enemy was hiding.

The only sound as they approached the insurgent stronghold was the lowing of piebald cows and the faint gobble of turkeys.

“I’ll tell you right now there’s a lot of bad guys watching,” Sgt. Anthony Palkki said.

Hundreds of U.S. soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division pushed into Ibrahim bin Ali village Saturday morning for a two-day operation designed to take back the hamlet from insurgents and catalogue every fighting-age male in the village.

Over two days, more than 350 U.S. troops involved in the operation searched 95 homes, discovered about a dozen roadside bombs -- including two that exploded under their tanks, causing no injuries -- and took scattered small-arms fire.

But they failed to capture a single insurgent.

Although the security plan has been cast as an Iraqi-led mission, no Iraqi police operate around Ibrahim bin Ali.

And Lt. Col. Kurt Pinkerton, the battalion commander, said he could not persuade Iraqi army commandos to assist.

“They didn’t return my calls,” he said.

So the U.S. troops proceeded alone along muddy canals, over irrigation ditches, amid flocks of sheep. The supporting tanks and Humvees sealed off roads around the village.

Soldiers swabbed some residents for traces of explosives, took digital photographs of every male adult and logged Global Positioning System readings to mark the location of each building.

Commanders said the census was necessary to learn who might be out of place when they return.

But even before the operation, officers warned that insurgents might flee such a large American onslaught, and finding them would be difficult.

“They know we’re looking for bad guys, and they know we don’t . . . know what the bad guys look like, so we’ve got to check everybody,” Staff Sgt. Patrick O’Neil told other platoon leaders at the pre-mission briefing.

Once in the village, a platoon led by 1st Lt. Chris Larsen, 24, a West Point graduate, encountered several frustrations.

Some residents blithely pronounced the area safe, even though guerrillas regularly attack U.S. patrols with roadside bombs, gunfire and rocket-propelled grenades.

Others complained about the lack of jobs, electricity and fuel, and said they cower in their homes at the sound of explosions and don’t know who is responsible.

“I am not afraid of your visit or of you, the Americans, I’m mostly happy when you come over. I’m afraid of the interaction between you and the terrorists and then firing starts,” said one villager, Onaid Merza Alwan. “Or when the terrorists see you in my house and they start to wonder why you are here, maybe I’m giving you information. It’s very scary.”

“So where are these terrorists that are watching right now?” Larsen asked him.

“If the Americans cannot see them, can I see them?”

“Yeah, he’ll know who they are,” Larsen told his interpreter. “I don’t know who they are. They look exactly the same. The bad guys and the good guys look exactly the same.”

Some residents took a more defiant stand when questioned by the platoon.

“Any individual on Earth values his country and refuses occupation. I am hoping this is not an occupation,” Hassan Ali Hamid Hassan, 27, a recent graduate in Arabic literature from Baghdad University, told Larsen. “Jihad is a duty. Jihad was within our power since the beginning to protect our women, our property, our way of living. Jihad is cited in the Koran.”

“I am not liking this guy right now,” Larsen said. Hassan eventually told the soldiers he did not support violence.

But Larsen’s platoon discovered no illicit weapons on this weekend hunt, or at least no new weapons.

One villager kept a forearm-size shell from the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s that he had converted into a flower vase. Behind another house, the soldiers examined 11 Russian ammunition boxes that held spare car parts.

Gunfire broke out once, when a U.S. soldier shot a snarling dog.

“Use rocks from now on, please. Rocks!” Larsen shouted at the soldier. “We’re trying not to scare these . . . people. Tell them that we’re sorry.”

When the sun set, and the bats began to circle, the platoon moved into an Iraqi home, posted rooftop guards and spent the night on blankets on the concrete floor. Maintaining around-the-clock presence in trouble spots is key to the battalion’s plan to disrupt the insurgents.

For weeks the soldiers have lived in a series of abandoned houses in the village to send the message that their presence is not temporary. The Baghdad security plan encourages commanders to make such deployments, Pinkerton said.

“I think there will always be people who don’t want us to be here,” said Spec. Logan Gathman, 26, of Sacramento. “And whenever we show up the bad guys leave, anyway.”

“I really thought there’d be more going on,” Sgt. Josh York said.

Dien Bien Phu Deja Vu

[These comments and the headline come from an individual in military service. He is referring to the news article about an attack on a combat outpost, which is reproduced below his comment. T]

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

I think this is indicative of how the 'new' security plan is going to work- it spreads U.S. forces into units small enough and spread thin enough to be attacked in dozens of locations in and around the city.

I don't know if this particular outpost is located in an urban environment or not but the more urban terrain surrounding your position the more difficult it is to spot an attack before it comes.

It looks like a given that we are going to be taking heavier casualties in the coming months.

February 19, 2007 By MARC SANTORA, New York Times

BAGHDAD, Feb. 19 - In a coordinated assault on an American combat outpost north of Baghdad, suicide bombers drove three cars filled with explosives into the base today, killing two American soldiers and wounding at least 17 more, witnesses and the American military said.

The brazen and highly unusual attack, which was followed by fierce gun battles and a daring evacuation of the wounded Americans by helicopters.

As American troops move into small combat outposts throughout Baghdad for the first time since the early months after the invasion in 2003, today's attack underscored the inherent risks in the Bush administration's new security strategy.

American troops only recently moved into the outpost in Tarmyia.

Until the Iraqi police force collapsed, Americans had only been an occasional presence in Tarmyia, a town of 25,000, sending soldiers to conduct patrols with the Iraqis from a nearby base.

The American combat outpost, located in the abandoned police headquarters in the center of the town, was fortified by large blast walls. Typically, the Americans keep one company of about 100 soldiers at such outposts.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Rockets Hit Kandahar Occupation Base

February 25, 2007 Graham Thomson, Edmonton Journal

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -NATO forces here came under attack Saturday night when insurgents fired two rockets into the sprawling military base in southern Afghanistan.

Military officials said no one was hurt by the blasts that rattled windows in the camp and sent 10,000 soldiers and civilians scrambling to bomb shelters.

As part of the base's regular security practice, officials would not reveal whether the attack caused any damage - not wanting to tip off the enemy where their rockets landed.

The rockets were likely of the 107-millimetre variety, made in Russia or China, and have an effective range of around 10 kilometres, making them the insurgents' weapon of choice for attacking the base. They prop the rocket up against a pile of rocks and fire the ignition either by remote control or by a timer. In either case, the insurgents are long gone by the time the attack takes place.

Violent Protests In Heart; Police Arrested

February 25, 2007 PakTribune

HERAT CITY: Police in the western Herat province said they had detained 28 people in connection with the Monday's violent protest demonstrations during which two people were killed and more than a dozen injured.

The dead included a civilian and a police officer, while four of the injured were policemen as the protestors, mostly auto-rickshaw owners, clashed with them at the entrance of the governor's office.

The 28 people, included some policemen, were arrested on the recommendation of the delegation sent by the Interior Ministry to investigate the incident.

Major General Abdul Manan Farahi, chief of the counter terrorism department of the ministry and head of the delegation, told journalists political motives were involved in the violent protest.

He said some policemen were also involved in the plot to create law and order situation in the province.

In addition to the killing of two men, seven police vehicles and 21 private and government-owned buses were partially damaged or fully destroyed by the angry protestors.

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Marine Cpl. Thomas E. Sabo during his burial at the Moravian Cemetery, Feb. 16, 2007 in the Staten Island borough of New York. Sabo 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)

Five Generals And Admirals Are Willing To Resign If The White House Orders A Military Strike Against Iran

February 25, 2007 Michael Smith and Sarah Baxter, Washington; The London Sunday Times

SOME of America's most senior military commanders are prepared to resign if the White House orders a military strike against Iran, according to highly placed defence and intelligence sources.

The Sunday Times has learnt that up to five generals and admirals are willing to resign rather than approve what they consider would be a reckless attack.

There are four or five generals and admirals we know of who would resign if Bush ordered an attack on Iran, a source with close ties to British intelligence said. There is simply no stomach for it in the Pentagon, and a lot of people question whether such an attack would be effective or even possible.

A British defence source confirmed that there were deep misgivings inside the Pentagon about a military strike. All the generals are perfectly clear that they don't have the military capacity to take Iran on in any meaningful fashion. Nobody wants to do it and it would be a matter of conscience for them.

A general's revolt on such a scale would be unprecedented. American generals usually stay and fight until they get fired, said a Pentagon source.

Robert Gates, the defence secretary, has repeatedly warned against striking Iran and is believed to represent the view of his senior commanders.

The threat of a wave of resignations coincided with a warning by Vice-President Dick Cheney that all options, including military action, remained on the table. He was responding to a comment by Tony Blair that it would not be right to take military action against Iran.

A second US navy aircraft carrier strike group led by the USS John C Stennis arrived in the Gulf last week, doubling the US presence there. Vice Admiral Patrick Walsh, the commander of the US Fifth Fleet, warned: The US will take military action if ships are attacked or if countries in the region are targeted or US troops come under direct attack.

But General Peter Pace, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, said recently there was zero chance of a war with Iran. He played down claims by US intelligence that the Iranian government was responsible for supplying insurgents in Iraq, forcing Bush on the defensive.

Pace's view was backed up by British intelligence officials who said the extent of the Iranian government's involvement in activities inside Iraq by a small number of Revolutionary Guards was far from clear.

Hillary Mann, the National Security Council's main Iran expert until 2004, said Pace's repudiation of the administration's claims was a sign of grave discontent at the top.

He is a very serious and a very loyal soldier, she said. It is extraordinary for him to have made these comments publicly, and it suggests there are serious problems between the White House, the National Security Council and the Pentagon.

Mann fears the administration is seeking to provoke Iran into a reaction that could be used as an excuse for an attack. A British official said the US navy was well aware of the risks of confrontation and was being seriously careful in the Gulf.

The US air force is regarded as being more willing to attack Iran. General Michael Moseley, the head of the air force, cited Iran as the main likely target for American aircraft at a military conference earlier this month.

According to a report in The New Yorker magazine, the Pentagon has already set up a working group to plan airstrikes on Iran. The panel initially focused on destroying Iran's nuclear facilities and on regime change but has more recently been instructed to identify targets in Iran that may be involved in supplying or aiding militants in Iraq.

However, army chiefs fear an attack on Iran would backfire on American troops in Iraq and lead to more terrorist attacks, a rise in oil prices and the threat of a regional war.

Britain is concerned that its own troops in Iraq might be drawn into any American conflict with Iran, regardless of whether the government takes part in the attack.

One retired general who participated in the generals revolt against Donald Rumsfeld's handling of the Iraq war said he hoped his former colleagues would resign in the event of an order to attack.

We don't want to take another initiative unless we've really thought through the consequences of our strategy, he warned.

Murderous Assholes At NY State Lottery Won't Release Vets

Winnings So He Can Get Cancer Treatments



Wayne A. Schenk at home in Naples, N.Y. Weeks after learning he had advanced lung cancer, he won the lottery. The money can help buy him better care — but only if he can get the winnings all at once. Kevin Rivoli for The New York Times

From Debbie Anderson, Veterans For Peace

She writes:

Former marine was diagnosed last year with lung cancer, has one year to live. Hits \$1 million dollar NY lottery, and lottery commission won't give him a lump sum prize to pay for cancer treatment.

He is without parents, spouse or children and is seeking help to get publicity on his story. His health is failing. Susan Miller, deputy director of the NY state lottery "will not bend the rules" this once to assist the dying veteran.

The NY state lottery director, Nancy Palumbo. Their telephone number to protest the treatment of this vet is #518-338-3300

NAPLES, N.Y., Feb. 5 — Wayne A. Schenk figured that someday he might get lung cancer.

His parents both died of the disease, and Mr. Schenk, 51, increased the odds with a pack-a-day smoking habit. Sure enough, after visiting a doctor in mid-December for a sore neck, he learned that a tumor was pressing on his nerves. "I was kind of devastated," he said.

With treatment, Mr. Schenk might live 12 to 16 months, the doctors told him. Four weeks later, just as he had ended radiation and was about to begin chemotherapy,

he and a close friend, Domonick R. Gallo, spent an afternoon playing the lottery with scratch-off tickets.

"We were driving and I'd scratch one off and holler, 'I'm a loser,' " he said, smiling at the memory as he and Mr. Gallo took turns describing what happened.

Then Mr. Gallo said his friend looked at the next ticket and said: "Oh, look at that. I'm a winner. What's the jackpot?"

It was \$1 million.

The odds of someone Mr. Schenk's age developing lung cancer are roughly one in 5,000; the odds of winning the jackpot in the \$5 game of High Stakes Blackjack, as he did, are one in 2,646,000.

Now Mr. Schenk, a Marine Corps veteran, hopes to spend his lottery winnings, which come to \$34,000 a year after taxes over 20 years, on medical care.

But it is not that easy — getting a lump sum payment of his winnings is not an option with this type of game.

After researching his alternatives, he called the Eastern Regional Medical Center in Philadelphia, which is part of a nationwide chain, Cancer Treatment Centers of America.

A spokeswoman for the medical center, Leigh Fazzina, said Mr. Schenk's insurance with the Department of Veterans Affairs would not transfer to the medical center, so he would need \$125,000 up front plus \$250,000 in reserves that the hospital could access directly and withdraw in \$50,000 increments as treatment progresses.

"The cost of cancer care is very, very expensive," she said.

But if the New York State Lottery can assign the ticket to the hospital, Ms. Fazzina said, "that's certainly something we would take a look at."

To that, his friend, Mr. Gallo, said, "We need to help Wayne now."

Before he got sick, Mr. Schenk, who is unmarried and childless, got by with a series of odd jobs, like working as a roofer and for a local ski resort.

A year ago he bought a tavern, the Orange Inn, but it has been losing money since he became ill and has been unable to work.

On the night he won the lottery, he said, he went to the tavern to buy patrons a round of drinks before he had even announced his winnings, but his bartender said, "I'm not going to buy a round when you can't pay your electrical bill."

Although Mr. Schenk did not reveal his good fortune that night, the bartender relented nonetheless.

His only health care comes from Veterans Affairs, from his stint in the Marines from 1976 to 1980, including a tour in Lebanon.

For now, he drives about 90 miles from his home to the Syracuse V.A. Medical Center, but believes he can improve his chances of survival if he seeks treatment from a specialized cancer center.

First Mr. Schenk and Mr. Gallo tried lobbying the New York Lottery for a lump sum payment, to no avail. "We have to abide by the rules and regulations," said Susan Miller, deputy director of the state lottery, adding that Mr. Schenk's illness "makes us wish we could in fact do something."

Next, they consulted State Assemblyman Joseph A. Errigo, whose district includes the small Finger Lakes town where Mr. Schenk lives.

Mr. Errigo said he was considering proposing legislation that would allow the lottery to make a one-time exemption and award a lump sum payment. "If we had a year or longer, that might work," he said. "But the way wheels work in Albany, if it did happen, it may be too late."

Even if the measure did come up for a vote, Mr. Errigo said the chances of it being approved were about one in five.

He is working with the lottery to see if the ticket can be assigned directly to a hospital — something that officials say has never been done before.

Mr. Schenk thought about selling the ticket to a third-party investor, but realized he would receive only a fraction of the payout, perhaps \$200,000. He also put his name on a list at a medical center in Canada to see if it would accept him for an experimental drug trial.

Mr. Schenk has received the first of his 20 payments, which after taxes, amounted to about \$34,000. He paid off some bills and put aside the rest. "I'm taking it day by day and hoping for the best," he said.

When asked what he thought his chances were of getting the lottery money up front, he sounded a bit like one of its slogans. "You never know," he said.

Faking It: The British Bring A Few Troops Home

#1: The Lying Bullshit

2.22.07 Washington Times

The Bush administration maintained that its Iraq coalition was still in good shape despite announcements by Britain and two other countries that they would withdraw all or some of their troops by the end of the year.

#2: The Reality

New York Times, February 22, 2007

The British gave up trying to win their war in southern Iraq a long time ago, beginning their withdrawal almost immediately after the invasion.

The British presence in the south, which was 46,000 troops in April 2003, has been under 10,000 for the past three years. Unwilling or unable to rid the region of the militias who are the main threats to order, the British troops' goal was to keep a lid on things until they could leave.

#3: The Reality Part 2

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in. He writes: DOESN'T SOUND LIKE WHEN THE BRITS LEAVE THE NATIVES WILL SLAUGHTER EACH OTHER...]

Feb 21 by Karim Jamil, AFP [Excerpts]

On Monday, hundreds of Basrawis marched to the British consulate to demand the release of local detainees.

"We want to see British forces leaving as soon as possible. Security is in place in Basra thanks to the Iraqi police and army," said 27-year-old Ali Abdullah, who works at the city's electricity firm.

Law student Muthanna Ihsan, 20, agreed.

"Iraqi forces in Basra are ready and able to ensure security. Every Basrawi wishes to see all British forces leaving at one time not gradually," he said.

And Razzaq Nasir, a 58-year-old oil worker, was categorical: "There is no need for them. The British forces in Basra are a big problem for the Iraqi forces and for ordinary Basrawis."

“It Doesn’t Change. It Never Goes Away”

February 24, 2007 by Kathy Kelly, Voices for Creative Nonviolence [Excerpt]

This past Tuesday, in Fairbanks, Alaska, nine people entered the office of Senator Ted Stevens to deliver their "emphatic request" that the Senator vote against supplemental funding for the war and then began reading the names of Iraqis and U.S. people who had died because of this war. They separated the names of U.S. troops by age. When ordered to leave, they were only half way through the commemoration of the twenty-one year old U.S. troops who died in Iraq. They began by reading the ages of the younger troops.

Seth Warncke, a University student, was issued a citation; Rob Mulford and Don Muller were taken to the Fairbanks Correctional Unit. They were released after being in jail for 23 hours.

Senator Steven's staff worker in the Fairbanks office assured the nine peace activists occupying the office that their efforts were worthless.

"The Senator's aide told us that our action wouldn't do any good," said Rob Mulford, "but when we were locked up I knew we'd done something good because a woman jailer spotted us in our cells and she said, 'Oh! You guys are my heroes!'"

On a more somber note, Rob Mulford and Don Muller told me of a fellow prisoner whom they encountered in the correctional center.

He was an Iraq war veteran, age 21.

The guards were kind to him, but the young man was very disturbed and ended up fracturing his hand and fist, pounding a wall. After falling asleep, he repeatedly woke up, shouting and cursing, "You killed my friend, I'm gonna kill you," and intermittently sobbing, "It doesn't change. It never goes away."

Rob Mulford, himself an Air Force veteran and the local contact for Veterans for Peace, was watching from his cell. Rob and Don are two of the several dozen people who've been arrested in the first two weeks of "the Occupation Project," a campaign to end U.S. funding for war in Iraq.

**Pentagon Filth Deliberately
Lying To Troops About Cutting
Off Their Benefits:
“Telling War-Activated Guard And
Reservists That If They Left Paid Drill**

Status They Would Lose Their GI Bill Education Benefits” “And In Fact It’s Not True”

February 8, 2007 By Melinda Tuhus, In These Times

Rick Scavetta lives with his wife and young daughter in a small town near New Haven, Conn. He joined the Army at 18, in part to earn money for college, and served in the regular Army and then the Reserve for a total of 15 years, reaching the rank of Sergeant 1st Class. In 2005, his Reserve unit was called up, and he served a year in Afghanistan.

Scavetta says he made a firm decision to leave the military last February, and planned to use his GI Bill benefits to pursue a master’s degree in political science and to study Arabic at Southern Connecticut State University.

But he was told in his exit briefing that if he deactivated—in military terms, “left drill status”—he would not be eligible.

“Imagine if someone told you, ‘We promise you these benefits if you serve your country,’ and you held up your end of the bargain for six years in the Reserve, a year or two deployed overseas,” he says.

“It’s frustrating, especially since school can be a very grounding thing for a veteran returning from war.”

Scavetta is just one of the many vets Jack Mordente works with as director of Veterans Affairs (VA) at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven.

Mordente says he learned last May that the Department of Defense was telling war-activated Guard and Reservists that if they left paid drill status they would lose their GI Bill education benefits. “And in fact it’s not true,” he says.

VA representative Keith Wilson backs up Mordente’s interpretation.

Providing a bit of history, he says that in 1985 Congress created GI Bill education benefits for members of the Guard and Reserve for the first time. Then, he adds, “During Gulf War I, some individuals in the Guard and Reserve were called up for active duty, which interfered with their ability to pursue their education. So Congress passed a law that allowed the delimiting date (i.e., eligibility deadline) to be extended for a period equal to the time they’re activated plus four months.”

Mordente says if a member of the Guard or Reserve knows he or she is eligible and files for the benefit, the Veterans Administration will pay it.

But the Department of Defense (DoD) interprets the law differently.

Lt. Col. Steve Beller of the Army National Guard writes the Guard policies to implement Army regulations.

He says that the Department of Defense, unlike the VA, interprets the law to restrict eligibility for benefits to those who remain on drill status.

“We will continue briefing as our attorneys have stated, that those benefits terminate upon leaving Selective Reserve.”

Scavetta knows he’s eligible, but has still run into roadblocks.

“I applied for my GI Bill benefits in August,” he says, “and I haven’t heard anything from the VA. I tried to call them, and got redirected to a call center, and the voice says nobody’s available to talk to me and hangs up.”

He’s putting his school expenses—about \$1,400 per semester—on his credit card. “To not have a quicker delivery system for the benefits we’re entitled to is, quite frankly, bullshit.”

Besides serving veteran-students at SCSU, Mordente is also president of the National Association of Veterans Program Administrators, and through his organization he is trying to get the word out nationally.

He says student vets make up more than 20 percent of the nearly 400,000 members of the Guard and Reserve from all branches of the military who have served in Iraq or Afghanistan since 2001. So far, the VA’s Wilson says the department has paid about 3,400 people under this provision, with a maximum payment of \$300 a month.

No one knows how many retired GIs haven’t applied because they’ve been told they’re ineligible.

“These are war-activated Guard and Reservists who sacrificed,” Mordente says. “And now they’re being told they’re not eligible for a benefit they are eligible for. It’s appalling.”

Soldiers Hurt In Tikrit Helicopter Crash Get \$13 Million In Damages

February 22, 2007 Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Boeing, Honeywell International and two other military contractors agreed to pay \$13.6 million to two U.S. soldiers who suffered spinal fractures when an Army helicopter malfunctioned in Iraq.

The Boeing-made Apache Longbow fell 800 feet on Aug. 14, 2003, in the Iraqi city of Tikrit, according to a statement from the soldiers' lawyers. Pilot Ron Carns, with assistance from co-pilot Juan Beltran, was conducting a test flight, according to the statement.

Sydney Anti-War Marchers Defy Police Ban And Reclaim The Streets



It was obvious the police were determined to enforce the no-march ban.

22 February 2007 Words and pictures by Gavin Gatenby, A Possum News Network Exclusive

This evening 1500 anti-war demonstrators overcame a strong police presence and, after a half-hour confrontation with the NSW riot squad and mounted police marched to the US Consulate to protest against US Vice-President Dick Cheney's visit to Australia and the five-year imprisonment of David Hicks in Guantanamo Bay.

An unexpected last-minute ban by NSW Police (no doubt at the instigation of the NSW Labor Government) turned what would have been a routine demonstration into a major test of the right to march.

The demonstrators prevailed after hundreds filtered through the police cordon around Town Hall Square. The remaining demonstrators bottled up in the square then voted to disperse and move in small groups to the US Consulate in Martin Place.

Faced with the impossibility pursuing hundreds of small groups of demonstrators through Thursday night shopping crowds, the police relented and allowed the demonstration to proceed to the US Consulate.



When the demonstrators voted to split up and head for the US Consulate in small groups the police rapidly decided it would be safer to compromise. The march was allowed to proceed down George Street along the footpath,



The final triumphant rally outside the US Consulate in Martin Plaza.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Militants Have Again Struck Power Stations In Baiji

Feb. 9 UPI

BAIJI, Iraq: Militants have again struck power stations in Baiji, severing electricity to Baghdad and compounding the fuel crisis.

Azzaman reports the attack is the second in less than two weeks. The Iraq Ministry of Electricity says the high-voltage lines in Baiji, in the north, head south to Baghdad.

A source in the ministry told Azzaman the city is now enduring blackout conditions that have spread to other parts of the country.

Baiji is also the location of Iraq's largest oil refinery, which has come under constant attack since the invasion. That, plus an electricity shortage, has greatly reduced Iraq's ability to refine oil.

Attacks and electricity issues have also hampered production of oil. Iraq produces about 2 million barrels a day now, down from 2.6 million before the war. It exports about 1.6 million barrels daily.

Assorted Resistance Action

2.25.07 (KUNA) & BRIAN MURPHY, Associated Press

Two Iraqi policemen were killed and four were injured in Mosul.

A source at the Iraqi police told KUNA guerrillas attacked a police patrol in Mosul killing one policeman, while armed men killed another policeman near the passports department of Mosul.

Two Iraqi policemen were injured in clashes with insurgents near Tal Afar Garage in Mosul as well, said the source.

Two patrol policemen were injured when a bomb was detonated near their vehicle in Somar neighborhood, added the source.

Three masked guerrillas muscled past a handful of worshippers and pumped four bullets into the chest of Sheik Adbul Rahman Jawhar al-Karbouli.

A truck bomb killed more than 50 people Saturday leaving a mosque in the Anbar village of Habbaniyah, 50 miles west of Baghdad. The mosque's imam - like the slain al-Karbouli - had spoken out against the insurgents,

Members of his tribe had publicly denounced the insurgents. Al-Karbouli often used his Friday sermons at the Ameen mosque in Karabilah to warn worshippers against joining the "terrorists," said residents of the town, located about 240 miles west of Baghdad.

The 45-year-old al-Karbouli spoke out in other prominent forums. As a member of the municipal council, he tried to rally young men to join the police or military.

Resident of Karabilah say his opposition to the insurgents cost him his life.

A bomber tried to kill Abdul Sattar Abu Risha, leader of the Anbar Salvation Council, an alliance of clans backing the government.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded two policemen in Nahrawan, southeast of Baghdad, a police source said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“Let Me Clear It Up For Any Moron
With Lingering Doubts”
“It's Over”
“You Lost”**

February 20, 2007 by Girl Blogger [Iraq], Riverbendblog [Excerpt]

And yet, as the situation continues to deteriorate both for Iraqis inside and outside of Iraq, and for Americans inside Iraq, Americans in America are still debating on the state of the war and occupation - are they winning or losing?

Is it better or worse.

Let me clear it up for any moron with lingering doubts: It's worse.

It's over.

You lost.

You lost the day your tanks rolled into Baghdad to the cheers of your imported, American-trained monkeys.

You lost every single family whose home your soldiers violated.

You lost every sane, red-blooded Iraqi when the Abu Ghraib pictures came out and verified your atrocities behind prison walls as well as the ones we see in our streets.

You lost when you brought murderers, looters, gangsters and militia heads to power and hailed them as Iraq's first democratic government.

You lost when a gruesome execution was dubbed your biggest accomplishment.

You lost the respect and reputation you once had.

You lost more than 3000 troops.

That is what you lost America. I hope the oil, at least, made it worthwhile.

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.

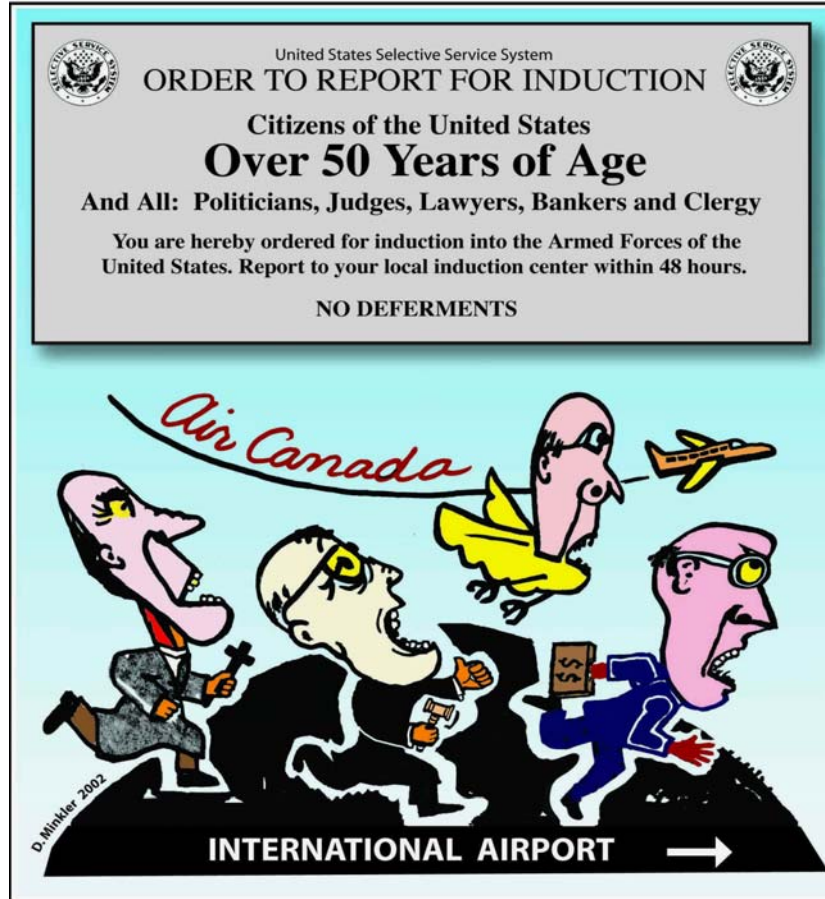
DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Congressional Democrats; “Fecklessly And Cynically Enacting Restrictions That Do Not Restrict”

2.22.07 George F. Will, Washington Post

Congressional Democrats lack the political will to exercise their clearly constitutional power to defund the war in Iraq. And they lack the Constitutional power to achieve that end by usurping the commander in chief's powers to conduct a war.

They can spend this year fecklessly and cynically enacting restrictions that do not restrict.



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

Federal Prosecutors Caught Faking Terrorism Statistics

2.21.07 New York Times

Federal prosecutors counted immigration violations, marriage fraud and drug trafficking among antiterror cases in the four years after Sept. 11 despite there being no evidence linking them to terror activity, a Justice Department audit found.

Armed Chimps Draw Mixed Reviews: NRA: "Welcome to the Club!"

Neocons: “Are They Being Armed by Iran?”

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

February 23, 2007 by William D. Hartung, New York; Associated Press International published by Common Dreams.

A report in the Washington Post has revealed that chimpanzees in West Africa have been observed making spears from sticks “and using the tools to hunt small animals.” The development has been cited as “the first routine production of deadly weapons ever observed in animals other than humans.”

Reactions to the report were mixed.

NRA spokesperson Wayne Lapiere enthusiastically embraced the news: “I say, welcome to the club! Humans aren’t the only ones who need protection from threats to their homes and families. And now that animals are able to arm themselves, the gun control zealots won’t be able to argue that no one needs to hunt with an AK-47.”

Other analysts expressed alarm.

Former UN Ambassador John Bolton said “It’s clear that these chimps couldn’t have developed this technology on their own. Mark my word, we will find the hand of the Iranian leadership behind this, as they try to destabilize West Africa and divert U.S. attention from their nuclear program.”

Vice President Cheney, who was busy provoking China during a brief trip to Asia, asserted that “nothing is off the table” as the US crafts a response to the arming of the chimps.

He further argued that “this should finally put the lie to assertions by granola-eating, ankle-biting animal rights activists who claim that animals are innocent victims of human aggression.”

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Joseph Biden has a different perspective: “If the administration moves towards war with the chimps without seeking Congressional approval, they will spark a constitutional crisis.”

Chimp spokesperson Howard Rubinstein termed the debate “much ado about nothing.” He noted that “U.S. military spending is 600 trillion times what the chimps are spending, and spears are a poor match for tactical nuclear weapons.”

In related news, Sen. Hillary Clinton argued that her term on the Senate Armed Services Committee made her “far more qualified” than her rival Sen. Barack Obama to deal with the “chimp crisis.”

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

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