

## GI SPECIAL 4C27:



[Photo: Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace]  
**Iraq Veterans Against The War**  
**Mobile To New Orleans March 3.06**

**“A Publicity Nightmare  
For The US Military”  
An Ever-Growing Number Of  
Veterans Of The Iraq Conflict Who  
Are Campaigning Against The  
War:**

# **“Jody Casey Left The Army Five Days Ago And Came Straight To Join The Vets”**

March 29, 2006 The Guardian

**They are a publicity nightmare for the US military: an ever-growing number of veterans of the Iraq conflict who are campaigning against the war.**

To mark the third anniversary of the invasion this month, a group of them marched on Katrina-ravaged New Orleans. Inigo Gilmore and Teresa Smith joined them

**At a press conference in a cavernous Alabama warehouse, banners and posters are rolled out: "Abandon Iraq, not the Gulf coast!"**

**A tall, white soldier steps forward in desert fatigues. "I was in Iraq when Katrina happened and I watched US citizens being washed ashore in New Orleans," he says.**

**"War is oppression: we could be setting up hospitals right here. America is war-addicted. America is neglecting its poor."**

A black reporter from a Fox TV news affiliate, visibly stunned, whispers: "Wow! That guy's pretty opinionated." Clearly such talk, even three years after the Iraq invasion, is still rare.

**This, after all, is the Deep South and this soldier less than a year ago was proudly serving his nation in Iraq.**

The soldier was engaged in no ordinary protest. Over five days earlier this month, around 200 veterans, military families and survivors of hurricane Katrina walked 130 miles from Mobile, Alabama, to New Orleans to mark the third anniversary of the Iraq war.

**At its vanguard, Iraq Veterans Against the War, a group formed less than two years ago, whose very name has aroused intense hostility at the highest levels of the US military.**

Mobile is a grand old southern naval town, clinging to the Gulf Coast. The stars and stripes flutter from almost every balcony as the soldiers parade through the town, surprising onlookers.

**As they begin their soon-to-be-familiar chants - "Bush lied, many died!" - some shout "traitor", or hurl less polite terms of abuse.**

**Elsewhere, a black man salutes as a blonde, middle-aged woman, emerging from a supermarket car park, cries out, "Take it all the way to the White House!" and offers the peace sign.**

Michael Blake is at the front of the march. The 22-year-old from New York state is not quite sure how he ended up in the military; the child of "a feminist mom and hippy dad", he says he signed up thinking that he would have an adventure, never imagining that he would find himself in Iraq. He served from April 2003 to March 2004, some of that time as a Humvee driver. Deeply disturbed by his experience in Iraq, he filed for conscientious objector status and has been campaigning against the war ever since.

He claims that US soldiers such as him were told little about Iraq, Iraqis or Islam before serving there; other than a book of Arabic phrases, "the message was always: 'Islam is evil' and 'They hate us.' Most of the guys I was with believed it."

**Blake says that the turning point for him came one day when his unit spent eight hours guarding a group of Iraqi women and children whose men were being questioned. He recalls: "The men were taken away and the women were screaming and crying, and I just remember thinking: this was exactly what Saddam used to do - and now we're doing it."**

**Becoming a peace activist, he says, has been a "cleansing" experience.**

"I'll never be normal again. I'll always have a sense of guilt." He tells us that he witnessed civilian Iraqis being killed indiscriminately. It would not be the most startling admission by the soldiers on the march. "When IEDs would go off by the side of the road, the instructions were - or the practice was - to basically shoot up the landscape, anything that moved. And that kind of thing would happen a lot." So innocent people were killed? "It happened, yes." (He says he did not carry out any such killings himself.)

Blake, an activist with IVAW for the past 12 months, is angry that American people seem so untouched by the war, by the grim abuses committed by American soldiers. "The American media doesn't cover it and they don't care. The American people aren't seeing the real war - what's really happening there."

We are in a Mexican diner in Mississippi when Alan Shackleton, a quiet 24-year-old from Iowa, stuns the table into silence with a story of his own. He details how he and his comrades in Iraq suffered multiple casualties, including a close friend who died of his injuries.

Then he pauses for a moment, swallows hard and says: "And I ran over a little kid and killed him ... and that's about it." He has been suffering from severe insomnia, but later he tells us that he has only been able to see a counsellor once every six weeks and has been prescribed sleeping pills.

"We are very, very sorry for what we did to the Iraqi people," he says the next day, holding a handwritten poster declaring: "Thou shall not kill."

As we get closer to New Orleans, the coastline becomes increasingly ravaged. Joe Hatcher, always sporting a keffiyeh and punk chains, reflects on his own time in the military and the hostility he has met from pro-war activists at home in Colorado Springs, Colorado, a town with five army bases where he campaigns against the war at town hall forums.

**He says: "There's this old guy, George, an ex-colonel. He shows up and talks shit on everybody for being anti-war because 'it's ruining the morale of the soldier and encouraging the enemy'.**

**"I scraped dead bodies off the pavements with a shovel and threw them in trash bags and left them there on the side of the road. And I really don't think the anti-war movement is what is infuriating people."**

When we reach Biloxi, Mississippi, the police say that there is no permit for the march and everyone will have to walk on the pavement. This is tricky because Katrina has left this coastal road looking like a bomb site.

**Jody Casey left the army five days ago and came straight to join the vets. The 29-year-old is no pacifist; he still firmly backs the military but says that he is speaking out in the hope of correcting many of the mistakes being made. He served as a scout sniper for a year until last February, based, like Blake, in the Sunni triangle.**

He clearly feels a little ill at ease with some of the protesters' rhetoric, but eventually agrees to talk to us. He says that the turning point for him came after he returned from Iraq and watched videos that he and other soldiers in his unit shot while out on raids, including hour after hour of Iraqi soldiers beating up Iraqi civilians. While reviewing them back home he decided "it was not right".

What upset him the most about Iraq? "The total disregard for human life," he says, matter of factly. "I mean, you do what you do at the time because you feel like you need to. But then to watch it get kind of covered up, shoved under a rug ... 'Oh, that did not happen'."

What kind of abuses did he witness? "Well, I mean, I have seen innocent people being killed. IEDs go off and (you) just zap any farmer that is close to you. You know, those people were out there trying to make a living, but on the other hand, you get hit by four or five of those IEDs and you get pretty tired of that, too."

Casey told us how, from the top down, there was little regard for the Iraqis, who were routinely called "hajjis", the Iraq equivalent of "gook". "They basically jam into your head: 'This is hajji! This is hajji!' You totally take the human being out of it and make them into a video game."

**It was a way of dehumanising the Iraqis? "I mean, yeah - if you start looking at them as humans, and stuff like that, then how are you going to kill them?"**

He says that soldiers who served in his area before his unit's arrival recommended them to keep spades on their vehicles so that if they killed innocent Iraqis, they could throw a spade off them to give the appearance that the dead Iraqi was digging a hole for a roadside bomb.

Casey says he didn't participate in any such killings himself, but claims the pervasive atmosphere was that "you could basically kill whoever you wanted - it was that easy. You did not even have to get off and dig a hole or anything. All you had to do was have

some kind of picture. You're driving down the road at three in the morning. There's a guy on the side of the road, you shoot him ... you throw a shovel off."

The IVAW, says Hatcher, "is becoming our religion, our fight - as in any religion we've confessed our wrongs, and now it's time to atone."

**Just outside New Orleans, the sudden appearance of a reporter from al-Jazeera's Washington office electrifies the former soldiers. It is a chance for the vets to turn confessional and the reporter is deluged with young former soldiers keen to be interviewed. "We want the Iraqi people to know that we stand with them," says Blake, "and that we're sorry, so sorry. That's why it was so important for us to appear on al-Jazeera."**

A number of Vietnam veterans also on the march are a welcome presence. For all the attempts to deny a link between the two conflicts, for both sets of veterans the parallels are persuasive.

**Thomas Brinson survived the Tet offensive in Vietnam in 1968. "Iraq is just Arabic for Vietnam, like the poster says - the same horror, the same tears," he says.**

Sitting on a riverbed outside New Orleans, Blake turns reflective.

"I met an Iraqi at one of the public meetings I was talking at recently. He came up to me and told me he was originally from the town where I had been stationed. And I just went up to this complete stranger and hugged him and I said, 'I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.' And you know what? He told me it was OK. And it was beautiful ..." He starts to cry. "That was redemption".



[Photo: Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace]

## **Iraq Veterans Against The War Mobile To New Orleans March 3.06**

**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**

## **Indiana Staff Sgt. Killed In Habbaniyah: “He Said He Had A Bad Feeling”**



Staff Sergeant Brock Beery was killed Thursday in Habbaniyah, Iraq when a bomb blew up near his military vehicle.

3.25.06 WNDU-TV

Staff Sergeant Brock Beery was killed Thursday in Habbaniyah, Iraq when a bomb blew up near his military vehicle.

Brock Beery grew up in Kosciusko County. In fact, he met his future wife at his first factory job in Warsaw, soon after he joined the military at the early age of 18.

The last time Roger & Pam Beery of Warsaw saw their 30-year-old son, Sergeant Brock Beery, was in November. He was home from Iraq on military leave for his grandpa's funeral.

"I'm proud of him, we miss him a whole lot," said Roger.

"He said he had a bad feeling. He said he didn't know if he was going to come back or not. It was a gut feeling, he knew," said Pam.

Thursday night around 8:00PM, a stranger's car pulled in to their Kosciusko County driveway, which caused the Brock's to feel immediate concern.

"They were from the U.S. military from Fort Wayne and they had come to talk to me and my husband. I more or less cracked outside," Pam said.

Staff Sergeant Brock Beery, with the Army National Guard's Second Battalion, had been fatally injured near Baghdad, where he was stationed.

"Since he's a Sergeant, he's the lead vehicle, and so the lead vehicle goes first. The landmine went off in front of the first tank he was riding in," explained Roger.

"There were four other men from his unit with him. Two of them were seriously hurt and are in critical condition and two of them were treated and released," Pam said.

They say their son died from his injuries near a tank.

"It's a Christmas picture of Brock & his tank, overseas that he sent up around Christmas time," said Pam.

"He was over there for about nine months. He was supposed to get out sometime in May. He had a little girl that loved him with all her heart and he was a very good provider," Pam said.

"When something like this happens, there is nothing you can do about it," said Roger.

Except hold dear to your heart the good times.

"We'll cherish those memories for the rest of our lives," said Pam.

Thirty-year-old Brock and his wife Sara grew up near Warsaw.

Brock leaves behind his wife Sara, and their 7-year-old daughter Elissa.

His family relocated to Tennessee a few years ago.

His father Roger said Brock's body will arrive in Tennessee sometime in the next 7 to 10 days, and that's where his funeral service will be held.

They are planning some type of memorial service locally. However, the date and time has yet to be announced.

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## **Australian Resident Killed By Australian Mercenaries**

03/29/06 The Daily Telegraph

AN Australian resident has been shot dead in Iraq. University of Baghdad Professor Kays Juma, 72, was killed when nervous security guards fired on his car last Saturday as he drove near a convoy of four-wheel drives carrying private contractors, News Ltd newspapers reported today.

Relatives were initially told an Australian fired the fatal shot, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) also suggested it, the newspaper said.

Prof Juma, whose birthplace was not disclosed by the paper, was married to an Adelaide woman and was an Australian permanent resident.

He spent much of each year in Baghdad teaching PhD agriculture students.

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Resistance Attacks Occupation Base: U.S. And Canadian Soldiers Killed In Helmund Province; Four More Wounded**



Private Robert Costall was killed after Taliban forces attacked coalition troops in the Helmund province, north of Kandadar on Wednesday March 29, 2006. Forces had been sent to the area after the recent death of eight Afghan Army soldiers. (AP PHOTO/HO, DND)

March 29, 2006 By Rahim Faiez, Associated Press

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan: Fierce fighting following an insurgent attack on a U.S.-led coalition base in southern Afghanistan on Wednesday killed 32 suspected Taliban militants and two troops, one American and one Canadian, officials said.

The battle in Helmand province's Sangin district also wounded three Canadian soldiers, Canadian Brig. Gen. David Fraser told reporters at a base in southern Kandahar city. A U.S. military statement said an American soldier was also hurt.

**Direct attacks on foreign bases are unusual, and Wednesday's assault comes after the Taliban warned of a renewed offensive this year.**

Rebels attacked a police checkpoint in Kandahar late Tuesday, killing two officers and wounding four, said police commander Abdul Nazik.

**Fraser said the slain Canadian was Pte. Robert Costall of the 1st Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, based in Edmonton.**

The wounded soldiers were rushed for treatment to a base in Kandahar, the main city in southern Afghanistan.

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## **Resistance Attacks Kill Mercenary, Guards And More Collaborator Troops**

Mar 28, 2006 BBC

A Namibian man and three Afghans have been killed in a landmine blast in the southwestern Afghan province of Farah, local officials say.

The US firm the Namibian worked for said he, his Afghan driver and two Afghan guards had died in the blast.

In a separate attack, a roadside bomb killed at least six Afghan soldiers in Helmand province, officials said.

Officials told the BBC the Taleban were behind the Farah province blast, which occurred in Dilaram district on the road linking Kandahar with the western city of Herat.

**The Namibian worked for United States Protection and Investigations, which provides security for a road building project in the area.**

The firm's Kabul-based deputy managing director, Bill Dupre', told the Associated Press news agency that the men's vehicle had taken the "full brunt" of the blast and they had been killed instantly.

**Troops were on patrol in southern Helmand province when they came under attack, a senior commander said.**

**"Today, late in the afternoon, Afghan National Army and police were on a joint patrol in Sangin district when a roadside bomb exploded close to the convoy and killed six Afghan National Army soldiers," Gen Rahmatullah Raufi told the AFP news agency.**

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## **TROOP NEWS**

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



The burial of Marine Staff Sgt. Kenneth Pospisil, Dec. 23, 2005, in Anoka, Minn. Pospisil was killed when a bomb went off near Al Ramadi Dec. 14. The Department of Defense told his mother that the 35-year -old was on his way to disarm the bomb when it went off. Pospisil was the 31st Minnesotan to die in connection with the Iraq war. (AP Photo/Jim Mone)

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# **Grand Forks Soldier Wounded In Iraq Still Hospitalized**

March 29, 2006 The Associated Press

GRAND FORKS, N.D.

A soldier from this city who was wounded by a roadside bomb in Iraq remains in a Maryland hospital.

Marine Lance Cpl. Ben Lunak, 21, was wounded last month when the Humvee in which he was riding drove over a roadside bomb, said his father, Duane. Ben Lunak had been stationed near Ramadi, west of Baghdad.

Duane Lunak said his son has had 13 major surgeries since the explosion.

Ben Lunak is a patient at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md.

Duane Lunak, a former Grand Forks councilman, said his son has lost a leg and his spleen. He said his son is trying to stay positive, and is looking forward to therapy outside the hospital.

Ben Lunak was wounded just four days before he was scheduled to leave Iraq, his father said.

Ben Lunak had pneumonia earlier this week but he seems to be getting better every day, his father said.

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## **General Peter Pace; A Monument To Dishonor; A Disgrace To His Uniform**

Mar 29 By Omar al-Ibadi, Reuters & Jonathan Steele and Qais al-Bashir in Baghdad, The Guardian

Sectarian violence has surged since the bombing of a Shi'ite shrine in Samarra last month and tensions were raised further by a joint raid by United States and Iraqi forces on a Shi'ite Muslim mosque in Baghdad.

"Just before prayers at 6.15, we were surprised by US and Iraqi national guards raining fire on us. Anyone who went out was shot dead," Ihssan Kamel Ali, who was in the mosque at the time, said yesterday.

"The national guard came in first, then the Americans. They had a man with a Lebanese accent with them. He sneered at us and said what we were reading was not the Qur'an. I heard sounds of explosions. I saw between 17 and 20 bodies. What upset me most was that there was a wounded man. An Iraqi soldier asked an officer what to do with him. The officer said 'Just finish him off'."

**The U.S. military defended the raid but said on Tuesday for the first time that part of the complex could be called a mosque.** The U.S. previously insisted no mosque was entered or damaged during the operation, despite accusations by Shi'ite leaders that troops killed worshippers inside the Mustafa mosque.

**A brief US communique in the first hours after the incident said "no mosques were entered or damaged".**

**"When they got into that compound, they found that there was a building there that had a small minaret and a prayer room inside of it," Marine General Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters in Washington.**

***"Some people are calling it a mosque."***

**[Right. And some people are calling it a turnip, and some people are calling it a ham sandwich? Just like some people are calling Pace a general, and some people are calling Pace a cheap dishonorable lying political whore for Bush.**

**[Gee, that "some people" line should be taught to cowards and criminals (like Pace) everywhere. "Yes, your honor, some people might call what I did to that little girl rape."]**

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# **FROM PROTEST TO RESISTANCE**

## **Regional Student Antiwar Conferences**

Sponsored by the Campus Antiwar Network  
<http://www.campusantiwar.net/>

Recently the US government has stepped up its bombing campaign in Samara to the highest level of intensity since the onset of the war.

**Even though public support has turned against the war and active resistance has begun in many sectors of the country and in the military, the movement is not at the necessary organizational levels to attain a complete withdrawal of American forces from the Middle East.**

Meanwhile, large demonstrations are being planned in cities across the country in April. This comes at a time when many politicians, Democrat and Republican, are supporting policies of "re-deployment" or outright military action against Iran.

Students are becoming organized and have been making great strides in fighting recruitment, fostering debate, and demonstrating for civil liberties. At this crucial time in the antiwar movement it is essential that a unified student front emerge to fight campus repression and to end the war. Real strategies for active resistance need to be developed to motivate the overwhelming public support into viable solutions.

Campus Antiwar Network is establishing regional conferences to develop the true student power needed to breakdown the military machine that has relentlessly torn several countries asunder.

**Workshops will look at concrete steps to end the war.**

**Anyone is welcome to attend and campuses are encouraged to send as many people as they can.**

**With the spirit of grassroots democratic action, we can truly set in motion the catalyst to change.**

#### MIDWEST

Chicago, IL

University of Illinois Chicago

April 22

contact: schwartz2020@gmail.com

#### NORTHEAST

New York City, NY

April 29 & 30

(to coincide with the April 29 protest in New York City to bring all the troops home now)

contact: monkeywithsoda@hotmail.com

#### WEST

Students and Educators to Stop the War Conference

San Francisco, CA

Mission High School

April 22

contact: tigger482@gmail.com

#### SOUTH

location and date to be announced

contact: originalman777@aol.com

For more information, contact the people above or visit:

<http://www.campusantiwar.net/>

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# **“ACTS OF WAR”**

## **A Festival of New Plays**

**ACTS OF WAR** are five one act plays concerning the war in Iraq that were selected from a national new play search which garnered seventy two entries from all over the world.

**Alan Stolzer, a member of the Military Project and Veterans For Peace, has written the first play to be performed of the five, "Issues Of A Sergeant."**

The plays will be performed as part of an overall evening of theatre which will include live music. The writers are from New York, Baltimore, Cambridge MA and New Jersey and present compelling, thought provoking plays on the effect of the war on the people here at home. They are presented in a complete evening of theatre showing the effect of the war on all of us.

**This is a news release from The South Camden Theatre Company which will be presenting the plays beginning April 21 and running through May 6.**

**Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 and Saturday and Sunday matinees at 1:30. Tickets are \$15 (students and seniors \$10) and can be reserved by calling the theatre at 856-456-2850 or online at CAMDENTHEATRE@aol.com.**

**Seating is limited so please reserve early. The plays will be performed in the basement of Sacred Heart Church, Broadway and Ferry Avenue in Camden, NJ. Ample, free parking is available.**

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

**“We Will Fight Terrorism, Whether  
It Is Wahhabi Or American”**

**“I Am Very Sure Now They Are  
Terrorists”**

**“We Did Not Fear The Mahdi  
Army”**

**"People always say: The Americans never do these things, but when I saw them with helicopters and their Humvees and Bradleys, I am very sure now they are terrorists," says Mr. Ali, giving a stark opinion increasingly expressed on Iraqi airwaves following the raid.**

03/28/06 By Ellen Knickmeyer, Washington Post Foreign Service & By Scott Peterson, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

**"We did not fear the Mahdi Army," Sadoun said, referring to the militia loyal to Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, "because we've lived in Sadr City for 20 years, and everyone knows us and knows how we love the Shiites.**

"But the Interior Ministry commandos arrest any Sunni. They don't just arrest them; they kill them."

"I need the government that I voted for to protect us, but they failed," says Souad Mohammad, the deputy director of a school, whose second-floor apartment, across the street from the mosque, is riven with holes from small-caliber US armor-piercing rounds.

"They came and killed the young people, and we want the Imam Mahdi Army to protect us, because they are from us, they are Iraqi people," says Mrs. Mohammad.

**"When the Mahdi Army is here, it's very quiet, no one is assassinated in this area, there are no car bombs, and at night there are checkpoints to protect us."**

The US-Iraqi raid "means they are targeting Shiites, to stop the political process," says Jassim Mohamad Ali, whose face was scratched by jumping over a fence in the Mustafa compound, to hide from the raiders.

"The only thing I witness from the Mahdi Army, they have honor and are loyal to this country, and they try to keep the Iraqi street clean," he says.

Haidar al-Abbadi, an adviser to Jafaari, warned of "death squads working alongside US troops that execute people without any reason while they are praying," he told Al-Arabiya television.

**"People always say: The Americans never do these things, but when I saw them with helicopters and their Humvees and Bradleys, I am very sure now they are terrorists," says Mr. Ali, giving a stark opinion increasingly expressed on Iraqi airwaves following the raid.**

**"We will fight terrorism, whether it is Wahhabi or American."**

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## **Assorted Resistance Action**

March 29, 2006 VANESSA ARRINGTON, Associated Press Writer & Aljazeera & Reuters & (KUNA)

Resistance fighters attacked a highway police patrol in west Baghdad Wednesday, killing one policeman and wounding four others, police said.

In south Baghdad, a sniper killed a policeman on patrol in the Dora neighborhood, Abdul-Razzaq said.

Three soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb in Hawija, 70 km (40 miles) south west of Kirkuk, police said.

Three Iraqi soldiers were killed, 12 others wounded, on Wednesday in a number of blasts in the province of Kirkuk in northern Iraq.

A Kirkuk Police source told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that three Iraqi soldiers were killed when an explosive device targeted a joint US-Iraqi military patrol on a road nearby Nasser town west of Kirkuk.

A similar attack took place on a road between Riyadh and Baiji, wounding six Iraqi soldiers, including one officer.

**Another bomb went off late Tuesday night, wounding five oil facility guards in southern Kirkuk.**

The police source said another timed bomb exploded nearby the residence of Chief of Police Rahim Awah, but no property or life losses were recorded in the attack.

Meanwhile, a Katyusha rocket landed in a vacant area nearby the Kirkuk Police Academy in southern Kirkuk. No property damages were recorded in the blast.

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

## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

**“People Shouldn't Fear Their  
Governments”**

**“Governments Should Fear  
Their People”**

March 31, 2006 Review by Amy Muldoon, Socialist Worker

***V for Vendetta, directed by James McTeigue, starring Natalie Portman and Hugo Weaving.***

**“PEOPLE SHOULDN’T fear their governments, governments should fear their people.”**

**This refreshingly revolutionary line is delivered in the climax of V for Vendetta, the new anarchist fantasy by Matrix creators Andy and Larry Wachowski.**

Mainstream films have capitalized on the distrust of Corporate America and fury at President Bush in veiled ways, a la Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith, or with historical allusions, a la Good Night, and Good Luck.

**But V is the first to unapologetically demand the overthrow of the government and condone the use of violence, even terrorism, as a means to accomplish it.**

Originally written as a comic book by Alan Moore for DC/Vertigo Comics between 1981 and 1988, the movie tells the story of V, a masked rebel who incites the overthrow of a future totalitarian Britain.

**While set in Britain and drawing on British cultural references (V for Victory, Guy Fawkes), the film is an action-adventure call to arms against the current American regime.**

In the story, Britain’s Christian fascist rulers rose to power riding a wave of xenophobia following a biological attack, for which several Arabs were convicted and executed. Camps for undesirables--Arabs, homosexuals and political activists--have claimed thousands.

The threat of being “black bagged”--grabbed by the secret police who are known as “fingermen”--constantly looms. Naked prisoners with black bags over their head appear and reappear, deliberately invoking Abu Graib and Guantánamo.

Popular culture is rife with racist depictions of Arabs and Muslims. There’s even a blowhard Bill O’Reilly clone known as “The Voice of London” who attacks “the former United States” for being “godless.”

V bursts onto the scene blowing up the Old Bailey (London’s High Court) on Guy Fawkes Day, the anniversary of a foiled 1605 plot to blow up the Parliament. On his way to the fireworks, he rescues Evey Hammond from fingermen who are about to rape her for being out past curfew.

As chance would have it, when he breaks into the state TV station the next day to broadcast his call for an uprising, it’s Evey’s workplace and she now helps him escape, thereby binding their fates. But Evey professes doubt about V’s crusade. “Every time I’ve seen the world change,” she argues, “I’ve seen it change for the worse.”

As the government becomes more convinced that V has popular sympathy through phone taps and surveillance of ordinary people, High Chancellor Sutler tells his various propaganda and spy minions to “remind people why they need us.” Immediately, we see Fox-worthy news reports about foreign terrorists, food riots and the avian flu.

Through the investigations of Detective Finch, we learn the intertwined stories of government corruption, medical malfeasance and profit-hungry pharmaceutical companies that are the truth behind the fascists' rise to power and V's origins.

This is the story of a ruling group so callous and brutal they sacrifice thousands of lives for power and profit--a thinly veiled suggestion about what disasters our own government might have engineered.

While V scolds the population for not rising up against the fascists, it's clear that fear is the main obstacle to dissent.

The turning point of the movie is Evey's personal transformation while in detention. Reading the notes of a fellow prisoner who refuses to renounce her lesbianism and chooses death over betrayal, Evey decides she would rather die than inform on V and destroy any hope of change.

**While Evey achieves a sort of personal liberation, this movie (unlike The Matrix) makes it clear that it takes more than "freeing your mind" to change the world. The institutions that govern and oppress us must be torn down and replaced with a society based on democracy.**

V is the archetypal anarchist martyr who sparks revolution, but the movie makes clear he could have been anybody (an idea more fully developed by the comic book ending). And the movie makes the point that, as V tells Evey early on, "Ideas, when they move masses of people, have great power."

**Go see V for Vendetta and cheer the downfall of a fictional regime, and get inspired to organize against this one.**

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## **I Just Saw "Sir, No Sir" And It Moved Me.**

From: C  
To: GI Special  
Sent: March 29, 2006

**I just saw "Sir, No Sir" and it moved me.**

**Not only have I now reached a higher level of certainty that the vast majority of 'mystery' atrocities in Iraq are being perpetrated by invasion forces but, I also have a higher level of confidence that among our veterans, there are many men of honor and courage; and that America will be in safe hands in the event they are ever called upon to protect our deepest understandings of morality.**

When I was like twelve years old or so, I remember seeing a Kenny Rogers' movie on TV called, "The Coward of the County". I just tried to rent it at three different video stores out here in northern Minnesota, but none of them had it.

I was able to find the movie in a one of their catalogs though, so I also know that it was released in 1981.

I haven't seen this particular film now for twenty years or so but, I remember it fairly well. If you can find it, I really think it would be a good movie to watch with military, and pacifist friends. I'm sure it would spark some very interesting conversation about the nature of aggression, and how to deal with it.

Solidarity,  
C



# Open To Interpretation



**Parked car in Portland, Oregon. Open to interpretation.**

From: Richard Hastie  
To: GI Special  
Sent: March 28, 2006

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](mailto:hastiemike@earthlink.net)) T)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie  
U.S. Army Medic  
Vietnam 1970-71

## OCCUPATION REPORT

# ***So Much For That “Sovereignty” Bullshit: Bush Military Dictatorship Tells Iraqis To Get Rid Of Collaborator Prime Minister***

28 March 2006 BBC & QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Forbes

**The US ambassador to Iraq has told Shia leaders that the US government does not want Ibrahim Jaafari to remain prime minister, senior Shia politicians say.**

The US ambassador to Iraq has told Shia leaders that the US government does not want Ibrahim Jaafari to remain prime minister, senior Shia politicians say.

**Zalmay Khalilzad said President George W Bush "doesn't want, doesn't support, doesn't accept" the retention of Mr Jaafari, Rida Jawad al-Takki said.**

Mr Takki said the US ambassador had passed on his government's dissatisfaction with Mr Jaafari at a meeting with the leader of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim, on Saturday.

"How can they do this?" Haidar al-Ubaidi asked.

**"An ambassador telling a sovereign country what to do is unacceptable," he added.**

**[How fortunate that has nothing to do with Iraq, which is no more a “sovereign” country than Poland was under German military occupation during World War II.]**

Ali al-Adeeb, a lawmaker with close ties to al-Jaafari and a member of his Dawa party, confirmed that he heard about Khalilzad's message but refused to say how.

**"The U.S. ambassador's position on al-Jaafari's nomination is negative. They want him (the prime minister) to be under their control," al-Adeeb said.**

## **NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

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

resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

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

## 2003: SOWING THE WIND 2006: REAPING THE WHIRLWIND



Iraqi citizens are searched by foreign fighters from the U.S. at the entrance of a police station as they wait for new identity cards to be issued in al Awja, a village outside Tikrit, November 1, 2003. The U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division (Task Force Ironhorse) continued for the second day stepping up security in the village of al Awja, setting up check points, patrolling with members of Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC), limiting movement with razor wire and issuing identity cards to adults that will allow them to move in and out of the village. REUTERS/Damir Sagolj

**“In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit,” said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay’s Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday’s raid. “Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead.”**

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

**DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

# **BUSH ORDERS 'PLAN FOR VICTORY' SIGN THE SIZE OF IRAQ: Gigantic Placard to Hover Over War-torn Nation**



Bush announces the plan at Capitol Music Hall in Wheeling, W.Va., March 22, 2006.  
(AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

March 27, 2006 The Borowitz Report

**President George W. Bush, who has given speeches in recent weeks accompanied by larger and larger placards with the slogan "Plan For Victory" on them, said today that he had authorized the construction of a "Plan For Victory" sign as big as the entire land mass of Iraq.**

**Mr. Bush explained the thought process behind the enormous sign, which will be built by the Halliburton Company at a cost of \$13.8 billion.**

"I have been speaking in front of bigger and bigger 'Plan for Victory' signs, but those signs weren't getting it done," Mr. Bush told reporters. "This sign should show the people of Iraq once and for all that when I say I have a plan for victory I mean it."

The gigantic "Plan for Victory" sign, believed to be the largest slogan placard in human history, will be flown over the nation of Iraq by U.S. Air Force cargo planes and will hover over the country until victory is secured, the president said.

While some experts warn that the gigantic sign could pose a danger to the Iraqi people, blotting out the sun or possibly falling from the sky and crushing the entire population, the President vowed to "stay the course" with his enormous placard.

"If that 'Plan for Victory' sign crushes the entire Iraqi people, that'll put an end to all this talk of civil war," Mr. Bush said.

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## **Woman Fights \$100 Fine For 'Bushit' Bumper Sticker: "This Is All About Free Speech"**

March 28, 2006 Filed by RAW STORY

"It was 9:30 on a recent Friday night when Denise Grier saw blue lights in her rearview mirror," the Atlanta Journal-Constitution begins in Thursday editions. Excerpts:

She pulled over on Chamblee-Tucker Road, unaware of her infraction.

**"The officer asked if I knew I had a lewd decal on my car and I thought, 'Oh gosh, what did my kids put on my car?' "**

**As it turns out, the decal was an anti-Bush bumper sticker Grier slapped on her 2001 Chrysler Sebring last summer. The bumper sticker, "I'm Tired Of All The BUSH—," contains an expletive.**

The officer "said DeKalb had an ordinance about lewd decals and wrote me a ticket" for \$100, said Grier, an oncology nurse at Emory University Hospital who lives in Athens.

**"This is all about free speech," Grier said in a telephone interview Monday.**

**"The officer pulled me over because he didn't agree with my politics. That's what this is about, not whether I support Bush, not because of the war in Iraq, but about my right to free speech."**

<p><b>What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to <a href="mailto:thomasfbarton@earthlink.net">thomasfbarton@earthlink.net</a>. Name, I.D., address withheld unless publication requested. Replies confidential.</b></p>
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## CLASS WAR REPORTS

# Death Squads Butchering Venezuelan Peasants: “Our Machetes Are Humbly Ready At The Service Of Those Who Continue The Fight Of Bolivar”

Mar 28, 2006 EL NUEVO TOPO (by way of Tom Condit tomcondit@igc.org)

The peasant movement led by the Frente Nacional Campesino Ezequiel Zamora blocked yesterday (March 27) Urdeneta Avenue in front of the building of the Vice-Presidency demanding that the agreements made during the previous march "Zamora Marches on Caracas" on July 11, 2005 be fulfilled.

Also still to be fulfilled were the agreement made during the Workshop on Peasant Security on July 17th, called by the President of the Republic, implemented by the Vice-President, at which was present attending were the Military Commandantes from diverse operational commands, governors, ministers of the cabinet, and members of the Frente Nacional Francisco Zamora.

**Eight months later no agreement has been fulfilled; those peasants murdered by death squads has gone from 135 to 168.**

The Frente Campesino Ezequiel Zamora, given its mandate by the ranks, cannot permit more abuse and failure to carry out agreements and that peasant companeros continue to fall from the bullets of death squads.

They are now in the streets demanding their rights.

**No one will be able to block our way. The streets belong to the people and we don't negotiate with any second class functionary who does not even know the agreements we have made.**

If they do not want to receive us, then only by struggle will we be free.

We have time and patience and are ready to confront the provocative actions of the lumpen-police, who are disguised as police who with their motorcycles tried to run us down but confronted a solid wall of serious men and women.

**If they want violence, then the Vice-President who up to now has been serious with us, will have to be responsible of the consequences. We will be responsible of our actions.**

**We are those who did not have a voice.**

**We are those who did not have a face.**

**But with each day of work in the sun, we produced and dignified our country.**

We have been historically postponed.

Now the rainbow of the moon and the Rio Bravo are inviting us to navigate in new waters. And we are capable of frightening away the current of reformists and corrupt.

We have no other options except our word and our arms sculptured by thousands of workdays.

We are the ignored who are planting consciousness with lines of poetry and love.

Enclosed within us is the mountain and the river.

We will not accept the blackmail of power.

**The State is reactionary and the Government is still in dispute.**

**Our machetes are humbly ready at the service of those who continue the fight of Bolivar and those fighters from the plains and gochos who never negotiated and continue fighting.**

We come from the edges of our country. We existed in the long night of 500 years.

**We are the insurrectionists.**

**We are unconquerable.**

We are like the seed of the chief who has fought and then is revived to shoot again.

**For us all the smiles and dawns of the plains in May. For the big landlords the ticks and dust of the plains in Summer.**

March 28, 2006  
(translated by Earl Gilman)

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# **One Million Strike In France Against The Government**

March 29, 2006 By CRAIG S. SMITH, New York Times Company

**Armed with hot dogs and baguettes, balloons, buttons, banners and, of course, gallons of red wine, France's major trade unions set out Tuesday to change the law, or to bring down a prime minister trying.**

**Responding to their rallying cry, more than a million people showed up in the streets, marching in the familiar protest parades that the unions sponsor from time to time. In Paris, the slow-moving street fair stretched for miles.**

"The unions haven't been this united in 20 years," said Jean-Claude Mailly, general secretary of Force Ouvrière, as he prepared for the protests that are meant to force Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin to withdraw a contested law giving employers the right to fire recently hired young workers without cause.

**Despite one of the lowest rates of unionization — only about 8 percent of the French work force are members — the unions have enormous leverage over the government. They play a unique organizational role in France's hierarchical society, rallying the populace accustomed to a confrontational relationship with leaders considered elitist. Spark-plug unions, some people call them.**

But the unions, too, have their own troubles, rent by internal political and ideological battles that have cost them membership. The French have also been losing faith in the unions' ability to stop unpopular government programs after they failed to defeat painful pension reforms three years ago. The current protests and strikes present the unions with an opportunity to recover their reputation as the protectors of workers' rights.

The French far right was discredited by its Nazi collaboration during the war, and the Communist Party emerged as a powerful force. It was able to put the right to strike into the French Constitution.

**That clause makes all the difference: if workers strike in the United States, they risk losing their jobs, but strikers in France do not fear for their jobs, regardless of whether they are union members.**

"The unions are the origin of the great social conquests, the great entitlements enjoyed by France," said André Narritsens, a historian for the C.G.T., France's largest union.

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# **One Million Strike Against The Government In England**

March 28, 2006 (AFP)

**France has been earning its reputation as European capital of strikes and demonstrations in recent weeks, but on Tuesday it shared that dubious honor with London, where unions proclaimed the biggest labor stoppage since the general strike of 1926.**

On both sides of the Channel, the protests have erupted over what are seen as government attempts to remove entrenched rights.

**In Britain, meanwhile, more than one million staff who work for local governments walked off the job, causing widespread disruption and leaving large parts of the country without public transport.**

Unions there are protesting a plan by Prime Minister Tony Blair's government to abolish a rule that allows municipal and district workers to retire at 60 if their age and length of service add up to 85 years.

David Marsden, professor of industrial and labor relations at the London School of Economics, warned that Britain has lessons to learn from the weeks of strikes and protests on French streets.

**"Sometimes there can be particularly striking events which trigger a change in the way people think about things and what people put up with for a long time in the past suddenly becomes something which is a burning issue," he said.**

With millions of people demonstrating in French cities, Marsden said there was a similar risk that social issues could "boil over" in Britain, a country where unemployment has been sharply reduced by the adoption of free-market economic policies.

The walkout by public workers obstructed a whole range of services, including schools, libraries and sports centers. British travelers also suffered major disruptions, including the cutting of the ferry link across the Mersey estuary, the closure of a railway system in the northeast and the halting of all public transport in northern Ireland.

Andrew Sugden, policy director of the North East Chamber of Commerce, said ordinary workers faced "transport havoc."

**Germany also faced labor stoppages on Wednesday after the powerful IG Metall Union said it would launch the first of a series of nationwide strikes in support of a demand for wage increases of up to five percent for 3.4 million workers in a range of industries ranging from autos to semiconductors.**

In addition, public sector workers in Germany are in the eighth week of strikes for higher pay.

### **GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out**

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