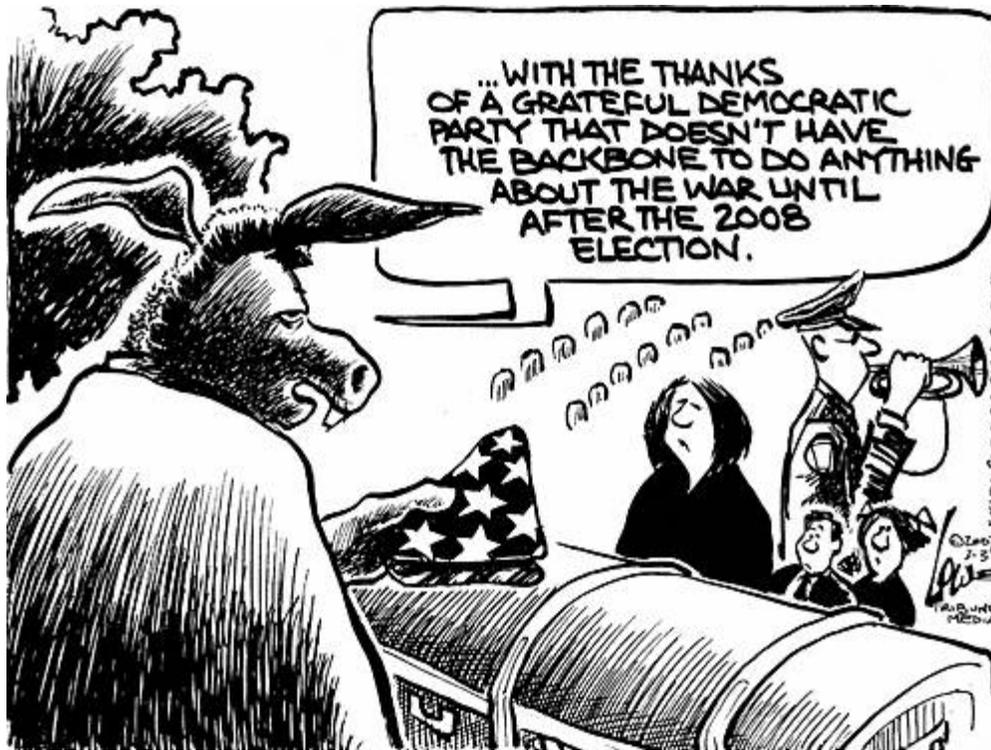


GI SPECIAL 5C11:



[Thanks to Katie GY, The Military Project]

“He Had Said He Couldn’t Make Sense Of The War Anymore” 25-Year-Old Sergeant Killed Wednesday In Iraq

March 02, 2007 By Curt Brown and Kevin Giles, Star Tribune staff writers

A 25-year-old Marine from Maple Lake, Minn., died Wednesday when a bomb exploded in Iraq, two days after a soldier with strong Minnesota ties died in a similar explosion.

Sgt. Chad M. Allen, whom his father described as a "very well loved young man," was killed while driving a light-armored vehicle in the Anbar Province.

He was on his second deployment in Iraq and was scheduled to leave the Marines on May 1, said his father, Steve Allen of Danbury, Wis.

On Monday, former Coon Rapids resident Army Sgt. William (B.J.) Beardsley, 25, was killed by a roadside bomb in Diwaniyah, about 100 miles south of Baghdad.

He and Allen were the 52nd and 53rd people with Minnesota ties to die in connection with the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Allen joined the Marines the day after the Sept. 11 attacks, said his mother, Deborah Allen, also of Danbury. "He was going to save his family from harm," she said Thursday.

His parents said he volunteered for a second tour of duty in Iraq to take the place of an injured fellow Marine.

Allen was assigned to the 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Allen's father said his son had told him Sunday that he had been promoted to sergeant. Chad, the second of four children, had grown up in Maple Lake and graduated from high school there.

Bart Kilgo, Allen's friend since kindergarten, said, "He was an all-around great person, the best friend I ever had," Kilgo said Thursday night.

The two played high school football together -- Allen played guard on offense and linebacker on defense -- and remained close friends even throughout their military careers. Kilgo left the Marines after serving two tours in Iraq.

Allen worked for a car wash and a landscape company before joining the Marines.

He loved to fish, ride his motorcycle, and was homecoming king in high school, his mother said.

"He was awesome, he was the coolest kid," she said. "He was very happy, very outgoing, never could sit still for a minute."

Beardsley's stepmother said the same was true of her son.

"He was always upbeat and in a good mood," said Dianna Beardsley of Blaine.

B.J. Beardsley had called his father, Jim, in Blaine last Friday.

When the phone rang Tuesday, it was with the news that Beardsley had died Monday in Iraq.

A native of Muskogee, Okla., Beardsley spent three years in the Army right out of high school.

He left the Army briefly and moved to Coon Rapids in 2002 to work for his father's excavation company.

After three years in Minnesota, world events became more important than excavation, and Beardsley reenlisted, Dianne Beardsley said. "He saw what was going on and he really believed that we needed to fight for this cause because there was evil out there," she said.

But Beardsley's support for the war was fading during the first seven months of his Iraq tour, according to his mother, Lavonna Harper, who lives in Oklahoma.

She said she had received an e-mail from her son a few weeks ago in which he had said he couldn't make sense of the war anymore.

'I ... told him to be careful'

"I wrote him back and told him to be careful and keep his head down and his butt covered," Harper said.

"I asked him what he needed me to send and when he was coming home."

She never got a response.

Beardsley was recently divorced from his wife, Stacy, who lives in Indiana with their 4-year-old son, Chance, and a 3-year-old daughter, Alexis.

Beardsley was set to fly to Indiana on leave April 8 to celebrate Chance's 5th birthday.

"He loved his kids and was a great brother," said Cassie Borden, 22, Beardsley's sister, who also lives in Blaine.

"He was a character, for sure, always quick-witted and he loved anything to do with motor sports and motorcycles."

As a child, Beardsley moved to Germany and Georgia with his mother and stepfather, a career military man. He returned to Oklahoma when he was 16.

Beardsley's first stint in the Army included time in South Korea. When he reenlisted, he was assigned to the 260th Quartermaster Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Troop Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division of Fort Stewart, Ga.

His funeral will be held in Indianapolis, and his Minnesota relatives plan to hold a memorial service.

"I'll miss talking to him, hearing his voice, touching him, just hearing me say the words 'I love you, son,' "

Harper said. "When they're gone, it's like, 'Oh my God.' "

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

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



12.24.06: A US tank in the southeast Baghdad neighbourhood of Kamaliya.
(AFP/Wissam al-Okaili)

**The Traitor Bush Escalates
Again:
Another 4,000 Off To His
Imperial Slaughterhouse**

3.10.07 By Steve Holland

President George W. Bush has approved adding 4,400 more U.S. troops to a force buildup already ordered to try to bring security to Iraq, the White House said on Saturday.

In January, Bush said he would deploy 21,500 more U.S. troops to Iraq to try to stabilize Baghdad and restive Anbar province.

Gordon Johndroe, spokesman for the White House National Security Council, said the extra troops would include up to 2,400 military police to handle an anticipated increase in Iraqi detainees.

In addition, about 2,000 more combat support troops will be needed to bolster the 21,500.

**LIAR
TRAITOR
TROOP-KILLER
DOMESTIC ENEMY
UNFIT FOR COMMAND
UNWORTHY OF OBEDIENCE**



(1.26.07: Kevin Lamarque/Reuters)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Iraqi Resistance Organization Demands German Troops Get Out Of Afghanistan Or Agents Will Be Executed



Iraqi militants from the Kataeb Siham al-Haq (Righteous Arrows Battalions) addressing the German government. (AFP)

March 11, 2007 The Sydney Morning Herald & MAGGIE MICHAEL, Associated Press Writer

A little-known Iraqi militant group said it would kill two hostages, a German woman and her son, in 10 days if Berlin does not withdraw its troops from Afghanistan.

The Arrows of Righteousness group posted a video on the internet showing Hannelore Marianne Krause urging Germany to heed the demands of the militants. The footage showed her passport.

"We give the German Government 10 days from the date of this statement to announce and start the withdrawal of their troops from Afghanistan, otherwise ... they will not even see the bodies of these two agents," said a masked man, reading a statement on the video.

German officials have refused to identify the captives or say why they are in Iraq.

The speaker said Germany was "annihilating" fellow Muslims in Afghanistan and "smiling at us in Iraq. Do not the tyrants know that we are one nation with one religion?"

Krause, 61, who was sitting next to a younger man, urged German Chancellor Angela Merkel to meet the demands of her abductors to save her life and that of her son. Both hostages were weeping as she made her plea.

Chicago GI Dies In Afghanistan

March 2, 2007 By Octavio Lopez and Gerry Doyle, Chicago Tribune. Octavio Lopez is an assignment editor at Hoy, a Tribune publication.

Family and friends on Thursday mourned the death of a Chicago soldier killed in an explosion this week while serving in northern Afghanistan.

Pfc. Daniel Zizumbo, 27, died Tuesday in Bagram, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered from a homemade bomb, Defense Department officials said. His mother, Julia, said she last saw him on Jan. 26, the day he deployed.

It was Zizumbo's second stint in the military, his mother said. He joined the Marines at age 17 after graduating from Juarez High School and spent four years in the corps.

After that, he tried for years to find a job in Chicago, applying at O'Hare International and Midway Airports, his mother said. Zizumbo briefly attended two colleges during this time, but unable to find work, he enlisted again, this time in the Army.

Julia Zizumbo, of the Archer Heights neighborhood, said the decision upset her. "He didn't need to go to the Army," his mother said. "I always provided for him and his siblings. I always wanted something better for my children."

Zizumbo was assigned to the Army's 1st Transportation Movement Control Agency, 21st Theater Support Command, based in Kaiserslautern, Germany, officials said.

Bagram, about an hour north of Kabul, is the main U.S. air base in Afghanistan.

Services for Zizumbo will be held next week, his mother said.

Top Occupation Collaborator Served 4 Years In U.S. Prison For Dealing Heroin

3.9.07 Los Angeles Times

Izzatullah Wasifi, Afghanistan's anti-corruption chief, served nearly four years in Nevada state prison on a conviction of selling heroin to an undercover detective, a review of criminal records has found.

Wasifi, a childhood friend of President Hamid Karzai, leads a staff of 84 charged with rooting out graft that is fueled in part by the country's opium poppies.

Assorted Resistance Action

Mar 7, 2007 (AP) & 10 March 2007 Khaleej Times Online

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan - Six people have died after being wounded in the bombing of the armoured vehicle of an Afghan elder who played a key role in dealing with the Taleban, police said Saturday.

He was also instrumental in persuading the Taleban to give up control of Kandahar province peacefully as they were being pushed from power in a US-led invasion in 2001.

A remote-controlled roadside bomb ripped through the vehicle of Mullah Naqeeb, an influential pro-government tribal elder on Friday, injuring him and nine others, including two of his sons.

Six died later in the hospital, including one of the sons, provincial police commander Ismatullah Alizai told AFP.

In southern Zabul province, Taliban militants attacked a police checkpoint and wounded four policemen Wednesday, said provincial police chief Abdul Ghafar. The attack occurred near Qalat, Zabul's capital.

TROOP NEWS

Michael Franti DC Event: A Fundraiser For Iraq Veterans Against The War

[Thanks to Garrett Reppenhagen, Iraq Veterans Against The War, who sent this in.]

Iraq Veterans Against the War presents a fundraising event and Late Night Screening of Michael Franti's movie "I know I'm not Alone"

WHEN:

March 16th at 11PM, the night before the march on the Pentagon

**WHERE: Bus Boys and Poets
14th and V NW, Washington DC**

Come join us March 16th for a late night exclusive event with Michael Franti of Spearhead.

**Including Iraq Veterans Against the War speakers
And a guest acoustic performance by
Michael Franti**

COST: \$25

Please pass this along to friends and lists you have to help support IVAW.



**IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR:
December 12, 2006: San Francisco**

[Photo by Jeff Paterson, Courage to Resist: jeff [at] paterson.net]

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, inside the armed services and at home. Send email

requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

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



The coffin of Army Sgt. Richard Ford, during a funeral ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery March 5, 2007. Ford of East Hartford, Conn., died on Feb. 20 of wounds suffered during combat operations near Baghdad, Iraq. (AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

450 From Ft. Riley Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse

3.12.07 Army Times

Fort Riley, Kansas: An engineering unit is headed for Afghanistan, where the soldiers will clear roads — and build more.

A deployment ceremony was held Feb. 23 for 70th Engineer Battalion. About half of the battalion's more than 450 soldiers will be going overseas for the first time.

The battalion returned about a year ago from a deployment to Iraq, its second there since 2003.

Troops Fucked Over, As Usual:

Officers Get More, Higher Disability Ratings: “The Army, In Particular, Purposely Tries To Hold Down Costs By Giving Low Ratings To Enlisted Soldiers” “Only 79 More Soldiers Were Placed On Permanent Disability Retirement In 2005 Than In 2001”

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

“If they admit they’re wrong, they’ve got thousands of cases to go through — billions and billions of dollars,” said Army Lt. Col. Mike Parker, who began raising the alarm on the problems over a year ago.

Mar 9, 2007 By Kelly Kennedy, Army Times Staff writer

The Army and Marine Corps, which are bearing the brunt of the burden in Iraq and Afghanistan, tend to give their wounded troops lower disability ratings than the Navy and Air Force, according to Defense Department data.

The result: soldiers and Marines receive an average of several hundred dollars per month less in disability retired pay than sailors and airmen.

Break those numbers down a different way, and the system shows another inequity: All services tend to grant officers disability ratings of 50 percent or higher at a significantly greater rate than enlisted members.

Critics say those figures support their contention that the Army, in particular, purposely tries to hold down costs by giving low ratings to enlisted soldiers who far outnumber officers going through the lengthy, convoluted system.

After digging through five years of reports from the Department of Defense Office of the Actuary, Military Times found the average payment for a disabled Air Force officer in 2005 was \$2,604 per month, about \$600 more than the Army’s average. For enlisted airmen, the average payment was \$926 per month, compared to an average of about \$770 per month for enlisted soldiers. Enlisted Marines averaged \$753 a month.

Military Times also compared the disability ratings of officers and enlisted members above 50 percent.

From 2003, the year the Iraq war began, through 2005, the latest year for which data is available, the proportion of officers who received disability retirement ratings of 50 percent or more — and the comparatively larger retirement checks that come with them — significantly outpaced the proportion of enlisted members who received similar ratings.

Those numbers may reflect a greater deference shown to officers going through the system, as well as the possibility that officers are more knowledgeable about the system and can better advocate for themselves. [Do you suppose?]

Senior officers, however, lay the blame not on the people operating the system, but on the system itself. They say convoluted disability ratings charts and regulations combine to form a bureaucratic thicket that has forced soldiers recovering from war wounds received in Iraq and Afghanistan to fight a new war in Washington.

But those explanations don't account for what some troops believe were intentional decisions to leave them with lower disability ratings than they feel they deserved.

They don't explain physical evaluation board members who refused to consider new medical evidence, or who told soldiers they couldn't appeal their cases when regulation clearly stated they could, or who simply told soldiers to take their claims to the VA.

"At the end of the day," Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Richard Cody acknowledged in a recent congressional hearing, "it looks unfair, and quite frankly, we're being stingy as a nation."

In the wake of the Walter Reed controversy — which has exploded into calls for a review of the entire military health system and particularly its disability evaluation processes — Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, has proposed reopening all past military disability cases for review.

That could provide thousands of troops with the chance to increase their disability ratings. But in an already-overwhelmed system, the results could be disastrous — and expensive.

"If they admit they're wrong, they've got thousands of cases to go through — billions and billions of dollars," said Army Lt. Col. Mike Parker, who began raising the alarm on the problems over a year ago.

Yet the numbers seem to beg for a fresh look. For example, the Army had 5,500 more soldiers going through the physical evaluation board process in 2005 than in 2001 — but only 79 more soldiers were placed on permanent disability retirement in 2005 than in 2001.

But Parker and other service members argue the issue can be larger than that: Those with multiple injuries get disability ratings based on only one of those injuries — and many say it tends to be the one that merits the lowest rating.

For example, Army Sgt. Michael Pinero is going blind. He must wear contacts not so that he can see, but to hold the shape of his eyes.

“He’s non-deployable because of the contacts,” said Ron Smith, deputy general counsel for Disabled American Veterans.

But Pinero was rated as 10 percent disabled for an esophagus problem.

Smith said the eye problems would have earned him a 30 percent disability rating, the threshold at which troops can draw lifetime, tax-free medical retirement pay and all the other routine benefits of military retirement, such as commissary and exchange privileges and continued access to military health care for themselves and their families.

Smith said he knows of another soldier who lost the use of his arm, but was rated for a different, lesser disability.

The loss of a limb is supposed to merit a disability rating of 70 percent, “no ifs, ands or buts,” Smith said. “But these people just wouldn’t do it. The problem is they fail to follow their own regulations.”

“We had heard some of that in after-action reviews with the soldiers and families,” Cody acknowledged.

Cynthia Bascetta, director of VA and military health care issues for the Government Accountability Office, said all these problems have been raised to the Defense Department before — multiple times.

“The cumulative message is that too often our wounded soldiers have been poorly served” by the Defense Department and VA, she said.

The GAO always follows up on the fate of its recommendations. In this particular arena, Bascetta said, “The systemic fixes don’t seem to happen.”

And the problems, she said, go deeper than bureaucracy: There is no oversight, “no quality-assurance mechanism in place.”

Col. Jerry Lechliter sued the Army when a physical evaluation board found him fit for duty — even though he had 11 ailments, including injuries to his back, shoulder and elbow, as well as three surgeries on his feet.

In July, he won the right to an appeal through the physical evaluation board in U.S. Federal Claims Court in Washington, but instead settled for a 70 percent disability rating and \$30,000 in back pay.

“When a physical evaluation board underrates ailments and denies a soldier disability retirement, the soldier and his family suffer for life,” he said. “VA benefits are much less and end with the death of the veteran if (the disability) isn’t service-connected. There’s no lifetime medical insurance for the spouse and for children.”

In his case, the Army cited a Defense Department regulation that states only those found unfit have the right to appeal a disability ratings decision. But the Army’s own regulation, AR 635-40, states that any soldier may appeal an informal physical evaluation board. Lechliter said soldiers are not told about that.

Parker said other issues include rating soldiers for limitation of motion based only on what physical evidence shows — for example, in an X-ray.

“Pain doesn’t show up on an X-ray, but the other services rate for it,” Parker said. “But the Army creates its own policy for pain, and it caps out at a 20 percent (disability rating). They’re using a regulation that doesn’t follow the law.”

Parker said he feared that by focusing attention on a system based on a convoluted disability ratings chart, the Army will evade further inquiries into whether physical evaluation board members are intentionally giving soldiers low ratings.

Parker said a disability retirement budget that has remained steady at \$100 million a month from 2002 to 2005 — despite thousands more people going through the system in the Army alone, according to data from the Pentagon’s Office of the Actuary — suggests to him that defense officials do, in fact, have an idea of just how much they want to spend on disability retirement.

Army Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Kevin Kiley recently told Congress that platoon sergeants and case managers assigned to the disability evaluation system now have better training than they did when the GAO reviewed the system two years ago.

But one soldier, Army Pvt. Martin Jackson of the 1st Armored Division, described having a private first class work his case for him.

“I can’t believe they’d let an E-3 in a (counselor) position,” Hilton said. “That’s too low. It’s too hard.”

MORE:

**“Many Who Served In The Guard
Think They Are Losing The Battle
Against The Bureaucracy”**

Many New Veterans Say They Are Often Left Waiting For Months Or Years, Wondering If They Will Be Taken Care Of”



James Webb waited 11 months for benefits and began living on the streets. Now he lives at his parents' house with his son, Christian.

3.8.07 By IAN URBINA and RON NIXON, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON, March 8 — Staff Sgt. Gregory L. Wilson, from the Texas National Guard, waited nearly two years for his veterans' disability check after he was injured in Iraq.

If he had been an active-duty soldier, he would have gotten more help in cutting through the red tape.

Allen Curry of Chicago has fallen behind on his mortgage while waiting nearly two years for his disability check. If he had filed his claim in a state deploying fewer troops than Illinois, Mr. Curry, who was injured by a bomb blast when he was a staff sergeant in the Army Reserve in Iraq, would most likely have been paid sooner and gotten more in benefits.

Veterans face serious inequities in compensation for disabilities depending on where they live and whether they were on active duty or were members of the National Guard or the Reserve, an analysis by The New York Times has found.

Those factors determine whether some soldiers wait nearly twice as long to get benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs as others, and collect less money, according to agency figures.

“The V.A. is supposed to provide uniform and fair treatment to all,” said Steve Robinson, the director of veteran affairs for Veterans for America.

“Instead, the places and services giving the most are getting the least.”

Numerous government reports have highlighted the agency’s backlog of disability claims and called for improvements in shifting resources.

“It’s Actuary Science 101,” said Paul Sullivan, who until last March monitored data on returning veterans for the V.A. “When 5,000 new troops get deployed from California, you can logically expect a percent of them will show up at the V.A. in California in a year with predictable types of problems.”

“It makes no sense to wait until the troop is already back home to start preparing for them,” Mr. Sullivan said. “But that’s what the V.A. does.”

Veterans’ advocates say the types of bureaucratic obstacles recently disclosed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center are eclipsed by those at the Veterans Affairs division that is supposed to pay soldiers for service-related ills.

Stephen Meskin, who retired last year as the V.A.’s chief actuary, said he had repeatedly urged agency managers to track data so they could better meet the needs of former soldiers. “Where are the new vets showing up?” Mr. Meskin said he kept asking. “They just shrugged.”

Many new veterans say they are often left waiting for months or years, wondering if they will be taken care of.

Unable to work because of post-traumatic stress disorder and back injuries from a bomb blast in Iraq in 2004, Specialist James Webb of the Army ran out of savings while waiting 11 months for his claim. In the fall of 2005, Mr. Webb said, he began living on the streets in Decatur, Ga., a state that has the 10th-largest backlog of claims in the country.

“I should have just gone home to be with family instead of trying to do it on my own,” said Mr. Webb, who received a Bronze Star for his service in Iraq. “But with the post-traumatic stress disorder, I just didn’t want any relationships.”

After waiting 11 months, he began receiving his \$869 monthly disability check and he moved into a house in Newnan, Ga. About three weeks ago, Mr. Webb moved back home to live with his parents in Kingsport, Tenn.

Illinois, which has deployed the sixth-highest number of soldiers of any state, has the second-largest backlog. The average disability payment for Illinois veterans — \$7,803 a year — is among the lowest in the nation, according to 2005 V.A. data.

In Pennsylvania, which has sent the fourth-highest number of troops, the claims office in Pittsburgh is tied for second for longest backlogs, where 4 out of 10 claims have been pending for more than six months. Veterans from this state on

average receive relatively low payments, \$8,268 per year, according to 2005 V.A. data.

Staffing levels at the veterans agency vary widely and have not kept pace with the increased demand.

The current inventory of disability claims rose to 378,296 by the end of the 2006 fiscal year.

The claims from returning war veterans plus those from previous periods increased by 39 percent from 2000 to 2006. During the same period, the staff for handling claims has remained relatively flat, a problem the department highlighted in its 2008 proposed budget.

The department expects to receive about 800,000 new claims in 2007 and 2008 each.

The growing strains on the veterans agency have affected some soldiers more than others.

While the Reserve and National Guard have sent a disproportionate number of soldiers to the war, the average annual disability payment for those troops is \$3,603, based on 2006 V.A. data for unmarried veterans with no dependents. Active-duty soldiers on average receive \$4,962.

Many who served in the Guard think they are losing the battle against the bureaucracy.

“We take a harder toll,” said Mr. Wilson, the Texan, referring to the fate of reservists and Guard troops compared with active duty soldiers.

He said that last month he received his disability check for his back injuries but only after a 21-month wait and the intervention of a congressman and a colonel.

When active-duty soldiers near discharge, they have access to far more programs offering assistance with benefits than do reserve and National Guard soldiers, according to veterans’ advocates.

He said that while active-duty soldiers often received medical disability evaluations in about 30 days, many reservists he knew waited two years or more to get an initial appointment.

Active-duty personnel also routinely received legal advice about appeals and other issues from military lawyers, while reservists had to request those hearings, he said.

For years, the V.A.’s inspector general, the Government Accountability Office, members of Congress and veterans’ advocates have pointed out the need to improve how the V.A. tracks data on soldiers as they are deployed and when they are injured. That would help prepare for their future needs and ease delays in processing health and benefit claims.

In 2004, a system was designed to track soldiers better, prepare for surges in demand and avoid backlogs. But the system was shelved by program officials

under Secretary Jim Nicholson for financial and logistical reasons, V.A. officials said Thursday at a hearing before the House Veterans Affairs Committee.

The V.A., which has said it has an alternate tracking system nearly operational, depends on paper files and lacks the ability to download Department of Defense records into its computers.

For Mr. Curry, the reservist from Chicago who has fallen behind on his mortgage payments, his previous life as a \$60,000-a-year postal worker is a fading memory. "It's just disheartening," he said.

"You feel like giving up sometimes."

Director Of VA Hospital With 12 "Suspicious Deaths" Was Sent To Arizona To Run Another One In Phoenix After Showing "A Gross Lack Of Leadership"

Mar. 9, 2007 Associated Press

SALISBURY, N.C. — Two years before disclosures of shoddy care at one of the country's top Army hospitals, federal investigators found a history of neglectful care at a veterans medical center in Salisbury, according to a 2005 report by the Office of the Medical Inspector.

The report, launched after an anonymous complaint about 12 suspicious deaths at the hospital, determined doctors and nurses at cut corners on treatment, manipulated records, and didn't talk enough with patients and families, The Charlotte Observer reported Friday.

The report also highlighted what investigators called the inadequate care received by two of the veterans who died there.

The report showed "a gross lack of leadership at almost every level, certainly medically," said Oscar Aylor, a professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill who has helped run three hospitals.

"You should just be appalled at the whole situation."

Donald Moore, who was director of the hospital at the time of the inspection and now heads a VA facility in Phoenix, could not be reached for comment.

In the Hefner report, investigators stopped short of blaming the hospital for the deaths of Carrol Edward Minish of Conover and Robert Edward Lashmit of Lexington, who each had chronic health problems. But it concludes the hospital staff did not do near enough to keep them alive.

The report did not account for the 10 other deaths.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

March 10, 2007 News Limited & Reuters

Two blasts that sounded like mortars rocked the building where delegates from regional and world powers were meeting to discuss stabilising Iraq, Reuters witnesses said. There was no immediate word on casualties.

A bomber has attacked an army checkpoint in Baghdad. Six soldiers were among those killed when the attacker rammed a military position guarding the entrance to the east Baghdad Shiite enclave of Sadr City.

The blast erupted in Mudaffer Square on the edge of Sadr City, a short distance from a police checkpoint, an AFP photographer said from the scene.

A roadside bomb killed three policemen and wounded one in the western Iraqi city of Ramadi on Friday, police said.

A car bomber killed one soldier and wounded two others when he blew up his vehicle at an Iraqi Army checkpoint in western Baghdad's Jamia district, police said.

A roadside bomb wounded two Iraqi soldiers when it blew up near their patrol in western Baghdad's Yarmouk district, police said.

Guerrillas opened fire on a police patrol in the Abu Ghraib district on the western outskirts of Baghdad, killing one policeman.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“The United States Has Already Lost” “Even If We Had A Million Men To Go In, It's Too Late Now,” Says Retired Four- Star Gen. Tony McPeak

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

Mar 07 By TIM DICKINSON, Rolling Stone [Excerpts]

The war in Iraq isn't over yet, but -- surge or no surge -- the United States has already lost.

“Even if we had a million men to go in, it's too late now,” says retired four-star Gen. Tony McPeak, who served on the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Gulf War. “Humpty Dumpty can't be put back together again.”

“It's not a question of whether we're going to leave Iraq -- it's a question of when. And everybody in Iraq knows that. So they say, ‘Fine. We'll stock arms and wait for you guys to leave. And then we'll do what we want.’”

Dickinson: But the administration has repeatedly highlighted the potential for chaos in Iraq after our departure as a reason we must stay and fight.

Richard Clarke: [Counterterrorism czar from 1992 to 2003]

All the things they say will happen are already happening.

We've got 150,000 troops there now and we can't stop it.

The Point Is That Nobody “Volunteered” For Bush’s Imperial War; Nobody At All

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

March 10, 2007 By Stacy Bannerman, AlterNet [Excerpts]

“They volunteered, didn't they?”

As the war in Iraq has gone from wrong to worse, that question, often delivered as a statement, has become the fallback stance of folks who are attempting to silence the voices of those of us who actually have loved ones in uniform, or who died while wearing it.

I love my country dearly, but sometimes it's difficult to retain a feeling of love for my countrymen who have said, "They volunteered, didn't they?" in an effort to shut up the growing numbers of military and Gold Star families who are speaking out against this war.

More often than not, the phrase falls from the mouths of people who will send our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, spouses and children to war, but blanch or literally roll their eyes at the suggestion that they send their own, or -- heavens! -- go themselves.

Over 400 Army National Guard soldiers have died in Iraq, more than quadruple the amount that died in the entire Vietnam War.

The cumulative number of days Guard soldiers called to duty (rose) from 12.7 million in 2001 to 68.3 million in 2005, according to the Los Angeles Times.

[Volunteered?

[The point is that *nobody*, Guard, Reserve or Active Duty, volunteered for Iraq.

[Oh, maybe they did.

[The recruiter said, "Hey, sign up here. The President of The United States is a foul dishonorable traitor who will lie about a reason to go to war so he can send you halfway across the world to invade a foreign country because it's got a lot of oil he wants to grab for his rich, powerful friends; you know, the ones that run the government and the country?

"And then he's going to set up his very own military dictatorship to run that country, and when the people who live there get pissed off and fight to liberate their country, they will kill you."

["You're all ready to volunteer for that, right? You're ready to be a Redcoat, right?"

[Yeah, sure, that's what the recruiter said, so yeah, they're all volunteers. T]

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR; RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



Iraqi children stand behind barbed wire near a police station during a rally near Kirkuk, March 4, 2007. The residents held a protest demanding the release of their family members, who were arrested by foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. in a raid two days ago. REUTERS/Slahaldeen Rasheed

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqi troops over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, butcher their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it "sovereign," and "detain" anybody who doesn't like it in some prison without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.]

[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]

“In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit,” said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay's Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday's raid. “Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead.”

A Classic Of Imperial Arrogance: “Our Main Goal Is To Show The Iraqis What Right Looks Like” “When We Tell Them To Do Something It's For Their Own Good”

March 12, 2007, By Michelle Tan, Staff writer, Army Times [Excerpts]

“For the most part, it's trying to get (the Iraqis) to understand that when we tell them to do something it's for their own good,” Gammon [Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Gammon, platoon sergeant, 1 Platoon, D Company, 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment] said.

“Our main goal is to show the Iraqis what right looks like. If we show them and do things correctly, hopefully they can take a page from that book and run with it. Ultimately, they're going to have to make it work, so we'll show them the way.”

Everything the soldiers are doing has a purpose, and the Americans are trying to convey that to the Iraqis, Brown [1st Lt. Clarke Brown of 1st Platoon, D Company] said.

“I'm glad I get to do what I signed up to do,” he [Sgt. Brian D'Apice] said.

“The biggest challenge is not being able to tell who's who. The enemy blends in. “Another big one is how little we know about their culture.”

[OK, how's this for starters:

[First, they understand already that “everything the soldiers are doing has a purpose” The purpose is destroying their independence and replacing it with a U.S. military dictatorship commanded by George W. Bush.

[As for “how little we know about their culture,” that’s not rocket science either. There culture, for about 4000 years now, has been to kill foreign invaders trying to occupy their land. That means you, Sgt. You are a Redcoat. Does that ring a bell? T]

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

Big Oil Company Executives Say Thanks But No Thanks; Draft Oil Law Useless

3.9.07 Wall Street Journal

Lawmakers in Iraq will soon debate a draft petroleum law for the oil-rich country, but in its current form the legislation fails to clarify two issues crucial to the nation's future: how to lure foreign investment into the vast oil sector and how to distribute the new revenue that results.

In recent days, oil-company executives have said the legislation is still too ambiguous to trigger any meaningful negotiations between companies and government officials.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Condi Upgrades Iraq From Quagmire To Morass; Situation Disastrous But Not Catastrophic, Rice Says

March 1, 2007 The Borowitz Report

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told reporters at the Pentagon today that the conflict in Iraq had improved to the point that it could no longer be considered a quagmire and should now be thought of as a morass.

“After taking a look at what is going on there on the ground, it is my judgment that it is time to upgrade Iraq from quagmire to morass,” Dr. Rice said, adding that she was “very confident” in making the new assessment.

The Secretary of State said that the decision to invade Iraq could no longer be considered “a boneheaded mistake of unthinkable proportions” and should now be thought of as “a colossal error we will regret for years to come.”

“That’s a measure of how much things have improved,” she said. “Anyone who takes a look at the big picture over there would come away saying that the situation is disastrous but not catastrophic.”

In order to fight the perception that the war in Iraq is going badly, Dr. Rice said she would ask Congress for an additional \$37 billion dollars to go toward euphemisms and synonyms.

Dr. Rice appeared to bristle at the question of one reporter, Charles Dolgian of the Toledo Blade, who asked if it was still appropriate to refer to the war in Iraq as “a train wreck.”

“It is most decidedly not a train wreck,” Dr. Rice said. “It is a train derailment in which the train hurtles down into the embankment and bursts into flames.”

University Of Hawaii Bans Cameras And Threatens “Bodily Ejection” From CIA Public Recruiting Lecture

“If the CIA “spook” doesn’t want his photo taken then he shouldn’t be giving a public recruiting lecture at a public university,” Albertini said.

March 8, 2007 By Jim Albertini, Malu `Aina Center For Non-violent Education & Action
[Excerpts]

A “CIA clandestine operative” gave a public recruiting lecture at University of Hawaii at Hilo (UHH) 5PM at UCB Room 111 today, Thursday, March 8, 2007.

The meeting was announced in the University calendar and open to the public.

People were told that no photography (stills or video) of the CIA employee or his power point presentation were allowed.

Former Marine and UHH Director of Career Services, Dr. Norman Stahl, threatened Hawaii Tribune-Herald staff photographer, William Ing, with bodily ejection by security guards if he took even one photo.

Student Global HOPE leader Justin Avery, was told he could not use his video camera.

Malu Aina peace organization also intended to take still photos and video of the presentation. Several people lined the wall holding signs of protest: "Stop CIA torture; CIA blood money; Intelligence Agency? Is torture intelligent? CIA is government terrorism; A person dressed as the Grimm Reaper waving a wad of phony money stood near the front of the lecture room with a sign that said: Join the CIA: learn to kill, torture and overthrow elected governments.

Jim Albertini of Malu Aina said his organization is going to file a complaint with UHH Chancellor Rose Tseng, and Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, Keith Miser.

"Banning photos and threatening bodily ejection for taking photos at a public lecture at a State University is totally inappropriate," said Albertini.

"If the CIA "spook" doesn't want his photo taken then he shouldn't be giving a public recruiting lecture at a public university," Albertini said.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

"America Assassina" Happy Brazilians Welcome Bush



Demonstrators protest against the upcoming visit of US President George W. Bush in Sao Paulo, Thursday, March 8, 2007. President Bush will visit Brazil March 8-9. (AP Photo/Andre Penner)

Police Assist Brazilian Man Overcome With Delight To See Our President



Brazilian Policemen beat a protester during a march against U.S. President George W. Bush in Sao Paulo, March 8, 2007. (AP Photo/Maurilio Cheli)

Brazil: Angry Crowds Hunt Bush: “Let’s Show Him What We Think So That He Will Never, Ever Dare To Set Foot In Our Country Again”

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

March 10, 2007 Tom Phillips in Sao Paulo, The Guardian [Excerpts]

Some arrived clutching banners telling "Mr Butcher" to go home. Others brought effigies of "The Warlord" dangling miserably from a hangman's noose. A handful dressed up as the grim reaper, while some women paraded through the streets with stickers of George Bush and Adolf Hitler placed tastefully over their nipples.

If President Bush needed a reminder of his growing unpopularity in Latin America, it was here in Sao Paulo in the shape of a 10,000-strong human wave marching noisily through the financial district.

There was none of the famed Brazilian hospitality. Even before Mr Bush arrived in Brazil on Thursday to begin a six-day tour of Latin America the protesters were out en masse. "Persona non grata" read one placard. "Get out you Nazi" said another.

In case the message still hadn't hit home, there was one other taunt - this time in English: "Bush, kill yourself."

Hours before Mr Bush touched down in Sao Paulo protests broke out across Brazil. In Rio de Janeiro the US consulate was spattered with red paint. In Porto Alegre protesters burned George Bush dolls. The centre of Sao Paulo erupted in violence.

Massive corruption scandals involving Brazilian politicians rarely elicit this kind of reaction. Even top-flight Brazilian football teams sometimes struggle to draw such crowds.

There was even a special group formed by students to track down the president, calling itself the Bush Hunt Command.

The group gathered yesterday morning in Sao Paulo's Ibirapuera Park with the aim of chasing Mr Bush through the streets and forcing him to listen to their message.

The hunt began with a version of If You're Happy and You Know It with doctored lyrics. "Good morning President Bush, how's it going?" the crowd screamed, before the unmistakable chorus of "Filho da puta" - son of a whore.

Arthur Herculano, one of the hunt's leaders, busied himself daubing dozens of T-shirts with the movement's slogan "Fora Bush", meaning "Get out Bush." "It's to show that his imperialist attitudes are not welcome," he said. "We will force him to listen to us."

A massive security operation involving hundreds of police, military and intelligence agents from both countries meant the president was completely shielded from any kind of protest.

That, however, did not stop people trying. In Ibirapuera Park the hunt's leaders herded protesters into a fleet of coaches to begin their pursuit. The first stop was the Hilton, where Mr Bush was staying in the £3,200-a-night presidential suite.

"Wherever he goes today we will show him our hostility," one leader bellowed through a crackly PA system. "Let's show him what we think so that he will never, ever dare to set foot in our country again."

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.org/)

Received:

Disinfecting After Bush

From: Steve Vargo
To: GI Special
Sent: March 10, 2007
Subject: RE: GI Special 5C9: Demons

I saw on the news last night that somewhere in South America, the people are going through all kind of rituals to get rid of Bush's bad karma after his visit there!

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

GI Special issues are archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

<http://www.williambowles.info/gispecial/2006/index.html>;

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

http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/; <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>;

<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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