

GI SPECIAL 5C4:



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

Pentagon Butchers Demand Thousands More For Lost War In Iraq

3/2/2007 By Tom Vanden Brook, USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — President Bush's planned escalation of U.S. forces in Iraq will require as many as 28,500 troops, Pentagon officials told a Senate committee Thursday.

England also told the Senate Budget Committee that it will be clear within months whether the so-called surge in forces has succeeded in helping secure Iraq.

In January, Bush said he would send 21,500 more combat troops to Iraq.

[Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon] England said 6,000 to 7,000 support troops will be needed to back up the larger combat force.

Bush & Petraeus' Stupid Plan Going Nowhere:

**“I Don't Know Who I'm Fighting
Most Of The Time,” Said Staff
Sgt. Joseph Lopez;**

**“I Don't Know Who Is Setting What
IED”**

**“We Do Not Go Out If The Americans
Are Not With Us”**

But U.S. troops, Iraqi soldiers and officials, and Baghdad residents say the plan is hampered because security forces cannot identify, let alone apprehend, the elusive perpetrators of the violence. Military patrols frequently push into neighborhoods where they have been shot at or struck with improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, only to find no one to arrest.

February 26, 2007 Washington Post Foreign Service, By Joshua Partlow [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD -- The engineer stood aside as Iraqi and American soldiers rifled through his daughter's wardrobe and peered under her bed. He did not mind when they confiscated the second clip for his AK-47, because he knew it could be easily replaced. He demurred when asked about insurgent activity in the neighborhood, afraid to be stamped an informant and driven from his home of 14 years.

Face to face with the Baghdad security plan, it seemed to him a bit absurd.

“Obviously, the soldiers lack the necessary information about where to look and who to look for,” said the government engineer, who declined to give his name in an interview during a sweep through his western Baghdad neighborhood last Monday. “There are too many houses and too many hide-outs.”

But U.S. troops, Iraqi soldiers and officials, and Baghdad residents say the plan is hampered because security forces cannot identify, let alone apprehend, the elusive perpetrators of the violence.

Military patrols frequently push into neighborhoods where they have been shot at or struck with improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, only to find no one to arrest.

“I don’t know who I’m fighting most of the time,” said Staff Sgt. Joseph Lopez, 39, a soldier based in the northern outskirts of the capital. “I don’t know who is setting what IED.”

Many people in Baghdad express deep reservations about the Iraqi security forces’ ability and desire to battle their fellow citizens.

U.S. soldiers say their Iraqi counterparts are swayed more by the anti-American [translation: pro-American but anti-occupation nationalist] speeches of Moqtada al-Sadr than by the public appeals of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki for even-handed enforcement.

On the streets of the capital, it is impossible to miss the increased military presence. Iraqi police pickups speed down the avenues, sirens wailing, as masked officers fire machine guns to clear their path.

Iraqi army soldiers and policemen stand sentry at checkpoint after checkpoint, but more often than not allow cars to pass through without inspection.

“They’re just standing and waving at the cars,” said Sgt. Haider Hasim, 20, a member of the Iraqi National Guard’s 1st Brigade, 2nd Regiment of the 6th Division, who patrols the western Baghdad neighborhood of Amiriyah.

“They won’t take weapons from their friends.”

“They’re doing nothing, they’re just sleeping at the camps,” he said. “We do not go out if the Americans are not with us.”

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Three U.S. Soldiers Killed By Central Baghdad IED

March 3, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory

Baghdad, Iraq -- Three Multi-National Corps-Iraq Soldiers died Saturday of wounds suffered after an improvised explosive device exploded next to their vehicle in central Baghdad.

Family Remembers Boise Soldier



PFC. Raymond Werner was killed by an improvised explosive device on Thursday. He attended Cole Valley Christian High School and Boise State before joining the army.

February 23, 2007 KTVB

BOISE - The last of three Idaho soldiers, killed while fighting in Iraq, have all been laid to rest.

Services were held for Private First Class Raymond Werner at the Cloverdale Church of God Friday.

Werner lived in Boise with his wife Lacey before he was deployed to Iraq with the 321st Engineering Battalion based at Gowen Field.

Werner and two other soldiers from that unit were killed on February 8th by a roadside bomb.

"Ray was my best friend, my support, my husband, my everything," Lacey Werner said.

Werner's wife of just over seven months bravely spoke about the love they shared - a love that made her feel safe Lacey says her husband will always be her.

"Not one day went by that I didn't tell him how proud I was of him," she said.

Lacey says Ray was hilarious – a fitting description, since he was Cole Valley Christian High School's class clown and mascot.

"If nothing else, you knew you could always have fun with Ray and he would try to make you laugh," pastor Chris Standridge said

At 14, Ray chose to rise above a troubled past and began connecting with many people at church.

Since then, his pastor and good friend says he has touched many lives -- evident by a packed church at his memorial. "I know hundreds, even thousands of lives who were changed forever because one 14-year-old boy chose to give his life to Christ," friend Ken Whitmire said.

Ray never got to be the father he had dreamed of being someday but his wife, Lacey says he did live out one goal of his life- being a great husband.

They spoke daily while he was away at war.

"Ray and I ended all of our conversations with 'I love you's' and 'bye, bye for now,'" Lacey said. "Knowing that we said that in our last conversation makes me feel at ease- because we truly meant it."

Now Lacey says their conversation endings have new meaning, because she along with Ray's loved ones, view this memorial the same way – it is "bye bye... for now."

"The life he lived, the man he was, the things he did for his fellow man...and the ultimate sacrifice he made will never be forgotten," Whitmire said.

"Good night my sweet angel and we will be together soon, again," Lacey said.

Pfc. Raymond Werner joined the Army in 2005.

He received military honors before he was laid to rest at the Idaho State Veterans Cemetery.

East Hartford Soldier Falls In Iraq

February 23, 2007 By RACHANA RATHI, Hartford Courant

A decorated soldier from East Hartford has died of wounds suffered in combat in Iraq, the Defense Department said Thursday.

Sgt. Richard L. Ford, 40, was on his third deployment to the country. He died Tuesday of wounds from small arms fire near Baghdad. He became the 37th person with Connecticut ties to die in Iraq or Afghanistan since March 2002.

'I am extremely proud of my dad's service to our country,' his son Michael Ryan Patrick, of Bridgeport, said in a statement. 'My dad is my greatest hero.'

Ford was a rifleman assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division out of Fort Bragg, N.C. He had served previous tours in Iraq, from December 2004 to March 2005, and from September to December 2005, the Defense Department said.

Ford was the recipient of the Bronze Star and Purple Heart, and received an Army Commendation Medal with a 'V' device for Valor in February 2005, for his role in an incident in Mosul.

A specialist at the time, he helped save members of his crew while under enemy fire, according to the Defense Department.

'As both a fatherly and brotherly figure, he was looked up to by many of his fellow paratroopers,' said Lt. Col. Richard Kim, battalion commander, in a statement. 'He contributed immensely to the readiness of the organization and will be sorely missed.'

Ford joined the Army National Guard in 1995 and was placed on active duty in June 2004.

He is survived by his son; his father, Mason Ford, of Colchester; a sister, Vanessa Migliore, of East Hartford; and a brother, Matthew O'Connor, of Lebanon.

A memorial service will be held for him by his unit in Iraq. Funeral arrangements by the family have not been finalized.

6 Wounded In Ramadi; Carson Soldier Lost Feet

03/02/07 THE GAZETTE

A Fort Carson soldier on his second tour in Iraq lost both feet last week after stepping on an explosive in Ramadi. Sgt. Mark R. Ecker II, 21, was flown to Walter Reed Army Medical Center on Tuesday.

Five other soldiers also were wounded.

U.S. Mercenary Killed In Thee Qar, Two Wounded

March 3 (KUNA)

A bomb planted on the highway between Safwan area and Thee Qar province exploded on a group of Americans killing one and injuring two others.

A spokesman for Al-Basra police force said that the incident occurred on Friday, adding that the Americans were employed by a foreign security company here.

BRITISH TROOPER GRAVELY ILL AFTER BASRA ATTACK

03 March 2007 This Is Staffordshire

The Staffordshire Regiment has spoken out as one of its troops lies gravely ill in hospital after being shot by an Iraqi gunman in Basra on Wednesday. Captain Gary Hedges, a media spokesman based in Basra, yesterday told The Sentinel that the soldier remained in a "critical condition".

He was travelling in a Warrior armoured vehicle when he was hit.

Jim Massey, regimental secretary of the Staffords, said: "We are very worried about the condition of our soldier and we are constantly being updated about his condition."

NO MISSION; HOPELESS WAR: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



A U.S. soldier sleeps inside an armoured vehicle during a patrol in the southeast of Baghdad February 26, 2007. REUTERS/Carlos Barria (IRAQ)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

War Pilot Had Md. Roots

February 21, 2007 By Julie Scharper, Baltimore Sun

A Dulaney High School graduate and father of three was one of eight soldiers who died Sunday in Afghanistan when the helicopter he was piloting crashed because of mechanical failure, relatives said.

Army Warrant Officer John A. Quinlan, 36, who grew up in northern Baltimore County, radioed that he had lost power shortly before the plane went down, said his father, Robert J. Quinlan of Bradley Beach, N.J.

'He was fighting it all the way down, I'm sure,' his father said.

Fourteen soldiers survived the crash.

Warrant Officer Quinlan, who had served in both Iraq wars and Somalia, joined the military soon after he graduated from high school in 1987. After serving with the Marines for 10 years, he joined the Army to pilot helicopters. He flew as part of the elite 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, nicknamed 'The Night Stalkers' because they fly only in darkness, said his father, a retired Army major.

'He was a calculated-risk-taker,' his father said. 'He was very good at planning and organizing.'

Brian Edwards, a boyhood friend who is a detective with the Baltimore County Police Department, said that Warrant Officer Quinlan had an unforgettable personality. 'He commanded the room whenever he came in,' Detective Edwards said. 'Whether it was his physical size or his sense of humor, he was larger than life.'

Family members said that about a week before his death, Warrant Officer Quinlan wrote in an e-mail to his father and sister, Susan M. Ripke of Seymour, Conn., that a helicopter he was flying had been downed by mechanical problems in a remote area of Afghanistan.

He had been planning to return to his home in Clarksville, Tenn., next week to spend his 37th birthday with his wife and three daughters.

'He was really a family man,' said his mother, Kathleen T. Quinlan. 'When he was home, it was all about doing things for his girls.'

Warrant Officer Quinlan, who grew up in the Phoenix area of Baltimore County, attended Immaculate Conception School in Towson through the eighth grade. He went to Calvert Hall College High School for a year before transferring to Dulaney.

A thrill-seeker as a boy, he rode his BMX bike over ramps that he built in the yard of his parents' home and through the woods at Loch Raven Reservoir . 'Basically, we did everything short of breaking our necks,' said Bill Quaid, a childhood friend who now lives in Chestertown.

Aircraft fascinated Warrant Officer Quinlan from an early age. He built an elaborate helicopter from Legos, his sister said. At Immaculate Conception, where his mother was a teacher, he often got in trouble for flying paper airplanes, Mr. Quaid recalled.

In high school, he wore his red hair in long curls and was not particularly interested in academics, family members said. 'He was a wild man,' his sister said. So his family was surprised when he announced that he wanted to join the Marines.

'He knew the Marines were tough,' his father said. 'He said, 'Hey, if I'm going to do it, I want to do it with the best.'

In the Marines, Warrant Officer Quinlan worked on a variety of aircraft before becoming an Army pilot.

The CH-47 Chinook transport helicopter he was flying at the time of his death was the only helicopter with a cockpit large enough to accommodate Warrant Officer Quinlan, who was 6 feet 4 inches tall, his sister said.

In August, he was piloting a similar helicopter with 25 people aboard when enemy fire hit the fuel tank, family members said, adding that he managed to land the helicopter and only one soldier was injured in the rescue operation.

His parents last saw him at Christmas, when he brought his family to stay at their New Jersey home. Warrant Officer Quinlan, his wife of 14 years, Julie, and his daughters, Keely, 10, Maddy, 8, and Erin, 3, have lived in Clarksville, Tenn., for the past four years.

In his free time, he renovated his home and worked on classic cars. His father had planned to give him a 1957 red Chevrolet convertible to work on after he retired from the military.

A memorial service is planned for today at Fort Campbell, Ky., where Warrant Officer Quinlan's regiment was stationed. A date for his burial has not been set, but his parents said they expect that he will be buried next week at Arlington National Cemetery. They hope to hold a ceremony in New Jersey next month.

The Case for Withdrawal from Afghanistan
The Khyber Impasse

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Sgt. Pedro J. Colon at the Church of Santa Maria March 2, 2007 in Bronx borough of New York. Colon died Feb. 19 in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when his unit came under attack by enemy forces using multiple weapons. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

**“He’s A Nice Man,” Darius Said
Quietly... “I Just Wish He Would
Come Back Alive”
“I Just Don’t See Any Good Result
Coming From This, But Yet We Keep
Sending More Troops,” She Said.**

February 26, 2007 By Tony Perry, L.A. Times Staff Writer [Excerpts]

SAN DIEGO — In Washington and in much of the media, the dominant discussion is whether the U.S. should send more troops to Iraq or bring home the troops already there and end U.S. involvement.

Seven-year-old Darius Badua knows none of this. But he does know that his father, Marine Staff Sgt. Roderick “Ben” Badua, left Sunday for his second deployment to Iraq.

“He’s a nice man,” Darius said quietly as his father and 125-plus other Marines left from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar here. “I just wish he would come back alive.”

Many military family members believe that it doesn’t help the troops in Iraq when politicians talk about cutting off funding or blocking President Bush’s request for a “surge” in the troop level.

But that view is not unanimous.

Maria Guzman of San Diego was at Miramar to wave goodbye to her son, 1st Lt. Arturo Guzman, a helicopter pilot. She hopes Congress blocks the president’s bid to send more troops.

“I just don’t see any good result coming from this, but yet we keep sending more troops,” she said. “I wish they could all come back safe.”

A few minutes later, the chartered 747 lumbered down the runway and lifted slowly into the early night air. By early Tuesday, the Marines of HMM161 will be in Iraq.

“It’s very sad, it’s just sad,” Guzman said.

Most of the families left before the Marines loaded onto the plane, but Roderick Badua’s family stayed until the last moment, waving and fighting back tears.

For the late-afternoon departure of her husband, Alicia Badua was accompanied by their children, Darius, 5; Trinity, 5; and Genesis, 3; and her in-laws Nina and Bob Hannemann, all from Ventura.

“My husband is just doing his job, that’s all I know,” she said. “The kids just know they want Daddy home.”

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

Mutiny In The Golani Brigade; “The Battalion Commander Tried To Impose ‘An Iron Discipline’ On

A Unit That Had Fought In Lebanon” “We Have Had Enough Of Him”

[Thanks to Max Watts and Adam Keller, who sent this in.]

Mar. 2, 2007 Yaakov Katz, Jerusalem Post & By Felix Frish and Uri Binder, Ma'ariv

In one of the largest revolts in IDF history, close to 100 soldiers from Battalion 51 of the Golani Brigade - which lost eight soldiers during the battle over Bint Jbail in Lebanon this past summer - mutinied against its commanders and stormed out of their base on Thursday.

The mutiny was led by Rifle Company C, which lost eight of its fighters at the harsh Battle of Bint Jbeil.

The soldiers claimed that they were fed up with the tough disciplinary approach of new battalion commander Lt.-Col. David Zini and the IDF's general 'lack of compassion' for soldiers who had fought and lost friends in Lebanon.

The soldiers said that meetings with psychologists they requested to discuss the effects of the war had been repeatedly postponed by their commanders.

'We did not get what we deserved,' said one of the soldiers, who said that Zini also broke with Golani traditions and took away certain privileges granted to veterans of the battalion.

During the Lebanon war, Battalion 51 lost eight soldiers during one day of fighting against Hizbullah in the southern Lebanese village of Bint Jbail. During the fighting, the battalion's deputy commander, Maj. Roi Klein, was killed after he jumped on top of a grenade to save the soldiers standing nearby.

At 2 p.m., close to 100 soldiers abandoned the battalion tent encampment at the Land Fighting Training Centre at Tze'elim (in the Negev), walked out the front gate of the Tze'elim training base in southern Israel and began walking along the highway.

The Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel David Zini, noticed after a short time what was going on. He immediately called the Regimental Commander, Colonel Tamir Yed'i, who was at the encampment in preparation for a Battalion training session which was supposed to take place later that day.

Col. Tamir Yidai drove south, where he met the soldiers on the road and convinced them to return to base.

Yidai later held a long talk with them, during which he promised to try to correct some of the problems reported by the soldiers.

"The soldiers had three main complaints" said Yed'i. "First., they claimed that the attitude of the Battalion Commander towards them was too harsh, and to some degree this complaint might have been justified.

Yed'i also mentioned the soldiers' complaint at not being allowed to place a black background behind the unit symbol (on their berets) to mark mourning for their comrades who were killed in Lebanon.

But the strongest complainant was that by order of the Battalion Commander they were not allowed to meet with a psychologist or Mental health Officer in order to discuss the mental damage which they suffered following the war in Lebanon.

Thursday's revolt was not the first time that Golani soldiers have walked out of their bases in protest over 'unfair' treatment. Last April, 25 soldiers left their base near Metulla to protest their commander's decision to expel a number of their comrades from the battalion.

A high-ranking officer in the brigade said Thursday night that all of the complaints would be looked into, and if there were failures or mistakes made by the commanders, they would be immediately corrected.

Some of their claims are justified, the officer admitted, referring to delays in medical care and handling of soldiers' personal and domestic issues.

One of the soldiers told: "The new Battalion Commander whom we got after the war arrived and decided that he did not like what was going on in battalion. He did not recognize the rights of Senior Soldiers."

(Note: soldiers on their third year of conscription regularly demand a privileged position due to their seniority. Denying these rights was the main reason for many past mutinies, but in this case this seems just one of the grievances and not necessarily the most important. Adam Keller]

"Also, he decided that there would be no more referrals to a doctors for medical treatment; that we were forbidden to sing "Fighters' Songs" and also forbidden to grow beards.

"We have had enough of him, so the guys just decided to run away from the base.

The Regimental Commander put road-blocks on our way, so after an hour we were stopped. The Regimental Commander arrived and talked with us. Afterwards we turned back. Now we hope things will start changing."

Another soldier claimed that the battalion Commander tried to impose "an iron discipline" on a unit that had fought in Lebanon with much devotion and sacrifice.

Yed'i, the Regimental Commander, demanded of the soldiers to turn back and to do in the best way their part in the planned exercise. He promised that if they do so, he would not sentence them to harsh punishments.

One of the participants in the organised abandonment of the camp told that in the present mutiny (unlike earlier ones) the main participants were the younger soldiers, while the senior ones, who have only a short time left until their discharge from the army, did not want to get this extended by imprisonment.

SENIOR CALL-UP APPROVED: Bring The Yougin's Home, NOW!

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ENLIST NOW!

FreakingNews.com

[picture by upinarms]

1/8/2007 Veterans For Peace Discussion

A number of us Old Foggie 'Nam Vets have tried to Re-Enlist, not to mention the 'Raging Grannies.' Now with the escalation we can save the little chimp's butt, before we indict the whole bunch!

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

Mar 3, 2007 By Mussab Al-Khairalla, (Reuters) & KUNA

In Anbar, a car bombing killed three policemen, according to Lieutenant Colonel Tareq Yussuf.

A police commando member was killed and four policemen wounded in two bomb attacks in Baghdad on Saturday, an Interior Ministry source said.

“A roadside bomb went off near a police commando patrol in the Saidiyah neighborhood in southwestern Baghdad, damaging a patrol vehicle and killing a commando member aboard,” the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Another roadside bomb detonated near a passing police patrol in Baghdad’s eastern neighborhood of Zaiyounah, charring a police vehicle and wounding four policemen aboard, the source added.

Earlier, a police source said that guerrillas shot dead Lieutenant Colonel Fadhil Rahim, commander of a police commando battalion, while his convoy was traveling in the western Baghdad district of Ghazaliyah.

Meanwhile, a roadside bomb went off near a police patrol in Baghdad’s southern district of Doura on Saturday, damaging a police vehicle and wounding two policemen aboard, the source said.

A car bomb killed a policeman when it blew up at a police checkpoint in the western Iraqi city of Ramadi on Saturday, sources said.

Guerrillas killed one civilian and seriously wounded two others on a commercial street in the Sunni town of Hawija, 70 km (43 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, police said. The source said the gunmen were targeting members of a tribe working with the occupation.

A roadside bomb killed three policemen and wounded three more when it hit a police convoy on the road to Tikrit, police said. The men guards of Major General Hamid Al Namis, provincial head of police in Salahaddin province.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“Do You Recall Some Of The Old
WW II Movies And How The Hero
Would Be Sent On ‘Suicide’
Missions?”**

**“Today, Our Opponents Have The
Very Same ‘Heroes’ Going On
Suicide Missions”**

“The Days Of Occupation Are Over”

To: GI Special
Sent: March 02, 2007 8:08 AM
Subject: Heroes

[Thanks to Billy Kelly, Vietnam Veteran, who sent this in. He writes: I just found this letter to Brooks. And I am so angered by the 'hero' bullshit.]

To: David Brooks, Op-Ed Columnist, NY Times

I sometimes feel it is futile to write these notes to columnists, particularly relating to a column from some time ago.

We all know about the need to keep to the 'story de jour' but I kept and remembered your piece so I will forge ahead.

From an article entitled a “Crisis Of Confidence” you wrote “We have a military filled with heroes, but the atrocities of a few have eclipsed the nobility of the many”.

I am a veteran ‘grunt’ officer of the American War in Viet Nam. I was wounded 4 times and received 2 Hearts. One day I had two minor hits from different actions and the paperwork was looked upon as duplication.

Last scratch was with a week to go and I opted to forego paperwork out of paranoia that my return to USA would be held up.

I also received, with numerous other awards, a Bronze and Silver Star for valor. This is not meant to be self-aggrandizing.

Purple Hearts are for the great part received because one fucked-up and/or was unlucky. Very few were for 'heroism'. One is not supposed to get hit!! I think the same can be said for awards for valor.

I think our nation glorifies the military too much. All, or most, of our troops are always referred to as 'noble', 'heroes', etc.

The reality is that soldiers from whatever nation, creed, or ethnicity are pretty much the same.

Americans are no more honorable and heroic, nor less so, than most other soldiers. In reality the grunt is really only Cannon Fodder.

Make contact! That's the mantra.

And hope you can stay alive till the high-tech shit comes in.

I personally know some of the soldiers who testified at the 'Winter Soldier' hearings.

And, I know many others who, tearfully, have admitted to horrors they had seen or participated in while on military duty.

By no means were the atrocities the rule but they most certainly were not anomalies. Some might even argue that the death of any Viet or Iraqi was/is an atrocity for the premise the soldiers are working under is illegal and immoral.

I found in VN, and I feel the same is true for Iraq, that the cause is what makes one side a 'winner' and one a 'loser'.

The American soldier in VN never spoke of a cause.

Never spoke of the fight against 'unholy' communism.

We quickly realized we were fighting a much more motivated opponent than the poor dragooned and shanghaied ARVN who was our avowed 'ally'.

Even LBJ once queried his staff after a briefing as to why 'their' Viets were better than 'ours'.

And from conversations with returning vets from America's war in Iraq, I think the same holds true in that benighted land.

Jesus Christ!!! How much more time do you need than a 2-3 month basic before a soldier can shoot a rifle and be 'stood-up'? It's now well into the 4th year of this travesty.

Do you recall some of the old WW II movies and how the hero would be sent on 'suicide' missions? Yes, we called that man a hero although we knew he would be killed accomplishing his mission.

Today, our opponents have the very same 'heroes' going on suicide missions.

One might say our brave men were focused on military objectives and our present day opponents are cowardly and un-civilized because their death and destruction encompasses so many 'innocents'.

One can argue this point but I feel the new guerrilla (now called asymmetric or 4th generation) warfare will always target the 'innocent'.

Think of our 'hero' bombers who drop their lethal loads in 'shock and awe' attacks. Are those killed and maimed less innocent than those blown apart in the suicide missions of the Iraqis?

In some respects that 'crazed' suicide bomber might actually be perceived as being braver than the high-flying pilot who is impervious/oblivious to any retaliation.

This feeling of our innate goodness and the superiority of our motive is a dangerous flaw in our national psyche. Are we really inherently different because we had the great good luck to be born in a specific, well-defined geographic area?

The conclusion was/is/will be certain: we 'lose' in Iraq.

The days of occupation are over.

If we must fight outside our borders in egregiously gratuitous wars, then the best we can do is follow the old Powell doctrine. Identify an objective! Use overwhelming force to accomplish it! Leave!

Actually, the 'great' warrior hero Colin was my Battalion XO in '68.

The XO sits on his butt in the rear.

After that, he was sent to General Staff duty at our 'impregnable' Division base camp where he received notoriety as one of those covering up My Lai.

His first tour, in early '60's, had him working as an advisor for the ARVN. Quite possibly he never humped in the field in his two tours as a junior officer. Perception always trumps reality!

I mentioned the 'Tiger Force' above.

Were you aware that after more than 4 years of investigation, many soldiers and junior officers were going to be court-martialed for murder?

But that was quickly nipped in the bud by the young SecDef working for Gerald Ford.

Yeah, it's really too good to be true, none other than one of our present-day 'heroes', he of Abu Ghraib fame, Donald Rumsfeld.

PS: You seem to be somewhat near me in age. How about your own service? Ever see any of the filth and shit of war? Ever peed in your pants out of fear?

Billy Kelly



1. Very small photo from museum at My Lai/Son My



2. At memorial saying a prayer for 504 !!!!! innocent victims

VETS DELIBERATELY SHAFTED ON PTSD TREATMENT FUNDING BY THE BUSH REGIME

**“Troops Have Been Pressured To Accept
A Diagnosis Other Than PTSD, Such As
Personality Disorder. They Are Then
Told That It Is A Pre-Existing Condition
That Is Not Eligible For VA Treatment”**



David Honish

From: David Honish [Veteran]
To: GI Special
Sent: February 27, 2007

Dedicated to Katherine. I'm so happy she's in a much better school than the one that I was in when I was 19.

If there is ever a choice between physical and mental pain, I'll take physical every time. Paul Richey No. 1 Squadron RAF Fighter Command 1940

Dope was what you took instead of alcohol or sleeping pills, effectively medicating the nightmares that plagued everyone. ...With drugs like opium and marijuana, memories of traumas in the field got filed away for later, though none of us knew how much, or how difficult, later would be. John Laurence in his book *The Cat From Hue*

I went berserk. I started yelling and screaming. I was cursing God. I was cursing everybody. The doctor got ahold of me and just slapped the hell out of me. About 15 minutes later, the corpsman tripped out. Then the nurse. Finally the doctor tripped out...

My behavior was not unusual on the ship. We had chiefs, nurses, and corpsmen that were on the ship for one week and were gone. Some may last three or four weeks, and then be shipped out. They just could not handle the stress... from the constant mayhem of dealing with daily casualties. As one nurse said, "What can

you do with half a dozen holes spurting with blood and half their insides blown away?"

But you never got the casualties off your mind. The smell from burnt skin, blood, and dead tissue was in your nostrils, hair, and skin. You could never really get away from it. Former CPO Homer Yount, Hospital Ship USS Sanctuary FEB 69-70 as quoted in the book *Scars Of Vietnam* by Henry Spillar

I would agree with Chief Yount that the sense of smell seems to be the sense which is most closely linked to memory. Most troops will associate the smell of cigarette smoke, diesel exhaust, and burned gunpowder with their military service.

Medics have other smells impressed into their memory as well. Sometimes being a REMF is not all that it is cranked up to be. While a combat medic on a single tour may treat serious injuries by the dozen, their hospital counterparts will see hundreds, or thousands.

But then hospital staff were not on patrol with the troops who became casualties. Hospital staff did not hear the explosion, or smell the smoke. Hospital staff did not apply first aid under fire in some rice paddy, or on the floor of a helicopter slippery with blood.

That is why combat medics get medals and Combat Medical Badges. You seldom get medals for working in a nice clean air conditioned hospital, no matter how many patients you treat.

For months now I've read repeated news reports of cuts in funding for PTSD treatment, or the shifting of funds allocated for PTSD to other areas. Those seeking treatment have been subjected to stalling or outright refusal of treatment.

Troops have been pressured to accept a diagnosis other than PTSD, such as personality disorder. They are then told that it is a pre-existing condition that is not eligible for VA treatment.

DOD and the VA have downgraded the numbers of those that they will admit have PTSD. This has nothing to do with observed symptoms, or the defining parameters of PTSD.

It is about money!

PTSD is not black and white, but rather an infinite number of shades of grey. Most fall somewhere in between the extremes of 'going postal' and simple insomnia.

The truth is that the real numbers are several times greater than those who decline to be pressured into not requesting treatment. For every soldier who overcomes the obstacles to getting treatment, there are dozens more who have been discouraged by the process.

Like everything else, it comes down to economics.

SUPPORT THE TROOPS is just more empty Whitehouse propoganda. It is intended to imply that criticism of the worst president in US history is treason. The phrase has nothing to do with adequate support for the troops.

Soldiers are stuck with lowest bidder body armor, and they are expected to perform tank missions with humvees.

Bush budget priorities are tax cuts for the wealthy, driving up oil prices, and billions in no bid contracts for his campaign contributors.

Not much left in the cookie jar to pay for the troops' health care.

The number of Vietnam era veterans with PTSD has magically been reduced by the government from 1/3 to only 20%.

Maybe they no longer include the completed suicides of the last few decades that rival the number of those on "The Wall?"

The bean counters are chopping the numbers to justify shortchanging the Iraq and Afghan vets on PTSD treatment. This despite the Army's own Killology Research Group which concluded that *"...Combat drives 98% of those persistently exposed to it insane; and the other 2% were crazy when they got there."*

So what is the DOD standard to approve PTSD treatment? Does somebody have to eat a gun, or deliberately walk into a spinning tail rotor before DOD will admit that a problem exists?

I have personally seen the results of suicide by both eating a gun and walking into a tail rotor. I'd have to say that I favor a lower threshold of proof to get PTSD treatment approved.

You don't have to watch your buddy get shredded by an IED, or spend time strapped into a burning helicopter to get PTSD. There are probably cargo handlers at Dover AFB who have unloaded hundreds of aluminum shipping caskets from the cargo planes that only sneak in at night. Must not inconvenience the Whitehouse by allowing the press to photograph the thousands of K.I.A. returning from Iraq.

They certainly cannot allow the press to speak with the airmen who process the containers stamped *MEMBERS MISSING* that weigh less than 100 pounds. I'm guessing that there has been a boom in the sales of liquor and sedatives near Dover AFB?

Between the Basic Medic Course and my advanced training there was a four month gap. During that time I was assigned to the Medical Intensive Care Unit. It was a twelve bed unit, with every bed filled. As soon as any bed was vacated, there was somebody else to fill it.

The average mortality for the unit was a fraction over three patients per day. Most of our ICU patients were not expected to survive. Vast resources of personnel and equipment were consumed in the usually losing battle to save them. ICU staff

were both hardened and worn down at the same time by the approximately 100 patients that we lost each month.

When my advanced course started I had a bunch of perky instructors. Most of them were the glass is half full types. Students and staff saw no shortage of maimed and/or burned patients.

The instructors saw "interesting patients that provide you with excellent training opportunities."

At least that is what they told us.

A couple of the instructors did not manage to crawl out of the bottle, even during duty hours. Maybe that is why the BAMC Recovery Room stocked IV's pre-mixed with 5% ethanol to prevent the numerous military alcoholics from going into delirium tremens after surgery?

Missing limbs were so common that they did not qualify for the title of "interesting patients."

Burns of more than 30% of the soldier's body were also common, but these did qualify as "interesting."

The trans-lumbar amputee who survived being cut in half after the tank ran over him was VERY "interesting." He was not the first. The Army had training films to show us of their experience with others who had suffered the same fate.

We thought that Air Evac Duty might be a break from our hospital rotations? We rode in a few ambulances and a large bus across San Antonio to Kelly AFB.

The olive drab bus had big red crosses on the sides and roof. Inside it was really a surgical recovery room on wheels. There were litter racks instead of seats, stacked three deep and running down both sides of the center aisle. In 1974 we only pulled Air Evac Duty with a single bus about once a month.

Those not on their first Army hitch spoke of earlier days.

"Man, you should have been here from '68 to '70. We'd come out here to unload C-141's ONCE A WEEK instead of once a month! We'd use a dozen ambulances and three or four buses then, not just one."

We students were glad to have missed it in '68-'70.

There were already more "interesting" patients than we could comfortably deal with.

The military was much the same then as now in regards to creating obstacles to PTSD treatment.

Students complaining of migraine headaches, insomnia, or "nerves" were only given aspirin and a lecture. Anyone wanting something more effective prescribed would first be required to attend psychiatric group therapy every Wednesday. We

were told that having psych treatment on our records would definitely NOT be a good thing.

We would also be required to make up the hour of sick call spent at WED psych group by working an extra hospital shift on Saturday.

In effect, the Army's solution to those having difficulty with job stress was to make them work an extra shift.

Only one guy in my class dropped out because of a complete mental breakdown. He ended up getting a psychiatric discharge from the Army. I don't know of anybody in my class that went to WED psych group and gave up their SAT off. There was a lot of boozing and pot smoking though.

When denied real treatment, we self medicated with whatever was available.

We tried to blow off steam by subverting authority.

One night myself and some fellow classmates amused ourselves by wedging a shopping bag full of golf balls down the muzzle of an obsolete 105mm howitzer at the base of the post flag pole.

The post MP company had a detail fire a blank charge in it every dawn and sunset as part of the flag raising or lowering ceremony. The tube was elevated about 45 degrees and pointed across the grassy parade ground that ran through the center of Ft. Sam.

Rumor had it that a few windows were broken at the Officers Club the next sunrise by our improvised canister round of golf balls. It seemed an appropriate target.

I tried the traditional coping mechanism of the Army lifers. I tried 'a few' shots of bourbon as nightly self medication. It did not fix any problems, it just put them on hold.

I suppose that I'm lucky to have a physical constitution that makes me sick before I get drunk? It tends to take the fun out of serious drinking. My lack of success at drinking made it a short term issue, rather than a long term health problem as it is for so many in the military.

I still have a nursing license, but I never again worked medical / surgical units once I left the Army.

It took me 30 years to figure out why.

These days I find that getting constructively angry works better than liquor.

I write letters to the editor and my elected representatives, FREQUENTLY!

I rant in online forums like *GI Special*.

I practice street politix to make people think, whether they want to or not.

If you share my concern for the lack of proper care for our returning troops, PLEASE GET INVOLVED AND TAKE ACTION! You will find that the website <http://www.congress.org/congressorg/home> is a very easy way to write both letters to the editor and to all of your elected officials.

It is also an easy way to issue press releases to invite press coverage of your next street politix event.

The important thing is that we make enough fuss that it is no longer easy, or cheap for the government to use our military forces as pawns in unnecessary wars of economic convenience.

Maybe with enough letters, emails, and phone calls of complaint to Congress we might even see adequate funding of PTSD treatment for the current generation of veterans?

It would be the very least that the government could do for them.

David Honish

(A Vietnam era REMF who had it made serving in the rear with Army nurses?)

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:. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential. Same to unsubscribe.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR;

RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



An Iraqi boy goes through wreckage of his belongings in a home that was raided in Sadr City, Iraq, Feb. 27, 2007. Foreign occupation troops from the U.S. raided homes in Sadr City early Tuesday morning. The captured and took away 16 persons Iraqi citizens, police said. Iraqi citizens have no right to resist the foreign soldiers breaking into their homes, and can be wounded or killed if they do so. (AP Photo/Adil al-Khazali)

[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?]

"My sons and wife were very terrified," complained Muhannad Mihbas, 30, who said his brother and six cousins were taken in the sweeps. "Does the security plan mean arresting innocent people and scaring civilians at night?" BRIAN MURPHY, AP, Feb. 27, 2007

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

So Much For That “Sovereignty” Bullshit, Case # 4,237

March 3rd 2007 DPA

In Kirkuk around 750 Iraqis protested against the arrest of two police officers by the US military. The officers are suspected of cooperating with elements of the resistance

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



* OFFER VOID IF INJURED MENTALLY OR PHYSICALLY, REQUIRING QUALITY CARE, THERAPY, RECUPERATION AND/OR DISABILITY INCOME.

[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, and Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in.]

WILL THE REAL JOHN MCCAIN PLEASE SHUT UP?

He's Sorry He Pointed Out Troops Lives Being Wasted In Iraq War; Next, Imperial Democrats Attack Him For Pointing Out Troops Lives Being Wasted In Iraq War

[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in. He writes: No, he had it right the first time before the retraction. Pham Binh provided the headline above.

Mar 1 By LIZ SIDOTI, Associated Press Writer

Republican presidential contender John McCain, facing criticism from Democrats, on Thursday said he regretted using the word "wasted" to describe the more than 3,100 U.S. lives lost in the Iraq war.

On Wednesday night, McCain said on CBS' "Late Show With David Letterman": "Americans are very frustrated, and they have every right to be. We've wasted a lot of our most precious treasure, which is American lives."

Hours after the taped appearance aired, the Democratic National Committee called on McCain to take back the "wasted" lives remark.

"Senator McCain should apologize immediately for his callous comments," said Karen Finney, a DNC spokeswoman. "

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

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

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