

Traveling Soldier

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Free to service men and women

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Issue # 9

“This war is about money. The money is only making the rich man richer.”

I am a manipulated stooge who sold his soul to exploit the ignorant with the proud lies our own leaders.

I am told on a regular basis “The Army is not like it used to be.” Most of the lifers think that the military lacks discipline and blame the new “Nintendo generation” soldiers for the weakness.

However, I think a hard look should be given at the uses of America’s advanced military in the modern era. Due to the operations the military has been tasked in the last forty years, the nobility of the professional soldier has been destroyed.

From Vietnam to Iraq the Armed Forces has been a chess piece in a game for money and power by elite Americans. Back in the world wars the military represented every citizen’s will. Today the people are duped with lies and phony values to support imperial progress.

Weapons of mass destruction, links to the two towers tragedy, and the ousting of an oppressive dictatorship are all bait for a revenge hungry over-patriotic American.

I doubt that the men in power are as incompetent as the world imagines. For that reason I dismiss the apparent failures in Iraq as not the true goals of this war. After these errors are

eliminated you are left with the truth behind the media smoke screens.

This war is about money.

Most people believe that dollars are being handed over to Iraq to rebuild their country on the backs of the American tax payers and under the protection of US troops.

However, the money never sees Iraq. It leaves your wallet and goes through the system in DC and ends up in a corporation with the sizeable government contract. Sure the product is a new road, a school house or AK-47s for the Iraqi National Guard, but the money is only making a rich man richer.

Even the soldiers are brain washed into hating the “rag heads”.

I have overheard soldiers telling racist jokes like “Why do Iraqis smell so bad? So blind people can hate them too.” It becomes easy to hate the Arab people. We don’t understand their culture, their religion and their language. They are a poor people with a lesser quality of lifestyle and standard of living. The average soldier can not relate to living without electricity, plumbing, and toilet paper.

If we see them as inferior it makes it easier to kill them. Just as one might kill a dog that digs through his trash. As a soldier gets into combat situations the prejudice grows as they



blame every Middle-Easterner for the conflict.

The Joes hate Iraqis because the command hypes about being in Iraqi to stabilize a democracy and fight terrorists on their own ground. The leadership never explains the fact that a majority of Iraqis don’t want a republic that is just a branch of the Western materialistic culture and that they see America as a tyrant equal to the fallen Saddam’s Baath Party.

Most soldiers mistake the word insurgent to mean a person that is inserted. As if we are fighting men from other countries than Iraq. When, insurgent means rebel.

The common GI won’t investigate why the insurgent will sacrifice himself, because most soldiers would never do the same.

But somewhere in the back of the GI's mind he has a sense that what he is doing here is wrong. It gives him doubt and discourages his morale.

The lifers hold on to the lies of the system because the truth would destroy the core of their beliefs. The fact that the stars and bars is only an illusion for the real power behind the throne could ruin their psyche and crash their egos. They will never let go of their pride and use it as an excuse to cover their fear.

A war backed by our nation's cowards. What else would a preemptive strike be good for. Americans get so afraid they will kill in cold blood and thump their chests to claim it for a good cause.

History is written by the victors and might makes right. After all is said and done it will go down that way in the books. We will kill communists, drug dealers and terrorists. Next will be homosexuals and atheists. Then full circle back to Jews and Blacks. Fear and prejudice is destructive and we dominate using it. Every country folds to American policies afraid their homes will become the next Baghdad.

And, our leaders use media to force the United States people into anxiety using colored threat levels, video of

violence, and worse case scenarios presented as emergency updates. We even had Colin Powell lie to the world's most powerful council, the U.N., about Iraq's malicious intent with nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. **America intimidates the world while calling the insurgent freedom fighters terrorists.**



So Americans can't let go of their fear. Like it is a security blanket from a childhood memory. Just as most people can't relax their guard, in Nam lifers couldn't relate to the men that was turned on to marijuana.

To let your mind and body go and become open to the chaos of the world is impossible for a person who lives in constant fear of the unknown truth. Drug usage isn't as much of a problem here in Iraq amongst the soldiers, yet. However with a draft, the inactive reserve and more stop-loss it won't be long before more soldiers discover the potency of Arab hashish and opium based narcotics.

There will be a division between lifers and the heads again. It has already started with the stop-loss soldier obviously not wanting to be in service any longer. Many of them get court marshaled or chaptered out with dishonorables saving the military

from paying an already deserved Collage GI Bill and other veterans benefits.

As war here in the middle-east gets more violent the soldiers will become less afraid of punishment. Prison will become a more sane option than trying to take Fallujah for the fourth time.

Most the soldiers I have talked to have joined for selfish reasons. They wanted money for collage, travel the world, get out of a dead end, avoid going to prison, or had no direction in life.

The boys who joined up to defend the red white and blue are few and far between. I met some soldiers that were motivated by September 11th, but not many. It is a need in today's society to find alternate advantages to enlist, and when kids learn what they really signed themselves up for it is a rude awakening. Many soldiers are counting down to their last day in the military from the first few hours at basic training.

For all these reasons, whether the G.I.s are conscious of it or not, the military personal have a decreased motivation and intensity.

We fight for lies, are alienated by our chain of command and are only trying to ride out the clock until we can finish our contracts without losing what we have worked for or seeing the inside of a prison cell.

The Armed Forces will never have a loyal troop base until its goals change. If there was something worth fighting for, something the common man can gain, rather than just being underpaid mercenaries for some elitist, then the soldiers would have more encouragement to join in work hard.

I myself find it difficult to have discipline in an Army full of ass-kissing lying hypocrites who enforce a wicked US policy with a violent war I disagree with.

I serve in shame,
A soldier in Iraq
Name withheld

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Production Staff
Pham Binh
Thomas Barton

“You are supporting us troops out here the best way possible – trying to get us back!”

One of the friends I have in Iraq sent me this message last week. He lets us know that we are supporting him and the rest of the 82nd Airborne in a way that he can appreciate. Feel free to use this letter in your organizing if it will help you.

Peace,
Lou Plummer, Military Families Speak Out

hello Lou,

hope everything is alright there. it is x-mass eve. i am in baghdad right by the airport. so far this experience has been nothing like i expected. everything has changed so much since i was here last time. the highways that we run our supplies on, the bases, and the structures for us troops. it is creepy because the stuff that they are building all says that we are not going anywhere soon.

in ways it is sick because literally everything is about money. it is almost like a sell out war. anything like coffee cups, t-shirts, coats, bags and on and on all have OIF logos and shit on them. i am drinking out of the lid of my thermos cause i refuse to buy a coffee mug or anything else for that matter that says

OIF on it. i tell all the soldiers that are with me that this is not a fucking disney land or six flags it is a fucking warzone. people are losing life and limb every day and it is not a positive thing.

out in the open desert i feel half way safe convoying due to the fact that there are so many soft targets heading south. convoy after convoy of trucks full of oil with military escorts.

i have no faith in the descision making process of the major officers appointed above me. so far this camp i am at gets rocketed or mortared 3 or 4 times a week. my first night here we got mortared. about a week ago i woke up and 2 trailers behind me a rocket hit sometime during the night but did not explode. i took pictures of it just sticking out of the sandbags reinforcing our sleeping quarters. the same thing happened right outside where i work another rocket was found just sticking out of the ground. when i 1st got here it did not matter if it was incoming or out going i just hit the deck. now it is just like nothing at all.

at night we cant have any lights on outside because we will be a possible target. but on the other hand we are still expected to salute? mortars are hitting all around us but it is just business as usual. but now a defac [dining facility] gets hit 22 mile north of here and they decide to raise our threat level. and i put my life in the hands of the people who make these descisions?

i am sorry i did not mean to sound all negative. i wanted to make sure that my snake is healthy. has he been eating? also i take it that my car is ok? Well anyway i hope that you are having a merry x-mass. another thing i never made a copy of fahrenheit 9/11 if you could get me a copy of it i will appreciate it.

anyway i know that you are supporting us troops out here the best way posible. trying to get us back! a lot of soldiers are like sheep and dont see it that way. but know this one is really grateful for people like you.

happy brave new year.

**A soldier in Iraq
Name withheld**

Rumsfeld loses an army

Troops can forgive a lot; bad food, stupid commanders, idiots in political office, and still stay loyal to the powers that be.

Two things, however, are unforgivable:

The first is being flagrantly lied to about the mission at hand. And by now, everybody serving in Iraq knows about the lies. All the reasons for invading and occupying Iraq have turned out to be utter bullshit.

The second, the real deal breaker, is being told those by the man who runs the Pentagon that he doesn't give a shit if you live or die, and then seeing the President praise him as a great leader right after that, instead of throwing his worthless ass out the door.

In covering Rumsfeld's disastrous December appearance before the soldiers in Kuwait, the media missed the point, as usual, and buried the deal breaker.

It wasn't the crack about "going to war with the army you have" that sent the shock waves rolling.

It was when he told the soldier who demanded more armored vehicles: "If you think about it, you can have all the armor in the world on a tank and a tank can be blown



up. ... And you can have an up-armored Humvee and it can be blown up.”

When the histories of the rebellion of the U.S. armed forces against the Iraq war are written, that will go down as the tipping point that cost the Empire this army.

Rumsfeld's stupidity has given every anti-war soldier a new audience, new openings to organize, new respect, and protective cover. It's OK now to trash this worthless soldier-killing piece of shit, and a very short step from that to pointing out the insanity of the war he so ardently pursues.

When the enemy staggers and blunders, and lets the ugly truth slip out, it's time take the opening offered. Take it easy, but take it.

"George Bush, the soldiers that have died for this sham [...] are so much more deserving than that. You are not worth the dust off of their boots."

To George W. Bush:

When are you going to tell the truth to the people of the United States?

Why don't you tell them why you want to be in Iraq so bad?

I was there for six months and I did not see the first weapon of mass destruction. I did receive orders from the company commander to shoot children if they threw small rocks at us and that was when I figured out that the entire thing was way over the line.

Over 1200 soldiers have died in Iraq so that you can have a couple billion more dollars, that should make you feel very good about yourself.

The soldiers that have died for this sham that you have put over on the American people are so much more deserving than that. You are not worth the dust off of their boots.

If you truly had respect for the military and the people that serve then you would not continue to kill them in your war.

I joined the Army to protect my country and not to be a mercenary for a political despot.

If you wish to put me in prison because of my views then you should make room for about 75% of the military.

And while you are at make some room for yourself and about half of your administration. You are responsible for what happened at Abu Gharaib and you are shirking your responsibility.



The commander in chief is not above the UCMJ, as you would like to believe.

I want to fulfill my contract that says I joined the Army to protect my country against all enemies foreign and domestic, and as far as I am concerned you are a domestic enemy of the United States.

You care nothing for this country; you just care about the profits that are to be made from the oil in Iraq. That much is evident to me from the way the contracts were passed out to Halliburton and KBR. It must be nice to have the deck stacked in your favor by the president of the USA.

Since you are raising the debt ceiling of America so that we can pay the bills that you have run up, why don't you forgive the debts of every one in the armed forces since they are the ones that are making it possible for you to make billions from the oil from Iraq.

Sincerely,

**SGT Kevin M, Benderman
Ft. Stewart, GA**

"I will act as a soldier on the behalf of the majority, and not in the interest of the few who possess the greatest amount of wealth"

Based on the democratic ideals of America, that our nation's citizens have a voice in the exercise of power, I will act as a soldier on the behalf of the majority, and not in the interest of the few who possess the greatest amount of wealth.

In basic training recruits learn a system called the Army Values, in which they follow as a moral guideline. The Army Values are set up as an acronym that spells out leadership, with a few of the vowels missing.

As I see it our leadership has ignored these rules of principle and have betrayed the standards in which the American people have placed so much pride.

It is time that the United States Soldier regains his dignified role as a defender of freedom and democracy.

It is time to give the nation's army back to the people.

These are my Army Values:

(Loyalty)- The constant allegiance to the American people and the dedication to the liberties of our countries independence.

(Duty)- The obligation that binds a soldier to perform whatever task necessary to complete his responsibilities toward the goals of the American society.

(Respect)- Admiration and fair treatment towards all people and regard for their rights and feelings.

(Selfless Service)- Concern for others welfare before ones own and working for anothers benefit without reward. Personal sacrifice.

(Honor)- High standing of character. Exemplifying just action and honest practice.

(Integrity)- Sound and virtuous morality.

(Personal Courage)- Acting on your values despite the consequences or challenge.

I would like to see more soldiers exercise these values in the face of those opposed to a true American democracy.

Fight against greed and authority to do what is right by our nation.

Our leaders' goals are not to the benefit of the majority who work themselves into poverty only to provide tax money that pays for their own shackles.

We deplete the strength and welfare of our own countrymen fighting as mercenaries for the elite rich who gain off exploiting government contracts and manipulating the oil market.

Let's put worth in the American flag again. Let's win back our values.

Let's act as patriots.

**A soldier in Iraq
Name withheld**

Winning or losing in Iraq?

According to Bush, “freedom is on the march” in Iraq with elections scheduled for January 30th and generals are talking tough about “breaking the back of the insurgency.”

But the reality on the ground is far different than the happy talk in Washington and on TV.

The six months since the phony sovereignty handover on June 28th have been the deadliest since the war started, with 503 soldiers killed. Recently, 13 soldiers died in Mosul when a suicide bomber put on an Iraqi security uniform and walked in broad daylight into their tent, and 7 died in Baghdad when their Bradley fighting vehicle ran over an IED. These two incidents are the two biggest losses of American life yet, and the war isn’t even close to being over.

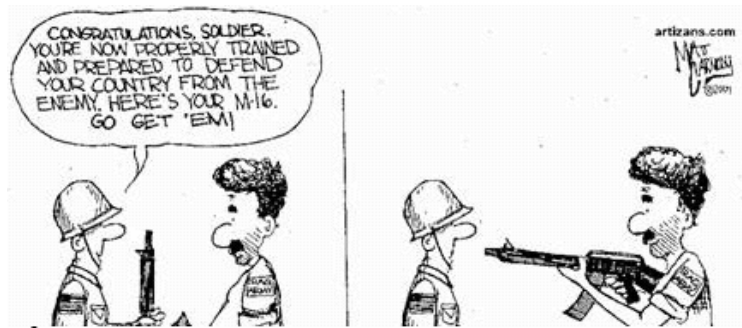
Iraqi intelligence service director General Mohamed Abdullah Shahwani said in an interview, “I think the resistance is bigger than the US military in Iraq. I think the resistance is more than 200,000 people.” His estimate is that there are 40,000 or so hard-core fighters, while the remaining 160,000 are part-time fighters and volunteers who provide rebels everything from intelligence and logistics to shelter.

Asked if the insurgents were winning, Shahwani answered: “I would say they aren’t losing.”

So what are the January 30th elections going to do about all this?

Not a damn thing. Iraq’s most powerful Shiite cleric, Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, has organized a united Shia slate and since Shiites are 60 percent of the population, he will emerge as the victor in the elections. Most of the Sunni-dominated political parties are either boycotting the election or calling for a delay because of the huge amount of attacks that the resistance will likely stage in central Iraq where it is strongest.

What Bush hopes to gain out of the election is an ally on the ground in Iraq that will use its power and influence to help crush the resistance. Once that is done, they can finally accomplish the goals of the war: establishing permanent military bases in the country and getting the oil



flowing. Chances of this happening are slim to none. Only 2 percent of the Iraqis questioned by the now-dissolved Coalition Provisional Authority said they viewed American troops as “liberators” (and only 3 percent said they support Saddam Hussein). Asked if the Americans should leave immediately, 41 per cent agreed, while 45 per cent said they preferred US forces to leave once a permanent Iraqi government was installed.

That means whoever wins the elections in Iraq won’t have popular support if they are seen as a U.S. stooge, and especially if they support a crackdown on the resistance.

The January 30th elections is just the latest attempt by the Bush administration to make the occupation of Iraq work. Plan A - invade, knock over a statue or two, and everything will go fine - failed. Plan B - bring in the United Nations - failed; no country wanted to send troops, and many countries have pulled their troops out. Plan C – hand over “sovereignty” and pretend like 140,000 American troops aren’t occupying the country starting June 28th - failed.

The latest addition, Plan D, is bound to fail too in the long run. **The question is, how many have to die on both sides, and how many billions have to be wasted until the troops come home for good and the Iraqis can run their country by themselves, for themselves? The answer depends on how many - inside the armed forces and out – decide enough is enough and begin organizing to end it once and for all.**

Why did Bush win?

That’s the question that everyone who hates Bush and the war has been asking themselves in the wake of the election. For the first time in his life, George W. Bush won a national election fair and square, getting 59 million votes against Kerry’s 55 million. And the Republicans picked up 3 Senate seats and 5 seats in the House of Representatives.

What happened? How could a President whose approval rating was 49% in most polls manage to win the popular vote

after bankrupting the government, lying to the country to get an unwinnable war, and handing out tax breaks to all of his rich pals along the way?

One view is that the country has moved to the right, and that a majority of working-class Americans in the “red states” or “middle America” are too conservative, apathetic, stupid, or some combination of the three to see that Bush has been one of the most terrible presidents in history. This view

doesn't square with the facts.

Fact #1: only 55 percent of those eligible actually voted, which means only a minority of the country supported Bush. Bush got slightly more than half of the half of the country that came out to the polls. Hardly a mandate.

Fact #2: Bush voters tended to have more years of schooling, indicating that Kerry's support tended to be working-class, while Bush's tended to be from the middle and upper classes. The income breakdown of the makes the class nature of the vote even more obvious: 36 percent of people making under \$15,000 voted for Bush, 55 percent of those making \$75,000-\$100,000 voted for him, and 63 percent of those making over \$200,000 voted for him. So much for the ignorant, right-wing workers for Bush theory.

Fact#3: Bush got 44 percent of the Latino vote and 23 percent of the gay/lesbian vote, according to CNN exit polls. Bush even got the votes of 38 percent of union members and 25 percent of voters who said "abortion should always be legal". What these numbers indicate is that John Kerry failed to mobilize the Democratic Party's base: women's organizations, left-wingers, progressives, labor unions, and minorities. And he failed miserably.

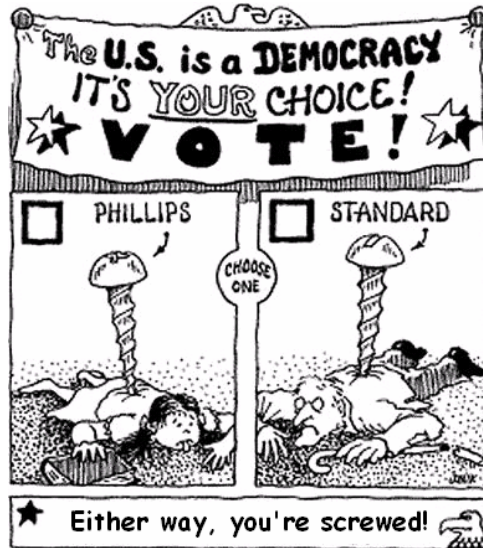
The Democratic Party's leaders figure that it can take the votes of blacks, women, gays, progressives, and unions for granted because who else are they going to vote for? The Republicans? So instead of working hard to win the votes of their base by promising universal health care, substantially raising the minimum wage, ending the Iraq war, expanding affirmative action programs and women's access to abortion, and fighting for gay marriage, Kerry's campaign wrapped itself in the flag, talked about "killing terrorists where ever they are," opposed gay marriage, criticized Bush for being "soft" on North Korea and Iran, and barely spoke of its extremely watered down support for affirmative action and abortion rights. In short, the Democratic Party took its base for granted and tried to appeal to Bush's base of evangelical Christians.

Given a choice between the right-wing original and the right-wing copy, voters chose the original (Bush) instead of the copy (Kerry). Aping the Republicans is not a viable strategy for the Democratic Party if it wants to win elections for the simple reason that right-wingers already have a party: the GOP.

But Kerry's terrible campaign was only part of the equation. Even more crucial to understanding what happened at the polls on November 2nd is the complete capitulation of the anti-war movement to the idea that we have to get behind the so-called "lesser evil" in the name of beating Bush at all costs.

There was not a single national anti-war demo for over a year prior to the election, despite the April uprising of Fallujah and al-Sadr and despite the Abu Ghraib torture scandal which could have cost Rumsfeld his job. Instead of organizing anti-war marches, the main anti-war organization in this country, United for Peace and Justice, sent busloads of activists to swing-states like Pennsylvania to campaign for Kerry despite the fact that he said that war spending should be increased "by whatever number of billions it takes to win."

The anti-war movement made electing John Kerry its most important priority instead of making bringing the troops home now its most important priority, and the result of going for the lesser evil was that we got the greater evil. Why? Because the national debate on Iraq was not dominated by two sides – pro-war and anti-war – but by the pro-war side alone. The only thing up for debate was how many troops should have been sent in the first place, and how many do we need to send now, rather than why the hell are we there in the first place! Because there was only one side in the national debate, the number of people who said that the U.S. made a mistake by going to war with Iraq **declined** from 54 percent in June/July to 44 percent at the end of October.



Defeating Bush at all costs by getting behind Kerry cost the anti-war movement its precious time, energy, and organizational skills, not to mention its anti-war principles. In practice, getting behind Kerry meant dropping any kind of criticism of him because to criticize him would be to detract from the goal of beating Bush "at all costs." The price we paid for this line of thinking is what those bought into it wanted most to avoid: four more years.

The first major protest against Bush is going to be Thursday, Jan 20th in Washington, D.C. at Bush's inauguration. While it will probably be smaller – due to enormous demoralization after the election – it will be an important first step in re-building the anti-war movement and strengthening it at the grassroots level. Everyone who can go should go, bring friends, and after the protest, join a local anti-war group or start one if there aren't any in your area.

For those in uniform in Iraq or elsewhere, talk to your buddies about the war, and we can get them Traveling Soldier and get them involved in organizing within the military. On Saturday, March 19 thousands of anti-war activists and military family members will be marching against the war in Fayetteville, N.C. right outside Ft. Bragg. If you're stationed there, or if you want to attend the demo while you're on your two week leave, email lplummer@nc.rr.com who is the local Military Families Speak Out organizer Lou Plummer and he can get you more details.

This is an open letter to the readers of Traveling Soldier from Specialist Barron's wife Kim Barron.



My name is Kimberly A. Barron.

I am writing this letter to convey my concern over the condition of my husbands, SPC Patrick G Barron, knees. He has been diagnosed with Chondromalacia Patellar, a degenerative condition affecting the cartilage beneath the kneecap. Since Pat has been mobilized, his pain has increased and his limp more pronounced.

My husband will be deploying to Iraq very shortly, and my concerns are for the health and well being of him in such a hostile environment.

I ask you this: How can anyone deploy a soldier to combat with such limitations as: no lifting or carrying more than forty pounds, no ruck, no walking/running on uneven surfaces, no 3 -5 second rushes under direct or indirect fire? These limitations have me deeply confused as he is 11B, an infantryman, one of the most physically demanding jobs in the army.

He has been on a T-3 profile under the L on the PULHES on the physical profile functional capacity guide. The first one was issued on the very first day he was mobilized and it had a duration of 60 days. Since that time he has been issued 4 more, all 30 day T-3 profiles. He has endured physical therapies, and numerous medications all to no avail. The problem has not gone away, and will not, as it is a degenerative condition.

On 06 DEC 2004, he suffered a fall at JRTC in FT Polk LA. The soldier who was standing nearby witnessed this. He is also an army medic, and he saw as well as heard the noise my husbands knee made when he slipped while climbing out of the back of a hummer.

The attending P.A. Capt. Eric Rice told my husband that a visit to the emergency room was not necessary and he dispensed Tylenol for pain. The pain my husband was in was excruciating but he felt he had no choice but to carry on, even in great pain.

Upon returning to Ft Hood some two weeks later, my husband then sought out the advice of an emergency room doctor at Darnell Military Hospital, once there he saw Capt. Dale A Spence P.A. who recommended an MRI as soon as possible and an Ortho consult as well, he then issued Patrick another 30 day T-3 pending aforementioned Consultation and test.

He said that he was worried that Patrick may have torn a ligament because his knees felt "looser" than it should be. The only problem with this is that he has been denied an MRI time and time again.

When he came home for the holidays, I noticed an increased limp as well as obvious pain. I insisted on a trip to our hospital, Uvalde Memorial Hospital, he agreed and was seen by Dr Lewis Christian who concurred with Capt Spence's diagnosis that he needed both an Ortho Consult and a MRI. He gave Patrick a immobilization brace and crutches as well as a prescription for Vicoden.

When Pat returned to Ft Hood after the holidays he was seen again, this time by SRP Capt Jeff H Wright D.O. Captain Wright examined Patrick's knees and told him that all previous diagnosis were wrong, and he didn't have Chondromalacia Patellar, he had something else and it would be cured in 30 days with knees braces, however the braces would not be available until after Patrick was out of the country.

He asked for a MRI and showed paperwork that said that it was needed, he was denied. My question is, who is this man that can change the diagnosis of 5 previous doctors without benefit of X-rays or MRI?

It certainly sounds very wrong to me.

Something must be done for Patrick, and soldiers like him that are at the mercy of the Army's whims.

If all it takes is for the diagnosis of one man to wipe out the previous diagnosis of several other doctors, civilian as well as military then why do we have these doctors to begin with? It seems to me that we really only need this one!

Something does not sound right to me, is the army so hard up for numbers that they will say whatever is necessary to send them into combat?

I would like to remind the people who read our articles that if they would like to contact us, you can email us at ArchAngel1BL@aol.com, ArchAngel1BL@hotmail.com , and ArchAngel2KB@hotmail.com

Words from the front-lines

“The reality right now is that the most dangerous opinion in the world is the opinion of a U.S. serviceman.” – **Lance Corporal Devin Kelly, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, Iskandariyah, Iraq.**

“We’re basically proving out that the government is wrong. We’re catching them in a lie.” – **Lance Corporal Alexander Jones, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, Iskandariyah, Iraq.**

“We don’t give a crap. What are they going to do, send us to Iraq?” – **Corporal Brandon Autin, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, Iskandariyah, Iraq, commenting on the possibility that he might be punished for telling reporters how he felt about the war.**

“If we did half the shit back home we’ve done here, we’d be in prison ... Where the fuck did Jesus say it’s OK to kill people for your government? Any priest who tells me that has got no credibility.” – **Anonymous Marine Sergeant, after a conversation with his chaplain, Baquba, Iraq.**

“What does the American public think happens when they tell us to assault a city? Marines don’t shoot rainbows out of our asses. We fucking kill people.” – **Anonymous Marine, commenting on the shooting of a wounded man in a Fallujah mosque.**

“When I went [to Iraq] to begin with, there was a mission. ...I don’t trust the people sending me over there. I have to stay focused, give it 100 percent. I just don’t agree with it. The war cannot be won. It won’t be won, not now, not ever. We’re getting maimed for bullshit.” – **Army Sgt. Fred Bemis**

“Given the choice, I would never have wanted to fire a gun. But it didn’t work out that way. I’d like a thousand boring missions rather than one interesting one.” – **Corporal Chris Merrell, Fallujah, Iraq.**

“We think Bush is an asshole for starting a war over nothing, trying to get money and oil. That’s what Paul thought. I think they should just get the boys out of there now. If not we’re going to lose a lot more than this.” – **Craig Lowe, commenting on the death of his friend. Both served in the Scottish Black Watch regiment.**

“If Tony Blair is so keen to be here, he should send his son over. To be honest I can’t understand what it is we are supposed to be doing here. Iraqis don’t want to kill each other, they only want to kill us.” – **Trooper Tim Clews, Queen’s Dragoon Guards, Camp Dogwood, Iraq.**



“Every day you read articles in the states when it’s like ‘Oh, it’s getting better and better.’ But when you’re here, you know it’s worse every day.” – **Lance Corporal Jonathan Snyder, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, Iskandariyah, Iraq.**

“How do I put this? First of all, this is a whole different thing. We’re supposed to be looking for al Qaeda. They’re the ones who are supposedly responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks. This has no connection at all to Sept. 11 because this war started just by telling us about all the nuclear warheads over here.” – **Lance Corporal Carlos Perez, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, Iskandariyah, Iraq.**

“This is Vietnam. I don’t even know why we’re over here fighting. We’re fighting for survival. The Iraqis don’t want us here. If they wanted us here, they’d help us. They’re certainly not helping us in this city.” – **Corporal Daniel Planalp, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, Ramadi, Iraq.**

“The funny thing that we laugh at sometimes is that the terrorists and us want the same thing. We don’t want to be here and they don’t want us here.” – **Lance Corporal Jamie Sutton, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, Ramadi, Iraq.**

“The only question for us is how many of us have gotta die before we get to go home.” – **Anonymous GI, 4th Infantry Division, Baquba, Iraq.**