

30 April 2006 By Tom Engelhardt, TomDispatch.com [Excerpt]

Demond Mullins is a 24 year-old student at Lehman College in New York. A handsome young man in wrap-around shades, he wears a desert camo jacket with Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) on it.

He tells me he was an infantryman in the Baghdad area from September 2004 to September 2005, part of a National Guard unit attached to the First Cavalry. He will be among a relatively modest IVAW group of perhaps 20 to 30 young men who will lead this demonstration.

"What got me here? I had just returned home and was having a lot of trouble transitioning back into civilian life. Then one day, a professor of mine gave me an email for an IVAW event. I met the vets against the war and it was my first time talking about my experience there. I felt easy with them.

"I lost friends over there. Here's a bracelet." He briefly brings his wrist up so that, for a moment, I can see the black band, one of several bands. "Your unit makes these and the whole unit wears them.

"In my battalion, we lost twenty-five guys, but I wear this one because he was my closest friend there and he died six days before my birthday."

I ask him to let me have a closer look. On it, the band has rank, name ("I don't want you to use his name..."), and "December 1, 2004, KIA, Baghdad, Iraq" as well as the phrase, "Something to believe in."

"I ran all those missions and I don't know why.

"I don't know what their lives and the lives of Iraqi nationals were spent for.

"I thought they showed a blatant disregard for human life. I was just tired of being part of a machine destroying the Earth - and I'm speaking of the military-industrial complex. I wanted to be part of a force saving the Earth."

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

IED Kills U. S. Soldier South Of Baghdad

5.1.06 The Associated Press

A roadside bomb killed the U.S. soldier about 9:50 p.m. Monday, about 40 miles south of Baghdad.

It was the first reported U.S. fatality in May.

In April, 70 American servicemen died in Iraq, the highest monthly figure since November, when 84 were killed.

Soldier Dies Six Months After Injuries

April 28, 2006 WXMI-TV, Grand Rapids

STANWOOD: A West Michigan soldier died Thursday morning after fighting for the past six months to survive.

Army Sergeant Matthew Webber of Stanwood suffered severe burns in a roadside bombing in Iraq last year.

His smile brightened the day for many: Matthew Webber was only 23-years-old, but lived a full life. Those who knew Matt say it was hard not to love him.

Clint LaPreze played basketball with Matt. "He made everybody laugh, smile, it didn't matter who you were; he was just an awesome friend to everybody. We're all going to miss him greatly," Clint told FOX 17 News at Ten.

Matt suffered burns over 70-percent of his body in November, when a roadside bomb took out his humvee.

Matt was flown to Texas, where his mother stayed at his bedside, waiting, praying for his recovery for six long months.

Clint says, "I thought he was going to pull through he was a strong-hearted person, I expected the best for him just. I miss him."

Principal Dennis Szczerowski says Matt was a model student; he graduated from Morley Stanwood High School in 2001, and joined the National Guard to pay for college.

"You wish you had 30 of him in your classroom, he was an A student, president of the National Honor Society, president of the Student Council; always had a smile on his face," Dennis says.

Now, thoughts turn to Matt's family.

"They're in our thoughts and in our prayers and we wish them the best in this tough time," Clint says.

Matt was close to finishing his degree at Western Michigan University when he was called up for duty in Iraq.

Matt's mother and stepfather will return from Texas Saturday; funeral arrangements are still being planned.

A candlelight vigil in honor of Sgt. Matthew Webber is planned at Morley Stanwood High School Sunday night.

Marine From Dubois Killed In Explosion

April 25, 2006 From Staff and AP Dispatches, The Courier-Journal

DUBOIS, Ind.: A 23-year-old Marine from Southern Indiana has been killed in Iraq during his second tour of duty in the Middle East.

Cpl. Eric Lueken's parents, Glenn Jake and Melinda Lueken, said they learned Saturday that their son had been killed that day during combat.

"Just like a shock," Melinda Lueken said in describing her feelings when Marines came to her door in Dubois to give her the news.

He was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, based at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

Lueken, a field radio operator, was killed by an improvised explosive device while in a convoy, said 2nd Lt. Binford Strickland of the Marine Corps base at Kaneohe Bay.

A 2001 graduate of Northeast Dubois High School, Lueken joined the Marine Corps in October 2003, his family said. He served in Afghanistan from November 2004 to June 2005 and left on March 11 for seven months in Iraq, his parents said.

After his time in Afghanistan, Lueken told his mother that he was not taking life for granted anymore, she told The Herald of Jasper.

Pictures show Lueken with Afghan children, and Jake Lueken said his son hated to see the way those children were forced to live. Before he left for Iraq, Lueken told his brother, Brent, and his father that he was ready.

"He took it serious," his father said. "He knew the risks."

Brent Lueken, 19, said last night that his brother played basketball at North Dubois High and "he really loved it. He really loved basketball."

After high school, Brent Lueken said, his brother worked for about a year and a half at a water treatment plant before becoming a Marine.

"He just wanted to do it for his country," he said, adding that while his brother was serious and seemed to gain focus after he signed up, he also joked around and was a good older brother. He always made you happy.

Lueken, who grew up on the family poultry farm, had planned to marry his girlfriend, Ericka Merkel, when he came back from Iraq, his parents said.

Bombing In Iraq Kills N.C. Marine

Apr. 23, 2006 GREG LACOUR, Charlotte Observer

This was supposed to be the last deployment.

Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Jason Ramseyer had already returned safely from a seven-month deployment in Afghanistan.

Now he was in Iraq, in charge of a squad providing security for the battalion commander. He hoped he could finish his tour by October and return home to his wife, Mandy, whom he'd known since their high school days in Lenoir, and their daughters, ages 3 and 2.

On Tuesday, in what would be their last conversation, Ramseyer talked about his plans with Mandy, back at base in Hawaii. She told him she'd been with him for nine years and gone wherever he had gone, and she was prepared to keep doing that.

On one condition: that his next assignment keep him home. "That's all I wanted," she said Saturday.

Mandy Ramseyer was still in shock Saturday. She was two days into the news. Jason Ramseyer was killed Thursday when the device he was checking along a road in Anbar province exploded, wounding two other Marines under his command. He was 28.

"There's no way," said Mandy Ramseyer, also 28, "to put it into words."

Jason Ramseyer, a 1996 graduate of West Caldwell High School in Lenoir, will be buried sometime this week in Arlington National Cemetery after services in Lenoir, Mandy Ramseyer said. The details are incomplete.

He was born in West Palm Beach, Fla., but moved to Lenoir with his parents in 1990, before he started middle school. His mother, Cindy Hicks of Claremont, said he was a perfect child: The only time Jason ever got into trouble was as a teenager, when he was caught fishing without a license.

It became clear during his high school years that Jason, though small, was a competitor. He excelled at wrestling, soccer and especially baseball, and he pushed himself to excel at everything he tried, his family and an old teammate said.

"When he did something, he wanted to do his best," said Joe Greer, who was two years behind Jason at West Caldwell and played with him on the baseball team.

Even then, Jason talked about the Marines. More than that -- it was almost all he could talk about. He pre-enlisted, Hicks said, and two weeks after graduation was off to basic training.

"It was amazing to me, for someone in high school to be so excited about being in the Marines, with people telling you what to do and where to go and everything. That's kind of like the opposite of what you want in high school," Greer said. "And that's what amazed me, when I'd run into him later, that it was everything he'd wanted it to be."

Jason's family agreed: He loved the Marines. Hicks thinks it may be because her son grew to only 5 feet 7 inches, and he felt a need to prove his toughness. Whatever the reason, he'd found his calling.

"If you look up `Marine,' " Mandy Ramseyer said, "you'll see him."

His last deployment began March 9. His job was to lead a squad escorting Lt. Col. Norm Cooling, commander of the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, from place to place in Iraq. He took the job seriously, as he did everything else, Mandy said.

A Marine Corps major told her the squad had just dropped Cooling off at a meeting and was headed back to base when Jason got out of his Humvee to check an object in the road, as he had dozens of times before. If he suspected a bomb, he'd call a bomb squad.

This time, he never got the chance. The device was remote-controlled, and Jason didn't even have time to take cover.

Hicks, who works as a paralegal in Hickory, got an urgent call from her husband that afternoon. He told her to come home immediately.

When she arrived, she knew. Two Marines were waiting. Her son had told her: If Marines ever show up at your door, it doesn't mean I'm injured.

She thought, too, about what he'd told her and Mandy before his deployment to Afghanistan. He was packing, and he insisted on showing them the precise spot on his uniform for each of his 10 medals. Neither woman wanted to hear it or even think about it.

But Jason said: No, you need to know where the medals go in case something happens.

Hicks hoped with everything she had that she'd never have to apply the lesson.

Jason was her only child.

"I know there's got to be a special reason why (God) took him from me and his babies," Hicks said. "But he was a Marine, and he was very proud, and that was his job."

Indian Truck Driver Killed

May 2, 2006 Hindustan Times

Sibi Kora, 34, a truck driver from Kochi in Kerala was killed in a landmine blast in Iraq.

"We have no idea what happened. Sibi's Kuwaiti employers called to say he died in the blast," his cousin Shobby said.

Sibi, who is survived by his wife and two children aged eight and four, was working in Kuwait for the last eight months.

"Just the other day, he called his wife to inform about his Iraq trip," he said. Shibu's body will be bought to India in a couple of days.

Two U.S. Mercenaries Wounded: They Kill Ambulance Driver Who Tried To Help Them



Armored vehicle used by a private mercenary company, damaged in roadside bomb explosion in Baghdad, May 2, 2006. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

A roadside bomb exploded near a convoy carrying American security contractors in Waziriyah, northern Baghdad, wounding two of them, the U.S. military said. An Iraqi ambulance driver who came to help them was killed by the mercenaries.

“The Vietnam War Era’s Widespread Protests By Armed Forces Personnel”



Vietnam: They Stopped An Imperial War

APRIL 26-MAY 9 By Michael Joshua Rowin, The L Magazine.com

As demonstrated by the Swift Boat slander against John Kerry in the 2004 presidential campaign, the current perception of military and veteran war protesters remains, due to ignorance, largely unfavorable.

Sadly, the history of political resistance within the military has been rewritten (the dominant myth having antiwar activists spitting on, instead of embracing, soldiers) by the very interests that would benefit from suppression of such firsthand dissent.

Sir! No Sir! offers a stirring rebuttal, documenting the Vietnam War era's widespread protests by armed forces personnel through archival footage and interviews with key figures of the movement like Keith Mather, one of the Nine for Peace soldiers who refused orders to Vietnam and were summarily locked in the Presidio stockade.

That rebels like these found solidarity with citizens equally opposed to U.S. foreign policy serves as a potent reminder of their common cause during these politically correct times, where "support the troops" jingoism is used to squelch criticism of the government.

While the film's dependence on still photos and anonymous acid rock betrays its somewhat static aesthetic, the personal testimonies are so powerful, and presented in unbroken sequences without unnecessary soundbytization or editorializing, that *Sir! No Sir!* takes on a resonance beyond the limits of its standard arrangement.



Sir! No Sir!
At A Theatre Near You!
To find it: <http://www.sirnosir.com/>

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.

General Says:
**“A Withdrawal Is Likely To Raise
Morale Among U.S. Forces”**
[No Shit]

[Thanks to Katherine and James Starowicz, who sent this in.]

Muktada al-Sadr's Shiite militia fights well today without U.S. advisors, as do Kurdish pesh merga units.

The problem is loyalty.

May/June 2006, By Lt. Gen. William E. Odom, Foreign Policy [Excerpts]

Withdraw immediately or stay the present course? That is the key question about the war in Iraq today. American public opinion is now decidedly against the war. From liberal New England, where citizens pass town-hall resolutions calling for withdrawal, to the conservative South and West, where more than half of "red state" citizens oppose the war, Americans want out. That sentiment is understandable.

No Iraqi leader with enough power and legitimacy to control the country will be pro-American.

Still, U.S. President George W. Bush says the United States must stay the course. Why? Let's consider his administration's most popular arguments for not leaving Iraq.

"Before U.S. forces stand down, Iraqi security forces must stand up."

The problem in Iraq is not military competency; it is political consolidation. Iraq has a large officer corps with plenty of combat experience from the Iran-Iraq war.

Muktada al-Sadr's Shiite militia fights well today without U.S. advisors, as do Kurdish pesh merga units.

The problem is loyalty.

To whom can officers and troops afford to give their loyalty? The political camps in Iraq are still shifting. So every Iraqi soldier and officer today risks choosing the wrong side. As a result, most choose to retain as much latitude as possible to switch allegiances.

All the U.S. military trainers in the world cannot remove that reality. But political consolidation will.

It should by now be clear that political power can only be established via Iraqi guns and civil war, not through elections or U.S. colonialism by ventriloquism.

"Setting a withdrawal deadline will damage the morale of U.S. troops."

Hiding behind the argument of troop morale shows no willingness to accept the responsibilities of command.

The truth is, most wars would stop early if soldiers had the choice of whether or not to continue. This is certainly true in Iraq, where a withdrawal is likely to raise morale among U.S. forces. A recent Zogby poll suggests that most U.S. troops would welcome an early withdrawal deadline.

FUTILE EXERCISE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



U.S. troops from the 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment drive atop of an armored personal carrier outside OP Hotel in Ramadi, Iraq, April 21, 2006. (AP Photo/Todd Pitman)

AWOL Marine With Maui Ties Flees To Canada: “They Wanted Us To Lie”

Magaoay said he was especially troubled by an order from a senior officer, whom he said told him not to take responsibility for any civilian deaths in Iraq, whether the Marines caused the deaths or not.

“That just disgusted me,” he said. “They wanted us to lie. The Marine Corps is supposed to be the most honorable service in the United States, and I wasn’t expecting to hear them say this.”

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

May 01, 2006 By CLAUDINE SAN NICOLAS, Staff Writer, The Maui News

A former Maui man, saying he took exception to military instructions he received as he trained for deployment to Iraq, has deserted from the U.S. Marines and is in Canada seeking refugee status.

Lance Cpl. Christopher Scott Magaoay, formerly of Pukalani, said he knows he may never be able to return to U.S. soil or even see his 4-year-old son living on Maui, but he's willing to make the sacrifice because of his opposition to the war in Iraq.

"I left my unit and came to Canada because of my beliefs," he wrote in an e-mail to The Maui News. "Now my family has all but disowned me."

Family members on Maui confirmed they do not support Magaoay's decision, with his father saying he is disappointed in his son.

In a telephone interview from Canada, Magaoay said he hopes Hawaii residents will support his stand against the war in Iraq by writing to the Canadian government to support his and other U.S. troops' requests for refugee status. Such a declaration would allow them to seek asylum in Canada and live there for as long as they wish.

In Magaoay's case, he can seek residency through sponsorship from his wife, Ria Rose, who is a Canadian citizen, though there are some financial issues. But he said he wants to pursue refugee status as a statement on the war in Iraq.

"I am not against war as a whole," he said. "I am against the war in Iraq. It was a war of aggression, which was not sanctioned by the United Nations, therefore making it illegal."

Magaoay was born on Maui, reared in Pukalani and attended King Kekaulike High School and Baldwin High School. He dropped out of high school and earned his General Educational Development credential in 2001.

He's fathered one child from a previous relationship, and his father, mother and siblings all live on Maui. Magaoay said his family has not been supportive of his decision to take absence without leave and flee his military service.

"It's heartbreaking, and it's hard. It really is because the people closest to me are not even speaking to me."

Magaoay's father, Ruben, said he learned of his son's actions when he received written notice from the U.S. Marine Corps, which reported that his son was a deserter. "I'm kind of disappointed," the 43-year-old Pukalani resident said. "I thought he wanted to go to war."

Magaoay said he talked to his son on Tuesday and told him of his disappointment. "I told him, 'You think you're going to win this. I don't think so. You're just a small peanut,'" he told his son.

Ruben Magaoay said he suffered a stroke two years ago and has had to quit his career in construction. He said he's had very little contact with Christopher since his son enlisted in the Marines.

After obtaining his high school equivalency in 2001, Christopher Magaoay said he attempted to join the Army but was turned down. He didn't give the reason. Following the Army rejection, Magaoay traveled to the Philippines and Canada for about a year and a half, before returning to Maui when he enlisted in the Marine Corps in 2004.

After completion of basic training, Magaoay was assigned in 2005 to the Delta Company of the 3rd Amphibious Assault Battalion stationed in Twentynine Palms, Calif.

Magaoay said he was described by his supervising officer as a “stellar Marine” until recently, when the unit began training for deployment to Iraq.

Magaoay said he became troubled by his officers’ instructions during training.

“The mentality is shoot anyone who gets close to you and especially those who look like insurgents,” he said.

“I know that killing persons just because they are of a different race is wrong,” he said, “no matter what the rules of engagement are. That is why I left.”

Magaoay said he was especially troubled by an order from a senior officer, whom he said told him not to take responsibility for any civilian deaths in Iraq, whether the Marines caused the deaths or not.

“That just disgusted me,” he said. “They wanted us to lie. The Marine Corps is supposed to be the most honorable service in the United States, and I wasn’t expecting to hear them say this.”

Magaoay said his decision to leave the Marines was difficult because as a young boy growing up on Maui, he also saw himself in a career with the military.

“That’s all I ever wanted to do in my life. I always wanted to be in the military and serve my country,” he said.

Military veteran Lee Zaslofski, who deserted the Vietnam War in the late 1960s, has been assisting Magaoay in Canada on behalf of the War Resisters Support Campaign.

The campaign, according to Zaslofski, is based in Toronto and has provided support for approximately 20 U.S. military deserters.

According to Zaslofski, many more troops have sought information from the campaign by telephone, and his program estimates there are hundreds more who have sought refuge in Canada but have stayed quiet about it.

Zaslofski said he’s met Magaoay and his wife.

Since deserting on March 7, Magaoay said, he’s attended multiple anti-war demonstrations in Canada and has been interviewed by media in Canada.

Zaslofski said the Magaoays have no reason to hide in Canada, and in fact, both have been welcomed and supported by many anti-war Canadians. “They have a good chance of success in Canada,” Zaslofski said.

Magaoay said he’s met several U.S. soldiers in the same position as he is.

“We all have different views of why we left, but we all feel strongly about it,” he said. “This experience has made us pretty much like family.”

Zaslofski said the War Resisters Supporters Campaign makes a special effort to provide information and outline options to soldiers troubled by war duty.

If and when a soldier decides to desert duty by fleeing to Canada, the War Resisters Support Campaign has been known to help find initial shelter and provide for basic food and clothing needs.

According to Zaslofski, deserting U.S. soldiers usually find their own means to get to Canada.

Magaoay, for example, drove in a car from California to Canada with his wife.

“It was nothing like driving to Hana. This ride was much harder,” Magaoay said.

He said he misses Maui, especially local food.

“It’s not like I go get takeout from Mel’s,” Magaoay said, referring to one of his favorite Filipino restaurants on the island.

“Today, In Broad Daylight, College Students From My Hometown Trashed A Local Military Recruiting Office, Complete With Recruiters Inside”

[Thanks to A, who sent this in.]

[He writes: Today, in broad daylight, college students from my hometown trashed a local military recruiting office, complete with recruiters inside. To my knowledge, this is the first time in America that protesters have actually gone on the offensive against the bush regime. Today marks the true beginning of the end to neo-fascism in America. Long live the Constitution.]

04/28/2006 KSTP.com

Minneapolis Police arrested six people at an anti-war protest at the University of Minnesota Friday afternoon.

Five of the students were arrested for disorderly conduct and one person was arrested for damage to public property. **[The TV report said protesters “smeared and dumped paint on the recruiting office.” T]**

A few hundred high school and college students, undeterred by a steady rain and hoping to capitalize on public opinion, walked out of their classes Friday to protest the war in Iraq,

"It's something we're really, really against," said University of Minnesota senior Amy Clute, who joined the protesters on the school's Twin Cities campus.

The students listened to speakers, chanted slogans and held anti-war posters and banners.

Two protesters wore President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney masks and dressed in orange prison garb, toting a sign saying, "Try all war criminals."

Many students huddled under a burgundy and gold tent to stay dry while others found shelter in the entryway of a nearby auditorium.

The protest organizers claimed the public no longer supports the war. In an AP-Ipsos poll earlier this month, two-thirds of Americans say they disapprove of Bush's handling of Iraq.

The rain forced organizers to jettison an idea to march to a plaza at Minneapolis Community and Technical College. They had planned to hold a peace concert there, but school officials denied the application because they feared the group would be too large.

Instead, protesters marched around the University of Minnesota campus and planned a stop at the school's military recruitment station.

Stillwater High School student John Sandor skipped class to attend the rally with three friends. "I wanted to come out and show support in numbers," he said.

Sandor, a 17-year-old pacifist, said administrators at his school didn't support the students missing class but said they weren't going to stop them from protesting.

Clute, whose parents both served in the military, was born on a military base. But she said she believes the U.S. went to war for the wrong reasons. "It's kind of like the second Vietnam," she said.

Nathan Paulsen, a member of the Anti-War Organizing League, said the university group spread word of the walkout to local high school and college students with leaflets, posters, e-mails, postings on myspace.com and teach-ins.

Police officers patrolled the perimeter of the crowd, including a pair on horseback. Police estimated the crowd to be between 200 and 300 people.

More:

Students Suspended For Marine Recruiter Protest

4.28.06 Los Angeles Times

Five high school students in Frederick, Md., were suspended after staging a "die-in" in front of a Marine Corps recruiting booth during an on-campus job fair.

Sanchez Dirty In Iraq Prisoner Tortures: He Walks Around Free While Enlisted Personnel Go To Prison

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in.]

5.2.06 By Will Dunham, Reuters

The top U.S. commander in Iraq during the Abu Ghraib abuse scandal urged U.S. forces to "go to the outer limits" to extract information from prisoners, according to a U.S. officer cited in a military document.

The Army last year exonerated Army Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez of wrongdoing relating to detainee abuse, but human rights lawyers said the document raises fresh questions about the degree to which senior officers sanctioned the abuse.

"This is evidence that raises additional questions about the role of Lt. Gen. Sanchez in authorizing and endorsing the abuse of prisoners," Jameel Jaffer, an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer, said on Tuesday.

The May 19, 2004 Defense Intelligence Agency document was among more than 100,000 pages of files turned over by the government to the ACLU under court order as part of a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit.

It said Sanchez saw a "desperate need" to get intelligence from the prisoners, adding that "HQ (headquarters) wanted the interrogators to break the detainees."

Grandmother Deployed To Iraq 10 Months Before Retirement

5.2.06 DUBUQUE, Iowa (AP)

A grandmother in eastern Iowa is getting one last call to duty.

Janet Grass, 52, had planned to retire from the military in about ten months after spending 19 years in the Navy Reserve. Instead, she has been ordered to leave her job as a special-education teacher in Cascade and do security work in the Middle East.

Grass boarded an airplane yesterday at the Dubuque Regional Airport amid emotional goodbyes from her family, which includes four children and six grandchildren.

Grass will train in California and Texas before deploying to Iraq for 12 to 18 months.

Grass, a petty officer first-class, recalled how her son Tim had also served in Iraq in 2003. She says now she's taking over for him.

As Grass prepared to board the airplane, a grandson grabbed her leg in embrace. She smiled at the boy and told him -- "I'll be back."

PTSD Troops Often Getting Drugged, But No Real Help

April 29, 2006 By Rick Rogers, UNION-TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER [Excerpts]

Bart Billings and Richard Lynch started a combat stress conference in 1993 after watching the toll the Persian Gulf War took on their military friends and colleagues.

Accounts of bankruptcy, divorce and suicide compelled them to bring together top researchers and counselors to help service members and their families.

Some doctors believe strongly in using antidepressants and other medications to treat conditions like PTSD, said C. Scott Saunders, director of the Trauma Psychiatry Service at the University of California Los Angeles.

However, Saunders doesn't advocate the practice because, "You can't medicate it away. It is a way to lessen the symptoms . . . but I don't think medications go to the heart of the problem."

A lack of experienced health providers, including a shortage of counselors, makes it more likely that physicians will resort to prescribing medications instead of using multiple therapies, the experts agreed.

"A doctor can see four or five patients an hour if all he or she does is write prescriptions (for drugs), which don't work about 50 percent of the time," Billings said. "You need large numbers of trained counselors to handle those problems."

“The Demand For Blood, Almost All Of Which Goes To A Battlefield, Has Grown 400 Percent”

"Injuries caused by insurgent attacks in Iraq have forced military donation centers to meet supply levels that exceed peacetime needs," reported the Tribune. "The demand for blood - almost all of which goes to a battlefield - has grown 400 percent since the war in Iraq began."

02 May 2006 By William Rivers Pitt, Truthout Perspective [Excerpts]

The good news for April is that, according to the Department of Defense, only 12 soldiers were wounded. [Individual day by day press reports through the month came up with a much higher total. Something is very wrong with this number. T]

489 had been wounded in March, so April represented a big leap forward. A lot fewer soldiers ended April with their brains scrambled, their limbs maimed or their flesh charred.

The fact that most of the wounded up and died isn't really something to be discussed in polite company. It just doesn't jibe with the "turning point" talk.

Oh, and the Minneapolis Star-Tribune reported that the need for military blood donations has skyrocketed.

"Injuries caused by insurgent attacks in Iraq have forced military donation centers to meet supply levels that exceed peacetime needs," reported the Tribune. "The demand for blood - almost all of which goes to a battlefield - has grown 400 percent since the war in Iraq began."

It seems, as we celebrate this "turning point," that there is blood aplenty in Iraq. Unfortunately, it is all in the wrong place.

So, apparently, is the money. Billions of taxpayer dollars have been funneled into Iraq for reconstruction of the petroleum industry and basic infrastructure. Almost none of this reconstruction has been completed, despite the fact that most of the money has somehow been spent.

This was the perfect capitalist war: a few people got very rich by stealing all these funds, and the children who have no schools and the families who have neither clean water nor electricity can go pound sand.

Literally.

More Candidates For Immediate Withdrawal From Iraq

May 2, 2006 by Joshua Frank, Antiwar.com [Excerpts]

Hillary Clinton is pocketing enormous amounts of cash across the country for her reelection campaign, from Manhattan to Hollywood.

Yet, Hillary is facing what seems to be fierce opposition from within her own party, as well as from third parties here in New York. The main reason candidates have signed up to challenge Hillary is her position, er, non-position on the disgraceful "war on terror."

The Green Party is also tossing its antiwar weight into the ring.

Sander Hicks, the founder of Soft Skull Press and operator of indie publishing house Vox Pop, is challenging Steve Greenfield for their party's nomination. Both Hicks and Greenfield support bringing U.S. troops home immediately and oppose any US involvement in Iran.

Supporting another antiwar candidate or voting "none of the above" may be the only way to hold Hillary Clinton accountable for her depraved Iraq war stance on Election Day 2006. Until then, let's track Hillary across the country and let her know we don't agree with what she's offering.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

5.1.06 The Associated Press & AFP & By Alastair Macdonald, Reuters

In Dora, one of the capital's neighborhoods, a roadside bomb wounded three Iraqi soldiers in a convoy, said police Capt. Jamil Hussein.

A roadside bomb killed three bodyguards of Anbar province Gov. Maamoun Sami Rashid al-Alwani, but he escaped with only minor wounds, officials said. Four other bodyguards were wounded. The bomb exploded as the convoy was heading from al-Alwani's home to his office in Ramadi, the capital of Iraq's most dangerous province where many insurgent groups are based.

Residents said they saw a car ram into the governor's motorcade and blow up in the centre of Ramadi. The U.S. military, whose troops witnesses said were escorting the limousines, had no comment.

An Iraqi private security guard was shot dead near the restive city of Baquba, just north of the capital.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Crystal Fall



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: May 02, 2006

I feel good about this piece, because it gives me breathing room.

Crystal Fall

**The only hope I see for America,
is long suffering.
That is the great teacher.
It is anguish that stops
ignorance and greed.
There is hope in pain.
Somehow you have to make
sense out of all the madness.
There are always clues in what
seems to be hopeless.
The path to freedom is always narrow,
because there is no room for war.**

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
May 2, 2006**

Photo 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)

“It Was Foolish In The Age Of Nationalism To Think That The United States Could Invade And Occupy Iraq”

5.19.2005 By John J Mearsheimer via AL-AWDA [Excerpts]

People in the developing world believe fervently in self-determination, which is the essence of nationalism, and they do not like Americans or Europeans running their lives.

The power of nationalism explains in good part why all of the great European empires – the British, the French, the Dutch, the Portuguese, the Austro-Hungarian, the Ottoman and the Russian – are now on the scrapheap of history.

The American experience in Vietnam and the Soviet experience in Afghanistan fit the same basic pattern, although the American and Soviet learning curves were a bit steeper than the Israeli.

In short, realists thought from the start that it was foolish in the age of nationalism to think that the United States could invade and occupy Iraq and other countries in the middle east for the purpose of altering their political systems in ways that would make them friendly to America.

The United States not only has dirty hands from Iraq, but it has also engaged in barbaric behaviour of its own. One should not underestimate how ruthless democratic America can be when pushed to the wall. American bombers pulverised German and Japanese cities in the second world war, killing about a million Japanese civilians in the process. Moreover, the United States is the only country in the world that has used nuclear weapons against another country.

Of course, most Americans believe that there was nothing wrong with bombing Germany and Japan or using nuclear weapons against Japanese civilians, because we are the white hats and the victims were the black hats.

However, when you are at the other end of the American rifle barrel, it usually does not look that way. When you are staring down the barrel of that rifle, it is the United States that looks like the black hat.

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.

“Have More Than 2,400 American Military Personnel Been Killed For ANYTHING More Beneficial Than Halliburton’s Profit Margin?”

From: David Honish [Veterans For Peace]
To: Denton Record-Chronicle, Denton, Texas
Sent: May 01, 2006 4:34 PM
Subject: Helicopters, Not Necessarily Black Ones

Residents of Denton SW of the town square may have wondered what all the noise was Saturday night, April 29th, about 12:30 am?

If the many people in my neighborhood standing in their front yards watching was any indicator, there was more than casual interest in the helicopter that circled at low altitude about three dozen times. The covered area was roughly bounded by Eagle Drive to the south, Elm Street to the east, Stroud to the north, and Alice to the west.

When I called Denton PD to inquire, I was told it was a Department of Public Safety helicopter.

You may ask just what urgent mission was DPS performing in the wee hours, other than making it difficult for folks to sleep? Were they assisting Denton PD to track some fugitive desperado? Maybe they were on a mission of mercy trying to locate a missing Alzheimer's patient?

According to Denton PD, it was neither. "DPS is conducting thermal imaging scans."

Our legislature held a special session this year to try to work out a funding plan that would prevent Texas from dropping behind Arkansas to 47th place out of 50 states in per capita public education spending.

And yet, DPS apparently has money to literally burn in the form of jet fuel for a helicopter. And what was this expensive flight doing? Apparently nothing more productive than trying to locate a rent house with the grow lights of some college kid growing a few pot plants?

Might not DPS live up to their name and spend the tax payer's money on something that actually involves public safety?

With many law enforcement officials admitting that the decades old "war on drugs" is a counter productive drain on resources, is this really the best use of our tax dollars?

Perhaps DPS is following the bad example of the federal government?

What is the return on the tax payer's investment of seven billion dollars a month being spent in Iraq?

How many non-existent WMD's have been found? How many days of democracy have been provided to the Iraqi people? Is an Iraqi civil war the expected dividend of our multi-billion dollar investment? When the Bush administration tries to make us believe that "progress is being made," can they really show us any such progress?

I mean real progress, not the \$3 / gallon gasoline to benefit their oil company campaign contributors.

Wasn't Iraq better off under Saddam when they at least had working electricity and water distribution systems? Have more than 2,400 American military personnel been killed, and tens of thousands more physically and psychologically maimed for ANYTHING more beneficial than Halliburton's profit margin?

With both the federal and state governments spending OUR tax dollars like the proverbial drunken sailor on shore leave, can the tax payers afford the hangover?

Both the republicans and democrats are responsible for voting to fund this disaster. Maybe voting the incumbents out of office this November will be the beginning of their wake up call?

“Wanted For Illegally Crossing Borders”



15,000 March On May 1st For Immigrant Justice In Oakland
Photo by Jeff Paterson, Not in Our Name, May. 01, 2006 at 9:43 PM. jeff@paterson.net

OCCUPATION REPORT

Iraqi Soldiers Go On Strike; “Iran Has 150,000 American Hostages”

May 02, 2006 By Riverbend, Baghdad Burning, Riverbendblog.blogspot.com/ [Excerpt]

A few days ago, we were watching one of several ceremonies they held after naming the new prime minister.

Talbani stood in front of various politicians in a large room in the Green Zone and said, rather brazenly, that Iraq would not stand any ‘tadakhul’ or meddling by neighboring countries because Iraq was a ‘sovereign country free of foreign influence’. The cousin almost fainted from laughter and E. was wiping his eyes and gasping for air... as Talbani pompously made his statement- all big belly and grins- smiling back at him was a group of American army commanders or generals and to his left was Khalilzad, patting him fondly on the arm and gazing at him like a father looking at his first-born!

So while Iraqis are dying by the hundreds, with corpses turning up everywhere (last week they found a dead man in the open area in front of my cousins daughters school), the Iraqi puppets are taking their time trying to decide who gets to do the most stealing and in which ministry.

Embezzlement, after all, is not to be taken lightly- one must give it the proper amount of thought and debate- even if the country is coming unhinged.

As for news of the new Iraqi army, it isn't going as smoothly as Bush and his crew portray.

Today we watched footage of Iraqi soldiers in Anbar graduating. The whole ceremony was quite ordinary up until nearly the end- their commander announced they would be deployed to various areas and suddenly it was chaos.

The soldiers began stripping their fatigues and throwing them around, verbally attacking their seniors and yelling and shoving. They were promised, when they signed up for the army in their areas, that they would be deployed inside of their own areas- which does make sense.

There is news that they are currently on strike- refusing to be deployed outside of their own provinces.

Just as soon as Washington makes a move against Tehran, American troops inside Iraq will come under attack. It's that simple-

Washington has big guns and planes...

But Iran has 150,000 American hostages.

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS

GET THE MESSAGE?



Tonantzin Castro, holds a placard during a rally in downtown Los Angeles May 1, 2006. In 'A Day Without Immigrants,' rallies across the country closed hundreds of restaurants,

shops and factories. Construction projects were disrupted, day labor jobs went begging, children stayed home from school and waves of humanity poured through city streets.
REUTERS/Lucy Nicholson

Ninety Thousand Denounce Government On May Day In Mexico City: “Fox, Listen! The People Are Up In Arms”

"The rich are richer and the poor, we are poorer," said Arturo Sierra, 38, an electrician. "The government has taken it upon itself to deliver the country to foreign governments and to the rich Mexicans, who continue exploiting workers with miserable salaries."

May 2, 2006 By JAMES C. McKINLEY Jr. and ANTONIO BETANCOURT, The New York Times Company

MEXICO CITY, May 1: After weeks of rising tensions between the administration of President Vicente Fox and union leaders, tens of thousands of workers, Communists and revolutionaries thronged the center of Mexico City on Monday to send a message to the government:

The unions are still here, and they are angry.

"Fox, listen! The people are up in arms," members of the electricians union chanted as they marched from the Monument of the Revolution to the Zócalo, or central square. "From north to south, from east to west, we will win this fight, no matter what the cost."

More than 90,000 workers turned out for the May 1 labor marches, which in recent years have been quiet affairs.

Some called for the labor secretary to resign, others complained that the Fox administration's free-trade policies had failed to lift up the working class.

Union members said Monday that relations between organized labor and the government had hit a new low. Most complained that their economic condition had not improved much under Mr. Fox's tenure.

"The rich are richer and the poor, we are poorer," said Arturo Sierra, 38, an electrician. "The government has taken it upon itself to deliver the country to

foreign governments and to the rich Mexicans, who continue exploiting workers with miserable salaries."

President Fox skipped the festivities, which he has always attended in the past. Instead, he held a small celebration at his residence, where he emphasized the importance of unions acting within the law.

The marches drew a variety of people with complaints against the government.

A group of naked men and women lined part of Paseo del la Reforma, the city's main boulevard, to call attention to what they said was the Fox administration's failure to honor agreements with farmers in rural Veracruz.

College students, maintaining that free-trade policies harm workers, spoke out against globalization.

Two carried a banner that depicted President Bush as a cannibal and called his government "troglodyte."

“Police Estimated That Crowd At 400,000”



Immigration protest near MacArthur Park in Los Angeles, Monday, May 1, 2006. Illegal immigrants and supporters rallied as part of a nationwide work and shopping boycott designed to demonstrate economic power. (AP Photo/Ric Francis)

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in. He writes: EX-LIFER STILL AN ASSHOLE: "You should send all of the 13 million aliens home, then you take all of the welfare recipients who are taking a free check and make them do those jobs," said Jack Culberson, a retired Army colonel who attended the Pensacola rally. "It's as simple as that."]

02 May 2006 By Anna Gorman, Marjorie Miller and Mitchell Landsberg, The Los Angeles Times & 5.1.06 By GILLIAN FLACCUS, Associated Press Writer

A crowd estimated by Los Angeles police at 250,000 marched to City Hall in the morning, after which many determined demonstrators made their way, on foot or by subway, to MacArthur Park for a larger march along Wilshire Boulevard. Police estimated that crowd at 400,000 and reported few problems.

Hundreds of thousands of mostly Hispanic immigrants skipped work and took to the streets Monday, flexing their newfound political muscle in a nationwide boycott that, while far from unified, still succeeded in slowing or shutting many farms, factories, markets and restaurants.

From Los Angeles to Chicago, New Orleans to Houston, the "Day Without Immigrants" attracted widespread participation despite divisions among activists over whether a boycott would send the right message to Washington lawmakers considering sweeping immigration reform.

"We are the backbone of what America is, legal or illegal, it doesn't matter," said Melanie Lugo, who was among thousands attending a rally in Denver with her husband and their third-grade daughter. "We butter each other's bread. They need us as much as we need them."

An estimated 300,000 people gathered by early afternoon in Chicago, and hundreds of thousands more were expected later at rallies in New York and Los Angeles.

"You should send all of the 13 million aliens home, then you take all of the welfare recipients who are taking a free check and make them do those jobs," said Jack Culberson, a retired Army colonel who attended the Pensacola rally. "It's as simple as that."

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)

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