

GI SPECIAL 6H2:



“It Is NOT Better Over There”

“I Don’t Know Who In The Media Is Perpetuating This Myth, But As Far As My Husband’s Personal Safety This Time (3 1/2 Years Later) It Is Worse”

“As Far As It ‘Being Better’ Over There.... That Is Crap”

From: [Wife Of Soldier In Iraq. Excerpts: Information removed that would ID the writer.]
To: GI Special
Sent: August 02, 2008
Subject: Re: GI Special 6H1: IVAW Leads By Example

Hope all is well with you and I continue to admire and respect you for your very heroic efforts. I truly do.

I had to respond to this post.

On a very small level, I know exactly what Kelly is talking about. **[The article she refers to, quoting Kelly Dougherty, Iraq Veterans Against The War, is reprinted just below. T]**

As you may remember, this is [XXX's] second tour there, and frankly, the difference between the first time and this time is huge. By difference, I mean that the first time he was there, I felt that I had so much support. This time, NO ONE, and I mean no one, wants to hear about it, think about it, let alone support him, his comrades, or their families.

My job is in outside sales, as it was [XXX]'s first tour. The first time, everyone had [XXX] on a prayer list and no one ever failed to ask about his safety.

I never even brought it up. This time, it's as though the fact that my husband is there is an ugly thing nice people don't bring up in public. It makes me sick.

As far as it “being better” over there.... that is crap.

[XXX] has been hit more this time and in a shorter amount of time since being there.

It is NOT better over there.

I don't know who in the media is perpetuating this myth, but as far as my husband's personal safety this time (3 1/2 years later) it is worse.

And as far as troop withdrawal, that is a joke too.

[XXX]'s home unit has many guys in the construction field.

Take one guess as to what they are doing? And it is NOT RE-building.... it is building period.

New FOB's, etc.

They are building a U.S. Military infrastructure, simple as that.

Anyway, in my own small way, I can really relate to Kelly Dougherty's comments about the general denial of the American public as to our troops.

You know, I knew that those stupid ribbon magnets really didn't mean a whole lot the first time he was there, but everyone sure did have them. They don't even bother with that this time.

Keep up your good work.

[Wife Of Soldier In Iraq]

REPLY:

What you write is of the tremendous importance, given the way the media and the politicians are portraying the situation in Iraq.

There is no substitute for ground truth.

And it's you and your husband who are the true heroes, seeing and saying what the truth is.

No lie can live forever. It sometimes seems to take forever for the liars about Iraq to receive their appropriate reward, but, as with the forces that generate great earthquakes, small movements on the surface can be deceptive, hiding the terrible power being generated below that will change things forever.

The troops know they have been betrayed.

At some point, there will be catch up and payback.

The government and both Parties could care less that the overwhelming majority of U.S. citizens want Iraq over, and a recent poll found a new high, 45%, "don't think the war on Afghanistan is worth it."

The problem, like Vietnam, is that when what the citizens have decided has little impact on the politicians who get picked by the rich and powerful to lead the Empire, so, as in Vietnam, the movement to end the war falls to the soldiers, by default.

When they go into motion, they'll have overwhelming support from the vast majority of citizens, who will have lost their last illusions by then that the new Obama regime is fundamentally different from Bush.

Towards the end of the rule of the Communist Party dictatorship in Russia, a party leader proposed they have two Communist Parties run in elections, so angry citizens below would feel like they had a choice. "They have two parties like that in the U.S.," he said, "and the capitalists always win either way. We can do that."

The American majority has made its well informed, intelligent, and honorable decision about both Imperial wars: they're for shit.

The problem is with the political electoral system firmly in the hands of the enemy, who use their money to pick the candidates, the citizens get demoralized -- and behave as you wrote, which hurts you and other military family members so much -- because they have no lever to move the government out of the way and stop the wars.

But the lever is the troops.

Limitless respect,
T

P.S. There are many many people -- in military service, veterans, family members, civilian organizers -- who make GI Special possible. So your favorable comments belong to the whole team who do that work.

MORE:

[This Is The Article The Soldier's Wife Refers To In Her Email:]

“What Undermines The Troops The Most Is Being Lied To By Their Political Leadership”

[Thanks to Sally Davidson, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

Jul. 31, 2008 By Evan Goodenow of The News-Sentinel

Returning home after serving a year near Nasiriyah as a military police officer with the Army National Guard, Kelly Dougherty remembers people asking her what it was like in Iraq.

But as soon as she started going into detail, they quickly changed the subject.

“I started to feel like people don't really want to know what my experience was; they just feel obligated to ask,” said Dougherty, executive director of Iraq Veterans Against the War.

“They just want to keep me or keep the veterans in this box of idealized war hero and not confront what is actually being done in the name of them and in the name of our country.”

Dougherty co-founded Iraq Veterans Against the War in 2004 with the aim of telling the hard truths about the war that some Americans might not want to hear and to push for an immediate withdrawal of all U.S. soldiers from Iraq.

The organization is taking part in anti-war rallies around the country, and members are going into high schools in “counter-recruitment” efforts.

They’re also assisting in post-Hurricane Katrina rebuilding efforts to highlight what they say is a diversion of money to Iraq that they believe should have been spent at home.

Members are also speaking out about what they say happens when soldiers reach their physical and emotional breaking points by repeated deployments to Iraq.

At hearings held by the group in Silver Springs, Md., in March, Iraq War veterans spoke of routine atrocities committed by them and fellow soldiers: unarmed civilians shot at checkpoints, civilians run over by convoys driving fast to avoid ambushes or roadside bombs and innocent Iraqis routinely roughed up in their homes during raids.

Dougherty contends the “few bad apples” argument given whenever U.S. soldiers commit atrocities fails to recognize that those acts occur in an atmosphere in which military commanders and the White House either condone or look the other way at criminal behavior – such as the use of dogs, hooding, sleep deprivation and sexual degradation against Iraqi prisoners at Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan and Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

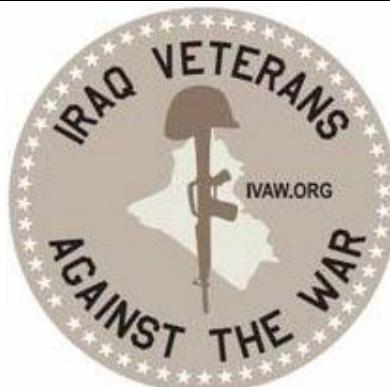
Dougherty’s organization is pushing for a complete withdrawal, not the ones advocated by presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama, which would leave troops in or around Iraq to fight al-Qaida [translation: to fight Iraqi nationalists resisting a military dictatorship imposed on their country by George W. Bush and the rest of the scum in human form that keep voting him the money in DC to keep on butchering U.S. troops and Iraqis.]

While many soldiers who have served in Iraq support the war, Dougherty believes anti-war vets can make the best case for withdrawal.

And she disputes war supporters’ contentions that criticizing the war undermines soldiers in Iraq.

“We know what it’s like to lose our friends or to be injured ourselves or come home with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder,” Dougherty said.

“What undermines the troops the most is being lied to by their political leadership.”



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

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Soldier From Elmont Killed In Iraq



Andre Darnell Mitchell, a PSC Specialist in the United States Army stationed in Iraq, died July 31. Mitchell, 25, grew up in Elmont and was the victim of a humvee accident.

08/03/08 Newsday

From the time he was a teenager, Andre Darnell Mitchell wanted to be a soldier.

He told his mother, Yasmin Patterson, of Elmont, that he was bored working in audiovisual services at the Marriott Hotel in Uniondale and for a caterer in Queens Village on weekends.

So on Valentine's Day 2006, he joined the Army.

"At 15, 16, that's what he wanted to do," Patterson said Saturday night.

On Thursday, Mitchell, 25, was killed when the Humvee he was riding in overturned in Mosul, Iraq.

Patterson said the Army told her the Humvee overturned on a sharp curve.

Mitchell's body was scheduled to be flown to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware Saturday night.

"I said, 'Please go to college, and after that, you can do what you want to do,'" Patterson said.

Mitchell was a 2003 graduate of Sewanhaka High School in Floral Park and a 2005 graduate of Nassau Community College.

It appears Mitchell couldn't wait to enlist. First, he talked to Air Force recruiters before meeting with an Army representative. When the Army said it could take him sooner, he signed up, his mother said.

Mitchell trained for 14 months at Fort Hood, Texas, and deployed to Iraq in November.

Patterson called her son a leader and said he was dogged in pursuing his dreams. His goal was to secure a job working for the federal government in Washington, D.C.

Besides his mother, he is survived by a brother, Malique Patterson, 12.

"I'll always remember his love for his mom and his brother," Patterson said. "He was a great human being. Besides his country, he'd die for his family."

UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; ALL HOME NOW



U.S. Army's soldiers from 25th infantry, take cover after the rooftop of Patrol Base Texas took sniper fire in southern Sadr City, Baghdad April 2, 2008. (AP Photo/Petr David Josek)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Dead After Bagrami Bomb; Another Wounded

Aug 03 2008 Independent Television News Limited

A roadside bomb has struck a US-led military convoy outside the Afghan capital killing one soldier and wounding another.

The attack happened in the Bagrami district on the eastern outskirts of Kabul.

"A coalition service member was killed and another wounded when their convoy struck an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) in Kabul," the US military said.

A witness said a military helicopter arrived at the scene of the blast and evacuated at least three foreign nationals from a four-wheel drive vehicle which was hit.

Militants Set Roshan Phone Tower On Fire Days After MTN Mast Set Alight

03 August 2008 Quqnoos

THE TALIBAN have set fire to another mobile phone mast after the militant group accused the mast's operator of failing to obey its orders, officials said.

Militants used 10 barrels of diesel to torch the Roshan tower in Ghazni's Qarabagh district on Saturday, days after fighters set alight to an MTN phone mast in the same district, the area's head said.

In February, the Taliban ordered mobile companies to switch off their phone masts between 6pm and 6am because of fears that American troops were using mobile signals to track fighters.

Zabihullah Mujahid, a spokesman for the guerrilla movement, said Roshan had defied their warning to switch off its signal after 7.00pm to 7.00am and so fighters were sent in to destroy the company's mast.

Recently the NDS announced that 3000 militants were being sent to Afghanistan to target infrastructure projects.

“But I Will Not Forgive The Foreigners For This Crime”

August 2, 2008 By Carlotta Gall, The International Herald Tribune [Excerpts]

KABUL, Afghanistan: On a piece of barren land on the western edge of this capital, a refugee camp is steadily swelling as families displaced by the heavy bombardment in southern Afghanistan arrive in batches.

The growing numbers reaching Kabul are a sign of the deepening of the conflict between NATO and American forces and the Taliban in the south and of the feeling among the population that there will be no end soon. Families who fled the fighting around their homes in Helmand Province one or two years ago and sought temporary shelter around two southern provincial capitals, Lashkar Gah and Kandahar, said they had moved to Kabul because of growing insecurity across the south.

“If there was security in the south, why would we come here?” said Abdullah Khan, 50, who lost his father, uncle and a female relative in the bombing of their home last year. “We will stay here, even for 10 years, until the bombardment ends.”

“The Taliban are getting stronger,” said Muhammad Younus, a farm worker who abandoned his village after his father, brother and uncle were killed in an airstrike two years ago. “There were armored vehicles on the hill and they were firing. There was a heavy bombardment, and planes bombed, too,” he said. “They did not differentiate between the guilty and not guilty.”

“The Taliban are coming during the night, with heavy weapons, riding on vehicles, and we cannot even dare ask them to leave, because if they see someone at night outside they will slaughter them and accuse them of being spies,” he said.

But the heavy reprisals by NATO and American forces was what drove them from their homes in the end, he and others said.

Khan Muhammad, 35, came with 40 people from his extended family three months ago after their village, Tajoi, near Kajaki, was bombed and his 4-year-old son, Umar Khan, was killed. “His mother was cooking, and he was lying beside her,” he said. “The whole village was destroyed, and after that we left.”

His father, Sher Ali Aqa, 75, was trapped under the rubble and his leg was shattered. Still unable to walk, he sat on a mat beside a makeshift tent.

"I blame the foreigners," Muhammad said. "If the Taliban fire from over there, do you come and bomb this village?"

He added, "We only want a stable country, whether with the Taliban or the foreigners." But he said that the level of violence made him realize that the foreign forces could not bring security.

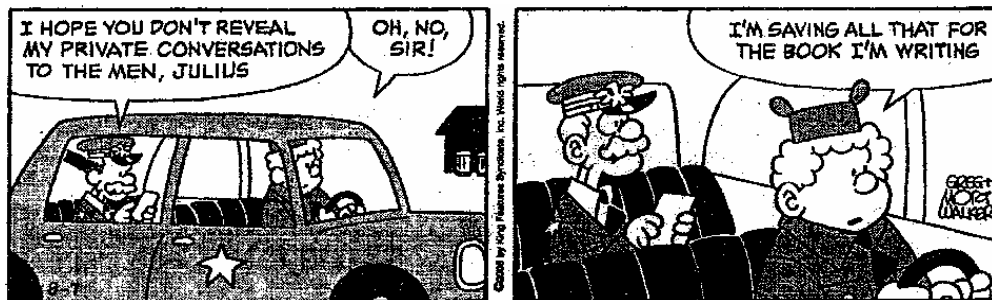
That sentiment was echoed by many of the villagers, who said that the civilian deaths were particularly galling given the sophisticated technology of the coalition's warplanes.

"If they kill, if they wound innocent people, we don't want them," said Taus Khan, a man from the Sangin district who said he lost five members of his family in bombings last year. "If they build and bring peace we will accept them."

His father, brother and a daughter were among those killed. "You cannot take revenge against a plane," he said.

"But I will not forgive the foreigners for this crime."

TROOP NEWS



Same Old Lame Bullshit:
“The Army Still Isn’t Meeting The Needs Of Its Wounded Warriors”
“Soldiers Who Remain In Their Duty Units Have Told Military Times That They Have Been Assigned Unit Work During

Times They Were Scheduled For Medical Appointments”

August 04, 2008 By Kelly Kennedy, Army Times [Excerpts]

Lawmakers say the Army has come a long way since last year’s Walter Reed scandal, but note three areas in which the Army still isn’t meeting the needs of its wounded warriors:

It has not provided enough resources for Warrior Transition Units designed to care for soldiers going through the medical retirement process.

It was unable to plan for new soldiers going into the transition units.

Bureaucratic hurdles have delayed plans to speed up the evaluation process.

A June visit to Fort Hood, Texas, highlighted lawmakers’ concerns.

House Armed Services personnel subcommittee staff members found 1,342 soldiers in the Warrior Transition Unit, but the unit had enough staff to support only 650.

And 300 soldiers were on a waiting list to get into the unit.

Other visits found similar problems.

At Fort Stewart, Ga., 592 soldiers were in the transition unit, which had staff to support only 360. At Fort Drum, N.Y., 530 soldiers were in the transition unit, which had staff to support 250; and Fort Polk, La., had 300 people in the unit and staff to support 78.

Rep. John McHugh, R-N.Y., ranking Republican on the subcommittee, noted that there were 6,000 people in the Warrior Transition Units in June 2007. By June 2008, the number grew to 12,000. By February, the Army is expecting the figure to rise to 20,000 wounded soldiers.

“It continued to grow, as we expected, but we were just not agile enough to respond,” said Brig. Gen. Gary Cheek, the Army’s assistant surgeon general for warrior care and transition.

Cheek said part of the problem is that not all soldiers going through the disability retirement process need to be in a Warrior Transition Unit.

A year ago, however, critics argued that first sergeants trying to keep a full roster — especially as a unit prepares to deploy — would not want undeployable soldiers filling a slot.

And some soldiers going through the evaluation process asked to be moved to medical hold units because their own units were so slow to process paperwork that they didn’t normally handle.

In the past month, soldiers who remain in their duty units have told Military Times that they have been assigned unit work during times they were scheduled for medical appointments or Veterans Affairs Department briefings.

MORE:

**Thousands Of Disabled Soldiers
“Could Be Facing Financial Ruin”
“Everybody Just Kind Of Washed
Their Hands Of Me, And It Was Like,
‘OK, You’re On Your Own’”
“Injured Soldiers Are Discharged On
Just A Fraction Of Their Pay And Then
Forced To Wait Six To Nine Months, And
Sometimes Even More Than A Year”**

[Here it is again. Same old story. Used up, thrown away, and the politicians couldn't care less. To repeat for the 3,525th 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]

[Thanks to Comrade Tribune, Vietnam Veteran, who sent this in.]

June 17, 2008 By Michelle Roberts, Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO -- His lifelong dream of becoming a soldier had, in the end, come to this for Isaac Stevens: 28, penniless, in a wheelchair, fending off the sexual advances of another man in a homeless shelter.

Stevens' descent from Army private first class, 3rd Infantry Division, 11 Bravo Company, began in 2005 -- not in battle, because he was never sent off to Iraq or Afghanistan, but with a headfirst fall over a wall on the obstacle course at Fort Benning, Ga. He suffered a head injury and spinal damage.

The injury alone didn't put him in a homeless shelter.

Instead, it was military bureaucracy -- specifically, the way that injured soldiers are discharged on just a fraction of their pay and then forced to wait six to nine months, and sometimes even more than a year, before their full disability payments begin to flow.

“When I got out, I hate to say it, but man, that was it.

“Everybody just kind of washed their hands of me, and it was like, ‘OK, you’re on your own,’ “ said Stevens, who was discharged in November and was in a shelter by February.

He has since moved into a temporary San Antonio apartment with help from Operation Homefront, a nonprofit organization.

Nearly 20,000 disabled soldiers were discharged in the past two fiscal years. Lawmakers, veterans advocates and others say that thousands could be facing financial ruin while they wait for their claims to be processed and their benefits to come through.

“The anecdotal evidence is depressing,” said Rep. John Hall, D-N.Y., who heads a subcommittee on veterans’ disability benefits. “These veterans are getting medical care, but their family is going through this huge readjustment at the same time they’re dealing with financial difficulties.”

Most permanently disabled veterans qualify for payments from Social Security and the military or the Department of Veterans Affairs. Those sums can amount to about two-thirds of their active-duty pay.

But until those checks show up, most disabled veterans draw a reduced Army paycheck.

The amount depends on the soldier’s injuries, service time and other factors. But a typical veteran and his or her family who once lived on \$3,400 a month might have to make do with \$970 a month.

Unless a soldier has a personal fortune or was so severely injured as to require long-term inpatient care, that can be an extreme hardship.

The Army has been working to help soldiers in the interim period, said Col. Becky Baker, assigned to injured-soldier transition at the U.S. Surgeon General’s Office.

In a change in policy that took effect in August, the Army is allowing wounded or injured soldiers to continue to draw their full Army paychecks for up to 90 days after discharge, Baker said.

“We make certain that we’ve covered all the bases before we discharge the soldier,” Baker said.

She acknowledged, however, that the changes have been slow to take hold across an Army stretched by war.

Simon Heine served three tours in Iraq as a tank mechanic before he was discharged with severe post-traumatic stress disorder.

His wife quit college so she could figure out how her four children could live on less than \$1,000 a month. Eventually, she moved the family of six into an Operation Homefront apartment so they could finish navigating the bureaucracy and wait out the arrival of Social Security and VA benefits.

“It is like giving you a car and taking the steering wheel off.

They say, ‘There is the gas and the brake. Just go straight,’ and hopefully, you are going in the right direction,” Heine said.

Bottom Feeding Scum Sucker Arrested For War Profiteering: “Current Iraq Contracts Include Those For Trash Pickup, Laundry, Heavy- Equipment Rental And Custodial Services”



Arrest photo of war profiteer Metin Atilan: FBI

[Thanks to Comrade Tribune, Vietnam Veteran, who sent this in.]

June 17, 2008 By Kathy Lynn Gray, THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH [Excerpts]

An FBI sting operation stretching from Iraq to England to Dayton has ended in bribery, conspiracy and fraud charges against a U.S. contractor in Iraq.

Las Vegas contractor Metin Atilan was indicted last week in U.S. District Court in Columbus, accused of bribing Department of Defense officials to steer multimillion-dollar contracts his way.

Atilan is the chief operating officer of PMA Securities, which has millions of dollars worth of contracts in Iraq for the Air Force, Army and Marines, PMA's Web site says.

Today, the FBI announced that Atilan cut off his electronic monitoring bracelet on Saturday and fled his home. He is a fugitive and anyone with information about his whereabouts should contact their local FBI. The FBI said today that Atilan, a citizen of both the United States and Turkey, had surrendered both passports after he was arrested.

Court records said the investigation began after an Air Force contracting officer told the FBI in November that Atilan had offered him a bribe in exchange for government contracts.

FBI agents had the officer play along with the offer, and on Dec. 3, 2007, Atilan's wife, Ayfer Atilan, wired \$4,966 into the officer's Dayton bank account as a kickback for a contract the officer had awarded him in 2006. That money came from an account in Turkey.

Atilan also offered, via e-mail, more bribes, an affidavit by FBI Special Agent Eric J. Miller alleges.

The officer then linked Atilan with an undercover agent posing as an Army contracting officer. In a meeting in London, the agent offered Atilan a \$10 million contract for residential trailers for Iraq, and Atilan promised him a \$1 million kickback. Through two intermediaries, Atilan delivered a total of \$30,000 to the agent on Feb. 5 and Feb. 6 in meetings at London hotels.

Atilan was arrested May 22 in Las Vegas and is under house arrest there.

According to PMA's Web site, the company has done business with the U.S. government since 1983 and has been in Iraq since 2003. Current Iraq contracts include those for trash pickup, laundry, heavy-equipment rental and custodial services.

A second bribery case involving government contracts also is in federal court in Columbus. In that case, which appears to be connected to the Atilan case, an Air Force contracting officer accepted bribes for steering contracts to the Abdullah Trading Co. in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Two men, Lateefuddin Khaja of India and Salim Ali Bin Howail of Tanzania, are accused in court documents of paying more than \$100,000 in bribes to the officer and, in at least two cases, to the officer's spouse.

Khaja was arrested in late May and charged with one count of fraud.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

What The Public Never Wants To See



**From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: August 03, 2008
Subject: What The Public Never Wants To See**

What The Public Never Wants To See

**Ever see dead American soldiers?
Ever see dead innocent civilians?
Ever go to a funeral where one of your
high school classmates was killed by
corporate greed?
Ever see an American soldier receive Shock Therapy?
Ever visit an orthopedic floor of a military hospital and
see all of the legs and arms missing?
Ever go to a VA hospital and see the walking dead?
Ever go to a VA hospital and see a picture of George Bush
on the wall,
and all you can feel is rage?
Ever see a combat vet loaded on VA prescription drugs?
Ever go to a military morgue in a combat zone?
Ever take a dead vet to the morgue in a VA hospital?
Ever insert cotton up a dead soldier's rectum before you take him to the**

morgue?

Ever get a message that a close vet friend hung himself in a motel room?

Ever stop a soldier from committing suicide in a war zone?

Ever see what a soldier looks like after he shot himself in the head with his M-16?

Ever see what a soldier looks like after he shot himself in the head with a pistol?

Ever see American soldiers loaded on heroin?

Ever see an American soldier put a knife to the throat of another soldier?

Ever see a dead American soldier taken off of a helicopter with half of his face gone?

Ever see a dead American soldier taken off of a helicopter who has been shot in the head?

Ever see an American soldier take his last breath after being shot in the gut?

Ever find yourself in a padded cell filled with rage?

Ever find yourself in a closet crying your heart out?

Ever hate the country you were born in?

Ever want to run your car off of a cliff?

Ever go see countless therapists trying to remove the hate from your soul?

Ever drive over 100mph, mile after mile?

Ever cry so hard you can't see the road?

Ever walk out of a therapy appointment and want to kill yourself?

Ever find yourself filled with so much anger and hate, you can't find your way home?

Ever see so much apathy in America?

Ever feel like you live in enemy territory?

Ever see American politicians get away with mass murder?

Ever visit an atrocity site?

Ever feel ashamed to be an American?

Ever see a country slip-sliding away?

Ever see an American flag in a casket?

Mike Hastie

U.S. Army Medic

Vietnam 1970-71

August 3, 2008

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

“12-Year-Old Narrator Herbert Weinberg And His Father Daniel Build A Nuclear Bomb In Their Garage”

“Millennials, On College Campuses, At Work And In The Military, Are To The Left Of Decades Of Prevailing Social Policy On Issue After Issue”

July 24, 2008 By Elizabeth Wrigley-Field. Socialist Worker

Review: Under My Roof; Nick Mamatas, Soft Skull Press, 2007, 144 pages, \$12.95

The story begins when 12-year-old narrator Herbert Weinberg and his father Daniel build a nuclear bomb in their garage. Daniel’s plan to buy commercial-grade uranium over the Internet and find 5,000 smoke detectors to scavenge for parts in the city dump may sound crazy, Herbert tells us, but “actually, the problem was that he was going mad more slowly and in the opposite direction from everyone else.”

Nuke complete, Daniel and Herbert stick it in a garden gnome and declare their independence from the United States--their house on Long Island now constituting the nuclear-armed nation Weinbergia.

Like any good satirist, Mamatas’ strength is his observance of small details. For example, Herbert (who just happens to be telepathic) relates what it looks like when adults flirt:

“[T]here were Rich and Adrienne, sitting on the corner of my low twin bed, his arm wrapped around her shoulders, and both of them staring at my screensaver, of all things. They were even murmuring about it (“Oh, it flickers like that all night?” “No, it stops after 10 minutes or so.”) and they were even thinking what they said. Usually, when people make empty comments, they’re thinking about something else.”

That same attention to the little things is used to send up American culture and politics, often hilariously.

Herbert’s homework assignments perfectly capture the simultaneous inanity and ideology of schooling:

“The Social Studies unit was on immigration--my job was to find an immigrant and interview him or her about coming to America. I had to fill out this sheet explaining Five Reasons Why Your Immigrant--my immigrant?--Left His Or Her Home Country and Five Reasons Why He or She Likes America. Then I had to get a picture of something my immigrant thinks represents America and paste it into the workbook.”

Meanwhile, Weinbergia’s example is being followed all over the country, and the U.S. government doesn’t like it.

When a local Qool Mart declares itself the newly-independent Islamic Republic of Qool Mart, the Qool Mart franchise is unimpressed, declaring via telecast:

“[W]e have ordered an air strike on the Port Jameson store. We’d like to make it absolutely clear that this is a private response. The U.S. government is not a part of this operation, though it has allowed use of its air space for the event.

“Indeed, our insurer, Bell, Winston, and Associates, has taken care of all the incidentals, from selecting the contractors to the sale of overseas rights for ancillary markets. We will also be releasing a one-shot magazine commemorating the forthcoming tragedy, called Freedom’s Qool, which will be our periodical upsell for November of this year.”

The absurdity keeps escalating, toward an ending that I won’t give away.

In real life, the years since 9/11 have seen not only utter insanity in what passes for mainstream political discourse, but also an increasing rejection of the worst elements of U.S. society--especially among young people.

High school students around the country led walkouts for immigrant rights on May Day 2006; on the fifth anniversary of the Iraq war, 250 students at Princeton High School walked out of classes in protest; and so-called Millennials, on college campuses, at work and in the military, are to the left of decades of prevailing social policy on issue after issue.

It is young people like these, turning against the absurdity of American policies--within its borders and outside them--but often feeling alone in their critique, who I think will benefit the most from reading Under My Roof.

August 3, 1913: Horrible Anniversary The Wheatland Massacre

Carl Bunin Peace History July 30-Aug 5

Four died in the Wheatland riots when police fired into a crowd of California Hop pickers trying to organize (with the help of the IWW, or Industrial Workers of the World) at the Durst Ranch in Wheatland, California.

Hundreds of workers — whites, Mexicans, and Filipinos — lay down their tools because of terrible working conditions, low wages, and an almost complete lack of sanitation and decent housing.

August 4, 1964:

Lying Lyndon Johnson Fakes The USA Into Escalation In Vietnam [Gee, He Wasn't A "Neo-Con" Either, So Knock Off The Stupid Bullshit About Bush's Buddies Inventing Evil U.S. Imperial Wars]

Carl Bunin Peace History July 30-Aug 5

A second attack on U.S. naval ships in Vietnam's Gulf of Tonkin was reported by the Pentagon. But there was no such activity reported by the task force commander in the Gulf, Captain John J. Herrick.

One of the Navy pilots flying overhead that night was squadron commander James Stockdale, later held as a POW by the North Vietnamese for more than seven years, and Ross Perot's vice presidential candidate in 1992.

"I had the best seat in the house to watch that event," recalled Stockdale, "and our destroyers were just shooting at phantom targets — there were no PT boats there.... There was nothing there but black water and American firepower."

Nearly three decades later, during the Gulf War, Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Sydney Schanberg warned journalists not to forget "our unquestioning chorus of agreeability when Lyndon Johnson bamboozled us with his fabrication of the Gulf of Tonkin incident



OCCUPATION REPORT

Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!

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

**[Payback Come Soon For This
Despicable Humiliation; Rightly So]**



Iraqi citizens are forced at gunpoint to sit in the dirt behind barbed wire by foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. as they wait to be interrogated and their papers examined in Nahr al-Imam, about 90 kilometers (60 miles) north of Baghdad in Diyala province on July 30, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**Zionist Terrorist Gang Executes 11
Year Old;**

Ahmad Husam Yousef Mousa Murdered Yesterday In Nilin

[HAPPENING DAYS AFTER ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF ADMITTED THAT ROUTE OF “SECURITY FENCE” IS DEFINED OUT OF POLITICAL MOTIVES, NOT FOR SECURITY]

July 30, 2008 Gush Shalom [info@gush-shalom.org]

10 year-old Ahmad Husam Yousef Mousa was murdered yesterday as he demonstrated, together with his friends against the separation fence which is being constructed on the lands of his village Nilin, taking away the lands and sole source of livelihood of many of its inhabitants.

When Ahmad and his friends reached the construction site the soldiers shot rubber bullets at them and they began to retreat.

At that point one of the soldiers shot a live round at Ahmad’s head from a distance of about 10 metres.

This happened only days after Army Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi had admitted that the route of the so-called “Separation Fence” is defined out of political motives – not for considerations of security, but in order to take away land from Palestinian villagers on behalf of settlement expansion.

Earlier in the day, 18 demonstrators were injured during the demo in which Mousa was shot.

During 6 years of popular struggle against the wall, the occupation forces have killed 11 demonstrators, 7 of them children, and thousands were injured.

Time and time again, soldiers violently suppress non-violent demonstrations and attack those who take part in them with lethal weapons.

To date, none of the soldiers who killed demonstrators has been prosecuted.

Today, Wednesday, members of Gush Shalom will join “Anarchists Against Fences” and other peace and anti-occupation groups, to protest the murder of 10 year old Ahmad, in vigil in front of the home of Defense Minister Barak in Tel Aviv.

STOP THE KILLING, STOP THE OCCUPATION !

MORE:

Zionist Terrorist Gang Executes 18 Year Old At Funeral Of 11 Year Old Executed By Zionist Terror Gang



Zionist Terror Gang At Work

31/07/2008 Haaretz

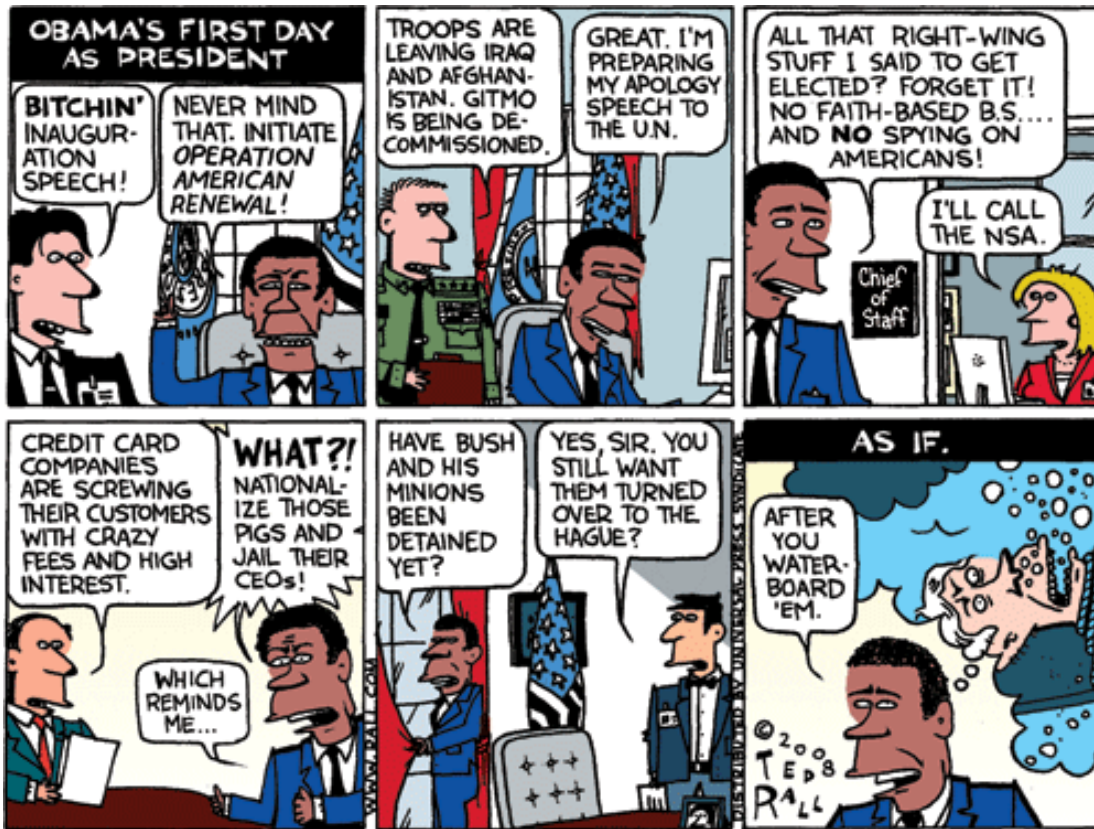
Israel Defense Forces troops wounded nine Palestinians in the West Bank city of Ramallah on Wednesday in a clash with protesters at the funeral of a 11-year-old boy killed a day earlier, Palestinian medics said.

They said the troops had shot the casualties with rubber bullets while fighting stone-throwing protesters.

A 18-year-old Palestinian was hit in the head by a rubber bullet and doctors described him as brain dead.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



“Bait-And-Switch Democrats, Of Whom Obama Is The Prince”

July 29, 2008 John Pilger, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Having declared Afghanistan a “good war,” the complicit enablers are now anointing Barack Obama as he tours the bloodfests in Afghanistan and Iraq.

What they never say is that Obama is a bomber.

In the New York Times on July 14, in an article spun to appear as if he is ending the war in Iraq, Obama demanded more war in Afghanistan and, in effect, an invasion of Pakistan.

He wants more combat troops, more helicopters, more bombs.

Bush may be on his way out, but the Republicans have built an ideological machine that transcends the loss of electoral power--because their collaborators are, as the American writer Mike Whitney put it succinctly, "bait-and-switch" Democrats, of whom Obama is the prince.

MORE:

“Continuing The Occupation Is Not Ending It”

“Obama’s Withdrawal Plan Would Still Leave Tens Of Thousands Of Troops In Iraq”

August 1, 2008 By Anthony Arnove, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

THE WALL Street Journal reports that the “The Bush administration’s embrace of a flexible timeline for pulling U.S. troops from Iraq has accelerated negotiations between Washington and Baghdad over a long-term security pact.”

Every day, it’s becoming clearer that the Bush administration, Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, and presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain are reaching a new consensus, which can be summed up as “let’s not and say we did.”

Let’s not end the occupation.

Let’s not withdraw all the troops.

Let’s not resolve the fundamental problems created by the U.S. invasion and occupation.

But let’s all pretend we did (or will soon enough, though certainly never “precipitously,” so leave us alone).

The advantages for all the parties are enormous. Nuri al-Maliki gets to pretend that he’s standing up for the interests of Iraqis, who want to see an end to the occupation.

The Bush administration gets to shout its mantra that “the surge worked,” creating the illusion that things are getting better in Iraq thanks to its policies.

And Barack Obama gets to claim he has the only workable plan to end the war, which voters so desperately want, and the Iraqi government (and now pretty much every one else, including McCain) supports it.

The only problem is, the “flexible timeline” around which all these parties are now coalescing is a bridge to continuing the occupation for years, perhaps even decades, to come.

Obama’s withdrawal plan--which he says he will revise based on advice from his military advisers and conditions on the ground--would still leave tens of thousands of troops in Iraq, as well as private contractors, including mercenaries, well beyond the year 2010.

To start, we have to challenge this new consensus.

A “flexible timeline” is not a timetable.

Redeployment of some or even all “combat troops” is not withdrawal.

Limited Iraqi sovereignty is not sovereignty.

Continuing the occupation is not ending it.

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

***Welcome To The Occupied USA:
They Really Do Hate Our Freedom:
U.S. Agents Can Seize Citizens
Laptops, Cell Phones, Ipods, Pagers,
Beepers, Video And Audio Tapes,
Books, Pamphlets And Other Written
Materials “Without Suspicion Of
Wrongdoing”***

[The enemy isn't in Iraq or Afghanistan. Here is the enemy up close and personal: armed, dangerous, and out of control. That's one more reason we need our troops home: to sweep this filth away. T]

Aug 1, 2008 by Paul Eckert (Reuters)

U.S. federal agents have been given new powers to seize travelers' laptops and other electronic devices at the border and hold them for unspecified periods the Washington Post reported on Friday.

Under recently disclosed Department of Homeland Security policies, such seizures may be carried out without suspicion of wrongdoing, the newspaper said, quoting policies issued on July 16 by two DHS agencies.

Agents are empowered to share the contents of seized computers with other agencies and private entities for data decryption and other reasons, the newspaper said.

DHS officials said the policies applied to anyone entering the country, including U.S. citizens, and were needed to prevent terrorism.

The measures have long been in place but were only disclosed in July, under pressure from civil liberties and business travel groups acting on reports that increasing numbers of international travelers had had their laptops, cellphones and other digital devices removed and examined.

The policies cover hard drives, flash drives, cell phones, iPods, pagers, beepers, and video and audio tapes -- as well as books, pamphlets and other written materials, the report said.

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS

MANAGERS THINK WORKERS ARE DUMBFUCKS

HOW COULD COSTS RISE FOR THE COMPANY IF THE UNION DOESN'T DO ANYTHING FOR THE WORKERS?

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) & Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier & The Military Project, who sent this in with the headline.]

Aug 1 (Reuters)

Wal-Mart Stores Inc said on Friday it has warned U.S. store managers in recent weeks about the possible consequences of a labor-friendly bill backed by Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama.

The Wall Street Journal reported that about a dozen employees who attended meetings in seven states said executives had told them that unionization could force Wal-Mart to cut jobs as labor costs rise, and that employees would have to pay hefty union dues and get nothing in return.

[P.S. The Wall St. Journal also reported that Wall-Mart is giving huge amounts of money to the Democratic Party for the fall elections. Their split is 52% to Republicans, 48% to Democrats. Now why do you suppose that is? T]



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

NEED SOME TRUTH?

CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

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

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



GI Special distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **GI Special has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is GI Special endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice.** Go to: www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.

