

## GI SPECIAL 6A1:



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**“After 15 Months, The Soldiers  
Have Realized That Even If  
Every Soldier Gave One  
Hundred, Two Hundred Or Even  
One-Thousand Percent, Nothing  
We Accomplish Will Get Us  
Home Any Sooner And *That Is*  
The Definition Of A Pointless  
War”**

From: [Soldier, Iraq]

To: GI Special  
Sent: December 30, 2007  
Subject: T!

**I'm sorry that I haven't donated as I have benefited from GI Special every day I've been here.**

**I've tried to tell as many people as possible about your publication as I see it as basically all the Iraq news anyone needs to know.**

**I don't have checks here and I don't have money orders. I tried to make a credit card payment but paypal wants my bank information which I just can't bring myself to give.**

**I'm going to miss the deadline for the raffle, but I AM going to donate just as soon as I deploy to Texas.**

**I use "deploy" because the sentiment among my buddies is, when you're in Iraq for 15 months and hope to be in the US for 12... which is really your home station?**

I've been incredibly busy in the last few months, trying to get the word out to fellow soldiers about GI Special and IVAW. There's a lot of interest but even among those not interested in joining, it's not out of love for Iraq or the war, more out of a mindset of "I volunteered to do this so I just *shouldn't* resist."

At any rate, with all the talk of the "success," it's surprising (or not?) how much the soldiers still don't see the cause as worth it.

**I think after 15 months, the soldiers have realized that even if every soldier gave one hundred, two hundred or even one-thousand percent, nothing we accomplish will get us home any sooner, and *that* is the definition of a pointless war.**

**Keep fighting the good fight, T! :D**

**[Soldier, Iraq]**

**Reply: Please, nothing whatsoever to apologize for. Admiration for your resistance is limitless. You're in the GI Special raffle, and so is every troop serving in Iraq who wishes to enter, free. It's a very small way of showing respect for the shit you're wading through.**

**You may not get the results you want now, but action is preceded by a long period of ferment and preparation, and in that process, the circulation of information *is* resistance. Merely taking it from you, reading it, and thinking about it is necessary and indispensable.**

**That tired old line about winning hearts and minds first, as a precondition for action, was always true and still is.**

**It just got a bad rep in Vietnam when command thought the way to win hearts and minds was napalm.**

Come home safe,

T

## **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**

### **St. Johns Soldier Dies In Iraq On Christmas**



12/28/2007 By Jessie-Lynne Kerr, The Times-Union

Army Sgt. Bryan Joseph Tuten, 33, who was born and reared in St. Augustine, was killed in Iraq on Christmas Day while serving his second tour of duty there with the 82nd Airborne.

His high school sweetheart and wife of 10 years, Constandina Tuten, and two young children were spending the holidays with her parents at their St. Augustine home when the family was informed of his death Wednesday.

Gary Peterson, his father-in-law who retired as a lieutenant colonel after 33 years in the Army National Guard, said the Army casualty assistance officers told them he was killed

Tuesday afternoon while on operations in Tikrit and implied his death was caused by an improvised explosive device.

Sgt. Tutten was a rifleman and squad leader of an infantry company, Peterson said.

"He went out to clear out the insurgents," he said. "It was a very dangerous job but he was very good at it."

Sgt. Tutten was the only child of Sylvia Smallwood of St. Johns and the late Thomas Robert Tutten of Vilano Beach, who drowned in 2001 trying to retrieve a raft for some children he had rescued from the surf. Tom Tutten was a popular artist and musician in St. Augustine.

Her son "was the bravest man I ever met and he was everything to me," Smallwood said Thursday. "He felt he was doing the right thing fighting for our freedom and our country."

Smallwood said she hated that her grandchildren will grow up without their father.

Arrangements for the funeral and burial have not been made but will be in St. Augustine with a service at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church.

Sgt. Tutten attended St. Augustine High School and St. Johns River Community College, Peterson said. He worked at various occupations, including restaurant chef and landscaper, before joining the Army five years ago and had recently re-enlisted. He was stationed at Fort Bragg and his wife and children - daughter, Catherine, who will be 4 on New Year's Eve, and son, Gareth, 7 months old - were living in Fayetteville, N.C.

Sgt. Tutten was expected home in about 45 days from his second tour of duty in Iraq, which began in November 2006. "When his son was born, Bryan was given emergency leave to come home for two weeks," Peterson said. Sgt. Tutten had missed his daughter's birth, he added.

The family last spoke with Sgt. Tutten on a video conference call for a group of soldiers on Dec. 11, Peterson said. "He was one of my heroes and he sacrificed his life for our safety," his father-in-law said.

The sergeant was an avid sportsman who loved to fish and cook.

"He was a very good family man who would spend hours playing with his daughter," Peterson said. "My wife, Faye, and I were so attached to Bryan that we thought of him as one of our sons and we have three of our own."

In addition to his wife, children and mother, Sgt. Tutten is survived by a grandmother, Jeannette McSwain of Conyers, Ga.

According to the Iraqi Coalition Casualty Count Web site records, Sgt. Tutten was the first serviceman from St. Johns County to die in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"He was so brave and he is going to be missed," his mother said.

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**FUTILE EXERCISE:  
ONLY 5 MILLION MORE PICTURES TO GO:  
COME ON HOME NOW!**



A U.S. soldier from the 2nd battalion, 32nd Field Artillery brigade checks behind pictures during a night raid in Baghdad August 8, 2007 . REUTERS/Damir Sagolj

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

# **U.S. Military Deaths And Opium Production In Afghanistan Hit Record Highs**

Dec 31, 2007 By Jason Straziuso - The Associated Press [Excerpts]

KABUL, Afghanistan — U.S. military deaths, bombings and opium production hit record highs in 2007.

Taliban fighters avoided head-on battles with U.S., NATO and Afghan army forces in 2007, resorting instead to ambushes and bombings, but militants attacked the weakest of Afghan forces to devastating effect.

Taliban militants killed more than 925 Afghan police, and large swaths of the country remain outside government control.

Afghanistan in 2007 saw record violence that killed more than 6,500 people, including 110 U.S. troops — the highest level ever in Afghanistan.

Seth Jones, an analyst with the Rand Corp. who follows Afghanistan, said the country's ability to improve governance is vital to defeating the insurgency.

"The thing that concerns me most," he said, "is the general perception in Afghanistan that the government is not capable of meeting the basic demands of its population, that it's involved in corruption ... that it's unable to deliver services in key rural areas, that it's not able to protect its population, especially the police."

The fight against poppies failed: Afghanistan this year produced 93 percent of the world's opium, the main ingredient in heroin.

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## **Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed, Four Wounded: Nationality Not Announced**

12.31.07 AP

KABUL, Afghanistan - A roadside bomb killed a NATO soldier and wounded four others yesterday in southern Afghanistan

The NATO soldiers were patrolling in the country's volatile south when an explosion ripped through their vehicle, NATO said. It did not identify the victims' nationalities or the exact location of the blast.

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## **Soldier Severely Burned In Humvee Rollover**

WOODBURN, Ky. — A soldier from southcentral Kentucky suffered severe burns when the Humvee he was riding in rolled over a bomb in Afghanistan, his father said.

Army Spc. Brian Gorham, 23, of Woodburn suffered second- and third-degree burns on his face, legs, and arms, said his father, Toney Gorham.

He was serving with the 173rd Airborne Brigade based in Vicenza, Italy, his father said. He had been in Afghanistan for six months before the Dec. 13 incident.

The soldier is being treated in an intensive care unit in San Antonio, his father said.

Brian Gorham recently had his first set of skin grafts on his arms and legs and looks better, but "he's still got a long way to go," Toney Gorham said.

Residents of Woodburn, a close-knit community of just more than 300 people in southern Warren County, were saddened by the news but were keeping a positive outlook.

"Knowing Brian and his mind if he can get it set, he'll come through this and won't think anything about it," said Frances McKinney, a neighbor. "Everybody's been real sad because most everybody knows him because he pretty much grew up here."

"He was doing what he loved. He loved being a soldier," said Stephanie McKinney, 19, who described Brian Gorham as "like a big brother" to her.

Toney Gorham said his son could be in the hospital for a year to treat burns that covered 51 percent of his body. He said his son suffered third-degree burns on his legs, arms and hands. He also suffered burns on his face and head.

Even so, Gorham said the doctors and his son are keeping a positive attitude and that his son is expected to walk out of the hospital.

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## **Resistance Action**

12.31.07 AP & AFP

In central Wardak province, Taliban militants fired rocket-propelled grenades Saturday at a convoy led by private security guards, killing six guards and two police officers, said Wardak police chief Gen. Zafaruddin, who goes by one name.

KABUL: Sixteen policemen were killed when their post in the southern province of Kandahar was attacked by Islamic rebels on Saturday, the interior ministry said.

Two other police officers were killed Monday in a roadside bomb blast in Musa Qala -- a town in southern Helmand province -- which was captured from the Taliban by Afghan and occupation forces this month.

Similar bomb attacks killed five Afghan soldiers -- one of them in eastern Paktia on Monday and four others in southern Uruzgan a day earlier, the defence ministry said in a statement.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

# Some Reserve And Guard Troops Getting Totally Fucked Out Of Dwell Time

Dec 30, 2007 By Michelle Tan, Army Times [Excerpts]

Wanted: Truck drivers, military police, infantrymen and mechanics to serve in the Army National Guard or Army Reserve.

**Because of the dire war-zone need for soldiers in short-handed specialties, many now serving in them are being sent back to theater with much less time at home than current component and Defense Department policy goals call for — namely, four to five years' dwell time for every one year deployed.**

**“The Army Reserve at this time is not capable of performing that,” said Lt. Col. Susan Lefever, chief of current operations for the Reserve G-1.**

In the Reserve, which has an end strength of about 191,500, transportation soldiers are called upon the most, said Lt. Col. Mark Cogburn, chief of G-1 strategic communications for the Reserve.

“We mobilize more transportation soldiers and have had to remobilize more transportation soldiers,” he said.

Two of the Reserve's top five hard-to-fill MOSs are in the transportation series, said Jim Ferguson, chief of the G-1's systems and analysis division. Other critical jobs include civil affairs, military police, engineers, quartermaster and personnel service support.

More than 291,000 soldiers from the Army Guard have been mobilized to support the war since Sept. 11, 2001, said Lt. Col. Ron Walls, chief of the Army Guard's enlisted recruiting and retention branch.

Currently, more than 46,300 soldiers are mobilized, and more than 35,500 are deployed.

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**[How It Is, Even In Tampa Bay]  
“There Were No Pro-War Protestors” “He  
Has Seen That In The Past, But Not  
Recently”**

December 31, 2007 By TONY HOLT, Tampa Bay Online [Excerpts]



WEEKI WACHEE - It was difficult hearing Brian Moore over the blaring horns.

He appreciates those sounds more than the screaming and cussing to which he has grown accustomed.

But it was the honking that was drowning out the other noises. Aside from a few heckles from a passenger in a garbage truck, there weren't many outspoken critics on the road Saturday morning.

Conversely, several motorists were pressing their horns as a show of support. That was not always the case when Moore began his weekly anti-war protests almost five years ago.

"Even though there's been a few birds and a few thumbs down, there have been a lot more people honking," he said while holding up signs with each hand that read "End The War" and "Where Is Osama?" "The majority is on our side."

There were no pro-war protestors across the intersection challenging Moore. He has seen that in the past, but not recently.

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## **“Some Filipino Troops Have Complained About The Arrogance Of U.S. Soldiers In Sulu” Treated “Like Janitors And Laborers”**

December 31, 2007 By Al Jacinto, Correspondent, The Manila Times

**AUTHORITIES have began an investigation into disturbing reports that US troops deployed in Sulu province had ordered the closure of a government hospital in the town of Panamao.**

The soldiers allegedly barged into the Panamao District Hospital on December 3 and ordered its closure for a still unknown reason.

US troops are in Sulu province since early this year to assist and advise Filipino forces in fighting terrorism.

Dr. Silak Lakkian, head of the hospital, has complained about how US troops meddled into their operations.

The news only broke out Saturday after local journalists learned about the incident, but US military officials were not available to make any statement.

**Sulu Governor Sakur Tan said he will personally act on the reports involving US troops and has talked to Major General Reuben Rafael, commander of Philippine military forces in the province, about it.**

**“US troops have no authority to impose on us,” he told The Manila Times.**

**It was not immediately known whether the US military tried to cover up the incident, but General Rafael also said that he will look into the reports. “We will look into this,” he said in a separate interview.**

Local villagers and some Filipino troops also have complained about the arrogance of US soldiers in Sulu. Some US troops have allegedly treated Filipino soldiers like janitors and laborers in the province.

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**



Albasrah [resistance publication] December 31, 2007

## **Resistance Action**

30 December 2007 by Muhammad Abu Nasr, Uruknet.info & Dec. 31 (Xinhua) & The Associated Press & Reuters & (KUNA)

In a dispatch posted at 2pm Baghdad time Sunday afternoon, the Yaqen News Agency reported that fighters equipped with light and medium machine guns assaulted headquarters of the collaborationist "popular committees," otherwise known as "Awakening" puppet police forces in the Balwar area of al-Miqdadiyah on Sunday.

Yaqen reported a source in the puppet regime's security establishment as saying that the attack left one of the members of the collaborationist committee dead and a second so severely wounded that he had to be evacuated to Ba'qubah General Hospital for treatment.

A woman wearing a bomb vest wounded two policemen when she attacked a police station in Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Militants injured dozens in separate attacks against three police stations in Al-Khales town, Diala governorate, north Baghdad. Two persons including an awakening council militiaman and a policeman were killed and a captain were injured in the attacks, a security source told KUNA.

A truck bomb attack in the town of Tarmiyah killed eight members the U.S. funded Awakening Council group at checkpoint in Tarmiyah, 30 km north of Baghdad.

A bomber also drove a truck rigged with explosives into a checkpoint manned by members of a U.S.-backed security volunteer in the town of Mishada, on part of the main highway linking Baghdad to northern Iraq, according a police officer and Adil al-Mishhadani, a member of the volunteer group.

In the town of Khalis, 50 miles north of Baghdad, guerrillas traded fire with police and U.S. allied Awakening Council members, leaving one council member and one policeman dead and wounding three policemen, a police officer said. Separately, six mortar rounds landed near an Iraqi Army checkpoint near the town, wounding two soldiers, the officer said.

A roadside bomb targeting a patrol killed two Iraqi soldiers and injured another four, police said. The attack occurred shortly after dawn in the frontier town of Mandali, about 30 miles from the Iranian border in Diyala province northeast of Baghdad.

A bomber wearing an explosive vest killed four U.S. allied neighbourhood patrol volunteers and wounded two others at a checkpoint on Baghdad's northern outskirts, police said.

A roadside bomb wounded two policemen when it struck their patrol in central Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Four Iraqi soldiers were killed in clashes on Monday in the village of Hashimiya west of Baquba.

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

## **END THE OCCUPATION**

### **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

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

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

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

“When someone says my son died fighting for his country, I say, “No, the suicide bomber who killed my son died fighting for his country.”  
-- Father of American Soldier Chase Beattie, KIA in Iraq

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

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

## **THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS**

**#1:**

# FIGHT HIM HERE, SO YOU WON'T HAVE TO FIGHT FOR HIM OVER THERE



The Traitor Bush: Dec. 20, 2007 (AP Photo/Ron Edmonds)

## #2: COMMENT UNNECESSARY



# “The Little-Known Story Of War Resistance Within The American Military During The Vietnam War”



December 31, 2007 By The Kebele Social Centre [Excerpts] Via GERALD ALI, CAWI

“It sends the wrong message to our troops.” George Bush

Does it ever!

By chronicling the little-known story of war resistance within the American military during the Vietnam War, our guys and gals being shipped to Iraq could get some seditious ideas.

Resist!

Tell the Republican gang in Washington, “We don’t want your fucking war!” just as many Vietnam GIs did.

What will surprise everyone seeing this film, including those with a vivid memory of the 1960s and 1970s US anti-War movement, is how much protest there was by people in uniform.



As early as 1966, when most at-home Americans hadn't thought much about Kennedy and then Johnson leading us into Southeast Asia, some in the military were already saying "No" to combat. Dr. Howard Levy, a physician serving in Vietnam, was being sent to three years in prison because, appalled by the murder of civilians, he stepped away from his duties.

Already in 1966, the leftist American magazine, Ramparts, had a cover story on a disillusioned Green Beret, Donald Duncan, above the banner headline, "I quit!"

Sir! No Sir! uncovers a national chain of GI coffee houses near military bases, where soldiers and marines could read alternative weeklies, listen to protest music, and chat about the lousy war under posters of Che Guevara and Huey Newton.

Soldiers started their own underground papers and distributed them clandestinely on the bases. This documentary makes the startling claim that there were 300 of them! And who today remembers the battles within military jails between incarcerated soldiers, who had refused to be shipped to Vietnam, and prison authorities, who viewed these inmates as traitors?

Sir! No Sir! makes clear that protesting the War from within the military wasn't taken lightly. It could be viewed as mutiny, a most serious charge leading those convicted to years in prison.

No wonder our unhappy soldiers, sickened to be in Vietnam, resorted to "fragging"; offing their own officers with grenades.

Probably two-dozen ex-soldiers are interviewed, now middle-aged and paunchy, and all speak of what turned them against the Vietnam War, and how they protested after.

These are ordinary people who dared to speak out from within, and against the war machine.

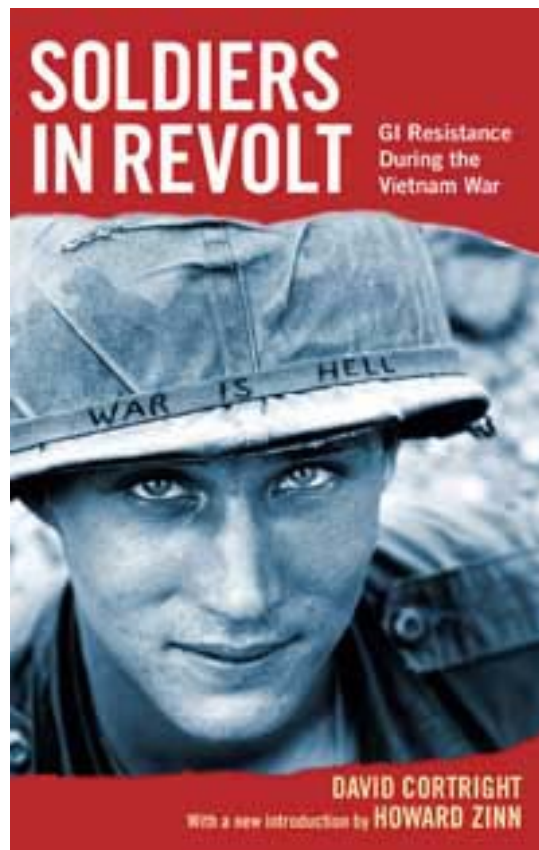
**Sir! No Sir!:**  
**At A Theatre Near You!**  
**To find it: <http://www.sirnosir.com/>**

**The Sir! No Sir! DVD is on sale now, exclusively at  
[www.sirnosir.com](http://www.sirnosir.com).**

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

**BUY SIR! NO SIR! FOR ACTIVE DUTY  
SOLDIERS NOW**

**HELP GET SIR! NO SIR!  
INTO THE HANDS THAT NEED IT MOST**



From: SOLDIERS IN REVOLT: DAVID CORTRIGHT, Anchor Press/Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1975. Now available in paperback from Haymarket Books.

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## **Happy Anniversary December 31, 1948; Honor To The 60,000**

Peace History December 25-31 By Carl Bunin

Sixty thousand Puerto Rican men refused to register for the draft. Eight were prosecuted.

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# Happy Anniversary

## December 31, 1970

### The Day The Lie Was Repudiated

Peace History Dec 31 - Jan 6 By Carl Bunin

**The U.S. Congress repealed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, which in 1964 authorized a dramatic increase in U.S. military involvement in Vietnam in response to an attack on U.S. forces that was later revealed to be fictitious.**

### How The Tonkin Gulf Lie Launched Vietnam War

July 27, 1994 By Jeff Cohen and Norman Solomon, Media Beat

Thirty years ago, it all seemed very clear.

“American Planes Hit North Vietnam After Second Attack on Our Destroyers; Move Taken to Halt New Aggression”, announced a Washington Post headline on Aug. 5, 1964.

That same day, the front page of the New York Times reported: “President Johnson has ordered retaliatory action against gunboats and ‘certain supporting facilities in North Vietnam’ after renewed attacks against American destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin.”

But there was no “second attack” by North Vietnam -- no “renewed attacks against American destroyers.”

**By reporting official claims as absolute truths, American journalism opened the floodgates for the bloody Vietnam War.**

**A pattern took hold: continuous government lies passed on by pliant mass media...leading to over 50,000 American deaths and millions of Vietnamese casualties.**

The official story was that North Vietnamese torpedo boats launched an “unprovoked attack” against a U.S. destroyer on “routine patrol” in the Tonkin Gulf on Aug. 2 -- and that North Vietnamese PT boats followed up with a “deliberate attack” on a pair of U.S. ships two days later.

The truth was very different.

Rather than being on a routine patrol Aug. 2, the U.S. destroyer Maddox was actually engaged in aggressive intelligence-gathering maneuvers -- in sync with coordinated attacks on North Vietnam by the South Vietnamese navy and the Laotian air force.

"The day before, two attacks on North Vietnam...had taken place," writes scholar Daniel C. Hallin. Those assaults were "part of a campaign of increasing military pressure on the North that the United States had been pursuing since early 1964."

**On the night of Aug. 4, the Pentagon proclaimed that a second attack by North Vietnamese PT boats had occurred earlier that day in the Tonkin Gulf -- a report cited by President Johnson as he went on national TV that evening to announce a momentous escalation in the war: air strikes against North Vietnam.**

**But Johnson ordered U.S. bombers to "retaliate" for a North Vietnamese torpedo attack that never happened.**

**Prior to the U.S. air strikes, top officials in Washington had reason to doubt that any Aug. 4 attack by North Vietnam had occurred. Cables from the U.S. task force commander in the Tonkin Gulf, Captain John J. Herrick, referred to "freak weather effects," "almost total darkness" and an "overeager sonarman" who "was hearing ship's own propeller beat."**

**One of the Navy pilots flying overhead that night was squadron commander James Stockdale, who gained fame later as a POW and then Ross Perot's vice presidential candidate. "I had the best seat in the house to watch that event," recalled Stockdale a few years ago, "and our destroyers were just shooting at phantom targets -- there were no PT boats there.... There was nothing there but black water and American fire power."**

In 1965, Lyndon Johnson commented: "For all I know, our Navy was shooting at whales out there."

But Johnson's deceitful speech of Aug. 4, 1964, won accolades from editorial writers.

The president, proclaimed the New York Times, "went to the American people last night with the somber facts." The Los Angeles Times urged Americans to "face the fact that the Communists, by their attack on American vessels in international waters, have themselves escalated the hostilities."

An exhaustive new book, *The War Within: America's Battle Over Vietnam*, begins with a dramatic account of the Tonkin Gulf incidents. In an interview, author Tom Wells told us that American media "described the air strikes that Johnson launched in response as merely 'tit for tat' -- when in reality they reflected plans the administration had already drawn up for gradually increasing its overt military pressure against the North."

Why such inaccurate news coverage? Wells points to the media's "almost exclusive reliance on U.S. government officials as sources of information" -- as well as "reluctance to question official pronouncements on 'national security issues.'"

Daniel Hallin's classic book *The 'Uncensored War'* observes that journalists had "a great deal of information available which contradicted the official account; it simply wasn't used. The day before the first incident, Hanoi had protested the attacks on its territory by Laotian aircraft and South Vietnamese gunboats."

What's more, "It was generally known...that 'covert' operations against North Vietnam, carried out by South Vietnamese forces with U.S. support and direction, had been going on for some time."

In the absence of independent journalism, the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution -- the closest thing there ever was to a declaration of war against North Vietnam -- sailed through Congress on Aug. 7. (Two courageous senators, Wayne Morse of Oregon and Ernest Gruening of Alaska, provided the only "no" votes.)

The resolution authorized the president "to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression."

The rest is tragic history.

#### **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](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org). Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe.**

#### **NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

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

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

## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

# **60% Of Iraqis Want U.S. Troops Dead:**

## Big Surprise



A boy covers his face as a foreign occupation soldier from the U.S. army points weapon towards him during a foot patrol in Baqouba, 60 kilometers (35 miles) northeast of Baghdad Dec. 30, 2007. (AP Photo/Marko Drobnjakovic)

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

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

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

***Occupation As Seen Through  
The Eyes Of The Occupied:  
“Frustration, Indignation,  
Resentment, Fear — These Are***

**The Emotions Most Frequently  
Aroused By The Occupation”  
“Everybody I Speak To Thinks  
This. They Don’t Have Power In  
Their Own Country”  
“Why Did This Kid Throw A Rock At  
A Man With A Weapon, A Helmet, And  
A Vest? What Was He Thinking?”  
“These Are Foreign Soldiers,” He  
Replied. “This Is An Occupation”**

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

January 17, 2008 By Michael Massing, The New York Review Of Books [Excerpts]

When it comes to covering the war in Iraq, McClatchy Newspapers has always done things a bit differently.

McClatchy has a large bureau in Washington, but without a paper either in the capital or in New York, it operates outside the glare of the nation’s political and media elite, and this has freed it to follow its own path.

About a year ago, it set up a blog exclusively for contributions from its Iraqi staff.

“Inside Iraq,” it’s called, and several times a week the Iraqi staff members post on it about their experiences and impressions.

“It’s an opportunity for Iraqis to talk directly to an American audience,” says Leila Fadel, the current bureau chief, whose father is from Lebanon and whose mother is from Michigan, who grew up in Saudi Arabia, and who is all of twenty-six years old.

The entries on it are rarely edited, and the English is left intact. “You can hear the way they think and speak, untouched,” Fadel says.

The emphasis, she notes, is on telling personal stories rather than expressing political views.

**Even so, the blog is full of passion, irony, bitterness, and outrage, qualities that help get across the dark realities — and unfathomable costs — of the occupation with an immediacy that Americans are rarely exposed to.**

**It's the occupation as seen through the eyes of the occupied.  
One major target of the Iraqi bloggers' frustration is government officials.**

**Officials are criticized for their incompetence, their arrogance, their indifference to the concerns of ordinary citizens, and above all their subservience to the United States.**

**To Americans, the pressure that Washington constantly exerts on the Iraqi government seems a necessary step to break the country's political impasse; to the McClatchy bloggers, it seems an indefensible violation of the nation's sovereignty.**

A US push to get Iraqi legislators to amend the national oil law draws a sharp rebuke:

At small gatherings and inside old cafes the betting runs high...will the Parliament buckle under the pressure??

**How unseemly for the government of a sovereign state — and its Parliament to be pressured into making...of all things... amendments to its own constitution...by a foreign force!**

As this entry suggests, the United States is not spared on the blog. On the contrary, it is the subject of almost constant comment — most of it negative.

**Frustration, indignation, resentment, fear — these are the emotions most frequently aroused by the occupation.**

One major source of grievance are the US military patrols and convoys that are forever hurtling across Baghdad.

**Motivated by a legitimate fear of car bombs, the Americans insist that while they are on the road, all cars must remain a safe distance away.**

**If anyone gets too close, or makes too sudden a move, the Americans will often open fire.**

**Though rarely mentioned in the US press, such incidents have claimed untold hundreds of Iraqi lives, and the fear of adding to the total is a constant theme of the blog, as in this entry from October 18, about being in a minibus caught in a traffic jam:**

"During our 10 minutes waiting to pass the intersection, I saw a US army convoy, four Humvee vehicles and two 4wheel drive cars among them. OMG, Not again.

"Everybody was watching the convoy carefully praying so hard that they pass over peacefully.

“While everyone is focused on the convoy in front, a passenger looks in back and sees that another, consisting of four Stryker armored vehicles, is approaching.

“Death in front, death behind,” he warns, and the passengers, looking behind them, are terrified.

When the two convoys pass without incident, they give thanks to Allah. “It was the longest ten minutes I ever lived,” the blogger notes.

The blogger thinks back to the incident that occurred a month earlier in al-Nosoor Square, when Blackwater security guards opened fire on a crowd, killing seventeen:

“The bullets that tore the bodies of the innocent people came to my mind. I imagined the shouts of the woman whose son was killed in the same car with her. I saw the wreck of the car few days after the incident. I also remembered the tears of the old man that we met who lost his wife in the incident. I don’t know how long we will live with these daily fears.”

That shooting had for the first time thrust Blackwater and other private security contractors into the spotlight in America.

From “Inside Iraq,” however, it’s clear that Iraqis have felt abused by them for years, and most Western journalists have also at least been aware of the aggressive behavior of these mercenaries.

Indeed, with their wraparound sunglasses, assault rifles, and menacing manner, they were hard to miss.

Yet with a few exceptions — Steve Fainaru in The Washington Post, T. Christian Miller in the Los Angeles Times, Jeremy Scahill in his book Blackwater, and PBS’s Frontline in “Private Warriors” — this major aspect of the US presence in Iraq remained until very recently hidden from American view.

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“Inside Iraq” provides many other startling glimpses of the American occupation. One, from late November, recounts an incident witnessed by a teacher at a Baghdad school:

**“Yesterday noon, an American squad from the United State Army (about ten to twelve) broke in Al-Mansour preparatory school for one reason or another.**

**“We don’t have the right to ask them why they came to the school.**

“The soldiers spread in different spots of the school walking towards the back yard which is used as a soccer field.

**“Most of the students were in their classes when the squad came, but still there were many students in the yard who were terrified to see the American soldiers with their guns.**

**“One of the students was upset to see the soldiers and he threw a stone and hit one of them.**

**“Three soldiers surrounded him kicking him with their boots for some minutes on different parts of his body.**

**“Later, a teacher of English said that the captain of the squad told him “next time if students throw stones, we will use our machines guns not the boots.”**

The blogger reflects:

**“I really hated myself hearing that news as I am a teacher myself. What shall I do if I were there? What shall I tell my students? How can I behave? What excuses will I give for that incident?... In 2003 I thought we were getting democracy and freedom, but what happened at that school does not tell the story of freedom.”**

**In a May 25 posting, a blogger named Hussein describes how, while he and his three brothers were at work one day, three armored vehicles pulled up to his house.**

Twenty US soldiers got out and went inside.

**There they found his mother and father, two sisters-in-law, and five children.**

**The soldiers forced the father to kneel with his head to the wall without taking into account his age (sixty-five) or his physical condition (high blood pressure).**

**Searching the house, the soldiers found some electric cables they suspected were being used to make bombs. (In fact, they were for use in the home generator.)**

**Searching through the mother’s wardrobe, the soldiers found a small tube containing a white substance — chemicals, they believed, used in making bombs.**

**In fact, the tube contained some salt that she had been given as a gift and had taken to a shrine to get blessed.**

**The woman was given no opportunity to explain this or to taste the salt, as she had offered.**

A few seconds later, the blogger writes,

**“they brought my father taking his finger prints telling him that... the test is positive and the marks on his hands referring that he is an expert of explosives.**

**“In fact, he has nothing to do with that, he was an electrician who worked hard for about forty years till he had got the pension in 1991, but he didn’t stop working for his own business till the last four years ago.**

**“I forgot to tell that they asked my father about any kind of weapons that we have, he told them that we have only one machine gun in the house and he gave it to them.**



**“They took the gun and my father saying that his hands carry TNT.**

**“Father has been taken to the unknown having no idea where he is, the condition he is in as he is ill and where to ask to have any kind of information about him or the charges behind this arrest.**

This incident sent a shudder through the McClatchy office, and Leila Fadel immediately began sending out e-mails to everybody she knew in the military, trying to discover the whereabouts of Hussein’s father.

A general she contacted took an interest in the case, and before leaving for a break in Beirut she was led to believe that he would be released.

While she was away, however, she learned from Hussein that not only was his father not being released but that he was being transferred to Camp Bucca, the main US detention facility, near Basra. Distraught, Fadel began sending out more e-mails, asking officials what evidence they had to implicate Hussein’s father.

She was told they had something but could not provide it.

Keeping up the pressure once she was back in Baghdad, she eventually got through to the American general in charge of all US-held detainees in Iraq. Mark Seibel, McClatchy’s managing editor for international news, raised the matter with General David Petraeus while on a visit to Baghdad in July. Finally, after three months of inquiries, petitions, and pleas, Hussein’s father was released.

I asked Fadel what she thinks would have happened had she not gotten involved in the case. “If Hussein didn’t work for us and if I didn’t call people, and if those people didn’t know that a journalist agency was involved,” she said, “he might still be in detention.”

Fadel told me that she planned to write an article about the case but — overextended — had not yet gotten around to it. To date, the incident has appeared exclusively on “Inside Iraq,” available only to those who seek it out.

Of all the reports I read on “Inside Iraq,” few affected me more than the one titled “Shadows,” by a reporter named Sahar. In it, she recounts being wakened early one morning by her barking dog.

Outside, she hears a number of men, some of whom are speaking English. Frightened, she asks who it is. The army, they say. She asks for time to get dressed, and they agree. When she opens the door, ten tall men in uniform walk in. Three of them, she can tell, are Americans; the rest are Iraqis.

While courteous, the men look right through her. One of the Americans begins searching the living room. In it is a large bookcase filled with books in English. “You read a lot Ma’am?” he asks. “Yes, in fact I do,” she replies, using English for the first time. “What’s this?” he says. “Heinlein? Asimov? Grisham?”

He turns to look at me again, this time with a different expression in his eyes. “Do you have a weapon?” “Yes, of course. It’s in that cabinet.”

He opens the cabinet and looks closely inside.

“You play Diablo?! And what’s this?! Grand Theft Auto??”

**He forgets all about the weapon and turns to us with a wide grin on his face, and astonishment in his eyes.**

**My son asks him, “Is ours the first house you search?”, “No, why?”, “Because all my friends have these games, why are you so surprised?”**

**The serviceman looks embarrassed, and turns to inspect the weapon.**

They went through every room, every cabinet, closet and drawer silently. After they accomplished their mission, in about thirty minutes, they walked out, gray shadows in the twilight.

With its quiet exploration of the subtle interplay between occupier and occupied, the vignette reminded me of Orwell’s writings about his imperial service in Burma.

Interested in learning more, I reached Sahar via phone at McClatchy’s Baghdad office.

**She told me that when the American soldier discovered Grisham and Asimov on her bookshelf, “He was totally amazed.**

**When he looked at me, he didn’t see an Iraqi woman in a hijab, he saw a human being. You can’t imagine the look on his face — there were tears in his eyes. He was inside a house, with love, a family, like anywhere else.”**

The incident, Sahar said, gave her a sense of the extent to which the Iraqi people are unknown.

“People in America look at pictures of Afghanistan and think Iraq is the same,” she said.

“They think Iraqis are people who are uneducated, who are Bedouins living in tents, tending camels and sheep.” Until the plague of wars began devouring the country, she went on, Iraq was the leading nation in the region, with a highly educated people boasting the best doctors, teachers, and engineers.

Americans, Sahar sighed, “don’t know this. And when you don’t know a person, you can’t feel for them, can you?”

She continued: “How many have been killed in Iraq? Bordering on a million. If you realize that these are real people with real feelings who are being killed—that they are fathers and husbands, teachers and doctors — if these facts could be made known, would people be so brutalized? It’s our job as Iraqi journalists to show that Iraqis are real people. This is what we try to advance through the blog.”

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The question on everyone's mind, of course, is whether the Americans should stay or go. On this, Leila Fadel told me, her Iraqi staff is divided. Some of them think the Americans should leave at once. While withdrawal would probably result in a bloodletting among Iraqis, they believe the country would be better off if this happened sooner rather than later, thus avoiding the effects of a prolonged occupation. Others think the Americans should stay and fix all the destruction they've caused over the last four and a half years. But, she adds, the staff's views on this keep shifting: "They're at war within themselves — on whether they want the Americans to stay or not, and whether they think that staying would make things any better. It's something they go back and forth on."

**Whichever side they come down on, however, there is one feeling that predominates: humiliation.**

"They remind me of this constantly," Fadel says.

**"Americans believe their soldiers are working for the greater good. The Iraqis don't see that. They see people who are here for their own self-interest — who drive the wrong way on roads, who stop traffic whenever they want to, who they have to be careful not to get too close to so that they won't be shot."**

When one of her staff members wrote the post about the student who threw a rock at a US soldier, Fadel says, she asked him, "Why did this kid throw a rock at a man with a weapon, a helmet, and a vest? What was he thinking?"

"These are foreign soldiers," he replied.

"This is an occupation."

That, Fadel notes, is a very common feeling among Iraqis.

"Everybody I speak to thinks this. They don't have power in their own country."

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## **Regrets That Saddam Hussein No Longer President: "Those Who Were Hurt During His Days Is Not Even One Tenth Of The People Who Are Suffering And Were Hurt By The Occupation"**

December 30, 2007 Deborah Haynes of The Times and Ali Hamdani in Baghdad  
[Excerpts]

Saddam Hussein supporters wept at his graveside in a village north of Baghdad today on the first anniversary of the toppled dictator's execution, while thousands more were prevented from visiting the tomb because of heightened security.

Some ordinary people, both minority Sunni Arabs who benefitted under the old regime and majority Shia who suffered, also admitted to regret that Saddam was no longer president, noting that the chaos since the invasion was worse than anything before.

In the nearby village of al-Dawr thousands of people had planned a demonstration to condemn the execution followed by a march to Saddam's graveside, but their movement was restricted by an indefinite curfew imposed from Saturday. American and Iraqi forces also prevented people from going to Awja.

Despite being a member of Iraq's Shia majority who suffered under the ousted regime, Ahmed Shati longs for the pre-invasion Iraq. "Everything was better during his reign. I wish we could bring him back but that is impossible.

"Maybe he caused some suffering in Iraq and he hurt some people but the number of those who were hurt during his days is not even one tenth of the people who are suffering and were hurt by the occupation and the governments that came after it," Mr Shati said.

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## **DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**



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