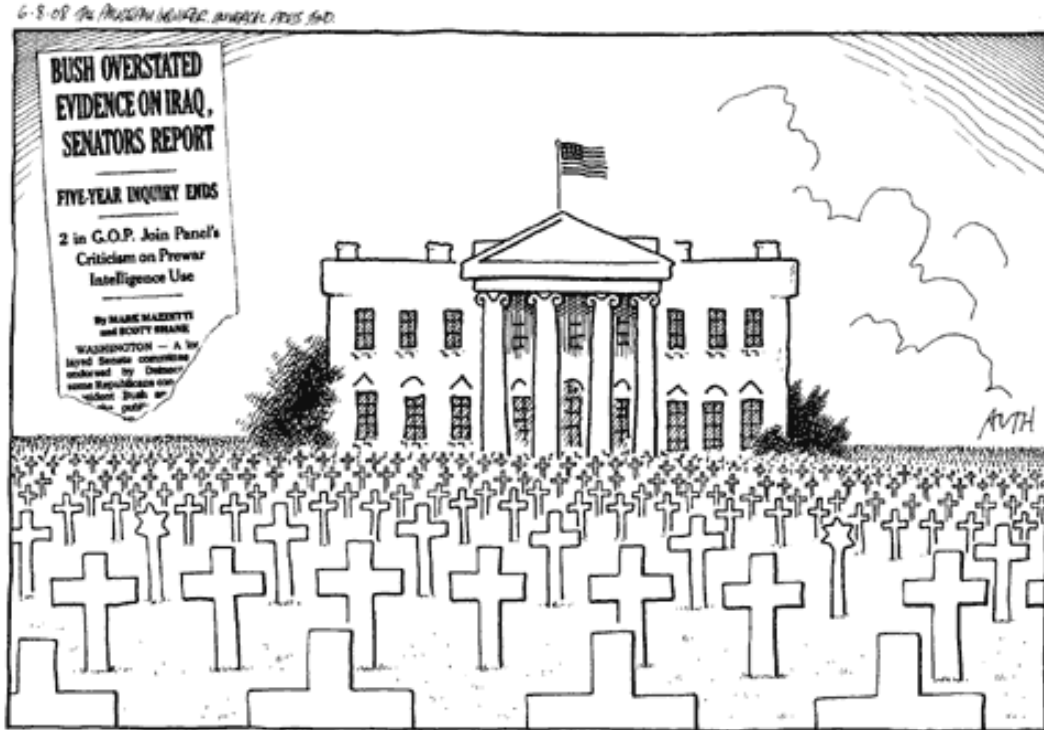


GI SPECIAL 6F6:



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

Looking Up And Down

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: June 06, 2008
Subject: Looking Up And Down 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

Looking Up And Down

We remember when you were so good looking
when you were all there, when your blue eyes

still twinkled, when you talked so smoothly
with the girls, told jokes like before
when we laughed and enjoyed life
remember at the bar when you hustled beers
with your pool stick and how we would sit there
buy our own drinks wishing we were like you
the parties we had and you would tell us
war stories and all the Iraqis you killed
when you would come back from another tour
tell us even more stories with your tattoo
that you would add more x's for Iraqis you killed
we all thought you were the baddest man in town
as we hung out together afraid of no one
but now everything has changed,
you have a deep scar by your eye
one of your legs is missing at the knee
you never smile or go to the bar anymore
instead you stay home and drink by yourself
you never laugh or cut up or joke anymore
you don't open your door or when you do
you tell us to leave, you're afraid to show
your face to the girls that come over
worst of all, you won't tell us what happened
you probably shot 20 of them
before they shot you, the town should have
a parade just for you, you should come with us
we will pay for more x's on your tattoo
go bar hopping like we did before
you don't have to worry, we will pay for all
of the drinks, but something is wrong
when we call you and you won't pick up
the phone, it just rings on and on
we don't care about your leg or the scar
on your face, you can show us all the medals
you received in that last battle
it must of been a good one
and you can tell us about it like before.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Merced Co. Soldier Killed In Iraq: Frank J. Gasper Was Two Weeks Into His Fourth Tour Of Duty

05/27/08 By Leslie Albrecht, Merced Sun-star

Merced County resident Sgt. Frank J. Gasper, 25, was killed in Iraq on Sunday, during his fourth tour of duty.

He died in Najaf when his vehicle hit an improvised explosive device, according to the Department of Defense. He was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group, Fort Carson, Colo.

Gasper was two weeks into his fourth tour in Iraq when he was killed, said his wife, Breanna Gasper. Two other soldiers in the vehicle were injured; Gasper was killed instantly, she said.

Gasper is the fourth Merced County service member to be killed in Iraq.

Breanna Gasper, 24, described her husband as a funny guy who loved telling animated stories of his time in Iraq, complete with sound effects and hand motions.

He loved muscle cars, driving big trucks, four-wheeling and going to the shooting range, she said.

Gasper, born on Veterans Day, joined the Army in 2002, in part because his uncles and cousins had served in the military.

"He just felt it was something he had to do," said Breanna Gasper.

She said her husband was committed to serving in Iraq, gladly returning for multiple deployments. "He would have it no other way," she said. "He felt like if he was over there he was actually helping someone. If anyone told him he couldn't go, he would fight to go over there."

Gasper planned to attend Green Berets training, then work for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency after leaving the Army, said Breanna Gasper.

His awards and commendations include three Army Commendation Medals, two Army Good Conduct Medals and a National Defense Service Medal.

Frank and Breanna Gasper both attended Golden Valley High School, graduating a year apart.

They were married in 2002, two months after Gasper enlisted.

Breanna Gasper said she last spoke to her husband Friday.

"He told me that he loved me. I told him that I was proud of him," she said.

"He said, 'I love you, Bunches, and I'll talk to you later.'" Bunches was his pet name for Breanna.

Sunday afternoon, Breanna Gasper saw two men in uniform from her husband's unit pull up outside her house near Fort Carson, Colo.

"I told myself, 'Please, don't let them come to my door,' " she said.

When the doorbell rang, she refused to let the soldiers in at first.

Eventually they entered the house and delivered the news that Sgt. Gasper had been killed earlier that day.

After Breanna Gasper learned of her husband's death, she watched a video he made for family and friends to watch in the event of his death. The video shows photos of Gasper set to the song "My Infinite Love" by George Strait.

Breanna Gasper said her husband chose the song as a message to his loved ones.

"Basically the lyrics are, whenever you see a shooting star, it's me," said Breanna Gasper.

"And if you get a feeling you can't explain, I want you to know it's me watching over you."

UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; ALL HOME NOW



U.S. Army soldiers from Third Armored Cavalry Regiment take cover behind their vehicles as they come under fire in Mosul, March 31, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

3 British Soldiers Killed Near Sangin Valley Base:

Bomb Takes British Death Toll In Afghanistan To 100

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

According to analysts of battlefield casualties, troops serving in Helmand had a one-in-36 chance of not surviving a six-month tour of duty.

During the Korean War, the death rate stood at one in 58. In Vietnam, it was one in 46; during the Falklands War it was one in 45.

9 June 2008 By Kim Sengupta, Independent.co.uk & Jun 8 By AMIR SHAH, Associated Press Writer

The grim milestone was expected but poignant, nevertheless, and raised fresh questions about a seemingly unending war with a rising toll of lives. Three soldiers were killed yesterday in Afghanistan bringing the number of British fatalities to 100.

The soldiers were killed in a bombing while on foot patrol less than a mile from their base in Afghanistan's Upper Sangin Valley, the British military said.

The latest casualties were from the 2nd Battalion, the Parachute Regiment.

The men had been on foot patrol in the upper Sangin valley in the heart of the killing fields of Helmand where ferocious battles had been fought out between British, NATO and Afghan forces and the Taliban.

Four soldiers injured were taken to the British base at Camp Bastion, where three of the men died from their injuries. The remaining survivor is expected to make a recovery.

It was the biggest single loss of life suffered by British troops in the country in enemy action since August last year, when three men from 1st Battalion, the Royal Anglian Regiment were killed when an American fighter dropped a 500lb bomb near their position.

The escalation in the ranks of those killed in the Afghan conflict, with many more injured, came after UK troops were deployed in large numbers in Helmand in the spring of 2006.

John Reid, the Defence Secretary at the time, declared that Britain hoped to finish its mission without a shot being fired in anger.

The following two years of combat saw more than five million rounds fired in what has been described as the fiercest fighting faced by British soldiers since the Korean War in the Fifties.

The youngest victim was Private Ben Ford, 18, from Chesterfield, Derbyshire, and the oldest was Senior Aircraftsman Gary Thompson, 51, from Nottingham, who was a father to five children.

According to analysts of battlefield casualties, troops serving in Helmand had a one-in-36 chance of not surviving a six-month tour of duty.

During the Korean War, the death rate stood at one in 58. In Vietnam, it was one in 46; during the Falklands War it was one in 45.

Amid the loss of life of British troops, more than 65 children had lost a father and one baby was even born weeks after her dad died.

Of the 97 victims, not including yesterday's three, 71 were killed by enemy fire or explosives, 62 from wounds so grievous they died on the battlefield. One accidentally shot himself, one took his own life and another was murdered by a drunken colleague. A further four were killed by friendly fire.

The single worst tragedy was the death of 14 airmen after an ageing Nimrod plane malfunctioned.

Soldier's Death Devastates Town



James Matthew Finley

June 3, 2008 By Jaime Baranyai, News-Leader

Lebanon -- James Matthew Finley's family recently received great news -- the soldier was coming home and might be stationed nearby.

But instead of planning a homecoming, funeral arrangements are being made.

The 21-year-old U.S. Army private, a 2005 graduate of Lebanon High School, was killed Saturday by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan near the town of Jalalabad.

"It was devastating," family friend Mike Palmer said, recalling his reaction when he got the news Saturday evening. "We sat there numb."

Finley, the oldest in a family of five, is the first from Lebanon to be killed in action, said Mayor C.P. Craig, a longtime friend of the Finley family.

“What makes it worse is they were scheduled to rotate home here in a few weeks,” Craig said. “He was looking forward to coming home and being back with his friends and his family.”

Palmer, a Lebanon High physical education teacher, had Finley in weight training classes and helped coach him on the football and wrestling teams. Two days after Finley's death, he struggled to find the words to describe the high school athlete. “He was very goal-oriented,” Palmer said. “He was always working hard to better himself. He always did what it took to get the job done.”

Which is exactly why Palmer wrote Finley a letter of recommendation for the military -- though now he almost wishes he hadn't.

Palmer, who attended church with the family at Heritage Baptist Temple where Finley's father is an associate pastor, said he was proud of the soldier. “He was excited to serve his country.”

Palmer said he especially enjoyed seeing Finley at Christmas following his tour in Iraq.

“The military had changed his life,” he said. “He was so mature.”

Craig, the mayor, spoke of Finley's dedication to the Army. “He had a solid sense of patriotism and a belief in God and country,” Craig said. “After high school he wanted to do something worthwhile and he thought joining the Army, particularly in this time of war, was the right thing to do.”

Rebecca Christal, who taught Finley in her Honors American History class during his junior year of high school, also recalled his patriotism. “Bless his heart ... he died for his country,” she said. “He made the ultimate sacrifice.”

That wasn't out of character for Finley, she said.

“He was the kind of kid who saw what needed to be done and got it done.”

Like other former teachers and family friends, Christal said Finley will be remembered for his kindness. “He was very, very nice,” she said. “He was very polite and very caring.”

Family friend Randy Sproat, who was Finley's drama teacher, also said he was kindhearted.

“He's like a big teddy bear,” said Sproat, who attended church with the Finleys and took part in family birthday celebrations. “He's got a big, warm heart.”

Sproat remembered Finley as someone who was always reaching out to others and “bringing lost kids into the group.”

Finley was about the only student in class who could effectively run the lights and sound, Sproat said. And although acting wasn't his focus, Finley and a friend did a hilarious version of the classic comedy routine "Who's on First?"

"That was a riot," Sproat said. "It was great to watch them put it together."

He said Finley was focused on the here and now instead of the future. His philosophy was "We're going to enjoy today and appreciate the moment," Sproat said. "He didn't worry about tomorrow or the next day."

Like many others, Sproat was having a hard time coping with the loss.

"You don't want to believe it," he said.

Christal said she was in shock Sunday when she learned of Finley's death at church.

"When I heard it yesterday my heart was broken for the family," she said Monday. "They have a big hole that will never be filled."

Christal said the close-knit family is well-known and very involved in the community. Finley's death made her stop and reflect.

"It makes you pause," she said. And it adds new meaning to the names of soldiers, killed in the war, that scroll across the television screen.

"It's not that you don't care, but to know that it's someone from your community makes it all the more real," she said. "It really brings it home."

Too close to home for many in Lebanon who knew Finley and his family well.

"As a community we feel a massive loss," Mayor Craig said. "James is the first local that has been killed in action and because he is a recent graduate, a lot of his friends are still here. His family has been here a long time and is prominent in the community, so there's a lot of people who know them."

Lebanon High School Principal Robert Smith echoed those sentiments.

"It hit us pretty hard," said Smith, who remembered Finley being an active student who was involved in sports. "He was a good kid from a good family. His parents were always involved."

Palmer said the hardest part about Finley's death is "the survivors having to survive."

They're the ones left with thoughts, memories, and questions, he said.

Sproat said the community has rallied around the Finleys as they grieve.

"They have a strong support system," he said. "They have a lot of people they can turn to."

Palmer added: "He has a great family and they're going to pull through together."

Funeral arrangements for Finley will be announced later this week.

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Insurgents Using Artillery On Bush-Backed Occupation Troops In Downtown Mogadishu

Jun 9 Reuters

In Mogadishu June 9, 2008, artillery battles between allied Ethiopian troops and Islamist insurgents killed at least 12 people on Sunday around Mogadishu's sprawling Bakara Market, residents said.

TROOP NEWS

Incidents Of Self-Harm Increasing: “There Are Some Soldiers Who Will Do Almost Anything Not To Go Back”

[Thanks to James Starowicz, Veterans For Peace, for posting.]

Jun 16, 2008 By Tony Dokoupil, NEWSWEEK

As an internist at New York's Mount Sinai Hospital, Dr. Stephanie Santos is used to finding odd things in people's stomachs. So last spring when a young man, identifying himself as an Iraq-bound soldier, said he had accidentally swallowed a pen at the bus station, she believed him. That is, until she found a second pen. It read 1-800-GREYHOUND.

Last summer, according to published reports, a 20-year-old Bronx soldier paid a hit man \$500 to shoot him in the knee on the day he was scheduled to return to Iraq.

The year before that, a 24-year-old specialist from Washington state escaped a second tour of duty, according to his sister, by strapping on a backpack full of tools and leaping off the roof of his house, injuring his spine.

Such cases of self-harm are a “rising trend” that military doctors are watching closely, says Col. Kathy Platoni, an Army Reserve psychologist who has worked with veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan.

“There are some soldiers who will do almost anything not to go back,” she says. Col. Elspeth Ritchie, the Army's top psychologist, agrees that we could see an uptick in intentional injuries as more U.S. soldiers serve long, repeated combat tours, “but we just don't have good, hard data on it.”

Intentional-injury cases are hard to identify, and even harder to prosecute. Fewer than 21 soldiers have been punitively discharged for self-harm since 2003, according to the military. What's worrying, however, is that American troops committed suicide at the highest rate on record in 2007—and the factors behind self-injury are similar: combat stress and strained relationships. “It's often the families that don't want soldiers to return to war,” says Ritchie.

Soldiers have long used self-harm as a rip cord to avoid war. During World War I, The American Journal of Psychiatry reported “epidemics of self-inflicted injuries,” hospital wards filled with men shot in a single finger or toe, as well as cases of pulled-out teeth, punctured eardrums and slashed Achilles' heels. Few doubt that the Korean and Vietnam wars were any different.

But the current war — fought with an overtaxed volunteer Army — may be the worst.

“Two Royal Navy Warships Have Been Left All At Sea - After Their Missiles Were Removed To Save Cash”

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

8/06/2008 Sunday Mirror [UK]

Two Royal Navy warships have been left all at sea - after their missiles were removed to save cash. The destroyers HMS Exeter and HMS Southampton have been working without their Sea Dart guided-missiles since Christmas.

HMS Exeter has since sailed to the Mediterranean twice and joined a NATO-led operation. The situation has provoked anger from defence sources who claim the Navy is suffering from short-term cost-cutting. Rear Admiral David Bawtree, former Commander of Portsmouth Naval Base, said: “It seems to be a sign of the times that there is a lack of willingness to spend money.”

General Order:



From: Modemand Guitar, The Military Project
To: GI Special
Sent: June 07, 2008
Subject: War Inc. was funny and profound

Has anyone else seen War Inc yet? I think it's going to be a major one (if it can ever get out of tinslow distro)

I got the following in my Myspace bulletins. I think I'm going to try and forward it far and wide for the obvious reasons.

Below are the words of our friend Sgt. Brent [XXXXXX] (pictured above):

“This is an issue I feel very strongly about and I am willing to defend.

“This process of outsourcing our military is becoming an alarming problem. Services our soldiers are fully capable of doing are being provided by these companies.

Our humvees here in Kosovo are OWNED by KBR. I think some folks are oblivious to this.”

PLEASE NOTICE THE KBR FLAG FLYING JUST BELOW THE AMERICAN FLAG.

We hope you also notice the forthright and fierce sense of justice of Brother Brent, because we damn well do -- and we had concerns for him, about our posting this picture and told him so – he told us not to worry about him and that, his mind was firm and he wanted to just see how far the deep and down in the rabbit hole we could go-- ... okay.



IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



(Graphic: London Financial Times)

Resistance Action

June 9 (Reuters)

BAGHDAD - An Iraqi soldier was killed when an Iraqi army convoy was hit by an explosion in the Rusafa district of Baghdad, the U.S. military said.

Insurgents killed a policeman while he was on a foot patrol in western Mosul, police said.

A roadside bomb killed an Iraqi army lieutenant, and wounded at least 12, when it exploded near an Iraqi army patrol in Karrada district, central Baghdad, police said.

A bomb exploded near a checkpoint controlled by a U.S.-paid neighbourhood patrol, killing one person and wounding three others in Tarmiya, 25 km (15 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Two Iraqi police officers were wounded when insurgents attacked their patrol car with a rocket-propelled grenade in the Shaab district of Baghdad, police said.

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

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

**“What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.”
Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.**

**“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**

**“It’s Evident That Ending The War
Will Not Come From The
Politicians In Washington”**

**“Ultimately It’s Going To Take The
Soldiers, Sailors, And Marines
Themselves Allied With The Anti-War
And Social Justice Movements To End
This War”**

**[An Interview With Navy Seaman Jonathan
Hutto, Co-Founder Of The Appeal For
Redress]**

Historically, it is not the politicians but the people and soldiers within the military who ended the war in Vietnam.

The power of the soldier's movement within was evident with the admission of Colonel Robert Heintz that the Army had collapsed and soldiers were mutinous and refusing combat.

June 6, 2008 By Erik Leaver, Foreign Policy In Focus [Excerpts].

Erik Leaver: As an active-duty soldier [wrong: Hutto is a Navy Seaman], the risk of forming the Appeal for Redress as well as writing this book must have been quite high. What motivated you to start the movement and then also write this book?

Jonathan Hutto: The risk was quite high. I vividly remember the day before we went public on October 23rd 2006 being on the phone with David Cortright and representatives from the Center on Conscience and War along with active duty members Liam Madden (Marines, Quantico in Virginia) and Linsay Burnett (Army, Fort Campbell in Kentucky).

Although we knew DOD directives protected our actions, we still understood we were going against an institutional culture which did not support activism among active duty.

My motivation to begin the Appeal was multi-fold.

Discovering and learning the history of the Vietnam GI Movement emboldened my desire to bond with others in the enlisted ranks in expressing my opposition to the Iraq War.

Writing the book was an opportunity to publicize to a larger audience and hopefully to motivate other active duty to get engaged in the Appeal and the movement for social justice as a whole.

Leaver: Is there a place for anti-war soldiers in the military?

Hutto: Yes, I am a witness! All military members take an oath to defend the Constitution. Taking this oath does not mean we have sacrificed our rights under that constitution. The practice of building democracy and equality should not end with one's induction into the armed forces.

Leaver: David Cortright's book, Soldiers in Revolt, about the active-duty soldiers' movement back during Vietnam clearly had a powerful effect on you and your colleagues. What's different about the movement now as opposed to the movement then?

Hutto: First, the birth of the GI Movement took place within a broader social justice movement throughout America and the entire world. The GI Movement is recorded to have started in the mid-1960's with the refusal of individual soldiers to report to Vietnam beginning with the individual resistance of Howard Levy, Larry Duncan, and a few others. This was at the height of the civil rights movement and the anti-war movement. It

was also on the cusp of the climatic year of 1968 (anti-war protestors getting their heads bashed at the Democratic Convention in Chicago, workers and students shutting down France). The contrast is we don't have a broader movement today through which the masses are educated on how to view the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The masses of Americans in 1967 watched a world heavyweight champion, Muhammad Ali, refused induction into the Armed Services. The next year the world witnessed Tommie Lee Smith and John Carlos putting their fists in the air in solidarity with the people's struggle taking place back home in America while receiving their gold medals in Mexico City. Acts such as these have a profound effect upon the masses. We lack this broad base movement in the current context.

Second, you had a draft which politicized an entire generation. While the base of the GI Movement was comprised of volunteers and not draftees, the draft politicized the population in a way the current volunteer Army does not. The current volunteer Army is an economic draft mostly of those on the margins of society. And the volunteer Army does not politicize the entire populace. My mother, a 1969 graduate of Clark College in Atlanta, Georgia had classmates from her college that went to Vietnam and never returned. The overwhelming majority of college students in America today do not face this prospect. Our last two presidents, Bill Clinton and George Bush, were both affected by the prospect of serving in Vietnam. That will not be the case for those of my generation running for the Presidency in the next decade or so; the Iraq War would not have affected them in such a way.

Third, the GI Movement of the Vietnam era used both traditional and untraditional tactics and strategies to make their voices heard. They used the media and they lobbied the government but they also dared to build a mass movement. In 1971, you had over 500 active-duty GI's marching in "Armed Forces Day" against the Vietnam War. The Appeal for Redress has yet to build beyond reliance on governmental institutions and to grip the masses of GI's. The GI Movement touched the lives of the masses of GI's as evident by the military establishment admitting the breakdown of the Army in 1971.

Leaver: Why is this movement important now?

Hutto: It's important now because ultimately it's going to take the soldiers, sailors, and marines themselves allied with the anti-war and social justice movements to end this war.

It's evident that ending the war will not come from the politicians in Washington.

The Democratic Congress, led by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, has not stood firm against continued occupation of Iraq.

Historically, it is not the politicians but the people and soldiers within the military who ended the war in Vietnam.

The power of the soldier's movement within was evident with the admission of Colonel Robert Heintz that the Army had collapsed and soldiers were mutinous and refusing combat. It will take the anti-war movement allied with citizen-soldiers within the ranks to bring this war to an end and build a more just and humane society.

Leaver: How has the military been affected by the efforts of the Appeal and IVAW?

Hutto: The military has been affected by Pentagon officials having to speak publicly on our constitutional rights to speak out when we are off-base and off-duty. This is unprecedented in the current context and gives us leverage in our recruitment.

IVAW forced the brass in the spring of 2007 to back down from lowering the discharge status of Adam Kokesh below a general discharge.

Overall, I believe both of these movements have provided an outlet for active-duty soldiers to raise their voices as evident by IVAW building of active-duty chapters on military bases.

Leaver: What are the biggest hurdles the movement both inside and outside the military faces today?

Hutto: The biggest hurdle for the anti-war movement as a whole is to build a culture of operational unity. This is what the National Assembly to End the Iraq War is working to do the weekend of June 27th-29th in Cleveland, Ohio. The sectarianism must be subordinated to the overall needs of the masses and the soldiers dying and coming back mangled from Iraq. The anti-war movement must move away from total/sole reliance on liberal politicians and celebrities with more of a focus on organizing the masses from within the unions, religious institutions, campuses, mass organizations, and just everyday people unaffiliated with groups but in solidarity with the movement and its demands. From within the military, the challenge is to move military members from fear of the brass towards challenging the brass on the question of war and the basic grievances active-duty endure daily.

Leaver: Besides trying to end the war, are there other issues the Appeal is trying to confront?

Hutto: The legal basis for the Appeal is DOD directive 7050.6 (The Military Whistle-blower Protection Act). This gives military members the right, without prior command approval, to speak with a member of Congress on any issue. That being stated, we have pushed for military members to not only address issues of war and occupation but basic grievances they endure on the job. Before initiating the Appeal, I personally was the victim of racial harassment/hate crime when I had a hangman's noose put in my face by other Non-Commissioned Officers. I appealed to Congressman John Lewis of Atlanta, Georgia to advocate on my behalf.

The Appeal stands against all forms of oppression in the ranks including but not limited to racism, sexism, homophobia, and all forms of intolerance. The Appeal advocates for military members to address any and all concerns extending from stop-loss, Individual Warrior program, Individual Augmentee, extended tours, the failure of don't ask don't tell and the failure of the VA to address the enormous health needs of our returning vets.

Leaver: If you could talk to someone contemplating joining the armed services, what would you say to them?

Hutto: I would tell them to research carefully all of their options before joining and to understand fully the sacrifice on all levels they are about to endure. They must be clear

that their life could be sacrificed on a battlefield for Imperialist aggression. I would tell them that all the educational benefits being promised to them by their recruiter is secondary to them performing and serving the mission. If it's education they desire, I would strongly urge them to look at other options such as community college.

I joined based on economic compulsion and I find myself to be lucky in comparison to those coming back from Iraq with mangled minds, bodies and those simply not coming back. Those believing they can join the Navy to avoid Iraq are mistaken.

Last, year the Navy augmented over 10,000 Sailors to support the “global war on terror,” many being sent to Iraq, especially Hospital Corpsman and Religious Personnelman.

I give my life within the ranks to them in hopes that we can end this conflict towards building a world where no one is sacrificed to enhance the lives and power of a few.

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

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!

U.S. Occupation Commands' Stupid Tactics Recruit Even More Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops



Foreign occupation soldiers from the US soldiers search an Iraqi citizen's house during an armed home invasion at Sheik Marouf neighborhood, Karkh district, Baghdad, May 23, 2008. (AP Photo/Petros Giannakouris)

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqi troops over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, butcher their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it "sovereign," and "detain" anybody who doesn't like it in some prison without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.]

[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]

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

Iraq Government Tells The Bush Regime It Wants All U.S. Troops Confined To Barracks

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

Jun-09-08 by Deborah Haynes, Times Newspapers Ltd. [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD - American troops in Iraq would be confined to their bases and private security guards subject to local law if Iraq gets its way in negotiations with the US over the future status of American forces.

The current United Nations mandate for US troops expires at the end of this year and Washington wants to conclude a bilateral agreement with Baghdad for the future deployment of US forces. There are just over 150,000 US troops in Iraq living on scores of bases across the country, from little 30-men outposts to sprawling camps often built around old Iraqi army barracks.

Ali al-Dabbagh, the Iraqi government spokesman, said that under the new deal US soldiers should be confined to the larger bases.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Daryl Dumbfuck McCain Says: The Reason He Had To Join The Navy Instead Of The Marines: His Parents Were Married When He Was Born

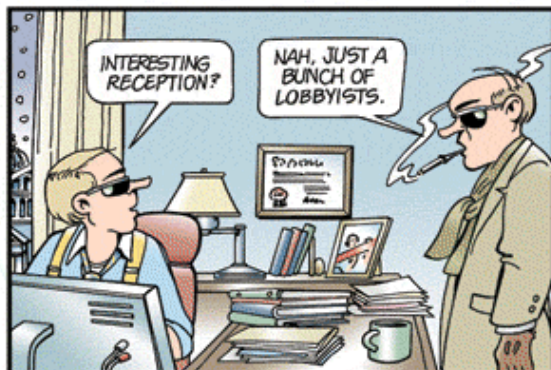
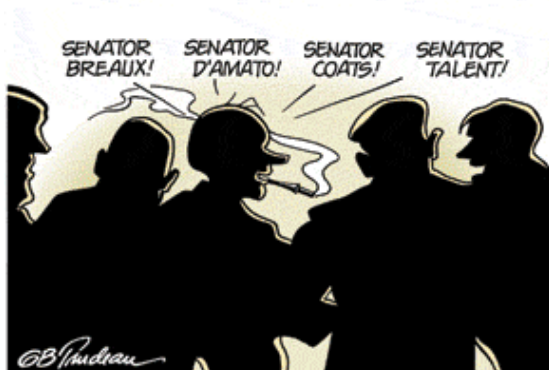
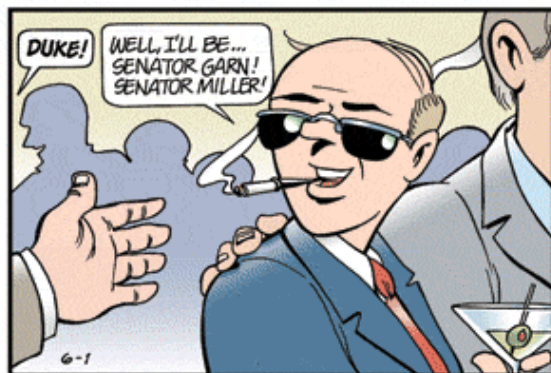
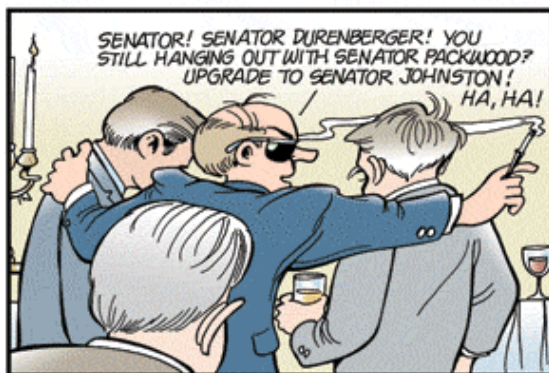
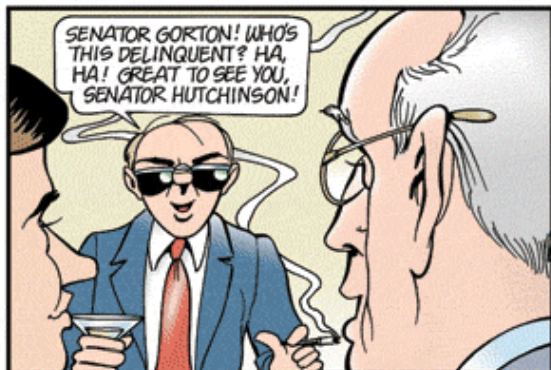
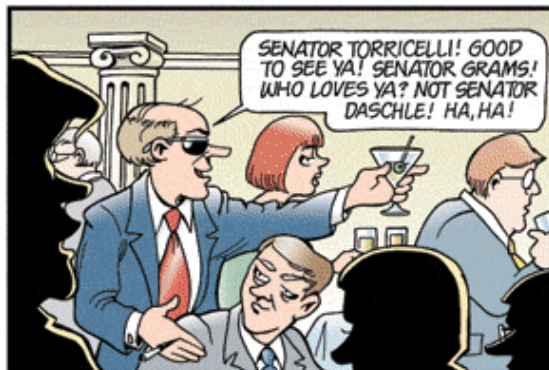
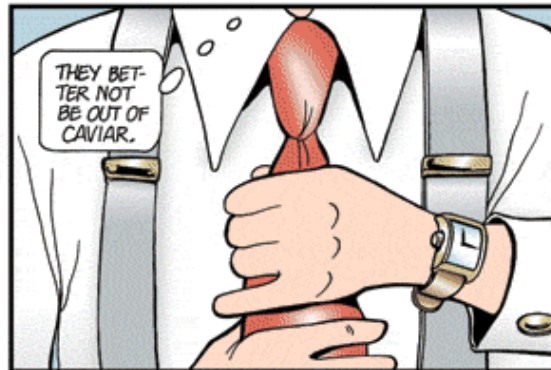
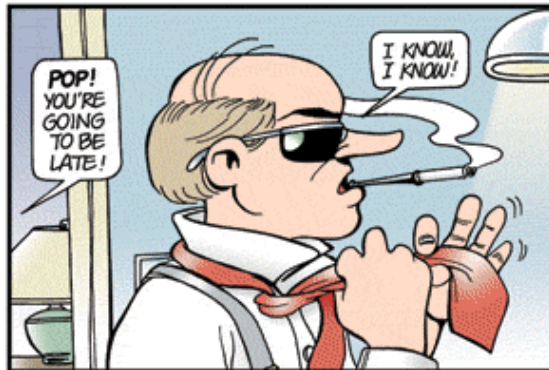
[Thanks to Pham Binh, Military Project & Traveling Soldier, who sent this in.]

Jun 9 Carrie Budoff Brown, Jonathan Martin, Yahoo! News [Excerpt]

To understand the stylistic gulf between Barack Obama and John McCain, first consider their cultural references.

The Republican enjoys a good Henny Youngman one-liner and the 1970s Swedish pop group ABBA.

He tells jokes about drunken Irish twins, and the reason he had to join the Navy instead of the Marines: His parents were married when he was born.



CLASS WAR REPORTS



What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

**U.S. Prison Population Hits All-Time High:
2.3 Million Incarcerated;**

“The United States Leads The Industrialized World In Incarceration”



Google.com

June 6, 2008 By PIERRE THOMAS and JASON RYAN, ABC News [Excerpts]

The Justice Department has released a new report showing the nation's prison and jail population reached a record 2.3 million people last year.

The report notes that in the 10 largest states, prison populations increased “during 2006 at more than three times (3.2 percent) the average annual rate of growth (0.9 percent) from 2000 through 2005.”

The new report from the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that in the first half of 2007 the growth rate slowed, but prison admissions growth outpaced the number of prison releases. The report provides a breakdown, noting “of the 2.3 million inmates in custody, 2.1 million were men and 208,300 were women.

Black males represented the largest percentage (35.4 percent) of inmates held in custody, followed by white males (32.9 percent) and Hispanic males (17.9 percent).”

The United States leads the industrialized world in incarceration.

In fact, the U.S. rate of incarceration (762 per 100,000) is five to eight times that of other highly developed countries, according to The Sentencing Project, a criminal justice think tank.

Black males continue to be incarcerated at an extraordinary rate.

Black males make up 35.4 percent of the jail and prison population — even though they make up less than 10 percent of the overall U.S. population.

Four percent of U.S. black males were in jail or prison last year, compared to 1.7 percent of Hispanic males and .7 percent of white males. In other words, black males were locked up at almost six times the rate of their white counterparts.

Locking up these prisoners comes with huge economic costs. The Sentencing Project estimates that cost to be \$60 billion per year for federal, state and local prison systems.

Many states, facing budget crises, are struggling to pay for their corrections systems. As a result, many state programs are being slashed, with some states looking to release certain convicts early.

No fewer than eight states have recently contemplated releasing prisoners early. Others are planning to push some categories of newly convicted criminals into rehabilitation programs. Kentucky, California, Rhode Island, New Jersey, South Carolina and Vermont are among the states wrestling with these issues.

“For The Region’s Class Of Superrich, Downtimes Have Made For A Bonanza Of Deals On Luxurious Pleasures, From Sports Cars And Yachts To PIEDS-A-Terre And Airplanes”

“For The Class Of Rich Who Make More Than \$1 Million A Year And Have Several Times That In The Bank, The Time Is Right For Indulgence”

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

May 19, 2008 By Sarah Schweitzer, Boston Globe Staff

The recession gripping the country has left a broad swath of Americans agonizing over \$60 gas fill-ups, ballooning grocery bills, and homes lost to foreclosure.

But for the region's class of superrich, downtimes have made for a bonanza of deals on luxurious pleasures, from sports cars and yachts to pieds-a-terre and airplanes.

At the Rolls-Royce dealership in Wayland, the Rolls-Royce Phantom Drophead is sold out into next year, and orders are still rolling in. Ferrari Maserati of New England in Foxborough notched more sales in April than in any of the previous 14 months.

Boston Yacht Sales of Weymouth last week closed on three boats valued at a total of \$1.6 million, helping to push business up by 9 percent over last year.

Business has been so brisk at Shoreline Aviation in Marshfield that the wait time to purchase a sleek Cessna Citation jet is two years.

Million-dollar condo sales, far from stalling like some other sectors of the real estate market, have continued at a pace about like last year's.

In all of those things, dealers say they see no signs of a slowdown in coming months.

"If I had five Rolls-Royce Phantoms, they'd be gone the next day," Paul Downey, sales manager of Herb Chambers Rolls-Royce Motorcars of New England and Bentley Boston, said of the convertible that retails for \$440,000.

For the class of rich who make more than \$1 million a year and have several times that in the bank, the time is right for indulgence.

Falling interest rates have made luxury goods cheaper to buy, and the items, which tend to be considered investments because they retain their value, are proving attractive alternatives to the volatile stock market.

There is also the foreclosure factor: A growing number of high-end boats, cars, and homes have been foreclosed upon by banks and can be had for cut-rate prices.

"Ultrahigh-net-worth individuals are looking for bargains with which to invest their money," said Karl Hahn, managing director of Deutsche Bank Securities Inc. in Boston, who advises "high-net-worth individuals" on their investments. "Their spending habits have not changed, but their mindset has changed."

Recent purchasers of high-end baubles were reluctant to speak on the record, particularly at a time of economic woe for so many, and in a region where flaunting one's wealth is not always viewed kindly.

One executive, who asked not to be quoted by name, said that as a business owner, he is not immune to the economic downturn, which has cut into his company's profits.

Like many Bostonians, he said, he is watching his spending habits and has cut back on dining out and is traveling less. But that didn't stop him from recently purchasing a Ferrari.

"With a Ferrari, that's the car I like, and that's the car I drive . . . so the economy is not going to affect that," he said.

Luxury dealers across the region report that they have seen fall-offs in sales of their slightly more down-market items, such as smaller boats. They attribute the declines to their increasingly skittish upper-middle-class clientele, often midlevel executives earning \$100,000 to \$500,000 a year, who are scaling back and trimming unnecessary indulgences from their budgets.

But dealers say that their superrich clients have not been deterred, and sales of luxurious indulgences have ticked upward, more than offsetting any losses.

“The economy is on everyone’s minds,” said Michael Myers, of Boston Yacht Sales. “But the consensus is that there is a much greater upside to this, and (my clients) are trying to take advantage of the lower interest rates and the buyer’s market.”

“Racetrack Rick” Scourtas, general sales manager of Ferrari Maserati of New England, said his customers - many of whom are venture capitalists or entrepreneurs - are natural risk-takers, and thus undeterred by the economic climate.

“These are movers and shakers, and they are positive people,” he said. “So a little downturn, they power right through it.”

Still, from the vantage point of some of the region’s wealthy residents, doomsayers have overexaggerated the economy’s weaknesses.

Jonathan Bush, president and chief executive officer of Athenahealth Inc., a Watertown-based medical billing and electronic medical records firm, took his company public last year and said the outlook is sunny.

To that end, he said he has donated money to nonprofits that he said he has wanted to support for many years, and he recently purchased a house in Cambridge’s Hubbard Park.

The price was \$3.1 million, according to the Middlesex Registry of Deeds records.

Bush, a cousin of President Bush, said he’s not a car guy, and has no immediate plans to purchase other big-ticket luxury items. But, he said, “Maybe the materialism is waiting to punch through.”

RECEIVED

**Re: U.S. Senator Calls For Military Defeat Of
Invading U.S. Army**

From: Robert Sharlet
To: GI Special
Sent: June 09, 2008

Subject: RE: CORWIN

That is a great antiwar speech by Corwin, it reminds that the tradition of antiwar protest in America predates Vietnam and even Randolph Bourne in WWI.

Also the analogy to Vietnam and Iraq is perfect.

Like Mexico they had fought to free themselves of colonial dominion in the past only to be revisited on the battlefield by the US.

REPLY: For the speech by Senator Thomas Corwin, Ohio, and the speech is terrific, go to <http://www.militaryproject.org> and open GI Special 6F5: 6.8.08. The headline for the article inside is:

**U.S. Senator Calls For Military Defeat Of Invading U.S. Army:
Supporting Resistance, Corwin Says “If I Were A Mexican I Would Tell You, ‘Have
You Not Room In Your Own Country To Bury Your Dead Men? If You Come Into
Mine We Will Greet You With Bloody Hands, And Welcome You To Hospitable
Graves”**

Thanks to Robert Sharlet for providing an opening to encourage the attention to Corwin’s magnificent speech, too little known, too long lost to view. There were giants in those days. T



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:

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