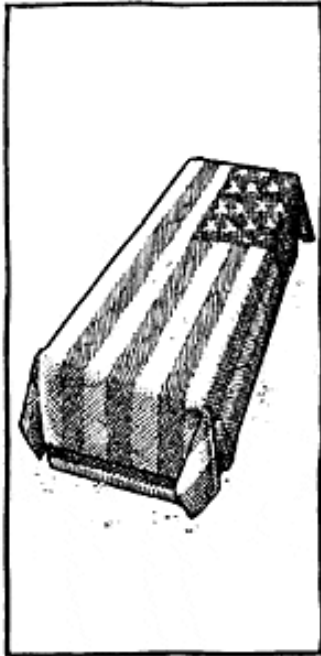


GI SPECIAL 5127:



BEN SARGENT
© 2007 Ben Sargent
Lipstick News - 9/30/07

KILLED.



WOUNDED.



MISSING IN ACTION.



Burma: Army Mutiny Reported: “Troops Refuse To Fire On Crowds”

[Thanks to Dennis Serdel, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, who sent this in. He writes: This is what we need.]

September 28, 2007 News Desk Special.co.uk

Reports from Rangoon suggest soldiers are mutinying.

It is unclear the numbers involved.

Reports cite heavy shooting in the former Burmese capital.

The organisation Helfen ohne Grenzen (Help without Frontiers) is reporting that “Soldiers from the 66th LID (Light Infantry Division) have turned their weapons against other government troops and possibly police in North Okkalappa township in Rangoon and are defending the protesters.

“At present unsure how many soldiers involved.”

Soldiers in Mandalay, where unrest has spread to as we reported this morning, are also reported to have refused orders to act against protesters.

Some reports claim that many soldiers remained in their barracks.

More recent reports now maintain that soldiers from the 99th LID now being sent there to confront them.

Growing numbers of protestors are gathering in Rangoon, with 10,000 reported at the Traders Hotel and 50,000 at the Thein Gyi market. The police are reported to have turned water cannons against crowds at Sule Pagoda.

Many phone lines into the Burmese state have now been cut, mobile networks have been disabled and the national internet service provider has been taken off-line.

MORE:

Disgruntled Officers Have Also Expressed Their Backing For Demonstrators

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in. She writes: In the last big protest against the junta in 1988 many monks were amongst the thousands killed, and some are still imprisoned, for their roll in the demonstrations. I have a feeling that this time things will work out differently. Living conditions are so bad that something has to happen. The monks are highly respected and foreign opposition to the junta is growing. Will the army mutiny? This may happen. See below:]

September 27, 2007 Matthew Weaver and Mark Tran, Guardian Unlimited [Excerpts]

Some Burmese troops have declared their support for the Buddhist monks who have led mass protests in the first apparent sign of disaffection in the army, exiled Burmese sources said today.

Disgruntled officers have formed a group called the Public Patriot Army Association and expressed their backing for demonstrators in a letter drafted on Tuesday.

“On behalf of the armed forces, we declare our support for the non-violent action of the Buddhist monks and members of the public and their peaceful expression,” it said.

“We are all encountering crisis in the economy and in society, political difficulties of various kinds of oppression. Those realities not only affect the public and Buddhist monks. We in the military are also affected.”

Burmese exiles in Thailand, who translated the letter, said it was a source of encouragement to the anti-government movement. [No shit?]

They reported that Burma’s military rulers were so concerned by mutiny in the army that they had ordered the arrest of the colonel in charge of governing Rangoon.

Any sign of dissent within the ranks would be a cause for alarm for the three-man military junta.

The junta is led by 74-year-old General Than Shwe, who has been acting as the head of state since 1992, and the military has ruled Burma since 1962.

Gen Than Shwe’s career included a stint in the department of psychological warfare. Said to be superstitious, he reportedly consults astrologers.

Generals Maung Aye and Soe Win, both hardliners, complete the triumvirate.

The junta reinforced its reputation for paranoia by moving the capital deep into the mountainous jungle at Naypyidaw, outside the town of Pynmana and 230 miles north of Rangoon.

Activists said the move was designed to insulate the generals from decades of misrule. [These idiots deserve to get wiped out. Imagine some U.S. military dictators abandoning New York City, DC, and all the other cities to move their CHQ to Antelope Crotch, Wyoming. T]

MORE:

“The People Are Both Afraid And Highly Motivated By The Desperate Situation”

“I’ve Just Seen So Many People In Terrible Poverty”

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

September 26, 2007 The Guardian [Excerpts]

Min Neing, an unemployed 22-year-old economics graduate and member of the National League for Democracy, has taken part in four days of demonstrations in Rangoon. Min Neing’s name has been changed to protect his identity. He was talking to Ian MacKinnon

“When the first day of the monks’ protests started on September 18, people were shocked and amazed. They never thought such a thing could happen, but they began to join the monks.

People are desperate for political change, but they’re also becoming very poor.

“I’ve just seen so many people in terrible poverty.

“Many people can no longer afford to send their children to school. They can’t even pay for two meals a day for their families now. They’re down to one meal a day, it’s that bad. As a result many are malnourished and they’re falling ill. But then they can’t even find the money for medical bills.

“With all of that has come the growing injustice. There are more and more restrictions every day.

“Sure, we had difficulties before, but the price hikes were the straw that broke the camel’s back. Living standards have gone down and down. The middle classes have become poor, and the poor have become destitute.

“The electricity goes off in Rangoon for five or six hours at a time without warning. Now the city’s deserted after 10pm at night except for a few people waiting for the last buses home, if they can afford it.

“People who work in the city’s industrial zone have to walk to work because they can’t afford the bus fares since the fuel price hikes. That means they’re walking for 45 minutes or an hour, both to and from work.

“The people are both afraid and highly motivated by the desperate situation.”

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward GI Special along, or send us the address if you wish and we’ll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing

resistance to the war, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Killed In South Baghdad

29 September 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070929-10

BAGHDAD — A Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier was killed during a small arms fire attack while conducting combat operations in a southern section of the Iraqi capital Sept. 29.

School Mourns Soldier's Death



09/13/2007 By: Ilin Chen, TWEAN Newschannel

FAYETTEVILLE -- Specialist Steven Elrod, 20, was a highly decorated soldier, garnering a number of awards since he joined the Army in February 2006. His military career ended this week in Iraq.

Elrod was one of seven soldiers with the 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team who died after their truck rolled over near Baghdad. They're part of the 82nd Airborne Division unit that deployed to Iraq in January as part of President Bush's "troop surge."

Before he was a paratrooper, Steven Elrod was a student at Massey Hill Classical High School in Fayetteville. In fact, he was voted the senior with the "prettiest eyes" by his classmates. Elrod graduated in 2005, but he would visit his former teachers and let them know how he was doing. Barbara Brunson taught him computer applications and

keyboarding. She thought of him as the son she never had, so the news of his death hit her hard.

“He was just a beautiful person in every aspect,” she recalled. Brunson also said that Elrod told her he felt good when she asked how he felt about going into the military. “We have lost an excellent citizen,” she added. “He was a smart young man who should have been one of our leaders.”

Carol Lloyd taught Elrod math in his junior year at Massey Hill. She remembered he was a quiet and respectful student who was well-liked by his peers. She said the whole school is affected by Elrod’s death because they’re a small, close-knit community.

“We love them all dearly, so you know it’s hard,” Lloyd said.

Several of Elrod’s former teachers said he was a bright student who joined the Army to help pay for college. “I was a little surprised when he chose the military,” said Jennifer Czechowski, who was his English teacher.

Czechowski said Elrod was interested in pursuing a journalism career and even shadowed a sports writer for the local newspaper. She added that he was a great writer. “He really had a lot of potential to go on and be somebody great, and it’s just a shame that he didn’t get the chance,” she said.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



An unexploded shell lies on the ground as a U.S. soldier inspects the scene of an attack outside a Baghdad morgue. (AFP/Ali Yussef)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed; Nationality Not Announced

September 30, 2007 REUTERS

One soldier from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was killed in a clash with Taliban rebels in eastern Afghanistan on Saturday, a spokesman for the NATO-led force said.

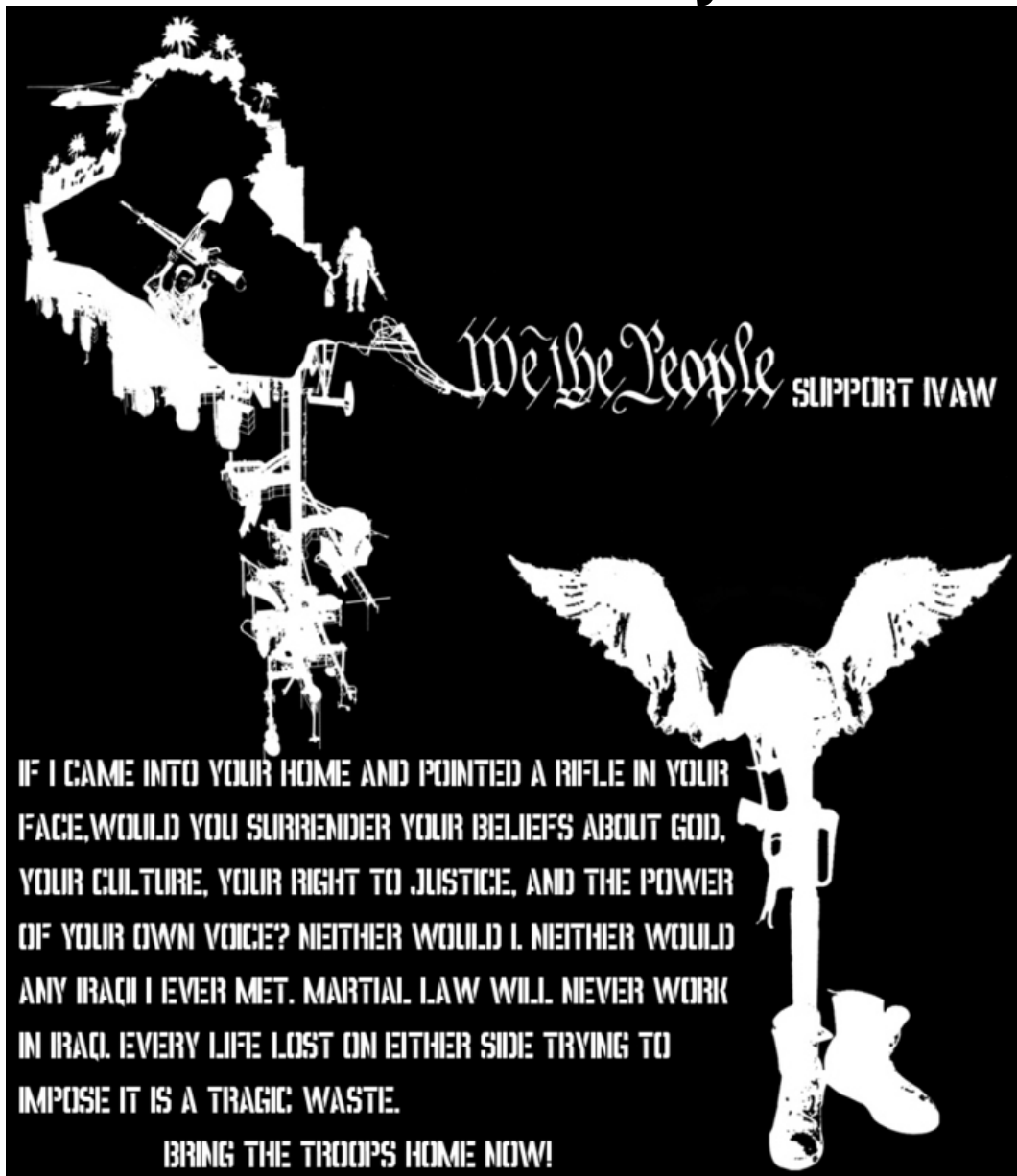
TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Army Cpl. Jason Hernandez in Streetsboro, Ohio, Sept. 17, 2007. Hernandez was killed by a roadside bomb on Sept. 7, his 21st birthday, while serving in Mosul, Iraq. (AP Photo/Amy Sancetta)

Iraq Veterans Against the War Hookah Party



[Thanks to John Osmand, who sent this in.]

Iraq Veterans Against The War Hookah Party

**When:
Saturday Oct 06, 2007 at 7:00 PM**

**Where:
Ocean's Mediterranean Cuisine
1708 Devonshire St.
Northridge, CA 91325
United States**

(\$10 suggested donation)

Come and have fun at our Hookah Party Fundraiser to support IVAW end the war!

Hookah, Beer, & good times!

Come and meet members of our armed forces who have served in Iraq and who want to put an end to the occupation.

A \$10 donation will be accepted. No one will be turned away for lack of funds.

Invite all your friends!

10th Mountain Division In Iraq:

**“16 Who Said They Were
Disgruntled About Their
Leadership”
[And Those 16 Out Of 36 Sampled
Got Buried In The Middle Of A Long,
Long News Story]**

September 30, 2007 By DAMIEN CAVE, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

MAHMUDIYA, Iraq — On bases big and small south of Baghdad, the scrambled reality of war has become routine: an unending loop of anxious driving in armored Humvees, gallons of Gatorade, laughter at the absurd and 4 a.m. raids into intimate Iraqi bedrooms.

This is Iraq for the 3,300 soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division's Second Brigade, and many have come to the unfortunate realization that it now feels more like home than home.

No brigade in the Army has spent more days deployed since Sept. 11, 2001, and with only a few weeks to go before ending their 15-month tour, the soldiers here are eager to go.

The Army screens returning soldiers for post-traumatic stress disorder and other signs of trouble, but for many, the struggle has already begun.

During one recent week, Colonel Carr [Lt. Col. Reagon P., the behavioral health officer] said, he met with 3 soldiers contemplating suicide, 12 who could not sleep, 5 who feared returning to a dysfunctional marriage and 16 who said they were disgruntled about their leadership.



FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

The Lying Bullshit About It Taking At Least A Year To Get Troops Out Of Iraq Is – Would You Believe It – Lying Bullshit:

“Fast Withdrawal Is Safer Than Slow — It Minimizes The Slow Bleed Of Occupation, And It Avoids Leaving Dangerously Weak Forces In-Country For Long Periods”

“The Longer We Stay, The More Men We Lose. How Can Anyone Believe That Piles Of Junk Are Worth Anyone’s Life?”

September 24, 2007 by Gregory Cochran, The American Conservative [Excerpts]

Finally, we’re hearing concrete talk about withdrawal from Iraq.

Probably this has something to do with public opinion: in a recent Gallup poll, 71 percent supported leaving Iraq in a year or less.

Most public discussions of the actual mechanics of withdrawal have emphasized how difficult it will be.

Army sources, many of them, estimate that it will take time. Most reports say 12 to 20 months. They cite endless lists of equipment that must be removed—everything from tanks to silverware.

Analysts say that most troops would probably be airlifted, reasoning that flying would be safer than Iraqi highways. Military experts also worry that we will face armed opposition and have to fight our way out.

Of course, military experts have said many things about Iraq over the years—and how often have they proved correct?

The first obvious objection is that it didn’t take that long to invade Iraq in the first place.

We crossed the border on March 20, 2003, and smashed the Iraqi government and military in about three weeks. Baghdad was formally occupied by April 9.

We managed to win easily, facing 13 infantry divisions, 10 mechanized/armored divisions, and miscellaneous paramilitary forces—a more-or-less organized force numbering approximately 400,000 men. We lost only 139 soldiers in the invasion phase, although we’ve had more than 3,000 killed in the occupation.

Modern armies, including ours, are mobile.

So why would it take so much longer to leave?

The short answer is that it won't.

If we couldn't create a compliant Iraq with 150,000 troops, we won't manage it with 50,000 or 20,000.

Many of our presidential candidates—you can recognize them by the humps on their backs — are talking about retaining smaller numbers of troops in Iraq, hoping to achieve some political end or at least disguise defeat, but that pig won't fly.

Our forces are tremendously powerful (compared to the insurgents) and never lose battles, but leaving small residual forces in a fundamentally hostile country—a solid majority of non-Kurdish Iraqis now find attacks on coalition forces acceptable—is asking for trouble.

The British tried that in Basra, and they took rocket and mortar fire every day while achieving nothing.

From this point of view, decisions about moving day become straightforward.

For example, what should we do about the vast amount of non-combat materiel in Iraq?

We've accumulated dentist chairs, chapel pews, swimming-pool filtration systems, office complexes, multimillion-dollar fitness centers, air-conditioners, refrigerators, prefab latrines, Coke machines, even 50-inch plasma TVs.

We have stockpiles of 50-gallon oil drums full of battery acid, contaminated oil, and industrial solvents.

We're being told that it all has to be shipped home.

I have a better idea: leave it all behind.

I'm sure that the Army bureaucracy thinks that we've got to move these refrigerators, got to move these TV's.

They're wrong.

Maybe they fear that leaving a single vending machine behind means that they will have to personally answer to the Coca-Cola Company.

The longer we stay, the more men we lose.

How can anyone believe that piles of junk are worth anyone's life?

We could spend extra time in Iraq in order to ship home toxic waste, but we can do without that kind of cosmic irony. Better to gift-wrap those drums and let the Iraqis steal them. I say it again: bring out men, weapons, ammo, vital spares—leave the pews.

Leaving behind everything but war-fighting equipment makes the move manageable.

We've shipped something like 9 million tons of stuff to Iraq, but only a small fraction—less than 10 percent—is war materiel.

Anthony Cordesman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies says that we have somewhere between 140,000 and 200,000 tons of crucial equipment and supplies in Iraq, as well as 15-20,000 vehicles and major weapons. That can't add up to more than half a million tons total.

Those vehicles can be driven out.

The "crucial equipment" would have to be trucked out, which would take a week or two of normal traffic on the main road to Kuwait.

We already make over 1,000 trips a day, and the trucks must be nearly empty when returning.

With this one choice, we've made the move almost 20 times easier.

Some may object on the grounds that all those creature comforts and office supplies cost billions of dollars, but even if you put aside for the moment the extra lives lost in a long, drawn-out exit, remember that the occupation is costing us \$10 billion a month.

Staying even one extra week to get out the last of the porta-potties is like running into a burning building to save your sea monkeys.

Sometimes the Army answers a different question than the one the reporters asked.

They wanted to know how long it would take to leave Iraq, but they were told how long it would take to get everything back to the States—which is not the same thing at all.

Once our forces get into Kuwait, they're safe, even if they're not yet home.

Of course, in some cases the professionals are being honest and crazy at the same time.

They keep saying that it's going to take amazingly long to get tanks and vehicles home, since they must be cleaned painstakingly in order to meet Agriculture Department regulations. In fact, that need not slow down our exit at all. We can wash them down in Kuwait.

More fundamentally, thinking that regulations trump all other considerations in a real, albeit pointless, war is, not to put too fine a point on it, nuts.

If we can violate the Geneva Conventions and the UN Charter, we can probably get away with bending a few bureaucratic rules.

The same analysts, most of them anyway, have expressed concern that we will have to fight our way out of Iraq.

I think there's a fair chance that we will face some opposition, although more practical Iraqis will probably be busy looting our camps as we abandon them, just as they have looted the bases abandoned by the British in the south.

But we can be sure that the opposition will be insignificant and our casualties few, since the insurgents we face in Iraq would be extremely weak in a conventional fight.

Remember that we lost fewer than 150 men during the invasion, when we faced 23 divisions, organized troops armed with (according to U.S. estimates) almost 2,000 main battle tanks, 3,500 armored personnel carriers, and 2,000 artillery pieces.

The insurgents today have no tanks, no APCs, no heavy artillery, and yet we're supposed to worry about the havoc they would wreak during any withdrawal.

We've been seeing about 100 men a month killed in action in 2007, we'd lose fewer in a rapid withdrawal than we would by staying one more month.

The insurgents excel at planting IEDs and blending into the population—but that's all they're good at. In a conventional battle, they would do about as well as a rabbit in a lawnmower. If you're worried that the Iraqi army we're always training might turn on us, relax: we never gave them any heavy weapons, which shows that someone was thinking ahead.

Since the "fight our way out" risks have been wildly exaggerated, planners should reconsider their notion of withdrawing most troops by air. If the insurgents manage to shoot down even one C-130 full of troops with a surface-to-air missile, we will lose more men than we would by taking Route Tampa. Moreover, we have to get those tanks and armored vehicles out somehow, and simply driving them to Kuwait with full crews does the job while keeping the withdrawing force strong—much stronger than any potential opposition.

Politicians, for the most part, have accepted statements about withdrawal requiring anywhere from one to two years.

They want to be "responsible"—that'll be the day.

Fast withdrawal is safer than slow — it minimizes the slow bleed of occupation, and it avoids leaving dangerously weak forces in-country for long periods.

Once we make up our mind to leave, "then 'twere well 'twere done quickly."

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.

“The Majority Of Troops On The Ground In Iraq, And Those Who Have Returned, Do Not Back The President’s Failed Policy”

September 27, 2007 Jon Soltz, Alternet.org [Excerpts]

As Media Matters reported today, Rush Limbaugh, on his show said that those troops who come home and want to get America out of the middle of the religious civil war in Iraq are “phony soldiers.”

Where to begin?

First, in what universe is a guy who never served even close to being qualified to judge those who have worn the uniform?

Rush Limbaugh has never worn a uniform in his life -- not even one at Mickey D’s -- and somehow he’s got the moral standing to pass judgment on the men and women who risked their lives for this nation, and his right to blather smears on the airwaves?

Second, maybe Rush doesn’t much care, but the majority of troops on the ground in Iraq, and those who have returned, do not back the President’s failed policy.

Does Rush believe, then, that the majority of the US Armed Forces are “phony?”

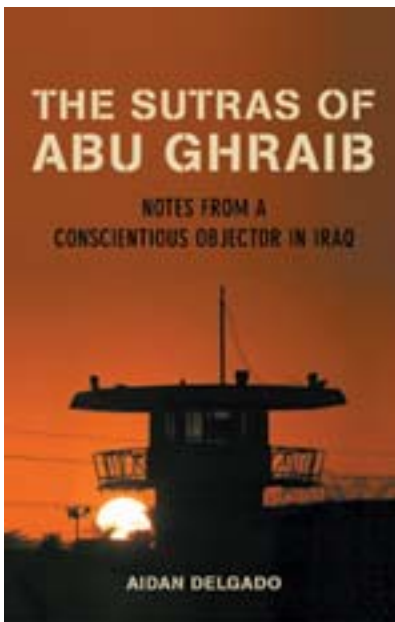
Finally, as Media Matters notes, just recently, members of the 82nd Airborne in Iraq wrote a New York Times op-ed, very critical of the course in Iraq, and suggesting it was time to figure out the exit strategy. Two of them just died.

Will Rush call up their grieving parents and tell them that they should stop crying, because they were just “phony soldiers?”

Get the point here, Rush?

You weren't just flat out wrong, you offended a majority of those of us who actually had the courage to go to Iraq and serve, while you sat back in your nice studio, coming up with crap like this.

**“The Sutras of Abu Ghraib”
A Memoir Of War Service:
“When I Returned, I Joined Iraq Veterans
Against The War And Have Been
Speaking Out Against The War Ever
Since”**



28 September 2007 By Aidan Delgado [Excerpts]

My name is Aidan Delgado, an Iraq War veteran and peace activist.

I write to you because I am trying to publicize my new book, a memoir of war service entitled “The Sutras of Abu Ghraib,” as well as connect with other progressive writers and bloggers.

While I was deployed to Iraq, I became a Buddhist conscientious objector and later was honorably discharged from the military.

When I returned, I joined Iraq Veterans Against the War and have been speaking out against the war ever since.

Nearly two years later, I completed a memoir of my deployment to Iraq and have been actively touring to promote it in the last few months.

I have previously appeared on Democracy Now, Bob Herbert's column in the NY Times, CNN, and many other media venues but now I am looking to reach out to other writers and bloggers to help promote a message of peace and resistance from a veteran's perspective.

My memoir tells the story of a Buddhist conscientious objector in Iraq, including a six-month deployment to Abu Ghraib prison during the prisoner abuse scandal.

"The Sutras of Abu Ghraib" is published by Beacon Press and is now available in bookstores.

I am seeking to integrate my book into a community of like-minded web users. I would like to inquire if you are interested in reading, reviewing or placing a link to my book on your website. I would be more than happy to provide you any resources you might need for this, including images, blurbs, bios, video clips or any other information. It would be a tremendous help to me as a writer and a peace activist to help spread this important message. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Aidan Delgado

For more information please see: www.aidandelgado.com or "Aidan Delgado" on Wikipedia.org

Reactions to The Sutras of Abu Ghraib:

"The point of view in this book is extraordinary—a Buddhist G.I. inside Abu Ghraib prison, a witness to the horrors, a conscientious objector. Aidan Delgado is a keen observer and an eloquent writer, and he shocks us while also educating us about the reality of the war in Iraq."

—Howard Zinn, author of *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train/* and *A People's History of the United States/*

"Aidan Delgado is a powerful, eloquent writer. His description of how he was transformed by the horrors of Iraq is unforgettable. He is a diamond in the rough, sandblasted in the desert of Iraq."

—Amy Goodman, Democracy Now!

"he offers a welcome corrective to much of the aggressive rhetoric that has pervaded the debate over the war in Iraq." Publishers Weekly - May 21, 2007

“an absorbing and worthy story that offers one man’s perspective on a conflict that continues to divide our nation.” Booklist - August 1, 2007

OCCUPATION REPORT

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



AND THIS IS WHAT COMMAND CALLS “QUESTIONING”

A foreign occupation soldier from the U.S. 1/38 Infantry Regiment guards Iraqi citizens handcuffed and forced to face the wall, while awaiting questioning at an Army combat out post outside Baquba, some 50 kms north-east from Baghdad. If they resist, in any way, they may be shot and killed. (AFP/Alexander Nemenov)

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

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

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

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

“No One Is Guilty In Israel”

**“There Is Never Anyone Guilty In
Israel”**

**“They Will Continue With The Work
Of Killing As Though Nothing Has
Happened”**



Ali Shaito implored his mother, Muntaha, to stay conscious as she lay dying from shrapnel wounds (Ghaith Abdul-Ahad / Getty Images).

09/29/07 By Gideon Levy, Haaretz [Israel]

Nineteen inhabitants of Beit Hanun were killed with malice aforethought. There is no other way of describing the circumstances of their killing.

Someone who throws burning matches into a forest can't claim he didn't mean to set it on fire, and anyone who bombards residential neighborhoods with artillery can't claim he didn't mean to kill innocent inhabitants.

Therefore it takes considerable gall and cynicism to dare to claim that the Israel Defense Forces did not intend to kill inhabitants of Beit Hanun.

Even if there was a glitch in the balancing of the aiming mechanism or in a component of the radar, a mistake in the input of the data or a human error, the overwhelming, crucial, shocking fact is that the IDF bombards helpless civilians.

Even shells that are supposedly aimed 200 meters from houses, into "open areas," are intended to kill, and they do kill.

In this respect, nothing new happened on Wednesday morning in Gaza: The IDF has been behaving like this for months now.

But this isn't just a matter of "the IDF," "the government" or "Israel" bearing the responsibility. It must be said explicitly:

The blame rests directly on people who hold official positions, flesh-and-blood human beings, and they must pay the price of their criminal responsibility for needless killing.

GOC Southern Command Yoav Galant will say with exasperating coolness that apparently there was "a problem with the battery's targeting apparatus," without moving a facial muscle, and will that be enough?

Deputy Defense Minister Ephraim Sneh will say, "The IDF is militarily responsible, but not morally responsible," and will he thus exculpate himself?

No one is guilty in Israel.

There is never anyone guilty in Israel.

The prime minister who is responsible for the brutal policy toward the Palestinians, the defense minister who knew about and approved the bombardments, the chief of staff, the chief of command and the commander of the division who gave the orders to bombard - not one of them is guilty.

They will continue with the work of killing as though nothing has happened: The sun shone, the system flourished and the ritual slaughterer slaughtered.

They will continue to pursue the routine of their daily lives, accepted in society like anyone else, and remain in their posts despite the blood on their hands.

A few hours after the disaster, while the Gaza Strip was still enveloped in sorrow and deep in shock, the air force was already hastening to carry out another targeted killing, an arrogant demonstration of just how much this disaster does not concern us.

A day or two after the disaster it was totally forgotten and other affairs are filling our lives. But it is impossible just to go on to the next item on the agenda.

This disaster is not an act of God. There are people who are clearly responsible for it, and they must be brought to justice.

The Zionist Terror State “Treats Every Palestinian As An Enemy-- Whether They Be Fighters Or Civilians, Men, Women Or Children”

September 28, 2007 EDITORIAL, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

ISRAEL HAS declared war on the 1.5 million Palestinians in Gaza Strip--and the U.S. government has given its blessing.

That’s the reality behind the media’s dishonest talk of “negotiations” and “breakthroughs.”

The U.S. has already backed Israeli sanctions that have turned Gaza into the world’s biggest open-air prison, with an economy in collapse, hunger and malnutrition on the rise, and poverty engulfing 87.7 percent of the population.

The justification for Israel’s murderous policies was the democratic election of the Islamist Hamas party to lead the Palestinian Authority in January 2006--a few months after Israel unilaterally withdrew its settlements from the territory.

Now, the Israeli cabinet has declared Gaza a “hostile territory,” and Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice, in Israel to broker “peace” negotiations, said Hamas “is indeed a hostile entity.

It is a hostile entity to the U.S. as well.”

In fact, Israel already treats every Palestinian as an enemy--whether they be fighters or civilians, men, women or children.

According to the Israeli human rights organization B’Tselem, which uses statistics conservatively, Israeli security forces killed 668 Palestinians in Gaza between September 1, 2005 and July 25, 2007.

Of these, more than half--359 people--"were not involved in any hostilities at the time they were killed," the organization reported.

Some 126 of those killed were children or teenagers.

In the same period, just four Israeli civilians were killed as a result of rockets fired from Gaza.

The Israeli claim that its periodic military attacks on Gaza are a "response" to the rockets can't be taken seriously. Israel's real aim is to crush the resistance of the Palestinian people and make a viable Palestinian state impossible.

In the West Bank, that means carving up Palestinian lands through a "security wall" to further entrench the position of 450,000 settlers (whose numbers are growing) and systematically squeeze Palestinians into small, economically weak enclaves.

Israel only withdrew from Gaza to turn the area into "one big prison," as B'Tselem put it.

Constant killings by the Israel military are only part of the suffering. In 2006, Israeli jets bombed Gaza's newly constructed power plant, cutting electricity to a minimum for months. Entrance into Israel--the only way to reach the West Bank over land--is banned, and Israel controls the Gaza border crossing into Egypt as well. Israel's refusal to hand over taxes due to the Palestinian Authority has aggravated mass unemployment.

And it's getting worse.

The World Bank this month reported that the Palestinian economy contracted by 8 percent last year and another 4.2 percent in the first quarter of 2007. Gross Domestic Product per capita for Palestinians is just \$1,129, a third less than in 1999. What's more, "investment has fallen to exceeding low levels, leaving little of a productive base for a self-sustaining economy," the World Bank concluded.

"I am never sure where to begin to give readers an idea of life in Gaza and the accelerating humanitarian and economic crises," wrote journalist Yassmin Moor.

"Do I begin by describing the effects of the border closures that are, according to the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees UNRWA, the reason that Gaza is on the verge of an economic collapse, and if there are no changes in the upcoming weeks the entire population will be completely aid-dependent?"

"We can all certainly feel the closure's effects, as all we have in the market are a few vegetables and are forced to rely on UNRWA's food packages of flour, rice and cooking oil.

We cannot even grow our own food if we wanted to, because farmers have run out of supplies, including fertilizer."

NOW COMES the Israeli declaration that Gaza is a “hostile territory.”

Israel will use this formulation to absolve itself of the responsibilities of an occupying power under international law, much as George W. Bush has used the term “enemy combatant” to imprison accused terrorists beyond the reach of any court.

Thus, Israel is considering cutting off the already small amount of electricity that goes to Gaza. These threats have gotten only the faintest criticism from the United Nations and European countries seen as friendlier to Palestinians than the U.S.--which only serves “to underline that Israel operates in a context where the ‘international community’ has become inured to a discourse of extermination of the Palestinian people, political and physical,” wrote Palestinian activist and author Ali Abunimah.

Israel is taking advantage of the ongoing struggle between the Hamas government in Gaza and the rival Palestinian “emergency government” in the West Bank run by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, of the secular Fatah party.

Forced to retreat from Gaza in June after its failed attempt to unseat Hamas, Fatah recently embarked on negotiations with Israel. The supposed aim of talks is to establish a Palestinian state, brokered by Bush sidekick Tony Blair. As a reward for talking, Israel has given Fatah tax revenues and supported it in a crackdown against Hamas supporters in the West Bank.

As Pappe wrote in August, “Standing idle while the American-Israeli vision of strangling the Strip to death, cleansing half of the West Bank from its indigenous population and threatening the rest of the Palestinians--inside Israel and in the other parts of the West Bank--with transfer, is not an option.

“It is tantamount to ‘decent’ people’s silence during the Holocaust.”

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bush Makes Surprise Visit To Work

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

September 26, 2007 The Onion

WASHINGTON, DC—In an unexpected move that shocked White House staff and stunned the nation, President George W. Bush arrived unannounced at the Oval Office Monday.

Bush, who flew in from his home in Texas, was greeted by security forces upon landing outside the White House, and quickly escorted through the building's back entrance.

Wearing a special suit-and-tie uniform intended to boost morale and show support for men and women serving in the Beltway, Bush entered the East Room at about 3:30 p.m. and addressed a bewildered but enthusiastic crowd of staff members.

"Am I late?" Bush joked to the group of approximately 200, who were led to believe they would be attending a ceremony to honor Secretary of Transportation Mary Peters. Bush's entrance received a standing ovation.

"It is incredible to see firsthand what you brave men and women do every day," Bush said to rousing applause. "You are all heroes."

Telling the group he wished he had the time to work alongside each and every one of them, Bush made general inquiries about conditions at the executive mansion, recruitment of new personnel, and where everyone was eating for lunch.

According to sources close to the president, Bush barely had time to rest during the four-hour visit. He first met face-to-face with several high-ranking U.S. officials, who briefed him on the situation in Washington.

Bush then signed a number of documents, took a guided tour of the facilities, and in a symbolic show of support for the current administration, shook hands with the vice president.

Bush was also granted permission to sit in on an important Cabinet meeting concerning U.S. counterterrorism efforts. Those who were present said the president mostly observed, but noted that he did ask "a lot" of questions. Afterward, Bush sat behind the Oval Office desk and shuffled papers for 15 minutes while news photographers snapped photographs.

For most members of the White House staff, it was their first chance to meet the president. Many said they were "overcome" with excitement.

"When I was getting ready for work this morning, the last person I ever thought I'd see was the president of the United States," said Alexander Mistri, special assistant to the president for legislative affairs.

"I actually got to shake hands with the president," Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao said. "He seems like a very nice man in person."

While Bush made surprise trips to work in August 2004 and stopped by in July 2005 to pick up a paycheck, Monday's visit marked his first extended stay since last December.

For security reasons, the trip was shrouded in secrecy.

Sources say the president was ushered out of his Crawford, TX home just before noon Monday, while his family and closest friends were under the assumption that he was sleeping in, per normal vacation protocol. Only a few officials were informed of the trip, including his chief of staff Joshua Bolten, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, and Bush's fishing buddy Dale.

Many claim the trip was staged as a “media ploy” intended to convince the public that the administration’s occupation of Washington, D.C. is not a lost cause.

“President Bush wants us to believe that he is in touch with the Bush administration,” political analyst Garry Wills said.

“But this is too little, too late. Mr. Bush has staked his legacy on the success of the work being done in the White House, but if I were him, I’d be thinking more about an exit strategy than rallying the grunts on the ground.”

Despite such criticisms, Bush's visit ended on a positive note.

At 4:55 p.m. Monday, he gave a parting speech to staff, thanking them for their hard work, explaining that the future of the country rests in their hands, and promising that they would all be sent home to their families “very soon.”



Rat Shit Walking Around Loose In Human Form: Racist Cowards Were Screaming “Your Kind Isn’t Welcome Here. You Don’t Belong Here” “The Two Smashed Assemi’s Hand With A Hammer, And Used A Knife And Box Cutter To Slice Her Face, Neck, Back And Chest”

Then there is the more indirect effect of the political climate in Washington, especially as both parties ramp up the blame-the-victim rhetoric to excuse the growing catastrophe of the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

September 21, 2007 By NICOLE COLSON, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

A TERRIBLE hate crime against an Iranian American woman on New York’s Long Island has thrown a spotlight on the tide of racism toward Arabs and Muslims that has accompanied the U.S. government’s wars overseas.

Zohreh Assemi was attacked by two men as she was opening her Long Island salon on the morning of September 15.

According to reports, the two men were screaming, “Your kind isn’t welcome here. You don’t belong here,” as they forced her inside, slammed her head on a counter and shoved a towel in her mouth.

The two smashed Assemi’s hand with a hammer, and used a knife and box cutter to slice her face, neck, back and chest, before stealing \$2,000 and scrawling anti-Muslim slurs on the salon’s mirrors.

Assemi told New York Newsday, “They were cursing, ‘Muslim, leave Locust Valley, leave the Plaza. Go back to the place you came from.’”

According to friends and family, Assemi had been receiving harassing phone calls for two weeks prior to the attack. The callers warned her to “get out of town” and called her “a terrorist,” according to the New York Post.

For Assemi, who fled from Iran and got political asylum from the U.S. in 1982, and became a citizen in 2001 in the wake of the September 11 attacks, the racism of the

attack was, in some ways, worse than the physical abuse she suffered. “(T)he worst thing they can call me is a terrorist,” she told Newsday. “That hurts a lot.”

ASSEMI IS one of many victims of the racist climate fostered against Arabs and Muslims in the U.S. since the September 11 attacks.

According to the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), hate crimes against Muslims rose 30 percent in 2005 to 1,972 incidents. They rose another 9 percent last year.

“The bias attack on Zohreh Assemi is an indicator of the rising trend of Islamophobia that is growing in certain segments of American society and is promoted by a small minority of Islamophobes,” CAIR’s Aliya Latif told Newsday.

Evidence of such Islamophobia--and the racist hate crimes it inevitably leads to--isn’t hard to find.

As Socialist Worker went to press, it was reported that a high-caliber bullet was fired through the door of the Islamic Center of South Texas in Corpus Christi--a suspected hate crime that occurred at the start of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

In August, in Antioch, Calif., the Islamic Center of the East Bay was the target of an arson that gutted the building and caused an estimated \$200,000 in damage. The mosque had been victim to a series of previous burglaries and vandalism.

Meanwhile, incidents of “flying while Arab”--Arab or Muslim passengers coming under suspicion from fellow passengers or the authorities, simply for the way they look or speak--have become common.

Late last year, for example, a group of six Muslim religious leaders were handcuffed and removed from a plane after passengers alerted the flight crew to “six suspicious Arabic men” on the plane. The six drew attention to themselves when they observed their evening prayers in the airport prior to their flight.

Late last month, in a similar incident, an American Airlines flight from San Diego to Chicago was forced to return to its gate, and all the passengers ordered off, after one woman complained that a group of six Iraqi men were speaking Arabic.

As Ahmed Rehab, executive director of CAIR, told the Chicago Sun Times, “It is one thing to flag suspicious behavior, but to flag a global language? We are deplaning people for who they are, not what they do.”

Ironically, it turned out that the men were hired by the company Defense Training Systems to train Marines at Camp Pendleton.

One of the targeted passengers, Dave Alwatan, was able to show reporters a photo of George W. Bush hugging him in a crowd during one of Bush’s visits to Michigan.

As Imad Hamad, of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, told the Arab American News, “This is not the first time where Arabs and Muslims are deplanned or thrown out of restaurants, buses or their place of work just because of the way they look or speak. If this is not discrimination, then would someone explain to me what it is?”

THIS IS discrimination, and it should provoke anger. But because it’s directed against Arabs and Muslims, neither the media nor politicians take much notice.

In fact, the attacks on Arabs and Muslims often come from just these sources.

Earlier this month, for example, Michigan state Rep. Kim Meltzer introduced legislation under which a city like Detroit would lose millions in state revenue if it keeps its anti-racial profiling ordinance--which prohibits police and city employees from stopping or questioning people on the basis of race, ethnicity, religious dress, physical appearance or immigration status.

Then there is the more indirect effect of the political climate in Washington, especially as both parties ramp up the blame-the-victim rhetoric to excuse the growing catastrophe of the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

Minimizing anti-Arab and anti-Muslim racism is certainly not unique.

In July, right-wing radio host Michael Savage got away with this racist rant: “(W)hen I see a woman walking around with a burqa, I see a Nazi...That’s what I see--how do you like that?--a hateful Nazi who would like to cut your throat and kill your children.”

Likewise, a May editorial from Investor’s Business Daily, decried the decision of the Kansas City International Airport to provide footbaths for Islamic cab drivers to be able to practice their religion more easily.

“You would think 9/11 would have marginalized militant Muslims,” the editorial stated, “But it’s only emboldened them. Now they’re demanding footbaths in restrooms--and getting them!... What’s next, prayer-rug cleaning? Box-cutter dispensers?”

In October, one of the best-known organizations of the hard-line right wing will take Islamophobia on the road. Ideologue David Horowitz has called for students to host “Islamofascism Awareness Week” on more than 100 campuses across the country.

A statement about the “awareness week” reads, in part: “According to the academic left, the Islamofascists hate us not because we are tolerant and free, but because we are ‘oppressors.’ Islamofascism Awareness Week is a national effort to oppose these lies and to rally American students to defend their country.”

Horowitz and Co. have suggested holding campus teach-ins and sit-ins. Women’s Studies departments and women’s centers would make particularly good targets, Horowitz suggests, because of their supposed “silence about the oppression of women in Islam.”

Speakers being offered for the “tour” include right-wing Harvard historian Daniel Pipes, anti-gay and anti-choice former Sen. Rick Santorum, as well as Horowitz himself.

The tide of racism against Arabs and Muslims is not a coincidence. It is a direct consequence of U.S. wars fought for domination of the Middle East.

Racism in all forms must be challenged. The antiwar movement has a duty to recognize that bigotry against Arabs and Muslims represents another front in the wars overseas that it organizes to oppose--and to stand up against the racist hysteria.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



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.