

GI SPECIAL 5C12:

***“It Is Not A Good Idea
For You To Give Me A
Weapon Right Now”***

**“I’m Going To Tell Them I’m Not
Going To Go. They Are Going
To Give Me A Weapon. I Am
Going To Say, ‘It Is Not A Good
Idea For You To Give Me A
Weapon Right Now’”**

***Soldiers Fighting Back Against
Murderous Traitors In Command
At Ft. Benning Who Send Unfit
Soldiers Unable To Wear
Protective Gear Back To Iraq;
Officers Caught Committing Medical
Fraud & Faking Medical Records:
The Rat General Kiley Knew Of These
Criminal Acts And Did Nothing;***

An Honorable Master Sgt. Reported To Him What Was Going On

[Yeah, this is the same bottom feeding scum sucking Lt. Gen. Kevin C. Kiley who used to be in command of Walter Reed, and refused to act for years on the endless reports of the horrible conditions there. He's got a perfect record for treating injured troops like shit.]

[So here it is again, one more time. Same old story. Used up, thrown away, and the politicians couldn't care less.

[To repeat for the 3,489th time, there is no enemy in Iraq. Iraqis and U.S. troops have a common enemy. That common enemy owns and operates the Imperial government in Washington DC for their own profit. That common enemy started this war of conquest on a platform of lies, because they couldn't tell the truth: this war was about making money for them, and nothing else. Payback for Kiley and all the rest of these worthless, lying, soldier-hating assholes is so far overdue it's lost someplace in the previous century. T]

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

As the military scrambles to pour more soldiers into Iraq, a unit of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Benning, Ga., is deploying troops with serious injuries and other medical problems, including GIs who doctors have said are medically unfit for battle.

Some are too injured to wear their body armor, according to medical records.

March 11, 2007 By Mark Benjamin, Salon.com

FORT BENNING, Ga. -- "This is not right," said Master Sgt. Ronald Jenkins, who has been ordered to Iraq even though he has a spine problem that doctors say would be damaged further by heavy Army protective gear.

"This whole thing is about taking care of soldiers," he said angrily. "If you are fit to fight you are fit to fight. If you are not fit to fight, then you are not fit to fight."

As the military scrambles to pour more soldiers into Iraq, a unit of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Benning, Ga., is deploying troops with serious injuries and other medical problems, including GIs who doctors have said are medically unfit for battle.

Some are too injured to wear their body armor, according to medical records.

On Feb. 15, Master Sgt. Jenkins and 74 other soldiers with medical conditions from the 3rd Division's 3rd Brigade were summoned to a meeting with the division surgeon and brigade surgeon.

These are the men responsible for handling each soldier's "physical profile," an Army document that lists for commanders an injured soldier's physical limitations because of medical problems -- from being unable to fire a weapon to the inability to move and dive in three-to-five-second increments to avoid enemy fire.

Jenkins and other soldiers claim that the division and brigade surgeons summarily downgraded soldiers' profiles, without even a medical exam, in order to deploy them to Iraq.

The 3,900-strong 3rd Brigade is now leaving for Iraq for a third time in a steady stream.

In fact, some of the troops with medical conditions interviewed by Salon last week are already gone.

Others are slated to fly out within a week, but are fighting against their chain of command, holding out hope that because of their ills they will ultimately not be forced to go.

Jenkins, who is still in Georgia, thinks doctors are helping to send hurt soldiers like him to Iraq to make units going there appear to be at full strength.

"This is about the numbers," he said flatly.

That is what worries Steve Robinson, director of veterans affairs at Veterans for America, who has long been concerned that the military was pressing injured troops into Iraq.

"Did they send anybody down range that cannot wear a helmet, that cannot wear body armor?"

Robinson asked rhetorically. "Well that is wrong. It is a war zone."

Robinson thinks that the possibility that physical profiles may have been altered improperly has the makings of a scandal.

"My concerns are that this needs serious investigation. You cannot just look at somebody and tell that they were fit," he said. "It smacks of an overstretched military that is in crisis mode to get people onto the battlefield."

Eight soldiers who were at the Feb. 15 meeting say they were summoned to the troop medical clinic at 6:30 in the morning and lined up to meet with division surgeon Lt. Col. George Appenzeller, who had arrived from Fort Stewart, Ga., and Capt. Aaron K. Starbuck, brigade surgeon at Fort Benning.

The soldiers described having a cursory discussion of their profiles, with no physical exam or extensive review of medical files. They say Appenzeller and Starbuck seemed focused on downplaying their physical problems.

"This guy was changing people's profiles left and right," said a captain who injured his back during his last tour in Iraq and was ordered to Iraq after the Feb. 15 review.

Appenzeller denied that the plan was to find more warm bodies for the surge into Baghdad, as did Col. Wayne W. Grigsby Jr., the brigade commander. Grigsby said he is under "no pressure" to find soldiers, regardless of health, to make his unit look fit.

Grigsby said he does not know how many injured soldiers are in his ranks. But he insisted that it is not unusual to deploy troops with physical limitations so long as he can place them in safe jobs when they get there. "They can be productive and safe in Iraq," Grigsby said.

The injured soldiers interviewed by Salon, however, expressed considerable worry about going to Iraq with physical deficits because it could endanger them or their fellow soldiers.

And while Grigsby, the brigade commander, says he is under no pressure to find troops, it is hard to imagine there is not some desperation behind the decision to deploy some of the sick soldiers.

Master Sgt. Jenkins, 42, has a degenerative spine problem and a long scar down the back of his neck where three of his vertebrae were fused during surgery. He takes a cornucopia of potent pain pills.

His medical records say he is "at significantly increased risk of re-injury during deployment where he will be wearing Kevlar, body armor and traveling through rough terrain." Late last year, those medical records show, a doctor recommended that Jenkins be referred to an Army board that handles retirements when injuries are permanent and severe.

A copy of Jenkins' profile written after that Feb. 15 meeting and signed by Capt. Starbuck, the brigade surgeon, shows a healthier soldier than the profile of Jenkins written by another doctor just late last year, though Jenkins says his condition is unchanged. Other soldiers' documents show the same pattern.

One female soldier with psychiatric issues and a spine problem has been in the Army for nearly 20 years. "My (health) is deteriorating," she said over dinner at a restaurant near Fort Benning. "My spine is separating. I can't carry gear."

Her medical records include the note "unable to deploy overseas." Her status was also reviewed on Feb. 15. And she has been ordered to Iraq this week.

The captain interviewed by Salon also requested anonymity because he fears retribution. He suffered a back injury during a previous deployment to Iraq as an infantry platoon leader. A Humvee accident "corkscrewed my spine," he explained.

Like the female soldier, he is unable to wear his protective gear, and like her he too was ordered to Iraq after his meeting with the division surgeon and brigade surgeon on Feb. 15.

He is still at Fort Benning and is fighting the decision to send him to Baghdad.

"It is a numbers issue with this whole troop surge," he claimed. "They are just trying to get those numbers."

Another soldier contacted Salon by telephone last week expressed considerable anxiety, in a frightened tone, about deploying to Iraq in her current condition. (She also wanted to remain anonymous, fearing retribution.)

An incident during training several years ago injured her back, forcing doctors to remove part of her fractured coccyx. She suffers from degenerative disk disease and has two ruptured disks and a bulging disk in her back.

While she said she loves the Army and would like to deploy after back surgery, her current injuries would limit her ability to wear her full protective gear.

She deployed to Iraq last week, the day after calling Salon.

Her husband, who has served three combat tours in the infantry in Afghanistan and Iraq, said he is worried sick because his wife's protective vest alone exceeds the maximum amount she is allowed to lift.

"I have been over there three times. I know what it is like," he told me during lunch at a restaurant here.

He predicted that by deploying people like his wife, the brigade leaders are "going to get somebody killed over there."

He said there is "no way" Grigsby is going to keep all of the injured soldiers in safe jobs.

"All of these people that deploy with these profiles, they are scared," he said. He railed at the command: "They are saying they don't care about your health. This is pathetic. It is bad."

His wife's physical profile was among those reevaluated on Feb. 15.

A copy of her profile from late last year showed her health problems were so severe they "prevent deployment" and recommended she be medically retired from the Army.

Her profile at that time showed she was unable to wear a protective mask and chemical defense equipment, and had limitations on doing pushups, walking, biking and swimming. It said she can only carry 15 pounds.

Though she says that her condition has not changed since then, almost all of those findings were reversed in a copy of her physical profile dated Feb. 15. The new profile says nothing about a medical retirement, but suggests that she limit wearing a helmet to "one hour at a time."

Smith is trained by the Army to be a truck driver.

But since he is in constant danger of falling asleep, military doctors have listed "No driving of military vehicles" on his physical profile. Smith was supposed to fly to Iraq March 9.

But he told me on March 8 that he won't go.

Nobody has retrained Smith to do anything else besides drive trucks. Plus, because of his condition he was unable to train properly with the unit when the brigade rehearsed for Iraq in January, so he does not feel ready.

Smith needs to sleep with a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machine pumping air into his mouth and nose. "Otherwise," he says, "I could die." But based on his last tour, he is not convinced he will be able to be in places with constant electricity or will be able to fix or replace his CPAP machine should it fail.

He told me last week he would refuse to deploy to Iraq, unsure of what he will be asked to do there and afraid that he will not be taken care of. Since he won't be a truck driver,

"I would be going basically as a number," says Smith, who is 32. "They don't have enough people," he says.

But he is not going to be one of those numbers until they train him to do something else.

"I'm going to go to the airport, and I'm going to tell them I'm not going to go. They are going to give me a weapon. I am going to say, 'It is not a good idea for you to give me a weapon right now.'"

The Pentagon was notified of the reclassification of the Fort Benning soldiers as soon as it happened, according to Master Sgt. Jenkins.

He showed Salon an e-mail describing the situation that he says he sent to Army Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Kevin C. Kiley.

Jenkins agreed to speak to Salon because he hopes public attention will help other soldiers, particularly younger ones in a similar predicament. "I can't sit back and let this happen to me or other soldiers in my position."

But he expects reprisals from the Army.

Other soldiers slated to leave for Iraq with injuries said they wonder whether the same thing is happening in other units in the Army.

"You have to ask where else this might be happening and who is dictating it," one female soldier told me.

"How high does it go?"

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward GI Special 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, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Task Force Lightning Soldier Dies In Non-Combat Related Incident

March 11, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070311-10

TIKRIT, Iraq – A Task Force Lightning Soldier died Sunday in a non-combated related incident, which is currently under investigation.

One U.S. Soldier Killed, Two Wounded Southwest Of Baghdad

March 11, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070311-16

A MND-B unit in support of an on-going air assault mission southwest of the Iraqi capital was struck by a roadside bomb, killing one Soldier and wounding two others on March 11.

One U.S. Soldier Killed One Wounded In Salah Ad Din

March 11, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070311-11

TIKRIT, Iraq – Task Force Lightning Soldiers were attacked while conducting combat operations in Salah ad Din province today.

One Task Force Lightning Soldier died as a result of injuries sustained from an explosion.

One other Soldier was wounded and taken to a Coalition medical facility for treatment.

U.S. Drone Down In Ur

11 Mar 2007 Reuters

A U.S. drone for air surveillance went down in Ur district in northeastern Baghdad, police said. The U.S. military confirmed that a drone was recovered but it was intact.
U.S. Convoy Ambushed In Farah

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



Thanks to Kevin Ramirez, CCCO. He writes: Pics showing what happens when US bases get mortared/rocketed. Obviously taken by a GI. I found them online, and don't know who took them.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

U.S. Convoy Ambushed In Farah

11/03/2007 BAKU TODAY

A bombing tore through a joint Afghan and US-led coalition force convoy in western Farah province Sunday killing a policeman and injuring three others, said Ikramuddin Yawar, police chief for the western provinces including Farah.

There were no casualties among the US-led troops in the incident in Farah province's Bala Blok district, the commander said.

Assorted Resistance Action

11/03/2007 BAKU TODAY

Taliban insurgents ambushed a police patrol in southern Afghanistan killing eight, a police commander said. The patrol was ambushed in the southern province of Kandahar late Saturday, the commander of border police in the province, General Raziq, told AFP, adding "eight policemen were killed."

The rebels were able to flee following a "brief" gun battle after the attack in Arghistan district, said the commander, who uses only one name. They appeared not to have suffered any casualties, he said.

"We've launched an operation against the Taliban who were behind this attack. So far we have had no success," he said.

Three policemen were killed in another gunfight in Kandahar province on Friday.

Taliban fighters attacked a convoy on the main highway in the province, sparking a gunfight, the interior ministry said Sunday.

TROOP NEWS

Bush Regime Supports Troops Like A Noose Supports A Hanging Man: They're Fighting GI Bill Boost For Reservists; [It's About The Money, What Else?]

March 12, 2007 By Rick Maze, Staff writer, Army Times [Excerpts]

The Bush administration opposes efforts in Congress to upgrade GI Bill education benefits for reservists because of a basic philosophical difference about why the benefits are paid in the first place.

For the bipartisan group of congressional sponsors of GI Bill legislation and for the coalition of military advocacy groups pushing for improvements, the purpose of the benefit is to make education more affordable to people who have served their country.

Bush administration officials, however, see the modern Montgomery GI Bill that was created in 1985 as a combination recruiting, retention and readjustment tool, with recruiting and retention atop the priority list for the National Guard and Reserve.

From the Defense Department's perspective, readjustment — the key purpose of GI Bill benefits when the original program was born after World War II — is not important for members of the National Guard and reserve, even those mobilized for deployment into a combat zone.

Rep. Vic Snyder, D-Ark., the subcommittee chairman and a key sponsor of a GI Bill overhaul plan, said he thinks the Bush administration is wrong because the employment market has changed.

Guard and reserve members, like other American workers, instead of working for only one employer during their lives, now often change jobs, and could use GI Bill benefits to help prepare for a new job in a new field.

Snyder also said many Guard and reserve members are returning from deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan to find they must seek new employment because their jobs disappeared while they were gone.

Moreover, he said, there is a basic element of fairness in simply doing the right thing for military members.

Just one aspect of the congressional plan — restoring the eroding value of reserve benefits that have not kept pace with increases in active-duty GI Bill payments — would cost more than \$13 billion over five years, money Dominguez [Michael Dominguez, principal deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness] said the Pentagon would much rather spend on something else.

He mentioned better health care for reservists being a higher priority in reserve satisfaction surveys, but conceded that the Bush administration probably would not willingly spend \$13 billion to improve reserve health benefits, either.

Snyder's personnel panel is considering a GI Bill upgrade that would increase benefits for Guard and reserve members, allow reservists the same rights as active-duty members to use benefits after getting out of the service and consolidate the program under VA, stripping the Defense Department of its authority over reserve benefits.

Snyder said he is willing to make one concession to the administration — leaving authority and funding for the enlistment “kickers” under the Defense Department — but otherwise is not going to let administration opposition stop him.

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



A US Army soldier, a double amputee who was injured in Baghdad, Iraq, tries out his prosthetic limbs after having them adjusted at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, in 2006. (AFP/File/Jim Watson)

The Army's Best Carbine: Better Than The M4 — But You Won't Get One

#1:

“When I Heard That There Was A Better Weapon On The Market And That It Was Being Denied Due To Being Too Expensive It Made Me Wonder About How Much A Soldier Is Really Worth”

March 12, 2007
Letter To The Editor
Army Times

Your article “The Army’s best carbine: Better than the M4 — but you won’t get one” [Feb. 26] had me fuming.

I have been deployed to Iraq and face another deployment coming up shortly. I have been face-to-face with the enemy, and luckily, my weapon did not jam.

When I heard that there was a better weapon on the market and that it was being denied due to being too expensive to invest without a “significant leap in technology,” it made me wonder about how much a soldier is really worth.

If I invest the cost of one Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance payout of a soldier saved by issuing a significantly better weapon to the distribution of that weapon, saving hundreds (of soldiers’ lives), then should cost be a factor? Aren’t we saving hundreds of thousands (of dollars) in SGLI and benefits?

If this weapon saves hundreds because it is more reliable, where is the issue?

I am a soldier that served on the front lines. My heart is with my comrades out there. Use my SGLI to pay the difference.

We don’t need a significant technological leap, just a weapon that doesn’t jam.

Warrant Officer 1 William Jones
Fort Rucker, Ala.

#2:

“Political Shenanigans Cannot Make A Pig’s Ear Into A Silk Purse”

March 12, 2007
Letter To The Editor
Army Times

During World War II, the Navy’s position on the poor performance of their torpedoes blamed everything on the sailors using it.

During Vietnam, the Army’s position on the M16 blamed everything on the soldiers using it.

Col. Robert Radcliffe, the man overseeing the Army’s small-arms needs, is upholding that fine tradition, but that works to the detriment of the American soldiers being forced to use the M16 family of weapons.

Too much time and money has been invested in keeping the M16 family going to drop it now, according to Radcliffe.

I will not question his sincerity, but I do question his judgment.

Having watched an abbreviated demonstration of the Heckler & Koch 416 on The Discovery Channel’s “Future Weapons,” I was thoroughly impressed. It is billed as unjammable, and even if this statement is only half true, it is light years better than the description of reliability for the M16 family: “highly reliable when properly maintained.”

That is a cop-out.

Weapons need to be highly reliable under combat conditions, not range conditions.

Tearing a weapon down, cleaning it and reassembling during a firefight does not sound very good to me.

Should the soldier be able to have a robust weapon that is putting lead down range versus one that needs tons of TLC to function?

The best weapon is the best weapon, period.

Political shenanigans cannot make a pig’s ear into a silk purse.

Sgt. Alan Griggs (ret.)
Buckeye, Ariz.

#3: “Infantry Isn’t The Only Branch Stuck In The ‘Do Nothing Until We Can Make A Great Leap Forward’ Mode Of Inaction”

March 12, 2007
Letter To The Editor
Army Times

I support your editorial “Field the best weapon” (Feb. 26).

Col. Robert Radcliffe, either by choice or by chance, has been stuck in the unenviable position of defending policies and ideas that are still stuck in the former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld time warp. Radcliffe isn’t in any position to have any influence upon how the Army bureaucracy makes important life-and- death decisions regarding our troops’ weapon systems.

The problem with the lingering Rumsfeld ideas about doing nothing until we can make a great leap forward is endemic to the Army structure and should be looked at by Congress, instead of politicians wasting time on micromanaging how we fight the war in Iraq.

Infantry isn’t the only branch stuck in the “do nothing until we can make a great leap forward” mode of inaction. Armor folks seem stuck in the same time warp.

The RPG29 is looming over everyone’s heads, but rather than admit that the Israeli Trophy system may do the trick, Army leaders stand by their decision to see if their unproven system might work, possibly by 2011.

When confronted, these Rumsfeld clones fall back and state that it will take a billion dollars to change out the M16 and M4 to the Heckler & Koch 416 or its equivalent.

Certainly, you can’t do it all overnight, but the fight to finish equipping the National Guard with the single channel ground and airborne radio system is proof that it can be done in stages.

Troops in combat zones where weapon malfunctions are prevalent should be the first to receive the equipment.

Instead of micromanaging timetables in Iraq, I plead with Congress to break Rumsfeld’s death grip upon the Army’s acquisition mentality and see that our troops in the combat zone not only get body armor but weapons that can stand up and fight alongside the venerable AK47.

Those stuck in slots such as Radcliffe's are in no position to make such monumental changes.

Congress needs to take on the Defense Department civilians and top brass to make the necessary changes.

Former Sgt. 1st Class
Richard H. Loney

Fort Wayne, Ind.

Navy Paying Contractor For New Weapon To Make Enemies Puke

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

7th March 2007 By Lewis Page, Theregister.co.uk

The US Navy is funding research into a "Star Trek phaser set on 'stun'".

At least to begin with, the kit is intended for use by Marines in ordinary urban combat rather than starship crewmen beamed down onto strange new worlds (fans of the classic series may be interested to note that the USS Enterprise happens to be preparing for an "upcoming surge deployment", however.)

The new technology has been given an acronym, EPIC, for Electromagnetic Personnel Interdiction Control. The idea is that intense radio-frequency emissions – capable of passing through walls – would be used to temporarily disrupt the balance and coordination functions of targets' inner ears, knocking them down relatively harmlessly.

The Navy notes that "second order effects would be extreme motion sickness," suggesting that in fact the order given by future Captain Kirks may be "set phasers on 'puke'".

The intention of the programme is to avoid unnecessary harm to the target, but unconscious vomiting would seem to present something of a choking hazard. Still, EPIC-based regurge blasters would seem less brutal than the microwave-oven cannons already tested, which are designed to disperse crowds by lightly frying their outer skin layers.

Texas-based wireless systems firm Invocon was awarded a \$99,609 development contract in 2004. The company now claims that "the first known demonstration of a vestibular response to an electromagnetic stimulus has been performed", and wants more money "for research into the effects of the stimulus and potential delivery mechanisms".

The best commentary so far was provided by “Dan Lardee” on Wired’s blogs, who simply said: “I think I got hit by one of those beams last night.”

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



(Graphic: London Financial Times)

Assorted Resistance Action

3.11.07 Mail & Guardian & Reuters

Two police officers were killed and seven others were wounded as a roadside bomb they were defusing in the Zulf-al-Sakhar district between Baghdad and the central city of Hilla exploded.

A roadside bomb killed three policemen and wounded seven others while they were trying to dismantle it in the main road in the town of Mussayab, police said.

A blast in the reception lobby of the Iraqi Islamic [collaborator] Party headquarters in the northern city of Mosul killed three guards and wounded two. The Islamic Party is the largest party of the Accordance Front, the biggest Sunni group in parliament

A car bomb parked on the side of the road killed one Iraqi soldier and wounded another in the Yarmouk district of western Baghdad, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation's ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of

biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. Frederick Douglas, 1852

Hunting And Fishing In Vietnam

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: March 11, 2007
Subject: Hunting And Fishing In Vietnam

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

Hunting And Fishing In Vietnam

Dogs of war flush the VC and NVA from the machete jungle so air superiority could kill them before they run down their rabbit holes. Ground troops are cheese on a rat trap, a worm on a hook for fishing in the jungle, when there is a bite, the bobber going down, the contact, the air superiority attack, gun ships mini-guns a blazing, jets fly so low that the bait sees the pilot's face as they napalm an edge of a village, the bait see the children half burning, mamason holds her infant trying to wipe away the spots of napalm burning on her baby's arm and foot. B-52's produce crater lakes as they fight the running Vietnamese, pilot's insulated by air superiority, flying back to base, take a shower, eat at the mess hall, drinking beer, playing poker, laughing and enjoying comradeship. The grunt bait eating from tin cans heating by C4 to boiling in a jungle of hate. The worms slither in the jungle in and out of eye holes, nose holes, bullets holes of rotting skulls. The dumb boys who could not afford college or didn't care for it, are flipped across the big pond into Vietnam and the masters of war who fly so high in their choppers waiting for the worms to be attacked and then direct their air power and it did not matter

**if the worms died or didn't wiggle anymore
they would just slide more worms
on their hooks.**

Confronting The War Machine In The Pacific Northwest: **“Ours Is A Direct Demonstration To The Troops That We Want To Keep Them Home Safely”**

From: Ron Jacobs
To: GI Special
Sent: March 11, 2007

When one thinks of militant political action taking place in the United States, their thoughts usually turn to cities like San Francisco, Chicago and New York. The US South and its Pacific Northwest probably don't spring immediately to mind.

This is despite the rich legacy of militant labor protest in the filed, woods and apple orchards of the northwest and the Seattle General Strike of 1919, not to mention the actions of the Seattle Chapter of the Black Panther Party and the Seattle Liberation Front in the 1960s and early 1970s.

As for the US South, one tends to think in terms of militant right wing political action against blacks and labor, but the converse of that is equally true.

It was in the South where Martin Luther King, Jr. began his campaign of militant non-violence. It was in the US South where students began the sit-in campaigns to desegregate public facilities and it was in the US South where Robert Williams confronted the night riders of the Ku Klux Klan with and armed force of African-Americans when confronted with the violent racism of the klansmen in white and in blue.

Equally under the radar in terms of militance is the US Midwest.

Once again, this misconception is based on an ignorance of history.

It was in Madison, Wisconsin where some of the most radical and militant protests against the war in Vietnam took place. The history of the first Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) tells us that the greatest proponents of the direct action form of protest came out of the midwestern colleges: Ann Arbor, MI., Kent, Ohio, Grinnell in Iowa, to name a few.

Why was this the case?

Perhaps because of an anger at discovering that America wasn't all she was cracked up to be. Perhaps a reflection of a working person's understanding that action got things done, not words. Or perhaps a combination of these and other factors.

The Northwest Shows The Way

On March 5th, 2007, several people were attacked and at least three arrested by police in Tacoma, WA. at a series of protests against shipments of military supplies at the city's port.

The reasons for the attacks and arrests were not clear to onlookers, who told the press that the protesters were doing nothing but holding signs.

In an exchange I had with Jeff Berryhill of Olympia, WA. (who was arrested along with Wally Cudderford and Caitlin Esworthy) I was told that all he was doing when he was shot with a rubber bullet by the police was "holding a sign that read "Courage to Resist. org." (Courage to Resist is an organization supporting military resisters.)

The next thing he knew he was hit in the thigh by a police-fired projectile.

All of this occurred in the predawn hours of March 5th, 2007. The reason for the unusual timing of the arrests is because even though the protest began the evening before, the actual loading of the equipment did not begin until after midnight. Protests continued each evening throughout the week, although no more arrests were made until Friday, March 9th when a woman was taken in by police for carrying a backpack into an unauthorized zone.

The Friday protests were some of the largest of the week and were met with tear gas, concussion grenades and other forms of police violence. Among the protesters was Attorney Lynne Stewart, who is out on bail following her questionable conviction on terrorism charges.

If one recalls, there was a similar protest last May at the Port of Olympia, some thirty miles south of Tacoma. Those protests resulted in the arrests of a couple dozen folks and a few injuries.

In addition, they appear to have caused the military to relocate its shiploading operations to Tacoma.

In fact, the trial of these folks, known as the Olympia 22, begins on March 26th. The judge in the trial has disallowed the necessity defense and, like the military judge in the first trial of war resister Lt, Watada, does not want the trial to be about the war.

Although military officials are reluctant to give a clear answer as to why there have been no more shipments loaded at the Olympia port since the May protests, the fact that they are now taking place at Tacoma speaks volumes.

To the credit of all of the antiwar groups in the northwest--from the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation to the sponsors of the direct actions at the Port, the Port Militarization Resistance (PMR)--the solidarity shown for these protests has been constant and clear.

The Tacoma action had the backing of Vets for Peace, the Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace, the Washington Greens, Iraq Veterans Against the War, and others.

This solidarity is important, especially in the face of attempts by the State and the media to delineate what is good protest and what is bad protest.

Indeed, the Tacoma News tribune reported on the actions of the protesters arrested and shot by quoting the police officer in charge of policing the event: demonstrators "have been told they could protest but they have to follow the rules, including, among others, that they can't block streets, sidewalks or cross a police line." This was followed by a quote from a military official telling reporters that he only wanted to see the weapons of this brutal war be loaded on in "as safe a manner as possible."

When I asked Berryhill for the PMR's rationale behind the direct actions at the ports, he told me, "I believe the strategy we are employing, which is concentrated on ending our communities involvement with the escalation and continuation of the war is one of many that should be utilized.

"Obviously other methods are valuable and should be continued, but ours is a direct demonstration to the troops that we want to keep them home safely.

"Traditional avenues have been used repeatedly (like lobbying, letter writing, and standard marches) with varying degrees of effectiveness. We are hoping to try something a bit unconventional, and in doing so have generated significant publicity and prompted serious interest within peace and justice communities."

Asked about the intended effect of the protests on soldiers on the other side of the lines from the protesters, Berryhill responded: "It is also important for the soldiers to witness police repression of democratic assembly. Many joined to uphold the standards and ideals of democracy and liberty and when these are denied to citizens of our country it illustrates the disconnect between the rhetoric of the political elite and the realities we face."

Many communities across the nation, large and small, are connected to the effort by Washington to militarily subjugate the people of Iraq and Afghanistan.

It may be that there's a military post or base near the town you live in, or it may be that there is a weapons manufacturer in town.

Perhaps your town hosts a company involved in the rendition and torture of prisoners under US control. The fact is that there is hardly a town in this country that the military-industrial complex has not stretched one of its bloody tendrils into.

This economic reality not only means we all share some culpability for the destruction and bloodshed carried out in Iraq and Afghanistan; it also means that

every one of us has the ability to expose that connection wherever we live and from there, hopefully oppose it.

(The City of Tacoma has dropped the charges against the three individuals arrested Monday morning. According to Berryhill, the original charge was for third degree felony assault on a police officer. The city attorney failed to even file a probable cause and "quickly dismissed the charge."

On another note, a student who was videotaping the protests on Tuesday was arrested by Tacoma police officers who insisted he turn off the video camera and when he didn't do so immediately, arrested him.)

“Maybe It’s Time For A New American Revolution”

03/09/07 By DOUG THOMPSON, Capital Hill Blue [Excerpts]

For a moment - a brief one to be sure - we held out hope that the voice of the voters might be heard after the November midterm elections. But turning out the corrupt Republican leadership of Congress was not enough.

Maybe we need to start with a clean sheet of paper. Maybe it's time to recognize that our present America is a rotting corpse, devoured from within by the cancer of politics, corruption, greed and a lust for power.

Some 40 years ago, I lost friends in the heat and squalor of Vietnam. They died in a war that never needed to be fought, supporting a cause that didn't exist for a government that lied to justify the fight.

A few years later, as a young reporter, I wrote about the attempts of Richard Milhous Nixon to destroy the Constitution of the United States. He failed because the system worked and both Congress and the Supreme Court exercised their powers in our system of checks and balances to restore order to a faltering nation.

Now, 33-and-a-half years after the Vietnam War came to an end without resolution and Nixon left office without honor, I'm losing family of friends in the heat and squalor of Iraq.

They die in a war that never needed to be fought, supporting a cause that doesn't exist for a government that lied to justify their sacrifices.

Another despot occupies the Presidency, an evil man whose lust for power surpasses Nixon and who poses a far greater danger to the Constitution. This time, however, the system is failing to protect America from despots. George W. Bush rides roughshod over a compliant Congress. The Supreme Court, packed with knee-jerk right-wingers who helped put Bush in office in 2000, abdicated its role long ago.

For a moment - a brief one to be sure - we held out hope that the voice of the voters might be heard after the November midterm elections. But turning out the corrupt Republican leadership of Congress was not enough.

Democrats who control the House lack the balls to take Bush on and the razor-thin majority in the Senate can't even get a vote together on a non-binding resolution.

Democrats Thursday unveiled a plan to bring troops home by the end of 2008 but Bush is already threatening a veto if the bill gets out of Congress, which is probably won't.

In the meantime, we've learned that Bush lied about both the size and cost of his "troop surge" that he claims will bring peace and stability to Iraq.

Not only are we sending more troops in than he said, at a cost far higher than he projected, his own general on the ground says they will have to stay longer than he told the American people earlier this year.

Over at the U.S. Department of Justice, an contradiction of terms if we over heard one, the FBI has lied repeatedly about its use, and abuse, of the rights-robbing USA Patriot Act to obtain information on U.S. citizens.

I find it disturbing that in all their rhetoric about restoring America to the people, the new Democratic leadership of Congress doesn't say a damn thing about repealing the USA Patriot Act, an ill-conceived bill crafted by former attorney general John Ashcroft, and hastily voted into law after 9/11 by shell-shocked representatives and Senators who later admitted they hadn't even read it.

Both Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid joined with Republicans to vote not only for original passage of the USA Patriot Act but also to reauthorize it. Bush has used the act to justify spying on Americans, wiretapping without warrants and strip away the last protections of the Constitution.

While Congress slept and the Supreme Court looked the other way, the Bush administration has gone on its merry way seizing absolute control of the United States government.

He ignores the laws of Congress, issuing "signing statements" that give him the power to do whatever he wants. When the federal courts declared his wiretapping of Americans illegal, he ignored the ruling and appointed an in-house review panel that declared the program "legal."

It doesn't matter who controls Congress. Congress is a dead institution, ruled by timid legislators who no longer exercise any real role in the governing of this nation.

I'm not talking about kicking out one party of political hacks and replacing it with another: Been there, done that, witnessed the failure.

Maybe we need to start with a clean sheet of paper. Maybe it's time to recognize that our present America is a rotting corpse, devoured from within by the cancer of politics, corruption, greed and a lust for power.

Maybe it's time for a new American Revolution.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!

U.S. Occupation Commands' Stupid Terror Tactics Recruit Even More Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops



A U.S. soldier of the 2nd Platoon Charlie Troop, 3rd Squadron of 61st Cavalry Regiment kicks open a door of a building to search for suspicious items in a suburb of Baghdad March 7, 2007. (AP Photo/Dusan Vranic)

[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?]

"My sons and wife were very terrified," complained Muhannad Mihbas, 30, who said his brother and six cousins were taken in the sweeps. "Does the security plan mean arresting innocent people and scaring civilians at night?" BRIAN MURPHY, AP, Feb. 27, 2007

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

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.org/)

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to Katie GY, The Military Project]

Happy Brazilians Welcome Bush



Brazilians protest against the visit by U.S. President George W. Bush, scheduled to arrive later in the day, along Sao Paulo's Paulista Avenue March 8, 2007. (Caetano Barreira/Reuters)

Police Assist Brazilian Man Overcome With Delight To See Our President



Brazilian policemen beat demonstrators during a protest against the upcoming visit of US President George W. Bush in Sao Paulo, March 8, 2007. (AP Photo/Maurilio Cheli)

Troops Invited:

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email contact@militaryproject.org:. Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe.

Guatemalan Mayan Priests To 'Purify' Sacred Site After Bush Visit

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

3.9.07 GUATEMALA CITY (AP)

Mayan priests will purify a sacred archaeological site to eliminate "bad spirits" after President Bush visits next week, an official with close ties to the group said Thursday.

"That a person like (Bush), with the persecution of our migrant brothers in the United States, with the wars he has provoked, is going to walk in our sacred lands, is an offense for the Mayan people and their culture," Juan Tiney, the director of a Mayan non-governmental organization with close ties to Mayan religious and political leaders, said Thursday.

On Monday morning Bush is scheduled to visit the archaeological site Iximche on the high western plateau in a region of the Central American country populated mostly by Mayans.

Tiney said the "spirit guides of the Mayan community" decided it would be necessary to cleanse the sacred site of "bad spirits" after Bush's visit so that their ancestors could rest in peace. He also said the rites - which entail chanting and burning incense, herbs and candles - would prepare the site for the third summit of Latin American Indians March 26-30.

In Bogota, Colombia, which Bush will visit on Sunday, 200 masked students battled 300 riot police with rocks and small homemade explosives.

Iximche, 30 miles west of the capital of Guatemala City, was founded as the capital of the Kaqchiqueles kingdom before the Spanish conquest in 1524.

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