

GI SPECIAL 6G7:

**WELCOME TO LIBERATED IRAQ
HAVE A NICE DAY**



Iraqis are taken out of their house by foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. 1st Armour Division during a home invasion military operation in Baghdad's Sadr City July 12, 2008. [Photo: REUTERS/Damir Sagolj]

**My Views Of The Fourth:
“I Think Of A Handful Of Men,
Who Gathered Together Despite
A Repressive Occupation, Who
Joined Their ‘Lives, Fortunes,**

And Sacred Honor' To Combat Injustice”

“I Would Like To Think That If They Saw Me Here, Now, Along With The Ranks Of The Rest Of Our Active Duty Soldiers Who Are Standing Up Against This Injustice, They Would Be Proud”



07/02/2008 By Army Sergeant, Iraq Veterans Against The War (www.ivaw.org/)

“Gentlemen cry peace, peace, but there is no peace, the war is already begun!” - Patrick Henry, 1775

July Fourth is coming. I know that to a lot of people, Americans, all it means is fireworks in a night sky, barbecues and roasting meat, hot summer days and cool beers. For too many people it's just a holiday, an extra day off from work where they get to wear red, white, and blue.

If they are feeling particularly patriotic, they may whisper to their children, “This is the day America became free.”

I don't wear red, white and blue, and I don't wave paper flags. Sometimes I don't even have a celebration.

The Founding Fathers certainly had no celebration, tucked away as they were, rebelling from a distance, the certain underdog against England's might.

No, how I choose to commemorate July Fourth is by recommitting myself to living by the ideals which were blazed that day.

I think of a handful of men, who gathered together despite a repressive occupation, who joined their "lives, fortunes, and sacred honor" to combat injustice.

Men who decided that it was intolerable to accept abuses without standing up against them.

Men who lost everything, in many cases up to and including their lives, that a nation might be born which would live for a thousand years in freedom and justice.

I think back to those bold men, whose deeds blazed across the sky.

I think of how I can possibly live up to what they asked of themselves, to what they asked of those who might follow in their footsteps.

To the dreams they held and battled the darkness for.

And I remember what I am.

I am an active duty soldier, who sees a duty to the country I love, the country birthed so many years ago to be a just and righteous nation, where each and every citizen would have the right to petition for redress of grievances, and to print whatever they pleased about their government.

I see a duty to all those who have died for these ideals - everyone whose red blood was shed to give our flag its color, who dreamed that generation after generation, patriots would always stand ready to answer America's call.

What a low, shivering thing would I be, if I saw the truth, that America is wasting its soldiers, breaking its military, and destroying its economy, all in the name of the interests of a few, and I did not stand up!

If I did not stand up for fear, or a wish to preserve my comfort.

If I did not stand up for fear of reprisal, or imprisonment-how those Founding Fathers would be ashamed!

I would like to think that if they saw me here, now, along with the ranks of the rest of our active duty soldiers who are standing up against this injustice, they would be proud. Would be proud of the spirit that still stands strong in America.

Why stand the rest of you silent? The war is already begun! Not just the war in Iraq, but the war here at home, to wake a complacent citizenry to action!

The time for sitting at home and thinking hopeful thoughts is over!

This July Fourth, and every day until the troops are home and treated like the country which has used the best and brightest in them owes, I swear to act!

Join with me.

Join with us.

We, the active duty IVAW members, and even those who are against the war but do not yet know they can be with us, are waiting.

**Sergeant Selena Coppa
35S, USA**

"In accordance with AR 360-1, the opinions expressed in this statement are those of the individual and do not reflect the official positions or policies of the Department of Defense, the United States Army, or the United States Government."



MORE:

**Medals and Medication:
"If American Soldiers Had Been Forced
To Serve Multiple Tours,
Extended Tours, And Had A Shit Policy
Called, 'Stop Loss,' In Vietnam,**

**We Would Have Eventually Burned The
Fucking White House Down.
It Would Have Been A Gift To God.”**



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: July 11, 2008
Subject: Medals and Medication

Medals and Medication

**Every aspect of the Vietnam War was a war crime.
When I went back to Vietnam in 1994, that belief was
solidified in me.
Brutal.
When I came back to the United States in April,
I found myself on a psyche ward by July.
One night in my room, I shouted at the top of my lungs
that the Vietnam War was a lie.
I yelled it as loud as I could.
Nurses came running into my room.
I began to educate them about what America did in Vietnam.
I gave them an atrocity 101 class,
right there in the hospital.**

I butchered their take on American history.
Like a knife, I cut out body parts.
America was a pig in Vietnam.
We turned that country into a toxic wasteland.
And then,
there were the economic sanctions after the war.
It was like digging up bodies,
and starving the corpses.
Nixon was a madman,
born and raised in America.
The only Gook is a dead Gook.
You have to kill them twice,
so the little bastards get it.
This is America,
home of the brave, and land of the free.
We have the freedom to kill any mother
fuckers we want to.
If American soldiers had been forced to serve multiple tours,
extended tours, and had a shit policy called, " Stop Loss," in Vietnam,
we would have eventually burned the fucking White House down.
It would have been a gift to God.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
July 10, 2008

**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

**NEWS:
Bush Regime Abandons Effort
To Conclude Long-Term**

Agreement Governing Status Of U.S. Troops In Iraq Before The End Of His Presidency: Failure “Deals A Blow To The Bush Administration's Plans” For Open-Ended Occupation; “Some U.S. Troops Expected To Remain In Iraq No Matter Who Becomes President”

According to U.S. officials, Maliki also hopes that a temporary protocol would circumvent the full parliamentary review and two-thirds vote he has promised for a status-of-forces agreement. “He is trying to figure out, just as we did, how you can set up an agreement between the two and have it be legally binding,” one official said, “but not go through the legislative body.”

July 13, 2008 By Karen DeYoung, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

U.S. and Iraqi negotiators have abandoned efforts to conclude a comprehensive agreement governing the long-term status of U.S. troops in Iraq before the end of the Bush presidency, according to senior U.S. officials, effectively leaving talks over an extended U.S. military presence there to the next administration.

In place of the formal status-of-forces agreement negotiators had hoped to complete by July 31, the two governments are now working on a “bridge” document, more limited in both time and scope, that would allow basic U.S. military operations to continue beyond the expiration of a U.N. mandate at the end of the year.

The failure of months of negotiations over the more detailed accord -- blamed on both the Iraqi refusal to accept U.S. terms and the complexity of the task -- deals a blow to the Bush administration's plans to leave in place a formal military architecture in Iraq that could last for years.

Although President Bush has repeatedly rejected calls for a troop withdrawal timeline, “we are talking about dates,” acknowledged one U.S. official close to the negotiations. Iraqi political leaders “are all telling us the same thing. They need something like this in there. . . . Iraqis want to know that foreign troops are not going to be here forever.”

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and his political allies have come under intense domestic pressure to reject any perceived infringement on Iraqi sovereignty.

Maliki, who last week publicly insisted on a withdrawal timeline, wants to frame the agreement as outlining the terms for “Americans leaving Iraq” rather than the conditions under which they will stay, said the U.S. official, who like others spoke on the condition of anonymity because U.S.-Iraqi negotiations are ongoing.

The idea, he said, is to “take the heat off (Maliki) a little bit, to rebrand the thing and counter the narrative that he's negotiating for a permanent military presence in Iraq.”

The most contentious unresolved issue is the legal immunity of U.S. troops and Defense Department personnel from Iraqi prosecution for any alleged crime. “We're trying to come onto the same page,” a second U.S. official close to the negotiations said. “But with U.S. forces in potential combat situations, we have some real bottom lines.

“But even on that question, it's one thing on immunity if in the Iraqi mind it's an agreement for U.S. troops forever,” he said. “It's another thing if these immunity arrangements are temporary because U.S. forces are temporary.”

Largely cosmetic compromises have been made on other difficult questions, such as the formation of joint U.S.-Iraqi commissions to oversee all unilateral U.S. combat and detainee operations and provide a veneer of Iraqi control. Washington has acquiesced to Iraqi refusal to grant immunity to private contractors, an issue that is controversial because of incidents in which American security contractors have killed Iraqi civilians.

U.S. and Iraqi officials also hope the new, bare-bones agreement -- called a “temporary operating protocol” in Washington and a “memorandum of understanding” in Baghdad -- will allow them to sidestep significant political roadblocks that have impeded completion of a broader agreement.

With some U.S. troops expected to remain in Iraq no matter who becomes president, administration officials said they anticipated that negotiations over a long-term status-of-forces agreement would continue.

Maliki's political competition, led by radical Shiite cleric [translation: nationalist anti-occupation politician] Moqtada al-Sadr, deemed the absence of a timeline a deal-breaker. Iraq's top Shiite leader, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, warned against any agreement that violated Iraqi sovereignty and was not approved by the Iraqi people.

“What we're doing now is more . . . a bridge to have the authority in place so we don't turn into a pumpkin on December 31,” the official said.

Neither country wants an extension of the U.N. mandate. Iraq has rejected its explicit limits on sovereignty, and the administration believes that a limited extension would only postpone the need for a bilateral accord and potentially leave U.S. troops with “our backs against the wall.”

According to U.S. officials, Maliki also hopes that a temporary protocol would circumvent the full parliamentary review and two-thirds vote he has promised for a status-of-forces agreement. “He is trying to figure out, just as we did, how you can set up an agreement between the two and have it be legally binding,” one official said, “but not go through the legislative body.”

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Clarksville Soldier Dies From Wounds In Iraq



Spc. Joshua Lee Plocica

June 28, 2008 By TAVIA D. GREEN, The Tennessean

CLARKSVILLE, Tenn. — When Josh Plocica was enrolled at Rossvie High School, he and his art teacher projected a picture of him on the wall next to the art room and painted his portrait.

The life-size portrait will become a memorial for Plocica, a soldier who has died in Iraq.

Spc. Joshua Lee Plocica, 20, of Clarksville died Wednesday in Baghdad of wounds from a roadside bombing, said a Department of Defense statement.

Plocica was assigned to 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, based at Fort Hood, Texas.

“Josh would want everyone to celebrate his life, not mourn his death,” said Lisa Thompson, Plocica's mother. “He loved life; he was one of those people who lit up a room with his smile when he walked in. He was so genuine.”

Georgie True, Plocica's grandmother, said she knows her grandson will be remembered for his respectful and loving personality.

"He was one of the most loving people I knew in my life," True said. "He truly was an angel sent here for a little while."

Thompson said her son had been deployed for only three months and joined the military in August 2006, a few months after he graduated from Rossview.

Plocica, whose grandfather and uncle had been soldiers, deployed to Iraq on March 9.

Thompson said the school portrait, painted by her son and his art teacher, Mary Bryant, will remind those who knew Plocica about his loving and giving spirit.

Plocica will be buried at Resthaven Memorial Gardens, but arrangements are incomplete.

Besides his mother and grandmother, Plocica is survived by his stepfather Keith Thompson, his father, David Corbin of Elizabethtown, Ky., and sister, Brenna Corbin.

"We all loved him so much, He loved all of us and we all know Josh is with God today," True said.

Sure. And Your Grandmother Has Wings Like A Bat



An explosive ordnance disposal team detonates explosives attached to the wings of a C-130 Hercules aircraft in Iraq July 7, 2008. The aircraft was disabled after it made an emergency landing last month, **and the Airmen are using a series of controlled**

detonations to divide the aircraft into smaller pieces so it can be moved. (AP Photo/US Air Force - Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Allen)

THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH; ALL HOME, NOW



U.S. Army's soldier from 25th infantry crawls after the rooftop of Patrol Base Texas took sniper fire in southern Sadr City, Baghdad, April 3, 2008. (AP Photo/Petr David Josek)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Nine U.S. Soldiers Killed In Dara-I-Pech

13 July 2008 BBC NEWS

Nine US soldiers have been killed in Afghanistan in clashes with Taleban militants.

US commander Daniel Dwyer told the BBC the soldiers had been killed in clashes in the north-east of the country.

The BBC's Martin Patience in Kabul says it is one of the biggest single losses in a day for the coalition since the start of military operations there.

There are conflicting reports as to where the latest attack took place.

A foreign military spokesman said US soldiers and members of the Afghan National Army came under attack at a remote base in Kunar province, near the border with Pakistan.

But Afghan officials insist the fighting took place in neighbouring Nuristan province.

In a statement earlier, Nate reported that a small American Combat Outpost in Dara-I-Pech district of Kunar province, came under heavy fire at around 0430 local time (0900 GMT).

It said insurgents had fired "with small arms, machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and mortars using homes, shops and the mosque in the village of Wanat for cover."

Combined International Security Assistance Forces and Afghan National Army forces responded with small arms, machine guns, mortars and artillery, it said.

Fighter jets and Apache helicopters were also brought in.

The fighting is close to where US forces were accused of killing 47 civilians, mostly women and children, in an air strike on a wedding procession in Nangarhar province a week ago.

Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed In Helmand Province, Nationality Not Announced

July 13 (Reuters)

A roadside bomb killed a soldier from the U.S.-led force on Sunday in the southern province of Helmand, the U.S. military said.

Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed In Baghlan Province, Nationality Not Announced

July 13 (Reuters)

A US.-led force soldier died on Saturday from injuries he had suffered in a blast in northern Baghlan province, the alliance said.

Roadside Bomb Blows Up & Kills Hungarian Explosives Expert Who Had Replaced Previous Hungarian Explosive Expert Blown Up & Killed By Roadside Bomb

July 12, 2008 The Associated Press

Afghanistan's Baglan Province, the Defense Ministry said.

Explosives expert Krisztian Nemes and a local police officer had been exploring an area on a road to Kunduz where a roadside bomb had been reported about 50 kilometers (31 miles) from where Hungary's 250 troops are deployed, the ministry said in a statement.

It was unclear what caused the bomb to explode. Nemes, 32, was killed at the scene, and the police officer was hospitalized with serious injuries, the ministry said.

Nemes had been sent to Afghanistan just weeks ago after another Hungarian explosives expert was killed in June, state news wire MTI said, citing ministry spokeswoman Andrea Eva Nagy.

On June 10, Gyula Kovacs, 30, was killed while trying to disarm a roadside bomb, making him the first Hungarian soldier to die in Afghanistan since Hungary sent troops there in 2003.

Poughkeepsie Guardsman Killed by Afghan Bomb; “He Just Kept Telling Her Things Were Getting Real Bad Over There”

July 1, 2008 By DENNIS YUSKO, Staff writer, Times Union

In an e-mail from Afghanistan, National Guard Spc. Mark C. Palmateer confided to his daughter, Stephanie, that he was about to embark on a dangerous convoy mission to Kabul.

“He just kept telling her things were getting real bad over there,” Palmateer's ex-wife, Kimberly Smith, said Monday from North Creek, Warren County.

As Smith spoke, Stephanie Palmateer, who turns 20 today, was driving from North Creek to the Poughkeepsie area to grieve her father's death with relatives.

Mark Palmateer, 38, of Wappingers Falls, Dutchess County, was one of three National Guardsmen killed Thursday by an improvised explosive device, small arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades in eastern Afghanistan.

Palmateer was posthumously promoted to sergeant. He moved back to Wappingers Falls from North Creek around 1994 and joined the National Guard in 2003. He will be buried next Friday in Wappingers Falls.

“He was just an amazing person, really funny, a jokester,” Stephanie Palmateer said in a phone interview. “He made the absolute best out of every situation.”

She recalled that her father made videos of himself dancing with local Afghans. “If I could give any advice to kids, I would say that if you have a parent over there, keep in the best touch you can. Because I'm really thankful I was able to keep in touch with him every day.”

Houston Marine Dies in Combat in Afghanistan; The Son Of Parents From Mexico, He Felt America Had Been Good To His Family



July 2, 2008 By ROSANNA RUIZ, Houston Chronicle

As the son of legal residents from Mexico, Edgar A. Heredia wanted to give back to the country that had been so good to his family.

Last Thursday, the 28-year-old staff sergeant gave his life in Afghanistan.

Heredia died in combat in the western province of Farah during a combat mission in what had been a particularly deadly month for coalition forces there, according to the Department of Defense.

More coalition troops have been killed in Afghanistan than in Iraq for the second straight month, according to The Associated Press. At least 44 international troops died there last month, compared to about 30 in Iraq.

Heredia had served a tour in Iraq during his 10 years in the Marines.

He was assigned to the 2nd Marine Special Operations Battalion at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Brother Sam Heredia and father Alejandro Heredia were at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware on Tuesday, where the Marine's remains were sent. A Marine Corps honor guard will meet the family at noon today when they arrive at Hobby Airport.

Heredia enlisted in the Marines after graduating from Taylor High School, in the Alief Independent School District, in 1998.

He planned to make it a career, Sam Heredia said. "We have a loyalty to this country, and we feel as though we have to repay it," he said. "He chose the Marines, and I went into Border Patrol."

As a Marine, Heredia worked in reconnaissance, served as a sniper, and recently became a reconnaissance team leader, Sam Heredia said. "He loved his job. He loved doing what he did," he said.

"As a family, we are very proud of him. He's our hero."

As a child, Edgar Heredia often insisted on joining his brother and his friends when they were deep into GI Joe war game "scenarios."

One time, Sam Heredia recalled, he had kept his younger brother out of their game, but he was lurking close by.

At the height of the imaginary attack, Edgar Heredia showed up with his toy tanks and yelled: "My friends will help you."

Even as a little boy, he always watched out for those he loved, Sam Heredia said. The men he served with could certainly count on him, he added.

"He was the most loyal person I knew, and his priority was backing up his friends," Sam Heredia said. "Even though he's my little brother, I looked up to him."

Resistance Captures MP Near Capital

13 July 2008 Quqnoos

Insurgents have captured a Member of Parliament in the eastern province of Logar, which borders the capital Kabul, a local official said.

Dr Abdul Wali Ahmadzai, the MP for Logar, was captured on Saturday morning in the Charkh district while he returned to Kabul after visiting relatives in the province, the head of the provincial council, Abdul Hakeem Sulimankhel, said.

Sulimankhel said the 41-year-old MP's driver was also captured and that foreign and Afghan troops were sent into the district to locate the MP's whereabouts.

Sulimankhel said the kidnappers were Taliban militants, who had recently warned the MP to leave his job.

The police chief in Logar, General Ghulam Mustafa Mohsini, said police had surrounded the area where the MP went missing and that nearby districts are also under police surveillance.

Resistance Action

12 July 2008 (DPA) & July 13 (Reuters) & (AFP) & Quqnoos

A bomber blew himself up near a group of Afghan military vehicles on Saturday, killing two soldiers. The attack occurred at around noon in the Marja district of the southern province of Helmand, police chief Mohammad Hussain Andiwai said.

The International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) & Afghan order police reported receiving indirect fire at about 1600 GMT Thursday. "ISAF forces tracked the fire to two points within Afghanistan and returned fire with artillery and one GBU-13 bomb dropped from an F-15 aircraft." an ISAF press release said.

Four policemen died in a Taliban attack in a bazaar on Sunday in Deh Rawud district of southern Uruzgan province, the interior ministry said, adding a senior police officer was also among the victims. The attacker rammed a bomb-filled vehicle into a police van in the centre of a busy bazaar in the Deh Rawood area, about 400 kilometres (250 miles) southwest of the capital Kabul.

Taliban insurgents killed two detective police officers and dumped their bodies in a ditch in a graveyard in Ghazni province on Saturday evening, a senior provincial police officer said. On Sunday in another area of the province, a roadside bomb killed two Afghan guards of a road construction company, another official said.

In Zabul, three police officers were killed when a roadside bomb hit their vehicle late on Saturday, police said.

THE DECAPITATED body of the National Solidarity Programme's (NSP) Nimroz chief has been found by residents three days after he went missing. Engineer Muhammad Naeem Momand disappeared three days ago in the provincial capital of the south-

western province, Zaranj. The province's NSP deputy, Abdul Ghani, said the dead body of the 30-year-old was found on Saturday afternoon in the Chakhansor district.

TROOP NEWS

And Now For The Good News: MRAPs Work Fine Except For: “Catastrophic Rollovers,” “Electrocution” Of Passengers & “Cancer-Causing” Vehicle Glass [Hey, Nothing’s Perfect]

July 14, 2008 By Bryan Mitchell and Andrew Scutro – Army Times Staff writers
[Excerpts]

The Pentagon announced completion of its 10,000th Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle July 3, amid growing concerns over the threat of catastrophic rollovers in the military's silver-bullet solution to improvised explosive devices.

Three Green Berets drowned June 29 when their MRAP rolled into a river in Afghanistan.

The deaths followed the rollover deaths of two soldiers in April, as well as two military reports issued in June indicating growing problems associated with the MRAPs' potential for rollover — as well as electrocution, when the vehicle snags low-hanging power lines — and an emerging threat from the vehicle's glass dissolving into a cancer-causing powder when struck with explosively formed projectiles.

Some troops openly wonder about the design of the vehicle — for example, why the troop seats face inward and not outward in such a way they could fire their weapons through ports, which some versions lack.

**Pentagon Traitors At Work
Again, Fucking Over Disabled
Troops, As Usual:
“The Phony Pre-Existing
Personality Disorder Diagnosis
Has Forced Over 20,000 Soldiers
To Return Their Re-Enlistment
Bonuses”**

**Injured Service Members Have To Pay
Back Their Disability Retirement Benefits
Before Becoming Eligible For Benefits
They’ve Earned — “Whether Their Injury
Was Suffered On The Battlefield Or
Preparing For It”**

23. TYPE OF SEPARATION
DISCHARGE

25. SEPARATION AUTHORITY
AR 635-200, PARA 5-13

28. NARRATIVE REASON FOR SEPARATION
PERSONALITY DISORDER

29. DATES OF TIME LOST DURING THIS PERIOD
NONE

DD FORM 214-AUTOMATED, FEB 2000

[Here it is again. Same old story. Used up, thrown away, and the politicians couldn't care less. To repeat for the 3,524th time, there is no enemy in Iraq. Iraqis and U.S. troops have a common enemy. That common enemy owns and operates the Imperial government in Washington DC for their own profit. That common enemy started this war of conquest on a platform of lies, because they couldn't

**tell the truth: this war was about making money for them, and nothing else.
Payback is overdue. T]**

July 07, 2008 By Kelly Kennedy, Army Times [Excerpts]

When Disabled American Veterans recently accused the Pentagon of violating the intent of Congress by leaving some veterans out of a legislative change intended to enhance disability severance pay for wounded service members, defense officials insisted they are following the law.

But at least three lawmakers in a position to know say the Defense Department has it wrong.

“The Department of Defense appears to be interpreting this law in the most narrow and tightfisted way possible,” said Rep. Timothy Walz, D-Minn., a House Veterans Affairs Committee member. “I am disappointed that (the department) is implementing this policy in a way that makes as few veterans as possible eligible for the benefit.”

At issue is Section 1646 of the 2008 Defense Authorization Act. Kerry Baker, associate national legislative director for DAV, said the provision is intended to free service members injured in a combat zone or while performing combat-related tasks — such as predeployment training — from having to repay their disability retirement severance from the military before they could receive disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs, as had been required under longstanding policy.

Phil Hare, D-Ill., called it “appalling” that any injured service members would have to pay back their disability retirement benefits before becoming eligible for benefits he said they’ve earned — “whether their injury was suffered on the battlefield or preparing for it.”

Baker said he believes this is a way for the Defense Department to save money because veterans pay that severance money back into the Pentagon’s coffers. Defense officials deny that.

But Hare agreed with Baker.

“This seems to be another cost-cutting mechanism by the Pentagon — just as the phony pre-existing personality disorder diagnosis has forced over 20,000 soldiers to return their re-enlistment bonuses,” Hare said. “The Pentagon should not balance its budget on the backs of our heroes.”

DoD Staffer Fought So Families Of KIA Could Decide On What They

Wanted At Arlington Memorial Services: Result? Pentagon Idiot Scum Rats Fire Her Because “She Failed To Act In An Inappropriate Manner”

“It's up to the families to decide how close or far away they want the media to be,” Gray continued. “It is not up to Arlington Cemetery officials to do that.”

July 11, 2008 David Edwards and Muriel Kane, Rawstory.com

The Department of Defense has attempted for years to manipulate popular opinion towards the war in Iraq by limiting press coverage of military funerals.

When Gina Gray, a media specialist with a long history of working with the military, became public affairs director at Arlington National Cemetery earlier this year, she found that officials there had started hampering media coverage even in cases where the families gave permission.

When she tried to uphold the existing regulations, she was harassed by her supervisor, demoted, and then fired.

Gray appeared on MSNBC's Verdict with David Shuster on Thursday for her first live interview, along with her attorney, Mark Zaid, who has a history of involvement in high-profile cases involving government secrecy.

“I had no idea I was going to be fired,” Gray explained, “but I certainly ... butted heads. ... I wanted there to be clear rules ... and cemetery officials felt like they were the exception to the rule, that they didn't have to play by the same rules.”

“It's up to the families to decide how close or far away they want the media to be,” Gray continued.

“It is not up to Arlington Cemetery officials to do that.”

In the case that first brought Gray into conflict with her supervisors, the media area had been placed 50 yards away from the gravesite, obstructing the view of photographers and making the service inaudible.

Shuster next turned to Roy Sekoff of the Huffington Post, who stated, “This is part and parcel of the Bush administration's policy of trying to keep the human toll of the Iraq War hidden. ... They talk about sacrifice, they like to use it as an applause line in a stump

speech, but they don't want the American people to see that that sacrifice also includes grieving widows and kids who are never going to have a dad.”

Shuster then returned to Gray, asking about her termination notice, which complained, “You have failed to follow my instructions ... failed to provide me with complete details for your work assignments, been disrespectful to me as your supervisor and failed to act in an inappropriate (sic) manner.”

“I'm guilty of not acting inappropriately,” Gray noted wryly.

She went on to explain, “Army public affairs did step in and did try to make the changes. But you have a deputy director, Thurman Higginbotham, who has been there for over 30 years and is kind of running the show on his own. He's making up the rules as he goes along.”

Mark Zaid added that this was a matter of a “hostile work environment, not just for Gina but her two predecessors.”

“There is an administrative action pending under the Equal Employment Opportunity Office,” Zaid stated.

“You're going to see some skeletons unearthed at Arlington.”

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

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action

7.12.08 By CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA, Associated Press Writer & (CNN) & 7.13 Reuters & (AFP)

Insurgents have killed two policemen and injured another in the northern city of Mosul. A provincial security official says the drive-by shooting happened on Saturday in the western part of the city.

An Iraqi traffic police officer was killed and four others were wounded by a roadside bomb that struck their patrol in central Kirkuk city Saturday morning, a Kirkuk police

official said. The wounded included Col. Ahmed Rashid, the commander of Kirkuk's traffic police, the official said.

Iraq's deputy head of traffic police escaped unharmed when a bomb attached to his car exploded in eastern Baghdad, police said.

A grenade attack wounded a policeman in eastern Mosul, police said.

Insurgents killed an off-duty policeman when they fired on his car on Friday in Mosul, police said.

A roadside bomb attack on Sunday killed three policemen in Fallujah, police said. The policemen were killed when two bombs exploded outside the home of a local police captain.

One police officer and one member of a U.S.-backed neighbourhood patrol group were killed when militants opened fire in Dhuluiya, 70 km (45 miles) north of Baghdad, the U.S. military said.

Two policemen were wounded by a roadside bomb blast in Palestine street, eastern Baghdad, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Once A Brat, Always A Brat: Watching Kids Part With Friends Brings Back Painful Memories

July 07, 2008 By Regina Galvin - Special to the Times, Army Times

Regina Galvin is editor-in-chief of CinCHouse.com, Operation Homefront's online community for military wives and women in uniform. An Army brat and Army wife for 22 years, she is married to Col. Jim Galvin and has two daughters, Shelby, 14, and Olivia, 10. They live at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

A few years back on one of our summer vacation travels, my husband and I stopped by an Army post to pick up some items from the PX.

As we drove through the parking lot, I saw a familiar sight. I made an immediate emotional connection to a group of strangers.

They were teenagers sitting on a curb near the PX.

They clustered near a car loaded down Beverly Hillbillies-style occupying the only patch of shade to avoid the punishing sun.

It clearly was a scene of friends hanging out together for just a few more minutes before one of their own moved away.

The girls' faces were tear-streaked, and the boys sat with their arms resting on their knees and their heads down.

My husband asked me what was wrong when he saw the tears roll down my own cheeks.

He hadn't noticed me watching the kids on the curb. But he also hadn't grown up with the experience that those military brats and I had.

When you're a brat, there is a suitcase of emotional baggage you always carry. It's one that was packed and repacked every time your quarters had that odd echoing sound of an empty house and a heart full of sadness.

You lug it around with you regardless of your age or your family's branch of service, or whether you choose to acknowledge it. Some people who aren't comfortable with their emotional side tend to jam the suitcase quickly with their current feelings and slam that thing shut before any shred of melancholy tumbles out.

Their mantra? Buck up! Don't cry — soldier on!

What those folks don't understand is that when soldiers wear rucksacks that are unbalanced, it can be terribly uncomfortable and physically harmful. It's necessary, albeit not always easy, to empty out the contents, examine them and repack.

In the process, loads lighten because some items disappear. Other items travel with you on your life's trip.

When I was in second grade, I lived in a civilian community — the kind of place where people live all their lives. I guess I was a bit of a puzzle to my friend, because she struggled with how to fit my moving away into her picture of how things were supposed to be.

On the way home from the pool one day, she offered the following solution, "Why don't we have a fight and get mad at each other? That way, when you leave, it won't hurt so much." My solution? I suggested when I left we would tell each other, "See you later." That way we'd never have to say goodbye.

I don't think age lessens the ache of a farewell. For me, it has never gotten easier, and now, in some ways, it's harder because I witness it in my children's lives.

As their mother, I try to soften the emotional hit. However, as a fellow brat, watching them say goodbye to their friends, I vicariously feel the blow. When I'm also saying goodbye to friends, it feels like a double punch.

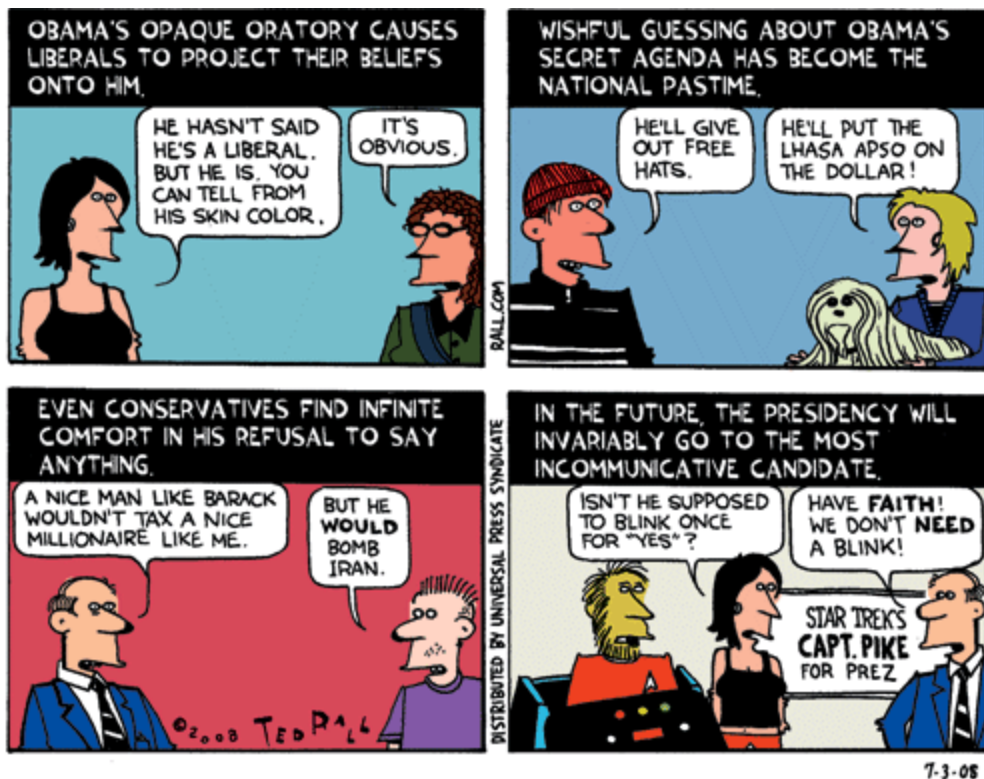
Three years ago, when my younger daughter, Olivia, was finishing second grade, her best buddy, Will, moved a couple of weeks before she did. She was only 7 years old, but she had moved four times. The difference was, this time she was the one who was left behind. Three years later, she's still smarting from it.

I realized this recently when she saw her older sister with a tear-stained face. Shelby, 14, had just said goodbye to her best friend.

It was a pull on my heartstrings when I saw the sometimes rival siblings hug, and then the misty-eyed younger one say, "I know how you feel." Ouch.

We don't need our suitcases yet. For now, we'll tuck away the souvenirs of friendship just given us by those moving on. We'll store them for when it's our turn to once again say, "See you later."

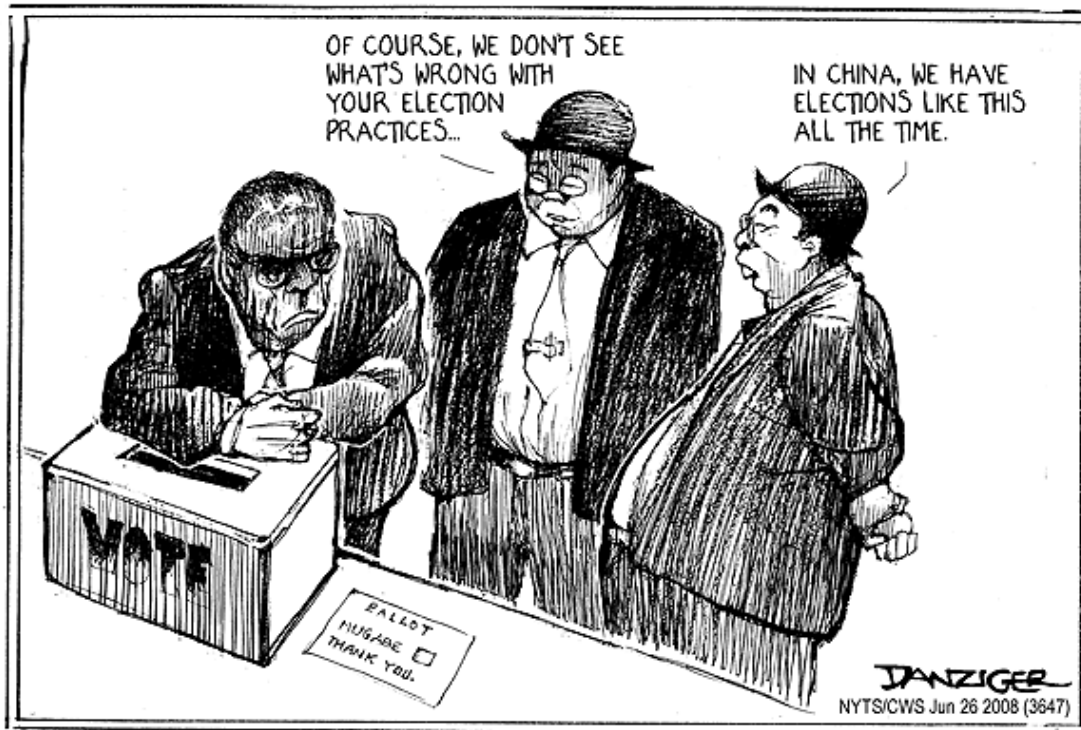
DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS

China Boiling: “Crowds Of Young And Old, Workers And Students” Defy Imperial Government; 30,000 In Weng’an County Rebel Against Their Oppressors: The Party, The Police, The Courts And The Secret Police Were Attacked, Their Premises Comprehensively Trashed And Set On Fire”

Chinese Accused of Supporting Mugabe Government



July 8, 2008 By David Whitehouse, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

TOP CHINESE officials have urged provincial and local authorities to “go on a war footing” to head off any protests that could tarnish China's image in the lead-up to the Olympic Games in Beijing, which begin on August 8.

The instructions, issued during a national teleconference and reported on the Web sites of several provincial governments, came on a weekend when 30,000 residents of the southwestern province of Guizhou rioted in protest over the police handling of a teenage girl's death.

Crowds in Guizhou's Weng'an County besieged government and Communist [translation: Capitalist] Party (CCP) buildings on June 28, torching official offices and cars.

Police had ruled the death of a 17-year-old student a suicide by drowning, but family members claimed that Li Shufen was raped and murdered by the son of a local official.

A crowd of 300 grew to 30,000 after receiving news that Li's uncle had been badly beaten on the street following an attempt to register a complaint with police over his niece's death.

More than 200 rioters were arrested, and police reported 150 injuries.

Police blamed the violence on gangs and criminals, but amateur videos showed crowds of young and old, workers and students.

The destruction wasn't random.

BBC Newsnight blogger Paul Mason reviewed BBC Monitoring reports from China's official Xinhua news agency and concluded, “What is clear is the scale of the attack on the entire apparatus of CCP rule in Guizhou: the party, the police, the courts and the secret police were attacked, their premises comprehensively trashed and set on fire.”

As BBC Monitoring wrote, “In this incident, the county CCP committee's building was destroyed by burning; 104 offices of the county government building were destroyed by burning; 47 offices and four facades of the office building of the county public security bureau were destroyed by burning; 14 offices of the criminal investigation building were smashed up; the entirety of the files and data at the domicile administration center of the county public security was destroyed.”

Within a few days, the People's Daily reported that a panel of local and provincial officials admitted the intensity of the crowd's anger was a consequence of a long buildup of grievances.

Since the People's Daily is the mouthpiece of the central government in Beijing, this admission of government wrongdoing really amounted to a staged enactment of a typical strategy for dealing with protest--blame officials at the lowest possible level for abuses that are endemic throughout China. The exercise also served to

warn lower officials elsewhere that they would take the blame for outbreaks of protest in their own areas.

Provincial officials pledged to reopen the inquiry into Li Shufen's death and admitted "improper handling" of the case by the lower--county--government.

Within a few days, the Shanghai Daily reported that Guizhou province was firing the county's party secretary, the head of the county government and two top county police officials. The provincial party chief, Shi Zongyuan, condemned the lower officials in harsh terms, accusing them of "severe malfeasance" and "rude and roughshod solutions" to "disputes over mines, demolition of homes for public projects, the relocation of residents for reservoir construction and many other issues."

At the same time, Shi continued to blame "criminal gangs" for turning Weng'an County's legitimate grievances into a riot--and endorsed a new police campaign against gangs and crime.

IN THE days following the Guizhou riot, Chinese sources noted two more outbreaks of violent anger against authorities--in Hunan province and in Shanghai.

In Shanghai, a man carrying Molotov cocktails and a large knife charged into a police building and stabbed six police to death and wounded several others. The 28-year-old man reportedly had been interrogated last October on suspicion of stealing bicycles. "Unhappy about the interrogation, he wanted to take revenge," said the Singapore-based Straits Times.

Following the initial press reports of the incident, postings on the Web--which many Chinese use to get around press censorship--claimed that the attacker had been beaten in custody and was repeatedly frustrated in his attempts to win compensation, according to the South China Morning Post. As the Times added, "Shanghai, a city of 20 million has its share of theft and petty crimes, but such violent attacks are rare."

One day later in Hunan province, a man who was angered at the demolition of his property detonated two bottles filled with cooking gas in a government building, injuring 12 people, according to the Morning Post.

"We all live in the neighborhood and heard about the man," one resident told the Morning Post.

"The government plans to move us off the land and build a new industrial park to attract outside investment." He added that the compensation being offered is not enough to buy similar property in other neighborhoods.

When Chinese fail to get satisfaction from their complaints to local officials, they often submit petitions to higher levels of government, which cultivate an image of impartiality. The reputation is undeserved.

The South China Morning Post, based in Hong Kong, cites mainland media for its claim that only two out of 1,000 petition cases are ever resolved.

It is precisely these appeals to higher authorities that Beijing officials are concerned to head off in the lead-up to the Olympics.

Nationwide, "petitions and complaint visits grew from 4.8 million in 1995 to 12.7 million in 2005," according to the Morning Post.

Echoing the latest directives from Beijing, an official in Sichuan province told the Morning Post, "Our most fundamental demand is that zero protesters go to Beijing, zero go to the provincial capital, and there are zero mass petitions and mass incidents."

Sichuan is the site of May 12 earthquake that killed 70,000, including 10,000 schoolchildren.

Provincial officials cooperated with the central government to promptly arrest family members who protested the shoddy construction of school buildings.

BUT THE nationwide campaign to quell dissent began earlier this year.

Following riots and major protests by Tibetans in four provinces in March, officials ordered the detention of thousands of Tibetans--and Muslims in the western province of Xinjiang--according to human rights organizations cited in the Straits Times.

Activists in Beijing have also been jailed and intimidated.

Beijing's nationwide directive to "go on a war footing" against protests in the coming weeks received a different spin in reports from some officials. According to the Straits Times, one city government said that Beijing was recommending a soft touch to keep small protests from exploding into large ones. Local officials, it said, should "earnestly solve the reasonable appeals of the masses."

But other accounts suggested that Beijing was urging officials to take a harder line through the Olympics, and "strictly deal with any unreasonable troublemakers or matters that disrupt the normal social order."

The language of warfare left no doubt about which message was really intended. As one account put it, Beijing's directive stated that "ensuring a smooth hosting of the Beijing Olympics has become a battle that all (government) levels and departments must win."

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Money

July 12 (Xinhua)

KABUL, July 12 (Xinhua) -- Afghan Minister for Mines Ibrahim Adil has said that his ministry had discovered varieties of mines worth of 300 billion U.S. dollars in Afghanistan's central high lands, a local newspaper reported Saturday.

The mining of the entire underground treasury would be leased to private sectors in future, according to officials at the ministry.

Afghanistan has already leased its biggest copper mine in Logar province to the China Metallurgical Group Corp. months ago.



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