

GI SPECIAL 4D19:

ENOUGH: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



A U.S. soldier before a patrol in Baghdad, April 16, 2006. U.S. troops have begun placing American flags on their windshields in order to distinguish their humvees from those used by Iraqi troops. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

Sir! No Sir! **Free DVD For Deployed Troops!**

**“If I Had Seen This Film While I Was In
Iraq, Things Would Have Been Much
Different”–Garett Reppenhagen, US
Army Sniper And OIF Veteran**

From: Tim Goodrich Co-founder, Iraq Veterans Against the War
To: GI Special
Sent: April 17, 2006 12:57 AM
Subject: For inclusion ASAP

In the 1960s, thousands of American GIs rebelled against the Vietnam War, changing the course of U.S. history and society. No film has ever told their story... until now.

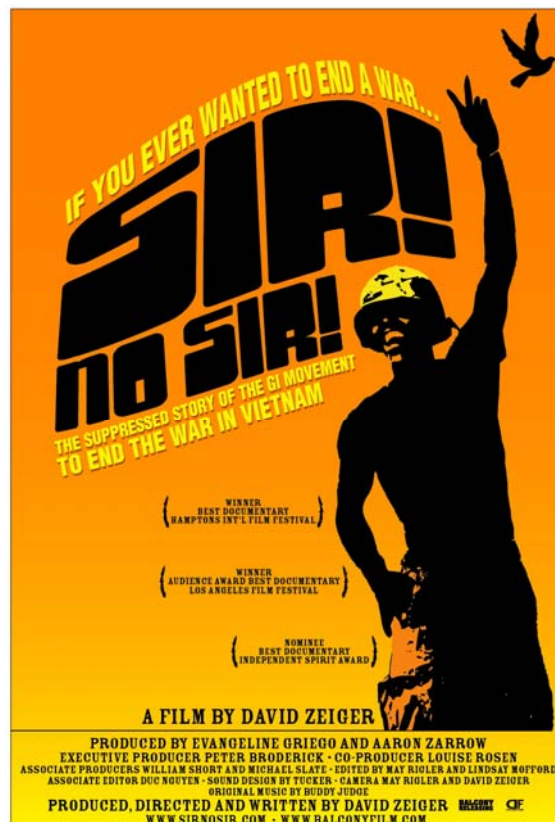
Are you or do you know someone serving in or in support of Iraq or Afghanistan?

For a limited time only IVAW and Displaced Films is proud to offer 500 free copies of Sir! No Sir! to members of the military who are serving overseas.

This award winning documentary uncovers the untold story of the antiwar movement within the military during the Vietnam era. To learn more about the film and watch the trailer, go to www.sirnosir.com

To get your copy or have one sent to a relative or friend serving overseas, simply send an email to ivaw_west@ivaw.net with the following information: Rank, Name, Unit, APO/FPO, and Email.

***All information will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shared with any other entity or organization**





A Film About U.S. Troops Opposed To The Vietnam War: “It May Be Understating Matters To Say That The Release Of ‘Sir! No Sir!’ Is A Timely One”

April 19, 2006 BY GENE SEYMOUR, Newsday Staff Writer

With barely a week having passed since a coalition of retired generals publicly called for Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's resignation because of his handling of the Iraq War, it may be understating matters to say that the release of "Sir! No Sir!" is a timely one.

David Zeiger's nonfiction chronicle of U.S. soldiers opposed to the Vietnam War practically dares its audience, wherever their place on the political spectrum, to find parallels between then and now.

That's a big part of Zeiger's objective, but not, by any means, all of it.

An award winner at last fall's Hamptons International Film Festival, "Sir! No Sir" is submitted as an urgent corrective to what Zeiger and his subjects believe to be widespread amnesia about the role played in the anti-war movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s by men and women who served in the military.

Zeiger's film compresses as many of those oppositional voices as it can into 84 minutes, beginning with Howard Levy, who was court-martialed for refusing to train GIs for Vietnam, and Donald Duncan, an ex-Green Beret, who resigned from the military in 1966 because, when it came to fighting in Vietnam, "I was doing it right, but I wasn't doing right."

Many others followed their example, including Navy nurse Susan Schall, who flew a private plane over Bay Area military installations to drop leaflets promoting an anti-war demonstration; Louis Font, the first West Point graduate to refuse to fight in a war; and

dozens of others who risked indictment, imprisonment or worse, both in the U.S. and abroad.

Though the history it covers is four decades in the past, "Sir! No Sir!" so vividly evokes the rage, passion and provocation of the era it chronicles that it feels up-to-the-minute.

Most trenchantly, "Sir! No Sir!" questions the authority of conventional wisdom that, to this day, places soldiers and protestors in the Vietnam era on opposing sides of a wide divide.

There may well be other voices - and other movies - that offer their own counterview to "Sir! No Sir!" But they've got their work cut out for them.

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

Texas Marine Dies

4.12.06 The Associated Press

DALLAS: A Texas Marine has been killed in Iraq, the Department of Defense said Tuesday.

Cpl. Richard P. Waller, of Fort Worth, died Friday after being wounded during combat operations in Al Anbar province.

The 22-year-old Waller was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif.

At least 203 Texas service members have been killed in Iraq since the war started in March 2003.

Georgia Soldier Killed

4/11/2006 (AP)

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. (AP) The Army says a soldier from Georgia was among three members of the 101st Airborne Division killed in Iraq.

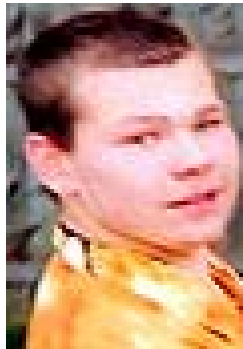
Officials at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, say 24-year-old Specialist David S- Collins of Jasper and Sergeant First Class Randall L-Lamberson of Springfield, Missouri, were fatally injured when a roadside bomb exploded near their vehicle during combat operations in Al Anbar Province on Sunday.

Collins died following the attack, and Lamberson died yesterday from his injuries.

The Fort Campbell officials say 22-year-old Specialist James W-Gardner of Glasgow, Kentucky, died in Tal Afar of a non-combat-related gunshot wound yesterday.

Collins is survived by his wife, Mara, and children, Elizabeth and James, of Fort Campbell; father, Jack Collins of Talking Rock, Georgia; and mother, Marsha Dean of Jasper. He joined the Army in January 2002.

Explosion Kills NH Soldier



PFC. GEORGE ROEHL JR. (COURTESY OF WMUR)

Apr. 13, 2006 By CAROL ROBIDOUX, Union Leader Staff

Manchester: Betty Vezina had a bad feeling she couldn't shake, once she knew about her son's mission in Iraq.

"When he told me he was going to be a cavalry scout, I just knew," said Vezina, sipping coffee from a Styrofoam cup outside her Manchester home last night. "I just knew."

Her son, 21-year-old Army Pfc. George Roehl Jr., was one of two U.S. soldiers killed Monday outside of Baghdad while on patrol when a roadside bomb exploded.

"I saw a picture of the vehicle on the news. There was nothing left. At least I know George didn't suffer," Vezina said.

Few details have been released by the military about the incident that claimed Roehl's life. His mother said two Army representatives were waiting for her Tuesday when she got home.

“They didn’t have to say a word. I knew what it was,” said Vezina, leaning back on the hood of her car, her voice dissolving into tears. “But they said it anyway, because they have to. They told me my son was gone.”

Roehl was the oldest of five children, a 2003 Franklin High School graduate who taught himself to read before he entered school. He loved reading dictionaries as a kid, had a good sense of humor and excelled at video games.

He joined the Army a year ago because he wanted more for his life, said his mother. “It’s a family thing, his grandparents were in the military; all my kids are thinking of joining still, even my little girl,” she said.

Last night Vezina stood outside with three of her four remaining children — Benjamin, 17, Steven, 15 and Breanna, 11, receiving friends and relatives who came bearing gifts of fast food and doughnuts, offering words of encouragement and lingering hugs as word of Roehl’s death circulated.

Sara, 19, also lives in Manchester. “She’s the oldest daughter, my oldest now,” Vezina said.

As she talked about her son and the hopes she has held onto for his safe return, she recalls the pile of letters she never sent, for lack of a good mailing address.

“In them I just said, ‘I love you. Please be careful. Please be careful . . .’ But I never got to mail them. I never got to give him his Christmas presents, either,” Vezina said.

Among them were a journal and some pens, something to help him cope with his dangerous surroundings, some snacks and baby wipes.

Vezina has been a single mom for a decade, juggling school and work and raising a family. “They are good children,” said Vezina. “All of them. It hasn’t been easy, but that’s a fact of life.”

Although Roehl grew up in Manchester, he went to live with his father, George Roehl Sr., in Bristol, and finished high school in Franklin, Vezina said.

“He was going through some hard times; he was torn between two worlds, I think, but it was the best thing for him at the time,” she said.

Roehl was supposed to come home on leave in March, but that plan fell through, said his mom. His next leave was scheduled for July or August.

“We kept the tree up for him, but I had my boys take it out back. Christmas is over,” Vezina said. “He died fighting for somebody’s freedom he didn’t even know,” she said, burying her head in her hands.

“He was fighting for people who couldn’t defend their own lives,” said Ed Roehl, of his nephew’s mission in Iraq. “George had the emotional struggle of being the man of the house for many years, and he found direction in the military. You should be proud of that,” he said.

"I am proud. He gave the ultimate gift, his life. He died doing what he wanted to do," Vezina said.

"George was a tough guy who never backed down for anything," said Donna Roehl, Ed's wife. Their son, Edward, joined the Marines around the same time his cousin went into the Army. Right now he is serving somewhere in Fallujah, said his mother. The family lives in Weare.

"I don't know how to reach him to tell him about his cousin. I spent four hours online today trying to find a way," she said.

"A lot of these young kids go in to show their pride, but I don't think they realize the full extent of what it means," said Ed Roehl.

"Whenever I talk to my son, I know he's trying to be so brave, but I hear it in his voice. He's scared."

Two U.S. Soldiers Wounded By Baghdad Bomb

April 18 (KUNA)

Two US soldiers were injured when a bomb exploded as they passed by in Al-Qadisiya district in Baghdad.

Northern Marianas Soldier Wounded

18/04/2006 Radio Australia

A soldier from the Northern Marianas has been seriously wounded in a bomb attack in Iraq.

The Marianas Variety says Private Joshua P Stein has been flown to Germany for treatment after an apparent improvised explosive device attack.

The United States continues to recruit new military personnel from the Northern Marianas, a US territory.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Welcome To Liberated Afghanistan:

A Government Of Drug Dealers

4.17.06 San Francisco Chronicle

Persistent allegations of drug links have dogged some of Afghanistan's most powerful figures, including several provincial governors, cabinet ministers and the president's own brother.

At least 17 members of the newly elected parliament have active links to the trade, according to a study by the Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit, a Kabul think tank. The most serious charges hover over Gen. Muhammad Daud, the deputy interior minister for counternarcotics, who is reputedly a player in the trade he is supposed to be destroying.

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Cpl. Brian St. Germain of West Warwick, R.I., at the Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery in Exeter, R.I., April 12, 2006. The 22-year-old Marine was killed in flash flood in Iraq on April 2 . (AP Photo/Joe Giblin)

The Angry Generals: Hypocrisy In Action



4.18.06 Thomas Lipscomb, Philadelphia Inquirer

A senior fellow of the Annenberg Center for the Digital Future writes that the question really is not whether Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld should resign.

He has already tried to quit several times and had President Bush tear up his letters of resignation; he clearly is taking responsibility for his actions on a continuing basis.

But now that a galaxy of flag officers' stars are demanding his resignation, no one seems to have bothered to ask which, if any, of these generals had ever submitted his own resignation in protest against the conduct of the Iraqi war, or the bumpy transition we are locked in now.

57% Of Americans Think The United States Will Not Win In Iraq: Bush War Approval Rate At 32%

April 17, 2006 By E&P Staff, EDITOR & PUBLISHER

NEW YORK: A report on a new Gallup poll released today shows that President Bush approval rating on his handling of Iraq is now at 32%, tied for the lowest rating Gallup has measured.

The survey, taken April 7-9, also shows that 57% of Americans think the United States will not win in Iraq.

In a surprise, the new poll found that 44% of Republicans now back withdrawing some or all troops from Iraq. The number for all Americans, 64%, is higher, but the fact that better than 4 in 10 Republicans back this idea is notable.

Independents are tracking much closer to Democrats on all issues related to Iraq.

In another finding, 57% of Americans say it was a mistake to send troops to Iraq, while 42% say it was not. Since December 2005, either a plurality or majority of Americans have said it was a mistake.

The breakdown on the troop pullout question is: 36% say to withdraw "some" troops, while 28% want to withdraw all troops.

Israeli Troops Rebel: Abandon Northern Post



Entrance to post on northern border abandoned by rebelling soldiers. (Photo: Effie Shrir)

[Thanks to Max Watts, who sent this in.]

04.17.06 Ynet

Soldiers furious over rejection of their benefits leave post located opposite Hizbullah post during military operations.

A protest that broke out at battalion 51 of the Golani brigade ended Sunday with a rebellion of dozens of soldiers, who left their post during military operations on the northern border, despite the Hizbullah post located opposite them.

Soldiers said that the rebellion broke out after senior company personnel insisted on canceling benefits due to them, due to their status as senior army staff, according to their claims.

The anger accumulated by soldiers against their commanders had been building up for a while, but what caused them to abandon the post was an incident which took place on Saturday.

In the morning hours, beds of ultra-Religious soldiers were found sprayed with shampoo. In response, the commander of the battalion called in six soldiers who were in the post overnight and informed them: "One of you did this, if you don't give me his name, you will all be punished."

On Sunday morning, the six soldiers were supposed to report to the regiment commander, but the soldiers left the post instead with the rest of their friends from the company, who are veteran soldiers.

The soldiers and their friends who joined them in a sympathy protest took a bus to the town of Kiryat Shmona, but senior company personnel chased them in order to return them to the post.

A chase developed in Kiryat Shmona after staff from the military headquarters of the regiment joined in, leaving the post almost completely abandoned.

During the chase, the commanders caught one soldier, while others hid on the roof of a building being constructed. The cat and mouse game continued when the escaped soldiers continued to hide in a nearby public park, but they were found their company commander, who mobilized the regiment commander, his deputy, and others who took part in the chase.

At this stage, soldiers ended their attempts, and commanders who arrived at the area spoke to them and demanded that they return to their post.

During talks with commanders, the soldiers explained that that they had a year to go before their release from the IDF, and that the rebellion was launched due to a failure to deliver the benefits owed to them due to their status.

They also said that despite being on the northern border for two months, they are forbidden to sing the company song or raise flags and signs showing their status as veteran soldiers.

The soldiers were also annoyed that even senior-ranking members were included in kitchen work.

Harlem Grandmas Hit The Warpath Over The War

April 18th, 2006 BY STEPHEN STIRLING, DAILY NEWS WRITER

Fed up with a war they call "unjust," grandmothers in the city are taking to the streets.

Armed with canes and loudspeakers, a crowd of more than 40 grandmothers, great-grandmothers and even a few grandfathers gathered outside an Army recruiting station in Harlem yesterday to protest the war in Iraq.

The Harlem Grandmothers Against the War in Iraq chose tax day specifically to protest, citing that the war has already cost U.S. taxpayers more than \$26 billion. That's money, they say, that could and should be used to fund community health care, housing and education programs.

"It is unconscionable that most of our tax money goes to killing people in other countries while our community in Harlem lacks the bare essentials of housing and medical care," said Vinie Burrows, a great-grandmother. "The war in Iraq translates itself into a war against the poor."

Several grandmothers spoke at the peaceful rally, which began outside the Harlem IRS office and culminated across the street in front of the Army recruiting station.

Former Harlem City Councilman Bill Perkins, one of the organizers of the event, had harsh words for the current presidential administration.

"Current policy is undermining both the safety of our country and the promise of America," said Perkins, himself a 57-year-old grandfather. "We need this money to help our children get a better education, to provide accessible health care and better services for our seniors."

Police stood watch while the group held up signs and chanted their own versions of popular protest sayings. Passersby were greeted with a chorus of grandparents belting out, "The grandmas, united, will never be defeated!" and "Listen to your grandmas, bring the troops home!"

The 150-member group is part of Grandmothers Against the War, a national organization that holds demonstrations around the country. The Harlem-based group has also held a vigil in support of the troops every Wednesday night outside Rockefeller Center since the war began in 2003.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



(Graphic: London Financial Times)

Assorted Resistance Action

April 18, 2006 & Reuters (Xinhua) & (KUNA) & AP

A bomb exploded under a car in eastern Baghdad, killing at least two policemen. The bomb targeted a police patrol in the neighborhood of Suleikh, police Capt. Ali al-Obeidi said.

A bomb exploded Tuesday at a Baghdad cafe frequented by policemen. The bomb at the cafe was originally believed to have been placed under a car, but it was actually hidden underneath a couch. Tables and chairs were thrown out of the building in the blast, and the glass windows of nearby shops were broken.

Three policemen were among those killed, and the rest were civilians, said police Capt. Ali al-Obeidi.

In the southern city of Basra, a policeman was killed in a drive-by shooting.

Two policemen were wounded when a roadside bomb exploded near a police patrol in northern Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas wounded a police colonel along with two policemen on Monday in the oil refinery city of Baiji, 180 km (112 miles) north of Baghdad, local officials said.

Guerrillas killed a policeman and wounded two others on Monday in Tikrit, 175 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad, local officials said.

Four policemen were wounded when a roadside bomb blast hit a police patrol in a eastern Baghdad district on Tuesday, an Interior Ministry source told Xinhua. The blast also damaged a police vehicle and several nearby civilian cars, he said.

A bomb exploded in a car parking in the Cairo district of Baghdad. A security source told KUNA that four Iraqi policemen are among the injured and that the explosion caused major damage in a number of civilian cars and a police vehicle.

Eyewitnesses said the number of victims was high because the bomb was close to a small cafe where drivers gathered every morning.

In Irbil, an Iraqi policeman was killed and six civilians were wounded in a drive-by shooting.

In Anbar, a car bomber attacked Iraqi security forces Monday at a checkpoint south of Rawa, killing one Iraqi soldier and wounding another, the U.S. military said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“General Strikes Throw Fear Into
The Hearts Of Rulers, Because
They Work”**

I look forward to May First this year because it will mark a return to the original reasoning behind the holiday, that ordinary people can stand up for their rights and win when they come together. Maybe after this year I won't have to work 60 hour weeks doing back breaking electrical work to afford an education.

From: Joshua Karpoff
To: GI Special
Sent: April 17, 2006
Subject: RE: GI Special 4D17: May 1st article

First things first, let's call the May 1st action what it really is, a general strike.

I love how these critics worry that many immigrants risk losing their jobs if they don't come in on May 1st.

If they don't strike they will most surely lose their jobs. If they do strike the worst that could happen to them is the same that would happen if they didn't. But if they do strike they also have the possibility of WINNING, something the US working class seems to have forgotten is possible.

General strikes throw fear into the hearts of rulers, because they work.

In the past month we have seen general strikes bring the King of Nepal back to the bargaining table, shut down the CPE law in France, cause Blair to back down on taking away pensions from poorly paid civil servants, as well as the number of presidents who have been toppled in Latin America by such actions.

I'm tired of this meekness of the American Left.

Wake up, you're moving with the stream of mass consciousness!

With less than a week to organize, more people came out for the April 10th immigrant's rights protest in Rochester than came out for the 3rd anniversary of the war protest which we spent a month and a half organizing.

Step up, take a lead.

If you're worried that workers may lose their jobs if they strike, the answer isn't to not strike and keep letting the bosses get away with this crap, the answer is to organize DEFENSE CAMPAIGNS.

In the Campus Antiwar Network we've been spied on by the Pentagon, assaulted by cops and campus security, harassed by school administrators and threatened with expulsion. This didn't make us cower in fear, because we know what we're doing is right.

Instead we come together, all our chapters across the country and flex our muscle and stand up for our brothers and sisters facing repression. And we have yet to lose.

I look forward to May First this year because it will mark a return to the original reasoning behind the holiday, that ordinary people can stand up for their rights and win when they come together.

Maybe after this year I won't have to work 60 hour weeks doing back breaking electrical work to afford an education.

Josh Karpoff
Rochester Institute of Technology Anti War, Organizer
Campus Antiwar Network, Website Manager

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

Lawrence Of Arabia On Reporting From Baghdad

[Thanks to Clancy Sigal, who sent this in.]

The people of England have been led in Mesopotamia into a trap from which it will be hard to escape with dignity and honor. They have been tricked into it by a steady withholding of information.

The Baghdad communiqués are belated, insincere, incomplete. Things have been far worse than we have been told, our administration more bloody and inefficient than the public knows...

We are today not far from a disaster.

-- T.E. Lawrence (a.k.a. Lawrence of Arabia), The Sunday Times, August 1920

***One More In A Long List Of
Despicable Betrayals:
“UFPJ Is Not Having Speakers At
The Demonstration”
“We Suspect UFPJ Is Reining In
The Demands Of The Rally To Be
Acceptable To Democratic Party
Politicians”***

[The most disgusting betrayal isn't mentioned here: Iraq Veterans who oppose this evil war have been denied a platform to tell America the truth. Nothing could serve George Bush and the Imperial politicians better, or do more to keep the war going.]

April 18, 2006 Stanley Heller, Thestruggle.org

My article on Counterpunch.org "Time to Shake-Up the Peace Movement" criticizing UFPJ plans for April 29 has gotten a very good response with emails and requests for reprints. Though no one on the UFPJ steering committee has deigned to send me a reply, the day after my piece came out UFPJ sent out their first mass emailing calling for "No War on Iran".

Still no change yet in the demands for the demo and THERE ARE NO PLANS TO HAVE ANY SPEAKERS, just a march and a "festival".

UFPJ Leadership: Change Course On April 29 Demo: Petition To The Leaders Of United For Peace And Justice

UFPJ is organizing a massive anti-war march in New York City on April 29th, but is ignoring critical dimensions of the war. The so-called "war on terror," which in reality is a violent drive re-colonize the Middle East, stretches far beyond Iraq.

The Bush Administration is provoking a confrontation with Iran. Its diplomats are demanding UN action against Iran. The Washington Post reports that it is even "contemplating tactical nuclear devices" against that country. All this is done even though Iran has neither attacked nor occupying any other country, even though the Bush Administration winks at Israel's hundreds of nuclear bombs, even though it has recently accepted India into the club of nuclear armed powers.

The escalation of rhetoric and threats against Iran has gone on for many months without a suitable reaction from UFPJ. Neither on its own website nor on the April 29 website created for the demonstration do the demands mention threats to attack Iran.

Apparently the rally will not mention Israel or Palestine either, despite the fact that the US has used Israel to fight Arab national aspirations for decades, despite the fact that Israeli government leaders were strongly in favor of the invasion of Iraq and urged their Christian and Jewish enthusiasts in this country to press for war, despite the fact that the 2006 AIPAC convention was filled with demands for war, despite the fact that Israel threatens to attack Iran by itself, despite the fact that Israeli militarism and war-mongering is an outgrowth of its oppression of the Palestinians.

We suspect UFPJ is reining in the demands of the rally to be acceptable to Democratic party politicians in the false belief that only by electing a Democratic Congress and President can the war be stopped.

It is false because the Democrats are complicit in this war from end to end.

It is false because the peace movement was able to stop the Vietnam War despite the fact that anti-war Democrats were always a small minority of Congress and were routed in presidential elections.

For unknown reasons UFPJ is not having speakers at the demonstration. There is no rally, just a march and a "peace festival." The chance for new activists to hear about all the dimensions of the war is lost. The chance to have substantial speeches shown on CSPAN and other media is thrown away.

We, the undersigned, urge the UFPJ to immediately reconsider the demands and program for April 29th to call for:

An end to the threats of attack or sanctions against Iran

Full exposure of the role of the Israeli militarism in the Middle East and in U.S. politics and as part of the demonstration:

That it have a brief program of speakers

That it have Palestinian and Israeli speakers who will protest the Wall, the occupation, the prison-like conditions in the territories and all aspects of human and national rights denied Palestinians.

That it have a speaker who will denounce the threats to attack Iran

The link below will go to a petition Middle East Crisis Committee created to the UFPJ leadership. Please look it over and consider signing.

<http://campaigns.ajjp.org/campaigns/signStatement.php?cid=6>

We'll contact signers from time to time about other anti-war actions.

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)

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Australian Police Occupying Solomon Islands Call For Army Troops To Help Them

April 19, 2006 Australian BC

The Speaker of the Solomon Islands Parliament has criticised the way in which the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission (RAMSI) has handled civil unrest in Honiara.

The swearing-in yesterday of the new Solomons Prime Minister, Snyder Rini, has sparked widespread riots and looting in the capital.

RAMSI officers have dispersed about 1,000 protesters, but the unrest continues across the city.

Sir Peter Kenilorea says he asked RAMSI officers not to use tear gas against the protesters.

"I specifically spoke to the RAMSI police officers not to take hasty actions as they did," he said.

"They should allow time for us to keep talking to the protesters at the Parliament House, not to use tear gas on them because it would simply aggravate the situation and it would simply take the Parliament situation or scene to the street."

Sir Peter says he had to order the officers out of his office.

"They were trying to organise themselves in the Parliament building," he said.

"I had to tell them to get the thing out of my office. It was Parliament House it's not an army barracks, they should organise themselves outside."

Seventeen Australian police officers have been hurt in the violence, including one who has a broken jaw. That officer is expected to be flown back to Australia for medical treatment.

Shane Castles, the Australian officer who heads policing in the Solomons, has requested that troops be deployed to the island nation.

"I did officially make the request through the RAMSI Special Coordinator's office for the deployment for the request to be made for the deployment of troops from Australia," he said.

"My advice, the advice that I've got is that up to 120 troops will be deployed from Australia today and should arrive in Honiara, we hope, by this evening."

Col Crampton, from the international deployment group 00, says the situation is slowly being brought under control.

"Police have several road blocks maintained, there's been major damage caused to a certain suburb overnight but at this stage it's reasonably calm," he said.

"There's people roaming the streets and a lot of larceny and looting taking place, it's just the local people that are roaming the streets."

Gloria Olsson, an Australian education and health adviser living in Honiara, says local security guards are helping maintain order.

Ms Olsson lives on the first floor of a Chinese-owned shop with three other Australian expatriates.

She says only the intervention of the local guards stopped looters from burning the building.

"They actually talked to them and talked them out of torching the building," she said.

"We just waited in the back, we had to go downstairs and wait for two hours while they completely demolished the building, looted, took everything and the staff said take everything but please don't torch it."

Received:

Requesting Letter Of Support For Kanak Indigenous People Of New Caledonia Living Under French Military Occupation

[Thanks to Max Watts, who sent this in.]

From: VagueInquietude

Sent: April 13, 2006

Subject: letter to support Kanak Indigenous people of New Caledonia

Dear friends,

For the past years many of you have supported the Kanak indigenous people of New Caledonia in their efforts to prevent environmental destruction from the Goro nickel mine, operated by Canadian mining giant INCO.

The mine threatens to pollute coastal waters and coral reefs, as well as land areas that are held sacred by the Kanak people. Although the Kanak people have channeled their demands through elected representatives, they have been ignored by French and provincial authorities and by INCO officials.

Last week some members of the Kanak community erected barricades and cut off access to the mine site and damaged INCO property, bringing the mining operation to a halt. The French troops shot at Kanaks using real ammunitions. There were a number of arrests, Kanak leaders outlawed.

Please write to international authorities and urge them to put pressure on French authorities and on INCO to respect the rights of the indigenous Kanak people.

Below is a model letter and some addresses you may use.

Please forward this message to any of your friends who may be interested and/or assist.

Thank you
Sarimin J. Boengkih
Agence Kanak de Developpement
Boite Postale 2321
98846 Noumea-cedex
New Caledonia
Tel 687 + 412 244 - Fax 687 + 412 294
<http://www.autochtonie.org>

MODEL LETTER

Dear Sirs:

I urge you to investigate violations of the rights of the indigenous Kanak people of New Caledonia, who oppose further construction of the Goro nickel mine operated by Goro-Nickel, a Paris based subsidiary of the Canadian mining company Inco.

At stake for the Kanaks is the protection of fresh water from Yate Lake, which Inco plans to tap for the mine's operations, as well as the protection of nearby marine ecosystems, which Kanaks argue are threatened by a pipeline Inco plans to build to release mine waste water into the sea.

The Kanaks have been struggling for years to have Inco heed their requests for negotiations about the social and environmental impacts of Inco's massive project. They seek a negotiated and legally binding settlement regarding social and environmental impacts, much as that signed with Inco by the Innu of Labrador.

The Kanak organization Rheeboo Nuu should be recognised as the legitimate representative of the Kanak people in these negotiations.

It is important to note that the Kanak people have not given their free prior and informed consent for this mine; the Senat Coutumier specifically withheld consent for the Goro mine in 2002.

Inco's CEO said at the 2004 AGM in Toronto that his company is not recognising the indigenous peoples' rights in New Caledonia because France does not recognise these rights; On November 8th, 2004, The French Tribunal in Noumea said that the political and cultural rights of the indigenous people of New Caledonia exist and are protected by Law; Still, the Southern province president, Philippe Gomez and Inco-Goro Nickel refuse to negotiate with Rheeboo Nuu on the basis of the indigenous peoples' rights for better protection of all the communities - Kanaks and non Kanaks - from the environmental, cultural and social impacts of the project.

All authorities and GN management continue to ignore contemptuously the Kanak demands, even when the traditional authorities ask that sacred sites on the mountain and in the Prony bay be respected.

Thank you for taking immediate steps to assure that the French government, local authorities and Inco respect the Kanak people's rights.

Sincerely,

ADDRESSES:

1) President Louis Schweitzer
Haute autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l'égalité
11 rue Saint Georges
75009 Paris - France
Fax : + 331 5531 6149
<http://www.halde.fr/>

Louis Schweitzer, president of the newly established Haute autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l'égalité (HALDE) - High Authority for the struggle against discrimination and for equality:

2) José Manuel Barroso
President of the European Commission
1049 Brussels - Belgium.
Email: sg-web-president@cec.eu.int

(In 2002 The European Parliament urged France to sign the European Convention for the protection of national minorities and also to sign and ratify the ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal populations. EU has strong commitment to promoting the rights of indigenous peoples (Resolution of 30 November 1998) and has called the member states to implement the resolution especially when development programs affect indigenous communities directly or indirectly, etc.)

3) Danielle Mitterrand
22 rue de Milan - 75009 PARIS
tel : 0033 (0)1 53 25 10 40
fax : 0033 (0)1 53 25 10 42
Communication Fondation Danielle Mitterrand :
Marion Esquerré - marion.esquerre@france-libertes.fr
Rita Cristofari - rita.cristofari@france-libertes.fr

Danielle Mitterrand, widow of the former French president, is still very active on indigenous rights issues. She presides France Libertes-Fondation Danielle Mitterrand and she should be asked to support the struggle of one of "the indigenous peoples of the French Republic" !

4) Rodolfo Stavenhagen
United Nations Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
United Nations - Room DC2-1772,

2 UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017
U.S.A.
Telephone : (917) 367-5100
Fax : (917) 367-5102
E-mail : IndigenouPermanentForum@un.org

Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous People of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights;

News From Crawford

From: TomSongs.Com
To: GI Special
Sent: April 18, 2006
Subject: Crawford

I neglected to properly thank you for posting BushWhacked.

I appreciate your thoughtfulness and your fine work in support of our mutual mission.

I made it to Crawford this past weekend and wrote a guest blog:
<http://downwithtyranny.blogspot.com/2006/04/dispatch-from-sheehanistan-texas.html>

Peace and Justice,
Tom

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

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

<http://www.williambowles.info/gispecial/2006/index.html>;
http://robinlea.com/GI_Special/; <http://imagineaworldof.blogspot.com/>; <http://gi-special.iraq-news.de>; http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/;
<http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>; <http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/gi-special.htm>

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