

GI SPECIAL 5C20:

ENOUGH. BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. soldiers and army paramedics at FOB Loyalty in Baghdad evacuate a comrade injured during a mission March 15, 2007. Two soldiers were seriously injured during the mission, a paramedic said. REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch

ANNOUNCEMENT RE GI SPECIAL

SEVERE COMPUTER PROBLEMS DELAYED SEVERAL ISSUES THIS WEEK.

EMAILS WERE LOST, CONTAINING A VARIETY OF NEWS STORIES YOU SENT IN. SOME WERE DUPLICATES SENT IN BY SEVERAL PEOPLE. IF THE STORY YOU SENT IN ISN'T PUBLISHED, OR YOU ARE NOT CREDITED FOR SENDING A STORY IN, APOLOGIES, AND THANKS. T

Iraq Vet Says “Soldiers Turning Against This War”

“More And More Soldiers Are Turning Against The War And We Have To Stand With Them” “My Son Doesn’t Like This War. He’s Against It. He’s Lost Very Close Friends, And He Wants To Come Home”

“The antiwar movement here must stand in solidarity with soldiers and veterans who are turning against the war,” said the IVAW’s Chanan Suarez-Diaz, speaking at the rally.

March 23, 2007 By Brian Jones and Elizabeth Schulte, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

FROM THE Pentagon outside Washington, D.C., to the streets of Los Angeles, tens of thousands of people gathered across the U.S. to be part of international protests on the fourth anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

In Washington, Earlene Evans, a D.C. resident, carried a picture of her son, David, who has been in Iraq for eight months.

“I’m here not only for my son, but for all of the sons and daughters,” Earlene told Socialist Worker. “My son doesn’t like this war. He’s against it. He’s lost very close friends, and he wants to come home.”

Sean Gomez, a Navy seaman who retired recently because of the Iraq war, explained what his first protest meant to him.

“I wanted to mingle, and I started meeting people,” Gomez said. “My first time around I was for being there. Now there’s no way in hell I would ever go back. After I got out, I started to become a person again, not a robot. I was flash-backing and started questioning my morality. Then I started questioning their morality. Why would they send me to do that? This all happened in the last six months.”

In Seattle, vets also played a key role in the 3,000-strong march called by ANSWER on March 18.

“The antiwar movement here must stand in solidarity with soldiers and veterans who are turning against the war,” said the IVAW’s Chanan Suarez-Diaz, speaking at the rally.

“If no one drives the tanks or humvees, the tanks and humvees don’t move...Soldiers are the ones carrying out this war on the ground, and they can say ‘No more!’

“The war machine will literally come to a halt. We need to organize to get to that point. More and more soldiers are turning against the war and we have to stand with them.”

In Fayetteville, N.C., home to the Fort Bragg military base, 500 people gathered, including a large showing from military families and organizations.

“It wasn't until I got over there and saw the injustice that was going on that I started speaking out,” Matt Southworth, a soldier who recently joined the IVAW.

“We’re also trying to reach out to people in the service, to give them a place to come if they’re against the war,” said IVAW Mid-Atlantic Regional Organizer Paul Abernathy.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Killed In Baghdad

March 22, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070322-02

BAGHDAD – While returning to base after conducting combat security operations, a MND-B patrol was attacked with small arms fire in a western section of the Iraqi capital, killing one Soldier.

Marine Killed In Anbar

March 22, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070322-05

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Marine assigned to Multi National Force-West died March 21 while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar Province.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Anbar

March 22, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070322-04

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Soldier assigned to Multi National Force-West died March 21 while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar Province.

Army Soldier From Holstein Killed In Iraq

March 21, 2007 AP

HOLSTEIN, Neb. -- Family members said a 26-year-old Army soldier from Holstein was killed in Iraq Monday.

Army Sgt. Wayne Cornell's family said on Wednesday that officials from Fort Riley, Kan., notified them about Cornell's death Tuesday. The Defense Department had not confirmed the death as of Wednesday afternoon.

Cornell was based at Fort Riley, but it's not immediately clear which unit he was part of.

Cornell's grandmother, Darlene Christensen, said her grandson had two children and his wife, Trisha, is expecting their third child.

Cornell graduated from Silver Lake High School in Roseland in 1999 after growing up in Holstein. Both Holstein and Roseland are about 20 miles southeast of Hastings in south-central Nebraska.

Family Mourns Iraq Casualty



March 12, 2007 By STEVE FETBRANDT, The Press-Enterprise

When both of his grandsons left to fight in Iraq in October, 71-year-old Lawrence Hoffmann of Hemet had a gut feeling one of the U.S. Army soldiers wouldn't make it back alive.

On March 7, Staff Sgt. Christopher R. Webb was killed along with two other soldiers in Baghdad, when an improvised explosive device detonated near their vehicle during combat operations. They were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, home-based at Fort Hood, Texas.

Webb, 28, a former West Valley High School student who grew up in Hemet and Winchester, left a wife and infant daughter among his survivors.

"He was an easygoing kid -- never any trouble," his grandfather said. "He was a God-loving young man."

Hoffmann said Webb went into the Army in search of a steady job.

"We weren't real close in recent years, but he'd come by the house sometimes," Hoffmann said. "He liked the outdoors and enjoyed camping and stuff like that. He'd go up to Joshua Tree Monument. I took him on a trip with me to San Luis on the Amtrak when he was 12, and he really liked that."

"He was just an all-American boy. I'm not handling this too good right now."

Webb's brother, Coy Bullock, had just finished chatting on the Internet with Webb minutes before he was killed, Hoffmann said, crying into the phone.

Webb's mother, Teresa Bullock, of Lake Elsinore, said her son loved the Army. She remembered watching him don Army attire as a child and play soldier with his friends.

"He comes from a background of military. He was 11 months old when I went into the Army. I was in for a couple of years," she said. "His stepfather was also in the Army, and his grandfather was in the Marines. His other grandfather on his stepfather's side was in the Marines, too."

In October 1996, Webb left West Valley High School as a senior to attend Alessandro High, a continuation school, but did not complete the program. After enlisting in the Army National Guard, he earned his GED and transferred into the regular Army.

Bullock said that being a former soldier herself, she always understood the danger her sons faced.

"But we've tried to keep things positive and say we'd get through whatever we need to get through with the love and help of our friends and family," she said. "With our belief in and support of a higher power, we are getting through this."

Funeral arrangements are pending. Bullock said her son will be buried in Alturas, a town about 180 miles north of Reno, where his wife and infant daughter live. A memorial service will be held later for family and friends in the Hemet area.

"You have no idea how many hearts this man reached," Bullock said. "I've talked to so many people I didn't know he knew and people I hadn't heard from in 15 or 16 years."

Bullock said the rest of the family is holding up under the circumstances. She and her daughter flew to Alturas to be with Webb's wife, Shalan, and 6-month-old child, Mary. Her other son and husband were driving up.

"I told Chris' wife this morning that I finally felt at peace," Bullock said. "I had the best night's sleep since this whole thing started, because I knew Chris would want us all to be together and still does."

Bullock said her younger son, Coy, 20, a specialist, joined the Army two years ago. Both sons deployed to Iraq together in October, each on a one-year tour.

"They put everything in process for Coy to come home as soon as possible on emergency leave, and he got home Friday night," she said. "We don't know yet if he has to go back."

Bullock said her older son loved and was devoted to his wife of 5½ years and their daughter. His baby was almost two months old when he went overseas.

Larry Stroud, commander of Hemet's Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 12023, said the post will change its name to honor fallen soldiers from the community, particularly those from Hemet High School. The post will be renamed the Hemet High Veterans Memorial Post.

A Hemet High School assembly will take place May 25 to commemorate the change, Stroud said.

"This community has paid a heavy price in this war," said Stroud, who served in Vietnam. "We want to make sure the community and the high school never forget it."

BROOKLYN-BORN GI DIES IN BAGHDAD



Spc. Michael D. Rivera's burial service March 21, 2007 at Greenwood cemetery in New York. Rivera died March 7 in Baghdad, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near their vehicle during combat operations. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

March 10, 2007 By PATRICK GALLAHUE, NY POST

A Brooklyn-born soldier was killed by a roadside bomb in Baghdad on Wednesday, only six months after he celebrated the greatest day of young life - the birth of his daughter.

Army Spc. Michael Rivera's little girl, Joycelin - named after his beloved mother - was born Sept. 6 in Korea, where he was stationed.

"She was my first grandchild. She was born on my birthday," Rivera's mother, Joycelin Diaz-Perks, said before bursting into tears.

"He was thrilled she was born on that day," recalled his father José Diaz. "Because he loved his mother so much."

At about the same time, Rivera received more good news. He was being transferred to Fort Benning, Ga., where cousin Edward Rivera, a veteran of two tours in Iraq, was stationed.

"We were happy to be together again," said Edward, 20. "(But) his order got changed. He went to Fort Hood in Texas. I knew they were deploying to Iraq. I told him, 'I know from experience, it won't be so bad.' I made him promise me he was coming home."

At one point in his tour, Edward even teased Rivera that it was up to him to "save the day" in Baghdad.

"He loved his job," Edward said. "If there was a perfect model to get into the Army, Michael would be it."

Marine From South Portland Killed In Iraq

3/15/2007 Peter Weyl, Executive Producer; WCSH 6

20-year old PFC Angel Rosa, who was known as Angel Cota at South Portland High School, was killed in battle in Al-Anbar Province.

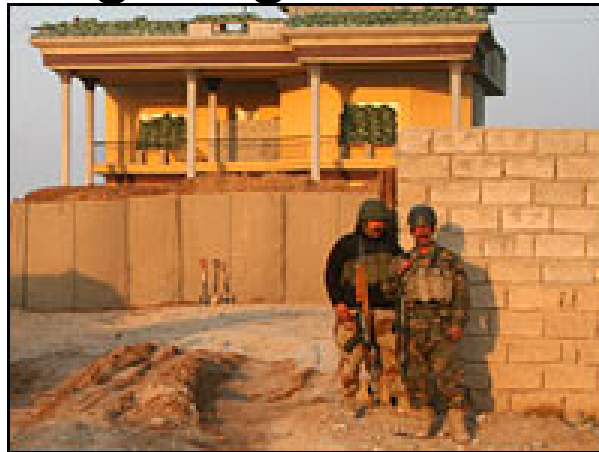
Rosa graduated from South Portland High School in 2004, where he was captain of the soccer team.

His coach, John Shardlow says, "He was a good athlete but a strong person, as well. For a kid who had such a competitive exterior, he had a soft interior."

Shardlow says Rosa was also a young man who loved teaching younger kids about the game he loved.

"He worked a lot with youth soccer." Shardlow says, "He was very involved in the community. If he served his country like he did his community, I think it's a tribute to the kinds of kids we're raising in this area."

Notes From An Evil War:
**Occupy A Town Where Everybody
Hates The Foreign Occupiers;
Take Over The Biggest House In
Town And Refuse To Pay For it:
Close The Bridge So People Can't
Get Any Food;
Call It Fighting For Democracy**



U.S. and Iraqi forces have taken over some of the houses in Shakarat. One of their new outposts is the largest and nicest house on this street. The owner's son complains that the family hasn't been compensated for the use of its house.

Photo: Jamie Tarabay, NPR

March 21, 2007 by Jamie Tarabay, NPR [Excerpts]

The road to the village of Shakarat is pocked with craters from roadside bombs. Cars approaching a U.S. military convoy teeter precariously to the left side of the road, almost falling into the pungent ditch. Shakarat and most of Diyala province are home to Iraq's

most fertile land. Towns are squeezed between dense clusters of palm groves and snaking canals.

Capt. Eric Philips, from the 293rd MP Company, says it's also the terrain of bomb-making Sunni insurgents; improvised explosive devices, known as IEDs, are a constant threat.

"I think we see about one a day on this road, in this little stretch," Philips says. "We either find it or get hit by it. I've had several trucks have the doors blown up and had to go get replaced on this road." The road is drenched in sewage and garbage.

Locals stare as the U.S. convoy goes past.

The spray-painted graffiti on the cinder block walls is all about support for the insurgent groups, with messages like: "Long live the mujahedeen," "Long live the Islamic state of Iraq," and "death to Maliki," referring to Iraq's prime minister.

[See photo below: In one of the stupidest ideas ever devised by any commander in any war anywhere anytime, U.S. troops are ordered to expose themselves to possible resistance sniper attack by spray painting over writing by resistance groups. After Shakarati, only about 3,239,004 walls in Iraq left to paint.]

The U.S. and Iraqi military intend to stay. They've taken over homes along the main road, and offered compensation to the owners. One of their main outposts is the biggest and nicest house in the street, but the owner has yet to be compensated.

[Lt. Michael] Stallings tells a member of the owner's family that the forces aren't prepared to make payments yet.

Stallings is assailed by questions from the locals.

He's not helped by a short Iraqi soldier at his elbow asking how much longer they have to stay in Shakarati. The soldier complains he's working 12-hour shifts, hasn't had time off, and hasn't been paid.

Stallings becomes frustrated.

"Yes, we're going to be here as long as we need to be to secure the people of Iraq," he tells the Iraqi soldier. [60% of them want you dead, Lt. That's from US sponsored polls. So between your short life expectancy, and the fact the troops are fed up this stupid war, better refigure that horseshit about "as long as we need to be." Think of it this way, Lt. The Iraqis, who live there, hate you, want to kill you, and their idea of security is seeing you go home to a cemetery. They want their country back. They're right, and you're nothing but a Redcoat. Remember them? 1776?]

Shopkeeper Fadhil Kadhmi wants the U.S. military to allow cars over the bridge again so he can sell his crops to buyers coming from other parts of the country.

"We have no connection with the insurgents," he says. "We don't know who they are or where they come from."

“This operation is for them, but it's been six days and we have nothing left to eat.”

Other Iraqis also want the bridge opened. But the U.S. military says it's too soon.



Iraqis stand outside a store covered in graffiti. When U.S. and Iraqi forces arrived, they spray painted over writing by insurgent groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq. Photo: Jamie Tarabay, NPR

MORE:

**As Soldier Cracks A Joke To
Relieve Tension After IED
Explosion, A Shit Eating Slime-
Fuck Clueless Lame Brained Limp
Dicked Waste Of Fucking Space
And Bane Of All Human Existence
Lt. Tells Him To “Quit Whining”**

[Thanks to Garrett Reppenhagen, Iraq Veteran, for the colorful terminology. T.]

March 20, 2007 by Jamie Tarabay, NPR [Excerpts]

First Lt. Douglas McGregor, 24, of Wilsonville, Ore., leads a convoy of supply vehicles in Iraq. His team had just finished delivering supplies to the newly built outpost in the village of Shakarat, and was on its way back to base. Just 10 minutes into the journey, the first IEDs were spotted. McGregor got out to check, and an ordnance team was called in.

A boom. An hour later, another loud boom — and McGregor returned.

"That would have killed us," he said. "It was a land mine right in the middle of the road. It was command-wired and pressure-plated, so whether he set it off or we set it off, it would have been a bad day."

Insurgents have long controlled this part of Iraq. They elude capture by slipping into the nearby palm groves and vineyards.

McGregor says the IEDs are often placed in the same spot daily.

"They're pretty hasty setting them in the same holes," he said.

We reached the spot where the first IED exploded; a massive gap in the middle of the rocky road was all that was left.

"Go slow ... all right, slow down, keep going, keep going. OK, stop," McGregor directed. "That's where it was. Hey stop! What the? Go! Get out of here, you're right over the hole! We had to check over the hole to make sure they didn't put something else in it."

The soldiers say it's hard to know what to look for. **[With an idiot like McGregor giving the commands you just read, no problem, the IED will find them.]**

Everything — and everyone — looks suspicious. Even children. McGregor got news on his radio and turned to the gunner to warn him.

"Hey, we got rock throwers on the left in an alleyway — just stay down. Just stay down and watch your head, there's rock throwers on the left. These little kids they're waving, but they probably hate you, actually," he said. "Hey, grab some candy for the rock throwers, throw some peanuts at them."

The convoy then rolled into a deserted part of the village. The shops looked like mechanic garages, but they were all shuttered. It was eerily vacant, so close to the place where moments earlier children had played.

McGregor pointed out a curious yellow trash can.

Then a bomb went off. The explosion showered metal and sand into the Humvee, leaving those inside coughing. But the vehicle kept going. McGregor ordered the convoy to continue, his tone unchanged. Contact with an IED, he called it.

The soldiers tried to inject some humor into the moment by counting how many IEDs they'd each encountered.

One cracked, "Hey throw some peanuts at these kids. Maybe they'll stop setting up IEDs."

By the end of the journey, all vehicles in the convoy were still intact.

The gunner wondered aloud in jest if he'd been hit in the head.

Reminding him that things could have been much worse, McGregor told him to quit whining.

Occupation Headquarters Under Constant Attacks; An Isolated Castle Besieged As Command Tries To Keep It A Secret

There is no sound until the whump of the blast wave and the crack of the exploding shell. Insurgents, militia elements, and disgruntled citizens often lob mortars on the IZ. It's nearly impossible to miss.

3/20/07 By Alex Kingsbury

BAGHDAD—The Green Zone is not officially called the Green Zone. Its proper moniker is the International Zone, a change instituted when the Iraqi government took power in June 2004. Green and Red, as it turns out, are Army-speak for the readiness of a gun: green = unloaded; red = loaded.

These days, soldiers carry loaded guns in the International Zone and have to render their weapons "green" before entering buildings. So at the entrance to each building are steel oil drums, filled with sand and mounted at a 45-degree angle from the ground. There is a hole through which soldiers point their guns and pull the trigger to demonstrate that there are no rounds in the chamber.

Everything outside the 4-square-mile IZ is called the Red Zone, and few Green Zoners travel there unescorted. When they do leave, it's usually with a convoy of at least four armored vehicles and a team of soldiers or private security guards for protection. On the back of many of these convoy vehicles is a now famous sign written in both English and Arabic and which has since been emblazoned on T-shirts and coffee mugs on sale at the stores in the IZ:

STAY BACK 100 METERS, read the signs. DEADLY FORCE IS AUTHORIZED.

"Heavily fortified" is the description most commonly attached to the IZ. But what does that actually entail? For starters, concrete. Lots of concrete.

In fact, much of the IZ is a maze of T-barriers, reinforced concrete slabs that are about 12 feet tall and designed to keep the blast from an explosion within a limited area.

Allan, an infantry sergeant from Kentucky, shared with me his misfortune as we waited for an airplane flight in Baghdad. "How ironic," he said, "that the Army activated my unit, and I had to close my business. We cleared several hundred thousand dollars every year in Kentucky," he recalled. "We sold concrete slabs and air-conditioning ducts."

If his company had also installed speed bumps, it'd have made a small fortune in Iraq. Speed bumps are everywhere, every few yards it sometimes seems. The speeds with which vehicles navigate these bumps vary from 5 to 30 miles per hour, depending on the vehicle and the driver's love for suspension systems.

Then there's concertina wire—far sharper than its barbed predecessors. It's also called razor wire and is bound in rolls and carried on humvees or stretched along the tops of the T-barriers. And it has a remarkable ability to snag bits of plastic garbage. The soldiers have jokingly christened the plastic bag stuck in concertina wire "Iraq's national bird."

One of the most spoken languages in the International Zone is Spanish. Peruvian Spanish, in particular. In fact, it's security contractors from Peru who fill many of the security jobs around the IZ. A few words of Spanish will serve the visitor well when trying to negotiate passage through one of the countless checkpoints and guard shacks.

They are friendly enough, if they get to know you, and many are often eager to practice their English skills on those who pass through their gates. Also staffing many of the checkpoints is a contingent of soldiers from Georgia. The formerly Soviet state, not the Peach State. They, of course, speak Georgian or Russian, making communication at those checkpoints significantly more difficult.

Scattered around the T-barrier labyrinth are duck-and-cover shelters, made from the same concrete as the barriers, and designed to protect International Zoners during mortar attacks.

These come often without warning. There is no sound until the whump of the blast wave and the crack of the exploding shell.

Insurgents, militia elements, and disgruntled citizens often lob mortars on the IZ.

It's nearly impossible to miss.

American officials are reluctant to speak about mortar attacks inside the Green Zone for fear of alerting insurgents to the accuracy and effectiveness of their attacks.

[That's a stilly, stupid lie, considering the whole Green Zone has been infiltrated, and exactly where the shells hit is no secret to the resistance. The scum in command don't want the folks back home to know how hopeless their position is. They're surrounded by resistance fighters all over Baghdad, and they can't even stop constant attacks on their command and control center.]

So many of the attacks go unreported.

The summit meeting earlier this month between officials from Iran, Syria, Iraq, and the United States, held just outside the IZ, was a target of one such attack.

In fact, insurgents were raining mortars on the IZ all morning.

I felt one mortar concussion coming from an open field on the other side of a road while driving to interview a brigadier general about the progress of reconstruction. Our interview was interrupted twice by mortar alarms.

The explosive shells fell every few hours during the day, landing one lucky strike on a building where the summit was being held.

No one was reported injured during the day's attacks.

Great Moments In U.S. Military History: **The Massacre At The Imam Al-Abass Mosque**

March 21. 2007 By KARIN BRULLIARD, The Washington Post [Excerpts]

According to a U.S. military statement, Iraqi soldiers assisting in a search for insurgents entered the Imam al-Abass mosque in Hurriyah, a formerly mixed Baghdad neighborhood that is now a stronghold of the Shiite Mahdi Army, before 9 p.m.

Col. Mahmoud Abdul Hussein of Iraq's Interior Ministry said six civilians were killed and seven wounded when U.S. helicopters fired on homes after coming under attack from armed men. Another ministry spokesman, Sami Jabarah, said late yesterday that the casualties has risen to eight killed and 11 wounded.

Two witnesses described indiscriminate shooting, but no helicopter fire, by U.S. forces that resulted in the deaths of at least six civilians, including some armed guards.

Mohammed Abu Rouaa, 31, said he was inside the mosque commemorating the anniversary of the death of the prophet Muhammad when he heard shots strike the outside of the building, where other people were gathered.

More than 20 American soldiers entered, rounded up those inside, and took them for questioning to a nearby school, where they remained for about four hours, he said. As he passed by, he saw several people with gunshot wounds lying on the ground outside, he said.

Ali Hussein Ali, 36, said he was leaving the mosque when the troops arrived, and said U.S. soldiers began spraying bullets around the area and hitting people at random.

He ran for cover in a house, he said, and heard gunfire continue for several hours.

"People were terrified, even we grown-up men," Ali said. "The mosques, through their loudspeakers, started to shout 'God is greatest' to calm the people."

Nassar al-Robae, leader of al-Sadr's political faction in Iraq's parliament, said the incident demonstrated that the security crackdown is not working.

"It increases fears that what is being done is not security and stability but chaos, only chaos," said Robae.

He said Hurriyah residents told him civilians were killed in the raid and that American helicopters bombed the area.

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



A U.S. soldier from the 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery Regiment, walks in front of a Bradley vehicle during an operation in eastern Baghdad, Dec. 31, 2006. (AP Photo/Darko Vojinovic)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Canadian Soldier & U.S. Mercenary Wounded Near Kandahar

March 21, 2007 Graham Thomson, CanWest News Service; Edmonton Journal

ZHARI DISTRICT, Afghanistan

Just hours after the governor of Kandahar province urged on Tuesday village elders to reject the Taliban, a bomb exploded in this troubled district west of Kandahar City, wounding a Canadian soldier, severely injuring a civilian dog handler and killing his dog.

"The best way to ensure your own security is to stop supporting Taliban activity," Asadullah Khalid told almost 200 district elders gathered for a special meeting in the village of Pasab.

"Don't let them in."

But somebody apparently did let them in, or, at the very least, did nothing to get them out.

Just four hours after Khalid's speech, a Canadian patrol set off a homemade land mine, or improvised explosive device, near the neighbouring village of Amadkhan.

Both the Canadian and the dog handler, who is employed by the U.S.-based company, American K-9, were flown to the Canadian-led hospital at Kandahar Airfield.

The explosion was actually the second of the day.

At noon, around the time Governor Khalid was sitting down to lunch with the district elders, a Canadian armoured reconnaissance vehicle hit an IED and was disabled.

That's when a second team, with the explosives-sniffing dog, was sent out to help determine if there were any other IEDs in the area and inadvertently triggered the second bomb.

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Marine PFC Bufford Kenny VanSlyke at his burial site in Bay City, Michigan, March 12, 2007. VanSlyke was killed at a checkpoint in Fallujah, Iraq. REUTERS/Rebecca Cook

**“The Masses Of Sailors That I
Talk To Are People Who Turned
Out To The Polls In November,
Voted Their Anguish And
Dissent”**

**“The Last Thing We’ve Heard Is
That They’re Pushing For A
Pullout By August 2008”**

**“Well, For Some People, That’s Just
Too Late”**

March 16, 2007, Socialist Worker, Excerpts from an interview with Jonathan Hutto and David Cortright.

Jonathan Hutto, United States Navy, Active Duty
David Cortright, Author: *Soldiers in Revolt: GI Resistance During the Vietnam War*

The Appeal for Redress [www.appealforredress.org/] is an Internet statement signed by 1,715 active-duty military personnel calling on Congress to withdraw the troops from Iraq.

HOW DID you come to the decision to start the Appeal for Redress?

Jonathan Hutto: I was first introduced to the concept of GI organizing by an old professor of mine at Howard University some years before I went into the Navy. We were in the midst of a struggle against police brutality in Prince George County, Md., and my professor told me about the struggle for GI rights then.

Later, when I was off the coast of Iraq on board the USS Theodore Roosevelt in January 2006, he sent me the 30th anniversary copy of *Soldiers in Revolt*. Upon reading it, I inquired as to the whereabouts of Mr. Cortright, because I really wanted to get to know him. This professor sent me his contact information, and I followed up.

We had a forum here in Norfolk, Va., so David could address veterans in the peace community as well as people on active duty. We had a small roundtable that night of active-duty folks who David spoke to, and from there, we were able to build a relationship.

It was a couple months later that David e-mailed me about the idea of starting a petition to get active-duty folks to ask the White House and Congress to end the Iraq war.

HOW WOULD you describe the contours of discontent in the military today?

Jonathan Hutto: First and foremost, I think people are starting to develop a general distrust of government and the promises that politicians have made on both sides of the aisle.

The justifications given for going into Iraq are the basis of a lot of the anguish I hear.

When the Appeal first started, people who were career military told me they couldn't quite understand how the country got into Iraq. They could somewhat understand what Afghanistan was about, but they didn't quite understand how the country got into Iraq.

And people are just sick and tired.

In the Navy, they have an Individual Augmentee program, where sailors are being retrained and reassigned, and sent to Iraq to fill jobs over there because they feel that people from the Navy trained stateside are better prepared to go into that situation than a fresh recruit.

This isn't only affecting people's morale, but it's also affecting re-enlistment rates.

Once you re-enlist after being on sea duty for five or six years, you get shore duty for three or four years. But now shore duty isn't being guaranteed, and people are being sent overseas for 16-month tours.

In a general sense, the masses of sailors that I talk to are people who turned out to the polls in November, voted their anguish and dissent, and now months later, this situation is a huge debate within the Congress with no real end in sight.

The last thing we've heard is that they're pushing for a pullout by August 2008.

Well, for some people, that's just too late.

General distrust of the government and of the politicians and their promises is leading people to take more grassroots action, to sign on to the Appeal for Redress, to get involved with Iraq Veterans Against the War, to get involved with mass demonstrations like we're going to see March 17 in Washington, D.C.

WHAT IMPACT do you think the Walter Reed scandal is having within the military?

Jonathan Hutto : Soldiers are coming to see that you can't really depend on the brass to be an advocate for you in this situation.

Walter Reed is a case in point.

Letters, warnings and other signs went to the brass for a year or two years about the conditions of soldiers at Walter Reed, and nothing was done about it until it hit the mass media.

It shouldn't have had to come to that. Once those warnings were given, then those services should have been provided, and changes should have been made.

The people I talk to understand that you really can't really depend on the chain of command in that situation.

David talked earlier about the anti-unionization law.

It's the reason why military personnel, particularly enlisted men and women, need an advocacy organization to fight and advocate on their behalf--about issues of war and imperialism, but also about the basic grievances these soldiers have at Walter Reed or elsewhere.

David Cortright: I agree. Another way in which there are similarities rather than contrasts between the Vietnam era and today is in the kinds of conditions and harassment and racial prejudice and careerism that goes on in the military every day, all to the disadvantage of the enlisted.

I got a communication the other day from one of our Appeal supporters--actually, it's the guy who helped set up the SoldierVoices.net Web site.

He's over in Iraq right now, he just finished reading the book, and he said the last chapter on soldiers and democracy is as relevant today as it was 30 years ago.

That was very surprising to me because it says there's a lack of rights, and that commanders can still harass and repress the troops, even though we're supposedly in an era of a volunteer and professional armed forces.

People aren't coming in just as two-year draftees; they're serious about their military commitment, yet they're still being treated like peons by a lot of the commanders.

That may be a tolerable condition under certain circumstances, but the whole military is going through stress right now, so these kinds of internal resistance factors start to increase, and the troops become less willing to tolerate it.

The brass have to go more on the defensive.

Jonathan said an important thing: Where are the military leaders who should be speaking out against this insanity? There's too much careerism.

These people know damn well that this is a lost cause, and there's no way the U.S. can "win," whatever that means in Iraq.

Yet they go along with it.

Their careers may get advanced, but that doesn't help those in the lower ranks.

Those kinds of tension are increasing.

For active-duty service members--folks like Jonathan who have more than a full-time job on duty--it's almost impossible to sustain their political commitment, their fight for their rights, without civilian support.

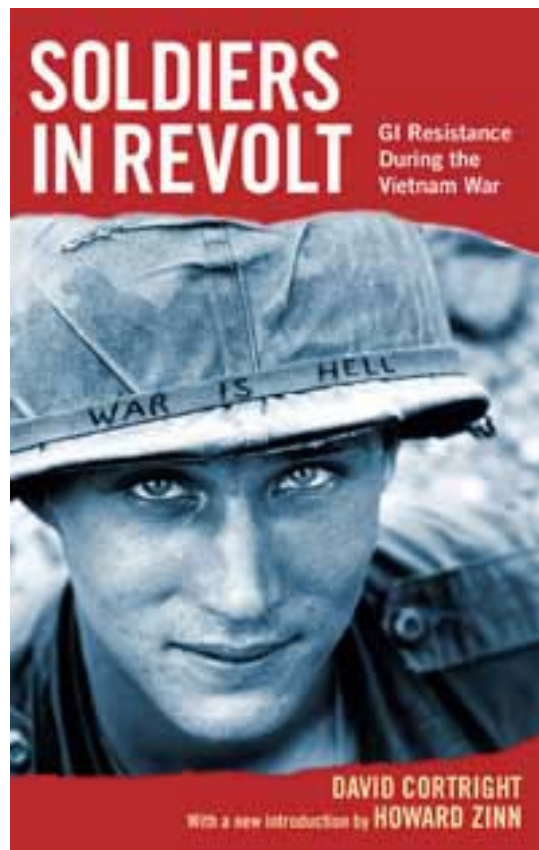
During the Vietnam days, we saw a lot of that. There was the GI coffeehouse movement, but there were also other organizations. I was helped by a group that I think was called the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee.

Today, we have a little bit of that, but it's coming from Veterans for Peace, the IVAW and military families.

We haven't really seen the civilian antiwar movement step up and commit itself to reaching out and providing sustained support for a growing number of service members who are now joining the ranks of the antiwar movement.

As Jonathan says, there are a number of voices being raised now. We need some sort of organization of GIs to advocate on behalf of the rights of enlisted people: first and foremost, for the First Amendment right to speak out and express their opinions to members of Congress about these issues; but also to advocate for better conditions, like at Walter Reed and other medical centers, but also on racial discrimination and sexism in the army.

There are all sorts of problems that need to be addressed and require some sort of a support network to help active-duty service members.



Iraq Veterans Condemn The War

#1: Iraq Veteran Tells Meeting “His Experience In Iraq And How He Became Antiwar”

[Respect to Socialist Worker newspaper, for expanded coverage of veterans and active duty troops coming out against the war, and for pointing out that helping troops organize against the war is decisive in stopping it. T]

3.16.07 Socialist Worker

In San Francisco, 40 people came out to a meeting to support military resister Travis Murphy, a member of Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) on March 10.

Murphy recounted the evening of September 11, 2001, while stationed in Germany. “I wondered who we were at war with as I wandered around a housing complex with an automatic rifle in my 19-year-old hands,” he said.

Murphy described his experience in Iraq and how he became antiwar. He described an experience with a young Iraqi man in a market, who he kicked to the ground when he put a hand on the soldier’s weapon.

“I looked at this man I had just kicked,” he said. “He had no weapon. He wasn’t the enemy. He just wanted me to stop aiming my weapon at people doing their shopping.”

The meeting was followed by sign-making for a March 18 antiwar protest. “What can we actually do for Iraq?” asked panelist Elizabeth Terzakis of the International Socialist Organization. “Give them money and leave them alone,” she said.

MORE:

#2:

“I’ve Been To Iraq And Some Of My Buddies Are There, And I Say We Need To Get Out Right Now”

3.23.07 Socialist Worker [Excerpt]

In San Francisco, about 60 students attended a panel discussion event with two members of IVAW [Iraq Veterans Against the War] at San Francisco State University March 14. The event was organized by Students Against War (a chapter of the Campus Antiwar Network) and was cosponsored by the General Union of Palestinian Students, Students for Social Change and the ISO.

Marine veteran Mike Ergo, who served two tours in Iraq, saw his friend killed during the siege of Falluja. “I’ve been to Iraq and some of my buddies are there, and I say we need to get out right now,” he said.

MORE:

#3:

Iraq Veteran Says “Immediate Withdrawal Is Both Morally And Strategically The Best Solution”

March 23, 2007 Socialist Worker

NEW YORK--About 70 people attended an antiwar panel discussion March 15 at Holyhood Church in Washington Heights. The event was sponsored by the International Socialist Organization (ISO), Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) and the Harlem Tenants Council.

Panelist Fabian Bouthillette of the New York chapter of IVAW spent the summer of 2004 stationed on a ship near Iraq. “Our presence in Iraq is what is creating the violence--immediate withdrawal is both morally and strategically the best solution,” he said.

Community activist Rev. Luis Barrios of Iglesia San Romero de las Americas, added, “If we’re not in the business of raising consciousness, we’re not going to mobilize people. If we don’t mobilize people, we’re not going to stop the war.”

Jen Roesch, of the ISO, was the third speaker. “We have an antiwar majority now for the first time. That is a change,” she said. “Now we need to figure out how to build between protests.”

MORE:

#4:

“The Tanks Would Go Through, ‘Secure’ A City, Shoot Everything That Moved...Men, Women, Children, Donkeys, And Then I Got To Go Through And See The Aftermath”

March 23, 2007 By Eric Ruder, Socialist Worker

FOUR MEMBERS of Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) spoke in Watertown, N.Y.--the home to Fort Drum, one of the largest military bases in the U.S.

Fort Drum has nearly as many soldiers stationed there--15,000--as Watertown has residents--26,000. The brigades at Fort Drum are some of the most heavily deployed in

the U.S. military. Some soldiers are facing their fifth deployment this summer--having already returned twice each from Afghanistan and Iraq.

Almost four years to the day after the U.S. invasion of Iraq began, a small but engaged audience of 30 listened at Jefferson Community College as IVAW member Adrienne Kinne described her firsthand observations of the inadequate health care the military offers soldiers and veterans.

"It makes me so mad when I hear veteran after veteran telling me they have difficulty getting their services," said Adrienne, whose work brings her in contact with many veterans.

"I saw one soldier who was stationed overseas. He now suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder because he saw our government do things to people that nobody should ever have to see our government do... He has nightmares every night, he can't sleep, because he saw people being tortured at one of our secret, nonexistent prisons."

Matt Howard also witnessed the horrors unleashed on Iraq's population by the U.S. military. He deployed to Iraq twice, the first time during the initial invasion when his squad swept northward through Iraq toward Baghdad.

"The complete lack of respect for Iraqis, for humanity and for human life solidified our policy in Iraq," said Matt. "The tanks would go through, 'secure' a city, shoot everything that moved...men, women, children, donkeys, and then I got to go through and see the aftermath."

After Drew Cameron and Matt Hrutkay described their experiences, veterans and family members of service members shared their own stories, frustrations and thoughts.

Later that night, at the Different Drummer Café, a GI coffeehouse set up by Citizen Soldier's Tod Ensign, the conversation continued.

For many in attendance, the gathering brought a welcome sense of relief, helping to overcome the feeling of isolation by providing a place to discuss these issues.

The enlisted men and women at Fort Drum have paid a heavy price for the U.S. wars on Afghanistan and Iraq--a price that increasing numbers believe is not worth it, especially since the U.S. government isn't keeping up its end of the bargain when it comes to providing the health care so many battle-scarred soldiers need.

MORE:

#5

"She Fought In Both Afghanistan And In Iraq"

“When She Did Come Back, She Said That She Thought That Bush Was A Liar”

3.16.06 By Roberto Rosario, New York City, Letters To The Editor, Socialist Worker [Excerpt]

I AM a student and activist at City College of New York, where there will be a career fair, with all of the branches of the military represented. They will be preying on the most vulnerable.

I almost joined in 2004, and my sister did serve 10 years in the military--because we both couldn't afford college tuition.

She fought in both Afghanistan and in Iraq, and was fortunate enough to come back in one piece. When she did come back, she said that she thought that Bush was a liar.

From experience, I know some of the deadly lies recruiters tell and how they pretend to be your best friend. Knowing this, I recently went to the career center to ask if there was some way I could get a table during the event. I told them that I would like to inform students of the risk of joining the military.

Not only that, but the military is a discriminatory institution that prohibits gays from serving openly. This is a direct violation of the school's anti-discriminatory policy.

Eventually, I was denied a table because they said I wasn't offering a job, nor did they have space. They said that the career fair was not the forum for me to express my opposition, and to basically take it somewhere else.

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

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.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

March 21 (Reuters) & The Associated Press & al Jazeera

Clashes erupted between Iraqi police and U.S. Marines and groups of fighters on Tuesday near Falluja. It ended with the killing of eight of the guerrillas, the U.S. military said. Eight policemen were killed.

A policeman was killed and four when clashes erupted between police and guerrillas on Tuesday in several districts of Diwaniya, 180 km (110 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents killed police captain Hussein Abdullah on Tuesday in the western Baghdad district of Mansour, police said.

Two roadside bombs in Palestine Street in central Baghdad wounded one policeman, police said.

The bodies of two policemen, handcuffed, were found in Diwaniyah, the site of recent clashes 80 miles south of Baghdad.

Fighting in Amiriyah, near Fallujah, left five Iraqi policemen wounded, the military said.

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

**U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING
DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR;**

RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



US soldiers from Baker Company 2-12 Infantry Battalion search through belongings in Iraqi citizens home in the al-Dora neighbourhood of southern Baghdad. (AFP/David Furst)

[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?]

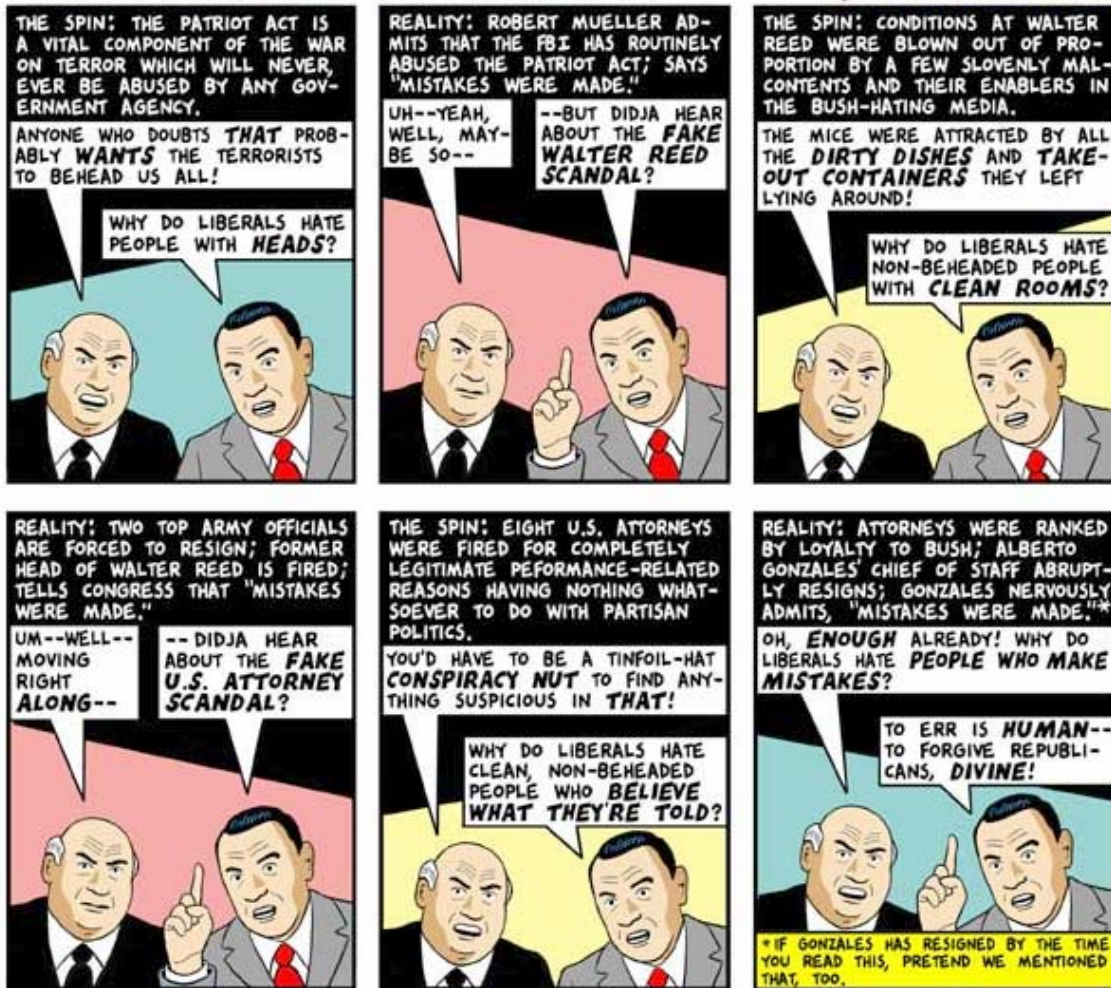
"In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit," said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay's Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday's raid. "Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are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

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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

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>

GI Special distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance

with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **GI Special has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is GI Special endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice.** Go to: www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.