

GI SPECIAL 5H27:

Welcome To Liberated Ohio: Which Side Are You On?



Occupation soldiers from Iraq's 2nd battalion are welcomed with open arms by a happy American couple in Cleveland, Ohio, as they search for American insurgents terrorizing the population.

General Anwar Dulami told reporters aside from isolated dissidents who still resist, the new Iraqi troop surge is succeeding. "We will probably only need another five or ten years to root out these sectarian militias completely," he said. In other news, 6 Iraqi soldiers were killed by an improvised explosive device near Springfield, Illinois. Over twenty U.S. insurgents were killed in subsequent fighting. REUTERS/Damir Sagolj

Checkpoint 18

From: [Soldier, Iraq]

To: GI Special

Sent: August 29, 2007

Subject: Re: GI Special 5H18: "A No Should Be Here Deal"

The reason the Georgians were removed from checkpoint 18 was because there were multiple reports spanning many months of the Georgians accepting bribes alongside the Iraqi “security” forces.

Turns out Georgia may a US ally, but the actual Georgians?

Not so much.

I’m not sure how much a Georgian soldier makes, but the bribes were typically 5,000 Iraqi dinar (between \$3 and \$4).

That was enough to get in without being searched.

As for why we weren’t attacked much harder? The only speculation is pure, dumb luck.

So, after many months, the Georgians were finally replaced by... Ugandans?

Surely they make enough to not be bought. Hm...

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Killed, Another Wounded In Baghdad

August 30, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070830-11

BAGHDAD — A Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier was killed and another wounded during combat operations in a western section of the Iraqi capital Aug. 30.

Mona Shores Grad Killed In Iraq



SFC Daniel Scheibner, 7 May 2007

Aug 30, 2007 WOODTV

NORTON SHORES -- Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Scheibner was killed northwest of Baghdad Wednesday when an IED exploded next to his convoy.

Scheibner, 40, was a 1986 graduate of Mona Shores High School. He'd been in Iraq since April, and served with the 4th Brigade out of Ft. Lewis, Washington. He was a career military man who recently celebrated his 20th year in the Army.

A veteran of the first Gulf War, Scheibner is survived by his wife and 12-year-old son.

Dover Soldier To Be Buried Sunday

August 23, 2007 Katie Marshall, Staff writer, The Free Press

Before Steven Jewell left for Iraq, he gave his son a cross necklace similar to the one he was wearing.

"Soldiers do come home," his son, 8-year-old Will Jewell, said Wednesday. Now, the boy's cross will serve as a reminder of his dad's ultimate sacrifice.

His father, an Army specialist, is coming home a casualty of the Iraq war.

Jewell, 26, was killed last week in a CH-47 Chinook helicopter crash in Anbar Province, Iraq, during a post-maintenance test flight.

A native of Dover, Jewell was among five people killed in the crash. They were part of the 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, Task Force 49, based in Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

A military funeral is planned for Sunday at Pinelawn Memorial Park in Kinston with Fort Bragg soldiers as pallbearers.

The 8-year-old will be starting the third grade at Pink Hill Elementary School the day after his father's funeral.

Will Jewell prayed every day for his father to come home safely when he left for Iraq just over a month ago.

"I was worried about him," he said. "I asked God not to let him die."

Jewell is proud of his father as well as his other family members.

While waiting for her son to come home, Cindy J. Wisener is having a hard time letting a picture of him out of sight.

The glass of the framed military picture is full of Wisener's fingerprints and tears.

"It's hard to describe how a mother feels," Wisener said. "A mother's love is different."

Wisener said her son joined the military Aug. 14, 2005, two years to the date before he died. This was his first tour to Iraq, arriving Aug. 1, after being in Kuwait for a month.

Jewell joined the Army after working minimum wage jobs.

"It was the only way he could support his son with the things he needed," Wisener said.

Wisener will never forget when her daughter-in-law Lisa Johnson Jewell, who is also serving in the Army overseas, called her and said a Chinook helicopter went down near where her son was stationed.

"I knew it was Steven," Wisener said.

Logan Wisener, 17, hopes her half-brother will be with her spiritually to help with math problems as she enters her senior year at Bethel Christian Academy.

"He was always there for me when I needed him," she said. "He was a good person and a good brother."

When Wisener saw her brother's friends, they told her she was Jewell's "little girl."

"He died doing what he loved," she said. "The army made him a man."

Jewell was a member of the Reelsboro United Methodist Church and the Dover Volunteer Fire Department. His father, Billy Jewell, is a detective for the Pamlico County Sheriff's Office.

Cindy Wisener said her son had tattoos and her son would pay for her first one. She was told other Army moms who lost children to the war got "fallen angel" tattoos. This will be Wisener's first tattoo.

"I always thought he was joking," she said.

"I didn't think he would pay for it this way."

Helena Soldier Laid To Rest

08/19/07 By EVE BYRON - IR Projects Editor, Helena Independent Record

Spc. Donald Young, remembered as a warrior and a friend, was laid to rest in Forestvale Cemetery in Helena on Saturday.

Young, 19, died in Baghdad Aug. 8 from wounds sustained when a vehicle he was in hit an improvised explosive device, known as an IED.

His sister, Catherine, recalled teaching her younger brother how to swim when he was eight and she was 10.

“He was a skinny little kid, all dressed in black, standing on the diving board ... he looked a little scared standing there,” she said quietly, smiling at the memory. “Then this guy came and pushed him off and he screamed so loud, his arms were flapping as he fell into the water and he sank really fast.”

But he never gave up, she added, which is a trait he carried with him throughout his short life, for better or worse.

“It got him in trouble a lot, but it made him the great man he was,” she said. “He always wanted to make a difference.”

Young was a former student at Capital High School, and lived in California, Missouri, Montana and Washington before joining the Army. He was assigned to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 1st Cavalry Division, based at Fort Hood, Texas.

He is the fifth service member from Helena to die in the war, and is survived by his wife, Cheryl Young, his father, Richard Cleary, his mother, Donna Smith, and numerous sisters, a brother, aunts, uncles, cousins and grandmothers.

In the online obituary service Legacy.com, friends noted how Young could always make them laugh. They described him as a sweet, caring man, a “goofball” with a lot of energy and spunk.

He also was a warrior who made an extraordinary sacrifice, added Maj. Gen. Randy Mosley, the Montana National Guard adjutant general.

Mosley awarded Young’s family four medals, including the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. The Bronze Star is given for heroic or meritorious deeds while engaged in combat, and is the nation’s fourth highest honor. The Purple Heart is given to those wounded or killed in the line of duty. “Those who die in the service to their country do so because they took an oath to defend this nation and its constitution,” Mosley said, speaking at Young’s funeral service. “This is about an individual who decided the United States is worth dying for. It’s about duty, honor, courage and selfless service.

“And we are, all of us, forever in his debt.”

Plane Carrying 4 Senator And Congressman Fired On Above Iraq

08/30/07 Birmingham News

A C-130 aircraft carrying an Alabama senator and congressman was fired on this evening as it was flying from Baghdad to Amman, Jordan.

The airplane was carrying Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., and Rep. Bud Cramer, D-Huntsville, and two other senators.

Three rockets were shot at the plane and were “near misses,” Shelby said in a telephone interview. He said the pilot took evasive maneuvers to avoid the rockets. The plane landed safely in Amman at about 4 p.m. central.

“I was looking out the window, a little small window, and I saw a shell or something,” Shelby said. “And then I see a flare. Our plane started maneuvering and changing directions and shaking all around.”

The Enemy Of My Enemy Of My Enemy Of My Enemy...

**“It Says A Lot About The Progress Of
This War When We’re Siding With
One Insurgent Group To Battle
Another”**

**“Do You Want To Kill Me?” Asked The
Soldier**

**“Yes,” Replied The Source, Coldly And
Without Emotion. “But Not Today”**

July 24, 2007 By AH, Army of Dude

Fourteen months into this deployment and things are taking a turn for the surreal.

Throughout Mosul and Baghdad, we were fighting what could best be described as an insurgent cocktail: parts of Islamic State of Iraq, Al Sadr’s Mahdi Army, 1920 Revolution Brigade and simple, pissed off farmers. Shia and Sunni.

Organized militias and rag tags. All they had in common was a shared goal: a total withdraw of occupational forces.

Then it got a little complicated when we moved to Diyala Province, where the 1920 Revolution Brigade was already fighting Al Qaeda for the Diyala capital of Baqubah. To us, to 1920, and to Al Qaeda, Baqubah became the most important city in year four of the Long War.

It housed the Al Qaeda network headquarters and was picked for a free-for-all Sunni insurgent cage match, a fight to the death to determine who would emerge victorious to battle the Americans and Iraqi Army in the future.

The 1920 Revolution Brigade (translated from “Brigades of the Revolution of the Twenty”) takes its name from the 1920 crusade against British colonial rule. History, it seems, does have a way of repeating itself.

The group picked the name to invoke nationalism in local Iraqis fed up with the Americans occupying.

A good portion of them were members of Saddam’s regime at one point. Since they’re all Iraqi, they haven’t taken kindly to Al Qaeda, made up of mainly foreign fighters that terrorize neighborhoods and kill indiscriminately.

They were natural enemies of 1920, who just wanted those pesky Americans to leave. Fighting with Al Qaeda took its toll. Before CNN broke the story, we had been cooperating for quite some time with members of the 1920 Brigade to flush out Al Qaeda members operating in Baqubah.

They came to us with a truce!

At the beginning of the year they claimed a series of downed helicopters, including the Blackwater Security chopper we responded to. They killed all four of the contractors point blank, one of them execution style and attempted to smuggle the bodies out before we got there. They responded by shooting at us with anti-aircraft guns from a high rise building.

After talking with them, we found out they were present during the attack that killed my friend Chevy on March 14.

Dude.

What must have been an awkward meeting turned into an agreement between coalition forces and 1920: they would stop attacking us if we helped them root out Al Qaeda. They would send one dude on patrol with us, and he’d point out Al Qaeda members and safe houses. They were restricted from carrying weapons during the day and would patrol at night.

Things got off to a rough start. Now and again a helicopter would see a car full of gunmen and destroy it. They turned out to be 1920 members on more than one occasion.

After we killed a dude with an AK, we always wondered if he was an unlucky Al Qaeda member or a really unlucky 1920 member. Most of us simply considered them a lesser enemy and didn’t care much when we killed our dubious friends by mistake.

A common suggestion when we got a source was to “dispose” of him after he outlived his usefulness.

When word got out to the press that we were in cahoots with insurgents, it was spun out of control.

General Nixon said something along the lines of “we can’t be sure they all have killed Americans.” Like there is an acceptable percentage of those who have blown an American soldier to pieces.

I’m not sure of the opinion of the public at large for reasons that are obvious, but it seems to border on unacceptable.

It says a lot about the progress of this war when we’re siding with one insurgent group to battle another.

If Jack Bauer doesn’t negotiate with terrorists, why does the American army?

Lately, after leading us to an endless amount of empty Al Qaeda safe houses and supposed cache sites, the 1920 Brigade has gotten more perks since we started this nefarious relationship.

They have started to patrol neighborhoods during the day, armed, contrary to the rules established. They take over a building and hold it as a base of operations, setting up concertina wire and giving us their location for our GPS systems so we don’t send a missile into the living room.

And of course, we supply them with food and water. We have given them uniforms (yellow reflective belts) and a new name: Baqubah Guardians (or The Bee Gees). At least someone up there has a sense of humor.

After a few months of working with them, I’m still on the fence about the morality of the situation.

On one hand, they have fought and killed us and hope to in the future when Al Qaeda is gone.

On the other, they are more reliable than the squabbling, sloppy, lazy, sectarian and thieving Iraqi police and army.

Our last hope of getting out of this country by the end of the decade is an efficient and professional military and police force. Renewed efforts of military transition teams to prop up credible army and police units have largely failed. We have to watch with suspicious eyes to prevent civilian abuse, looting and vaguely homosexual assault on detainees.

We don’t even try to obstruct their cocaine use, which was apparent in Mosul when I saw piles of white powder on the desks at the police department. I declined an offer to sniff a line.

The only thing more impressive than the Shiite IA’s ability to beat the hell out of Sunni civilians is their inability to do anything on their own accord.

They simply cannot conduct patrols without us, but 1920 reigns freely in the neighborhoods they operate in. In a few months they are confident in their ability to combat Al Qaeda with minimal help from us, and the IA refuses to do a thirty minute patrol alone.

And we still refuse to take off the training wheels.

For now, our relationship with 1920 is one of mutual distrust and hatred, a sign of the times.

A conversation between a member of my platoon and a 1920 source is ripe with foreboding on the future of this partnership, and of the war to come.

“Do you want to kill me?” asked the soldier.

“Yes,” replied the source, coldly and without emotion. “But not today.”

FUTILE EXERCISE: ONLY A FEW MILLION MORE TO GO: COME ON HOME NOW!



A U.S. Army soldier from Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division guards detainees that were captured during an operation in the Amariyah neighborhood of west Baghdad, Aug. 2, 2007. (AP Photo/Petr David Josek)

More Notes From A Lost War:

“I Don’t Feel We Are Winning Over People”

“For The Militia, This Is Their Home”

“They Want To Have The Militia Here”

“So, Why Are We Here?”

Although commanders say the overall strategy is bringing Baghdad increasingly under U.S. and Iraqi government control, enlisted men and noncommissioned officers say it is flawed.

August 23, 2007 By Julian E. Barnes, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD -- In the east Baghdad strongholds of the Al Mahdi militia, U.S. efforts to weaken ties between the militant Shiite Muslim group and the Shiite population are falling short, say American soldiers assigned to carry out the plan.

The attempt to shift the loyalty of residents to the Iraqi central government is failing because the militia is far more popular than anything the Americans have to offer, many troops say.

Although commanders say the overall strategy is bringing Baghdad increasingly under U.S. and Iraqi government control, enlisted men and noncommissioned officers say it is flawed.

“They want to have the militia here,” said one experienced noncommissioned officer who has served multiple tours in Iraq. “So, why are we here?”

“These people are not going to change,” said the noncommissioned officer in east Baghdad, who, like other troops, spoke on condition of anonymity because his views differed from those of his commander.

The flaws underscore the difficulty of crafting a strategy that can work in an environment in which few trust the ability of U.S. forces or the central government to improve their neighborhoods.

The Al Mahdi militia is not a textbook insurgent group. To Iraqi Shiites, the militia offers a source for basic services and support for the political and religious work of popular anti-U.S. cleric Muqtada Sadr.

“The Mahdi militia provides services and protects the region,” said a 25-year-old clothing salesman in the Shiite neighborhood of New Baghdad who gave his nickname as Abu Atwar.

“I don’t feel we are winning over people. They all know we are going home. Units change, but the militia is always there,” said Spc. Tyrone Richardson, 24, of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry.

“For the militia, this is their home.

“They can walk up to any house and intimidate the people. They can get results. We can’t protect everybody all the time.”

[Even Occupation sponsored polls find the overwhelming majority of Iraqis favor killing U.S. troops. Iraq as a whole is for the “insurgents,” and will always be so until the last Occupation troop goes home. For Iraqis, the protection they want is from a military dictatorship run by George W. Bush. They aren’t idiots.]

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



Doctors bring another wounded U.S. soldier to the emergency room of the 28th Combat Support hospital in Baghdad August 22, 2007. REUTERS/Damir Sagolj

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

British Soldier & Terp Killed In Kandahar Province; Two Soldiers Wounded

30 Aug 07 Ministry of Defence

It is with deep regret that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the death of a Gunner from 51 Squadron, RAF Regiment along with a civilian interpreter in Kandahar Province, southern Afghanistan today (local time), Thursday 30 August 2007. Two other Servicemen received minor injuries.

Shortly after midnight local time, personnel from the Squadron were conducting a routine security patrol around Kandahar Airfield when one of their vehicles was caught in an explosion.

All the casualties were evacuated to the ISAF medical facility at Kandahar Airfield by emergency response helicopter. Sadly the serviceman was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital and the interpreter later died of his wounds.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Another Baghdad Bridge Attacked

8.30.07 CNN

An explosion wounded at least four Iraqi police officers Thursday while they were dismantling a bomb on a Baghdad bridge, Iraq's Interior Ministry said.

Assorted Resistance Action

29 Aug 2007 (KUNA) & Reuters & 30 Aug 2007 Reuters & (CNN)

Eight guard were wounded when a car bomb went off in the northern city of Kirkuk Wednesday evening. The attack targeted the convoy of Colonel Anwar Qader, chief of Al-Domiz police station, downtown Kirkuk.

In the northern city of Kirkuk, the police chief escaped an assassination attempt Thursday, authorities said. Two roadside bombs detonated near Gen. Burhan Tayyeb's convoy in central Kirkuk. The attack wounded two members of Tayyeb's security detail, but the chief escaped unharmed.

A policeman was injured in a bomb attack in the same city.

Guerrilla fighters shot dead an Iraqi soldier in southern Kirkuk on Tuesday, police said.

Two bodyguards of a government official in the southern city of Diwaniyah were killed by roadside bomb targeting their convoy, police said.

Guerrilla fighters killed one policeman in a drive-by shooting north of Najaf, 160 km (100 miles) south of Baghdad, a security source said.

At least six people were killed and four wounded when Guerrilla fighters attacked a party headquarters of the Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council [Collaborator] and set it a blaze in the al-Hamza district of Babil province south of Baghdad overnight, police said.

Guerrilla fighters attacked and set ablaze the headquarters of Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council [Collaborator] in Iskandariya, 40 km (25 miles) south of Baghdad on Tuesday night, police said.

Five policemen were killed when freedom fighters attacked a police checkpoint in the Hammam al-Alel area south of the northern city of Mosul on Tuesday night, police said.

Guerrilla fighters attacked a Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council [Collaborator] party headquarters with rocket-propelled grenades in central Najaf city and torched a SIIC party office in the nearby holy city of Kufa.

A sniper shot dead a policeman in Mosul on Tuesday, police said.

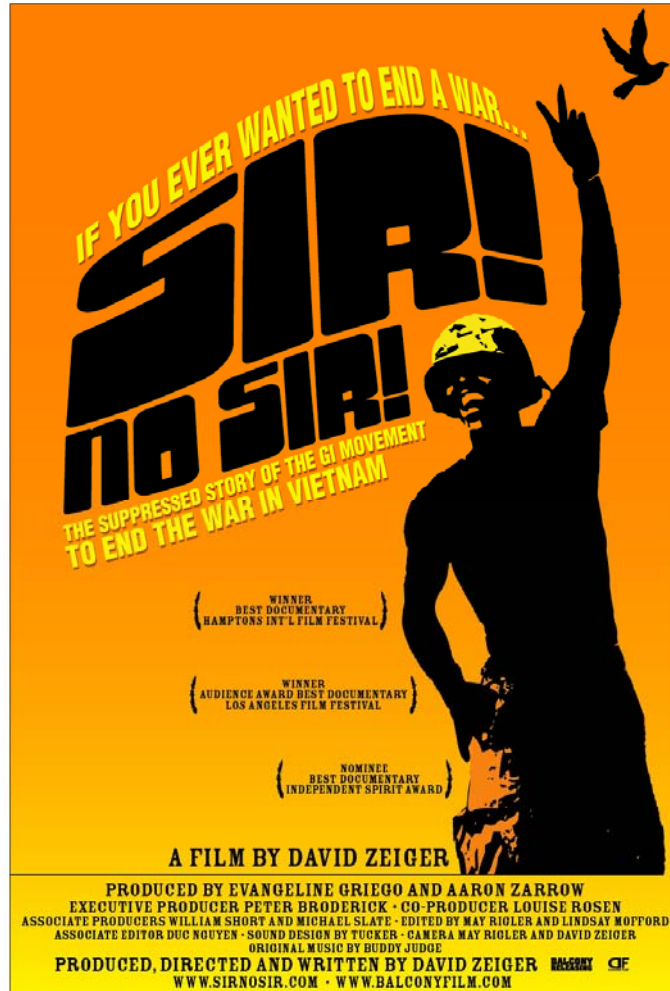
Guerrilla fighters killed an Iraqi soldier in a drive-by shooting in Hawija, 70 km (43 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, police said.

Insurgents killed a local energy official in Najaf near his house in a drive-by shooting on Wednesday night, police said. Najaf is 160 km (100 miles) south of Baghdad.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“By 1969/70 There Were GI
Activist Groups All Over The
Military; And The Military
Leadership Started To Panic”
“The Antiwar Movement That Organised
Itself In Barracks, On Aircraft Carriers, In
Country, At Listening Posts, In The Line
For Mess Hall”**



“Many of us are very convinced that Nixon had to go to an air war because he couldn’t trust us on the ground. And for good reason. We were shooting his officers and refusing direct orders to go in to combat.”

The police riot at the Democratic Convention was not augmented by troops, though a contingent was sent and held in reserve; “They had to keep them off the streets: it was no longer certain which side the GIs were on.”

8/22/07 By DeAnander, Stangoff.com [Excerpts]

What do you think of when you hear the words “Viet Nam AntiWar Movement” or “AntiWar Movement of the Sixties”?

What you most likely won’t think of — unless you remember it personally — is the veterans’ and soldiers’ anti-war movement.

You won’t think of the song “Soldier We Love You,” and you won’t remember that the FTA Show in which Jane Fonda starred drew cheering crowds of US soldiers throughout

its tour of Pacific Asia. You won't remember soldiers in Viet Nam wearing peace signs in place of their dog tags, or going to jail for refusing combat duty.

You probably won't remember radical Black soldiers making a direct connection between US policy in Viet Nam and US policy in the inner cities. Memory of the pivotal social moment of the Sixties has been selectively edited (especially through the sugar-coated amnesia pills cranked out by the Hollywood vending machine).

The soldiers' and veterans' antiwar movement has been erased from the public's memory.

This is why David Zeiger decided he had to make a documentary about the antiwar movement that we've been taught to forget: the antiwar movement that organised itself in barracks, on aircraft carriers, in country, at listening posts, in the line for mess hall.

His film is called *Sir! No Sir!* and in this viewer's opinion it's one of the best documentaries of recent years.

One of the strengths of Zeiger's film is that it doesn't start by systematically deconstructing a catalogue of lies about the Viet Nam War resistance movement (though there are so many, and such ripe targets for debunking). This is not a defensive or reactive documentary.

Instead, it starts by telling the story from the beginning, in eyewitness testimony drawn from hours of interviews with a core group of war resisters from inside the US military.

Debunking urban legends like the "spitting hippie chick" is saved for the second half, and is an easier task after we've had a guided tour of the situation and heard the stories for ourselves.

The object of the first half is to take us back in time, to make the Viet Nam War era real to us, to help us place ourselves in the shoes of the young people who were caught up in the draft and the resistance — to meet them as they were then, and as they are now, looking back. The montage of interview voice-overs, still photos, and video clips works exceptionally well to take us back in time.

The film opens with an audio excerpt from Radio First-Termer, one of the underground GI radio stations that operated in Viet Nam; against its selfconsciously rebellious voiceover we see footage from a US aerial attack force, napalm explosions and clouds of smoke in the wake of the planes, devastation sown across the beautiful countryside.

Cue up "Soldier Boy," a girl-group classic from the early Sixties.

Then the interviewees start to talk, looking back on how they joined the armed forces, what they believed, how they felt at the time, what it was like to come from military families, from a long tradition of soldiering and patriotism, and still find themselves in such doubt about what they were doing... "And we came to the conclusion... Let's hope we're doing the right thing, 'cause that's where we're going." "I was really proud of what I thought I was doing. The problem I had was realising that what I was doing was not

good.” Donald Duncan, Robert Levy, one after the other they explain how they came to a moment when conscience forced them to rebel against military authority.

The people being interviewed are some of the first US military personnel to ‘blow the whistle’ and face disciplinary action for refusing to carry out their assigned duties as part of the Viet Nam war effort. The film recounts the jail sentences handed out after courts martial for the early resisters; soldiers who refused to go, a doctor who refused to provide training to US soldiers, a decorated Ranger who refused to return and resigned from the service, Black soldiers convicted for holding meetings to discuss the racial politics of the war. “A majority of men that I met in the service were opposed (to the war)..”

The Tet Offensive in 1968 revealed that “victory” was nowhere near; the GI peace movement gained momentum as the gap between official government lies and the reality on the ground became more and more obvious and painful.

At about this time, nine young men in San Francisco went AWOL (July 1968) taking refuge in a church and refusing to go to Viet Nam. They chained themselves to ministers, but eventually the military arrived with bolt cutters, separated them from their clerical protectors and confined them in the Presidio. The “Nine for Peace” reminisce about their jail time; meanwhile in the outside world, veterans and conscripts were organising the first Viet Nam Veterans peace march. In a stroke of genius, the activists drop antiwar leaflets from a small private plane onto military bases in California — imitating the propaganda methods of the Americans in Viet Nam who were dumping leaflets on the “enemy”.

And all of this happens in the first few minutes of the film!

It has the appeal of a gripping thriller, without having to fictionalise or dramatise its material. Even in writing this review it seems easier and more appropriate to let the subjects speak for themselves; their voices tell the story — and their faces, which you’ll have to see the movie to appreciate.

The film continues to weave together contemporary television news coverage and archival footage with audio and video of interviews with the survivors, who discuss the fear and overreaction of the authorities. “I kinda came in as an AWOL and within 2 days of hitting the stockade, ya know, I was facing the death sentence — for singing We Shall Overcome.”

Those who saw combat recall confusion and the failure of meaning... “And the sergeant said, here’s this gook you killed, you did a good job. And I seen this guy and he was about my age, and... and I started thinking, ya know, why is he dead and I’m alive, it’s just a matter of pure luck. And I started thinking, I wonder if he had a girlfriend and how his mother’s gonna find out and things like that.

“And when you’ve been through an experience of that nature and you find out that it’s all lies and they’re just lying to the American people, and your silence means that you’re part of keeping that lie going... I couldn’t stop, I mean I couldn’t be silent, I had a responsibility to my friends and to the country in general. And to the Vietnamese.

“The last guy that I shot, I don’t consider he was the first guy I shot, but he was the first guy I shot where I was shooting it out barrel-to-barrel with him and looked him in the face afterwards, and I felt a certain amount of responsibility to him.

“To make it that his life — his death — not be in vain, meant that I had to try and advocate for the justness that he was fighting for. And I believe that he was fighting for his country. So I became involved in the Movement, that’s what happened with me.”

The film recalls the establishment of the GI coffeehouses, organised by civilian anti-war activists in support of anti-war soldiers. They offered live music, radical newspapers, community, sympathy, poetry, and the presence of returned GIs who warned raw recruits about what they could expect in country. The coffeehouses predictably came under attack: some were legally harassed, some were trashed, some were burnt out by either pro-war local yahoos or government agents.

By 1969/70 there were GI activist groups all over the military; and the military leadership started to panic.

Coffeehouses and GI organisers were persecuted by any legal means possible. “One whole wall was an American flag painted upside down — the stars part of it was a toilet seat. And if you lifted the toilet seat up, there was Lyndon Johnson’s picture. And when the police officer who came in to examine the place saw that, he just hit the roof... I spent 13 days in this little jail that still had a trapdoor from when they did lynchings, from before the Civil War, there was a hook up on the wall... but we weren’t going away.”

“But in defending those centres (coffeehouses) to exist, it pulled us off the base, which was where we were effective and powerful. Put us in a coffeehouse and we were just like another bunch of young people in a coffeehouse.

“But put us in a barracks with a stack of papers around us, and we were f—ing Atlas.”

And thus began the underground newspaper phenomenon....

“What I liked about it was that officers hated it. That had to be good.”

“If you were caught distributing literature on base, that was a court-martial offence.”

“There must have been close to 300 anti-war newspapers written, produced and published on bases all throughout the world. It was wherever there were GIs, American GIs in the world.”

The film makes its inevitable visit with Jane Fonda, making it clear that the GI press and the GI movement existed first — the soldiers themselves invented the “FTA” tag line well before Michael Alaimo and Jane Fonda did their comedy skits in what became the FTA Show, the anti-war answer to Bob Hope’s travelling vaudeville.

Fonda: “We are coming in response to what is probably the most powerful movement going on in this country — the movement of the men inside the military, and women,

who are beginning to understand how they are being used and what the nature of American foreign policy is. And we come there because they have asked us to..."

The footage of uniformed GIs cheering and applauding as the FTA Show players mock the government, the war, and the army, is surprising to anyone who has (and haven't most of us?) accepted the revised version of the history of those years: the anti-war movement was not some civilian phenomenon hostile to and separate from the US troops.

The heart of the movement was the GI resistance.

Another element of the antiwar movement that has been officially forgotten was the role of Black troops who consciously connected the genocidal tactics used against the Vietnamese with the repression and paramilitary police occupation of Black neighbourhoods back home.

"I seen Charlie, Luke the Gook, whatever you wan' call him, NVA, right there layin down, as I walk by; I look at him, he looks at me, and I'm goin about my business, this man ain't doin me nothin, he ain't hurtin me in no type of way, he ain't hurtin none of my Black people, none of my families, so why should I shoot him?" "The only place a Black man should fight is where he is being oppressed. And I'm not being oppressed in Japan, I'm not being oppressed in Viet Nam, I'm not being oppressed in Pakistan."

"I remember one day the first sergeant was talking about Gooks. Show you how naive I was, I didn't know that Gook was a racial slur. I didn't really understand that, yeah. And I remember one day he was talking about Gooks and a light went off in my head and I said Wow, a Gook is the same thing as a Nigger."

The military responded with heavy handed repression, jailing Black soldiers merely for doing "the dap," a complex handshake exchanged to express solidarity and Black resistance. The stockades in Viet Nam filled up with Black GIs.

"There's always something that reminds you of the things that you've done in Viet Nam, the things that you've seen. I seen what I saw, what was going on in the States. Dudes are running down the streets wearing the same kind of uniform that I got. They're in Memphis. They're beating up on people — wait a minute. We're over here beatin up on people over here, and you're beatin up on Black people, dogs are running everywhere, tanks are on the streets..."

In 1968, uniformed soldiery were used against US citizens on US soil. "We just got back from fighting the North Vietnamese and now they want us to fight the Americans."

The police riot at the Democratic Convention was not augmented by troops, though a contingent was sent and held in reserve; "They had to keep them off the streets: it was no longer certain which side the GIs were on."

Also in 1968, in the Spring, the My Lai massacre took place. For over a year the US military pretended that only "enemy soldiers" were killed, but the news got out. It was whispered from recruit to recruit in line for mess hall at the training bases, and even civilians became aware; the scandal raised a stink around the world. The Winter Soldier

Investigation was instigated by troops, to show that My Lai and events like it were not “an isolated instance of aberrant behaviour” but fully conformant with US policy; VVAW was founded. “Why are they going after Calley, when Calley was doing precisely what we were all told to do when we were in Viet Nam, essentially: which was Kill them All, and Sort it Out Later.”

No one over the rank of Lieutenant was prosecuted for the My Lai massacre (sound familiar?). During the Winter Soldier hearings, GIs testified to the brutalising tactics of basic training and the brutality that they witnessed and/or committed in country. “And I went and listened to the three days of testimony and came away emotionally drained and floored by it. I never grasped, even up to that point, how powerful was the genocidal plans and strategy of the US towards the Vietnamese people — on every level, whether it was Agent Orange or Dow Chemical reconfiguring the napalm, ‘cause the napalm wasn’t sticking to the Vietnamese skin enough...”

In response to the growing failure in Viet Nam, Nixon invaded Cambodia (sound familiar?). The National Guard at Kent State opened fire on protesters with lethal ammo and killed four students.

And the soldiers marched and demonstrated along with civilians outside military bases, those at Fort Hood declaring “Armed Farces Day” in mockery of Armed Forces Day.

More seriously, morale was collapsing in country, with drug use, desertion, mutiny and fragging on the rise. Nixon announced “Vietnamisation” (substituting locals for US troops — sound familiar?) combined with an aggressive air bombardment campaign [sound familiar?].

US troops were no longer officially in combat; but in practise, small units were stranded on the border between Viet Nam and Cambodia, facing orders to go out on reconnaissance and night ambush in the face of vastly superior force.

Some units refused to go; one unit wrote a petition which they smuggled back to “the outside world”: “In the event of mass prosecution of our unit, our only hope would be public opinion.”

US troops started refusing to fight. “I’ve seen more than one big group meeting where actually all they talk about is fragging, as we call ‘em, pigs.” “By pigs you’re talking about your senior enlisted men and your officers?” “That’s correct, that’s one of our most common terms.”

Unsurprisingly, Black antiwar soldiers were made scapegoats for these violent rebellions. The film-maker goes in some detail into the tragic case of Billy Dean Smith, scapegoated and jailed for a fragging that he almost certainly did not commit.

“Many of us are very convinced that Nixon had to go to an air war because he couldn’t trust us on the ground. And for good reason. We were shooting his officers and refusing direct orders to go in to combat.”

“So we were burning our commander in effigy, and I looked up and there was a large group of people on the perimeter that had circled us, and it was the Security

Police. And they were starting to close in on us. And they had dogs. And once they got close enough to figure out what we were doing... they joined us."

Then Kissinger and Nixon decided to "bomb Viet Nam back to the Stone Age" as a farewell message before the Americans left. "I think everybody that was involved in our operations was faced with the stark reality of participating in something which bordered on what we considered to be criminal, genocidal, unprecedented. So we felt very much in solidarity with other GIs who were refusing to participate, particularly people refusing to fly B52s over the North. People stopped producing the intelligence product that we were supposed to be producing..." "The Air Force was no longer a reliable instrument for carrying out the war."

The Viet Nam war ended on April 30th 1975 — partly due to the courageous and determined efforts of the GI anti-war movement. And the rewriting of history started right away.

The power of this rewriting is emphasised in a wonderful interview with Jerry Lembcke, author of *The Spitting Image*, an investigation of the urban legend of the "spat-upon US Veteran" returning from Viet Nam.

He could not find any documentary evidence that any such incident ever took place, and deconstructs various forms of the urban legend with wry humour.

"If you went back and looked at the front pages of newspapers in 1969, 1970, what were you gonna see on the front pages of newspapers about Viet Nam vets?"

"They're in the streets. They're political activists. They're on the Capitol Mall. They're giving the Nixon Administration fits. This stuff was in living rooms all over America. So people knew this, and this is an important piece we're talking about, how memory about the war has been re-written, has been reconstructed. This is gone. This has been erased. This had been displaced."

The purpose of this documentary is to remember what has been erased. It closes with the beautiful young Rita Martinson singing the classic anti war song "Soldier We Love You":

I read that you took a stand
and refused to kill in Viet Nam
you said no man was your enemy
if what he's fighting for is to be free

soldier we love you
yeah soldier we love you
standing strong 'cause it's hard to do
what you know you must do, cause you know that it's true
yes it's true

they'll lock you up in their stockade
yeah they'll lock you up 'cause they're afraid...

The film is dedicated to the memory of two antiwar GIs who died from Agent Orange poisoning — which the US government denied and covered up for as long as it possibly could (sound familiar?).

“Sir No Sir” is a haunting documentary. It reminds us how easily and convincingly history can be rewritten in the space of a generation.

Will there come a day when the Bush White House, or the Clinton or Obama White House, will find that it cannot trust its grunts on the ground, and its Air Force is no longer a reliable instrument for carrying out genocidal policy in the name of realpolitik?

And what can we do, to hasten that day?

(Note: the DVD release contains many, many minutes of additional interview footage, all of it well worth watching and quoting. But I had to stop somewhere. This is one DVD worth owning. –DeA)

Sir! No Sir!:
At A Theatre Near You!
To find it: <http://www.sirnosir.com/>

**The Sir! No Sir! DVD is on sale now, exclusively at
www.sirnosir.com.**

Also available is a Soundtrack CD (which includes the entire song from the FTA Show, “Soldier We Love You”), theatrical posters, tee shirts, and the DVD of “A Night of Ferocious Joy,” a film about the first hip-hop antiwar concert against the “War on Terror.”

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Vietnam GI: Reprints Available

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Edited by Vietnam Veteran Jeff Sharlet from 1968 until his death, this newspaper rocked the world, attracting attention even from Time Magazine, and extremely hostile attention from the chain of command. The pages and pages of letters in

the paper from troops in Vietnam condemning the war are lost to history, but you can find them here.

The Military Project has copied complete sets of Vietnam GI. The originals were a bit rough, but every page is there. Over 100 pages, full 11x17 size.

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MORE:

The Army Whore House Blues

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: August 29, 2007
Subject: The Army Whore House Blues by Dennis

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

The Army Whore House Blues

The tanks are worthless in Vietnam, it's too wet, they get stuck in the mud in the rice paddies and jungle. So they hang around the landing zone hills doing nothing but getting drunk. The tank Commander in a drunken rage argument with the whores drove over the whore house again and again Later, infantry Soldiers come slopping in all nasty, sweaty, thinking of showers

from 55 gallon drums with shower heads above their heads, food not in a can
smoking toking joking relaxing. The whore house, one of the few luxuries the grunts look forward to, is flattened, it's rippled tin roof and sides mish mashed
boards from Army throw aways, lay on the ground like a grave site and the whores are gone, leaving the Soldiers feeling "Fucked Again."
They hear of a restaurant down the hill by the shacks on Highway One but who cares
Tom and Dave shower, put on clean jungle rags and stroll down the hill with their M-16s and a little money in their pockets
They walk through the doorway and mamason has square tables with red and white checkered tablecloths, an ashtray in the middle and proper chairs
They sit down and Tom asks for two beers and mamason brings two ice cold Budwiesers. Tom and Dave take in her place
it's a long straw hut, somewhat cool inside, they are the only ones there
"Sometimes I feel like the Army is treating us like whores," Tom comments,
"they fuck us until we are dead or wounded bad and useless to them like an old whore." Dave says "We should go kill that tank Commander."
Tom asks mamason what she has to eat and she shouts "Stew."
He asks her what else she has and she shouts "Stew." They order two bowls of stew.
Out comes hot thick glass bowls of stew with spoons and napkins.
After getting down to the bottom of the bowl, Tom says "The meat is grey,
what kind of meat is this?" Dave asks mamason and she shouts "Wat."
"What?" "Wat" "Rat" "?" "Yes." Dave tells Tom it's rat.
Tom says "That's what I feel like, a cheap Army whore lower than a rat."
Dave orders two more Buds and two more bowls of stew.
Mamason smiles.

Troops Invited:

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

60% Of Iraqis Want U.S. Troops Dead: Big Surprise



8.21.07: Foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. 3-509 Para-Infantry Regiment stand guard over an Iraqi family as other soldiers search their house during a night home invasion along the Tigris river south of Baghdad. (AFP/David Furst)

“You go up the stairs. You grab the man of the house. You rip him out of bed in front of his wife. You put him up against the wall. “You have junior-level troops, PFCs, specialists will run into the other rooms and grab the family, and you’ll group them all together. Then you go into a room and you tear the room to shreds and you make sure there’s no weapons or anything that they can use to attack us.

Sgt. John Bruhns

[61% of Iraqis say they approve of attacks on U.S.-led forces in their country, up from 47 percent in January. A solid majority of Shiite and Sunni Arabs approved of the attacks, according to the poll. 9/27/2006 By BARRY SCHWEID, AP & Program on International Policy Attitudes

[Iraqis feel about U.S. troops trampling them in the dirt the same way Americans felt about British troops trampling them in the dirt in 1776. They are right to resist by any means necessary. T]

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Detainee Murdered By Immigration Agents: They Took Away The Medicine That Kept Him Alive Victor Arellano's Fellow Detainees Staged a Protest Over His Treatment

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

Aug. 9, 2007 By Sandra Hernandez, Daily Journal Staff Writer

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 9, 2007 - The handful of prescription drugs Victor Arellano took each morning kept him alive.

But Arellano, in the throes of full-blown AIDS, was denied that medicine when immigration officials locked him up at the San Pedro detention center, other detainees said.

Two months later Arellano, 23, died in custody - too weak to walk to the bathroom alone, but shackled to a hospital bed.

Arellano's family and his fellow detainees said the detention center's staff denied him his critical medication despite repeated requests.

"He called me two weeks before he died and told me he was afraid," said Arellano's mother, Olga. "He kept telling me how frustrated he felt because he wanted to see a doctor. He asked for his medicine but no one listened to him."

Victor came to the United States from Mexico as a child. A transgender person, he was known as Victoria Arellano to his fellow detainees, who routinely referred to him as her.

"She was so sick that if you tried to move her she would scream," said Walter Ayala, another detainee, recalling her final two weeks.

Arellano spent most days in a bunk bed, complaining of debilitating headaches, back pain, nausea and stomach cramps, Ayala said.

"This is the most extreme case I've encountered in my research," said Megan McLemore of Human Rights Watch in New York. She is preparing a report, due out this fall, on HIV/AIDS conditions in U.S. immigration detention centers.

"We have received a lot of complaints from detainees and their advocates," McLemore said. "The complaints are about the delays in getting medication and continuity issues where people get moved around."

Three years ago, doctors at a Los Angeles free clinic said Arellano did not require skilled nursing care and was asymptomatic.

She was prescribed daily doses of bactrim, a prophylactic antibiotic given to HIV patients to prevent pulmonary infections from developing into life-threatening pneumonia. Arellano was later switched to dapasone, another antibiotic.

Arellano was still taking dapasone when she was sent to the San Pedro detention center in May.

Medical experts said taking HIV patients off dapasone could produce deadly results.

"The consequences of taking someone off that medication is that within a few weeks a patient may unfortunately develop pneumonia and then not respond to treatment," said Homayoon Khanlou, chief of medicine for AIDS Healthcare Foundation, the largest AIDS clinic in the U.S., based in Los Angeles.

Arellano's mother said doctors at the San Pedro hospital said her son's body was wracked by meningitis and pneumonia.

Arellano's final days were spent in a dormitory-style cell built to hold 50 men but often houses as many as 80.

Arellano's care fell to fellow detainees, who soaked their bath towels in water to cool her fever and used a cardboard box as a makeshift trash can to gather her vomit.

"We all asked the guards for help, to take Victoria to the infirmary but no one did anything," said Oscar Santander, a fellow detainee.

"The last week was the worst," Santander said. "She couldn't stand so we took turns taking her to the bathroom. She was vomiting and had terrible diarrhea."

Arellano was taken to the infirmary and on July 13 given drugs to treat nausea and amoxicillin, an antibiotic, according to a prescription signed by Jeff Brinkley, a senior nurse practitioner assigned to the San Pedro detention center.

Medical experts said amoxicillin is not used to treat AIDS-related infections.

"It would not be my drug of choice because it would not cover the problems or infections an HIV person would have, such as a lung infection or meningitis," said the AIDS Healthcare Foundation's Khanlou.

Arellano couldn't keep the drugs down and began vomiting blood, Santander said.

By nightfall, Arellano looked so pale and weak that 80 detainees staged a protest, ignoring an order to get in line for the nightly head count.

The men began chanting "hospital," said Abel Gutierrez, a Mexican detainee.

"She was so sick and they wouldn't do anything," Gutierrez said.

Arellano was taken by ambulance to a San Pedro hospital. Less than 24 hours later, she was back in the detention center, crippled by intense vomiting and bouts of diarrhea.

Arellano was again rushed to the hospital.

This time, Arellano was taken to Little Company of Mary Hospital's intensive care unit, where she died July 20, shackled to a bed with two immigration agents standing guard at the hospital room door.

Raimondi said 62 immigrants, including Arellano, have died in federal immigration custody since 2004, three at the San Pedro center.

In 2000, federal immigration officials adopted medical standards. However, those standards are not legally enforceable, unlike those for inmates in state or federal prisons.

"The fact is there is no legal recourse for immigrants in detention, and that is a major systemic problem," McLemore said. "Both the federal and state prison system have enforceable detention standards, but immigration has nothing like that."

The result, immigration advocates say, are deaths like that of a Barbadian woman who died in 2005 while detained in Virginia after she was denied her medication for high blood pressure.

That same year, Haitian writer Edwidge Danticat's uncle died in a South Florida detention center after he was stopped at the Miami International Airport, where his medications for hypertension and an inflamed prostate were seized.

"The No. 1 complaint I hear about is the lack of medical care for immigrant detainees," said Tom Jawetz, a staff attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union's national prison project in Washington, D.C. "And typically the complaints come from detainees or lawyers around the country."

In June, the ACLU's national prison project filed a federal lawsuit over medical conditions at the San Diego Correction Facility, a privately run detention center.

The lawsuit came after a detainee died and several others immigrants suffered life-threatening illnesses.

Francisco Castaneda, a Salvadoran immigrant who was held at San Diego and San Pedro, repeatedly asked to be taken to the infirmary when he was at San Pedro last year, according to his lawyer, Conal Doyle.

Castaneda would show guards his bloodstained underwear, hoping to persuade them to let him see a nurse or doctor, Doyle said.

In December, the ACLU's Jawetz sent immigration officials a letter asking San Pedro officials to provide medical treatment, but nothing happened.

Castaneda's health grew worse after a small lesion on his groin was left untreated for 10 months while he was in detention, Doyle said. Castaneda has since been released. His penis was amputated, and he is now battling penile and lymph node cancer, Doyle said.

The ACLU's lawsuit comes too late for Arellano's family, who struggle to understand an unexpected death and the federal government's actions during those final days.

Sitting in her Ventura County apartment, Olga looks at the bags of medication her son took and cries.

She said her greatest comfort has come from Arellano's fellow detainees, who last week pooled their own money and sent the family \$245.

"I can only find the strength to talk about this because I want people to know what is going on inside that place," Olga said.

"I don't want another family to have to live through this nightmare."

NBC Launches 'To Catch a Senator'

August 30, 2007 The Borowitz Report

“Dateline,” the NBC newsmagazine which has scored big ratings for its “To Catch a Predator” investigations, announced today that it would introduce a new investigative series this fall, entitled “To Catch a Senator.”

At a press conference in New York, NBC News president Steve Capus said that “To Catch a Senator” would focus the “Dateline” investigation team’s energies on “the number one menace in America today: pervy Republican senators.”

While he indicated that plans for the program are still being developed, Mr. Capus said that “To Catch a Senator” would use an airport bathroom as the nerve center for its sting operation.

Specifically, he said that the program would deploy “Predator” host Chris Hansen as a decoy to lure depraved senators into lewd contact.

“Chris will be waiting in one of the bathroom stalls, and when the senator taps on the wall, Chris will kind of pop out of the stall and start grilling him,” Mr. Capus said. “We’ll nail that bastard faster than he can say ‘I’m not gay.’”

But even as NBC trumpeted its latest “Dateline” spin-off, industry insiders wondered whether there would be an adequate supply of sex-crazed senators to keep the program going for more than a few episodes.

For his part, Mr. Capus brushed off such concerns, telling reporters, “As long as there are Republican senators out there who oppose gay marriage, there will always be plenty of pervs.”

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