

GI SPECIAL 5E32:



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

**“They At Least Owe
Many Of Us Here An
Apology Or Something,
This Is All So Blatantly
Wrong”**

From: [Soldier, Iraq]

To: GI Special

Sent: May 29, 2007

Subject: Re: GI Special 5E29: West Point

On May 12 I personally emailed that same letter that you read [at West Point] to Cheney Bush and my other members of our government. [The letter is reprinted just below.]

None have replied, I feel they at least owe many of us here an apology or something, this is all so blatantly wrong.

Thank you for you support,

[Soldier, Iraq]

“Another Extension?”
“There Is Now Word Leaking Out That We
Are Scheduled To Be Extended For Three
Additional Months This December”
“I Feel That This Should Be Looked Into So That
Another Announcement Can Be Compelled”

From: [Soldier, Iraq]

To: GI Special

Sent: May 11, 2007

Subject: ANOTHER Extension?

Thanks for posting the article about our leaders saying the surge will go into 2008.

What's going on here in Iraq can't be stopped and the best they can hope to do is suppress it, but suppression never ends.

With the 3-month extension now in effect, certain units who were supposed to go home later this year will now redeploy early 2008.

The reason for this email is because there is now word leaking out that we are scheduled to be extended for three ADDITIONAL months THIS December.

This is in keeping with the “long-term surge” and the timing is so that the units getting ready to go home will get the news at the end of their tour, and the arriving units will get the news once they're already in Iraq.

The goal is to get all the surge soldiers in place, then break the news.

I feel that this should be looked into so that another announcement can be compelled.

[Soldier, Iraq]

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Maryland Soldier Killed In Baghdad



U.S. Army, Cpl. Jonathan V. Hamm, 20, of Baltimore, Md., died May 17, 2007, in Baghdad when his mounted patrol came under enemy small arms fire and bombing. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

Virginia Soldier Killed In Baghdad



Cpl. Aaron D. Gautier, 19, of Hampton, Va., died May 17, 2007, in Baghdad when his mounted patrol came under enemy small arms fire and bombing. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

Vernon Soldier Remembered As 'Compassionate,' 'Competitive'



May 22, 2007 By Linda Stewart, Times Record News

VERNON (Special) - Everyone who knew Army Spc. Ryan Collins characterized him as a loving, giving young man. Collins was killed in action Friday in Iraq.

Jay Hanley, minister of the Wilbarger Street Church of Christ where Ryan and his family attended, said Ryan was supposed to have come home on leave earlier, but gave up his time so a fellow soldier could come home to see his new baby. Hanley said that was the kind of person he was. He said that Ryan loved the children in Iraq and had told several people they were the reason he and the others were over there.

Hanley said that it was his understanding that Ryan's commander had gotten approval for his company to be home by Christmas because they had suffered so many casualties.

"Ryan loved the Army, and planned to make a career of it," Hanley said. He remembered when Ryan joined up, he didn't tell his parents what he was doing until he had already enlisted. "When he decided to do something, he went full steam ahead," Hanley said.

Kenny Railsback, principal at Vernon High School, said the students and teachers met at the school's flagpole Monday morning before classes to pray for Ryan's family. "That is something Ryan would have been involved in if this had happened to someone else," Railsback said.

Railsback said office staff characterized Ryan as a very well-liked young man. He said Ryan was popular and that a lot of the underclassmen looked up to him. He was also active in his church and a very compassionate person, according to Railsback.

Ryan was competitive and put in everything he had when he got on a football field or on a basketball court, the principal said. He said he was "a good kid," a hard worker, never in trouble and always had a smile on his face.

Head football coach Keith Hall recalled that Ryan was a great kid to be around. He said he would do anything asked of him, and that it didn't matter to him what he, as the coach, wanted or needed him to do - he did his best. Hall remembered the last football game of the 2003 season. He said Vernon had to beat Childress to make the playoffs. Ryan made a catch that broke the game open.

"He had a lot of heart, (and) he would do whatever he could for anybody, just like he did giving up his time for his fellow soldier," Hall said.

Jameson Hanley said he and Ryan were really good buddies. He said Ryan always put others before himself and always made others feel good about being around him.

He recalled the time when Ryan was home on leave while stationed in Alaska. "It was my birthday, and he took time to spend with me and take me out to Wal-Mart and get me a gift card," Hanley said.

Ryan was the son of Danita and David Logsdon and former Vernon resident Lynn Collins. Lynn Collins is a former chief of police in Iowa Park.

Ryan graduated from Vernon High School in 2005 and joined the military in the fall following his graduation. He was based at Fort Richardson, Alaska, before his deployment to Iraq about seven months ago.

Railsback said, "We turn out some great kids here at Vernon High School, and he was certainly one of them. He is going to be missed."

Oscar Saucedo Jr. Dies In Tour Of Duty

May 23, 2007 By Brian Argabright, Del Rio News-Herald

U.S. Army Pvt. Oscar Saucedo Jr., the 21-year-old son of Sandra and Ricky Hernandez and the late Oscar Saucedo, was killed in a firefight in Baghdad Tuesday afternoon.

Saucedo, known to his friends and family as "J.R.", had been in Baghdad since Feb. 23.

A 2004 Del Rio High School graduate, Saucedo had been in the Army about 18 months.

Saucedo's mother, Sandra, was at work when she was notified by a family member that Army representatives were at her home and needed to speak to her.

When she arrived, her worst fears were realized.

“They told me that at 1 p.m. Tuesday his company engaged fire with enemy units inside of Baghdad and that Oscar had been killed by small arms fire,” Hernandez said Tuesday afternoon.

Surrounded by family, Hernandez remembered her son as a lover of life whose infectious smile could put anyone at ease.

“He was full of love, full of joy, full of adventure. He was always a joker. He always had to have the last word,” Hernandez said.

“He would always come to me with anything that troubled him and he would always call to talk. The last time I spoke to him was on Mother’s Day. He called me at four in the morning. He thought it was funny to ask me, ‘What are you doing?’ He was always like that.”

Hernandez said that her son loved his time in the military and was proud to be a soldier. She said that he had made up his mind to reenlist when his current tour was completed.

“He loved that way of life. Of course I was afraid for him, but I supported him and the choices he made,” Hernandez said.

“When I went to see him off at his deployment Feb. 1, I had a strong fear. He just smiled and didn’t let me see him worry. He told me, ‘Mom, I have to do this. I’ll be back. I’ll be fine.’”

Hernandez said no timetable had been yet set for the return of Saucedá’s body. She said she would meet with Army representatives today to begin working out the details. She said they would likely fly his body from Iraq to Germany then to Washington D.C. and then home to Del Rio.

As mourners prepared for a candlelight vigil in Saucedá’s memory, Hernandez said the outpouring of support had been amazing. “Oscar was very dedicated to his family and friends and to his country. If you needed him, he would be there. If he told you he would do something, he would do it,” Hernandez said.

“I am overwhelmed to see all of these people here today. It showed me how much he meant to everyone and how many people loved him.”

After an emotional day, the Saucedá and Hernandez families, joined by friends, family and mourners, gathered outside of the home for a candlelight vigil and recitation of the Rosary.

As a picture of Saucedá, dressed in his Rams football uniform, reflected the soft glow of the dozens of candles lit in his honor, Hernandez thanked everyone for their support.

“I ask everyone to keep praying for our troops. Don’t ever stop praying. And pray for the Iraqi people. That’s what I was doing,” Hernandez said. “We support these boys. If your son or daughter joins the military, support them. It’s their job and they do it with a great sense of pride.

“And to everyone who knew J.R., please come and say your goodbyes.”

**THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR
HEALTH;
COME HOME, NOW**



U.S. soldiers during combat with insurgents in Al-Jamia in Baghdad May 27, 2007.
REUTERS/Eduardo Munoz

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**British Soldier From 1st Battalion The
Royal Anglian Regiment Killed In
Helmand**

29 May 07 Ministry of Defence

It is with deep regret that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that a soldier serving in the 1st Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment was killed on the morning of Monday 28 May 2007, in Helmand Province, southern Afghanistan.

TROOP NEWS

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



The remains of Army Cpl. Matthew T. Bolar at Arlington National Cemetery May 16, 2007. Bolar of Montgomery, Ala. was killed May 3, 2007 in Baghdad from a improvised explosive device explosion. (AP Photo/Kevin Wolf)

***Washington DC Meeting:* Iraq Veterans Against The War Speak On Their Experiences In Iraq And The Anti-War Movement**

**7 PM, Wednesday, May 30th
Foundry UM Church, 16th and P Streets, NW**

The Washington Peace Center hosts a special evening with three Iraq Vets sharing their own stories and discussing their involvement in the growing anti-war movement.

Participants include Adam Kokesh, IVAW; Geoff Millard, IVAW; Nate Wildermuth, Conscientious Objector; Tassi McKee, Appeal for Redress.

MC: Rev. Yearwood of the HipHop Caucus. Musical guest. Information on military recruiters and more available.

For more information: Pete, 202-234-2000

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

**“This Was The Army’s Paper Trail,
So The Top Brass Could Say,
‘Look! We’re Accomplishing
Something!’”**

**“I Filled Out The Form Five Times
From October 2005 To December
2006”**

**“In All Five Instances, I Received No
Help And No Follow-Up Calls”**

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

May 22, 2007, By Paul Rieckhoff, Military.com [Excerpts]

Over 50,000 Iraq veterans have already been diagnosed with PTSD. Tens of thousands are waiting for VA appointments. One-third of Vet Centers (walk-in counseling clinics for combat veterans and their families) lack adequate counseling staff. Even a VA official has admitted that waiting lists render mental health and substance abuse care “virtually inaccessible.”

I’d like to share the story of a friend of mine that experienced the failings of the current system first-hand.

Drew Brown served as a Sergeant First Class training Iraq’s soldiers in Fallujah, Taji, Baghdad and Baquba.

Now, Drew has bravely offered to share his story in the hopes of helping other Iraq veterans hold on long enough to get the care they need - and of spurring action in Washington to make sure no more Iraq veterans fall through the cracks:

“One night, while my wife slept only feet from me, I came to the conclusion that she would not be able to stop me if I chose to end my life.

“With the speed and accuracy of my years handling weapons, I could easily load a magazine, chamber a round, remove the safety and squeeze the trigger before she even got out of bed. I could taste the Hoppe’s No. 9, feel the front sight post as it pressed against the roof of my mouth.

“For months I tried to schedule an appointment with the VA. I was told I would need to schedule an appointment three weeks out, at a hospital that is an hours’ drive away. The appointment would only be scheduled between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Even assuming I would walk right in and be seen, it would take me an hour to get there, an hour there, then an hour back to work. Who can blow half a day on an hour-long appointment? I can’t.

“One issue I was particularly perturbed about was the Post Deployment Health Readiness Assessment (PDHRA).

“This was the Army’s paper trail, so the top brass could say, ‘Look! We’re accomplishing something!’ Actually, they were only tracking, not treating.

“I filled out the form five times from October 2005 to December 2006. In all five instances, I asked for help from a mental health professional.

“In all five instances, I received no help and no follow-up calls.

“In late February 2007, I was so incensed that the PDHRA was being bandied about by Generals as proof that they were tracking troops’ mental health problems, that I called the civilian company that is supposed to handle the forms.

“Eventually, a program manager told me my case was closed.

“My case was closed? I was incredulous.

“I made him read the part on the copies of the forms where I asked for contact from a mental health professional, which he did.

“Then I asked him to show me the record of said professional contacting me, which he could not do.

“He asked me to again fill out the form and said he would reopen my case. I did what was asked dutifully, and waited.

“Two weeks later, the PDHRA folks finally called me back. It only took 16 months.

"I held nothing back from them and told them what was weighing on my mind. I had nothing to lose. In a span of minutes, I was on the phone with a counselor, then social worker from the local VA hospital. They took no chances and scheduled appointments as quickly as possible, and at an outpatient clinic that was minutes from my house.

"That's the good news.

"The bad news is my first appointment was 2 weeks later. There are those that might not have lasted that long"

Thankfully, help came in time for Drew. But it took a full sixteen months for the military and veterans affairs' systems to respond to his repeated requests for counseling. During that time, Drew was suffering from depression, anger, and flashbacks.

Bush's Pick for Surgeon General Killed Veterans, Hates Gays, Loves Republicans

05/25/2007 A BUZZFLASH NEWS ANALYSIS

Dr. James Holsinger was tapped by President Bush Thursday to be the nation's next Surgeon General.

Sure enough, Holsinger's record is mired with incompetence, zealous conservatism, and, of course, sizable campaign contributions to Republicans.

As Chief Medical Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs under Bush's father, Dr. Holsinger was neglecting our vets long before Walter Reed made it fashionable.

A government investigation found "several cases in which incompetence and neglect led to the deaths of patients." Dr. Holsinger was forced to admit blame for the deaths of six patients in less than a year at a single Chicago hospital alone.

But the problems weren't limited to Chicago. In a Wyoming, a patient scheduled for surgery for a treatable cancer died after he was ignored for 45 days following the resignation of the staff urologist over a contract dispute.

Thirty VA hospitals were found to have "high numbers of patient complications and other indicators of substandard care."

A decade later, Dr. Holsinger was appointed Kentucky's Cabinet Secretary for Health and Family Services. By the end of his tenure, a Kentucky newspaper found that the

state was at the bottom of the nation for almost every health measure. Kentuckians die at a rate of 18 percent above the national average, the newspaper reported.

“We don't have to worry about foreign aggressors. We are killing ourselves off,” said Dr. Baretta Casey, a Hazard physician and University of Kentucky professor. “I see a lot of illnesses similar to a third-world country,” added Dr. Sandra Dionisio, a Kentucky internist trained in the Philippines.

“We've got some big mountains to climb,” Dr. Holsinger said of the findings, a few months before he jumped ship for a cushy teaching job at the University of Kentucky.

So why does Bush want Dr. Holsinger to be the nation's top doc?

For starters, he hates gay people. As president of the United Methodist Church's Judicial Council, Holsinger ruled in 2004 that “the practice of homosexuality is a chargeable offense for clergy” after a highly publicized internal trial for openly lesbian pastor Karen Dammann.

In 1991, Dr. Holsinger resigned from church panel studying homosexuality “because he felt certain its conclusions would follow liberal lines.”

Last year, a Methodist pastor blasted Dr. Holsinger for essentially trying to embezzle some \$20 million from the Methodist Church through a charity Holsinger chairs. Holsinger has lost in court twice on the matter but continues to appeal through the legal system.

The coup de grace of the Dr. Holsinger story is his more than \$16,000 in political donations since 1998 – all to Republicans, including George W. Bush.

Dr. Holsinger seems like a great choice for the VP to take hunting, but he hardly seems like the best candidate out of all the doctors in America to become our next Surgeon General.

Not Even Board Certified!

Buzzflash:

Submitted by samblackman on Sat, 05/26/2007 - 11:56am.

I was poking around and found out that Dr. Holsinger isn't board certified in any specialty.

While this probably matters less for someone who has chosen to make their life as a political hack than someone who actually takes care of patients, this is certainly something of note.

As a physician, I take it to mean that he is someone who didn't care enough about his clinical training to demonstrate competence according to national standards.

You can see his lack of board certification for yourself at the American Board of Medical Specialties site.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

GET THE MESSAGE?



An Iraqi throws a stone at a burning SUV after a roadside bomb exploded in central Basra, May 25, 2007. The roadside bomb targeted a SUV belong to a foreign security company, injuring 3 mercenaries. (AP Photo/Nabil al-Jurani)

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“Our Soldiers, They Need To
Realize That Bush Is Not God”**

**“Anybody That Tells Them They Must
Continue Fighting Is Sewage And
Shit”**

**“They Hold In Their Hands A Weapon
That Defines Who Lives And Who Dies.
They Need To Realize That The Tables
Can Be Turned And That They Are God”**

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: May 29, 2007
Subject: Episode #4

[This is from the writer of the *Georgie W. Saporano* series that you've been reading in *GI Special*, Vietnam Veteran & United Auto Workers GM Retiree Dennis Serdel.]

Thanks for putting in Episode #4 of Georgie W. Saporano's. Nice layout too. Went well with Bird Story.

A little comic relief never hurt anybody.

The last GM factory I worked in before I retired had a scared workforce; with help, we did get them to rise up and rebel against the Bosses for awhile though.

After raising hell, the Workers stood taller and walked prouder.

When the smoke cleared, I put out an anonymous flyer ridiculing the Plant Manager.

I just put a few of them out on the plant floor but the Workers dug it and had copies made and threw them into the cars as they went down the assembly line. The flier was also funny like Episode #4 and they enjoyed it.

The Workers needed to realize that the Plant Manager is Not God and can be talked and thought about as sewage or shit.

Even though they were sent home early for almost a month, when it ended, the Workers and the Bosses realized that the Workers had Power.

Episode #4 was for our Soldiers, they need to realize that Bush is Not God and can be talked about and thought about as sewage or shit.

The Generals are also sewage and shit.

Their Officers are also sewage and shit.

Anybody that tells them they must continue fighting is sewage and shit.

They hold in their hands a weapon that defines who lives and who dies.

They need to realize that the tables can be turned and that they are God.

Solidarity, Dennis

PS: I'll continue writing the Soprano's until I believe that people like IVAWs, College folks, High School folks have enough material to put on underground plays.

Working for Peace can be fun too!!

The Fraud About “Genocide” In Darfur Hides More U.S. Greed For Oil And Empire

#1:

**“Those Who Argue For Liberal
Intervention, To Impose “Rights,
Freedom And Democracy”, Ultimately
Speak Only Of Their Own Interests”**

May 16, 2007 Roger Howard, The Guardian [Excerpt]

Humanitarian concern among policymakers in Washington is ultimately self-interested.

The United States is willing to impose new sanctions on the Sudan government if the latter refuses to accept a United Nations peacekeeping force, but it is no coincidence that Sudan, unlike Congo, has oil - lots of it - and strong links with China, a country the US regards as a strategic rival in the struggle for Africa's natural resources; only last week Amnesty International reported that Beijing has illicitly supplied Khartoum with large quantities of arms.

Those who argue for liberal intervention, to impose “rights, freedom and democracy”, ultimately speak only of their own interests.

#2:

How The Deaths In Darfur Were Made In The U.S.A. “It’s The Oil, Stupid” “The ‘Darfur Genocide’ Campaign Began In 2003, The Same Time The Chad-Cameroon Oil Pipeline Began To Flow. The U.S. Now Had A Base In Chad To Go After Darfur Oil”

May 25, 2007 By F William Engdahl, Asia Times [Excerpts]

[T]he present concern of the current Washington administration over Darfur in southern Sudan is not, if we look closely, genuine concern over genocide against the peoples in that poorest of poor part of a forsaken section of Africa.

No. “It’s the oil, stupid.”

A look at the southern Sudan oil concessions shows that China’s CNPC holds rights to bloc 6, which straddles Darfur, near the border with Chad and the Central African Republic.

In April 2005, Sudan’s government announced that it had found oil in Southern Darfur, which is estimated to be able to pump 500,000 barrels per day when developed.

The world press forgot to report that vital fact in discussing the Darfur conflict.

Genocide was the preferred theme, and Washington was the orchestra conductor.

Curiously, while all observers acknowledge that Darfur has seen a large human displacement and human misery, with tens of thousands or even as many as 300,000 deaths in the last several years, only Washington and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) close to it use the charged term “genocide” to describe Darfur.

If they are able to get popular acceptance of the charge of genocide, it opens the possibility of drastic “regime change” intervention by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) - read Washington - in Sudan’s sovereign affairs.

The genocide theme is being used, with full-scale Hollywood backing from the likes of stars like George Clooney, to orchestrate the case for de facto NATO occupation of the region.

So far the Sudan government has vehemently refused, not surprisingly.

The US government repeatedly uses “genocide” to refer to Darfur. It is the only government to do so.

US Assistant Secretary of State Ellen Sauerbrey, head of the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, said during a USINFO online interview last November 17, “The ongoing genocide in Darfur, Sudan - a gross violation of human rights - is among the top international issues of concern to the United States.”

The United States, acting through surrogate allies in Chad and neighboring states has trained and armed the Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Army, headed until his death in July 2005 by John Garang, trained at the US Special Forces school at Fort Benning, Georgia.

By pouring arms into first southeastern Sudan and since discovery of oil in Darfur into that region as well, Washington fueled the conflict that led to tens of thousands dying and several million driven to flee their homes.

Eritrea hosts and supports the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA), the umbrella NDA opposition group, and the Eastern Front and Darfur rebels.

There are two rebel groups fighting in Sudan’s Darfur region against the Khartoum central government of President Omar al-Bashir - the Justice for Equality Movement and the larger Sudan Liberation Army (SLA).

In February 2003, the SLA launched attacks on Sudan government positions in the Darfur region. SLA secretary-general Minni Arkou Minnawi called for armed struggle, accusing the government of ignoring Darfur.

“The objective of the SLA is to create a united democratic Sudan.” In other words, regime change in Sudan.

The US Senate adopted a resolution in February 2006 that requested NATO troops in Darfur, as well as a stronger UN peacekeeping force with a robust mandate. A month later, President George W Bush also called for additional NATO forces in Darfur.

Genocide?

Or oil?

Much of the arms that have fueled the killing in Darfur and the south have been brought in via murky, protected private “merchants of death” such as the notorious former KGB operative, now with offices in the US, Victor Bout, who has been cited repeatedly in recent years for selling weapons across Africa.

US government officials strangely leave his operations in Texas and Florida untouched despite the fact he is on the Interpol wanted list for money laundering.

The region of southern Sudan from the Upper Nile to the Chad border is rich in oil. Washington knew that long before the Sudanese government

In 1979, Jafaar Nimeiry, Sudan’s head of state, broke with the Soviets and invited Chevron to develop the country’s oil industry. That was perhaps a fatal mistake. UN Ambassador George H W Bush had personally told Nimeiry of satellite photos indicating oil in Sudan. Nimeiry took the bait. Wars over oil have been the consequence ever since.

Chevron found big oil reserves in southern Sudan. It spent \$1.2 billion finding and testing them. That oil triggered what is called Sudan’s second civil war in 1983.

Chevron was the target of repeated attacks and killings and it suspended the project in 1984. In 1992, it sold its Sudanese oil concessions. Then China began to develop the abandoned Chevron fields in 1999 with notable results.

But Chevron is not far from Darfur today.

Condoleezza Rice’s Chevron is in neighboring Chad, together with the other US oil giant, ExxonMobil.

They’ve just built a \$3.7 billion oil pipeline carrying 160,000 barrels per day from Doba in central Chad, near Darfur, via Cameroon to Kribi on the Atlantic Ocean, destined for US refineries.

To do it, they worked with Chad “President for life” Idriss Deby, a corrupt despot who has been accused of feeding US-supplied arms to the Darfur rebels. Deby joined Washington’s Pan Sahel Initiative run by the Pentagon’s US-European Command, to train his troops to fight “Islamic terrorism”.

Supplied with US military aid, training and weapons, in 2004, Deby launched the initial strike that set off the conflict in Darfur.

He used members of his elite Presidential Guard, who come from the province, providing them with all-terrain vehicles, arms and anti-aircraft guns to aid Darfur rebels fighting the Khartoum government in southwestern Sudan.

The US military support to Deby in fact had been the trigger for the Darfur bloodbath.

Khartoum reacted and the ensuing debacle was unleashed in full, tragic force.

Washington-backed NGOs and the US government claim unproven genocide as a pretext to ultimately bring UN/NATO troops into the oil fields of Darfur and southern Sudan. Oil, not human misery, is behind Washington's new interest in Darfur.

The "Darfur genocide" campaign began in 2003, the same time the Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline began to flow. The US now had a base in Chad to go after Darfur oil and, potentially, co-opt China's new oil sources.

US military objectives in Darfur - and the Horn of Africa more widely - are being served at present by US and NATO backing for African Union (AU) troops in Darfur.

There NATO provides ground and air support for AU troops who are categorized as "neutral" and "peacekeepers".

Sudan is at war on three fronts, against Uganda, Chad, and Ethiopia, each with a significant US military presence and ongoing US military programs.

The war in Sudan involves both US covert operations and US trained "rebel" factions coming in from south Sudan, Chad, Ethiopia and Uganda.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to 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.

Mutiny On The Battleship Potemkin: "The Execution Squad Turned Its Weapons On The Officers. The Revolt Was On" "The Potemkin Became A Symbol Of Defiance And Hope For Revolutionaries In Other Countries As Well"

It happened on a muggy June day in 1905, when 700 Russian sailors aboard the battleship Potemkin mutinied, throwing some of their officers into the Black Sea,

and set up a free-speech soviet (council) to run the ship under the red flag of revolution.

May 18, 2007 By Clancy Sigal, Special to The Times. Clancy Sigal is a screenwriter and author, most recently, of the memoir "A Woman of Uncertain Character."

BOOK REVIEW: *Red Mutiny; Eleven Fateful Days on the Battleship Potemkin*. Neal Bascomb; Houghton Mifflin

ANYONE who's seen Warren Beatty's 1981 film "Reds," which dramatized the birth pangs of the Russian Revolution, may be equally moved by "Red Mutiny," Neal Bascomb's elegiac and emotionally involving story of that revolution's dress rehearsal.

It happened on a muggy June day in 1905, when 700 Russian sailors aboard the battleship Potemkin mutinied, throwing some of their officers into the Black Sea, and set up a free-speech soviet (council) to run the ship under the red flag of revolution.

At the time, Russia was aflame with strikes and riots after her Pacific fleet was annihilated in an "underfunded, ill-equipped and poorly led" war against Japan. After 250 years of despotic Romanov rule, the monarchy of Czar Nicholas II was rotting from within and seemed ready to collapse. Earlier in the year, the czar ordered his Cossacks to fire on petitioners carrying religious icons and singing hymns in St. Petersburg, which ended all hope of peaceful reform.

Into this epic drama stepped the hero of Bascomb's tale, Afanasy Nikolayevich Matyushenko, a hot-tempered torpedo machinist from the Ukraine steppes. Drafted onto the nation's proudest battleship, where sailors suffered floggings and brutal contempt by incompetent officers, the peasant boy who'd taught himself to read was like a Russian Joe Hill, preaching resistance to specific grievances and czarist oppression.

The 26-year-old Matyushenko was a free-spirit of impatient temperament who "could barely stand any of the other revolutionaries he met," including Lenin and his newly formed Bolsheviks, Bascomb writes. At the time, Lenin was an obscure speech-monger exiled in Switzerland, a coldly analytical intellectual chafing for his historical moment. "When Lenin spoke of his rivals his dark eyes hardened and then he drew back as if he was gathering venom before a strike."

This beautifully researched book rescues from anonymity the vibrant personalities of the other sailor rebels and their tormentors. He conveys a tragic inevitability to the collision between the seamen who can't take it anymore and the officers (often the dregs of nobility) who can't imagine doing anything other than beat, whip and starve their men.

On pain of being punched in the face, sailors had to address their officers as "your most high radiance."

The stirring images of Sergei Eisenstein's 1925 propaganda film, "Battleship Potemkin," come to mind even though Bascomb clearly intends to demystify both the Stalin-inspired movie and the official Soviet account, which ignored - when it didn't denigrate - the mutineers.

The myth of the Potemkin uprising is that the sailors rebelled because they were forced to eat maggoty meat. Actually, the fuse was rotten borscht, made from the infested meat. The ship's captain ordered the men to eat the stew or be executed. Die for lousy borscht? Suddenly order "disintegrated". Life-and-death decisions were made in seconds, based on instinct, anger, confusion, or desperation," Bascomb writes.

Thirty sailors were herded for execution and a tarpaulin - Eisenstein's famous tarpaulin - was brought on deck to soak up the blood. An enraged Matyushenko shouted, "Brothers! What are they doing to our comrades? Enough of (the captain) drinking our blood!" The execution squad turned its weapons on the officers. The revolt was on.

The subsequent high-seas drama is as gripping as a novel by C.S. Forester or Patrick O'Brian. The first sailor to be killed was Matyushenko's dearest comrade, Grigory N. Vakulenchuk.

Although the Potemkin sailors took over quickly, this was no spontaneous uprising. Their rage was real, but Matyushenko and Vakulenchuk had spent months preaching, cajoling, teaching the arts of resistance in the engine room and gun turrets. Unlike Lenin, who was of the minor gentry, these rank-and-file leaders were common folk with a knack for trusting, and being trusted by, their fellow sailors. Despite the intimidating presence of spies, shipboard debate was open and transparent. Everyone had a say, even (untrustworthy) junior officers.

Matyushenko and his sailors had counted on igniting mutinies throughout the Black Sea fleet that would spread revolution, already brewing in peasant revolts and factory strikes, across Russia, then one sixth of the world's land mass.

Indeed, the Potemkin became a symbol of defiance and hope for revolutionaries in other countries as well. Perhaps that's why international public opinion - signaled by the world's major newspapers - turned against the sailors.

The New York Times argued that the sailors should be hanged; Le Figaro editorialized that the mutineers "were willing to do anything, except to do their duty!"

The czar soon sent flotillas to capture or sink the Potemkin. Outnumbered 5 to 1 in the first confrontation, Matyushenko, who was at the helm, ordered his ship directly into an oncoming squadron.

"What do you want, madman?" the flotilla admiral demanded in a telegraph message. But Matyushenko kept coming - a high seas game of chicken.

Many of the czar's officers, fearing their sailors might rebel, lost their nerve and broke battle formation. The crew of one ship prevented its captain from blowing up the vessel to damage the Potemkin. Indeed, there was a fleet-wide mutiny, but it was short-lived and brutally crushed.

One of the book's several brilliant set pieces - again echoing the Eisenstein film - is the famous "Odessa Steps" sequence when residents of the Crimean city headed down a steep granite staircase toward the port to greet the sailors, only to be mowed down by the czar's Cossack cavalry. (Director Brian De Palma re-created the scene in "The

Untouchables” with a baby carriage careening wildly down the steps as the baby’s mother, blinded by bullets, screams in terror.)

The mutiny ultimately failed because of betrayals, fatigue, poor timing and lack of support from those on land.

The Potemkin, isolated and alone, wandered the Black Sea, stopping at this or that port, losing morale, sailor turning on sailor until all was lost.

The ship was scuttled. In the aftermath, hundreds if not thousands of mutineers, in the fleet and the army, were shot or hanged. (Ironically, some survivors later were murdered in Stalin’s purges.)

Matyushenko managed to escape and make his way to the United States, where he worked briefly at the Singer Sewing Machine company in New York. Indomitable and unrepentant, he returned to Russia to carry on the struggle, but was soon captured, tried and sentenced to death.

Wearing a heavy wool coat, Matyushenko was escorted into a prison courtyard before sunrise on a fall morning in 1907. A naval captain read aloud a list of his crimes, which took more than an hour.

The manacled revolutionary stepped to the gallows and offered these last words: “Hang me, you cowards. But know, the time will come when it will be you hanging from the lampposts in the street.”

Bascomb concludes that the Potemkin’s “rebellious spirit lived on in the navy.” Mutinies broke out up until the 1917 revolution - and afterward, when sailors at the Kronstadt naval base rose up against their new masters, the Bolsheviks.

Bascomb has written a remarkable book about an episode that, once historians get it right, will rank next to Spartacus’ uprising against Rome and George Washington rallying his troops at Valley Forge.

Troops Invited:

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe.

May 30, 1937: Massacre

Chicago Police Cowards Murder Striking Steel Workers: “All But Four Of The Fifty-Four Gunshot Wounds Were To The Side Or Back And One Victim Was Shot Four Times”



Carl Bunin Peace History May 28-June 3

1000 striking steel workers (and members of their families), on their way to picket at the Republic Steel plant in south Chicago where they were organizing a union, were stopped by the Chicago Police.

In what became known as the “Memorial Day Massacre,” police shot and killed 10 fleeing workers, wounded 30 more, and beat 55 so badly they required hospitalization.

The Memorial Day Massacre of 1937

uhigh.ilstu.edu [Excerpts]

The 1930s was a period of economic unrest for the United States. Following the prosperous “roaring twenties”, the Great Depression hit the general population hard. Many employees were fired and those who were not lost much of their former salary.

Then, in 1933, as part of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, the National Recovery Act was passed. One of its most important concessions to laborers was the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing.

The number of strikes nationwide grew to the highest amount in American history.

When the National Recovery Act was declared unconstitutional in 1935, Congress was still sympathetic to the young labor unions that had been formed under it. They soon passed the Wagner Act, or National Labor Relations Act, to reassert the rights of the laborers.

By the 1930s the steel industry had survived much adversity, yet there were still changes to come.

The Committee for Industrial Organization, (CIO), was founded in November 1935.

Encouraged by the CIO, the steel industry became one of the first to begin organizing under the Wagner Act. Accordingly, on June 17, 1936 The Steel Workers Organizing Committee, (SWOC), was created.

The industry itself did not accept this movement.

Many companies began to stock up on tear-gas, firearms, and ammunition as well as, refining their espionage and police systems.

After a long struggle for further organization and acceptance within the steel industry, the United States Steel Corporation, (the leading producer of steel, dubbed "Big Steel"), signed an agreement recognizing SWOC. This contract allowed for five dollar a day wages in addition to a 40-hour week with time-and-a-half for overtime. By May 1937, there were 110 firms under contract.

Still, some companies refused to sign. In response, SWOC called its first strike involving 25,000 workmen against Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation. Thirty-six hours later, the corporation agreed to a Labor Board election. The union won 17,028 to 7,207.

Despite this enormous victory, a combination of "Little Steel" companies including Bethlehem Steel, Republic Steel, Inland Steel, and Youngstown Sheet & Tube, refused to sign.

Their leaders had strong anti-union attitudes and felt that the U.S. steel decision to "surrender" to SWOC was a betrayal. Tom Girdler, chairman of the Board of Republic Steel, was one particularly influential anti-union spokesperson.

The company anticipated a strike so they placed a stockpile of industrial munitions at various plants of Republic Steel.

Then, on May 26, 1937, SWOC decided to strike three of the "Little Steel" companies: Republic, Youngstown Sheet & Tube, and Inland. Most of the plants ceased production during the strike; they were willing to wait it out because the steelworkers' union strike benefits were meager.

Picket lines were set up at these plants to prevent any attempt to reopen them.

However, Republic Steel remained defiant and refused to close all of its plants. They even housed non-union workers in the plant, so they could continue working without the hassle of picket lines outside.

One of these plants was the Republic Steel South Chicago Plant.

One half of this plant's 2,200 employees had joined the strike. When the walkout began on May 26, the police interfered in an attempt to prevent other non-committed workers from joining the cause.

The SWOC organizers attempted to form a picket line in front of the gate.

Police Captain James Mooney, despite the fact that the picketers were peaceful, broke up the line and arrested 23 people who refused to move. The rest were forced to 117th Street, 2 blocks from the plant.

Because of this action, the police no longer played an impartial role in the strike. Instead, they were clearly supportive of Republic.

Strike headquarters were established in Sam's Place, at 113th and Green Bay Avenue.

Chicago mayor, Edward J. Kelley, announced in the Chicago Tribune that peaceful picketing would be permitted.

In response to this article, the strikers attempted to establish pickets, but were turned away.

On the next day, at around 5:00 PM, another attempt was made to picket. The marchers marched from Sam's Place to 117th Street. There were a few policemen present, but the marchers continued west towards Burley Avenue.

Once the marchers reached Buffalo the police line had strengthened a great deal. The workers continued and fighting broke out. The police used clubs to fight the workers back. A few had drawn revolvers without orders and discharged them in the air. No one was killed, but there were several bloody heads.

May 28 was a quiet day, but the marchers were upset with police actions.

Nick Fontecchio, a Union leader, called for a mass meeting at Sam's Place the next day, Memorial Day Sunday. Captain Mooney received an anonymous report that on Sunday an attempt would be made to invade the plant to drive out the remaining non-union workers. He did not check the rumor, but proceeded to station 264 policemen on duty at the Republic Steel Mill.

By 3:00 p.m. on May 30, 1937, a crowd of around 1500 strikers had gathered. It was a sunny, warm day with the temperature at around 88 degrees.

Many of the union members and supporters had brought along their wives and children to join in this almost festive gathering organized by SWOC leader Joe

Hunt. Several speakers addressed various labor issues most importantly, the right to organize and picket.

Some resolutions were approved to send to government officials concerning police conduct at the Republic plant. It was then moved to march to the plant and establish a mass picket.

When this was approved about 1000 people went into formation behind two American flags. Instead of marching south down Green Bay Avenue, they turned onto a dirt road across a open prairie chanting, "CIO, CIO!"

When the police, saw this they moved their position from 117th street between Green Bay and Burley Avenue to across the dirt road, just north of 117th on Burley.

The 200 police were in double file and watched the approaching marchers with their clubs drawn. The Republic mill had armed some of the officers with non-regulation clubs and tear gas.

The marchers met the police line and demanded that their rights to picket be recognized by the police letting them through.

They were "commanded in the name of the law to disperse", but the picketers persisted. This continued for several minutes. While marchers armed themselves with rocks and branches, foul language was passed between the two parties. Tension was mounting.

Recording all of this was cameraman Orland Lippert. Unfortunately, he was changing lenses at the start of the actual violence. This has caused some dispute as to which side initiated the fighting. The following account, determined at the hearings under Senator Robert LaFollette, is generally accepted.

Police were trying to prevent marchers from outflanking their line.

As some strikers began to retreat a stick flew from the back of the line towards the police. Instantaneously, tear gas bombs were thrown at the marchers.

The next few moments were total chaos.

More objects were thrown at the police by the marchers.

Acting without orders, several policemen in the front drew their revolvers and fired point blank at the marcher's ranks, many of whom were beginning to retreat.

The actual shooting only continued for fifteen seconds, but the violence did not end there.

Using their clubs, the police beat anyone in their paths, including women and children.

During this time, arrests were also made. Patrol wagons were filled to twice the mandated capacity of 8 prisoners. The injured were not even taken directly to local hospitals.

As a result of this atrocity, four marchers were fatally shot and six were mortally wounded. Thirty others suffered gunshot wounds.

Thirty-eight were hospitalized due to injuries from the beatings and still thirty more required other medical treatment.

It is noteworthy that all but four of the fifty-four gunshot wounds were to the side or back and one victim was shot four times.

There were minor police casualties with thirty-five reported injuries, (no gunshot wounds), but only three needed overnight hospital care.

After the riot, sympathetic strikers fervently protested the police brutality. On the other hand, the press, especially the Chicago Tribune, portrayed the marchers as communist conspirators who had essentially attacked the police and attempted to throw out non-union workers.

The LaFollette Committee investigated this tragedy and came to four conclusions.

First, the police had no right to limit the number of peaceful pickets and that the march was not aimed at freeing remaining plant workers.

Second, the police should have halted the march with limited violence, if this action is even justifiable.

Third, the force used by the police was excessive and the marcher's only methods of provocation were abusive language and throwing of isolated missiles.

Fourth, the police could have avoided the bloodshed.

In addition to those killed in the Memorial Day Massacre, 6 other union members lost their lives in pickets of the "Little Steel" strike of 1937.

In fact, the "Little Steel" strike is surpassed by few in the areas of viciousness, press distortion, suppression of rights, and police brutality.

The strike was called off when the many hardships suffered began to demoralize union workers. However, in August of 1941, under legal pressure, the Little Steel companies agreed to cease the committing of unfair labor practices.

A year later, they signed their first contract recognizing the new union, United Steelworkers of America.

The massacre has been referred to as the "blackest day of modern labor history", but the sacrifices of these workers were not in vain. Little Steel had only delayed the inevitable march of unionism in America.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!

U.S. Occupation Commands' Stupid Terror Tactics Recruit Even More Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops



Iraqi citizens in the al-Obaidy neighborhood in eastern Baghdad try to clean up the destruction to their home following a raid by foreign occupation soldiers from the USA on May 16, 2007. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

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

[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate

they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]

[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?]

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

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

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