

GI SPECIAL 4F12:

JUST ONE LIE AFTER ANOTHER



In this U.S. Air Force photo provided by the Department of Defense Tuesday, June 6, 2006, U.S. Army soldiers run towards a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter as they are extracted after completing an aerial traffic control point mission near Tall Afar, Iraq, Monday, June 5. The soldiers are from Bravo Company, 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team and the Black Hawk aircrew is from Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation, Alaska National Guard. (AP Photo/Department of Defense, Jacob N. Bailey)



Brigade Combat Team during an aerial traffic control point mission in Tal Afar, Iraq, in this photo taken June 12, 2006 and released June 13, 2006. (Staff Sgt. Jacob Bailey/Handout/Reuters)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Killed Near Diwaniya

13 June 2006 By Solomon Moore, The Los Angeles Times

The U.S. military announced that a soldier was killed while on patrol Saturday near Diwaniya, 80 miles south of Baghdad.

High School Football Star Killed In Iraq



6/9/2006 By Audrey Barnes 9 News

There were rumors of violence on 6-6-6; and in Iraq there was. It claimed the life of a soldier from Fairfax County. Now the family of this popular former high school athlete is trying to make some sense of it all.

The army says Cpl. Andy Anderson died instantly after mortars rained down on his camp in ar Ramadi, Iraq on June 6th.

He may have died instantly, but he lived 24 years of endless possibilities. He was known for bringing home troubled kids during high school.

Anderson played varsity basketball and football at Jeb Stuart High School in Falls Church. But what he did best was set a good example for his brothers, twins Randall and Rafael.

They couldn't have been prouder of his recent promotion to platoon leader. And Semiya Anderson got an early Mother's Day gift from her eldest son this year: a surprise two week visit home from Iraq.

He proposed to his girlfriend Tayva White while he was here. They had planned to start a life together when he returned from Iraq in October.

The family hated to see him leave. So now instead of planning a wedding, they must plan a funeral.

And there's an additional burden to bear for Anderson's dad, an Army veteran himself. He's worried that this war that has claimed one of his sons might harm another. Both of his twins are in the Army Reserves.

FUTILE EXERCISE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



5.31.06: US soldiers inspect the wreckage of a car loaded with rockets that exploded near the Iraqi interior ministry in central Baghdad. (AFP/Ali Al-Saadi)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**U.S. Soldier Killed, Two Wounded;
Three Vehicles Burned;
“Other Casualties” Not “Assessed”**

6/13/2006 AFP News, KANDAHAR

A US soldier was killed and at least two others wounded when coalition troops came under three separate attacks in southern Afghanistan Tuesday, the coalition said.

The soldier was killed in volatile Helmand province in a battle in which strike aircraft, including British Harriers, were called in to assist, coalition spokesman Major Quentin Innes said.

Battle damage, including other casualties, was still being assessed but four vehicles had been damaged, three set on fire, Innes said.

Earlier in the day, two US patrols were attacked in separate ambushes in neighbouring Zabul province. Two coalition soldiers were wounded in one of the attacks.

Desertions Plague Afghan Collaborator Army: “A Reluctance To Fight Alongside Foreigners Against Countrymen”

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

May 29, 2006 By JIM KRANE, The Associated Press

Desertions from Afghanistan's U.S.-allied army have dropped sharply, but more than 10 percent of the troops still go AWOL, a U.S. general said Monday.

Maj. Gen. Robert Durbin, who heads the effort to train Afghan soldiers and police, said a focus on replacing unfit commanders has cut desertion rates from their peak a few months ago, when almost a quarter of all Afghan troops absconded for varying periods.

U.S. and Afghan officials have said soldiers desert for several reasons, including a reluctance to fight alongside foreigners against countrymen and a need to earn money for families in remote villages.

TROOP NEWS

Soldier Arrested:

Refused To Go Back To Iraq

[Thanks to Clancy Sigal and Mike Woloshin, who sent this in.]

June 13, 2006 AP EUGENE, Oregon

A 21-year-old woman who refused to deploy with her Army unit to Iraq for a second tour has been arrested and will be returned to Fort Lewis, Wash., Eugene police said Monday.

Eugene Police spokesman Sgt. Rich Stronach said Spec. Suzanne Swift, 21, told officers she did not want to go back to Iraq. She was picked up Sunday night at the request of the Army.

Stronach said Swift at first did not say who she was but was identified by tattoos described in the warrant and was arrested at her family's home without incident.

She was listed as AWOL late last year and her unit left for Iraq without her. She served her first tour in Iraq with a military police unit in 2004, her mother, Sarah Rich, told Oregon Public Broadcasting.

Rich said her daughter broke down and said she could not return because of the war and the way she was treated.

She said her daughter was belittled, called names, and frequently propositioned.

Swift is expected to be returned to Fort Lewis on Tuesday.

MORE:

“Fear For My Daughter:

From: David Zeiger [Producer, Sir! No Sir!]

To: GI Special

Subject: Re: My daughter

Date: Jun 13, 2006 10:42 AM

Displaced Films

3421 Fernwood Avenue

Los Angeles, CA 90039

323-906-9249

www.displacedfilms

Just got this. Should go out everywhere.

From: Sara Rich sararich@mac.com
Sent: Jun 13, 2006 6:08 AM
To: David Zeiger
Subject: Re: My daughter

Hi David.

Here is something I wrote and an update:

Fear For My Daughter:

It started out with being scared for her life when she signed up for the military.

She assured me that she was promised she would not go to Iraq. I was not as trusting.

She was sent to Iraq right out of her basic training. She assured me she would be ok as we cried while she was packing.

One of her Sgt. assured me. "Don't worry Ma'am, we'll take good care of your daughter."

I desperately hoped that I could trust him to watch over her. I later found out he was one the first predators to try and have sex with her and make her "his private."

She spent a long year in Iraq. I feared for her safety every waking minute.

She called me crying frequently. Telling me very little of the horror she was witnessing. Only telling me it was hard.

Telling me that almost all of the other soldiers sexually harass her and many of her Sgt.'s and Lt. really pressuring her and making her life miserable for rejecting them.

Calls from her ending with, "o, there goes gun fire, gotta go mom, love you."

She returns from Iraq. She is much more quiet and anxious. I offer to get her help and she refuses. She tells me that if she opens that can of worms she will not be able to function as a human being.

I ask her if she wants to deal with the horrible sexual harassment charges against so many of her fellow soldiers, she says no mom, it would only make my life even more of a living hell.

Then she finally blew the whistle on one of her superiors for sexually harassing and she was treated like a pirana while he was moved to a different unit and promoted.

She put her head down and worked as an Military Police officer on Ft. Lewis. She was always shocked by the number of domestic violence calls she went out on. The fear of a mother of a peace officer was there, but at least I could call her and knew she was safe.

We know that she is going to be re-deployed to Iraq sometime after the mandatory 18 months stabilization time is over. So, we were looking at November of 2006 for a second re-deployment. Our hearts were heavy at the thought.

She comes home for a visit and can't face me to tell me she is going much sooner than expected back to Iraq. My fear is skyrocketing.

How can they do that, you will have only had 11 months of stabilization time.

She tells me that she refused to sign the waiver waiving her rights to 18 months. She was told that her life would be hell in a shit hole if she refused to sign. They screamed in her face and intimidated her to the point that she would shake when she told the story.

Our family prepares.

She is packed, ready to redeploy. Keys in hand. "I can't do this, Mom, I can't go back there."

We shift into action to protect our daughter.

We networked with everyone imaginable. We knew that we would rather see her in jail than spend another minute in Iraq. We hired an attorney with experience in these kinds of military matters. And Suzanne went into hiding.

Now here we are facing what we knew was a real possibility. Suzanne is in jail and waiting to be taken up to Ft. Lewis and I am really scared.

The military treated her horribly when she was a soldier, I can only imagine what they will do to her as a prisoner. She is a brave young woman and my hero. There is only just so much stress an Iraq war veteran can handle.

My fear for my daughter is real. My hope for and belief in my daughter and what she is doing is strong and unshakable. I truly believe she saved her own life with her courage.

Hopefully by telling her story and standing strong she can encourage others in the military to stand up, speak out and refuse to participate in this illegal and immoral war.

Thanks to you all. I knew this was going to happen eventually so I had my ducks in a serious row. Today, I had a press conference, a vigil at the jail where Suzanne is, spoke to 10 different radio shows, some nationally syndicated, three TV stations, 3 newspapers and had a million calls.

I only got to talk to Suzanne for one short minute in which we were both were crying so hard we could not talk.

They are transporting Suzanne tomorrow early morning to Ft. Lewis and returning her to her unit. We are planning to be at the jail at 7:45 AM-9 to see if we can catch a glimpse of her as she leaves the jail to show her that we are here for her.

Lt. Colonel Switzer, Ft. Lewis Washington is who we need to be writing to asking for Spc. Suzanne Swift to have a medical discharge or an honorable discharge from the Army due to her post traumatic stress disorder.

After writing the letter we need to fax them to:

Senator Gordon Smith- Eugene, OR Office
Federal Building
211 East 7th Avenue, Room 202
Eugene, OR 97401
Phone: 541.465.6750
Fax: 541.465.6808

Senator Ron Wyden-Eugene, OR
151 West 7th Ave
Suite 435
Eugene, OR 97401
(541) 431-0229

Congressman Peter DeFazio-Eugene Office
151 West 7th, Suite 400
Eugene, OR 97401
Phone: (541) 465-6732

Senator Patty Murray in Washington- Tacoma Office
950 Pacific Avenue, Ste. 650
Tacoma, Washington 98402
Phone: (253) 572-3636
Fax: (253) 572-9892

If there is no fax number you can email them. let me know if you send a letter and if you get a response.

If you want to donate to Suzanne's legal or medical fund please contact me and I will get the addresses for you for our attorney Larry Hildis or Suzanne's psychologist, Zak Schwartz. [See email address above.]

Thanks so much from Suzanne and her family. We appreciate your love and passion.

This is so important for us to do not only for us to end the war, but to defend women who are in the military.

love,
Sara Rich
M.S.W.

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.

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



A Marine honor guard carries the body of Cpl. Ryan Cummings, who was killed in Iraq, in Schaumburg, Illinois June 13, 2006. REUTERS/John Gress (UNITED STATES)

Base Commanders Refuse To Act: They Won't Protect Troops From Predatory Lenders

The boards at individual installations have the ability to place businesses off-limits to service members and could be effective tools to minimize the effects of predatory lending practices on service members.

But the boards have been used few times for this purpose and most do not meet regularly, according to the GAO.

June 05, 2006 By Karen Jowers, Army Times staff writer [Excerpts]

Lawmakers agree that service members need more protection from predatory lenders — but how far that protection should go is where the agreement stops, at least for two House members.

A recent Government Accountability Office report said the Defense Department could make more effective use of a weapon already in its arsenal to battle the threat — the Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Boards at individual installations, which can declare businesses such as predatory lenders off-limits to service members.

But the GAO said data show that these boards are used only sporadically to address predatory lending.

“I am very concerned, angry, about the payday loan industry and the fact that they are increasingly targeting members of the military,” said Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., at a May 18 hearing of the House Financial Services subcommittee on oversight and investigations.

Rep. Geoff Davis, R-Ky., said the problem is not large payday lenders, but rather “the pawn shops, the sole proprietorships, those that are not accountable to any professional organizations ... that take advantage of the troops.”

“I think it’s the responsibility of our military to not only embrace credit unions, but the Armed Forces Disciplinary Control boards should be stronger. They should make (predatory lenders) off-limits,” Waters said.

The boards at individual installations have the ability to place businesses off-limits to service members and could be effective tools to minimize the effects of predatory lending practices on service members.

But the boards have been used few times for this purpose and most do not meet regularly, according to the GAO.

The Defense Department should “increase the use of those boards,” said Valerie Melvin, acting director of defense capabilities and management for the GAO.

Lame Bullshit Prize For 2006, So Far:

V.A. Head Says Vets And Troops Weren't Told Of Identify Theft Because He Didn't Have Enough Envelopes

June 13, 2006 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer

Rep. Bob Filner of California, the acting ranking Democrat on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, staged a press conference Tuesday morning in front of the VA headquarters near the White House to ceremoniously deliver boxes of envelopes that could be used, he said, to send letters to veterans, service members and families warning about the possibility of identify theft. VA records containing names, Social Security numbers, birthdates and other information was stolen in early May from the home of a VA employee who had taken the information home.

Envelopes were involved because VA Secretary R. James Nicholson told Congress that veterans were not immediately notified of the theft, which raised the threat of identity theft for 26.5 million veterans, 2.2 million current service members and 50,000 survivors, because "we have found out we cannot right now get 26 million envelopes."

WHITE HOUSE WARFIGHTERS IN ACTION!



White House Press Secretary Tony Snow, left, and White House Counselor Dan Barlett, ride in a military helicopter for a trip from Baghdad International Airport to U.S. Embassy in the Green zone Tuesday, June 13, 2006 in Baghdad, Iraq. (AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

12 June 2006 RTE & Reuters & June 13 2006 Reuters & By KIM GAMEL, Associated Press Writer & News Limited

A police officer was killed by militants between Tikrit and Ouja.

A roadside bomb targeting a bus carrying industry ministry workers killed six people and wounded 12 others in Baghdad, police sources said.

In Kirkuk a car bomb exploded outside the house of a senior police officer, seriously wounding him and killing one of his bodyguards, police said.

Also in Kirkuk, a bomber in a car was shot by guards as he tried to attack the police headquarters. He blew himself up, killing two policemen and wounding 10 civilians.

The bombings in Kirkuk began at 7:45 a.m. when a parked car containing a bomb exploded near a police patrol in the city center, killing 10 people, including two policemen, Brig. Gen. Sarhat Qadir said.

A bomb targeting a police patrol in central Baghdad killed a policeman and wounded four others, as well as injuring a detainee they were transporting.

In Karbala, guerrillas shot dead a police captain in the criminal investigations department.

A policeman was killed and 2 wounded when their patrol was attacked in the city of Kut 170 km (105 miles) southeast of Baghdad.

Guerrillas shot dead a police captain and wounded 2 of his bodyguards in the city of Kerbala, 110 km (68 miles) southwest of Baghdad, police sources said.

A policeman was killed in a series of attacks in Baquba, northeast of Baghdad.

Guerrillas killed three policemen and wounded three others in Balad Ruz.

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

**BASRA:
"No Night Passes" Without Attack On
British Base**

June 13, 2006 By Solomon Moore, L.A. Times Staff Writer

In the southern city of Basra, a rocket struck a house and killed a man in his garden. A witness, Tayb Khalil Saleem, 37, said the rocket probably was aimed at British forces occupying a hotel. "No night passes without the shelling of this hotel," Saleem said.

In Amarah, 110 miles north of Basra, the governorate council announced a three-day mourning period and one-day work stoppage to protest British raids on Sunday.

Iraq Province Cuts Links With British Army After Deadly Clashes

Jun 11 by Fadhel Mushatat, AFP News

A provincial council in southern Iraq has suspended all cooperation with the British military after overnight clashes between troops and Shiite militiamen left five Iraqis dead.

The violence in the Maysan provincial capital of Amara, in which a British soldier was also wounded, cast a shadow over British plans to hand over patrolling of the province to the fledgling Iraqi security forces this summer.

"We in the province of Maysan are in mourning for the shedding of the innocent blood of our martyrs and the injuring of old men, women and children by the occupation forces," the provincial council said in a statement on Sunday.

It ordered a halt to all cooperation with British troops, and demanded an inquiry into the deaths and the intervention of the central government in Baghdad.

The governor of Maysan, Adel al-Maliki, told AFP that the provincial council would not meet Monday in protest at the deaths. He said black banners would be hung on official buildings in honour of the "martyrs".

British soldiers entered Amara early Sunday. Once they entered the Risala neighbourhood of the city, the troops came under attack, resulting in multiple firefights.

Amara police reported that at least five people were killed, including a woman and a six-year-old boy.

"Whenever they enter residential areas, they are always attacked," said Iraqi police Lieutenant Ali Aziz, adding that the assailants were members of Sadr's Mehdi Army.

One reason the firefight lasted so long was because a British Warrior armoured vehicle became stuck in a ditch. This necessitated a recovery operation, which was ultimately successful.

"That attracted some fire," said Eaton, adding that one British soldier was also wounded.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

"We know that both parties are selling the country to the highest bidder. So, in a historical context, where do you want to be? Republicans controlled by corporations? Democrats controlled by corporations? Or, with some independent movement that is going to challenge the lack of representation of the people.
Kevin Zeese, June 4, 2006, Cork Gallery, Baltimore, MD quoted by William Hughes, Americanchronicle.com

“Atrocities Happened Because The Presidential Administrations In Power Declared The Lives Of Distant Individuals Trivial, Disposable, Theoretical”

June 5, 2006 BRUCE JACKSON, CounterPunch [Excerpts]

Army spokesmen are saying that the murders of 24 Iraqi civilians, most of them women and young children, at Haditha last November took place because the troops just weren't well enough trained.

I don't believe that, and neither should you.

The Defense Department is saying that it is going to initiate a huge training program that will keep such incidents from happening in the future.

I don't believe that either, and neither should you.

It has been, admittedly, a long time, but I do not remember anyone ever during the whole time I was in the Marines telling us "It is a bad thing to shoot to death unarmed men, women and children who pose no threat to you and who have not done or even seemed to want to do you any harm."

Neither do I remember anybody ever during the whole time I was in the Marines telling us, "It is not okay to kill innocent civilians because you are pissed off because one of your guys got hurt earlier in the day someplace else."

I do remember them telling us to keep mud out of the muzzles of our weapons, to take care of our feet, and not to salute indoors.

I remember lots of things from those years. But I cannot remember anyone of any rank telling us that we shouldn't shoot to death unarmed little kids and women and working stiffs and old guys.

If anybody had said anything that stupid to us someone surely would have said what someone always said when somebody said something really, really, really stupid: "No shit?"

None of the interviewers on network and cable stations these past few weeks, however, has said that or anything close like it to any of the generals and Defense Department officials they've had on the air doing the administration's damage control. Again and again, the brasshats or suits have talked about training failed or training needed, and not one interviewer from "Newshour" to the flacks at Fox has said, "No shit?"

The White House and Pentagon love the excuse of "inadequate training" because it makes atrocities the result of innocent procedural negligence or "a few bad apples" rather than the result and acknowledgement of the administration's basic policy.

But Haditha was no more a function of "inadequate training" than was My Lai or Abu Ghraib.

Each of them was a direct consequence of US policies at the highest levels, policies that said the US had the right to apply deadly force halfway around the world in pursuit of what its leaders had decided in secret were the country's national interest.

All three atrocities happened because the presidential administrations in power declared the lives of distant individuals trivial, disposable, theoretical.

In each of those events, the troops scorned for atrocities (Calley was the only one who got a sentence out of My Lai, and that was only house arrest for a few months; no officer went into the dock for Abu Ghraib, just a few enlisted losers) were in fact carrying out US policy without the window-dressing, without the bullshit.

In My Lai, they were in a script written for them by Lyndon Johnson and Robert McNamara; in Iraq it has been a script crafted by George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney.

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.

“It Is Seriously Disordered When One Has To Keep Killing More People Just Because So Many Have Already Died”

13 June 2006 By Cindy Sheehan, Truthout Perspective [Excerpts]

Between the first and second world wars, Marine Major General Smedley Butler wrote the seminal work, *War is a Racket*. Up until that time, he was the most highly decorated Marine in history. He wrote in the first two paragraphs of his booklet:

“War is a racket. It always has been. It is possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious. It is the only one international in scope. It is the only one in which the profits are reckoned in dollars and the losses in lives.”

A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of the people. Only a small "inside" group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few, at the expense of the very many. Out of war a few people make huge fortunes.

These occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan are nothing but sickly rackets, with the war machine getting wealthy off of our children's flesh and blood and off of the ruination of two countries and the deaths of many, many civilians.

BushCo. keeps spewing the vomit that we have to "honor the sacrifices of the fallen by completing the mission for which they gave their lives."

Number one, they didn't "give their lives," they were stolen by the tumor of the war machine, and number two, it is seriously disordered when one has to keep killing more people just because so many have already died.

In the USA, we allegedly have a two party system (that is only traditional and not mandated by the Constitution) and each party should provide tension and checks and balances on each other.

As I see it, in our ailing democracy one of our biggest problems is that we now have a one party system.

“If The Violence Continues, Who Do We Blame?”

June 09, 2006 By Sean D. Naylor, Army Times staff writer [Excerpt]

Jeffrey White, an analyst at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and a former Defense Intelligence Agency analyst, said Zarqawi's death, paradoxically, creates a new challenge for the Bush administration, which no longer has the specter of Iraq's most violent and fanatical terrorist to hold up as its enemy.

"We killed our bogeyman," White said. "A lot of effort went into making him enemy number one. If the violence continues, who do we blame?"

OCCUPATION REPORT

So Much For That "Sovereignty" Bullshit: Bush Invites Himself To Iraq: Refuses To Tell His Puppet "Prime Minister"



THE LOYAL SERVANT BIDS HIS MASTER WELCOME.

Bush with Nuri al-Maliki during their meeting in Baghdad June 13, 2006.

REUTERS/Ahmad al-Rubaye/Pool (IRAQ)

Jun 13 By TERENCE HUNT, AP White House Correspondent

President Bush made a surprise visit to Iraq on Tuesday to meet newly named Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and discuss the next steps in the troubled, three-year-old war.

Landing at Baghdad airport, Bush transferred to a helicopter for a six-minute ride into the heavily fortified Green Zone.

“Good to see you,” exclaimed al-Maliki, who didn’t know Bush was in Baghdad until five minutes before they met.

“Thanks for having me,” Bush responded. [As if he had any choice. What pathetic play acting. Puke.]

The prime minister had been invited to the embassy on the pretense of taking part in a video conference with Bush, supposedly at Camp David, the presidential retreat in Maryland’s Catoctin Mountains.

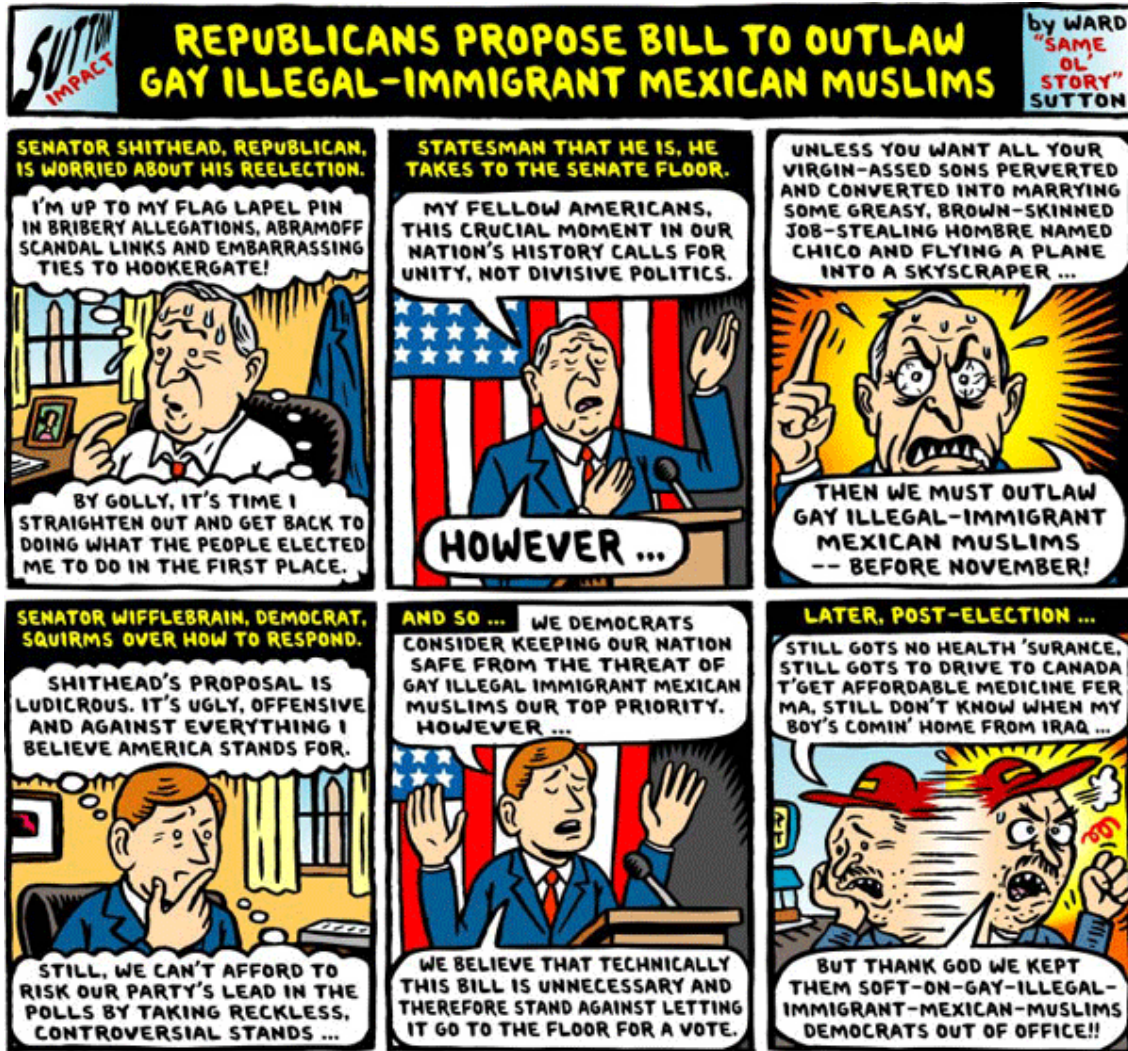
MEANWHILE, BACK IN THE REAL WORLD:



British and American flags painted across a street in Karbala in Iraq June 13, 2006. The flags are painted on the ground in order that passers-by step on them, which is considered an insult. [And that’s putting it mildly.] (AP Photo/Alaa al-Marjani)

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Overwhelming Majority Of House
Democrats And Republicans Agree:

We Want More Dead U.S. Troops And More Dead Iraqis

June 13, 2006 By Andrew Taylor, Associated Press

The House passed a \$94.5 billion bill Tuesday to pay for continuing U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, hurricane relief, bird flu preparations and border security at home.

The House-Senate compromise bill contains \$66 billion for the two wars, bringing the cost of the three-year-old war in Iraq to about \$320 billion. Operations in Afghanistan have now tallied about \$89 billion, according to the Congressional Research Service.

The bill, which passed by a 351-67 vote, had only minimal debate Monday night.

Three More Lying Imperial Politicians At Work: Democrat Rats Pretend To Be For Withdrawal, But Check Out The Fine Print

6.13.06 By Rick Klein, The Boston Globe & Groundspring.org

Sen. Russell Feingold (D-WI): amendment No. 4192 that requires the redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq by December 31, 2006, **maintaining only a minimal force sufficient for engaging directly in targeted counter-terrorism activities, training Iraqi security forces, and protecting U.S. infrastructure and personnel.**

Sen. John Kerry (D-MA): amendment No. 4293 mandating withdrawal of United States combat troops from Iraq by December 31, 2006, **leaving only forces that are critical to completing the mission of standing up Iraqi security forces.**

Sen. Diane Feinstein (D-CA): amendment No. 4207, a sense of Congress that the United States should begin to downsize the US Armed Forces in Iraq with the goal of ending the presence of US Armed Forces in Iraq within 18 months from the date of the enactment of this Act, **except for logistical and training personnel [and, of course, those forces necessary to protect them].**

In the Senate, Kerry dismissed as "scare tactics" any depictions of his proposal as a retreat. He said his plan would leave in place US troops who are training Iraqi security forces, and would also leave behind an "over-the-horizon" troop

contingent who could respond to security crises in Iraq or in the surrounding area.

"There's no element at all of 'cut and run,' " Kerry said.

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)

Two More Imperial Rats At Work: Murtha And Boxer: Neck Deep In Blood

Last year, a few peace groups endorsed the Murtha bill before they understood what it actually entailed. Let's not make that mistake again. This year, let's tell congress that the only redeployment we want is the one that brings the troops home.

06/12/06 By Pat Gerber, Information Clearing House [Excerpts]

"Redeployment." Even if you can define it correctly, you may not know what its implications are. For starters, it is not a formula for ending the war.

Rep. John Murtha introduced America to the word "redeployment" during his press conference last November, when he spoke about a bill he authored that was designed to prevent the military he loves from becoming "a broken force," to use General Helmly's words.

Rep. Murtha has never claimed that his redeployment bill was peace-oriented, and if you examine it closely, you can see that its purpose is to change the arc of the war rather than end it.

Now Senator Boxer has introduced a Senate companion to Murtha's House of Representatives resolution.

Both of these call for American troops to be "redeployed at the earliest practicable date." The phrase "earliest practicable date" is so vague that it allows things to be done whenever the good old boys in Washington decide that they are in the mood.

The word "redeployment" means moving troops from point A to point B and/or giving them a new set of tasks. In this instance, it means that some of the forces who are currently on Iraqi soil will be moved to other bases in the region and become part of two new entities specified in the legislation, "a quick-reaction U.S. force" that can be put back into Iraq on a few hours notice and "an over-the-horizon presence of U.S. Marines."

A number of analysts have pointed out that this proposed redeployment is no more than a vehicle for moving the focus of the war from the ground to the air:

The Murtha and Boxer resolutions are steps toward repositioning U.S. planes, the troops who fly and service them, and everything else the military needs to bases in nearby Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman, as well as on ships that patrol the Gulf.

These aircraft would then patrol Iraq's skies 24/7, looking for "signs of trouble" and dropping bombs whenever any are found. Since the number of troops needed to control Iraq by use of air power is smaller than the number we currently have on the ground, some of them – perhaps as many as 25% -- will be able to come home.

Instead of advancing the cause of ending the war and ushering in an era of peace, it allows the U.S. to continue managing Iraq's affairs by using a new technique.

This is not a substitute for ending the carnage.

But there is more bad news.

One of the things this resolution does accomplish is to provide a convenient way for politicians to continue to play politics with the war.

Because its provisions entail a lowering of troop levels, congressmembers who sign on as co-sponsors can make themselves appear to be in favor of peace, though actually all they are supporting is a change in the war's strategy.

Last year, a few peace groups endorsed the Murtha bill before they understood what it actually entailed.

Let's not make that mistake again.

This year, let's tell congress that the only redeployment we want is the one that brings the troops home.

The Deaths At Gitmo

June 12, 2006 Editorial, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

The news that three inmates at Guantánamo Bay hanged themselves should not have surprised anyone who has paid the slightest attention to the twisted history of the camp that President Bush built for selected prisoners from Afghanistan and antiterrorist operations.

It was the inevitable result of creating a netherworld of despair beyond the laws of civilized nations, where men were to be held without any hope of decent treatment, impartial justice or, in so many cases, even eventual release.

It is a place where secret tribunals sat in judgment of men whose identities they barely knew and who were not permitted to see the evidence against them. Inmates were abused, humiliated, tormented and sometimes tortured. Some surely are very dangerous men, committed to a life of terrorism and deserving of harsh justice.

But only 10 of the roughly 465 men at the camp have been charged with crimes.

The others, according to senior officers who served there, were foot soldiers of the Taliban or men who just happened to live in a country invaded by the United States after the 9/11 attacks.

Inmates at Guantánamo Bay have tried seeking help from the American courts, and one case has reached the Supreme Court. But most of these appeals were thwarted by claims of national security. Any new appeals will fall under a shocking new law that deprives the inmates of the centuries-old right to challenge their imprisonment. Government lawyers have even tried to use that law retroactively, to dismiss all pending appeals.

Last month a United Nations panel called for the prisons to be shut down. But the administration's response to all of this has been defiance.

When dozens of inmates went on hunger strikes last year, the authorities strapped them into metal "restraint chairs" and ordered doctors to force-feed them. Military officials said they did this only to inmates on the brink of death, but The Times has reported that the restraint chair was used on all hunger strikers, regardless of their condition.

Medical groups were overwhelmingly appalled by this practice, but the Pentagon issued new rules this month reaffirming that military doctors can be ordered to force-feed prisoners. The only role for psychiatrists at Gitmo seems to be to help prepare prisoners for interrogation.

So it was not surprising in the least when inmates attempted suicide.

Twenty-three tried to kill themselves over eight days in August 2003, but the military covered it up for 18 months.

Now, three inmates have succeeded. Camp officials say one was a mid- or high-level Qaeda operative. One was captured in Afghanistan (doing what, we're not sure), and the other was from something the camp commander, Rear Adm. Harry Harris Jr., called a splinter group.

Admiral Harris's response was as appalling as the suicides. "I believe this was not an act of desperation, but an act of asymmetrical warfare waged against us," he said. The inmates, he said, "have no regard for life, neither ours nor their own."

These comments reveal a profound disassociation from humanity. They say more about why Guantánamo Bay should be closed than any United Nations report ever could.

Received:

Contacting/Interviewing A Veteran Who Lost Limbs.

From: Chad Uhlenhopp Jones chadujones@yahoo.com
To: GI Special
Sent: June 13, 2006
Subject: contacting/interviewing a veteran who lost limbs.

I just saw your name on a recent pdf file from the MilitaryProject website. I wanted to email to ask if you could connect me with a vet amputee who was severely wounded in Iraq or Afghanistan.

I am an Politics editor at Clamor magazine, and we are writing an article about the use of technology in war -- how it leads to new weaponry advancing war and how it is being used in the fallout of war, in hospitals and ER.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Chad.

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