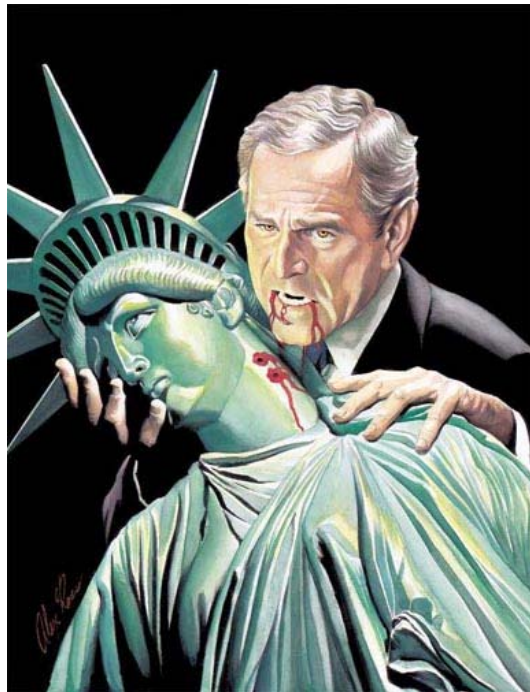


GI SPECIAL 6B14:

SATAN



The marines that I have had wounded over the past five months have been attacked by a faceless enemy. But the enemy has got a face. He's called Satan.
US Marine Colonel Gareth Brandl

**“It Didn't Make Any
Sense, We Didn't
Accomplish Anything”
“I Talked To A Lot Of Other
Soldiers Who Feel The Same
Way”**

“A Growing Number Of Active Duty Soldiers Or Recent Iraq War Veterans Are Speaking Up”

“This War Is Being Paid In American Blood, In My Soldier's Blood. And That Is Not Okay”

[Thanks to Ward Reilly & James Starowicz, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

“There is a cost to this war. This war is being paid in American blood, in my soldier's blood. And that is not okay,” Coppa said.

“We lost really good friends, really good leaders who died in Iraq. From my perspective, it didn't make any sense, we didn't accomplish anything, and I talked to a lot of other soldiers who feel the same way,” Fort Hood soldier Casey Porter said.

2/17/2008 By Chelsea Hover, Channel 8 News Austin Texas

A growing number of active duty soldiers or recent Iraq war veterans are speaking up about the war in Iraq.

And with the number of soldiers speaking up about their experiences in Iraq via online forums, blogs and pamphlets, some vets feel it's their duty to let the American public know the truth.

“The honest truth is that if the American people knew what was going on over there everyday, they would be raising their voices too. They would be saying, 'Hey, bring those guys home,' Sgt. Selena Coppa said.

Coppa blames lawmakers in Washington for filtering the facts on the war in Iraq. She said there's no real end in sight.

“There is a cost to this war. This war is being paid in American blood, in my soldier's blood. And that is not okay,” Coppa said.

“We lost really good friends, really good leaders who died in Iraq. From my perspective, it didn't make any sense, we didn't accomplish anything, and I talked to a lot of other soldiers who feel the same way,” Fort Hood soldier Casey Porter said.

He started the local branch of IVAW at Fort Hood.

Porter is spending his numbered days in the U.S. passing out pamphlets before he is redeployed this summer.

He said he feels it's his obligation to his fallen brothers to take action. Local IVAW members are trying to let other soldiers know it's okay to do the same.

"This is well within the rights that service members have, but not many soldiers know that they do have," Fort Hood soldier Ronn Cantu said.

He's also home between deployments to Iraq.

"I honestly thought I might not live through my second tour, so I thought, you know if I'm going to die anyway, I need to say the things I need to say," Cantu said.

Those things are now being said loud and clear.

Sunday, a group took part in what they call a blitz, plastering busy areas of Killeen with informational pamphlets about their mission, and soldiers' rights.

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

Iowa Soldier Killed In Iraq

February 18, 2008 KCCI

SIOUX CITY, Iowa -- Family members said Monday that a 21-year-old soldier from northwest Iowa has been killed in Iraq.

The family of Specialist Chad Groepper of Kingsley said he was shot Sunday in the Diyala province. He leaves behind a wife and 4-month-old daughter.

Dave Groepper, the soldier's father, told The Associated Press his son was an "action figure" who always wanted to be in the front line.

Chad Groepper had been serving in Iraq for nearly one year with an Army infantry unit from Fort Lewis, Washington. His father says he was scheduled to return to the United States as early as May.

He enlisted in the Army after graduating in 2004 from Kingsley-Pierson High School.

Funeral arrangements are pending.

Christopher J. West: Combat Medic From Arlington

February 8, 2008 By JOE SIMNACHER, The Dallas Morning News

Army Spec. Christopher J. West was fatally wounded late Sunday on the final combat mission of his first tour of duty in Iraq. The 26-year-old Arlington man was scheduled to return to Fort Bragg, N.C., this weekend and begin a year of noncombat duty before being redeployed to combat.

Spec. West, a combat medic, was on foot patrol Sunday in Muqdadiyah, Iraq, when he was wounded by the explosion of an improvised bomb. He died 30 to 40 minutes later, on Monday, at an Army hospital in Balad, Iraq, his family said.

Spec. West will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia on Feb. 20.

"He died doing what he loved," said his sister, Lauren West of Arlington. "It was the only thing in his life that he felt was challenging him, and he loved it. He felt like he had found his calling."

Spec. West was smart and funny, "the life of the party," his sister said. "He loved hard, he played hard, he fought hard. He loved his country. He was so proud to be an American."

Born in Dallas, Spec. West grew up in Arlington, where he attended Sam Houston High School before graduating from Bowie High School in 2000.

He received a bachelor's degree in marketing from Texas A&M University, graduating with honors in 2004.

Spec. West decided when he was 4 years old that he wanted to become the fourth generation of his family to serve in the Army, his sister said. His father, John West, was an Army Ranger and Green Beret in Vietnam.

Spec. West took considerable time to physically condition himself before joining the Army, his sister said.

He joined the Army in January 2007 and completed basic training at Fort Benning, Ga., in March 2007. He completed his training to become an Army combat medic at Fort

Sam Houston in San Antonio last July and completed jump school at Fort Benning in last August.

Spec. West was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg. He arrived in Iraq on Oct. 5.

In addition to his sister, Spec. West is survived by his parents, John and Hattie West of Arlington; and another sister, Cameron West of Houston.

Navy SEAL Killed In Iraq To Be Buried At Arlington

February 8, 2008 By STEPHANIE HEINATZ, Daily Press

Chief Petty Officer Nathan H. Hardy, a 29-year-old Virginia Beach-based Navy SEAL who was killed in Iraq Monday from small arms fire, will be buried at Arlington Memorial Cemetery Friday, Feb. 15.

A memorial service and celebration of his life will be held at a later date in his New Hampshire home town.

Hardy's family asks that in lieu of flowers, friends may donate to the "Nate Hardy Memorial Fund" through the Navy Federal Credit Union in Dam Neck, Virginia Beach.

Hardy, 29, "dreamed of becoming a Navy SEAL at a young age," according to a Navy spokesman.

Through the sports of soccer and lacrosse in high school, Hardy "developed the fierce competitiveness and team-first mentality that would later serve him so well on his road to achieving that goal."

Much like his grandfathers, also sailors, Hardy enlisted in the Navy shortly after graduating from high school.

He was accepted to Basic Underwater Demolition / SEAL training and began the rigorous course in January 1998. His entire SEAL career was with East Coast-based SEAL teams.

There are four SEAL teams at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek. Navy SEALs also have a presence at Dam Neck in Virginia Beach with the Naval Special Warfare Development Group.

Hardy was highly decorated, having earned, among other military medals, the Bronze Star, two Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals and an Iraq and Afghanistan Campaign Medal.

"In 2005, while attending the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California, Hardy married the love of his life, Mindi Buck," according to the Navy. "In 2007, Mindi gave birth

to their son, Parker Hall. He lived his dream both at work, where he served the cause of freedom against terror and fear, and at home, where he was a devoted husband and father.”

Hardy is also survived by his parents and a brother. Another brother died of brain cancer in 1993.

WELCOME TO IRAQNAM: HAVE A NICE DAY



Soldiers from the 30th Infantry Regiment patrol in Arab Jabour during Operation Coliseum south of Baghdad Jan. 26, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

“Camp Victory” Takes Casualties As U.S. Base And Green Zone Slammed By Rocket Attacks

Feb. 18, 2008 (AFP) & By JOHN AFFLECK, Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AFP) UPDATE: At least two U.S. soldiers are reported wounded.

BAGHDAD (AFP) - A barrage of mortar rounds rocked Baghdad on Monday, with some falling in a nearby US military base, causing casualties, officials and witnesses said.

“Camp Victory was struck by indirect fire,” US spokesman Navy Commander Scott Rye told AFP. “We are aware there are some casualties but damage and casualties are still being assessed.”

The blasts, which could be heard across Baghdad, prompted guards at checkpoints near the airport to take cover, an AFP correspondent said.

US military base Camp Victory is located beside the airport and is often the target of mortar and rocket attacks. [“Often”? What happened to that wildly successful surge?]

An Iraq defence ministry official said that 10 mortar rounds crashed in Baghdad's highly fortified Green Zone, which houses Iraqi government offices and foreign embassies.

Iraqi officials spent the weekend celebrating the successes of a crackdown that began on Feb. 14, 2007, and saw the eventual buildup of some 30,000 extra American troops.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

British Soldier Killed Near Kajaki, Another Wounded

18 Feb 08 Ministry of Defence

It is with deep regret that the Ministry of Defence must confirm that a soldier from the 2nd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment was killed in southern Afghanistan yesterday, Sunday 17 February 2008.

One other soldier was also injured in the incident but his injuries are not life threatening.

Just before 2100 hrs local time soldiers from the 2nd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment, as part of their Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) role, were taking part in a foot patrol with 40 Commando Royal Marines near Kajaki, Helmand Province, when they were caught in an explosion.

Medical treatment was administered at the scene and both soldiers were evacuated to Camp Bastion by emergency response helicopter. Sadly one of the soldiers was pronounced dead on arrival.

Four Canadian Soldiers Wounded Near Spin Boldak

February 18, 2008 Brian Hutchinson, Canwest News Service

An assailant crashed his explosive-laden vehicle into a small convoy of Canadian armoured vehicles travelling along a highway near the town of Spin Boldak, a few kilometres from a busy Afghanistan-Pakistan border crossing.

Four Canadian soldiers were injured in the blast, which occurred at 2:30 p.m. local time today. One was released almost immediately after his admittance to a hospital on the Kandahar Airfield. Two others were released a little bit later and the fourth was expected to be held overnight under observation.

A hub for travellers going between the two countries, Spin Boldak is only a few kilometres from a Canadian forward operating base, where soldiers regularly launch regional patrols and train Afghan security forces.

The governor of Kandahar province, Asadullah Khalid, said today that he had warned coalition forces against conducting patrols outside Spin Boldak, because Afghan forces were aware that a suicide bomber was in the area. He said he first raised the issue Sunday, and repeated the warning a number of times. But he was ignored, he claimed.

TROOP NEWS

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



Funeral services at Arlington National Cemetery for Army Sgt. John Carl Osmolski, Feb. 15, 2008. Osmolski, of Eustis, Fla. was killed earlier this month from an explosive in Muqdadiyah, Iraq. (AP Photo/Dennis Cook)

Winter Soldiers to Speak Out About Vietnam and Iraq: Iraq Veterans Against The War And VVAW New York Chapters Host Fundraiser For Upcoming Winter Soldier Event



New York, NY – Two generations of soldiers will get together on Thursday to speak out about two wars in which U.S. soldiers were ordered to do things that violated their consciences and the rules of war.

Participants will include veterans from Winter Soldier - a 1971 public investigation that revealed the criminal nature of the Vietnam War – and Winter Soldier: Iraq and Afghanistan – a similar event slated to take place next month. In addition, local musician Liah Alonso will perform a song she wrote entitled “Winter Soldier.”

Hosted by the New York chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War, Vietnam Veterans Against the War and New York Society for Ethical Culture, the gathering will be a fundraiser to cover travel costs for New York veterans attending next month's Winter Soldier – slated to take place from March 13-16 at the National Labor College just outside of Washington, D.C.

“Next month at Winter Soldier, local veterans will be joining others from across the country who will be standing up to share their experiences. Their stories will show that wrongdoings in Iraq and Afghanistan are not isolated incidents perpetrated by “bad apples” but widespread occurrences that are the direct result of bad policy,” said Jose Vasquez, president of Iraq Veterans Against the War's New York chapter. “We've heard from the politicians, we've heard from the generals, we've heard from the media – now it's our turn.”

WHAT: New York City Winter Soldier

WHO: Iraq Veterans Against the War New York Chapter, Vietnam Veterans Against the War, and New York Society for Ethical Culture

WHERE: New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 West 64th Street at Central Park West, New York. A, B, C, D trains to Columbus Circle or 1 train to 66th Street

WHEN: Thursday, February 21, 7-9 p.m.

WHY: To cover travel costs of local veterans attending Winter Soldier in DC in March

Iraq Veterans Against the War was founded in 2004 to give those who have served in the military since September 11, 2001 a way to come together and speak out against an unjust, illegal and unwinnable war. Today, IVAW has over 700 members in 49 states, Washington, D.C. and Canada and on military bases overseas.

CONTACT:

IVAW NYC Office, 212-982-4641, nyc@ivaw.org

National: Emilie Surrusco, 202-253-7298, emilie@ivaw.org

Your Military Records Being Inspected By FBI & Homeland Security Rats; Veteran Accused Of Having A “Criminal Record” For Once Getting An Article 15

[Thanks to Paul G, who sent this in. He writes: Here's something Vets should think about.]

January 31, 2008 Wayne Madsen Report

WMR has learned from veteran sources that the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) bureau and the FBI is being granted access to military personnel records and culling non-judicial punishment files to establish criminal records.

Non-judicial punishment results from what are known as Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) Article 15 investigations.

Non-judicial punishment is not considered criminal under military law and punishments range from extra duty to loss of pay.

However, a recent incident on the U.S.-Canadian border north of Seattle indicates that the Department of Defense is sharing Article 15 records from personnel files of current, former, and retired members of the armed forces with both ICE and the FBI.

A former enlisted member of the California National Guard, Arabic linguist possessing a Top Secret/Special Background Investigation (SBI) clearance, and US Army officer was recently stopped by a Canadian immigration agent while driving 20 minutes from south of the border in Washington state to Vancouver international airport to drop off friends for a flight.

The driver and his three passengers were informed they had to undergo a search. After presenting their identification to the Canadian border agent, the driver was asked by the agent if he had ever been arrested.

His answer was “no.”

The agent became angry and replied that lying to an agent could result in being barred from Canada for a long time.

As it turned out the Canadian agent said that their files, which are shared by ICE, contained an FBI criminal record file number.

The file indicated the driver had been arrested for marijuana in 1989. The driver insisted he had never been arrested.

However, the veteran had failed a urinalysis test while in the National Guard and an Article 15 hearing resulted in non-criminal punishment of 15 days extra duty.

It was later discovered that state of Washington files contained no criminal information on the veteran.

It is noteworthy that the individual in question is an active member of a veterans' anti-war movement.

Brass to GIs: You Aren't Heroes

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in with the headline.]

Feb 2, 2008 By Dan Ephron, NEWSWEEK [Excerpts]

Rafael Peralta's heroism in Iraq is apparent to anyone who hears about his story.

A 25-year-old Marine sergeant, Peralta volunteered for a mission to clear insurgents from a neighborhood in Fallujah in November 2004. He charged into several homes,

leading a squad of eight men. In the fifth home, gunmen ambushed the Marines, shooting Sergeant Peralta in the face and neck.

Cpl. Robert Reynolds, who fought alongside Peralta and took a bullet in the arm, says he saw Peralta melt onto the floor and lie in a pool of blood. Then Reynolds spotted what is the dread of every infantryman: a grenade bouncing toward the squad. "It was yellow and it came from a room to our side," he says. Reynolds says he watched Peralta reach out and drag the grenade under his body. Peralta died in the explosion; others in the room sustained only light wounds.

Last month, more than three years after that battle in Fallujah, the Department of Defense told Peralta's mother it had recommended that her son posthumously be given the Medal of Honor, the military's highest award for valor. It now awaits the president's approval.

Rosa Peralta says it is an apt tribute to her son, who wanted to be a Marine since he moved to San Diego from Mexico at 15 and signed up the day he got permanent residency in the United States.

But his case underscores how cautious the military has been about honoring service in Iraq.

Only two other Iraq vets have received the Medal of Honor, compared with 245 GIs who fought in Vietnam and 464 in World War II.

Lesser medals have also been in short supply. Pentagon officials say the disparity has to do with the nature of combat in Iraq: less face-to-face fighting and fewer occasions for valor.

Iraq veterans point to the battles of 2004 and 2005 in Fallujah, Ramadi and elsewhere as examples of fighting that were as fierce as it gets in war.

Even in defensive situations, says David Bellavia, a retired Army staff sergeant who spent more than a year in Iraq, examples abound of troops risking their lives to save their buddies.

At least five GIs have died jumping on grenades, the most iconic act of valor in warfare.

"So many of our guys are worthy and they've been completely ignored," he tells NEWSWEEK.

Bellavia attributes the dearth of medals — and the slow process of approving them — to bureaucratic clumsiness at the Pentagon and to a lack of transparency in the awards process.

"What's unfortunate is that those who survive have to then politic for their award," he says.

He says his Pentagon contacts told him Peralta's Medal of Honor had been delayed because pathologists questioned whether he could have scooped up the grenade given the severity of his gunshot wounds.

The three-year wait has made closure difficult for the Peraltas.

Rosa Peralta, who speaks only Spanish, says she came to terms long ago with the fact that the award would not bring back her son. Instead she focuses on what would have been Sergeant Peralta's likely response. "He would jump for joy knowing that he was honored for saving other people," she says through a translator.

'Above and Beyond'

The government has bestowed more than 3,400 members of the military with the Medal of Honor; 18 percent of the recipients got the award posthumously.

Top Honors:

The Medal of Honor, first given during the Civil War, recognizes 'gallantry and intrepidity ... above and beyond the call of duty.' It is the highest military decoration that the U.S. government awards those who serve.

Number of Medals Awarded

World War I: 124

World War II: 464

Korean War: 131

Vietnam War: 245

GWOT: 3

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action

02/17/08 By SINAN SALAHEDDIN, Associated Press & (KUNA) & Feb. 18 (Xinhua) & Reuters

In the northern city of Mosul, a bomb in a parked car detonated, killing a police officer. The slain policeman was examining the car, which was parked in the eastern section of Mosul, 225 miles north of Baghdad, when it was exploded remotely, a police officer said.

An improvised vehicle exploded when it was parked near a police patrol in Ninawa, an Iraqi security source said on Sunday. The source who asked not to be identified said among those killed and injured were policemen who were on their way to inspect the parked vehicle.

Maj. Nahi Khalaf Ahmad was killed when a roadside bomb detonated before noon outside his house in central the capital city of Tikrit, 170 km north of Baghdad, a provincial police source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. Three of his guards were also wounded by the blast.

Insurgents killed three neighbourhood patrol policemen and wounded three others in an attack targeting their base in the town of Kan Bani Saad, 35 km (20 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Good Words Received

From: SSGT N [ret'd]
To: GI Special
Sent: February 18, 2008
Subject: Re: Parrots

I noticed that 4 of 9 gender identifiable authors or contributors in [GI Special] 6B8 were women.

I always believed that if we reached critical mass, say 40%, it would permanently change the military.

The women wouldn't put up with Bushit.

The palm grove pix reminded me of Central America.

At first light I always went down the hill from the kitchen to the latrines. I had to go. Nothing stopped me.

The nature call wasn't mine, however, it was the green parrots, hundreds of them, discussing the dawn amongst themselves while flitting and flying their way through the trees towards mists on the river.

If I could hold that thought in my head, the day would be good.

I'm not saying things weren't capable of going down, and for many reasons.

But if I could keep that peace aura about myself, I probably would get to see the parrots again.

Funny, they didn't reverse the process at dusk.

I know.

I always watched for them.

February 19, 1942: A Day That Will Live In Infamy



Japanese American residents board the bus for Camp Harmony, 1942

Carl Bunin Peace History Peace History February 18-24

Executive Order 9066 was signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt 10 weeks after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, ordering all Japanese Americans (Nisei) evacuated from the West Coast of the U.S. and forcing them to live in concentration camps.

The document authorized the Secretary of War and military commanders “to prescribe military areas...from which any or all persons may be excluded.”

There was strong support from California Attorney General Earl Warren (later U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice), liberal journalist Walter Lippmann and Time magazine—which referred to California as “Japan’s Sudetenland”

112,000 citizens of Japanese ancestry were relocated, losing their businesses, homes, and belongings to whites.

In the entire course of the war, 10 people were convicted of spying for Japan, all of whom were Caucasian.

Ben Franklin Had It Right:

He Rejected The Eagle As A Symbol For The United States: “He Is A Bird Of Bad Moral Character” ‘Like Those Among Men Who Live By Sharping & Robbing” “A Rank Coward”



[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier & Military Project, who sent this in.]

greatseal.com

Writing from France on January 26, 1784 to his daughter Sally (Mrs. Sarah Bache) in Philadelphia, Franklin casts doubt on the propriety of using the Bald Eagle to symbolize the “brave and honest Cincinnati of America,” a newly formed society of revolutionary war officers.

Franklin’s Letter To His Daughter (Excerpt)

“For my own part I wish the Bald Eagle had not been chosen the Representative of our Country.

“He is a Bird of bad moral Character.

“He does not get his Living honestly.

“You may have seen him perched on some dead Tree near the River, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the Labour of the Fishing Hawk; and when that diligent Bird has at length taken a Fish, and is bearing it to his Nest for the Support of his Mate and young Ones, the Bald Eagle pursues him and takes it from him.

“With all this Injustice, he is never in good Case but like those among Men who live by Sharping & Robbing he is generally poor and often very lousy.

“Besides he is a rank Coward: The little King Bird not bigger than a Sparrow attacks him boldly and drives him out of the District.

“He is therefore by no means a proper Emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America who have driven all the King birds from our Country . . .

“I am on this account not displeased that the Figure is not known as a Bald Eagle, but looks more like a Turkey. For the Truth the Turkey is in Comparison a much more respectable Bird, and withal a true original Native of America . . . “He is besides, though a little vain & silly, a Bird of Courage, and would not hesitate to attack a Grenadier of the British Guards who should presume to invade his Farm Yard with a red Coat on.”

OCCUPATION REPORT

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



A resident holds the bloodstained clothes of his mother inside a house after a raid by foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. in Baghdad's Sadr City February 7, 2008. Police said three people, including a woman and a child, were killed in the clashes and 16 detained. REUTERS PHOTO

[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!**

“Mounting Death Toll Among Civilian Contractors Sparking New Criticism Of The War”

“The Bush Administration Recently Has Expanded The Number Of Contractors Working In Iraq”

[Thanks to SSGT N [ret'd] who sent this in.]

Feb. 9, 2008 By DAVID IVANOVICH, Houston Chronicle Washington Bureau [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON — The number of civilian contractors reported killed in Iraq jumped 17 percent in 2007 and accounted for more than one in four deaths associated with the U.S. occupation last year.

In a year when President Bush sent 30,000 additional troops into Iraq in what's been called the “surge,” at least 353 civilian contractors working for the U.S. government were killed, up from 301 in 2006, Labor Department records show.

“Incredible,” replied Steven Schooner, a law professor and associate dean at the George Washington University Law School, when told of the contractor death toll.

Military planners didn't anticipate contractors would represent such a high percentage of fatalities when they were privatizing functions once performed by uniformed personnel, said Schooner, an expert in federal procurement law and military contracting issues.

Yet these contractor casualties go largely unmentioned by the Pentagon and unnoticed by the American public.

From the start of the war in March 2003 through Dec. 31 — the latest figures available — 1,123 civilian contractors are known to have died in Iraq, according to the U.S. Labor Department.

The mounting death toll among civilian contractors — while a fraction of the tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians caught in the violence — is sparking new criticism of the war.

“Civilians are being put on the front line and in the middle of battle,” said T. Scott Allen, a Houston attorney representing former KBR workers injured in Iraq and survivors of workers killed.

KBR has more than 54,000 workers in Iraq serving up food, washing clothes, delivering mail and providing a host of other logistical support services for the Pentagon.

The Bush administration recently has expanded the number of contractors working in Iraq, while at the same time preparing to reduce the number of troops there.

Neither the Pentagon nor the Labor Department would comment on why civilian contractor deaths rose so much in 2007 — indeed, at a faster rate than military fatalities.

The number of contractors working in Iraq has been on the rise, up 13 percent from the third quarter of 2007.

The Labor Department’s figures only provide a rough estimate of the number of civilian contractors killed in Iraq.

They actually record the number of insurance claims filed with the Labor Department’s Division of Longshore and Harbor Workers Compensation. Workers whose families or employers do not seek compensation are not counted.

“How can it be that the only official count of dead and wounded contractors in Iraq comes from the Labor Department rather than the Defense Department?” law professor Schooner wonders.

“I Cannot Walk By Myself In Tikrit. I Might Be Killed Or Kidnapped,” Said Brigadier-General Muaid Al-Tikriti

Feb 18 By Sabah al-Bazi (Reuters) [Excerpts]

In the cities of Samarra, Baquba and Mosul, the militants still sow fear.

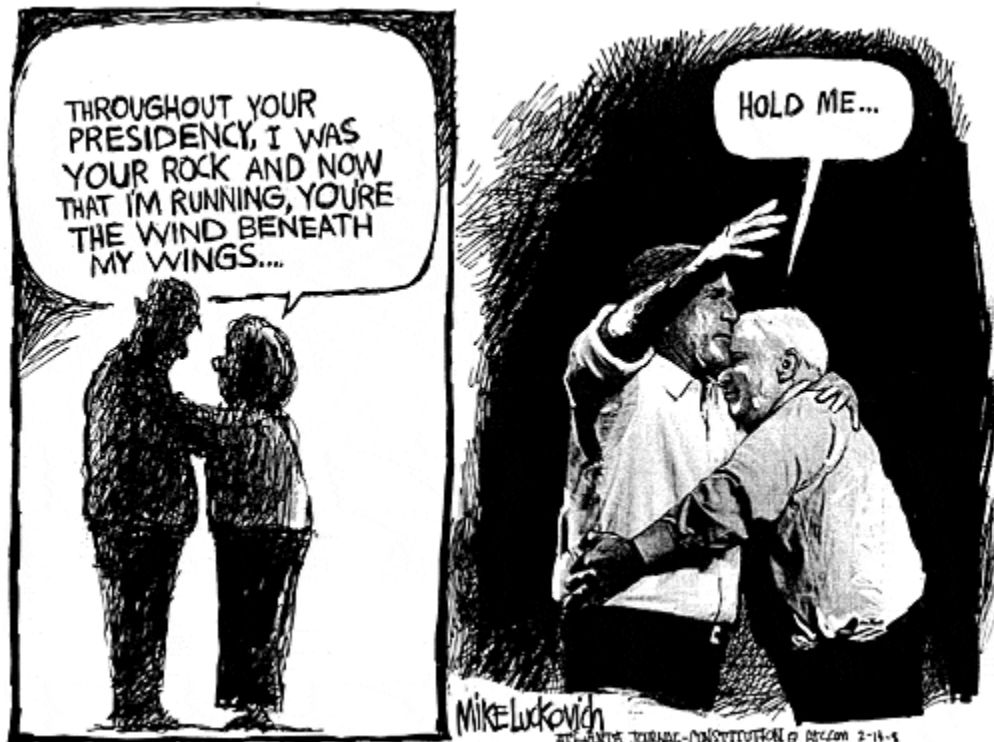
Said grocer Nihad Hameed in [Samarra], 100 km (62 miles) north of Baghdad, "We come back home at 7 p.m. like chickens. No one can move after that."

"Everything in Baquba stops the minute it gets dark," Nada Amaar, a doctor, said from the capital of ethnically and religiously mixed Diyala province.

Iraqi military and provincial officials in northern provinces acknowledge the concerns of residents. Some have those fears themselves, although they say security is better.

"I cannot walk by myself in Tikrit. I might be killed or kidnapped," said Brigadier-General Muaid al-Tikriti, the Iraqi army chief in Saddam Hussein's home town in Salahuddin province.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Bush Vs. Obama Demystified

From: Karl Marx, by Boris Nicolaievsky & Otto Maenchen-Helfen; Philadelphia, J.B. Lippincott Company, 1936

THE whole of the politics of an absolute state are embodied in the person of the reigning monarch.

The more flagrantly his policy contradicts the interests of the classes excluded from government, the more conscious they are of their impotence to break their ruler's power, the more longingly they direct their gaze towards the heir to the throne.

Upon him they rely for the fulfillment of all their hopes.

With him, or so they whisper to themselves, the great new era will begin.

The greater their expectations, the more bitter their disappointment when the new régime turns out to be nothing but a bare sequel of the old.

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.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT THE NEW TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces.

Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>

And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

The Preacher's Son

[Thanks to RS, who sent this in.]

An old country preacher had a teenage son, and it was getting time the boy should give some thought to choosing a profession.

Like many young men, the boy didn't really know what he wanted to do, and he didn't seem too concerned about it.

One day, while the boy was away at school, his father decided to try an experiment. He went into the boy's room and placed on his study table four objects:

a Bible,
a silver dollar,
a bottle of whisky
and a Playboy magazine

'I'll just hide behind the door', the old preacher said to himself, 'When he comes home from school this afternoon, I'll see which object he picks up.'

If it's the Bible, he's going to be a preacher like me and what a blessing that would be!

If he picks up the dollar, he's going to be a businessman, and that would be okay, too.

But if he picks up the bottle, he's going to be a no-good drunkard, and, Lord, what a shame that would be.

And worst of all, if he picks up that magazine he's gonna be a skirt-chasing bum.'

The old man waited anxiously, and soon heard his son's footsteps as he entered the house whistling and headed for his room. The boy tossed his books on the bed, and as he turned to leave the room he spotted the objects on the table.

With curiosity in his eye, he walked over to inspect them.

Finally, he picked up the Bible and placed it under his arm.

He picked up the silver dollar and dropped it into his pocket.

He uncorked the bottle and took a big drink while he admired this month's centerfold.

'Lord have mercy', the old preacher disgustedly whispered, 'He's gonna run for Congress!'

CLASS WAR REPORTS

***Welcome To The Occupied USA:
New Orleans Police Arrested
Homeless Katrina Survivors For
Breaking A Law That Was
Repealed 7 Years Ago;
Vicious Piece Of Shit Running
“Charity” Shelter Whines That They
“Survive While Living By Their Own
Rules”
Worker Says Life At The Claiborne
Overpass Is “Disgusting And
Depressing,” But At Least She Has Her
Freedom***



Debra Reed has lived under Interstate 10 on the Claiborne Avenue median for nine months. Last week she landed a job. (Photo by Frank Aymami)

Unable to arrest the homeless on public habitation offenses, Mitchell said the police will use more traditional charges such as trespassing, public drunkenness and obstructing the sidewalk.

February 18, 2008 by Richard A. Webster, New Orleans Publishing Group [Excerpts]

Debra Reed, 54, used to rent a house in the Seventh Ward for \$375 a month while earning \$10 an hour at a drycleaner. She took home \$400 a week, more than enough to pay her rent with enough left over to live comfortably.

And then Hurricane Katrina took it all away.

The storm destroyed Reed's home and workplace. She spent four days on the roof of her house before being evacuated to Houston.

The native New Orleanian came home nine months ago to a city where homes that once rented for \$375 are now going for \$800.

With no job, no place to stay and no assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Reed became one of the city's estimated 12,000 homeless.

She is now living in a tent under the Interstate 10 overpass at Claiborne Avenue and Canal Street along with another 200 people.

Reed may soon be uprooted once again.

Mayor C. Ray Nagin has said it may be time to "push the issue" and move the hundreds of homeless people camped out under the Claiborne overpass to shelters by enforcing the city's "habitation laws."

There's one problem with Nagin's plan: In 2001 the New Orleans City Council unanimously repealed the public habitation ordinance that made it illegal for the homeless to sleep or live on public property.

The confusion may be a result of the Municipal Code Corp.'s failure to remove the ordinance after the 2001 repeal, said Judson Mitchell, staff attorney with the Loyola Law Clinic.

"People looking through the ordinance book today can see it and have no way of knowing the law doesn't exist," Mitchell said.

"People are still being arrested on it because the code has never been updated."

Unable to arrest the homeless on public habitation offenses, Mitchell said the police will use more traditional charges such as trespassing, public drunkenness and obstructing the sidewalk.

But these laws can't be used for a wholesale sweep of the Claiborne Avenue encampment.

There is no money left to assist people living under the Claiborne overpass and there are no plans to release additional funds.

The New Orleans Mission requires everyone to vacate its premises by 7 a.m. That means the residents without a job have no place to go until they can check back in at 5:30 p.m.

The people living under the bridge, however, are used to coming and going as they please while always having a permanent shelter, Miller said. Many have accumulated possessions and some even have dogs, which they would be forced to give up if they checked into the Mission.

Linda Gonzales, Mission assistant director, is unapologetic about its rules.

“We all live under laws and they have to live by those laws, especially when they’re not paying anything to be fed and showered,” Gonzales said.

Part of the problem at the Claiborne encampment is most basic needs of the homeless are being taken care of by well-meaning people who bring them clothes, blankets, breakfast, lunch and dinner on a daily basis, Gonzales said.

This allows them to survive while living by their own rules.

And despite the belief most of the homeless are lazy, addicted to drugs or mentally ill, [Biaggio] Giovanni said the doubling in homelessness following the storm from 6,000 to 12,000 is mainly due to renters like Reed who lost their apartments and are desperate for help.

Last week she landed a job at the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now earning \$9 an hour for 30 hours a week. She’s excited to be working again but fears it could take more than nine months to save enough money to afford an apartment post-Katrina.

“How do they expect people to survive?” Reed asked. “A lot of people here want to work. I want my own place but none of us who grew up here can afford to live in New Orleans no more.”

Reed said she has few options and will remain in her tent under the bridge.

She knows there are beds available at the New Orleans Mission’s shelter for women but as a 54-year-old woman who has never before been homeless, she finds it difficult to live under someone else’s rules.

Life at the Claiborne overpass is “disgusting and depressing,” she said, but at least she has her freedom

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 to contact@militaryproject.org:. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential. Same to unsubscribe.

RECEIVED

Urgent Appeal For Interviews With Troops Who Participated In Resistance Movement During Vietnam War

From: Marcus Karl Adams
To: GI Special
Sent: February 18, 2008
Subject: Thesis Assistance

My thesis is titled “The War Within: The Soldiers Resistance Movement during the Vietnam Era,” with a Feb. 29 deadline.

I need to interview some primary sources and I’d appreciate your help in putting me in touch with some veterans who were a part for an email interview.

The basic guidelines I’d like addressed regarding their participation in the Soldiers Resistance Movement is: I’d like their name, rank, duty station, time of duty, military specialty, and whether drafted or not.

While the disclosure of their race is optional, I’d like to know why they became political and what affect the movement experience has had in their civilian life.

Any sources and information used will be properly cited in the thesis. I’ll also need contact information for whoever participates for verification which will not be published. I shouldn’t have to say it, but there is no compensation for their participation.

However, if my thesis is accepted, this may help in the current resistance and the participants will be forever included in a body of scholarship that (hopefully) will be available online through my library later this year.

Any assistance you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

Those with questions can reach me via email or at the address below.

In Solidarity,
Marcus

Until lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunters - African proverb

Marcus K. Adams, Library Assistant III
120 Halle Library
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, MI 48197-2207

734.487.0020 ext. 2145

734.487.8861 (fax)



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