

## **GI SPECIAL 6A10:**

**ENOUGH OF THIS SHIT;  
COME HOME NOW**



A U.S. soldier from 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment resting on a rooftop in the village of Sinsil on the northern outskirts of Muqadadiyah, Diyala province, Jan. 8, 2008. (AP Photo/Marko Drobnyakovic)

**“A Majority Of  
Americans Favor  
Withdrawal No Matter  
What Happened During  
The Surge”**

January 6, 2008 By FRANK RICH, NY Times [Excerpt]

The continued political import of Iraq could be found in three different polls in the past six weeks - Pew, ABC News-Washington Post and Wall Street Journal-NBC News.

By the same margins as before (sometimes even slightly larger), a majority of Americans favor withdrawal no matter what happened during the "surge."

In another poll (Gallup), a majority still call the war a mistake, a finding that has varied little since February 2006.

## **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**

**THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH;  
COME HOME, NOW**



F Company, 52nd Infantry, 4th Brigade, searches a destroyed house for a sniper in the village of Asada near Baquba December 5, 2007. REUTERS/Bob Strong

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Two Dutch Soldiers Killed in Uruzgan, Another Wounded**

Jan 13, 2008 NoS

In the Afghan province of Uruzgan, two Dutch soldiers lost their lives, a 20-year-old soldier and a 22-year-old corporal. Een derde Nederlander raakte gewond. A third Dutchman was injured. Hun familie is ingelicht. Their family has been informed.

De commandant der strijdkrachten Berlijn maakte op een persconferentie bekend dat de slachtoffers vielen bij een langdurig vuurgevecht in de buurt van Deh Rawod. The commander of the armed forces made at a Berlin press conference announced that the victims were in a prolonged fire in the vicinity of Deh Rawod. Honderden Nederlandse en Afghaanse militairen zijn daar bezig met een militaire operatie. Hundreds of Dutch and Afghan soldiers are engaged in a military operation.

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### **Lt. Col. Dies Of Afghan Wounds**

01/12/08 The Buffalo News

A school nurse from McKean County, Pa., who was serving with an Army National Guard unit in Afghanistan has died from injuries he suffered in a roadside bombing, the Pennsylvania National Guard confirmed today.

Lt. Col. Richard J. Berrettini, 52, of Eldred, Pa., was severely injured Jan. 2 in eastern Afghanistan when his Humvee drove by an improvised explosive device, said Lt. Col. Chris Cleaver, public affairs officer for the Pennsylvania National Guard.

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### **Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed In Afghanistan, Another Wounded: Nationality Not Announced**

Jan. 12 (Xinhua)

A soldier of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was killed and another sustained injuries when a mine struck their vehicle in south Afghanistan Saturday, a statement of the alliance released here said.

“One ISAF soldier lost his life and another was injured when a mine hit their vehicle in the southern region,” the statement added.

However, it did not identify the nationality of the victim and the exact location of the incident saying ISAF will not reveal the nationality of the victim unless the relevant nation does so.

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**Notes From A Lost War:**

**“This Looks Like A Fortress”  
“Really It Is An Island. The Taliban Is  
All Around”**

**“The Possibility Of Mutiny Was On His  
Mind. It Was A Natural Worry, He Said,  
Because Since April None Of His Men  
Had Been Paid”**



The Afghan police base in Nawa. Tyler Hicks/The New York Times

January 13, 2008 By C. J. CHIVERS, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

NAWA, Afghanistan — Many of the problems frustrating Afghanistan’s efforts to secure its dangerous eastern and southern provinces were evident in the bizarre tour of duty of Shair Mohammad, a police officer who spent 18 months in an isolated swath of steppe.

Until December, when a colonel arrived to replace him, Mr. Mohammad, 30, had been the acting police chief in the Nawa district of Ghazni Province. The job gave him jurisdiction over hundreds of square miles near Pakistan that the Taliban had used as a sanctuary since being ousted from power in 2001.

But his ability to police his beat was severely compromised.

**Mr. Mohammad had no rank, no money for food and not enough clothing or gear to operate in cold weather. Two of his six trucks were broken.**

**The ammunition the Pentagon provided him came in cardboard boxes that immediately crumbled, exposing cartridges to the elements on his storeroom's dirty floor.**

**Compounding his woes, the possibility of mutiny was on his mind. It was a natural worry, he said, because since April none of his men had been paid.**

"My commanders always just give me promises," he said. "They never send the money."

But in the past two years, the insurgency has blossomed, making control of many provinces a contest.

The police lag far behind. Lightly equipped, marginally trained, undermined by corruption and poor discipline, they remain weak, though their expected role is daunting. They are not asked merely to police a country that lacks the rule of law. They are being used to fight a war.

But Mr. Mohammad's tour, undermined by mismanagement from above and the poor discipline that surrounded him, suggested how difficult any transformation might be. As his tour ended in mid-December, he spent his last evenings crouched by a hissing space heater in a mud-walled fort, sipping tea and waiting for his government to provide the help the police needed.

In a Taliban ambush in October, they noted, one of his officers was killed and four others wounded. Mr. Mohammad survived and tried to rally his penniless ranks.

Another day, the mutilated body of an elderly man who had spoken against the Taliban was found on the road. The man had been beheaded. Afghanis, the national currency, had been stuffed in his nose.

As his tour ended, Mr. Mohammad said, his own government had failed to match his sense of duty.

His district had long been a transit corridor for insurgents between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and had had almost no government presence. Since 2006 the area had been covered only by Mr. Mohammad's detachment and one American platoon, roughly 40 soldiers. Many villages in the district had never been visited by either the military or the police.

**The officers in Nawa, the only government representatives that had ever entered much of Nawa, were surviving on donations — some might call it extortion — from a local bazaar.**

When Captain DeMure arrived, Mr. Mohammad told him the government's logistics system was such a failure that he owed \$3,400 to shopkeepers for goods he had commandeered to keep his police station fed and supplied. The sum equaled roughly three years of his salary.

Lt. Col. Amanuddin, the police supervisor who arrived with new officers, appeared to be just as disappointed as Mr. Mohammad. (Like many Afghans, Colonel Amanuddin has only one name.) "I need 20 good police officers, and could use 100," he said. "Good people — not any hashish smokers. And I need sleeping bags and mattresses and a generator for power."

**Without more officers and better equipment, he said, it would be impossible to conduct night patrols with American soldiers.**

But there were signs as well that Mr. Mohammad, for all of his courage and sense of loyalty, lacked other fundamental leadership traits. The station Colonel Amanuddin was inheriting was a picture of disorder and filth.

Its front yard was a junkyard of scrapped vehicles and broken artillery pieces. Inside was a garbage pit. The garbage was not confined to this hole; it was everywhere. The courtyard was overrun by dogs that fed on it.

At least three unexploded rockets littered the grounds, and the police had taken to using a guard tower as a toilet. Human waste covered its floor.

Seeing the depth of the problems, Captain DeMure contacted a provincial coordination center that supervises the police. He hoped to get more gear, wages for the officers and more officers for the district.

He also organized the police into patrols, led by Americans, to search for Taliban fighters and meet villagers for introductions.

**But on Dec. 6, Mr. Mohammad's fear of mass desertion came true.**

**Destitute and dispirited, most of the officers under his command abandoned their posts at sunrise; it was not the first time, he said, that such a thing had happened.**

**Nine of Colonel Amanuddin's officers announced that they were leaving, too.**

**Only one new officer remained: Amir Mohammad, a driver with only one arm.**

The only other officers to agree to work were three of Mr. Mohammad's relatives — cheerful but largely untrained men. At one point, Mr. Mohammad had commanded more than 15 men.

**Captain DeMure urged the new chief to ask the men to keep working.**

**It was no use. “None of the officers have been paid,” the colonel said. “If we force them, they might kill us.” Mr. Mohammad nodded knowingly.**

Captain DeMure was soon back in contact with Ghazni, asking for police officers again. The patrols he had organized had been encouraging; many villagers had seemed friendly and said they wanted the government to move into the district.

A few days later, at the captain’s urging, eight more officers arrived to work with Colonel Amanuddin. More were expected soon, he said.

Mr. Mohammad’s tour was over at last. Earlier, he had said that when he was relieved he would confront the supervisors he suspected of embezzling his officers’ wages.

But even this wish showed how much work was ahead.

**He would have to travel in an American convoy, he said, because if a police officer risked driving to the capital alone, he would almost certainly be shot.**

**“This looks like a fortress,” he said, gesturing to the compound where he had lived for a year and a half.**

**“Really it is an island. The Taliban is all around.”**

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## **TROOP NEWS**

### **“The Growing Strength Of IVAW”**



January 11, 2008 By Brian Lenzo, Socialist Worker

ROCHESTER, N.Y.--More than 40 people packed into the Rochester Antiwar Storefront during a two-hour event, “Resisting Empire in Iraq: Veterans Present the Case for Immediate Withdrawal,” hosted by the city’s newly formed chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW).

With a standing-room-only crowd, Rochester Chapter President T.J. Buonomo opened the event with a scathing indictment of U.S. imperial interventions around the world. Other speakers included Rochester IVAW member Bryan Casler, the group's regional coordinator, Nate Lewis, and Phil Aliff, an IVAW national steering committee member stationed at Ft. Drum.

The speakers described how they turned against the war, discussed life in Iraq and why immediate withdrawal is the only solution in Iraq. The first-person accounts provided gripping, heart-wrenching details about a war made distant and detached by the mainstream media.

Discussion following the presentations took up the character of the Iraqi resistance, the increasingly desperate tactics of the U.S. military to simulate "progress," the role of U.S. private contractors in Iraq, and the worsening plight of veterans seeking care when they return. The meeting concluded after 90 minutes, but discussion continued informally for almost an hour beyond that.

The event not only showed the growing strength of IVAW, but also the concrete ways in which the civilian antiwar movement can help build the soldiers' and veterans' movement.

Local groups Rochester Against War, Military Families Speak Out, Veterans for Peace and the Unitarian Peace Advocates helped promote and publicize the event and hounded two major TV news stations into covering the event.

Even more significantly, the existence of places like the Antiwar Storefront and the Different Drummer Cafe outside Ft. Drum, provide a venue for soldiers and veterans to connect up, speak their mind and read antiwar literature.

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## **1800 From New York's Army National Guard Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse**

January 14, 2008 Army Times

About 1,800 soldiers with the Army National Guard's 27th Brigade Combat Team are preparing for a deployment to Iraq.

The soldiers will take command of Task Force-Phoenix.

Early elements already have mobilized. The remaining soldiers will deploy Jan. 20. A farewell ceremony is scheduled for Jan. 16.

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# ***“A Congressional Source” Said “Our Soldiers Do Not Have The Best Rifle”***

## **But General Praises M4 After It Finishes Last In Desert Conditions Weapons Testing: General Brown Proudly Insists On Producing More Dead Troops: This Pentagon Sewer Rat Shits On Soldiers For Not Cleaning Their M4s Enough And Lacking “Discipline”**

December 31, 2007 By Matthew Cox, Army Times [Excerpts]

Army weapons officials said they are considering equipping the M4 carbine with a more durable barrel and improved magazines after three newer carbines outperformed the M4 in a recent reliability test.

Army Test and Evaluation Command at Aberdeen Proving, Md., completed an “extreme dust test” in late November that looked at the M4’s reliability compared to the Heckler & Koch XM8, FNH USA’s Special Operations Forces Combat Assault Rifle and the H&K 416.

**The weapons were exposed to 25 hours of heavy dust conditions over the course of the two-month long test in which 6,000 rounds were fired through each test weapon.**

**XM8 finished first in the test because it recorded the fewest stoppages; SCAR ranked second, HK416 finished third and M4 was fourth.**

**Despite the findings, Army weapons officials still have great confidence in the M4, said Brig. Gen. Mark Brown, commander of Program Executive Office Soldier, the command responsible for equipping soldiers.**

The Colt Defense LLC M4 is a “world-class weapon,” Brown told reporters at a Dec. 17 briefing held after Army Times first reported the test results. **[Fine. Give him one, plus**

**a one way ticket to Iraq. Let's see how he loves his "world-class weapon" in the first dust storm that comes along. What a "world-class" worthless, lying, scheming piece of shit.]**

The Army decided last year to equip all soldiers with the M4, which is made by Colt Defense LLC.

Army weapons officials agreed to perform the dust test at the request of Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., in July. Coburn took up the issue following a Feb. 26 Army Times report on moves by elite Army Special Forces units to ditch the M4 in favor of carbines they consider more reliable.

Coburn is questioning the Army's plans to spend \$375 million to purchase M4s through fiscal 2009.

**In the dust test, evaluators fired 6,000 rounds from each of 10 copies of each carbine, for a total of 60,000 rounds per model. The XM8 suffered 127 stoppages; the SCAR recorded 226; the HK416 finished third with 233 stoppages and the M4 last with 882 stoppages.**

Coburn could not be reached for comment.

However, a congressional source closely following the test results said they were "stunning, and frankly they are significantly more dramatic than most weapons experts expected."

**A test that makes the M4 "fail at a rate over seven times more than the cancelled XM8 and four times more than the other two competitors is a clear message that our soldiers do not have the best rifle," he said.**

Because of the extensive firing in the extreme conditions, Army officials decided that all 10 of the M4 barrels had to be replaced, according to an ATEC "Part Replacement Summary" document obtained by Army Times.

By contrast, none of the H&K, XM8 and 416 barrels — which are hammer forged — needed replacing, the document showed.

While there is no timeline in place, Brown said switching to this specific manufacturing process — which is designed to produce a more durable steel than the type used in standard barrels — could yield M4 barrels that "have a longer life."

From 2002 to 2005, the Army developed the XM8 as a replacement for the conventional Army's M16 and M4 carbine. The program led to infighting in the service's weapons community and eventually died after failing to win approval at the Defense Department level.

XM8, along with the HK416 and the SCAR, uses a piston-style gas system, which relies on a gas-driven piston rod to cycle the weapon during firing.

**The Army's Delta Force replaced its M4s with the HK416 in 2004 after tests revealed that the piston operating system significantly reduces malfunctions while increasing the life of parts.**

**U.S. Special Operations Command has also revised its small-arms requirements. In November 2004, SOCom awarded a developmental contract to FN Herstal to develop its new SCAR to replace its weapons from the M16 family.**

The M4, like its predecessor, the M16, uses a gas tube system, which relies on the gas created when a bullet is fired to cycle the weapon. Weapons experts maintain the M4's system of blowing gas directly into the receiver of the weapon spews carbon residue that can lead to fouling and heat that dries up lubrication and causes excessive wear on parts.

Despite the test's findings, Army weapons officials contend that there is no proof the piston system performs significantly better than the M4's gas tube system, Brown said.

**This test, he [Brown] said, demonstrates that the M4 jams only if soldiers don't clean it properly.**

**"If a soldier cleans his weapon, there are no failures, there are no stoppages," Brown said. "That's a matter of discipline and tactics and techniques and training, not material requirements."**

**MORE:**

**"The Results Of The Sand And Dust Test Are No Surprise To Those Of Us Who Have Ears To Hear And Eyes To See"**

**"What Is Truly Shown By This Test Is The Failure Of The Army Procurement Process"**

Letters To The Editor  
Army Times  
December 31, 2007

**The results of the sand and dust test are no surprise to those of us who have ears to hear and eyes to see ("Dead last: Newer carbines outperform soldiers' current rifle in dust test," Newlines, Dec. 24).**

The common knowledge that the short-stroke gas piston imparts significant advantages over a direct gas impingement system has again been proven. The service rifle question is a significant one and needs to be addressed quickly, but it is not the main issue at stake.

The answer to the question of whether it is time for a new service arm has long been a definitive “yes.”

The FNH USA and Heckler & Koch platforms not only demonstrate a superior operating system, but also incorporate numerous advantages in ergonomics, aesthetics, service life and accuracy that raise the bar beyond that of the nearly half-century-old Colt product.

**However, what is truly shown by this test is the failure of the Army procurement process.**

The Ordnance Department is a mirror image of the system that would have killed the M16 in its infancy had it not been for Gen. Curtis LeMay and Secretary Robert McNamara.

As a military, it is time to revamp the system for weapons and equipment acquisition.

**Despite the claims of some military officers, we do not field the best service rifle in the world.**

**The procurement process — full of competing authorities, survey data used out of context and political foot dragging — is an inefficient, consuming system that will forever hinder the development of better equipment and its distribution.**

**We must solve the problems of the procurement system, and the best weapon choice for our soldiers, whatever it may be, will fall into place.**

**The most important aim should be the ability to face the next generation of soldiers with our integrity intact.**

Staff Sgt. Jason R. Gillis  
Goldsboro, N.C.

**MORE:**

**“If That Rifle Has Flaws, All The  
Technology And Training In The World  
Won’t Fight The Wars To Which We Send  
Our Soldiers”**

Letters To The Editor  
Army Times

December 31, 2007

As an Army veteran, a writer about small arms for 30 years, and having been involved in the small-arms community for longer, I was quite interested in the article regarding the M4 carbine's performance in the recent dust tests.

I have personally and professionally tested each of the weapons systems at different levels, and have had the opportunity to view tests and trials at manufacturers, and it is my opinion that while each of the systems have design needs, the Heckler & Koch XM8, the FNH USA SCAR and the H&K 416 are all superior to the M4 as it is today.

There are also other systems that outperform the M4 at various levels.

The M4 still suffers from some of the same initial problems it experienced as the M16 and M16A1, and this is due primarily to the gas impingement operating system. Some brilliant designers have worked to fix this, but as long as the gas system remains the same, in my opinion it will be subject to the problems related to time under pressure and modifications made to the propellants and projectiles.

Recently, I interviewed two of the three original designers of the AR15/M16 system, Jim Sullivan and Arthur Miller. Both men spoke about how their designs in the 1960s (after the M16 went to Colt) were all piston operated. Eugene Stoner, the man credited as the designer of the M16, worked with Sullivan and Miller, and his designs all went to piston operation in 1960 — the Stoner 63 system and the AR16/AR18, to be precise.

I think it is critical that Army Times continue to look very closely at the current small-arms situation, because even with all the great technology available today, in the end, it comes down to a soldier on the ground and a rifle.

If that rifle has flaws, all the technology and training in the world won't fight the wars to which we send our soldiers.

E. Daniel Shea (civilian)  
Editor-in-chief, Small Arms Review  
Henderson, Nev.

**MORE:**

## **Soldiers Deserve Apology; General “Insinuates Soldiers Killed Due To A Weapon Failure Brought It On Themselves”**

Letters To The Editor  
Army Times  
January 14, 2008

Brig. Gen. Mark Brown, commander of Program Executive Office Soldier, Col. Robert Radcliffe, the head of the Directorate of Combat Developments for the Infantry Center, and Col. Carl Lipsit, project manager for Soldier Weapons, owe all soldiers an apology.

Through words, not deeds, they are attempting to make the M4 a success story.

When a test needs to be P.R.'d into acceptability, then something is very wrong.

Brown goes to the extreme when he says, "If a soldier cleans his weapon, there are no failures, there are no stoppages.

That's a matter of discipline and tactics and techniques and training, not material requirements." that insinuates soldiers killed due to a weapon failure brought it on themselves.

**The recent M4 test should have included an AK-47 and AK-74 as baselines, but they did not do this. Probably for a very good reason, as these two legendary weapons would have destroyed the M4.**

**Why is it that the powers above have forgotten that reliability in a combat weapon is paramount (clean, dirty or otherwise)?**

**We had it in the Model 1911A1 and the M1 Garand, but forgot that credo when the M16 was accepted.**

**No matter how much they wish it, you can't make a pig's ear into a silk purse, and that is just what they are attempting to do with the M16/M4 family.**

Sgt. Alan Griggs (ret.)  
Buckeye, Ariz.

**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.**

**“This Could Be The VA’s Worst  
Nightmare”**

# **“Hundreds Of Attorneys From Around The Country Providing Legal Service To Veterans For Free”**

## **“Participating Lawyers Are Vietnam Veterans And ‘Are Appalled At The Circumstances That They Find Veterans In Today’”**

January 14, 2008 By Laura Parker, USA Today [Excerpts

The scene in Washington, D.C., resembled Hollywood's version of how a multibillion-dollar legal deal might be negotiated — big-name corporate law firm, posh conference room with a table so large 70 attorneys fit easily around it, video technicians hovering nearby, beaming the meeting to other big law firms from Boston to Seattle.

Yet there was no deal to cut. Instead, the high-powered lawyers were getting a tutorial in the arcane vagaries of veterans law.

“This could be the VA's worst nightmare,” Bart Stichman, one of the organizers, enthused from the podium: “Hundreds of attorneys from around the country providing legal service to veterans for free.”

**The recent gathering at Sidley Austin, a firm with 1,700 lawyers worldwide, is part of a growing effort to provide free legal aid to thousands of veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq who are trying to win disability benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs.**

**“There are 100,000 veterans seeking benefits, and too many of them are waiting too long to get them,” said Ron Abrams, who, with Stichman, directs the National Veterans Legal Services Program, a nonprofit group in Washington spearheading the effort. “These lawyers are going to treat these veterans the way they would treat their corporate clients.”**

The approach marks the first time since the Civil War that attorneys have been recruited in large numbers to represent veterans. The lawyers hope their legal expertise will speed consideration of claims and result in better benefits for veterans, Stichman said. More than 50 of the largest law firms in the U.S. and more than 400 attorneys have signed up.

Amanda Smith, an attorney with the Philadelphia-based firm Morgan Lewis, said many of the participating lawyers are Vietnam veterans and “are appalled at the circumstances that they find veterans in today.”

Besides the push by big law firms, law schools in states such as the Carolinas, Virginia, Delaware, Michigan and Illinois also are offering free services to veterans.

Craig Kabatchnick, who worked as a VA appellate attorney from 1990 to 1995, launched a clinic last January for veterans at North Carolina Central University's law school, where he now teaches.

**“We had all kinds of veterans who were very disabled, litigating against trained attorneys like myself who were defending the VA,” Kabatchnick said.**

The VA would “win” if the claim was denied, he said.

**“Did we litigate to win? Absolutely. In cases where the veteran was representing himself, the win ratio was very high.”**

**MORE:**

## ***They Could Use A Good Lawyer: “Marines Lag Far Behind Enlisted Sailors And Airmen In The Size Of The Average Disability Payments They Are Awarded”***

January 14, 2008 By Kelly Kennedy, Army Times [Excerpt]

An Army Times investigation last spring found that enlisted Marines lag far behind enlisted sailors and airmen in the size of the average disability payments they are awarded.

The 2006 data released by the Defense Department's Office of the Actuary show Marines and soldiers continue to lag, even though they have higher injury rates and could be expected to have a greater proportion of serious injuries because of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan than do sailors or airmen. Their ranks and times in service were also comparable.

The average monthly disability payments for all enlisted members receiving disability pay from the military in 2006:

- Air Force: \$963
- Navy: \$845
- Army: \$792
- Marine Corps: \$774

Officers had similar discrepancies:



- Air Force: \$2,668
  - Navy: \$2,392
  - Marine Corps: \$2,336
  - Army: \$2,067
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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

# **“UFPJ Has Called For A Year Of Mini-Protests In All 435 Congressional Districts--Making It Certain That Expressions Of Antiwar Opposition Will Be Dispersed And Ineffectual”**

January 11, 2008 Editorial, Socialist Worker [Excerpt]

After the 2006 election, antiwar activists with United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), the largest national antiwar coalition, took credit for turning out a large “peace vote.”

The Democrats' victory was seen as a vindication of UFPJ's strategy of “(building) a bipartisan peace bloc in Congress that can set the date for troop withdrawal and force Bush and the Pentagon to end the occupation,” according to Judith Le Blanc, a UFPJ national co-chair.

But rather than carry out the antiwar mandate of the November vote, the Democrats caved--and activists meeting at the UFPJ assembly in July admitted to feeling a sense of isolation, despite the reinvigoration of local activism following the November election.

This sense of demoralization occurred at the very moment that more and more people were growing increasingly outraged at the growing violence in Iraq and Congress' inaction--people who could have been mobilized to turn this disaffection into organized expressions of protest.

The unwillingness of leading voices of the antiwar movement to examine the failure of the “peace bloc” strategy has left the movement rudderless as the war in Iraq approaches its fifth anniversary.

Instead of mobilizing mass protests to confront both the Republican White House and the Democratic Congress in Washington, UFPJ has called for a year of mini-protests in

all 435 Congressional districts--making it certain that expressions of antiwar opposition will be dispersed and ineffectual.

**“The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops.” Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War**

**“The military are the final, essential weak point of Bush and Cheney.” David McReynolds 9.29.07**

## **Long-Range Patrol; “Green-Faced Zombies With Wide-Open Eyes Kept The Night Vigil”**



Thanks to “Comrade Tribune,” Vietnam Veteran, who sent this in.

He writes “This is a story I had published while I was a student at college.”

**“I was a Sgt. E-5 – and in command of team – led by Sgt. E-6.**

**[It is based on a true story; a mission I was on with the LURP Unit. My ‘handle’ or nickname given to me by my brothers was ‘Sgt. Rock.’ My job in the LURP Team was ‘rear security’ and I walked more miles backwards in country, then most guys did forward.]**

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Vietnam in 1968 kicked off the New Year with the start of TET I.

It was to be a crucial battle that would prove to have a profound effect on the war effort both in battle and on the home front.

Young paratroopers highly trained into six-man teams comprised Co. "F" 51st Infantry Long Range Patrol, Airborne and Ranger Company. The unit had drawn primarily on infantry companies for the manpower needed to form the special unit.

Mission: To travel a designated route gathering information, to monitor a large trail deep in enemy territory and to report on any enemy troop and supply movements.

The team leader nodded as the chopper pilot motioned thumbs- down to indicate that the chopper was going in. Faces held the truth of it all as beads of perspiration formed on the skin of the men. Young men with deep, serious eyes grew older by the moment.

Sergeant Rock stood on the landing skid and braced himself for the fall. It wasn't safe to have the helicopter fly too low, so it was mandatory to jump from it as it hovered five to fifteen feet above the ground.

The world was still and silent as the beating of the chopper's blade faded into the distance. This was a critical time period for the team as they sat waiting in the bushes.

The sergeant thought briefly to a previous mission when the treeline had erupted with gunfire as the team hit the ground.

There was a radio check back to base by the team leader who then, by use of a non-verbal hand signal, ordered the six men into the jungle.

They formed a human snake that moved as one with each man having a specific job to do — the point man, left security, radio man, team security, and rear security. The point man led the way and so it went for three uneventful days until they arrived at the trail.

Two men moved out to scout it and signaled that they found fresh footprints and a second path that entered the other from the north.

The area was sparse in vegetation, making it necessary for the men to set up behind an extremely scrawny bush. This was a good vantage point as the team could watch the trail from a few short yards away.

The first night passed sleeplessly but without incident. During the day they remained in a prone position, not moving or speaking because noise discipline was the key to their survival.

Drinking water from a canteen, ordinarily a simple task, would be done in slow motion by the men to prevent any unnecessary noise.

By midday the men were as well-done as most lobster one dines on. The oppressive temperatures reached over one hundred degrees.

Sergeant Rock gazed at his companions while he reflected on moments of "contact".

The eternity of eternities is combat.

Surrealism and at times Dante's Inferno, complete with the deafening drone of gunfire:

Death for some.

Reality: Two Vietnamese soldiers walked slowly and carefully up the trail, moving from right to left in front of the team. Frozen in place, the men watched the soldiers cross out of their sight. This information was radioed back to base.

They had a feeling that the night would bring activity on the trail.

Another sleepless night, again due to the extreme tension of the situation.

Ghosts and figures occasionally appeared as the sergeant blinked them out of sight and mind.

A light suddenly appeared in the distance. The full moon made it difficult to tell what it was.

Closer and closer the light came, getting brighter as it did so. The sound of equipment banging together broke the silence of the night as a group of thirty or forty men, along with a large cart being pulled by the soldiers made its way slowly from the north trail south toward Saigon.

This important information indicated troop and supply movements in obvious reinforcement of the large enemy offensive.

On their knees the team remained motionless with M-16s in hand, watching the soldiers moving to their front. Staying close to the path the column moved slowly while the hearts of the young men pounded against their chests.

The team could quite possibly escape in the bushes but the thought of taking on this large force didn't appeal to anyone. A cough, sneeze or other noise could mean the death of all as the men sat with sweaty palms.

The adrenalin rush created anxiety which pushed each man to his individual endurance point.

This was worse on the nerves than actual shooting because firing at least has a way of releasing tension. Just sitting and waiting was unbearable pressure.

Men could stand pressure but how much could anyone take? Who might be the first one to snap out? One never knew.

Faceless silhouettes moved without speaking and without pausing. Finally the last soldier moved out of view. Stillness once again resumed as the team leader radioed the information back, utilizing a method of non-voice communication by clicking the voice control lever to produce a type of morse code.

Slowly the team members sat back and relaxed.

Relaxed?

A pile of grenades sat in front of each man which fate had decreed they didn't have to use.

Green-faced zombies with wide-open eyes kept the night vigil.

Morning came slowly with everyone wet from the heavy mist. Although shivering they were unable to light a fire, so they gritted their teeth and awaited the warmth of the cursed sun which would later fry their brains.

After two hours on the move a small opening in the jungle suddenly revealed itself to the team. They carefully moved around the landing zone to insure no enemy were in the area. A radio call to base had a helicopter coming to pick up the men.

This time they had made it.

One by one the men ran to the hovering bird and jumped on. The door gunner scanned the tree line with his machine gun as a rear security, the last man to come aboard, scrambled on.

The chopper rose quickly, accelerating as the men took a final look below.

Exhaustion, fatigue, spent nerves, eyes that looked like the eyes of all men in all wars.

They were heading back to base over a green sea which raced by below.

Soon they could sleep.

Until the next mission. .

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## **S.I.W.**

### **[Self-Inflicted Wound]**

*[From: The Collected Poems Of Wilfred Owen (World War I) Thanks to "Comrade Tribune," Vietnam Veteran]*

*I will to the King,  
And offer him consolation in his trouble,  
For that man there has set his teeth to die,  
And being one that hates obedience,  
Discipline, and orderliness of life,  
I cannot mourn him.  
W. B. YEATS*

#### **I. THE PROLOGUE**

Patting good-bye, doubtless they told the lad

He'd always show the Hun a brave man's face;  
Father would sooner him dead than in disgrace,—  
Was proud to see him going, aye, and glad.  
Perhaps his mother whimpered how she'd fret  
Until he got a nice safe wound to nurse.  
Sisters would wish girls too could shoot, charge, curse;  
Brothers—would send his favourite cigarette.  
Each week, month after month, they wrote the same,  
Thinking him sheltered in some Y.M. Hut,  
Because he said so, writing on his butt  
Where once an hour a bullet missed its aim  
And misses teased the hunger of his brain.  
His eyes grew old with wincing, and his hand  
Reckless with ague. Courage leaked, as sand  
From the best sand-bags after years of rain.  
But never leave, wound, fever, trench-foot, shock,  
Untrapped the wretch. And death seemed still withheld  
For torture of lying machinally shelled,  
At the pleasure of this world's Powers who'd run amok.

He'd seen men shoot their hands, on night patrol.  
Their people never knew. Yet they were vile.  
"Death sooner than dishonour, that's the style!"  
So Father said.

## II. THE ACTION

One dawn, our wire patrol  
Carried him. This time, Death had not missed.  
We could do nothing but wipe his bleeding cough.  
Could it be accident?—Rifles go off  
Not sniped? No. (Later they found the English ball.)

## III. THE POEM

It was the reasoned crisis of his soul  
Against more days of inescapable thrall,  
Against infrangibly wired and blind trench wall  
Curtained with fire, roofed in with creeping fire,  
Slow grazing fire, that would not burn him whole  
But kept him for death's promises and scoff,  
And life's half-promising, and both their riling.

## IV. THE EPILOGUE

With him they buried the muzzle his teeth had kissed,  
And truthfully wrote the Mother, "Tim died smiling".

**MORE:**

# Exposure

Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that knive us  
Wearied we keep awake because the night is silent . . .  
Low, drooping flares confuse our memory of the salient . . .  
Worried by silence, sentries whisper, curious, nervous,  
    But nothing happens.

Watching, we hear the mad gusts tugging on the wire,  
Like twitching agonies of men among its brambles.  
Northward, incessantly, the flickering gunnery rumbles,  
Far off, like a dull rumour of some other war.  
    What are we doing here?

The poignant misery of dawn begins to grow  
We only know war lasts, rain soaks, and clouds sag stormy.  
Dawn massing in the east her melancholy army  
Attacks once more in ranks on shivering ranks of gray,  
    But nothing happens.

Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence.  
Less deathly than the air that shudders black with snow,  
With sidelong flowing flakes that flock, pause, and renew;  
We watch them wandering up and down the wind's nonchalance,  
    But nothing happens.

Pale flakes with fingering stealth come feeling for our faces—  
We cringe in holes, back on forgotten dreams, and stare, snow-dazed,  
Deep into grassier ditches. So we drowse, sun-dozed,  
Littered with blossoms trickling where the blackbird fusses.  
    Is it that we are dying?

Slowly our ghosts drag home: glimpsing the sunk fires, glozed  
With crusted dark-red jewels; crickets jingle there;  
For hours the innocent mice rejoice: the house is theirs;  
Shutters and doors, all closed: on us the doors are closed,—  
    We turn back to our dying.

Since we believe not otherwise can kind fires burn;  
Nor ever suns smile true on child, or field, or fruit.  
For God's invincible spring our love is made afraid;  
Therefore, not loath, we lie out here; therefore were born,  
    For love of God seems dying.

To-night, His frost will fasten on this mud and us,  
Shrivelling many hands, puckering foreheads crisp.  
The burying-party, picks and shovels in their shaking grasp,

Pause over half-known faces. All their eyes are ice,  
But nothing happens.

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**January 13, 1874:  
Shameful Anniversary  
New York City Cops Attack  
Unemployed, Leaving Hundreds Of  
Casualties;  
Police Commissioner Commented, “It  
Was The Most Glorious Sight I Have Ever  
Seen...”**



Carl Bunin Peace History January 7-13

The depression of 1873-1877 left 3 million people unemployed.

**In the winter of 1873, 900 people starved to death, and 3,000 deserted their infants on doorsteps.**

A public meeting was called in New York City's Tompkins Square Park to lobby for public works projects.

The night before, the city secretly voided the permit for the gathering.

**The next morning, mounted police charged into the crowd of 10,000, indiscriminately clubbing adults and children, leaving hundreds of casualties.**



**Police commissioner Abram Duryee commented, “It was the most glorious sight I have ever seen...”**

The Tompkins Square event was part of a wave of parades of the unemployed and bread riots across the nation.

In Chicago, 20,000 people marched. Even under police attack, workers in New York, Omaha, and Cincinnati refused to disperse.

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## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

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



A foreign occupation soldier from the U.S. army inside an Iraqi citizens bedroom during a home invasion in the village of Sinsil on the northern outskirts of Muqadiyah, in Diyala province, Jan. 8, 2008. (AP Photo/Marko Drobnjakovic)

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

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

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

“So what you'll do is you'll take his sofa cushions and you'll dump them. If he has a couch, you'll turn the couch upside down.

“You'll go into the fridge, if he has a fridge, and you'll throw everything on the floor, and you'll take his drawers and you'll dump them.... You'll open up his closet and you'll throw all the clothes on the floor and basically leave his house looking like a hurricane just hit it.

“So you've just humiliated this man in front of his entire family and terrorized his entire family and you've destroyed his home. And then you go right next door and you do the same thing in a hundred homes.”

Sgt. John Bruhns

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

**DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**



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

## 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/))



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

<http://williambowles.info/gispecial/2007/index.html>; <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=6&l=e>;

[http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi\\_special/](http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/);

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

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