

GI SPECIAL 5F3:



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

**Shit-Birds In Command:
Marine Corps Threatens Two
Antiwar Veterans:
“The Military Is Concerned
Because Veterans From All
Across The Country Are Becoming
Part Of A National Movement To
Resist This War”**



Marine Corps veteran Liam Madden in Washington, June 1, 2007. (AP Photo/Lawrence Jackson)

“I’m sure that when the former commandant of the Marine Corps was wearing his uniform the other day at a policy meeting, they would never dare to downgrade his discharge for wearing a uniform at a political event. “But when Adam Kokesh does it during Operation First Casualty, it’s a different story.

June 1, 2007 BY ERIC RUDER, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

THE U.S. Marine Corps is trying a new approach to silencing criticism from veterans-- discharge them again, but this time less than honorably.

Former Marines Liam Madden and Adam Kokesh served in Iraq and were both honorably discharged. Upon their return, they both joined Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW).

Liam is also a cofounder of the Appeal for Redress, a statement signed by nearly 2,000 active-duty troops that garnered a lot of media coverage, and he’s currently helping to organize a bus tour to some 20 military bases throughout the eastern U.S. Adam is in Germany, reaching out to soldiers at the U.S. Army base at Ansbach.

Both Adam and Liam participated in the first installment of Operation First Casualty, in which IVAW members brought the war home through street theater by mounting “patrols” in the streets of Washington, D.C., on March 19.

Now the Marine Corps is trying to make an example of them. Both men are part of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), an inactive status that practically all troops pass through prior to final separation from the military.

Only once--in July 2004--have troops on IRR been recalled to active duty, and more than one-third of the 5,000 soldiers summoned by the Army failed to appear. None faced any kind of sanction--much less a change in their discharge status to other than honorable.

THE MARINES claim that Liam and Adam appeared in uniform at a political event, which is a violation of military rules that give troops the right to participate in political action so long as they do so off-base, out of uniform and while off duty.

Regardless of the truth of this allegation, the Marine Corps is taking extraordinary steps in trying to subject two Marines on IRR to such regulations.

“These are important issues, and they go to the question of military-civilian balance, and when you cease being bound by military rules,” said Tod Ensign, director of the New York City-based Citizen Soldier, in an interview. “Are Liam and Adam bound by those rules? I’d say hell no.”

For his part, Liam understands the stakes--and is making plans for responding.

“The military is trying to stifle the IVAW’s voice in the public discourse about the war,” Liam said.

“They perceive me as a figurehead or a vocal component of this, and it’s their tendency to nip that in the bud by going after the figurehead.

“The troops are allegedly fighting for freedom and democracy, yet their voices are suppressed when they get home--if their voices go against the grain.

“I’m sure that when the former commandant of the Marine Corps was wearing his uniform the other day at a policy meeting, they would never dare to downgrade his discharge for wearing a uniform at a political event.

“But when Adam Kokesh does it during Operation First Casualty, it’s a different story. I don’t think they’ll get away with this. It’s pretty groundless.”

Paul Abernathy, an IVAW member from Pittsburgh, agrees that the issue is larger than just Liam and Adam.

“The reality is that the military is concerned because veterans from all across the country are becoming part of a national movement to resist this war,” he said in an interview at an IVAW Memorial Day event at the Vietnam War Memorial in Chicago.

“They recognize this, they’re afraid of it, and so they’re trying to set an example to discourage future veterans from coming forward.

“In Iraq, the only concern that soldiers have is spending 365 days and coming home alive.

“No one is trying to institute ‘democracy’ or social transformation there, and no one is battling terrorists, because that’s not the reality.

“The reality is that soldiers are put in a difficult position--to enforce an unjust and futile policy.

“Everyone knows it, and no one wants to lose their life for it.

“It’s difficult to take the next step to come out and speak out publicly with the IVAW, but at every event, more veterans are standing with us.”

**FUNDS NEEDED FOR THE MADDEN-KOKESH
LEGAL DEFENSE TEAM:**

www.ivaw.org/



Garrett Reppenhagen, Iraq Veterans Against The War, center, with, from left to right, Marine Corps veteran and attorney Michael Liebowitz, Marine Corps veteran Adam Kokesh, attorney Kevin Zeiss and Marine Corps veteran Liam Madden in Washington, June 1, 2007. (AP Photo/Lawrence Jackson)

MORE:

**Contemptible, Cowardly Rats In
Marine Corps Command Hate
Our Democratic Rights, And Are
Determined To Destroy Them:
VFW Says “What The Marine Corps Is
Trying To Do Is Hush Up And Punish**

These Individuals Who Served Our Country”



Marine Corps veteran Adam Kokesch in Washington, June 1, 2007. (AP Photo/Lawrence Jackson)

[Thanks to Elaine Brower & Katherine GY & Chris Lombardi, The Military Project; & James Starowicz, Veterans For Peace & Frank Millsbaugh & Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

While all three reservists wore parts of their uniforms during demonstrations, at least one of the charges seems to involve speech only: Liam Madden, 22, of Boston, is accused of making disloyal statements in a speech where he accused the Bush administration of “war crimes”; said the conflict is a war “of aggression” and “empire building”; and said Bush “betrayed U.S. military personnel.”

Madden says he was not in uniform during that February speech in New York.

“For the military to try to punish civilians for speaking out against the war is completely outrageous, says Arthur Spitzer, legal director of American Civil Liberties Union for the National Capital Area, whom Madden has consulted but not yet retained.

May 30, 2007 AP & 31 May 2007 & 6.1.07 VFW & Institute for Public Accuracy & 02 June 2007 By David Montgomery, The Washington Post & Salon [Excerpts]

The national commander of the proud, patriotic, 2.4 million strong Veterans of Foreign Wars (motto: “Honor the dead by helping the living”) took one look at the mushrooming dispute between three antiwar Marine reservists and the U.S. Marine Corps, and knew where his sympathies lay: with the protesters.

“What the Marine Corps is trying to do is hush up and punish these individuals who served our country,” Gary Kurpius, the national commander, said in a telephone interview.

“This is about First Amendment rights and whether the military can discipline former servicemen who are in the inactive reserves,” said Kurpius.

“We all know that people give up some individual rights when they join the military,” said Kurpius, a Vietnam veteran from Anchorage, Alaska, “but these Marines went to war, did their duty, and were honorably discharged from the active roles.”

The Marines have accused the three reservists, all members of Iraq Veterans Against the War, of wearing their uniforms during political protests and making “disrespectful” or “disloyal” statements.

All three were honorably discharged from active duty, but now face “other than honorable” discharges from the inactive reserve.

Kokesh, a veteran of the Iraq war who is now an antiwar activist, faces a hearing in Kansas City, Mo., on Monday at which a panel will determine whether to downgrade his discharge status. “Other than honorable” discharges can have serious consequences, hampering chances for educational benefits and future employment.

If his discharge status is changed, Kokesh said he could lose some health benefits and be forced to repay about \$10,800 he received to obtain his undergraduate degree on the GI Bill.

The VFW issued a blistering statement on the controversy yesterday. Headline: “VFW to Corps: Don't Stifle Freedom of Speech.”

Kurpius, an Army vet who fought in Vietnam, doesn't even agree with the protesters. “We're pretty much on record supporting the troops, and if you're going to support the troops, you're going to have to support their mission,” he said.

“I may disagree with the message . . . but I and my organization will always defend their right to say it.”

The Marines respond that this is not a free-speech case. Adam Kokesh, 25, one of the protesters, “violated Marine Corps uniform regulations and he was disrespectful to a commissioned officer,” said Master Sgt. Ronald Spencer, a spokesman for the Marine Corps Mobilization Command in Kansas City, Mo. “That would be the issue. It has nothing to do with free speech.”

Kokesh, who fought in Fallujah and now is a graduate student at George Washington University, was wearing parts of his camouflage uniform in March during a demonstration where 13 veterans roamed Capitol Hill and downtown Washington carrying imaginary weapons to mark the fourth anniversary of the war in Iraq.

When Kokesh was contacted by the major assigned to investigate the case, he responded with an e-mail about his service and opposition to the war, and concluded with a profane suggestion about what the major could do.

This earned him the count for a “disrespectful statement.”

Kokesh also gained a little notoriety earlier this year when he kept a running count of each use of the phrase “I don't recall” by Attorney General Alberto Gonzales during Gonzales' testimony in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

While all three reservists wore parts of their uniforms during demonstrations, at least one of the charges seems to involve speech only: Liam Madden, 22, of Boston, is also accused of making disloyal statements during a speech in February in New York, when he says he wasn't wearing his uniform.

These statements, as summarized by the Marines in legal documents: “Sgt. Madden spends several minutes explaining the 'war crimes' of the Bush administration. Sgt. Madden claims that the war in Iraq is a war 'of aggression' and one of 'empire building.' Sgt. Madden explains that the President of the United States has 'betrayed U.S. military personnel' engaged in the Iraq conflict.”

Madden says he was not in uniform during that February speech in New York.

Spencer, after addressing the uniform issue, said he needed a few hours to research questions about the alleged disloyal statements, then did not return messages to answer those questions.

Maj. Stewart Upton, a Pentagon spokesman, referred those questions back to Spencer, saying, “I'm unable to speak to the legal reasoning behind the freedom of speech charges issued by the Marine Corps.”

Kokesh's lawyer, Michael Lebowitz, an Iraq Army vet with the Washington firm of Greenberg & Lieberman, says what's at stake is the very definition of a civilian.

These reservists are among the 158,000 on the Individual Ready Reserve, a pool of discharged former active-duty soldiers and Marines who aren't paid, don't drill, have no chain of command, yet may be recalled to duty during the few years they are on inactive reserve.

Lebowitz says they have the free-speech rights of civilians; the Marines disagree.

“Someone in the Marine Corps needs to exercise a little common sense and put an end to this matter before it turns into a circus,” said the VFW's Kurpius.

The circus may already have arrived, in a white touring bus.

Yesterday evening, Kokesh, 25, held a news conference at Union Station. Then he and his supporters boarded what they call the Yellow Rose of Texas Bus for Peace, festooned with flags and antiwar slogans for a road trip to Kansas City, where Kokesh faces a discharge hearing Monday.

In the crowd was Tina Richards, an antiwar activist who is the mother of Cloy Richards, 23, who served two tours in Iraq -- and who was also investigated for wearing his uniform during protests.

The young man is 80 percent disabled and can't afford to risk the \$1,300 a month he receives in veteran's benefits. He has been told he could lose them if he receives an other-than-honorable discharge, according to his mother.

"It's a form of intimidation and blackmail on the military's part to quiet the combat veterans who are speaking out against the war," said Tina Richards, who wears parts of her son's uniform to protest on his behalf.

Kurpius noted the example of retired generals -- including at least one Marine -- criticizing the war effort, even though retired top officers retain certain obligations to the military.

"I see them on CNN all the time, badmouthing the administration," Kurpius said. "Why is something not done about those individuals, when these poor troops are being hammered?"

Kokesh and Madden say they have a question about all this: Don't the Marines have anything better to do these days?

The case also raises a fundamental question of interest to the roughly 158,000 men and women in the Marines' and Army's Individual Ready Reserve: Are they civilians - free to speak their minds - or not?

"This case is about the Marine Corps seeking to stifle critics of the Iraq policy by officially labeling civilian acts of peaceful protest and political speech as misconduct and serious offenses," says Michael Lebowitz, Kokesh's attorney, who fought in Iraq as an Army paratrooper.

In legal documents sent to the reservists, the Marines cite well-known military regulations against wearing uniforms for political activity.

But, counters Lebowitz, unlike other types of reservists who have specific paid duties, Individual Ready Reservists are not paid, have no weekend drill requirements and no chain of command.

Therefore, he argues, they are civilians, unless summoned back to duty.

And if they are civilians, they can say pretty much what they want.

"For the military to try to punish civilians for speaking out against the war is completely outrageous, says Arthur Spitzer, legal director of American Civil Liberties Union for the National Capital Area, whom Madden has consulted but not yet retained.

It is true that civilians are subject to civilian laws against wearing military uniforms - but that's not for the Marines to judge, the lawyers say.

Kokesh and Madden both say they are proud to have served and have nothing against the institution of the Marines.

Neither plans to curb his antiwar work, despite the consequences. Kokesh just took part in another mock patrol protest - wearing his uniform - in New York City.

“I will not be intimidated,” Kokesh says.

“This is clearly a case of selective prosecution and intimidation of veterans who speak out against the war,” Kokesh said. “To suggest that while as a veteran you don't have freedom of speech is absurd.”

Kokesh said he was not representing the military at the protest in Washington and he made that clear by removing his name tag and other military insignia from his uniform.

His attorney, Mike Lebowitz, contends that Kokesh technically is a civilian unless recalled to active duty and had the right to be disrespectful in his response to the officer.

He called the proceedings against Kokesh highly unusual and noted the military usually seeks to change a veteran's discharge status only if a crime has been committed.

MORE:

Kokesh Refuses Plea Bargain: “But Let Me Tell You, You Messed With The Wrong Veteran” “You Should All Be Ashamed To Call Yourselves Marines”

31 May 2007 Written by Kevin Zeese, Democracyrising.us [Excerpts]

Former Marine Sergeant Adam Kokesh is embroiled in a conflict that could have major implications for the free speech rights of veterans especially recent Vets who are in the Individual Ready Reserve.

Kokesh is facing an administrative hearing for his anti-war activities but recognizing the high stakes the military has offered a plea bargain.

In response, Kokesh rejected the offer saying it risks the “free speech rights” of vets and “allow you to silence the voices of those whose experiences are most relevant in the most pressing debate before the nation.”

Below this release is his letter to Captain Sibert and Brigadier General Moore, who is the convening authority for the hearing.

Last week, the prosecuting attorney, Captain Sibert, offered Kokesh a general discharge.

To accept this would be to allow the Marines to say that members of the IRR do not have freedom of speech, so naturally, he declined.

The hearing will be held on June 4, at the Marine Corps Mobilization Command in Kansas City, MO.

Kokesh requested the hearing be held closer to Washington, DC, his current residence and a much more convenient location for the witnesses to the event in question, which happened in Washington, but was denied.

He has the right to call witnesses, but has to provide for their transportation.

Letter: Adam Kokesh To Captain Sibert And Brig. General Moore, The Convening Authority For The Hearing

Dear Captain Sibert and Brigadier General Moore,

As an esteemed US Attorney and a General, you both must have a sense of the potential significance of my separation hearing.

The prosecution of a member of the inactive reserve under these circumstances is unprecedented.

As citizens, we all have a right to freedom of speech.

In the Marines, we often joke that you signed away that freedom, and I understand the necessity for certain restrictions while on active duty.

But those who have risked their lives to defend the rights of all Americans have a special claim to those rights when they have completed their service.

Is the Marine Corps attempting to strip away those rights from the hundreds of thousands in the inactive reserves?

Maybe that's not the case.

Perhaps I am being singled out because I have become a vocal opponent of the war.

Maybe Brigadier General Darrell L. Moore just got upset when he saw a picture of a Marine in the paper disagreeing with him.

Maybe that's when he decided to order Colonel Steve Brown, Deputy Commander of the Mobilization Command to recommend that I be separated with an Other Than Honorable Discharge.

Maybe he thought that I would be intimidated by the long letter, the official letterhead, and the threats in official Marine Corps terminology.

Maybe he thought that I would just ignore it, and let the Marines "paper-fuck" me behind my back. Maybe I would shut up for a while.

But let me tell you, you messed with the wrong veteran.

While there may be some purpose of this prosecution in order to maintain the, "good order and discipline" of the inactive reserve, it is clear by its prejudice that it is intended to silence the voices of dissent.

Thousands of taxpayers' dollars are being spent on this case. I love the Marine Corps, and to see it abused for political ends makes me sick.

You should all be ashamed to call yourselves Marines.

I joined the Marines out of patriotism.

I said that when I enlisted in 1999, before it was cool, and even wrote it as my reason on the form I filled out at the Military Entrance Processing Station.

As Thomas Jefferson said, "Dissent is the highest form of patriotism."

Now that I am out of the Marines, I am continuing my patriotic duty by speaking out.

It is Marines like you, Brigadier General Moore, and Colonel Brown, who are preventing the American public from hearing the truth about Iraq by intimidating those who would disagree with you from speaking out.

If the policies that you support are so righteous, why are you afraid of the truth?

If I accept this "plea bargain," I would have to allow you to punish me for speaking my mind, allow you to say that it is somehow less than honorable for thousands of IRR Marines to exercise their freedom of speech, allow you to silence the voices of those whose experiences are most relevant in the most pressing debate before the nation, and allow you to say that Thomas Jefferson was wrong.

If this is your intent, I would ask to please, kindly, go f* yourself.**

I will not allow it.

Semper Fi,

**Adam Kokesh, PFC
Proud Fucking Civilian**

MORE:

“A Quick Message To Those Of You Who Are Wasting Government Time And Resources To Spy On Me: Go Fuck Yourselves”

Sergeant Kokesh Goes to Washington blogspot:

My attorney has just informed me that the Marines plan to use posts on my blog against me at my separation hearing.

So, a quick message to those of you who are wasting government time and resources to spy on me: go fuck yourselves.

I was very reluctant to start a blog after hearing the statistics that there are a bazillion new blogs and ten bazillion new blog posts every day. If everyone in the blogosphere is so busy posting this crap, who the hell is reading it?

At least someone is reading this blog.



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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

One U.S. Soldier Killed, One Wounded In Baghdad

June 1, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 200700601-04

BAGHDAD – While conducting combat security operations in the Iraqi capital, one Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldier was killed and one wounded when their patrol was attacked with small arms fire May 30.

One interpreter was also wounded in the attack.

McAllen Soldier Succumbs To Injuries



Juan Campos

June 1, 2007 Michael Barnett and Sara Perkins, The Monitor

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Juan Campos' last battle is over.

The 27-year-old from McAllen died Friday, his family said, more than two weeks after he was injured while on patrol in Iraq.

Campos was badly burned during a roadside bomb attack and transported back to Texas May 16 in critical condition alongside another Rio Grande Valley soldier, his friend Omar Avila of Brownsville.

For a while, Campos and Avila had adjoining hospital rooms.

Campos' widow, Jamie Drury-Campos, confirmed his death but said she did not feel ready to talk.

Last month, she described Campos as "this one guy who always does everything right." He was quiet and loving, she said — and an amazing dancer.

He also leaves behind his 8-year-old son, Andre.

Campos had recently spent several weeks on leave from his second tour in Iraq, spending the downtime in the Valley with his family.

The May 13 attack came just two weeks after he returned to the "Blue Spaders" of the 1st Infantry Division, 2nd Brigade, 1-26 Infantry Regiment.

In that attack, near Baghdad, a vehicle carrying Campos and Avila hit an improvised explosive device, or IED, which has been one of the deadliest weapons used against U.S. forces in Iraq.

In San Antonio, Campos was given a 50-50 chance of survival.

"This is our life," Drury-Campos told The Monitor last month, referring to the uncertainty surrounding her husband's condition. "It's like we're losing our life as he's slipping away."

Campos received burns to about 80 percent of his body, his wife said in an interview last month.

The McAllen High School graduate's kidneys were also damaged, and he had needed a respirator to breathe.

Avila, who broke both his legs and was also badly burned, is expected to survive, said his brother, Cesar Avila.

"Thank God, he's getting better," said Cesar, who's been by his brother's side in San Antonio. "He's been talking to us."

Avila, 21, had his third surgery Friday and is expected to need six or seven more before he leaves the hospital.

"He's going to be here for a while," said Cesar. "Another couple of months."

Campos is the 25th service member from the Valley to die in Afghanistan or Iraq post-9/11, according to a tally kept by The Monitor.

The Pentagon has confirmed 3,463 military deaths in Iraq.

Baghdad IED Kills One U.S. Soldier

June 1, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070601-14

BAGHDAD – While conducting combat operations in the southwest section of the Iraqi capital, a Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier was seriously wounded when an improvised explosive device detonated May 30.

The Soldier was taken to the Combat Support Hospital, but died of those wounds.

Soldier's Song Ends In Hymn

05/23/2007 By Cary Clack, Express-News

It was supposed to be his songs that put Marquis McCants' name in the newspaper. Melodies and rhythms, beats and lyrics were to be the reasons that eyes across the country would see his name in print and maybe, just maybe, praise his talents.

In his 23 years on this earth, Marquis, a 2001 graduate of O'Connor High School, got into the paper twice, but not for his songs. The first time was on a discordant note seven years ago when he was unjustly arrested.

The second time, accompanied by a funeral hymn, was this Tuesday with the news that the specialist in the Army's 82nd Airborne Division was killed on his first deployment to Iraq. Marquis and 33-year-old Sgt. 1st Class Scott Brown of Windsor, Colo., lost their lives Friday when their unit was attacked.

Marquis was almost 17 in the summer of 2000 when his father, Savage, called me, upset that Marquis had been arrested in Alamo Plaza for jaywalking. Marquis was humiliated as he sat handcuffed on a bench and watched nine white people jaywalk without being arrested.

As he recounted what happened by phone he was still stunned at his arrest.

When his father went downtown to pick him up, the senior McCants was surprised to see that there were about 20 youths, all black, who'd been arrested, a statistical oddity that led him to believe that black youths were being targeted.

I called Al Philippus, the police chief at the time, who denied that assertion. But a few days later, after an editorial board meeting, he asked to see the police reports I had, took down their case numbers and two days later called to say that mistakes had been made. He was apologetic and said he'd already put a stop to that.

What stayed with me most about that incident, along with Chief Philippus' initiative and candor, was Savage McCants' fierce passion to protect his son and clear his name.

Over the years I wondered what Marquis was doing with his life. I wondered until Monday afternoon when a colleague, Scott Huddleston, sent an e-mail telling me of Marquis' passing.

In August Wilson's play, "Joe Turner's Come and Gone," a character named Bynum says, "Everybody has to find his song."

Marquis McCants was in search of his song. He was in search of the songs through which he could express his thoughts and feelings, reveal a little of his soul and make a living for his family.

"He wanted to start his own production company," his father said. "He had a business sense about him and would help local groups."

McCants says that Marquis didn't consider the military his first option.

"I didn't want him to go into the Army," says McCants, a retired Air Force master sergeant who served for 25 years. "He had a plan for his life."

Marquis' plan for when he got out of the Army was to get a degree and pursue a music career. Those are the songs he was in search of and those are the songs that this God-awful war prevented him from capturing.

But know this: Marquis found his songs. Listen to how his father talks about him.

"He had the most loving spirit in the world," says McCants. "If you were down, he'd say something crazy to lighten the mood."

That's a song.

Marquis was a medic and, in a statement, one of his commanders said, "Specialist McCants distinguished himself by providing life-saving care on several occasions to members of the Red Falcons (his battalion's name) and the Iraqi people."

That's a song.

Marquis joined the Army to provide for his wife and three children, the oldest of whom is 3 years old.

"Everything he did was for those kids," said McCants. "He loved them to death."

That's a song.

Living your life with a compassion and love that graces the lives of your parents, your wife and children, your colleagues and strangers is a song that will resonate longer and deeper than any gold-selling record.

You sang well, Marquis. You sang well.

U.S. Helicopter Gunship Down In Khan Bani Saad After Groundfire

June 2 (KUNA)

An American-manned gunship helicopter made an emergency landing in the region of Khan Bani Saad some 65 kilometers northeast of the Iraqi capital on Saturday.

The multi-winged aircraft made the emergency landing after it was fired upon from the ground, said the media coordinator for the Multi-National Force, Jenah Hmoud, in remarks to KUNA.

Local Soldier Wounded In Iraq

June 2, 2007 WJAC-TV

The Centre Daily Times reports Bellefonte native, Army Lt. Nate Stone, was wounded earlier this week when his unit was ambushed in Baghdad.

Stone's dad said his son was shot in the leg.

Nate Stone is a 2001 graduate of Bellefonte High School. Stone is expected to eventually be taken to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. His father said Stone will probably get back with his unit as soon as possible.

Paul Soldier Critically Wounded In Iraq

June 1, 2007 By Laurie Welch, South Idaho Press

A Mini-Cassia soldier injured in Iraq May 24 remained in critical condition in a stateside hospital Friday.

U.S. Army Specialist Cody Sibbett, of Paul, was wounded when an improvised explosive device struck the Humvee he was riding in during a patrol mission south of Baghdad.

His parents, Lisa and Bill Sibbett, of Rupert, have been staying close by him as he recovers.

"We want to do as much as we can to keep his parents there to help him as he recovers," said Karen Gallegos, Cody Sibbett's aunt.

Gallegos said he was rescued after the incident by two of his fellow servicemen but he faces a long road to recovery due to the serious nature of his injuries

The Cody J. Sibbett Benefit Fund has been set up and donations can be taken at any Idaho Wells Fargo Bank. Other fundraisers are being coordinated.

Sibbett is a member of the 725th Support Battalion Airborne Unit based out of Anchorage, AK, and was serving his second tour of duty in Iraq. He was a 2002 graduate of Minico High School and joined the army right after graduation.

Gallegos said Cody is doing as well as can be expected, but the family welcomes all prayers.

Many people do not really realize the impact of war, she said, until someone close to them is wounded.

"We need to stop and thank all of these soldiers," Gallegos said. "They really are risking their lives."

The family asks that donations be made to the benefit fund in lieu of flowers or gifts.

***Great Moments In U.S. Military History:* Daring Air Strike Kills Iraqis Sleeping On Their Roof**

31 May 2007 By Sinan Salaheddin, AP

A procession of mourners, some of them women wailing and beating their chests, marched through Sadr City behind a small bus carrying the coffins of two people who police said were killed in a U.S. helicopter strike before dawn.

The U.S. military did not respond to a request for comment on the attack in the second day of a search for the Britons who were abducted from a Finance Ministry data processing building in eastern Baghdad on Tuesday.

Associated Press Television news video tape from Sadr City showed the coffins of the victims atop a small bus with men and women walking behind, crying. A young boy could be seen sitting next to the coffins on the bus.

A car near where the attack happened was punctured with big holes, hit by an airstrike.

A police officer in Sadr City, who refused to allow use of his name because he feared retribution, said the helicopter hit a house and car at 4:30 a.m., killing two elderly people sleeping on the roof of their home, a common practice in the extreme heat of Iraq through late spring and summer.

The officer said a 13-year-old boy was injured.

Also in Sadr City raids, which the U.S. has been conducting with a select unit of Iraqi army forces, Shiite cleric Abdul-Zahra al-Suwaidi claimed his home was raided and ransacked by American forces at 3 a.m. Thursday.

Al-Suwaidi, who runs the Sadr City political office of nationalist Muqtada al-Sadr, said he was sleeping elsewhere at the time of the raid, expecting that he would be targeted.

He said his home was badly damaged and a small amount of money was taken.



7-year-old Wasnaa Abdullah, in Imam Ali Hospital, Sadr City, Baghdad cries after foreign occupation soldiers from the USA killed her father and shot her during a raid, June 1, 2007.

The raid targeted Iraqis in the Kibr and Ghizlan areas on the outskirts of north eastern Sadr City early Friday. U.S. troops opened fire on her house killing Khalid Abdullah, her father, and wounding his 7 year old daughter Wasnaa, police said. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

Amazing News From Iraq: Little Girl Shot While Flying Through The Air



REUTERS/Kareem Raheem

A girl who was wounded during a raid by U.S. forces lies in a hospital in Baghdad's Sadr City June 1, 2007.

The girl was wounded accidentally when the U.S. soldiers fired their rifles into the air.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Long Beach Green Beret Dies In Afghanistan

2007-05-19 The Associated Press

LONG BEACH, Calif.

Joshua R. Whitaker of Long Beach had always talked about joining the military, according to his family.

When he finally did, he quickly decided he wanted to be part of its elite Special Forces unit known as the Green Berets.

"We were worried, but we knew there was no stopping him," said his uncle, Robb Whitaker. "He was very, very happy. He felt he finally found his calling."

In March, the 23-year-old engineer sergeant was deployed to Afghanistan - his first mission since completing his Special Forces training. On Tuesday, Whitaker died in action near Qalat, Afghanistan, from wounds he suffered in a firefight.

An only child, Whitaker was raised by his mother, Catherine Whitaker, and his uncle. He was a staff sergeant assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group from Fort Bragg, N.C.

"He was looking forward to making a difference in the world. He'll always be a hero to me," his uncle said.

On Friday, flags at the state Capitol were flown at half-staff in his honor.

Whitaker "willingly put his life on the line and made the ultimate sacrifice while bravely serving our country abroad," Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said in a statement.

The former Millikan High School linebacker joined the Army in 2003 after finishing his education at Opportunities for Learning, an alternative high school. He completed Special Forces training in August 2006.

Whitaker was the second Long Beach soldier killed this month. Spc. Astor Sunsin-Pineda, 20, was killed on May 2 by a roadside bomb in Baghdad, Iraq.

In addition to his uncle and mother, Whitaker is survived by his father, Frank Dougherty of El Monte, an aunt and two cousins.

U.S. SERVICEMEMBER DIES FROM UNKNOWN CAUSE IN KABUL

6/1/2007 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Casualty Reports 07-01-03C

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – A U.S. servicemember in Kabul died today of an undetermined cause. The cause of death is under investigation.

12,000 Rally To Support Afghan Resistance Movement; "We Will Complete Dadullah's Mission By Expelling Americans And Liberating Afghanistan"

June 2, 2007 By ABDUL SATTAR, Associated Press Writer

A man described as the Taliban's new top field commander has vowed to liberate Afghanistan from "American slavery," a pro-Taliban cleric said Saturday.

Dadullah Mansoor made the remarks in an audiotape played Friday at a rally at Killi Nalai, a village about 45 miles west of Quetta near the Afghan border, said Abdul Sattar Chishti, the cleric who organized the event.

He said more than 12,000 people listened to the speech by the brother of Mullah Dadullah, the top Taliban commander who was killed in a U.S. operation last month in southern Afghanistan.

He said Mansoor vowed to avenge his brother's death and those of others killed while fighting U.S., NATO and Afghan forces.

"The blood of my brother will never go waste. We will never forget his sacrifices, and the role of other martyrs. We will complete Dadullah's mission by expelling Americans and liberating Afghanistan," Chishti quoted Mansoor as saying.

He said Mansoor also asked youths to participate in holy war against infidels as emotional participants chanted slogans in favor of Taliban chief Mullah Omar and al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Takes Down Another Major Bridge

02 Jun 2007 By Mussab Al-Khairalla, Reuters & AP & June 3, 2007, By Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpts]

In northern Iraq, an insurgent attack heavily damaged the Sarhat Bridge, a vital link near the town of Tuz Khurmato on a major road connecting Baghdad with northern Iraq, including the Kurdish cities of Irbil and Sulaimaniya, as well as Tikrit and Kirkuk, police said.

The Sarha bridge is about 100 miles north of Baghdad, and one of the country's longest bridges.

Small cars were still able to cross the bridge with difficulty but the damage caused by the explosion was forcing trucks to take a more dangerous route through cities and Diyala province, police Brig. Gen. Sarhat Qadir said.

Militants planted explosives across the bridge. The blast severely damaged half the length of the bridge which lies around 150 km (100 miles) north of Baghdad.

Motorists were detouring across the dry riverbed below the bridge.

A U.S. military spokesman for northern Iraq, Maj. Tage Rainsford, said that Iraqi security forces secured the bridge after the blast and that no American or Iraqi casualties had been reported.

Iraqi soldiers now stand sentry at checkpoints on both ends of Baghdad's bridges, searching cars and preventing trucks and other large vehicles from crossing. But some merchants find more frustration than comfort in the extra protection.

"These checkpoints have a lot of disadvantages, like heavy traffic, bothering the people; the merchandise and the goods take a longer time to arrive," said Abdul Rahman Sabri, 42, the owner of a convenience store near the foot of the Jumhuriyah Bridge, which leads to the Green Zone. "These bridges are the veins of life for this part of Baghdad."

Ever since a large chunk of Baghdad's steel-beamed Sarafiya bridge splashed into the Tigris River in April, attackers have systematically targeted bridges in and around the capital.

Concern about the attacks has led the Iraqi government to prohibit oil tankers and other heavy trucks from crossing all but two of Baghdad's 13 bridges across the Tigris, worsening fuel shortages at a time when drivers must regularly wait hours for gas in lines hundreds of cars long.

"We are really tired of this kind of living," said Amer Abdul Razzaq, 46, the owner of an abandoned hotel and a looted carpet shop, who was visiting a friend near the foot of the Sinak bridge in Baghdad. "We cannot work, we cannot move from one side of the river to the other."

Assorted Resistance Action

01 Jun 2007 Reuters & Iraq today & 02 Jun 2007 Reuters & AP & By CHARLES J. HANLEY, AP

More than 2,000 people marched the streets in the predominantly Shiite area of Shula in northwestern Baghdad to demand improvements in basic services like electricity and water. The demonstrators denounced the United States, Israel and the U.S.-backed Iraqi government.

A car bomber killed two soldiers and two policemen when he attacked a joint Iraqi security checkpoint on Friday in the northern Iraqi town of Shirqat, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol in the northern city of Kirkuk wounded five policemen, police said.

Some security force personnel belonging to oil facilities in the area were ambushed by armed men on the main road to the south-west of Kirkuk, which is 290 kilometres north

of Baghdad, independent Voices of Iraq news agency reported. The forces were seized and taken to an unknown place, the source said.

North of Baghdad, a tribal sheik and village mayor, Rokan Mutlak al-Jibouri, whose tribe is said to be opposed to the insurgents in Iraq, was shot to death while leaving his home for work Saturday morning, Brig. Qadir said.

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

GET THE MESSAGE?



Iraqis shout against US occupation during a demonstration to protest against the US raids on Baghdad's al-Shula neighborhood. Demonstrators urged today the Iraqi Government and the Parliament to stop the US military raids on the neighborhood. (AFP/Ali Yussef)

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Army. Sgt. Maj. Bradley Dean Conner during burial ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery May 31, 2007. Conner, 41, from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho and attached to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group at Ft. Lewis, was killed in Al-Hillah, Iraq in an IED explosion. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

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

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



5.23.07: Foreign occupation soldiers from the USA stop Iraqi citizens going home from work and search their bodies in Fallujah. (AFP/Roslan Rahman)

[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?]

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

No Oil For Blood

May 25, 2007 By PHILIP SHISHKIN, The Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

In the second half of last year, one stretch of pipelines connecting Kirkuk with the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan -- the main outlet for Iraq's northern oil exports -- pumped oil for only 43 days.

The rest of the time the pipes sat idle, leaking crude through dozens of holes drilled along their 200-mile run through the Iraqi desert. One pipeline has been broken into 39 times so far this year, according to U.S. military officials.

The holes help explain why, four years after the U.S. invasion, Iraq hasn't been able to match its prewar crude production levels of 2.5 million barrels a day.

This year, Iraq is averaging 1.9 million barrels, mostly from southern oil fields that haven't suffered the unrelenting sabotage seen in the North.

Kirkuk currently produces 180,000 barrels of oil a day, but under normal conditions it could produce an additional 400,000 barrels a day. At current market prices, that would bring Iraq up to \$20 million of revenue a day. Projected over an entire year, this additional income would amount to about one-fifth of Iraq's current annual budget of \$32 billion.

The first priority of Col. Pritchard's artillery battalion was to secure that 50-mile leg of pipelines between Kirkuk and Bayji along the main desert road, code-named Route Cherry by the Americans.

Some of the pipeline tapping at the Cherry Hump unfolded with the complicity of Iraqi soldiers charged with protecting the pipeline, according to interviews with Iraqi and U.S. officers.

"The insurgents do it, sometimes my soldiers do it," says Col. Sadra al-Din, commander of the third battalion of the Iraqi army's Strategic Infrastructure Brigade.

Col. al-Din smoked nervously in the Iraqi brigade headquarters, a villa formerly owned by Ali Hassan al-Majid, a Hussein acolyte known as "Chemical Ali."

An ethnic Kurd from Kirkuk, Col. al-Din is viewed as an outsider by his Sunni Arab charges. Earlier this year, he survived a bomb explosion in his office, and another time he was shot in the back. Both incidents appear to be inside jobs, according to U.S. officers.

Being an oil worker here has become increasingly dangerous. Pipeline-repair crews have been hit by roadside bombs and shot at. Insurgents have been dropping leaflets in Kirkuk telling all government employees, including oil-company workers, to quit or face a bloodbath.

Last summer, Adil al-Qazaz, Northern Oil's director-general at the time, went to Baghdad to visit the Oil Ministry. After his meeting, he was snatched by gunmen on the street, never to be seen again.

"We were invited to go to Baghdad together, and I feel guilty about not going," says Mr. Abdullah, who was Mr. al-Qazaz's deputy at the time. He has avoided moving into his

missing colleague's office. "I keep getting calls from his family: 'Have you heard anything?'"

Since Col. Pritchard's artillery battalion arrived, the drilling along Route Cherry has dropped off significantly. But the smugglers have moved on to a more secluded area further north, the focus of a new security push that's just getting under way. The drillers feel so comfortable there that U.S. forces have found pipeline holes with spigots and valves. Sami Othman, the tough-talking Kurdish chief of the Oil Protection Force in Kirkuk, has just hired 600 new guards that he plans to deploy there.

All of this has allowed Mr. Abdullah to start exporting again: He sent crude to Turkey three times in May, but then several new holes in the pipeline stopped oil flow again.

Recently, he learned of a possible case of pipeline sabotage near Route Cherry, and passed the tip to Col. Pritchard's battalion. That night, several Humvees drove around the desert looking for smugglers, but found nothing.

Still, Mr. Abdullah preferred to wait longer to make sure the pipeline was intact. "We've borne it for so long, we can bear it another day," he says.

GUESS WHO'S WORRIED GUESS WHO ISN'T: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



A U.S. soldier at the site of a bomb attack near a mosque in Baghdad May 28, 2007.
REUTERS/Ali Jasim

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

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

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