

GI SPECIAL 3A65:

**VIETNAM: THEY STOPPED AN IMPERIAL WAR.
THEY MADE THE IMPERIAL POLITICIANS VERY,
VERY AFRAID**



Friend Rico flipping the peace sign.

Photo from the portfolio of Mike Hastie, U.S. Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (Please contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) for more of his outstanding work. T)

**Darell Ankarlo, Scum In
Human Form:
Shit-Mouthed Piece Of Trash
Pisses On Families Of Soldiers
Killed In Iraq:**

Lies About Memorial To The War Dead

By Cindy Sheehan, Mother of Hero: Spc Casey Austin Sheehan KIA 04/04/04
Co-Founder of Gold Star Families For Peace <http://www.gsfp.org/>
February 28, 2005 Dallas, Texas, PEACE ACTION

"I'm so glad George Bush is a uniter and not a divider," I sarcastically thought to myself as the retired Marine Viet Nam Veteran was screaming at me and the other volunteers at the Eyes Wide Open Exhibit (presented by the American Friend's Service Committee--AFSC) in Dallas today.

The man was beside himself with fury.

He accused me and the AFSC of being shameful and that the AFSC wanted to see all of our soldiers who are fighting in Iraq "tried for war crimes."

I just sat at the hospitality table trying to let the Veteran blow off some steam-I couldn't answer his concerns at that point anyway- I felt his accusations were for the representatives of the AFSC.

The very, very angry man finally screamed one thing that I couldn't ignore. He was practically frothing at the mouth when he roared: "You people are all cowards. You wouldn't die for anything."

That's when I had had just about enough of Mr. Marine's tirade. I stood up to him and I said: "You are wrong about that sir. I would have gladly gone to Iraq instead of my son. I would have died in his place without question."

This simple, but true statement, which any parent would make, took the wind out of Mr. Marine's sails.

He got tears in his eyes and he said: "I'm so sorry for your loss, ma'am. I would have taken your son's place, too."

Then we hugged each other and both of us cried..me for my devastating loss..and I'm not sure what the Veteran gentleman was crying for? My loss, or the losses he experienced as a soldier in Viet Nam? Maybe a little of both?

At that miraculous and rare point in time, a Blue State, peace activist mom and a Red state, Bush/War supporting Veteran, found common ground!! It was a very unusual and sacred moment. When we found common ground, we were able to open up an honest dialogue, which is so rare in this country these days.

There were about 50 protesters out today at the Eyes Wide Open Exhibit.

They were there because they were under the mistaken impression that the AFSC wants all soldiers serving in Iraq prosecuted for war crimes.

That would make me mad, also: if it were true.

Most of our children in harm's way are just trying to save their lives and the lives of their buddies. But this notion about the AFSC, is totally absurd and false.

How did these otherwise, seemingly intelligent protestors get such a whacky idea??

Well, the protesters were told that this was true by a hate-mongering radio talk show host named Darrell Ankarlo. He told his listeners: "Eyes Wide Open is in actuality anti-war/anti-American/anti-troops display suggesting that our military "be brought to justice" for crimes against humanity." Ankarlo also told his listeners that this statement was on the AFSC website.

Of course, this is not on the AFSC website. But don't take my word for it. Do something that Ankarlo's listeners did not: check it out yourself. www.AFSC.ORG. It's amazing to me that the protesters would come out and waste hours of their time on a beautiful Dallas morning to protest something that they didn't even verify!!

Like I said in my speech at the Eyes Wide Open Exhibit today: "Whether one thinks this war is moral or immoral, we all agree that the 1496 young people represented in their empty boots behind me, are brave and honorable people who deserve the highest of honors and our highest respect."

I have been all over the country protesting this war and trying to expose the reasons for going to Iraq and staying in Iraq for what they were and still are: lies.

My experience in Dallas has convinced me of a certain fact: standing across from our philosophical opponents and screaming slogans at each other is not very productive. Having knee-jerk reactions to hate mongering talk show hosts is also very counter-productive! I think we as Americans have more in common with each other than not and we need to find that common ground. quickly!! We need to join together to stop the next war before it even begins this time.

Exhibits like AFSC's Eyes Wide Open is a wonderful way to honor our children's sacrifices and to bring an awareness of the true human cost of war to our nation. Click on the link to the AFSC website and you can view a short movie on the exhibit, see the list of scheduled upcoming cities where Eyes Wide Open will be, and sign a petition for peace.

Repeated calls and e-mails to Darrell Ankarlo's station in Dallas from members of Gold Star Families for Peace have not been returned. We are demanding that Ankarlo apologize to the AFSC and to GSFP for lying to his listeners. [A good old fashioned Texas public horse-whipping would be a whole lot more effective. One lash for every troop dead in Iraq sounds about right.]

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Troop Deaths Fall In February: (Duh!)

(Washington Times, March 4, 2005, Pg. 9)

The number of U.S. troops killed in Iraq fell in February to the lowest level in seven months, even as the overall death toll increased to more than 1,500.

Among the reasons: The military has dramatically improved its ability to electronically jam remotely detonated roadside bombs and is getting more intelligence tips since the Jan. 30 elections.

Comment:

The stupidity of those in charge of the Iraq occupation appears exceeded only by those who write articles like the one just above.

It's not rocket science.

In the run-up to the election, about 20,000 battle tested, first line, well-equipped U.S. regular army and Marine troops were held in Iraq, instead of returned to bases elsewhere outside Iraq, as had originally been planned.

In February, thousands of them began shipping out to the USA or Germany, like many from the 1st ID.

Now, if you are a resistance commander with an IQ over 10, do you:

Attack these battle tested, well equipped troops while they are packing up to leave Iraq, thereby pissing them off no end, and also risking a U.S. command decision to cut the number being pulled out?

Attack these battle tested troops before they leave, meaning that the ratio of occupation troops to your troops is at its highest point?

OR

Do you hold off launching more than scattered attacks until the number of U.S. forces in Iraq has dropped by about 20,000, and those left are composed of a higher proportion of ill-equipped National Guard and Reserve troops, rather than first line regular army and Marine combat tested veterans?

Do you understand that as the number of occupation forces decreases by about 20,000, those remaining are stretched thinner, less able to mount offensives, easier to attack, and more likely to be confined to force protection, rather than offensive action?

In short, do you attack before or after your opponent is fewer in numbers and reduced in experience and equipment?

Duh.

T

25th ID Soldier Killed In Mosul

March 5, 2005 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 233-05

Staff Sgt. Juan M. Solorio, 32, of Dallas, Texas, died March 4 in Mosul, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle as his unit was being attacked by enemy forces using small arms fire.

Solorio was assigned to the Army's 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Lewis, Wash.

Freed Hostage Targeted For Death: Body Of Soldier Who Saved Her Comes Home



Maria Rosa Caligeri, right, follows the coffin of her husband, Italian special forces officer Nicola Calipari at Ciampino military airport in Rome, March 5, 2005. Calipari was killed

in Iraq by fire coming from a U.S. vehicle while he was escorting in a car Italian journalist Giuliana Sgrena to Baghdad airport after her liberation. (AP Photo/Gregorio Borgia)

3.5.05 AFP & (SA) March 04, 2005 By Angela Doland, Associated Press & Translated from the web site of TF1, France

Freed Italian hostage Giuliana Sgrena said the firing by US soldiers that left her wounded and an Italian special forces officer dead was not justified, as Rome awaited an explanation of the incident from US authorities.

The chief of the Italian special forces team in Iraq, Nicola Calipari, who was with her, was killed.

As the Italian soldiers were on their way from the Iraqi capital to the airport, where a military plane was waiting to take her straight back to Rome, a barrage of American soldiers opened fire on the convoy. In addition to the officer killed, another Italian soldier was wounded.

Last month, Sgrena was shown in a video demanding that all foreign troops — including Italian forces — leave Iraq

The shooting on the road to Baghdad airport late on Friday threatened to cast a pall over relations between Rome and Washington, which are close allies in the Iraq conflict.

Sgrena, the 56-year-old correspondent of the daily *Il Manifesto*, told Italian investigators the US troops' intense fire had been in no way justified by the speed of her car, ANSA news agency said.

"Our vehicle was running at normal speed which could not be misunderstood," she said, rejecting US fears of a possible suicide attack.

"It wasn't a checkpoint but a patrol which immediately opened fire after they trained their light on us," Sgrena said on her return from Iraq .

Sgrena, her left shoulder in a bandage, flew into Rome on a government plane on Saturday morning and was immediately rushed to Celio military hospital where she will undergo surgery within the next few days.

Her companion, who travelled with her from Baghdad, levelled serious accusations at the US troops involved in the incident, saying the shooting had been deliberate.

"The Americans and Italians knew about (her) car coming," Pier Scolari said on leaving Celio hospital.

"They were 700 metres from the airport, which means that they had passed all checkpoints."

"The whole fusillade was heard live by the Council presidency, which was on the phone with one of the members of the special forces. Then the American soldiers confiscated and shut off the cell phones," added Pier Scolari.

"Giuliana had information, and the US military did not want her to survive," he added.

When Sgrena was kidnapped on February 4 she was writing an article on refugees from Fallujah seeking shelter at a Baghdad mosque after US forces bombed the former Sunni rebel stronghold.

"I was speaking to (agent) Nicola Calipari (...) when he leant on me, probably to protect me, and then collapsed and I realised he was dead," said Sgrena, who was being questioned on Saturday by two Italian magistrates.

"They continued shooting and the driver couldn't even explain that we were Italians. It was really horrible," she added.

Sgrena, who was taken to hospital with serious wounds to her left shoulder and lung after arriving back in Rome on Saturday before noon, said she was "exhausted because of what happened above all in the last 24 hours".

"After all the risks I have been running I can say that I'm fine," she said.

The chief editor of Sgrena's left-wing newspaper Il Manifesto Gabriele Polo meanwhile branded Calipari's death a "murder".

"He was hit in the head," he said.

Calipari will be given a state funeral on Monday.

US Ambassador to Rome Mel Sembler told Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi he had asked Washington for an urgent explanation of what happened.

Berlusconi, a staunch Bush ally, told a press conference in Rome late Friday there were troubling questions that needed to be answered.

"We are petrified and dumbfounded by this fatality", said the prime minister.

Carlo Ciampi, the head of state, demanded an explanation from Washington. "Like all Italians, we are waiting for clarification from the United States on this painful tragedy," he announced Saturday morning.

It was clear that Carlo Ciampi found inadequate the regrets expressed Friday evening by President George W. Bush in a five-minute telephone conversation with Silvio Berlusconi.



Italian President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi honors the fallen. (AP Photo/Gregorio Borgia)

Notes From A Lost War:

Marines Take A Hit



TOM BROWN – STAFF

"They're very perceptive, not stupid at all, and they probably saw tanks were moved here. So they left," says Lt. Col Stephen Dinauer from Verona, Wisc., commander of the 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, which headed up operations in Hit. "It's frustrating, because we can't be everywhere at once."

March 03, 2005 By Dan Murphy, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor'

HIT, IRAQ – Walking in from the desert before dawn, the marines entering the ancient city of Hit bristled with armaments.

Flak jackets bulged with extra ammo clips. Packs were heavy with spare mortar rounds and grenades. Many of the men recalled the last time they entered the city in October, calling it a miracle that none was killed in a determined insurgent ambush.

Yet pulling out of the city five days later, every one of those mortars and grenades remained intact. The 250 marines, most from Bravo Company of the 1st Marine Division's 23rd Regiment out of Houston, had fired fewer than 100 rifle rounds. There were few signs of the fighters that made Forward Operating Base Hit one of the most mortared US positions in Iraq.

It was much the same story in a recent Marine offensive across Anbar Province, the center of Iraq's insurgency. As part of "River Blitz," Marines took over trouble-spots like Hit, Haditha, Baghdadi, and Ramadi with hardly any shots being fired.

But from the upper ranks to the most junior boots on the ground, few believe the relative ease of this operation means the insurgency in Anbar is over. **Instead, the militants are fleeing [translation from presstitute-speak: withdrawing their forces] before the marines arrive, only to return when the marines withdraw. The temporary nature of the Marine takeovers is hampering US efforts to get local cooperation on security. [translation from presstitute-speak: is proving to be a useless waste of time and effort.]**

"They called it River Blitz, but it's been more like operation River Dance," says Sgt. Bob Grandfield, from Boston. "This is what insurgents are supposed to do. Run away when we come in. If they fight, they know we'll just kill them." [No shit? Maybe that's because they're fighting a guerrilla war against an occupying armed force. As for "running," not very likely. Why run anywhere when you can walk or ride, carrying all your equipment and supplies with you, until the invaders have moved on?]

"They're very perceptive, not stupid at all, and they probably saw tanks were moved here. So they left," says Lt. Col Stephen Dinauer from Verona, Wisc., commander of the 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, which headed up operations in Hit. "It's frustrating, because we can't be everywhere at once." [Now here is a miracle as significant as the earth standing still. A Lt. Col. with a perfect understanding of what's going on. Better watch out. Rumsfeld doesn't care much for officers who have a grip on the real world and the courage to tell the truth.]

But while Marines conducted their offensive in Anbar, insurgents struck elsewhere.

A suicide car bomb in Hilla, south of Baghdad, killed 125 people - the deadliest single attack since the toppling of Saddam Hussein. Wednesday, unknown gunmen in Baghdad shot and killed a judge involved in the trial of Mr. Hussein.

As the Marines involved in "River Blitz" pull out Anbar Province, a smaller US force is replacing them. One senior marine said he feels "guilty about leaving" Hit because he worries that insurgents will seek reprisals on residents in the absence of local police.

[Not to worry. The residents are “the insurgents” and are unlikely to shoot themselves.]

These sentiments echo the scaled-back expectations among troops on the ground.

Gone is the talk about breaking the back of the insurgency that was floated before the November battle for Fallujah, where hundreds of militants were dug in and ready to fight.

And they speak about slowly finding a way to train and motivate Iraqi troops to replace the largely failed experiment with the Iraqi National Guard, which has been plagued by desertions, insurgent infiltration, and a refusal to fight because of fears of reprisals against their family members.

Patrolling Hit, a city of 100,000 people, the marines encountered no open hostility. Little boys fascinated by their guns chased after them and young men peppered them with questions in broken English. In five days in the city, one sniper was killed by the marines, and another man was killed after a drive by shooting. In Anbar Province, that's about as quiet as it gets.

But there is also little open or obvious cooperation. Just about an hour before the drive-by shooting, the owner of a house occupied by a team of marines was asked about insurgent activity in the area. "There is no resistance in the entire city of Hit," he said. "They left a long time ago."

In a brief meeting with marines to arrange the recovery of two insurgent bodies, a local sheikh told Maj. Derek Horst, "99.9 percent of our people are peaceful people. We don't want problems here." **[By “problems,” that 99.9% mean occupation troops.]**

Such reticence either masks sympathies with the insurgency, or more commonly fear of reprisals. [Such bullshit masks the reporters' fear of reprisals for pissing off command and ceasing to be welcome, so of course he throws in that tired old lie. Well, maybe there is some truth in it. No doubt some traitor civilians feared reprisals from Thomas Jefferson's and George Washington's troops too.] Last October, insurgents moved into the city, reduced the police station to rubble, and beheaded a few locals they deemed too close to US forces. The city's police remain inactive.

Yet as marines left the meeting, another with long experience in the Hit area could hardly detain his disgust. "This guy is one of our biggest problems here. In the past, he's been whipping people up to fight." [There it is.]

The marines say they appreciate civilian fears, but are frustrated that locals don't secure their towns on their own. "It's hard to understand sometimes why people don't stand up for themselves," says Sergeant Shawn Hudman of Austin, Texas. **[Somebody help the Sgt. out. Like explaining that people are indeed standing up for themselves. It's called the resistance, just like he would do if there were 150,000 Iraqi troops occupying Texas.]**

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)

TROOP NEWS

"My God, I Can't Believe I'm Here Again, I Thought I Was Going To Get Out And Go Back To School." **Stop-Lossed 3rd ID Soldiers Back In The Shit**

But many 3rd Infantry soldiers have seen their enlistment involuntarily extended.

Spc. Desmond Lackey, who was due to get out on Saturday, said his first thought on returning to Baghdad was: "My God, I can't believe I'm here again, I thought I was going to get out and go back to school."

The U.S. Army has told him that he won't be allowed to leave the service at least until the 3rd Infantry goes home next year.

[Thanks to Desmond, who sent this in.]

Mar 5 By CHRIS TOMLINSON, Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Their enemy has changed, from Iraqi soldiers in uniform to insurgents in civilian clothes. But for the soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division returning to Baghdad, some things remain the same.

The smell, for instance — a mixture of smog, rotting garbage and sewage.

"It's only here, it's only in Iraq," said Staff Sgt. Jason Barr of Roswell, Mich. "I don't know what it is, but it gets to you."

Nearly two years after they first entered Baghdad, the Fort Stewart, Ga.-based 3rd Infantry is back in Iraq, **taking charge of the Baghdad metropolitan area. [Aren't the delusions of reporters amazing?]** While some of the soldiers are here for the first time, most were part of the invasion and capture of Baghdad in April 2003.

Sgt. Joshua Butler of Jackson, Mo., is a team leader in A Co. 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment. His company, code-named Attack, was among the first to roll into Baghdad and spent four months in Iraq in 2003. Bivouacked in an old barracks in south Baghdad, he feels as though he never left.

"The last time I was here, my guard was up 24/7 and I went back home and everything relaxed and it was fine," Butler said. "Now we're back and that feeling is there again all of a sudden."

Butler's life, like that of many of the returning soldiers, has changed since the invasion. He has been promoted from private first class to sergeant. He has married, has a child and owns a house.

"This time I have to think about having a wife and a daughter back home," he said. "I'm responsible now for bringing home my guys alive to their family."

The quick redeployment to Iraq takes a toll on families. "Just as you begin to get relaxed and get back into a normal rhythm with your family, it starts all over again, the pressure of getting ready to leave again," said Barr, a father of two. [In case there's anybody who still doesn't know it, the only thing that held the army together as long as it did in Vietnam, before the troops finally rebelled against that war and stopped it cold, was that once you put in day 365 in Vietnam, nobody could ever make you stay one more day, and nobody could ever make you go back for a second tour. The politicians who are in charge of this Imperial goat fuck are so blind and stupid they have no clue what sending troops back over and over again means. They will, however, find out.]

"It's not just being gone that's the hard part; the hard part is getting ready to leave, preparing your family for it and everything you do to prepare your family for it reminds them, and yourself, that you're leaving," he added. "The few months before you leave are hard; the first few months after you get back are hard."

The soldiers say what they fear most this time around are roadside bombs — there were at least 81 in January alone.

Patrolling southern Baghdad will be more dangerous this time around, said Spc. Jacob Pfister of Buffalo, N.Y., because the insurgents fight from the shadows.

"In a direct firefight, we've got them hands down. But what you have to worry about is what you don't see, driving up and a guy has got a bomb on the side of the road," Pfister said.

Although Pfister lost 25 percent of his hearing in a bombing in 2003, he has decided to make a career out of the U.S. Army.

But many 3rd Infantry soldiers have seen their enlistment involuntarily extended.

Spc. Desmond Lackey, who was due to get out on Saturday, said his first thought on returning to Baghdad was: "My God, I can't believe I'm here again, I thought I was going to get out and go back to school."

The U.S. Army has told him that he won't be allowed to leave the service at least until the 3rd Infantry goes home next year.

**IT'S A START.
ONLY 140,000 TO GO.
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.**



U.S. Army reservist Master Sgt. Robert Metz, left, and wife Mary Ann Metz of Ipswich, Mass., reunite at Londonderry High School in Londonderry, N.H., Saturday, March 5, 2005. Metz deployed to Iraq with the 167th Corps Support Group in December 2003 and has just returned with 110 fellow soldiers. (AP Photo/Larry Crowe)

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.

U.S. Soldier Fights To Keep Home While In Iraq: Bank Threatens To Foreclose On Sergeant's House, Sell Belongings

March 1, 2005 WSOC-TV, OSAWATOMIE, Kan.

A Kansas soldier who is on active duty in Iraq is also fighting for his home.

A bank is trying to foreclose on Sgt. Steve Welter's house in Osawatomie, which is illegal. It is a violation of a 64-year-old federal law to foreclose on a soldier's property while he or she is at war.

Welter has been fighting in Iraq since September. Meanwhile, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage is threatening to foreclose on the house where his wife and three children live.

"And he's fighting in a war. And yet an American company is trying to take our home," said Keira Welter, Steve's wife.

The Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act reads in part: "No sale, foreclosure or seizure of property ... shall be valid if made during the period of military service."

On Aug. 12, 2004, Welter got his active duty orders for Iraq and he sent it to the mortgage company.

But Keira Welter said the letters and demands kept coming.

"The (Veterans Affairs) Housing unit of Kansas sent (Wells Fargo) the papers three weeks ago on a Thursday. The next Tuesday, they filed the foreclosure proceedings on us," Keira Welter said.

She's worried the family will lose more than the house.

"They want to sell everything ... They want to sell my house and all my possessions in it," Keira Welter said.

She said the worst aspect are the phone calls. Once, Keira Welter's daughter, 10-year-old Krysha, answered the phone.

"And I said, 'My daddy's in Iraq.' And they hung up," said Krysha Welter. "I was scared because I thought they'd come for us because they knew our daddy is gone."

"And then I looked at the caller ID. It said Wells Fargo," Keira Welter said.

Before Steve Welter left for war, he was a Lawrence, Kan., firefighter. In 2003, he won a Firefighter of the Year award. The department is holding his job for him when his tour of duty is over.

Keira Welter said the family's financial problems started during Steve's Army training. She said the military paychecks are smaller than his firefighter salary.

Steve Welter once wrote Wells Fargo a desperate letter, Keira said. The letter read: "Please consider that I am fighting for this country and everyone's way of life." **[He doesn't get it. The U.S. way of life is good old fashioned capitalism, and that means if you don't pay the capitalist, in this case the bank, you get fucked. And that is indeed what the war is about. More money for capitalists. End of discussion.]**

Before the incident, the Welter credit history appeared to be good, KMBC-TV in Kansas City, Mo., reported.

"I paid extra money each month, to reduce the principal, so we could pay it off in 17 years instead of 30," Keira Welter said.

Wells Fargo issued a written statement to KMBC about the Welter case: "We are working directly with the customer to resolve any issues that have affected their situation. Based on information we have received in the last two weeks, we believe the immediate concerns have been resolved."

Keira Welter said she is skeptical about any assurance from Wells Fargo. She said Veterans Affairs has also received such assurances, and so has U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts' office. [Keira Welter is no fool.]

The Sand Storm: Stories From the Front

From: John Gingerich
To: GI Special
Sent:., March 02, 2005
Subject: The Sand Storm: Stories From the Front

3.1.05: Posted by Tai, altnet.org

The human need to remember and share experience is powerful, and when the experience is as horrific as war, the need becomes a compulsion -- and the compulsion is sometimes expressed as art.

Just as the Vietnam war spawned a genre of literature, film, theater and visual art, the Iraq war is slowly taking hold of the subconsciousness of its artist-witnesses. "The thing about remembering is that you don't forget," says the narrator of Tim O'Brien's classic Vietnam book, *The Things They Carried*.

Telling his story, the narrator says, seemed like a natural, inevitable process, like clearing the throat. Partly catharsis, partly communication, it was a way of grabbing people by the shirt and explaining exactly what had happened to me.

First-time playwright Sean Huze, a young Marine who enlisted the day after 9/11, needed to tell exactly what had happened to him in Iraq. Huze kept a journal during the war that became the basis for **The Sand Storm: Stories From the Front**, 10 searing monologues in which actors playing Marines from the 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion -- Huze's real-life unit -- relate their stories.

By stripping away the myths, distortion and propaganda, Huze hoped to let the truth of the war emerge -- the story of the troops that, he says, has been "lost in the storm."

By all accounts, he has succeeded. *The Sand Storm* had its premiere to critical acclaim last fall and has returned for another run, this time at the Elephant Asylum Theatre in Santa Monica.

If you can't make it to opening night you can buy a copy of the play.

***The Sand Storm*, writes Huze on his website, is "Dedicated to all the service members who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, especially those who could not return. Also to the Iraqi civilians who lost their lives in a war in which they did not choose to participate."**

County Honors Wounded Marine: Military Career? "I Don't Think So"

March 5, 2005 By DAVE WOODSON - Staff Writer, Elko Daily Free Press

ELKO - Walking without his cane, his once gaunt form filled out and a smile on his face, wounded U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Stacy Alexander of Carlin received a standing ovation Wednesday at the Elko County board meeting.

Commissioners presented him with a plaque for his service and dedication to Elko County and to his country.

Alexander will return to active duty March 12 at the Marine Training Center in Twentynine Palms, Calif. However, he said there were no immediate plans for him to return to war-torn Iraq.

"We don't deploy again overseas for about a year," Alexander said. "So I have plenty of time to heal."

He said while it has been wonderful to be back in Carlin for his recuperation, there is something he does miss about California.

"It's nice to be home but I am ready to go back to the good weather in California," Alexander observed. "I like northern Nevada, and I always look forward to coming home, but it is just a visit; it is always good to go back and do your job."

It's his job now, but he said he did not plan to make the military a career.

"I don't think so," Alexander said.

Die For The Empire? No Thanks! Number Of Black Army Recruits Drops 41%

March 4, 2005 By: TOM PHILPOTT - For the North County Times

The Army's wartime recruiting challenge is aggravated by a sharp drop in black enlistments in the last four years, which internal Army and Defense Department polls trace to an unpopular war in Iraq and concerns among blacks with Bush administration policies.

The Army strains to meet recruiting goals in part because black volunteers have fallen 41 percent ---- from 23.5 percent of recruits in fiscal 2000 down steadily to 13.9 percent in the first four months of fiscal 2005.

Results of the Defense Department's own Youth and Influencer Polls, conducted last May, **affirm that administration policies and the Iraq war have lowered the propensity of black youth to enlist, particularly in the Army and Marine Corps, the ground forces taking most of the casualties.**

Lawmakers Hear About Bullshit Facing Wounded Soldiers: "We Were Pretty Much Left On Our Own And It Was Chaotic"

March 3, 2005 TheOmahaChannel.com

WASHINGTON -- Lawmakers on Thursday heard about the jumble of red tape some military service members face at home.

On Capitol Hill Thursday, lawmakers heard that soldiers wounded overseas sometimes fight another battle navigating the military health care system -- especially if they're in the Guard or Reserve.

Wounded soldiers testifying said the quality of military medical care is high. But Guardsmen and Reservists shouldering much of the burden in Afghanistan and Iraq said it's a system that sometimes treats them like second-class citizens.

Arkansas National Guardsman Chief Warrant Officer James Keeton said that after being wounded in Iraq he was sent to a medical-hold company for Guardsmen and had trouble seeing a doctor.

"We were pretty much left on our own and it was chaotic," Keeton said.

Generals Knew Recruiting Would “Fall Off A Cliff”

March 03, 2005 By Dave Moniz, USA Today

The active-duty Army needs to recruit 80,000 new soldiers this year — 3,000 more than last year — to replenish its ranks. David Segal, a military sociologist at the University of Maryland, said he does not think the Army will achieve that goal.

Loren Thompson, a military analyst with the Lexington Institute in Arlington, Va., said several Army generals told him last year that recruiting was likely to “fall off a cliff” in 2005. “I think this spells a major recruiting shortfall for the Army,” he said.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Eleven Local Occupation Soldiers & Assorted Collaborators Killed In Resistance Attacks

05 March 2005 AFP & Aljazeera

Eleven Iraqi soldiers have been killed in various attacks, security sources said, as a daytime curfew was imposed in the restive town of Samarra, north of Baghdad.

The worst attack left five soldiers dead when their camp in Al-Duluiyah, north of the capital, was hit by mortars as the new army recruits got up for training, Captain Assad Saddam said.

Another soldier was killed and another wounded when a roadside bomb blew up as they were attempting to diffuse it near the northern oil refining town of Baiji, said Captain Ali Yussif of the army.

A second roadside bomb in Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's hometown, killed an Iraqi soldier and wounded three, according to police.

Three Iraqi policemen were also wounded in an ambush by anti-occupation forces in the village of Bir, east of Tikrit, said local police.

A police officer was wounded in a similar attack in Baquba, said police in the restive city north-east of Baghdad.

A roadside bomb killed three Iraqi army soldiers in Baghdad's Bab al-Mu'adam area early Saturday, according to Wisam Muhsin, an official at al-Kindi hospital. Another four soldiers were injured.

Guerrillas in two vehicles west of Baghdad, in Abu Ghraib, killed an Iraqi army officer, said Capt. Akram al-Zubaie.

Guerrillas killed a Turkish driver and an Iraqi Kurdish official in two separate attacks in the northern city of Mosul on Saturday, witnesses said. The assailants began shouting afterward that they shot the driver because he was carrying supplies to American troops, witness Mohammed Jassim Ali said.

Also in Mosul, a Kurdish employee working for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, one of two main Kurdish parties, was killed, a party official said.



Mar 5: Fire fighters douse the flames from a convoy tanker truck after it blew up in the northern city of Mosul. (AFP/Mujahed Mohammed)

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

Resistance Captures Occupation Financial Officer With Money And “Important Documents”

3/5/2005 AFP and Turkish Press

MOSUL, Iraq - The Islamic Army in Iraq, said Saturday it had captured the financial officer of an Iraqi army base near Mosul and his deputy.

The group claimed responsibility on a compact disc distributed in this northern Iraqi town, containing recordings dated February 3 and 7.

Footage showed the two men blindfolded and hands tied together, and then the two individuals with their faces visible and holding up their identity cards.

It also shows a ledger of amounts paid to soldiers at the Kasak base some 40 kilometers west of Mosul. The men are shown standing near a banner bearing the name of the group.

The CD, the authenticity of which was not immediately confirmed, was accompanied by a commentary that said the two men were captured "as they travelled to Baghdad, between Kirkuk and the province of Diyala, in the belief that they had escaped the eyes of the Mujahadeen."

"They failed in their plan and fell easily into the hands of the Mujahadeen, which seized sums of money and important documents," the commentary said.

"The two men will appear before the Islamic courts which will decide their fates," it said.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

There is a light that burns dimly today, an ember of justice that will smolder until one day it will ignite in the hearts of the people and bring forth the flame of liberty once again. Each of us holds that torch of freedom and each of us carries it as he or/she can. M. Zehr

Always Liberating

From: ZC
To: GI Special
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2005 1:36 PM
Subject: always liberating

"Whenever we engage in a war or move in on some other country, it is always to liberate somebody."

US writer and critic Edmund Wilson, 1962

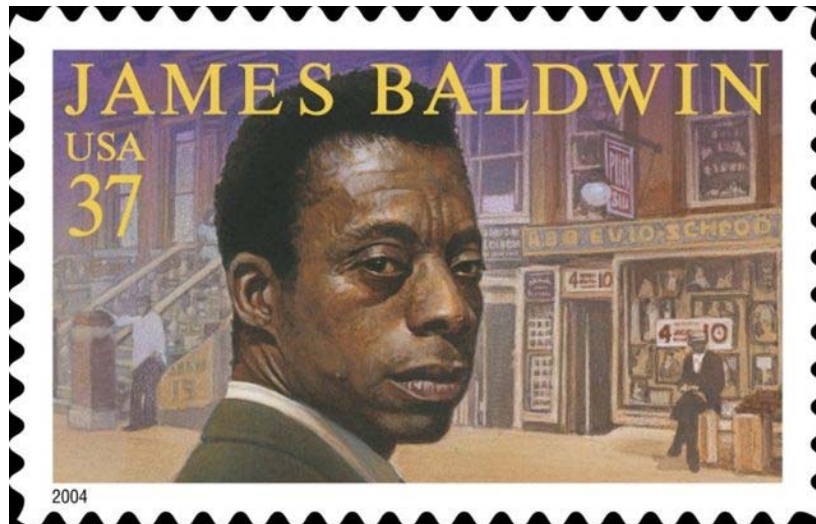
Solidarity,
z

Amen To That!

Write on my gravestone: "Infidel, Traitor." --infidel to every church that compromises with wrong; traitor to every government that oppresses the people.

Wendell Phillips

Our Civilized Rulers



From: Z
To: GI Special
Sent: March 05, 2005
Subject: our civilized rulers

“The civilized have created the wretched, quite coldly and deliberately, and do not intend to change the status quo; are responsible for their slaughter and enslavement; rain down bombs on defenseless children whenever and wherever they decide that their "vital interests" are menaced, and think nothing of torturing a man to death: these people are not to be taken seriously when they speak of the "sanctity" of human life, or the "conscience" of the civilized world.” James Baldwin, 1976

George W. Bush As Fecalith

From: AH
To: GI Special
Sent: March 05, 2005

It looks like bush's ego is too big to come to terms with the notion that he's going out as a dismissed folly of history. It looks rather as though he would like to go out now as a complete and utter fuck up. He is apparently striving now for Nixon like stardom. Okay - we'll remember you but, does anyone really want to?

I remember this one time when I was like twelve years old, when I got constipated really bad, and none of the laxatives worked.

I even had to try this weird waxy candle like thing that you have to stick in the butt and have melt there. (Don't worry. There wasn't any fire involved with it.)

Anyway, my dad had to finally take me to the ER to get an enema to remedy the situation. So, I remember this experience but, man - I wish I didn't...

So, if bush gets his wish and actually gets his own page in the grade school history books, with maybe his own small picture, I don't think it's really going to say anything that kids are going to be proud of.

If anyone of future generations take note of bush, they are going to see him as just a hard piece of stool that got stuck somehow in the anus of our country.

Solidarity,
A

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

No One Safe From Occupation On Baghdad's Roads, Iraqis Say: "What Have I Done To Deserve Losing My Leg?"

Mar 5, 2005 By Elizabeth Piper, BAGHDAD (Reuters)

Jawdat Abd al-Kadhumi was not surprised that U.S. troops opened fire at a car carrying a freed Italian hostage to safety. He lost a leg to an American bullet fired from a convoy traveling ahead of him.

The 23-year-old says fear, confusion and misunderstandings on all sides have made roads in Iraq's capital perilous. Now he says he makes sure that any car he is in stops when a U.S. military convoy transporting soldiers or equipment nears.

"There is no safety on the roads. Everyone should expect anything to happen on these roads. Foreigners, Iraqis we are all exposed to the same risks," said al-Kadhumi, his left tracksuit trouser leg tied around the stump of his leg.

"Now if I see an American convoy, I stop until it has gone."

Many have a tale to tell of someone they know that has been shot at, killed or harassed by U.S. forces in convoys or at checkpoints dotted across the country.

Security contractors, whose numbers have risen as relentless and often indiscriminate violence grips Iraq, are accused of being trigger-happy.

But the killing of secret service agent Nicola Calipari, who was instrumental in gaining Italian journalist Giuliana Sgrena's release from kidnappers, has underlined what was already known to many -- U.S. checkpoints or convoys should be avoided.

Ex-army officers say cars should be at least 50 meters away from any convoy, never overtake and that if a car speeds toward a checkpoint soldiers will shoot at the engine block to make sure the vehicle comes to a standstill.

They say unnecessary shootings happen when hand signals -- a fist to stay back -- or linguistic misunderstandings take place. Cultural differences can also prompt panic -- driving slowly for an Iraqi is not necessarily the same as for an American.

Al-Kadhumi thought he knew the rules.

He was taking his uncle, who suffers from kidney disease, to hospital just miles away from their home in al-Ghazaliyah in west Baghdad. He says they were a safe distance from the convoy.

"I cannot remember the exact distance, but we were first behind the convoy about 500 meters behind," he says. "But then there was an explosion on the convoy and they started shooting. Shooting everywhere."

His car was shot. A bullet went through his knee. He tried to press the hole to stop the bleeding but then lost consciousness.

In hospital, his leg was amputated just above the knee.

"I believe the Americans were confused when they attacked us. But this confusion causes tragedies," he says, complaining that he cannot find work and has been told he cannot claim compensation before the formation of Iraq's new government.

"But yes I blame them. We were not guilty. What have I done to deserve losing my leg?"

Comment:

Blame the murderous Imperial politicians in Washington DC who sent the troops to invade and occupy Iraq. Once that decision is made, the rest is absolutely inevitable, including far worse atrocities.

Fools and idiots in the anti-war movement blame the troops. The "leadership" in the anti-war movement is still too stupid, blind and/or cowardly to take on the enemy: the bi-partisan U.S. Imperial government.

That government, and the Imperial system the Democrat and Republican politicians both defend, is responsible for every atrocity committed in Iraq. Every one. No exceptions. Of course, the politicians, and the wealthy class that owns the politicians, escape the blame, the war itself, and the consequences, unless and until the troops and the citizens at home take them on and bring them down, once and for all.

When the "leadership" of the anti-war movement quits kissing the ass of Democratic Party politicians and gets serious about bringing down the Imperial system itself, there will be more hope of accomplishing something that will endure.

After Vietnam, the Imperial system was crippled, but left in place. "Those who make half a revolution dig their own graves." Now the graves are in Iraq, and in troops' home-towns everywhere. T

So Much For That "Sovereignty" Bullshit: Case #487

Occupation Commanders Refuses To Let Iraqi Government Lawyers Help Prisoners

"At the ministry of justice we've offered them lawyers, but they've refused," said Salim Mendalawi, a lawyer at the ministry. "I talked to the Americans and told them it is for their benefit. The ministry has enough investigators."

05 March 2005 By David Enders in Abu Ghraib, The Independent (UK)

Relatives of the thousands of Iraqis in American-run detention centres in Iraq are protesting at overcrowding. Pre-election sweeps have swollen the prison population to breaking point, they say.

Hundreds of relatives queue for hours outside in the hope of getting news of loved ones, who have been picked up in operations outside the capital.

Iqbal Ali Khadim has been waiting to see her 12-year-old son, Ali. "I just want him to be out," she said. "The last time I visited him, he told me they had beat him because they think he was going to be a suicide bomber."

Ali, along with his father, two older brothers and a pair of uncles, were arrested from Mrs Khadim's home in Yusefiya, south of Baghdad, two months ago.

Tomorrow, she says, she will make the day-long trip to Camp Bucca in Umm Qasr, south of Basra, where Ali's brothers and uncles are being held, **accused of supporting the insurgency.**

One man standing in line said: "If they are not going to charge them, they should let them go." He complained that his brother had been held for more than a year.

US military officials have said they are bringing prisoners before review boards, but it is not happening quickly enough for many families.

Iraqi officials also complain that the US military is not devoting enough personnel to the process.

"At the ministry of justice we've offered them lawyers, but they've refused," said Salim Mendalawi, a lawyer at the ministry. "I talked to the Americans and told them it is for their benefit. The ministry has enough investigators."

[Now do you wonder why Iraqis support the resistance and fight the occupation? They are right to do so. They want their country back from asshole Bush and the rest of the Washington DC Imperial scum.]

OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION

BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!

Occupation Goons Beat Doctor

03 March 2005 By David Enders in Baghdad, Independent News & Media (UK) Ltd.

At Yarmuk Hospital, staff threatened to refuse treatment to soldiers after a doctor was beaten by Iraqi troops.

The incident occurred after a doctor refused to stop talking on a mobile phone, which troops feared might be used to set off a bomb. The doctor was beaten with rifle butts, and doctors at the hospital only agreed to treat soldiers again after a military commander agreed that soldiers would no longer carry weapons inside the hospital.

“Democracy” Occupation Style: Samarra Demonstration Blocked

05 March 2005 Aljazeera

Iraqi police in the city of Samarra, 120km north of Baghdad, imposed a curfew from 07.00am to 9.00pm as it sought to prevent an anti-American demonstration called for by the local chapter of Association of Muslim Scholars, according to resigning mayor Taha al-Handira.

The mayor had quit in protest against what he saw as restrictive and tough security measures imposed by US and Iraqi forces on the city.

“Democracy” Occupation Style: Iraqi Newspaper Condemns US Arrest Of Journalist

2005-03-05 (Xinhuanet)

An Iraqi mainstream newspaper on Saturday condemned the arrest of its journalist by US forces.

Majed Fadhel Zbon, senior editor of the al-Furat newspaper, was arrested by US troops on the Iraqi-Syrian border along with a number of Iraqis as traveling from Damascus to

Baghdad, Saker al-Juboury, chief editor said in a statement, a copy of which was obtained by Xinhua.

"We demand that US forces release Zbon, and we vehemently condemn the US military's act that indicates its disdain to the Iraqi media personnel and the fact that they failed to capture those who are responsible for insecurity and instability," said the statement.

US forces arrested Zbon although he presented papers proving his trip to Damascus was for "cultural activities along with an Iraqi delegation representing the Iraqi Union of Novelists," it said.

Zbon has been detained for 10 days, it added.

Al-Furat, an independent newspaper and one of the most influential newspapers in Iraq, made debut after the toppling of the former regime in 2003.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Soldier Wounded In Afghanistan

March 04, 2005 Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A homemade bomb exploded near a convoy of vehicles in eastern Afghanistan, wounding a soldier of the U.S.-led coalition, the U.S. military said Friday.

The soldier suffered minor injuries in Thursday's blast in Kunar province and was transported to a coalition base at the provincial capital Asadabad for treatment.

Received:

Journalists Against the War

From: "Elizabeth Weill-Greenberg
Sent: Saturday, March 05, 2005 7:46 PM
Subject: Journalists Against the War

I'd like this website (www.journalistsagainsthewar.blogspot.com/) to be a place where journalists who oppose the war in Iraq can share leads, story ideas, events, articles and contacts. **As journalists we can help stop this war.**

It is our job and duty to expose the lies the Bush administration tells and to hold them accountable.

It is our job and duty to show how this war affects our communities -- from New York City to Skokie. And it is our job and duty to tell the stories of the activists, soldiers, veterans and educators working for peace.

As journalists we must take a stand and not absolve ourselves of responsibility by claiming we're simply being "objective."

And please sign the petition -- Journalists Say No to War -- at <http://www.ipetitions.com/campaigns/journalists/>.

Together, we can bring the troops home.
Peace,
Elizabeth

Web Copies

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The following that we know of have also posted issues: www.gifightback.org,
<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/>, www.williambowles.info/gispecial,
<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/gi-special.htm>**

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