

GI SPECIAL 6A20:



**“We Would Fight Back”
“I Would Fight Back, No Matter
What The Intention Of The
Occupiers Were”**



Branch of service: Army National Guard of the United States (ARNG)
Unit: 724 En Bn
Rank: E-5
Home: Bellingham, Washington
Served in: Nicaragua; Tallil, Iraq

During the Great Depression the U.S. economy fell into a slump of unemployment. Following the lead of the U.S., most of the rest of the industrialized nations also fell into a slump.

Children are taught about it at school, how unimaginable the unemployment was and the widespread hunger and homelessness.

Farmers were kicked off their properties because the price of crops fell, and the farmers could no longer make their bank payments.

This is a story told again and again.

When joblessness in the United States in 1933, the unemployment rate peaked at close to twenty-five percent. This was the state of the U.S. in one of our darkest hours.

As a history lesson, we cannot think of a sadder period of time; it has been one of the largest struggles the American people have had to endure.

Even more amazing today is the state of Iraq, where, according to the Iraqi Ministry of Social Affairs, the unemployment rate for the year 2007 is at forty-eight percent!

How can the United States ignore these statistics? I feel that the answer to this is too simple.

We as U.S. citizens cannot imagine these events as if they were happening here at home.

The idea is too absurd to realize that this could be us.

But what if it was?

We would be outraged; we would start retaliating against our captors, our occupiers.

I would never say that I am happy that people are dying, or being killed, but what would happen if someone came to the U.S. and occupied our country, killed our citizens, causing such astounding unemployment?

We would fight back.

I would fight back, no matter what the intention of the occupiers were.

We need to learn from our mistakes! We need to take our head out of the sand and help Iraq. Let Iraq be free from our gun and let's help its future with aid, food, water, and education.

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

Soldier Dies Atop Bomb Resistant Truck

Jan. 25, 2008 By Andrea Washington, Staff Writer, Hinesville Publishing

The death of a 3rd Infantry Division soldier killed in Iraq over the weekend when his MRAP vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device is under investigation, a division spokesperson said Tuesday.

Spc. Richard B. Burress, 25, died Jan. 19 while acting as the gunner atop a Mine-Resistant, Ambush Protected vehicle that rolled over after being hit by the roadside bomb in Al Jabour.

According to Pentagon Press Secretary Geoff Morrell, the MRAP hit a "very large, deep-buried IED" and the "force of the explosion blew the MRAP into the air and caused it to overturn."

It is unclear whether Burress died from injuries due to the blast or in the subsequent rollover.

Three crew members inside the cabin of the heavily armored vehicle suffered cuts and broken bones in their feet.

Maj. Alayne P. Conway, deputy spokeswoman for the 3rd ID, said both the attack and death are under investigation.

Burress is the first American killed in a roadside bomb attack on an MRAP, the military's latest heavily armored vehicle designed to deflect blasts from IEDs, which have killed more U.S. troops than any other tactic used by insurgents and militia fighters in Iraq.

Family members in his hometown of Naples, Fla. told the Associated Press Burress joined the Army in December 2005 to “add focus and direction” to his life, but “didn't want to be recognized for his service and was deeply touched by the many thanks he received from strangers.”

He enjoyed the simple pleasures of fishing, canoeing and spending time with family members, especially his daughter, Alyssa.

Burress was assigned to the division's 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

**GUESS WHO'S WORRIED
GUESS WHO ISN'T
GUESS WHY
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



US soldiers in a village near Salman Pak, on the outskirts of south Baghdad, January 28. (AFP/Jewel Samad)

Have Some Reality

In December, there were about 600 attacks on coalition troops each week. In northern Iraq, there are about 210 attacks a week. Tom Vanden Brook, USA Today January 28, 2008

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Canada Threatening To Withdraw Troops From Afghanistan: “Growing Concern In European Circles About Possible Allied Defeat”

January 29, 2008 Peter O'Neil, Europe Correspondent, Canwest News Service
[Excerpts]

BRUSSELS -- Prime Minister Stephen Harper is engaging in unnecessary, irrelevant and “overheated” speculation when he suggests a Canadian troop pullout from Afghanistan could jeopardize the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a NATO official said here Tuesday.

Harper said Monday that his government would only support an extension of the Canadian mission beyond February 2009 if allies provide more equipment and 1,000 troops to help Canada in Kandahar.

Canada, with roughly 2,500 troops in Afghanistan, has lost 78 soldiers and one diplomat.

All three opposition parties are pressuring Harper's Conservatives to end Canada's combat mission by no later than February, 2009, with the NDP and Bloc Quebecois demanding an immediate withdrawal.

Alvaro de Vasconcelos, the Paris-based director of the European Union Institute for Security Studies, said there's growing concern in European circles about possible allied defeat in Afghanistan.

But he said European countries already face both skeptical voters and overextended military commitments in Afghanistan and other international hot-spots.

British Troops Can Leave Afghanistan: Afghan President Says They're No Good

January 30, 2008 Financial Times

NATO's military operations in southern Afghanistan have come under intensified scrutiny this month. Last week, Hamid Karzai, Afghan president, disparaged the performance of Britain's 7,000 troops in Helmand province.

TROOP NEWS

Army “Tiger Team” Rat Scum Fuck Over Wounded Iraq Vets At Ft. Drum; VA Ass Kissers Let Them Get Away With It: “Soldiers At Fort Drum Say They Feel Betrayed” “To Be Tossed Aside Like A Worn-Out Pair Of Boots Is Pretty Disheartening” The Soldier Says

January 29 by Ari Shapiro, NPR [Excerpts] & Jan 30, 2008 The Associated Press

Army officials in upstate New York instructed representatives from the Department of Veterans Affairs not to help disabled soldiers at Fort Drum Army base with their military disability paperwork last year.

That paperwork can be crucial because it helps determine whether soldiers will get annual disability payments and health care after they're discharged.

Now soldiers at Fort Drum say they feel betrayed by the institutions that are supposed to support them.

The soldiers want to know why the Army would want to stop them from getting help with their disability paperwork and why the VA — whose mission is to help veterans — would agree to the Army's request.

One disabled soldier, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he fears retaliation from the military, says it feels like a slap in the face.

“To be tossed aside like a worn-out pair of boots is pretty disheartening,” the soldier says. “I always believed the Army would take care of me if I did the best I could, and I've done that.”

At a restaurant near Fort Drum, the soldier described his first briefing with the VA office on base. According to the soldier, the VA official told a classroom full of injured troops, "We cannot help you review the narrative summaries of your medical problems."

The official said the VA used to help soldiers with the paperwork, but Army officials saw soldiers from Fort Drum getting higher disability ratings with the VA's help than soldiers from other bases.

The Army told the VA to stop helping Fort Drum soldiers describe their army injuries, and the VA did as it was told.

It's unclear why the Army wanted to stop the soldiers from getting help with the disability paperwork. Cynthia Vaughan, spokeswoman for the Army surgeon general, says the VA was not doing anything wrong by helping soldiers at Fort Drum.

"There is no Army policy on outside help in reviewing and/or assisting soldiers in rewriting their narratives during the 10-day period which they have to review them," Vaughan says.

She says the officers who asked the VA to stop helping Fort Drum's soldiers were part of what the Army calls a "Tiger Team"— an ad-hoc group assigned to investigate, in this case, medical disability benefits.

According to Army spokesman George Wright, the Tiger Team thought the VA should not be helping soldiers with their medical documents. The Army delivered that message to VA officials in Buffalo, N.Y., who went along with the request, even though the VA's assistance complied with Army policy.

The Army declined to provide any information about the Tiger Team members' identities or their motivations in asking the VA to stop reviewing the soldiers' paperwork.

However, private attorney Mara Hurwitt points out that the Army has a financial incentive to keep soldiers' disability ratings low.

"The more soldiers you have who get disability retirements, the more retirement pay is coming out of your budget," Hurwitt says.

Another question is why the VA would go along with the Army's request.

Tom Pamperin, deputy director of the VA's compensation and pension service, believes VA officers are not qualified to help with soldiers' disability paperwork.

"We do not train our employees in the intricacies of the Defense Department's disability evaluation system, so we would feel that it would be inappropriate for our employees to apply VA standards to a Defense Department process," Pamperin says.

But Hurwitt argues the VA is more equipped than anyone to help soldiers with their paperwork.

“VA counselors understand the disabilities, what the different kinds of conditions are, how they should be properly described in the paperwork,” Hurwitt says.

She points out that VA officials have to look at a soldier's medical history anyway to counsel him or her on VA benefits, which are separate from Army benefits.

“Really what it comes down to is you're just helping the soldier get what he's entitled to under law,” Hurwitt says.

“Once again, we witness a military command which is more concerned with saving money than with providing adequate compensation for injured veterans,” said Tod Ensign, an attorney with New York City-based Citizen Soldier.

If a soldier receives a disability rating of less than 30 percent, he or she receives only a lump sum payment instead of a monthly disability payment, Ensign said.

“We are talking about young people, inexperienced, with no knowledge of medical terminology. What's wrong with helping them? These are determinations that could have a bearing on the rest of their life,” Ensign said.

Ensign said he was working with a handful of active duty Fort Drum soldiers to file a formal request for an official Court of Inquiry. Such a panel can conduct a service-wide investigation into the Army's policy, he said.

“I can't imagine Fort Drum soldiers are alone in this,” he said.

Security Shit-Birds Refused To Let Returning Iraq Vets Go In Airport Terminal; 200 Soldiers And Marines Forced To Spend A Two-Hour Layover On The Tarmac: Airport Said It Did Not Know What Kind Of Screening The Troops Had Undergone

Jan 30, 2008 The Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Oakland International Airport officials broke no rules or laws when they directed to a remote corner of the airfield a charter plane ferrying military personnel from Iraq, a U.S. Transportation Department inquiry found.

The diversion, which airport authorities said was based on security concerns, caused the more than 200 soldiers and Marines to spend a two-hour layover Sept. 27 between Iraq and Hawaii on the tarmac rather than inside a passenger terminal.

The incident troubled two influential congressmen and some conservative commentators, including Fox News Channel's John Gibson, who called it an "appalling reception of our men and women from the U.S. military."

Florida Rep. John Mica, the top Republican on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, told Fox the incident was "a real slap in the face to our troops," and asked the Transportation Department's inspector general to investigate.

In a report released Wednesday, inspector general Calvin L. Scovel III said security was in fact a principal issue in the airport's decision, which he declined to criticize.

The airport said it did not know what kind of screening the troops had undergone before landing in Oakland.

A TSA official told Scovel's investigators he agreed with the airport's decision to bar the troops from the secure terminal because the airport could not confirm whether their base screening had met TSA standards, the report said.

Hilltop Aviation, which provides services to airlines on the ground in Oakland, also could not confirm to airport officials that weapons on the flight would be secured and safeguarded in accordance to Defense Department regulations, the report said.

Parasites Stuff Their Own Pockets With Donations To Veterans' Charities; "Army Gen. Tommy Franks Was Paid \$100,000 — Out Of Donations Made To Wounded Veterans"

January 28, 2008 By Karen Jowers, Army Times [Excerpts]

Retired Army Gen. Tommy Franks was paid \$100,000 — out of donations made to wounded veterans — for allowing his name to be used on fundraising appeals by a charity that has come under increasing scrutiny for the way it handles its money.

Lawmakers questioned the ethics of the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes Foundation not only for using donors' money to pay Franks, but for failing to disclose to potential donors who received the mail solicitations that Franks was paid for his endorsement.

Franks' endorsement helped the charity raise “millions of dollars more” than it otherwise could have, said Roger Chapin, president of Help Hospitalized Veterans Inc. and the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes Foundation.

At a Jan. 17 hearing, Chapin said he is also paying retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Arthur “Chip” Diehl III \$5,000 a month for similar assistance.

The three-hour hearing was charged with heated exchanges about Chapin's operations and the disclosure of costs to donors.

Lawmakers pushed Chapin and two executives of fundraising companies on whether solicitations should disclose information about the percentage of donations that a group spends on fundraising.

“If we disclose, we'd be out of business,” Chapin said.

“Your words are wonderful, because if the public knew, they wouldn't donate,” said Rep. Christopher Shays, R-Conn.

Chapin acknowledged that his organization has used inflated numbers in its mailings when describing what percentage of donations help veterans.

While some mailings have stated that 92 percent or even 100 percent of donations have gone to veterans, the real figure is closer to 25 percent, according to a congressional study.

An analysis of Chapin's financial documents by the committee's staff showed that his organizations took in more than \$168 million in donations from 2004 to 2006.

They spent \$125 million on fundraising, overhead and administrative costs, and the rest — about 26 percent of the total — on veterans.

“I've tried everything under the sun to reduce fundraising costs,” Chapin said, including a variety of advertising.

“What about reducing your salary?” asked Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md.

According to the committee's analysis, Chapin and his wife received \$1.5 million in salary from 2004 to 2006 and also were reimbursed more than \$340,000 for meals, hotels, entertainment and other costs.

Chapin said his salary is in the lower half of salaries of charity executives, while his performance is in the upper half.

Committee staff members contest that figure, noting that his salary falls in the median range of for-profit executive compensation.

Among other things, the committee questioned why Help Hospitalized Veterans has authorized a payment of \$17,000 for a country club membership on behalf of one of the company's officers.

"I think it's appropriate," Chapin said. "The board is not paid, they volunteer."

"It's Absurd That People Serving In The Military Are Trained To Kill On The Battlefield But At The Same Time Couldn't Come Back Home And Have A Beer"

Jan 30, 2008 By Susanne M. Schafer, The Associated Press [Excerpts]

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Underage military members would be able to drink alcohol under a bill proposed by South Carolina legislator, who said Wednesday he introduced the measure when he heard a 20-year-old Marine return from Iraq and complain about not being able to buy a drink.

"It's absurd that people serving in the military are trained to kill on the battlefield but at the same time couldn't come back home and have a beer," said Rep. Fletcher Smith. "If you're old enough to get training in the U.S. military, you should be old enough to get a beer. That training really matures a person."

State law prohibits the sale or possession of alcohol by anyone under 21. In 1984, South Carolina raised the drinking age to 21 from 18 to comply with federal law.

Smith's colleague, Rep. Grady Brown, D-Bishopville, said he will support the legislation.

"If a man is old enough to defend his country and die for his country," he shouldn't be told he's too young for a beer, said Brown, who served in the South Carolina Air National Guard. "That's totally absurd."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action

January 30, 2008 The Associated Press & Reuters & By Mokhles Khoshnaw (KUNA)

BAGHDAD: An Iraqi television cameraman and his driver were killed in a roadside bombing Tuesday north of Baghdad, Al-Forat TV reported. The female correspondent and camera assistant traveling with them were wounded.

Alaa Abdul-Karim al-Fartoosi, 29, was traveling with the three colleagues when a roadside bomb went off next to their car in Balad, 80 kilometers (50 miles) north of Baghdad, said Haider Kadhum, a Al-Forat news editor. He did not identify the others in the party by name.

Al-Forat TV is affiliated to a powerful Shiite [translation: Occupation collaborator, pro-Iranian] political party, the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council.

A policeman was killed and five wounded by a roadside bomb targeting their patrol near al-Mustanssiriya Square in eastern Baghdad, police said.

Five police commandos and two civilians were wounded by a roadside bomb in eastern Baghdad's al-Ghadir district, police said.

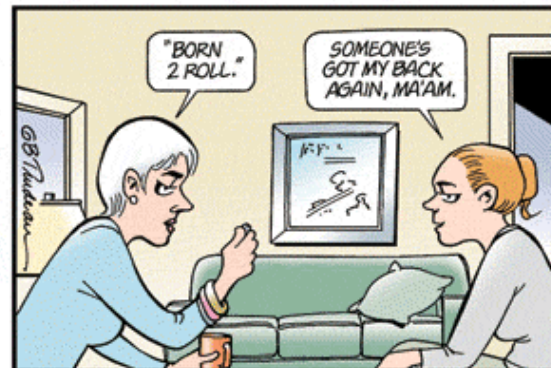
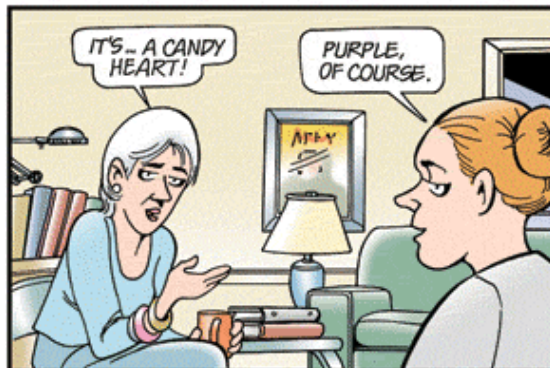
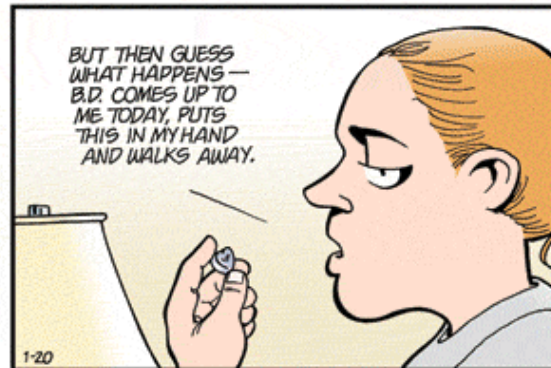
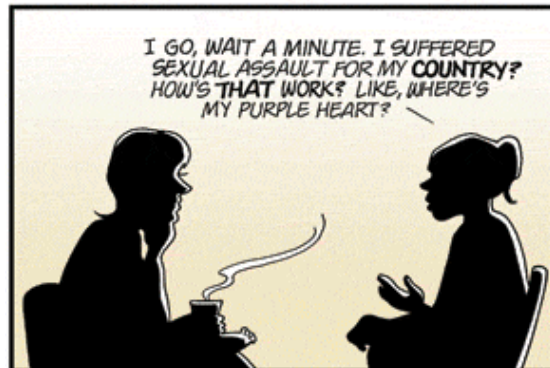
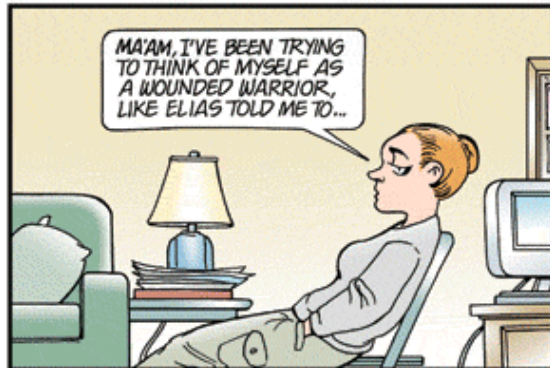
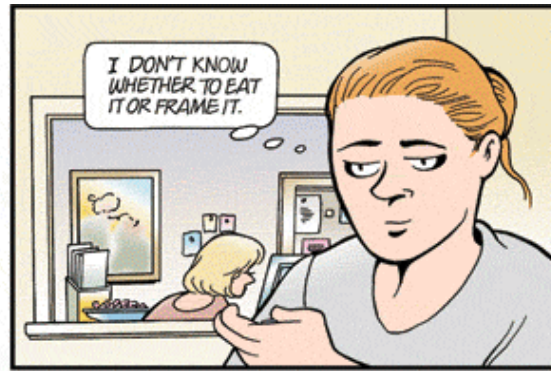
A police source told KUNA that armed men opened fire at the convoy of Taleb Mohammad Mustafa, the governor of Salman Bek district, southern Kirkuk, seriously wounding him and his driver.

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

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**To My Brothers In The Military -
WE Must Stop Rapes**



From: Marco Frucht, The Military Project
To: The Military Project & GI Special
Sent: January 12, 2008
Subject: To My Brothers In The Military - WE Must Stop Rapes

Fellow military men.

I say this with the heaviest friggin' heart I can ever have.

Rape in the military is out of control.

It has been out of control for a very long time.

Until all women have learned Aikido and made themselves capable of kicking our asses if/when they need to, it will remain OUR role to stop other men from raping them.

It is our burden to find out it is happening, and to stop it when we find out -- before it happens if/when that is ever possible.

And it will forever remain our guilt whenever we know something is up and choose to STAY un-involved or worse yet, complicitous.

Why do I say this?

Let me put it this way.

It was 1988. I was stationed in South Carolina.

I was invited to a famous hotel near an even more famous golf course. I was told I could join a "train" if I wanted to.

YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT. It is time to discuss these issues head on. A train is when a drunk woman lays there and allows many different men she doesn't even know jump her bones and rape her limp and lifeless body.

I was very young, and I was curious.

I looked ahead of the line I was invited to join, into the room to the open door and saw perhaps one of the most disgusting things I've ever seen in my life.

A woman about my age was a zombie with half open eyes. Buck naked and bruised all over her body. She was in the middle of having sex with perhaps the 20th soldier in this past hour. There was a line of a dozen or more people ahead of where I could have chosen to join in.

She was too drunk to have any idea what was continuing on. I have no idea if she consented to any part of this at all. I will never know that; and I will never know who she was. I'll never even know if she was OK afterward.

I left instead of joining that line; but I also did not do anything to stop it, or tell anyone about it for a few years.

When I finally did mention this to a few people many were not surprised, and some seemed to wonder why I even cared. Why it even bothered me.

Many confided in me that they had seen these events as a fairly common weekend thing in the military.

Blame the victim, etc.

Anyhow, I'll close just saying that I've reflected on that and so many other issues a lot over the years, and for whatever reasons, our United States society is perhaps the most violent in the world; and U.S. military society seems to be the worst of the worst, especially when you take into account what a young female soldier must go through day in and day out, **BEFORE YOU FACTOR IN THESE TRAINS** even.

So again I say, we need to figure out how and when we can help put a stop to this kind of bullshit.

I say this now **AFTER** Lance Corporal (goddamned it, she was the same rank as me!!!) Maria Lauterbach has been brutally murdered, and after Suzanne Swift has tried to get the Army to let her go home, and after Janis Karpinski testified to Congress, but hopefully **BEFORE** another rape occurs.

Surge to Nowhere: “Surge Or No Surge, The Iraq War Remains An Egregious Strategic Blunder That Persistence Will Only Compound”

[Thanks to Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace]

January 20, 2008 By Andrew J. Bacevich, The Washington Post [Excerpts]

As the fifth anniversary of Operation Iraqi Freedom nears, the fabulists are again trying to weave their own version of the war. The latest myth is that the “surge” is working.

The United States has acquired a ramshackle, ungovernable and unresponsive dependency that is incapable of securing its own borders or managing its own affairs.

More than three years after then-national security adviser Condoleezza Rice handed President Bush a note announcing that “Iraq is sovereign,” that sovereignty remains a fiction.

A nation-building project launched in the confident expectation that the United States would repeat in Iraq the successes it had achieved in Germany and Japan after 1945 instead compares unfavorably with the U.S. response to Hurricane Katrina.

Even today, Iraqi electrical generation meets barely half the daily national requirements. Baghdad households now receive power an average of 12 hours each day -- six hours

fewer than when Saddam Hussein ruled. Oil production still has not returned to pre-invasion levels.

Reports of widespread fraud, waste and sheer ineptitude in the administration of U.S. aid have become so commonplace that they barely last a news cycle. (Recall, for example, the 110,000 AK-47s, 80,000 pistols, 135,000 items of body armor and 115,000 helmets intended for Iraqi security forces that, according to the Government Accountability Office, the Pentagon cannot account for.) U.S. officials repeatedly complain, to little avail, about the paralyzing squabbling inside the Iraqi parliament and the rampant corruption within Iraqi ministries.

If a primary function of government is to provide services, then the government of Iraq can hardly be said to exist.

To say that any amount of “kicking ass” will make Iraq whole once again is pure fantasy.

The U.S. dilemma remains unchanged: continue to pour lives and money into Iraq with no end in sight, or cut our losses and deal with the consequences of failure.

In reality, the war's effects are precisely the inverse of those that Bush and his lieutenants expected. Baghdad has become a strategic cul-de-sac.

According to the war's most fervent proponents, Bush's critics have become so “invested in defeat” that they cannot see the progress being made on the ground.

Yet something similar might be said of those who remain so passionately invested in a futile war's perpetuation.

They are unable to see that, surge or no surge, the Iraq war remains an egregious strategic blunder that persistence will only compound.

January 31, 1968: Resistance Anniversary: The Tet Offensive

Peace History: Carl Bunin

The Tet (the lunar new year) Offensive began as North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces launched surprise attacks against major cities, provincial and district capitals in South Vietnam.

The attack had been anticipated but, nonetheless, half of the ARVN troops (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) were on leave because of the holiday.

There were attacks in Saigon (the South's capital) on the Independence Palace (the residence of the president), the radio station, the ARVN's joint General Staff Compound,

Tan Son Nhut airfield, and the United States embassy, causing considerable damage and throwing the city into turmoil.

January 31, 1876: Betrayal



Sitting Bull: One of several chiefs who refused to comply.

Carl Bunin Peace History Jan 28 - Feb 3

The U.S. government ordered that all Native Americans must move to reservations by this date or be declared hostile.

Most Sioux did not even hear of the ultimatum until after the deadline.

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/)

January 31, 1945: Anniversary Of A Murder; The Execution Of Private Eddy Slovik



Pvt. Eddie Slovik

Carl Bunin Peace History Jan 28 - Feb 3

Private Eddie Slovik became the first American soldier since the Civil War to be executed for desertion.

Supreme Allied Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered Slovik's execution be carried out, he said, to avoid further desertions in the late stages of the war.

[Excerpt from the article by Joe Allen; Death Row At The "Castle": Inside The U.S. Military's Judicial System; the International Socialist Review. Joe Allen is a member of Teamsters Local 705 in Chicago and the International Socialist Organization.]

Alvin "Tommy" Bridges, a military policeman during the war and a future police chief, recounted his very bitter memories of "military justice" to Studs Terkel in the Good War: "They shot some of those same guys up there that were—if you'd go to a municipal court, they'd dismiss the case. Depending a lot upon the commanding officer."

Near the end of his narrative, Bridges makes clear the extent of summary "justice" and who was responsible:

"Eisenhower says that's the only guy (Eddie Slovik) that was ever executed for it (desertion). That's what burns me up, when a gross of them that I know were

executed for probably more minor things than what Slovik was. They said he was the only one. We had to make a show of it. The son-of-a-bitches.”

Eddie Slovik was a Polish working-class kid from Detroit who had a minor criminal record and spent some years in a youth reformatory. His draft classification was originally 4-F (unfit for military service) and therefore not eligible to be drafted. He married and got a decent paying job in the auto industry, whereupon he was reclassified 1-A.

The army was then drafting anybody it could get its hands on in preparation for the invasion of Europe. It was also clear that Slovik couldn't kill a living thing and was terrified of combat. In his "confession" after he deserted he said, "I'll run away again if I have to go their." (He misspelled "there," and by "there" he meant going into combat).

Over 40,000 other deserters tried by lesser courts-martial were punished by confinement to disciplinary centers or dishonorably discharged. Another 2,864 were tried by general courts-martial. Most were sentenced to long terms in prisons (many left prison soon after the war was over), but forty-nine were sentenced to death. All the sentences for desertion were commuted except Slovik's.

Slovik's story is recounted in William Bradford Huie's book *The Execution of Private Slovik*.

Why Slovik?

It seems likely that the reason Slovik was singled out was because he deserted at the time of stiffening German resistance in late 1944, when the Allied forces came dangerously close to collapsing on the Western front. Yet, curiously, the army never publicized his execution beyond his company, never told his wife, and buried him in a secret cemetery.

It would be nearly a decade after Slovik's death before Huie began investigating the strange circumstances surrounding it. Despite the efforts of many people, Slovik's wife never received the paltry \$10,000 plus interest she asked for in GI life insurance. Slovik's remains were finally returned to the U.S. in 1987, to be buried beside the grave of his deceased wife.

While many people believe that Slovik was the only American soldier executed during the war, that is not true.

Many were executed on charges other than desertion, and African American soldiers once again bore the brunt of these executions.

OCCUPATION REPORT

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



Foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. army interrogate an Iraqi citizen during a home invasion in the village of Sinsil on the northern outskirts of Muqdadiyah, 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?]

"You get the interpreter and you get the man of the home, and you have him at gunpoint, and you'll ask the interpreter to ask him: 'Do you have any weapons? Do you have any anti-US propaganda, anything at all--anything--anything in here that would lead us to believe that you are somehow involved in insurgent activity or anti-coalition forces activity?'

"Normally they'll say no, because that's normally the truth," Sergeant Bruhns said.

"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.

“And if you find something, then you'll detain him. If not, you'll say, 'Sorry to disturb you. Have a nice evening.'”

“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

“In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit,” said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay’s Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday’s raid. “Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead.”

OCCUPATION PALESTINE



It is ironic but not unexpected that 3500 years after the Hebrews fled their dismal life in Egypt and escaped eastwards to freedom across the miraculously stilled Red Sea, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians should be fleeing from the modern day descendants of the Hebrews -- the state of Israel -- who now play the role of the oppressive Pharaoh to the subjugated and dehumanized Palestinians in Gaza. Rami G. Khouri 28 Jan 2008 Agence Global

GAZA:
**“We Are One People In Two
Countries,” Another Told Me. “We
Should Be One Country”**
**“There Is Something Almost
Indescribably Exhilarating About
Suddenly Evaporating Borders”**

January 29, 2008 By Ben Wedeman, CNN [Excerpts]

GAZA (CNN) -- There is something almost indescribably exhilarating about suddenly evaporating borders, an almost palpable electricity that pulses through the air.

It was breathtaking to watch as tens of thousands of people poured over what once was a towering Israeli-built iron wall, a seemingly insurmountable barrier between Gaza and the world, now a walkway through which Palestinians strolled into Egypt.

In the days of the Ottoman Empire, there were no borders and no walls across much of what is now the Middle East. You could travel from Baghdad to Jerusalem to Cairo to Tunis without a question asked. Then came the era of the nation state, when Arabs became Egyptian or Iraqi or Tunisian.

But the depth of desire for unity, for freedom of movement in the Arab world remains profound. And you only need cross a border in this region to understand why.

At the Salahadin Gate, the main ad-hoc crossing between Gaza and Egypt, I met a middle-aged man, wearing a suit and tie, carrying a bulky suitcase, accompanied by his wife and teenaged son. He explained calmly but urgently in fluent English that he was hoping to go to Cairo, to put his son on a plane to Morocco where he was supposed to go to a university.

I don't know if they ever made it to Cairo, since Egyptian security forces weren't letting Gazans go beyond the town of Al-'Arish, 40 kilometers west of Rafah. For them, borders are an obstacle.

Most people I spoke with were thrilled with the open borders.

“We need food and fuel and medicine, everything,” one man told me. “And the Egyptians need our business. This is how this should be. We need them; they need us.”

“We are one people in two countries,” another told me. “We should be one country.”

Not everyone was pondering lofty ideals. “I need to get to Cairo,” a Gazan who had an American passport told me. “I haven't had a beer in five years.”

Egyptians -- identifiable by their unique accents -- mixed easily with the hard-bitten, toughened Gazans, one and all caught up in a frenzy of buying and selling, at the same time reveling in the revolution.

Of course, there were moments of tension -- for example when the Egyptian border guards temporarily stopped Gazans from entering Egypt. Rocks were thrown in both directions, curses hurled with equal gusto.

But when the Egyptians relented and stepped aside again, it was all handshakes and hardy greetings, shouts of thanks to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak for allowing the border to stay open.

We even saw roses being passed to the Egyptian border guards.

And it's a reminder to Washington that its drive for a Middle East peace deal is all the more difficult without Hamas.

Washington tacitly backed the Israeli blockade on Gaza, and now that has collapsed.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

***“The President Doesn't Have
The Authority To Cancel These
Rights Unless He Sends In
Troops To Stop A Jury From
Hearing Whistleblower Cases”***

The Traitor Bush Says He Is Above The Constitution: Signs New Defense Law But He Will Pay No Attention To Parts He Personally Doesn't Like; Will Ignore Ban On Permanent U.S. Troop Deployment To Iraq And Whistleblower Rights

January 29, 2008 Elana Schor in Washington, Guardian Unlimited

George Bush has resumed his practice of disregarding portions of new laws, quietly reserving the right to build permanent military bases in Iraq, keep Congress in the dark on spying activity and block two accountability measures aimed at private security firms accused of wartime abuses.

As he signed a defence bill into law yesterday, Bush quietly added a "signing statement" that asserts his ability to ignore several parts of the measure.

The fracas over the statements started when Bush used one to open a loophole in a 2005 ban on inhumane treatment of US detainees, creating potential for torture at the Guantanamo Bay prison.

Bush's attempt this week to sidestep the permanent bases law, which aims to stop him from creating an indefinite US military presence in Iraq, may become as controversial as the signing statement sidestepping the torture ban.

Such bases are broadly unpopular with Iraqis, who have voiced fears of an ongoing US occupation, and Bush's political opponents are suspicious of the administration's intentions along similar lines.

"President Bush seems to forget that Congress is a co-equal branch of government, not a body whose decisions he can simply dismiss out of hand when he finds them inconvenient," Democratic congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, who has led the push to prevent lasting bases in Iraq, said through a spokesman.

"With this most recent signing the president is also sending a dangerous signal to the people of Iraq that the US has a long-term interest in occupying their country, a move that will only enflame the insurgency," Woolsey added.

Mark Agrast, a member of the American Bar Association's task force on signing statements, said the limit on permanent bases is the most serious of the four laws that Bush claimed freedom to nullify this week.

“On the merits, for the president to assert that Congress lacks the authority to say there shouldn't be permanent bases on foreign soil is fanciful at best,” said Agrast, also a senior fellow at the Centre for American Progress.

The other three defence provisions singled out by Bush are equally alarming to members of Congress and outside experts.

The two new programmes for security contractors gained momentum amid revelations of widespread improper and violent episodes involving employees of Blackwater as well as other private firms operating in Iraq.

Bush asserted the ability to disregard a new contracting commission created to help the US military navigate the challenge of relying on private companies to perform essential jobs. Modelled on a similar defence commission formed after World War II, the effort received unanimous support from both Democratic and Republican senators.

The Pentagon's inspector general, whose office conducts internal investigations, also endorsed the commission, telling its Democratic authors in a November meeting: “We're leaning forward in the saddle, we're committed to this.”

The president appears less committed, however. Bush said in his signing statement that the commission “could inhibit the president's ability to carry out his constitutional obligations to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, to protect national security, to supervise the executive branch and to execute his authority as commander-in-chief”.

Democratic senator Jon Tester, a long-time advocate of the commission, blasted Bush for trying to circumvent a law that was drafted to save taxpayers money.

“There's no gray area here,” Tester said. “The idea that the president would stand in the way of a non-partisan, independent committee to look into waste and fraud by companies like Blackwater and Halliburton in Iraq is inexcusable and it's irresponsible, and it ought to ruffle a lot of feathers across the country.”

Bush's statement also seeks to open a loophole in new protections for contractors who blow the whistle on fiscal or criminal abuses committed by their employers.

This legal shield against reprisals was co-written by a senior Republican, Maine senator Susan Collins. “This closes a troubling loophole in the laws that protect whistleblowers from retaliation,” Collins said in a statement celebrating congressional approval of the protections she crafted.

Despite the potential blow to whistleblower rights, at least one advocate in Washington is hardly cowed by the Bush statement.

“Bush has threatened to veto or promised not to obey every whistleblower rights law that has been proposed or adopted during his administration,” Tom Devine, legal director at the non-profit Government Accountability Project, said.

“The president doesn't have the authority to cancel these rights,” Devine added, “unless he sends in troops to stop a jury from hearing whistleblower cases”.

**TRAITOR
CRIMINAL
UNFIT FOR COMMAND;
UNWORTHY OF OBEDIENCE**



(AP Photo/APTN)

**THIS IS THE ENEMY;
BRING THE WAR HOME NOW**

**Stupid Iran Bullshit:
“However Threatening The Words Were,
They Sounded Fake”**

January 28, 2008 Editorial, Army Times

There was something about the voice: “I’m coming to you. You will explode in a few minutes.”

It came at the end of a Navy-released video showing Iranian speedboats menacing three U.S. warships in the Strait of Hormuz on Jan. 6.

The ominous voice didn't sound like it came from a speedboat skipping across the wakes of the Navy ships; missing were the sounds of wind, waves, motors and shouting. However threatening the words were, they sounded fake.

The Iranians charged the Navy with fakery and released a video of their own showing an Iranian speedboat officer trying to hail the cruiser Port Royal on the same radio frequency.

Experienced Navy ship handlers, meanwhile, said the voice likely belonged to any number of people in the region who get on the open emergency radio channel and heckle passing ships.

Bloggers and international media immediately began comparing the episode to the infamous Gulf of Tonkin incidents of 1964, in which the Navy's exaggerated and outright false accusations of North Vietnamese aggression accelerated America's involvement in the Vietnam War.

Many others used it as an excuse to rehash America's credibility problem following the invasion of Iraq.

Perhaps Navy officials were so eager to shape the message of threatening Iranians that they overplayed their hand.

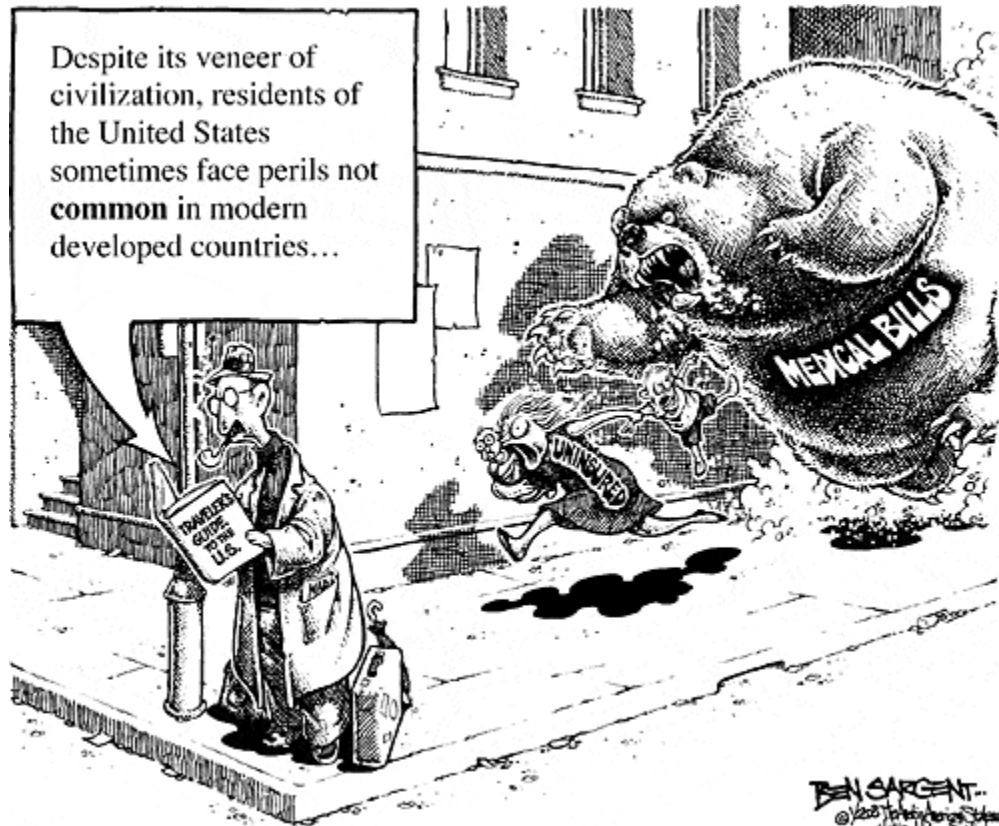
Navy officials never directly attributed that voice to the Iranians in the boats, but the clear implication of their edited video was that it had.

Tragically, they sacrificed their own credibility and wrongfully handed victory in the court of international public opinion to Iran at the expense of the United States.



LAO
ALCALANZO
©2008
DISTRIBUTED BY
AMERICAN PRESS
SYNDICATE

CLASS WAR REPORTS



1/25

GI Special www.militaryproject.org

*This is how Bush brings the troops home,
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.*



*GI Special is a near-daily news bulletin for service members
www.militaryproject.org*

“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:. Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

GI Special issues are archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org> . The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others: <http://williambowles.info/gispecial/2007/index.html>; <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=6&l=e>; http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/; <http://www.albasrah.net/pages/mod.php?header=res1&mod=gis&rep=gis>

GI Special distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. We believe this constitutes a “fair use” of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **GI Special has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is GI Special endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice.** Go to: www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond ‘fair use’, you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. “Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited.” DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.