

GI SPECIAL 6G14:



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“We Were All Betrayed”
‘We Had Joined The Military To Do
Good And To Defend Our Country,
But Our Leaders’ Motivations
Were Immoral’
‘It’s The Troops Themselves Who
Need To Stop The War; The
Resistance Of Troops To The
Fighting Is The Key’

‘The Beauty Of The Military Project Is That It Bridges The Gap Between Civilians And The Military’



U.S. Army soldier patrols Beijja village, Iraq Feb. 4, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

“If They Called A War And Nobody Came: The Military Project”

**July 14, 2008 By Kathy Sanborn, Republic Broadcasting Network
[RepublicBroadcasting.org]**

Kathy Sanborn is an author, journalist, and recording artist. Currently Kathy is working on a new recording project, slated for completion in 2008.

Kathy welcomes your questions, comments, and suggestions for future articles. Write to her at sanbornkathy@yahoo.com

Thomas Barton and Fabian Bouthillette are American activists, calmly doing the work of patriots in the modern age.

I had the opportunity to speak with these gentlemen about their participation in the Military Project, an organization that links civilians with active duty service members who resist the war.

Barton and Bouthillette's strong feelings about the occupation of Iraq were apparent during our conversation.

As much as they believe the Iraq War was a betrayal, the men clearly have respect for those who put on the uniform of service for the United States.

Sanborn: Thomas, tell us about the Military Project: When did it begin, and what does it attempt to do?

Thomas: The project began in 2004. The idea was to bring together people who were not in the military to provide aid and comfort to the troops who were resisting the war.

Fabian: Yes, it was an attempt to foster a culture in the anti-war movement that could reach out to troops who were against the war. It's the most effective way to end the war.

Sanborn: Thomas, talk about 'Traveling Soldier' and 'GI Special,' both publications for the troops. Please describe the two, and tell how people can receive them.

Thomas: 'Traveling Soldier' is a newsletter for people in the armed forces. You can read 'Traveling Soldier' at <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>.

From the Traveling Soldier web site:

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

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

'GI Special' is a near-daily news bulletin for service members and is not a formal publication of the Military Project.

Active duty troops can even receive free copies by mail upon request. You can access 'GI Special' through the <http://www.militaryproject.org/> web site.

Sanborn: How were you able to first get the word out about the Military Project?

Thomas: By direct contact, really – meeting people at events, rallies – that sort of thing.

Fabian: We get a lot of emails and responses that show us there's a lot of active duty sentiment against the war. A good guess is that 50% or more of the soldiers on the ground are against the war.

I'm in IVAW (Iraq Veterans Against the War) and our membership is growing exponentially.

More service members feel safer to speak out, especially after the Winter Soldier event. Desertions are on the rise, too.

There are IVAW chapters opening up on military bases; Fort Drum in upstate New York is one.

In fact, most of the country is against the war. *[According to a recent Opinion Research Corporation/CNN poll, 68% of Americans are against the war. –KS]*

The beauty of the Military Project is that it bridges the gap between civilians and the military.

Sanborn: Do you accept donations from Military Project supporters?

Thomas: We'd be delighted to accept donations. Interested readers can also volunteer to put in time for outreach by going to www.militaryproject.org.

Sanborn: What woke you up, Thomas, about the insanity of war? You are not a veteran, yet you are very passionate about getting the troops out. Was there a specific incident that propelled you to become an activist, or have you always been anti-war?

Thomas: Back in the Vietnam days, I helped with the publication of 'Vietnam GI,' which was founded by Jeff Sharlet, (1) who died of Agent Orange exposure two years after he began the publication. 'Vietnam GI' had from seven to ten thousand subscribers. Jeff had joined the military to defend America from the so-called 'evils of communism,' but afterwards had a change of viewpoint – thus the publication of 'Vietnam GI.'

I'm not strictly anti-war, either; I would have been for the Civil War and the Revolutionary War. But you have to determine the purpose for war before committing yourself to it.

Sanborn: Fabian, what was your branch of the military, and how many years did you serve?

Fabian: I entered the Naval Academy in 1999, and graduated in the class of 2003. I got an 'early out' in '05 because they had commissioned too many officers and waived the five-year requirement.

Sanborn: Fabian, what made you decide to speak out against war? Was there a turning point when you realized you just couldn't do it anymore?

Fabian: There wasn't one specific event. After 9/11, I was still at the academy, and there I heard a lot of talk about 'we gotta kill whoever did this; we gotta get them back.' I felt that we needed to be cautious about getting into a war when the facts weren't in yet.

When the 'Mission Accomplished' stunt happened, I knew it was B.S., and I thought it was extremely arrogant.

After a while, it dawned on me that we were all betrayed, and I use the word 'betrayed' purposefully. We had joined the military to do good and to defend our country, but our leaders' motivations were immoral and illegal.

We were betrayed, and it hurts.

Now all the troops want to do is to get home alive. That's all they want – to do their time and come home.

Sanborn: Fabian, do some of your fellow soldiers have a tough time understanding why you are against the wars?

Fabian: That's a very interesting question. When you go to the Naval Academy, you bond with everyone. Recently I attended a wedding there, and I was pleasantly surprised to find that my friends understood my position, and some shared my sentiments about the war. Others felt that, at the very least, the war has been mismanaged.

And yes, some of the guys who didn't know me were upset about what I had to say.

Sanborn: I keep reading about the awful toll these wars are taking on our troops: high suicide rates and high mental and physical disability numbers. That alone should anger the American public enough to march on Washington to stop these wars. Do you think the average American is simply complacent, or are the media to blame for not showing the atrocities of war? Or is there another reason?

Fabian: People aren't ready for a mass change in their country or government. Many of them don't know what to do, and that's why the Military Project is so important.

People feel helpless to do anything.

It's the troops themselves who need to stop the war; the resistance of troops to the fighting is the key.

This is what happened in Vietnam: the troops resisted and the war stopped.

Sanborn: Where do you think we're headed regarding war with Iran? Will this administration do to Iran what they are doing in Iraq? Author and journalist Dahr Jamail thinks they will. What do you think?

Fabian: I don't want to speculate about Iran. From a military point of view, though, a war with Iran is not a good idea. We need to mobilize our efforts to stop the Iraq war and that may prevent other wars as well.

Thomas: I agree.

Sanborn: What can regular folks do to help with the anti-war cause?

Fabian: Do outreach, whether as part of the Military Project, or outside of it.

Talk to the troops: go to bases, talk to them at airports.

Talk to them one to one, as human beings.

Bring IVAW materials with you, to demonstrate that there are already many soldiers against the war.

Forget about marching on Washington and lobbying Congress.

Getting the troops to resist is the answer to stopping the war.

The Army and the Marine Corps were not working at the end of the 1960s. Then the Navy stopped working, and the Vietnam War stopped. We can stop the wars by doing the same thing today.

Thomas: Everybody has a dream. Here's mine ... It's the end of 2009, and the American public's desperate hope that their new president would end the wars and withdraw the troops hasn't been realized.

If enough of the American people, standing shoulder to shoulder, march on our military bases and show that they are behind the troops who resist the wars, it could make a tremendous difference. It could mean the end of the wars.

That is my dream.

Sanborn: Thank you, gentlemen, for spending time with me today.

Thomas and Fabian: Thank you.

For more information, visit the Military Project's web site: www.militaryproject.org

Notes:

(1.) Jeff Sharlet (1942-1969), an ex-Vietnam GI, was a leader of the GI resistance movement during the Vietnam War and the founding editor of Vietnam GI, a monthly underground paper written by and for enlisted men who were committed to ending the war. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeff_Sharlet_%28Vietnam_antiwar_activist%29)

MORE:

7.19.08

To: Kathy Sanborn,
Republic Broadcasting Network
[RepublicBroadcasting.org]

From: The Military Project

In meeting July 14, by unanimous vote of the members present, it was agreed this letter be sent to you to express our thanks for the accuracy, sensitivity, and skill in reporting on the work of the Military Project in your article 'If They Called a War and Nobody Came: The Military Project.'

You got it right.

Respect,

The Military Project

MORE:

MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY PROJECT

- 1. Do not 'support the troops' in the abstract. We focus on support for Armed Forces resistance, giving aid and comfort to those who are against the war.**
- 2. Are for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all occupation troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.**
- 3. Believe that oppressed peoples and nations have the right to self-determination and the right to resist Imperial invasion and occupation.**
- 4. Do not require others to be in complete agreement to work together with them towards common objectives.**
- 5. Reject the idea that organizations working together on a common project must not debate differences about the best way forward for the movement. On the contrary, we encourage debate and discussion as the most useful method to arrive at the best course of action.**
- 6. May choose to support candidates for elective office who are for immediate withdrawal from Iraq, but do not support candidates opposed to bringing our troops home now.**
- 7. Are committed to organizational democracy. This means control of our organization by the membership, through freely elected delegates to any coordinating bodies that may be formed, whether at local, regional, or national levels. Any member in good standing may run for any position, with or without a slate. Coordinating bodies must report their actions, decisions and votes to the membership who elected them for approval or rejection.**
- 8. Are committed to putting in time taking action in an organized way to reach out to members of the armed forces, including local community Reserve and National Guard units.**
- 9. Are not commissioned officers active duty or drilling reserve, nor members of nor employed by any law enforcement agency.**

I understand and am in agreement with the above statement, and pledge to defend my brothers and sisters against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

(Signed)

(Date)

(Application taken by)

The Military Project: Contact@militaryproject.org
Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657
917.677.8057

MORE:

‘People Need Not Be Helpless Before The Power Of Illegitimate Authority’

**THE MILITARY PROJECT: Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657
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[Based on a statement by David Cortright, Vietnam Veteran and armed forces resistance organizer.]

In the final analysis the stationing of American forces abroad serves not the national interest but the class interest of the corporate and political elite.

The maintenance of a massive, interventionist-oriented military establishment is based on the need to protect multinational investment and preserve regimes friendly to American capital.

Imperialism is at the heart of the national-security system and is the force fundamentally responsible for the counterrevolutionary, repressive aims of U.S. policy.

Only if we confront this reality and challenge it throughout society and within the ranks can we restore democratic control of the military.

Of course nothing can be accomplished without citizen involvement and active political struggle.

During the Vietnam era enlisted servicemen created massive pressures for change, despite severe repression, and significantly altered the course of the war and subsequent military policy.

To sustain and strengthen this challenge we must continue to build political opposition to interventionism and support those within the armed services, including national guard and reserves, who defy the goals and program of Empire.

The central lesson of the GI movement is that people need not be helpless before the power of illegitimate authority, that by getting together and acting upon their convictions people can change society and, in effect, make their own history.

The Military Project

**POLITICIANS CAN'T BE COUNTED ON TO HALT
THE BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WAR**

**DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE
SERVICE?**

Forward GI Special along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 917.677.8057

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Notes From A Lost War:

**'You See, They Won't Help Us. They
Are All Mahdi Army'**

**'They Question Whether Their Victories
Of The Last Few Months Are Real Or The
Result Of A Mahdi Army Decision To
Walk Away To Fight Another Day'**

Hassan was searching for the home of a Mahdi Army suspect named Mohammed Jassim, but neither local police nor young boys hanging out nearby would tell him which house to raid.

July 23, 2008 By Nancy A. Youssef, McClatchy Newspapers. McClatchy special correspondent Hussein Kadhim contributed to this article. [Excerpts]

AMARA, Iraq — It wasn't yet dawn, and the Iraqi army unit was already behind schedule. It was about to launch a major operation against another cluster of towns overrun by Shiite Muslim militiamen [translation from Occupationspeak: nationalist resistance forces], and this time American forces would remain at the rear of the convoy, behind their Iraqi counterparts.

The troops mustered in darkness, relying for light on the headlamps of Iraqi Humvees, refurbished U.S. vehicles now crudely painted over with the red, white and black Iraqi flag.

Some Iraqi soldiers weren't wearing armor.

Fewer were wearing helmets.

The brigade commander was riding in an unarmored pickup. His handgun was in its holster; his walking cane by his seat.

The 40-vehicle convoy was about to leave the base when the commander, Brig. Gen. Nabil Yassin Azadi, ordered everyone to stop.

'Where is the map? How could you forget the map?' he screamed at his subordinates.

By the time they arrived at their destination, the city of Majir al Kabir, the sun led them in, and the militiamen whom they'd hoped to surprise had left, disappeared into the nearby marshes or perhaps across the border into Iran.

Flush with confidence after a string of victories against the Mahdi Army militia of radical Shiite cleric [translation: nationalist politician] Muqtada al Sadr, the Iraqi army is in control of Basra, Iraq's second largest city, and Amara province, a one-time Sadrist [translation: nationalist] stronghold. Its forces also are in Sadr City, the massive Shiite slum in Baghdad that's home to as many people as Chicago.

Troops are headed now to restive Diyala province. **[Since 2005, all reporters are required to use the word 'restive' before the words 'Diyala province.' Should any reporter fail to do so, the reporter must stand in a corner on one leg and repeat the words 'restive Diyala province' and "I love stupid clichés" two thousand times, while listening to speeches of George W. Bush at max amps.]**

Although the U.S. military played a big role in some of the battles, the Iraqi army is unabashedly cocky.

'The power nowadays is with the security forces,' said Azadi, the commander of the 38th Brigade, 10th Iraqi Army Division. 'As long as we are here, they will not come back.'

Yet a McClatchy reporter embedded with this Iraqi unit for four days as it searched for weapons throughout the province — one of the first Americans ever allowed to embed on a post-Basra Iraqi operation — had a glimpse of another reality. Iraqi troops are confident as never before.

But just below the surface, they question whether their victories of the last few months are real or the result of a Mahdi Army decision to walk away to fight another day.

Publicly, they're boastful; privately they wonder whether they're really in charge.

As they dashed about the province over those four days, Azadi's troops fired no shots and uncovered few weapons, despite digging up patios with picks and shovels in vain response to a tip.

They even used a bulldozer to move mounds of earth that a tipster swore were hiding weapons.

The troops said they kept going because they thought that the militias wouldn't return as long as they were conducting raids.

And if they did their jobs well, the American forces eventually would leave, too.

Col. Mohammed Hassan, 39, is the commander of the 3rd Battalion, 38th Brigade, a mobile unit that travels to hot spots. He's a Shiite and a 20-year veteran of Saddam Hussein's army, a rarity.

With each tip, he burst into action, hoping to turn up something big.

But he and his men never did.

The five-minute searches were usually perfunctory.

Even the raid on the supposed big fish — a local policeman and alleged Mahdi Army militiaman on the side thought to have returned from Iran — turned up nothing.

Many throughout Iraq viewed these operations mainly as political posturing by Prime Minister Nouri al Maliki in the run-up to this fall's scheduled provincial elections.

Amara is dominated by Sadrists [translation: nationalist resistance forces], the followers of Maliki's main rival. Even the governor is a Sadrist [translation: anti-occupation nationalist]; he's been under virtual house arrest since the army arrived last month.

Azadi declared himself and Maj. Gen. Habib Talib Abbas, the commander of the 10th Iraqi Division, the de facto leaders of the province until new elections, making them effectively local warlords.

'The governor has no authority,' he said, neglecting to mention that the governor was elected.

Azadi's strategy has been to continue launching offensives in the province to keep the roughly 3,000 militiamen from controlling it again. Many of them fled or hid after Sadr ordered his forces not to confront the Iraqi army.

After they cleared every neighborhood, Azadi said, his troops would move into outposts, just as the Americans did after their forces cleared Baghdad's neighborhoods.

So the raids continued.

At a secret location, a sedan pulled up and Hassan met his tipster, who's always been reliable. The big fish — the policeman — was back, he assured him.

About a dozen officers stormed the house, and an older woman started yelling repeatedly: 'Look at us. We have nothing. You see our house; we have nothing. I swear to God we have nothing.'

She said the man they were searching for was working at the police station. But Hassan said that he hadn't been showing up to work.

'Maybe he fled at dawn. Maybe somebody told him the Iraqi troops are coming,' he told McClatchy, adding: 'If you had been here three days ago, you would have seen more. We found a huge weapons cache.'

The soldiers dug in the yard, looking for weapons. They searched the freshly moved dirt first and then other spots, but found nothing.

A U.S. Army battalion moved here at the start of the operation to monitor the Iraqi soldiers — to remind them that they must be honest and professional — usually from the perimeter. The Americans also provide air support. Throughout the operation, U.S. soldiers took the names of those arrested, tracked the weapons confiscated and reported their observations to their commanders.

'I am sure they are monitoring everything I do. If they see me working hard, it means that I am loyal,' Hassan said.

Not much more was found on Day Two.

Hassan was searching for the home of a Mahdi Army suspect named Mohammed Jassim, but neither local police nor young boys hanging out nearby would tell him which house to raid.

'You see, they won't help us. They are all Mahdi Army,' Hassan said, exasperated.

His soldiers suddenly sprinted to the house of Jassim's brother and grabbed him by the neck, their professionalism fading fast.

'Where is your brother?'

The younger Jassim didn't respond. As soon as he put on his pants, they arrested him. Hassan's soldiers started digging for weapons in the family's yard. They retrieved a few magazines and a poster of Sadr. It was the best find of the day.

Hassan didn't know it when the convoy headed out, but Day Three was the final one of the operation.

He traveled to Adil, one of the most desolate communities in the struggling province. The men in the small town next to the marshes work as farmers. The houses are barren and made of mud, cattle and chickens wander just outside front doors and the smell of manure permeates the sweltering streets.

The soldiers were too embarrassed to scrutinize the residents' meager belongings, and they spent only a couple of minutes at each house raid. No one was arrested.

Afterward, Lt. Gen. Ali Ghaidan, the Iraqi army's ground forces commander, summoned Hassan and Azadi. Maliki had called to complain that all these searches weren't producing results.

'I never want to get a call like that again,' the general told them. 'This town is full of Mahdi Army and weapons, and you are telling me you found no weapons or targets? . . . I don't believe it.'

Azadi, the unofficial warlord, said that two women suspected of stashing Mahdi Army victims in their homes had turned themselves in but couldn't be arrested under the amnesty program.

'Arrest them!' Ghaidan demanded.

Hassan and Azadi left sheepishly and arrested the women.

As the mother and daughter sat in a sedan, their uncle pleaded with the troops, saying that the women's enemies were accusing them falsely. An Iraqi captain summoned McClatchy reporters and told them not to photograph the women because, he said, 'I believe they are innocent.'

Hassan insisted that the women 'are responsible for a lot of deaths.'

Then another call came in.

The commanders ordered the women released. A controversial arrest could make the Sadrists political martyrs.

Azadi's bravado all but disappeared, replaced with resignation.

One leader, who asked not to be identified, fearing retribution for speaking about politics, simply said: 'It's useless. This is a political game.'

'What did we get? Raids and searches. They are not here.'

By nightfall, Azadi called off the operation.

The next day, Hassan slept in until sunrise, got a haircut and took his first day off in a month. He headed home to the holy Shiite city of Karbala to see his wife, two sons and daughter.

He'd return three days later to take part in the next operation.

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



101st Airborne soldier, Iraq. Photograph: Sean Smith; Guardian [UK] May 19, 2008

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Clearlake Marine Killed In Afghanistan



Ivan Wilson Private first class killed by explosive.

July 22, 2008 PRESS DEMOCRAT STAFF

A Clearlake Marine killed in an explosion in Afghanistan on Monday become Lake County's first service member to die in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Pfc. Ivan Wilson was killed by an improvised explosive device, according to a source close to his family, but few other details of his death were available.

Ginny Craven, who runs a local group called Operation Tango Mike that sends care packages to troops, said Wilson's family called her early Monday with news of his death. Craven said the military notified the family about 5 a.m.

Wilson grew up in Clearlake and was a 2004 graduate of Clearlake Community School.

He was on his second tour of duty in the Middle East, having served in Iraq from January through August of 2007, according to a proclamation issued by the Lake County Board of Supervisors on his return.

Volunteers with Operation Tango Mike, military jargon for 'thanks much,' put together care packages for Wilson while he was overseas. 'We took care of Ivan for a year while he was in Iraq,' said Craven. 'He was like a family member to all of us.'

Wilson joined the Marine Corps on Sept. 11, 2005, and was a rifleman in the 3rd Platoon, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Division, Fox Company, according to the proclamation.

He is the 13th North Coast service member to die in Iraq or Afghanistan since 2002 and the third local serviceman killed in Afghanistan in the past three months.

U.K. Soldier Is Killed, Two Wounded in Kajaki Firefight

July 23 By Gregory Viscusi, Bloomberg & AFP

A British soldier was killed and two wounded when their patrol was attacked in Afghanistan's southern Helmand province, the U.K.'s Ministry of Defence said.

'Whilst returning fire, one soldier from 2nd Battalion the Parachute Regiment was injured by a mine,' the Ministry of Defence said in a statement.

'While leaving the scene after suppressing the enemy, a vehicle other soldiers were travelling in hit a suspected IED (improvised explosive device).

'One soldier from 2nd Battalion the Parachute Regiment was injured and one soldier from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers sustained serious injuries.

'More US Troops In Afghanistan Will Change Nothing'

'There Is Not Going To Be Any Solution In The Lands Of The Pashtun Coming From Foreign Occupiers'

'The Demand Of The Anti-War Movement For Afghanistan Should Be No Different Than Iraq. US Out!'

15/07/08 by Jon Flanders, Monthly Review [Excerpts] Jon Flanders is a member and former president of IAM LL 1145 and a member of the Troy Area Labor Council, AFL-CIO

More US troops have been killed in Afghanistan than Iraq in the past several months.

We can expect as a result that the Democrats and their Presidential candidate Obama will intensify their calls for shifting the 'war on terror' to Afghanistan, where it should never have been abandoned for the invasion of Iraq.

We will hear talk of attacking Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province, even calls for invasion, I suspect.

Given the support for Obama by a significant sector of the anti-war movement, confusion about how to respond is sure to be noticeable.

In order to have some clarity on the question, a little research is necessary.

For example, what about that Afghan-Pakistani border? Where did it come from?

Per usual for this part of the world, we find that the British had a hand in setting up the Durand Line, which separates Afghanistan and Pakistan's borders.

This border crosses the territory of the Pashtun people, some 42 million of them, a population much bigger than that of Iraq.

The Durand Line was declared invalid by the 1949 Afghan Loya Jirga, but has been given legitimacy by court rulings upholding colonial divisions of territories across the globe.

There has been and still is a movement for a Pashtunistan nation.

So when we hear stories from the corporate press about the Taliban violating borders, let's keep the above in mind.

And when we hear denunciations of the Taliban, universally supposed to be the devils incarnate and sponsors of Al Qaeda, let's remember that for the Pashtun people, it is very likely that repelling the foreign invaders, whether from the US, Afghan, or Pakistani government, is a far likelier motivator for war than the religious theories of a particular Islamic sect.

More US troops in Afghanistan will change nothing.

There is not going to be any solution in the lands of the Pashtun coming from foreign occupiers.

Given the Pashtun code of honor, that demands retribution for unjust attacks, US escalation will only see increased resistance in response.

As we have just seen in the deaths of nine Americans.

The demand of the anti-war movement for Afghanistan should be no different than Iraq. US Out!

Resistance Action

July 21, 2008 AP & (AFP) & July 22, 2008 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS & Reuters

On Sunday militants attacked a police checkpoint near the provincial capital in Helmand killing four officers and wounding another, said Mohammad Hussein Andiwal, a provincial police chief.

An Afghan driver was killed when militants attacked a convoy supplying a foreign military base there, a police official said.

Insurgents on Monday attacked a convoy of trucks ferrying supplies for foreign troops on the main Kandahar-Kabul highway, killing four private security guards, said Shadi Khan, a local government official in Zabul province.

A bomber on a bike and a roadside bomb hit two separate coalition patrols in Farah on Monday, said 1st Lt. Nathan Perry, a coalition spokesman. Militants also fired small arms and rocket-propelled grenades to attack another coalition patrol on Tuesday, Perry said.

Separately, militants attacked an Afghan army outpost in the same region Tuesday and the clash there was continuing, Perry said.

Early Tuesday, gunmen killed the spokesman for the governor of Paktika province, Ghamai Khan Mohammadyar, and wounded his wife, his brother and his mother. Hashmatullah Yusufi, the spokesman for the governor in neighbouring Paktia province, confirmed the incident. Mohammadyar lived in Paktia but worked in Paktika, Yusufi said.

On Monday night, militants killed four brothers - all policemen – and captured their father from Qarabagh district in central Ghazni province, said a statement from the Ministry of Interior.

In Ghazni, Taliban fighters stormed a police post and killed four officers late on Monday, an official said.

TROOP NEWS

‘There Is Nothing Cool About Seeing Your Buddy On The Ground During His Last Dying Seconds Of Life’

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

Jul 16 By SEBASTIAN ABBOT, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD - Spc. Grover Gebhart has spent nine months at a small post on a Sunni-Shiite fault line in western Baghdad. But the 21-year-old soldier on his first tour in Iraq feels he's missing the real war — in Afghanistan, where his brother is fighting the Taliban.

With violence in Iraq at its lowest level in four years and the war in Afghanistan at a peak, the soldiers serving at patrol station Maverick say Gebhart's view is increasingly common, especially among younger soldiers looking to prove themselves in battle.

Soldiers who have experienced combat stress note that it is usually young soldiers on their first tour who most want to get on the battlefield. They say it is hard to communicate the horrors of war to those who haven't actually experienced it.

'These kids are just being young,' said Sgt. Christopher Janis, who is only 23 but is on his third tour in Iraq. 'They say they want to get into battle until they do, and then they won't want it anymore.'

'These kids who joined the Army since the Iraq war started in 2003 are more fearless than when I joined during the Cold War,' said 1st Sgt. John Greis, the senior enlisted soldier at Maverick. 'They knew they were going to war.'

Not all soldiers in Iraq are pining for service in Afghanistan.

Greis, a 21-year veteran, isn't eager to seek out battle. 'There is nothing cool about seeing your buddy on the ground during his last dying seconds of life,' he said.

He rolled up his sleeve and pointed to a Latin phrase tattooed on his right shoulder: 'Dulce Bellum Inexpertis' — 'War is sweet for the inexperienced.'

Rat-Fucking V.A. Scum At It Again: 37,000 Guardsmen, Reservists Back From Iraq Didn't Get Benefits; 'Members Twice As Likely To Have Their VA Claims Denied As Active-Duty'

July 23, 2008 By Les Blumenthal, McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs failed to send benefit packages to nearly 37,000 National Guard and Reserve members who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan because it mistakenly thought they were ineligible.

Several senators raised the discovery Wednesday, detailed in a report by the VA's Office of Inspector General, as the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee held a hearing on whether Guard and Reserve members are being adequately informed of the benefits that are available to them.

In addition, Guard and Reserve members are twice as likely to have their VA claims denied as active-duty service members are, [Sen. Patty Murray] said.

NOT ANOTHER DAY NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR NOT ANOTHER LIFE



The casket of Spc. Byron Fouty, 10th Mountain Division July 22, 2008 in Novi, Mich., killed in Iraq. (AP Photo/Carlos Osorio)

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

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

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

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action



Police vehicle damaged by a roadside bomb attack in Baghdad July 20, 2008. The attack which targeted a police patrol wounded two policemen. REUTERS/Thaier al-Sudani

07/20/08 Xinhua & July 22, 2008 By Hussein Kadhim, McClatchy Newspapers & Reuters & AFP & July 23 (Reuters) & McClatchy Newspapers

AN explosives-filled tractor exploded in Diyala province today, killing at least seven members of a local U.S.-funded militia, a police officer said. The tractor was parked by the side of road in the village of Wais, 100km east of Baquba, the capital of Diyala, the officer said. It exploded when a patrol of a local U.S.-funded militia was passing.

In northern Baghdad, a roadside bomb hit a police patrol in the Waziriyah neighborhood, wounding two policemen, the source said. One of the police vehicles was badly damaged by the blast, he added.

On Monday night, a roadside bomb targeted a police patrol in Kirkuk city. Two policemen were killed (including the deputy of Irouba police station Colonel Khabat Aziz) and 5 others were injured.

A roadside bomb killed a police lieutenant-colonel and wounded four of his guards on Monday in northern Kirkuk, police said.

A car bomber wounded three policemen in an attack on their checkpoint in northwest Baghdad on Monday, the U.S. military said.

Insurgents opened fire on the convoy of Khalid Burhan, head of the health office of Salahuddin province in central Tikrit, 150 km (95 miles) north of Baghdad, wounding his guards, police said. Burhan escaped unharmed.

A roadside bomb wounded three policemen when it exploded near their patrol in southeastern Mosul, 390 km (240 miles), north of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas attacked a checkpoint in al Tahreer neighborhood in east Mosul city on Wednesday afternoon killing two Iraqi soldiers.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

'Nothing At All'

July 23, 2008 By Sahar IIS, 'Inside Iraq'

Was I the only one who had any expectations regarding Barak Obama's visit to Baghdad?

It seems so.

'What difference will it make what the name of the president is? The overall policy will be the same.' That was one friend's opinion.

'The president is only a small part of the decision making process in America. So why should I expect anything good coming out of it?' That was another friend. I was getting really discouraged. I was waiting for this believer in change to actually give a hint of change – but he was too much the politician – He said absolutely nothing to the Iraqi people. Nothing.

He wasn't here for us.

He didn't show any interest in our one thousand and one questions.

I had thought maybe a visit a university to feel out le crème de la crème of the youth of Iraq. No.

Maybe a real press conference where his wit in answering direct questions would be put to the test. No.

OK – some words of encouragement to the families of the slain, at least!

But nothing came. Nothing at all.

It was very clear that the old rules of the political game have not been touched by Mr. Obama's magical wand for change.

A man who is a change in U.S. politics all by himself said nothing to me, an Iraqi Citizen, and I was disappointed.

Mr. Candidate, our destinies have been linked, not by our choice but through the decision of others, for richer, for poorer and you had not one word for me.

Vietnam Blues: A Review of Joe Allen's 'Vietnam: The (Last) War the US Lost'

June 30th, 2008 by Ron Jacobs, Dissident Voice

There have been several histories of the US war in Vietnam by US writers. Very few of them have stood the test of time.

Marilyn Young's *Vietnam Wars 1945-1990* and Bernard Fall's *Street Without Joy* stand out in my mind as two that have, even though their approach and focus differ greatly.

Other texts on the subject have their highs and lows and certainly deserve to be read by those who have the time. In addition, there are books that cover specific elements of that historical period. Some cover the antiwar movement and others cover the military aspects of the war from both sides. Others look at what the war was like for soldiers in the US military and others look at life as a member of the NLF or northern Vietnamese forces.

Into this heady and well-populated milieu steps Joe Allen's recently published *Vietnam: The (Last) War the US Lost*.

This book is a comprehensive history of the US movement against the war in Vietnam, the revolutionary upsurge that sprang up in the wake of that movement's growth and Washington's refusal to end the war, and the eventual end of the war and the movement against it. Utilizing a multitude of sources, Allen's history is unique in its methodology in that it takes the war, its conduct by the US military, and the antiwar movement as an interconnected whole.

While definitely written from a perspective that not only considered the war to be wrong, but also as part of a foreign policy that can be described only as imperialism, Allen's book is not a diatribe. Instead, it is a reasoned and researched description of the US involvement in the French attempts to maintain its empire, the eventual assumption of the French role by Washington for its own reasons, and the development of the largest and most effective movement against war in US history.

With an ear attuned to the shifting nature of western empires in the wake of World War Two and the important struggles of the period by peoples seeking their independence from those empires, the reader of *Vietnam: The (Last) War the US Lost* is taken from the battlefield of Dien Bienphu to the streets of Washington, DC and provided a narrative that saliently connects the resistance to US imperialism in both venues. Many liberal histories of the period do their best to obfuscate any connections between the antiwar and civil rights movements in the United States. Allen does the opposite, not only proving the clear links that existed between the two phenomenon, but clearly explaining why the connection was historically impossible to avoid.

Besides addressing the interconnectedness of the US struggles against the war and for civil rights and black liberation in the US, Allen places the US antiwar movement within the international movement against US imperialism and for revolutionary nationalism.

In addition, Allen takes a look at the prevailing myths about the US working class and the war and argues persuasively that the popular perception of the white working class's reactionary and prowar stance is at best a half-truth.

Citing various polling data and actions undertaken by union locals and individuals, Allen makes a case that by 1969 members of the white working class were more solidly against the war than almost any other demographic in the US outside of blacks and college students.

Although Allen does not mention the current US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan until the book's last chapter, it is difficult to read *Vietnam: The (Last) War the US Lost* without thinking about those quagmires. Both countries have an occupation government propped up by the US that have at times talked with opposition groups and individuals in the hopes that their government will survive; both are badgered by a US government intent on staying in the country despite even the puppet government's opposition to the idea.

To top it off, both occupations have also featured US GIs refusing to go on missions because in their understanding they have no real reason to be doing what they are doing.

Yet, Washington continues to prevail, bankrupting the US national treasury and leaving death in its wake. Furthermore, the once thriving US antiwar movement has become a collection of groups waging occasionally noisy protests while too much of its leadership kisses the Democratic Party's ass, futilely hoping that its elected representatives will vote against Washington's interests without being pushed against the wall.

Writing history is a challenge. Given the aversion of so many people to reading it, the historian begins their task with the question as to how they can make their final work inviting enough to reach those with an aversion to history texts.

Joe Allen succeeds with *Vietnam: The (Last) War the US Lost*. It is accessible where so many other books on the subject have not been. Furthermore, its comprehensiveness helps make sense of an often confusing historical period.

Friends of mine who teach history to high school and college undergraduates often bemoan the lack of texts on this period that are written so that their students will read them. With Allen's new release, I think they have found their book.

Of course, this recommendation does not preclude those not in school from reading this perceptive and unique history.

'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

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!

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



An Iraqi citizen is 'questioned' by foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. He is not allowed to speak to them as equals, but is forced to squat down in the dirt before them in front of his house as they search it during a home invasion in Baghdad's Sadr City July 12, 2008. Photo: REUTERS/Damir Sagolj]

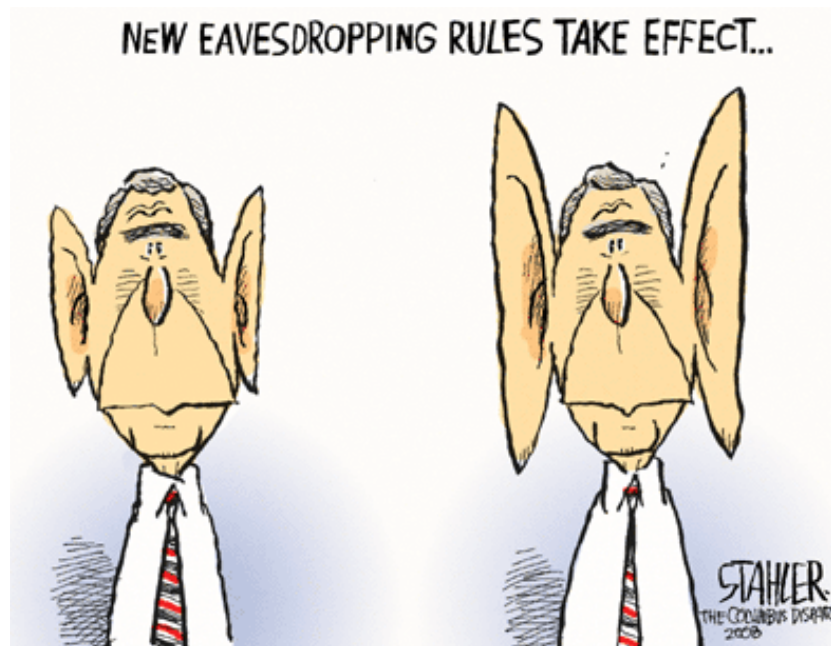
[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqi troops over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, butcher their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it 'sovereign,' and 'detain' anybody who doesn't 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?]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS

**Americans Live Shorter Lives
Than Citizens Of Almost Every
Other Developed Country:
'The US Is Ranked 42nd In Global Life
Expectancy And 34th In Terms Of
Infants Surviving To Age One'
[Now For The Good News: The U.S.
Ranks First Among The 30 Rich**

Countries In Terms Of The Number Of People In Prison]

July 17, 2008 Ashley Seager, The Guardian [UK] [Excerpts]

Despite spending \$230m an hour on healthcare, Americans live shorter lives than citizens of almost every other developed country. And while it has the second-highest income per head in the world, the United States ranks 42nd in terms of life expectancy.

These are some of the startling conclusions from a major new report which attempts to explain why the world's number-one economy has slipped to 12th place - from 2nd in 1990- in terms of human development.

Japanese, for example, can expect to outlive Americans, on average, by more than four years. In fact, citizens of Israel, Greece, Singapore, Costa Rica, South Korea and every western European and Nordic country save one can expect to live longer than Americans.

There are also wider differences, the report shows. The average Asian woman, for example, lives for almost 89 years, while African-American women live until 76. For men of the same groups, the difference is 14 years.

One of the main problems faced by the US, says the report, is that one in six Americans, or about 47 million people, are not covered by health insurance and so have limited access to healthcare.

As a result, the US is ranked 42nd in global life expectancy and 34th in terms of infants surviving to age one.

The US has a higher percentage of children living in poverty than any of the world's richest countries.

In fact, the report shows that 15% of American children - 10.7 million - live in families with incomes of less than \$1,500 per month.

It also reveals 14% of the population - some 40 million Americans - lack the literacy skills to perform simple, everyday tasks such as understanding newspaper articles and instruction manuals.

And while in much of Europe, Canada, Japan and Russia, levels of enrolment of three and four-year-olds in pre-school are running at about 75%, in the US it is little more than 50%.

Inequality remains stark. The richest fifth of Americans earn on average \$168,170 a year, almost 15 times the average of the lowest fifth, who make do with \$11,352.

The US is far behind many other countries in the support given to working families, particularly in terms of family leave, sick leave and childcare. The country has no federally mandated maternity leave.

The US also ranks first among the 30 rich countries of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development in terms of the number of people in prison, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the total population.

It has 5% of the world's people but 24% of its prisoners.



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