

GI SPECIAL 6H11:



**“I Don’t See Any Good
Coming From This War”
“We Just Lose More And More
People”
Wash. Heights G.I. Killed In Iraq
Blast**



Sgt. Jose (Ricky) Ulloa

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War & Military Project, who sent this in.]

August 12th 2008 BY KERRY BURKE and LEO STANDORA; DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

An army sergeant from Washington Heights who told his family “I love being a soldier” died when a roadside bomb blew up his vehicle in Baghdad.

Sgt. Jose (Ricky) Ulloa, 23, was training two soldiers when the bomb exploded Saturday afternoon near a Sadr City market, military officials said.

The death of Ulloa, who lost his mother just three months ago, has plunged his family into despair, the eldest of his two sisters said.

“His wife said she no longer wants to live,” said Miriam Marmol, 43, who raised Ulloa from age 5. “And my brother’s son - he’s only 6 months old - doesn’t have a father anymore.”

Marmol said her brother came from the Dominican Republic to live with her after their mother took ill.

Ulloa grew up to be happy and a “great kid” who loved “music, dancing, driving - and pulling pranks.”

“He was a joker, the real troublemaker in our family,” she said sadly.

Even before he graduated from Washington Irving High School, Ulloa wanted to join the service.

His relatives urged him to wait, but he convinced them he knew best.

“We all wanted him to go to college, to become a professional person,” Marmol said. “But he looked me in the eye and said ‘Okay, I’ll wait until I can join on my own,’ and that’s what he did.”

Marmol said her brother reenlisted just a few months ago.

He called her and their father every week, especially after his mother died.

“We’re all so sad,” she said.

“There are so many questions in our minds. I don’t see any good coming from this war. We just lose more and more people.”

Ulloa was assigned to the Army’s 515th Transportation Company, 28th Transportation Battalion, based in Mannheim, Germany, where his wife and child live.

Sadr City, a slum of 2 million, had been a hotbed of bombings and fighting between U.S. forces and the Mahdi Army for years until a ceasefire was called in May by Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, who created the paramilitary force.

As of Monday, at least 4,139 members of the U.S. military have died in the Iraq war since it began in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

ACTION REPORTS

“‘Sir! No Sir!’ Is In The Breakroom For All Soldiers To View At Their Leisure”

From: Alan Stolzer, The Military Project
To: GI Special
Sent: August 13, 2008
Subject: Action Report

Last night I had time to go by [XXXX] Station for outreach where the past two weekends (one Saturday; one Sunday) found no troops whatsoever.

Obviously, the National Guard schedule has changed since I’ve been going every weekend for at least a year.

But Monday night they were there.

I approached four and distributed GI Specials, Traveling Soldiers, soldier rights pamphlets and DVDs of "Sir! No Sir!"

All this has been done before but the best part was being told (as I had been months before) that "Sir! No Sir! is in the breakroom for all soldiers to view at their leisure. That's good to know.

It's also good to know that one soldier mentioned he had heard of the Military Project and its outreach to the National Guard Armory in [XXXX].

Obviously the evening hours (during the week) are the ones to use for outreach here.

[XXXX] Station will be included in the next one as it has been in the past.

MORE ACTION REPORTS WANTED: FROM YOU!

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

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

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

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

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

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

NOTE WELL:

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

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

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Marine Killed Near Fallujah

Aug. 15, 2008 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080815-03

AL ANBAR, Iraq – A Multi-National Force – West Marine was killed Aug. 14 when his unit received small-arms fire during security operations approximately 1 km east of Fallujah.

ENOUGH OF THIS SHIT; ALL HOME NOW



A U.S. Army soldier from Second Stryker Cavalry Regiment searches a rural village near Qara Tappah, about 75 miles northeast of Baghdad in Diyala province July 22, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Two Foreign Occupation Soldiers Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan; Nationality Not Announced

Aug 15, 2008 KABUL (Reuters)

Insurgents killed two soldiers from NATO-led forces in an attack in eastern Afghanistan on Friday, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said.

“Two ISAF service members died as a result of wounds suffered during an IED strike and small arms fire attack on their patrol in eastern Afghanistan today,” ISAF said in a statement.

The alliance does not release the nationalities of soldiers killed in Afghanistan, but most ISAF troops in eastern Afghanistan are American.

Rockford Soldier Dies In Afghanistan, Planned To Attend College

8.5.08 David J. Badie, By ASSOCIATED PRESS AND GAZETTE STAFF

CHICAGO — A soldier who had attended Milton High School and had plans to attend college when his U.S. Army enlistment ended was killed Friday by a bomb blast in Afghanistan as he returned from a patrol, his family said.

Daniel Morgan said Army officials came to his home to tell him that his son, Pfc. David J. Badie, 23, of Rockford, Ill., had died Friday.

Badie was born in Arizona and moved to the Midwest in 2000, according to news reports.

He attended Milton High School from 2001 to 2003, according to Milton school officials. He later received his general equivalency diploma through Blackhawk Technical College.

Badie was home in June, on leave before his deployment, and asked his father in a conversation away from his siblings to tell his family how much he loved them if he were to be wounded or killed.

“He enjoyed what he was doing and was proud to be in the Army,” Morgan said. “At the same time, he knew the risks. He wanted to remind me how very much he cared for his brothers and sisters. He asked me to tell them that if the worst happened.”

The worst happened on Friday as his son’s unit was returning to its base after a mine detection mission, Morgan said. Army casualty affairs officers arranged for Morgan to speak with his son’s commanding officer, who told him that somehow the unit missed an improvised explosive device near its camp, Morgan said.

“He said it happened very quick and that my son didn’t suffer,” Morgan said. “He told me my son never knew what hit him.”

Badie was assigned to the Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

Badie’s sister, Cassandra Badie, said her brother had changed his life around since enlisting two years ago.

Before joining the Army, Cassandra said her brother “sowed some wild oats.” When he visited in June, she noticed a change.

“My brother and I talked about everything,” she said. “He was really my best friend. He seemed more focused when he came home. He had goals. He wanted to go to college when he got out of the Army.”

“Hundreds” Of Resistance Troops Capture Nawah And Marja Districts In Ghanzni Province; Collaborator Forces Run Away

Aug 15, 2008 DPA

Kabul - Taliban militants overran a district in southern Afghanistan Friday after four policemen were killed in a blast in the same region, officials said.

Hundreds of Taliban militants overran Nawah district in southern Ghazni province on Friday morning after the local authorities and police forces left the district, said Mohibullah Khepilwak, the district administrative chief.

‘We were under severe pressure by the Taliban militants for the past several days,’ Khepilwak told Deutsche Presse-Agentur dpa by phone from the province, adding, ‘We had asked the government to send reinforcement, but nobody was sent.’

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid also confirmed that their forces had captured the district without any resistance by the ‘Afghan and foreign forces.’

The Taliban also claimed that their forces captured Marja district in southern Helmand province after several days of fierce fighting, another rebel spokesman, Qari Mohammad Yousif Ahmadi, said.

TROOP NEWS



Thanks to Linda Olson, who sent this in. [Military Humor: Tom-phillips.info]

“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

THE GI COFFEE HOUSE
COMING SOON! NEXT TO FT LEWIS!
BOOKS—LIVE MUSIC—GI RESOURCES
DONATIONS AT THE DOOR

Our illegal military occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan have put an even greater strain on the military than the Vietnam War did! Vietnam duty for most soldiers consisted of one twelve-month combat tour. Today, many combat troops are deployed two or more times, with each deployment lasting from twelve to fifteen months. Not surprisingly, the suicide rate among troops serving in Iraq is rising. The longer soldiers are subjected to combat, the more likely they are to develop post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and a host of other problems.



But there is hope. A new GI Coffee House will be opening within a stone's throw of Fort Lewis this fall. Just like the GI Coffee Houses from Vietnam era, this one will be a place for soldiers to support each other and find out how to **PROTECT THEIR RIGHTS**. But we need your help to open the Ft Lewis GI Coffee House, so please come to the:

PLEASE RSVP mollygibbs3@gmail.com

GI COFFEE HOUSE FUNDRAISER!

Monday, August 25 ~ 7 to 9 PM

The Richard Hugo House

1634 11th Ave ~ Seattle

(see www.hugohouse.org/house/map)



SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER:

Tod Ensign is director of Citizen Soldier—a GI and veterans' rights organization that co-sponsors the Different Drummer Internet Café near Ft Drum in upstate N.Y. Ensign will discuss what he has learned from working with soldiers and families. Additionally, we will explore how to engage our communities in supporting the coffee house.

Sponsored by



Endorsers: Iraq Veterans Against the War (Seattle IVAW), National Veterans for Peace, Western WA Fellowship of Reconciliation, Vets for Peace Chapter 92, Sound Non-Violent Opponents of War (S.N.O.W.), WA Physicians for Social Responsibility, Progressive Democrats of America (PDA)

Burn Them Out
Throw Them Away
You're A Member Of Congress

Have A Nice Day

#1:

Multiple Deployments To War Produce PTSD In +25% Of troops

8.15.08 USA Today

Multiple combat deployments to Iraq are increasing serious mental health problems among soldiers, triggering drug and alcohol abuse and contributing to record suicide levels, according to researchers attending a American Psychological Association meeting in Boston.

In a typical unit headed to Iraq, 60 percent are on their second, third or fourth deployment, lasting about a year each, said Army Col. Carl Castro, who directs a medical research program at Fort Detrick, Md.

By their third tour to Iraq, more than a quarter of soldiers show signs of mental problems, such as post-traumatic stress disorder — the rate is 1 out of 3 for those exposed to heavy combat — according to an Army Surgeon General report in March on more than 2,000 soldiers.

MORE:

#2:

Head Trauma: “Troops Who Serve Multiple Tours In Iraq Often Experience Explosion After Explosion”

August 15, 2008 Tampa Tribune

About 60 percent of today's 1.5 million war injuries are related to explosions, according to Dr. Steven Scott, head of the Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital in Tampa, Fla.

And up to 10 percent of those injuries involve a blow to the head, he told an audience at MacDill Air Force Base. He called head trauma “the signature wound” of the Iraq war, and such injuries are becoming more severe as the war continues.

Troops who serve multiple tours in Iraq often experience explosion after explosion.

Each encounter alone might not be enough to cause serious damage, Scott said, but together they can amount to major trauma.

Comment: T

During the Vietnam War, it was understood by all concerned that after serving 365 days in that war, there would never, ever be a 366th unless an individual chose to sign up for another tour.

No one could be forced to do so. Few did. There was no stop-loss, or threat of stop-loss.

Had there been an effort to try to stop-loss troops in Vietnam, the dead commanding officer body count would have been in the thousands rather than merely the high hundreds.

This is not said in criticism of troops today.

Unlike the Vietnam army, with endless comings of individual replacements and goings of individual troops the day their year was up, and consequent lack of unit cohesion, in today's armed forces, unit cohesion is real, and strong.

There is a saying that General's always fight the last war.

So do political activists, who have their own firmly backward-looking myth.

They keep telling each other that the troops won't rebel today, as they did in Vietnam days, because, they say, the civilians haven't given a lead by rising up in this or that mass movement over this or that or some other political issue, as was true during Vietnam days.

As if the troops then needed civilian permission to rebel! As if they were too weak and stupid to act for themselves! As if they didn't know the huge majority of Americans hated the war in Vietnam, especially working class Americans, where the opposition was most concentrated. That was quite good enough.

This isn't 1968, and the troops are not required by some silly formula based on 40 year old myths to wait around for civilians to do this or that before they decide to act to save their sanity and their lives.

The troops know very well that the overwhelming majority of Americans hate today's' Imperial wars, and that's good enough.

Rather than seeing escalating individual acts of Vietnam-style resistance, somewhere, sometime, enough will be enough.

Platoons and then companies will simply decide one day not go to work outside the wire.

And that will be that.

Another Soldier Found Dead In Hood Barracks

Aug 14, 2008 The Associated Press

FORT HOOD, Texas — A soldier has been found dead in his barracks at Fort Hood, the second soldier's death at the Central Texas Army post in less than a month.

Pfc. Travis Edward Dowd, 22, of Tallahassee, Fla., was found Tuesday in his room by fellow soldiers after he failed to report to formation, and he was later pronounced dead, Fort Hood officials said Thursday. Authorities are still trying to determine how he died, said Maj. David Shoupe, who said he could not comment on whether foul play is suspected.

Dowd joined the military in 2007 and was assigned to 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division as an infantryman. His unit is to deploy to Iraq early next year.

Dowd's decorations and awards include the Army Commendation Medal, National Defense Service Medal and Army Service Ribbon.

The body of Spc. Donald James Scott Jr., 28, a biomedical equipment specialist from Boyceville, Wis., was found July 29 by a game warden in a training area, although his unit was not doing training exercises at the time, Fort Hood officials have said.

Army officials in the Washington, D.C., area handling the investigation into Scott's death did not immediately return calls on Thursday.

Florida National Guard Commander, Supported By Governor, Was Ready To Bring His Soldiers Home From U.S. Army Training Abuse:

“My Intent Was To Rescind The Military’s Orders Sending Them There To Texas And Go Get Them” General “Considered Sending A Cargo Plane To Bring His Medics Home”

August 15, 2008 By BILLY HOUSE, The Tampa Tribune

WASHINGTON - The housing of 35 Florida National Guard combat medics and other soldiers in sweltering metal huts during training in Texas was “a bit out of control,” says a congressman who wants to know of any similar conditions elsewhere.

Rep. C.W. Bill Young, R-Indian Shores, stopped short Thursday of calling for a congressional investigation, but said “what we need to do is inquire of the Army - or all of the military - if they know of any more situations like this that need fixing.”

The medics have been undergoing three weeks of training at Camp Bullis.

But with temperatures climbing to 107 degrees, word of stark housing conditions made it back last week to the Florida Guard’s commanding general, Doug Burnett, who considered sending a cargo plane to bring his medics home.

In an interview Thursday, Burnett said those concerns were heightened after he sent a Guard officer, Gen. Mike Fleming, to view the housing conditions firsthand. Fleming reported back that the troops were sleeping on cots in huts with no running water - likening it to storage sheds where people keep gardening tools - and that temperatures in the metal huts were reaching as high as 107 degrees.

Fleming also reported that as many as 50 males and 24 females had to use the same “common latrine,” with just eight stalls and eight shower heads, in shifts.

“My intent was to rescind the military’s orders sending them there to Texas and go get them - and I had the support of Gov. Charlie Crist to do it,” said Burnett.

Young, ranking Republican on the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, successfully pushed to get the military approval needed to move the 35 members of Florida’s 256th Medical Company and more than 100 other troops from other states into a nearby hotel.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

War In Georgia 101:

#1: OOPS

August 14, 2008 By Jamal Dajani, Huffingtonpost.com [Excerpt]

“What goes around comes around.”

This is how one of the editorials in a major Arab newspaper described the Georgian ordeal.

The writer went on to poke fun at Georgia for having to withdraw its troops from the occupation of Iraq, which it obviously approves of, to try to prevent a possible occupation of Georgia, which it seems to consider a bad idea.

#2: Big Surprise

Comment: T

In war, every side fakes propaganda, and always has.

Russia is controlled by a pack of loathsome, corrupt thugs.

Georgia is controlled by a pack of loathsome corrupt thugs.

Big surprise.

The U.S. politicians are running an Empire, and trying to dominate every small country they can.

The Russian politicians are running an Empire, and trying to dominate every small country they can.

Big surprise.

All the rest is propaganda, lies, and noise.

#3:

“If One Plays Geopolitical Chess, It Is Best To Know The Rules, Or One Gets Out-Maneuvered” [Background To A Mini-War In The Caucasus]

15 Aug 2008 by Immanuel Wallerstein, Agence Global

The world has been witness this month to a mini-war in the Caucasus, and the rhetoric has been passionate, if largely irrelevant.

Geopolitics is a gigantic series of two-player chess games, in which the players seek positional advantage.

In these games, it is crucial to know the current rules that govern the moves. Knights are not allowed to move diagonally.

From 1945 to 1989, the principal chess game was that between the United States and the Soviet Union. It was called the Cold War, and the basic rules were called metaphorically “Yalta.”

The most important rule concerned a line that divided Europe into two zones of influence. It was called by Winston Churchill the “Iron Curtain” and ran from Stettin to Trieste.

The rule was that, no matter how much turmoil was instigated in Europe by the pawns, there was to be no actual warfare between the United States and the Soviet Union.

And at the end of each instance of turmoil, the pieces were to be returned to where they were at the outset. This rule was observed meticulously right up to the collapse of the Communisms in 1989, which was most notably marked by the destruction of the Berlin wall.

It is perfectly true, as everyone observed at the time, that the Yalta rules were abrogated in 1989 and that the game between the United States and (as of 1991) Russia had changed radically.

The major problem since then is that the United States misunderstood the new rules of the game. It proclaimed itself, and was proclaimed by many others, the lone superpower.

In terms of chess rules, this was interpreted to mean that the United States was free to move about the chessboard as it saw fit, and in particular to transfer former Soviet pawns to its sphere of influence. Under Clinton, and even more spectacularly under George W. Bush, the United States proceeded to play the game this way.

There was only one problem with this: The United States was not the lone superpower; it was no longer even a superpower at all.

The end of the Cold War meant that the United States had been demoted from being one of two superpowers to being one strong state in a truly multilateral distribution of real power in the interstate system.

Many large countries were now able to play their own chess games without clearing their moves with one of the two erstwhile superpowers. And they began to do so.

Two major geopolitical decisions were made in the Clinton years.

First, the United States pushed hard, and more or less successfully, for the incorporation of erstwhile Soviet satellites into NATO membership. These countries were themselves anxious to join, even though the key western European countries -- Germany and France -- were somewhat reluctant to go down this path. They saw the U.S. maneuver as one aimed in part at them, seeking to limit their newly-acquired freedom of geopolitical action.

The second key U.S. decision was to become an active player in the boundary realignments within the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This culminated in a decision to sanction, and enforce with their troops, the de facto secession of Kosovo from Serbia.

Russia, even under Yeltsin, was quite unhappy about both these U.S. actions. However, the political and economic disarray of Russia during the Yeltsin years was such that the most it could do was complain, somewhat feebly it should be added.

The coming to power of George W. Bush and Vladimir Putin was more or less simultaneous.

Bush decided to push the lone superpower tactics (the United States can move its pieces as it alone decides) much further than had Clinton. First, Bush in 2001 withdrew from the 1972 U.S.-Soviet Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

Then he announced that the United States would not move to ratify two new treaties signed in the Clinton years: the 1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the agreed changes in the SALT II nuclear disarmament treaty. Then Bush announced that the United States would move forward with its National Missile Defense system.

And of course, Bush invaded Iraq in 2003.

As part of this engagement, the United States sought and obtained rights to military bases and overflight rights in the Central Asian republics that formerly were part of the Soviet Union. In addition, the United States promoted the construction of pipelines for Central Asian and Caucasian oil and natural gas that would bypass Russia.

And finally, the United States entered into an agreement with Poland and the Czech Republic to establish missile defense sites, ostensibly to guard against Iranian missiles. Russia, however, regarded them as aimed at her.

Putin decided to push back much more effectually than Yeltsin.

As a prudent player, however, he moved first to strengthen his home base -- restoring effective central authority and reinvigorating the Russian military. At this point, the tides in the world-economy changed, and Russia suddenly became a wealthy and powerful controller not only of oil production but of the natural gas so needed by western European countries.

Putin thereupon began to act. He entered into treaty relationships with China. He maintained close relations with Iran. He began to push the United States out of its Central Asian bases.

And he took a very firm stand on the further extension of NATO to two key zones -- Ukraine and Georgia.

The breakup of the Soviet Union had led to ethnic secessionist movements in many former republics, including Georgia.

When Georgia in 1990 sought to end the autonomous status of its non-Georgian ethnic zones, they promptly proclaimed themselves independent states.

They were recognized by no one but Russia guaranteed their de facto autonomy.

The immediate spurs to the current mini-war were twofold.

In February, Kosovo formally transformed its de facto autonomy to de jure independence. Its move was supported by and recognized by the United States and many western European countries.

Russia warned at the time that the logic of this move applied equally to the de facto secessions in the former Soviet republics. In Georgia, Russia moved immediately, for the first time, to recognize South Ossetian de jure independence in direct response to that of Kosovo.

And in April this year, the United States proposed at the NATO meeting that Georgia and Ukraine be welcomed into a so-called Membership Action Plan. Germany, France, and the United Kingdom all opposed this action, saying it would provoke Russia.

Georgia's neoliberal and strongly pro-American president, Mikhail Saakashvili, was now desperate.

He saw the reassertion of Georgian authority in South Ossetia (and Abkhazia) receding forever. So, he chose a moment of Russian inattention (Putin at the Olympics, Medvedev on vacation) to invade South Ossetia.

Of course, the puny South Ossetian military collapsed completely. Saakashvili expected that he would be forcing the hand of the United States (and indeed of Germany and France as well).

Instead, he got an immediate Russian military response, overwhelming the small Georgian army.

What he got from George W. Bush was rhetoric.

What, after all, could Bush do?

The United States was not a superpower.

Its armed forces were tied down in two losing wars in the Middle East.

And, most important of all, the United States needed Russia far more than Russia needed the United States. Russia's foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, pointedly noted in an op-ed in the Financial Times that Russia was a "partner with the west on...the Middle East, Iran and North Korea."

As for western Europe, Russia essentially controls its gas supplies. It is no accident that it was President Sarkozy of France, not Condoleezza Rice, who negotiated the truce between Georgia and Russia.

The truce contained two essential concessions by Georgia. Georgia committed itself to no further use of force in South Ossetia, and the agreement contained no reference to Georgian territorial integrity.

So, Russia emerged far stronger than before.

Saakashvili had bet everything he has and was now geopolitically bankrupt.

And, as an ironic footnote, Georgia, one of the last U.S. allies in the coalition in Iraq, withdrew all its 2000 troops from Iraq. These troops had been playing a crucial role in Shi'a areas, and would now have to be replaced by U.S. troops, which will have to be withdrawn from other areas.

If one plays geopolitical chess, it is best to know the rules, or one gets out-manuevered.

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

August 16, 1819:

Horrible Anniversary: THE PETERLOO MASSACRE “The Government’s Attitude Was Made Clear By Its Total Endorsement Of The Massacre”



[spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk]

**‘Rise, like lions after slumber.
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth like dew,
Which in sleep had fallen on you!
Ye are many- they are few!’**

[Thanks to Max Watts, who sent this in.]

When all the contingents had arrived and assembled in the centre of Manchester, something like 12 per cent of the population of the county of Lancashire, and over half that of its industrial South East were present. It was the largest assembly England had ever seen.

As soon as all the contingents had filled St Peter's Field, to the point where, according to a contemporary report, people were packed in so tightly that 'their hats seemed to touch', the area was ringed by 1,500 troops with cannon.

1981 By Graham Milner, Unpublished

On August 16, 1819, mounted regular troops and yeomanry of the British army, acting on the instructions of Government officials, attacked without warning a mass meeting of over 100,000 people drawn from the industrial centres of Lancashire in the north-west of England.

The meeting, held on St Peter's Field in the centre of Manchester, the major industrial city of Lancashire, had been organised as part of a national campaign to win a radical reform of the British parliament and to redress the economic grievances of working people.

Over four hundred men, women and children were killed or seriously injured as a result of this 'action'.

One of the cavalry units involved - the 11th Hussars - had been present at the Battle of Waterloo, which had occurred four years earlier. As soon as the massacre became known to the public, the savage sobriquet 'Peterloo' was universally adopted.

The August 16 massacre in Manchester was one outcome of an extraordinarily powerful and determined agitation for social and political justice in England which at times approached pre-revolutionary proportions. The primary social force behind this mass agitation was the new working class.

This new class, the industrial proletariat, emerged from the industrial revolution, a transformation of economic and social relations that began towards the end of the 18th century, primarily in parts of north-west England. The cradle of this revolution was in fact south-east Lancashire, and Manchester in particular.

Here, technological innovations developed in the latter third of the 18th century, such as the steam engine, the power loom and the spinning jenny, were applied to the previously-dispersed, domestic-based cotton industry then existing. The 'putting-out' system, whereby spinners and weavers worked at home at more or less their own pace, was replaced by vast factories employing hundreds or thousands of workers.

The new machine industry was concentrated in these factories. Raw materials and fuel for the machines came from the coal and iron extraction industries then emerging in other parts of England and Scotland. Around the factories grew up large industrial towns such as Rochdale, Stockport, Oldham and Blackburn, as well as the world's first industrial city - Manchester.

The previously-existing social order broke up in Lancashire and other emergent industrial districts, and was replaced by a new one.

Ties of dependence descended from feudalism - a deferential hierarchy linking 'masters' and 'men'; the static, rigid order overseen by landlord and parson; all this was burst asunder and replaced by the cut-throat world of capitalist competition.

In these regions the whole pattern of life was revolutionised.

By 1800, of English cities, Manchester was second only to London in size.

Near to the centre of Manchester, in large opulent houses, lived the new rich - the capitalist factory owners. Surrounding the factories lived the workers and their families. Many of these workers were ruined hand-loom weavers or hand spinners forced to seek work in factory towns like Manchester, as competition from cheap, machine-produced goods forced them out of their traditional occupations.

Many capitalists made quick fortunes raising jerry-built, back-to-back slums to house the workers. Almost without exception these slums were overcrowded, damp, ill-lit, without sanitation, and without running water or gardens.

Many who sought employment were denied it by the frequent slumps that punctuated the evolution of capitalist industry. Those who did find work were faced with ruthless exploitation and appalling working conditions.

Long hours - fourteen hours per day was quite usual - abysmally low wages, child labour and dangerous, unguarded machinery were the norm. Sexual abuse of women by foremen and capitalists was rampant. Immigrant workers, especially those from Ireland, fared particularly badly.

The new working class was by no means a 'dormant, passive mass' in the face of these conditions of life and work. It hit back at its oppressors in an increasingly intelligent, organised and effective way.

Working class radicalism in England was on the rise when the French Revolution broke out in 1789. Jacobin democratic clubs sprang up across the country during the 1790s, inspired by the Revolution in France, and by widely-circulated books such as Tom Paine's 'The Rights of Man'.

The Government's repression of domestic radicalism, which it combined with a reactionary war against the French republic, was strongly and widely opposed by workers.

The historian Edward Thompson, in his book 'The Making of the English Working Class' reveals how the English workers fought back during the period of the French wars, by organising unions and secret societies in defiance of the Combination Acts, and by burning mills and smashing the machines that threatened their livelihoods.

By 1815 the revolutionary ferment brewing underground burst forth in the mass radicalism that was to come to a head in 1819.

At this time Manchester and its surrounding area was, among governing circles, considered to be the most 'turbulent and seditious' in the country. The mass

movement as a national force directed itself towards achieving first political rights, and secondly social and economic justice.

Political rights included first and foremost a democratic, representative parliament, and it included the sweeping away of 'Old Corruption'. Under that system bribery and patronage of electors were rife.

Old Sarum, which had been the parliamentary seat of William Pitt the Elder, consisted of a few tufts of grass, while Manchester, with its population of 200,000, went unrepresented. Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, under which religious minorities - Jews, Roman Catholics and Non-Conformists in particular - faced discrimination in public life, was another major issue.

Repeal of the anti-trade union Combination Acts, and the monopolistic Corn Laws also were major focuses of organised agitation.

The ongoing economic struggle for improved wages, shorter hours and better working conditions was made more imperative by the acute distress of the post-war years in England.

Industry and trade slumped.

Unemployment rose and was swelled by the return of demobilised troops from Continental Europe.

Wages fell. Actual starvation faced many working-class communities.

Joseph Johnson, a shareholder in the Radical newspaper the 'Manchester Observer', wrote of conditions in Manchester in 1819, the year of Peterloo: 'Everything is almost at a standstill, nothing but ruin and starvation stare one in the face. The state of the district is truly dreadful.'

The Government in power at this time, that of the Tory Prime Minister Lord Liverpool, has been described as one of the most reactionary and repressive in British history. It represented the interests of no more than a narrow ruling class of big landowners, City financiers and merchants.

Liverpool and his closest advisors were firmly convinced that England was on the brink of revolution.

The Home Secretary, Sidmouth, who had control of the police, militia and army units stationed in England, had organised an elaborate network of spies to disrupt the radical movement.

Castlereigh, another of Liverpool's ministers, had been instrumental in the suppression of the Irish Rebellion of 1798 and the subsequent terror campaign and forced Union of Ireland with Britain.

Control of Manchester itself was in the hands of the descendents of the same local landed clique that had ruled this once small market town in pre-industrial

times. Landowners and clergymen dominated the local magistracy - this body was to have direct responsibility for instigating the Peterloo massacre.

A local levy of merchants, manufacturers, publicans and shopkeepers, all rabid enemies of the working-class radical movement, formed the backbone of the 'Manchester and Salford Yeomanry Cavalry' - the body that charged into the assembly at St Peter's Field.

Although one of the powerhouses of the mass movement for radical reform was centred in the industrial districts of Lancashire, by 1819 a coordinated national effort was well under way, based on mass mobilisations in all the major cities.

1817 had witnessed a huge meeting of workers, mainly spinners and weavers, assembling on St Peter's Field to see off the famous 'March of the Blanketeers' from Manchester to London. The march sought redress of economic grievances.

1818 had been a year of mass strikes aimed at restoring falling wage levels. These strikes showed a great capacity by workers for discipline and organisation, with meetings, marches and pickets in Manchester and Stockport.

A new feature of these actions was the increasing participation of women workers. Union Societies were founded to develop basic education in the working class and to circulate the ideas of radicalism in an organised way. Women had their own separate Union Societies.

The workers' press advanced the ideas of radicalism with imagination and tenacity. The most widely-read newspapers among radicals and radical sympathisers were William Cobbett's 'Political Register', as well as 'The Black Dwarf'.

A typical issue of the Radical 'Manchester Observer', founded in 1818, included alongside a demand for the impeachment of Sidmouth, coverage of the republican revolution in Venezuela.

Mass meetings for parliamentary reform and for the repeal of the hated Corn Laws, which artificially inflated the price of bread, took place in Stockport and Manchester in the first half of 1819.

By July thousands of workers had begun drilling on the moors and in the fields outside working-class districts in Lancashire. The same thing occurred in other parts of the country. In July as many as 2000 workers paraded in semi-military formation along the High Rd from Manchester to Rochdale.

These preparations were primarily aimed at improving organisation for the planned August mass meeting at St Peter's Field, to which contingents from surrounding towns were to march. The planned assembly in Manchester was part of a broader national effort for July-August 1819, which organised large meetings in Birmingham, Leeds and London.

The reactionary oligarchy controlling the city of Manchester made preparations in league with Sidmouth and the national Government for what amounted to the

waging of civil war on the workers expected to pour into Manchester to demand reform of parliament.

In July the magistracy formed an 'Armed Association for the Preservation of the Peace' and enrolled special constables.

Military units in the S.E. Lancashire areas were mobilised as part of a national military alert. As soon as instructions came through, the yeomanry sent its sabres to be sharpened.

On the final weekend before the rally at St Peter's Field the city magistracy sat in almost continuous session to discuss ways and means of dealing with the mobilisation.

In the weeks before the St Peter's Field meeting, which as everyone expected would be the largest meeting ever seen in England, Manchester's streets and buildings were covered with posters and placards, and thousands of leaflets and fliers were distributed.

The publicising and organisation of the assembly was a major achievement of communication and organisation. Assembly points were announced from which people in the towns and districts surrounding Manchester could gather and from there march in disciplined contingents to the rally.

August 16 in Lancashire was a lovely summer day with a cloudless sky and a hot sun shining. There was a confident, cheerful and festive atmosphere as the contingents gathered and prepared to march.

Bands played, and the beautiful banners, woven and embroidered with great care, were unfurled. Oldham's banner was of pure white silk, emblazoned with the inscriptions 'Universal Suffrage, Annual Parliaments - Election by Ballot', and 'No Combination Acts: Oldham Union'.

Saddleworth's was jet black, with the inscription 'Equal Representation or Death' in white over two joined hands and a heart. One of the banners carried by the Stockport contingent read 'Success to the Female Reformers of Stockport'. Many red caps of liberty were carried.

When all the contingents had arrived and assembled in the centre of Manchester, something like 12 per cent of the population of the county of Lancashire, and over half that of its industrial South East were present. It was the largest assembly England had ever seen.

As soon as all the contingents had filled St Peter's Field, to the point where, according to a contemporary report, people were packed in so tightly that 'their hats seemed to touch', the area was ringed by 1,500 troops with cannon.

No-one in the crowd, least of all the organisers, suspected that an attempt to physically disperse the meeting was planned. Meetings such as this, even if smaller and without the same evident discipline and organisation, had been held many times before up and down the country.

The ensuing massacre was completely unexpected and unprovoked, and met with little organised resistance.

The city magistrates had even gone to the lengths in their preparations for the massacre of employing scavengers to remove every stone, brick or possible missile from the Field and surrounding streets, so that the meeting's participants were thus left entirely without defence.

Barely had Hentry Hunt, the main featured speaker, begun to address the meeting when mounted troopers of the yeomanry charged the hustings to arrest him and others on the platform.

At first the crowd, which had not been aware of the presence of the troops, did not panic and Hunt shouted: 'Stand firm, my friends: there are only a few soldiers, and we are a host against them'.

But as the yeomanry, many of whom were drunk, charged with sabres drawn, slashing and cutting their way through the crowd and trampling and crushing many people, chaos and panic gripped the field.

According to witnesses cited in Joyce Marlow's account 'The Peterloo Massacre', the yeomanry, having tasted blood, went berserk. They dragged the speakers and organisers from the hustings and would have killed Hunt had he not been quickly whisked away to jail. The yeomanry continued to slash and cut indiscriminately at men, women and children alike, while smashing wagons and platforms, and tearing the banners and the caps of liberty. The regular cavalry then moved onto the field to complete the work. Hundreds more people suffered serious injuries from the slashing sabres and flying hooves, or were smothered under piles of falling bodies.

Ten minutes from the first charge it was all over. Samuel Bamford, the Lancashire poet, described the scene:

'...the field was an open and almost deserted space. The hustings remained, with a few broken and hewed flagstaves erect, and a torn and gashed banner or two drooping; whilst over the whole field were strewn the caps, bonnets, hats, shawls and shoes and other parts of male and female dress; trampled, torn and bloody. The yeomanry had dismounted - some were easing their horse's girths and some were wiping their sabres'

Many more people were killed and maimed as the troops continued to 'disperse' the crowd through surrounding streets.

That night one person was shot dead and several injured in clashes between soldiers and crowds of angry workers.

The Government's attitude was made clear by its total endorsement of the massacre.

The Prince Regent, then disporting himself on his yacht, made it known, through Sidmouth, what great satisfaction he had derived from the magistrate's 'prompt, decisive and efficient measure for the preservation of public tranquility'. Despite repeated and

widely-voiced demands for one, there was never an official inquiry into the Peterloo Massacre.

An immense wave of anger swept across England in the wake of the massacre.

The mass movement for reform was not appreciably set back by the Peterloo massacre. A huge crowd estimated by the conservative 'Times' at 300,000 lined the streets of London to greet Hunt after his release from jail.

Meetings were spurred all over England by the events at St Peter's Field, especially in the North East counties, where over 50,000 miners marched into Newcastle from surrounding districts.

Loyalist forces in this area began arming, and the pitmen took up arms to defend themselves. In the months of October and November, according to Edward Thompson, workers across the country stocked pikes and other weapons to defend themselves and their meetings. Drilling and armed demonstrations were reported in Newcastle, Wolverhampton, Wigan, Bolton and Blackburn.

Divisions within the Radical movement's leadership between constitutionalists and revolutionaries were not resolved, and this crisis of leadership, combined with renewed Government repression and an economic upturn brought this early phase of mass working class struggle to a close.

The events in Manchester on August 16, 1819 however, will remain forever inscribed in the collective memory of the international working class.

Shelley's poem 'The Masque of Anarchy' was written just after Peterloo, and its final stanza carries the fighting sentiments of thousands of workers:

**'Rise, like lions after slumber.
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth like dew,
Which in sleep had fallen on you!
Ye are many- they are few!'**

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OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. Troops Fighting For Democracy? What Silly, Stupid Bullshit: Iraqi Collaborators Using Troops To Wreck Elections: “An Emerging Pattern Of Voter Intimidation” By Bush Buddies: “Iraqi Army Troops Raided A Registration Center In Sadr City And Demanded A List Of Names And Addresses Of Voters”

8.15.08 By Charles Levinson and Ali A. Nabhan, USA TODAY [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD — Iraqi security forces loyal to the government are raiding voter registration centers and taking other steps to discourage participation in upcoming elections, says the head of Iraq’s voting regulatory agency.

A drive to register new voters is slated to end next week. However, only about 1 million people had registered as of Wednesday, a low turnout due partly to voter intimidation, according to Iraq’s High Elections Commission.

“There are people who don’t want these elections and the security forces are collaborating with these people in some places,” said Faraj al-Haydari, the commission’s chairman.

Opposition politicians such as Ali Hatem, a leader of a group of former insurgents known as the Sunni Awakening, accuse ruling parties of trying to sabotage the elections because they fear losing power.

Among recent incidents:

•Iraqi Army troops raided a registration center in the Baghdad neighborhood of Sadr City and demanded a list of names and addresses of voters, al-Haydari said.

The area is the heart of support for anti-government Shiite cleric [translation: nationalist anti-occupation politician] Muqtada al-Sadr. The incident was confirmed by Iraqi Gen. Aiden Qader, the ministry of interior official responsible for election security.

Similar tactics have repeatedly occurred at another registration center in the city of Mada'in east of Baghdad, according to Mohammad al-Qinani, president of the Ayn Election Monitoring Network. His non-profit organization monitors 152 registration centers around the country.

Iraqi troops have either removed, or allowed others to destroy, a large percentage of the 2 million posters distributed nationwide to publicize the registration effort, al-Haydari said.

"We put up posters next to (security) checkpoints and the next day they're gone," he said.

"The people don't know that they're supposed to register."

MORE:

“The Governing Parties Have Lost Their Popular Base, And They Don’t Want These Elections Because They’re Going To Lose,” Hatem Said: “This Time, We Will Use Force To Take Control Of Things”

2008-08-15 USA Today [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD -- The Iraqi army officer, wearing a tank top that revealed a large bullet wound scar on his left shoulder, emerged outraged from the doorway at the Abaa Elementary School.

His unit was supposed to be protecting the school, which is serving as a voter registration center for upcoming provincial elections.

Instead, he screamed at the center’s director, Raad Saddam, to hand over names and addresses of voters -- which are supposed to be confidential.

His actions, witnessed Thursday by a USA TODAY reporter, were part of what Faraj al-Haydari, the chairman of Iraq's election oversight agency, says is an emerging pattern of voter intimidation by Iraqi security forces.

Colin Kahl, an Iraq expert at the Center for a New American Security, a Washington think tank, said the incident at the school and others were the first evidence of a long-standing fear: that the elections could be sabotaged by parties in power.

"The U.S. says these elections are essential to get (Iraqis) ... who have taken risks and stopped fighting into the political system," Kahl said.

"Well, what happens if the political system is rigged against those people? I think some of those people might return to violence," Kahl said.

Ali Hatem, a leader of the Sunni Awakening, a group of former insurgents who turned on al-Qaeda and now seek a larger role in politics, also predicted violence if the elections are perceived as unfair.

"The governing parties have lost their popular base, and they don't want these elections because they're going to lose," Hatem said.

"If there is any fraud in the next elections, Iraq will be a mess again. This time, we will use force to take control of things."

The elementary school in Sadr City, a Baghdad slum and hotbed for opposition to the government, had been the site of a separate incident Tuesday.

Iraqi troops had briefly arrested Saddam, the director, after he refused to divulge the voter data.

Gen. Aiden Qader, the Interior Ministry's lead official for election security, confirmed Saddam's arrest but dismissed the incident as an isolated case.

Yet troops appeared to be back in charge of the voter registration center Thursday.

When a USA TODAY reporter entered the premises, an officer ordered his soldiers to lock the front gate, preventing anyone from leaving for about 15 minutes.

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

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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