

## **GI SPECIAL 5C26:**

### **PERFECT HELL ON EARTH: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. Army soldiers evacuate a wounded soldier during operations in Qubbah, Iraq, March 24, 2007. The soldiers are from Charlie Troop, 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment (Airborne Recon), 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division out of Fort Bragg, N.C. (AP Photo/U.S. Air Force, Staff Sgt. JoAnn S. Makinano)

# **Eagles And Harleys**

From: Dennis Serdel  
To: GI Special  
Sent: March 27, 2007  
Subject: Eagles And Harleys

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11<sup>th</sup> Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

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**Eagles And Harleys**

Don't you remember that we were brothers,  
I covered your ass and you covered mine.  
Now I'm standing here with a peace sign  
and you are across the road calling me a traitor.  
Are you still my brother like we were in Vietnam  
or did you forget all about that ?  
Besides all the bullshit brother  
didn't we fight for freedom  
freedom to say I'm against the war  
freedom to say I'm for the war,  
so have your For The War action another day,  
we won't bother you at all, it's your right.  
I know 80% of you never saw battle  
you were smoking pot and drinking beers  
in the rear where you had it made,  
I hope it's not you causing the trouble.  
But 20% of you were like me  
fighting and bleeding together  
eating ham and motherfuckers brother  
in the rain when the leaches  
would jump on us, sucking down our blood.  
Do you remember how the Vietnamese hated us,  
No VC, No VC, they would say to us,  
yet there were all kinds of kids in their village  
and their fathers were no where around.  
I was so pissed off humping back  
from the field one day,  
mamason had a Coke stand on Highway one.  
I told her to give my squad big Cokes with ice  
then when she asked for the money,  
I raised my 16 at her, ready to blow her away,  
none of them gave a shit for us fighting  
for their country  
they liked our money and liked it  
when we would die because they hated us  
So we were fighting and dying for nothing  
just like in Iraq and Afghanistan now.  
What would of happened if we had won  
our war,  
they now have a Ford factory in Vietnam  
while they close a Ford factory in Michigan.  
Now Penny's shirts are made in Vietnam  
cost is \$40 - \$50 a pop at the mall  
and now you want me to back  
a punk and coward named Bush,

who finally made it to Vietnam last year  
and all his draft dodger friends are  
For The War for oil to get rich.  
Give me a motherfucking break brother  
give me some fucking respect  
give me some fucking truth.  
Walter Reed and the VA are chumping  
our Iraq and Afghanistan wounded Soldiers  
just like they did to us,  
or did most of you not fire a shot  
in Vietnam so you don't know  
what the fuck I'm talking about.  
I've seen your Rolling Thunder on C-Span  
when he asked one of you  
where he was in Vietnam, he couldn't say  
because he was never there.  
He was just some wannabe on a Harley  
putting along just for the ride.  
But a brother in mortar in our company  
who sometimes went out with in the boonies  
and had a real nice hootch over there  
rode his Harley from Detroit to DC  
to be with you, rode there with peace  
but came back with war.  
Your Gathering of Eagles do Not  
make me proud.  
You are not protecting the Wall,  
you are protecting the coward Bush,  
you are Not protecting our Soldiers in Iraq  
because the Iraqi people hate them  
just like the Vietnamese hated us.  
It took courage and bravery to fight  
the VC and NVA  
but it doesn't take a big man  
to spit on peace marchers  
and throw sulfuric acid at them,  
maybe it's because they are for peace  
and you know they won't attack you,  
Yes, I remember coming home  
to the peace movement from Vietnam  
at the end of 1968.  
I have scars on my arms and legs  
and my Dad, a WWII veteran  
took me down to his VFW Hall,  
they bought me a beer and then  
turned their backs on me.

**My father was cussing all the way home,  
do you remember that or did you  
erase that from your memory ?  
Yes I remember the hippies  
and students against the war.  
39 years ago the peace marchers  
didn't always treat us so good,  
I know you blame them for losing  
our war  
and that's where your anger comes from.  
But even back then I never spit on them  
or tried to hurt them in any way  
so leave these new ones alone  
and let me do what I have to do.  
Vietnam will never be over for us,  
we will take to our graves.  
I hope you will never forget  
we will be brothers until we are dead.  
If you are working for the government,  
I take back all I said,  
please do Not threaten me with death  
because I still have a gun  
and I will kill you first  
just like in Vietnam.**

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## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

### **Soldier, 32, Who Had Lived In Boulder Killed In Iraq**

March 19, 2007 By Daily Camera, Rocky Mountain News

BOULDER - When Gerry Kowalczyk awoke in her Boulder home early Thursday to two military officials knocking at her door, she knew immediately that something had happened to her youngest son.

"I asked them to come in," the 75-year-old woman said Saturday from her home in Gunbarrel. "I knew they had a message for me."

Her son, Army Spc. Stephen M. Kowalczyk, 32, was killed Wednesday in Muqdadiyah, Iraq, by small-arms fire.

Kowalczyk moved to Boulder and worked for a construction company after graduating from high school in Albuquerque, his mother said.

Her son, who she said was always smiling, left Boulder to attend Macalester College in Minnesota but eventually moved back to work for the Sky Chair company on Pearl Street.

"Steve was always a very adventuresome person," she said. "He never waited for someone else to lead him." After leaving Sky Chair, Kowalczyk visited Europe and the Middle East. He later worked on a pineapple farm in Hawaii.

He moved to California a few years ago, but had a hard time finding a job, so he joined the Army.

"He liked the Army very much," his mother said.

Kowalczyk wrote to his mother and five siblings often from Iraq, describing nights so cool that he could see his breath and rainstorms interrupted by bursts of sun.

In one of his letters, his mother said, he wrote: "I looked up, and I could see a million stars."

"He said, 'You know, I am not very far from where everything started for all us human beings.' He was very poetic in his writing."

Kowalczyk is survived by two sisters in Boulder, a sister in Nashville, Tenn., a sister in Alaska and a brother in San Francisco, his mother said.

He was assigned to the 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, stationed in Fort Hood, Texas.

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## **Bragg Medic's Death Brings Blast's Toll To 7**



Mar 18, 2007 Marlon A. Walker, Staff Writer, The News & Observer

A soldier based at Fort Bragg died Wednesday in Houston, more than a week after he was wounded in an explosion while in combat in Iraq.

Sgt. Joshua M. Boyd, 30, of Abilene, Texas, was injured in Samarra, about 60 miles northwest of Baghdad. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.

His death brings to seven the number of soldiers killed in the March 5 explosion, which accounts for the largest single-day loss of life for the 82nd Airborne in the Iraq war.

Boyd joined the army in September 1997 as an infantryman and was honorably discharged when he completed his term of service.

He rejoined in April 2002.

He was reclassified as a combat medic in 2005 and completed medical training at Fort Sam Houston in Texas. He completed the Basic Airborne Course last February at Fort Benning, Ga. He reported to the 82nd Airborne in March 2006 as an ambulance driver and was designated as a trauma specialist six months later.

After he was injured in the explosion, he was brought back to the Brooke Army Medical Center in Houston for treatment. In a statement, Boyd's family thanked the hospital staff for the care he was provided.

"Doc Boyd never complained, and his good spirits always motivated the rest of us when we were down," said Spc. Lee Wolf of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment. "His maturity and life experiences were a huge asset to all the guys in C Company."

He is survived by his parents, Robin and Tonya Boyd of Abilene. A memorial service will be held for him by his unit in Iraq.

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## **EP Soldier, Ysleta Grad Loses Legs In Iraq**

March 23, 2007 KVIA

YSLETA, Tx. - A 19-year-old Ysleta High School graduate has lost his legs in a rocket-propelled grenade attack in Iraq.

Adrian Garcia, who graduated last year from Ysleta High, had been in Iraq for only a month. The 6-foot-4 former basketball player at Ysleta had to have both of his legs amputated above the knee.

Garcia was assigned to the 1-9 Battalion, Second Infantry Division out of Fort Carson, Colorado.

According to the family, Garcia's condition has been upgraded from critical to stable, although he remains heavily sedated as he awaits transfer to Landstuhl Hospital in Germany.

Garcia's former coach at Ysleta, Hector Avila, called him an outstanding young man and one of the hardest working players on his 2006 District Championship team.

Coach Avila tells ABC-7 that word of Garcia's devastating injuries has saddened the Ysleta area.

Avila added, "It's like being punched in the stomach...you just can't believe it...it really hits home. It hurts. You just feel for the kid and for the family and especially for him, because you know he was out there giving his whole heart and soul to the fight in Iraq."

Avila also said that Garcia was a solid student and had talked about going to college, but chose first to serve his country.

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## Minnesota Soldier Killed



U.S. Army Spc. Sean McDonald, of Rosemount, Minn., 21, died March 25, 2007, in Baghdad from wounds he suffered in when a bomb exploded near his vehicle. He served with the A Company, 9th Engineer Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division based in Wiesbaden, Germany. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

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## Friends And Family Remember Holstein Soldier

3/22/2007 By Ginger ten Bensel, KHAS-TV

A Central Nebraska soldier has died while fighting for his country in Iraq. 26-year-old Sergeant Wayne Cornell was killed Monday in Baghdad. The Department of Defense confirms he died when an improvised explosive device went off near his vehicle during combat operations.

He was part of the 28th Infantry Regiment out of Fort Riley, Kansas.

Sgt. Wayne Cornell is from Holstein. Cornell was on his third tour of duty overseas.

He served in the Army National Guard Troop A 167th Cavalry based in Hastings before becoming active duty military.

As the Silver Lake Guidance Counselor flips through the pages of the 1999 annual, he is searching for pictures of Wayne Cornell, one of Silver Lakes' finest.

"He was a person who gave everything he had in everything he did," said Chris Sluka. "He was well liked by our students and the things that he enjoyed he tried very hard at. He was tremendously well mannered."

And he poured his heart and soul into a number of things. When he was 14, he started taking Taekwondo classes, and he even earned a 3rd degree Black Belt.

"He had intended to come back and start training with us again.

One of our last email's had talked about setting things up with Mr. Kim and being able to test for his next rank and continue training with us. So we were looking forward to him coming," said Michael Neiman of South Central Taekwondo.

While he worked on Taekwondo, one of the main things he wanted to do, since he was a freshman in High School, was join the military.

"When he was old enough he talked to all of them because he was very interested in making what for him was the right choice, but he knew that being in the military was going to be his career one way or another," Sluka said.

Though Wayne was extremely successful in a number of areas, his teachers remember him the most for being kind hearted.

"I will remember Wayne as being one of the most caring gentle funny people I have known," said Vicki Neiman of South Central Taekwondo.

Sgt. Wayne Cornell's father and grandfather both served in the military.

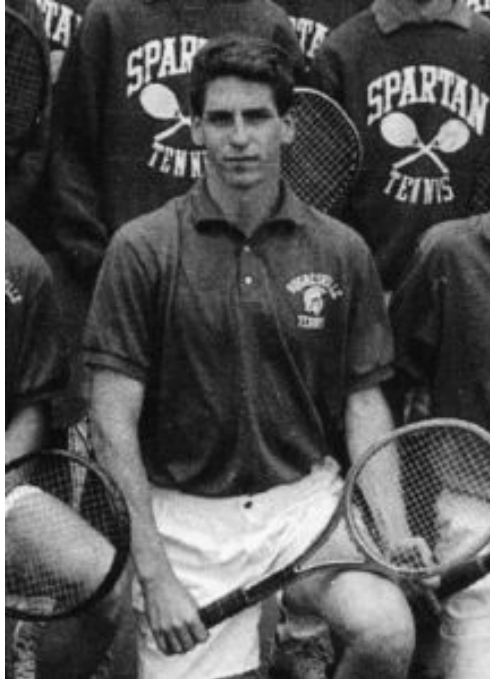
Wayne was deployed to Iraq just last month.

He and his wife Tricia have two preschool children and one on the way.

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# Former County Man Killed In Iraq



Sean Michael Thomas captained the Hughesville High School tennis team in his senior year.

March 29, 2007 By MARK MARONEY, The Williamsport Sun-Gazette

HUGHESVILLE — A Lycoming County native has died in Iraq.

Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Sean Michael Thomas, 33, a 1992 graduate of Hughesville High School, was killed Tuesday when a rocket exploded over his head, his mother Diana Thomas, told the Sun-Gazette Wednesday.

Thomas was walking in the Green Zone in Baghdad when the missile struck, she said she was told.

Thomas is the first soldier from the county to die in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He leaves behind a wife, Carrie, and a 6-month-old daughter, Alexa.

“He loved his wife, his family and his new baby,” Diana Thomas said. “He was the first person to smile and make a joke and his entire family will miss him terribly.”

Thomas lived in Howard when he was deployed to Iraq in July. He was to attend officer’s candidate school in October, Diana Thomas said.

“He was excited because he was down to four months to go and was going to be a warrant officer,” his mother said.

He wanted to be a teacher when he returned to civilian life, she said.

After graduating from Hughesville, Thomas attended Penn State and Pennsylvania College of Technology, earning an associate's degree in 1995.

The National Guard provided money for college and a place where he could employ his skills, Diana Thomas said.

He was a unit supply superintendent regularly assigned to the 28th Joint Area Support Group in Harrisburg with the state National Guard, based in Harrisburg.

He served a stint in Afghanistan less than a year before being sent to Iraq this past summer, she said.

There, Thomas served with the 28th Infantry Division in Baghdad, where he was stationed in the Green Zone.

News of his death spread quickly in the eastern Lycoming County community.

Ryan Onufrak, a close friend of Thomas', said he will miss his buddy.

Onufrak described Thomas as a great guy who loved football and golf. The pair often attended Baltimore Ravens games, the most recent last year, Onufrak said.

Another hobby Thomas enjoyed was golf, and the two friends played at White Deer Golf Course.

Beth Myers, a biology teacher and high school tennis coach for 29 years at Hughesville, heard the news from a friend before school this morning, and said she thought about Thomas all day.

"He could always bring a smile to your face. ... What a joy he was to have around," she said.

Thomas was on the tennis team four years and was captain his senior year. The team went undefeated and was West Branch champion his junior and senior years. He also was a member of the football and wrestling teams.

"The whole community is saddened by the news," Myers said.

"The East Lycoming School District extends (its) heartfelt condolences to the Thomas family," Dr. Susan L. Bigger, director of curriculum and instruction, said in a statement on behalf of the district.

"There are many teachers, students and administrators that know Sean and members of the family personally and are overwhelmed by such a tragic loss," the statement read.

"Sean is remembered as a student filled with life, funny, and outgoing. Although we are extraordinarily proud of his service to our country, we are heartbroken that he will not return to his family and friends.

"The loss of his life is devastating for the family, school and community. He will be incredibly missed by us all."

"He was an all-around good guy," Onufrak said. "He made the Army National Guard his career."

Ryan's father, Montgomery Mayor Andrew Onufrak II, said his borough and others in the county will fly flags at half staff in honor of the fallen soldier.

"This is what neighbors do," he said.

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## Oregon Soldier Dies Of Wounds From Blast In Iraq



March 24, 2007 The Associated Press

TOLEDO -- An Army medic from Oregon has died because of injuries from an explosion in Baghdad.

Sgt. Nicholas Lightner, 29, died at Walter Reed Army Medical Center on Wednesday.

He was injured March 15 when an improvised explosive device went off as his unit was on patrol, the Army said.

His father, Bill Lightner said his son enlisted four years ago and was deployed to Iraq in November.

"He went for the right reasons," his father told The Oregonian. "After 9/11, he felt the need to do something, and that's what he did."

**By the count kept by Gov. Ted Kulongoski, Lightner is the 84th person from Oregon or with strong ties in the state to die in the fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan.**

In Toledo, a Lincoln County town just east of Newport, Lightner was described as a nurturer.

"I'm not surprised he became a medic," said former Toledo school counselor Sandy Blackwell. "It brought together the two sides of him: the big, strong football player who could do almost anything with the compassionate young man with the big, caring heart."

She said Lightner played football at Toledo High School.

Lightner was transferred to Walter Reed, where he died as family members headed East to be with him.

Chaplain Geoff Bailey said in an e-mail to the family that Lightner learned he was the only survivor of the unit and regretted he was unable to save his team members.

"He told me that he became a medic in order to help people and was frustrated that he was unable to do so after being injured," Bailey wrote.

"When he got out of the Army," said his girlfriend, Ginger Warfield, 24, "we were going to live together and eventually get married and live happily ever after."

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## **THE ULTIMATE EXERCISE IN COMPLETE FUTILITY: PACK IT UP AND COME HOME**



U.S. soldiers listen to members of a local council by means of an interpreter during the council's session with U.S. forces to discuss local affairs in Baghdad's northwest neighbourhood of Ghazaliya March 27, 2007. REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Two Occupation Soldiers Killed, Nationality Not Reported; Italian Soldier Wounded Near Herat**

March 29, 2007 AP

An Italian marine serving with NATO's International Security Assistance Force was lightly wounded Thursday morning when his patrol was attacked some 70 kilometers (43 miles) south of Herat city in western Afghanistan, the Italian Defense Ministry in Rome said.

Two NATO soldiers, meanwhile, died from injuries sustained in a traffic accident in Afghanistan on Wednesday, but no enemy action contributed to the incident, NATO's International Security Assistance Force said.

It did not identify the soldiers' nationalities or the crash's location.

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### **Assorted Resistance Action**

March 29, 2007 AP & Deutsche Presse-Agentur

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan: Militants in southern Afghanistan demanded the release Thursday of Taliban prisoners in exchange for four Afghan health workers and a driver kidnapped by the hardline militia this week.

Militants, meanwhile, also attacked a police checkpoint in Kandahar's Arghandab district on Wednesday, killing two officers and capturing two others, Alizai said.

A rocket hit in Bagram airport - the biggest US military base - north of Kabul city on Wednesday, causing no casualties or damage, the US military said in a statement. It said the rocket hit an unoccupied area near the runway.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

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



The casket of Army Spec. Justin A. Rollins during a funeral services at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, March 19, 2007. Rollins of Newport, N.H., was killed with five other soldiers on March 5 in Samarra, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near their unit during combat operations. (AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

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**Enlisted Troops Cheated On  
Disability Retirement Pay:  
“The Army Is Not Sending Soldiers  
First To An MOS/Medical Retention  
Board, As Required”  
“Officers Who Received Disability  
Retirement Ratings Of 50 Percent Or  
More Significantly Outpaced The  
Proportion Of Enlisted Members”**

March 26, 2007 Army Times; By Kelly Kennedy – Staff writer [Excerpts]

The Marine Corps has no answer for why enlisted Marines have lower average disability payments than other service members.

The Navy is still trying to figure out why its officers get higher disability ratings than enlisted sailors — by 17 percentage points.

The Air Force doesn't know why enlisted airmen get several hundred dollars more per month in average disability retirement pay than soldiers.

The Army, at least, has ventured some guesses.

Army Times based its calculations on the total number of medical retirees receiving disability retirement pay from the military services in 2005 — 22,074 officers and 67,437 enlisted members. The figures include only those who were medically retired, not those who received one-time severance pay.

**An Army Times analysis of five years of data from the Defense Department Office of the Actuary showed disparities in two areas — average disability payments among the services, and percentage disability ratings between officers and enlisted members.**

**Average disability pay for all injured Air Force officers in 2005 was \$2,604 per month, about \$600 more than the average for Army officers. The average payment for injured enlisted airmen was \$926 per month, compared with about \$770 per month for enlisted soldiers.**

**Enlisted Marines had the lowest average, \$753 a month.**

Army Times also compared the percentage disability ratings of officers and enlisted members. From 2003, the year the Iraq war began, through 2005, the latest year for which data are available, the proportion of officers who received disability retirement ratings of 50 percent or more significantly outpaced the proportion of enlisted members who received similar ratings.

**[Lt. Col. Robert Tallman, an Army spokesman] said the differences between officers and enlisted members could be because officers have more time in service when injured, on average, than enlisted people.**

**However, although time in service affects dollar payments, it should not have anything to do with disability ratings percentages, which measure only the severity of an injury.**

[Retired Army Lt. Col. Mike Parker] noted another problem, at least in the Army, that he said may push more enlisted people than necessary into the disability retirement pipeline in the first place.

**Parker noted that the recent Army IG report found the Army is not sending soldiers first to an MOS/Medical Retention Board, as required, to see if, for example, an injury that disqualifies someone from continuing to serve as a military policeman might still allow them to serve in some other job.**

**All active-duty personnel are supposed to appear before a retention board within 60 days of receiving a permanent medical profile due to a disability.**

**The IG report found commanders either did not know about the board, or preferred to send the soldiers to a physical evaluation board and start the separation process so they could replace them with fresh troops.**

Two-thirds of commanders interviewed by the IG said the retention-board process takes too long and only delays the separation process. "As a result, the Army separates soldiers with good knowledge and skills because of a condition considered unfitting for their current military duty, even though they could perform other types of duties," the report stated.

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **Assorted Resistance Action; DBED [Dead Body Explosive Device] Kills Two Collaborator Cops**



A wounded Iraqi army soldier is evacuated by a comrade minutes after a roadside bomb exploded next to their armoured vehicle in Baghdad's northwest neighbourhood of Ghazaliya March 29, 2007. Three Iraqi soldiers were wounded. REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch

Mar 29, 2007 Reuters & By Sinan Salaheddin, ASSOCIATED PRESS

**In Baghdad, a booby-trapped car abandoned on a main road in a western area blew up when police attempted to extract a dead body they found inside.**

**The blast in the Amil district killed two policemen and wounded six more policemen, said police officials, speaking on condition of anonymity.**

Iraq's national traffic police chief escaped an assassination attempt when guerrilla fighters ambushed his convoy in a northern Baghdad district at 8 a.m., a police official



said. Two of Gen. Jaafar Kadhim's guards were killed and two were injured on the convoy in Azamiyah.

**In Baqouba, an insurgent stronghold 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, 15 masked guerrillas sneaked up on four policemen guarding the local government's agriculture department offices, disarming them and later blowing up the one-story building, police said. Such attacks are not uncommon and are designed to disrupt government activity or deny U.S. and Iraqi troops a potential base during combat against the insurgents.**

A car bomb killed four policemen and wounded nine more police in Jihad in southwest Baghdad.

Police were checking a suspicious vehicle when it exploded.

A car bomb targeting an Iraqi army checkpoint killed a soldier and wounded three others on Wednesday near al-Shurta tunnel in western Baghdad, police said.

Ali Abid, the deputy to the governor of Kirkuk, escaped a roadside bomb attack on Wednesday in the northern city of Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. He was unharmed but three of his guards were wounded.

Guerrillas killed a policeman near his house in the southern city of Diwaniya, 180 km (110 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.



Iraqi army soldiers minutes after a roadside bomb exploded next to their armoured vehicle in Ghazaliya March 29, 2007. REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch

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## Care To Guess What He's Thinking?

***“Some 200 people demanded the release of 60 of their relatives arrested and taken away by the U.S. forces two days ago.”***



A girl cries in front of an Iraqi soldier during a protest in the Ghazaliyah neighborhood in Baghdad March 29. Some 200 people demanded the release of 60 of their relatives arrested and taken away by the U.S. forces two days ago. (AP Photo/Asaad Mouhsin)

**MORE:**

## **Did He Get Sniper Training?**



An Iraqi soldier holds a crying boy during a protest in Baghdad March 29, 2007. Scores of demonstrators held a rally on Thursday demanding the release of the U.S. prisoners, in the Ghazaliya district of Baghdad. REUTERS/Mahmoud Raouf Mahmoud

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

## END THE OCCUPATION

### FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

# The Irish Armed Resistance Fights The British Army To Liberate Their Nation; A Film Review

March 23, 2007 Review by Andrew Freund, Socialist Worker

**The Wind That Shakes the Barley, directed by Ken Loach, starring Pádraic Delaney and Cillian Murphy.**

THE STRUGGLE of the Irish people for independence from the British Empire comes to screens in the U.S. British director Ken Loach's film *The Wind That Shakes the Barley* is a stirring tale about resistance and political tragedy that bears haunting similarity to the civil war in Iraq.

Loach is the director of radical film favorites like *Land and Freedom* (1995) and *Bread and Roses* (2000), realistically acted dramas depicting everyday people fighting in grass-roots historical struggles. His new masterpiece follows in that vein.

*The Wind That Shakes the Barley* unanimously won the coveted Palm d'Or at the 2006 Cannes Film Festival, garnering a 20-minute standing ovation. Predictably, so radical a film has found trouble getting distributed.

The film's narrative revolves around a group of young Irish men in 1920 County Cork who have joined the newly formed Irish Republican Army (IRA) in order to oust the British occupying force through guerrilla warfare. Central to these characters are local "flying column" leader Teddy O'Donovan and his brother Damien, a young doctor who casts aside his chance to finish residency in London to fight the British.

**A few years prior to the events in the story, Irish Republicans staged the Easter Rising of 1916, an insurrection the British quickly crushed, executing its leaders. The Crown had grudgingly granted Ireland representation in the UK Parliament soon after, but also instituted conscription for the meat grinder of the First World War. This string of injustices pushed the Irish people to elect the Sinn Fein party to 70 percent of Ireland's seats.**

**Refusing to join the occupying government in Westminster, the Sinn Fein MPs formed a separate Irish parliament, declared independence from the United**

**Kingdom, and called for the formation of the IRA. Thus began the Irish War for Independence.**

**The men who form Teddy's unit are common farmers and workers. They wear no uniforms, and don't even have weapons until they steal them from the occupying forces, yet they fight bravely and efficiently. The women of their town are the backbone of the resistance support system, providing food and shelter to those constantly on the run.**

The film does not gloss over the brutality of the "Black and Tans," the vicious police and soldier mercenary units thus named for their mismatched uniforms. Early in the film, during a humiliating group arrest, a squad leader of the Black and Tans has a man killed for refusing to give his name in English instead of Gaelic.

In true Loach style, the political issues of the greater conflict are played out through the debates between characters. These scenes always feel real and improvised. Those who loved the land collectivization debate scene in *Land and Freedom* will be treated to several like it here.

In jail, Damien discusses with a train driver his admiration for the words of James Connolly, the Irish socialist executed after the Easter Rising. A majority during the war focused solely on national liberation, but a minority wanted a new society to arise from the independence struggle.

These divisions manifest themselves in a debate about a Republican court's decision to force a landlord to cease his economic repression of an old woman, but Teddy argues that they need the support of the local rich landlords to get guns for the resistance.

The eventual jubilation of a truce and treaty creating an Irish Free State quickly turns to anger when the industrial Northern Ireland is not included in the new nation. The characters quickly find themselves on opposing sides in the Irish Civil War.

One side thinks the weak treaty is a betrayal to Republican ideals, the other believes it's the best Ireland can get. The latter don the Free State uniform, while the former are branded criminals.

Many have pointed out the obvious parallels between this film, and the events in Iraq, where civil war rages along ethnic lines. Unlike the way the media and politicians describe Iraq, the viewer isn't left wondering why the civil war started in Ireland; the reasons are clear.

**The major division in any struggle for self-determination is the degree of cooperation one side offers to the occupier.**

**In response to a criticism that his film is "anti-British," Loach replied, "I'd encourage people to see their loyalties horizontally across national boundaries, so that this isn't a film about the Brits bashing the Irish. People have much more in common with people in the same social position in other countries than they do with, say, those at the top of their own society."**

“We hope that our film represents a small step in the relationship which the British have with their imperialist past. If we dare to tell the truth about the past, perhaps we shall dare tell the truth about the present.”

**The Wind That Shakes the Barley is Loach’s greatest film. Everyone fighting for the right of self-determination needs to see this movie.**

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## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

### ***Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!***

## **U.S. Occupation Commands’ Stupid Terror Tactics Recruit Even More Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops**



A foreign occupation soldier U.S. B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment kicks in the door of an Iraqi citizens’ home in west Baghdad’s Ghazaliyah neighborhood, Iraq, March 23, 2007. (AP Photo/Marko Drobnjakovic)

**[Iraqi citizens have no right to resist home invasions by occupation soldiers from the USA. If they do, they may be arrested, wounded, or killed.]**

[There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and busting into their houses by force to arouse an intense desire to kill you in the patriotic, self-respecting civilians who live there.

[But your commanders know that, don't they? Don't they?]

The women and children were moved into a room, where they huddled together in silence. The men had been forced down onto their knees wherever they were apprehended, their hands secured behind their backs with plastic handcuffs and their eyes covered by makeshift blindfolds. YOCHI J. DREAZEN, Wall St. Journal, 3.12.07

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

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

## ***Here's A Huge Shocking Surprise!*** **Iraqis Have No Confidence In Occupation Troops**

19/03/07 AP

LONDON — Fewer than one in five Iraqis has confidence in U.S.-led coalition troops.

Only 18 per cent of Iraqis have confidence in U.S. and coalition troops.

[What a stupid, biased poll. There is no doubt that an honest poll would have found 90% confidence in occupation troops --- to kick their door down in the middle of the night and treat them like worthless pieces of shit in their own country. T]

**MORE:**

**Can't Imagine How They Got The  
Wrong Idea, Can You?  
“Some 200 People Demanded The  
Release Of 60 Of Their Relatives Held By  
The U.S. Forces Two Days Ago”**



An Iraqi woman argues with a US soldier during a protest in the Ghazaliyah neighborhood in Baghdad, Iraq, March 29, 2007. Some 200 people demanded the release of 60 of their relatives held by the U.S. forces two days ago. (AP Photo/Asaad Mouhsin)

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**DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

**“The Congressional Democrats’  
Proposal Will Let The Bloodletting  
Go On For Another Year Or More”**

It's as if, before the Civil War, abolitionists agreed to postpone the emancipation of the slaves for a year, or two years, or five years, and coupled this with an appropriation of funds to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act.



May 2007 By Howard Zinn, The Progressive [Excerpts]

As I write this, Congress is debating timetables for withdrawal from Iraq.

**In response to the Bush Administration's "surge" of troops, and the Republicans' refusal to limit our occupation, the Democrats are behaving with their customary timidity, proposing withdrawal, but only after a year, or eighteen months. And it seems they expect the anti-war movement to support them.**

That was suggested in a recent message from MoveOn, which polled its members on the Democrat proposal, saying that progressives in Congress, "like many of us, don't think the bill goes far enough, but see it as the first concrete step to ending the war."

Ironically, and shockingly, the same bill appropriates \$124 billion in more funds to carry the war.

**It's as if, before the Civil War, abolitionists agreed to postpone the emancipation of the slaves for a year, or two years, or five years, and coupled this with an appropriation of funds to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act.**

**Timetables for withdrawal are not only morally reprehensible in the case of a brutal occupation (would you give a thug who invaded your house, smashed everything in sight, and terrorized your children a timetable for withdrawal?) but logically nonsensical.**

**If our troops are preventing civil war, helping people, controlling violence, then why withdraw at all? If they are in fact doing the opposite—provoking civil war, hurting people, perpetuating violence—they should withdraw as quickly as ships and planes can carry them home.**

The Congressional Democrats' proposal is to give more funds to the war, and to set a timetable that will let the bloodletting go on for another year or more.

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## **Bigmouth McCain Talks The Talk: "Wish He Would Walk In That Neighborhood"**

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in. He writes: McCain says it is safe to go for a walk in parts of Baghdad. Wish he would walk in that neighborhood.]

3.26.07 Rawstory.com

Monday morning's "Bill Bennett's Morning in America" radio show, Senator John McCain (R-AZ) said that there were parts of Baghdad where he and the host could go for a walk.



“There are neighborhoods in Baghdad where you and I could walk through those neighborhoods, today,” he said, when asked to highlight something positive about what American forces have been able to accomplish in Iraq.

Earlier in the interview, McCain said that the US is “beginning to succeed in Iraq” and early pull out would result in “unmitigated disaster of incredible proportions,” adding that “we will see..”

**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 to [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org):. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential. Same to unsubscribe.**

## **Disgusting Piece Of Shit**



3.29.07: (AFP/Brendan Smialowski)

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# **FBI Spying On American Citizens Exposed As Massive Criminal Enterprise: Bush Regime Traitors Broke Law Thousands Of Times**

March 21, 2007 By R. Jeffrey Smith, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

The Justice Department's inspector general told a committee of angry House members yesterday that the FBI may have violated the law or government policies as many as 3,000 times since 2003 as agents secretly collected the telephone, bank and credit card records of U.S. citizens and foreign nationals residing here.

Inspector General Glenn A. Fine said that according to the FBI's own estimate, as many as 600 of these violations could be "cases of serious misconduct" involving the improper use of "national security letters" to compel telephone companies, banks and credit institutions to produce records.

National security letters are comparable to subpoenas but are issued directly by the bureau without court review.

An FBI tally showed that the bureau made an average of 916 such requests each week from 2003 to 2005, but Fine told the House Judiciary Committee that FBI recordkeeping has been chaotic and "significantly understates" the actual use of that tool.

Fine, amplifying the criticisms he made in a March 9 report, attributed the FBI's "troubling" abuse of the letters to "mistakes, carelessness, confusion, sloppiness, lack of training, lack of adequate guidance and lack of adequate oversight."

His account evoked heated criticism of the bureau from Republicans and Democrats alike, including a comment from Rep. Dan Lungren (R-Calif.) that it "sounds like a report about a first- or second-grade class."

"This was an example of the incredibly sloppy practice that was unacceptable," Fine interjected. His report also noted that some lawyers at FBI field offices – who work for the special agents in charge, rather than for legal officials at FBI headquarters – felt pressured to go along with requests for letters that they knew were not adequately documented.

Fine's estimate of the incidence of serious abuses was extrapolated from his investigators' scrutiny of 293 national security letters, out of 44,000 letters – containing 143,074 data requests – that the FBI has reported issuing during the three-year period he reviewed.

Of those letters studied, he found "about seven where there were illegal uses" to obtain information the FBI was not entitled to have. Caproni questioned the validity of the extrapolation but acknowledged that 1 percent of the letters examined by Fine were tainted by "unquestionably serious violations."

Fine's extrapolated tally of 3,000 likely illegal or improper letters did not include three other categories of wrongdoing disclosed in his report:

One was a headquarters unit's use of 739 "exigent circumstances" letters to obtain telephone records from AT&T, Verizon and MCI on an emergency basis using false statements or improper documentation. The second was an improper use of 300 national security letters to obtain information for a single classified project. And the third was the FBI's use of improper letters to obtain the financial records of 244 people from banks.

Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (R-Wis.) expressed surprise at how widespread the use of national security letters had become, asking: "Do we have that many potential terrorists running around the country? If so, I'm really worried."

**MORE:**

# **"I Resent Being Conscripted As A Secret Informer For The Government And Being Made To Mislead Those Who Are Close To Me"**

March 23, 2007 By E&P Staff

NEW YORK "It is the policy of The Washington Post not to publish anonymous pieces," the newspaper declares on page A17 of today's edition. "In this case, an exception has been made because the author – who would have preferred to be named – is legally prohibited from disclosing his or her identity in connection with receipt of a national security letter.

"The Post confirmed the legitimacy of this submission by verifying it with the author's attorney and by reviewing publicly available court documents."

What follows, in the paper – and in its opening passages below – is the submission by "John Doe."

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The Justice Department's inspector general revealed on March 9 that the FBI has been systematically abusing one of the most controversial provisions of the USA Patriot Act: the expanded power to issue "national security letters."

It no doubt surprised most Americans to learn that between 2003 and 2005 the FBI issued more than 140,000 specific demands under this provision – demands issued without a showing of probable cause or prior judicial approval – to obtain potentially sensitive information about U.S. citizens and residents. It did not, however, come as any surprise to me.

**Three years ago, I received a national security letter (NSL) in my capacity as the president of a small Internet access and consulting business.**

**The letter ordered me to provide sensitive information about one of my clients.**

There was no indication that a judge had reviewed or approved the letter, and it turned out that none had.

**The letter came with a gag provision that prohibited me from telling anyone, including my client, that the FBI was seeking this information.**

Based on the context of the demand – a context that the FBI still won't let me discuss publicly – I suspected that the FBI was abusing its power and that the letter sought information to which the FBI was not entitled.

Rather than turn over the information, I contacted lawyers at the American Civil Liberties Union, and in April 2004 I filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the NSL power.

I never released the information the FBI sought, and last November the FBI decided that it no longer needs the information anyway.

**But the FBI still hasn't abandoned the gag order that prevents me from disclosing my experience and concerns with the law or the national security letter that was served on my company. In fact, the government will return to court in the next few weeks to defend the gag orders that are imposed on recipients of these letters.**

Living under the gag order has been stressful and surreal.

**Under the threat of criminal prosecution, I must hide all aspects of my involvement in the case – including the mere fact that I received an NSL – from my colleagues, my family and my friends.**

**When I meet with my attorneys I cannot tell my girlfriend where I am going or where I have been. I hide any papers related to the case in a place where she will not look.**

**When clients and friends ask me whether I am the one challenging the constitutionality of the NSL statute, I have no choice but to look them in the eye and lie.**

**I resent being conscripted as a secret informer for the government and being made to mislead those who are close to me, especially because I have doubts about the legitimacy of the underlying investigation.**

## **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/](http://www.ivaw.org/))

### **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:

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

[http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi\\_special/](http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/); <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>;

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