

GI SPECIAL 6E10:



“Who Better To End The Occupation Than Pissed Off GI's Focused And Organized By IVAW?”

“Increasingly, IVAW's Work Is Among Active Duty Troops, Overburdened By Multiple Tours, Betrayed By Their Government, And Ready To Take Action”

“This Summer, We Will Be Going On The Road For A Tour Of Military Bases”

Stimulate GI Resistance With Your Tax Rebate

May 14, 2008 11:46 AM IVAW Newsletter [Excerpt]

IVAW's work to end the occupation by organizing a GI resistance movement is building momentum, and we need your continued financial support. Since our Winter Soldier hearings in March, our membership has grown at its fastest pace ever – over 200 new members have joined in less than 2 months.

Increasingly, IVAW's work is among active duty troops, overburdened by multiple tours, betrayed by their government, and ready to take action.

We can barely keep up with the demands that this new and energized membership brings, but we are excited about the opportunities this membership boost creates to increase our power to end the occupation.

This summer, we will be going on the road for a tour of military bases where our members will collect new Winter Soldier testimony and show active duty troops that they have a right to speak out.

We expect to double the number of IVAW active duty chapters by summer's end.

Sending our members on tour takes resources, and you can help!

When you get your George W. Bush economic stimulus check in the mail this month, please consider using it to fuel GI resistance to the Iraq occupation by donating it to IVAW.

What better way to stimulate the economy than ceasing the spending of billions of dollars on the occupation in Iraq?

And who better to end the occupation than pissed off GI's focused and organized by IVAW?

Because two-thirds of our funding comes from individuals, we depend on you to make our work possible.

You are a partner in this effort, so please give today.

Peace,

Kelly Dougherty
Former Sergeant, Army National Guard
Executive Director
Iraq Veterans Against the War
(www.ivaw.org/)

Our postal address is
PO Box 8296
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19101
United States

MORE:

IVAW OUTREACH ACTION **REPORT:**



WHO:
IVAW Los Angeles, VFP, + Civilian
Allies

WHAT: GI Outreach Los Alamitos

From: Wendy Barranco
To: GI Special
Sent: Monday, May 12, 2008 8:30 PM
Subject: GO outreach report back

WHO: IAW Los Angeles, VFP, + civilian allies

WHAT: GI Outreach Los Alamitos

I had two teams of 3-4 people.

One was posted outside the main gate passing out sit-reps and brownies and cookies (that included in the wrapping a card with IVAW.org and "Honor the warrior, not the war") to vehicles exiting the base.

The other team, myself included, drove on base. I gave the soldier at the gate a sit-rep and brownie after checking my ID.

On base we gave 48 brownies to a group of at risk/drop out Los Angeles high school students who were doing physical training under army sergeants.

An MP had been sent to watch us and I gave him a sit-rep and brownie also. He took it and said thanks. After I asked him if he was sent to watch us, he responded by saying that he had cameras all over the base and found out about us as soon as we reached the gate.

Team B, proceeded to post at the base PX and pass out sit-reps and brownies.

About 20 minutes later, the same MP from before informed us that he was sorry but he was here to escort us off base.

One lady entering the PX was very vocal and told him not to apologize. She said we had no right to protest on base, and we needed to get off base and protest there. I engaged her and asked her if we were protesting. We were just handing out brownies and sit-reps.

We got into my car and he asked us for our IDs after receiving the order on the radio. He took my license plate number down also and we proceeded to get off base.

We then scoped out other areas that we could post. We found a history teacher on the way to his son's little league game who asked for a sit-reps to show to his class. I offered to visit his class and engage them.

Team A at the gate was very successful and found by their accounts 95-98% were very receptive.

I did see one lady who returned the sit-rep and brownie after circling around.

We plan to continue this action monthly in order to become familiar with the soldiers.

Unfortunately many of the units are taking time off because of the upcoming annual training.

All in all I think this was a very good action.

A trial if you will and we know for future reference how to operate logistically.

What works best are 3-4 man teams maximum, avoid mob presence, and preferably station a group of people away from the gate and from traffic for those who are receptive and would like to engage in a conversation.

The Los Alamitos police was amicable and just warned us to not obstruct traffic.

Best,
Wendy Barranco
IVAW-LA

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

MORE ACTION REPORTS WANTED: FROM YOU!

An effective way to encourage others to support members of the armed forces organizing to resist the Imperial war is to report what you do.

If you've carried out organized contact with troops on active duty, at base gates, airports, or anywhere else, send a report in to GI Special for the Action Reports section.

Same for contact with National Guard and/or Reserve components.

They don't have to be long. Just clear, and direct action reports about what work was done and how.

If there were favorable responses, say so. If there were unfavorable responses or problems, don't leave them out.

If you are not planning or engaging in outreach to the troops, you have nothing to report.

NOTE WELL:

Do not make public any information that could compromise the work.

Whether you are serving in the armed forces or not, do not in any way identify members of the armed forces organizing to stop the war.

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

The sole exception: occasions when a member of the armed services explicitly directs his or her name be listed as reporting on the action.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Surry Man Dies In Iraq

April 29, 2008 By Sherry Youngquist, Journal Reporter

Adam Marion, a Surry County native, died in Iraq this week while serving with the Army. Military officers came to his family's Mount Airy home late Monday night to tell his parents, Surry County Clerk of Superior Court Pam Marion and Donnie Marion, a magistrate.

Adam Marion was 26. Details about his death and Army career were not yet available.

He had been in the Army close to a year, a family friend said. "His family is a very loving, very giving family, and they taught him. They instilled in him the importance of taking care of your community and your country," said Kathy Robertson, a friend. "I think that's part of the reason he joined the military."

Yesterday, the American flag at the Surry County Courthouse was lowered to half mast as word spread throughout the community of Marion's death. Clerks who work at the courthouse with his mother Pam Marion were teary-eyed as people came to offer condolences.

Adam Marion was her only son. In addition to his parents, he is survived by an older sister.

A woman who answered the phone at the Marion's home today said that the family was not ready to give a statement. They are still waiting to learn all the details, said the woman, who did not give her name.

Adam Marion graduated in 2000 from Surry Central High School, where he was on the golf team. He loved to hunt deer.

He was very family oriented, said Robertson, who is the finance officer at Surry Central and whose husband is a cousin.

Marion loved being around his family, she said.

A few weeks ago, he was back in Surry County on leave.

“He loved to have fun,” Robertson said. “Just being around him would make you laugh, and he loved to cut up and pick. He was just fun to be around.”

The family and community are overwhelmed with grief, friends said yesterday. “He was such a good fine young man,” Robertson said. “He was a good Christian boy. And he loved life to the fullest. They're devastated. It's a loss for our community.”

FIVE YEARS AND \$50 BILLION LATER, U.S. TRAINED IRAQI SOLDIER IN ACTION FOR BUSH AND THE EMPIRE



An Iraqi army soldier during a gun battle with Mahdi Army militiamen in Baghdad's neighbourhood of Shulla May 13, 2008. REUTERS/Oleg Popov

Mosul:
**“On Each Occasion The Military
Escort Necessary To Reach The City
Safely Has Grown Bigger”**

“The Number Of Roadside Bombs Had Risen From 175 To 269”



MUJAHID MOHAMMED/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: I look at the size of the vehicle, and the size of the people, and the size of the vehicle . . . I don't like it when semi trucks use my street, what do these people think?]

12 May 2008 By Patrick Cockburn in Mosul, The Independent [UK] [Excerpts]

Mosul looks like a city of the dead.

Soldiers shoot at any civilian vehicle on the streets in defiance of a strict curfew.

Two men, a woman and child in one car which failed to stop were shot dead yesterday by US troops, who issued a statement saying the men were armed and one made “threatening movements”.

Mosul, on the Tigris river, is inhabited by 1.4 million people, but has been sealed off from the outside world by hundreds of police and army checkpoints since the Iraqi government offensive against al-Qa'ida [translation: nationalists opposed to the occupation] began at 4am on Saturday.

The operation is a critical part of an attempt to reassert military [translation: occupation] control over Iraq which has led to heavy fighting in Baghdad and Basra.

The besieged city is now difficult to reach; we began the journey from the Kurdish capital Arbil in a convoy of white pick-up trucks, each with a heavy machine gun in the back manned by alert-looking soldiers, some wearing black face masks, that were escorting Khasro Goran, the deputy governor of Mosul, to his office in the city.

Soon after crossing the long bridge over the Zaab river and leaving territory officially controlled by the Kurds, we saw lines of trucks and cars being stopped by police. Their

drivers presumably had not heard of the curfew. At the Christian village of Bartilla we exchanged our pick-ups for more heavily armoured vehicles with windows a few inches across of bulletproof glass.

I had been to Mosul down this road half a dozen times since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003 and on each occasion the military escort necessary to reach the city safely has grown bigger.

Squinting through the small glass portholes it was clear that local people were taking the curfew seriously. Even the miserable cafes used by the truck drivers, and which I had imagined never closed their doors, had pulled down their metal shutters.

In eastern Mosul the streets are usually bustling and stalls spill on to the road near the tomb of the prophet Jonah, who died here some time after his alarming experience with the whale. Most of the people living in this part of the city are Kurds, who support the central government against al-Qa'ida [translation: nationalists opposed to the occupation]. Yet, here too every shop was shut and there were police and soldiers at checkpoints every 50 yards. An extra brigade had been sent from Baghdad for the offensive along with special security troops to reinforce the 2nd and 3rd divisions.

Outside the police headquarters, the black vehicles of the Interior Ministry, each with a heavy machine gun and a yellow head of a tiger as an insignia on the doors, were drawn up in rows.

American helicopters flew high overhead as well as drones for reconnaissance. There was the occasional burst of firing and bomb blast in the distance.

These are critical days for Mr Maliki's government. Since 25 March he has launched military offensives in Basra and Baghdad. He is receiving support from the Americans and the Kurds.

But it is not clear if the Iraqi army will fight without the backing of US firepower in the air or on the ground. On Saturday a ceasefire was agreed with the Mehdi Army of Muqtada al-Sadr in Sadr City giving the government greater control.

But, as in Mosul, it is not clear how far the government's opponents have simply retreated to fight another day.

Mr Goran, who in effect runs the city, said that 90 people were killed in Mosul last September compared to 213 dead this March, including 58 soldiers and policemen. The number of roadside bombs had risen from 175 to 269 over the same period.

Attacks on US troops in Anbar province have restarted and in Sunni districts of west Baghdad al-Qa'ida [translation: nationalists opposed to the occupation] appears to be lying low rather than being eliminated.

In many cases in Baghdad al-Sahwa, the supposedly anti-al-Qa'ida awakening councils paid by the Americans, in practice have cosy arrangements with al-Qa'ida [translation: nationalists opposed to the occupation].

I was in Mosul on the day it was surrendered by Saddam Hussein's forces in 2003.

Five years later Mosul, one of the great cities of the world, looks ruinous and under siege.

Every alley way is blocked by barricades and the only new building is in the form of concrete blast walls.

NEW GENERAL ORDER NO. 1: PACK UP GO HOME



Mar 17: A US soldier rests in the Diyala region. (AFP/David Furst)

TROOP NEWS

From 1 Cav: “Please Put This In The GI Special”

From: BH
To: Thomas Cleaver
Sent: May 13, 2008 5:47 AM
Subject: please put this in the gi special

As I was headed out to my bike after a hard day's work waxing floors, I noticed the flashing red and blue lights against the large white tent set up semi-permanently outside the 1st Cavalry Division Headquarters.

It was already past 9pm so I knew something squirrely was afoot and after numerous remarks about the faint smell of bacon and various other pork products, we saw the 2 MPs and another person approaching us.

My first thought was that I had spoken too loud, but when the MP asked for my NCO and told me we had a deserter on our hands I knew the heat wasn't on me at all. After a haphazard handoff, probably due to an impending shift change, The MPs entrusted the soldier with our NCO who instructed him to stay in the barracks room of one of our other soldiers.

After a brief interview I learned that Army SPC Bryan Falke is a 21 year old native to Florida, but he grew up in Missouri. He is engaged to Nicole Lipe and they are slated to be married. Nicole showed her support for her fiance by riding 20 hours with Bryan and his friend, who's identity will remain undisclosed, because he hasn't turned himself in yet.

The two have a baby on the way and that was the main reason Bryan turned himself in. He figured he can have a normal life for his child, so he doesn't have to be on the run like a criminal.

Bryan is with the 2nd Battalion of 82nd Field Artillery Regiment under the 1st Cavalry Division, whom he honorably served 15 months with in Logistics Support Area (LSA) Anaconda in Iraq, and he said that though he had issues with how his unit treated him, those issues were not the reason he went AWOL.

He had mounting problems at home with his mother in the hospital, his father in a divorce and his older sister is currently in a battle with cancer.

He was unable to get a Red Cross Message sent to him and he had already taken leave so he took matters into his own hands and 70 days later turned himself in.

Posted by Soldier Interrupted at 9:07 PM

“He Said He Joined The Marines To Serve His Country But Has Become Disillusioned And Now Belongs To The IVAW”

“The Real Problem With The Occupation Of Iraq Is The Occupation Is The Source Of Violence In Iraq,” Emanuele Said.



5/5/2008 Laurie Wink, The News-Dispatch

WESTVILLE - Two area veterans of the U.S. Marines have joined a nationwide grassroots movement of Iraqi War veterans taking their anti-war message to campuses and other public forums.

Vince Emanuele, Chesterton, and Aaron Bibler, Kouts, came to Purdue University-North Central last week as members of Iraq Veterans Against the War for a presentation, “The Cost of War.”

The program was organized by Active Voices, a student group that, according to member Damien Appel, tries “to make the PNC community more aware of social justice issues. “It’s always hard to get participation at PNC,” Appel said.

Emanuele offered personal testimony about his experiences in Iraq.

After graduating from Chesteron High School in May 2002, he enlisted in the Marine Corps. His grandfather was a World War II veteran and his father served in Vietnam, so Emanuele felt he was next in line.

He said he felt military service was a stepping stone to future opportunities and a way of getting money to attend college. Emanuele said he didn’t listen when his father tried to talk him out of enlisting.

He was stationed in Kuwait in March 2003. In 2004, he was sent to Al Qaim, Iraq, and served eight months. As he started sharing stories with other troops in Iraq, Emanuele said he began to question the military mission.

Since joining the IVAW in 2007, Emanuele has been working to end the U.S. involvement in Iraq. He wants Americans to understand that the U.S. military is not trained for nation building.

“The real problem with the occupation of Iraq is the occupation is the source of violence in Iraq,” Emanuele said.

“We have to withdraw our troops. It's the only way to alleviate most of the violence in Iraq.”

While stationed in Iraq, his days were spent patrolling streets in search of improvised explosive devices.

Instead of being given rules of engagement, he said troops were told to kill anytime they felt in danger.

“It was up to each soldier,” Emanuele said. “If an individual had a shovel or bag on the side of the road, he was shot.”

Emanuele said after he had his first confirmed kill on Feb. 17, 2005, he was congratulated by officers. He said officers were out of touch with what was going on in the streets.

After returning to his unit following a four-hour ambush, Emanuele said he reported to his officers and saw them playing Tiger Woods golf on a PlayStation 2. He said he's also frustrated by a lack of public outrage and protest over what he said is “a war based on lies for the profit of a few.”

Bibler is a PNC student and Marine reservist who spent a year as a Marine recruiter.

He said he joined the Marines to serve his country but has become disillusioned and now belongs to the IVAW.

The organization wants an immediate withdrawal from Iraq.

They also want the United States to make reparations to Iraqis for human and structural damages and allow them to control their own lives. In addition, the group is pushing for adequate health care for returning veterans.

Emanuele is president of the Indiana chapter of IVAW, and has an office in Chesterton at Second and Broadway.

Emergency Protest: Picket US Embassy London Over Sadr City Assault

**Picket the US Embassy!
Thursday 15 May, 4.30--6pm**

24 Grosvenor Square, W1A 2LQ

From: Ewa Jasiewicz

Sent: May 14, 2008

The US supported assault on Sadr City has led to hundreds of deaths.

Food and medicine are scarce, as aid is not longer reaching the city.

The US have now warned the residents to be ready for a huge attack, sports stadiums have been opened for the thousands of expected refugees.

This criminal assault on one of the poorest areas of Baghdad should be opposed.

Organised by Iraqi Democrats Against the Occupation and Stop the War Coalition

www.idao.org and www.stopwar.org.uk

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Signs Of The Times

#1

“POSTER OF IRAQI PRIME MINISTER NURI AL-MALIKI WITH A NOOSE AROUND HIS NECK”



Posters of Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki with a noose around his neck and with half his face metamorphosing into that of Saddam Hussein stuck to painted Iraqi flag. (AFP/Wissam al-Okaili)

#2

- A. GUESS WHO HE'S BACKING**
B. IF HE'S MADHI ARMY, DEFINITELY NCO

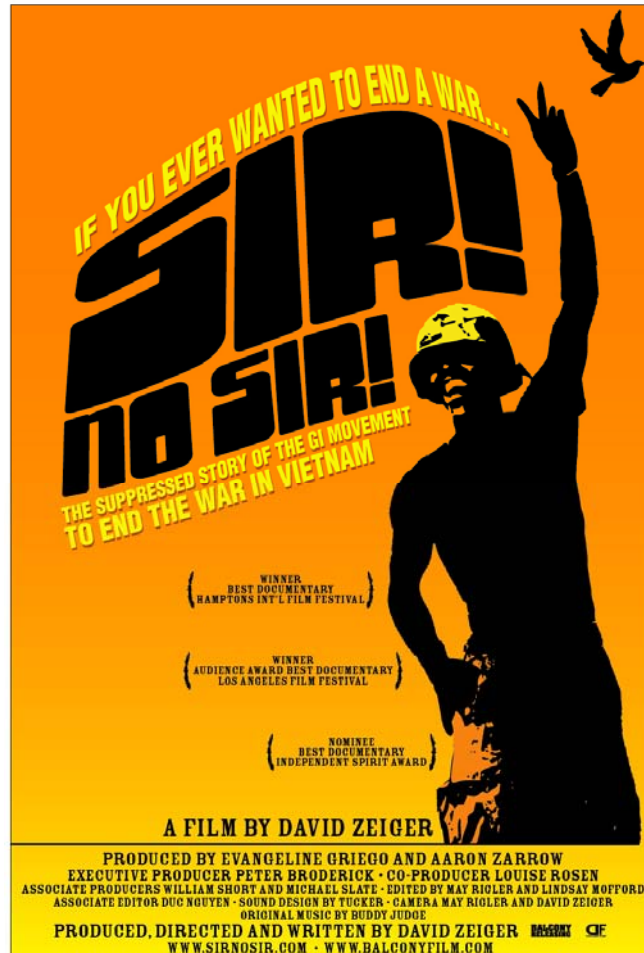


An Iraqi man sits next to a poster of nationalist Moqtada al-Sadr near a local mosque in Sadr City in east Baghdad. (AFP/Wissam al-Okaili)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation's ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. Frederick Douglas, 1852

“The Suppressed Story Of The GI Movement To End The War In Vietnam”



Sir! No Sir!

The Sir! No Sir! DVD is on sale now, exclusively at http://www.sirnosir.com/home_dvd_storefront.html

Also available is a Soundtrack CD (which includes the entire song from the FTA Show, “Soldier We Love You”), theatrical posters, tee shirts, and the DVD of “A Night of Ferocious Joy,” a film about the first hip-hop antiwar concert against the “War on Terror.”

**BUY SIR! NO SIR! FOR ACTIVE DUTY SOLDIERS
NOW**

**HELP GET SIR! NO SIR!
INTO THE HANDS THAT NEED IT MOST**

The Boys

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: May 13, 2008
Subject: The Boys by Dennis

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

The Boys

**Here, hold this flag boy
hold it up high
follow your leader boy
because we have a plan
but we can't tell you everything
so please march ahead
march through the bullets
march through the cannons
march through the dead bodies
and hold that flag high
because we have a plan boy
but we can't tell you all
you will just have to trust us
march through the machine guns
march through the falling bombs
march as the mother's cry
march as the fathers wait
for their sons from across
the oceans and be a good boy
when all the bullets miss you
and you don't step on a land mine
when you make it through
all the close calls and all the others
fall dead and wounded all around you
blood dripping off your hands
as you hold the flag high
following orders like a good boy**

as your helmet is blown off
from a mortar concussion
a hunk of metal stabs you in the back
but the medic pulls it out
puts on a bandage
as you keep marching through
all of the battles, all of the fire fights
we will reward you
with a Purple Heart with
other ribbons other medals
then you can go down to the VFW
the American Legion Post
and drink and get old
and support the troops on TV
in another war when they say
to another young boy
Here, hold this flag boy
hold it up high.

The Real Elitist Scum?
The Fools And Liars Who
Peddle Their Bullshit About
How Stupid And Backward We
Are:

**“It Is A Truly Reactionary Ruling
Class That Spreads The Myth Of
The Reactionary Working Class”**

**“The Working-Class That The
Mainstream Media Have
‘Rediscovered’ Is Still Viewed As
White And Presented As Holding
Generally Conservative Views”**

“This Picture Has Little Connection To Reality”

May 9, 2008 By Adam Turl, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

THE WORKING class is back--or at least the words “working class” are.

For decades, an army of pundits and academics argued that the majority of people in the United States comprised an expanding, satiated and upwardly mobile middle class--and that the very idea of a working class belonged to an industrial past long ago.

The word “working class” went down the memory hole, and couldn't be brought out--even in roundabout ways--without invoking the specter of “class war” in mainstream politics.

As University of Illinois-Chicago Professor Leon Fink wrote in the Chicago Tribune:

When Al Gore unveiled a modest appeal to “working families” at the 2000 Democratic National Convention...[h]is Republican opponent, George W. Bush, immediately counterattacked, accusing Gore of unleashing “class war” on the country. The preferred term of address had long been “middle class”; even the AFL-CIO avoided the shoals of class rhetoric to try to co-opt the conservative family-values agenda.

Yet, today, virtually every commentator, from William Kristol to Paul Krugman, unblinkingly invokes the once-dreaded terminology in suggesting that Sen. Barack Obama cannot, as the director of the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute put it, “penetrate working-class voters.”

If “working class” has become common parlance again, it may be because there is a crisis facing the working-class majority in the U.S.--those who work for wages. Hourly wages, adjusted for inflation, have fallen over the past three decades, while the size of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) almost tripled--a growth of riches that has accrued almost solely to big business.

But if the “working class”--and its much debated “bitterness” and grievances--is at the forefront of the 2008 presidential election, this “rediscovery” has brought along with it the reprisal of longstanding myths--that the working class is, generally speaking, flag-waving, conservative, church-obsessed, tradition-oriented and mostly white.

THIS IS a stereotype, of course, and one with a long history.

Fink invokes a distorted view of the working class--“Archie Bunker and his like-minded descendants”--that was an invention of the ruling class and mass media when it arose in the 1960s as part of an ideological counter to the growing influence of the 1960s social movements.

As International Socialist Review contributor Joe Allen has written, “In the late 1960s, the U.S. media and political establishment ‘rediscovered’ the working class, though not the

real working class--which was white, Black, Latino and increasingly made up of women...The working class that they claim to have discovered was really a middle-class stereotype that portrayed the working class as white men who were in rebellion against the civil rights and antiwar movements and liberalism in general.”

Images of workers in hard hats attacking activists were broadcast to in an attempt to show that “hard-working” Americans rejected “ungrateful” and “privileged” antiwar students.

But surveys in the late 1960s and early 1970s showed that manual workers opposed the Vietnam War in similar numbers to the youths who made up the student antiwar movement and the GI resistance.

In the working-class city of Dearborn, Mich., for example, a 1968 referendum calling for immediate withdrawal passed with 57 percent of the vote.

By 1971, union households along with minority households (which overlapped greatly) were among the most consistent opponents of the war in national polls.

Although racism continued to pervade every aspect of U.S. life--as was famously demonstrated when a white mob attacked Martin Luther King Jr. when he attempted to take the civil rights struggle north to Chicago--working-class and poor whites generally tended to be more sympathetic to Black workers than the “more well to do.”

One 1966 study showed that “the higher one's class or origin of class or class destination, the more likely that one prefers to exclude Negroes from one's neighborhood.”

As a result of the continual impact of the Black liberation struggle on consciousness, by 1970, a majority of white Americans favored affirmative action, including quotas, to redress the impact of current and past racist injustices.

This isn't to say that racism didn't influence white workers. It did, as evidenced by some working-class support--including in the north--for George Wallace's 1968 “state's rights” presidential campaign, and in the busing struggles that continued throughout the 1970s.

However, the working class was not, as many depict it today, a homogenous bastion of racism and reaction.

TODAY, THE working-class that the mainstream media have “rediscovered” may include women, but it is still viewed as white and presented as holding generally conservative views.

As in the 1960s, this picture has little connection to reality.

Most polls show that the U.S. population as a whole--and the working class in particular--has become more progressive on most social and economic issues.

Nowhere is this clearer than on the question of racism.

In 1954, only 4 percent of those surveyed responded that they approved of marriage between “white and colored people.” In 2007, 79 percent told a Gallup poll that they approved of interracial marriages.

Current polls show, for example, that 51 percent of Americans--the highest number since the 1930s Great Depression--support the longstanding socialist demand of taxing the rich specifically to redistribute wealth.

A 2006 poll showed that 59 percent of people support trade unions--with support jumping to 68 percent among those who earn less than \$30,000 a year.

But this isn't merely a question of economic issues.

A majority of citizens and permanent residents responded in a 2006 survey that they believed immigration to be “a good thing.”

Nearly 90 percent of Americans said they thought gays and lesbians should have equal rights at work. Support for gay marriage has grown by 19 percent since 1996, and opposition has declined by 15 percent.

Even on abortion--one of the few areas where the right wing has gained ground ideologically--a majority of people still holds a favorable view of Roe v. Wade itself.

Also, in contrast to the picture of a fundamentalist hinterland existing between the coasts, polls also show that Americans are becoming less religious, that the religious are less consistent in attending church, and even that the younger generation of fundamentalist Christians are somewhat more left wing on some social justice issues.

As the 2008 elections have progressed, we've seen “class” take center stage, with Hillary Clinton--of all people--positioning herself, in the words of the New York Times, as a “working-class hero,” ready to fight around all manner of “injustices,” from high oil prices to mortgage foreclosures.

How is it possible that Clinton--a senator and former first lady who, with her husband, is worth more than \$100 million--has been able to present herself as the working class' favorite daughter?

One reason is the gullible media that repeated her campaign's spin. Another is racism.

The media brouhaha around Obama's former pastor, Rev. Jeremiah Wright--pushed by both John McCain and Hillary Clinton's campaign--undermined Obama's “post-racial” campaign strategy (though it should be pointed out that millions of working-class white people have voted for Obama).

But it also must be said that Clinton and the media were able to paint Obama as “elitist” because he let them do it.

If he wanted, Obama could rally workers--Black, white and Latino--around a campaign that spoke to their concerns, with strong proposals to help working-class people deal with the consequences of being hammered by recession.

But Obama doesn't want to campaign on this basis.

He wants to assure Wall Street and Corporate America, which have shifted sharply away from the Republicans to supporting the Democrats, that he is not a real threat.

And so Obama tilts to the right--in a very similar manner to Bill Clinton's triangulation--to try to win over "swing voters."

The kernel of solidarity exists in every workplace and in every working-class community around the country.

Organizing this kernel into movements to challenge racism, sexism, nationalism, homophobia and corporate rule can force "official" politics left and extract real concessions.

At the end of the day, it is a truly reactionary ruling class that spreads the myth of the reactionary working class.

**Quit Whining And Pissing On
Everybody In Sight With Your
Condescending Bullshit About How
Stupid & Apathetic Americans Are:
If You Don't Spend Time In The Real World
Reaching Out To Real Troops, You Have Nothing
Whatsoever To Sneer At Others About. Just Shut
The Fuck Up And Get The Fuck Out Of The Way**

"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

“Of The Many Thousands Dead In Afghanistan From U.S. Bombings And Guns, How Many, Can It Be Said With Any Certainty, Had Played A Role In 9-11?”

“I’d Be Surprised If There Was One. So What Kind Of Revenge Is That?”

By William Blum; International Socialist Review March–April 2008 [Excerpts]

From a presentation given by Blum on November 2, 2007, as part of the Will Miller Social Justice Lecture Series at the University of Vermont in Burlington. Blum is author of *Rogue State: A Guide to the World’s Only Superpower* (Common Courage Press, 2000) and *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* (Common Courage Press, 2003).

Oddly enough, many, if not most, Americans who are opposed to the war in Iraq, including many on the left, think that what the U.S. has done in Afghanistan is just fine—getting revenge for 9-11, what could be simpler?

Of course — in a rational world — revenge should be taken against those responsible for what happened on that infamous date, but of the many thousands dead in Afghanistan from U.S. bombings and guns, how many, can it be said with any certainty, had played a role in 9-11?

I’d be surprised if there was one. So what kind of revenge is that?

Whatever one thinks of the appalling society the Taliban created, they had not really been associated with terrorist acts, and the masses of Taliban supporters shouldn’t have been held responsible if their leader, Mohammed Omar, one person, allowed foreign terrorists into the country, any more than I would want to be held responsible for all the Cuban terrorists in Miami.

Most of the foreigners had probably come to Afghanistan in the 1990s to help the Taliban in their civil war — a religious act for them — nothing the U.S. government should have been concerned about.

So on what basis can one support what the United States has done to Afghanistan the past six years?

If Timothy McVeigh, who carried out the terrible bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City in 1995, had not been quickly caught, would the United States have bombed the state of Michigan or any of the other places he called home?

No, they would have instituted a mammoth manhunt until they found him and punished him in a legal manner.

But in Afghanistan, the United States proceeded as if they believed that everyone who supported the Taliban government, native or foreigner, was (1) a “terrorist” and (2) morally, if not legally, stained with the blood of September 11. And so they deserved to die....

And so they died.

Now NATO is playing a major role in the killing fields.... NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization —

Does anyone here have a map of the world? It’s not simply that NATO doesn’t belong in South Asia; NATO has no reason to exist even in Europe. It was formed to prevent a Soviet invasion of Western Europe. The Soviet Union no longer exists.

During the Cold War, Washington officials of course couldn’t say that they were intervening to block social change, so they called it fighting communism, fighting a communist conspiracy, and of course fighting for freedom and democracy.

Just like now the White House can’t say that it invaded Iraq to expand the empire, or for the oil, or for the corporations, or for Israel, so it says it’s fighting terrorism.

The word “communist” was used exceptionally loosely during the Cold War, just as the word “terrorist” is used these days; or “al-Qaeda” — almost every individual or group that Washington wants to stigmatize is charged with being a member of al-Qaeda, as if there’s a precise and meaningful distinction between people retaliating against American imperialism while being a member of al-Qaeda and people retaliating against American imperialism while not being a member of al-Qaeda; as if al-Qaeda gives out membership cards to fit into your wallet, as if there are chapters of al-Qaeda that put out a weekly newsletter, and hold a potluck on the first Monday of each month.

U.S. policies keep creating new anti-American terrorists, whom Washington calls al-Qaeda, which justifies continuing the same policies to fight the new al-Qaeda terrorists.

They’re just more word games to dazzle you and throw you off the scent.

Both Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama love the idea of the empire.

Each of them looks forward to being the new emperor.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Final Examinations Commence Today...A Beginning Or An End?

May 14, 2008 by Sahar IIS [Baghdad] washingtonbureau.typepad.com/iraq/

On the first day of the final exams, at work, translating an article about the difficulties that are expected to face students during their exams, my phone rings.

"MOM! There was an explosion near to our school! Some of the boys ran to see – but I remembered what you told me about them coming in twos and kept walking. But I took photos of the smoke – Mom, do you think many people were hurt?"

It was my son.

A wave swept over me. I closed my eyes for a second and took a deep – shuddering – breath and answered him, "Well done, habibi. Abu Ahmed will be waiting for you around the corner, don't go home, just come straight here."

I didn't want to think of the outcome of an explosion so near to a boy's school at the time they were all going home.

Ten minutes later, my phone rings again.

"Hello, Khala (aunty), please tell me that your son is OK!" A young friend of the family, a doctor who works in the nearby hospital.

"Yes, alhamdu lillah – he called me after the explosion. You please tell me that none of the school boys were hurt."

"The first explosion was just a trap to catch their attention. Many boys walked towards the site out of curiosity. It was only after there was quite a group surrounding the burning car that the second explosion went off. It was terrible."

A second explosion!

A second explosion near by! Oh my God!

I pick up my cell and I try to ring him. My fingers wouldn't work the buttons. I try again and again – and finally, it rings! But there is no answer.

Again and again I ring – and I get "it's either switched off or out of coverage... I feel myself slip into a vortex of possibilities. Is he gone? Have I lost him too? His big brown eyes – his narrow face – his typical teenage silliness, like a slide film in front of my eyes.

His laugh, his serious frown, his strong shoulders ... No, no - that was Mazin, my other son. A tidal wave of tears flow down my face – NO! Not again!

I find myself sitting in my chair, with a buzzing sound growing louder and louder in my ears. I look up. The monitor of the entrance is in front of me. I stare at it and wait.

And wait.

And wait.

And I don't know how many centuries later I see him at the entrance! He is alive! He looks up at the camera and waves!

OH! How dear he is! OH! How I hugged him until I nearly crushed him! How I love the way he is pushing me away in embarrassment, his mom is hugging him and kissing him in the newsroom! When I wouldn't be pushed away, his worried eyes look deep into mine, "MOM, is anything the matter?"

HOW am I going to tell him that some of his school mates may have been hurt in the explosion? Some may even be killed – I don't know yet.

And HOW am I going to send him to take his next exam??

My son survived – this time. God help the mothers, the fathers, the sisters and brothers of the boys who got hurt, or who may have died.

It is said that God, almighty, will not look straight into the eyes of a mother who has gone through the pain of losing a son (or daughter), her pain is so great.

How many women in Iraq will not see the gaze of the almighty on judgment day??

And who will be held accountable for their pain?

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

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

Troops Invited:

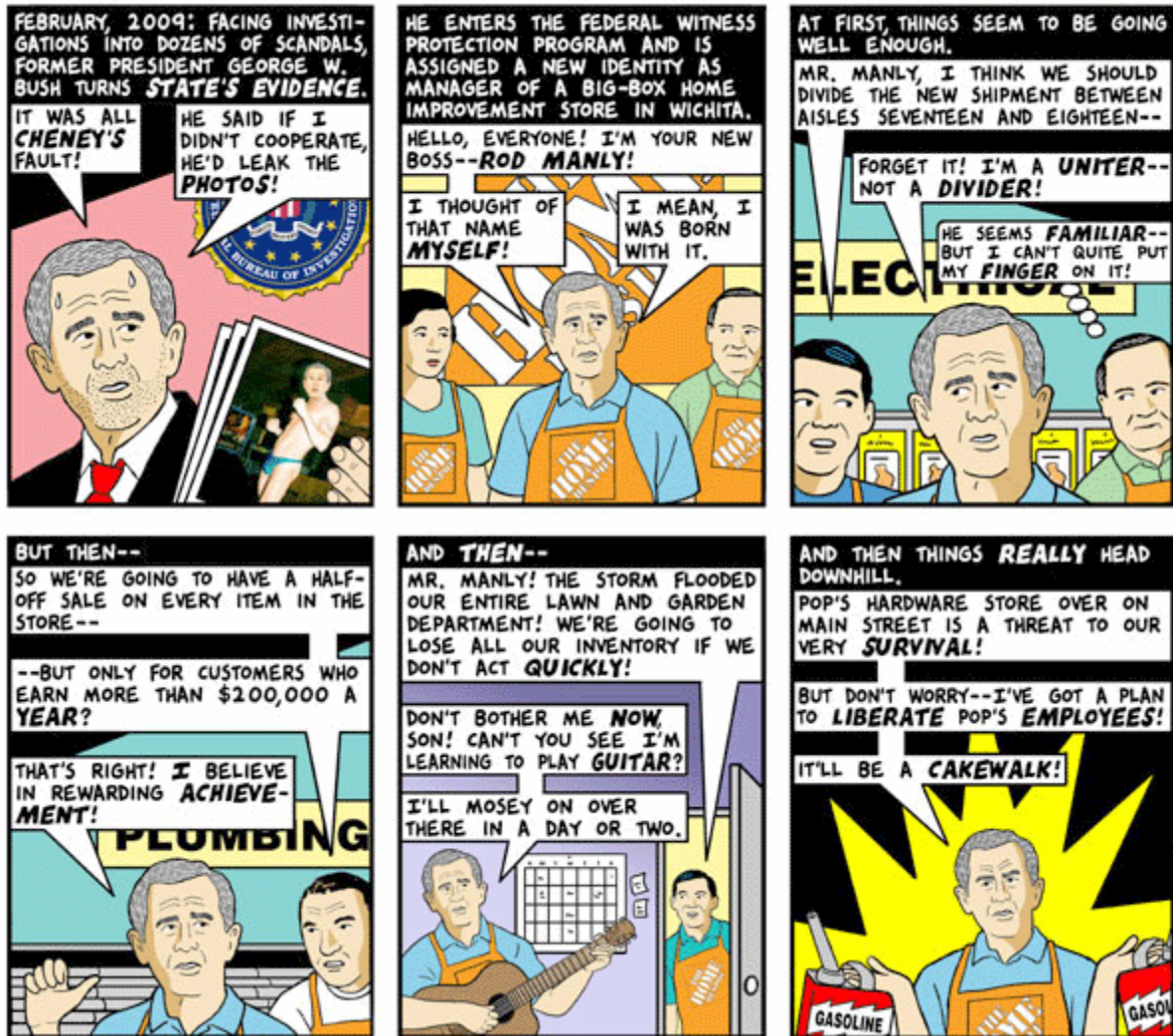
What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email

contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

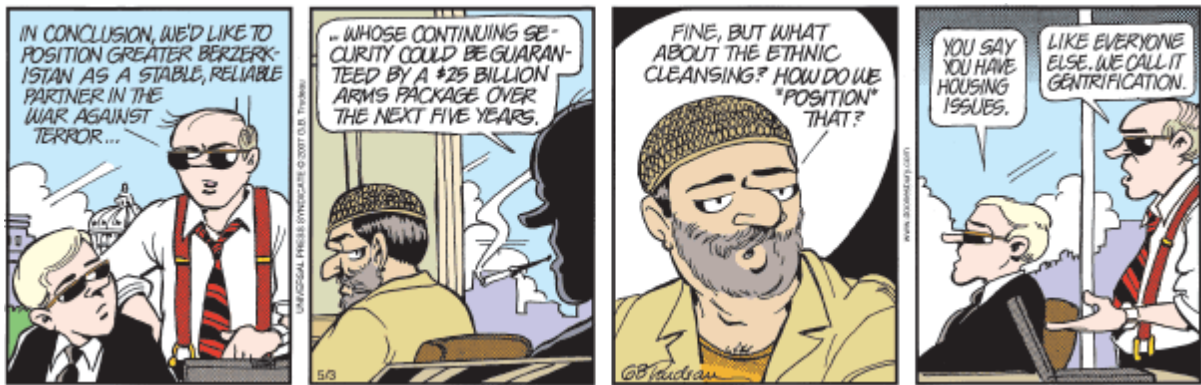
**GI SPECIALS BY MAIL FREE FOR
ACTIVE DUTY TROOPS**

IF YOU WISH TO HAVE A SELECTION OF GI SPECIALS MAILED TO YOU, EMAIL YOUR ADDRESS TO: CONTACT@MILITARYPROJECT.ORG OR DROP A LINE TO: BOX 126, 2576 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10025-5657 USA. 917.677.8057

Please say how many you wish sent.

NOTE WELL: They will all be different issues of GI Special to satisfy DOD regs that you may possess copies, *provided you don't have more than one of the same issue.*

CLASS WAR REPORTS



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

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.