

GI SPECIAL 5G6:

HOW MANY MORE FOR BUSH'S WARS?



Air Force medics from the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group rush a wounded soldier to the emergency room at the Air Force Theater Hospital at Balad Air Base, June 21, 2007. (AP Photo/ Maya Alleruzzo)

Ten Seconds

“I Respect Him Now, It’s Easy To Admire A Man Like Him. After All, He Is Not Like Me; A Soulless Mercenary Who Kills On A Three Year Contract, This Is His Life”

06/29/2007 by Clifton Hicks, [Iraq Veterans Against The War] lvaw.org/

The wind is cold and damp against the flesh of my face; the only exposed skin on my body. My shoulders ache under the strain of a thirty pound armored vest, the back of my neck grows raw from the constant friction of my rifle’s heavy canvas strap.

My antiquated pistol holster constricts my lungs and digs painfully into my ribs, my hips are tender and bruised where they've been jarred against the edge of the turret.

Every few minutes I fall asleep for a moment, a fraction of a second, awakened only when my chin touches the bulky kevlar neck guard that is fastened tightly over my throat; I'm the only one in my platoon who still wears it. The cloth is oily and slick and brown, coated with two months of sweat and filth, has it really only been two months?

I am utterly exhausted, I think of nothing, my mind is vacant.

A shot rings out, I ignore it, I'm so tired I don't even care, and besides, someone is always shooting at something around here, I wish they'd just fucking quit, this is so stupid.

Another shot, followed by a few more, a bullet glances off something in the road and screams over my head, the spark remains in my eyes.

I am awake now, totally awake, the kind of 'awake' that cannot be described and most people never have to feel.

It's four in the afternoon right now back home, my friends graduated from high school a few months ago when I was still in basic training, their faces flash through my mind, I can barely recall them now. I know my mother is thinking of me, can she sense what is happening to her only son?

More bullets, closer this time, and these do not glance off the road but fly straight past my face, coming straight on now. I can almost sense their heat, like sitting too close to the fireplace, and the sound of a thousand bull whips cracking all around me.

So this is what it's like! Just what I expected, which in turn surprises me. No fear though, I always thought I'd be afraid, thought I'd be the one to lose it, but there's no time to be afraid now.

I drop down inside the humvee and glance around at the faces of my comrades, they stare at me apprehensively. Someone asks if I've been hit, "No. I'm fine, I'm fine." We're moving swiftly now, the road is uneven.

I lose my balance for a moment but catch myself on the 'butt strap', a canvas strap that is hooked into the turret for me, the gunner, to sit upon, though I've rarely been allowed to use it.

In fourth platoon we stand fully erect with eyes scanning back and forth 180 degrees; from shoulder to shoulder, completely exposed for all the world to see and kill.

He's still shooting. I notice that his weapon is on semi-automatic, they never use semi-automatic, but not this one, his aim is true, he means to kill me.

I respect him now, it's easy to admire a man like him.

After all, he is not like me; a soulless mercenary who kills on a three year contract, this is his life.

He hates me, I cannot hate him, but I must try to kill him. He continues to shoot at me, I wish he'd just run on home like the rest of them.

Them... how I hate them, we all do.

They are so easy to hate, so vile and treacherous, subhuman even. It's because of them that I am here in the first place, God how I hate every inch of every one of them. We will all fight to the death, we are prepared even to take our own lives, rather than fall into their hands, to be tortured, raped, and humiliated. They thieve and lie and have killed boys who were once my friends. People with whom I used to carry on intelligent conversations, laugh with, live with, and when I saw them last I never knew it would be the last.

They have transformed them from men into cumbersome heaps of cold flesh, no longer anything more than a sanitation problem to be solved with the aid of a plastic bag. The blood and entrails must be scrubbed away with Simple Green and scratch pads.

My first true friend in the Army was cleaned up in this way. Thank God I wasn't there, had I seen it I wouldn't be able to remember him as I do now; always a smile, always a comment worthy of note, always something interesting in mind; a husband and a son. And when he died I didn't even bother to cry, I wanted to, I even tried a little bit, but that was stupid and wrong. No need to lie to yourself my friend, you are no longer human and everyone knows it.

Pulling myself up using the butt strap I bring my head up just far enough to peer over the lip of the turret ring.

Where is this motherfucker? I take a look around.... there he is. Not 'him' per say, but a tiny flash of light, followed by the report of a rifle and the sound of a bullet striking concrete or metal, I never learned to tell the difference.

I look down at the orange handle which will unlock the turret and allow me to swing it around, pointing the machine gun in his direction. No, there's no time for all that, the way this humvee is leaning and rocking I'd never be able to do it.

The gun alone weighs nearly eighty pounds, it's the old kind, a "fifty cal". Besides, he's standing on the roof of an apartment building, and I am imagining a family huddled inside their cramped home. They are poor and the weather is cold so they sleep in the same room, probably without beds. I will not send a score of fifty caliber bullets into that building, to grind and shred the flesh of three generations with one flick of my pathetic thumb, my thumb that is only eighteen years old.

I'm not that inhuman, not that cruel, not yet at least.

No, but I will use my rifle. Now I am ready, now I have a purpose. No longer will I cower inside this armored hull and take whatever he chooses to give me, now I will give him something, I will take control, I will kill him. I bring the rifle to my shoulder, the same kind my father and uncles carried when they were in the service. What a gruesome object, it's

black steel and plastic lay cold and lifeless in my hands, much like the corpses it was designed to create, incapable of human warmth. I place the tip of my nose on the charging handle, shut my left eye, and peer into the sight hole.

Now I am in a different world entirely. A still, silent void that has but one entrance. You cannot reach it through meditation or by ingesting some strange plant, not even in death can one find it. This man-made world can be glimpsed only through the sights of a rifle, only when it is pointed at a living thing. Here there is no God, no Hell, no consequences and certainly no remorse, those will all come later.

For the time being he and I are completely alone, oblivious to the outside world.

Now the moment of truth. Am I really going to go through with this? Can I? Oh yes, I can, and I will, I must. This man is attacking you and your comrades, it is your duty as the gunner of this vehicle to kill him as soon as possible.

You are the gunner, you are responsible for the lives of these men inside this humvee. I hope... I know that they would do the same for me.

Now I'm nervous, my knees tremble, I feel like a kid who's just been caught stealing. For an instant I can clearly see his bullet coming for me, flying straight towards my face, I vividly imagine the impact.

Switch the safety off, take a moment to blink your eyes and breathe. Let me wait and see one more muzzle flash before I strike, let me wait for him to show me where he is just once more. Oh what sweet satisfaction I am about to receive!

Two months of misery and a lost childhood because of you, damn you, I finally get to kill one of you now. I will use you as the object of my vengeance, this is for everything you have done to my life and to my family, you alone will pay the price, tonight. I think of nothing else now but my own misery and suffering, selfish I know, to kill a man and not even think about him. Then my wish comes true, I see another flash, he has revealed himself. Instantly I readjust my hands, he's fairly close so I aim a little lower than usual, just like they taught us at Ft. Knox.

And now I can feel the trigger. In this moment I think of my father, who always taught me to 'squeeze' a trigger, never to 'pull' it, so, ever so slightly, I begin to squeeze. The movement of my index finger is barely distinguishable to the human eye, it curls inward only millimeters per second, when the rifle finally discharges it's almost unexpected. A shell casing jingles against the floor, I taste smoke, and the finger now points at no one but me.

My enemy, my peer, a man who I have even come to admire in the last few seconds, stops firing immediately.

I raise my cheek from the rifle and look at him. I see him for the first time, nothing more than a black silhouette against a midnight sky, but I see him. He goes down behind the edge of the roof. I never see him again, I never learn his name or his lineage, I never learn what became of him.



[IVAW]

Later the next morning, when the patrol is over, after I've refueled the humvee and put away the weapons, I'm congratulated by my friends. I am quiet and expressionless, though I'm not upset.

I sit down alone on my cot and disassemble my rifle, the one I used against my enemy, the brother I never had, the only man who has ever faced me as a natural equal.

The smell of the spent bullet is strong, but the weapon is mostly clean, after all it was only one shot, I push a piece of paper through the barrel with a thin rod, the paper empties out into the breech, bearing its little sunburst of black residue.

I wipe off each metal part, coating them with fresh CLP, and reassemble them carefully.

This rifle did not fail me in my hour of need, it may have even saved my life.

I imagine the next soldier who will carry it after I have gone on, will he ever know of the sin it has committed this night? How many people did you kill before I took you off the rack? I push such thoughts aside and am asleep in a matter of minutes.



IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Virginia Soldier Killed In Iraq



Pfc. Steven A. Davis. Davis, 23, of Woodbridge, Va., died in Iraq July 4, 2007, when insurgents attacked his unit. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division based at Fort Carson. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

Baghdad IED Kills Two U.S. Soldiers, Three More Wounded

July 7, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070707-07

BAGHDAD —Two Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldiers was killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near a combat patrol in a eastern section of the Iraqi capital July 6. Three other Soldiers were wounded in the attack. All of the wounded Soldiers were evacuated to a combat support hospital following the attack.

Two Marines Killed In Anbar

July 7, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070707-12

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – Two Marines assigned to Multi National Force-West were killed July 5 while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar Province.

Baghdad IED Kills U.S. Soldier & Terp, Three More Wounded

July 7, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070707-02

BAGHDAD —One Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldier was killed by an explosively-formed penetrator targeting a combat patrol in a southeastern section of Baghdad July 6. An interpreter was also killed and three other Soldiers were wounded in the attack. The wounded were evacuated to a combat support hospital following the attack.

U.S. Soldier Killed By West Baghdad IED

July 7, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070707-09

BAGHDAD —A Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier was killed when a patrol was struck by a roadside bomb in western Baghdad July 5.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Baghdad

July 6, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070706-02

BAGHDAD – One MNC-I Soldier died of wounds received during combat operations in western Baghdad on Thursday.

Staff Sgt. Killed In Iraq

Jun 28, 2007 By DAVID RESS, TIMES-DISPATCH STAFF WRITER

STONY CREEK; He telephoned only last Thursday to wish his daughter a happy sixth birthday.

Staff Sgt. Michael D. Moody Jr. can no longer call his parents' neat brick house, just across Flat Foot Road from the peanut field.

But at that home, and elsewhere, there will always be the memory of a smile, a strong handshake -- and pride.

Moody, 31, died June 23 of wounds he received when insurgents attacked his unit with a bomb and small-arms fire in Baghdad, not quite three months into his third tour in Iraq.

He leaves behind his daughter, a 2-year-old son and an enduring presence.

"He really was proud of his job and proud to serve," his mother, Connie Moody, said yesterday.

Moody's job was the Army. A tank commander with the 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, based at Fort Benning Ga., he enlisted in 1997, shortly after graduating from Meadowbrook High School in Chesterfield County.

It was something family friend Alton Mason knew Moody always wanted: "His father was in the Army, and what his father did, he wanted to do."

One of his son's proudest days, Moody's father recalled, was his recent promotion to staff sergeant, one step above his own rank before his return to civilian life.

"I used to say: 'I'm the sergeant, I'm in charge.' . . . When he made E-6 (staff sergeant) he said, 'Dad, now I'm in charge,'" said Michael D. Moody Sr., smiling sadly.

With another sad smile, he tells how the 6-year-old granddaughter he will now care for asked if someday she can have her daddy's black Chevy, which is parked by the side of Flat Foot Road. He wonders how she'll feel as a teenager when the car looks a little old.

And with that, a reminder of what those who know him will miss most: "His smile," Connie Moody said, dabbing her eyes. "It was just beautiful."

Her son's service took him to Kosovo as well as Iraq, won him two Army Commendation medals and two Army achievement medals.

His father remembers a talk after Moody's first tour in Iraq.

"I said, 'Son, you know, that's history,'" Michael Sr. recalled. "They may not know your name, but you're going to be in the history books."

Charfauros' Body To Be Flown To Rota Next Week

June 27, 2007 By Marconi Calindas, Reporter, Saipan Tribune

The late CPL Joe Junior Gogue Charfauros is best remembered as a joker and someone who always brought a smile to the faces of family and friends.

Joe Junior's mother Annie described her second oldest son as having a good disposition in life.

"He is always the friendly one," she said in a trembling voice.

Joe Junior is the latest CNMI son killed in action. He was reportedly killed last Thursday during a regular routine mission in Iraq.

Mrs. Charfauros recalled that the last time she talked to his son was in May. She said when Joe Junior called Rota from Iraq he would always ask for his wife Stellita. She said she would always pass the phone to his wife, but she never failed to always tell her son to take care of himself before handing over the phone.

She said her son's remains would be flown from Philadelphia on June 28, going directly to Rota. She said her son's "homecoming" could be on Monday or Tuesday next week depending on layovers from the point of origin.

Mrs. Charfauros said the whole family was more than surprised when they heard the news last weekend.

"It hurts. It's the first time," she said bursting into tears during yesterday's phone interview. "I always told him to be careful. If I had the chance to talk to him, I would still tell him to be careful," she said.

She said her husband and Joe Junior's father, Jose, is also grieving with the loss but refuses to show it. She said her son called his dad two Sundays ago to greet him on Father's Day. "He told Joe Junior to take care of himself," she said.

Mrs. Charfauros said what breaks her heart more is that her other son, Jovan, is about to join the military. She said Jovan was in Guam and was about to go to training in the mainland when he learned about his brother's death.

She told Jovan to postpone the training and head back to Rota for his brother's funeral service.

She said as much as the family would want to stop Jovan from joining the military, the family had no choice but to let him go. Jovan already had completed his physical exams.

"Because he believes there's no life here on Rota," she said, adding that she asked her other son so many times if he really is sure about his decision to follow his older brother's footsteps.

Mrs. Charfauros said the whole family hasn't been informed about what actually happened in Iraq that took away their son's life.

Joe Junior is survived by his wife Stellita and three kids, Mikeangela, Junelle and Joe II.

Joe Junior was a police officer on Rota. He enlisted to the military last year. He went back to Rota in December 2006 for his wedding.

Four Explosions Rock Baghdad's Green Zone

7/6/2007 (KUNA)

Four explosions rocked the Green Zone in central Baghdad on Friday, after missiles fell over a number of buildings in the fortified area.

Four consecutive explosions were heard by KUNA's correspondent here, likely to have been caused by mortar shells, and were followed by the wailing of sirens.

Columns of thick black smoke were seen, apparently from a fire that had erupted at one of the locations.

The area houses Iraqi government buildings, as well as the US and British embassies. It is not yet clear whether there are casualties.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



2nd brigade, 12th Infantry Division provides cover after a grenade attack in the Dora neighborhood in southern Baghdad June 15, 2007. (AP Photo/Petros Giannakouris)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Va. Soldier's Kindness, Leadership Recalled

June 23, 2007 By Delphine Schrank, Washington Post Staff Writer

Army Sgt. Dustin J. Perrott was the kind of leader who infused others with motivation and the sort of person with whom it was impossible not to share a smile, his commander said. To friends and family, he was brave, charismatic and selfless. His wife and friends called him the Gentle Giant.

Perrott, 23, of Fredericksburg, was an infantryman with the 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. He died Thursday of wounds suffered when a bomb detonated in Miri, Afghanistan, the Army said in a statement yesterday.

"Everyone always seemed drawn to his kindness," his wife, Anna Marie, 20, said in a statement. The couple were married in August 2004. "Dusty was a huge guy. . . . That guy that would give you the shirt off his back and the last dollar to his name."

Since deploying to Afghanistan in February, Perrott was rarely able to contact his parents. The last time he phoned, his stepfather, John Calamos, scrawled the cellphone number and time on a piece of paper that he stuck on the fridge: 6:07 a.m., June 6. Perrott had borrowed a friend's phone, and that number had appeared on the home phone's caller ID, Calamos said.

"He told us we probably wouldn't hear from him in a while because he was going on a mission, and in Afghanistan, it's rural, not like Baghdad," Calamos said.

Perrott, who joined the Army in 2004, never feared action, his family said. He volunteered to go to Iraq, serving there from December 2004 to March 2005.

"I want to serve my country. I'm proud to serve my country," he often said, according to his wife's statement. At age 16, after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Perrott felt a calling to enlist but had to wait until he graduated from high school. He also sought to follow in the footsteps of his father, a sergeant, who died when Perrott was 4, his family said.

After completing training at Fort Benning, Ga., in 2004, he rose to the rank of sergeant.

"Sgt. Perrott was a tremendous paratrooper who had been a leader in this organization for a long time," Lt. Col. Timothy McAteer, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, said in a statement. ". . . You just couldn't help but smile when you talked to him."

As early as third grade, Perrott was the class clown, his mother recalled. In high school and beyond, he channeled that energy into playing drums with his band.

"Dusty had an ear for music like nothing I've ever seen," wrote his wife. He couldn't read sheet music, but he could hear something once, like an Elton John tune, and play it right back without error, she said.

Among the decorations he received are the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal and the Army Achievement Medal.

Perrott will be buried beside his father, in Fredericksburg.

Two Foreign Occupation Soldiers Killed; "Several" More Wounded, Nationality Not Announced

Jul 6 (AFP)

Two soldiers with the NATO-led force were killed in eastern Afghanistan.

Several NATO and Afghan soldiers and one civilian worker were also wounded in the incident on Thursday, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said in a statement that gave no further details.

Two British Soldiers Wounded Near Kabul

06/07/2007 Irish Examiner

Two British soldiers were wounded in Afghanistan today when a car bomber attacked a NATO convoy near Kabul, news reports said.

A senior Afghan police official said the attacker's blast also destroyed the International Security Assistance Force vehicle.

TROOP NEWS

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME:

BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Agawam, Mass. July 5, 2007. The casket of Staff Sgt. Daniel A. Newsome of Chicopee, Mass., who was killed June 27 in Baghdad. (AP Photo/Mieke Zuiderweg, Pool)

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

06 Jul 2007 Reuters & VOI

An Iraqi police lieutenant was killed and another officer wounded when a hand grenade was thrown at their car in the restive northern city of Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A fourth person has been killed in clashes since Thursday in the southern city of Samawa between the Iraqi [collaborator] army and militiamen loyal to nationalist Moqtada al-Sadr, a morgue source said. An eyewitness said sporadic fighting continued.

Four Iraqi policemen killed by a roadside bomb in Samawa, police said.

One Iraqi soldier killed in Hawija, 60 km (40 miles) outside the northern city of Kirkuk, police said.

Three Iraqi police wounded in a drive-by shooting in central Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad.

A roadside bomb killed four Iraqi soldiers in the southern Shi'ite city of Hilla on Thursday, police said.

One Iraqi army soldier was killed by a roadside bomb in Yusufiya, 15 km (9 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas killed a police commander from the Facilities Protection Service who was responsible for protection of electricity infrastructure in southern Baghdad, police said. The commander was killed in the town of Salman Pak near Baghdad on Thursday.

And Now For A Message From The Iraqi Resistance: “Never Deal With The Enemy And His Allies”



This flyer says ‘Never deal with the enemy and his allies. Our eyes are wide open, and our fingers are on the trigger.’ (AP Photo/ Courtesy of Saamir Ali)

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Enough Silly Hysterical Bullshit About Fascism And 9/11: “We Are Not Losing - We Are Winning” “Rarely Have We Seen A President Fall So Desperately Far In So Short A Time”

Jul 5, 2007 By David McCreynolds [Excerpts]

I'm sending this out to several lists because I think the "left" can scare itself to death.

(One of the popular pieces that has been around and around the internet is the one on the 14 defining characteristics of fascism - the assumption being that is where we are).

We have been inundated by 9.11 conspiracy material - a whole movement of its own which wastes our time and diverts us from the real and open conspiracy which is the Administration.

First, if we were in a fascist period I wouldn't be able to send this and you wouldn't be able to get it - we'd all be safely locked up. The internet would have been closed down.

The Democrats - timid and divided as they are - would have done even less than they have done. Which God knows is little enough - they can and must stop funding the war, sending back the same bill again and again no matter how often Bush vetoes it.

It is a commentary on our democracy - which is indeed in peril, and in large part because of the role of the corporate control - that we can tell how things are going to seeing what the media is willing to tell us.

Yes, the events in Guantanamo, Bagram, Abu Graib and elsewhere are deeply shocking. The arbitrary arrest of hundreds of Muslims after 9.11 was a violation of the Bill of Rights. But Moveon.org hasn't been stopped. The various peace coalitions -

United for Peace and Justice, ANSWER, World Can't Wait - all function. Not always wisely, never in unity, but they are alive and well.

Rarely have we seen a President fall so desperately far in so short a time.

He lost totally on his efforts to alter Social Security. He lost totally on his efforts at Immigration Reform. The situation in Iraq is a desperate mess, in which the only thing on which everyone can agree is that "there are no good options".

Aside from the rabid Ann Coulter, who runs her hands through her hair so restlessly one can't help but think she has bugs in her scalp, there are few real defenders left.

The right wing, which owns Fox News (and much else) has not been able to buy or build any real competition to the Daily Show. Not even the Supreme Court can be counted on when it comes to issues such as torture. (The Supreme Court has always followed the election returns).

We are not losing - we are winning.

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.

1915:

“The Struggle Against The Government That Conducts The Imperialist War Must Not Halt In Any Country Before The Possibility Of That Country’s Defeat”

March 29, 1915, V.I. Ulyanov, Sostial Demokrat [Excerpts]

Some of the means employed to fool the working class are pacifism and the abstract preachment of peace.

A propaganda of peace at the present time, if not accompanied by a call to revolutionary mass actions, is only capable of spreading illusions, of demoralizing the proletariat by imbuing it with confidence in the humanitarianism of the bourgeoisie, and of making it a plaything in the hands of the secret diplomacy of the belligerent countries.

In particular, the idea of the possibility of a so-called democratic peace without a series of revolutions is deeply erroneous.

The struggle against the government that conducts the imperialist war must not halt in any country before the possibility of that country's defeat in consequence of revolutionary propaganda.

The defeat of the governmental army weakens the government, aids the liberation of the nationalities oppressed by it, and makes civil war against the ruling classes easier.

OCCUPATION REPORT

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



Iraqi boys stand in front of the wreckage after their home was invaded by foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S.A. .in Sadr City, Baghdad, June 30, 2007. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

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

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

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

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

"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

**" Hamas Understands That The
Israelis And The Americans Will
Not Relinquish Anything
Without Struggle "**

July 6, 2007 By Eric Ruder, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Socialist Worker held a roundtable discussion with TOUFIC HADDAD, coauthor of the newly released *Between the Lines: Israel, the Palestinians and the U.S. War on Terror*; MOSTAFA OMAR, a contributor to *The Struggle for Palestine*; and Socialist Worker reporter ERIC RUDER.

MOSTAFA OMAR:

TO TAKE a step back from the most recent conflict between Hamas and Fatah, I think there's been a growing consensus among the genuine activists still interested in the idea

of the liberation of Palestine--whether it's the majority of the rank and file in Hamas or sections of Fatah, like the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade--that the Oslo Accords has actually deepened the occupation and was never meant to do away with the occupation.

Since 2000, there have been attempts to build some kind of unity on the ground--if not ideologically at least practically--in terms of day-to-day resistance to the Israelis.

The second point is that the main obstacle since the signing of the Oslo Accords to any effective national liberation strategy has been the leadership of Fatah, which is basically allied with some of the most reactionary Arab regimes and the United States, and which wants to find some way to compromise with Israel on some of the basic, most fundamental Palestinian rights, especially the right of return.

I think the death of Arafat gave that leadership in Fatah the opportunity to do so--or at least they thought his death gave them this opportunity. I think Abbas wants to be able to sign a deal with the U.S. very similar to the one that Arafat was forced to reject at Camp David in 2000.

At the same time, Abbas has always been interested in national unity with Hamas and other groups, but only on the basis of them agreeing to a deal that would not have Jerusalem be the capital of a Palestinian state, and that would maintain a substantial number of Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

So the Palestinian Authority was not simply corrupt, but it was brutal as well in suppressing those genuine liberation fighters who disagreed with those compromises--whether in Hamas or within their own ranks.

Several stories came out in the last few weeks about the reign of terror that Fatah employed in Gaza and the West Bank--the torture chambers, the weapons and aid they were receiving from the U.S.--which all was meant to weaken the national liberation movement.

TOUFIC HADDAD:

THERE'S SOMETHING that's going to be interesting in this whole thing, and we'll have to wait and see what it amounts to, but Hamas has been able to get a hold of the entire archive of these intelligence agencies. It's amazing to think that these intelligence people were so out of touch with the situation in Gaza and so caught off guard that they didn't try to get rid of these records.

Hamas is promising to publish the documents, which cover a wide range of issues, including economic and intelligence relations with the Israelis, weapons smuggling, drug dealing, prostitution rings, blackmail of ministers.

And there are elements of political corruption that are also important here regarding--for example, the imprisonment of Ahmad Saadat, the general secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. There might be information in these files that elements in Fatah played a role in both his initial imprisonment and his later capture by the Israelis. Other issues include the building of the wall and even the death of Arafat.

This is relevant to the question of Gaza because it gives a picture of the kind of regime that Palestinians were asked to fight for--the "principles" they were asked to uphold in sustaining the resistance, while at the same time, significant elements of the leadership were making deals with their enemies.

But it's not just a dictatorship by Fatah that explained their strength. The other political parties are also so weak politically. The whole political setting is bankrupt, and this created the conditions for opportunism.

Hamas is perhaps the only grouping that challenges the commonsense assumption of the Fatah leadership that we can't fight, we can't win, we just have to keep our noses clean and expose the fact that the Israelis don't want a solution, and eventually, we'll be able to create the conditions where we can get our state and our rights.

It's not about trying to defeat Zionism or gain the sympathy of the world. This is an elitist strategy that doesn't actually believe that you can win--while Hamas is actually posing an alternative, saying that we can and we will, but it starts from what we do on the ground.

MOSTAFA OMAR:

IN THE bigger context, the U.S. is quite concerned about the fact that the majority of Palestinians--despite the embargo, the siege of Gaza and Israeli brutality--still refuses to surrender in one way or another. And that gives a tremendous amount of hope to millions in the wider Arab world.

This is coming at a time when, one, there's general instability in the area because of the war in Iraq (and the resistance in Iraq doesn't seem to go away, as Bush always insists it's about to) and, two, a number of Arab regimes face an incredible economic and political crisis, such as Egypt and Jordan, where neoliberal policies have made things worse for most of the population over the last 20 years.

There's now the beginning of the revival of workers' struggle in countries like Egypt. The U.S. is concerned about the overall picture, and crushing the Palestinian resistance in one way or another is key for them. And that's why they have thrown their support behind Fatah.

As you said, Fatah has a lot of rank-and-file members, a lot of fighters, but for the past 13 years, those fighters have been used more or less to curb the Palestinian resistance.

But I also want to make a point about the differences and similarities between Fatah and Hamas. Fatah believes you can achieve some kind of a "statelet" through negotiations with the Americans--through endless compromises on giving up national rights.

Hamas isn't opposed to compromises with Israel either. It has offered a 10-year truce, and some of its leaders have said while they would not give up on the right of return, they are willing to postpone it for a generation or two until the two peoples manage to reach some kind of healing.

But the difference is that Hamas believes that the only way you can get anything out of the Israelis and the Americans is through struggle--and of course, their main method of struggle is armed struggle. That's the main difference between the two--Hamas understands that the Israelis and the Americans will not relinquish anything without struggle.

Having said that, there's a contradiction with Hamas. While they've been the most consistent in the past 15 years in resisting the Israelis, they actually are willing to negotiate with Israel, and they are willing to allow reactionary Arab regimes, such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia, to come in and play a major role in Gaza and the West Bank.

So in the short term, things don't look very promising.

But if you look at the bigger picture, including the beginnings of class struggles in the area, there's the possibility for a new generation of Palestinians from (to borrow a term from American politics) across the aisle--young Fatah militants who refuse to give up the struggle--to find ways of connecting with the younger Hamas generation, who are also against those compromises that do away with national rights.

That kind of unity, from the bottom up, is what's needed, and the future will tell if there will be organizations and leadership that will be able to go beyond the corrupt politics of inconsistency.

ERIC RUDER:

TOUFIC, ARE you both saying that Hamas' consolidation of power over Gaza may pose certain problems, but that it should generally be seen as a welcome development?

TOUFIC HADDAD

ABSOLUTELY, AS a result of Hamas' takeover of Gaza, the pro-American current inside the Palestinian movement has been weakened, and now there's also the first possibility to organize the society, economy and politics of a territorial base--inasmuch as this is possible under conditions of siege and occupation--around a political project of resistance.

There are, of course, complications. There's the split between the West Bank and Gaza, and Israel can use the stick with Gaza and the carrot with the West Bank. But on another level, it's a sense of accomplishment for the popular forces.

Hamas may not have the means or the politics to be able to lead the Palestinian liberation movement. But there was something so stagnant in the Palestinian movement because these Fatah elite dominated for so many years.

So now a window is opening for a new politics to be decided and hopefully new institutions to be developed. On one level, people might be happy with Hamas coming to power, but people also have big questions about it.

For years, the Palestinian movement struggled to win the independence of their movement from any other Arab party. Just to set up the PLO, thousands of martyrs lost their lives.

Hamas is not a part of the PLO, nor does it recognize the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian national movement. It's an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood--not exactly the Muslim Brotherhood, but it doesn't distance itself from it. And people also worry about the fact that there are regional players--that Hamas takes money from Iran and the Saudis.

There are so many compounded problems--political, institutional--but I think people will be willing to give this new effort a chance. But the whole project needs to be reinvented. And Hamas has been very smart about it.

Hamas could have led the whole government on its own by using its democratic majority to pass whatever it wanted, but Hamas wanted to form a unity government. And every time they did, they ran into various conflicts--with Israel and with Fatah. Despite this, Hamas still said that we want a unity government and to make a deal, because we don't want to impose our agenda on others.

But Fatah is still refusing to see the error of its ways. Abu Mazen fired Rashid Abu-Shabak, Dahlan's number two in Gaza--on the basis that they didn't defend their positions. But who the hell is going to defend their positions when the rank and file fled, and it's just the cronies and gangsters who were still around?

If you want to see what they are like, you can go to Hamas' English Web site to see how Fatah were torturing Hamas members and making them praise Mohammed Dahlan.

MOSTAFA OMAR:

IN THE short term, I think the Hamas victory in Gaza is a step forward, because despite all the contradictions of Hamas' politics, they're saying we need to get rid of corruption, we need to end torture, we need to build some kind of a national united movement to be able to speak in one voice and resist the Israelis. That's a welcome step.

But they will face tremendous pressures--from the U.S., Israel and the Arab governments.

I don't doubt that Israel and the U.S. will try once again to starve Gaza. That's going to raise a number of concrete tasks for Palestinian activists, whether they're Islamists or not, in Gaza or the West Bank--and the question is whether they can mobilize the support and the solidarity and the resources needed to withstand such a siege.

It's also a step forward because it shows that it's possible to build an alternative to Fatah. You can disagree as much as you want with Hamas, but at the end of the day, this is an alternative to Fatah--even if it could be built, and hopefully will be built, on a much stronger political basis.

TOUFIC HADDAD:

I ALSO don't think you realize what can be done now. Even though Gaza has terribly limited means, the PA had businesses that it was running there--cement, grain and gravel operations. Hamas could organize the economy and collectivize production in a

way, so that instead of building big penthouses, they can make Gaza much more self-sufficient. And Hamas knows that that's the kind of stuff it needs to be doing.

ERIC RUDER:

BUT EVEN if you leave aside the question of its own political limitations that may not lead Hamas to those particular conclusions about how to run the economy, two things still trouble me. One is the extent to which this is the outcome of a divide-and-conquer strategy. Even if the Fatah leadership got what it deserved, it's going to be difficult to recover from these divisions, especially as they become entrenched territorially.

And two, what's going to happen to all those Fatah fighters who do sincerely want to organize? It doesn't seem to me that their conclusion--even if Fatah leaders have been exposed as complete collaborators--will be to join Hamas and fight under the this new banner. Even if people conclude this later, in the short to medium run, this could have a significant impact on the confidence of those who make up the backbone of the resistance.

MOSTAFA OMAR:

IN TERMS of the leadership of Fatah and Hamas, the leadership of Fatah was not interested in any resistance to Israel, so in that sense, this isn't really a consequence of a divide-and-conquer strategy.

TOUFIC HADDAD:

ERIC, YOU seem to be saying that this is an accomplishment for the U.S. because it represents a success of their divide-and-rule approach. But the U.S. and Israel are even against Fatah, because it represents a sector of the national leadership that's holding its own--that's just asking for UN Resolution 242 (passed in 1967 and calling on Israel to withdraw from the Occupied Territories) to be implemented. They couldn't get what they wanted from this leadership, which was Arafat's signature at Camp David. And since then, Israel's strategy was to destroy any Palestinian national leadership. They did it methodically and targeted all factions, and the only currents to survive were Hamas, which reorganized in Gaza, and a sliver of Fatah that was allowed to survive because of their connections with the Israelis.

Those are the two currents that exist on the political scene today. That's why the Israelis helped these Fatah elite move from Gaza to the West Bank when Hamas' takeover of Gaza went down. So it's not a success for a divide-and-rule strategy--in fact, it's a failure because Abbas' current is getting weaker and weaker, and is on the brink of extinction.

Olmert is talking about releasing 250 Fatah prisoners and the tax money and so on to resurrect Abbas' fortunes. But in those rooms where all those intelligence people are sitting down to figure out what the hell this means, they're not going to say that now we have to pump up Abbas, because they didn't even help him out during the last period.

I think they see their strategy in the next period as letting this play out, and then destroy what's left of Fatah. You can't try to build up people like Dahlan and Abbas when there's still a resistance option out there. And that's why they have

to do away with the resistance, and then bring these people back as the only political option available.

So they want to decapitate Hamas, then try to deal a mortal blow to the Palestinian resistance forces, and then bring in Abbas. And they want people to conclude, yes, the struggle is useless, and I want Abbas, because that's the best we can hope for.

MOSTAFA OMAR:

I THINK you can look at the goals of the U.S. and Israel in another way. As Toufic said, the purpose of supporting Fatah and Abbas is to isolate Fatah and put more pressure on them. My guess is they want Abbas to sign a deal that's much worse than the Camp David Accords, and he's going to have no choice but to sign such a deal. That's their goal.

The most anti-Arab of the presidential candidates, Rudy Giuliani, who refused to allow Arafat to attend an opera when he was at the UN General Assembly back in 1998, just gave a whole speech about why the U.S. needs to support Fatah and Abbas.

This isn't because they want a stronger Palestinian organization that they can negotiate with on an equal footing. They want a weaker one that will surrender what Arafat couldn't surrender back at Camp David. If Arafat was willing to allow them to keep 50 percent of the settlements, now they can maybe get 70 or 80 percent out of Abbas.

TOUFIC HADDAD

DAY BY day, the Fatah leadership are losing legitimacy, and so an agreement is not worth more than the paper it's printed on. It will simply be rejected by the popular will.

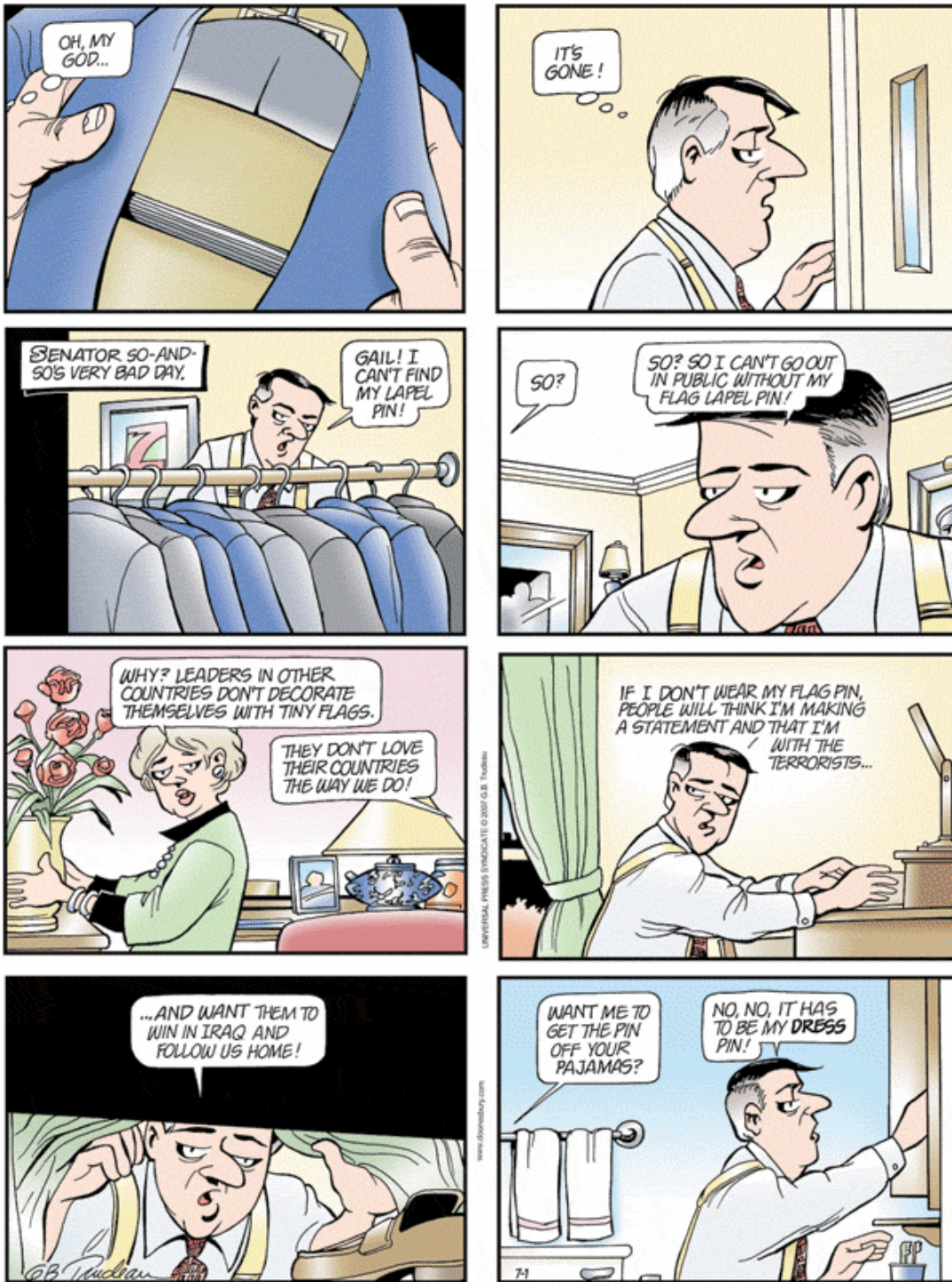
ERIC RUDER:

THAT'S WHAT made Arafat so useful to the Israelis. He could collaborate with Israel, but he also had enough respect and prestige that he could actually deliver some degree of support when he made this or that concession. Abbas, on the other hand, in this political climate, will only lose more credibility. There was a reason Hamas won the January 2006 elections, and it's because of the long string of Fatah concessions. And it doesn't seem to me that Abbas is strong enough to give away what the Israelis want him to sign off on.

MOSTAFA OMAR:

TOUFIC MIGHT disagree with me about this, but even though I think the Israelis want to get a better agreement out of Abbas, I don't think they have any intention of even implementing that one. They don't want a settled agreement, but they want to crush the resistance and continue the occupation indefinitely.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

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

The United States Supreme Corpse: Ass-Kissers To The Wealthy, Powerful And Corrupt



05 July 2007 The New York Times, Editorial [Excerpts]

On campaign finance, the court handed a major victory to corporations and wealthy individuals - again by a 5-4 vote - striking down portions of the law that reined in the use of phony issue ads. The ruling will make it easier for corporations and lobbyists to buy the policies they want from Congress.

Corporations also won repeatedly over consumers and small stockholders. The court overturned a jury's award of \$79.5 million in punitive damages against Philip Morris. The Oregon Supreme Court had upheld the award, calling Philip Morris's 40 years of denying the connection between smoking and cancer "extraordinarily reprehensible."

In a ruling that will enrich companies at the expense of consumers, the court overturned - again by a 5-4 vote - a 96-year-old rule that manufacturers cannot impose minimum prices on retailers.

The flip side of the court's boundless solicitude for the powerful was its often contemptuous attitude toward common folks looking for justice.

It ruled that an inmate who filed his appeal within the deadline set by a federal judge was out of luck, because the judge had given the wrong date - a shockingly unjust decision that overturned two court precedents on missed deadlines.

It has been decades since the most privileged members of society - corporations, the wealthy, white people who want to attend school with other whites - have had such a successful Supreme Court term.

GI SPECIALS BY MAIL FREE FOR ACTIVE DUTY TROOPS

IF YOU WISH TO HAVE A SELECTION OF GI SPECIALS MAILED TO YOU, EMAIL YOUR ADDRESS TO: CONTACT@MILITARYPROJECT.ORG OR DROP A LINE TO: BOX 126, 2576 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10025-5657 USA

Please say how many you wish sent.

NOTE WELL: They will all be different issues of GI Special to satisfy DOD regs that you may possess copies, *provided you don't have more than one of the same issue.*

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

GI Special issues are archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

<http://www.williambowles.info/gispecial/2006/index.html>;

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

http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/; <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>;
<http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/qi-special.htm>

GI Special distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **GI Special has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is GI Special endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice.** Go to: www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.