

GI SPECIAL 6F10:

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY



FROM

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'George W. Bush'.

GEORGE W. BUSH

LAJO
ALCARRAZ
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6/10

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Escondido Soldier Killed In Iraq



Cody Legg

June 6, 2008 By MARK WALKER, Staff Writer, North County Times

ESCONDIDO ---- U.S. Army Sgt. Cody Legg has been killed in fighting in Iraq, just a few days after returning to his unit following a visit with his family in Escondido.

Legg, 23, died in the city of Tikrit on Wednesday from wounds suffered during fighting in the nearby city of Sharqat about 200 miles northwest of Baghdad, the Defense Department announced Friday.

At the family home, Legg's father, David, said his son relished his life as a soldier and the men and women he served with.

"He loved his country, he loved being in the Army and the people that he led in his platoon," he said. "They were his family."

Two other men from his unit also died Wednesday when their squad was attacked by small arms fire and hand grenades, the Defense Department said. Also killed were Sgt. Shane P. Duffy, 22, of Taunton, Mass., and Spc. Jonathan D. Emard, 20, of Mesquite, Texas.

The three 10th Mountain Division infantrymen were assigned to the 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Team based at Fort Drum, N.Y.

Legg's father, a physical education teacher and baseball coach at Vista Murrieta High School in Murrieta, said he was at work when he got word that his son had been killed.

"It's the visit you don't want to get," he said. "I was just kind of numb. At first, you don't believe it."

Cody Legg was born in San Diego and graduated from San Pasqual High School in Escondido in 2003, where he played on the baseball team as a catcher and outfielder.

He entered the Army shortly after graduating and was on his second assignment in Iraq when he died.

Legg spent much of May with his family and friends while home on a 21-day leave, his father said.

"He just did a lot of hanging out with his buddies and going to Disneyland and Padre games," David Legg said.

The two never spent a lot of time talking about the war, David Legg said, adding that he knew his son was committed to the U.S. involvement in Iraq.

"The young man will forever be my hero for being willing to do what he did," his father said. "He made the ultimate sacrifice."

His survivors include his mother and father and a stepmother and five stepbrothers.

Legg is the fourth Escondido resident to die in the Iraq war. The first to die was Marine Lance Cpl. Jesus Suarez del Solar, 20, who died on March 29, 2003, just days after the U.S. invasion.

On April 17, 2004, Marine Capt. Richard Gannon II, 31, was killed. Less than two weeks later, Army Spc. James L. Beckstrand, 27, was killed in fighting on April 29.

As of Friday, 4,092 service members have been killed in Iraq, according to a tally kept by the Associated Press.

The dead include at least 350 troops from Camp Pendleton and 10 troops from Miramar Marine Corps Airbase.

Iraqi Soldiers Find 90 Rockets, U.S. Unmanned Drone In Baghdad **[Associated Press Headline 6.15.08]**



Unmanned Drone found in Baghdad. [Photo: Clapso.files.wordpress.com]

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Bush's Hand-Puppet Threatens To Send Non-Existent Afghan Army Off To Attack Pakistan;

Silly Man Also Says When Militants Kill Afghans, His Forces Can “Do The Same”



Silly Man Karzai: Crazy as a shit-house rat. [AP]

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

June 15, 2008 AP

Kabul: Afghan President Hamid Karzai on Sunday issued a warning to militants in Pakistan, saying he will send Afghan troops across the border to combat Taliban insurgents.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Yousuf Raza responded by saying that Pakistan will not allow anyone to interfere in its internal affairs.

The Afghanistan leader said that when militants cross over from Pakistan and kill Afghans, Afghan forces have "the right to do the same."

Resistance Attacks On Occupation Troops Up 50% In April; “Attacks Have Grown More Complex”

June 15, 2008 By Ann Scott Tyson, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

The outgoing top U.S. military commander in Afghanistan [Gen. Dan K. McNeill] said Friday that attacks increased 50 percent in April in the country's eastern region ...

Overall violence has increased and attacks have grown more complex, according to the data and U.S. military officials.

The number of roadside bombs increased from 1,931 in 2006 to 2,615 last year.

Attacks peaked during the months of the warm weather fighting season, with more than 400 in the peak month of 2005, more than 800 in 2006, and about 1,000 in 2007.

Troop numbers are low compared with the size of the insurgency, which includes many part-time fighters.

There are an estimated 5,000 to 20,000 Taliban fighters in Afghanistan, plus an estimated 1,000 each for the insurgent groups led by Siraj Haqqani and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, according to ISAF intelligence.

The outgoing top U.S. military commander in Afghanistan said Friday that attacks increased 50 percent in April in the country's eastern region ...

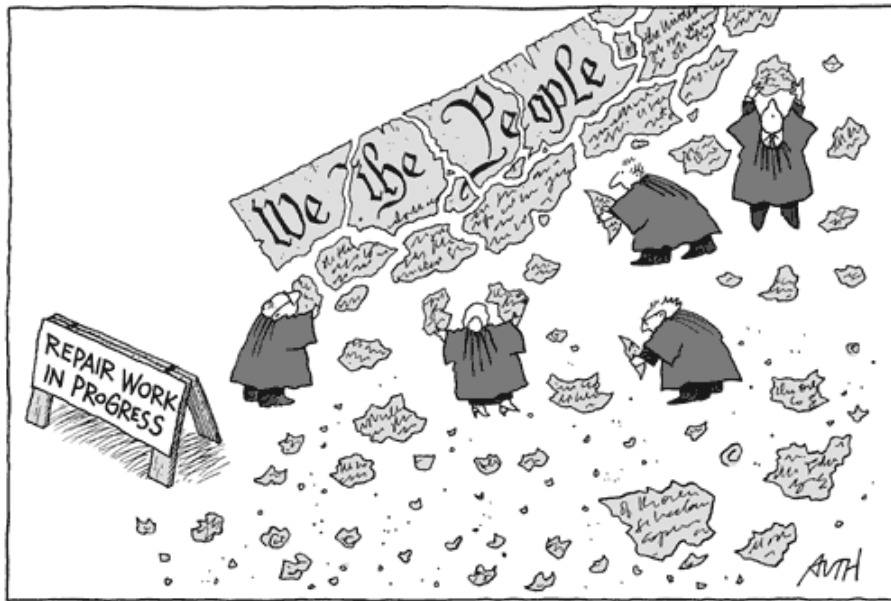
REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: ALL HOME NOW



A U.S. Marine from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, is seen during a patrol near Taliban positions, outside the town of Garmser, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, Saturday, May 3, 2008. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)

TROOP NEWS

Supreme Court Rules “Detainees Held For Years At Guantanamo Bay In Cuba Have The Right To Appeal To U.S. Civilian Courts To Challenge Their Indefinite Imprisonment Without Charges”



6-15-08 AP PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, WASHINGTON POST

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in, with the cartoon above. She writes:

“Gee, who woulda thunk it?

“The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that prisoners at Guantanamo have rights under the U.S. Constitution to challenge their detention in U.S. civil courts.

“Since the whole point of Gitmo was to circumvent courts and the constitution, there is no point to its further existence.”

June 12, 2008 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP) -- In a stinging rebuke to President Bush's policies, a deeply divided Supreme Court ruled Thursday that foreign detainees held for years at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba have the right to appeal to U.S. civilian courts to challenge their indefinite imprisonment without charges.

The ruling itself won't result in any immediate releases.

The decision also cast doubt on the future of the military war crimes trials that 19 detainees, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and four other alleged Sept. 11 plotters, are facing so far. The Pentagon has said it plans to try as many as 80 men held at Guantanamo.

Lawyers for detainees differed over whether the ruling, unlike the first two, would lead to prompt hearings for those who have not been charged. Roughly 270 men remain at the prison at the U.S. naval base in Cuba.

Charles Swift, the former Navy lawyer who used to represent Hamdan, said he believes the court removed any legal basis for keeping the Guantanamo facility open and that the military tribunals are "doomed."

Guantanamo generally and the tribunals were conceived on the idea that "constitutional protections wouldn't apply," Swift said.

"The court said the Constitution applies. They're in big trouble."

The prison has been harshly criticized at home and abroad for the detentions themselves and the aggressive interrogations that were conducted there.

At its heart, the 70-page ruling says that the detainees have the same rights as anyone else in custody in the United States to contest their detention before a judge.

Kennedy also said the system the administration has put in place to classify detainees as enemy combatants and review those decisions is not an adequate substitute for the right to go before a civilian judge.

The administration had argued first that the detainees have no rights.

But it also contended that the classification and review process was sufficient.

[Justice David] Souter wrote a separate opinion in which he emphasized the length of the detentions.

"A second fact insufficiently appreciated by the dissents is the length of the disputed imprisonments; some of the prisoners represented here today having been locked up for six years," Souter said.

"Hence the hollow ring when the dissenters suggest that the court is somehow precipitating the judiciary into reviewing claims that the military ... could handle within some reasonable period of time."

The court has ruled twice previously that people held at Guantanamo without charges can go into civilian courts to ask that the government justify their continued detention. Each time, the administration and Congress, then controlled by Republicans, changed the law to try to close the courthouse doors to the detainees.

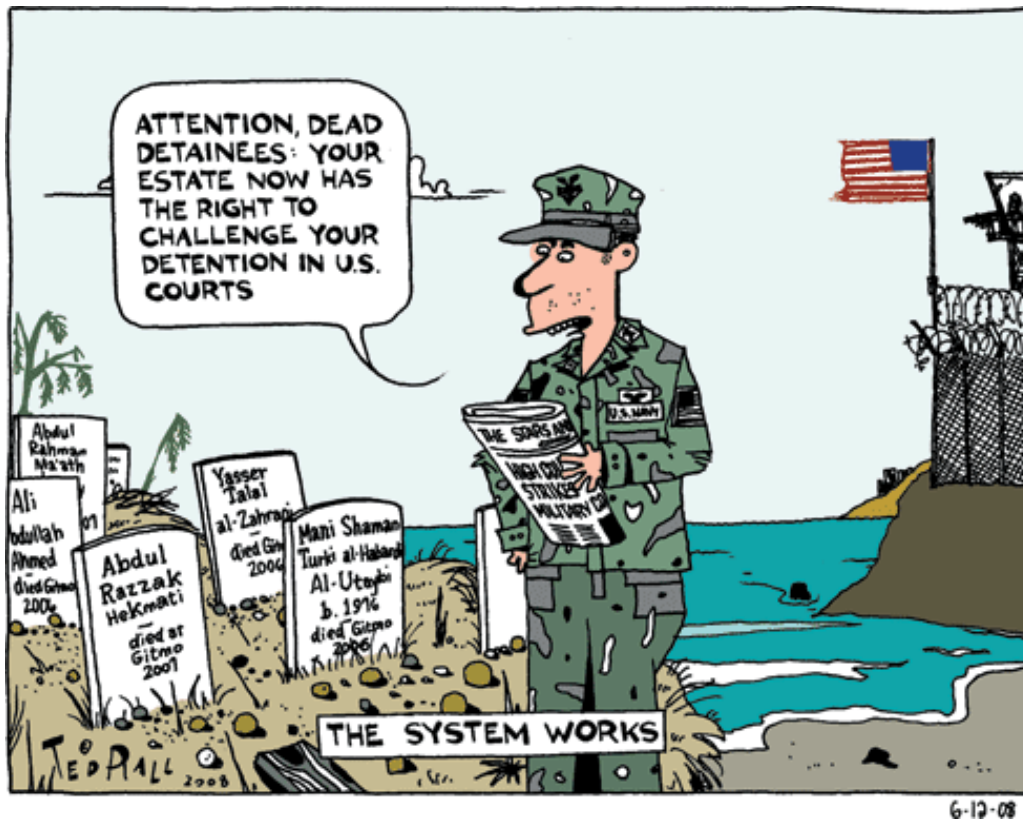
The court specifically struck down a provision of the Military Commissions Act of 2006 that denies Guantanamo detainees the right to file petitions of habeas corpus.

Habeas corpus is a centuries-old legal principle, enshrined in the Constitution, that allows courts to determine whether a prisoner is being held illegally.

The head of the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights, which represents dozens of prisoners at Guantanamo, welcomed the ruling.

"The Supreme Court has finally brought an end to one of our nation's most egregious injustices," said CCR Executive Director Vincent Warren.

"By granting the writ of habeas corpus, the Supreme Court recognizes a rule of law established hundreds of years ago and essential to American jurisprudence since our nation's founding."



MORE:

Guantanamo:

The Faultless Blending Of Terror And Stupidity: Dozens Of Men, Perhaps Hundreds. Imprisoned “On The Basis Of Flimsy Or Fabricated Evidence, Old Personal Scores Or Bounty Payments”

An eight-month McClatchy investigation in 11 countries on three continents has found that Akhtiar was one of dozens of men — and, according to several officials, perhaps hundreds — whom the U.S. has wrongfully imprisoned in Afghanistan, Cuba and elsewhere on the basis of flimsy or fabricated evidence, old personal scores or bounty payments.

June 14, 2008 By Tom Lasseter, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

GARDEZ, Afghanistan — The militants crept up behind Mohammed Akhtiar as he squatted at the spigot to wash his hands before evening prayers at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp.

They shouted "Allahu Akbar" — God is great — as one of them hefted a metal mop squeezer into the air, slammed it into Akhtiar's head and sent thick streams of blood running down his face.

Akhtiar was among the more than 770 terrorism suspects imprisoned at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

They are the men the Bush administration described as "the worst of the worst."

But Akhtiar was no terrorist.

American troops had dragged him out of his Afghanistan home in 2003 and held him in Guantanamo for three years in the belief that he was an insurgent involved in rocket attacks on U.S. forces.

The Islamic radicals in Guantanamo's Camp Four who hissed "infidel" and spat at Akhtiar, however, knew something his captors didn't: The U.S. government had the wrong guy.

"He was not an enemy of the government, he was a friend of the government," a senior Afghan intelligence officer told McClatchy.

Akhtiar was imprisoned at Guantanamo on the basis of false information that local anti-government insurgents fed to U.S. troops, he said.

An eight-month McClatchy investigation in 11 countries on three continents has found that Akhtiar was one of dozens of men — and, according to several officials, perhaps hundreds — whom the U.S. has wrongfully imprisoned in Afghanistan, Cuba and elsewhere on the basis of flimsy or fabricated evidence, old personal scores or bounty payments.

McClatchy interviewed 66 released detainees, more than a dozen local officials — primarily in Afghanistan — and U.S. officials with intimate knowledge of the detention program. The investigation also reviewed thousands of pages of U.S. military tribunal documents and other records.

This unprecedented compilation shows that most of the 66 were low-level Taliban grunts, innocent Afghan villagers or ordinary criminals.

At least seven had been working for the U.S.-backed Afghan government and had no ties to militants, according to Afghan local officials. In effect, many of the detainees posed no danger to the United States or its allies.

The investigation also found that despite the uncertainty about whom they were holding, U.S. soldiers beat and abused many prisoners.

Prisoner mistreatment became a regular feature in cellblocks and interrogation rooms at Bagram and Kandahar air bases, the two main way stations in Afghanistan en route to Guantanamo.

While he was held at Afghanistan's Bagram Air Base, Akhtiar said, "When I had a dispute with the interrogator, when I asked, 'What is my crime?' the soldiers who took me back to my cell would throw me down the stairs."

The McClatchy reporting also documented how U.S. detention policies fueled support for extremist Islamist groups.

For some detainees who went home far more militant than when they arrived, Guantanamo became a school for jihad, or Islamic holy war.

Of course, Guantanamo also houses Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the alleged mastermind of the Sept. 11 attacks, who along with four other high-profile detainees faces military commission charges. Cases also have been opened against 15 other detainees for assorted offenses, such as attending al Qaida training camps.

But because the Bush administration set up Guantanamo under special rules that allowed indefinite detention without charges or federal court challenge, it's impossible to know how many of the 770 men who've been held there were terrorists.

One former administration official said the White House's initial policy and legal decisions "probably made instances of abuse more likely. ... My sense is that decisions taken at the top probably sent a signal that the old rules don't apply ... certainly some people read what was coming out of Washington: The gloves are off, this isn't a Geneva world anymore."

Like many others who previously worked in the White House or Defense Department, the official spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the legal and political sensitivities of the issue.

McClatchy's interviews are the most ever conducted with former Guantanamo detainees by a U.S. news organization. The issue of detainee backgrounds has previously been reported on by other media outlets, but not as comprehensively.

McClatchy also in many cases did more research than either the U.S. military at Guantanamo, which often relied on secondhand accounts, or the detainees' lawyers, who relied mainly on the detainees' accounts.

LITTLE INTELLIGENCE VALUE

The McClatchy investigation found that top Bush administration officials knew within months of opening the Guantanamo detention center that many of the prisoners there weren't "the worst of the worst."

From the moment that Guantanamo opened in early 2002, former Secretary of the Army Thomas White said, it was obvious that at least a third of the population didn't belong there.

Of the 66 detainees whom McClatchy interviewed, the evidence indicates that 34 of them, about 52 percent, had connections with militant groups or activities.

At least 23 of those 34, however, were Taliban foot soldiers, conscripts, low-level volunteers or adventure-seekers who knew nothing about global terrorism.

Only seven of the 66 were in positions to have had any ties to al Qaida's leadership, and it isn't clear that any of them knew any terrorists of consequence.

If the former detainees whom McClatchy interviewed are any indication — and several former high-ranking U.S. administration and defense officials said in interviews that they are — most of the prisoners at Guantanamo weren't terrorist masterminds but men who were of no intelligence value in the war on terrorism.

Far from being an ally of the Taliban, Mohammed Akhtiar had fled to Pakistan shortly after the puritanical Islamist group took power in 1996, the senior Afghan intelligence officer told McClatchy. The Taliban burned down Akhtiar's house after he refused to ally his tribe with their government.

The Americans detained Akhtiar, the intelligence officer said, because they were given bad information by another Afghan who'd harbored a personal vendetta

against Akhtiar going back to his time as a commander against the Soviet military during the 1980s.

"In some of these cases, tribal feuds and political feuds have played a big role" in people getting sent to Guantanamo, the intelligence officer said.

He didn't want his name used, partly because he didn't want to offend the Western officials he works with and partly because Afghan intelligence officers are assassinated regularly.

"There were Afghans being sent to Guantanamo because of bad intelligence," said Helaluddin Helal, Afghanistan's deputy interior minister for security from 2002 to early 2004. "In the beginning, everyone was trying to give intelligence to the Americans ... the Americans were taking action without checking this information."

Nusrat Khan was in his 70s when American troops shoved him into an isolation cell at Bagram in the spring of 2003. They blindfolded him, put earphones on his head and tied his hands behind his back for almost four weeks straight, Khan said.

By the time he was taken out of the cell, Khan — who'd had at least two strokes years before he was arrested and was barely able to walk — was half-mad and couldn't stand without help. Khan said that he was taken to Guantanamo on a stretcher.

Several Afghan officials, including the country's attorney general, later said that Khan, who spent more than three years at Guantanamo, wasn't a threat to anyone; he'd been turned in as an insurgent leader because of decades-old rivalries with competing Afghan militias.

Ghalib Hassan was an Interior Ministry-appointed district commander in Afghanistan's Nangarhar province, a man who'd risked his life to help the U.S.-backed government. Din Mohammed, the former governor of that province and now the governor of Kabul, said there was no question that local tribal leaders, offended by Hassan's brusque style, fed false information about him to local informants used by American troops.

The Pentagon declined requests to make top officials, including the secretary of defense, available to respond to McClatchy's findings.

The defense official in charge of detainee affairs, Sandra Hodgkinson, refused to speak with McClatchy.

The Pentagon's only response to a series of written questions from McClatchy, and to a list of 63 of the 66 former detainees interviewed for this story, was a three-paragraph statement.

"These unlawful combatants have provided valuable information in the struggle to protect the U.S. public from an enemy bent on murder of innocent civilians," Col. Gary Keck said in the statement. He provided no examples.

Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby, until recently the commanding officer at Guantanamo, said that detainees had supplied crucial information about al Qaida, the Taliban and other terrorist groups.

"Included with the folks that were brought here in 2002 were, by and large, the main leadership of al Qaida and the Taliban," he said in a phone interview.

Buzby agreed, however, that some detainees were from the bottom rung.

"It's all about developing the mosaic ... there's value to both ends of the spectrum," he said.

Former senior U.S. defense and intelligence officials, however, said McClatchy's conclusions squared with their own observations.

"As far as intelligence value from those in Gitmo, I got tired of telling the people writing reports based on their interrogations that their material was essentially worthless," a U.S. intelligence officer said in an e-mail, using the military's slang for Guantanamo.

Guantanamo authorities periodically sent analysts at the U.S. Central Command "rap sheets on various prisoners and asked our assessment whether they merited continued confinement," said the analyst, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject.

"Over about three years, I assessed around 40 of these individuals, mostly Afghans. ... I only can remember recommending that ONE should be kept at GITMO."

'WAR COUNCIL' REWRITES DETAINEE LAW

At a Pentagon briefing in the spring of 2002, a senior Army intelligence officer expressed doubt about the entire intelligence-gathering process.

"He said that we're not getting anything, and his thought was that we're not getting anything because there might not be anything to get," said Donald J. Guter, a retired rear admiral who was the head of the Navy's Judge Advocate General's Corps at the time.

Many detainees were "swept up in the pot" by large operations conducted by Afghan troops allied with the Americans, said former Army Secretary White, who's now a partner at DKRW Energy, an energy company in Houston.

One of the Afghan detainees at Guantanamo, White recalled, was more than 80 years old.

Army Spc. Eric Barclais, who was a military intelligence interrogator at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan from September 2002 through January 2003, told military investigators in sworn testimony that "We recommended lots of folks be released from (Bagram), but they were not. I believe some people ended up at (Guantanamo) that had no business being sent there."

"You have to understand some folks were detained because they got turned in by neighbors or family members who were feuding with them," Barclais said.

"Yes, they had weapons. Everyone had weapons. Some were Soviet-era and could not even be fired."

A former Pentagon official told McClatchy that he was shocked at times by the backgrounds of men held at Guantanamo.

"Captured with weapon near the Pakistan border?" the official said. "Are you kidding me?"

"The screening, the understanding of who we had was horrible," he said. "That's why we had so many useless people at Gitmo."

In 2002, a CIA analyst interviewed several dozen detainees at Guantanamo and reported to senior National Security Council officials that many of them didn't belong there, a former White House official said.

Despite the analyst's findings, the administration made no further review of the Guantanamo detainees.

The White House had determined that all of them were enemy combatants, the former official said.

Rather than taking a closer look at whom they were holding, a group of five White House, Justice Department and Pentagon lawyers who called themselves the "War Council" devised a legal framework that enabled the administration to detain suspected "enemy combatants" indefinitely with few legal rights.

The group further argued that detainees had no legal right to defend themselves, and that American soldiers — along with the War Council members, their bosses and Bush — should be shielded from prosecution for actions that many experts argue are war crimes.

With the support of Bush, Cheney and then-Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, the group shunted aside the military justice system, and in February 2002, Bush suspended the legal protection for detainees spelled out in Common Article Three of the 1949 Geneva Convention on prisoners of war, which outlaws degrading treatment and torture.

The Bush administration didn't launch a formal review of the detentions until a 2004 Supreme Court decision forced it to begin holding military tribunals at Guantanamo. The Supreme Court ruling last week said that the tribunals were deeply flawed, but it didn't close them down.

In late 2004, Pentagon officials decided to restrict further interrogations at Guantanamo to detainees who were considered "high value" for their suspected knowledge of terrorist groups or their potential of returning to the battlefield, according to Matthew Waxman, who was the deputy assistant secretary of defense for detainee affairs, the Defense Department's head official for detainee matters, from August 2004 to December 2005.

"Maybe three-quarters of the detainees by 2005 were no longer regularly interrogated," said Waxman, who's now a law professor at Columbia University.

At that time, about 500 men were still being held at Guantanamo.

So far, the military commissions have publicly charged only six detainees — less than 1 percent of the more than 770 who've been at Guantanamo — with direct involvement in the 9-11 terrorist attacks; they dropped the charges in one case. Those few cases are now in question after the high court's ruling Thursday.

About 500 detainees — nearly two out of three — have been released.

During a military review board hearing at Guantanamo, Mohammed Akhtiar had some advice for the U.S. officers seated before him.

"I wish," he said, "that the United States would realize who the bad guys are and who the good guys are."

HOW FOOT SOLDIERS, FARMERS GOT SWEEPED UP

How did the United States come to hold so many farmers and goat herders among the real terrorists at Guantanamo?

Among the reasons:

After conceding control of the country to U.S.-backed Afghan forces in late 2001, top Taliban and al Qaida leaders escaped to Pakistan, leaving the battlefield filled with ragtag groups of volunteers and conscripts who knew nothing about global terrorism.

The majority of the detainees taken to Guantanamo came into U.S. custody indirectly, from Afghan troops, warlords, mercenaries and Pakistani police who often were paid cash by the number and alleged importance of the men they handed over.

Foot soldiers brought in hundreds of dollars, but commanders were worth thousands.

Because of the bounties — advertised in fliers that U.S. planes dropped all over Afghanistan in late 2001 — there was financial incentive for locals to lie about the detainees' backgrounds.

Only 33 percent of the former detainees — 22 out of 66 — whom McClatchy interviewed were detained initially by U.S. forces. Of those 22, 17 were Afghans who'd been captured around mid-2002 or later as part of the peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan, a fight that had more to do with counter-insurgency than terrorism.

American soldiers and interrogators were susceptible to false reports passed along by informants and officials looking to settle old grudges in Afghanistan, a nation that had experienced more than two decades of occupation and civil war before U.S. troops arrived.

This meant that Americans were likely to arrest Afghans who had no significant connections to militant groups.

For example, of those 17 Afghans whom the U.S. captured in mid-2002 or later, at least 12 of them were innocent of the allegations against them, according to interviews with Afghan intelligence and security officials.

Detainees at Guantanamo had no legal venue in which to challenge their detentions.

The only mechanism set up to evaluate their status, an internal tribunal in the late summer of 2004, rested on the decisions of rotating panels of three U.S. military officers.

The tribunals made little effort to find witnesses who weren't present at Guantanamo, and detainees were in no position to challenge the allegations against them.

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

“London Hates George Bush!” Imperial Police Thugs Block Whitehall & “Beat Back” Peaceful Demonstrators

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, The Military Project, who sent this in. He writes:

It was a fantastic loud and lively peaceful Demo today to protest that Filthy Murdering Pig War Criminal's visit to London - nothing like the 2 million who marched on Downing Street hoping to stop the War in Iraq but nevertheless very effective –

Never has permission been denied to march down Whitehall but the Metropolitan Police would not allow today's protest march - no question Washington had a big

part to play in today's decision to deny our democratic right to protest - several protesters were attacked by the police and seriously injured - London hates George Bush!

16/06/2008 Telegraph Media Group Limited [UK]

President Bush's arrival at Downing Street triggered violent confrontations between police and anti-war protestors in Westminster.

Police had to beat back the crowd of approximately 2,500 demonstrators in Parliament Square with batons as they attempted to breach barricades and march on Whitehall, to Downing Street.

Riot officers with shields and helmets, as well as officers on horse back, were called in to increase the police presence.

One protester Suzanna Wylie, 29, was left bleeding from a head injury after being hit by a police baton.

She said: "I've been on lots of demonstrations before and every one of the Stop the War demonstrations have been peaceful.

"This time because Bush is here, specifically because Bush is here, because of his own security arrangements, they won't let us demonstrate."

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 mighty are only mighty because we are on our knees. Let us rise!"
-- Camille Desmoulins**

**"When someone says my son died fighting for his country, I say, "No, the suicide bomber who killed my son died fighting for his country."
-- Father of American Soldier Chase Beattie, KIA in Iraq**

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

“The Head-Fixing Industry Cannot Tell You The Truth, They Cannot Tell You That American Troops Were Violently Against The War And The Officers That Tried To Lead Them Into Battle”

“The Troops Could No Longer Be Used As A Fighting Force; They Had To Be Brought Home”

“There’s No Way To End Your Own Oppression And Exploitation Without Collective Action, Collective Struggle, Joining With Other People To Change This World”

[1968: Year Of Revolutionary Hope]

Decide that you will not put up with injustice, oppression, exploitation, and war, that you’re not going to go quietly being processed to put up with all they want you to accept.

You have to know who you are, and which side are you on.

By Joel Geier, ISR Issue 59, May–June 2008

This article is based on a speech JOEL GEIER, associate editor of the ISR, gave at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on March 26, 2008. [Excerpts]

1968 WAS a year of revolutionary hope.

Most of the time people have little hope.

They accept or adapt to existing conditions around them, even miserable ones. They feel powerless; they don't think they can change things.

Most of the time revolutionaries are a small, marginalized minority, considered unrealistic and utopian. Revolution is seen as being impossible; people, we are told, are too apathetic or ignorant — they'll never fight back.

The working class has been bought off, it's fat and contented; so forget it, relax, enjoy your own life, that's the best you can hope for.

And then suddenly, unexpectedly, out of nowhere there are huge explosions from below, in which millions of people heroically engage in radical struggles that totally transform the world, politics, and themselves. They reach for revolutionary solutions to the oppressive conditions they live under, and large numbers of them come to revolutionary consciousness.

In this country, for example, tens of thousands of people thought of themselves as revolutionaries in the late 1960s.

By 1970, 3 million Americans, according to public opinion polls, believed that a revolution was necessary in the United States.

A majority of young Blacks identified with the Black Panther Party.

The mass opposition to the war, and the impact of the nature of the war they were fighting provided the context for a soldiers' revolt inside the American army.

It is difficult for people to understand that there was more opposition inside the American army to the war than there was on the college campuses.

Most history books are written as if this was just a student movement, and hide the rebellion of the American soldiers.

An organized and critically important opposition to the war existed inside the U.S. Army.

The head-fixing industry cannot tell you the truth, they cannot tell you that American troops were violently against the war and the officers that tried to lead them into battle, that within a few years of the Tet Offensive, a quarter of all the

American troops in Vietnam deserted or went AWOL, that those that stayed refused to engage in combat; that they mutinied, and killed their officers in what was called “fragging.”

A quarter of all the officers killed in Vietnam were killed by their own troops.

There was an immense radicalization of the American army.

There were dozens of antiwar groups and 300 underground antiwar newspapers inside the army. And those newspapers presented a radical and socialist analysis of the war.

This is from the Ft. Lewis Free Press: “In Vietnam the lifers, the brass, are the enemy, not the enemy,” or this from the Fort Ord Right-on Post: “We recognize the enemy. It’s the capitalists who see only profit. They control the military who send us off to die.”

The American army collapsed in the three years after the Tet Offensive.

The troops could no longer be used as a fighting force; they had to be brought home.

Since the defeat of the revolutionary wave that began in 1968 and ran until 1975, we have had thirty years of reaction.

One of the things that you’re told today is don’t be too radical, but the weakness of the Left of the 1960s was that it was not revolutionary enough, that it did not go all the way.

When you engage in radical struggle, if you don’t win, there’s going to be an attempt to take everything back, and there was.

In Chile and in Argentina, defeat led to military dictatorships, to the police going into the factories taking out the working-class vanguard and killing them to intimidate and destroy the workers’ movement.

In other places it didn’t go that far, but what we got here and internationally were thirty years of reaction—of the free market, of neoliberalism, and of sharply increased inequality.

We have had thirty years of an employers’ offensive, and all the reactionary politics tied up with it—opposition to abortion, to women’s liberation, to a woman’s right to control her body; and an attempt to push back all the gains of the civil rights movement, a union-busting attack on workers’ organizations and living standards.

A million Black men are in jail today, mostly on nonviolent drug charges. In terms of the criminal justice system things are more racist than they were under Jim Crow segregation.

Wages have not risen (in real terms) [adjusted for inflation] since 1973.

The rulers of this country were able to win—and have introduced their entire reactionary program.

For thirty years we've had to put up with it, but now things are starting to open up because they have another defeated war and they have an economic crisis on their hands that is the biggest thing in fifty to sixty years and they know it. This is not just a recession we are entering; but an enormous financial meltdown, and with it a crisis of the international capitalist system.

Years like 1968 come; 1968 was not the only revolutionary year. There was 1917. There was 1919. There was 1936. Those years come.

The question is whether people are prepared for them; whether they are prepared for when the conditions for an explosion exist—and I will tell you I think the conditions for an explosion exist in this country.

Lots of people think that everything is screwed up—everything.

They don't think that there's anything they can do about it, they don't know how you can change it, but they think that things are terrible, because they are terrible for them.

Millions of people are losing their homes; millions of people will lose their jobs. As I said, there hasn't been a wage increase in this country since 1973, even though the economy has tripled in size.

The rich, the employers, have gotten everything.

The possibility for an explosion exists.

That doesn't mean it's going to occur for some period of time.

Yet for the first time in years you can see a thoroughgoing repudiation of the Right, and the promises that Clinton and Obama make are to appeal to the change in consciousness, the shift to the left, among working people.

People are starting to have expectations that things will change.

They hope that.

We will see what happens when the Democrats come into power and how they actually handle the war and a serious recession, and what happens to peoples' expectations, whether they go further, whether they radicalize more.

We don't know when an explosion will come, but eventually an explosion will come.

In conditions that are miserable, where people are oppressed and exploited, there will be resistance. They will fight back, particularly when they think there's any chance whatsoever of there being some success.

And the question for all of us is, are we going to be ready for it?

All of us are called upon to make a decision. There's nobody who can liberate you but yourself. The first thing you have to do is liberate yourself; liberate your mind.

Decide that you will not put up with injustice, oppression, exploitation, and war, that you're not going to go quietly being processed to put up with all they want you to accept.

You have to know who you are, and which side are you on.

The second thing you have to know is that you cannot liberate yourself by yourself; you can only do it with other people.

There's no way to end your own oppression and exploitation without collective action, collective struggle, joining with other people to change this world.

And so all of you have to start thinking through what that means; how you're going to educate and train yourself to be effective movement organizers, to raise your own and other peoples' consciousness, to create the sort of effective organization and leadership that can lead to a successful liberation.

The lessons of 1968 are that we should be preparing now for the future explosion by building revolutionary working-class politics, leadership, and organization.

MORE:

**“I Am Familiar With The Person,
Sgt Parkinson, Noted In The First
Example Of Your Piece Soldiers In
Revolt”**

**“I Was In A Unit Commanded By Him
During Tet Of '68, In Early February”**

**“Sorry To Say It But I Can Easily
Understand Why He Was Fragged”**

From: H

To: GI Special

Sent: June 14, 2008 4:09 AM

Subject: In response to a post of 19 Dec 2006 - re fragging

I am familiar with the person, Sgt Parkinson, noted in the first example of your piece **Soldiers in Revolt**.

I was in a unit commanded by him during Tet of '68, in early February.

He was a madman.

Everyone hated his guts.

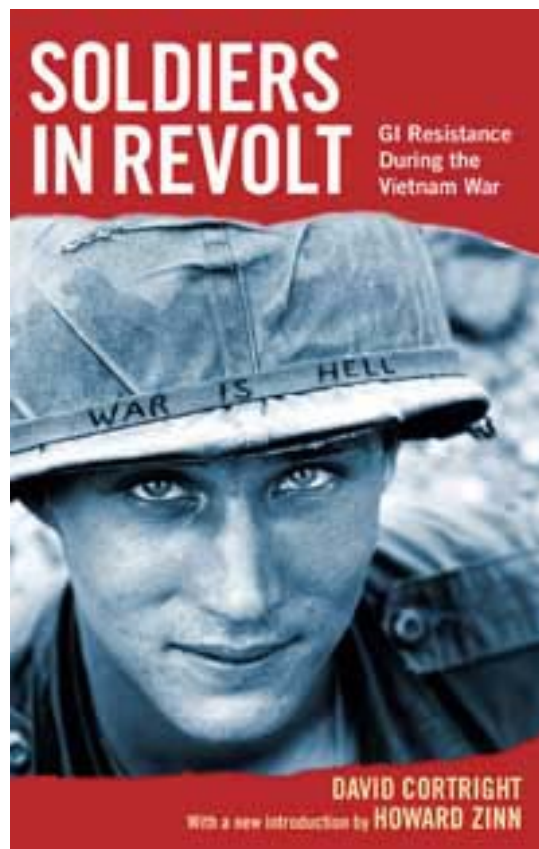
On one of our patrols he killed an elderly VN peasant man for the fun of watching him die.

Sorry to say it but I can easily understand why he was fragged.

It had nothing to do with a hopeless cause, although it was such.

His fragging was most likely about the man, not the cause, or lack of one.

At that time most of us did not yet realize that it was a hopeless cause.



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

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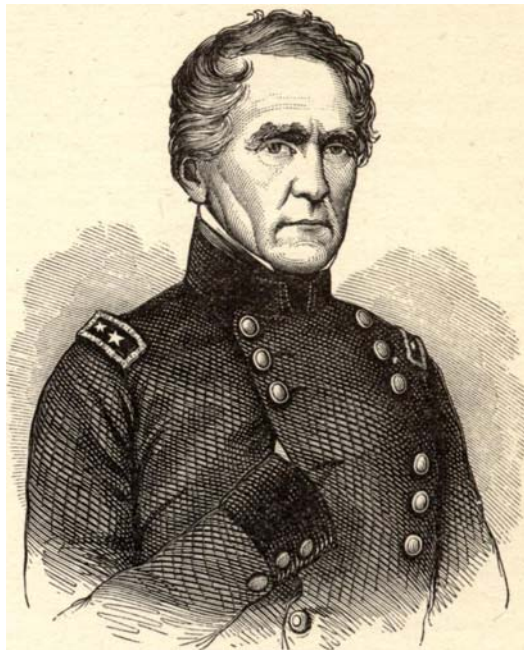
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Forward GI Special along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance 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

June 17, 1838: Anniversary On A Most Honorable Act By General John Wool Of The United States Army



General John Wool [Sonofthesouth.net]

Carl Bunin Peace History June 16-22

The Cherokee Nation began the 1,200-mile forced march known as the Trail of Tears.

Their removal from ancestral land in the southeast U.S. had been ordered by Pres. Andrew Jackson as the result of a treaty signed by a small minority of the tribe, and approved in the Senate by a one-vote margin.

Ordered to move on the Cherokee, General John Wool resigned his command in protest; Gen. Winfield Scott and 7000 troops moved in to enforce the treaty.

"The Trail Where They Cried" ("Nunna daul Tsuny" in the Cherokee language) led from northern Georgia to Oklahoma.

Along the way, an estimated 4,000 died from hunger, exposure and disease.



OCCUPATION REPORT

THE TERROR THAT COMES BY NIGHT



Foreign occupation soldier from the U.S. looks at an Iraqi citizens "papers" after breaking into their house during a night armed home invasion in a neighbourhood in Mosul June 13, 2008. REUTERS/Eduardo Munoz

Iraqi citizens have no right to resist home invasions by occupation soldiers from the USA. If they do, they may be arrested, wounded, or killed.

[There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and busting into their houses by force to arouse an intense desire to kill you in the patriotic, self-respecting civilians who live there.

[But your commanders know that, don't they? Don't they?]

"My sons and wife were very terrified," complained Muhannad Mihbas, 30, who said his brother and six cousins were taken in the sweeps. "Does the security plan mean arresting innocent people and scaring civilians at night?" BRIAN MURPHY, AP, Feb. 27, 2007

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

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

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

"The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops." Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

"The military are the final, essential weak point of Bush and Cheney." David McReynolds 9.29.07

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

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. (Photo: AFP/File/Jim Watson)

GI Special www.militaryproject.org

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



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