

GI SPECIAL 5L21:

The Blackhorse Prayer
“A RARE PROTEST”
[From Vietnam Days]

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THE BLACKHORSE PRAYER
(Composed by Dr Gordon S. Livingston, MD and distributed by him at the change of command ceremonies for Col. George S. Patton, III (son of Gen. Patton) in Vietnam)

God, our heavenly Father, hear our prayer. We acknowledge our shortcomings and ask thy help in being better soldiers for thee. Grant us, O Lord, those things we need to do thy work more effectively. Give us this day a gun that will fire 10,000 rounds a second, a napalm which will burn for a week. Help us to bring death and destruction wherever we go, for we do it in thy name and therefore it is meet and just. We thank thee for this war fully mindful that while it is not the best of all wars, it is better than no war at all. We remember that Christ said, "I came not to send peace, but a sword," and we pledge ourselves in all our works to be like Him. Forget not the least of thy children as they hide from us in the jungles; bring them under our merciful hand that we may end their suffering. In all things, O God, assist us, for we do our noble work in the knowledge that only with thy help can we avoid the catastrophe of peace which threatens us ever. All of which we ask in the name of thy son, George Patton. Amen.

From: Sharlet, Robert
To: GI Special
Sent: December 17, 2007
Subject: A RARE PROTEST

I wonder if you've ever seen the attached 'Blackhorse Prayer', a rare antiwar protest from within the senior ranks in the field in Vietnam.

The author and distributor of the irreverent 'prayer' was Major Gordon Livingston, a fellow cadet at Jeff's [Jeff Sharlet, Editor of Vietnam GI] military prep school.

Gordon Livingston was a West Point graduate, a psychiatrist, and in late '68 was posted to Col. Patton's 11th Armored Cavalry deployed in I Corps as regimental surgeon.

I had been aware of the protest, but only recently came across the prayer in an old GI antiwar underground paper of the period.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Ft. Drum Soldier Killed Near Riyadh, Four Wounded

December 26, 2007 by Pedro Ramirez III, The Post-Standard

Army officials at Fort Drum announced today that a 24-year-old infantryman was killed and four others injured in an IED attack in Iraq.

Pfc. George J. Howell with the 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment of the 10th Mountain Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team was killed Dec. 21 when his convoy was struck by an improvised explosive device near Riyadh.

Two of the four other 1st BCT soldiers hurt in the attack suffered serious injuries, Army officials said.

Howell joined the Army in April. He left behind a wife, son and daughter in Watertown, and his mother in Watsonville, Calif., officials said.

BEEN ON THE JOB TOO LONG: COME ON HOME, NOW



U.S. soldiers with 3rd Platoon, Alpha Company, I-327th Infantry 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division Air Assault, in Bayji November 26, 2007.

U.S. Vehicle Destroyed In Baghdad; Casualties Not Announced



A destroyed U.S. vehicle lies on a road after a roadside bomb attack in Baghdad December 26, 2007 targeted a U.S. patrol. The U.S. military forces did not comment on the attack. REUTERS/Mohammed Ameen

“Next Year, When We’re All Home For Christmas...” “Insha’Allah”

December 24, 2007 By Jamie Gumbrecht and Laith Hammoudi, McClatchy Newspapers

BAGHDAD — In a war zone, Christmas sometimes is as much about compromise as it is about celebration.

At Patrol Base Warrior Keep in southwest Baghdad, all wish they were home. But at least there won’t be any patrols outside the base for the Fort Campbell, Ky.-based 101st Airborne Division, 1st Battalion, 187th regiment, which arrived in Iraq in October:

Lt. Col. RJ Lillibridge, of Clarksville, Tenn., didn’t want to risk having to deliver bad news to families on the holiday.

At Patrol Base Warrior, Staff Sgt. Barry Brennan’s present came on Christmas Eve morning: His wife, Staff Sgt. Josie Brennan, arrived on a Blackhawk helicopter. Their

superiors flew her in, saying there was no reason the couple shouldn't be together when Josie Brennan worked at nearby Camp Mahmudiyah. The Brennans exchanged gifts and ate together.

Their children, three boys ages 8, 7 and 2, are back home, living with grandparents. Last year, the family was together in Colorado, building snowmen and playing with toys on Christmas.

"I just keep saying, 'They're OK, they're OK,'" Josie Brennan said. "It's stuff you don't want to think about."

"Next year, when we're all home for Christmas ..." Sgt. Maj. Eric Crabtree of Clarksville, Tenn., told the soldiers, then cut himself off.

"Insha'Allah," he said, using an Arabic phrase they've all heard. It means **"God willing."**

Baji Base Burning; Casualties Not Announced



U.S. Army soldiers at an explosion and fire which started for unknown reasons at a truck delivering fuel to their operating base in Baiji December 26, 2007. REUTERS/Bob Strong

TROOP NEWS



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

IVAW On The Offensive:



Ft. Sill:

**“Enough Soldiers Signed Up To Form
The Ft. Sill Chapter Of IVAW”**

Ft. Hood:

“These Soldiers Have Formed A Chapter Of Iraq Veterans Against The War While They Were Deployed In Iraq!”

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www.vvaw.org
vvaw@vvaw.org

December 2007 [Excerpts]

Dear fellow activist,

I want to thank you so very much for your support of Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

This year, the 40th anniversary of our founding in 1967, we are taking some very exciting steps forward. It is thanks to you that we are able to do this. Your continued support will enable us to carry out our ambitious plans for 2008.

Many of us were involved in anti-war activities while we were still on active duty during the Vietnam War. Some of us worked with GI Coffeehouses.

This month Vietnam Veterans Against the War will start organizing GIs again.

We could never have taken on this critical but expensive task without your financial support.

We are entering a partnership with Citizen Soldier to sponsor the Different Drummer, a café outside Ft. Drum, New York that was started by Citizen Soldier a year ago.

The café serves as a meeting place for the Ft. Drum chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War and also supports their organizing efforts. There are bands on Friday and Saturday nights that draw a mix of soldiers and community people.

Vietnam Veterans Against the War's participation will enable the café to hire an organizer who will be able to reach many additional soldiers.

This should dramatically increase the ability of the café to support the on-base chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War. You can learn more about the café by going to differentdrummercafe.org

In late November, I traveled with the new IVAW Midwest organizer, Robert Clack, and three Iraq Veterans Against the War members to Carbondale, Illinois to speak at the founding meeting of the Carbondale chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War.

My fellow travelers went on from Carbondale to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, where they met with Justin, a very courageous Iraq veteran who is organizing fellow anti-war soldiers on the base, in a very hostile atmosphere.

They held a fundraiser there outside Ft. Sill at which enough soldiers signed up to form the Ft. Sill chapter of IVAW.

Clearly supporting that chapter will be an important part of the Midwest Iraq Veterans Against the War Midwest office's work.

In January, I plan to travel to Fort Hood in Texas along with Aaron Hughes, the Iraq Veterans Against the War Midwest Coordinator. I will participate with Aaron and IVAW in a "welcome home" event for a brigade of soldiers that are to be returning from deployment in Iraq.

These soldiers have formed a chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War while they were deployed in Iraq!

News like this makes me think that active duty soldiers are turning a corner in their willingness to actively oppose the war.

In closing this end of the year letter, I want to again express my appreciation for your support.

Without you and people like you, Vietnam Veterans Against the War would not have been able to rebound in numbers and activity. We would not have been nearly as effective in meeting the challenges posed by this latest war.

Your tax deductible donation will enable us to carry forward in 2008 our expanded programs: reaching out to active duty soldiers, supporting Iraq Veterans Against the War, and helping veterans of all eras get the benefits they have earned.

Sincerely,
Barry Romo
Vietnam Veterans Against the War
National Coordinator

I am sending Vietnam Veterans Against The War \$----- to support its work for peace and its efforts to expose the Bush Administration's hypocritical neglect of returning veterans.

Checks to VVAW are tax deductible. You can also donate online at vvaaw.org.

Name (print) _____
Address _____

City, State, Zip _____
E-Mail Address (please print clearly)

Mail to address up top.

**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

**As Talented Officers Quit,
Incompetents Get Command:
“If You Breathe, You Make
Lieutenant Colonel These Days”
“A Generation Of Senior Leaders
Who Seemed Most Comfortable In
Iraq Behind A Desk”
“The Colonel Says ‘Why Don’t You Have
Your Knee Pads On?’ And You’re Like,
‘Shut The Fuck Up, I’ve Got A Guy
Bleeding Over Here’”**

“Rather than focus on important stuff, they focus on PowerPoint slides. They’d have me up all night to make one slide a little prettier,” he said. “After a while, you start to think, What am I doing over here?”

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

By Andrew Tilghman, December 2007 Washington Monthly [Excerpts]

In the last four years, the exodus of junior officers from the Army has accelerated. In 2003, around 8 percent of junior officers with between four and nine years of experience left for other careers.

Last year, the attrition rate leapt to 13 percent. “A five percent change could potentially be a serious problem,” said James Hosek, an expert in military retention at the RAND Corporation. Over the long term, this rate of attrition would halve the number of officers who reach their tenth year in uniform and intend to take senior leadership roles.

But the problem isn’t one of numbers alone: the Army also appears to be losing its most gifted young officers.

In 2005, internal Army memos started to warn of the “disproportionate loss of high-potential, high-performance junior leaders.” West Point graduates are leaving at their highest rates since the 1970s (except for a few years in the early 1990s when the Army’s goal was to reduce its size). Of the nearly 1,000 cadets from the class of 2002, 58 percent are no longer on active duty.

This means that there is less competition for promotions, and that less-able candidates are rising to the top.

For years, Congress required the Army to promote only 70 to 80 percent of eligible officers. Under that law, the rank of major served as a useful funnel by which the Army separated out the bottom quarter of the senior officer corps.

On September 14, 2001, President Bush suspended that requirement. Today, more than 98 percent of eligible captains are promoted to major.

“If you breathe, you make lieutenant colonel these days,” one retired colonel grumbled to me.

Iraq, in one way or another, is a driving force behind many officers’ decision to leave.

As officers prepare for a third or even fourth deployment, a new wave of discontent is expected to wash over junior leaders.

Studies show that one deployment actually improves retention, as soldiers draw satisfaction from using their skills in the real world. Second deployments often have no effect on retention. It’s the third deployment that begins to burn out soldiers.

And a fourth?

There’s no large-scale historical precedent for military planners to examine – yet.

In Philadelphia, I met Zeke Austin, a twenty-eight-year-old former captain at Fort Hood, Texas, who left the Army after five years to look for a private-sector job. Austin first explained that he quit because his fiancée was finishing medical school and couldn’t find a residency program in an Army town.

Suddenly, he veered into a scathing critique of his commanders’ preoccupation with institutional process.

“Rather than focus on important stuff, they focus on PowerPoint slides. They’d have me up all night to make one slide a little prettier,” he said. “After a while, you start to think, What am I doing over here?”

In Houston, I met an officer who had taken the rare step of leaving only eight years before he was due to retire. When I inquired why, he described a generation of senior leaders who gained experience in the relative calm of the 1980s, and seemed most comfortable in Iraq behind a desk.

“What did these guys ever do? Go to Panama?” said the captain, who now makes more than \$100,000 as a logistics manager for a petrochemical services company. “All they know how to do is train.

“So you’re out in a firefight and they’re complaining because you’re not wearing eye protection. The colonel says ‘Why don’t you have your knee pads on?’ and you’re like, ‘Shut the fuck up, I’ve got a guy bleeding over here.’ That has a lot to do with it.”

In Washington, I met Matt Kapinos and his longtime friend Jim Morin for lunch. Like Kapinos, Morin was a history major from West Point’s class of 2001 and then served with the 82nd Airborne in Iraq and Afghanistan. He, too, left the Army for Georgetown’s law school. Both men were frank, thoughtful, and occasionally sarcastic about their disillusionment with the Army; it was clear that they’d discussed the subject repeatedly before.

“You have a three-star general like John Vines come down to talk to us, and he says, ‘Just go out there and shoot people,’” Kapinos said. “And you know that that is not how to fight an insurgency. Everyone who’s ever read the most basic article on counterinsurgency knows that is not how you’re going to win.”

“Yeah,” Morin agreed. “The general would come out and give these bellicose speeches, and every time he did that, I’d have to go back to my guys and say, ‘What the general really meant to say was ...’”

Morin is a soldier-scholar type who frequently refers to military theorists in casual conversation. Like Kapinos, he always thought he would spend twenty-plus years in uniform.

Morin became addicted to military history when he was twelve years old. When he was fifteen, he persuaded his parents to help him buy Civil War-era military dress and an antique musket worth several thousand dollars so he could participate in large-scale battle reenactments. At West Point, he took a special interest in counterinsurgency, writing his senior thesis on how the British successfully quelled the French-Canadian rebellion in Quebec.

“If you go read Clausewitz and the other military writers,” he explained, “(you learn that) war is politics by other means. You have to offer them an alternative better than the other guy. You have to fight a bullet war, but you also have to fight an economic development war, you have to fight a PR war, and you have to do it all at the same time. From what I saw, that just wasn’t happening.

“I felt like we were keeping people safe so they could starve.”

As a young lieutenant, Morin once drafted a memo for his commander proposing an elaborate program to help fund humanitarian and infrastructure projects, using integrated teams of infantrymen, civil affairs specialists, and civilian aid agencies.

He didn't receive a response, and quickly stopped making such suggestions for fear of being perceived as “a wet-behind-the-ears second lieutenant.” Now, he laughs about the incident as an example of his naivete.

Of course, every generation of young officers is critical of their superiors. But the botched management in Iraq and a sense of squandered momentum in Afghanistan have intensified those feelings among today's young officers.

It's one thing for young officers in the 1980s or '90s to stand around at a training facility at Fort Polk, Louisiana, complaining about the higher-ups; it's another when junior officers have to see soldiers under their command dying in missions they believe are strategically flawed or futile.

Many in the military are mindful of what happened when the Army experienced a similar flight of top young talent near the end of the Vietnam War.

Then, critical midlevel leadership positions were filled by soldiers with less experience and maturity.

Poorly prepared leaders drove relations between the officer corps and the enlisted men who served under them to historic lows.

The Army documented incidents of “fragging,” when outraged enlisted men turned their weapons on officers who they felt were gratuitously or ineptly leading troops into danger.

“We got more of our own people killed than the enemy killed because of insufficiently skilled soldiers and lousy leadership,” said General Donn Starry, a retired four-star general who was a commander in Vietnam.

When seasoned junior officers read that President Bush is negotiating a long-term occupation of Iraq, and that the Democratic presidential candidates are acquiescing to the notion of 50,000 or 100,000 troops being stationed there for five to ten years, they can foresee the future.

Arrested Veterans Banned From Veterans Day March By American Legion Scum Win In Court:

“We Disturbed Nothing Except Perhaps The Leaders Of The Legion. We Are Not Going Away”

December 14, 2007 Veterans For Peace

BOSTON: The charge of disturbing a lawful assembly was dismissed today with no payment of court costs in Boston Municipal Court against 15 veterans, members of Veterans For Peace, and 3 supporters, who were arrested on Veterans Day.

“It was a travesty that veterans were arrested on Veterans Day for attempting to exercise their First Amendment right of free speech,” said Nate Goldschlag, an U.S. Army veteran and co-coordinator of the Smedley D. Butler Brigade, Chapter 9 of Veterans For Peace.

“Our messages of peace and against the Iraq war were silenced by the American Legion, who runs the Veterans Day events. The city needs to take control of the parade and allow all veterans to speak, regardless of their political views. We will press for this with Mayor Menino.”

The Veterans Day 18 were standing silently, with gags through their mouths and with signs that said “American Legion SILENCES Messages of Peace From Veterans” in front of a raised podium on City Hall Plaza on November 11 when they were arrested. A request to have a speaker at the event was denied by the American Legion, in spite of a City Council hearing called by Boston City Councillor Chuck Turner and two other councillors titled “Isn’t Veterans Day For All Veterans?”

In addition, Veterans For Peace was relegated to march behind the street sweepers in order to not be in the official Veterans Day parade, despite it being the single largest veterans contingent.

“The charges were absurd, and we view this as a victory for antiwar people everywhere.

“The police claimed we were “loudly chanting” when we had gags on.

“We disturbed nothing except perhaps the leaders of the Legion.

The event could have gone on. People could see the podium above us.” Goldschlag said.

“We are not going away. Veterans For Peace and its message must be heard. We intend to pursue this with Mayor Menino and the City Council.”

Former Sgt. Reprimanded For Blowing Whistle On Dangerous Anthrax Vaccine Wins Big: “They Were Using Me To Set An Example”

In addition to the complaint that his right to speak out was suppressed, Adkins' suit also alleged that the Air Force tried to make an example of him to silence dissent in his Dover Air Force Base, Del., squadron.

December 17, 2007 By William H. McMichael, Army Times [Excerpts]

The Pentagon is removing a letter of reprimand given three years ago to a former Air Force staff sergeant who complained to a doctor, and later a newspaper, about migraine headaches he thought might be the result of his anthrax vaccinations — then later sued the Defense Department over his freedom to speak out about the controversial program.

In the settlement, dated Nov. 29, the Defense Department said the letter of reprimand is “deemed to be of no effect.”

Former Staff Sgt. Jason Adkins made no claim for damages in his lawsuit and no payments were made; all he wanted was the letter of reprimand removed from his military records.

Still, the Air Force “tried for three years” to get the case thrown out of court, said Stephen Neuberger, Adkins' lawyer.

In addition to the complaint that his right to speak out was suppressed, Adkins' suit also alleged that the Air Force tried to make an example of him to silence dissent in his Dover Air Force Base, Del., squadron.

In October 2004, a federal judge temporarily halted the program, ruling that the Pentagon could not force troops to take the shots because the Food and Drug Administration had not properly certified the vaccine as effective against airborne anthrax spores.

The FDA has since done so, and the same six-shot regimen — with the same vaccine — now is required of all troops traveling to the Middle East or South Korea for 15 or more consecutive days.

Also in October 2004, Adkins, a C-5 transport aircraft flight engineer who had taken all six shots, awoke with a migraine. While en route to Dover to see a flight surgeon — in keeping with Air Force flight safety protocol — he learned via a cell-phone call that he was on tap for a mission the next morning.

Adkins, who said he was considered an exemplary performer, told the doctor he had been suffering headaches for a “long time” and, having read a recent series of investigative stories about the controversial anthrax vaccine in the local media, said he thought his problems might be related to the shots. The surgeon downplayed that notion, changed Adkins’ flight status to “Duties Not To Include Flying” and prescribed some narcotics.

Adkins called his enlisted boss with the news.

He was ordered to report in full dress uniform to his squadron commander, Lt. Col. Christos Vasilas.

Afterward, two senior sergeants chewed him out, he said, accusing him of dereliction of duty and faking his malady, and gave him a letter of reprimand and 76 hours of additional duty.

Adkins said he endured nearly eight months of harassment, with leaders threatening to pull his flight wings.

“They had a field day with me,” said Adkins, who left the Air Force in May 2005, just shy of 15 years of service. “They were using me to set an example.”

City May Send Armored Vests To U.S. Troops To Shield Military Vehicles: “Does That Mean That The Vehicles Are Inadequately Armored To Begin With?”

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

December 7, 2007 By Ray Finger, Star-Gazette

Elmira officials want to send 201 bulletproof vests to U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, but the vests, now past their expiration date for regular use, would not end up on soldiers.

Instead, they would be installed in military vehicles to help provide additional protection against explosives, such as land mines.

Elmira City Council will vote Monday to authorize the delivery of the body armor to American Recreational Military Services, a New Jersey-based charity founded in 2003 to assist military members and their families.

“These are vests that do work still, but they’re way past their expiration,” Elmira Police Chief Scott Drake told council members Thursday during a workshop session. “We’ve

accumulated them because you don't just throw those away. You don't want them getting into the wrong hands."

Sending them to the U.S. military is a way to put the obsolete vests to good use, he said.

Councilman James Hare, D-6th District, said he was not against supporting the proposal but was not clear on why it is necessary. "Does that mean that the vehicles are inadequately armored to begin with?" he said.

Drake said the bulletproof vests will provide extra protection in areas of the military vehicles that need it, such as in the forward section.

Families Of Scots Troops Reveal Hell Of Barrack Life; "One Relative Accused The Military Of 'Incompetence' And 'Negligence' And Said The Dead Were 'Betrayed'"

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

09 December 2007 By MURDO MACLEOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT, Scotland
On Sunday

Scottish soldiers has emerged in an MoD document obtained by this newspaper.

Wives and girlfriends of troops from the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders complained to military officials that they felt isolated, were treated like "scum", and repeated requests for help were ignored.

The litany of criticism also included partners being deployed for too long, their pay being regularly "messed up", and a cut in financial assistance for travelling back to Scotland from their barracks in Kent.

Morale in the Argylls is already at rock bottom after 17 members of the unit tested positive for banned drugs, and now face dismissal, while on a post-exercise break in Belize.

Early next year, the unit will be sent to Afghanistan's war-torn Helmand province.

Last week, Defence Secretary Des Browne apologised to the families of the 14 troops who died when an RAF Nimrod crashed in Afghanistan.

An official inquiry identified a catalogue of failings, including ageing aircraft components and a lack of modern fire suppressants.

One relative accused the military of “incompetence” and “negligence” and said the dead were “betrayed”.

Even though Howe barracks are supposed to represent “better” accommodation, comments included:

“We are not respected or welcomed by the locals here at all. We have been made to feel like scum and have been treated unfairly all because we are in the Army.”

“We want to go back to Scotland!”

“My husband’s pay gets messed up every single month yet still nothing gets sorted out.”

“MHS (Modern Housing Solutions - meant to maintain living quarters) - what a disaster. What has been done to sort this problem out? If anything?”

“Why do we not get the same amount of (free travel) warrants that we got in Northern Ireland? We are further away from Scotland now and we get fewer. Why?”

“Deployments are too long. It seems our husbands are away for nine or 10 months not six. Can something be done about this?”

Some accused the army of “spinning” to the media, others said they were worried about the state of equipment their partners were using at the front.

Many families claim they are left to cope alone if a loved one suffers a breakdown while on active service.

New Zealand Navy Faces “The Very Real Probability” That Its Ships Will Be Stranded At Port Because Of An Exodus Of Specialists

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

11 December 2007 By MARTIN KAY, The Dominion Post

The Royal New Zealand Navy faces “the very real probability” that its ships will be stranded at port because of an exodus of specialists, an internal memo has revealed.

Chief of Navy Rear Admiral David Ledson has introduced a \$45,000 bonus for sought-after marine technicians who agree to stay for three years after a retention crisis threatened the navy’s ability to set sail.

The technicians run and maintain crucial engine and power systems. A frigate requires 28 technicians and inshore patrol craft, such as the four bought under the \$500 million Project Protector scheme, need three.

In a briefing sent to all naval staff, Ledson said there was pressure on all naval trades, but the shortage of marine technicians was critical.

“If our ships have to stay alongside the naval base, then this will have a negative effect on just about everyone in the navy - and on our reputation.”

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action

December 26, 2007 Deutsche Presse-Agentur & AP & Reuters

A bomber blew himself up in the middle of a funeral procession, killing nine people and wounding 20, a Baquba police official said. Casualties included members of an Awakening Council – an ally of the U.S. military. Among the dead was Hajj Farhan al-Baharzewi, the local head of the Brigades of 20th Revolution, working with U.S. forces.

Insurgents early Wednesday blew up the offices of the so-called people’s councils in the Iraqi city of Baquba, killing three council members and wounding two, Voices of Iraq news agency cited security sources in Diyala province as saying.

Fighters blew up the headquarters of a U.S.-allied anti-insurgent group called the 1920 Revolution Brigades in the Jirf al-Malh area of Baquba by planting explosives and bombs, the sources said.

Three members of a neighbourhood patrol fighting with Iraqi forces and the U.S. military were killed and two were seriously wounded when a booby-trapped house exploded as they entered it in Baquba, police said.

Guerrillas attacked an Iraqi army check point, killing three soldiers and wounding another seven in the small town of Kanan, east of Baquba, a security source said.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Thought For The Day

The horrible Iraq war continues, with official opposition meekly calling for a responsible redeployment of troops. That's like stopping crime by asking rapists to responsibly redeploy their genitals. December 26, 2007, Frank Scott. Scott writes political commentary which appears in the Coastal Post, The Independent Monitor, on numerous web sites and on his shared blog at: <http://legalienate.blogspot.com>.

“Troops Home For The Holidays” Caroling By Ventura County Committee To Stop The War

From: John Osmand, ISO, antiwar socialist
To: GI Special
Sent: December 26, 2007
Subject: Re: GI Special 5L20: “I Hate That Place”

Hey GI Special,

Very cool caroling against anti-Palestinian racist Leviev!

The Ventura County Committee to Stop the War had our own antiwar “Troops Home for the Holidays” caroling last Friday night and Saturday morning. I'll write a report in the next day or so.

Here are the lyrics.

It doesn't include “Bring Them Home” (remake of “Over There”) nor some classics we sang straight, such as “Imagine”, “Give Peace a Chance”, “Where Have All the Flowers Gone”, “Blowing in the Wind”, and “So This Is Christmas/War Is Over”.

“FROSTY THE SNOWMAN”

George Bush the con man has a very crooked soul
'Cause he went to war on a pack of lies,
But we know the war's for oil.

All those in Congress keep funding Bush's crime.
But we stand up for peace in the Middle East
'Till the culprits do jail time.

There must have been some errors in the facts they threw around,
For when the troops got to Iraq not a WMD was found!

Tell all the planet there is one place troops should be:
They should all come home for the holidays
And remain with family.

Cheney the con man has a very crooked soul
'Cause he went to war on a pack of lies,
But we know the war's for oil.

All those in Congress keep funding Cheney's crime.
But we stand up for peace in the Middle East
'Till the culprits do jail time.

(refrain and last verse)

"JINGLE BELLS"

President Dubya Bush, hear us when we say:
Bring our fam'lies home to us and end the war today!
Congressmen, women too, hear us when we say:
Bring our fam'lies home to us and end the war today!

"We can't leave Iraq"
The often heard refrain.
But soldiers can come back
By either boat or plane.

Stability won't clime
While lives are on the line.
Occupation is a crime from Iraq to Palestine!

Gallegly, Gallegly, hear us when we say:
Bring our fam'lies home to us and end the war today!
Lois Capps, Lois Capps, hear us when we say:
Bring our fam'lies home to us and end the war today!

"WINTER WONDERLAND"

Gone away the infrastructure. (verses)
Here to stay is the destruction.
Saddam was a curse,
But this is much worse!
Living in an occupied Iraq.

Abu Ghraib was a horror
In the jail we were tortured.
Our country we roam
Since fleeing our home,
Living in an occupied Iraq.

In the desert they built army bases (bridge)
And pretend that they are in control.
We know that the war is really racist--
So we demand they give back what they stole!

Was recruited by the army, (verses)
Now the truth is gonna scar me
It's tough to want war
While on your third tour,
Living in an occupied Iraq.

Other troops are causing mayhem,
But I'm refusing to obey 'em.
Whether we've won,
I lay down my gun,
Living in an occupied Iraq.

U.S. says that they'll rebuild the nation, (bridge)
But Iraqis struggle to survive.
Occupation can't bring liberation.
Get out and let the troops come home alive!

To survive now it is urgent (verse)
That I fight as an insurgent.
But violence will cease
Just leave us in peace....
Living in an occupied Iraq.

JOY TO THE WORLD

Give peace a chance all thru Iraq
We want the U. S. out
Let military families have their soldiers back

So bring the troops home now
So bring the troops home now
So bring, So bring
The troops home now

George W. Bush should go to jail
For taking us to war
Let his war for oil and domination fail

And then we'll fight no more
And then we'll fight no more
And then, And then
we'll fight no more

"DECK THE HALLS"

Deck the halls with signs of peace.
Falalalala lala la la
U.S. out of the Middle East!
Falalalala lala la la
Keep our civil liberties!
Falala lalala la la la
Bring the troops home, war will cease.
Falalalala lala la la

Mercenaries from Blackwater
Fa la la la la lu-u ja
Terrorize and maim and slaughter
Fa la la la la lu-u ja
Halliburton's profit's certain
Fa la la la la lu-u ja
Life is hell thanks to Bechtel
Fa la la la la lu-u ja

“O CHRISTMAS TREE/TANNENBAUM”

Afghanistan, Afghanistan,
We'll end our reign of terror.
Afghanistan, Afghanistan,
We'll end our reign of terror.
The army claimed to liberate
But all it did was make more hate.
Afghanistan, Afghanistan,
We'll end our reign of terror.

Afghanistan, Afghanistan,
With vengeful war we've cursed you.
Afghanistan, Afghanistan,
With vengeful war we've cursed you.
The CIA helped train and fund
The man Osama bin Laden
Afghanistan, Afghanistan,
With vengeful war we've cursed you.

Afghanistan, Afghanistan,
May you have peace in your land.
Afghanistan, Afghanistan,
May you have peace in your land.
If Bush wants war then he can fight
But we demand troops home tonight!
Afghanistan, Afghanistan,
May you have peace in your land.

Trouble With The Chain-Of-Command

Military-quotes.com

A COLONEL ISSUED THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIVE TO HIS EXECUTIVE OFFICERS:

"Tomorrow evening at approximately 2000 hours Halley's Comet will be visible in this area; an event which occurs only every 75 years. Have the men fall out in the battalion area in fatigues, and I will explain this rare phenomenon to them. In case of rain, we will not be able to see anything, so assemble the men in the theater and I will show them films of it."

EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO COMPANY COMMANDER:

"By order of the Colonel, tomorrow at 2000 hours, Halley's Comet will appear above the battalion area. If it rains, fall the men out in fatigues, then march to the theater where this rare phenomenon will take place, something which occurs only once every 75 years."

COMPANY COMMANDER TO LIEUTENANT:

"By order of the Colonel be in fatigues at 2000 hours tomorrow evening. The phenomenal Halley's Comet will appear in the theater. In case of rain in the battalion area, the Colonel will give another order, something which occurs once every 75 years."

LIEUTENANT TO SERGEANT:

"Tomorrow at 2000 hours, the Colonel will appear in the theater with Halley's comet, something which happens every 75 years. If it rains, the Colonel will order the comet into the battalion area."

SERGEANT TO SQUAD:

"When it rains tomorrow at 2000 hours, the phenomenal 75-year-old General Halley, accompanied by the Colonel, will drive his comet through the battalion area theater in fatigues."

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/)

OCCUPATION REPORT

***Good News For The Iraqi
Resistance!!***
**U.S. Occupation Commands'
Stupid Tactics Recruit Even More
Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops**



Foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. army “question” an Iraqi citizen in his house during a night home invasion on the outskirts of Muqdadiah, Diyala province, Dec. 12, 2007. (AP Photo/Marko Drobnjakovic)

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

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

OCCUPATION ISN’T LIBERATION

BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!

“All We Have Is Chess Pieces,” Said Dr. Abbas Haider

December 26, 2007 By Tina Susman, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer [Excerpts]

SABA AL BOR, IRAQ -- It started with a broken generator at a water pumping station. Local officials did what they usually do when an important piece of machinery needs repairs: They turned to the U.S. forces stationed in town.

But this time, the answer was “No.” The time had come for officials here to rely on the central government in Baghdad for such things.

“Iraqis know we don’t really have a government.

“All we have is chess pieces,” said Dr. Abbas Haider, who runs Saba al Bor’s clinic.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Zionist Terror Unleashed: “Every Week, Innocent People Are Killed In The West Bank, And Nobody Talks About Them”

Adib Salim, paralyzed on his right side, sold lupini beans. When the IDF conducted one of its raids on Nablus he dared to stick his head out. The soldiers killed him. The IDF Spokesman claimed that he threatened to shoot at the soldiers, but the paralyzed bean seller was totally incapable of doing so.

24/12/2007 By Gideon Levy, Haaretz [Israel] [Excerpts]

Don’t let the quiet fool you: It is imaginary.

While all eyes are on Gaza, the impression has been created, under the aegis of a media turning a blind eye, that the West Bank is quiet.

That's where the "good guys" are in charge, those with whom we went to Annapolis, those who will be getting the money from the donor nations, and life there is great, so it seems.

Well, that is not the case.

The lives of the Palestinians in the West Bank are also intolerable, blood is being shed there too. For the Israel Defense Forces it is business as usual, with a frighteningly quick finger on the trigger.

I have visited quite a few mourners' homes in the West Bank in recent months.

They were all mourning family members who had been killed for no reason.

Every week, innocent people are killed in the West Bank, and nobody talks about them.

Among the dozens of Palestinians killed recently, not all were Qassam launchers or gang leaders from Gaza. If a new uprising erupts in the West Bank one day, it will originate in these mourners' homes.

The daily routine in the West Bank is also patently inhumane. The night I spent last summer in the Jenin refugee camp brought that home to me:

The IDF enters the camp every night, and even when it does not kill, it strikes great terror in the hearts of thousands of families, who are the victims of anxiety.

There are few Israelis who can imagine the daily routine of West Bank residents, during the day and even more so at night. And we have not said a word about the poverty, the roadblocks and the home demolitions.

The story of the recent killings in the West Bank is not on our agenda, because so far the Palestinians there have not responded with attacks in retaliation for these deaths.

Adib Salim, paralyzed on his right side, sold lupini beans. When the IDF conducted one of its raids on Nablus he dared to stick his head out.

The soldiers killed him.

The IDF Spokesman claimed that he threatened to shoot at the soldiers, but the paralyzed bean seller was totally incapable of doing so.

Abdel Wazir, the 71-year-old cousin of the legendary Abu Jihad, was a retired accountant. He spent a terrifying night in his home: for hours the soldiers fired next to his window, while he sat with his wife on the sofa, both of them incapacitated by fear.

When the order to go outside was heard, he left his house and was immediately shot dead.

Jihad Shaar, 19, was making his way from his village, Tekua, in order to register for university. Soldiers killed him for an unexplained reason with cudgel blows and kicks, while he was waiting at the bus stop.

The IDF Spokesman said that the soldiers “behaved appropriately.”

Mohammed Salah was a Palestinian policeman, after years of working as a tiler in the settlements. On duty, he stopped a suspicious Palestinian commercial van, which had tried to avoid the Palestinian checkpoint in Bethlehem.

Salah opened the door, suspecting that the van was carrying stolen merchandise, and the IDF undercover soldiers inside shot him to death. The IDF Spokesman claimed that he tried to shoot at the soldiers, but all the eyewitnesses have rejected this version out of hand.

Firas Kaskas went for a nature hike near Ramallah, accompanied by his brother and his brother-in-law. When they noticed a herd of gazelles running down to the wadi, they stood to watch.

The soldiers who suddenly appeared shot him from afar, without warning. The IDF Spokesman claimed that the soldiers thought that he was placing an explosive device in the heart of the nature reserve.

All these people were killed by the IDF in recent weeks, for no reason.

Add to them Mohammed Askar from Saida, who was shot at close range during riots at Ketziot Prison; Kamela Kabha of Bartaa, an elderly woman whose son tried to rush her to the hospital in Jenin and was delayed at the Reihan checkpoint for three hours, until she died in his arms, and other incidents of killing, and you will get the true picture of Israel’s “peace efforts.”

And we haven’t even mentioned the construction in the settlements.

MORE:

“A Jew to Zionist Fighters, 1988” Do You Really Want To Be The New Gestapo? The New Wehrmacht? The New SA And SS?

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in. She writes:]

Something very different: a poem.

Have you heard of Erich Fried who is often referred to as the greatest modern, Jewish, poet?

He was born in Vienna in 1921 and escaped to England, with his mother, after his father was tortured to death by the Gestapo, in 1938.

Because of his experiences with racism and Fascism he became involved in the Palestinian cause.

He was a leader in the fight against both Fascism and Zionism.

I'm sending a copy of his best poem, in my opinion. It was first published in 1988 just before he died.

Please take the time to read it. I think it's wonderful.

A Jew to Zionist Fighters, 1988

What do you actually want?
Do you really want to outdo
those who trod you down
a generation ago
into your own blood
and into your own excrement
Do you want to pass on the old torture
to others now
in all its bloody and dirty detail
with all the brutal delight of torturers
as suffered by your fathers?
Do you really want to be the new Gestapo
the new Wehrmacht
the new SA and SS
and turn the Palestinians
into the new Jews?
Well then I too want,
having fifty years ago
myself been tormented for being a Jewboy
by your tormentors,
to be a new Jew with these new Jews
you are making of the Palestinians
And I want to help lead them as a free people
into their own land of Palestine
from whence you have driven them or in which you plague them
you apprentices of the Swastika
you fools and changelings of history
whose Star of David on your flags
turns ever quicker
into that damned symbol with its four feet
that you just do not want to see

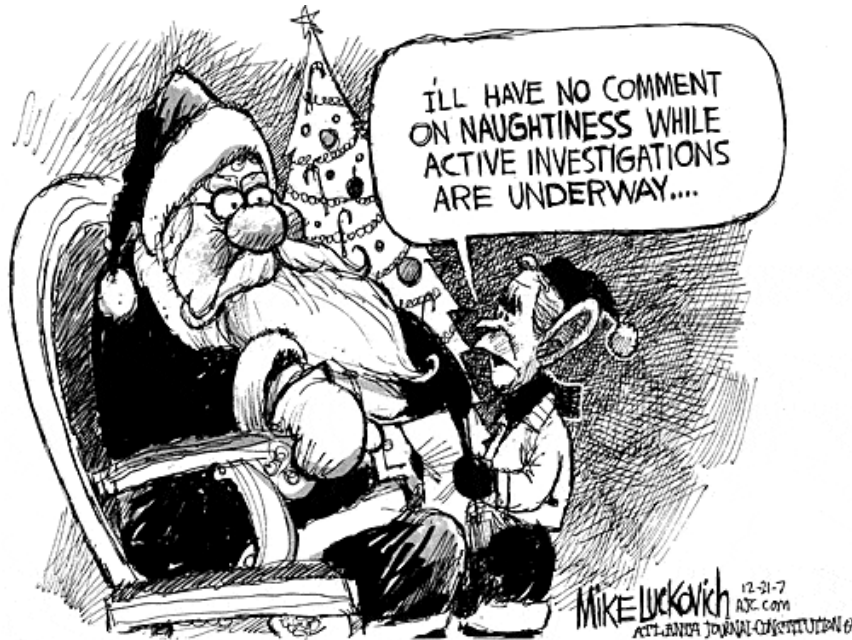
but whose path you are following today

[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."]

Troops Invited:

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to 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.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS

New Orleans Resistance In Action:

Stop the Demolition Outreach And Picket At BW Cooper

4pm Thursday
December 27, 2007
Meet at S. Galvez and Erato

Making the Right of Return a reality for all necessitates the reopening of public housing in New Orleans.

Join residents and non-residents in an action designed to deepen the connection between anti-demolition forces and B.W. Cooper residents.

There will be a picket opposing the demolition of public housing at B.W. Cooper. At the same time opponents of public housing demolition will use this event as an opportunity to speak directly with residents of the development to gain their insights regarding the issue at hand.

For additional information call Jay at 504-587-0080

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

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