

GI SPECIAL 3A78:



**Mike Hoffman, Organizer, Iraq Veterans Against The War (by Caine Rose)
Fayetteville, March 19.2005**

GI Special Comment:

Let's Get To Work

[Remarks given at Fayetteville, North Carolina, home of Ft. Bragg, at the rally 3.19.05.
Thomas Barton, GI Special.]

Greetings from New York City Labor Against The War; GI Special; Traveling Soldier
newsletter, produced by Pham Binh; and the Military Project organizing committee.

Here is a blinding flash of the obvious.

During the Vietnam war, the anti-war movement at home was necessary to stop the war,
but it was not sufficient.

The resistance in Vietnam was necessary to stop the war, but it was not sufficient.

But the rebellion against the war in the armed forces was both necessary and sufficient to stop the war. And the war stopped.

It was the greatest insurrection against an Imperial war since the rebellion of the Russian army in 1917.

But you don't have to believe me about that, and you shouldn't.

Check out:

Heinl, Jr. Col. Robert D.
THE COLLAPSE OF THE ARMED FORCES
Armed Forces Journal, 1971

Lots of soldiers can fight in wars.

It takes something very special in soldiers to stop one. Honor and respect to them all.

Respect also to the civilians who forged the links to the anti-war troops, gave them aid and comfort, and helped make that rebellion possible.

Now it is time for us to follow the instruction of the prophet:

Go thou and do likewise.

Today, the anti war movement is necessary to stop the war in Iraq, but it is not sufficient.

Today, the Iraqi resistance to Imperial invasion and occupation is necessary to stop the war, but it is not sufficient.

But the coming rebellion in the armed forces will be both necessary and sufficient. It may not come as soon as we might wish, but it will come. And the war will stop.

But you don't have to take my word for that, and you shouldn't.

Here is what one 1st ID member from a group of anti-war soldiers in Iraq wrote to GI Special:

“Before any soldier risks going to prison he should realize that his ability to communicate with other troops will be limited.

“We choose our battles and continue to speak out in our underground action.

“There has to be a point when we reach a high enough number of troops in our peace effort that a unified boycott of all military action will have a desired effect.”

Nothing is more important today than forging new links with the troops turning against this war.

Our job is to help them do what is necessary to stop this war and end forever the power of the predators who rule in this society.

If we act together to take back our lives and our futures from those who would steal both, there is no force on earth that can stop us.

We need our troops by our side.

Without them we are truly lost.

With them, everything is possible.

Let's get to work.

Fayetteville: "I Didn't Lose My Son. I Know Right Where He Is. He's In A Grave In Baccaville, And I Know Who Put Him There: George Bush"

3.20.05 <http://nc.indymedia.org/>

On Saturday over 4800 people came to Fayetteville, home of Fort Bragg, to protest the war in Iraq.

Sponsored by the North Carolina Council of Churches, United for Peace and Justice, scores of other social justice groups, the demonstration and rally marked the 2nd anniversary of the commencement of war in Iraq, and brought together military members and their families, and civilians.

Cindy Sheehan, a member of Military Families Speak Out, said from the stage at Rowan Park: "I often get introduced as a mother who lost her son in Iraq. I didn't lose my son. I know right where he is. He's in a grave in Baccaville, and I know who put him there: George Bush, and the rest of the arrogant and ignorant Neo-cons who murdered my son and tens of thousands of other innocent people."

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Another Marine Killed In Anbar

22 March 2005 Aljazeera.Net

The US military reported the death of a marine in the western Anbar province.

The marine, assigned to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, was killed in action on Monday in Anbar province which includes the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi, the US military said in a statement. No further details were given.

One Killed, Three Injured In Attack: "In My Eyes It's Very Unfair."

Mar 21 Elissa Burnell, News Channel 11

A local soldier has been killed in Iraq...and others have been injured.

Greeneville's 278th regimental combat team has suffered it's first losses in Iraq since their deployment in November.

Specialist Paul Thomason of Jefferson City was killed when his convoy was attacked near Tikrit late last week. His family was notified yesterday.

Says his wife Amanda, "my children have lost the best dad that anyone could ever ask for and I've lost my best friend, my best friend that I've ever had in my life -- I've lost him."

At the unit's homebase in Greeneville many are feeling the shock of these first losses. Specialist Anthony Lambert was one of those injured. His wife Renita let out a tired smile as she said, "I'm just thanking the dear God in heaven that he's still alive."

When Mrs. Lambert received the call on Sunday it was from a number she didn't recognize and then when the first question the caller asked was, "when was the last time you talked to your husband?" she thought she might be dealing with a scam artist.

But she wasn't, it was an officer calling to tell her of her husband's extensive injuries.

"It's still not real," says Lambert.

With several broken bones and lying in an induced coma...her husband is alive...and on his way home.

Adds Amanda Thomason, "I guess in his eyes he was doing what he thought was right. In my eyes it's very unfair."

Thomason's eyes will no longer be able to meet her husband's.

Lambert is making sure she'll be at Walter Reed Medical Center Tuesday night to meet hers.

"I'm gonna hug his neck and give him the biggest kiss he's had in a long time."

Our sister station WVLT in Knoxville is reporting three of the units soldiers were injured in the attack.

Hampton Native, Army Medic Killed



3.22.05 (AP)

Friends say Pfc. Lee Lewis Jr. was a funny but tough man who loved God and had a "servant's heart." He was the sort of guy who, instead of trashtalking, would help a player up after knocking him down on the football field.

The 28-year-old Hampton native and Army medic was shot and killed by small-arms fire Friday afternoon in Baghdad's Sadr City area. The Army said he was shot in an ally by a guerrilla 250 feet away.

He was stationed with the 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Ga.

The former athlete was "just one of those young men you wanted your son to turn out like," said Curtis Newsome, assistant head football coach at James Madison University who once coached Lewis at Kecoughtan High School. Lewis played not only football but basketball, track and soccer in high school and local sports clubs.

Lewis graduated from Kecoughtan in 1994 and later attended Virginia State University and Old Dominion University. He talked of fusing sports and medicine, friends said.

Lewis married Telia Jackson in May of 2003. He raised Telia's daughter, Justina, and planned to adopt her. He joined the Army in 2003 as an Army medic.

"It didn't surprise me at all that he was a medic, somebody who wanted to help somebody," said Thomas Moore, who coached Lewis at the Fox Hill Athletic Association. Moore said he had expected Lewis to return to Hampton to practice medicine someday.

Hampton Mayor Ross Kearney once directed Lewis' youth group at St. Joseph Catholic Church. He said the fact that Lewis didn't quit the church when he started playing football and instead brought his teammates to services said a lot about his character. **And both he and Moore say a lot of that came from his mother and retired Army lieutenant colonel father.**

Guam Son Hurt In Mess Hall Mortar Attack; Army Fails To Notify Family



Photo courtesy of Capt. Eddie Guerrero

March 23, 2005 By Steve Limtiaco, Pacific Daily News

Army Spc. Michael Guerrero, 25, a 1998 graduate of George Washington High School, was seriously injured during a mortar attack on March 18 while deployed in Iraq, said his wife, Tara Guerrero.

Tara Guerrero is scheduled to fly to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., today, along with Michael Guerrero's mother and sister.

Michael Guerrero is in stable condition in Walter Reed's intensive care unit, said Joaquin Perez, a spokesman for Guam Delegate Madeleine Bordallo's Guam district office. The fact that Guerrero was moved to the U.S. mainland so quickly could speak to the severity of his injuries, Perez said.

"I'm not too sure exactly what happened. I'm hearing two different stories," Tara Guerrero, 28, said. "All I know is it was during lunchtime (at a mess hall) when he was injured by a mortar round... He is seriously injured."

Perez, of the congresswoman's office, said the military for some reason failed to immediately notify Guerrero's family that he had been injured. Although he was injured last week, his family was officially notified Monday, Perez said -- a delay that the congressional office plans to look into.

Michael Guerrero, whose family lives in Dededo, joined the Army Reserve in December 2003, his wife said, and he worked as a stock clerk for DFS Guam before he was deployed in October 2004.

His deployment was supposed to be for 18 months, she said, and **his most recent post was Camp Danger, in Tikrit, Iraq.**

Guerrero is with the 793rd Engineering Division, Guam Army Reserves, according to Bordallo's office. The congressional office has not received word of any other Guam soldiers injured during that attack.

Tara Guerrero said she does not know where the mortar attack happened or the nature of her husband's injuries, although she said she heard he has undergone two surgeries.

“A Number” Of US Soldiers Wounded In Mosul; Ramadi Base Attacked

3/23/2005 Anatolia.com Inc. & 3. 22 & 23.05 Aljazeera + Agencies & (Xinhuanet)

MOSUL, Iraq - Two US and two Iraqi soldiers were wounded in a car bombing in Mosul on Wednesday, the US military said in a statement.

The attack was against a convoy, it said, adding that one Iraqi and one US soldier were returned to duty with minor wounds.

Four Iraqis were killed and a number of US soldiers injured on Tuesday in an explosion caused by an explosive device, planted on Sinharib bridge in central Mosul city, Aljazeera reported.

A US Humvee was also damaged in the explosion.

In Haditha, a US patrol near the local general hospital was hit by an explosive device.

A US base in Ramadi was attacked with mortar rounds and US soldiers immediately sealed off the roads leading to the city.

**TOXIC ENVIRONMENT:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**



U.S. Army soldiers take cover at the scene after a car was destroyed by an explosion in Baghdad, March 23, 2005. (AP Photo/Mohammed Uraibi)

TROOP NEWS

MURDER?

**U.S. Command Refuses To Let
Italians Examine Dead Italian's Car**

March 23, 2005 Associated Press

ROME — The U.S. military command in Iraq has blocked two Italian policemen from examining the car in which an Italian intelligence agent was shot to death in Baghdad, a newspaper said Wednesday.

Corriere della Sera said that the policemen were about to leave when the Italian Embassy in Baghdad received an order from the U.S. command on Monday to abort the mission for security concerns.

The car, a Toyota Corolla, is still in American hands, at Baghdad airport where it was originally rented.

Italian authorities say that examining the vehicle is key to assessing what happened on March 4, when U.S. troops opened fire on the car carrying secret service agent Nicola Calipari, another intelligence officer and journalist Giuliana Sgrena, who had just been released after a month of captivity in Iraq.

Calipari died on the spot, while the other two were wounded.

Calipari's killing outraged Italians and prompted Premier Silvio Berlusconi to demand that Washington provide an explanation.

MISERABLE SHIT-EATING ASSHOLES IN COMMAND TRY TO STOP SOLDIER FROM GOING TO HIS DAUGHTERS FUNERAL



SPC Robbie Winfrey

3.23.05 Christi Lowe for News 2

He was miles away from home, fighting the war in Iraq, when his baby girl was stillborn. But the army would not let the 278th soldier come back on emergency leave.

Thanks to News 2's story and help from a U.S. Congressman, the grieving father is on his way home for the funeral.

Miranda Lata got the call in the middle of Tuesday night. Her fiancé, SPC Robbie Winfrey, is on his way back to Nashville, so he can say goodbye to the baby girl he'll never know.

"I was so thankful," said Lata. "I was so happy that he's finally coming home."

Winfrey, a fueller with the 278th National Guard, was in Iraq when his pregnant fiancée found out the five-month-old unborn child had died. But the Army refused to give the grief-stricken soldier emergency leave. Stunned, Lata's father asked News 2 to get involved.

"The military wasn't very cooperative and the Red Cross and the doctor," said Rick Lata. "We had to reach out for someone."

SPC Winfrey should be home by Thursday night.

"He is excited," said Miranda Lata. "He is so happy that he is coming home and he's going to get to be here with me and his son, and our daughter...to go through this with us."

"Robbie would still be over there tore up and fighting," said Rick Lata. "And it wouldn't do any of us any good that way."

Unless an earlier flight becomes available, Robbie Winfrey will still most likely miss his baby's funeral. But he'll be there for his fiancée and two other children on Friday, when Maryann Lata-Winfrey is laid to rest.

"Whoever made this possible, thank you," said Miranda Lata. "I really needed him here. I can't wait to see him. I can't wait for him to be here."

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT 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)

The Amazing Hypocrites:

How About “The Soldiers Put in Harm's Way For Lies and Betrayals Emergency Relief Act”

However, I have one question for Congress and for George ("When in doubt, it is always better to err on the side of life"- Arizona, March 22, 2005) Bush, though: Why does Terry Schiavo deserve to live more than my son, Spc. Casey Austin Sheehan?

Casey was sent to Iraq to be killed by the same pack of cowards and murderers who so "valiantly" and tirelessly fought for the right for Ms. Schiavo to live!

22 March 2005 By Cindy Sheehan

This past weekend was the two-year anniversary of the beginning of "shock and awe" of the US Government's aggression in Iraq. If all you did was watch CNN, FOX News, or MSNBC, you would never have known.

There were protests all across our nation. CNN called the over 800 protest events "barely a ripple."

I spoke at a protest in Fayetteville, North Carolina where there were right around 4000 people. 4000 people full of energy and committed to the task of peace and justice and reclaiming our country from the sociopathic maniacs who are in power right now.

So what were the hypocrites in DC doing while much of the country was working for peace ... either at rallies, marches, or candlelight vigils?

They were conducting an emergency smokescreen session in Congress to draft legislation for one woman: Terry Schiavo. Terry's story is tragic and her family has suffered unbearable pain for many years with her "persistent vegetative state." I feel so much compassion for her mother, who has had to watch her daughter slowly waste away. My heart truly breaks for everyone in Terry Schiavo's family.

However, I have one question for Congress and for George ("When in doubt, it is always better to err on the side of life"- Arizona, March 22, 2005) Bush, though: Why does Terry Schiavo deserve to live more than my son, Spc. Casey Austin Sheehan?

Casey was misused and abused by his Commander-in-Chief and executive branch that boldly lied to the American public and the less gullible citizens of other countries about the reasons for the invasion of Iraq.

Casey was sent to Iraq to be killed by the same pack of cowards and murderers who so "valiantly" and tirelessly fought for the right for Ms. Schiavo to live!

The green light for Casey's murder was given by a Congress who expediently abrogated their constitutional rights to a president whose foreign policies are not based on reality or even loosely based on any kind of Christian moral values. Someone needs to give Congress basic lessons on the Constitution: Declaring War - YES; Meddling in a family's private tragedy - NO!

As far as I am concerned, the amazing hypocrites in our Government are not making up for killing thousands of innocent Americans and Iraqis by passing emergency legislation to save one life.

Every member of Bush's executive branch (past and present) and every member of Congress who voted to give George the authority to invade Iraq have innocent blood on their hands.

For the next State of the Union address, maybe the hypocrites in Congress should shamefacedly display blood-soaked hands, instead of proudly wriggling fingers stained with ink to symbolize sham Iraqi elections.

From Bush signing into Texas law The Futile Care Bill, the culture of the death penalty in Texas (and around our nation), proposed cuts in Medicaid, laws restricting medical malpractice lawsuits and Chapter 7 bankruptcy for families who have incurred huge medical bills, this shameful Congress should go back on vacation and go back to their home districts and look for people who have been devastated by the illegal occupation of Iraq.

Mr. Tom ("We should investigate every avenue before we take the life of a living human being") DeLay should be outraged for the soldiers who have been murdered because of the cowardice of him and his colleagues.

He should shed real tears for the soldiers' families, whose lives have been destroyed by their murders.

DeLay should search for a homeless Iraq Vet and pass legislation to find him a job and an apartment. Mr. Tom (who cried over Ms. Schiavo's hunger pains) DeLay should go to Walter Reed hospital and find one of our kids who has been horribly maimed by the betrayal of his government and pass legislation to pay for his meals. After 3 months, the wounded soldier has to pay for his meals with his own money.

Maybe Mr. Tom (Crocodile Tears) DeLay should find a soldier who has returned from this abomination of a war who is suffering from PTSD and pass a law to get him the help he needs before the soldier's dad finds him hanging by a garden hose in the basement.

Maybe if Tom DeLay and the rest of the members of Congress who voted for the Terry Schiavo Emergency Relief Act, and who voted to give George Bush the authority to go to war and who voted to give George Bush more money to waste in Iraq, sought out and talked to us citizens whose lives have been tragically impaired by the invasion/occupation of Iraq and could hear our stories, they might rush back to DC to vote to rip the authority out of the president's hands and end the immoral occupation of Iraq.

One thing this "Circus of Hypocrisy" has shown me is that Congress can accomplish something when it sets its mind to it. Now it is time to accomplish something important ... and I am not talking about steroids use in baseball.

I have a great idea!

Although Mr. Tom (Politician Protection Act: HB 913) DeLay is not my Congressman (hmmm ... don't think he's Terry Schiavo's Congressman, either) maybe I should ask him to introduce the Soldiers Put in Harm's Way for Lies and Betrayals Emergency Relief Act ... and force the amazing hypocrites to bring our troops home, now!

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.

More IRR Called Up: Idiot Army Secretary Says "We're Going To Appeal To Patriotism" In Hopes Parents Will Want Dead Kids

[Thanks to PB and PG for sending this in.]

3.23.05 By ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer

The Army said more people in the Individual Ready Reserve - those no longer in uniform and not obligated to train - are going to be hearing from the Army in the weeks ahead.

The Army has revised upward the number of IRR soldiers it plans to put on active duty, from the 4,402 announced last summer to 4,653.

Of those given mobilization orders so far, 370 have failed to report for duty, according to Lt. Col. Pamela Hart, an Army spokeswoman. An additional 2,229 have asked for delays in their reporting dates or for exemptions.

Army Secretary Francis J. Harvey also disclosed that the Army is "looking at" changing its policy on having more than one sibling in a combat zone at the same

time. He did not say how the policy might be altered, and he declined to say more about the subject, other than to indicate that it came up when he visited the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, where wounded U.S. troops are treated.

The current policy is that if one of two siblings in a combat zone is killed, the Army will consider removing the remaining one from the combat zone if the surviving soldier or his parents request it, according to spokeswoman Hart.

Lt. Col. Tom Collins, spokesman for Harvey, said later that Harvey was in the early stages of thinking through the whole issue and that no proposed changes had been developed yet.

The Army is forecasting that all three elements - active, Guard and Reserve - will fall short of their targets for March and April. That means they will have to make up the lost ground this summer - traditionally the best recruiting season - in order to meet their full-year goals.

"I'm clearly not going to give up," Harvey said. "At this stage we still have six months to go" before the recruiting year ends Sept. 30. "I've challenged our human resource people to get as innovative as they can. And even as we speak we've got a number of new ideas."

One of those new approaches is designed to persuade more parents to steer their children to the Army.

"We're going to appeal to patriotism," he said.

"And There's No Way Malcolm Is Going Off And Getting Killed For Nothing."

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

03/14/2005 By Ron Harris, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

As he made his way to the cafeteria, Malcolm Cotton spotted the Army recruiters passing out video games and making their pitches from a long table they had set up in a hallway at his school.

The recruiters made joining sound oh so terribly good - a \$20,000 bonus for enlisting, \$9,000 more if enlistees shipped out in the next 30 days and even better, \$70,000 for college.

Cotton, 18, a senior at Gateway High School, just walked on by without pausing, almost with disdain.

"I love this country and I will defend this country if someone is really attacking us," he said. "But I don't agree with this war. I believe it's really nonsense. It's about power and taking oil. I really don't think we need to be over there fighting."

Increasingly, young African-Americans have been turning away from the Army, many for the same reasons as Cotton, the military says. They don't agree with the war. They dislike President George W. Bush's handling of the military and foreign policies, and they are not willing to fight and possibly die for a cause they don't believe in.

The number of African-American recruits, a cornerstone of the Army in recent years, has plummeted, the military says.

According to a study by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation at the University of California, Berkeley, the number of African-American deaths in Iraq is proportionately lower than the number of African-Americans in the military.

African-Americans, who make up about 20 percent of all active-duty personnel, represented 16.7 percent of all deaths during the phase of the war that ended May 1, 2003, according to the study. They have made up 12.2 percent of the deaths during the occupation as of September last year, the study found.

In September of last year, while the rest of America was nearly evenly split on the war, a survey of 850 African-Americans by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington think tank, found that 72 percent of blacks disapproved of the war.

And that attitude is now reflected in African-American youth, the military found. Only 36 percent of black youth felt the war was justified, compared with 61 percent of whites. Meanwhile, 80 percent of blacks and 71 percent of women reported that the war made them less likely to join the military, the study said.

The military's recruiting difficulties are expected to persist as long as many parents, clergy and other influential people in the lives of black youth are against the war. Among them is the Rev. Donald Hunter, pastor of New Sunnyside Missionary Baptist Church in St. Louis.

"I have always been against it," Hunter said. "I am really pushing my youngsters to go and get an education." Hunter said he believes that if he took a poll, about 95 percent of his 1,100-family congregation would say they are opposed to the war.

"I've got a brother-in-law and others in my congregation who are still mentally messed up from the Vietnam War," he said. "And this war, we went in under false pretenses. Even if there were weapons of mass destruction, they were not a threat to the United States, and yet all these lives are being lost."

Fueling that consciousness are parents such as George Cotton, Malcolm's father. It is parents, other relatives and influential peers that recruiters like Wadyko must counter in order to win African-American recruits.

"Yes, we talk about the war and how senseless it is, and how different it is from World War I and World War II," said Cotton, who teaches political science at St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley.

"They know that the war in Iraq is not about freedom and justice. It's about power and oil, and I think people understand that."

Cotton's wife is so adamant that her son won't be going to the military that she tears up every piece of recruiting mail that comes to their house without ever opening it.

"I think young people have been sold a bill of goods," Cotton said. "And there's no way Malcolm is going off and getting killed for nothing."

“He Suggests That Most U.S. Troops In Iraq Oppose The War, But Says They Can't Say So”

Mar. 22, 2005 By JIM WARREN, Lexington Herald-Leader (Lexington, Ky.)

He pictures America as a country run by the rich, where average citizens have little say. He suggests that most U.S. troops in Iraq oppose the war, but says they can't say so. And he says the news media feed support for the war by picturing only zealous troops, never the wounded or discouraged.

TORONTO - It is the kind of night that could drive even hearty Canadians indoors - temperatures in the 20s, a biting wind, white flakes falling from a late winter storm that already has added 8 inches to the towering windrows of snow lining Toronto's curbsides from earlier storms.

The nasty weather, however, hasn't kept about 100 enthusiastic people from packing into a University of Toronto classroom for a recent rally in support of American soldiers who have deserted from the U.S. military.

One of those deserters was the night's lead speaker - Army Specialist Darrell Anderson, 22, of Lexington, Ky.

Since arriving here Jan. 6, Anderson has become perhaps the most visible member of the tiny group of U.S. deserters - Canadian supporters prefer to call them "war resisters" - seeking refuge in Canada.

Anderson has become an effective, if unpolished, public speaker, appearing at numerous Canadian peace rallies like the one this bitter March night, sponsored by Students for Peace in Iraq and the War Resisters Support Campaign.

He pictures America as a country run by the rich, where average citizens have little say. He suggests that most U.S. troops in Iraq oppose the war, but says they can't say so. And he says the news media feed support for the war by picturing only zealous troops, never the wounded or discouraged.

Anderson's Canadian attorney, Jeffry House, said Anderson has become a favorite with the media and the Canadian peace movement because he actually served in Iraq and was wounded, unlike most other deserters here.

The Invisible Wounded: Injured U.S. Soldiers Arrive Home Under Cover of Darkness; 25,000 And Counting Flown Out Of The War

The reason why, the soldiers say, is because if the army can make a determination that a soldier's problems are not caused by combat, then the army or the Pentagon does not have to pay, in other words have to pay medical care for those people or money to those people, remuneration to those people for the rest of their lives. In other words, it looks like it could be a money saving maneuver, sadly.

[Thanks to Desmond, who sent this in.]

March 15th, 2005 Amy Goodman, Democracy Now

AMY GOODMAN: We're talking to Mark Benjamin, who has written a series of pieces on wounded soldiers, one called "Behind the Walls of Ward 54."

AMY GOODMAN: You were able to see one of these shipments of wounded soldiers. Can you describe your experience and how you went about it?

MARK BENJAMIN: I saw several shipments of these soldiers, actually, at Walter Reed Army Medical Center coming in. This was without the army's consent. The army said I was not allowed to see the arrival of soldiers to protect their privacy. However, I didn't know who these soldiers were, and I even obtained some images of the soldiers arriving, and I just made sure that their identities were not clear in the photos that I obtained. It's a pretty shocking process, to give you an idea of what it looks like.

One night I was very close to the delivery of wounded at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and two soldiers, just as an example -- the soldiers arrive, as you can imagine, on stretchers. They're unloaded out of these buses. They're white buses that stack the

wounded in the back on stretchers. They also arrive in ambulances, sometimes even in unmarked black vans, which is a very strange twist. One night, for example, I saw two soldiers unloaded from these vans that were apparently intubated, meaning they could not breathe on their own.

They were sort of swollen looking, very young. I mean, to me they looked like kids, of course, and they -- in other words, there's a large machine strapped over the top of their bed and a tube into their mouth. They looked like they were totally unconscious. One of them looked like there might have been -- could have been blood in a urine bag on the side of the bed.

I mean, these soldiers were in very, very bad shape. I didn't even know that they could transport people overseas that couldn't even breath on their own.

So we're talking about very, very seriously wounded people coming into the United States, and we just -- we don't see them.

What is interesting about this whole process is that all of the flights of wounded into the United States are scheduled to land at night. The wounded are arriving under the cover of darkness.

Also, at least at the two hospitals, Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Bethesda Naval Medical Center, photographers and the press are barred from seeing, watching, or taking photos of the wounded arriving.

So, if you take those two facts, the fact that the wounded are only arriving at night at Andrews Air Force Base, and you take the fact that we in the press are not allowed to see them when they go to the two main hospitals here, we have a situation where we're several years into the war now, and **we've seen essentially no reporting or no images of these wounded arriving; and to give you just a idea of the scope of this situation, if you take the wounded soldiers and then you add in the number of hurt soldiers that the Pentagon doesn't generally report (in other words, soldiers that are hurt in vehicle accidents and so on) we have 25,000 soldiers who have been flown out of the battlefields, mostly from Iraq, some from Afghanistan.**

Most of those come back to the United States — 25,000 — and images or reporting on them arriving in the United States is almost unheard of.

Soldiers from this war who suffer acute wounds, amputees, head injuries, bullet wounds, you know, people that are blown up by roadside bombs, get excellent, excellent medical care, or that's what they report to me.

They get off those battlefields very, very quickly. They're bought back to Walter Reed. You'll see them -- you will see their good news stories on TV where reporters are allowed to see them rehabilitating there at Walter Reed.

What is interesting about that is that soldiers who are hurt in their mind, soldiers who have debilitating, really scary post-traumatic stress disorder -- we're talking about people that are acutely homicidal, acutely suicidal after what they've seen or had to do in Iraq -- their treatment, the way they describe their treatment at Walter Reed is extremely substandard.

There was -- of the 14 soldiers that I tracked over one year, two of them I know or said reported suicide attempts over that year.

Of the 14 soldiers that I tracked, all of them rated -- after being at Walter Reed for usually at the very least months -- said they were either the same or worse off psychologically after getting what Walter Reed calls treatment there, which I do not think was an encouraging trend.

And of the soldiers that were put out of the army and handed off to the veterans' -- Department of Veterans' Affairs, which is, of course, separate from the Pentagon, those soldiers were found -- **the army found that their problems were not related to combat. In other words, the army found that they had other problems, preexisting conditions, in most cases, anyway, which is a disturbing trend because these are people that the army found fit for service.**

The army seemed to think they were psychologically in good enough shape to go to war and later on seemed to find out that their problems were their own.

They don't get the kind of therapy they deserve.

They don't get one-on-one therapy. They don't -- they're treated by not even doctors, they're medical students, and the entire time that they are at Walter Reed, the army seems to be more bent on trying to determine that their problems were not, in fact, caused by the war and that, in fact, these soldiers were just crazy of their own accord.

The reason why, the soldiers say, is because if the army can make a determination that a soldier's problems are not caused by combat, then the army or the Pentagon does not have to pay, in other words have to pay medical care for those people or money to those people, remuneration to those people for the rest of their lives. In other words, it looks like it could be a money saving maneuver, sadly.

Huge Increase In Damaged Trucks From Iraq; War Profiteers Stock At High

March 22, 2005 By RYAN NAKASHIMA, AP

Paul Walheim has seen hundreds of U.S. military trucks come back from Iraq -- encrusted with sand, sometimes riddled with bullet holes. One was crumpled beyond use after an attack by a suicide bomber.

His job is to strip the vehicles down to their bare bones -- just a frame with no wheels -- and turn them around in 120 days for a second tour of duty.

Walheim is a contract manager at Oshkosh Truck Corp., a company that's one of the top vehicle suppliers to the U.S. military that's also taken the rehabilitation of trucks pummeled by the fighting in Iraq.

Since the war began in March 2003, Walheim has seen the number of damaged trucks returned for refurbishment leap from 20 to 30 a month to about 500 in the last two months.

Some trucks come in with bent frames, or radiators smashed into the engine from when a convoy apparently came to an abrupt halt and caused a crash. Often they have just been worn down without proper maintenance -pushed to the brink during the heat of battle.

The vehicles known as HEMTTs, or Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks, and HETs, or Heavy Equipment Transporters, are the backbone of the U.S. military, carrying tanks to the battlefield, and hauling gas, guns and ammunition.

With 13,000 HEMTTs in the U.S. Army fleet and 2,000 HETs, many of them two decades old, the military is working to modernize its fleet.

The Army aims to keep 90 percent of its trucks operationally ready, but heavy use since the war began has forced it to rely on Oshkosh for major repairs, said U.S. Army spokesman Don Jarosz. So the Army entered a four-year open contract with Oshkosh in December to have trucks from Iraq refitted.

"Our estimates are that approximately 15 percent of our deployed fleets will require the higher level repairs at Oshkosh," Jarosz said.

The company's stock is currently trading near the 52-week high of \$81.41 it reached in early March, after Oshkosh said it was adding 300,000 square feet of manufacturing and office space. The expansion is being undertaken primarily to handle the growth in its defense business. Oshkosh employs more than 7,000 people worldwide.

A tour through the snowy "graveyard" where the returned trucks await repairs in this eastern Wisconsin city shows a few signs of where the trucks have been.

Serial number 35044 has markings that show it was assigned to the 3rd Cavalry, 1st Squadron, Headquarters, Headquarters Troops. It has a hole in the cab's roof, probably for a .50-caliber M-2 machine gun. Walheim imagined the unlucky soldier forced to man the turret. "He was probably hauling ammo for somebody."

One truck has a sand-caked pair of goggles inside. Another, a sunflower seed shell and a cigarette butt.

Stories of where trucks have been pass down from driver to handler as the trucks make their way back to Oshkosh by ship, rail and trailer.

Veterans, It's Time To Fight Again

March 8, 2005 New York Times

To the Editor:

Bravo on "A Fighting Strategy for Veterans" (editorial, March 5). Veterans should do what they did in war: fight for all Americans and for the values of this country, for equality and justice.

I know of no veteran who risked his life for a tax cut for the wealthy but plenty who fought for a compassionate country that takes care of its less well off, children and the elderly.

President Bush's cynical strategy to try to use us to achieve his unconscionable domestic cuts will not work. But there is a more cynical game afoot.

The administration is raising trial balloons to pit veterans' benefits and retired pay against active-duty needs, especially the need for more, higher cost systems.

Veterans must not only fight for the disadvantaged; we must fight for the needed equipment for our troops, but not unnecessary systems.

Armor kits for Humvees are not expensive but are not being provided, while \$250 million-per-copy aircraft are.

So veterans must fight a two-front war with this administration. Fortunately, we know how to fight.

Richard L. Klass

Arlington, Va., March 6, 2005

The writer, a retired Air Force colonel and aerospace marketing consultant, is president, Veterans Institute for Security and Democracy.

To the Editor:

If the president uses his proposed cuts in veterans' benefits as a "bargaining chip," it will be among the most despicable ploys used by this administration.

President Bush's bellicose approach to world politics has generated thousands of new veterans in need of medical care. Now he wants to cut back on that care almost before the veterans become eligible.

Veterans should use all the clout they have to pressure Congress to force Mr. Bush to acquire some fiscal responsibility.

Taxes should not have been cut while fighting a war. His war.

Robert W. Vitolo
Waterville, Me., March 5, 2005

To the Editor:

A strategy for veterans is to remember how this administration has treated them and those who serve.

Too few troops were sent to secure Iraq; those sent had inadequate personal and vehicle armor. Meanwhile, families scabbled to buy survival gear for their loved ones.

Now the Republicans are establishing a \$250 yearly sign-up fee for veterans wishing to use the services of the V.A. hospitals, establishing new V.A. hospital fees and increasing V.A. prescription co-payments.

Top this off with tax cuts for the rich.

Any veteran who supports this administration's treatment of serving troops and veterans is betraying the band of brothers.

Donald Edge
Cherry Hill, N.J., March 7, 2005

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

3. 22 & 23.05 Aljazeera + Agencies & Mar 22 By TRACI CARL, Associated Press Writer

Two policemen were killed while defusing a roadside bomb in Baghdad.

In the Abu Ghraib suburb, west of Baghdad, Iraqi police found two beheaded bodies abandoned on the highway. The men were identified as members of the country's fledgling army.

Morgue officials in southern Kut said they had received a half-dozen corpses of Iraqi army soldiers with bound hands and bullet-riddled heads and torsos.

Each of the soldiers had their hands tied behind their backs, with multiple gunshot wounds to the head and chest, according to Hadi Al-Itabi, head of the morgue at Al-Zahraa Hospital in Kut, 160 km southeast of Baghdad.

Six Iraqi soldiers were reported captured Monday in Anbar province, west of Baghdad, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Halt The Anniversary Rallies & End The Damn War

March 23, 2005 By RON JACOBS (excerpt), [anti-allawi-group]

We've got to do more than mark their anniversaries and we've got to take the initiative. Leftists all around me complain that there is no left in the USA. If there isn't I wonder, than who are you and who am I?

Anarchists hit the streets with their fellow travelers; and the liberals against the US war on the world seem to be waiting for their savior-some kind of Democratic wolf in peacenik clothing, I assume.

Meanwhile all around, death, destruction and deception go on.

Congress votes another hundred billion for the war industry under the guise of staying the course and too much of the country is wondering if Mark McGwire took steroids and/or did Michael Jackson wore pajamas to court today.

Bottom line-this war is a war fought to maintain and (if the war planners can pull it off) and expand the US empire.

This means that the Democrats will only help the antiwar cause so much.

After all, they profit from the current situation just like the GOP. To oppose this war at its fundamental level, we can't look to the democrats. After all, Bill Clinton's bombs and cruise missiles killed and destroyed with the same impunity as George Bush's. The cause of most of the world's problems is not George Bush, it's US imperialism.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Afghan Goat Fuck Marches On: Guerrillas Attack: Silly General Babbles Bullshit: Occupation Forces Kill Kid

March 23, 2005 Associated Press

Guerrillas launched an overnight attack on American and Afghan military positions, officials said Wednesday.

Insurgents fired at least eight rockets at a U.S. base in the southeastern province of Khost and turned rockets and guns against three border posts late Tuesday, the American military said.

Mohammed Nawab, a senior Afghan commander in Khost, told The Associated Press that U.S. helicopters had ferried ammunition to forces defending the border posts.

He blamed Taliban or al-Qaida militants for the attacks and said they had come from the Pakistani side of the border.

In eastern Afghanistan, U.S.-led troops accidentally shot to death an Afghan boy during a search operation, the military said. The boy was killed when troops from the American-led coalition opened fire as they pursued a suspected bomb-maker in a village near Asadabad, 120 miles east of Kabul, the military said in a statement.

In another incident, a roadside bomb damaged a Humvee near the southern city of Kandahar on Tuesday, U.S. spokeswoman Lt. Cindy Moore said. The soldiers on board were unhurt.

On Wednesday, NATO's top commander said Afghanistan was stable and that recent attacks were no more than "random acts of violence." [Hello? That's what guerrilla war is. Get it? No, of course not. The general is concerned with sound bites for the press, not reality. Just another politician wearing a funny suit and fancy ribbons.]

"I don't think we're facing anything that remotely resembles an organized insurgency," Marine Corps Gen. James L. Jones said at the end of a short visit to the separate, 8,500-strong NATO security force in Afghanistan.

Three U.N. vehicles were damaged by explosions that killed five Afghan civilians in Kandahar last Thursday, just as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited the capital, Kabul to praise the country's fledgling democracy.

CLASS WAR NEWS

Exxon Oil: “The Most Profitable Company In The World”

22 March 2005 By Michael T. Klare, TomDispatch

Data released annually at this time by the major oil companies on their prior-year performances rarely generates much interest outside the business world.

With oil prices at an all-time high and Big Oil reporting record profits, however, this year has been exceptional. Many media outlets covered the announcement of mammoth profits garnered by ExxonMobil, the nation's wealthiest public corporation, and other large firms.

Exxon's fourth-quarter earnings, at \$8.42 billion, represented the highest quarterly income ever reported by an American firm.

"This is the most profitable company in the world," declared Nick Raich, research director of Zacks Investment Research in Chicago.

A Flood of Magazines For Those Awash In Cash

"In an ever more fragmented media world, the rich are becoming their own niche. They may be diverse connoisseurs of fashion, yachting or jewelry, but they share one important trait: a seemingly bottomless supply of disposable income."

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

March 7, 2005

By KATHARINE Q. SEELYE, New York Times

Sidney Frank, the liquor baron who recently sold Grey Goose vodka to Bacardi for \$2 billion, was just back from Hawaii, where he had bought a house - his sixth - for \$12.5 million.

"I am on a quest for the best," he said by telephone from another of his homes in Southern California. He said that his search applied both to his personal life and his

decision to start a new luxury magazine. "I want a magazine for my lifestyle and other lifestyles like mine."

It is not clear just how many others live like Mr. Frank - he said 14 members of one of the country clubs he belongs to are billionaires - but at 86, he is not alone in jumping into the business of luxury magazines to seek gold in the rising hills of glossy advertising, in his case by buying up and revamping titles like Travel Savvy.

Publishers are cranking out more magazines than ever - there are now 6,200 published for the general public in the United States, with 1,006 of those starting up in the last year alone, according to Samir Husni, a journalism professor specializing in magazines at the University of Mississippi.

He said that 5 percent of those 6,200 titles are "aimed at the cream of the crop." "And we are seeing more," he said. "The market is getting flooded with them."

Just last week, Absolute Publishing started a magazine called Absolute, for distribution to New Yorkers with an estimated annual household income of at least \$500,000.

And Jason Binn, the publisher of Hamptons and Ocean Drive, has several new high-end titles on tap, including one for Washington, called Capitol File, which will compete with two other new luxury glossies.

The competition is not stopping at American shores: both Absolute and Mr. Binn said they expected eventually to start similar magazines in international markets.

"It is a phenomenon that is here to stay," said Michael Silverstein, an executive with the Boston Consulting Group and co-author of the book "Trading Up: The New American Luxury."

His firm estimates that by 2010 Americans will spend \$1 trillion on luxury goods. In an ever more fragmented media world, the rich are becoming their own niche. They may be diverse connoisseurs of fashion, yachting or jewelry, but they share one important trait: a seemingly bottomless supply of disposable income.

Not everyone in the magazine industry is convinced that this new market is as real as its promoters like to believe. Maer Roshan, editor in chief of Radar, a magazine that is being reintroduced in May and aimed not at the luxury crowd but at contemporary urban culture, said he saw the luxury magazines as escape hatches for a country weary of a post-9/11 reality.

"We're in a war and it's not exactly a boom time economy," he said. But the luxury magazines "have ceded reality, so what's left for them but to build their own fantasy worlds?"

Most of the magazines rely on a similar formula: extravagantly lush photography on heavy paper stock, flattering feature articles on prominent local personalities and snapshots of those personalities hobnobbing with each other.

"People like to see themselves in pictures," said Andrew Essex, the editor in chief of Absolute. "It reinforces their place in the social firmament."

The magazines also make it easy for readers to buy what they see on the page, whether it appears in an advertisement or an article - and it is often difficult to tell the difference, as the magazines have elevated commercial product placement to an art form.

The cover of the premier issue of Absolute, for example, shows what look to be glass beads in a broach; they turn out to be the fizz bubbling up from a \$430 bottle of Krug champagne, which is featured and recommended in an article inside.

"High-end brands want to be in publications where luxury is celebrated with local content to drive business," said Mr. Binn. "They want direct access to the consumers in their respective cities with targeted distribution and exclusive marketing opportunities," he said.

As part of Sobe News, one of his companies, Mr. Binn launched Ocean Drive in Miami in 1992 and in April will start a new high-end interior design magazine to be distributed nationally, called Florida InsideOut. Through another company, Niche Media, Mr. Binn publishes Gotham, Aspen Peak, Hamptons and Los Angeles Confidential and plans magazines in Boston and San Francisco.

Luxury magazines do not chase a broad market. Many of them are distributed by "controlled circulation" - readers neither subscribe nor pay for their copies. The publishers predetermine potential readers who are rich enough to buy the goods advertised, leaving the magazines free from having to build a large circulation, one of the costliest aspects of publishing. At the same time, many advertisers look for smaller titles where they can pay less and reach people who are likely to buy their products, rather than buy expensive ads in large publications that reach wider but less specific audiences.

Henri Barguidjian, chief executive officer of Graff, the diamond merchant who recently sold Donald Trump a 15-carat, \$1.5 million engagement ring, said a small magazine like Avenue was a welcome outlet. The free magazine, which is dropped in high-end buildings on Manhattan's Upper East Side, goes to 52,500 people.

"It's a small number, but it's almost 100 percent potential clients," he said. "It's very cost-efficient. A page in Avenue or Quest or any of those magazines is infinitely cheaper than in the major magazines."

Ernest J. Renzulli, president and publisher of Absolute, is aiming for an audience of just 60,000 New Yorkers. To generate buzz, he is putting 15,000 copies for sale at high-end newsstands and airport lounges starting March 8. His primary audience is New Yorkers who make at least \$500,000 a year.

He said he found them by winnowing databases of the most affluent New York ZIP codes with people who have bought houses for more than \$2 million and people who have registered cars, boats or planes that cost more than \$75,000.

"It's a small number," Mr. Renzulli said. "But this is not a magazine that's about mass reach. It's about reaching the tip of the pyramid."

In any case, audience size does not matter in the realm of luxury. **Erica Kasel, director of marketing for American Express magazines, said Departures went to 700,000 people, but she would not reveal the number who receive the magazine with no name, except to say it was very exclusive.**

"No one is worried that it's small," she said. "They understand as marketers that this is a magazine that moves product. They can do focused marketing on a large scale without any waste."

Advertisers can also get discounts in the newer magazines, said George Fertitta, a founding partner of Margeotes/Fertitta, an advertising agency with upscale clients like Godiva chocolates and Bombay Sapphire gin.

Received:

Fayetteville

From: B

To: GI Special

Sent: March 22, 2005 5:34 PM

Subject: Re: Fayetteville GI Special Announcement 3.22.05

Thanks for passing this along to me. I will never forget the time spent in Fayetteville. The energy will help keep the fire burning here in New Hampshire.

Web Copies

For back issues see: GI Special web site at <http://www.militaryproject.org/> .

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

**<http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/>, www.williambowles.info/qispecial,
<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>**

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