

GI SPECIAL 4A17:



<http://www.maps.org/images/yamdma.jpg>

“See You In Hell Douglas Barber”

From: Soldier X
To: GI Special
Sent: January 23, 2006
Subject: See you in Hell Douglas Barber

Raise a glass to Douglas Barber, he finally lost his battle almost two years after his tour in the kitty litter. The cops even got dash cam of him chewing on a shot gun. Guess Alabama's finest didn't comply with suicide by cop. Doug did an about face with a snap and went out in style.

Should we bother keeping the score after regulation? Is that one up for the insurgents or one for the US? It feels like I never picked a side and everyone is against me. Douglas must have figured shit was stacked against him. You can't fend off Ali Baba awake and asleep for the rest of your life.

Sounds to me that Barber got the shaft on the way out the door. Went a little batty after getting his boots on the ground here in the real world.

The board diagnosed him with Personality Disorder instead of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. You see if they write in Personality Disorder, Adjustment, or Anxiety Disorder, they claim that your mental illness was a condition you had previous to going to war. Saves some tax payer money and the government isn't liable.

Despite the fact that, the twenty odd years you lived before service you were fine, when you entered into the service and went to your medical/psychological physical at MEPS you were a GO, and even the days right prior to going to war you checked out okay when you did a pre-deployment evaluation. But apparently, you are so fucking nuts and always have been that you have some severe mental illness making you unfit for most civilian deployment.

So here you are unemployed and not sleeping. You drink yourself to sleep when you can't afford medicine because you haven't gotten the disability write off for having PTSD.

You jump at every loud noise (jack hammers sound embarrassingly close to heavy machine gun fire) and you have anxiety attacks on every date when you enter a crowded restaurant or bar. It doesn't take long to say "FUCK IT!" when you keep coming back to the VA clinic and they give you the run around or they pile a shit load of bureaucracy on your ass. Or worse, they call bullshit and humiliate you.

It all gets drastically worse when you realize that your sacrifice is denied meaning. We don't have a Pearl Harbor or an Auschwitz to justify our combat experience.

The verdict is coming barreling down the pipe "WRONG FUCKING WAR!" Sorry boys. Looks like we made a big god damn mistake. You wanna cry democracy in Iraq and the war on terror, shove it up your ass and sit down because here comes the bad news.... YOU ARE WRONG!

Barber fights the courts for a year and a half to change his diagnosis, and when he finally does win and he switches to the good drugs the VA mails out in big shiny bottles, he starts popping em down like a starving child.

When he misses appointment after appointment at the clinic, where is the concerned case worker checking out if everything is on the level at the Barber house? Sorry again, the VA is too under staffed to even see the folks in the waiting room who have been there for six hours, much less have any accountability to struggling vets to sketched out to leave their houses.

I have only pieces of Douglas Barber's story, but I assure you it will be out in full soon. It will bounce around concerned circles, somewhere in the middle of the newspaper. The institution will report that things are getting better and all the citizen zombies will nod and go back to eating brains and watching tv. No real changes will take place and the veterans will continue to suffer.

We will become desensitized to stories of veteran suicides and the journalists will all say "We just did an article on that, so we aren't interested in another" and Americans will

lose sight of the issue until it happens to the neighbor's son or Cousin Joe Bob. We don't have the attention span to really care about each other and it is always someone else's problem.

So slap a yellow ribbon on your SUV and don't cry foul when some drunk vet comes slamming into your wagon killing your kids or a desperate homeless war hero is knocking over the liquor store and guns down grandma, because he thinks he is putting forty out of forty in the black of an insurgent silhouette.

And don't point fingers if recruiting is down. You convince a kid to go into the war machine when he sees vets coming out the other end in coffins, wheel chairs, and straight jackets.

People might not be spitting in the faces of the veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan War, but they may as well be pissing on us. If apathetic America is too busy drinking Star Bucks and shopping at Wal-Mart to notice there is a big problem with the Vets and this whole War On Terror then this whole country has it's neck in the slaughter stock waiting for the blade to fall.

To Douglas and all the dead soldiers and dying vets, keep a pot of coffee on. We will all see you in hell soon enough.

SOLDIER X

Douglas Barber's last letter:

<http://groups.google.com/group/coalitionforreethoughtinmedia/msg/339447f2ecaef4db>

Douglas Barber's Blog "Soldier For Truth": <http://soldierforrhth.blogspot.com/>



www.theage.com.au

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

2 MND-B Soldiers Killed By IED

January 24, 2006 MNF Release A060124a

BAGHDAD, Iraq: Two Multi-National Division Baghdad Soldiers were killed when their vehicle was struck by a roadside bomb in southeast Baghdad Jan. 23.

One Soldier died at the scene and the other Soldier died of wounds en route to the military hospital.

Two Marines Killed In Accident Near Al Taqaddum

January 24, 2006 MNF Release A060124c

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq: Two Marines assigned to II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), were killed in a non-hostile vehicle accident near Al Taqaddum, Jan. 23.

Tracy Marine Killed

Jan 23, 2006 CBS Broadcasting Inc.

A Marine from Tracy has died in a suicide bombing. He is the fifth person to die from Tracy since the war began.

Marine Lance Corporal Brandon Christopher Dewey died in a car bombing Friday Northwest of Baghdad. This was the 20-year-old's second tour of duty.

During his first tour Dewey was injured in Fallujah, that was during some of the fiercest fighting of the war.

UK Troops Targeted;

One Wounded

1.24.06 By PETE BELL, Sun Online

A PATROL of British troops was today targeted by a roadside bomb in Basra.

The bomb exploded near a school in the northeast of the town, wounding a number of children, two adults and one coalition soldier, said British military spokesman Captain James St. John-Price.

Bomb Explosion Damages British Tank In Basra: Casualties Not Announced

Jan 24 (KUNA)

A bomb exploded Tuesday in the southern Iraqi city of Basra, damaging a British tank and a nearby civilian car, said a police spokesperson.

The bomb exploded while the British tank was passing in Al-Maaqal in mid Basra, said the spokesperson without mentioning any human loss.

**REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**



U.S. soldiers from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, search for weapons caches in Shakaria village in Iraq in this photo taken January 11, 2006 and released January 13, 2006. REUTERS/Staff Sgt. Kevin L. Moses/U.S. Army/Handout

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Resistance Jail Break: Guards Help Seven Escape Afghan Hell Hole

January 24, 2006 By Amir Shah, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Seven mid-ranking Taliban rebels disguised themselves as visitors to escape from a high-security prison in Kabul that is being refurbished ahead of the arrival of terror suspects from U.S. military custody at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, Cuba, officials said Tuesday.

The breakout from the crumbling Policharki Prison comes six months after four al-Qaida members, including one of Osama bin Laden's top lieutenants in Southeast Asia, broke out of Bagram, the U.S. military's headquarters north of Kabul.

The seven men convinced their guards to let them walk out of the overcrowded prison Sunday by marking their hands with a fake ink stamp similar to one used to identify visitors to the jail, Deputy Minister for Justice Mohammad Qasim Hashimzai said.

Prisoners don't wear uniforms and the stamp is the main method used to differentiate between detainees and visitors, he said. "There were so many visitors at the jail on the Sunday that the prisoners exploited the guards' confusion and sneaked out," he said.

Police launched a manhunt for the seven, who all had been caught during the past year fighting for the Taliban in the volatile southern provinces of Helmand and Kandahar, said Gen. Abdul Salam Bakshi, the director of the country's prisons.

Ten prison guards who are suspected of helping the men escape or of failing in their duties have been arrested, Bakshi said.

Policharki, located on the capital's outskirts, is notorious in Afghanistan. Human rights workers have criticized the living conditions at the prison, saying they violate "every standard of human rights."

TROOP NEWS

Less Than Warm Enthusiasm For The Traitor-In-Chief: Iraq Vet Says: “We Slaughtered Those People” “There Was No Point Or Aim To Any Of It”



Army troops from Fort Riley listen to Bush deliver a speech Jan. 23, 2006 in Manhattan, Kansas. (AP Photo/Charlie Riedel)

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in. He writes: The guy in the bottom left area looks like he's asleep. Not that I blame him.]

[Looking carefully, there are quite a few faces showing less than raving enthusiasm for the Traitor-In-Chief. T]

January 24, 2006 By John Milburn, Associated Press [Excerpt]

But a former Army captain was among dozens of protesters outside Bramlage Coliseum, where Bush spoke. Sam Wilson, now a 29-year-old graduate student in statistics, said he was with the 2nd Battalion, 70th Armored Regiment, in the first wave of troops to invade Iraq in March 2003.

He said had wanted to go to Iraq after a seven-month stint in Bosnia, believing that dictator Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction. But he said the deaths of civilians and the developing insurgency made him question the war before he left Iraq five months later.

“We slaughtered those people,” he said. “I don’t think most people think of war in these terms.”

He remembered being in Baghdad: **“There was no point or aim to any of it.”**

***Blinding Flash Of The Obvious:* “Army Stretched To Breaking Point” Bush Regime Bullshit Slapped Down**

[Thanks to PB, PG AND D, who sent this in.]

<p>Krepinevich's analysis, while consistent with the conclusions of some outside the Bush administration, is in stark contrast with the public statements of Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and senior Army officials.</p>

1.24.06 By ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer

Stretched by frequent troop rotations to Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army has become a "thin green line" that could snap unless relief comes soon, according to a study for the Pentagon.

Andrew Krepinevich, a retired Army officer who wrote the report under a Pentagon contract, concluded that the Army cannot sustain the pace of troop deployments to Iraq long enough to break the back of the insurgency. He also suggested that the Pentagon's decision, announced in December, to begin reducing the force in Iraq this year was driven in part by a realization that the Army was overextended.

As evidence, Krepinevich points to the Army's 2005 recruiting slump, missing its recruiting goal for the first time since 1999, and its decision to offer much bigger enlistment bonuses and other incentives.

"You really begin to wonder just how much stress and strain there is on the Army, how much longer it can continue," he said in an interview.

The 136-page report represents a more sobering picture of the Army's condition than military officials offer in public.

Krepinevich's analysis, while consistent with the conclusions of some outside the Bush administration, is in stark contrast with the public statements of Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and senior Army officials.

Army Secretary Francis Harvey, for example, opened a Pentagon news conference last week by denying the Army was in trouble.

Rumsfeld has argued that the experience of fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan has made the Army stronger, not weaker.

Krepinevich said in the interview that he understands why Pentagon officials do not state publicly that they are being forced to reduce troop levels in Iraq because of stress on the Army. "That gives too much encouragement to the enemy," he said, even if a number of signs, such as a recruiting slump, point in that direction.

He said he concluded that even Army leaders are not sure how much longer they can keep up the unusually high pace of combat tours in Iraq before they trigger an institutional crisis.

Some major Army divisions are serving their second yearlong tours in Iraq, and some smaller units have served three times.

MORE:

The Brookings Institution's Michael O'Hanlon told Hersh that "if the president decides to stay the present course in Iraq some troops would be compelled to serve fourth and fifth tours of combat by 2007 and 2008, which could have serious consequences for morale and competency levels." Rohan Pearce, January 25, 2006 Green Left Weekly

MORE:

Fourth And Fifth Deployments For Wisconsin Troops

[Thanks to David Honish, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in. He writes: Does third or fourth deployment sound like an all volunteer force?]

Jan 23 WISC Channel 3000

Members of Madison's 115th Fighter Wing are being deployed once again.

Thirteen members of the group are leaving on Wednesday for southwest Asia and hundreds more might leave this summer, WISC-TV reported.

The group, **mostly** volunteers, consists of pilots, aircraft maintainers, weapons loaders and vehicle maintenance staff.

For many of the soldiers, it is their second, third, or fourth time heading overseas, WISC-TV reported.

Panic Time At The Pentagon: \$40,000 Offered For Enlistment

[Thanks to D, who sent this in.]

January 18, 2006 Associated Press

WASHINGTON - After falling well short of its recruiting goals last year, the Army has set even higher monthly targets for this summer, hoping that new financial incentives will attract high school and college graduates in the face of mounting deaths in Iraq.

From June to September, the Army will try to recruit between 8,600 and 10,400 soldiers per month - well above the numbers achieved last year. To reach those goals, recruiters will be armed with more than catchy slogans and national pride.

A new law will allow the Army to give larger financial bonuses for enlistments and re-enlistments, doubling the maximum payment to new active duty recruits from \$20,000 to \$40,000, and from \$10,000 to \$20,000 for reservists.

It also will let older recruits sign on by raising the top age from 35 to 42.

And the top re-enlistment bonus for active duty soldiers would increase from \$60,000 to \$90,000.

Complaints From The Ranks Bring Down Bigoted “Religious” Piece Of Shit; Now He Lies About Fake “Victory”

<p>He admitted that one of his evangelical sermons received complaints from 25 percent of those who heard it because he said those who do not accept Jesus will be “cast into hell.”</p>

January 23, 2006 By Kelly Kennedy, Army Times staff writer [Excerpts]

When Navy Chaplain (Lt.) Gordon Klingenschmitt broke on Jan. 7 a 19-day hunger strike he started in protest against the Navy, it was just the most recent salvo in a long line of protests he's launched against the service, complaining about what he is allowed and not allowed to do.

Klingenschmitt, an evangelical Episcopal priest, began his water-only diet Dec. 20 because he said the Navy precluded him from praying in Jesus' name while in uniform, saying he would end his hunger strike when the "president gave me my uniform and let me pray in Jesus' name."

"Today is that day," he announced at a press conference in front of the White House, before breaking his fast with a communion wafer. "I have been granted the religious liberty today to pray in uniform."

But Navy officials said nothing had changed since the beginning of Klingenschmitt's fast.

"No one ever, ever told him he couldn't pray in uniform," Navy spokesman Lt. William Marks said. The regulation states military chaplains may pray in public in uniform, but they can't lobby for a cause in uniform.

At issue, originally, was what Klingenschmitt said was his right to lead evangelical Episcopalian prayers, rather than nonsectarian prayers, on the guided missile cruiser Anzio as ship chaplain when speaking to soldiers of all faiths.

Klingenschmitt said he was punished after being asked to lead "Jewish prayers," which he ended with "in Jesus' name."

<p>He admitted that one of his evangelical sermons received complaints from 25 percent of those who heard it because he said those who do not accept Jesus will be "cast into hell."</p>

Patronizing Prostitutes Means Those Convicted Face Dishonorable Discharge, Jail

January 24, 2006 By Karen Jowers, Army Times staff writer

Service members now may pay dearly for hiring a prostitute.

Under a change in the Manual for Courts-Martial, troops who patronize prostitutes can receive a dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances and up to a year in jail.

[A perfect example of the Uniform Code Of Military Injustice. Any defense contractor can visit any member of Congress anytime, and not even get a slap on the wrist.]

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

“Insurgents Mount A Major Attack On Oil Facilities About Once Every Three Days”

“The Situation Is Getting Worse”

Jan. 30, 2006 Scott Johnson and Michael Hastings, Newsweek

Guarding the Fatah oil refinery used to be a pretty straightforward job. Insurgents hit the complex only sporadically, at night, and usually missed important targets. But by early last year, attackers were using rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and heavy machine guns in brazen daylight assaults.

They seemed to know about everything and everybody in the refinery. Ambushes were common. "We were afraid to even take vacation and go home," says 26-year-old Saif Mohammed, an Iraqi security guard assigned to help protect the vast network of blackened pipes and smokestacks. "The people who worked with us used to tip off the fighters. They wanted to play both sides: to keep their jobs and be informants for the terrorists."

When insurgents killed the man Mohammed shared duty with last April, then threatened Mohammed with the same, he quit.

In the past year, there have been close to 20 large-scale assaults on or around Fatah, part of Iraq's largest oil-production complex in Bayji, northwest of Baghdad.

Across the country, insurgents mount a major attack on oil facilities about once every three days, and the situation is getting worse. December was the third month in a row that Iraqi oil production went down, marking the lowest level of exports since the invasion.

The insurgents, meanwhile, are precise in their timing and ruthless in their choice of targets.

They often wait for key repairs to be completed before attacking the same location, sometimes the day after the oil starts flowing.

"We fix them and they just hit us again and again," says Iraqi Oil Minister Ibrahim Mohammed Bahar al-Aloum. Personnel are targeted, too. On Jan. 4, insurgents struck at the Oil Ministry itself, killing Director General Rahim Ali al-Sudani and his son.

Under mounting pressure, Iraqi officials try to remain optimistic. Al-Aloum has decorated his living room with propaganda posters. with oil we realize our ambitions, says one of them. But for workers more worried about ambushes, such notions seem lost in a distant future.

Oil Pipeline Blown Up In Northern Iraq



An Iraqi collaborator near the burning oil pipeline line near Kirkuk January 24, 2006. Insurgents set the pipeline ablaze by detonating a bomb on it, witnesses in the area said.
REUTERS/Slahaldeen Rasheed

1/24/2006 AFP

KIRKUK - A bomb exploded Tuesday under a pipeline linking an oilfield near Kirkuk with the terminal at Ceyhan, Turkey, causing a fire and a partial reduction in pumping, an Iraqi oil ministry official said.

The bomb went off at 12:45 am (2145 GMT Monday) 75 kilometres (47 miles) west of Kirkuk and was an act of sabotage, ministry spokesman Assem Jihad told AFP.

An executive with the Northern Oil Co said pumping through the pipeline had been halted so that repairs could be carried out, but Jihad said pumping was still underway on other lines, making up for the loss.

Meanwhile, security forces defused two bombs that had been placed under another pipeline in the Dibs area, 55 kilometres (34 miles) north of Kirkuk.

Captain Chakhwan Abdullah, who heads a security team, said his guards saw two suspect men near the pipeline and fired at them, causing them to flee. The two explosive devices were subsequently discovered and dismantled.

Assorted Resistance Action

January 24, 2006 PAUL GARWOOD, AP

A car bomb exploded in eastern Baghdad shortly before the resumption of the Saddam Hussein trial, wounding at least one policeman.

Guerrillas wearing Iraqi army uniforms kidnapped two German engineers Tuesday in northern Iraq.

The Germans worked at an Iraqi state-owned detergent plant near the oil refinery in Beiji, 155 miles north of Baghdad and were seized by gunmen wearing Iraqi army uniforms, said police Capt. Falah al-Janabi.

Meanwhile, guerrillas killed two policemen and wounded four in separate ambushes in Baghdad.

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

Reality Check

Alaa Adel, a 32-year-old guard at a Sunni mosque in Baghdad, told the Inter Press Service on December 31: "I did not believe the election would make the situation in Iraq better, because we are under occupation. I'm sure only real resistance will force the occupation forces to end their occupation." Doug Lorimer, January 25, 2006 Green Left Weekly

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

In grade school we learned about the redcoats, the nasty British soldiers that tried to stifle our freedom.... Subconsciously, but not very subconsciously, I began increasingly to have the feeling that I was a redcoat. I think it was one of the most staggering realizations of my life. Bill Ehrhart, United States Marine Corps, Vietnam

**“Is There Nothing This Group Of
Megalomaniacal Criminals Won't
Do To Push Their Self-Serving
Goals Down The Throats Of The
Rest Of The World?”**



FREE KEVIN BENDERMAN NOW !

Did the African slaves fight and claw and bleed their way to freedom and equality so that everyone of us could just roll over and beg for a false sense of security from people who can not possibly give it to us?

January 23, 2006 By Sgt. Kevin Benderman: Prisoner of Conscience,
Conscientious Objector to War.

January 23, 2006

Illegal war; illegal wiretapping; illegal torture; unethical treatment of a UN ambassador and his wife; ignoring the top generals' statements concerning the number of troops necessary to conduct the illegal war; not providing proper medical or psychological care to a vast number of troops coming back from this highly unethical and illegal war; bringing the bodies of Americans killed as a result of being sent to this war back home under the cover of darkness to mask the scope of the madness of this war thereby dealing a slap in the face to those patriotic sons and daughters for their service and their ultimate sacrifice; calling this illegal war a crusade in a poorly billed swipe against the Muslims of the world; claiming to be a devout follower of Christ's teachings while lying, coveting, murdering and taking the Lord's name in vain; accosting a former Attorney General while he lay in an intensive care unit recovering from surgery just to get his signature authorizing the illegal wiretaps: *is there nothing this group of megalomaniacal criminals won't do to push their self-serving goals down the throats of the rest of the world?*

This group of criminals has the unmitigated gall to post their manifesto on the world-wide web, and their name is "The Project for the New American Century," and there are many of them.

A large number of this group currently hold appointed and elected positions in the high reaches of our government.

Using their positions, they have effectively declared our constitution null and void by convincing us to follow along blindly through manipulation and fear.

The surprising thing about this is that a large number of Americans cheer these unconstitutional acts while others simply look on with a dull gaze of apathy.

Whatever happened to "Truth, Justice and The American Way"? Have we traded them for "False Security, Hollow Justice and whatever any politician says is what goes"?

While this country has not been perfect, and there are black marks on our record, I believe we, as American citizens are dishonoring the efforts of those who have come before us.

Did the pioneers cross the great plains in covered wagons to make a better life for their children so that we could sit back and whine to have everything given to us?

Did the African slaves fight and claw and bleed their way to freedom and equality so that everyone of us could just roll over and beg for a false sense of security from people who can not possibly give it to us?

If this is what we believe the people who have given so much intended for us, then we should just board up the houses of Congress, relinquish our rights to self-governance, and bow down to the king.

"Rest in Peace, America."

[For more Letters from Fort Lewis check out: Benderman Defense Committee:
<http://www.topia.net/kevinbenderman.html>]

“Nineteen Year Old Kids, With 50 Year Old Eyes, Carrying The Coffins Of Their Friends To A Six Foot Hole”

From: David Honish, Veterans For Peace

To: GI Special

Sent: January 24, 2006

Subject: Kids with shoulder patches

In the Army one wears the insignia of the unit that they serve in on their left shoulder. The majority of troops will have a bare right shoulder. That is as it should be.

The right shoulder is reserved for the insignia of a unit in which the soldier served in combat.

I can't help but notice all the photos in recent *GI Special* issues of what look like 18 & 19 year old kids with a variety of patches on their right shoulders as they serve on pall bearer details. 1st Infantry Div, 2nd Infantry Div, 3rd Infantry Div, 4th Infantry Div, 1st Armor Div, 1st Cavalry Div, 11th Armored Cav Regiment, and so on.

Many of these men and women have no doubt served multiple tours. There is something very wrong about a 19 year old that can choose from more than one patch to display on their right shoulder.

I never wore a right shoulder patch in my 1,096 days of Regular Army, and another 8 years in the Army Reserve and National Guard. That is how it should be.

After Viet Nam when Jerry Ford wanted to jump into Angola hard with both feet in 1975 because Cuban troops were there, Congress said NO!

Seems hard to imagine now a Congress that actually did it's job of deciding to declare war, or not?

Africa seems to have done OK? I should think they are much better off now without our military intervention, than they would have been had Congress given Jerry Ford a blank check in Angola.

In 1976 when an unarmed platoon sized tree trimming detail had a hand to hand conflict with unarmed North Korean troops in the DMZ, things got a bit dicey.

The platoon covered each other, except for the 2LT platoon leader who was killed by a North Korean with an American axe. (Insert your own joke here about 2LT's needing to spend more time listening to platoon sergeants, instead of acting on their own.)

Shortly afterwards, just across the border in China, Mao died of old age. 1976 was tense for troops in Korea, several of whom were personal friends of mine, but nobody went to war.

I was wearing the red, blue, and yellow triangle of the 49th Armor Division on my left shoulder when Ronald Reagan went mucking about in Grenada, Beirut, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras.

There was a levy for Spanish speaking troops in the TX National Guard for duty in Honduras. One of my co-workers at the state hospital delighted in shouting "Honduras!" every time he saw me. I stayed in Texas. They needed Spanish skills more extensive than my ability to just read a menu and order another beer for duty in Honduras.

Congress had loosed control a bit. Ronald Reagan was allowed to act on his fantasies of 'sending in the Marines' someplace to blur the lines between his bad B movies and his bad terms of office.

Congress has gotten much worse since then.

They have totally abdicated their authority to declare war, or make the President obey laws against wire tapping US citizens without a court order.

The stampede of both democats and republicrats to collect corporate campaign contributions has made them worse than useless. They are willing tools of corporate Amerika, rubber stamping their approval on the checks to pay to send our young people to Iraq as taxpayer provided mercenaries for the oil industry.

The result of this is kids with a choice of shoulder patches on their right shoulder.

Nineteen year old kids, with 50 year old eyes, carrying the coffins of their friends to a six foot hole.

I hope we get a couple of Congresspersons with the balls to put an end to this madness in this year's mid-term elections?

Pain Is The Touchstone To Growth

From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: January 24, 2006
Subject: Pain is the Touchstone to Growth

After reading today about a military jury " just " reprimanding Chief Warrant Officer Lewis Welshofer Jr. for the interrogation death of Iraqi Gen. Abed Hamed Mowhoush in 2003, I am convinced that America will change when we have suffered enough, and have enough shit in our pants.

Pain is the touchstone to growth, and America has a ways to go. There are times when you can do nothing, but sit in the bleachers and wait and watch. That is the most painful thing to go through.

I saw that in Crawford Texas, when I was confronted by the pro-war folks, and when I had an encounter with some Bush people in Washington, D.C.

You do not come to the peace table with a smirk on your face. You come to the peace table when you are short of breath.

Thank God the anti-war movement will never be short of breath.

When the American helicopters finally left the roof tops of Saigon in 1975, the little guy realized he had power. Ho Chi Minh is alive and well in Iraq.

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
January 23, 2006**



***American soldier murdered in Iraq by George W. Bush:
Camp Casey, Texas 2005***

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

SAME OLD SAME OLD



[Thanks to John Gingerich, who sent this in from his collection.]

**“The Instinct Of The Occupation
Is Not To Unite People, It Is To
Divide People”**

**“So They Went To The Tribal
Leaders, The Former Officers, The
Torturers, The Victimiziers Of The
People”**

To meet the requirements of Repression-as-usual, the occupation has employed former high-ranking Baathists as death squad leaders, military commanders, torturers, expert interrogators and agents. The dictatorship's apparatus of repression has been key to the occupation's military and economic survival.

The divisions in Iraq are not about religion or politics, they are the same divisions in existence all over the planet and their demolition is the story of liberation struggles all over the world.

They are about who has power, economic and social power, the power to decide the future, the power to control and benefit from a collective resource, the power over life and death.

1.19.06 by Ewa Jasiewicz, Left Turn magazine [Excerpts]

The Rainstorm in the Livingroom:

At the beginning of the occupation in May 2003, when anybody could have their own political party, militia or NGO, many Baathists who profited from the regime and were loyal to it, and who had the language and foreigner skills or capital to form their own NGOs did so and reproduced the Baath class system of privilege and social power in the process.

Regime loyalists were rewarded with the freedom to organise under it, to run and take part in regime-approved 'civil society' organisations. Even if those who profited and flourished, under the regime, rejected it after the fall, the perpetuation and preservation of their privilege, status and confidence based on their past permission to organise, was re-affirmed, through interaction with certain foreign NGOs as well as the Occupation's own NGO-promoting and funding bodies and funds.

This became a source of gnawing injustice for many poorer, excluded, working class onlookers.

The former Baathi privileged and wealthy and their collaborators were getting not just privileged again but powerful again, in the social sphere, the civil society sphere which after the regime fell, is exactly where the marginalised saw their potential power residing.

For US imperialism, the Ba'ath dictatorship has been one of its' most potent weapons for the past 40 years.

Its current use by the occupation is evident in the employment of occupation government ministers, civil servants, and managers for the sake of Business as usual.

To meet the requirements of Repression-as-usual, the occupation has employed former high-ranking Baathists as death squad leaders, military commanders, torturers, expert interrogators and agents. The dictatorship's apparatus of repression has been key to the occupation's military and economic survival.

The occupation-run media portray the armed resistance as solidly Saddamist, playing on and re-generating the trauma of much of the population in order to discredit and alienate it.

As well as a reliance on old forces of repression, the occupation has orchestrated institutional sectarianism.

From the original ethnicity/religion enshrining governing council set up in June 2003, to the stage-managed further Interim Governing Councils where dissenters were weeded out and replaced with Washington protégés.

The seeds of sectarianism were cultivated through the IGC, through ethnic/tribal based appointments in local government and ministries. Millions of dollars were pumped into creating pro-occupation civil society organisations, NGOs and funding and approving trade unions, all in an effort to impose social peace, a top-down exile and occupation-lead whitewash over bloodshed and state terror.

As unbelievable and disempowering as the top-down creation of the state apparatus of an imposed government before the eyes of the population, so too was the US and UK's attempt to grow a grassroots civil society out of terrain devastated by sanctions, war and a dictatorship of their own making.

Ismaeel Dawood, the founder of Al Messalla Human Rights Organisation in Baghdad argues that 'A Saddamist strategy appears to be in place, as with the past where one group of people were granted the power and money. The Baath still have power. We are always speaking about this in our daily life.

“People who had the power back in the past, are returning.

“Civil society, the place for people to come together, is very limited now. It's not easy to win trust, people fear they can be targeted for being Sunna, Shia or Kurdish. You

cannot declare what you do; it's not like before when NGOs had press conferences and demonstrations.

“The Democratic Party and Republican Party are giving money to NGOs in order to influence the political process but the funding serves their (Parties) way and they are creating networks. Most of them are now choosing to hold events in Kurdistan or the south.’

The violence of the occupation, concentrated on the 'Sunni centre' has alienated and displaced not just the inhabitants of towns like Fallujah and Ramadi, pushing them into desert refugee camps and controlling their movement with retina scanners and ID cards, but it has also isolated them from the rest of Iraq.

This is a conscious strategy of physical division which prevents human relationships, alliances, and solidarity from forming between people: a dynamic which was alive after the first siege and massacre of Fallujah in April 2004 which saw Shia and Sunna inhabitants march together on the devastated town with water, food, medicines and blankets chanting slogans of unity and resistance to the occupation.

From the beginning, the engineering of sectarianism was accompanied by a co-optation and reproduction of the hierarchies of authority and repression within the tribal and governmental systems in Iraq. An Iraqification of the occupation, a tried and tested tactic by the British in the 1920s was deployed.

'The instinct of the occupation is not to unite people, it is to divide people, so they did not go to the poor, they went to the Tribal leaders, the former officers, the torturers, the victimizers of the people. Because you can threaten them easier, buy them off easier, co-opt them easier'.

So where are the spaces for creating alternative, representative power structures in Iraq?

According to Exile, teacher and writer Sami Ramadani, the mosque, which was traditionally independent of the regime, and is now also independent of the occupation is a key space of both refuge and organisation.

Others are the market place and the hospital. 'The market is an important place for expression', he explains, 'A political space where both the poor and middle class people go and can converse in both open and camouflaged ways. I don't believe it was an accident that the occupation used to target these places. Hospitals too have traditionally been politically autonomous.

The Iraqi Federation of Oil Unions, formerly known as the General Union of Oil Employees is the most powerful trade union in Iraq. It prides itself on its political independence, refusing to join any of the existing trade union federations in Iraq due to their strong ties to either the government and occupation or political parties.

Hassan Jumaa Awad al Assadi, President of the IFOU, sees the struggle to defend Iraq's oil as a catalyst to create unity throughout the country and undermine sectarianism.

"Iraq has nothing but oil and America wants to control it. But we in the Union will destroy the plans of the capitalists and colonialists. It is impermissible for anyone to sell any part of Iraq's public sector: this belongs to the people.

"We built it and it represents the collective efforts of generations of Iraqis. We in the union will fight to defend our common wealth, from the north to the south because it represents our common interests and destiny which know no religious, tribal or ethnic boundaries."

At a time where spaces for open social organisation are receding into sectarianism or occupation-perpetuating agendas, spaces for organising and social resistance become everywhere where human beings come together to meet common economic, social and physical needs from the street markets to the Mosques and hospitals.

As politics comes to mean an imposed government and fractious elitism and sectarianism stoking parties, another politics pushes up from the grassroots to shatter the divisions being plotted from above.

And it is rooted in the shared experience and lived reality of common ground and history.

The divisions in Iraq are not about religion or politics, they are the same divisions in existence all over the planet and their demolition is the story of liberation struggles all over the world.

They are about who has power, economic and social power, the power to decide the future, the power to control and benefit from a collective resource, the power over life and death.

Equalisation of power means justice. In Iraq, this power is still being heavily contested. We have reasons to hope and new struggles to connect to.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bush Traitors Trying To Send Protestor To Jail On Secret Evidence

[Thanks to Liz Burbank, who posted this.]

The U.S. Attorney had moved to assert "federal privilege" and quash the subpoenas. He argued that by reason of their participation in the Joint Terrorism

Task Force (JTTF), these Boston police officers had become federal agents, and thus not subject to a local subpoena.

19th Hearing for Richard Picariello]

January 19, 2006 by Bill Cunningham, Bridge News

Associate Justice Paul K. Leary was annoyed. "Oh, this is a zoo. I want these people out of the courtroom and a guard at the door."

The judge was referring to friends of Richard Picariello, who had just come into the room. January 19 marked Picariello's fifteenth appearance in Boston Municipal Court since being arrested twice in March, 2004.

That seems like a lot of court time for the kind of offenses Picariello is supposed to have committed.

The cops say they busted him the first time for putting a political sticker on a telephone pole.

A week later, they spotted him in a crowd, mostly labor union members who were loudly and belligerently protesting a Bush fund-raiser.

The police report said that Picariello, "known from prior pictures and involvement in prior demonstrations," was arrested this time because he "became loud and belligerent, to the dismay of the crowd."

Picariello's attorneys are convinced that he is being singled out for political reasons. His supporters believe that the arrests are linked to a coordinated program of surveillance and harassment aimed at stifling political dissent.

There were a number of political arrests in the weeks leading up to the Democratic National Convention, including the Lafayette 8 in Cambridge, whose trial is still pending.

The reason Picariello has not come to trial is that Boston Police have refused defense attorneys' requests for files on their client. Jurists call this "failure to comply with discovery."

One document that did come out through discovery was a brief memo from a Boston police detective saying that Richard Picariello's name was mentioned at a police briefing just before the Bush fundraiser.

The case is beginning to draw wider interest. On January 19, for the first time, a staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union joined the defense team.

The U.S. Attorney was also present for the case. Before assigning Justice Rosalind H. Miller to the trial, Justice Leary asked the U.S. Attorney if she was acceptable to him.

It turned out that Picariello's attorneys had to ask Justice Miller for yet another postponement. Boston police officers, whom the defense had wanted to question, failed to answer their subpoenas.

The U.S. Attorney had moved to assert "federal privilege" and quash the subpoenas. He argued that by reason of their participation in the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), these Boston police officers had become federal agents, and thus not subject to a local subpoena.

A JTTF is a special team comprised of local, state, and federal agents. It was first used in the 1970s, following exposure of the FBI's illegal COINTELPRO domestic surveillance operation.

Justice Miller said, "I have no idea how that operates." She ordered the two sides to produce written arguments and set a new trial date of March 6.



Members of the audience stand up and turn their backs on Attorney General Alberto Gonzales as he speaks at Georgetown University Law School Jan. 24, 2006 defending warrantless surveillance of American citizens. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

Received:

“An Administration That Acts Like The Jester In The Courts Of Hell”

From: J
To: GI Special
Sent: January 24, 2006
Subject: "A soldier with tears in his eyes"

This is very upsetting. Home invasions are an unnecessary evil. Now they are also putting a journalist's life in danger.

Carroll's former employer, The Jordan Times, published a Sunday (Jan 15) editorial, stating: "The kidnappers who abducted her could not have chosen a more wrong target. True, Jill is a US citizen. But she is also more critical of US policies towards the Middle East than many Arabs... Jill has been from day one opposed to the war, to the invasion and occupation of Iraq. "

So many prominent Muslims have spoken in her favour that I believed she would be released unharmed. The response of the US seems to be designed to counteract the work of the people trying to free her.

Surely anyone sane must realize that terrorising, and brutalizing, innocent civilians in her name will antagonise her captives. Is this designed to help her or make sure she is executed? The US forces have already killed, or imprisoned, several journalists who have been too much against US policy in Iraq. Is Jill meant to be the next?

What can stop the insane, criminal behaviour of maniacs who order Human Rights abuses of this nature? I hope Jill Carroll doesn't pay with her life for an administration that acts like the jester in the courts of hell.

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

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

<http://qi-special.iraq-news.de>, <http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/>,
www.williambowles.info/qispecial, http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/,
<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>

GI Special distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **GI Special has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is GI Special endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice** Go to:

www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.