

GI SPECIAL 4F26:



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

“Only Terry Lisk Has Seen The End Of This War”

“I don’t know if this war is worth the life of Terry Lisk, or 10 soldiers, or 2,500 soldiers like him,” MacFarland told his men and women. “What I do know is that he did not die alone. He was surrounded by friends.”

June 29, 2006 By Dexter Filkins The New York Times

RAMADI, Iraq

A soldier was dead, and it was time for him to go home.

The doors to the little morgue swung open, and six other soldiers stepped outside carrying a long black bag zippered at the top.

About 60 soldiers were waiting to say goodbye. They had gathered in the sand outside this morgue at Camp Ramadi, an army base in Anbar Province, now the most lethal of Iraqi places.

Inside the bag was Sergeant Terry Michael Lisk, 26, of Zion, Illinois, killed a few hours before.

In the darkness, the bag was barely visible. A line of blue chemical lights marked the way to the landing strip not far away.

Everyone saluted, even the wounded man on a stretcher. No one said a word.

Lisk had been standing near an intersection in central Ramadi on Monday morning when a 120 mm mortar shell, fired by guerrillas, landed about 30 paces away. The exploding shell flung a chunk of steel into the right side of his chest, just beneath his arm. He stopped breathing and died a few minutes later.

The pallbearers lifted Lisk into the back of an ambulance, a truck marked by a large red cross, and fell in with the others walking silently behind it as it crept through the sand toward the landing zone. The blue lights marked the way.

From a distance came the sound of a helicopter.

Death comes often to the soldiers and marines who are fighting in Anbar Province, the most intractable region in Iraq.

Almost every day, a U.S. soldier is killed somewhere in Anbar - in Ramadi, in Haditha, in Falluja, by a sniper, by a roadside bomb, or as with Lisk, by a mortar shell. In the first 27 days of June, 27 soldiers and marines were killed here. In small ways, the military tries to ensure that individuals like Lisk are not forgotten in the plenitude of death.

One way is to say goodbye to the body of a fallen comrade as it leaves for the United States. Here in Anbar, American bodies are taken first by helicopter to Camp Anaconda, the big logistical base north of Baghdad, and then on to the United States. Most helicopter traffic in Anbar, for security reasons, takes place at night.

In the minutes after the mortar shell exploded, everyone hoped that Lisk would live. Although he was not breathing, the medics got to him right away, and the hospital was not far.

"What's his name?" asked Colonel Sean MacFarland, the commander of the 4,000-soldier First Brigade.

"Lisk, sir," someone replied.

"If he can be saved, they'll save him," said MacFarland, who had been only a few yards away in an armored personnel carrier when the mortar shell landed.

About 10 minutes later, the word came.

"He's dead," MacFarland said.

Whenever a soldier dies, in Iraq or anywhere else, a wave of uneasiness - fear, revulsion, guilt, sadness - ripples through the survivors. It could be felt Monday, even when the fighting was still going on.

"He was my best friend," Specialist Allan Sammons said, his lower lip shaking. "That's all I can say. I'm kind of shaken up."

Another soldier asked, "You want to take a break?"

Sammons said, "I'll be fine," his lip still shaking.

Lisk's friends and superiors recalled a man who had risen from a difficult childhood to become someone whom they counted on for good cheer in a grim and uncertain place.

"He was a special kid," Sammons said of Lisk. "He came from a broken home. I think he was divorced. I'm worried that it might be hard to find someone."

He said he would write a letter to the family - to whom it was not clear yet.

Hours later, at the landing zone at Camp Ramadi, the helicopter descended. Without lights, in the darkness, it was just a grayish glow. With its engines still whirring, it lowered its back door.

The six soldiers walked out to the chopper and lifted Lisk's body into it. The door went back up. The helicopter flew away.

The soldiers saluted a final time.

In the darkness, as the sound of the helicopter faded, MacFarland addressed his soldiers.

"I don't know if this war is worth the life of Terry Lisk, or 10 soldiers, or 2,500 soldiers like him," MacFarland told his men and women. "What I do know is that he did not die alone. He was surrounded by friends.

"A Greek philosopher said that only the dead have seen the end of war," the colonel continued. "Only Terry Lisk has seen the end of this war."

The soldiers turned and walked back to their barracks in the darkness. No one said a word.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Winnsboro Soldier Killed

June 28, 2006 The Associated Press, WINNSBORO, La.

A 33-year-old soldier from Louisiana was killed in Iraq when a roadside bomb exploded near his vehicle, his family said Wednesday.

The Department of Defense has not released the circumstances of Army Sgt. Terry Wallace's death, but his mother, Mary Wallace of Winnsboro, said military authorities knocked on her door Wednesday morning to bring her the news.

Wallace, a member of the 42nd Field Artillery Unit based at Ford Hood, Texas, enlisted after graduating from Winnsboro High School. He was deployed to Iraq last November and was scheduled to return home in December, his wife, Shunda, told KNOE-TV of Monroe.

Mrs. Wallace said her husband died Tuesday night "when a bomb exploded and blew up his Humvee." He was killed immediately. The family was not told whether any other soldiers were killed in the blast, said Wallace from Bellevue, Neb., where she moved for work after her husband was deployed.

Wallace's twin brother, Jerry, said the soldier's active lifestyle pushed him to get what he wanted out of life.

"He loved any sport," he said. "He loved to play in the band. He was just a brother that just loved to strive to get to anything and everything he wanted to do. It wasn't anything that couldn't cross his path that you could tell he couldn't do because he was going to show you he could do it."

Wallace's survivors also include five children.

UKIAH: Sgt. Jason J. Buzzard Loved To Go Fishing

June 24, 2006 Cicero A. Estrella, San Francisco Chronicle Staff Writer

Army Sgt. Jason J. Buzzard grew up with his father as his best friend. They spent countless hours together outdoors -- hunting, fishing, skiing and camping.

"It's something he's done all his life," said Sgt. Buzzard's wife, Michele, "He just loved fishing and hunting with his dad."

Sgt. Buzzard was killed in Baghdad Wednesday when an explosive device detonated near his cargo truck during combat operations, the U.S. Department of Defense said. He was 31.

He joined the Army in 1998 and was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division out of Fort Hood, Texas.

Jason Buzzard was born in Willits and grew up in Ukiah. He first thought about joining the military while attending Ukiah High School, where he played tuba for the school band and from where he graduated in 1993.

"It's something that he thought about, but wasn't able to do," Michele Buzzard said. "He always wanted to join and defend his country.

"He liked the structure of the Army and the fact that he was able to travel to different places and meet different people," she said.

During his time in the Army, Sgt. Buzzard was stationed in Colorado, Korea and most recently Fort Hood.

But wherever he was, Sgt. Buzzard always kept close tabs on his family. He exchanged instant messages with his wife in Texas and parents in Ukiah almost every day.

"He always wanted to know what everyone was doing," said Michele Buzzard, who began dating him after high school and married him in 1997. "I told him every day to be safe and to come home to us."

She said that her husband had planned to ask for a transfer to Fort Lewis, Wash., when he returned from his duty in Iraq so that they could be closer to family in Northern California.

Michele Buzzard said her husband enjoyed romping on the trampoline and bowling with their 12-year-old daughter Michala and 9-year-old son Tristin.

Whenever he got the chance, he returned home to Ukiah to spend time with his parents, Jerry and Marilyn Buzzard.

Father and son always found time for outdoor activities, especially fishing.

"Lake Pillsbury, Lake Sonoma, Lake Trinity, Lake Mendocino -- they would fish on any lake they could find," Michele Buzzard said.

Sgt. Buzzard also enjoyed diving for abalone at Ft. Bragg and ocean fishing with his father-in-law, Steve Swingle, she said.

He was also a big fan of the San Francisco 49ers.

"He liked watching them on TV, eating salami and just hanging out in his sweatpants," said Michele Buzzard, who broke down a couple of times during a phone interview from Ukiah.

Sgt. Buzzard is also survived by an older sister, Kelly Macmillan.

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



U.S. Marines patrol in Ramadi June 26, 2006. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**“The Taliban Has Expressed Its
Thanks To The U.S. Air Force For
Greatly Increasing Its Popular
Support In The Bombed Areas.”**

June 19, 2006 By William S. Lind, On War #171

This Sunday’s sacred ritual of Mass, bagels and tea with the Grumpy Old Men’s Club was rudely disrupted by the headline of the day’s Washington Post: “U.S. Airstrikes Rise In Afghanistan as Fighting Intensifies.”

Great, I thought; it's probably cheaper than funding a recruiting campaign for the Taliban and lots more effective at creating new guerrillas.

Getting into the story just made the picture worse:

As fighting in Afghanistan has intensified over the past three months, the U.S. military has conducted 340 airstrikes there, more than twice the 160 carried out in the much higher-profile war in Iraq, according to data from the Central Command...

The airstrikes appear to have increased in recent days as the United States and its allies have launched counteroffensives against the Taliban in the south and southeast, strafing and bombing a stronghold in Uruzgan province and pounding an area near Khost with 500-pound bombs.

One might add, "The Taliban has expressed its thanks to the U.S. Air Force for greatly increasing its popular support in the bombed areas."

At present, the bombing is largely tied to the latest Somme-like "Big Push," Operation Mountain Thrust, in which more than 10,000 U.S.-led troops are trying another failed approach to guerrilla war, the sweep.

I have no doubt it would break the Mullah Omar Line, if it existed, which it doesn't.

Even the Brits seem to have drunk the Kool-Aid this time, with the June 19 Washington Times reporting that "British commanders declared for the first time yesterday that their troops were enjoying success in the restive south of Afghanistan after pushing faster than expected into rebel territory."

Should be in Berlin by September, old chap.

Of course, all this is accompanied by claims of many dead Taliban, who are conveniently interchangeable with dead locals who weren't Taliban.

Bombing from the air is the best way to drive up the body count, because you don't even have to count bodies; you just make estimates based on the claimed effectiveness of your weapons, and feed them to ever-gullible reporters. By the time Operation Mountain Thrust is done thrusting into mountains, we should have killed the Taliban several times over.

Icing this particular cake is a strategic misconception of the nature of the Afghan war that only American generals could swallow.

According to the same Post story,

U.S. officials say the activity is a response to an increasingly aggressive Taliban, whose leaders realize that long-term trends are against them as the power of the Afghan central government grows.

"I think the Taliban realize they have a window to act," Army Maj. Gen. Benjamin Freakley, commander of the 22,000 U.S. troops in the country, said in a recent interview. "The enemy is working against a window that he knows is closing."

Except that the power of the U.S.-created Afghan government is receding, not growing, and the Taliban's "window" only closes when Christ comes again.

Awful! The last time a nation's civilian and military leadership was this incapable of learning from experience was under the Ching Dynasty.

Perhaps it's time to offer a short refresher course in Guerrilla War 101:

Air power works against you, not for you.

It kills lots of people who weren't your enemy, recruiting their relatives, friends and fellow tribesmen to become your enemies.

In this kind of war, bombers are as useful as 42 cm. siege mortars.

Big, noisy, offensives, launched with lots of warning, achieve nothing. The enemy just goes to ground while you pass on through, and he's still there when you leave. Big Pushes are the opposite of the "ink blot" strategy, which is the only thing that works, when anything can.

Putting the Big Push together with lots of bombing in Afghanistan's Pashtun country means we end up fighting most if not all of the Pashtun. In Afghan wars, the Pashtun always win in the end.

Quisling governments fail because they cannot achieve legitimacy.

You need closure, but your guerilla enemy doesn't. He not only can fight until Doomsday, he intends to do just that, if not you, then someone else.

The bigger the operations you have to undertake, the more surely your enemy is winning.

The June 19 Washington Times also reported that

The ambassador from Afghanistan traveled to America's heartland to promote his war-torn country as the "heart of Asia" and a good place to do business...

In his region, "all roads lead to Afghanistan," he said...

Asia doesn't have any heart, and Afghanistan doesn't have any roads, not even one we can follow to get out.

TROOP NEWS

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME:

BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



Army Pfc. Kristian Menchaca, is lowered at his funeral in Brownsville, Texas, June 28, 2006. Members of his family oppose the war in Iraq. (AP Photo/Eric Gay)

100 Soldiers From Colorado 169th Guard Unit Going To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse

June 29, 2006 By Dick Foster, Rocky Mountain News

More than 100 soldiers from the Colorado Army National Guard's 169th "Fires" Brigade will go to Iraq at the end of next month, Guard officials said Wednesday.

The unit, headquartered at Buckley Air Force Base in Aurora, has been training since March 1 at Fort Sill, Okla., and in Hawaii to prepare for its deployment.

The 169th, formerly a field artillery brigade, has been renamed a fires brigade and will coordinate all large "stand-off" weapons that support ground troops, including artillery and airborne weapons.

"We are responsible for synchronizing all of those indirect fires on the battlefield," said Lt. Col. Mark Brackney, the brigade's deputy commander.

The brigade is made up mostly of Coloradans from all walks of life, said Brackney, a program manager for Lockheed Martin in civilian life. Many are going to Iraq for the first time.

The Guard unit, commanded by Col. Kenneth Lull, will work for a division commander in Iraq, coordinating the use of large weapons for operations over a large swath of northern Iraq, Brackney said.

"We will bring together all the puzzle pieces for the division commander," Brackney said. "We will integrate radar, artillery, Army attack helicopters and the Air Force's close air support, because you can't just shoot into the sky without clearing the air space."

The 169th will be the third Colorado Army National Guard unit serving in or headed to Iraq.

About 135 members of the 947th Engineer Company went in October and are building roads in western Iraq, guard spokesman 2nd Lt. Darin Overstreet said.

Another 300 troops from the 2/135th Aviation Company were mobilized in April and are training in Texas for deployment in September.

Pentagon Surrenders: Will Stop Calling Gay Troops Head Cases

June 29, 2006 Washington Post

The Pentagon is revising a document that calls homosexuality a mental disorder. DoD said homosexuality should not have been characterized as a mental disorder in an appendix of a procedural instruction. **[This after a shit-storm of condemnation.]**

The Weasel Kerry Betrays Again: Breaks Promise To Fight "Lousy" "Paltry" Pay Raise For Troops;

Now He Says Higher Ranks Need The Money More

[This is the same rat that attacked Bush for not destroying Falluja more quickly, and demanded 40,000 more troops be sent to Iraq. T]

June 28, 2006 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer [Excerpts]

After promising in February to lead a fight against the smallest military pay raise since 1994, Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., failed to offer an amendment to give a larger raise during Senate debate on the 2007 defense budget.

After the Senate passed its defense authorization bill June 22 and left intact the 2.2 percent raise sought by the Bush administration, Kerry said he had been working with Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., on an amendment calling for a 2.7 percent raise for all service members effective Jan. 1, but was waved off by the Senate Armed Services Committee.

In February, Kerry was the leader of a 10-senator effort to press the Senate for a bigger pay raise. He called the proposed 2.2 percent hike “lousy.”

“Our troops are sacrificing so much, in every corner of the world. Shortchanging them and the families who love them is a lousy way to say thanks,” Kerry said in a statement at the time.

“Our military deserves leadership that matches their service and patriotism. Getting our troops the pay raise they deserve is the very least we can do to show how much we value everything they do for us.

“I’m going to fight for a fair military pay raise until it becomes a reality.”

His initial effort was supported only by Democrats, who tried and failed to get the Senate Budget Committee to amend the overall federal budget to make room for the bigger military pay increase.

In a Feb. 16 letter to the budget committee, Kerry and the other Democrats said the 2.2 percent raise is “paltry.”

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“It is our understanding that the committee has made the determination, in consultation with people in the services, the needs of the services, that there is a particular problem with respect to retention of noncommissioned officers,” Kerry said, appearing to indicate that he didn’t think it was possible to carry through

with a Bush administration plan to provide targeted pay raises for warrant officers and mid-career enlisted members on April 1 if the Jan. 1 pay increase for all ranks was slightly higher.

However, the House Armed Services Committee approved a two-part pay plan, urged by Rep. John McHugh, R-N.Y., that would do exactly what Kerry said is impossible.

At a cost of about an extra \$300 million, the House version of the defense bill includes a 2.7 percent basic pay raise and also includes a targeted pay increase of up to 8.3 percent for E-5s, E-6s, E-7s and warrant officers.

Twisted Kill Freak Goes Free: Staff Sgt. Called Him “A Cancer To My Soldiers”

"The Daily News reported that in the months leading to Waruch's deployment in Iraq, two women alleging domestic abuse obtained temporary restraining orders against him, each order requiring him to surrender his firearms to police."

June 25, 2006 E&P Staff

NEW YORK

An American soldier convicted in the fatal shooting of a handcuffed Iraqi cow herder in 2004 was freed from a military prison in Oklahoma on Friday, more than a year before his sentence was up, the Dayton Daily News reported today.

Army Spec. Edward Richmond Jr., 22, of Gonzales, La., was convicted of voluntary manslaughter and sentenced in August 2004 to three years in prison for the April 28, 2004, shooting death of Muhamad Husain Kadir in the village of Taal Al Jal, which is about 40 miles southwest of Kirkuk.

Richmond was released on parole, his attorney said Friday. "He told me this morning it feels good to be free," said Richmond's father, Edward Richmond Sr.

The shooting was one of two of Iraqi civilians during a 10-day period by members of the same Hawaii-based platoon, the HHC 1/27th Mortar platoon.

Richmond Jr. said that he shot Kadir because he thought he lunged at the soldier who was holding him, Sgt. Jeffrey D. Waruch of Olean, N.Y., and that he wasn't aware Kadir's hands were bound.

Waruch was accused in the other shooting, in which a 13-year-old girl was killed and her mother and sister wounded.

Waruch was discharged without being accused of a crime. Army officials determined it was unlikely they would find sufficient evidence against him. Both shootings were examined by the Dayton Daily News late last year in a special report.

The Ohio newspaper reported then that dozens of soldiers were accused of crimes against Iraqis since the first troops deployed for Iraq, but despite strong evidence and convictions in some cases, only a small percentage resulted in punishments.

"As with the death of former NFL star Pat Tillman and the deaths of 24 Iraqi civilians by Marines in Haditha, the military did not immediately conduct a criminal investigation into the shooting of the three women by Waruch.

The Army Criminal Investigation Command did not begin a formal investigation until more than a year after the Feb. 18, 2004, shootings, after official requests for records from both the Dayton Daily News and Richmond's father.

"The Daily News reported that in the months leading to Waruch's deployment in Iraq, two women alleging domestic abuse obtained temporary restraining orders against him, each order requiring him to surrender his firearms to police."

"During an interview, Waruch's supervisor, Staff Sgt. Marcus Warner of New Iberia, La., called him 'a cancer to my soldiers,' and he unsuccessfully tried to prevent him from going to Iraq."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

June 29, 2006 Press Trust of India & IOL & (KUNA) 7 Reuters

Guerrillas in a civilian car intercepted a car carrying Kadhim Challoub, who was in charge of the guards at Baghdad University, ordered his driver and his guard out, then killed the security chief on the eastern side of the capital, police Lt Mohammad Khayoun said.

Fighters on a motorcycle also killed a policeman

Unidentified armed men killed Thursday a police officer in the Iraqi capital, Baghdad 24 hours after his capture. A security source in the Iraqi Interior Ministry said that the body of Lieut. General Mohammed Nasser in the west Baghdad.

The source added that an armed group kidnapped on Wednesday the police officer, where his body was found today bearing torture marks and gun shots on a road side in Al-Ghazaliyah.

BAQUBA, Iraq: The commander of an Iraqi quick reaction force and two soldiers were shot dead by a sniper.

Police said the fighting was still going on at 6 p.m. (3 p.m. British time) in the predominantly Shi'ite village of Khairnabat, 3 km (two miles) north of Baquba, capital of Diyala province. Local residents reported hearing shooting and explosions.

Guerrillas shot a criminal intelligence policeman in central Kerbala.

An Iraqi army checkpoint in Falluja came under mortar fire that killed two soldiers and wounded one, police said. When the soldiers returned fire, one civilian was killed and two wounded.

A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol exploded in Riyadh, killing a soldier and wounding seven, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Famous Last Words

“The United States is not going to do what the French did ten years ago: cut and run.” Richard Nixon on Vietnam, 1966

“Today, Anti-War Organizers Are Again Discussing How Active Duty GIs Can Play A More Active Part In The Struggle Against The War”

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

June 2006 By Tod Ensign, ZMag

One of the greatest achievements of the Vietnam anti-war movement was its creation of a GI coffeehouse and counseling network. The first coffeehouse was opened outside Ft. Jackson, South Carolina in late 1967, two-and-a half years after U.S. troops invaded Vietnam. Within weeks, hundreds of GIs had visited during

their off duty hours. Over the next year, similar projects sprang up outside 20 other major U.S. bases.

These projects embodied the “countercultural” spirit of the times. Sex, psychedelic drugs, and rock and roll coexisted with a strong anti-war message. Civilian activists, mostly recruited from the anti-war movement, worked in tandem with active duty GIs, some of whom had just returned from Vietnam. At some projects, the soldiers played a leading role in setting political goals, providing counseling, and putting out anti-war newspapers.

Today, anti-war organizers are again discussing how active duty GIs can play a more active part in the struggle against the war. A Stars and Stripes newspaper poll of soldiers fighting in Iraq reported in March 2006 that 72 percent of them wanted to be withdrawn within a year, while 29 percent favored immediate withdrawal.

Organizers from Citizen Soldier, a GI-veterans rights advocacy group, recently met with anti-war veterans and GIs in Fayetteville, North Carolina, home to Ft. Bragg, where 40,000 combat troops are stationed. They discussed the prospects for establishing a coffeehouse and counseling project near the base—the largest in the eastern U.S. Their hope is that a successful pilot project at Bragg could stimulate the creation of similar efforts at other key posts.

Both the U.S. military and U.S. society have changed since the Vietnam era. Foremost is the transformation of a conscript-driven military to one that is entirely composed of “volunteers.” This has made the armed forces much less representative of U.S. society as a whole. One of the primary reasons why advocates of an “all volunteer” military wanted to junk the draft was their belief that it fueled much of the anti-war opposition—especially among young people.

The transition to a volunteer force has had two other significant consequences. One, women were integrated into most military jobs, except for the infantry and armor. Today, every sixth soldier is female, except in the Marine Corps.

Second, the shrinkage of active duty force levels, which became necessary once competitive wages were being paid, has meant that reservists and Guard troops must shoulder a much greater combat burden.

Today, one out of three GIs in Iraq is a reservist. These soldiers are older, have family obligations, and are less accustomed to the rigors of military life.

These demographic changes are central to any discussion of how a coffeehouse project could attract the participation of GIs. During Vietnam, the average low ranking soldier was paid less than \$300 a month. They lived in austere barracks and ate their meals in dingy chow halls. These conditions made an off-base coffeehouse seem attractive as a refuge from the tedium of the “green machine” and its grinding routines.

Today, half of all soldiers are married and many have children. Their relatively good pay and benefits allow them to buy expensive cars and vans and many choose Applebee’s and Mickey D’s over the mess hall. To counter serious problems with recruitment and retention, the Pentagon now offers a series of bonuses ranging from \$10,000 to \$40,000, payable over the life of an enlistment hitch. Elite “Delta Force” troops can get

up to \$100,000 if they'll sign for another tour. (A note to those who believe that recruiting shortfalls may force a reinstatement of the draft: the Pentagon has shown that it will spend whatever it takes to induce—bribe?—low income youth to fill its combat slots.)

One of the main attractions of the Vietnam era coffeehouse was that GIs identified them with the “countercultural” changes that were sweeping the U.S. at the time. Psychedelic paraphernalia and drugs fanned the latent anti-authoritarianism of soldiers. This, in turn, sparked challenges to all forms of authority—sexual mores, gender roles, social conventions, and the military’s vaunted chain of command. One key demand of the U.S. Servicemen’s (sic) Union was “an end to sir-ing and saluting.” Explicit anti-war organizing, while important, was only one item on the projects’ agendas.

Popular culture today is much more diffuse.

Organizers concluded that a coffeehouse/counseling project could succeed in attracting significant numbers of soldiers assuming that it provided Internet access, good coffee, and plenty of free parking.

Many young soldiers quest for intellectual, cultural, and political fulfillment today, as they always have. A coffeehouse that combines an alternative bookstore with a lively mix of free musical performances, stand up comedy, and poetry (with some political speechifying thrown in) could become highly popular with a significant minority of GIs.

A number of important questions remain.

Who will finance the project?

Certainly GIs can be expected to provide more than a small portion of the budget.

During Vietnam, the United Servicemen’s Support Fund raised substantial sums, which it then parceled out to the local projects to help them pay rent and staff salaries. Nothing like the USSF exists today, but something along these lines will be needed if these projects are to thrive.

Important first steps have been taken, but much more needs to be done.

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.

What George “Bring ‘Em On” Bush Did During The Vietnam War



From: Richard Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: June 27, 2006

What George “Bring ‘Em On” Bush did during the Vietnam War.

“Courage is being scared to death, and saddling up anyway.” John Wayne

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
June 27, 2006

Photo from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR;

RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



Foreign fighters from the U.S. armed forces occupying an Iraqi citizens home in Ramadi, June 20, 2006. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and busting into their houses by force to arouse an intense desire to kill you in the patriotic, self-respecting civilians who live there.

But your commanders know that, don't they? Don't they?

"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."

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

***The Great Iraqi Collaborator Troop
Training Fiasco:***

General Says None Can Act On Their Own, Therefore The War Will Go On “A Long Time,” Another Silly General Says

June 28, 2006 By Pauline Jelinek, Associated Press

Three years into the war, Iraqi security forces still are unable to operate independently of U.S.-led foreign forces, the general in charge of training them said Tuesday.

The building of Iraqi police and army forces is “moving apace,” and performance of the forces has been “quite remarkable” given conditions in the country, Lt. Gen. Martin Dempsey said, but he would not say when they might be able to operate independently.

Asked how many Iraqi units are able to operate on their own, Dempsey told a Pentagon press conference: “It’s just not appropriate yet to be thinking in terms of independent anything in Iraq.

“This, remember, is a nation at war.” **[A nation at war with a foreign Imperial occupation, which is precisely the reason his mission is a failure. The British had a few units of traitor Americans fighting George Washington’s army; didn’t work then, won’t work now.]**

American officials have said repeatedly they cannot begin to withdraw U.S. troops until Iraq has a strong government and security forces capable of controlling the violence.

In Congress, the Army’s chief of staff, Gen. Peter Schoomaker, told the House Armed Services Committee, when pressed by Democrats, that he believes the U.S. military will be in Iraq “a long time.”

[The clueless General will hear from the troops about that. He will find, just as in Vietnam, that the troops, not the Generals or the politicians, will decide when this stupid, evil Imperial war ends. 79% of U.S. forces in Iraq say get out by 12.31.06. When that doesn’t happen, they will find ways to make sure their demand is obeyed. And just as in Vietnam, it will not be pretty, but it will be effective.]

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Israeli Veteran Asks: **“Can It Be That Palestinian Lives Are Nothing, Israeli Lives Everything?”**

6.29.06 Via Ed Pearl

Letter to the Toronto Daily Star....
Jun. 27, 2006. 01:00 AM

To the Editor:

As someone who has served in an Israeli tank unit near Kerem Shalom, I have nothing but sympathy for the bereaved families of Lieut. Hanan Barak and Sgt. Pavel Slutsker, killed in a daring Palestinian commando raid in which Corp. Gilad Shalit was taken captive. But some perspective and some context are necessary.

This tank base was one of the locations from which Israel has been relentlessly shelling the Gaza Strip for several weeks.

Further, just one day earlier, on Saturday, Israeli commandos had raided Rafah, in the Gaza Strip, and captured two brothers, Mustafa and Osama Mu'ammr. All of this is well-known, but did not make it to the front page.

Can it be that Palestinian lives are nothing, Israeli lives everything?

Naftali Lavie, Toronto

Gaza

**In Gaza you would find only
one Israeli-soldier-prisoner
among a one million Palestinian occupied population**

**Surrounding Gaza you would find
658 Tanks, 25.144 soldiers
203 heavy artillery
and 259 armoured vehicles
(not to mention the Air-Power)**

The people surrounding Gaza

have more than 10.000 Palestinian prisoners
and three and half million Palestinians as hostages
and 8 Ministers and 16 members of Parliament
in their custody, without charges...

The people inside Gaza were once
outside Gaza, living in Peace
until one day ugly people came from Europe,
took their homes and sent them into Gaza
as refugees inside their own country.

Some Gaza-natives have never seen
Jerusalem nor Ramallah
nor even their birth-place....

Entering Gaza , by force, reminds me
of the Nazis entering the Warsaw Ghetto.
Or when the Roman-legions
finished up with Spartacus.....

How "brave" can a criminal-army be??

They starved Gaza, cut-off its electricity
and water and food and medicines
They have an Army and Gaza does not...
what else do they want ?

Is genocide their only way to Peace ??

Raja Chemayel

29.06.06 anti-allawi-group

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign
terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The
foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

OCCUPATION EAST TIMOR

Australian Government, With U.S. Help, Makes A Grab For Oil-Rich (\$30 Billion) East Timor: Troops Sent, Government Condemned As “Marxist”

After the arrival of 2200 troops from Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia in late May, a concerted campaign began in the Australian corporate media to demonise Alkatiri, while presenting his rivals, Gusmao and recently promoted defence minister Jose Ramos Horta, as “responsible leaders”.

June 28, 2006 Nick Everett, Green Left Weekly

East Timor’s current political crisis began when a group of soldiers from the country’s west, which grew from 140 to 591, signed a petition claiming discrimination inside the 1300-strong East Timorese Defence Force (FDTL).

In March they were dismissed by the FDTL chief of staff and former commander of Falintil (the armed wing of the pre-1999 national liberation movement), Taur Matan Ruak.

On April 28, a demonstration by the petitioners turned violent. In the rioting that followed, at least 25 people were killed and 130,000 people fled their homes.

Rebel army leader Major Alfredo Reinado took to the mountains with a separate group of soldiers, demanding Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri’s resignation and claiming to be loyal to President Xanana Gusmao. Reinado, who was trained at the Australian Defence Force Academy, has “at least implicit support from Catholic Church leaders, and the Australian and US governments”, according to Sydney University lecturer Tim Anderson.

While claiming to be “neutral” on the dispute between the economic nationalist Alkatiri and Xanana and other elite politicians, the Australian government has been quick to condemn Alkatiri’s leadership, declaring East Timor a “failed state”.

PM John Howard claims East Timor has been “badly governed”.

Foreign minister Alexander Downer — responsible for depriving East Timor of \$1 million per day in oil and gas revenue — declared “the East Timorese themselves are responsible for what has happened ... no-one else is”.

And defence minister Brendan Nelson chimed in with: “If East Timor is allowed to be a failed state in our region, we know that it will be a target for trans-national crime, also for terrorism.”

The Australian ruling class is increasing its interference in East Timor's political affairs, seeking to further undermine the 1999 victory of the East Timor solidarity movement, which reversed a 24-year policy of support for Jakarta's military occupation of East Timor and forced the Howard government to acquiesce to a UN intervention that assisted the nation's self-determination.

After the arrival of 2200 troops from Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia in late May, a concerted campaign began in the Australian corporate media to demonise Alkatiri, while presenting his rivals, Gusmao and recently promoted defence minister Jose Ramos Horta, as “responsible leaders”.

On June 1, the Australian's Greg Sheridan asserted that “Alkatiri has been the author of every calamitous decision the East Timorese Government has made”.

Sheridan called for Alkatiri's resignation on June 3, claiming, “If (the Australian government) cannot translate the leverage of 1300 troops, 50 policemen, hundreds of support personnel, buckets of aid and a critical international rescue mission into enough influence to get rid of a disastrous Marxist Prime Minister, then (it is) just not very skilled in the arts of influence, tutelage, sponsorship and, ultimately, promoting the national interest”.

Sheridan's defence of Australia's “national interest” was not a call for peaceful relations with the people of East Timor, but a blatant bid to strengthen an Australian corporate monopoly over US\$30 billion worth of oil and gas in the Timor Sea.

Chris Barrie, former chief of the Australian Defence Force, told the Age: “Maybe we were too quick to blame the whole (pre-independence) problem on the militia and Indonesia, rather than the East Timorese themselves and their own unresolved societal tensions.” Likewise, the Sydney Morning Herald's Gerard Henderson blamed “clan-based violence in East Timor”, claiming this was endemic both “before the Indonesian army arrived in 1975” and “since the pro-Indonesia militia was dispersed by Interfet in 1999”.

Yet Australia's corporate media has avoided reference to the collective trauma experienced by East Timor's population during 24 years of military occupation.

The Reception, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CAVR), established in 2002 to investigate and document human rights violations in East Timor between 1974 and 1999, estimated that the number of conflict-related deaths in that period was 102,800-183,000, out of a total population of well under a million. CAVR concluded that 90% of the killings were carried out either by the Indonesian military (58%) or their East Timorese auxiliaries (32%).

The primary responsibility for this social disaster rests with the neoliberal economic policies imposed on East Timor under the United Nations Transitional Authority for East Timor (UNTAET) between 1999 and 2002.

Following the withdrawal of the Indonesian military, the UN handed the World Bank the job of managing East Timor's reconstruction by administering funds donated by UN member states through the Trust Fund for East Timor (TFET).

East Timor's donors demanded a compliant government beholden to powerful corporate interests.

Since 1999, international donors have committed an estimated \$3 billion for "post-conflict reconstruction" in East Timor.

A European Commission evaluation of the TFET noted that over a third of allocated funds were eaten up by foreign consultants' fees, overheads and tied procurements, leaving little to address urgent problems of malnourishment, food security, clean water, preventable diseases and unemployment. Many former Falintil fighters particularly suffered.

In 2001, UNTAET established the FDTL and the PNTL through an agreement with the National Council, a consultative body of East Timorese political leaders headed by Gusmao.

On advice from Kings College, London, UNTAET and the National Council set criteria for recruitment to the FDTL that could not be met by many former Falintil guerrilla fighters.

Falintil veterans who were not successful were "reintegrated" into civilian life through a World Bank-funded program that left many poor and destitute.

The demobilisation of Falintil, a force that could potentially have been mobilised for reconstruction projects within the country, was symptomatic of the demobilisation of the broader national liberation movement and an increasing reliance on foreign governments — particularly Australia and Portugal — to assist in reconstruction.

"In 1975, Fretilin integrated the struggle for national liberation with people's liberation through cooperative programs, eradication of illiteracy and development of a national culture. At that time Fretilin became a people's political force with a clear vision about the future of an independent Timor Leste. Unfortunately, these popular ideas which flourished in the 1970s are considered by many sections within Fretilin as outdated", said Nasution. "The liberal democracy promoted by the UN has turned political parties into electoral machines ... in which popular participation is removed."

While East Timor's political elite, including many of Alkatiri's Fretilin "comrades," have sought to position themselves to benefit from their relationships with foreign donors, Alkatiri has so far resisted pressure to accept World Bank and IMF loans.

Alkatiri's government has established a Petroleum Fund, seeking to invest 90% of the national wealth obtained from oil and gas in long-term investment, while committing 10% to spending on health, education and agricultural programs.

The Alkatiri government also plans to set up a state-owned petroleum company, assisted by China, Malaysia and Brazil, aimed at obtaining a bigger share of oil and gas revenue from the Timor Sea.

A domestic rice industry has increased production from 37,000 to 65,000 tonnes between 1998 and 2004, using aid to fund public grain silos, against policies advocated by the Australian government and the World Bank.

Through bilateral agreements between East Timor and Cuba, 220 Cuban doctors and 30 Cuban health technicians are working in clinics across 13 districts; hundreds of East Timorese students are studying medicine in Cuba (there are only 55 trained Timorese doctors); and Cuban education trainers are working alongside local teachers as part of a program of illiteracy eradication.

These modest measures have come under attack from much of East Timor's elite. In 2005, Alkatiri's opposition to compulsory religious education in schools prompted church-led protests, which had the backing of the US ambassador.

These protests demanded the criminalisation of homosexuality and abortion, Alkatiri's resignation and the removal of "communists" from the government.

At the same time, Alkatiri has also been roundly criticised for a defamation law that severely curtails civil liberties.

Author Clinton Fernandes, in his book *Reluctant Saviour: Australia, Indonesia and the Independence of East Timor*, observed in 2004 that the East Timorese leadership "remains wary of harnessing the momentum of its people, choosing instead to make deals with Australian and Portuguese corporate interests, as well as with other international forces. (East Timor) finds its political independence constrained by its dependent, neo-colonial economy."

Today an East Timorese bourgeoisie — represented not only by Horta and Xanana, but also by an increasingly dominant faction within Fretilin — is consolidating its strength, based on close ties with Australian and other Western governments.

If Alkatiri is ousted, it will mark a significant setback for the East Timorese people and will consolidate Fretilin's transformation from a national liberation movement into a club of beneficiaries of foreign donor funds and the country's oil wealth.

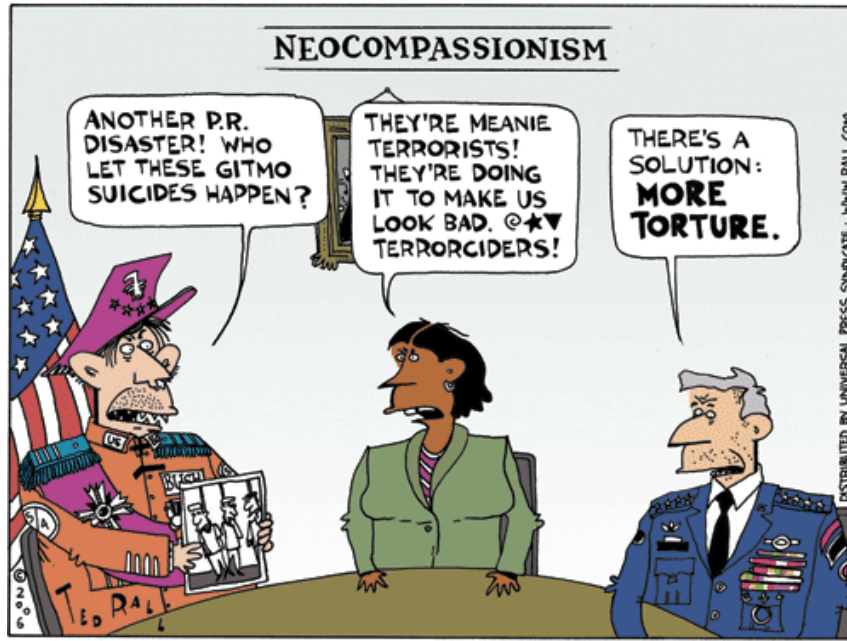
If East Timor is to be genuinely free of the designs of its neo-colonial masters, it will require the mobilisation of its people, backed by the revival of a powerful solidarity movement in Australia.

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)

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

Supreme Court “Repudiates Guantanamo Trials”: “A Sweeping And Categorical Defeat” For The Traitor Bush

June 29, 2006 By LINDA GREENHOUSE, The New York Times [Excerpts]

The Supreme Court on Thursday repudiated the Bush administration's plan to put Guantánamo detainees on trial before military commissions, ruling broadly that the commissions were unauthorized by federal statute and violated international law.

"The executive is bound to comply with the Rule of Law that prevails in this jurisdiction," Justice John Paul Stevens, writing for the 5-to-3 majority, said at the end of a 73-page opinion that in sober tones shredded each of the administration's arguments, including the assertion that Congress had stripped the court of jurisdiction to decide the case.

The decision was such a sweeping and categorical defeat for the Bush administration that it left human rights lawyers who have pressed this and other cases on behalf of Guantanamo detainees almost speechless with surprise and delight, using words like "fantastic," "amazing," "remarkable."

Michael Ratner, president of the Center for Constitutional Rights, a public interest law firm in New York that represents hundreds of detainees, said, "It doesn't get any better."

The courtroom was, surprisingly, not full, but among those in attendance, there was no doubt that they were witnessing a historic event, a definitional moment in the ever-shifting balance of power among the branches of government that ranked with the court's order to President Nixon in 1974 to turn over the Watergate tapes or with the court's rejection of President Truman's seizure of the nation's steel mills, a 1952 landmark decision from which Justice Kennedy quoted at length.

The opinion made it clear that while this provision does not necessarily require the full range of protections of a civilian court or a military court martial, it does require observance of protections for defendants that are missing from the rules the administration has issued for military commissions.

The flaws the court cited were the failure to guarantee the defendant the right to attend the trial and the prosecution's ability under the rules to introduce hearsay evidence, unsworn testimony, and evidence obtained through coercion.

The majority opinion was also joined by Justices David H. Souter, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and Stephen G. Breyer, who wrote a brief concurring opinion of his own that focused on the role of Congress. "The court's conclusion ultimately rests upon a single ground: Congress has not issued the executive a blank check," he said.

The decision contained unwelcome implications, from the administration's point of view, for other legal battles, some with equal or greater importance than the fate of the military commissions themselves.

In ruling that the congressional "authorization for the use of military force," passed in the days immediately following the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, cannot be interpreted to legitimize the military commissions, the ruling poses a direct challenge to the administration's legal justification for its secret wiretapping program.

IN BID FOR AMNESTY, DELAY BECOMES IRAQI INSURGENT Former Texas Lawmaker Changes Name To Hassan El-Medfaai

June 29, 2006 The Borowitz Report

Just days after Iraqi Prime Minister Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki announced a sweeping plan that would offer amnesty to members of the Iraqi insurgency, former Texas congressman Tom DeLay announced that he would become an Iraqi insurgent.

Mr. DeLay, who is under indictment in state court on money-laundering and conspiracy charges, said at a Houston press conference today that he had put the legal gears into motion to attain Iraqi insurgent status.

"On my 2006 tax returns, my occupation will be listed as 'insurgent,' and my name will be legally changed to Hassan El-Medfaai," Mr. DeLay said, adding, "Death to America."

Mr. DeLay's legal advisors seem confident that by changing his legal status to that of an Iraqi insurgent he will be entitled to amnesty from all of the criminal charges he currently faces in Texas.

But in order to become an insurgent, Mr. DeLay faces an immediately hurdle which may prove difficult to surmount: convincing the Iraqi insurgency that he deserves to be a member.

In Basra, the National Coalition of Iraqi Insurgents, a trade association representing over 250,000 Iraqi insurgents, met in an emergency session today to discuss Mr. DeLay's bid for membership in the insurgency.

At the conclusion of the all-day session, however, a spokesman for the group gave the former Texas congressman a resounding thumbs-down.

"As Iraqi insurgents, we have certain ethical standards that we abide by," said a spokesman for the insurgents' group. "Unfortunately, Tom DeLay falls far below those standards."

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