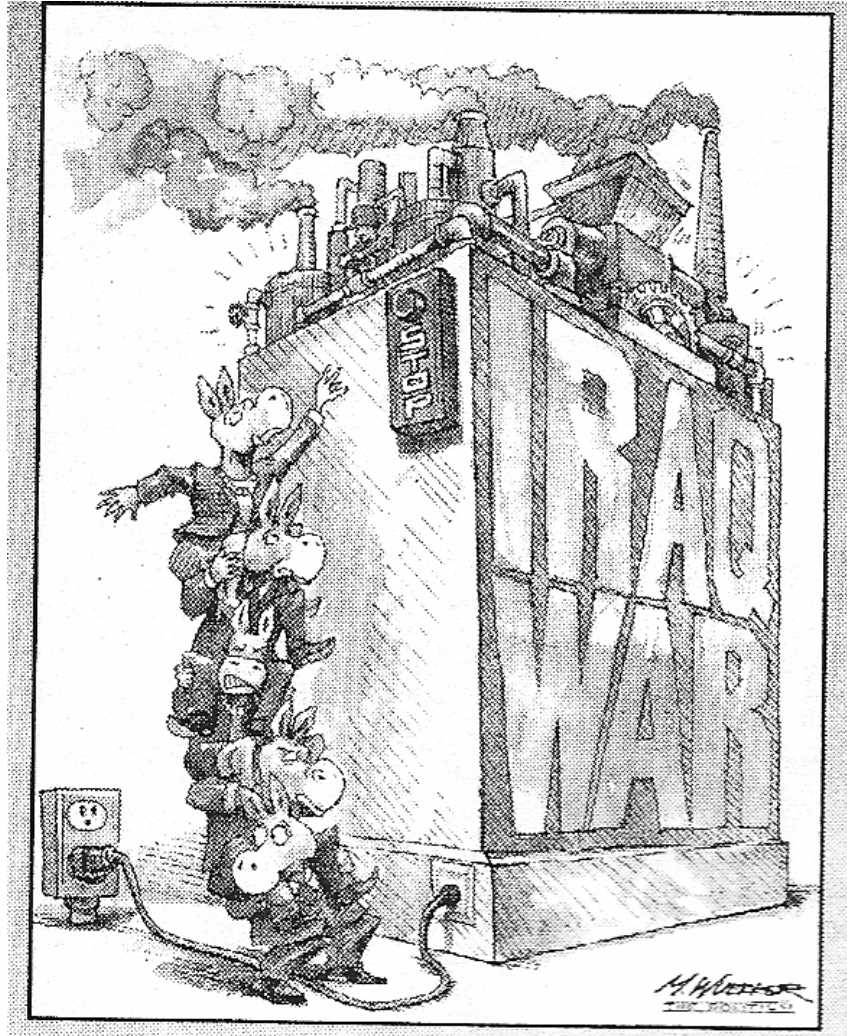


GI SPECIAL 5K22:

DANGER: DEMORATS AT WORK



**The Death Of A Stupid
Lie:
U.S. Occupation Command And
Iraqi Collaborators Caught Faking**

Numbers About All Those Happy Iraqis Coming Home Thanks To “Improved Security”

“The Government Has Continued To Publicize Figures That Exaggerate The Movement Back To Iraq”

“Syria Has Tightened Visa Rules For Iraqis In Hopes Of Forcing People To Return Home And Blocking New Refugees”

The survey found that 46 percent were leaving because they could not afford to stay; 25 percent said they fell victim to a stricter Syrian visa policy; and only 14 percent said they were returning because they had heard about improved security.

November 26, 2007 By DAMIEN CAVE, The New York Times Company & Nov 27 By ALBERT AJI, Associated Press Writer

By all accounts, Iraqi families who fled their homes in the past two years are returning to Baghdad.

The program also seeks to win favor from neighboring countries such as Syria and Jordan that are struggling with an estimated 2.2 million Iraqi refugees.

Syria has tightened visa rules for Iraqis in hopes of forcing people to return home and blocking new refugees.

The description of the scope of the return, however, appears to have been massaged by politics. Returnees have essentially become a currency of progress.

Under intense pressure to show results after months of political stalemate, the government has continued to publicize figures that exaggerate the movement back to Iraq and Iraqis’ confidence that the current lull in violence can be sustained.

On Nov. 7, Brig. Gen. Qassim al-Moussawi, the Iraqi spokesman for the American-Iraqi effort to pacify Baghdad, said that 46,030 people returned to Iraq from abroad in October because of the “improving security situation.”

But in interviews, officials from the ministry acknowledged that the count covered all Iraqis crossing the border, not just returnees.

“We didn’t ask them if they were displaced and neither did the Interior Ministry,” said Sattar Nowruz, a spokesman for the Ministry of Displacement and Migration.

As a result, the tally included Iraqi employees of The New York Times who had visited relatives in Syria but were not among the roughly two million Iraqis who have fled the country.

The figures apparently also included three people suspected of being insurgents arrested Saturday near Baquba in Diyala Province. The police described them as local residents who had fled temporarily to Syria, then returned.

Some Iraqi lawmakers said that overly broad figures were being used intentionally.

“They are using this number because they want to show that Maliki is succeeding,” said Salim Abdullah, a lawmaker and member of the largest Sunni bloc, known as the Accordance Front, referring to Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki. “But this does not make the number correct. I think dozens of Iraqis return home daily, but not 1,600.”

A half-dozen owners of Iraqi travel agencies and drivers who regularly travel to Syria agreed that the numbers misrepresented reality.

They said that the flow of returnees peaked last month, with more than 50 families arriving daily from Syria at Baghdad’s main drop-off point.

Since Nov. 1, they said, the numbers have declined, and on Sunday morning, during a period when several buses used to appear, only one came.

A United Nations survey released last week, of 110 Iraqi families leaving Syria, also seemed to dispute the contentions of officials in Iraq that people are returning primarily because they feel safer.

The survey found that 46 percent were leaving because they could not afford to stay; 25 percent said they fell victim to a stricter Syrian visa policy; and only 14 percent said they were returning because they had heard about improved security.

Furthermore, people are still leaving their homes — 28,017 were internally displaced in October, according to the latest United Nations figures. In all, the United Nations estimates that 2.4 million Iraqis are still internally displaced, with many occupying someone else’s home.

MORE:

The Stupid Lie Collapses In Rubble; “People Are Leaving Because Of Visa Problems” “You Journalists Are Being Duped With All This Talk Of Improved Security And Returning Refugees. It Is Government Propaganda, Believe Me”

November 28, 2007 By Julien Barnes-Dacey – Contributor and Sam Dagher – Correspondent; The Christian Science Monitor [Excerpts]

Damascus, Syria; and Baghdad - After a year of refuge in Syria, Ahmed Ali is returning home. He joined up to 800 other Iraqis who boarded buses Tuesday for a free lift back to Baghdad courtesy of the Iraqi government.

While Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's government says improved security as a result of the US surge of troops is drawing refugees back, UN observers and many of the departing Iraqis themselves are skeptical about what awaits them back in Baghdad.

Tough economic realities and new visa restrictions in Syria are forcing them to leave.

“I have no money because there is no work for us here,” he says, laying out on his hand what he said was the last of his money: a few Syrian coins worth less than \$1.

“Even this bus will only protect me as far as Baghdad. Who's going to protect me after that?” asks Ali. Diyala Province, where he lives, remains violent despite a massive US-led effort over the summer to rout militants. A bomber disguised as a shepherd killed nine people there Tuesday.

The Syrians say that, with very limited international support, they could no longer afford to host the refugees, which they claim cost more than \$1 billion annually.

Visas are now granted at the Syrian embassy in Baghdad only to those with education or business purposes for travel.

Syrian immigration officials have started issuing Iraqi passports with exit stamps once their three month visas expire, says the UNHCR, forcing them to leave the country.

“People are leaving because of visa problems,” says Nasser Hussein, another Iraqi living in Damascus.

“Before they could go to the border and come right back with a new visa, now when their visas run out they have to return to Iraq.”

One of the few people standing at Liqaa Square was Naima Hamid, a school teacher wearing a veil and dressed in a gray winter coat. She was waiting to meet a relative from a Baghdad neighborhood.

Mrs. Hamid was in Syria in August but stayed for only a month because it was too expensive. “If I had the money I would go back to Syria in a heartbeat.

“You journalists are being duped with all this talk of improved security and returning refugees. It is government propaganda, believe me. Things are still very bad.”

MORE:

Meanwhile, Back In The Real World: Up To 40,000 Iraqis Seek Asylum In European Union Countries

BRUSSELS, Nov 27 (KUNA)

The Iraqi problem is the largest refugee crisis in the world with 4.5 million Iraqis are either displaced inside Iraq or have fled to neighbouring countries, according to Judith Kumin of the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees).

She told a meeting with the European Parliaments Delegation for Relations with the countries of the Mashreq Tuesday evening that 20,000 Iraqis applied for asylum in the European Union last year and the number is expected to rise to 40,000 in 2007.

“Conditions for large-scale return of Iraqi refugees are not there as yet. Time has not come as yet to promote return,” she said.

Lisbeth Pilegaard, of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), said the approximately 1.5 million Iraqis who have arrived in Syria are residing “mainly in and around Damascus,” which had a total population of 2.5 million.

Besides the strain these refugees have put on general services such as health care and education, they have also had economic effects. “The price of bread has increased 30 percent, flour 50 percent and potatoes 90 percent,” she said. [Gee, do you suppose that has anything to do with why the Syrian government is canceling their residency permits and shipping them back to Iraq?]

Shannon Meehan, from the International Rescue Committee (IRC), said the conditions for the approximately half a million Iraqi refugees in Jordan were worsening.

She emphasised that the “lack of legal status for these refugees builds an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty”.

**SEE! SEE!
AN IRAQI CITIZEN IS SO HAPPY TO GET KICKED
OUT OF SYRIA AND SHIPPED HOME TO IRAQ**



An Iraqi woman is seen aboard a bus heading to Iraq, prior to its departure from Damascus, Nov. 27, 2007. (AP Photo/Bassem Tellawi)

Troops Invited:

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

**Two U.S. Soldiers Killed In Salah Ad Din;
Two More Wounded**

November 27, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory, RELEASE No. 20071127-02

TIKRIT, Iraq – Two Multi-National Division – North Soldiers were killed as a result of injuries sustained from an explosion near their vehicle while conducting operations in Salah ad Din province, Nov. 27.

Additionally, two Soldiers were wounded and transported to a Coalition medical facility for treatment.

Ohio Staff Sgt. Dies Of Iraq Wounds



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jonathon L. Martin, 33, of Bellevue, Ohio, died Nov. 22, 2007, in Regensburg, Germany, of wounds sustained Nov. 9 in Jisr Naft, Iraq, when an explosive detonated near his vehicle. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

Elmhurst Soldier Is Killed In Iraq

November 13, 2007, By Jeremy Gerner, Chicago Tribune

A soldier from Elmhurst who came from a family of military veterans was killed in Iraq on Sunday during his third tour in the war-torn nation.

Frank Vanek learned of the death of his son, Army Sgt. Joe Vanek, 22, on Monday.

“Two gentlemen appeared at the door this morning,” Vanek said in a telephone interview Monday night.

Joe Vanek of the 82nd Airborne Division was killed by “small arms” fire in Baghdad, his father said.

He joined the military right after graduating from York Community High School.

“He thought it was the right thing to do,” Frank Vanek said about his son, whose family includes at least three veterans.

Joe Vanek, who served in Iraq during the country’s historic elections, was stationed in Baghdad for his final tour, his father said.

When speaking with his son last week, Frank Vanek said he outlined three goals after serving overseas: “Go to college, get an apartment and buy a motorcycle.”

The soldier’s mother, Jan, is a former Elmhurst alderman, said Elmhurst Mayor Thomas Marcucci.

“The entire community is shocked. This was one of ours,” Marcucci said of Joe Vanek. “He was a young man who grew up right here in the neighborhood. “He volunteered for the military. He found a home there. He became a leader in that environment. He was serving his country. He was a patriot.”

The mayor, who has known Jan Vanek for 15 years, also said Joe Vanek came from a “very community-oriented family” that seeks out responsibility. “Something I believed Joe learned from his parents,” Marcucci said.

In addition to his mother and father, Joe Vanek is survived by his mother and an older sister, Anne.

Bomber Wounds 7 U.S. Soldiers In Baqubah

November 28, 2007 AP

TIKRIT, Iraq – A female bomber detonated an explosive laden vest, wounding seven U.S. Soldiers and five Iraqi citizens in Baqubah, Nov. 27.

The injured were taken by helicopter to a Coalition Forces hospital for treatment.

“It Wasn’t Ignited By Enemy Fire, But From A Grenade Thrown By One Of Our Lieutenants”

“He Didn’t Make It Over The Wire To Hit The Imaginary Bad Guy”



Posted by Alex at Monday, November 19, 2007; Army Of Dude

It was a week into February of 2007 and a little over a month into the surge, which began with a unit from the 82nd Airborne coming into Baghdad.

Since November we had no clear goal in the capital. We were the scoundrels and tramps of the city: we went from slum to slum, clearing and securing it from Sadr’s Mahdi Army and handing it over to American and Iraqi forces. We had no area of our own.

Petraeus’ main focus of the surge was to get us out of the big bases and into the neighborhoods of Baghdad, rubbing elbows with the locals and giving them enough confidence to assist us in rooting out the bad guys.

Given that, we had to find a building big enough for a company of both Americans and Iraqis, a parking lot able to hold many vehicles, and enough standoff from major roads to prevent someone from driving a bomb right through the gate. It was decided that an abandoned shopping mall would do.

When we arrived, all there was to prevent a full on attack was a couple strands of wire around the building.

The cement walls would be going up during the night but it would take a few days. We were scheduled to be out there for nearly a week. Luckily, outhouses were being constructed outside.

Unluckily, they were in plain view of passing cars and high buildings. Anyone could toss a grenade or shoot an AK out the window as they drove past.

I decided to hold it in.

The outpost being built up was called Callahan, hopefully named after my favorite hard-boiled cop.

The clearing missions were routine for the most part. We walked into houses and searched them, dug through courtyards and trash piles and looked into sewage drains for any signs of weapons and bombs.

And we looked on top of houses, too.

For a few days it was going well. We were going into neighborhoods that held dangerous reputations, wondering what all the commotion was about. Patrolling through the streets and not a peep from the enemy!

One evening we were freezing our asses off inside the outpost, getting by with no heat or electricity. I had just returned to my cot after taking out the garbage when I heard a commotion coming from third platoon's area.

My former squad leader was rousing everyone awake. I gathered from his hurried speech that he was walking through the parking lot when a round struck by his feet. We were under attack!

Immediately, several men threw on their gear and took positions in the windows, hoping to catch a muzzle flash or RPG streak.

The 82nd guys were particularly excited, this being among their first chances of action. Machine guns opened up on a house, starting a fire. Following the tracers, everyone fired in that direction, assuming it was an enemy position.

Grenades were dropping in front and in back of the house. In the parking lot, guns were firing toward the same house.

All of a sudden, a fuel tanker inside the wire started to burn.

Making a mad dash for the Strykers, I find mine in a huddle of vehicles. It's too dangerous to lower the ramp, so I open the door in the back and climb in. I caught a glimpse of David, the AFP photographer with us for the duration of our Callahan adventure, snapping shots of people running to and from cover.

Our vehicle is a little close to the burning fuel tanker, making me a bit uneasy.

Later we would learn that it wasn't ignited by enemy fire, but from a grenade thrown by one of our lieutenants. He didn't make it over the wire to hit the imaginary bad guy.



The view of Callahan - from one of the buildings we shot up the day prior. We pulled .50 cal rounds out of the walls with pliers

After everyone made it back to the Strykers, we tore off for the buildings being ravaged by flames.

We dismounted and started up the street, nearing the flames and feeling the heat of the fire in the February night.

Across the street was a man carrying furniture from the building.

He was shouting in very good English, "Thank you for your security! Thank you for your security! This is what you call security?"

We had fired on this man's house as he was taking a bath.

Pressing on, we looked all around for enemy shell casings, weapons, anything. We left with a smoldering building to our backs.

Later that night we received a mission to raid a few suspected insurgent houses. Crawling through the grass, we heard the rumblings of tanks out in the distance.

We got down low in the weeds so they wouldn't open fire on a group of strange men hiding in the bushes holding guns. We held our breath until they passed.

We stood up and moved toward the small collection of buildings surrounded by palm trees and knocked the door down to find...an old man with information. About mortars that fell. A month prior.

Waiting for this valuable information to filter down to the appropriate level, I leaned up against a desk in the house and dozed off.

Standing in the moonlight shining through the open door, I didn't care if a tank shot me in the face. I just wanted a nap.

BEEN ON THE JOB TOO LONG: COME ON HOME, NOW



A U.S. soldier outside a church in Baghdad's Dora district November 21, 2007.
REUTERS/Mahmoud Raouf Mahmoud

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

“Mortars Rained Down Just Inside The Perimeter For About Four Hours – Or Was It Six?” “If A Rocket Hits The Bunker Square On, We’re Gone”

December 5, 2007 By Lee Lawrence, Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor
[Excerpts]

Bagram air base, Afghanistan

Even news that directly affected us was sometimes hard to get. Again in Bagram, Air Force personnel at the hospital asked us one day whether we’d heard that the base had come under attack the day before.

Really?

Yes, mortars rained down just inside the perimeter for about four hours – or was it six?

Accounts varied, and nobody we spoke to could tell fact from rumor because, though we’d all been right there, we hadn’t heard or seen a thing.

By contrast, when rockets hit Salerno, a medium-sized FOB (forward operating base) south of Kabul, we all knew it. I’d just spent two days hopping in and out of Black Hawk helicopters, shadowing Air Force Chaplain Gary Linksy as he traveled to seven tiny outposts to say mass. I’d already discovered that the dust, whether whipped up by nature or the whirl of rotor blades, acts like those old dry shampoos that absorb the oil in your hair, leaving it technically clean but feeling dull and gritty.

When I got back to Salerno, I headed straight for the shower trailer. I had the place to myself and was all lathered up when I heard the first big boom. It felt like the world had taken a convulsive in-out breath.

People talk about the fight or flight response – my response was freeze and focus. I stood still, water pouring over me. Then my focus narrowed: Rinse off. Get dressed. Gather toiletries. Poke head out of trailer.

I could see the walls of various structures coming in at angles to one another, as deserted and stark as a De Chirico painting. Another boom. Do I leave? Stay put? Someone is speaking over the loudspeaker, but I can’t make out the words. Then laughter – guys must be playing cards over in that tent, so how bad can this be? But, wait, that’s not a tent.

That’s a bunker. A bunker. I need to be in that bunker.

The thought propelled my legs, and the next thing I knew I was staring up at a man with an open, kind face and a body so massive the largest size neck armor was too small. I took one look at Sgt. Robert Walker and stuck to him like glue. When the next rocket hit, those of us near the opening of the bunker saw the dust kick up 300 yards away.

“How bad can it be?” one soldier said, “The guys in the guard tower are still there.”

Right on cue, the guys in the guard tower charged down the stairs, chins tucked in and backs hunched.

I looked at Sergeant Walker. When he headed for a bunker farther inside the FOB, I was right behind him. (About a week later an all-female singing group called Purple Angels performed at the base – and who do you suppose was their designated driver and bodyguard? You know it – Sergeant Walker.)

We sat in the next bunker for about an hour.

A soldier told me all about his wife; a civilian contractor explained bluntly that we were basically defenseless – “If a rocket hits the bunker square on, we’re gone.”

I spent hours in guard towers, usually late at night when the watch feels the longest. I heard about future plans (“My ambition,” one marine said, “is to get a job I can quit, not signing on any dotted line”), girlfriends back home, and the boredom (on one tower, the guys had been feeding a mouse and were a little worried that he hadn’t shown up in a day or so; in another camp, marines spun a fantasy of being on an island with just one obstacle between them and freedom; the challenge was devising ever-weirder ways to get around it).

“We’re Seeing Definite Expanded Strongholds”

“That’s Not Going To Stop In 2008. . . . If Anything, It’s Gaining Momentum”

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, Military Project, who sent this in.]

November 25, 2007 By Karen DeYoung, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

Senior White House officials privately express pessimism about Afghanistan.

According to a survey released last month by the Asia Foundation, 79 percent of Afghans felt that the government does not care what they think, while 69 percent felt that it is not acceptable to publicly criticize the government.

Experts said the Taliban's control has extended beyond the group's traditional southern territory, with extremists making substantial inroads this year into the western provinces of Farah, Herat and others along the Iranian border even as they regularly challenge eastern-based U.S. forces.

"We're seeing definite expanded strongholds," said a U.S. official who declined to be identified by agency. "That's not going to stop in 2008. . . . If anything, it's gaining momentum."

Resistance Action

Nov. 26 (Xinhua) & Herald and Weekly Times & November 27, 2007 By Rahim Faiea
Associated Press

A roadside bomb struck an Afghan army vehicle in an eastern province Monday, killing four soldiers and wounding two, an official said.

The soldiers were attacked with a remote-controlled bomb in Paktia province as they traveled toward their base, said Din Mohammad Darwish, spokesman for the provincial governor.

Two of the wounded soldiers were in critical condition, he said.

"The Taliban rebels detonated a roadside bomb by remote control in Zarmat district today at noon, destroying a military vehicle and killing four soldiers on the spot," Darwish told Xinhua.

Two policemen were killed overnight in a roadside bomb blast in the country's south, a police commander said. The policemen were killed when a remotely detonated bomb struck their vehicle in Spin Boldak, a town on the border with Pakistan in the southern province of Kandahar, district police chief Abdul Raziq said.

TROOP NEWS

62% Of Americans Think Iraq War A Mistake

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

November 25, 2007 (Angus Reid Global Monitor) & 11.27.07 AP

All in all, thinking about how things have gone in Iraq since the United States went to war there in March 2003, do you think the United States...

Made the right decision in going to war in Iraq
37%

Made a mistake in going to war in Iraq
62%

Refused / Not Answered
1%

54 percent say they favor bringing the troops home as soon as possible, virtually the same number as in February.

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



Photo by Nahrawan [Thanks to Kevin Ramirez, CCCO, who sent this in.]

Rats At Work:

Defend Teachers Threatened With Termination for Antiwar Student Walkout:

“The School Administration Is Disciplining A Teacher Whose Husband Is A Veteran Whose Life Was Put At Serious Risk In Iraq And Who Has Now Turned Against The War”

[An Urgent Call for Solidarity]

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

The husband of one of the teachers who received the threatening letters is an Iraq veteran.

He went to Foster High School on November 16th and spoke to the students from first-hand experience about the truth of the Iraq War that the government and corporate media are actively hiding from the American people, and he walked out with the students.

BRIEF BACKGROUND:

On November 16th, over 1,000 students in Washington State walked out to protest the war in Iraq and the presence of military recruiters in public schools. Students at Foster High School in Tukwila, Washington organized and 150 walked out, saying “Money for Schools, Not War.” (For more info, see www.yawr.org)

Foster students rallied at the school flagpole, marched down to the I-5 overpass, and then marched to the Tukwila City Hall. The march and rally were student generated and entirely peaceful.

In reaction the Tukwila School District has done the following:

Suspended one Social Studies teacher, Brett Rogers, who supported his students in a student generated democratic movement

Threatened administrative action against five other teachers

Threatened to discipline students for exercising their First Amendment Right to free speech

When Brett Rogers was asked if he had a personal stake in the war, he said: "It's an illegal war and my cousin is deploying December 4th, and I'm not happy about it."

Please call and email the Principal and Superintendent now!

Tell them they need to:

1. Reinstate the teacher Brett Rogers who has been put on administrative leave!
2. Drop the disciplinary hearings against all six teachers who face investigations!
3. Support the initiative and moral fortitude of students who took a stand against the effects caused by this war to their communities!
4. Take no disciplinary action against students who participated in the walkout!

We request that you flood the school administration with phone calls and emails. Tell them to halt all disciplinary action against students and the Tukwila Six!

CONTACT:

Foster HS Principal George Ilgenfritz:
(206) 901-7905 ilgenfritz@tukwila.wednet.edu

And Interim Superintendent Ethelda Burke:
(206) 901-8000, (206) 901-8006, burke@tukwila.wednet.edu

Please send a copy of protest emails to us at tukwila.teachers.solidarity@hotmail.com so we can count how many protest emails have been sent in.

If they refuse to answer your call, call Foster HS Assistant Principal Daryl Wright (206) 901-7902 and Foster HS Office Manager Darlene Aguiluz (206) 901-7915.

What Happened, In Detail

On Friday, November 16th, more than a 1,000 students in Washington State participated in a nation-wide student walkout to protest the war and military recruiters in schools. This included around 150 students at Foster High School, just south of Seattle.

Foster is part of the Tukwila School District, of which 71% of the student body is low-income and eligible for the free and reduced-cost school meals. Since the beginning of the Iraq War, the U.S. military has been assigning ever greater numbers of recruiters to lure young people into signing up for this bloody, costly and illegal quagmire in Iraq, especially in marginalized schools like Foster High School.

Student made signs, walked out, marched to an I-5 overpass and the Tukwila City Hall for a civic and peaceful assembly.

Now the principal and school district superintendent have begun a witch-hunt against students and at least six of their teachers and threatened to suspend students who walked out.

The students took a bold stand against the war and these teachers have stood up for their students, some of the most disenfranchised in the state, both inside and outside the classroom.

Students who walked out are threatened with truancy, and their teachers' jobs are on the line. Now, who will stand up for these students and teachers?

One teacher was put on administrative leave on Monday, November 19th.

On Tuesday, November 20th, at least five more were delivered memos notifying them that the Tukwila school district was "investigating reports of possible misconduct relating to you in connection with the student walk-out."

These teachers were further notified that they were not to discuss "this matter with any District students or staff" under threat of being terminated.

Several of these teachers were completely unconnected with the walkout, but because they have been previously marked out as individuals that speak their minds, they are being lumped into the teacher hunt.

"Investigative interviews" are to begin this Tuesday.

These teachers are union members of the Tukwila Education Association, and there are measures being taken to try to ensure their defense through this channel, BUT A STRONG COMMUNITY AND NATION-WIDE RESPONSE IS CRITICAL!!!

How can we give thanks to those on the REAL frontlines of freedom in America?

Call and email the school officials above!

And please forward this alert to supportive organizations and individuals!

The memo from Interim Superintendent to at least 6 teachers essentially says:

In the next couple days, we will summon you to a meeting because we are "investigating reports of possible misconduct relating to you in connection with the student walk-out."

There could be disciplinary consequences pending completion of this investigation.

The teachers have been careful to abide by the Interim Superintendent's directive not to talk with any District students or staff about these matters. But nothing in the

Superintendent's letter said teachers could not talk with their union representatives or community supporters. In fact, the letter explicitly says they could talk with the union.

Some teachers who received letters were simply on their lesson planning hour and therefore were not scheduled to teach class when the student walkout happened. These teachers went outside just to see what was going on when the students walked out, but they did not walk out or promote the walkout. So the school has no evidence against some teachers who received the threatening letters.

It appears the administration is targeting these teachers in a political with-hunt because they have spoken their minds in the past over other issues.

For example, two of these teachers were banned in the past from sending out school-wide emails because they spoke their minds in school-wide emails that the administrators did not like.

Iraq Veteran's Wife Threatened

The husband of one of the teachers who received the threatening letters is an Iraq veteran.

He went to Foster High School on November 16th and spoke to the students from first-hand experience about the truth of the Iraq War that the government and corporate media are actively hiding from the American people, and he walked out with the students.

As the Iraq veteran left the building, he was confronted by a security guard who identified himself as a police officer/veteran/federal marshal who said: "Don't even start with me, I'm a veteran."

The school administration is disciplining a teacher whose husband is a veteran whose life was put at serious risk in Iraq and who has now turned against the war.

This is very disrespectful to the veteran, his family, and the working-class students who are being forced to shoulder the burdens of this war.

The school administrators are more concerned with trying to having power over teachers and students than letting the communities who have been hit the hardest by the war speak out against the war and the predatory military recruiters in their schools.

This after the American people voted the Democrats into Congress to end the war, but the Democrats are still making excuses about why they cannot cut off funds for the war and direct those funds toward education and other desperately needed social services.

When the leaders of our country will not end this unjust war, then it becomes up to ordinary workers, parents, students, and soldiers to end the war.

The attendance secretary at the school also refused to excuse the absences of students who had permission slips signed by their parents to miss school, which is a flagrant violation of parent and student rights.

Principal George Ilgenfritz also told one student that she didn't know anything about war.

(Ironically, the student is from an immigrant Somali family who has family in the war-torn country of Somalia.)

On the Tukwila School District's website, the following message has been posted by Interim Superintendent Ethelda Burke: "We believe in the historic mission of public education within our democracy. Our schools are expected to encourage and prepare students to be productive citizens.

"We believe the challenge is to transform every child - to give every student a chance to become an autonomous, thinking person and a self-governing citizen. We are all here to work together to provide the best education for the most prized commodity of our fine city - the students of the Tukwila School District."

Yet when the students participate in an act of peaceful civil disobedience in the best traditions of Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement who challenged unjust segregation laws, now the Superintendent is hypocritically trying to discourage students from being "self-governing citizens" and standing up for what is right.

We need to match the determination of these courageous teachers, students and the Iraq veteran with all the support we can!

Please take a few minutes now to call and email the Principal and Superintendent at the numbers and emails at the top of this email!

For more info, contact the Tukwila Teachers and Students Solidarity Committee: foster_nfo@hotmail.com (253) 573-9252

Please leave a brief message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action

11.26.07 By SINAN SALAHEDDIN, Associated Press Writer & Reuters & November 27 2007 Independent News & Media & Reuters

A bomber posing as a shepherd killed four policemen and wounded six policemen, in an attack on the Diyala province police headquarters in the city of Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. Three women were killed in random gunfire which broke

out after the blast. Three women were killed in random police gunfire which broke out after the blast.

Guerrillas killed a policeman in a drive-by shooting in the town of Hawija, 70 km (45 miles) southwest of Baghdad.

A policeman was killed in a drive-by shooting by attackers on motorcycles in Kut, 100 miles southeast of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas killed a policeman when they stormed his house in Kut, 170 km (105 miles) southeast of Baghdad, police said.

A truck bomb killed one soldier and wounded five others in an attack on an Iraqi army checkpoint on Sunday in the Al-Zab area, 35 km (20 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, police said. Another soldier was missing.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

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

**“The mighty are only mighty because we are on our knees. Let us rise!”
--Camille Desmoulins**

November 27, 1969: Fast Against The War “Spread To Units All Over Vietnam”

Carl Bunin Peace History Dec 26 - Dec 3

Over one hundred members of the U.S. 71st Evacuation Hospital and the 44th Medical Detachment at Pleiku, Vietnam, organized a protest fast called the “John Turkey movement.”

In *Home Before Morning: The Story of an Army Nurse in Vietnam*, nurse Lynda Van Devanter recalled her change in attitude.

“Earlier in my tour, when I had heard about the war protesters, I had felt angry at them for not supporting us. Now I wished I could march with them. . .

“Most others in Pleiku felt the same way.

“We even held our own Thanksgiving Day fast—the John Turkey movement — as a show of support for those who were trying to end the war through protests and moratoriums.

We heard that the fast had spread to units all over Vietnam.”

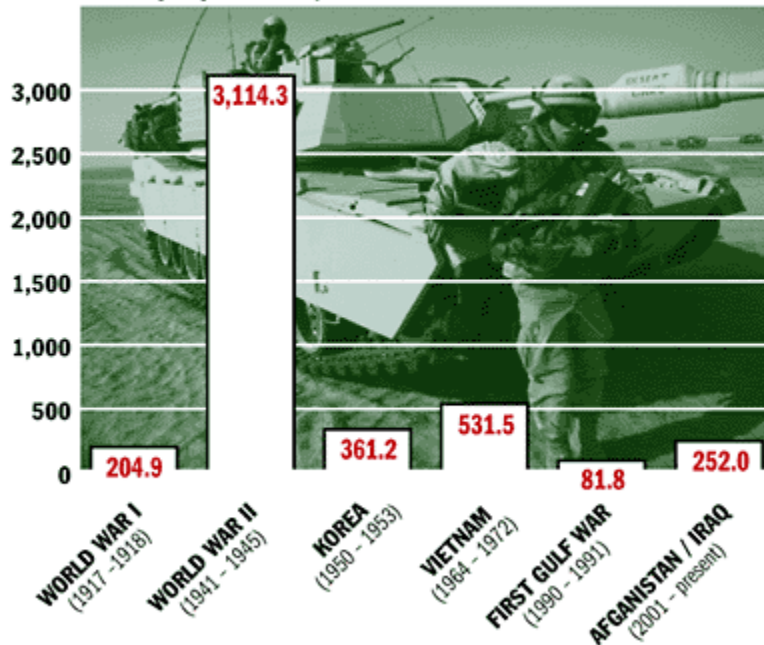
The fast received considerable media coverage when Denise Murray, a nurse at Pleiku and daughter of a distinguished admiral, made antiwar statements to the press.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE SERVICE?

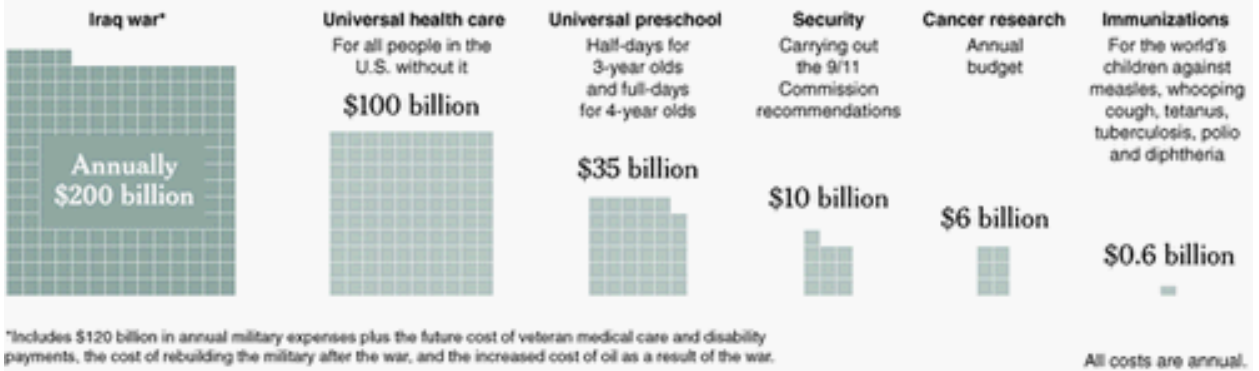
Forward GI Special along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

Comparing costs of US wars

(Military expenditures, in billions of 2005 dollars)



Putting the Annual Cost of War in Perspective



Sources: Scott Wallsten and Katrina Kosac (war costs); Linda Bilmes and Joseph Stiglitz (war costs); Kaiser Family Foundation (health insurance); Jane Waldfogel, Columbia University School of Social Work (preschool); National Cancer Institute (cancer research); Unicef (immunizations)

The New York Times

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

OCCUPATION REPORT

Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!

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



Pissed-off Iraqi citizen, described as a “suspect,” is handcuffed and forced to sit on the floor while waiting to be questioned by foreign occupation soldiers from the US in Baquba, October 2007. (AFP/File/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, 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!**

Welcome To Liberated Iraq: Assassins Kill 11 Relatives Of A Journalist Critical Of The Iraqi Government

November 27, 2007 By HAMID AHMED, Associated Press Writer

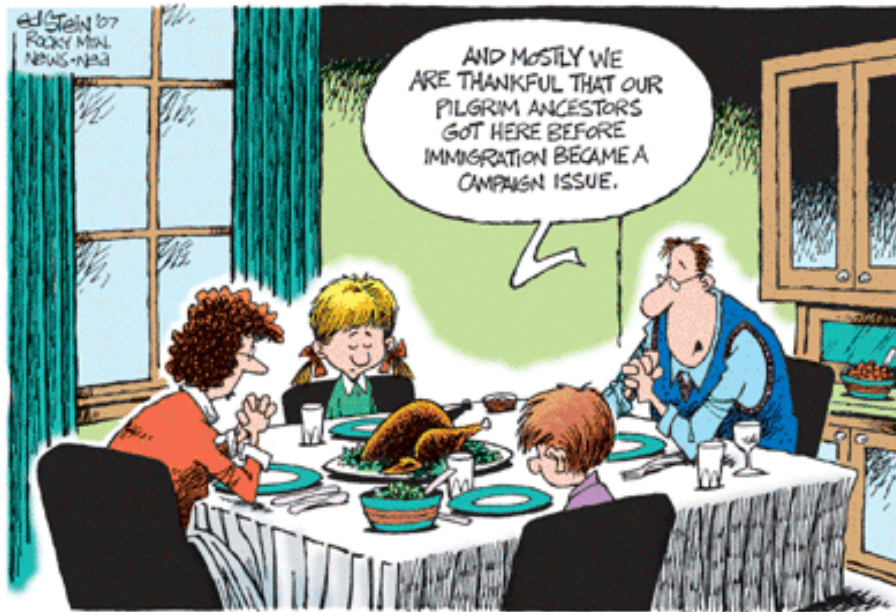
Masked gunmen killed 11 relatives of a journalist critical of the Iraqi government on Sunday, according to colleagues and the media advocacy group Reporters Without Borders.

In Amman, Jordan, the journalist challenged the Iraqi government’s account and accused the Interior Ministry forces of involvement in the deaths.

Dhia al-Kawaz said they raided a wake in Iraq for his slain family Tuesday in the predominantly Shiite city of Kut, 100 miles southeast of Baghdad, tearing down banners commemorating the dead.

Al-Kawaz, who has lived outside Iraq for 20 years, said the killing of his family members was “a message to me to any journalist inside Iraq or outside Iraq who opposes the policies of the Iraqi government.”

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT THE NEW TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

Received:

**“I Would Like To Get This Information Out
There As Far And Wide So I Don’t See Other
Soldiers Who Decide They Don’t Want To Be
A Part Of This Shamed And Thrown Into**

Prison When They Could Have Had A Fighting Chance”

From: IVAW Member
To: GI Special
Sent: November 27, 2007

Hello GI special.

This is Chris Capps-Schubert here from IVAW [www.ivaw.org/].

I would like to bring to the attention of your readers on help on how to help to get out of the military.

I know you would like to see more soldiers themselves changing the atmosphere within the military, but as it stands right now the army is entirely in the hands of its officers and individual soldiers feel like they don't have any options inside the military. What is coming to my mind is the recent spurt of soldiers who are or were in the 173rd deciding to go AWOL.

As far as we know at least 2 soldiers (James Blanks and Andrew Hegerty) are locked up in the military prison in Mannheim, another (Jeffrey Gauntt) is confined to Caserna Ederle, and yet another is under investigation in Baunholder for desertion (Captain Robert Przybylski) for committing the crime of trying to avoid deployment to be forced to fight. One of them (James Blanks) was taken to Afghanistan anyways before being returned to Germany for his court martial. All these soldiers were in the 173rd at one point or another, and the fact that the 173rd is going through a tough time can be evidenced by the fact that dead soldiers from the 173rd are in the pages of your newspaper.

What I would like to say is that for those desperate enough to see no other alternatives to going AWOL that there is help out there in not only the GI Rights Hotline and the Military Counseling Network, but in various organizations who are willing to provide the kind of legal help and public eye that is needed to successfully fight against the Army's retribution.

Chances are these soldiers would or will have better success with support from organizations behind them. Chances are these soldiers have no idea about anything like the GI special itself or any organizations that support soldiers who refuse to fight.

I would like to get this information out there as far and wide so I don't see other soldiers who decide they don't want to be a part of this shamed and thrown into prison when they could have had a fighting chance.

Iraq Veterans Against the War
www.ivaw.org

The GI Rights Hotline
www.objector.org/girights/contact.html

(800) 394-9544
(510)-465-1472

The Military Counseling Network
<http://www.getting-out.de/>
06223-47506 (in Germany, best to call if you are in Europe)

Military Families Speak Out
www.mfso.org

National Lawyers Guild/ Military Law Task Force
www.nlg.org/mltf

Proyecto Guerrero Azteca
www.guerreroazteca.org

Veterans for Peace
www.veteransforpeace.org

I would like to note, that we know 2 other soldiers from the 173rd who DID get help. James Circello recently got released from military custody in Ft. Sill and is now a free man instead of in Afghanistan.

Another one is turning himself in soon and we are expecting him not to have any problems. Hopefully he to will be a free man.



GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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

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

<http://williambowles.info/gispecial/2007/index.html>; <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=->

http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/;
<http://www.albasrah.net/pages/mod.php?header=res1&mod=gis&rep=gis>

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