

GI SPECIAL 7B17:



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

**It's Official:
Jack Cafferty Said It On CNN At
4:57 PM EST 2.25.09:
"We Need A Revolution In This
Country"**

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Obama Betrays Nobody: He Keeps His Word: He Won't Withdraw "Between 30,000 And 50,000 Troops" From Iraq: They Will Continue The Occupation To "Protect U.S. Interests" And "Fight Terrorists"

February 24, 2009 By Pamela Hess and Anne Gearan, The Associated Press &
February 25, 2009 By ANNE GEARAN, The Associated Press [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON — Some of the U.S. forces likely to remain in Iraq after President Barack Obama fulfills his pledge to withdraw combat troops would still have a combat role fighting suspected terrorists [translation: Iraqi nationalists fighting for their independence against a foreign occupation army], the Pentagon said Wednesday.

"I think a limited number of those that remain will conduct combat operations against terrorists [translation: Iraqi nationalists fighting for their independence against a foreign occupation army], assisting Iraqi security forces," Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell said.

Although most of the fighting forces would be withdrawn in the next 18 months, some troops could remain in Iraq for years to come.

Obama expects to leave a large contingent of troops in Iraq, between 30,000 and 50,000 troops, after August, 2010 to advise and train Iraqi security forces and to protect U.S. interests, according to two administration officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because the plan has not been made public.

The contingent will include intelligence and surveillance specialists and their equipment, such as unmanned aircraft.

There are more than 200 U.S. military installations in Iraq.

According to Army officials interviewed by the Government Accountability Office, it can take up to two months to shut down small outposts that hold up to 300 troops. **[This wins the lying bullshit award of the year, so far. Tell the 300 troops they got a ticket home and they'll be out of there in 60 minutes max.]**

About 142,000 U.S. troops are in Iraq, roughly 14 brigades, about 11,000 more than the total in Iraq when President George W. Bush announced in January 2007 that he would “surge” the force to put down the insurgency. He sent an additional 21,000 combat troops to Baghdad and Anbar province.

Although the number of combat brigades has dropped from 20 to 14, the U.S. has increased the number of logistical and other support troops. A brigade is usually about 3,000 to 5,000 troops.

After All That, If You Got A Problem With This One, Eat Shit And Die



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

**“During A Joint US-Iraqi Patrol, The
Shadow Of An Active Insurgency
Loomed Large”**

“Everywhere We Go People Tell Us They’re Here And They’re Around, So You Know They’re Here”

February 25, 2009 By Tom A. Peter, Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor
[Excerpts]

[Ignoring the silly dinosaur in command, still whining about Al Qaeda, as if the armed resistance go around with love notes from Ben Laden in their pockets, the reality behind Vanderhoff’s stupid Rumsfeld–era propaganda is clear: the armed resistance is alive, well, and will not stop until the last U.S. soldier occupying Iraq is gone,

[Iraqis fighting for their independence know Obama is full of shit about withdrawing from Iraq, up to his neck in blood, and intends to hold on to Iraq for the Empire if he can by leaving U.S. forces there to continue the occupation. He says so. Duh. Get it? T]

Baquba, Iraq - Looking across a canal at Umm al-Gatan, a village of about 20 houses, US Army Lt. Drew Vanderhoff is nagged by one of the classic frustrations of counterinsurgency warfare.

“We know for a fact that there is AQI [Al Qaeda in Iraq] in that village,” he says. Although he has the names and even biometric data of everyone in the village, 25 miles outside of Baghdad, he’s still not sure exactly who’s working with the *home-grown Sunni insurgent group* [oops; the reporter just undercut the idiotic “Al Qaeda” lies] and who’s not.

Ongoing violence in outlying provinces such as Diyala and Nineveh indicates that although violence has fallen and some normalcy is returning to Baghdad, the fringes of Iraq – the rural towns, farming villages, and desert outposts – have become the new fronts in the fight against the insurgent threat as extremists [translation: Iraqis fighting for their freedom] have fled cities and are hiding in the country’s remote corners.

During a joint US-Iraqi patrol, the shadow of an active insurgency loomed large.

Searching a dried-up canal, members of Vanderhoff’s platoon discovered “spider holes” and tunnels dug into the sides of the empty waterway.

Insurgents use these tunnel systems to hide from passing helicopters and stash everything from weapons to motorcycles.

“Everywhere we go people tell us they’re here and they’re around, so you know they’re here,” says Staff Sgt. Patrick Wixon. His platoon member, Spc. Chris Calhoun adds,

“And in the wintertime they’re also not that active,” so the present lull in activity may be deceptive.

The change has become clear as the number of Iraqi deaths in outer lying provinces now exceeds those in Baghdad. Though the capital traditionally accounted for the majority of fatalities – 54 percent in 2006-07 – in 2008 it was responsible for only 32 percent, according to the Iraq Body Count, an online database of casualties in Iraq.

MORE:

U.S. KIA In Iraq: Reality: #1 It’s Not A Big Fucking Mystery; It’s Cause And Effect

Comment: T

Not being idiots, the resistance command orders attacks cut way back, while continuing enough attacks to leave no doubt they’re there and keep their forces sharp.

They know the U.S. Army has to start cutting force levels this year. Hard as it is for some to grip, given all the stupid racist stereotypes [on the anti-war side too] resistance leadership can and do read the New York Times, and not being raving fanatics of some kind or other, can plan strategy:

Attack when the balance of forces is better, not worse. Get it? Hold your attacks until the occupation army has been cut in size. Duh. That’s so pathetically obvious a commander who doesn’t understand it belongs in the Pentagon.

The resistance is in no hurry. They live there. It’s their country. They’ve only been resisting foreign invasions for a few thousand years. And however many years or decades or centuries it’s taken, they’ve won and buried their occupiers in the dirt.

This has been an iron rule of intelligent insurgent warfare against an occupying army for about 2000 years now. As so well described by Asprey in *The Guerrilla In History*.

MORE:

U.S. KIA In Iraq: Reality: #2 [Comment By J.D. Englehart;

Iraq Veterans Against The War & Military Project]

From: J.D. Englehart
To: GI Special
Sent: November 17, 2007 2:10 AM
Subject: Re: U.S. KIA in Iraq

I agree.

The media, even of the most liberal, is talking these quiet moments up as “the light at the end of the tunnel” and “sure signs of victory.”

It's obvious the insurgency is regrouping.

They are not winning through shock and awe, but rather through slowly picking away at the imperialist enemy. Another 2000 year old guerrilla strategy.

What's important to look at is how this “growing signs of success” line is used by both republicans AND democrats (aka: the one-party American capitalist regime) to justify asking for more money for the war, or forfeiting more money for the war, in a clever guise to keep funding the war and not ending the war.

I bet the soldiers are catching on to this more and more everyday.

[You better believe the “between 30,000 and 50,000” left behind to “protect U.S. interests” will get it loud and clear.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Three Soldiers From 1 RIFLES Killed In Gereshk

25 Feb 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that three soldiers from 1st Battalion The Rifles have been killed in Afghanistan today, Wednesday 25 February 2009.

The soldiers died from wounds sustained as a result of an enemy explosion during an escort operation in the Gereshk district of Helmand province this morning.

The Medical Emergency Response Team helicopter was called, but sadly the soldiers were all pronounced dead by the doctor in the helicopter.

Royal Marine Dies Of Wounds Sustained In Afghanistan

25 Feb 09 Ministry of Defence

It is with deepest regret that the Ministry of Defence has confirmed the death of a Royal Marine from 45 Commando Royal Marines today, Wednesday 25 February 2009, in Selly Oak Hospital, Birmingham.

He died as a result of wounds sustained from enemy fire whilst on a reassurance patrol in near Sangin in Northern Helmand on Monday 23 February.

He received immediate medical attention both on the ground and at the ISAF medical facility at Kandahar Airfield, prior to being returned to the UK for further specialist treatment.

Two “Western” Mercenaries Wounded In Helmand

Feb 25 (AFP)

Heavy fighting erupted in the province of Helmand late Tuesday when militants attacked Afghan soldiers protecting police who were destroying illegal opium crops, the provincial government said.

“Eighteen militants were killed and two Afghan army soldiers were martyred,” provincial spokesman Daud Ahmadi told AFP.

Two Westerners training the counternarcotics team were also wounded in fighting, he said.

**THE U.S. EMPIRE WELCOMES
YOU TO THE HAPPY
LIBERATED LAND OF
AFGHANISTAN:**

Remember Those Horrible Taliban “Terrorists”? Well, The U.S. Occupation Has Brought Real Security: “Beating And Torturing Civilians: Torture And Abuse Included Pulling Out Fingernails And Toenails, Burning With Hot Oil, Beatings, Sexual Humiliation, And Sodomy”

February 26, 2009 PAUL KORING, Globe and Mail Update

WASHINGTON — Torture and abuse remains rife in Afghan prisons, woman and children detainees are often raped, and the International Red Cross was prevented from visiting some prisons, the U.S. state Department reported today.

In its annual compendium of human rights in countries round the world, the U.S. report says Afghanistan’s “human rights problems included extrajudicial killings; torture; poor prison conditions; official impunity; prolonged pretrial detention; restrictions on freedom of the press; restrictions on freedom of religion; violence and societal discrimination against women; restrictions on religious conversions; abuses against minorities; sexual abuse of children; trafficking in persons; abuse of worker rights; and child labor.”

“Security forces continued to use excessive force, including beating and torturing civilians,” the U.S. report says. “Torture and abuse included pulling out fingernails and toenails, burning with hot oil, beatings, sexual humiliation, and sodomy.”

It also cited the UN Secretary-General’s report from last year that found “detainees continued to complain of torture by law enforcement officials.”

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupations 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 to Imperial wars 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 Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

Resistance Action



Afghan National Army soldiers inspect their damaged vehicle at the site of a bomb blast in the city of Kandahar. (AFP/Hamed Zalmy)

Feb. 19 (Xinhua) & February 23, 2009 (Quqnoos) & Feb 25 (AFP) & 2.26 AFP

A bomb planted by insurgents struck the car of an Indian engineer in Khost province east of Afghanistan Thursday, killing a local guard and wounding two others including the engineer, police said. "The gruesome incident occurred in Dumanda district on Khost--Gerdez highway at 12:30 p.m. local time, as a result the Indian engineer along with one of his guards were injured and another guard was killed," provincial police chief Abdul Qayum Baqizoi told Xinhua. He further added that the Indian engineer works for a road construction company involved in building roads in east Afghanistan.

Attacks Kills a Cop in Nimroz: The first attacker detonated his explosive at the Counter Narcotics department killing one policeman and wounding three others. According to the provincial governor Ghulam Dastger Azad, the second attacker was indentified by the police and shot dead before he detonates his explosive vest. Local officials say that the attackers were both clothed in the police uniform.

In Kandahar city, explosives fixed to a motorbike were detonated remotely as an Afghan army convoy passed, said the regional army commander, General Shair Mohammad Zazai. Five Afghan soldiers were hurt, he told AFP.

A bomb on Thursday killed four Afghan security guards working for a private company building roads in the east of the country, the interior ministry said. The bomb blew up a small truck belonging to the road construction company in which the guards were travelling in the southeastern province of Paktika, the ministry said in a statement.

**BAD IDEA:
NO MISSION;
POINTLESS WAR:
ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. soldiers near a damaged police vehicle following an attack by Taliban militants on Jalalabad-Kabul highway, east of Kabul, Afghanistan, on Feb. 7, 2009. In Laghman province, another Taliban attack on a police convoy late Friday killed two police, including the police chief of Qarghayi district, said Hadayutullah Qalanderzai, Laghman's deputy provincial governor. (AP Photo/Rahmat Gul)

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

TROOP NEWS

**NOT ANOTHER DAY
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR
NOT ANOTHER LIFE**



The casket bearing the comingled remains of Staff Sgt. Alex Jimenez and Spc. Byron Fouty passes on the way to burial at Arlington National Cemetery, Feb. 17, 2009. The two soldiers, both of the 10th Mountain Division, were killed in Iraq in May 2007. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

**Bangladeshi Soldiers Kill 50
Officers Over Low Pay;
Prime Minister Offers Amnesty And
“Agreed To Meet Their Demands”
“Bodies Of Two Top Army Officers Were
Dumped In A Drain”**

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer & Pham Binh, Military Project]

2.25.09 DHAKA (AFP) & 2.26.09 By PARVEEN AHMED, Associated Press Writer

DHAKA, Bangladesh – Tanks rolled through the Bangladeshi capital Thursday in a show of force that finally persuaded mutinous border guards to lay down their arms, ending a two-day revolt that threatened to spread across the impoverished South Asian nation.

The rebel soldiers began laying down their arms early Thursday after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina offered an amnesty and agreed to meet their demands.

The mutiny began Wednesday morning as hundreds of border guards gathered inside their headquarters for an annual conference, along the Bangladesh Army officers who command them. Around 9 a.m., the guards took an unknown number of army officers hostage.

The Bangladesh Rifles border guards have more than 40,000 members.

Nearly 2,000 guards opened fire on their senior officers and seized their headquarters to protest poor pay and conditions.

As the insurrection threatened to spread to other border guard units across the country Thursday, mutineers fired shots at the commanding officer's residence.

The insurrection was the result of longtime frustrations over pay for the border guards that didn't keep pace with that of the army's — highlighted by rising food prices in the chronically poor South Asian country as the global economic crisis grows. The guards make about \$100 a month.

Their resentment has been heightened by the practice of appointing army officers to head the border guards. They are also not allowed to participate in lucrative U.N. peacekeeping missions.

Concerned about reports of dozens still missing, firefighters searched the area through the night and recovered seven more bodies, fire official Dilip Kumar Ghosh said early Friday.

He said two of the bodies — a man and a woman — were found at the home of the border force's chief, Maj. Gen. Shakil Ahmed, but the commander was not one of them.

One officer said earlier that he saw Ahmed killed immediately after the mutiny began Wednesday.

Hours later, tanks and armored vehicles with heavy machine guns rolled into the capital, taking up positions in residential neighborhoods around the border guards' compound. An Associated Press reporter saw several tanks stationed in a playground.

Fifty Bangladeshi army officers are said to have been killed, the country's deputy law minister told reporters early Thursday.

Kamrul Islam went inside the headquarters of the paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) after thousands of rebel guards who mutinied against their superiors over pay surrendered their arms.

“We talked to the BDR troops and they said some 50 officers have been killed,” he said, adding he could not confirm the deaths as he had not seen the bodies.

“We heard that the casualties were kept at a hospital inside the compound,” he said.

Television footage showed about 30 people, said to be the relatives of the captured army officers, being driven from the compound, where they reportedly spent the siege holed up in their bathrooms.

Women with small children in their arms could be seen weeping as they emerged from the barracks.

The army said earlier that the mutineers were holding more than 100 people captive inside the BDR headquarters in Dhaka, including around 50 army officers and their families.

It said the bodies of two top army officers were earlier found dumped in a drain outside the barracks. Both had gunshot wounds.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

Frederick Douglas, 1852

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

**“The mighty are only mighty because we are on our knees. Let us rise!”
-- Camille Desmoulins**

**“When someone says my son died fighting for his country, I say, “No, the suicide bomber who killed my son died fighting for his country.”
-- Father of American Soldier Chase Beattie, KIA in Iraq**

The American Stimulus Package



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: February 23, 2009
Subject: The American Stimulus Package

The American Stimulus Package

**You will get a tax break on your mortgage,
as long as you keep giving us your children.**

The Army Of One.

Gun.

Done.

Gone forever.

Multiple Tours.

Multiple Lies.

Multiple Graves.

**We regret to inform you,
that your home is in foreclosure.**

**Please take your American flag
with you.**

Thank You.

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
February 23, 2009**

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)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004**

**“Because The Face Of The
Occupation Is Now Barack Obama
It’s Ok?”**

“Well I Have A Newsflash, It’s NOT OK!”

February 24, 2009 by Elaine Brower [Military Project] Opednews.com

As I sit here tonight listening to the crap about extending troop withdrawal 19 months, instead of 16 months, and keeping 50,000 troops in Iraq as so called “advisers” or “trainers” or whatever they want to nickname them, I am outraged! I expected this, but did you?

This is wrong. The occupation is wrong, and those of us in the anti-war movement have been screaming this at the top of our lungs for the last 6 years, even before the first boots were on the ground in Iraq. Even before the campaign of “shock and awe” even lit up the skies above innocent people. What the hell are we thinking?

Because it isn’t Bush and Cheney, those loathsome characters we so love to hate that isn’t doing this, it’s Ok?

That because it isn’t Don Rumsfeld, that warmongering war criminal of a pig, it’s Ok?

Because the face of the occupation is now Barack Obama it’s Ok?

Well I have a newsflash, it’s NOT OK!

We have in our infinite wisdom killed over 1 million Iraqis, displaced 2 million, destroyed hospitals, mosques, historical sites, homes, agricultural, stolen natural resources, orphaned children, made widows, killed entire families, sent over 4,200 soldiers to their deaths, severely wounded another 50,000, not including those who have PTSD and are committing suicide in record-breaking amounts, and we think we shouldn’t be out in the streets demanding an end to this now? Why is that.

Right now, if this were 1970, thousands upon thousands of people would be marching outside, almost rioting because this war is not over. We went to the polls twice to tell our so called elected representatives that we want an end to this, and they are ignoring their mandate. Wait and see? Why so we can murder more innocent people, build more walls, and kill our own as well. Come on, people, get with the program. Stop fooling around, nothing was ever accomplished worth a damn by hoping for someone to do the work for you.

This occupation is costing us \$10 billion a month, and Obama is now saying he will continue it for 19 months, maybe, possibly longer. That’s \$190 billion if my math is right. And what about Afghanistan. How much will that cost us. Who is getting rich off of this and why aren’t the people being listened to.

We were warned of the Military Industrial Complex, and endless wars, and boy we got it. Those of us in the movement, if you want to call it that, haven’t even been a mosquito in the ear of any one in this government. They don’t give a damn about what we have to say, or what our sons and daughters have to go off and do in war.

My son is in Iraq, his third tour of duty in this hellacious war of terror.

**We have been terrorized, our lives will never be the same, and he could go back?
Over my dead body.**

Get with it, they are not listening to you. When will the movement get out there and demand this end NOW. We attempted to do it under Bush, we must, absolutely must, do it under Obama. We cannot wait 19 months, or even a day. We have been out there calling “not one more day not one more dollar”, yet now those voices are silent. March 19th marks the 6th year of this mess, and we will mark a 7th, 8th, 9th, and on and on if we don't stop business as usual for these bastards in Washington. So it's a weekday, oh, we have to take a day off of work, or move away from our computers, or not walk the dogs! Wherever you are, you must gather your forces and get out into the streets. Take over whatever it is you have to occupy. Demand this government shut down its warmongering policies immediately, and stop sending more troops to Afghanistan. Stop bombing sovereign nations because we “think” there might be a “high value target” somewhere lurking amongst some party goers or innocent villagers who happen to live in the hills.

Damn it. Wake up and see what is going on around you. When your child, wife, husband, brother, sister has to go fight will you be pissed off then? I mean really mad, like I am. Not occasionally mad because you don't like war. I mean every day mad. Shut down your cities, your communities. Get out en masse and take to the streets, not on a Saturday, but on that Thursday, the day they bombed the crap out of Iraq.

Demand justice be served now, not when politicians feel like it.

We cannot leave troops in Iraq. That wasn't our demand at all. We keep yelling “troops out now!” Say it like you mean it. We lost the battle, but we didn't lose the war, yet. Mobilize on the 19th, do something loud and meaningful.

Complacency is not acceptable, nor is silence. People are dying, people are crippled for life, we must act now. We owe it to the Iraqi people. We owe it to those who got out in the 60's and 70's, our predecessors in the fight for peace. Let's pick up the sword and continue the fight. Or has the media won, and dumbed us down so much that those of us who want peace, think we can get it through the internet.

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

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WARS**

**“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**

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**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WARS**

February 25, 1968: Anniversary Of Memorable Bullshit: A General Cuts His Throat With His Tongue



Vietnam commander Gen. William Westmoreland meeting with Pres. Lyndon Johnson

Carl Bunin Peace History Feb 25-March 2

Discussing the war capacity of North Vietnam, a country that had been fighting for its independence for 23 years and had just staged the massive, successful Tet Offensive, U.S. General William C. Westmoreland stated, “I do not believe Hanoi can hold up under a long war.”

He was replaced as commander in Vietnam less than four months later.

[Yeah, the timing on carrying this anniversary notice is off, but then so was Westmoreland's. T]

February 26, 1984: Reagan Withdraws U.S. Troops After Saying To Do So “Means The End Of Lebanon” “There Was No Way That We Could Really Contribute To The Original Mission By Staying There As A Target”



[Thanks to Carl Bunin Peace History Feb 25-March 2]

The last of the 1400 peacekeeping troops Pres. Ronald Reagan had sent to the Lebanese capital of Beirut were evacuated. The troops were part of an international force sent to deal with the Lebanese civil war.

The president withdrew almost all American troops following the deaths of 241 Marines and 58 French paratroopers in a suicide truck bombing carried out four months earlier by combined forces of Islamic Jihad and Hizbollah.

France withdrew its troops as well.

Three weeks earlier, Reagan had told the Wall Street Journal, "As long as there is a chance for peace, the mission remains the same. If we get out, that means the end of Lebanon."

In a barb directed at House Speaker Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill Jr. (D-Massachusetts), Reagan had said, "He may be ready to surrender, but I'm not."

BBC News: On This Day

American forces have withdrawn almost all of their troops from the Lebanese capital, Beirut. About 1,000 US Marines left the coast beside the international airport as Shi'ite militiamen arrived in jeeps and armoured vehicles to take over.

US President Ronald Reagan ordered military personnel to begin pulling out of the area over a week ago following a recent upsurge in terrorist attacks.

"Once the terrorist attacks started there was no way that we could really contribute to the original mission by staying there as a target just bunkering down and waiting for further attacks," he said.

The US Marines were sent in 18 months ago to help the Lebanese administration but as the last troops pulled out there was no official government delegation present to see them off. Instead, gunmen riding motorcycles watched without emotion as US military helicopters airlifted the last front line troops to warships off the Lebanese coast.

Troops Invited:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters 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. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

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 wars, 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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS

Working Class Hero Vs. Deregulation And Corporate Greed:

**“Sullenberger Testified That His Pay
Has Been Cut 40 % In Recent Years
And His Pension Has Been
Terminated And Replaced With A**

Promise ‘Worth Pennies On The Dollar’”

“Experienced Crews In The Cockpit Will Be A Thing Of The Past”



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

Feb 24 By JOAN LOWY and MICHAEL J. SNIFFEN, Associated Press Writers
[Excerpts]

WASHINGTON – The air traffic controller who handled Flight 1549 thought ditching in the Hudson River amounted to a death sentence for all aboard. Now the veteran pilot who pulled off the feat safely says harsh pay cuts are driving experienced pilots from the cockpit.

“People don’t survive landings on the Hudson River,” 10-year veteran controller Patrick Harten told the House aviation subcommittee Tuesday in his first public description of how he tried to land the jetliner that lost power in both jets when it hit Canada geese after takeoff from New York’s LaGuardia Airport.

"I thought it was his own death sentence," Harten said of the moment when US Airways pilot Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger radioed that he was going into the river. Defying the odds, Sullenberger delicately glided the Airbus A320 down in one piece and all 155 people aboard survived the Jan. 15 water landing.

Sullenberger, a 58-year-old who joined a US Airways predecessor in 1980, and his copilot, Jeffrey B. Skiles, told the panel that experienced pilots are quitting because of deep cuts in their pay and benefits.

Skiles said unless federal laws are revised to improve labor-management relations "experienced crews in the cockpit will be a thing of the past." Sullenberger added that without experienced pilots "we will see negative consequences to the flying public."

Sullenberger testified that his pay has been cut 40 percent in recent years and his pension has been terminated and replaced with a promise "worth pennies on the dollar" from the federally created Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. These cuts followed a wave of airline bankruptcies after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks compounded by the current recession, he said.

He said the problems began with deregulation of the industry in the 1970s. Then "the bankruptcies were used by some as a fishing expedition to get what they could not get in normal times," Sullenberger said of the airlines.

The reduced compensation has placed "pilots and their families in an untenable financial situation," Sullenberger said. "I do not know a single professional airline pilot who wants his or her children to follow in their footsteps."

Sullenberger himself has started a consulting business to help make ends meet.

Skiles added, "For the last six years, I have worked seven days a week between my two jobs just to maintain a middle class standard of living."

Egyptian Workers Strike Against Fertilizer Export To Israel: "Egypt Has Seen A Rapid Increase In Solidarity Actions And Initiatives For Palestine, Especially Within The Labour Movement"

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

2.18.09 by Mashahed, Monthly Review & 2.18.09 Worldwide Activism

The original article was published by Mashahed on 10 February 2009. The English translation is in part based on one provided by Tadamon! on 17 February 2009

In an unprecedented action, the first following the recent Israeli war on Gaza, workers of the Egyptian Fertilizers Company in Suez protested on Saturday, 7 February against the export of fertilizers to Israel.

The Egyptian Fertilizers Company is owned by Onsi and Nassef Sawiris under the umbrella of Orascom Construction Industries. The Egyptian Fertilizers Company signed an agreement to export 1,000 tons of phosphate fertilizers to Israel, at a rate of 100 tons per week. An estimated 800 Egyptians work at this factory.

Two days prior to the protest, workers were surprised by a request from the management to process an order of unmarked bags that will be transported by Jordanian trucks to an undisclosed location. As a result, about 100 workers went on strike and refused to process the order because they believed, rightly, that the cargo would travel to Israel.

When the management learned about the situation, they broke the strike by threatening the workers of dismissal and deducted 15 days of pay from all workers at the company.

There is no doubt that the Egyptian workers at the fertilizer factory in Suez have taken a big step forward.

First, this strike is a political strike held for purely political reasons, not to demand wage increases or bonuses or meal allowances, though the importance of such demands must be fully recognized since they reflect the movement of workers struggling in the face of exploitation and oppression to mitigate the real and immediate injustice.

Second, they showed the correct path for the Egyptian movement of solidarity with the Palestinian people.

The conditions in Egypt have changed a lot since the beginning of the second Intifada, because of the Egyptian regime's naked hostility to Hamas and therefore also to the Palestinian people in Gaza and to solidarity with their resistance from all walks of life here, and because of the rise of social movements, particularly the labor movement, in the last three years.

Solidarity with the Egyptian fertilizer workers today is the duty of all who are concerned about violations of workers' rights and interested in an upsurge in workers' activity, just as it is the duty of every defender of Palestinian rights in the face of a hostile regime.

Finally, it should be noted that the iron and steel workers asked the management to donate a day's work for the people of Gaza, who remained steadfast last January.

In the past three years, Egypt has seen a rapid increase in solidarity actions and initiatives for Palestine, especially within the labour movement. One key issue has been the ongoing requests to halt natural gas sales to Israel.

While the government has failed to act, pressure has been building and was a key demand during Gaza solidarity actions.

The Egyptian government is keen to crush this type of political activism, as Palestine solidarity is often interlinked with workers'

Long live the struggle of the working class!
Long live the struggle!
Ya Falastin!



MR.FISH

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in. She writes: "Oh, my country."]

RECEIVED

MARCH FOR HOUSING JUSTICE IN NEW ORLEANS.

1:00PM SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2007.

MEET AT THE CORNER OF ORLEANS AND N. CLAIBORNE.

WHAT WE DEMAND:

KEEP LAFITTE ALIVE! NO PLANNED EVICTIONS!

LSU HANDS OFF LOWER MID-CITY!

IMMEDIATE MORATORIUM ON RENTER EVICTIONS FOR THE DURATION OF ECONOMIC CRISIS!

The long standing problem of affordable housing in New Orleans, so greatly aggravated by Hurricane Katrina and the official response to the devastation ignited by the storm, is now being compounded by the onset of recession.

Last month, for the first time since Hurricane Katrina, the unemployment rate in New Orleans jumped above the now, surging national unemployment rate. Escalating unemployment here is occurring while the local public safety net remains in tatters as a consequence of the tidal wave of privatization of local public services-housing, healthcare, education-that followed Katrina.

Making a terrible situation worse, the administration of Governor Bobby Jindal is spurning additional federal assistance for the state's unemployed that would extend unemployment compensation to 25,000 unemployed who now make do without such assistance. These developments threaten to rob tens of thousands of families access to affordable housing in the all to near future.

Only the people have the power to avert yet another housing catastrophe in the Greater New Orleans area.

The time is now for working class New Orleanians to forge a mass movement that compels the heartless rulers of this state and country to respect our right to affordable and habitable housing.

Averting another housing catastrophe requires that we vote with our feet now. Join this fight for justice.

SPONSORS: Residents of Lafitte, C3/Hands Off Iberville, May Day NOLA. Interested in co-sponsoring call 504-587-0080.

We meet 7pm Thursdays in St. Jude's Basing Hall(410 Basin St.)

Please forward.

RECEIVED:

Correcting A Misconception In Today's GI Special

From: JM [Australia]
To: GI Special
Sent: February 25, 2009
Subject: Correcting a misconception in today's GI Special.

Today's GI special had a interesting piece written by a soldier who is a true survivor. I want to say something about one of his statements.

He said the Iraqi toilets can't take toilet paper because Iraqis clean themselves with their left hands. I've never heard that before and it makes Arabs sound unhygienic. This isn't the case.

Do you have bidets in America? The bidet was, I believe, a French invention but has spread to many parts of the world. It can be a separate item standing near the toilet, as in many parts of southern Europe, or it can be part of the toilet itself. I think this is the case in Arab countries, where almost all houses have at least one bidet. Toilet paper isn't necessary because the cleaning is done by water. I've always liked this idea and think it's time people of English ancestry got round to using bidets.

A lot of Middle Eastern and Asian people think toilet paper is unhygienic. It's all a matter of what one is used to.

REPLY: T

The writer is correct. The Koran prescribes that the left hand only be used in dealing with excretory functions. This was a common sense requirement to minimize the spread of disease. Food was eaten with the right hand. However, people do not use their bare hands to clean themselves. The Koranic requirement was to use what is sometimes translated into English as "dust" for wiping, and other times translated as "sand." This goes back to the days people lived in the desert, where no paper and little water was available. People certainly do not use their bare hands, and never have.

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

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