

GI SPECIAL 5G27:

**HOW MANY MORE FOR BUSH'S WARS?
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



US soldier is wheeled from the emergency room after being shot in the leg in Baghdad, 22 March 2007. AFP/File/David Furst)

**Army Chief Of Staff Says
“He Could Not
Guarantee Soldiers Will
Not Be Deployed Longer
Than 15 Months At A
Time”**

Off The Record Officer Says “Left To Their Own Devices, They Will Never Reduce Forces” Other Generals, Pissing Their Pants At Prospect Of Rebellion In The Ranks, Scramble To Say It Ain’t So

July 30, 2007 By Gina Cavallaro and Michelle Tan, Army Times [Excerpts]

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff told soldiers on duty in Afghanistan that combat-zone rotations could be back down to 12 months by early next year.

According to the online edition of Stars and Stripes, Marine Gen. Peter Pace, in a July 19 meeting with soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, also denied rumors that current tour lengths might grow three months, to a total of 18 months.

“An 18-month tour has zero, zero, none, nada, squat, nothing, no ... validity, OK? I want to make sure you got that,” Pace said in the July 20 story.

He is the latest senior official to comment on tour lengths, a subject of much speculation in the ranks.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey said after a July 10 town hall meeting at Fort Bliss, Texas, that he could not guarantee soldiers will not be deployed longer than 15 months at a time.

Shortly after Casey’s words, Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Preston, sergeant major of the Army, assured troops July 16 in Baghdad that war-zone rotations will not exceed 15 months, according to a 3rd Infantry Division newsletter.

“What I’m seeing is it’s going from 20 (brigades in Iraq) in the spring back down to 15 or 16 in ‘08, and then 15 (in ‘09) plus what you’ve got in Afghanistan, so nobody’s getting a break,” [a senior Army official speaking to Army Times on condition of anonymity] said.

The request for forces for fiscal 2009 calls for 15 Army brigades in Iraq plus another that can deploy, if needed, within days, he said. The request for fiscal 2008 remains unclear because CentCom hasn’t told the Army what its plans are when the five “surge” brigades start redeploying next spring and summer.

“We’re all wondering what it’s going to look like when we start redeploying those surge brigades,” the official said.

At this time, there are no plans to replace the surge brigades, the official said.

“It’s impossible to replace them without taking extraordinary measures,” he said.

The Army gets requests for forces every two or three days, the official said.

“There is no appetite suppressant going on anywhere in CENTCOM,” he said.

“Left to their own devices, they will never reduce forces.”

MORE:

**“Has Anyone Noticed That
Virtually Every One Of The
Players, Political And Military,
Have Begun Chipping Away At
The September Milestone?”
“They Begin To Talk Of The Urgent Need
For American Troops To Remain In Iraq
At The Present Level Of 160,000 Or
Maybe Even More Until 2009”**

[Thanks to Katherine G, The Military Project & Don Bacon, The Smedley Butler Society, who sent this in.]

July 26, 2007 By Joseph L. Galloway, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

We’re hard upon the dog days of August. Members of the U.S. Congress and the Iraqi parliament will soon slither away to the shade of cooler rocks, and President Bush will no doubt head off to Crawford to take his frustrations out on some brush with a chainsaw.

Meanwhile, in Iraq, the 60,000 American combat troops who daily patrol the most dangerous streets and roads in the world will carry on fighting, dying and bleeding in the broiling sun where temperatures nudge the 130-degree mark and 40 pounds of body armor and Kevlar helmet plus weapon and ammunition weigh more with every step an Infantryman takes.

The politicians in Washington and Baghdad will take their summer breaks, happy to postpone any further thought of Iraq at least until September, when the U.S. commander Gen. David Petraeus makes his progress report on the American troop surge to

Congress, as though that may make some difference in how much longer this agony is going to continue.

Has anyone noticed that virtually every one of the players, political and military, have already begun chipping away at the September milestone?

That, shock and horror, they begin to talk of the urgent need for American troops to remain in Iraq at the present level of 160,000 or maybe even more until 2009?

The Democrats in Congress — most of whom seem to be running for president — seem content to await further developments.

The Republicans, especially those up for re-election in 2008, are wearing out the knees of their \$4,000 suits praying for some miracle to remove Iraq and assorted other administration disasters from the voters' minds.

The President has gone back to talking about his impossible dream of "victory" in a war that can't be won with the tools he's applying in the place where he's applying them.

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Father Of Five Died During His Second Tour In Iraq.

07/22/2007 Associated Press

FAIR OAKS - Sgt. Ronald Coffelt was devoted to his country and his children and died doing what he wanted to do, his family said.

Coffelt, 36, of Fair Oaks, died Thursday of wounds suffered when a bomb exploded in Baghdad, the Defense Department said.

The father of five, who died during his second tour of duty in Iraq, joined the Army when he graduated from high school, his brother-in-law, Brian Conner, 33, told the San Francisco Chronicle.

“He was fully aware of what he would be facing. He knew what his duties would be, and he had no problems doing his duties,” Conner said.

At home in Fort Bragg, N.C., Coffelt enjoyed coaching Little League and umpiring baseball games.

“He loved being involved with his children. He was so eager to get back home. He missed his kids,” his father, Robert Coffelt of Fair Oaks, told The Sacramento Bee.

Coffelt served eight years in the Army, spent five years as a civilian and then joined the National Guard, deploying in 2005 for a one-year tour of Iraq. He joined the Army again after returning to the U.S. and returned to Iraq for his second yearlong tour.

“He always wanted to be in the Army, and he was sorry he got out of it the first time,” his father said. “He was third-generation Army, and he was proud of that.” Coffelt was assigned to the 503rd Military Police Battalion, 16th Military Police Brigade, XVIII Airborne Corps, based in Fort Bragg, N.C.

Along with his children and father, Coffelt is survived by his wife, mother, grandmother and sister.

Dixon Man Patriotic To Core



Sgt. Shawn G. Adams

07/26/2007 By MELISSA MURPHY, MediaNews Group

Looking at the quiet Dixon home, with its American flag waving gently in the breeze next to a tree tied with a yellow ribbon, one would never know that inside, a family mourned the loss of their son, brother, friend and soldier.

U.S. Army Sgt. Shawn G. Adams, 21, died Sunday in Owaset, Iraq, of wounds suffered as a result of a roadside bomb detonating close to his vehicle, according to the Department of Defense.

Adams, a Vanden High School graduate who split his family time between Dixon and Vacaville, was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, Fort Richardson, Alaska.

But that hardly begins to describe the man he was, said family and friends on Tuesday. His mother lives in Dixon and father lives in Vacaville.

Sporting a T-shirt bearing the photograph of his stepson and daughters above the words "Daddy's Pride," Robert Gillis met with media in front of the family's Dixon home and tried to put into words the honorable man his stepson had grown to be.

"The boy had more heart than anyone I know," he said. "He was always true to his commitments and he followed through."

Adams was devoted to family, Gillis said.

The day he died was the one-year wedding anniversary to Wihelmina Elizabeth Adams, who he met through a mutual friend while stationed in Anchorage, Alaska.

"I'm very glad he found the love of his life," Gillis said. "It was the first girl he brought home." He was also patriotic to his core.

Adams' father, Vacaville resident Darcy Adams, served in the Navy and said that his son following in his footsteps was not a surprise.

"He's an adrenaline junky like me," Darcy said. "He seeked the thrill."

Darcy explained that he and Shawn's mom, Laura Gillis, had to sign and give permission for their son to enlist.

"He was only 17," Darcy said. "And if I knew the outcome then, I still wouldn't change my decision. It's still a major shock."

Shawn, according to Laura, knew what he was getting into when he signed up to serve in the military.

"He was all boy," she said. "He was trucks, dirt and a daredevil."

Even though his family was hesitant to let him go into the Army, they knew Shawn had made up his mind.

"He was very independent," said Robert, holding a picture of his stepson in his high school football uniform. "He knew exactly what he wanted. We felt that it was his decision to make."

Still, the family worried.

"Of course we were hesitant to let him go," Laura said. "But even if I didn't want him to go, he would have found a way."

Shawn left for the Army in August of 2004, only two months after graduating from high school.

"He knew exactly what he was doing and he always had a smile," said Bea Bruno, Adams' grandmother. "He had the ability to make everything small. Nothing was too big for him to handle."

Even a severe wound to his leg was only a minor setback, the family said.

On New Year's Eve 2006, Shawn, while on duty in Iraq, was injured by an explosion that left shrapnel in his left leg. It was the same night that his best friend, Joseph Andrew Medeiros Jr., was killed in a car accident while stationed in Fort Hood, Texas.

"They called to let us know he was hurt," Laura said. "Shawn said he was fine because he would never let me worry."

And with a quick recovery, Shawn returned to duty. "He was the ultimate fighter," said Cheryl Feeley, Adams' aunt. "We should all be honored that he fought for his country. He knew what he wanted to do and he did it well."

The war in Iraq is something Bruno still doesn't understand.

"I'm proud of Shawn, but I'm mad at the politicians," she said. "The boys need to come home. It doesn't make sense for us to still be over there."

The family, however, continues to support the troops.

"We might not agree with the politics, but we still need to support our troops," Darcy added.

For now, the family holds on to the good memories of Shawn - a young man, who liked the outdoors, swimming, football, baseball and looking out for his three younger sisters, Lacy Gillis, 15, and Samantha Gillis, 12, and Mary Adams, 7.

"He was always there," said 15-year-old Lacy, adding that Adams tried to warn her about boys and the clothes she wore.

They also enjoyed watching movies and shared a love of music, she said.

"He was all about family," Robert said. "He was happy to be with his family."

Dixon is a small town and news of Adams' death moved quickly. The Dixon City Council meeting Tuesday night was opened with a moment of silence, the meeting dedicated to Shawn's memory. Flags across the community were lowered to half staff and will stay that way for the next week, said City Manager Warren Salmons.

Funeral arrangements have not been completed.

Shawn is also survived by his father, stepmother Gay Adams of Vacaville and grandparents Jim and Gloria Pasley and Mike Bruno of Vacaville.

“We are all so proud and the family is pulling together,” Feeley said. “This has to be your worst nightmare.”

**GUESS WHO’S WORRIED
GUESS WHO ISN’T
GUESS WHY
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



A U.S. soldier during night patrol in Baghdad July 8, 2007. REUTERS/Nikola Solic

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**Havelock Native Killed In Combat In
Afghanistan**

July 10, 2007 Sarah Maynard, Havelock News

Havelock native Spc. Christopher Steven Honaker, 23, was killed in combat action in Watapor Valley, Afghanistan, July 5.

Honaker was assigned to A. Co., 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), 173rd Airborne Brigade combat team stationed in Vicenza, Italy. The team is currently

deployed as Task Force Bayonet in support of the NATO International Security Assistance Force.

Honaker was killed as a result of injuries sustained after his dismounted patrol came under enemy small arms fire and indirect fire.

Honaker was born aboard Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point to George and Eva Honaker in 1983. He attended Havelock High School as was a graduate of Universal Technical Institute's NASCAR technology program.

His earliest roots were in the military with his father, a retired Marine Corps gunnery sergeant and his older sister, an active duty soldier, currently serving in Germany.

"We all know Chris," said Sue Boyer, a Realtor with First Carolina Realtors and a co-worker and friend of Eva Honaker. "He was a very personable young man – very kind, hard working and polite. He seemed pleased about the Army and was doing very well. Everyone in the office was very proud of him. We all liked him very much."

Shelia Blazer, the managing broker of First Carolina Realtors, has known the Honaker family for the better part of 10 years.

"Losing Chris is as close to losing one of your own as it could possibly be," said Blazer.

"He and my youngest son went to school together. Living in Havelock, we see people leave all the time, and it's hard any time, but it's different when it's almost family. We love them all."

A funeral service will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday at the Cherry Point Base Chapel with the Rev. Jim Durner officiating. Burial will be held in Forest Oaks Memorial Gardens with full military honors.

Visitation will be from 5-8 p.m. Friday at Cotton Funeral Home.

TROOP NEWS

“The Pentagon’s Biggest Public Relations Nightmare”
“The Marine Corps Attempted To Label Political Speech As Official Misconduct And As A Serious Offense”



Kokesh, left, with members of the Iraq Veterans Against the War, directly before the protest that led to his clash with the Marine Corps over a uniform violation

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

06/26/07 By Holiday Dmitri, Radar Magazine

When Cindy Sheehan called it quits in May, her seat was barely cold when the peace movement hoisted its replacement trophy aloft: a younger, more photogenic mouthpiece with unimpeachable credentials.

Marine Corporal Adam Kokesh, a decorated Iraq war vet, was already in the middle of a nasty dispute with his military superiors over a protest he had attended, the details of which only further endeared him to the cause.

Within weeks, the unknown soldier from New Mexico had metamorphosed, as Wonkette put it, into “the Pentagon’s biggest public relations nightmare.”

At five feet ten inches, 205 pounds, Kokesh is no pantywaist hippie. He’s built more like your prototypical killing machine, which goes a long way in explaining his appeal to the mainstream media as an antiwar provocateur. Thrust onto the national stage—including appearances on Good Morning America and Paula Zahn Now — the embattled reservist appears to be awed by his newfound fame. And he doesn’t take the responsibility lightly.

“I’m a vet and that gives me some unique credibility. No one can say we’re cowards or traitors or don’t know what we’re talking about,” he says. “There’s power in that platform. I have a moral imperative to be doing this.”

Naturally, it's taken some time for Kokesh to adjust to his new role. He's still mystified by the idea that there's a Wikipedia entry in his name. But he seems to have the right perspective.

"I'm just a regular guy in the middle of a shit storm," he says. "But it's been fun."

On this summer morning in D.C., it appears that all the fun may have finally caught up with Kokesh.

When the burly 25-year-old pulls up to meet me in his white Ford Bronco, he looks haggard. "Late night," he admits. He had been partying the previous evening at the Wonderland Ballroom, a Columbia Heights bar. I offer him my cup of Starbucks, but he shakes his head, flicking his unfiltered cigarette out the window. He doesn't drink coffee, he says, because "It stunts your growth."

After a few minutes with Kokesh, it's easy to see how he's made it this far: The man's assertive. "When people ask me what my experience in Iraq was like, I tell them hot, dirty, and dangerous." Then, waiting a beat, he takes a pull from his cigarette and winks, "Just the way I like my women." (Later Kokesh informs me I'm the most attractive reporter who's interviewed him so far.)

The subject soon turns to Cindy Sheehan, the formerly vocal mother of a soldier who died in Iraq, to whom Kokesh is often compared. Last year, in Crawford, Texas, a young Marine described Casey Sheehan's death to the press as "an acceptable loss." Instead of getting angry, Kokesh recalls, Sheehan put her arms around the young man and led him off to speak privately. "I couldn't hear any of the words, but I knew exactly what she was saying to him, and I cried," he says.

Realizing how callous he had been to his own mother about being deployed, Kokesh called her to apologize.

Though he admires Sheehan, Kokesh is quick to point out that their philosophies diverge.

"Cindy Sheehan wanted to talk to Bush. I want to stop the motherfucker," he says.

Corporal Kokesh's stormy relations with the U.S. government began on March 20, when a photo of him in desert camouflage appeared in the Washington Post. He had participated a day earlier in a mock combat patrol to mark the fourth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq.

Along with 12 other vets, he "patrolled" the area from Union Station to Arlington National Cemetery with an imaginary assault rifle, manhandling suspected "terrorists" at simulated gunpoint, to give Washingtonians a taste of U.S. occupation .

Nine days later, Major John R. Whyte sent Kokesh an e-mail informing him that he was under investigation by the Marines for wearing his uniform in a political protest.

Furious, the young GI composed an e-mail reply to his superior admonishing him for devoting valuable resources to what he viewed as a trivial matter — the political

activities of a reservist — while his fellow servicemen continued to die in futility overseas.

He closed with a request for the investigating officer to “please, kindly, go fuck (him)self.”

On May 1, Kokesh received notification from the government that Mjr. Whyte had recommended his “honorable discharge” status be stripped and changed to an “other-than-honorable discharge,” the most serious sanction possible, which involves a loss of VA health benefits, the right to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery, and, in his case, having to pay back the \$10,000 he received on the GI Bill. The charges: uniform violation and disrespecting a superior under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

Kokesh was a member of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), a category most soldiers fall into for the period after they’ve left active duty but haven’t yet completed their eight-year military obligations. IRR members can be recalled to active duty at any time, a process that’s been described as a “backdoor draft,” but under the rule book, they receive no benefits, no salary, and fall under no chain of command. Kokesh’s lawyers argued that, as an IRR member, he was a civilian: the Uniform Code of Military Justice had no jurisdiction.

“My mother was afraid for me in Iraq, but she should be more afraid now,” Kokesh contends.

“Instead of the insurgents, today it’s the United States government that’s after me.”

Kokesh maintains he made it clear he was acting as a civilian and not a Marine when he partook in the mock patrol, consciously removing the name tag and insignias from his uniform.

Wearing a military uniform in such a re-enactment, his lawyers argue, is “street theater,” an action protected by the 1970 Supreme Court decision handed down in Schacht vs. United States, even if the performance could be found to “discredit” the armed forces in some manner.

According to Mike Lebowitz, an Iraq war vet who serves as Kokesh’s lead attorney, the case is the first in which the military has sought to stifle the political speech of an IRR civilian.

During the Vietnam War, disgruntled vets protested their war in weathered fatigues, but those dissidents were drafted.

“This is unprecedented,” Lebowitz says. “As far as I know, we’re the first to fight something completely related to the civilian world against a discharged veteran without orders to return to duty.”

“Involuntary separation hearings are almost exclusively related to inherently criminal cases such as drugs or violence,” he adds.

“In this case, the Marine Corps attempted to label political speech as official misconduct and as a serious offense. The whole thing with Adam was political, no question.”

As we approach Longworth, a congressional office building on Capitol Hill, Kokesh is walking fast. He’s late to a meeting, and I’m trying to keep up.

On the way, he describes the curious path that got him here. This February, a month after moving to Washington to earn a master’s degree in political management at George Washington University, he came across the story of Jonathan Schulze, a Marine from Minnesota who had been suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after a tour in Iraq.

Schulze repeatedly sought help from the Veterans Administration, informing them he was suicidal. But his requests for psychiatric care were denied. Shortly thereafter, he hanged himself with an electric chord, a picture of his infant daughter beside him. Kokesh read his story over and over, and was overwhelmed.

“I spent my nights at my computer, sobbing uncontrollably,” he says.

The experience changed him.

Within a week, he had joined Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW); a few days after that, he was participating in the infamous “street theater” event.

Two other IVAW Marine reservists, Cpl. Cloy Richards, 23, of Salem, Missouri, and Sgt. Liam Madden, 22, of Boston, Massachusetts, also took part, and would later be investigated for wearing their combat utility uniforms during political protests and making “disrespectful” or “disloyal” statements.

Their charges come at a time when many soldiers returning home are questioning the increasingly unpopular war in which they fought. According to a Zogby poll, 72 percent of U.S. troops serving in Iraq support a troop withdrawal within the year. **[Wrong. The poll was taken in 2006, and 72% of troop serving in Iraq expressed the view that all should be out and home by Dec. 31, 2006!]**

In the Longworth cafeteria, Kokesh introduces me to Tina Richards, the mother of fellow IVAW Marine Cloy Richards, who is sitting at a long table with a group of young activists preparing the day’s agenda on the Hill.

Richards, the founder of Grassroots America, a non-profit devoted to social-justice issues, became a YouTube sensation after a run-in with Rep. Dave Obey (D-WI) in which the congressman informed her that “liberal idiots” trying to de-fund the war were actually hurting the cause of the veterans. Tina Richards and Kokesh have lately been collaborating, and have vowed not to leave Washington until the war is over.

Tina’s son, Cloy, returned from Iraq 80 percent combat disabled, suffering from symptoms of traumatic brain injury and DU (depleted uranium) poisoning.

He has no other health insurance and can’t afford to be denied medical treatment or lose his GI Bill for college.

In short, losing his honorable discharge is not an option. Accordingly, Cloy has agreed to the government's request that he not participate in any political rallies in uniform. His mother, in turn, has decided to speak up for him. "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," she says.

The initial plan for the morning had been to occupy Sen. McCain's office—applying the same techniques soldiers do in Baghdad, Kokesh notes—to protest his Iraq initiatives. ("How does that sound for a first date?" Kokesh joked earlier. "We can get arrested together.")

The senator, however, wasn't in. Kokesh and Richards decide to split up for the day, and as we head out, Kokesh is stopped by a busboy who recognizes him from the papers.

"Go make something happen, man," he says, extending his arm for a handshake.

“The Next Battle Was At The Palo Alto VA Hospital Where, Marissa Says, Her Husband Wasn't Getting The Therapy He Needed”
“Had Marissa Not Been So Persistent, She Says, Jarod Would Be Sitting In A Nursing Home Right Now”



Marissa Behee, left, battled the VA to help her husband, Jarod, get the therapy he needed after being wounded in Iraq. (CBS)

“We went from three months at the VA telling us that Jarod can’t do this, he can’t do that. Then we came here and they got him on his feet and tried walking him around the gym, just to see what he was capable of and to know what they had to work on.”

July 25, 2007 (CBS)

There have been heartbreaking stories about the shoddy level of veterans’ care since the beginning of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Two Army wives decided that wasn’t good enough for them, and, as CBS News national security correspondent David Martin reports, they took matters into their own hands.

“I just couldn’t accept what we were being told by the VA,” says Marissa Behee.

Behee is not a soldier, but she’s one of the fiercest warriors of the Iraq War. Ever since her husband, Staff Sgt. Jarod Behee, was shot in the head, she has been fighting for him — and against a Veterans Administration she says was unprepared for the needs of grievously wounded soldiers.

“It’s not just Jarod. I mean, he’s one of how many that are coming home with a signature head wound. There are so many more out there, and this cannot continue to happen to all those people coming home,” she says.

A sniper’s bullet drove fragments of Jarod’s skull deep into his brain. He probably would not have survived in an earlier war, according to Dr. Rocco Armondo.

With Jarod’s life saved, the next battle was at the Palo Alto, Calif., VA hospital where, Marissa says, her husband wasn’t getting the therapy he needed.

“It felt like we were just in this holding pattern and our next step in their book was a nursing home,” she said. “To me, that wasn’t a great plan.”

On her own, Marissa found Casa Colina, a private rehabilitation hospital in southern California.

Marissa says she saw a change in Jarod immediately.

“We went from three months at the VA telling us that Jarod can’t do this, he can’t do that. Then we came here and they got him on his feet and tried walking him around the gym, just to see what he was capable of and to know what they had to work on.”

How did it feel to Jarod? “It felt great,” he says. “I was actually getting therapy.”

Despite his brain injury, Jarod was capable of walking and more; he was able to work as a hospital assistant.

Had Marissa not been so persistent, she says, Jarod “would be sitting in a nursing home right now.”

With her battle won, Marissa went to work on a Web site to tell other families what Casa Colina had done for her husband. "They told us 'Never give up. Remember Sgt. Behee,'" says Jenny Breist, whose husband, Corey, had also suffered a devastating head wound..

"We didn't know who Sgt. Behee was," Jenny says, "so we just Googled 'Sgt. Behee' and his Web site came up. His wife, Marissa, had on there, 'Any injury soldiers' families, please contact me.'"

Corey was in a different VA hospital, but his wife was fighting the same battle for more therapy. She found it when Marissa pointed her to Casa Colina.

"It's just unbelievable," says Jenny. "The first week you could tell huge differences in Corey."

Corey remains severely handicapped, but he is out of the hospital and once again a father to his children.

"My biggest wish in life was just to have him be at home with his family. And it's happened," says Jenny. But it wouldn't have happened if two young wives hadn't gone to war against the VA.

"He would be sitting in a nursing home right now," Jenny said.

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



Nicholas Wilson, brother of U.S. Army Pfc. Le Ron Wilson, lays a flower on the casket at Long Island National Cemetery in Farmingdale, New York, July 17, 2007. Wilson, 18, from New York, died July 6, 2007, in Iraq of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. (Shannon Stapleton/Reuters)

Navy Officer Fakes Own Kidnapping To Avoid “Stress”

July 30, 2007 Army Times

A Japanese navy officer found gagged and bound on the side of a road claimed he had been robbed and assaulted. But when details of his story did not add up, he finally admitted he faked the whole thing because he didn't want to go to work.

Reuters reported the 22-year-old junior officer was tired of working and tired of the stress of being caught between his superiors and his subordinates, so he made up the story of kidnapping and robbery as an excuse for not showing up at work, somehow managing to tie and gag himself on a roadside in Kanagawa prefecture, near Tokyo.

Reuters did not say what made police suspicious about his story, but other news reports noted that the man had no apparent injuries, his clothes were neat and tidy, his hands were tied in front of him, rather than behind, and his feet were not bound. The officer may have drawn inspiration from Japanese movies, where faked kidnappings are a standard plot convention.

“Right Now I Am Heartbroken” “We Want Them All Back Home. It’s Not Right To Use Them Like That”

27 Jul 2007 SHAN ROSS, The Scotsman [Excerpts]

THE six young soldiers from the Black Watch eased the coffin from the hearse and lifted it, draped in a Union flag, on to their shoulders.

As the pall bearers made their way slowly into the church, the crowd of mourners who had gathered to pay their respects to 20-year-old Private Jamie Kerr fell silent.

While the funerals of those killed in Iraq and Afghanistan get just a fleeting mention on the television news, here in Fife, the heartland of the Black Watch and the home of Prime Minister Gordon Brown, whose house is just nine miles away, the community mourns every death as if it was a member of their family.

But Mr Brown was not there. While he had been in contact with Pte Kerr's mother, Pauline Ward, offering condolences after her son was killed and also had a lengthy telephone conversation with the dead soldier's stepfather, the Prime Minister had not been invited.

Mrs Ward, 38, later issued a plea to Mr Brown on Bebo, the social networking website, saying: "Right now I am heartbroken. How many more families must go through this pain? It's not funny. Bring our boys home safe and sound ASAP."

Among the crowd making their way home were brother and sister David and Hayley Rodger, from Cowdenbeath.

David, 20, still shaken and clutching the order of service, said he had been one of Jamie's friends. He said his death would not deter him from pursuing his ambition of joining the army.

Asked who he blamed for the death and whether the premiership of Gordon Brown would make a difference, David said: "We're in this mess because Tony Blair was (too close to) Bush. Gordon Brown should bring all the guys back."

Hayley, 22, who completed a pre-entry course with the Royal Logistics Corps in 2003 before changing her mind, agreed with her brother but thought Mr Brown should have been at the funeral.

"We want them all back home. It's not right to use them like that, they are just boys from round here. Gordon Brown should have been here, they could have got him up in a helicopter and then back down to the floods."

A mother who was standing outside the church with her four young sons while her older son, a friend of Pte Kerr's, attended the funeral, said she would do everything she could to stop any of them joining the army.

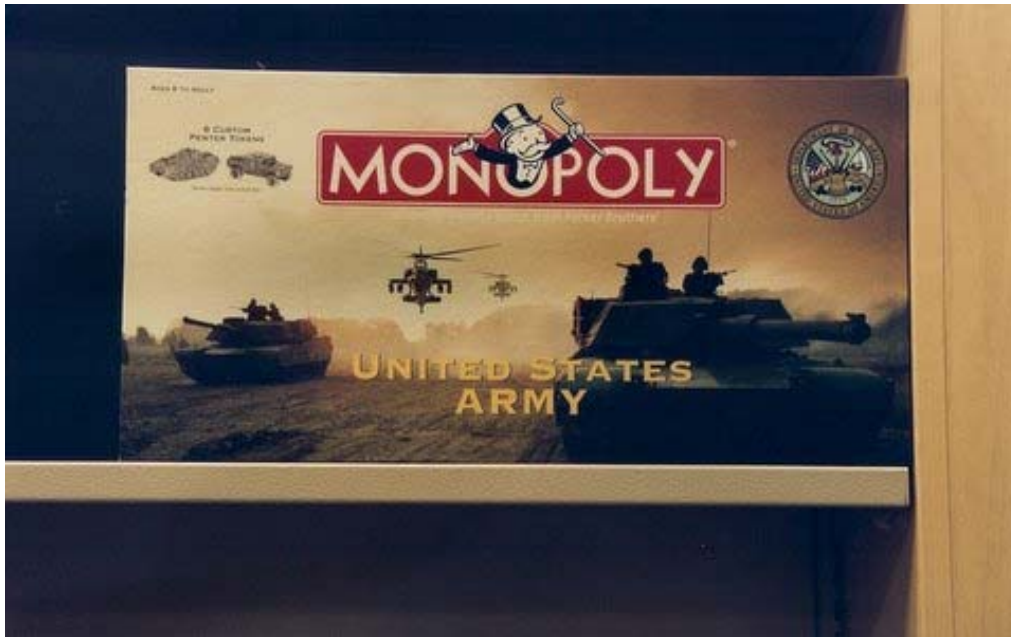
One son, aged 10, still naive, or perhaps not, to the way of politics, said: "Can't the Prime Minister stop people joining the army until they're 30? Then they'll be old and have had their life and it won't matter."

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation's ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. Frederick Douglas, 1852

**"What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms."
Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.**

EXIT STRATEGY



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: July 25, 2007
Subject: Exit Strategy

EXIT STRATEGY

**George Bush and Dick Face Cheney's
exit strategy from Iraq.**

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
July 25, 2007**

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004**

Semper Fi: **Was General Butler Faithful?** **You Decide**

By Don Bacon, The Smedley Butler Society
To: GI Special
Sent: July 29, 2007
Subject: SEMPER FI

Semper Fidelis, Always Faithful, is the motto of the United States Marine Corps.

But faithful to what?

Major General Smedley Darlington Butler, one of the most colorful officers in the Marine Corps' long history, was one of the two Marines who received two Medals of Honor for separate acts of outstanding heroism.

General Butler was still in his teens when, on 20 May 1898, he was appointed a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps during the Spanish-American War. In the early part of the last century General Butler led assault troops in Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Mexico and Haiti.

He was a regimental commander in France during World War I and later served in China. On 1 October 1931, he was retired upon his own application after completion of 33 years' service in the Marine Corps. Major General Butler died at the Naval Hospital, Philadelphia, on 21 June 1940, following a four-week illness.

After his retirement General Butler wrote a book WAR IS A RACKET, which started as follows:

“WAR is a racket. It always has been. It is possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious.

“It is the only one international in scope. It is the only one in which the profits are reckoned in dollars and the losses in lives.

“A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of the people.

“Only a small “inside” group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few, at the expense of the very many. Out of war a few people make huge fortunes. [www.lexrex.com/enlightened/articles/warisaracket.htm]

And in a speech delivered in 1933, General Butler said:

“I helped make Mexico, especially Tampico, safe for American oil interests in 1914.

"I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefits of Wall Street.

"The record of racketeering is long.

"I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912 (where have I heard that name before?). I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916.

"In China I helped to see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested.

"During those years, I had, as the boys in the back room would say, a swell racket. Looking back on it, I feel that I could have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was to operate his racket in three districts. I operated on three continents. [http://www.fas.org/man/smedley.htm]

General Butler has had a naval destroyer, a military base and a chapter of Veterans for Peace (the 'Smed Butts') named for him. He is loved and quoted not only in the United States, but around the world.

Like all officers General Butler swore the following oath upon his commissioning:

"I, _____, having been appointed an officer in the Marine Corps of the United States, as indicated above in the grade of _____ do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign or domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservations or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter; So help me God."

Was General Butler faithful?

You decide.

More at www.warisaracket.org/index.html" : The Smedley Butler Society

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR; RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



Foreign occupation soldiers from the USA search an Iraqi citizens during a night home invasion in Rasheed neighborhood, southern of Baghdad June 19, 2007. (AP Photo/Petros Giannakouris)

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

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

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

"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!**

OCCUPATION PALESTINE



[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

DEMOCRATS "DID NOT NEED A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY TO STOP FUNDING THE WAR"

"Congressional Democrats' Need To Take Superficially Antiwar Postures While Using Their Policymaking Authority To Continue Funding And

Justifying The Persistent U.S. Assault On The People Of Iraq”

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

As Howard Zinn notes, for antiwar activists to support “timetables” for the eventual scaling down of the invasion of Iraq is “as if, before the Civil War, abolitionists agreed to postpone the emancipation of the slaves for a year, or two years, or five years, and coupled this with an appropriation of funds to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act...

July 23, 2007 by Paul Street, Zmag [Excerpts]

But it’s all too simple, apparently, for Harkin and most of the Democrats in Congress.

Harkin’s party rode mass U.S. antiwar sentiment to a Congressional majority during the mid-term elections last November.

But last May 24th, Harkin joined 36 other Democratic U.S. Senators in cravenly capitulating to the Bush administration’s demand for nearly \$100 billion of unconditionally granted supplemental military spending to pay for the continuing invasion of Iraq.

Most Congressional Democrats (Harkin included) voted to keep spending a taxpayer fortune on the occupation with no strings attached even while polls indicated that 82 percent of Americans wanted Congress to “either kill funding for the war immediately or approve funds for the war (only) with strict conditions” (Zunes 2007) - primarily timetables for expeditious withdrawal.

Frustrated by Bush’s veto of their earlier effort to tie war funding to (merely non-binding) timetables for troop “withdrawal” and (more to the imperial point) “redeployment,” the congressional Democratic “leadership” caved to the nation’s incredibly unpopular president.

They had no choice, they argued, claiming that the White House would be able to portray them as traitorous under-cutters of the nation’s noble freedom fighters in Iraq.

But this was transparently false cover for their continuing collaboration with an imperial White House gone wild. Stephen Zunes’ May 31st critique of how Harkin and other Democrats voted on May 24th merits lengthy quotation:

“The claim by Speaker Pelosi (D-CA) and other Democratic leaders that unconditional funding was necessary to ‘support the troops’ and to ‘not leave them in harm’s way’ is a LIE (capitalization added).

“If they really supported the troops and wanted them out of harm’s way, they would have passed legislation that would bring them home. The Democrats had other priorities, however.”

“Pelosi claimed that they had to provide unconditional funding for President Bush’s war in Iraq because they could not get enough Republican support to achieve the two-thirds majority necessary to override a presidential veto.

However, they did not need a two-thirds majority to stop funding the war.

All they needed to do was to refuse to pass any unconditional funding for the war and instead pass a funding measure that allocated money for the sole purpose of facilitating a safe and orderly withdrawal from Iraq, or, at the very least, a funding measure that set a strict deadline for the withdrawal of troops.”

“As Speaker, Pelosi could have set the legislative agenda and not allowed any funding bill to come to a vote unless it had such provisions.

“And, if Bush refused to sign it, he would have been the one to put the troops in harm’s way, not Congress.”

“Some apologists for the Democrats claim that to not support funding for the supplemental would have allowed political opponents to portray them as ‘not supporting our troops.’ However, three conservative Republican senators-Coburn, Burr, and Enzi-voted against the supplemental because of the \$20 billion in domestic, non-war-related expenditures without apparent fear of such charges. So why should the Democrats have been afraid to oppose the measure as well?”

“And it certainly is no longer the case-as apologists for the Democrats claimed when they supported supplemental spending for the war in previous years-that it would be politically difficult to oppose a key initiative of a popular president now that Bush is one of the least popular presidents in history, a ranking that has come largely as a result of the very war policy for which the Democrats have once again given him a blank check to continue” (Zunes 2007).

This September, when the FY 2008 Pentagon budget comes up for congressional approval - \$649 billion plus a \$142 billion “war supplemental” - we should not be surprised when Harkin and hundreds of our other Democratic “representatives” fail yet again to pull the fiscal plug Cheney and Bush’s imperial adventurism within and beyond Iraq.

At the same time, we should refrain from celebration if Congress enacts “conditional” funding with some version of the (partial) withdrawal and redeployment schedules that Harkin and other Democrats tried to pass last March.

As Howard Zinn notes, for antiwar activists to support “timetables” for the eventual scaling down of the invasion of Iraq is “as if, before the Civil War, abolitionists agreed to postpone the emancipation of the slaves for a year, or two years, or five years, and coupled this with an appropriation of funds to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act...

“Timetables for withdrawal,” Zinn argues, “are not only morally reprehensible in the case of a brutal occupation (would you give a thug who invaded your house, smashed

everything in sight, and terrorized your children a timetable for withdrawal?) but logically nonsensical.

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

Such is the deep dark and oily imperial truth - readily available to anyone with “three functioning grey cells,” according to Noam Chomsky (Chomsky 2005) - behind Harkin and other leading congressional Democrats’ need to take superficially antiwar postures while using their policymaking authority to continue funding and justifying the persistent U.S. assault on the people of Iraq.

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.

Received:

Re: Spc. Antoine Mckinzie: Information Needed

From: William King dowopsmooth@yahoo.com
To: GI Special
Sent: July 28, 2007
Subject: SPC ANTOINE MCKINZIE

My name is William King. I am a private citizen conducting an unofficially conducting an inquiry into the death of a local soldier from Indianapolis, IN., Spc Antoine Mckinzie who was KIA March 21, 2006 in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Unit: Army, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Armored Division, Baumholder, Germany

In light of the upcoming hearings regarding the Tillman case, I believe this soldiers case requires a closer scrutiny.

I was wondering if you had a representative that I could speak with here in this area who has served, or in Iraq.

I assure you that I represent no group or groups of people, agency or the like. I only represent myself.

I appreciate your courage to stand by your beliefs.

William Todd King

Reply: [Not for publication. T]

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<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/)

IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION

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