

GI SPECIAL 7F4:



GI SPECIAL RAFFLE REPORT

Big thanks to everybody who sent in contributions to the GI Special fund raising raffle. A final collection of envelopes will be made Monday, June 8 from the PO Box to allow for envelopes to arrive that were sent in from overseas before the May 31 deadline. The drawing, by members of the Military Project, will happen June 9 and winners notified in series, first place winner first, and on down the line. T

80%

June 4, 2009 Tuscaloosa News

NATO spokesman Canadian Brig. Gen. Richard Blanchette says that roadside bombs in Afghanistan have increased about eighty percent from last year.

ACTION REPORTS

Fleet Week Outreach Action Report [New York City]

From: Alexis B
To: GI Special
Sent: June 03, 2009
Subject: Fleet Week Outreach Action Report

[This is about outreach to sailors and Marines Fleet Week in New York City. T]

Well, I pounded the pavement hard and heavy on three separate occasions with a very dedicated dude from the NYC area.

Having done so, I am renewed in my understanding of the critical importance of this work at this time. Much respect is due to members of the Military Project for their steadfast support and dedication.

I feel balanced because, after about eight solid years of serious study into history, politics, and war resistance, I finally see "the light" (i.e. that one can "support the troops" and be "against the war," and that's exactly where one needs to be).

Why do most "Americans" not get this, seem not to get this, or seem not to care? An important question to ponder, for sure.

I have learned from a wise tutor (and vet of military "service" as well as many kinds of outreach) that anyone from any walk of life can really talk to anyone in any walk of life, so long as one has valid intention and intimate knowledge of/familiarity with his/her truth, and one keeps the message clear and simple.

Let us humble ourselves, both those who have never served a day in armed forces and those who are veteran gazers into the ugly face of war, through a clear vision of the travails and hardships the contemporary soldier faces.

Peace.
Peace.
And again,
Peace.

Brother A

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 wars.

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.

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Illinois Sgt. Killed In Baghdad



Sgt. Justin Duffy, Moline, Illinois, was killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near the Humvee he was in on Tuesday, June 2, 2009 in east Baghdad. (AP Photo/Department of Defense)

U.S. Soldier Killed By Grenade In Kirkuk

June 4, 2009 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20090604-04

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, TIKRIT, Iraq – A Multi-National Division – North Soldier died from injuries received during a grenade attack on a patrol in the Kirkuk province of northern Iraq, June 4.

U.S. Soldier Killed By Grenade In Diyala

June 5, 2009 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20090605-03

CAMP VICTORY, BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Corps – Iraq Soldier died late last night of injuries received during a grenade attack on a patrol in the Diyala province of northern Iraq, June 4.

NEA Soldier Killed In Iraq

May 22, 2009 By Michael Wilkey, Paxton Media News Bureau, Paragould Daily Press

JONESBORO:

“We’ve lost our son in Iraq.”

Those words from the mother of a 35-year-old Jonesboro native on Thursday showed how she and her family felt after being told the news of his death in Iraq.

Paul Faris Brooks, an Army medic stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., was one of three U.S. soldiers killed Thursday in a bombing at an outdoor market in Baghdad’s southern Dora district.

U.S. officials said in addition to Brooks and two others dying, an undisclosed number of Americans were wounded.

Twelve Iraqi civilians were also killed, and 25 were wounded in the attack caused by a bomb exploding in a vehicle.

Barbara Brooks, Brooks’ mother, said her son was a good father and husband.

“Daddy was their idol,” Brooks said as she was holding a photo of four of Paul Brooks’ children. “He had good kids. He was a typical teen-ager who grew into a family man.”

Brooks said her son, who was in his second tour of duty in Iraq, was an E-5 medic, attended Jonesboro High School and received his General Equivalency Degree while in the military.

Her son also cared about his wife, Nicole, and their seven children -- Hayley, 14, Harmony, 11, Seth, 7, Logan, 6, Aiden, 5, Samara, 3, and Denver, 2, Brooks said.

“He was strong and figured out problems,” Brooks said. “He was a good dad and husband, very soft-spoken and a family man.”

Barbara Brooks said her son and daughter-in-law faced adversity two years ago, when Denver had heart surgery.

However, Brooks said the family stuck together and rallied around him.

“Our family has always loved him, and he came out on top,” Brooks said. “He was a very good serviceman.”

Barbara Brooks said Paul Faris Brooks last spoke with her and her husband, Paul David Brooks, on Wednesday.

“We talked about the mission and how they had to have a medic with them,” Brooks said.

Brooks said her son was last in Jonesboro for Christmas two years ago but spent time with the family at their Spring River vacation home in Hardy.

"He would visit there at least two times a year," Brooks said. "He would visit with the kids there."

Paul Brooks' sister, Christy Sharp, said she communicated with him while he was in Iraq.

"I texted him and thanked him for what he did," Sharp said. "He tortured me as a kid, but he was a great brother."

Another sister, Nikki Winn of Paragould, said that now she would spend Memorial Day remembering her brother.

Brooks said a military chaplain and sergeant arrived at her home around 4 p.m. Thursday, notifying the family of the death.

Family and friends gathered at her home Thursday night expressing their sorrow in the lost of Brooks.

Brooks was circumspect when talking about her son's sacrifice.

"I thought it was the last time," Brooks said. "You should not have babies without their father, especially when they just don't care."

Funeral services are pending.

Romanian Troops Getting Out Of Iraq Now And Not Coming Back; [They're Going Home, Not To Afghanistan]

June 4, 2009 By KIM GAMEL, The Associated Press

BAGHDAD -- Romania's 366-strong military contingent ended its deployment in Iraq on Thursday, reducing the U.S.-led coalition to three countries. In Iraq's north, another U.S. soldier died in combat.

The Romanian force was among a handful that has remained in Iraq after the Jan. 1 expiry of the U.N. mandate that governed the presence of the U.S.-led coalition force in Iraq.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Three U.S. Soldiers Killed In Kapisa Convoy Ambush

Jun 4 (AFP)

Three US soldiers were killed in an attack in Afghanistan Thursday.

The soldiers were attacked just north of Kabul, where US troops are operating alongside the French military.

“Three coalition service members were killed in an attack on their convoy in Kapisa province this morning when their convoy struck an improvised explosive device and came under small-arms fire,” the military said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility but militants from the radical Hezb-e-Islami faction led by former prime minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar are active in the area.

Bomb Kills Queens G.I. In Afghanistan Just Weeks Before Scheduled Return To NYC



Army Spc. Roberto Hernandez

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

June 5th 2009 BY Larry Mcshane, DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

The family of Roberto Hernandez, a third-generation military man, braced for the worst as an Army chaplain approached the young soldier's Queens home.

"When the chaplain comes, they don't tell you he got shot in the leg," said his uncle, 15-year Army veteran Alejandro Tomlinson. "I knew. ... They did not have to say the words."

The message delivered was brief but brutal: Army Spc. Hernandez, 21, was killed by a bomb Tuesday in Afghanistan.

He was riding in a Humvee only weeks before a scheduled July return to Queens.

"He wanted to come home," said his inconsolable mother, Paulina Richards, drying her tears Thursday. "He was my only child."

Hernandez, who enlisted in September 2007, volunteered for war-torn Afghanistan immediately after basic training.

His mother begged him to pick a different assignment, but Hernandez - who served with the military police - wanted to join Operation Enduring Freedom.

"I wanted him to join the military, but I did not want him to go over there," said Richards, a former Air Force mechanic. "I told him, 'Why did you do that? You know you don't have to go over there.'"

A half-dozen colleagues carried his remains Thursday in a flag-draped coffin after Hernandez was flown into Dover Air Force Base.

At the family home in Far Rockaway, relatives hugged amid pictures of the young soldier in his uniform. The August Martin High School graduate had followed his grandfather, mother, two uncles and an aunt into the service.

The family came to the U.S. after Hernandez's grandfather, Alfonso Tomlinson, joined the Army in 1969. Over time, using his military paycheck, he brought other family members over from their native Panama.

"The military brought us to this country," said Virginia Tomlinson, his aunt and an Army veteran. "He paid our debt."

Hernandez, a devoted Christian and member of the Christian Cultural Center in Brooklyn, often wrote and called with details of his life overseas.

"He would tell me, 'It's going to be all right,'" his mom said. Hernandez hoped to use his Army career as a springboard to become a private investigator, family members said.

Uncle Rick Tomlinson, 41, an Army veteran, stood in the home admiring a picture of the handsome young soldier.

“He left many broken hearts,” the uncle said.



The remains of Spc. Roberto Hernandez June 4, 2009 at Dover Air Force Base.
Ruark/AP

Bundeswehr Ambushed In Afghanistan

05 June, 2009 AFP/DDP/Military-World

German soldiers were ambushed by insurgents on Thursday in Afghanistan but managed to escape unscathed, Bundeswehr operations command said on Friday.

The patrol was northwest of Kunduz when it came under fire from automatic weapons and anti-tank guns. The soldiers returned fire and broke through the ambush, the military reported.

Members of the Quick Reaction Forces from the German Bundeswehr were also attacked, but all soldiers and vehicles came away unharmed.

Losses on the side of the insurgents are unknown.

According to media reports, the Taliban is reportedly planning to step up its military campaign to exploit political sensitivities in the run-up to Germany's general election.

Resistance Action

Jun 03, 2009 AFP & Jun 5 by Sharif Khoram (AFP)

KABUL: A bomb killed six security guards on Wednesday. The bomber, who was riding a motorbike, blew himself up alongside guards from a private Afghan company escorting a convoy of logistics for international troops, police said.

“Six private Afghan guards were killed,” said the southern Afghanistan border police commander, General Saifullah. The attack was near a bazaar in Spin Boldak, a town on a key border-crossing with Pakistan through which most of the supplies to foreign forces arrive.

Police in the eastern province of Ghazni announced that they had found the body of a candidate for the provincial polls, the second to be killed after registering to stand.

The corpse of Yahya Mawlaee Azhar was found in central Wardak province Wednesday, a week after he was kidnapped while driving home to Ghazni from a visit to Kabul, police said.

“He was killed by Taliban insurgents since he was a candidate for a provincial council seat in the upcoming polls,” Ghazni police chief Khial Baz Shairzai told AFP.

Heavy fighting erupted in the troubled eastern province of Khost when militants attacked a compound where foreign troops were based, police said. A policeman and a militia soldier contracted to the US military were also killed, he said.

A Taliban spokesman confirmed the militia was involved, saying 100 men had attacked the district.

Two roadside bombs exploded an hour apart in the eastern province of Nangarhar on Friday, killing six policemen, provincial government spokesman Ahmad Zia Abdulzai told AFP.

A remote-controlled bomb blast in the southern province of Uruzgan Friday killed two policemen, one of them an officer, while they were on foot patrol, deputy provincial police chief Mohammad Gulab said.

Police in the southern province of Kandahar announced meanwhile that another policeman and a civilian driver were killed in a bomb attack on their vehicle late Thursday.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE

END THE OCCUPATIONS

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

Stupid Fucks In Command At It Again [Welcome To Liberated Afghanistan]

3 June 2009 BBC

An Afghan journalist working for a prominent independent radio station in the province of Khost has been arrested by American soldiers. [translation: ordered arrested by U.S. commanding officers; quit blaming the "soldiers"]

The journalist, Noorjahan Bahir, and his two brothers were arrested at their family home on Tuesday night.

The US military has confirmed the arrests but has given no details.

Local journalists demanding the release of Mr Bahir have said they will stop reporting news relating to the US military or Afghan government.

**How Do You Know For Sure
When Your War Is Lost?
When You Pants-Pissing
Commanders Panic And Bring
Back Body Counts:
"It's A Concern That At Home, The
Common Perception Is This War Is
Being Lost"**

“Death Tallies Aren’t ‘Any Kind Of Measurement Or Metric Of Success’ Says Former Lt. Col. David Accetta

JUNE 1, 2009 By MICHAEL M. PHILLIPS, The Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Body counts are back, reigniting the decades-old debate about whether victory in war can be judged by measuring the stack of enemy dead.

In recent months, the U.S. command in Afghanistan has begun publicizing every single enemy fighter killed in combat, the most detailed body counts the military has released since the practice fell into disrepute during the Vietnam War.

The practice has revealed deep divides in military circles over the value of keeping such a score in a war being waged not over turf, but over the allegiance of the Afghan people.

Does it buck up the troops and the home front to let them know the enemy is suffering, too?

Or does the focus on killing distract from the goals of generating legitimacy and economic development?

American commanders have detailed nearly 2,000 insurgent deaths in Afghanistan over the past 14 months.

U.S. officers say they’ve embraced body counts to undermine insurgent propaganda, and stiffen the resolve of the American public.

“It’s a concern that at home, the common perception is this war is being lost,” says Lt. Col. Rumi Nielson-Green, spokeswoman for the 101st Airborne Division, which initiated the policy.

Still, the practice has led the U.S. into an impasse with military allies, who don’t release body counts for fear it would prove politically unpalatable at home and counterproductive in Afghanistan.

“Recording an ongoing body count is hardly going to endear us to the people of Afghanistan,” says British Royal Navy Capt. Mark Durkin, spokesman for the 42-nation, NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, or ISAF.

U.S. Army public-affairs officers routinely release body counts for fights involving the 17,000 special-operations troops, Air Force crew members and U.S. trainers in Afghanistan, a force led by an American general.

But ISAF -- which is led by the same American general -- almost never releases enemy-casualty figures for fights involving forces under its command, including French, British,

Dutch and Canadian units, as well as roughly 24,000 U.S. troops wearing the ISAF patch.

Even those who endorse the idea face the challenge of actually counting the bodies.

Commanders know there's a good deal of uncertainty when firefights often take place at ranges of up to 1,000 yards and end with aerial bombardments. Insurgents frequently remove their dead, in what Lt. Col. Nielson-Green calls the "self-cleaning battlefield."

That forces U.S. troops to use other methods -- such as intercepting insurgent communications, monitoring funerals or surveillance from unmanned spy planes -- to confirm the enemy body count.

Some commanders are wary of such indirect methods.

"My policy is when you stand with your legs astride a dead body, call me and tell me you killed one person," says Col. Chris Cavoli, who commanded an infantry battalion on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in 2006-07.

"We made a deliberate decision to stay away from body counts and not get caught up in that Vietnam predicament," says Col. Greg Julian, who was a public-affairs officer in Kuwait before the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and in Baghdad after it.

Body counts were "kind of a politically sensitive issue," says former Lt. Col. David Accetta, director of the 82nd Airborne Division's media operation at Bagram Airfield in 2007.

Death tallies aren't "any kind of measurement or metric of success," says Mr. Accetta, who has since retired from the military.

Col. Cavoli, the former battalion commander, says his men fired thousands of rounds of artillery at insurgents along the Pakistan border during a tour lasting more than a year, ending in 2007. But "making the enemy irrelevant in the minds of the people was a much more profound defeat for the enemy than killing some of his members or even killing a lot of his people," says Col. Cavoli, who went on to teach counterinsurgency techniques to North Atlantic Treaty Organization officers.

The Army began a rethink when the 101st Airborne Division took over Afghan media operations in April 2008. Commanders worried the U.S.-led coalition appeared to be losing ground.

The U.S. military routinely releases information about Americans killed in action. Since Sept. 11, 2001, 618 Americans have died in and around Afghanistan, 456 killed in combat.

Remaining silent about enemy deaths gave the false impression that the U.S. was losing, says Lt. Col. Nielson-Green, spokeswoman for the 101st and a proponent of the new approach.

Then the publicity battlefield shifted to the issue of civilian casualties. Time and again, American forces found themselves defending against allegations that bad intelligence and reckless tactics caused large-scale civilian casualties.

A pivotal moment came last August, when U.S. Special Forces troops and Afghan commandos conducted a raid to seize a suspected insurgent leader from a house in Azizabad. A firefight ensued and the Americans called in airstrikes.

In October, Col. Julian assumed responsibility for public affairs for a new unified command, U.S. Forces -- Afghanistan, taking over much of the work done by the 101st Airborne. He immediately ordered his staff to get ahead of their Taliban counterparts by reporting enemy casualties, no matter how small. From now on, he decided, news releases would provide ample detail about each fight to add to their credibility.

On a given day, the military might announce that a single militant died when coalition forces tried to seize a foreign fighter in Paktika Province, or that allied soldiers killed an insurgent hiding among the livestock at a compound used by bomb makers in Logar Province.

"We have decided to combat by being accurate with our information," says Col. Julian.

For instance, the military reported last month that Afghan commandos and U.S. troops killed 60 insurgents during four days of fighting in the town of Marjeh. Three of the militants were killed while planting a bomb in a road; two suicide bombers detonated themselves trying to sneak into allied positions, the military reported.

The U.S. does not, Col. Julian says, keep an official running tally of how many Taliban, al Qaeda and other insurgents are killed. A review of the record, however, shows U.S. officers have released details of at least 1,971 insurgent deaths since April 10, 2008, the day the 101st Airborne took over press operations.

The Vietnam analogy, Col. Julian adds, is misleading in the Afghan context. In Vietnam, "there were exaggerations -- the bigger the number, the better you've done. That's not the case here."

Col. Julian says neither the Pentagon nor the White House has objected to his practice of releasing detailed body counts.

America's ISAF allies, however, decline to follow suit.

Many face public skepticism about the war and prefer to emphasize their efforts to fight poverty and disease in Afghanistan.

Some, including NATO stalwarts such as Germany, work under strict national rules limiting their combat activities.

Some Arab leaders don't want their populations to know they're participating at all, much less that they're killing fellow Muslims.

“It ended up working against the American forces,” Capt. Durkin, the British ISAF spokesman, says of body-count reporting in Vietnam. “It just seemed as though it was a sort of slaughter going on.”

ISAF did make one exception. In mid-March, a French battalion fought its way through the Alasai Valley in a two-day battle. One French soldier died, while the insurgents lost 29 killed and 12 wounded.

When the fighting quieted, Lt. Col. Nielson-Green of the 101st Airborne called ISAF’s Capt. Durkin and urged him to release the count of enemy fallen. It was, she argued, an exceptionally large number of insurgent dead and signaled a major allied victory.

ISAF officials agreed to put out a brief press release, but reluctantly.

They did so in large part because they didn’t want the French public, unaccustomed to combat deaths, to think their soldier died in vain.

MORE:

The Clueless Fools Just Revealed The Depths Of Their Incompetence

From: WAR IN THE SHADOWS: THE GUERRILLA IN HISTORY, BY Robert B. Asprey; William Morrow And Company; New York, 1994

From the beginning, the American command erred by trying to use maximum, not minimum, force, and by designating the guerrilla the primary target rather than the population that supported him.

Dead guerrillas became “victories”—enough “victories” would “win” the war.

They did not understand that an insurgency is not “won”—except that it fades into relative quiescence.

Unlike the Western battlefield, a rising body count in an insurgency is a danger sign.

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

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

**FUTILE EXERCISE:
ONLY 5 MILLION MORE SEARCH:
ALL HOME NOW!**



A U.S. soldier of 10th Mountain Division checks a vehicle during a patrol in Logar province April 13, 2009. REUTERS/Ahmad Masood

**Hello Foreign Soldiers
Welcome To Afghanistan
Have A Nice Day**



Taliban militants are seen in an undisclosed location in Afghanistan in this picture released to Reuters May 9, 2009. Picture taken May 8, 2009. REUTERS/Stringer

“The Foreign Troops, In Particular From The United States, Are Increasingly Regarded As Occupying Forces, Like The Soviet Army”

4 June 2009 Can Merey (DPA) [Excerpts]

Every day, foreign troops report casualties among the militants, but the Taliban are far from being beaten. On the contrary.

Not just in the south but also provinces adjoining Kabul have become so unsafe that even Afghan residents of the capital don't dare go there.

The foreign troops, in particular from the United States, are increasingly regarded as occupying forces, like the Soviet army, which left the country defeated in 1989.

“Sometimes you think the Taliban are at the gates of Kabul,” said a young Afghan who works for a foreign company in Kabul. Almost 30 years of war and civil have made him and many of his fellow countrymen impatient.

Never mind rebuilding successes.

They want peace, and they want it soon - if necessary, even under a new Islamic regime.

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Explosion Targets Occupation Convoy In Mogadishu

6/5/2009 MOGADISHU (Sh. M. Network)

A land mine explosion has been targeted to the African Union troops AMISOM convoy traveling between Aden Adde international airport and Km4 intersection in the Somali capital Mogadishu, witnesses told Shabelle radio on Friday.

Reports say that the explosion was a remote controlled landmine targeted to the African Union troops who were traveling on near the UNDP centre near Aden Adde international airport in the capital.

AMISOM troops halted the movement of the people and traffic between the airport and Km4 intersection in Mogadishu after the explosion.

The real casualty of the explosion is unclear yet and there is comment about the explosion from the AMISOM in Mogadishu.

The explosion is part of series of attacks targeted to the African Union troops in the Somali capital Mogadishu.

TROOP NEWS

Soldiers And Veterans Sue KBR For Damages From Deadly Iraq Burn Pits: “The Work They Did Harmed The Soldiers And Hindered The Military Mission”

“In my professional opinion, the known carcinogens and respiratory sensitizers released into the atmosphere by the burn pit present both an acute and chronic health hazard to our troops and local population,”

06/04/2009 By Guillermo Contreras, Express-News [Excerpts]

Six people from Texas, including some soldiers, who claim they were poisoned by toxins and emissions from burn pits at U.S. camps in Iraq and Afghanistan are suing contractors KBR and Halliburton.

The suit, moved to federal court in San Antonio from state court last week, alleges the companies operated the large war-zone pits and burned waste since 2004 that included trucks, tires, plastic water bottles, medical waste, hazardous materials, animal carcasses and even human corpses.

The suit claims burning the waste in open pits — with no safety controls — may have released toxins that harmed at least 100,000 people, including U.S. troops, contractors and civilians.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs are seeking to make the case a class-action lawsuit, citing evidence that many others are having symptoms or medical conditions that include severe respiratory ailments, asthma, sleep apnea, heart problems, tumors, lymphoma and leukemia.

Some even have died, according to the suit and news reports.

The situation has been likened by some observers to that caused by Agent Orange of the Vietnam era.

The suit was filed on behalf of Robert Cain of San Marcos; Craig Henry of San Antonio; Francis Jaeger of Haltom City; David McMenemy of Lampasas; Mark Posz of San Antonio; and El Kevin Sar of Houston.

The six exhibited symptoms ranging from acute abdominal pains, chronic respiratory infections, burning sensations in the lungs and persistent cold-like symptoms.

McMenemy had a football-size tumor removed from his hip suspected of being caused by fumes from a burn pit at Camp Al Taji, Iraq, the suit said.

Thirty-four suits have been filed or are expected to be filed in 34 states where people with symptoms have surfaced, plaintiffs' attorney Elizabeth Burke said.

The burn pits are so large, the suit said, that tractors are used to push "every type of waste imaginable" into the fire, and the flames shoot hundreds of feet into the sky, sometimes around the clock.

The suit claims the contractors failed to install incinerators to limit the toxic exposure.

"They took an enormous amount of taxpayer dollars and did shoddy work," Burke said of the contractors.

"The work they did harmed the soldiers and hindered the military mission. In some bases with an Air Force presence, planes could not take off and land because of the smoke."

Senior members of military environmental health assessment teams have expressed concern about the pits to the Pentagon.

One of them called the burn pit at Balad Air Base in Iraq "the worst environmental site I have personally visited" in 10 years.

An Air Force memo that was leaked recently on Wikileaks, a Web site that receives documents from anonymous sources to help expose government misdeeds, said thousands of people might have been exposed to toxins at a burn pit at Balad Air Base.

"In my professional opinion, the known carcinogens and respiratory sensitizers released into the atmosphere by the burn pit present both an acute and chronic health hazard to our troops and local population," Lt. Col. James R. Elliott, the chief of aero-medical services, wrote in a December 2006 memo.

The memo said the pit had been identified as a health concern for several years.

The claims against the defendants include negligence, battery, breach of duty to warn, intentional infliction of emotional distress and breach of contract.

The suit seeks compensatory damages for current and future medical expenses and punitive damages “in an amount sufficient to strip defendants of all of the revenue and profits earned from their pattern of constant, wanton and outrageous misconduct and callous disregard and utter indifference to the welfare of Americans serving and working in Iraq.”

More Stupid Army Rules

June 8, 2009 Army Times

Wearing a reflective belt with PTs at noon in a war zone ...

Keeping the injured, infirm, nondeployable on the books in order to increase numbers of the unit, even though these folks cannot perform the mission. ...

Not talking on a cell phone when driving (yet you can talk on any military communication gear while doing the same).

— RONALD45

Saluting —

I fully understand the history behind saluting, but I honestly feel in this day and age there is absolutely no respect in it.

It is pretty much an unconscious act and seven out of 10 times the officer won't even salute back.

— FatCat40

Panel Rules Guantánamo Torture Renders Prisoner Unfit To Testify About Torture

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Project, who sent this in.]

May 21, 2009 The Onion

WASHINGTON—In its first major hearing on the use of abusive interrogation tactics at Guantánamo Bay, a blue-ribbon panel found detainee Omar Khadr mentally unfit to testify about his years of psychological torture.

“Because of Mr. Khadr’s fragile state due to unknown hours spent under the most brutal, mentally straining conditions, he cannot be trusted to speak competently on his own behalf,” said Rep. Kit Bond (R-MO), the panel’s chairman.

“It is unfortunate that someone with such intimate knowledge of the horrors of waterboarding, stress positions, and induced hypothermia is so emotionally unstable. He bursts into tears at even the mention of mock torture.”

Bond added that Khadr’s confession of planning 9/11, the London train bombings, and the Iranian hostage crisis would be kept on the record.

Swedish Troop Training Scandal Exposed: “New Conscripts Fired Shoulder Mounted Artillery Cannons While In The Nude”

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

12 May 08 The Local Europe AB

Lars-Olof Corneliusson, the former commander of a Swedish amphibious military unit based near Stockholm, is accused of trying to cover up an incident in which new conscripts fired shoulder mounted artillery cannons while in the nude.

The leader of the exercise, which took place in 2004 and involved soldiers from the Amf 1 amphibious unit based in Vaxholm outside of Stockholm, was told by Corneliusson to destroy a film of the shooting, according to the Dagens Nyheter (DN) newspaper.

When the film was shown by Svergies Television’s investigative news program Uppdrag Granskning in May of 2006, it generated a great deal of controversy.

The film shows a group of conscripts from Amf 1 shooting a shoulder-fired mortar wearing only helmets, and generated concern about a lack of security within the unit.

But if Corneliusson, who was in charge of the unit at the time, had had his way, the film never would have been made public.

According to DN, Corneliusson had requested that the leader of the exercise destroy the film during a discussion between the two following the incident.

He also failed to report the naked shooting as a workplace incident, according to the newspaper, which reviewed reports from the unit.

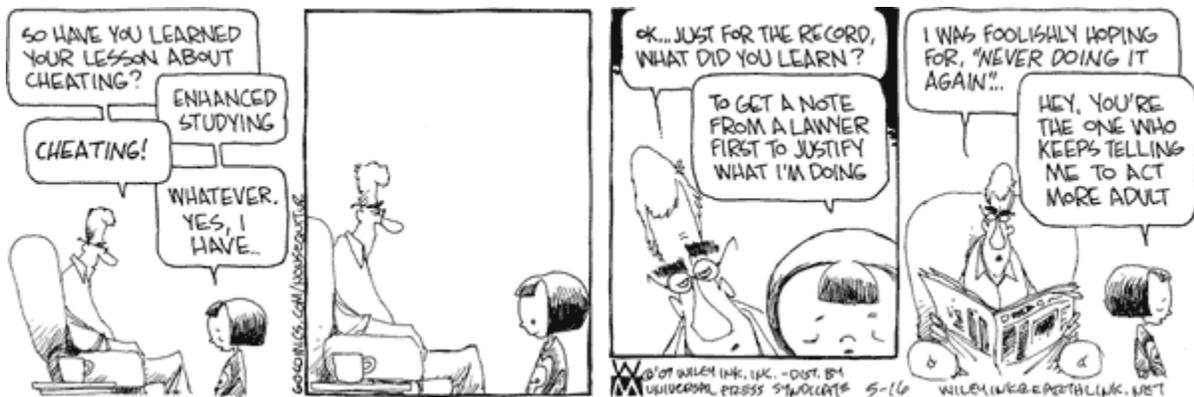
Commander Christer Olofsson, who conducted the military's own investigation into the naked artillery firing, was critical of the unit's leadership for not reacting immediately following the incident.

Corneliusson is currently under indictment for workplace crimes in connection with a combat patrol boat accident near the island of Sollenkroka in Stockholm's archipelago in which two conscripts lost their lives.

The boating accident took place about one week following the naked shooting incident.

Here is the controversial video featuring Swedish conscripts firing rocket launchers in the nude, courtesy of YouTube: <http://www.thelocal.se/blog/20080512/278/>

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

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/)

CLASS WAR REPORTS

GET THE MESSAGE?



Protesters shout slogans against local government layoffs in San Juan, Friday, June 5, 2009. Thousands of demonstrators protested against Governor Luis Fortuno and the government's recent layoffs, cultural and education budget cuts as well as privatization of public services. (AP Photo/Ricardo Arduengo)



Protesters, one carrying a machete and waving a Puerto Rican flag, march against local government layoffs in San Juan, Friday, June 5, 2009. Thousands of demonstrators protested against Governor Luis Fortuno and the government's recent layoffs, cultural and education budget cuts as well as privatization of public services. (AP Photo/Ricardo Arduengo)



A Puerto Rico national flag is carried by protesters during a demonstration named "National People's Assembly", as they march from Dos Hermanos Bridge to Capitol House, in San Juan, June 5, 2009. Thousands of demonstrators protested against Governor Luis Fortuno and the government's recent layoffs, cultural and education budget cuts as well as privatization of public services. REUTERS/Ana Martinez

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



RECEIVED

When 500,000 Mothers Write 500,000 Military Sons “The Government Is Killing Us, Come Help Us!”

[This message from Larry C is about the poem by Vietnam Veteran Dennis Serdel “Confusion, Poverty, Then Revolt,” front page GI SPECIAL 7F1: 6.2.09. You can find GI Special 7F1 at the GI Special archive: <http://www.militaryproject.org> T]

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: June 04, 2009

I received many good comments on my poem, but this one by a VVAW and UAW retiree friend is the best. Dennis

Begin forwarded message:

From: Larry C
Date: June 3, 2009 10:19:51 PM GMT-04:00
To: Dennis Serdel
Subject: extra good

Extra good poem this time Dennis!

“Confusion, poverty -- then revolt.” So fine.

When 500,000 mothers write 500,000 military sons: “The government is killing us, come help us!” -- that’s a day I hope to live to see.

Good job Dennis!

Larry

Vietnam GI: Reprints Available



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Edited by Vietnam Veteran Jeff Sharlet from 1968 until his death, this newspaper rocked the world, attracting attention even from Time Magazine, and extremely hostile attention from the chain of command. The pages and pages of letters in the paper from troops in Vietnam condemning the war are lost to history, but you can find them here.

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