# ***GI SPECIAL 3A24:***

# "What A Fucking Farce"

**From:** Soldier X, Iraq
**To:** GI Special
**Sent:** January 22

**I am still shocked to see none of the superior NCOs or Officers in the Abu Ghriab issue being brought to justice. As most soldiers know, everything in the military is so micro managed that it becomes frustrating to get any work done without some jackass over your shoulder telling you what you are doing wrong. There are far more people with dirty hands in the Abu Ghriab prison abuse.**

**The barricades are going up all over Baqubah and the surrounding areas. We are not allowed to get closer then 400 meters from any polling station?**

**What a fucking farce. Our crew serve weapons (50 cals, Mark-19s, and 240 bravos) all have effective ranges far beyond 1000 meters. So, what is the point? We are going to roll in and shoot up the place the first moment of contact anyways.**

**I asked a group of Iraqi's if they were going to vote and they looked at me like I was from another planet. And I guess, I almost am.**

**One told "We risk our lives every day when we enter your camps to earn money for our families. The elections are not real. Why would I risk my life for nothing?"**

**I didn't have a good answer for him, but a soldier with me said "This is your chance to effect the future. You can change the way your children are governed." The Iraqi responded "How can I decide weather my child dies by the sword or by the gun?"**

**I wake up every morning before dawn to mortar attacks, by light there are new craters. We are finding the decapitated heads of Iraqi Officials on the streets. *This election is going to be the final obstacle before getting out of this dismal deployment.* [Hopefully so. But do not underestimate the enemy. Washington may have other plans about that. T]**

**Soldier X**

**PS It is hard to see a nineteen year old kid lose his life over a mistake, and then have an attempt to cover it up. My little brother is twenty-one, anyone killed here younger then him is more than just a tragedy, it is a crime.**

**Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.**

# IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

# U.S. Soldier Killed In Mosul

23-01-2005 Aljazeera.Net

**A US soldier has been killed in a firefight in the northern city of Mosul, a US army officer said.**

"One soldier was killed in a firefight. He was shot by insurgents," said Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Kurilla on Sunday.

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# U.S. Military Convoy Attacked, Retreats To Mosul

January 23, 2005 The Associated Press, MOSUL, Iraq

A U-S military convoy has come under attack in northern Iraq.

**Witnesses say guerrillas ambushed the convoy with small arms fire, and set on fire a Turkish fuel tanker that was traveling with the convoy.** The driver was killed.

**Residents say the U-S vehicles then turned back toward Mosul.**

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# Mosul: The Enemy, He Said, Is Everywhere; “We Don't Have Much Glowing Success With Combating Insurgencies."

Jan. 23, 2005 BY TOM LASSETER, MOSUL, Iraq - (KRT)

**The bodies turn up at night. Pulled from the trunks of cars, throats slit and dropped off in a cemetery. Or shot in the back of the head and dumped in the middle of the road.**

**There's no official tally, but interviews with U.S. Army officers and soldiers in Mosul indicate that hundreds of the corpses - calling cards of the insurgency - have turned up during the past several months.**

**U.S. troops have proved unable to stop it.**

The threat has moved inside military bases in Mosul, places usually considered sanctuaries against the guerrillas. A suicide bomber killed 14 U.S. soldiers last month in a blast at the mess hall at Forward Operating Base Marez.

Lt. Col. Todd McCaffrey sees the mess hall every day, looming behind concrete walls down the road from his office. He remembers stepping past the door, the bright flash and then the screams and the blood.

**Now, McCaffrey often wonders how history will judge the U.S. mission in Iraq.**

**"There's a sense of `I'm not going to quit now because we've invested American blood,'" said McCaffrey, whose 25th Infantry Division battalion patrols an area on the edge of Mosul.**

**But, he added, "You look at our history: We don't have much glowing success with combating insurgencies." [Watch out. They don’t like Lt. Col.s who can think and see what’s going around, and, above all, ask real questions.]**

At road checkpoints inside Marez, even soldiers in uniform driving U.S. Army Humvees are asked to show identification.

**Saluting is done rarely, if at all - it would differentiate soldiers of higher rank and make them targets for attack. One of the first things visitors to the local airfield see is a sign forbidding soldiers from wearing caps that would reveal rank.**

"This is a different kind of war. At West Point they taught us about history, like Napoleon or World War II. But it's not even like Vietnam. There, when you were in North Vietnam, you knew you were in enemy territory," said Capt. Mickey Traugutt, 25, of Lakewood, Wash. "Here, it's decentralized." **[Obviously he had some pretty stupid teachers. In South Vietnam, you didn't know shit, and every inch was "enemy territory," just like Iraq.]**

**The enemy, he said, is everywhere.**

**Maj. Tim Vidra, a public affairs officer with the 25th Infantry Division, said it's gotten to the point where some vendors will no longer deliver supplies to troops.**

**For example, he said, he had a shipment of communications equipment scheduled to come in from the town of Irbil, but then one of the contractors' men was followed in Mosul and told by insurgents that they'd kill him if he brought shipments to the Americans or anyone associated with them.**

**"He e-mailed me and said, `I'm sorry. I've been working with (aid groups) and the coalition since the war began, but the security situation is so bad now that I can't leave Irbil,'" said Vidra, 34, of Denver. It wasn't an isolated incident, he said. [The noose is closing.]**

"We've had interpreters who've been killed, interpreters whose families have been tortured," he said. "One interpreter found two brothers and a cousin stuffed in a well."

Standing in a graveyard on the northwest corner of Mosul recently, McCaffrey looked around at the tombstones. Soldiers have found hundreds of dead bodies dumped at the site during the past several months, he said.

One of McCaffrey's company commanders, Capt. Steve Szilvassy, keeps a map of the bodies his men has found. It's pockmarked with small red dots and notations such as "Bx1" and "Bx2" for the number of corpses at a particular spot.

Pointing to one of the spots recently, Szilvassy, a 33-year-old from West Paterson, N.J., said, "We stumbled here 10 minutes after the two guys were pulled out of a car and shot in the back of the head, shot throughout the body. They cut one of the guy's throats."

He continued: "Kids watched the whole thing and told us about it."

In the graveyard, McCaffrey walked over with his translator to speak with an Iraqi woman whose family lives as squatters in a nearby ramshackle house.

***The woman, who wouldn't give her name, told McCaffrey that her children are more scared of his soldiers than of insurgents.***

"We hope things will get better," he said. "Allah Karim," she responded: God is generous.

**A few moments later, there was a low roar. Down the road, a thick column of smoke with a ring on top shot up in the sky. A car bomb targeting a U.S. convoy had blown up prematurely.**

**McCaffrey shook his head.**

**"It's tough to measure," he said. "It's tough to know if you're having success out here." [No, it's not. Not if you think about what your own interpreter just said.]**


**NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT THE NEW TRAVELING SOLDIER**

**Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. http://www.traveling-soldier.org/ And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)**


# "So Many People Getting Wounded They Aren't Writing Them All Up"

January 22, 2005 Times Leader, Princeton, Kentucky

Caldwell County native Seth Pool was wounded during a fire fight in Fallujah, Iraq, Tuesday.

"He's okay," said P'Pool's father Richard P'Pool on Thursday.

**While Pool's injuries entitle him to a Purple Heart, he told his father he didn't know if that recognition would be bestowed upon him.**

***"There are so many people getting wounded over there, Seth said they aren't writing them all up," said Richard.***

**Seth told his father it was "hotter" in the next area in which his unit was moving.**

**“He wasn’t talking about the temperature, he was talking about the fighting,” said Richard. “I said ‘Son, you just got shot yesterday, how much hotter can it get.’”**

Through it all, Seth has kept his sense of humor, according to his dad.

“He was happy to get a new pair of ‘cami’s’ out of the deal. He bled enough they had to give him a new pair,” said Richard.

“It doesn’t matter if you believe in this war or not, you need to support our troops.”

**Richard said he does not know when his son will be coming home.**

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## TROOP NEWS

# “Some People Have Forgotten That We Have Families Back Home”

Letters To The Editor
Army Times
1.24.05

**I am an infantryman, and I am deployed to Iraq. I have a wife and two kids, whom I miss very much. A few months ago, my wife was in a car accident and now has limited use of the left side of her body.**

I would like nothing more than to go home and spend time with my family. But I’m in the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division. I have been deployed since January 2004, and my unit has been extended.

I hope to be home sometime in mid-March, but I tell my friends and family only that I will be home in time for Christmas 2005.

**My biggest complaint, though, is that while I am supposed to be here for a total of 15 months or more, I was told recently that another unit that has about eight months over here is about to go home. How is it possible that a brigade that has been here since January is extended and one that has been here only since April or May is sent home?**

**When they got here, I was going home on leave to see my newborn baby girl, 2-year-old son and wife. Now I am staying here, and they are going home.**

**I think some people have forgotten that we have families back home that we love and miss.**

**So I just wanted to make sure that everyone got to know a little about just one soldier who has to stay here to stabilize Iraq for the elections.**

Spc. Walter E. Beverly IV

Fort Hood, Texas

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# Our Meeting With Rummy...An Essay

**From:** Cincy Sheehan
**To:** GI Special
**Sent:** Sunday, January 23, 2005 10:01 PM

**This is an essay about the result of our meeting request for rummy:**

# The Dangerous Gold Star Families

**Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld continues to astound us Gold Star Families with his heartlessness, callousness and disrespect in the faces of our children who are being killed in the mindless invasion and occupation of Iraq.**

I am one of the founding members of a group called **Gold Star Families for Peace.**

Some of us families who have lost loved ones in this illegal and immoral war in Iraq have organized to use our collective voices to bring the tragedy of war to the fore front of America's hearts and souls like it so tragically is in ours.

We families are amazed that so few of our fellow citizens are touched by the horrors of the invasion and occupation of a sovereign country. It seems to us like the only people who are asked to sacrifice anything for the war effort are our brave young men and women fighting this so-called war and their families. **There are some families in our nation like us, that have paid the ultimate price for the lies and betrayals of this current administration.**

**I, and some other Gold Star Families, have been writing and calling the Department of Defense for over three weeks.**

**We were all meeting in DC to protest the inauguration and we thought it would be a good time to meet with Donald Rumsfeld. We have many questions to ask him about our loved ones' deaths and we deserve to have some answers. I think it is our right as Americans and grieving families to have these answers.**

**For example, why were the children of this country sent to fight a war without the proper training, equipment or armor? Why were our children sent to fight a war**

**that had no basis in reality? Why are American children still over there fighting a war, and dying in a war, when all the reasons for the war have been proven false? When is this administration going to bring the rest of our children home before it's too late for their families?**

If we were granted an audience with him, we didn't really expect Mr. Rumsfeld to be truthful with us or even polite to us considering his past history of being so sarcastically untruthful and blatantly rude.

**The real reason I wanted to meet with Rumsfeld was so he could see the face of my son, Spc Casey Sheehan, who was killed in Sadr City on 04/04/04. I wanted him to look *me* in the face and see my red swollen eyes and to see all the lines that grief has etched. I wanted him to see the unbearable pain his ignorance and arrogance has caused me and my family. I wanted him to know that his actions have terrible consequences.**

**Our letters, phone calls, faxes, and e-mails to the Pentagon were to no avail: we received no response. So in conjunction with Military Families Speak Out (MFSO) we decided to go to the Pentagon and try and meet with someone, anyone. We were met at the parking lot by a couple of dozen of police officers blocking our way. We were told that we weren't allowed to go into the Pentagon because we didn't go through the proper protocol to request a meeting!!**

I find it so ironic that with all the tight security for the events in DC this week that enough time and energy was mustered to stop families in mourning so forcefully at the Pentagon.

**I also find it ironic that if I were a wealthy Republican who had donated large sums of money for the "re"-election of the President, I could have had access to all the big wigs at the lavish parties…but I, whose son paid the ultimate price of his precious life to this country, can't even get within a half of a mile from the man who sent him to die.**

We **Gold Star Families for Peace** are not giving up the fight to hold someone in this administration accountable for the quagmire in Iraq and the more important struggle to bring the rest of our children home from this devastating occupation **now**.

**It takes most of our energy just to get out of our beds in the morning and mourn our horrific losses.**

**We need all Americans to wake up and start lobbying their elected officials for an end to this immorality in Iraq and to join our voices in protest.**

Cindy Sheehan
Gold Star Families for Peace: www.GSFP.org

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# Proposal To Lengthen Tours For Reservists Dead On Arrival

January 24, 2005 By Jane McHugh, Army Times staff writer

Calls for retooling policies to allow longer and more frequent reserve mobilizations are meeting some resistance in Congress — and in the ranks.

**The co-chairmen of the Senate National Guard Caucus, Sens. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., and Kit Bond, R-Mo., announced their opposition.**

**"Unacceptable," Leahy and Bond said in a joint news release Jan. 12. "As a matter of national policy and as a matter of keeping faith with the men and women of our National Guard and Reserves, we find it unacceptable for the Army to revoke the limitation on the length of Guard and Reserve mobilizations."**

The adjutant general of the Vermont National Guard also condemned the proposal, saying it would hurt recruitment and effectively change the Guard from a part-time to a full-time force.

**"I think this would create a situation that we'd want to avoid, and that's a situation where the Guard and Guard members could be used indefinitely," said Maj. Gen. Martha Rainville, who serves on the Reserve Forces Policy Board.** The board advises the secretary of defense.

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# Severely Disabled Vets Still Get Fucked Over By The Army

January 24, 2005 By Gina Cavallaro, Army Times staff writer

Dozens of organizations sprang up to help returning service members and their families after the U.S.-led war on terrorism was launched in October 2001. One of the newest, the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes, aims to be all-encompassing, to help severely disabled vets find the resources they need to jump-start their lives or be the vehicle to give them what they need directly.

The Mix and Adams families were two of four couples at the Disney conference who were awarded new homes built to meet their needs. The homes were awarded through the coalition's Homes for Wheelchair-Bound Heroes, a program in which the coalition raises $200,000 toward a home and then taps into a $50,000 grant available through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The recipient is responsible for a $50,000 mortgage.

**“I still can’t believe it,” Katie Adams said at the prospect that she and Kenny soon will be living in their own home.**

**For the Mixes, it can’t come a day too soon. Mix will be medically discharged at the end of February, but his disability pay doesn’t kick in until May 1.**

# Sgt. Chuck Bartles: Personally Lied To And Betrayed By George W. Bush, Domestic Enemy Of The United States

January 24, 2005 By David Wood, Newhouse News Service

**Army Reserve Sgt. Chuck Bartles took heart when President Bush pinned a Purple Heart to his chest, lauding him for courage and determination.**

**Bartles, then struggling to recover from having his right arm blown off in Iraq, felt even better when Bush walked out of the hospital ward and made a stirring speech. Just because a service member has lost a leg or an arm in combat, Bush said, doesn’t mean he’s useless.**

**“People are no longer forced out of the military,” he declared to applause. “Today, if wounded service members want to remain in uniform and can do the job, the military tries to help them stay.”**

**But that’s not always true.**

Swiveling behind a machine gun atop a Humvee, Bartles was wounded in October 2003 by a roadside bomb blast that killed a fellow soldier. **A civil affairs specialist with a master’s degree, fluency in Russian and a Bronze Star for heroism in battle, he’s the kind of soldier the Army probably would want to keep.**

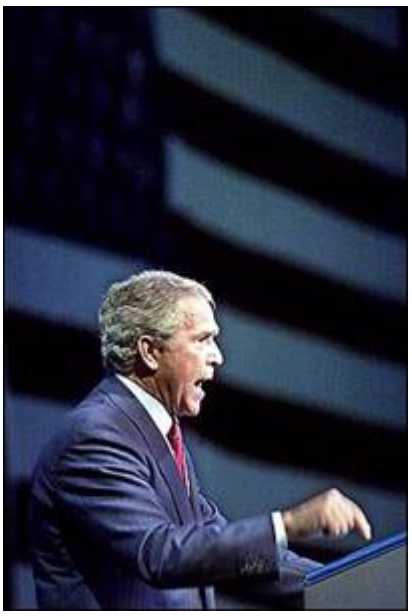
**He sweated for months to qualify for duty. This summer, his Army doctors finally certified him fit. His commander wanted him back. It seemed a sure thing.**

**Jubilant, Bartles re-enlisted. But the next day, he got a form letter from the Army. “Your medical condition prevents satisfactory performance of duty,” it read. The final verdict: “permanent disability.”**

**Bartles, 26, is fighting that judgment — in a solitary struggle against pain, frustration and complex regulations. “Nobody can give you a straight answer,” he said. “It’s kind of put me on edge.”**

His reserve unit, the 418th Civil Affairs Battalion of Belton, Mo., returns to Iraq in April. “I am going with them, no doubt about that,” Bartles vows in a deep South Dakota growl.

# LIAR
# TRAITOR
# SOLDIER-HATING PIECE OF SHIT



(AFP/File/Tim Sloan)

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# British TA Soldier Quits Over War In Iraq; Says 20 To 25% Of Troops “Don’t Believe In It”

20 January 2005 By Terri Judd, The Independent (UK) & January 19, 2005 Ed Vulliamy and Richard Norton-Taylor, The Guardian & BBC

A Territorial Army soldier announced his resignation publicly yesterday to highlight discontent about Iraq in the ranks.

**Lance Corporal George Solomou believes as many as half of TA soldiers do not agree with, or are uncomfortable about, the conflict.** He said he would rather face imprisonment than be forced to serve in a war he described as "bankrupt, unjust and

immoral". A quarter of the Army is TA soldiers and 11,000 have served in Iraq since February 2003, making up a sixth of the force.

**L/Cpl Solomou, 38, who is in the Royal Army Medical Corps attached to the London Irish Rifles, made his statement at a Military Families Against the War conference.**

**He said many of his comrades felt uneasy. "The majority resign in the traditional way," he said. "They go quietly, saying they have got family problems. I want to act as a beacon, a rallying point for other soldiers. We don't have to go quietly. This war is wrong. I call upon other soldiers to conscientiously object to this war."**

**The emergency services worker, who has been what is often referred to as a weekend warrior for five years, says as many as a quarter of his comrades disagree with the conflict. "Twenty to 25 per cent are on the line. They don't believe in it but they are not going to do anything about it. They just hope they don't get called up."**

He said he joined the TA for the experience, discipline and adventurous life. Of joint British and Cypriot nationality, he had already done six months' national service in his parents' home country. "If it was a moral war, I would go, but it is not," he said. "We have to know what we do is right so we can face our grandchildren, our spouses, our partners, look them in the eye and said, 'What I did was morally just'. I believe my job, as a medic, is to look after my mates after they get injured. In a way, I am betraying them because I am not going to be with them the next time. But the bigger picture is, if we stop soldiers going to war, we will save people that way."

The London Irish Rifles has already served in Iraq. L/Cpl Solomou's tour of duty was deferred last May because he was studying at university. **He said: "If they call me up then I will take my papers and burn them outside Downing Street. I will go to prison rather than go to war in Iraq."**

**He said he was among six TA soldiers who took part in the anti-war march in London.**

"I have always wanted to be a soldier and I still want to be a soldier," he added. "But I want to be used in the correct manner. **We are not just pieces of flesh to be moved about on a chessboard."**

**Mr Solomou was joined by Rose Gentle, whose son, Gordon, was killed in Iraq. She told the press conference: "This was a war for oil and greed.**

**"It is time that the boys came home and I do not want any other family to have to go through what we are going through."**

**Gordon Gentle died in a roadside bomb attack last June while serving with the Royal Highland Fusiliers.**

**When asked about photographs depicting the alleged abuse of Iraqi prisoners by British soldiers, shown to a court martial on Tuesday, she said: "It will make it worse, it is going to make the soldiers even more of a target."**

**MORE:**

# Statement By George Solomou: "So Many Solders Are Against This War"

Mr Solomou, with Rose Gentle, urged others to join him in condemning the Iraq conflict (BBC)

21 January 2005, Independent (UK)

Earlier this week, I came out publicly against the war in Iraq.

I'm not the only member of the Labour Party to be opposed to our military participation in this American-led adventure, nor am I the only soldier.

**In fact, there is a growing vocal minority within the Territorial Army that is against the war. Nonetheless I am the first one to make it clear, in public, that if called to serve in Iraq, I will refuse.**

**I wanted to leave the TA in the public way I have because, although so many solders are against this war, they don't have a rallying point. There has to be someone who is the first to go. After that, there will be another and another and another. They're out there, the soldiers who want to make plain their refusal to part of this illegal war - I know, I've talked to them.**

Many people, even those who agree with my views on the war, will say that it is not the place of soldiers to decide which wars they will fight; that decision must be taken by their senior officers, and ultimately by the government of the day. But you should only obey orders that are morally right. The WMD claims were untrue, and so many other lies were told in the pursuit of this war. **Every individual soldier also has the moral right to decide whether he will put his life on the line. After all, it is his flesh and blood that gets wounded; that gives him the right to an opinion.**

I'm proud to be part of the military family that is against the war.

**There will be more soldiers coming out soon, and I'll be proud to stand next to them on 19 March at the anti-war demo in London. We can help stop this illegal and immoral war, and that is our duty now.**

**MORE:**

# More British Soldiers Won't Go

From: Ewa Jasiewicz
To: GI Special
Sent: January 19, 2005 12:44 PM
Subject: Today's Press Conference

Most of the mainstream media have covered it all so I wont repeat what's already been said, however, I will say this.

**Both George and Rose and also Andrew Bergin of STWC said repeatedly that they knew other soldiers who were going to refuse if called up. Andrew Bergin said that a soldier had approached them (MFAW) and said that he didn't want to go to Iraq and he was advised to tell his commanding officer, which he duly did.**

When it came around top the draft, this particular soldier was passed over. He didn't get called up.

**Andrew Bergin said if people were under the impression that there wouldn't be any more refusals then they were 'totally crazy' as the MFAW knew of at least 10 soldiers prepared to follow George's lead.**

George stated that he could save more lives by coming out against the war and stated resolutely that, 'There are others like me and they will come forward'.

**When asked why they hadn't so far, he responded 'You have to understand that there's a culture of suggestion and intimidation from high ranking officers'.**

**Rose Gentle cited fear of punishment against serving soldiers as being a factor in keeping families back from joining the Military Families Against War campaign in the UK but still called on them to fight the fair and join them.**

**A journalist from Al Hayat asked the most probing and difficult questions for George. First he asked whether George felt the Iraqi people had a right to resist the occupation with armed struggle and did he support the armed resistance in that right?**

**George replied that every country had a right to self-determination and repeated this statement.**

He was also asked whether he felt that Blair's policies were nurturing a culture of racism in the army. He replied that the London TA branch was totally mixed and multicultural but said 'To kill your enemy, you have to hate your enemy'.

**Afterwards I spoke to Rose and she said that she and others in the campaign were going around schools in Scotland and showing Dear Mrs Blair and speaking out against military recruiters and it was all going very very well.**

**MORE:**

# Rose Gentle
# Gordon Gentle

**[Gordon Gentle, son of Rose Gentle, was sent by the British government to fight in Iraq. He was killed there. Today, she wages a war of her own, against those who sent him, and for bringing all the troops home now.]**

**From:** Rose Gentle
**To:** GI Special
**Sent:** Sunday, January 23, 2005 6:33 PM
**Subject:** Re: GI Special 3A23: Come To Fayetteville

to those i love and those who love me,

when i am gone release me let me go.

i have so many things to see and do.

you mustn't tie yourself to me with tears

be happy that we had so many years ,

i gave my love , you can only guess,

how much gave me in happiness,

i thank you for the love you each have shown,

but now its time i travelled alone.

so grieve a while for me, if grieve you must'

then let your grief be comforted by trust.

its only for a while we must part.

so bless the memories within your hart.

i wont be far away ,for life goes on,

so if you need me. call and i will come.

though you cant see or touch me, I'll be near,

and if you listen with your heart you'll hear,

all of my love around you ,soft and clear.

and then when you come this way alone ,

I'll greet you with a smile and say

wellcome home.

to us all and those we love

rose gentle [gordon gentle]

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# Veterans Want Troops To Come Home

01/21/05 By J.J. Andrews, News Editor, Sun Coast Media Group Inc

**Venice resident Steve Brown remembers patrolling Vietnam waters as part of the U.S. CGC Androscoggin in 1967-68.**

As a member of the U.S. Coast Guard, Brown believed in his mission during his 11-month tour of duty.

**And then some time after the Tet Offensive in 1968, Brown believes the battles went from being waged for military goals to political goals. The local legal**

**assistant sees much of the same going on now in Iraq, which is why he joined Florida Veterans for Common Sense.**

"We support our troops, but we think the reasons we went there were misleading to the public," Brown said. **"Things that were previously being stated as the case are not the case. And these poor kids ... I'd hate to see another thing like Vietnam that drug on and drug on as a political thing rather than what it was meant for."**

**In step with President George Bush's inauguration Thursday, Florida Veterans for Common Sense came out stating troops in Iraq should be brought home.**

More than 1,350 troops have died, thousands more have been wounded and they accuse the administration of misleading the public and militaries.

Sarasota resident Gene Jones is the spokesperson for the Manatee and Sarasota county area of Florida Veterans for Common Sense. A veteran of the U.S. Air Force from 1965 to 1969, the Florida chapter got started during election season when a branch of Veterans of Foreign Wars supported the reelection of U.S. Rep. Katherine Harris.

As a nonprofit, VFW cannot endorse candidates, but this subdivision of VFW made it look that way, according to Jones.

**"This (political action committee) out of Washington, D.C., backed Katherine Harris," Jones said. "We thought, who are these people? We're veterans and they're not speaking for us."**

**"We've come to this problem (in Iraq) with experience," Jones said. "We have a lot of combat veterans, former POWs. So, (other veterans) may not agree with us, but they certainly have to respect us."**

Florida Veterans for Common Sense is not part of the national group by the same name. Jones said this is a coincidence, but the two groups are working to merge together. The national group formed in 2002, according to its Web site.

Goals for both groups are to bring current troops home, improve the image of America overseas and remain true to national ideals.

"International respect for America is at an all-time low due to the policies of this administration," according to its statement. "In Iraq, the best estimates are that we have killed as many as 100,000 civilians. We have used collective punishment. We have destroyed Fallujah. We have tortured prisoners. Such behavior is contrary to American ideals and morality."

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# Iraq War Veteran Kidnaps And Kills Wal Mart Clerk; “Something Happened To My Son”

**“Something happened to my son,” the suspect’s mother, Pat Williams, told Dallas television station KDFW, saying he had trouble adjusting to civilian life after serving in Iraq. “Some of the things that he endured I may never know. But it changed who he is and for that I’m sorry.”**

Jan. 23, 2005 Associated Press, MSNBC

TYLER, Texas - The surveillance camera captured the crime in chilling detail: A college student punches out after her night shift as a clerk at a Texas Wal-Mart and walks toward her truck in the parking lot. Suddenly she is attacked by a shadowy figure in a long, dark coat and kidnapped.

On Friday, 19-year-old Megan Leann Holden was found shot to death in a ditch near Stanton in West Texas, about 380 miles west of Tyler, where she had been abducted.

**Police said she was killed at the hands of a man who went on a multistate crime spree before he turned up Friday at an Arizona hospital with a gunshot wound.**

The suspect, Johnny Lee Williams, 24, was being held on a $1 million bond on an aggravated kidnapping charge from Texas, authorities said, adding that Williams was driving the woman’s pickup truck, which was parked outside the hospital.

**Police said Williams, a preacher’s son who was discharged last year after four years as a Marine, was arrested last month in Tyler on a cocaine possession charge. He was released the same day on $2,000 bond.**

The tape later shows Holden getting into her truck just before midnight and the man “running up behind her and either hitting her or pushing her,” Martin said. “There’s no doubt this was a total stranger abduction,” Tyler Police Chief Gary Swindle said.

Swindle provided little detail about the killing, but said Holden died of a gunshot wound, adding: “We have every indication that she was shot at the location where her body was found.”

Authorities said Williams kept heading west as he continued his crime spree, attempting a robbery at an Arizona RV park, but was foiled by a store worker who fired the shot that landed Williams in the Arizona hospital where he was treated and then taken into custody.

Because Holden was kidnapped in Tyler, Smith County District Attorney Matt Bingham said he would seek capital murder charges.

Police said Williams also was involved in an armed robbery at a convenience store in Texas on Thursday.

**“Something happened to my son,” the suspect’s mother, Pat Williams, told Dallas television station KDFW, saying he had trouble adjusting to civilian life after serving in Iraq. “Some of the things that he endured I may never know. But it changed who he is and for that I’m sorry.”**

“Megan was just one of those students who you instantly liked,” Sullivan told The Dallas Morning News in Saturday’s edition. “Everyone is so upset because it was such a senseless tragedy. Why did this have to happen to her?”

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# IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

## Four Allawi Troops Killed

January 24, 2005 AFP

**One insurgent and three Iraqi soldiers were killed in a firefight in Baiji.**

**An Iraqi soldier was killed by guerillas as he entered his home in Tuz Khurmatu, north of Tikrit, while three other soldiers were wounded in a firefight near Ad-Dawr**

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## Polling Stations Blown Up

BAGHDAD (AP) 1/23/2005 & 1.24.05 AFP

**On Sunday, armed men blew up a designated polling station near Hillah south of Baghdad, Iraqi police Capt. Hatif Hadi said.** No injuries were reported. Insurgents have targeted several schools and other buildings to be used as voting sites with gunfire and rockets in recent days.

**Attackers blew up a school used as a voting centre in the town of Albu Alwan.** No one was inside when the attackers levelled the building.

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## Guerrillas Capture, Blow Up Police Station In Heet

BAGHDAD, Jan 23 (KUNA)

**Gunmen dawn on Sunday attacked the police directorate building in the town of Heet, 210 kilometers west of the capital Baghdad, police said.**

**A source at the Interior Ministry who requested anonymity said the gunmen who attacked the building forced policemen out before dynamiting it. Eyewitnesses said the policemen were released after the explosion.**

US troops cordoned off the town after the attack and urged inhabitants, using loudspeakers, to hand over the assailants. **[Now that is a just plain silly waste of time.]**

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# Six Allawi Soldiers Wounded At Polish Base

23-01-2005 Aljazeera.Net

**Six members of the Iraqi army were injured when a car bomb exploded at an army checkpoint in front of the Polish military headquarters in the southern city of Hilla, Aljazeera learned.**

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# Resistance Captures Jazira Cop Station

23-01-2005 Aljazeera.Net

**Fighters attacked the al-Jazira police centre north of Ramadi city and confiscated equipment and weapons, Aljazeera learned. The fighters forced out all members of the attacked centre, threatening to kill them if they came back.**

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# Pipeline Attack # 4,569

January 22, 2005 Energy Security

January 21 - 07:00am attack on pipeline in the al-Tharthar region 12 miles south of Samarra interrupted the flow of oil to the Bayji refinery.

**[To save work, clip out and save:**

**[(Month) (Date) Attack on pipeline at (place) interrupted to flow of oil to (insert name). So the resistance will be able to plan the next attack, (insert name) of the Ministry of Oil said repairs were expected to be completed in (insert #) days.]**

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# Southern Iraq's Oil Exports Shut Down By Weather, Power

1/23/2005 By Jim Krane, DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)

**A power cut followed by strong winds have shut down Iraq's southern oil terminals since Saturday afternoon, leaving tankers backed up in the Gulf waiting to load Iraqi crude, an oil shipping agent in Iraq said Sunday.**

The power failure on Iraq's tattered electrical grid prevented oil from flowing and high winds and rough seas have kept the massive oil tankers from pulling alongside Iraq's two offshore oil terminals at Basra and Khor al-Amaya, said the agent, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Both Iraqi terminals remained closed Sunday morning.

The delays have curbed Iraq's oil export lifeline and compounded the wait from previous weather and power-related shutdowns, he said.

Three tankers berthed at the terminals had been unable to complete their loading and depart, and seven more are anchored in the Gulf waiting to take on Iraqi crude, the agent said in a telephone interview. "We were already seven days delayed. Now add one more," he said.

**Iraqi oil exports have been perennial targets of Iraqi insurgents, with sabotaged pipelines costing the country billions of dollars in export earnings, officials have said.**

Earlier this month, Iraq's State Oil Marketing Organization told customers it would cut crude oil exports from its southern region by about 10 percent for the five months starting Feb. 1 because of continuing attacks and bad weather.

**The Iraqi oil ministry said last week that it should resume pumping crude from northern fields to an export terminal in southeastern Turkey by January's end. A December blast shuttered a northern pipeline and halted exports from Iraq's northern oil fields.**

**That pipeline has been the target of incessant blasts. Storage facilities at Ceyhan, Turkey, ran dry last month.**

**Iraq's annual average export level fell below the target of 1.85 million barrels a day because of insurgent attacks and the country's deteriorating security.**

Oil officials said last month that exports averaged 1.55 million barrels a day in 2004, with 1.43 million barrels coming from the south and 120,000 from the north.

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# Who’s Who

**Sometimes it is impossible to tell who is who. Many police officers wear street clothes and ski masks. Many insurgents dressed in government-style uniforms have waved down cars and killed people.** 2005-01-22 JEFFREY GETTLEMAN, New York Times

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

## FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

# "Good Riddance, War!"

From: Z
To: GI Special
Sent: January 23, 2005

**Russian troops defy their officers, abandon their lines in Galicia, and start to head home. (circa 1917)**

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# “I Know There Are More Scars There Than Just The Hearing Loss.”

**From:** David Honish
**To:** GI Special
**Sent:** January 23, 2005
**Subject:** Inauguration Day

It is 39 miles from where I live to Dealy Plaza in Dallas.

It is sort of a creepy place. It looks a lot like it did in the Zapruder film, not much has changed. A block east of Dealy is the JFK Memorial Plaza, behind the old red stone former city hall.

There was an inauguration day event there, a gathering of an assortment of antiwar coalition groups. Only about 150 or so folks showed up for the Funeral For Democracy. I suppose that is good by Dallas standards? A disappointment to me compared to the thousands of folks that would show up for antiwar demonstrations at the state capitol grounds in Austin. Dallas is definitely NOT Austin.

**This is GW territory, behind enemy lines.**

Austin is rarely kind to republican candidates, a different world all together. An old Central Texas joke is "people from Austin are called Austinites, people from San Antonio are called San Antonians, and people from Dallas are called assholes." It is just a commentary on the relative priority differences of business first vs. quality of life between the other cities and Dallas.

I was there in my usual low profile capacity.

I collect the yard signs from the 100 foot boundary outside the polls after elections. They make nice not so raw materials for protest signs if you reverse the yard sign to the white back surface. The night before, I was making new signs to replace my favorite ones worn by 23 months of use.

On my chest it said **HITLER AND STALIN WOULD ENVY THE PATRIOT ACT.** On my back it said **1369 KIA FOR A LIE. The four decimal places on it are separate mix and match pieces fastened with twist ties. I'm sure the numbers will change.**

Both signs had VETERANS FOR PEACE.ORG across the bottom. My old favorite sign from the pre-invasion protests had INFO WARS.COM on the bottom. I had not yet heard of VFP in those days. And then of course, my flagstaff with an upside down US flag sort of catches the eye first. It draws them in close enough to read the signs.

More than a few folks would come in close to chat about the signs. Some would politely ask permission to take a photograph, or want to pose standing next to me for a

photograph. Some would want to shake my hand and thank me for being there. All expressed agreement with the sentiments. Some did so while nervously glancing back over their shoulder to see who else was listening. This is Dallas after all. Progressive politics come at a price.

**One woman was different from the others.**

**She showed none of the excitement of street politics that the others had.**

**She was a few years older than me. She asked me about VFP, explaining that she had a daughter in the Army. She said her daughter had just gotten back from Iraq recently, and was now at Ft Polk, Louisiana for the last few months of her tour.**

**Her eyes started to tear up a bit, but she held them back.**

Maybe she was wondering if it was really almost over, or if stop loss would take her daughter away again?

**She had nothing kind to say about GW, explaining that her daughter's time in Iraq had both a financial and personal cost attached to it. She said that she spent on average $100 per week to send her daughter the things she needed that the Army did not provide. Things such as moist towelettes to substitute for the showers that were not available, and canned high protein drinks to try to compensate for the poor food. So much for GW's lip service about supporting the troops.**

***I was told that her daughter was OK, that she had "only suffered permanent hearing loss from a near miss explosion."***

**She got real interested when I told her about the formation of Iraq Veterans Against War.**

"My daughter is only 30, she'd probably like to be with people more her own age," she said while eyeing the fiftyish or older VFP members present.

**The Viet Nam, Korean, and WW II era VFP members could tell her daughter what it is like to 'get past it.'**

**The IVAW folks her own age can share the common experience to get them all 'past it' someday.**

**I hope her family heals soon.**

**I know there are more scars there than just the hearing loss.**

David Honish,
http://www.ptsd-alliance.org
http://www.veteransforpeace.org

**What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to**

**contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.**

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

# Protesters Make Waves At Bush Coronation Party: "Champagne Is Flying While Soldiers Are Dying."

January 22 By Jackson Thoreau, smirkingchimp.com

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- If you read most mainstream media accounts, you'd think there wasn't much of a protest during Bush's January 2005 coronation week.

You probably wouldn't read about the members of the national women's peace group Code Pink, who obtained tickets to the inauguration from their Congress reps and got up close to Bush on Thursday as he strained to recall some memorized lines.

**After Bush issued his standard propaganda about "spreading" freedom in faraway lands like it was chicken feed as he took away the same in his own country, Code Pinkers, including co-founders Medea Benjamin, 51, and Jodie Evans, 50, unrolled anti-war banners and shouted some better lines: "Champagne is flying while soldiers are dying."**

**Dittobushies began chanting themselves, causing Bush to appear shaken and stop his acting lines. Some of the overkill army of police dragged the women away and let most go, while holding Benjamin and Diane Wilson, 56, of Texas for at least another day.**

Score one for Bush opponents.

**Moving from the charade to the parade, there seemed to be almost as many protesters along the route as fur-coated and cowboy hat-clad supporters. Many supporters showed they were as shallow as their candidate, as they just couldn't take the cold and having to submit to standing in line for a police check and took off early to a hotel party.**

There were many signs on the route, including a direct one held by Meredith Lair, 32, who had just completed a doctorate in history at Pennsylvania State University. Her sign read, "Mr. Bush, under my mittens I'm giving you the finger."

**A disturbance at 14th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue involving some more aggressive protesters who threw snowballs, including one that struck Cheney's vehicle, and yelled "Fuck Bush" and police that included tear gas, pepper spray and beatings actually halted Bush's motorcade.**

Score another for Bush opponents.

**"At one point, the fence 'barrackades' on Pennsylvania Avenue about a mile ahead of the presidential parade were brought down by demonstrators during a prolonged clash that first slowed the president's motorcade, ultimately bringing it to a stand-still," wrote an account on Indymedia.org.**

**"Moments before the motorcade stopped, it was actually forced to speed up briefly in an attempt to spare the president a prolonged exposure to an expanse of protesters who dwarfed the numbers of Bush supporters on the parade route at the site of the ANSWER rally."**

**Earlier, a massive rally at Malcolm X Park, sponsored by the D.C. Anti-War Network was followed by a march of about 10,000 to McPherson Square. A second march from the rally ended in civil disobedience at Lafayette Park in front of the White House.**

**Participants from those marches ended up battling police, who also reportedly fired rubber bullets or pepper balls at protesters. Police reported one officer suffered a broken arm in a conflict that included even journalists and dittobushies being pepper sprayed.**

Penny wrote on Indymedia that she merely stood at 14th and Pennsylvania with no sign well away from the barricades and fence, and she was pepper sprayed.

"I was determined to simply stand there as long as I was able," Penny wrote. "It was still a surprise to me when the man who had ordered me to step back sprayed me in the face anyway. I stood there, getting sprayed, for as long as I could, until there was so much gas and pepper in the air that I couldn't breathe anymore and had to retreat."

**Welcome to the vision of Bush World, where even those who just stand there, and those who support the ruler, get pepper sprayed. Wake up, America.**

**After the parade, many protesters marched up Massachusetts Avenue towards Union Station, where police hit them with motorcycles, DC Indymedia reported. After making it to Union Station, they confronted Republicans clad in tuxedos and gowns who were going to parties. At least one fight broke out, and the protester was arrested but not the Republican, Indymedia wrote.**

**I missed that fight but got into several verbal confrontations myself with dittobushies at Union Station as I shoved my "Party On Like It's 1929" sign in their smug faces. Some fellow protesters told them to go to Iraq and called them cowards, which I avoided doing, just wanting to get across a message.**

**Bush's motorcade actually passed us by, and we turned our back and waved our signs at it, as police yelled at us to remain motionless.** Anyone who thinks the U.S.

really stands for freedom needed to try just walking through the D.C. streets on this night.

**Yet another march made its way up Columbia Road through Adams Morgan, trying to get to the Washington Hilton's Inaugural Ball. But police arrested many for no reason, hauling them away on buses. Some of those arrested were pepper sprayed by police even after they were adequately restrained, Indymedia reported.**

**"He says he's bringing freedom to the world, and we're getting pepper-sprayed for our First Amendment rights. That's kind of ironic," Dustin, 22, a National Institute of Health employee, told Reuters.**

The barricades made it difficult to drive through D.C., but I scooted through several blocked-off streets just to see if I could do it. **I made it to a prime parking space near the Platinum Club to "party on like it's 1929" at the Billionaires for Bush counter-inaugural party. As I got out of my car, another attendee asked how I got to that spot. "At some point, you just have to risk it and break through some of those barriers," I replied. If just to show the Bushies that they can't control you all the time.**

Some 91 percent of D.C. voted against Bush last November. That's why he made them pay $17 million for his parties. Fuck Bush, indeed.

Republicans like to harp on "family values" that usually don't include alcohol and prostitutes, but they engaged in plenty of both this week. Some made racist comments as they rode the subway. Others yelled "four more years" in bystanders' faces. Others shouted "loser" at John Kerry, who made himself as inconspicuous as possible.

**Many hypocritically and callously criticized protesters' conduct and ignored their own drunken, fur-wearing orgies of excess during this time of great needs. One mink-and-pearl-wearing Republican wrote on a Washington Post site that she was "embarrassed" for the protesters and cattily advised young female protesters that "if they would wash their hair and put on a little make-up, then they might not have to go out and get pepper-sprayed to get attention."**

She just doesn't get it. We weren't there to get attention. We were there to send a message. We're sick and tired of the crass crap and cynical policies of this administration. And we're fighting back.

D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams just doesn't get it, either. He, too, criticized protesters for the few who shouted obscenities. Then Williams himself hypocritically ripped off an obscenity to a reporter. "It really does piss me off that people are so selfish that they can't give [Bush] this one day," Williams said.

**Selfish? We're out there giving everything we have so more people can just survive as Bush and his supporters rape the national treasury, make a mockery of fiscal restraint, lay off more workers, strip people of their rights, push for more tax breaks for the billionaires and millionaires, plan to invade more countries to further neocon empire dreams.**

**And WE are selfish because we REFUSE to not send Bush a message on the best chance we have to send that message this year?**

**Pissed off doesn't begin to cover it.**

**Washington Post society columnist Richard Leiby put the high-octane partying this way: "All I saw all week was drunken partying by big-shot lobbyists and donors. I saw more stretch limos than I've ever seen in D.C., even during World Bank/IMF summits."**

**A D.C. resident added, "I've never seen so much fur in all of my life. It seemed that everywhere I went, women were draped in animal hides."**

**And protesters are SELFISH?**

**Back in my elementary school and junior high history classes, my teachers spoke reverently of the Boston Tea Party as a watershed event in our country's history that led to the birth of this nation. During that tea party, protesters destroyed property and engaged in violence against another King George. Most people living in the colonies did not support them then -- they called them anarchists, said they were embarrassing, said they were selfish and worse.**

**And they are now seen as heroes.**

**One day, the tide will turn. Our day will come.**

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