

**GI SPECIAL 6A11:**



**One Year From Now  
“Our Strategy Is Simple:  
Organize The Men And Women  
Of Our Armed Forces To  
Withdraw Their Support For The  
War”**

**“Our Reason For Choosing This  
Strategy Is Also Simple: Without  
The Active Support Of Military  
Service Members, This War  
Cannot Continue”**

As we enter 2008, please stop for a moment and consider where we are now, and where we are going.

In just over a year, America will have a new President.

We will have endured a year of campaign commercials and attack ads.

We'll have watched debates devoid of any real discussion of the withdrawal from Iraq that a growing number of Americans now call for. We'll have waited, for yet another year, for our leaders to find a way to say what we know in our hearts: we must leave Iraq.

But what will have changed in the next year that will make that happen?

**We must face this fact: we run the serious risk that one year from today we'll be right where we are now, but with another year's worth of casualties, a year's worth of grieving families, a year's worth of Iraqi anger and suffering built on our occupation of a country we now know was no threat to us.**

**Ending this war in a year is different than ending it now, just as ending it now is different than ending it a year ago, or a year before that.**

**There is a price to pay for every day that we wait.**

**As a veteran who served in Iraq as a military police sergeant, I see our continued occupation of that country as more than simply a list of numbers.**

**On daily patrols through Baghdad and other cities, your glance darts from one window to the next and you look with suspicion at everyone you pass, waiting to be attacked.**

**Every time you drive, you anxiously scan the roadways and gutters, anticipating the explosion of a roadside bomb that will send burning shards of metal through both vehicles and flesh.**

**Indiscriminate home raids at all hours of the day and night become a common experience, as do the mass detentions of terrified and angry Iraqis.**

**You spend hours at checkpoints, with your finger on the trigger, prepared to make life and death decisions in a country where the line between civilians and combatants is blurred and in constant motion.**

**These things take a toll, on our soldiers, their families, and the Iraqi people.**

**As members of Iraq Veterans Against the War, we know these things and many of us still face them on a daily basis.**

**Despite what you see on TV, or read in the paper, this is daily life in Iraq.**

**A year from now, will we have moved any closer to withdrawal?**

**Or will our leaders continue to push such a decision off into the future, where, like so many decisions made by the powerful, the price to be paid rests squarely on the shoulders of the next generation?**

**We are at a crossroads: we can focus our energy exclusively on an election in which no viable candidate is committed to rapid withdrawal, or we can spend the next year ensuring that whoever takes office, Republican or Democrat, will face a country mobilized to the cause of bringing our troops home.**

**The veterans and active duty troops of Iraq Veterans Against the War represent the generation that is living with the pain and consequences of our leaders' daily decision to continue this war.**

**We have watched our closest friends be killed and injured, we've seen innocent people dehumanized and destroyed.**

**We are first-hand witnesses and participants of an illegal war and occupation and we are here to tell you that we have had enough.**

**We have come together, as members of Iraq Veterans Against the War, with this message: It is time to put this awful chapter of our history behind us.**

**It is time to do the right thing for the people of Iraq and the people of America.**

**It is time.**

We've been here before.

In the aftermath of the 2006 elections, the analysts said it plainly: the issue that had brought the Democrats to power was opposition to the war. Hundreds of thousands of people worked phone banks, canvassed their neighbors, made signs, and raised money for that election cycle, but it was not enough to end the war.

Why not?

The political leadership and the pundits have settled on the excuse that the Democrats don't have enough power in Congress to get it done.

But we think it is something else - we have failed to force our leaders into action.

This is not a unique situation in history.

Looking back on successful movements, what is the common denominator?

Has real change occurred when people relied on politicians to do the right thing, or when a movement of people used their strength to move this country forward?

We propose the second path - organizing Americans to move our leaders to do what must be done. Iraq Veterans Against the War has spent the last year devising a strategy and tactics to bring our troops home.

Our plans are not contingent on a particular candidate, or a party, because we're not willing to roll the political dice on something as important as this.

**Our strategy is simple: organize the men and women of our armed forces to withdraw their support for the war.**

**Our reason for choosing this strategy is also simple: without the active support of military service members, this war cannot continue.**

**The government has shown that no matter which lever people pull on Election day, they can continue, and even escalate, the war.**

**But without people to drive the trucks, to man the checkpoints, and to go out on nightly raids, no war is possible.**

**Of course, we don't expect to be able to convince the entirety of our armed forces to go on strike, but what percentage of soldiers would need to stand up against this war before our leaders decide that they cannot continue?**

**One percent?**

**Five?**

**We aim to find out.**

**We're drawing the line, and we're asking you to join us.**

**All over the country, veterans and members of the military are organizing chapters of Iraq Veterans Against the War in cities, in rural areas, and on military bases.**

**Last year at this time, we had eight chapters.**

**Today, we have 37, with more forming all the time.**

**We need your help to support those who are doing this important work on the ground.**

**We know what our brothers and sisters are going through in Iraq, and we're putting plans in motion to put an end to it.**

**Not a year from now.**

**Not next month.**

**Today.**

Peace,  
Kelly Dougherty  
Former Sergeant, Army National Guard  
Executive Director

Iraq Veterans Against the War

**P.S. Our members are working hard organizing new chapters, recruiting new members, and preparing for Winter Soldier.**

**We need your support to continue this work. Please make a donation today!**

[To contribute: go to [www.ivaw.org](http://www.ivaw.org)]

## **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**

### **Ninewah IED Kills U.S. Soldier; Four Wounded**

January 13, 2008 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080113-05

TIKRIT, Iraq – One Multi-National Division – North Soldier died from injuries sustained when an IED exploded near his vehicle while conducting operations in Ninewah province Jan. 12.

Additionally, four MND-N Soldiers were injured and evacuated to a Coalition hospital.

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### **U.S. Patrol Bombed In Baquba**

1.13.08 IOL

BAQUBA, Iraq – Extremists bombed a Coalition Forces patrol. Two Multi-National Division – North Soldiers were injured in the attack, but were later returned to duty.

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**FUTILE EXERCISE:  
ONLY 10 MILLION MORE TO GO:**

## COME ON HOME NOW!



U.S. Army soldiers from B Troop, 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry guard a detainee after conducting a pre-dawn raid in the Radwaniyah area of southern Baghdad Oct. 11, 2007. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

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## Diyala: A Magnificent Performance By Iraqi Collaborator Troops

January 12, 2008 By Alexandra Zavis, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer [Excerpts]

Singing and cheering, Iraqi soldiers rolled through snow and sleet in open trucks Friday to set up a base on the outskirts of the reputed nerve center of Sunni militants who had forced the northern Diyala River valley into their self-styled Islamic caliphate.

Two freshly planted bombs were found Friday along a major road through the valley that U.S. forces had cleared.

U.S. forces believe some insurgents remain hidden among the population. **[And since even Occupation polls find the overwhelming majority of Iraqis favor killing U.S. troops, the silly reporter doesn't seem to have a grip on the fact that the population as a whole are the "insurgents," and will always be so until the last Occupation troop goes home.]**

Within hours, Iraqi soldiers were headed out on their first mission: to search a mosque that U.S. soldiers said had been taken over by the militants and used to issue their decrees.

**One Iraqi soldier accidentally discharged his weapon as he entered the compound, and another dropped a rocket-propelled grenade, causing some wary Americans to keep their distance.**

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## **Some Truth For A Change**

1.13.08 By Scott Peterson, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor [Excerpt]

“You can kill AQI and insurgents all day – they'll always make more. In fact, you may be fueling the fire that creates them,” says Lt. Col. [James] Brown, from Russellville, Ark.

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Soldier Dies Weeks After Roadside Bombing In Afghanistan**

Jan. 02, 2008 The Associated Press

WOODBURN, Ky. --A soldier from south-central Kentucky who suffered severe burns when the Humvee he was riding in rolled over a bomb in Afghanistan has died, his father said Wednesday.

Army Spc. Brian Gorham, 23, of Woodburn suffered 2nd and 3rd degree burns on his face, legs, and arms in the Dec. 13 explosion. He died Monday, 18 days after the blast.

“My son was a fighter,” his father, Toney Gorham said. “He fought the whole time.”

Gorham served with the 173rd Airborne Brigade based in Vicenza, Italy, and had been in Afghanistan for six months. He was being treated in a hospital in San Antonio, Texas.

Gorham was remembered as a likable man who was always willing to help his neighbors.

“If you were around Brian for very long you would like him,” Jack Wright, a Sunday school teacher at Woodburn Baptist Church, told the Bowling Green Daily News. “I’m proud to have known him.”

Frances McKinney, who lived across the street from Gorham and his family, said Gorham was like a big brother to her daughter.

“When my dad was sick, Brian and his mother would come over and help him up and get around the house,” McKinney said.

McKinney said when she first heard about Gorham being injured by the roadside bomb, "I thought that it can't be hitting this close to home, but it was."

When the McKinneys moved into a house across from the Gorhams 15 years ago, the future soldier and his family helped welcome them to the community.

McKinney's husband spent eight years in the Army, so when Gorham enlisted, he was able to talk to someone who had military experience.

"I remember him coming over and saying he was really excited about doing something meaningful," McKinney said.

Debbie Brown, a secretary at Woodburn Baptist Church, said Gorham would often arrive at Wednesday church services wearing his Army ROTC uniform. "I remember that he looked very distinguished and I'm sure he was proud to wear that uniform," Brown said.

Gov. Steve Beshear directed that flags at all state office buildings be lowered to half-staff in Gorham's honor.

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## **Netherlands Soldier Wounded**

13-01-2008 Ministry of Defence [Netherlands]

A 20-year-old soldier wounded in a fire. Hij is gewond aan beide benen en wordt inmiddels in het role 2 hospitaal van Tarin Kowt behandeld.

He was wounded in both legs and is now in the hospital 2 role of Tarin Kowt. Hij is afkomstig van het 12 infanteriebataljon gelegerd op de Oranjekazerne te Arnhem.

He comes from the 12 infantry battalion gelegerd on Oranjekazerne to Arnhem. Zijn toestand is niet levensbedreigend.

His condition is not life-threatening. De families van de gesneuvelde en gewonde militairen zijn ingelicht. The families of the wounded soldiers are in gesneuvelde informed.

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## **Dutch Troops In Afghanistan Kill Occupation Collaborators**

Jan. 13, 2008 By ALISA TANG, Associated Press

Dutch troops in Afghanistan killed two allied Afghan soldiers they mistook for enemies, the Defense Ministry said today.



“Darkness, the weather conditions and the confused situation” played a role in the mistake Saturday in the southern Afghan province of Uruzgan, Gen. Dick Berlijn, the top Dutch military commander, said in a statement.

Opposing fighters were in between Dutch units during the fighting several miles northwest of Camp Hadrian, near Deh Rawod.

The two Afghan soldiers, who were not “recognizably in uniform,” also were killed Saturday after they approached a wounded Dutch soldier six miles to the south, Berlijn said.

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## TROOP NEWS

### **Bush Is So Happy To See The Troops**



The traitor Bush at U.S. Camp Arifjan, Kuwait Jan. 12, 2008. (AP Photo/Gustavo Ferrari)

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### **Iraq Veterans Against the War On The Move In North Carolina;**

# Citizens Don't Like The War



[Thanks to James Starowicz, Veterans For Peace]

January 10, 2008 by Ashley Wilson, CITIZEN-TIMES

ASHEVILLE, North Carolina

In the middle of Pack Square, Kindra Phillips stood on a makeshift pedestal dressed as the Statue of Liberty with her mouth gagged. The light green fabric of her costume blew in the wind as honking cars drove by.

Phillips is one of 20 locally active members of Veterans For Peace.

The organization, along with the local chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War, holds weekly demonstrations on Pack Square to get more people involved in anti-war efforts.

The two organizations are working together to launch a radio talk show on WPVM-FM 103.5 next week.

“We just had enough,” said Phillips, who joined the organization six months ago and served in the U.S. Navy for 10 months. “I couldn’t just sit at home and not do anything.”

Two members of Iraq Veterans Against War and one member of Veterans For Peace will host the 30-minute talk show.

The organizations plan to feature news, interviews and guest speakers on the show. They also hope to discuss benefits and resources for veterans and air spoken word and music from area veterans.

“We want to give a voice to veterans because we don’t feel they are represented on a national, local or state level,” said Jason Hurd, Asheville chapter president of Iraq Veterans Against the War. “As much as a stake people put in us, we might as well have our opinions heard.”

Members hope that the radio show will get the same positive community response as that the rest of their work gets.

In addition to the weekly demonstrations, they have collected almost \$20,000 to rebuild an orphanage in Afghanistan. They also organize tabling, counter recruitment in area high schools and bus trips for local and national rallies.

**“The response we get is normally very positive — much more than when we first started,” said Lyle Petersen, president of Veterans For Peace’s North Carolina chapter. “We used to get gestures and a lot of negativity at the start, but now it’s become more positive.”**

For more than four years, members of the organization have been standing on Pack Square. They started the demonstrations on the day U.S. troops entered Iraq.

WPVM is a low-powered FM radio station broadcasting in Asheville and globally on the Internet and is run completely by volunteers and donations.

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## **Anti-War Café Near Ft. Drum In Watertown, NY Is Looking For An Organizer To Reach Out To Active Duty Soldiers On The Base; Recent Military Combat Veteran Preferred**

[Thanks to Elaine Brower, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

From: Citizen Soldier, Tod Ensign, 212-679-2250

Organization Name: Different Drummer Cafe

Sponsored by: Citizen Soldier and Vietnam Veterans Against the War

Location: Near Ft Drum in Watertown, NY

Website: [www.differentdrummercafe.org](http://www.differentdrummercafe.org)

Anticipated Start Date: February 1st

Anti-war café near Ft. Drum in Watertown, NY is looking for an organizer to reach out to active duty soldiers on the base. The Café has been in existence for one year and is currently co-sponsored by Citizen Soldier and Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

The cafe holds educational programs one or two times per month on Thursday nights and regularly has bands playing on Friday and Saturday nights.

Organizer should be a self-starter who enjoys initiating and creating new activities and projects. Recent military combat veteran is preferred.

### **Recent military combat veteran preferred**

This is an exciting, one-of-kind project where one will work with interesting and committed anti-war folks, including Iraq war veterans.

There is an existing chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War on the base.

Starting salary range \$20–\$26K is negotiable and commensurate with experience. (Vacation package included)

Organizer must have access to reliable automobile.

Watertown is 65 miles north of Syracuse, N Y and experiences cold, snowy winter weather from December to April.

We will assist organizer in finding affordable local housing.

### **Organizer Responsibilities**

Support the IVAW chapter and help them with recruiting.

Do outreach at places other than the Café to get to know soldiers who don't come to the café and invite them to the cafe. This could be on the base if that is possible or in other in-town locations frequented by soldiers.

Share responsibility with the Café's music director for keeping the Café open at scheduled hours.

Work with existing volunteers who help with the work of the Café and recruit additional volunteers.

Keep the sponsoring organizations updated re what is going on at the Café.

Refer soldiers who need help to Citizen Soldier or to the VVAW Military Counselor.

### **Qualifications**

Organizing experience is desirable but not required. Training will be provided.

Willingness to learn organizing techniques and skills

Commitment to the anti-war movement and social justice

Strong work ethic

Excellent personal organization, time management and interpersonal

communication skills

### **How To Apply:**

Email resume with Contact information, employment history, Anti-war and/or Social Justice involvement and organizing experience plus 3 references to:  
Tod Ensign \_citizensoldier1@aol.com & Marty Webster mw.vvaw@gmail.com

Please paste resume into the body of the email as well as attaching an MSWord file.

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## **New Handbook To Help Wounded And Their Families Get The Benefits They Have Earned Is Now Available**

January 14, 2008 By Karen Jowers, Army Times

**A new handbook designed to help wounded warriors and their families navigate the bureaucracy to get the benefits they have earned is now available.**

The 149-page “A Handbook for Injured Service Members and Their Families” was prepared free by a New York-based law firm for two nonprofit charities — the Wounded Warrior Project and the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund. It can be downloaded for free at <http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org> and <http://www.fallenheroesfund.org/>.

“This answers the questions you have,” said Army Spc. James O’Leary, who received multiple injuries in a mortar attack in Iraq in 2004. “I didn’t know what I was eligible for. I didn’t know about the vocational rehabilitation program, which is much better than the GI Bill and pays for all your tuition and books. I didn’t know about the evaluation system. I figured if [the Veterans Affairs Department] gave me a certain rating, that’s what I would be eligible for.”

Davis Polk & Wardell donated about \$500,000 worth of time, with hundreds of attorneys combing through government laws, regulations and other information, said Bill White, president of the Intrepid Foundation, which operates the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund.

“They tried to simplify and put the information in layman’s terms, so that if you’re 19 years old and haven’t gone to law school, ... you can understand it,” White said, adding that the senior lead partner on the project is a retired Marine.

The handbook is divided into sections dealing with issues that come up during the process wounded service members go through, said Jeremy Chwat, vice president for policy and public affairs for the Wounded Warrior Project.

“We wanted to make sure service members understand their benefits and rights and that it’s not lost in legislative speak,” Chwat said.

Chapters include “Immediate Concerns,” with details on important documents, financial aid sources and information on service members’ continuing salaries.

For families traveling to be at their service member’s bedside, information is included about the military’s invitational travel orders, per diem rates for family members, and a listing of contacts for all Fisher House homes.

Extensive information about the disability evaluation systems, education and employment benefits, health benefits, legal rights and legal assistance, and other federal benefits is provided.

The handbook has a glossary and a state-by-state list of resources for the wounded. Other resources are sprinkled throughout, such as Disabled American Veterans and the Army’s Wounded Soldier and Family Hotline.

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

# **“Not Us. We’re Not Going” Soldiers Refuse Orders In Iraq**

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

Jan 6, 2008 By Dustin Langley, Workers World

“Our army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and noncommissioned officers, drug-ridden, and dispirited where not near-mutinous conditions [exist] among American forces in Vietnam that have only been exceeded in this century by ... the collapse of the czarist armies in 1916 and 1917.”

—Armed Forces Journal, June 1971

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One of the most underreported stories from the Vietnam War is the role played by the disintegration of military discipline as the war dragged on. While the situation in Iraq has not reached the same point yet, revolutionaries understand that the fact that the bosses are forced to rely on workers in uniform to wage their wars raises the possibility that the troops will say, “No.”

On July 18 last year, members of 2nd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, held a meeting and decided collectively that they would refuse to obey an order to go out on patrol in the Adhamiya region of Iraq. They determined, after

an IED (improvised explosive device) attack had killed five more members of Charlie Company, that they could “no longer function professionally.”

A recent four-part series in the Army Times tells Charlie Company’s story, which is the basis for this article’s report on the mutiny. The series, without openly questioning the U.S. role as occupier of Iraq, idealizes the strong friendships among the U.S. troops and their willingness to make sacrifices for their buddies.

For revolutionaries reading the Army Times series, it should be obvious that Washington has placed these U.S. troops in an impossible situation: they must carry out an occupation of a hostile country whose population is highly motivated, well-armed and capable of fighting back and winning, just as in Vietnam.

**Charlie Company’s verbal response to losing their buddies was that they wanted to massacre Iraqis. Their physical response, however, was to break military discipline, refusing orders to go out on patrol. [Brilliant tactic. As Army Times reported, what they said was “Hey, you send us out on another patrol we’ll massacre every Iraqi in sight.” What’s an officer supposed to do with that one? T]**

Charlie Company had been in Iraq for almost a year and during that time had been one of the hardest hit U.S. units in Iraq, losing 14 troops out of approximately 140.

During the day, Charlie Company patrolled constantly. Each soldier went out three or four times a day, with a one-and-a-half-hour break between patrols. They patrolled in full body armor in the 110-degree heat, but could only shower every two or three days. At night, they slept 25 to a room in a run-down and sour-smelling basement.

Sgt. Shawn Ladue, 27, said of their quarters: “I thought it was a dump. Every time it’d rain, we’d get that stagnant-ass water in the basement.”

**Spc. Gerry DeNardi and Sgt. Ryan Wood wrote a song titled “Adhamiya Blues.” One line from the song says: “War, it degrades the heart and poisons the mind. And we’re tossed aside by governments’ lies.”**

**DeNardi joined the Army believing, “I don’t think you can say you’re an American or you’re a patriot without serving.”**

**But a year of bloodshed changed his mind. After living through daily explosions for 11 months, he said: “I’ve seen enough. I’ve done enough.”**

Two weeks before his platoon refused orders, the 20-year-old DeNardi lost five friends, killed together as they rode in a Bradley Fighting Vehicle that rolled over an IED.

Meanwhile, their tour was extended from 12 months to 15 months. They had been scheduled to go home June 20.

Just prior to the mutiny, First Sergeant McKinney, a well-loved NCO in Charlie Company, was on patrol with his soldiers, when the stress became too much for him. McKinney said, “I can’t take it anymore.” He took his M4, put it under his chin, and he killed himself in front of his men.

The following week, soldiers from Alpha Company, also of the 1st Battalion, were hit by an IED and lost four men.

Sgt. 1st Class Tim Ybay, 38, 2nd Platoon's platoon sergeant, said: "I knew after losing those five guys, my platoon had to get out of there. These were the guys they slept with, joked with, worked out with. I don't think they'd be able to accomplish the mission."

The battalion gave 2nd Platoon the day to recover. Then they were scheduled to go back out on patrol in Adhamiya on July 18.

But when Capt. Cecil Strickland, Charlie Company's commander, returned from a mission on June 18, he learned 2nd Platoon had refused his orders.

"They're not coming," Strickland said he was told. "So I called the platoon sergeant and talked to him. 'Remind your guys: These are some of the things that could happen if they refuse to go out.' I was irritated they were thumbing their noses. I was determined to get them down there."

**Di Nardi said, "We said, 'No. If you make us go there, we're going to light up everything. There's a thousand platoons. Not us. We're not going.'"**

**He was not aware that 2nd Platoon had met and determined that they could no longer function and that members of the platoon were afraid that their anger and stress would result in a massacre.**

They decided as a platoon that they were done; they would refuse the order to go on patrol, despite the knowledge that mutiny can result in court-martial, imprisonment and even execution.

But no court-martial ever came. "Captain Strickland read us our rights," DeNardi said. "We had 15 yes-or-no questions, and no matter how you answered them, it looked like you disobeyed an order. No one asked what happened. And there's no record—no article 15. Nothing to show it happened."

Instead, battalion leaders began breaking up the platoon. Their only punishment was that members of the platoon were flagged, meaning that they could not receive promotions or awards.

As the brutal occupation of Iraq continues, with politicians from both corporate parties committed to Wall Street's agenda of domination of the oil-rich Middle East, mutinies, refusals, and other acts of resistance in the ranks will continue.

It is the task of all revolutionaries and progressives, and the antiwar movement as a whole, to be visibly supportive of resistance in the ranks, to continue reaching out to the working class in uniform. In addition, it is to provide the political explanation that shows how the U.S. ruling class—and not the Iraqi resistance—is the real enemy of the working-class U.S. troops.



Many organizations are committed to reaching the troops. In response to plans to call up thousands of National Guard in New Jersey, Military Families Speak Out is distributing literature at National Guard armories where soldiers have orders to deploy to Iraq.

The Military Project ([www.militaryproject.org](http://www.militaryproject.org)) organizes regular outreach to military bases and publishes GI Special, a newsletter focusing on GI resistance and the occupation.

**“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**

**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.**

***“The First Mass Mutiny In The  
History Of The U. S. Navy”***

**Sailors Resist The War On  
Vietnam:**

**“Recent Instances Of Sabotage, Riot,  
Willful Disobedience Of Orders, And  
Contempt For Authority, Instances  
Which Have Occurred With Increased  
Frequency, Are Clear-Cut Symptoms  
Of A Dangerous Deterioration Of  
Discipline”**



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

With a militant stand against racism and in support of Third World struggles, MDM [Movement for a Democratic Military] enjoyed a substantial following among both blacks and whites at Great Lakes. During the summer of 1970, the sailors joined together in a major confrontation with authorities,

**On July 9, commanders arrested four black WAVES and illegally placed them in confinement. After hearing of the incident, blacks and whites met and decided on a coordinated campaign of direct resistance to free the women.**

**More than a hundred of the brothers marched to where the women were being held and formed a circle around the building, refusing to move until the WAVES were released.**

**As military policemen rushed to the scene, whites in other parts of the post engaged in various acts of sabotage, painting "MDM" and "All Power to the People" on trash dumpsters and causing some ten thousand dollars property damage.**

After a night of spreading enlisted defiance, authorities released the women. In the weeks following the incident, more than nine hundred enlisted men and women at Great Lakes were discharged or transferred to other bases, cleaning out the entire transient personnel unit and several other barracks.

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Recognizing the vital role of aircraft carriers in the Indochina intervention, a broad Coalition known as the "Harbor Project" launched an extensive educational and organizing effort aimed at mobilizing opposition among the ship's [the Constellation's] crew prior to its scheduled October departure.

For months, the coalition worked vigorously, disseminating information against the air war in general and against the function of the Constellation in particular.

On one occasion soon after the drive began, Captain Gerhard illegally confiscated hundreds of letters sent to the ship as part of a mass mailing, an action that prompted 112 servicemen to request an official military court of inquiry into the commander's action.

The culmination of the Harbor Project was an unofficial vote held just prior to the Constellations October 2 sailing date.

Over fifty-four thousand San Diego people voted, including sixty nine hundred active-duty men and women; 82 per cent of the civilians and 73 per cent of the servicepeople participating voted for the Connie to stay home. Just before the ship's departure, nine sailors sought sanctuary in Christ the King Church in San Diego and publicly refused to go to Vietnam.

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**The largest and most significant of thee rebellions took place in early November 1972 aboard the U.S.S. Constellation — what has been aptly described as “the first mass mutiny, in the history of the U. S. Navy.”**

In October, during training operations off the Southern California coast, black crew members formed an organization called the “Black Fraction,” with the aim of protecting minority interests in promotion policies and in the administration of military justice.

Throughout October, the group held several meetings, including one attended by the ship's executive officer, where programs were developed to defend blacks subjected to court-martial proceedings and to examine the ship's records for evidence of discrimination in non-judicial punishment.

As the organization grew in strength, the command, on November 2, singled out fifteen leading members of Black Fraction as agitators and ordered that six of them be given immediate less-than-honorable discharges.

At approximately the same time, a notice appeared in the ship's plan of the day announcing that 250 additional men were to be administratively discharged.

**Fearing that most of these punitive releases would be directed at them and angry at the command's apparent efforts to suppress their activities, over one hundred sailors, including a number of whites, staged a sit-in at the after mess deck on November 3 and demanded that the ship's commander, Captain J. D. Ward, personally hear their grievances.**

**The captain refused to acknowledge them, however, and the dissidents thus continued their strike throughout the day and into the early morning hours on November 4, refusing a direct order to report for muster on the flight deck.**

As tensions aboard ship mounted, a series of high-level consultations were held among Captain Ward, the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, Admiral Zumwalt in Washington, and other senior naval commanders.

To avert another Kitty Hawk, the officials reluctantly decided to cut sea operations short and return the rebels to San Diego as a beach detachment.”

**Captain Ward pulled the ship into the harbor on the fourth and allowed more than one hundred thirty of the men to go ashore.**

**The Constellation returned a few days later to pick up the dissidents, but the men refused to board ship, and on the morning of November 9 staged a defiant dockside strike — perhaps the largest act of mass defiance in naval history.**

**Despite the seriousness of their action, not one of the one hundred thirty sailors was arrested.**

**Several of the men received early discharges, but most were simply reassigned to shore duty.**

The Constellation incident created an immediate uproar within the military establishment.

On November 10, Chief of Naval Operations Zumwalt called eighty leading admirals and Marine Corps generals to an emergency meeting at the Pentagon in which he demanded greater attention to equal opportunity programs.

A few days later, the House Armed Services Committee responded to the crisis by appointing a special subcommittee to investigate disciplinary problems in the Navy.

**Although dissent and racial unrest were the immediate occasion for this concern, military officials were also becoming increasingly worried over a far more serious and menacing phenomenon within the fleet: sabotage.**

### **Sabotage:**

**For every sailor who spoke out or openly resisted, many others supported the movement silently, unwilling to risk the consequences of military repression.**

**With even the most innocuous forms of protest certain to encounter a harsh response, many enlisted people expressed their bitterness through covert acts of disruption.**

For some, sabotage was a spontaneous, often frustrated reaction to particular command policies or government action.

**For others, though, internal destruction was seen as the most politically effective form of resistance, as a sure means of directly obstructing an imperious war machine.**

**As opposition to the air war increased, the surging undercurrent of hostility among enlisted people produced a growing number of acts of intentional damage to ship components — a grave threat to the highly technological, capital-intensive Navy.**

**One of the first publicly disclosed acts of sabotage during the Vietnam period occurred on May 26, 1970, aboard the destroyer U.S.S. Anderson, in San Diego.**

**As the ship was preparing to steam into the Pacific for Vietnam, it suffered a major breakdown, resulting in some two hundred thousand dollars worth of property damage and a delay of several weeks.**

**An investigation disclosed that someone had dropped nuts, bolts, and chains down the main gear shaft.**

**Three sailors were charged for willful destruction and sabotage, but because of a lack of evidence the case had to be dismissed.**

A similar incident occurred in November of 1971, when naval reservist James Field caused one hundred thousand dollars damage to the U.S.S. Chilton while the ship, was docked at Norfolk.

**The level of sabotage grew steadily during 1972 with the escalation of naval involvement in Indochina.**

**The situation suddenly reached crisis proportions in July of 1972, however, when, within the space of just three weeks, two of the Navy's aircraft carriers were put out of commission by attacks from within.**

On July 10, 1972, a massive fire broke out on the carrier U.S.S. Forrestal at Norfolk. The blaze swept through the admiral's quarters and extensively damaged the ship's radar center, resulting in over \$7 million damage. The incident was the largest single act of sabotage in naval history, and it delayed the ship's deployment for over two months.

A nineteen-year-old seaman apprentice, Jeffrey Allison, was apprehended soon afterward and charged with arson and sabotage, as well as possession of LSD. On December 7, 1972, a military court found Allison guilty and sentenced him to five years in prison.

**In late July, another major act of sabotage shook the carrier U.S.S. Ranger, docked at Alameda, California.**

**Just days before the ship's scheduled departure for Vietnam, a paint scraper and two twelve-inch bolts were inserted into the number-four-engine reduction gears, causing nearly \$1 million damage and forcing a three-and-a-half-month delay in operations for extensive repairs.**

Pat Chenoweth, a soft-spoken young sailor from a broken home, was arrested and accused of the attack. Although military commanders for years refused to legally define the Vietnam intervention as a war, Chenoweth was in fact charged with the grave offense of "sabotage in time of war"—a crime punishable by thirty-five years in prison.

**After a lengthy legal battle and over ten months in pretrial confinement, Chenoweth was acquitted, in June of '73.**

**In their efforts to exonerate Chenoweth, defense lawyers pointed out that numerous other sabotage incidents had occurred on the Ranger during 1972 and that it was common for sailors to brag about or claim credit for such acts.**

**They documented over two dozen instances of willful destruction during May and June alone, including cut fire hoses, bomb threats, a plugged fire main, fuel in the freshwater supply, a flooded compartment, and assorted damage to generators and oil pumps.**

Evidence from various other sources indicates that sabotage became an increasingly severe problem throughout the Navy during the air war.

One indication of the extent of the problem comes in figures supplied to the House Internal Security Committee by the Navy Department in late 1971. The Navy listed 488 "investigations on damage or attempted damage" during fiscal year 1971, including 191 for sabotage, 135 for arson, and 162 for "wrongful destruction"; the figures showed a considerable increase over earlier years.

Captain Ward of the Constellation told a press conference in November of 1972 that "saboteurs were at work" during the period of unrest aboard his ship.

**He admitted that bomb and ordnance handling machinery had been damaged and that various other types of equipment had disappeared over the side.**

The problem became so serious that the Navy initiated a program of monitoring sensitive machinery aboard ships with television cameras.

Top Navy officials have spoken openly of the trouble. At his retirement as Commander in Chief of the Atlantic Fleet in October of 1972, Admiral Charles K. Duncan termed the increase in sabotage a "grave liability" to naval operations. Flanked by Admiral Zumwalt at a ceremony aboard the carrier U.S.S. Kennedy in Norfolk, Admiral Duncan referred to "about a dozen" incidents during the previous months and urged the immediate expulsion of those responsible for such acts.

In its report on Navy disciplinary problems, the House Armed Services Committee also disclosed "an alarming frequency of successful acts of sabotage and apparent sabotage on a wide variety of ships and stations. . . ." The Committee reported receiving "a list of literally hundreds of instances of damage to naval property wherein sabotage is suspected."

**The House Committee's report also contained a startling admission of how resistance among sailors actually undermined naval combat operations during the bombing campaign in 1972.**

The investigators found that the uprising aboard the Kitty Hawk in October was closely related to disruption of normal fleet rotation due to sabotage.

It will be remembered that the sudden and unexpected order to the Kitty Hawk to return to combat duty provided the spark in an already tense situation that led to violence.

In the Committee's words:

“This rescheduling apparently was due to the incidents of sabotage aboard her sister ships U.S.S. Ranger and U.S.S. Forestall.”

With two of the Navy's principal carriers out of commission due to sabotage, the Kitty Hawk was forced to cancel its scheduled return to the States and sail once again for the Tonkin Gulf.

**Thus sabotage and black resistance combined in the fall of 1972 to physically impede the Navy's ability to carry out its mission.**

The House Armed Services Committee summed up this crisis in the fleet in alarming terms:

“The U. S. Navy is now confronted with pressures . which if not controlled, will surely destroy its enviable tradition of discipline.

**“Recent instances of sabotage, riot, willful disobedience of orders, and contempt for authority, instances which have occurred with increased frequency, are clear-cut symptoms of a dangerous deterioration of discipline.”**

In late December 1972, the Pentagon finally responded to this new rebellion in the ranks, again resorting to the expedient of mass discharges. Three thousand sailors were immediately handed administrative discharges, many of them less than honorable, and an additional three thousand men were identified for release in the following months.

The mass-discharge policy, along with the demobilization of the fleet after the January peace accords, eased the pressure within the Navy and effectively lowered the level of enlisted resistance.

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## **“The Largest Mass Rebellion In The History Of The Air Force”**

Violence erupted at other air bases during the course of the war — but never as extensively as at Travis AFB in May of 1971.

From May 22 through 2, this primary Vietnam transfer point in northern California was crippled by the largest mass rebellion in the history of the Air Force.

A whole book could be devoted to just the Travis story, for in many ways it epitomized the racism and black revolt eroding the American armed forces.

The roots of the conflict, as in so many previous examples, lay in command repression, growing black restiveness, and a general crisis in morale — with a fracas at an enlisted men's club providing the spark for a generalized uprising throughout the base.

Fighting apparently began on Saturday afternoon between black enlisted men and women and military policemen and continued in scattered clashes through the entire

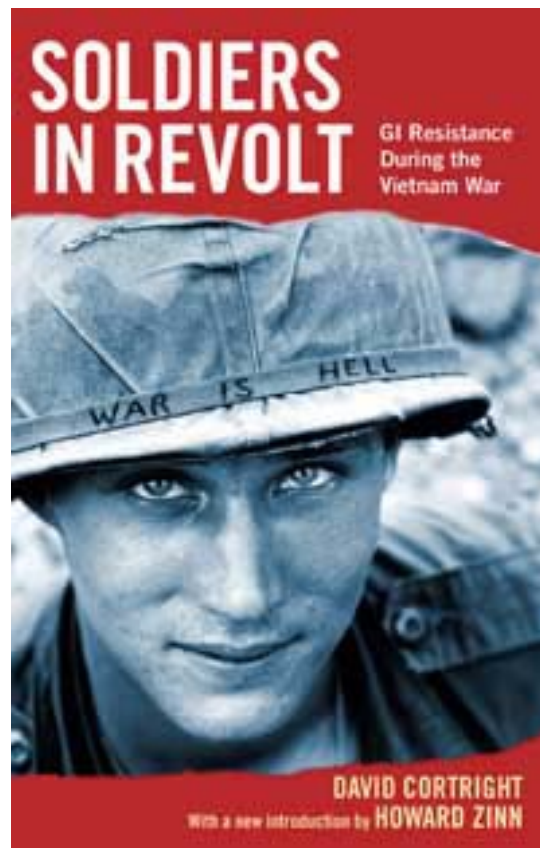
weekend. The minority barracks area was cordoned off, and a number of black airmen were arrested.

The main clash came on Monday evening, the twenty-fourth, when over two hundred enlisted people, some whites included, attempted to free the imprisoned brothers and were met by three hundred MPs and nearly eighty civilian police called in from surrounding communities.

In the ensuing battle, over six hundred airmen were drawn into the brawl, an officers' club was burned to the ground, several dozen people were injured, and 135 servicepeople, most of them black, were arrested.

Fighting continued into the next day, with armed guards patrolling the base and all incoming traffic searched at the gate.

**For a few incredible days, Travis was in a virtual state of siege, with nearly all base activities abandoned in a frantic attempt to restore order.**



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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## **OCCUPATION REPORT**



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



Foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment break into a house during a home invasion raid in Baghdad. (AFP/Jewel Samad)

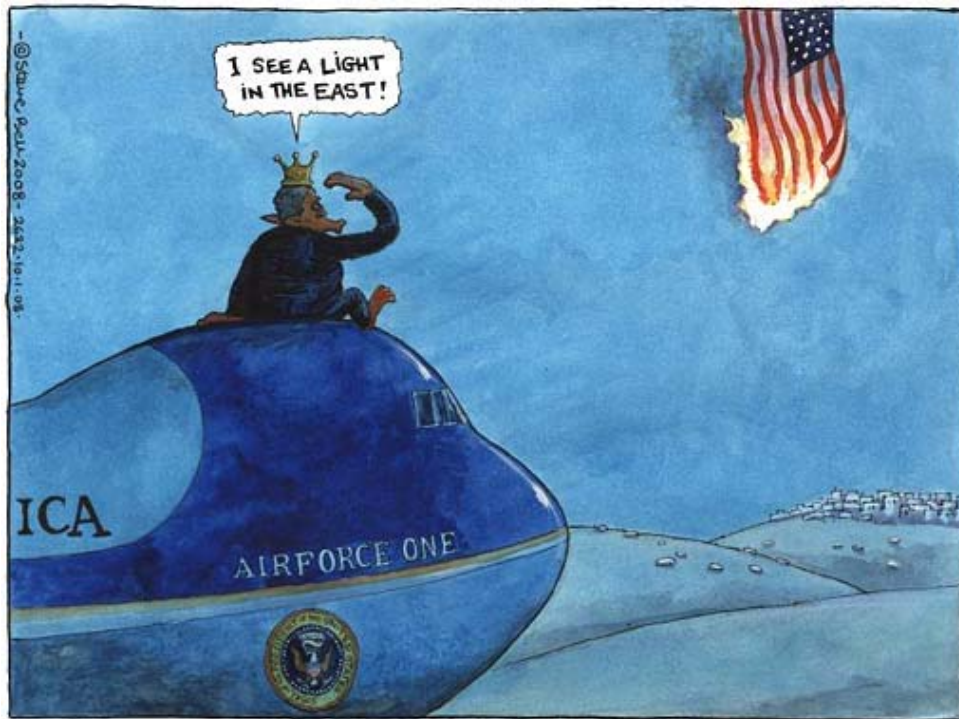
**[61% of Iraqis say they approve of attacks on U.S.-led forces in their country, up from 47 percent in January. A solid majority of Shiite and Sunni Arabs approved of the attacks, according to the poll. 9/27/2006 By BARRY SCHWEID, AP & Program on International Policy Attitudes**

**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!**

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

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to Z and Nigel B, who sent this in.]

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## CLASS WAR REPORTS

**Mexican Government Attacks  
Striking Copper Miners:  
“They Never Want Us To Spend Time  
Fixing Problems - Just Get The  
Production Out. If We Tried To Stop The  
Line For Safety Problems, We Would  
Lose Our Jobs”**

13 January 2008 By David Bacon, TruthOut Report [Excerpts]

Mexican labor authorities seized on technicalities to order an end to the strike at the country's largest copper mine in Cananea, Sonora, on Friday.

**The Mexican press reports that over 700 heavily armed agents of the Sonora state police arrived in Cananea just hours before the decision was announced, and agents of the Federal Preventative Police were sent to this tiny mountain town as well. Strikers report that the streets were filled with rocks and teargas, and 20 miners have been injured - some seriously - in the ensuing conflict.**

**The union says that five strikers are missing.**

The action by the government seeks to end the longest-running defiance of government labor policy in Mexico in decades. The mine belongs to one of the largest mining corporations in the world, Grupo Mexico, which is owned by the wealthy family of German Larrea.

On June 29 of last year, the union at Cananea, Section 65 of the Mexican Union of Mine, Metal and Allied Workers, went on strike over extreme health and safety dangers. Since the beginning of the strike, both the company and the labor board in the state of Sonora, which is controlled by Mexico's old ruling party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party, as well as the company itself, have tried to declare the strike illegal.

The union won an injunction, called an "amparo," from the Mexican Federal Court on December 13, protecting the strike's legal status. Under Mexican law, if the strike is legal, the company may not make any effort to operate the mine or make reprisals against the strikers. If the strike is declared illegal, however, the company can begin operations, and fire any striker who refuses to return to work.

Miners fear the presence of heavily armed police is intended to protect a company effort to reopen the mine with strikebreakers, or to frighten strikers themselves into returning.

Grupo Mexico has been at war with the Mexican miners union for over three years. In 2001, Napoleon Gomez Urrutia was elected as the union's president. He soon became a high-profile opponent of the Mexican government's conservative economic policy, successfully fighting its effort to weaken labor law and privatize its pension system. Taking advantage of high world copper prices, Gomez negotiated wage increases much higher than the limits the government sought to impose in its effort to attract foreign investment.

**On February 19, 2005, 65 miners died in a huge explosion in the Pasta de Conchos coal mine in the northern state of Coahuila. That mine belonged to Grupo Mexico.**

**The union found that workers on the second shift had complained of high concentrations of explosive methane gas in the shafts before the accident. "They told us that welding was still going on, even after the failure of some electrical equipment," Gomez charged.**

**Two days after the explosion, Gomez Urrutia accused the Secretary of Labor and Grupo Mexico of "industrial homicide." Then-President Vicente Fox filed corruption charges against Gomez less than a week later, and Labor Secretary Francisco Xavier Salazar Sáenz appointed Elias Morales to replace him as union**

**president. Morales had been expelled from the union for his close relationship with the company. Gomez fled to Canada to avoid arrest, where the United Steel Workers gave him sanctuary, and where he remains. While in exile, he was twice reelected president of the union, although Grupo Mexico and the government refused to recognize him.**

A July 2006 report by the National Human Rights Commission found that the local office of the federal labor ministry responsible for inspecting Pasta de Conchos had “clear knowledge” before the accident of the conditions that set off the explosion. In 2004, labor safety inspectors had found 48 health and safety violations in the mine, including oil and gas leaks, missing safety devices, and broken lighting.

Although Grupo Mexico was given an order to fix the illegal conditions, no compliance inspection was carried out until February 7, 12 days before the explosion. The Cananea strikers say conditions in their mine also threaten their lives and health.

**Rock dust in the enclosed part of the huge complex, called the concentrator, is so deep that it rises up over workers' boot tops. “When the mine is running,” says Victoriano Carrillo, a member of the mine's health and safety commission, “you can't even see more than a few feet in front of you.”**

**Mine dust is more than just uncomfortable or inconvenient: it's deadly. Superfine particles lodge in the lungs, and miners who breathe rock dust year after year suffer a variety of lung diseases, including silicosis.**

**Cananea miners charge that the vacuum apparatus that is supposed to suck dust from the complex has been disconnected and inoperable for a decade. “We know what's safe and what's not,” one miner charged, “but they never want us to spend time fixing problems - just get the production out. If we tried to stop the line for safety problems, we would lose our jobs.”**

In October, a binational delegation of health and safety experts from Mexico and the US visited the Cananea mine and performed preliminary health screenings on 68 of the 1,300 strikers. “We documented appalling working conditions in the open-pit mine and processing plants where workers are exposed to high levels of airborne silica, which can cause fatal diseases like silicosis and lung cancer,” stated Garrett Brown, a California health and safety inspector and director of the Maquiladora Health and Safety Network.

“Ironically, the Mexican Labor Department's own safety inspectors found the same hazards in an April 2007 inspection of the facility and issued a laundry list of 72 'corrective actions,' including fixing the cranes' brakes and re-assembling the dust collectors. None of the mandated corrections, many of which had also been identified in previous inspections, had been completed by the time the workers went on strike over health and safety issues on July 29.”

According to Grupo Mexico, the strikers are supporters of Gomez Urrutia, and are striking to pressure the company and government into reinstating him. But breaking the strike in Cananea would allow the company and government to install a company union at the mine, as they have at many others over the last two years.

The new union is headed by Francisco Gamez, a former contractor for Grupo Mexico who once worked at Cananea. The federal labor board set up elections to allow it to take over representation rights in eight mines. The Center for Labor Action and Reflection (CEREAL), a human rights organization, charges that the election process was manipulated to get rid of the old miners union. Fifteen workers were fired before a vote at a San Luis Potosi mine, CEREAL says.

**In Nueva Rosita, Coahuila, miners on the first and second shifts were locked inside the coal mine for a day before balloting began, while 300 federal, state and municipal police surrounded the mine entrance.**

At Nacozari, where 1,500 workers were fired for striking in 2006, over 900 were denied voting rights. Workers brought in to replace the fired miners were told they would be fired themselves, evicted from company housing, and sent back to southern Mexico if the company union didn't win the vote there.

**Rita Marcela Robles Benitez, an analyst with CEREAL, charges that Grupo Mexico “changed the working hours from 8 to 12 per day, which has resulted in more accidents because of the lack of safety protection and training.”**

The new union approved the change.

The government and Grupo Mexico have been prevented from holding a similar election at Cananea because of the strike. If the strike is smashed, however, authorities will probably hold one there to eliminate the miners union, and allow Grupo Mexico to deal with the company union instead.

### **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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