

GI SPECIAL 6D6:

“Normalcy is returning back to Iraq.”

George W. Bush: 3.27.08



Nationalist, anti-Occupation Mehdi army fighters take position in Baghdad's Sadr City
March 29, 2008. REUTERS/Kareem Raheem

**“Weren’t You Just Here
Dick?”**

**“Didn’t You Rouse A Couple
Thousand Soldiers Out Of Bed 2
Hours Early Just To Be
Voluntold To Go Listen To You
Blow Smoke Up Our Asses?”**

“I Wish That Everyone Booing Yourself And Your Butt Buddy Would Have Made The News”



By Bryan Allen Hannah [Iraq Veterans Against the War]

Branch of service: United States Army (USA)

Unit: 1st Cav

Rank: SPC

Home: Munising, Michigan

Served in: Fort Hood, Kuwait, Iraq.

Wednesday, March 26, 2008 Posted by Soldier Interrupted: www.hoodgi.blogspot.com

So I woke up today, groggy from the Vicodin and I had cottonmouth, so I went and brushed my teeth. As I wiped the sleep from my eyes and sat down to my trusty dusty laptop, I saw a little something that interested me.

After I watched the video of the waterskiing squirrel, what do I see, but Dick Cheney.

Weren't you just here Dick?

Didn't you rouse a couple thousand soldiers out of bed 2 hours early just to be voluntold to go listen to you blow smoke up our asses?

I wish that everyone booing yourself and your butt buddy would have made the news.

I wish the 2 high stacked connexes (shipping containers) had made the news, or the soldiers that got kicked out of the barracks adjacent to Cooper Field.

How would Americans react (people, not soldiers) if you kicked them out of their homes?

Fort Hood should be the safest place in the world to you.

We're your soldiers right?

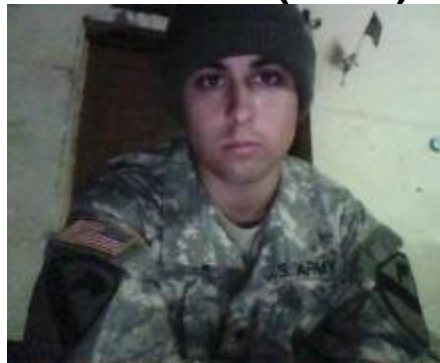
Aren't we?

Anyways I'm getting off track.

When told that "over 2/3 of Americans say it's not worth fighting." in reference to the war in Iraq. His response was "So?" followed by a direct slap in the face to 300,000,000 people "You cannot be "blown off course" by the fluctuations of the public opinion polls" and went on to say that we're making progress in Iraq.

Maybe I should translate. "No, You cannot be blown off course, because I like the fluctuations in my bank account."

Help! I've Fallen And Can't Get Out! Enter: Me (intro)



Monday, March 24, 2008 Posted by Soldier Interrupted: www.hoodgi.blogspot.com

I am an American Soldier who has great plans of flying and going to college, maybe living a normal life one of these days (before I'm fucking 30), but all of my plans have been put on hold due to a little thing called stop-loss.

Stop-loss is the military denying a soldier the termination of his contract at the original agreed upon date. Stop-loss was created by congress after the Viet nam war. Title 10, United States Code, section 12305(a)* states, "the President may suspend any provision of law relating to promotion, retirement, or separation applicable to any member of the armed forces who the President determines is essential to the national security of the United States"

Contractually, soldiers agree to stop loss.

In your contract it looks like so: "In the event of war, my enlistment in the Armed Forces continues until six (6) months after the war ends, unless the enlistment is ended sooner by the President of the United States."

Many recruiters, mine included, will point this out, just to write it off as BS.

My recruiter, Sergeant Ryan Simms, from the recruiting station in Crawfordsville, IN as well as the people at the Military Entrance and Processing Station (MEPS) in Indianapolis, IN all told me that this never happens.

They likened it to a draft, to be used only in cases of extreme emergency.

This is excluding the fact that this oversight often occurs when young, often poor, people are dazzled, by a \$20,000-\$40,000 bonus. What would you do?

I will have to go to Iraq one more time for what is projected to be 12 months. The last time they told me that it was 15 months.

I am tired of this war.

I never agreed with it, but I need the money for college as I was never raised in a "well-off" family.

I also love the Army and what it is supposed to stand for when it isn't being used as a corporate puppet. In this blog I will cover past, present, and future highlights in both my personal life and the "war on terrorism".

I am an active member of Iraq Veterans Against the War.

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. Phone: 917.677.8057

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Baghdad IED Kills U.S. Airman

April 3, 2008 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080403-11

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division – Baghdad Airman was killed at approximately noon in an improvised explosive device attack in central Baghdad April 3.

The Airman was on a patrol, when the IED attack occurred.

Palmdale Man Dies In Iraq

03/27/2008 By Patricia Farrell Aidem, Staff Writer, Los Angeles Daily News

An Army private from Palmdale was among four soldiers killed this week in Iraq in an explosion that brought to 4,000 the tally of U.S. servicemen and -women who have died in the Iraq war.

Pvt. George Delgado, 21, died Monday from wounds suffered when his vehicle hit an improvised explosive device the day before - Easter Sunday.

"He was a very fun, outgoing, lovable, excited-about-life person," said Palmdale resident Alysse Pernula, 20, who met Delgado at Desert Christian High School. "He always had a smile."

She said he had talked about going into the military and was excited about the prospect.

Since he was sent to Iraq, the friends had talked online through the MySpace and Facebook Web sites. They last chatted a couple of weeks ago, Pernula said. "I'm really just praying for his family," she said.

In a statement issued Thursday, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger called Delgado a "true patriot" and ordered Capitol flags to be flown today at half-staff.

Assemblywoman Sharon Runner, R-Lancaster, and her husband, state Sen. George Runner, also a Lancaster Republican, are the founders of Desert Christian Schools.

"Our prayers go out to the family of Pvt. Delgado during this difficult time," Sharon Runner said in a statement. "The Antelope Valley lost a great American - a true patriot and protector of our freedom." Also today, students at Desert Christian will remember Delgado at a morning assembly.

Delgado joined the Army in May 2007 and was assigned in September to Fort Stewart in Georgia.

Delgado attended Palmdale High School, then transferred to Desert Christian for his senior year, graduating in 2004.

"He was a pretty quiet young man that just had a great zest for life," said Devin Thomas, Desert Christian dean of students. "Once you got to know him, he was a funny young man, a delight to be around."

The two had formed a friendship and Delgado visited after his graduation with thoughts of becoming a teacher, Thomas said. "Sometimes you get kids in and you kind of develop a bond," Thomas said. "When we got the news today, it floored us."

Principal Beth Elder spoke with Delgado's mother, who called with the news her son had died.

"She called us, which was very sweet. I don't think I could have done this. She said they're OK, but it's very hard," Elder said.

U.S. Command Orders Up Slaughter Of More "Suspected" Iraqis [Only 20 Million To Go]



Iraqis grieve by the rubble of a Basra home destroyed by a U.S. airstrike Thursday.
Nabil Al-Jurani/ AP

4.3.08 MSNBC News Services & (Reuters)

U.S. forces called in helicopter strikes during a clash with suspected al-Sadr insurgents on Thursday in the city of Hilla and bombed a house in Basra overnight, after days of relative calm that followed a truce announced on Sunday.

Police sources in the Shiite city of Hilla said five people were killed in Thursday's predawn clash and helicopter strike, including four policemen.

The military said that in Basra a U.S. fighter jet destroyed a house, killing two suspected militants after American and Iraqi ground forces came under fire.

Police sources said at least three people had died, including a mother, father and son, and three were seriously wounded.

Reuters television pictures showed a woman's body in the rubble and rescue workers searching for more dead. Police sources said at least three people had died including a mother, father and son, and three were seriously wounded.

[WTF IS THIS?]

“The Roadside Bomb And The Wounded Woman Had Been Taken Away By The Crowd”

April 3, 2008 The Associated Press

BAGHDAD: U.S. soldiers accidentally shot and killed an Iraqi woman while targeting a man planting a roadside bomb in Baghdad, the military said Thursday.

The soldiers were on a foot patrol Wednesday in northeastern Baghdad when they fired three rounds at the suspect, killing him, according to a statement. The troops then opened fire on another man trying to remove the roadside bomb from the site as a crowd gathered.

The military said the man was wounded along with one of two local women he was using as shield against the soldiers. "After the engagement, the woman died of her wounds," the military said.

It also said the roadside bomb and the wounded woman had been taken away by the crowd when the U.S. patrol approached the site of the incident.

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. Phone: 917.677.8057

The Stupidest Iraq Combat Advice Of 2008, So Far

Comment: T

This is from a long news report about National Guard troops from Ohio and Texas training for Iraq at Ft. Hood. They got people pretending to be Iraqis, yellow smoke pretending to be IED explosions, and on and on.

And they got Captain Pedro Casiano, giving them encouraging news about Iraq. Just in case, you know, they've got worries.

Here it is, from the Columbus [Ohio] Dispatch, March 23, 2008:

"Not everyone in Iraq is our enemy," Casiano says as the Humvees rattle along.

"We're not alone there. There is Iraqi police and Iraqi army.. We have to work with them."

Terrific.

But photos are ten thousand words, as the saying goes.

Here, so Capt. Casiano can copy and hand them out, are two photos of "Iraqi police and Iraqi army" at work, along with an article discussing their combat effectiveness.

And his troops will definitely not be alone.

Not for one second.

Iraqi Police Defect And Join Anti-U.S. Occupation Mahdi Army Insurgents



Sheik Salman al-Feraiji, right, anti-occupation nationalist Muqtada al-Sadr's chief representative in Sadr City, takes weapons from a group of Iraqi policemen in Sadr City, Baghdad March 29, 2008. Policemen in Sadr City handed over their weapons Saturday. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

Iraqi Police And Soldiers Defect And Join Anti-U.S. Occupation Mahdi Army Insurgents



Members of the Iraqi army and police hold copies of the Koran as they sit in the office of anti-Occupation nationalist Moqtada al-Sadr in Baghdad's Sadr City. A group of Iraqi police and soldiers surrendered themselves and their weapons March 29, 2008, a Reuters photographer said, and swore loyalty to al-Sadr. REUTERS/Kareem Raheem

MORE:

More Than 1,000 in Iraq's Forces Quit Fight Against Insurgents: "The Group Included Dozens Of Officers, Including At Least Two Senior Field Commanders In The Battle"

Maliki Move To Buy Southern Iraq Support Infuriates U.S. Allied “Awakening Councils”

April 4, 2008 By STEPHEN FARRELL and JAMES GLANZ, New York Times [Excerpts]

More than 1,000 Iraqi soldiers and policemen either refused to fight or simply abandoned their posts during the inconclusive assault against Shiite militias in Basra last week, a senior Iraqi government official said Thursday.

Iraqi military officials said the group included dozens of officers, including at least two senior field commanders in the battle.

Estimates by Iraqi military officials of the number of officers who refused to fight during the Basra operation varied from several dozen to more than 100.

But three officials said that among those who had been relieved of duty for refusing to fight were Col. Rahim Jabbar and Lt. Col. Shakir Khalaf, the commander and deputy commander of an entire brigade affiliated with the Interior Ministry.

Asked why he believed Colonel Khalaf did not fight, the official said that the colonel did not believe the Iraqi security forces would be able to protect him against threats to his life that he had received for his involvement in the assault.

“If he fights today, he might be killed later,” the official said.

But most of the deserters were not officers.

The American military official said, “From what we understand, the bulk of these were from fairly fresh troops who had only just gotten out of basic training and were probably pushed into the fight too soon.”

“There were obviously others who elected to not fight their fellow Shia,” the official said, but added that the coalition did not see the failures as a “major issue,” especially if the Iraqi government dealt firmly with them. **[In your fucking dreams.]**

On Sunday, Mr. Sadr gave the prime minister a somewhat face-saving way out of the Basra fight by ordering the Mahdi fighters to lay down their weapons after days in which government forces had made no headway.

Mr. Sadr simultaneously made a series of demands, which senior Iraqi politicians involved in the talks said they believed that Mr. Maliki had agreed to in advance.

But the prime minister has since denied any involvement in the talks, and government raids on Mahdi Army units — something Mr. Sadr had said must stop — have if anything become more frequent in Basra and Baghdad.

Accordingly, Mr. Sadr's latest statement began by quoting a section of the Koran promising doom to those who make promises and then break them.

He then complained bitterly that his followers were being unjustly suppressed and arrested, and warned that nothing would force them to completely withdraw. But he did not explicitly call for new fighting.

American support for Iraqi government forces has also continued, and on Thursday the American military said it had carried out two airstrikes on Wednesday in Basra, one "to destroy an enemy structure housing a sniper engaging Iraqi security forces in Basra" and another to destroy a machine gun nest.

Two southern tribal sheiks said that by providing recruits for the security forces, they were expressing support for the government.

But the sheiks made clear that the promise of good-paying jobs for the largely unemployed young men in their tribes had also been a powerful inducement.

Mr. Maliki said that the tribal recruits would be carefully vetted.

But that was not enough to satisfy some Sunnis farther north who have been waiting for months to see comparable numbers of their tribesmen accepted into the government security forces.

Tens of thousands of these Sunnis, including many former insurgents, are working alongside Iraqi and American troops in a so-called tribal awakening movement — clearly a model for the tribal outreach in Basra.

"Recruiting large number of young people in Basra to fight the JAM proves once again that the government of Nuri al-Maliki is a sectarian government, a double-standard one that favors one sect at the expense of other sects," said Abu Othman, a senior member of Fadhil Awakening Council, referring to the Mahdi Army by its Arabic acronym.

Abu Othman said four months ago he had presented 100 Sunni names for enrollment in the Iraqi police and had received no reply.

"The Maliki government wants security forces that are controlled, manipulated and moved by them," he said.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Winning Hearts And Minds, As Usual

Apr 1 (AFP)

In Kandahar province an air strike killed three men late Monday that the alliance force said were insurgents laying mines, but a government official said they were farmers watering their crops.

TROOP NEWS

BEEN ON THE JOB TOO LONG: COME ON HOME, NOW



U.S. soldiers patrol at their new outpost, Carver, that is being built in Salman Pak, south of Baghdad, February 16, 2008. (Mahmoud Raouf Mahmoud/Reuters)

4000 From 1st Armored Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse

April 07, 2008 Army Times

Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, received a send-off on March 27 in Baumholder, Germany, as they prepared for the brigade's third deployment to Iraq.

About 4,000 soldiers are affected by the deployment.

The Iron Brigade first deployed to Iraq in 2003 and 2004. The brigade, along with the division, was extended for three months when violence erupted in Baghdad, earning a Presidential Unit Citation for its 15 months of combat action.

The brigade deployed to the region again in November 2005 for 12 months, serving as the Central Command theater reserve force in Kuwait.

500 From 14th Combat Engineer Battalion Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse

April 07, 2008 Army Times

Almost 500 soldiers from the 14th Combat Engineer Battalion at Fort Lewis, Wash., will deploy to Iraq later this spring. A send-off for the soldiers was held on March 27 at Fort Lewis.

Their mission in Iraq will be to search for and destroy improvised explosive devices, repair roads and do general construction.

This is the battalion's third deployment to Iraq.

Its first tour was in November 2005, and its second tour began in August 2006.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action

April 3 (KUNA) & Reuters

In a car bomb explosion in Al-Haretheyah town, near a security checkpoint in western Baghdad, victims of the blast included three from Iraqi police, and another six were injured and taken to Al-Yarmouk Hospital.(

A road side bomb struck a police patrol near the Askariya shrine in central Samara, 100 km (62 miles) north of Baghdad, killing five policemen, police said.

A road side bomb struck a U.S.-backed neighbourhood patrol in Mahmudiya, 30 km (20 miles) south of Baghdad killing one and wounding two others, police said.

A roadside bomb exploded near a restaurant in western Baghdad wounding a traffic policeman, police said.



A blown up Iraqi police vehicle is removed from the bombing scene in Baghdad, April 3, 2008. A parked car bomb targeted the police patrol in western Baghdad, wounding three officers. (AP Photo/Hadi Mizban)

Basra: Maliki Officials Blown Up



Nationalist, anti-Occupation Mehdi Army fighters celebrate success on during a lull in fighting in Basra, March 28, 2008. (Atef Hassan/Reuters)

April 3, 2008 By Ernesto Londoño, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpts]

An Iraqi Defense Ministry official was wounded and two of his bodyguards were killed when a bomb exploded near their convoy in the Hayaniyah neighborhood, according to an Iraqi police official in Basra who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Two other Iraqi military officials were wounded during clashes in another part of the city, Qibla, as they fought members of the Mahdi Army militia, the official said.

Police officials in Basra said a few clashes broke out Wednesday between Iraqi soldiers and Mahdi Army fighters.

Mustafa Othman, 35, a resident of the Hayaniyah neighborhood, said Iraqi soldiers and militia members fought there Wednesday.

"Frankly, the situation is becoming worse and worse, and I don't think this conflict will be solved at all," he said.

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

The U.S. Occupation-Backed The Attack On The Mahdi Army; “They Hoped For A Triumph To Boast About In Congress” “Now They Must Explain A Disaster”

In fact, Sadr's real sin in Washington's eyes is that, of all the Shia movements, his is the one that has most consistently opposed the US occupation and called for a timetable for US troops to leave Iraq.

April 4, 2008 by Jonathan Steele, The Guardian/UK

The battle for Basra, which came to a halt on Sunday, was a disaster for everyone except its intended losers.

Iraq's prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki - who ordered the assault and put his prestige on the line by supervising it in person - has emerged with his authority severely weakened.

His army and police took a battering and failed to capture any ground, with several commanders and units going over to the militias they were meant to be defeating.

And the Bush administration's effort to portray Iraq as a place that is gradually calming down thanks to the "surge" of an extra 30,000 US troops looks far less convincing to an increasingly sceptical US public.

As well as mounting surveillance and artillery strikes, British troops were deployed to rescue Iraqi units from militia counterattacks.

General David Petraeus, the US commander in Iraq, and the Bush administration's civilian officials supported the arrests of Sadr's people.

They have long worked with Maliki and Sadr's main political rivals, the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (formerly the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq), to weaken the movement.

Although the fighting in Basra was led by the Iraqi national army, many of its units are made up of troops of ASCII's fighting wing, the Badr organisation.

President Bush described last week's fighting as a "positive moment in the development of a sovereign nation that is willing to take on elements that believe they are beyond the law".

In reality, it amounted to US support for the promotion of a Shia civil war.

US officials say that Iran is behind the Sadr movement, a charge that could equally be made about Isci, whose leaders spent decades exiled in Tehran during the Saddam Hussein years.

In fact, Sadr's real sin in Washington's eyes is that, of all the Shia movements, his is the one that has most consistently opposed the US occupation and called for a timetable for US troops to leave Iraq.

How far was the US responsible for last week's assault?

When Iraqi government forces became bogged down after the initial attacks, US officials were quick to brief American journalists that they had not been fully consulted in advance.

But it is hard to believe that the Iraqi army could have undertaken such a major offensive without American cooperation, since they needed American, and British, surveillance and air support.

The most likely explanation is that the Americans approved the assault, confidently expecting it would succeed within a few days.

The hardline US vice-president, Dick Cheney, was in Baghdad two weeks earlier and may well have urged Maliki to go ahead.

They hoped for a triumph to boast about in Congress.

Now they must explain a disaster.

Sadr is a major player who cannot be marginalised or defeated.

He has widespread popular support, not just because of his socially conservative Islamist message, but because of his nationalist credentials.

These have been strengthened by last week's failed assault. It should not be repeated.

Al-Sadr Calls For A Million-Iraqis To Rally Against U.S. Occupation Military Dictatorship; "Raise Your Voices Loud Against The Unjust Occupier And Enemy Of Nations And Humanity"

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

4.3.08 MSNBC News Services & By Peter Graff and Ahmed Rasheed (Reuters)

BAGHDAD - Just days after ordering supporters to desist from fighting Iraqi and U.S. troops, radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr on Thursday called for one million Iraqis to march against the U.S. "occupation" next week.

Sadr has millions of followers and was able to summon tens of thousands of people on to the streets in Baghdad for demonstrations during last week's fighting. A march to Najaf would potentially mobilize swathes of Shi'ite Iraq.

A statement released by al-Sadr's office called on Iraqis of all sects to descend Wednesday on Najaf, site of annual Shiite pilgrimages that attract hundreds of thousands of worshippers.

"The time has come to express your rejections and raise your voices loud against the unjust occupier and enemy of nations and humanity, and against the horrible massacres committed by the occupier against our honorable people," it said.

The demonstration, called for the fifth anniversary of the fall of Baghdad, raises the prospect of unrest coinciding with a politically sensitive progress report to Congress by the top U.S. officials in Iraq.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

‘Stop-Loss’ Film Review: 3 Stars

April 07, 2008 By Chuck Vinch, Army Times

As film fodder, the Iraq war and its effects on U.S. troops and their families have so far been quicksand for Hollywood.

A string of war-related films — “Grace Is Gone,” “Rendition,” “Redacted,” “Lions for Lambs” and the unfairly snubbed “In the Valley of Elah” — have all gone down in flames at the box office.

It simply may be that with the war still raging — literally for the troops fighting it, figuratively for supporters and opponents back home — it’s just too soon to make sense of it; maybe that can only come with time.

The latest Iraq war movie, “Stop-Loss” will not go down as the conflict’s definitive film. But writer-director Kimberly Peirce gets as close as any filmmaker has so far to capturing the plight of the many young Iraq war veterans left largely on their own to grapple with their post-deployment demons.

The melodrama gets a little thick at times, but the result feels like the work of a filmmaker far more seasoned than Peirce, whose only other credit of note is “Boys Don’t Cry,” made nine years ago.

“Stop-Loss” blasts off with a harrowing battle scene. Staff Sgt. Brandon King (a superb Ryan Phillippe) leads his squad into an alley ambush that leaves several soldiers dead or badly wounded.

Then, we come back home to see Brandon and his fellow soldier and boyhood buddy, Sgt. Steve Shriver (Channing Tatum), made the guests of honor in a welcome-home celebration in their small Texas town, where the jingoistic Steve fires up the crowd with a booming declaration about “fighting them in Iraq so we don’t have to fight them in Texas!”

Both Steve and Brandon are set on getting out.

But they can’t shake the war so quickly. It isn’t long before Steve’s flashbacks have him digging foxholes on his front lawn at 3 a.m., much to the distress of his fiancée, Michelle (Aussie actress Abbie Cornish in a fine, understated performance).

Faring even worse is their squadmate Tommy (Joseph Gordon-Levitt), a ball of burning, unfocused, alcohol-fueled rage.

Brandon, a straight arrow who feels he did his duty as well as he could and now wants to get on with his life, seems to have a firmer grip — at least until he's told, on the very day he's due to separate, that he has been “stop-lossed” and is going back to Iraq.

The film says 81,000 troops have been stop-lossed in the war. In case anyone in uniform still doesn't know what that means ...

Every military enlistment incurs an eight-year obligation, even if you think you're signing up only for, say, three.

The military can keep you in for all eight, or it can let you out after your three — but it has the legal right to yank you back for another dance any time over the next five years.

“It's a back-door draft, is what it is,” Brandon sputters.

Feeling betrayed — and unable to bear losing more buddies in combat — Brandon makes a snap call to go AWOL, hatching a half-baked plan to go to Washington, D.C., along with Michelle, in the naïve hope that the backslapping senator who hailed him as a hero at his homecoming will get his stop-loss orders overturned.

The road trip and the stops along the way are the heart of the film.

The journey leads Brandon to places he couldn't have imagined a few weeks earlier, including a shadowy community of AWOL troops trying to get to Canada.

But “Stop-Loss” is not an anti-war film; if anything, it's pro-troops, epitomized by its long, wordless, moving final scene.

Peirce, whose brother served with the 82nd Airborne in Iraq, simply wants us to think about the meaning of duty and patriotism against the backdrop of this most frustrating of wars — and she succeeds, poignantly and sympathetically.

**A Vietnam Veterans Story:
“You Came To Realize, The
Reasons For The War Were All
Bullshit And Americans Were
Dying For Nothing”
“And While We May Not Have
Refused Orders Or Missions, I Would**

Say Fragging-Shooting And Blowing Up Your Superiors Was Pretty Fucking Radical” Today: “We Offer Resistance Info From Military Project To Any GI’s That Approach Us For Help”

I’m a white male and Hungarian from a blue collar family.

I enlisted in the army in 1965 for 3 years.

That was the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis (a very real possibility of Nuclear war compared with the total bullshit reasons given today - like WMD, etc); JFK’s ‘ask not what your country can do for you, etc speech.

I was light weapons specialist.

Basic training was at Fort Gordon Georgia (can u imagine that fucking place in ‘65? Stars & bars flags everywhere and signs, ‘soldiers and dogs stay off the grass.)

From there I took my advanced infantry training at Fort Ord, California.

Then, I signed up to be a paratrooper (‘put silver wings upon my chest) and took my jump school training at Fort Benning, Georgia.

I then went to my stateside duty station with the 101st Airborne (Screaming Eagles) at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

Vietnam was starting to build up and I got my orders to go to Nam in 1967.

In country I went to the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Herd) in the Central Highlands (think the movie Platoon).

I was an e-4 and was promoted on the battlefield to Sergeant E-5 (buck sergeant) as a fire team leader of a 3-4 soldiers. Fire Teams were the smallest unit of infantry. Next came squads; platoons; company.

The Centrals Highlands were brutal.

They were so high, we would be above the cloud line looking down at the clouds circling the mountains. We would go out on 30-45 day missions, with no change of clothes.

Your clothes would rot off eventually and be torn apart by the elephant grass.

We spent the whole time chasing up one mountain and down the other looking for VC or NVA. Got to go to Hong Kong on R & R.

Monsoon was terrible.

The biggest battle I was in: a regiment of NVA ambushed one of our companies and wiped it out almost to the man. Of about 60-70 troops, only about 8 were left alive.

We were the first company in. The jungle floor was coated with blood. A trooper came running out with two hand grenades in his hands and fell to his knees crying, that he didn't have to use them, on himself. Many of the GI's killed, had been wounded; the NVA finished them off with head shots.

We got hit that night by heavy mortar fire.

A position directly above ours got hit and the only thing left of one soldier was a smoking boot with his foot in it.

We chased after the NVA but never caught up with them. We did find dead Chinese advisors in Chi-Com uniforms hastily buried as they fled before us.

Being a line doggy is hard, real hard.

Got a Red Cross visit once from Robert Stack, star of the hit TV show, The Untouchables. I always admired him for risking his life to visit with us.

In 1967, the resistance movement among GI's had not formally hit in country. We never even heard about the underground papers and coffee houses etc.

We resisted incompetent leaders, be they nco's, noncommissioned officers (sergeants) or officers who would endanger us by piss poor leadership or orders.

Also, nco's or officer's who fucked with us were dealt with.

We 'fragged 'em'.

No warning shots-no grenades left with the pins in at first as a warning.

Fragging is lobbing a live grenade at someone.

This was the true start of the GI resistance movement.

You came to realize, the reasons for the war were all bullshit and Americans were dying for nothing.

In that time, you only had letters and the Stars & Stripes official paper for news and did not have a real understanding what was going on in the world (USA). Of course we were aware of the protesters against the war and really had no comment or opinion on them-we were focused on staying alive-day-to-day.

Well, after about 4 months of life on the line, I was 'levied'-a levy is an inter-service type of draft.

I had the option to volunteer for a LURP Unit, but they could not order me to go.

Like I said, life as a line rat is the worst life there is, so I jumped at the chance to better my existence.

When I got to the Long Range Patrol Company, we went through training at a Ranger School in country; were taught by Special Forces.

After training, we worked in 6-man recon teams; 12-man ambush (hatchet teams).

We were on a 6 man recon mission during Tet 1. I wrote a short story based on a real mission when I was at Baldwin-Wallace College and was published in The Mill.

We would go out for 4-5 days at a time, if not discovered and compromised.

One time, we were working inside Cambodia leading a company of Cambodian mercs on Search & destroy missions. Our choppers would not pick us up if we were inside Cambodia and we had to make it back across the border for pick-up.

In the 173rd and LURP Company, we did whatever missions we were assigned and watched each others back without trying to be fucking John Wayne glory hounds.

We smoked killer weed and opium and would paint the black liquid opium on or weed cigs.

Our base camp was outside Bien Hoa and we'd go into the bars on pass and drink in the same bars as hardcore VC, who were taking a time-out like us – beer – weed – massages – blowjobs - whore houses.

We (VC and us) had our own version of the famous Christmas Truce in WW1.

We would not buy each other drinks, but would leave each other alone-mutual respect.

Like in the 173rd, we would frag any sergeants or officers who were incompetent or fucked with us.

The working class whites like me and black soldiers got along ok. Malcolm X would have been proud of us.

Armed to the teeth - bad attitudes; a mutual enemy - no, not the VC but the fucking establishment officers and sergeants!

Like I said, blacks & whites hung out and it drove the redneck types crazy to see us passing reefer and bottles around. I am sure some of the 'necks were in the KKK back home.

One time, this asshole top sergeant was really fucking with everybody.

The chicken shit type of crap that sergeants did to troopers stateside.

Too much attempted discipline etc.

So, one night, somebody hooked up a claymore mine and pointed it at his sleeping area (hooch); hooked it up to the generator, which was started at about the same time nightly.

Someone tripped over the wire before it went off and that fucker was hardly seen after that!

Again, this was the beginning of GI resistance.

And while we may not have refused orders or missions, I would say fragging-shooting and blowing up your superiors was pretty fucking radical.

I had earned a purple heart by being shot across the nose once.

My job in the team was rear security and I laid down cover fire to protect the team if we had contact. I turned around once firing and took a round across the nose. When I got inside the chopper, the door gunner was pointing at my nose and I noticed the blood everywhere.

On my last mission, we got hit and were in a life and death shoot out.

One VC bullet hit a buddies white phosphorous (willy peter) grenade; it exploded -killing him and wounding me.

I first went to Japan; then to Valley Forge Military Hospital outside Philly (went to the Philly folk festival; saw Tom Rush; Buffy St.Marie; Janis Ian and others) and got to see the Chambers Brother's live at the Factory! Awesome show-I chugged a whole bottle of robo-cough syrup before the show.

One day, I'm resting in my hospital bed when the MP's snatched me up and threw me in the brig (jail) for a couple of days to see if I'd go cold turkey.

I would have killed those fucks with my bare hands if I could have.

This put me on the path to resisting.

I met one guy who had refused to go to Vietnam and he wanted to know if I hated him -I told him no-I understood and told him I respected his decision.

A first step towards solidarity.

I was discharged a couple of months early and went to college on the GI Bill.

At Lakeland Community College, I promptly joined SDS; helped design a poster/flyer, 'Dow shall not kill.'

Moved to Boston (met a chick at nearby Lake Erie College for Women who was transferring to Boston University), so I moved to Boston and moved in with her.

Broke up with her and moved to Cambridge for several years and played harp in a band.

Was in some bloody demonstrations and confrontations with the Boston oinkers.

I am currently a member of VVAWI (Vietnam Veterans Against The War Anti-Imperialist); with VVAWI, I'm an Editorial Board member for their mag-'Storm Warning.'

I am also the Columbus, Ohio chapter organizer for World Can't Wait, see our chapter website at www.columbuswcw.org. Events to the right of the page; click on events for details. I also work closely with the Military Project/GI Special and am a contributor and reporter for GI Special.

We offer resistance info from Military Project to any GI's that approach us for help (this happened after a demo here in Sept, where an alleged GI said he wanted help so he did not have to redeploy to Iraq again).

Even though we thought he was an agent-mi (military intell) or FBI or even a snitch-a real soldier who was snitching us out for relief in his own case/situation. We gave him the info from Military Project even though we thought he was an agent.

Our WCW chapter is tabling inside the Ani DiFranco show here in March and after the 5th year march against the war here on March 19th along with WCW info/march, we will have Military Project resistance info on our table in case a soldier or soldier's family wants it.

I purchased a free newspaper box (like the kind for real estate or employment); its orange; has on it-free GI Special; placed it across the street at a bus stop from a national guard armory by me.

I put individual copies of the GI Special in there; bundled with each GI Special is: the WW Iran quiz; WCW call; NION pledge of resistance in several languages; Military Project resistance info/help lines.

I have been active in the movement since 1968 when I joined SDS.

OCCUPATION REPORT

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



An Iraqi family reacts as occupation soldiers from the U.S. Army take a family member prisoner after forcing into their home in Mosul, Iraq, March 31, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo) [Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

[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?]

"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."

You go room to room, knocking the people down, zip tying them, keeping them restrained, and then once you secure the house you start looking for weapons.

Sometimes we were very diligent and complete in these searches.

Sometimes we would shred up floors, couches and beds. We'd take all the women, children and old men (that was mostly who was in these houses—women, children and old men), we'd take them outside and throw them into the grass and we'd start yelling at them as to where weapons are, where the men are.

Sometimes, all that we needed was a knife or a gun. It could be something as small as a pistol, to justify taking away all the men in the house.

Mark Wilkerson, Iraq Veterans Against The War



[images.google.com]

English soldiers search an American settler's house (1770's)

Declared Bill Ehrhart, a marine in Vietnam:

In grade school we learned about the redcoats, the nasty British soldiers that tried to stifle our freedom. Subconsciously, but not very subconsciously, I began increasingly to have the feeling that I was a redcoat. I think it was one of the most staggering realizations of my life.

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

Busy Busy Busy Winning Hearts And Minds



A U.S. occupation Army vehicle takes aim at hearts and minds in Baghdad's Shula district during the vehicle curfew, April 2, 2008. (Yasser Faisal/Reuters)

"We Are Spending Tens Of Billions Of Dollars On Rebuilding Iraq While They Are Putting Tens Of Billions Of Dollars In Banks Around The World From Oil Revenues"

April 3, 2008 (AP)

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Think you're being gouged by Big Oil? U.S. forces in Iraq are paying almost as much as Americans back home, despite burning fuel at staggering rates in a war to stabilize a country known for its oil reserves.

Military units pay an average of \$3.23 a gallon for gasoline, diesel and jet fuel, some \$88 per day per service member in Iraq, according to an Associated Press review and interviews with defense officials. A penny or two increase in the price of fuel can add millions of dollars to U.S. costs.

It's unlikely the U.S. has pressed Saudi Arabia, Qatar or other oil-rich allies recently to help subsidize the cost of fuel in Iraq.

The Defense Department referred questions about such negotiations to the State Department, where a spokesman said the agency was not aware of any.

Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, R-Maryland, also a member of the Armed Services Committee and a vocal advocate pushing the military to pursue alternative energy solutions, said he doubts such talks would be fruitful anyway because of the impression by many in the Middle East that the U.S. invaded Iraq for its oil to begin with.

"I'm not sure they're as convinced we're fighting for them, as they were in the first Gulf war," Bartlett said.

In the meantime, other lawmakers say they want to see the high costs of the war defrayed by Iraq dipping into its own oil revenues, which are projected to be substantial. Independent auditors estimate that Iraq is headed this year toward a massive surplus because of as much as \$60 billion in oil revenues -- a consequence of increased production paired with the sharp rise in prices.

"It's totally unacceptable to me that we are spending tens of billions of dollars on rebuilding Iraq while they are putting tens of billions of dollars in banks around the world from oil revenues," said Sen. Carl Levin, D-Michigan, chairman of the Armed Services Committee. "It doesn't compute as far as I'm concerned."

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/)

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

McCain (and Lieberman) Visit Baghdad

SEE, JOE, THINGS ARE GETTING BETTER...
LAST TIME I WENT FOR A NICE SAFE STROLL IN THE MARKET
WE NEEDED A WHOLE COMPANY
OF TROOPS.



Terrorists Confer In Romania; New Plan To Kill Troops Reported



April 3, 2008: The traitor Bush and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown meet in Romania to plan more effective ways to kill U.S. and British troops in Iraq. Attacking the

60,000 strong, well-armed, nationalist anti-Occupation Mahdi Army is rumored to be at the top of their list. (AP Photo/Yves Logghe)

CLASS WAR REPORTS



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.