

GI SPECIAL 4D25:



[Thanks to Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

“A Defiant Anti-War Movement That Spread Among Soldiers” “A Revealing Account Of The Anti-War Activities Of Soldiers On The Ground In Vietnam”

April 21, 2006 By ELIZABETH WEITZMAN, NEW YORK DAILY NEWS WRITER

Sir! No Sir!: Documentary about a defiant anti-war movement that spread among soldiers fighting in the Vietnam War. Directed by David Zeiger (1:24).

A vital new chapter in the book of protest, documentarian David Zeiger's "Sir! No Sir!" is a revealing account of the anti-war activities of soldiers on the ground in Vietnam.

Though their political defiance was eclipsed by civilian protests, thousands of American soldiers risked their careers, and, in some cases, their lives, to expose the truths of the campaigns they were ordered to fight.

Learning that their reality was far different from the one being presented to the American public, many G.I.s began contributing to underground newspapers, planning demonstrations and refusing to continue in battle. Toward the end of the conflict, some even turned on their own officers, tossing grenades into their tents as they slept.

Melding historical footage with dozens of contemporary interviews from veterans (and a regrettably self-righteous Jane Fonda), Zeiger builds a poignant history of young men transformed from loyal soldiers to bitter activists nearly overnight.

Today, many of these men remain haunted, still unable to escape a war they never understood.

This is powerful stuff, offering us not only a new look at the past, but to the unavoidably relevant insights into the present.

Sir! No Sir!:
Tuesday, April 25, Last
Showings At
IFC Center
322 Sixth Avenue, at West Third Street, New
York City

Advance tickets on sale NOW through the IFC box office

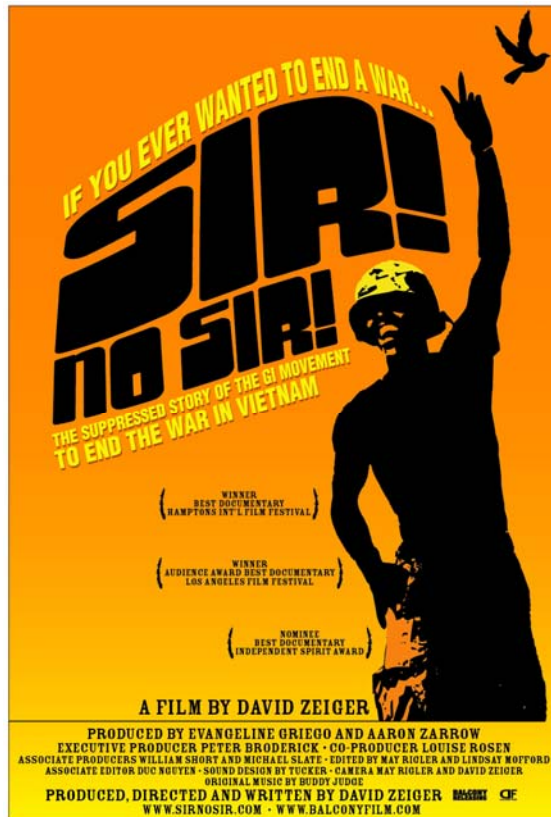
Recording: 212-924-7771

Live box office: 212-924-5246

Online at www.ifccenter.com

Check out the trailer at www.sirnosir.com

Please contact max@riseup.net or celia@riseup.net for posters, postcards and flyers to help promote this event!



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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Former Pulaski County Man In Marine Corps Killed

Apr. 13 By Wayne Crenshaw, The Macon Telegraph, Ga.

The official military record lists Lance Cpl. Kun Y. Kim's hometown as Atlanta, but when the Marine's funeral is held April 19, it's Hawkinsville where flags will fly at half staff in his honor.

Kim, who attended Hawkinsville High School, was killed in Iraq on April 2, according to a release from a 2nd Marines Division Public Affairs Office. Kim, 20, and two others were killed by an improvised explosive device, the release stated.

The funeral service will be held at Lilburn First Baptist Church with burial in Arlington Memorial Park in Atlanta.

Kim's father and stepmother still live in Hawkinsville, according to a Hawkinsville Dispatch report, and Kim attended Hawkinsville High School during his freshman and sophomore years.

Kim was a member of the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, based in Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Boyertown Soldier Killed



Travis Zimmerman

2006-04-24 Maranatha Broadcasting Company, Inc

Terrible news from overseas this weekend for one Berks county community. A 19-year-old Boyertown High grad was killed by a roadside bomb near Baghdad. WFMZ's Eve Tannery has more.

TANNERY: Flags and yellow ribbons adorn the outside of the Zimmerman family home on North Reading Avenue in Boyertown.

Neighbors say Travis Zimmerman had lived here all his life with his father and stepmother.

They say Travis graduated from Boyertown High School in June and started basic training in July.

And they say, in February, he went to Iraq with the Army 101st Airborne.

Neighbors up and down the block say Travis was one-of-a kind.....always happy, and an all-around great kid.

They say he was home briefly in November for Thanksgiving.

Two of his neighbors just got a letter from him Tuesday, they say he wrote it while he was sitting in a humvee, and that he seemed very positive, interested in what was going on in his hometown, and, very proud.

Indiana Marine Killed



Marine Corporal Eric R. Lueken, of Dubois, Ind. died April 22 while conducting combat operations against enemy forces in Al Anbar province, Iraq. He was 23. (AP Photo/Marine Corps Base Hawaii)

**Breese, IL, Soldier Injured:
Disgusting DC Politicians Refuse
To Provide One Dollar For One
Stitch Of Clothing For His Hospital
Stay**



Private James Bright

4/23/2006 By Ann Rubin, (KSDK)

An explosion near Tal Afar, Iraq injured three soldiers, including a man from Breese, Illinois. It happened late Thursday. Sunday, his family talked about getting a phone call from the Army, they never wanted to receive.

Lynne Huelsmann says, "You just know. You just have this sense. And I just couldn't get to the phone fast enough."

Her son, Private James Bright, had served in Iraq for two months. Now she got word a bomb had exploded near him. He was sprayed with shrapnel. Bright was wearing body armor at the time. That may have been the only thing that saved his life.

His sister, Cyndi Bright, says, "I just stood there and was frozen. I had my hands on my face and tears coming down."

As the hours passed, the family gathered. They kept a half dozen phones between them, waiting for the Army to call. His mother says, "They just crowded around and holding this phone, it was like holding a lifeline."

Another call and they got the news, Private Bright had been transported from Tal Afar. He had successful surgery to remove part of his lung. He was on his way to Germany.

The family knows they are lucky, and that the outcome could have been much different. Lynne says, "I'm just glad I got a phone call and not a visit."

Jim was injured doing what he loved. He always wanted to follow in his father's military footsteps. He got his first flight suit at age three.

His family knows he'll return to Iraq if he can. Cyndi says, "He's going to be here, and he's going to get better. And as soon as he gets better he's going to want to go back. And that scares me to death, because I don't want to get that knock on the door at all."

For now, they won't focus on the future. They just want their soldier safe. And Sunday afternoon they finally got a call from Jim. Lynne says, "He knew who we were. And he said I just can't wait to get home."

Jim's father, Randal Bright, is an Air Force Colonel who transports injured soldiers. In this case, he will not be flying his son home, but he does plan to be at the base when Jim lands in the States. The family hopes that will happen sometime Tuesday.

The family is now encouraging others to start supporting Operation Undergarment. It helps send clothes to hospitalized soldiers overseas. Oftentimes, these soldiers have had their uniforms cut off to tend to their wounds and have no additional clothes or pajamas to wear during their hospital stay.

Jim Bright's family says this problem was brought to their attention when Jim was transported to the hospital in Germany.

[Right. That makes perfect sense. Billions for war profiteers like Halliburton, but not one fucking cent so wounded troops don't have to go around naked. Hey, make the families pay for it. That's what Imperial wars are all about: some people pay and some people don't. Some people get killed and maimed, and some people make lots and lots of money.

[There is no enemy in Iraq: the enemy is in Washington DC running the government. And doing very well for themselves while they're at it.]

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)

Notes From A Lost War:

Ramadi: “The Worst Sniper Threat On The Planet”

“It Just Feels Like Someone's Always Watching You”



A U.S. Marine from the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, Kilo Company runs across a street opposite the Government Center April 17, 2006 in Ramadi. Standing still is rarely an option. (AP Photo/Todd Pitman)

"You try to take cover wherever you can, but it just feels like someone's always watching you. It really messes with your head," said Cpl. Jason Hunt of Wellsville, N.Y. "You look for dark windows, tiny holes anywhere," the 24-year-old said. "They could be sitting back on a bench with a scope and a barrel: they see you, but you can't see them."

4/24/2006 By Todd Pitman, Associated Press

RAMADI, Iraq: Weapons locked, loaded and ready, a U.S. Marine platoon runs through this troubled Iraqi city's war-wrecked streets, hurling yellow, gray and violet smoke grenades to shroud their path.

Pausing only to train gunbarrels around corners or scan rooftops for insurgents, they bound across desolate roads lined with broken glass and charred cars, and start running again.

Standing still is rarely an option in this insurgent-plagued metropolis beset by roadside bombs, rocket fire and, Marines here say, the worst sniper threat on the planet.

"Every time we go out, we run," said 2nd Lt. Brian Wilson, a 24-year-old platoon commander from Columbia, S.C. "If you stand still, you will get shot at."

And most of the time, Marines shoot back.

Marines patrolling this city on foot do not like to stay exposed too long, preferring instead to blow front gate locks off private homes with special shotgun shells to take temporary cover in walled courtyards before moving on. They do not knock first: there is no time.

On one recent sweep, U.S. and Iraqi infantrymen climbed over walls between houses instead of risking the streets outside.

"We try to stay mobile so snipers can't aim in on us," said 1st Lt. Carlos Goetz, a 29-year-old Miami native.

The urban environment of walled villa rooftops and windowed buildings keeps Marines edgy.

"You try to take cover wherever you can, but it just feels like someone's always watching you. It really messes with your head," said Cpl. Jason Hunt of Wellsville, N.Y.

"You look for dark windows, tiny holes anywhere," the 24-year-old said. "They could be sitting back on a bench with a scope and a barrel: they see you, but you can't see them."

Troops from the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment aggressively patrol the blown-out district around Government Center at all hours; conducting raids and sweeps during the hazy, gritty heat of the day, and in the quiet of night when moonlight casts buildings and villas in blue hues.

Marines say the patrols have disrupted insurgent operations. But the guerrillas operating in small teams are relentless, firing rockets, mortars and machine guns daily at Government Center, U.S. bases and fortified observation posts. Sometimes they attack the same targets several times a day.

Goetz said Marines patrol hoping to bring insurgents out into the open, where they are little match for the overwhelming U.S. firepower. [The British wished for the same stupidity in their Imperial War of 1776. The Lt. would be better leaving his silly fantasies back home.]

It usually doesn't take long.

"It takes about eight minutes from us stepping outside of the wire and getting across the street to the time that we start receiving contact from the enemy," Goetz said at Government Center.

The safety-in-motion logic also applies to U.S. vehicles. Drivers roll back and forth in danger zones, rather than park, to make their vehicles harder targets, particularly for rocket-propelled grenades, or RPGs.

One young Marine manning a machine gun in a Humvee turret outside Government Center was hit by an RPG and killed instantly just before the vehicle rolled inside. In recent weeks, another Marine was killed by a sniper's bullet that tore through his shoulder toward his heart.

Two Iraqi soldiers were fatally shot manning a guard post: one as he walked out of it and one who went to save him, said Marine Capt. Carlos Barela, 35, of Albuquerque, N.M.

Out on the streets, troops are wary of all the spots that insurgents have used to hide bombs: heaps of garbage and rubble, mangles of wires, scrap metal, the occasional dead animal or body part.

"This is the kind of stuff that makes you cringe," said Capt. Andrew Del Gaudio, 30, of Mount Laurel, N.J., gesturing at a large pile of dirt near a light pole as he ran along ahead of a raid with a platoon from his Kilo Company.

Sprinting into the entrance of an abandoned building on another day and seeing a bag on the ground with wires sticking out, Marines quickly retreated as one shouted, "Get out! Go! Go! Go!"

One Iraqi soldier bounding between two roads this month stepped on a bomb that blew off his leg.

It's easier to spot bombs when moving slowly, but speed is the rule for Marines in Ramadi.

Cpl. Scott R. Gibson, 22, of Carlisle, Pa., said his platoon had started off walking during their first patrol in the city last month, worrying about pressure-plate bombs that explode when stepped on.

They soon came under a hail of gunfire.

"After that, we started running," Gibson said. "We can't stand still here too long."

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

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

TROOP NEWS

**THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE**



Funeral services for Army Pfc. George Roehl Jr. April 24, 2006 at the state Veterans Cemetery in Boscawen, N.H. Roehl, 21, was killed April 21 when a bomb exploded near his Bradley Fighting Vehicle in Taji, Iraq. (AP Photo/Jim Cole)

**REALLY BAD IDEA:
NO MISSION;
HOPELESS WAR:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



A U.S. soldier near the scene of a car bomb attack in Baghdad, April 24, 2006. (Ceerwan Aziz/Reuters)

“It Is Wrong To Encourage Racism, Even If It Might Make A Few Soldiers Sleep Easier At Night”

April 24, 2006
Letters To The Editor
Army Times

The letter “War dehumanizes enemy” (April 10) was a shock to read, particularly as it seems to go against established Army policy.

Dehumanizing “the enemy” may make it easier to pull the trigger, but it will not contribute to our long-term goals. Nor is encouraging racism ever the right answer.

It might behoove us to remember that Arabs and Persians are found not only among the ranks of our enemies. What about Saudi Arabia or Kuwait? Also, according to the 2000 U.S. census, 1.2 million people living in the U.S. identified themselves as Arabs.

If our soldiers are taught to hate an ethnicity, the effects of that hate will be felt on our own citizens. And let us not forget about Arab-Americans in the military forces, including Gen. John Abizaid, the commander of U.S. Central Command.

A lot of things might make a war easier. Breaking the Geneva Convention would certainly make a war easier, for one.

But we don’t do that for one simple reason: because it’s wrong, just as it is wrong to encourage racism, even if it might make a few soldiers sleep easier at night.

War is never supposed to be easy. That’s one of the things that makes it hard to be a soldier: knowing you may be killing someone who doesn’t want to be there or whom, under other circumstances, you might share a beer with.

This has always been the case, yet we have managed. We should be striving not for divisive hatred, lowering ourselves to the enemy’s level, but rather for the Christmas Truce, which, incidentally, did not seem to hurt our victory in World War I.

We will never accomplish anything if we persist in seeing things in black and white, seeing the enemy as completely evil, beyond redemption. We may win a few battles, but we will never win the war.

Sgt. Selena Coppa
Fort Meade, Md.

Anti-War Demonstrators Force Bush To Reroute Trip



Chronicle / Michael Macor



Chronicle / Michael Macor

Apr. 21, 2006 by Sal Lood, Indybay.org/news

Bush was scheduled to visit the Hoover Institute, the Conservative Propaganda "Think Tank" group, at Stanford University today.

Students, community members and even some musicians showed up to protest and closed the roads leading to the Hoover Institute. Bush's caravan was forced to reroute their trip and had to meet with Hoover officials off campus.

Some protestors were arrested; no information about the amount and identity of protestors was available to this writer at this time.



IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

April 24 AP & APF & By Nelson Hernandez and Saad al-Izzi, Washington Post Foreign Service & (CBS) & Reuters

Thirty-two bodies of Iraqi police and security forces recruits were discovered in two areas of Baghdad on Monday, Interior Ministry sources said.

All 32 were from the town of Ramadi in the insurgent heartland of Anbar province, which is fiercely opposed to the government, the sources said.

One group of 17 were captured and then shot dead after they signed up for the police force one week ago. They were found in the Baghdady district of the capital.

The other 15 were found bullet-riddled in two cars in Abu Ghraib, on the western edge of Baghdad.

Bombs in two cars parked about 100 yards apart exploded one after another near Iraqi police patrols in the New Baghdad part of the capital, wounding three policemen and three civilians, said police Lt. Ali Abass.

At 2:30 p.m., a car bomb targeting a police patrol in the Mansur area of Baghdad wounded three policemen and four civilians, said police Capt. Jamil Hussein.

Five police commandos were wounded when a roadside bomb hit their patrol in southern Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas attacked a police station near Tikrit, killing four policemen.

Clashes broke out when the rebels, driving in a Toyota pick-up truck and wearing explosive belts, fired on the policemen at a checkpoint on the road between Tikrit and Tuz, an officer said.

On Monday, five police officers and 10 other Iraqis died in a car bombing outside a restaurant in the Bab al-Muadham neighborhood of central Baghdad, according to police Col. Salam Muhsin. The police officers were having breakfast, Muhsin said.

Guerrillas killed two Iraqi soldiers near Balad, the military said.

Two policemen were wounded on Sunday when a roadside bomb exploded near their patrol in the oil city of Baiji, the military said.

Six Iraqi soldiers and three civilians were wounded when a roadside bomb struck an army patrol in Mahmudiya, south of Baghdad, police said.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

***Overthrow:* The American Imperial Project;**

“The United States Has Been Overthrowing Governments For More Than A Century”

[Thanks to Ed Pearl for posting and PB for sending in.]

Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq (Times Books, 2006)

21 Apr 2006 Review by Russell Mokhiber and Robert Weissman, Lists.essential.org

Hawaii
Cuba
Philippines
Puerto Rico
Nicaragua
Honduras
Iran
Guatemala
South Vietnam
Chile
Grenada
Panama
Afghanistan
Iraq

What do these 14 governments have in common?

You got it.

The United States overthrew them.

And in almost in every case, the overthrow can be traced to corporate interests.

In Hawaii, the sugar companies didn't want to pay export duties – so they overthrew the queen of Hawaii and made it part of the United States.

In Guatemala, United Fruit wanted Arbenz out.

Out he went.

In Chile, Allende offended the copper interests.

Allende: dead.

In Iran, Mossadegh offended major oil interests.

Mossadegh out.

In Nicaragua, Jose Santos Zelaya was bothering American lumber and mining companies.

Zelaya: out.

In Honduras, an American banana magnate organized the coup of the Honduran government.

And on down the list.

Democratic Party critics charge that the Bush administration is ripping the United States from a long history of diplomacy by violently overthrowing governments.

Not true, says former New York Times foreign correspondent Stephen Kinzer.

Kinzer says that in fact the opposite is true.

"Actually, the United States has been overthrowing governments for more than a century," Kinzer said in an interview.

He documents this in a new book: *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* (Times Books, 2006).

Overthrow is the third in a series of regime change books by Kinzer. His previous two: *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror* (2003), and *Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (1982). Together, they would make a remarkable "regime change" boxed set for the holidays.

Kinzer left the Times last year. He says that the parting was "perfectly amicable" -- although he doesn't sound convincing when he says this.

What is clear is that Kinzer is not comfortable with establishment rationales for the American imperial project. This became clear during an interview Kinzer gave on NPR's *Fresh Air* with Terry Gross earlier this month.

Gross tried to get Kinzer to concede that if we hadn't overthrown these governments, the Soviets would have taken over, or today, radical Islam will take over.

Kinzer didn't give an inch.

For example, Gross said that had we not overthrown these 14 governments, "the Soviets might have won the Cold War."

"I don't think that's true at all," Kinzer responded. "In the first place, the countries whose governments we overthrew, all countries that we claimed were pawns of the Kremlin, actually were nothing of the sort. We now know, for example, that the Kremlin had not the slightest interest in Guatemala at all in the early 1950s. They didn't even know Guatemala existed. They didn't even have diplomatic or economic relations."

"The leader of Iran who we overthrew was fiercely anti-communist. He came from an aristocratic family. He despised Marxist ideology."

"In Chile, we always portrayed President Allende as a cat's paw of the Kremlin. We now know from documents that have come out that the Soviets and the Chinese were constantly fighting with him and urging him to calm down and not be so provocative towards the Americans. So, in the first place, the Soviets were not behind those regimes. We completely overestimated the influence of the Soviet Union on those regimes."

When Gross asked Kinzer what he thought of the "spread of radical Islam," Kinzer didn't hesitate.

"We sometimes like to think that our interventions in these countries don't have effects, but when we break down the doors of foreign countries and impose our own leaders, as we did in Iran and as we've recently done in Iraq, we outrage a lot of people," Kinzer said.

"We like to think that everybody will soon calmly come to realize that by rational standards, this was a good thing to do. But that doesn't happen. We are not able to change cultures as easily as we are able to change regimes."

The United States had a hand in many other overthrows, but Kinzer limited his cases to those where the United States was the primary mover and shaker.

So, for example, while the United States played a role in the overthrow of Lumumba in the Congo, Kinzer says that it was primarily an operation by Belgium on behalf of large Belgian mining interests.

This might be the most important book to read as the United States approaches a showdown with Iran.

President Bush says he's trying to bring democracy to Iran.

In fact, Iranians had democracy once.

And we crushed it.

Kinzer is on tour promoting his book. And he's got a gig at Northwestern University in Chicago, where he lives.

He's teaching a course in regime change.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to thomasfbarton@earthlink.net. Name, I.D., address withheld unless publication requested. Replies confidential.

Murphy's Laws Of Armor

Strategypage.com/humor

1. Just after you report "Redcon 1" for your qualification run, you will realize that you desperately need to take a leak.
2. The fuel truck will run out of fuel just before he gets to your tank.
 - 2a. You will run out of fuel before he returns.
3. Tanks don't float.
4. If a supply sergeant is given a choice between death and going to the field with his unit, he will ask for a few minutes to "Think it over."
5. Attempting to help recover a mired tank will only result in your tank becoming mired also.
6. The primary purpose of an operations order is to ensure that all blame falls on the line units.
 - 6a. For this reason, the staff will not publish an operations order until after the exercise is completed.
7. Night vision devices will only fail at night.
 - 7a. They will function perfectly once the sun rises.
8. The dirtier and more tired you are, the less appreciative you become of "constructive criticism" from somebody in a pristine uniform.
9. The heater on your tank will fail in October. The part to repair it will arrive in April.
10. No matter how minor the ailment, a visit to the medics will result in an I.V.
 - 10a. Arguing with the medics about this will result in your being evacuated in a neck brace and back board (in addition to the I.V.).
11. When loading the main gun, remember: "pointy end first."
12. The only times you will throw a track are: a. At night, b. in the rain, c. during the movement back to garrison, or d. one hour after you installed the new ones.
13. Your vehicle will go NMC right after the contact team leaves the AO.
14. All infantry fighting vehicles don't look alike.
15. Shaking trees to your front mean that you are being hunted by helicopters.

16. When you are told your engineer support was needed elsewhere, the bridge will be out.
 17. The exercise will finish and you'll get back to garrison just after the wash rack closes.
 18. If all else fails, shoot at the muzzle flashes: the larger ones are the dangerous ones, the smaller ones are infantry.
 - 18a. The infantry muzzle flashes you ignore are covering an anti-tank team setting up.
 19. "Rebel yells" are not proper FM radio procedure after a successful Table VIII shoot.
 20. XO math: 3 pacs on the ground + no fueler + 2 deadlines = 100% FMC.
 21. Close air support is safest from far away.
 22. Proving that three feet of frontal armor protection will defend against any threat is probably best demonstrated on someone else's track.
 23. Hearing an "Aw, shit" soon after an "on-the-waaay!" means you're probably not getting that promotion.
 24. Tanks are very easy to see unless you're dismounted and they're backing up.
 25. The one time you skip the firing circuit test is when you have the misfire.
 26. "GUNNER, SABOT, SNIPER" is not an appropriate use of ammunition.
 27. It is cruel to tell NBC types "Damn, that Fox looks like a BMP!" — particularly when live rounds are being issued.
 28. Blackout drive + autobahn + 0345 = polizei.
 29. Unsecured turrets will only swing freely mid-way through a rail tunnel.
 30. When doing a gunnery, the tank is always operational until you get to the ready line.
 31. If you are promised "downtime," what they really mean is: You will be breaking track.
 32. First sergeant math: Buy Gatorade for \$1.49 each and sell for \$1.00 each — with the profits going to the unit fund.
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OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR; RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



An Iraqi girl sits in her mother's arms while male family members are searched by a U.S. Marine at a checkpoint in Karmah April 24, 2006. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqis over here to the USA. They can kill or simply humiliate citizens at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it "sovereign," and "detain" anybody who doesn't like it in some prison without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.]

[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]

"In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit," said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay's Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday's raid. "Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead."

Notes From A Lost War:

“A Faceless Insurgency In Which Every Iraqi Is A Potential Enemy”

[How do you know when the politicians have lost an evil war for Empire? When a reporter writes a sentence like that. Duh.]

At an air base in Mosul, civilian contractors, soldiers, and Western journalists are given beds and allowed to walk around freely while they wait for flights. Meanwhile, a squad of Iraqi police traveling on a US military flight sleeps on rocks in a fenced-in pen, guarded by US soldiers.

April 17, 2006 By Charles Levinson, Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

MOSUL, IRAQ: He's known at the US military base here as Roger, from the radio lingo used in old American war movies that he watched to learn English. Like the other Iraqi interpreters working with the Americans, he is certain that if his identity were revealed he would be killed.

To protect his family he visits them only once a year, even though they live just minutes away, and his friends think he works for a cable TV company overseas. Roger's concern for his and his family's well-being is not overblown. Interpreters here - known by US troops as "terps" - estimate that in Mosul alone 50 to 60 of their colleagues have been murdered by insurgents.

But on both sides of this conflict they are regarded with suspicion. They are considered traitors by their fellow countrymen and potential enemy spies by their US employers.

"If you look at our situation it's really risky and kind of horrible," says Roger. "Outside the wire everybody looks at us like we are back-stabbers, like we betrayed our country and our religion, and then inside the wire they look at us like we might be terrorists."

Concerns that interpreters could be working with insurgents prompted the US military to severely restrict interpreters' freedoms earlier this year.

They live the life of a garrisoned soldier, but they are forbidden many of the luxuries that make life on a US military base tolerable. Cellular phones, e-mail, satellite TV, computers, video game consoles, CD players, cameras, the weight room, and even the swimming pool are all off limits.

Entering the mess hall, interpreters alone are singled out and searched at every meal. They are not allowed to take food to-go for fear they might be feeding an insurgent who is on the base illegally. Some commanders take their interpreters' national ID cards so they can't leave the base without permission.

"It gives you the feeling that you are not really trusted," says an interpreter known simply as Vivian, a 20-something Kurdish woman whose good looks invariably turns soldiers' heads.

It is, of course, a valid concern in a struggle against a faceless insurgency in which every Iraqi is a potential enemy.

An interpreter for the previous brigade stationed here was caught spying for insurgents, and in Baghdad there have been cases of interpreters calling in grid coordinates to insurgent mortar teams.

"These guys (have guts) to do what they do. And we'd be nowhere without them. We'd be lost," says US Army Staff Sgt. Paul Volino from East Liverpool, Ohio.

But, he adds, "You always have this fear that they might be leaking op-sec stuff. You want to trust them but you're still reserved."

While bans on cellphones are easy to defend, other rules seem hard to justify to many.

"It doesn't make any sense at all," says Sgt. Matthew Chipman, from Beardstown, Ill., who is in charge of the interpreters for the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team's 2-1 Battalion, stationed in Mosul.

"What are they going to do, send information through the weights or through the swimming pool?"

Such rules demonstrate why the US effort here leaves a bitter taste in the mouths of so many Iraqis who find themselves treated as second-class citizens in their own country.

And it's not just interpreters who suffer the indignity of US suspicions.

At an air base in Mosul, civilian contractors, soldiers, and Western journalists are given beds and allowed to walk around freely while they wait for flights. Meanwhile, a squad of Iraqi police traveling on a US military flight sleeps on rocks in a fenced-in pen, guarded by US soldiers.

"The terps and all the local nationals are always going to be treated like shit except for by the people that they immediately work for," says Sergeant Chipman.

The new, more stringent rules, which interpreters say are having a demoralizing effect, come as the US is having an increasingly difficult time recruiting adequate numbers of English-speaking Iraqis willing to work with American forces.

Chipman says his battalion is desperate for interpreters. Other interpreters bemoan the poor quality of those now being hired.

"In the beginning it was so difficult to get a job as a terp," says one interpreter called "Bob," a musician from the Kurdish city of Dahook.

"Now, many terps don't know English and they get a job," he says. "Someone will tell them 'There's an IED over there' and they'll go to a US soldier and go 'Boom boom' and point. It's miserable. If you can say 'What's up? How you doing?' in English, you're going to get a job."

Indeed, interpreters are in many ways the public face of the US occupation here and language skills are essential. It is Roger, not the platoon leader he works for, who calms, questions, and communicates with the scores of Iraqis these soldiers deal with on a daily basis.

On a recent patrol here in Mosul, a mother and daughter cowered in fear at the sight of US troops in their front yard. It seemed like it might become one more battle for Iraqi hearts and minds that would be lost.

But Roger stepped in quickly to allay their worries. He gives a moving defense of the US occupation. "Why are you afraid?" the Sunni Arab, a native of this northern Iraqi city, asks as tears well up in the teenage daughter's frightened eyes.

"It's not the Americans who are going to hurt you. They're here to help you. It's the terrorists you should fear," he says.

Those interpreters who are sticking it out say they do it for the money - the \$1,050 monthly salary for combat interpreters is a decent salary in Iraq today, though it's nearly a third less than many Western media outlets pay their interpreters.

Many of them do it because they believe in what the US is trying to accomplish in Iraq. In fact, they seem among the most fervent supporters of the US effort here.

But most of all, they say, they hope their loyal service will earn them American citizenship.

In their Army-issued fatigues, body armor, and Kevlar helmets, the terps are indistinguishable from the soldiers they serve with, except for the ski masks many of them wear to protect their identities. They go everywhere soldiers go and face the same myriad of threats as any infantryman.

"I have a dream that one day the army will recognize their good terps and let us go to America," says Roger, who cheered US Humvees when the US first rolled into Mosul in 2003.

Unlike a US soldier, however, who will serve 12 months in Iraq and then return home, many of these interpreters have essentially served three consecutive tours of duty - going home to see their families for just a handful of days every few months.

In 28 months of combat patrols with the US Army, Roger has weathered car bombs, rocket propelled grenades, scores of firefights, and more IEDs (improvised explosive devices) than he can count.

"I can't even rewind my brain to think about this," he says. "Now I just laugh at IEDs when they go off. But I no longer have good hearing in my right ear."

The interpreter named Vivian has been working for the US Army for three years now and lives in a two-person barrack surrounded by US soldiers, a somewhat nontraditional living arrangement for a young Iraqi girl from rural Kurdistan.

"My parents no longer consider me a daughter," she says, sitting cross-legged on a flowery pink bedspread, brushing freshly shampooed hair. "They think of me as a soldier now. I spend my days in uniform doing exactly the same things the soldiers do, so I guess I pretty much am a soldier."

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Bush's Approval Rating Hits New Low

April 24, 2006 Reuters

President George W. Bush's public approval rating has fallen to 32 percent, a new low for his presidency, a CNN poll showed on Monday.

The survey also showed that 60 percent of Americans disapprove of the way Bush is handling his job.

Bush's approval rating as measured by CNN's poll dropped from 36 percent in March. His lowest job performance measure has been 32 percent, in a Fox News poll this month.

54% Don't Trust Bush On Iran

21 April 2006 By Jeremy Brecher and Brendan L. Smith, The Nation

The American people are by now deeply skeptical of Bush's reliability in matters of war and peace. In a recent Los Angeles Times poll, 54 percent of respondents said they did not trust President Bush to "make the right decision about whether we should go to war with Iran," compared with 42 percent who did.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



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[Thanks to David Honish, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

Why 760,000 New Yorkers Who Qualify For Food Stamps Don't Get Them, And Go Hungry

March 2006 Public Employee Press [Excerpt]

"The working poor are especially like to miss out on Food Stamp benefits.

As a result, the city is losing approximately half a billion dollars in federal aid each year," says the study.

The red tape and delays of the application process are the number one reason why more of the working poor don't enroll.

The average benefit is \$112 a month, but many payments' are far less.

When low-paid workers take off time to apply they lose a day's pay. Typically these workers have to sacrifice two and sometimes three days of already low wages to secure their Food Stamp allotment.

Regular recertifications cost them additional days of work and further reduce the net benefit— literally taking food from their mouths.

Another reason clients cite for non-participation is the stigma involved in receiving the benefit. Under the Giuliani administration, the process of fingerprinting every participant 18 and older was implemented. The effect of "finger imaging," as the agency euphemistically calls it, is to criminalize hunger and poverty.

To walk in the shoes of a food stamp applicant, imagine having to get fingerprinted before your next trip to the A&P.

Despite the heroic efforts of the staff, here's how the Food Stamp system adds up today: Understaffing and inadequate equipment make for long waits. Long waits and loss of pay create frustration.

Result: 760,000 New Yorkers who need Food Stamps, don't get them, and go hungry.

Prison Nation

April 17, 2006 D. L. O'Huallachain, Al-moharer.net [Excerpt]

The United States incarcerates more people per head of population than any other country in the world. More than 2.2 million people are in American prisons - that is 1 in every 75 males.

Put another way, America has over 500,000 more prisoners than China which has a population four times greater than the United States.

Furthermore we find that the Americans who make up the correctional population total out at 6.9 million.

That means that between prison, county jail, police custody, probation, parole and community service 1 in every 31 Americans is accounted for.

The current incarceration rate in the USA is 715 per 100,000 people, whilst almost two-thirds of the world's countries have incarceration rates of 150 or fewer per 100,000 people. Australia, for example, has just 143 per 100,000 people.

This information comes from the statistics of the U.S. Bureau of Justice, the statistics of the FBI, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Sentencing Project.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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