

GI SPECIAL 4G11:

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



April 28, 2005 National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 152

**“Opposing This War IS
Defending This Country”**

**“All I Wanted To See Was The Town
Of Baiji Leveled”**

**“I Now Understand, Very Well, How
War Crimes Happen”**

From: Andrew Sapp [Excerpts]

To: GI Special

Sent: July 08, 2006

I'd like to thank you for GI Special. I found it last year while I was still serving in Iraq, and it helped keep me sane.

I shared stories with a number of my buddies, and they went a long way in helping them try to make some sense out the insanity that is Iraq.

I joined IVAW while I was still there, and have been active ever since.

Opposing this war IS defending this country.

I'm sending an article by a reporter who covered a talk I gave a couple of days ago, in case you're interested.

Thanks again, and keep up the fight!

"In the beginning of change...the patriot is a scarce man, who is brave, hated, and scorned. When his cause succeeds, the timid join him; for then it costs nothing to be a patriot." ~Mark Twain

REPLY:

It's an honor to have been of service to you, and your buddies. It's you who have earned the thanks, for your service, and for speaking out, and telling people the truth.

Sitting in a chair putting together a newsletter is nothing compared to serving in Iraq, and deciding to take action against a wrong done to those who have served, both the living and the dead.

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**“This Is What We Have Done”
“We Will Carry This Burden
Until We Are Old”**

July 07, 2006 Eagle-Tribune, North Andover, MA

ANDOVER:

Andrew Sapp made up his mind last year while he was outside the Iraqi town of Baiji.

A staff sergeant with the Massachusetts Army National Guard, he had long opposed the war in Iraq, but not publicly.

Standing in a guard tower on Aug. 9, 2005, Sapp saw a flash in the sky.

"A moment later the ground shook. It really shook," Sapp, who lives in Billerica, told a group of about 75 summer session students at Phillips Academy last night.

Two roadside bombs had exploded nearby, Sapp said. The second, meant for a tank, hit an American Humvee. The gunner on the vehicle was thrown 50 feet but survived. Four others, members of the Pennsylvania National Guard, died.

"They had to pick pieces of them out of trees," Sapp told the high school-age students.

The stress of the memory was enough to drive feelings of intense anger through his mind and send Sapp into counseling.

"All I wanted to see was the town of Baiji leveled," he told the group. "I now understand, very well, how war crimes happen."

Sapp's story hushed the students as he told them about an organization he has joined, Iraq Veterans Against the War which was started in Boston.

The speech and ensuing discussion was part of the first of a weekly series at Phillips Academy held in honor of the activism of W.E.B. DuBois. Also speaking were Charley Richardson and Nancy Lessin of Jamaica Plain, a married couple who helped to found Military Families Speak Out in 2002.

Military Families Speak Out, which Lessin said includes more than 3,000 families, is calling for a complete, immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq. Iraq Veterans Against the War has the same goal.

Marine Joe Richardson, son of Richardson and Lessin, was in Iraq for several months leading up to and including the March 2003 invasion of the country.

The students were attentive to the speeches, especially when Sapp, an English teacher at Concord High School, spoke.

After the presentations, students questioned the speakers on whether their organizations were making progress and if they would support the Iraq invasion if there had been a quick withdrawal.

When asked by the speakers who has relatives or friends in Iraq, only two hands in the crowd were raised. One belonged to Jon Christman, 17, a summer session student from Atlanta. Christman asked the group to acknowledge some positive aspects of the war.

"In the very least, we've thrown out a dictator who gassed his own people," Christman said. After the event, he said friends of his family are in Iraq. He also said he was uncertain if some of the statistics quoted by the speakers were accurate.

The presentation, though, involved more than statistics.

Sapp said there was a very real consequence to both the roadside bomb that killed four American soldiers and the war as a whole. He described his struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder.

"I'm sleeping better now," he said, adding that in his mind "I don't hear as many explosions as I used to."

"You will live with this too," he told the students. "This is what we have done. We will carry this burden until we are old."



www.ivaw.net

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

Ramadi IED Destroys Cougar: Three Soldiers Dead

July 8, 2006 Julian E. Barnes and Borzou Daragahi, LATimes Staff Writers

Three U.S. soldiers scouring the treacherous roads of western Iraq for remote-controlled explosive devices were killed by a massive roadside bomb that destroyed their heavily protected vehicle, U.S. military officials said.

The three soldiers were part of the U.S. Army 1st Armored Division's Task Force Dagger, which sweeps major roads in Ramadi for bombs under the command of the U.S. Marines.

They were riding in a heavily armored Cougar, a vehicle designed to withstand unexpected roadside bombs and used in mine sweeping operations.

The Pentagon last year ordered 122 of the mine-sweeping Cougars worth a total of \$87 million from Force Protection, Inc., the Ladson, S.C. firm that makes the vehicle and its spare parts.

The Cougars "feature armor-plated V-shaped bottoms designed to deflect the upward explosive power of roadside bombs," said the company's website.

But since the 1st Armored Division units moved into the area, some Marines say they believe insurgents have been placing larger roadside bombs to take out the Germany-based unit's fleet of armored tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles.

Detroit Lakes Area Soldier Killed

07/09/06 AP

A Detroit Lakes area soldier was killed in Iraq when a roadside bomb went off near the Humvee he was driving, relatives said Sunday.

Army Spec. Troy Carlin Linden, 22, of Rochert, was killed in Anbar province on Saturday, his siblings said. He had been home on leave just six months earlier, when his family threw him a surprise welcome home party.

The family's farm home east of Detroit Lakes was decorated with flags and ribbons on Sunday as relatives and friends gathered together. "When we see a flag, we think of Troy," said his brother, Ryan Linden.

Troy Linden was a 2002 graduate of Detroit Lakes High School. He enlisted in the Army in Billings, Mont., where he had moved after graduating, but his siblings described him as a Minnesotan through and through. They said he was a humble all-American who was proud to serve his country.

"I noticed a real change in my brother from the time he went to basic training and then overseas," Ryan Linden said. "For the first time I didn't see him as my little brother, I saw him as a man."

He said his brother, in his phone calls from Iraq, would try to ease their mother's mind by telling her he drove the last truck in the convoy, even when he didn't.

"It was hard to hear his voice over there because we could tell how sad he was because he wanted to be home, but we reassured him that we loved him and how proud we were of him," his brother said.

His sister, Sarah Nelson, also expressed pride. "I was proud of him the day he joined the service, and I was proud of him every step he took," she said.

Troy Linden's dog, Rusty, has been staying with the relatives.

"He was looking forward to having a dog and coming home and teaching him how to swim, play, taking him Jeeping with him and stuff," his sister said.

Funeral arrangements were pending, but his family said he will be buried in Detroit Lakes, tentatively late next week.

"He'll never be gone, he'll always be a part of us. He'll be with us forever," Nelson said.

Forty-one people with Minnesota ties have died in connection with the war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

**REALLY BAD IDEA:
NO MISSION;
HOPELESS WAR:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. Marine Cpl. Brad Bruce, center, of LaPorte, Ind., Cpl. Tyler Warndorf, right, of Hebron, Ky., and a translator, study a map before a patrol, in Ramadi June 25, 2006. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

Three U.S. Troops Wounded In Qadamiya

10 July 2006 By Patrick Cockburn, The Independent UK

Iraqi troops, backed by US forces, attacked the Shia stronghold of Qadamiya, killing nine people, wounding 30 and arresting seven.

Three Americans and one Iraqi government soldier were wounded.

Bomb Strikes Convoy In Ramadi; Four Wounded

July 10, 2006 Associated Press

The explosion occurred near the convoy as it was headed to the government center in the insurgent-ridden city, 70 miles west of Baghdad. Four coalition forces were wounded, the military said in a statement.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Canadian Killed, Two More Wounded In Zharew

7.10.06 Boston Globe

In Kandahar province, fighting killed at least 15 militants and one Canadian. Two other Canadian soldiers were wounded in the province's Zharew district, the scene of some of the fiercest fighting in an anti-Taliban offensive being waged across the south.

Most of the fighting occurred in fields and orchards where small bands of Taliban fighters took cover.

Three Foreign Occupation Troops Wounded In Uruzgan: Nationality Not Announced

July 10, 2006 AEST

US and Afghan government forces attacked an insurgent stronghold in the southern province of Uruzgan,

One member of the Afghan security forces was killed and three members of the US-led coalition force were wounded in the attack on the compound, 10 kilometres north of the provincial capital, Tirin Kot, it said.

Apaches And Land Rovers Versus A Guy With A Detonator;

“They Fight Us Like They Fought The Russians: Hit And Run”

Whether military action combined with "hearts and minds" will succeed remains an open question. "The Taliban can afford to wait," said one western security official in southern Afghanistan. "They don't need a £38m aircraft to kill their enemies - just a few old weapons," he said.

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

July 10, 2006 Declan Walsh in Camp Bastion, The Guardian, [Excerpts]

The British Apache attack helicopters have blunted numerous Taliban offensives and become a key battlefield weapon, according to commanders who are quickly forgetting earlier controversies over the £38m-per-plane cost and training delays.

And although the insurgents are little match for the Apaches - just one bullet has hit an Apache, passing harmlessly through the helicopter's rump - they find ways to dodge the helicopters.

"They fight us like they fought the Russians: hit and run," said J.

That association could signal another looming problem.

The use of extreme force has already dented efforts to win hearts and minds among Afghan villagers, many of whom are convinced the British have come to avenge the last colonial defeat in 1880.

Officers admit they are worried that the screaming warplanes and bloody battles could rouse memories of the Soviet occupation in the 1980s, which prompted thousands of southern villagers to take up arms.

"There's a lot of suspicion," said Maj Williams. "There's a danger people will see us as the new Soviets. We're always looking for a softer image."

Whether military action combined with "hearts and minds" will succeed remains an open question. "The Taliban can afford to wait," said one western security official in southern Afghanistan. "They don't need a £38m aircraft to kill their enemies - just a few old weapons," he said.

"And it doesn't matter how many Apaches or armoured Land Rovers you have. That still won't stop a guy with a fuse and a detonator planting a bomb on the side of the road."

“Former Colonel Of 1st Battalion Accused The Government Of Lacking A Strategy For Afghanistan”

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

July 10, 2006 Richard Norton-Taylor and Jeevan Vasagar, The Guardian [Excerpt]

Infantry from the Royal Irish Regiment will go to Afghanistan to reinforce severely stretched British forces battling Taliban militants, the defence secretary Des Browne is expected to announce today.

Tim Collins, former colonel of 1st Battalion, Royal Irish Regiment, yesterday accused the government of lacking a strategy for Afghanistan.

He told BBC TV's Sunday AM: "We have a British government that has no idea of what it wants to do. It's invited the Army to go to Iraq, to Afghanistan, and do stuff. It would be a bit like giving your keys to builders and say go and do some stuff in my house."

TROOP NEWS

HELP! THE FORT LEE PEACE GROUP IS BEING PRESSURED BY LOCAL POLICE

To: Veterans For Peace [VetPax]

Sent: July 09, 2006

Subject: HELP! THE FORT LEE PEACE GROUP IS BEING PRESSURED BY LOCAL POLICE/ A cry for help!

VFP, IVAW & VVAW members

If you can make it to this vigil to show support, I'm sure they would appreciate having veterans back them up.

Please pass this message on.

Ken Dalton
Veterans For Peace Chapter 21

From: Stephen Palmino
Sent: Sun, 9 Jul 2006
Subject: FW: HELP! THE FORT LEE PEACE GROUP IS BEING PRESSURED BY LOCAL POLICE/ A cry for help!

Friends,

Please pass this word far and wide. We can not ignore the request for support. Try your best to be there next Thursday, please, even if it is just one day.

I will be there. If one of us is pressured, we are all pressured.

Steve

7/7/2006 Arya Jenkins

Hi Everyone:

On at least two occasions, on the 4th when a few of us paraded quietly and peacefully through a multitude of watchers who came to see fireworks in Fort Lee, and today, when the Fort Lee Peace Group had its standard vigil from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm on the corner of Lemoine Avenue and Bruce Reynolds Blvd in Fort Lee, we had unpleasant and challenging interactions with police.

We need support from other vigilers because it appears as if we are being pressured to "go away."

Please join us and vigil with us for peace and for the right to be here.

On the first occasion, the 4th, I was pulled aside by two plainclothed detectives while stepping peacefully through a crowd carrying two signs for peace. Officers Young and Tilton asked me for my age, name and ID.

I didn't have ID and they proceeded to ask me, "Then, how do we know you are who you say you are? You're not allowed to do what you're doing."

I told them I had informed Fort Lee police the previous day of our intentions to be present and vigil in a peaceful and unintrusive way during the fireworks. I told them we had received an okay and were told that we just can't interfere with pedestrian traffic.

Furthermore, as I mentioned to the officers, a supervising officer at the end of the street on the occasion of the 4th, had told us it was okay to be standing at our corner with signs and to walk through the town, as long as we "don't interfere with pedestrian traffic."

Finally, I had to mention to the officers that I was with the media and name a couple of friends that they also know, to cool them down a little.

They definitely looked like they would have arrested me if I'd scratched my nose.

Finally, after a few minutes of repeating myself, I ended up by asking their names, shaking their hands and going on my merry way.

As I was leaving they warned me, "Remember if you interfere with traffic, you'll get arrested."

A side note --- On the fourth a policeman gruffly called out to me to explain what the PAZ meant on one of my signs. I had to explain that it means PEACE in Spanish. Perhaps words with a Z are too similar to anti-American words and symbols????

Yesterday, Thursday, I was not at the vigil as I had a religious holiday commitment, but I was informed by two members of the Fort Lee Peace Group that a police car came by and two officers claimed that passersby were complaining about vigilers shouting back.

The Fort Lee Peace Group has vigil guidelines, which I feel are important to follow. At the same time, I know that some of our male members sometimes call out a "Thank you!" when there's a supportive honk.

That hardly merits a warning/reprimand.

I also heard that the officers approached The Fort Lee Peace Group with initial suspicion and antipathy, remarking incredulously, "What are you guys against -- the war?"

Members of the Fort Lee Peace Group were told not to call out and were warned against interfering with pedestrian traffic again, "or you'll be arrested."

The Fort Lee police have been advised several times that we plan to vigil every Thursday from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm. Yet members of the police department appear to be unclear about whether we should be supported and protected or not.

Since the vigil before the one on July 4th when we were approached by an officer who asked us how long we planned to stand vigiling at our corner, the pendulum of support appears to be swinging the other way.

I feel that what is transpiring with our peace group may be a sign of things to come for which we all should be prepared.

Be peaceful in responding to negativity from passersby and especially the police. It will never serve our cause to be disrespectful or challenging.

However, we must also protect ourselves and stand firm for our cause and in support of one another...

We hope some of you will join our vigil.

We plan to have a film camera present. I also urge you to keep cell phones and cameras handy when you vigil.

Peacefulness is important. So is justice. In peace,

Arya Jenkins for the Fort Lee Peace Group

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

“A Western Plan Aimed At Sponsoring A Civil And Sectarian War Between Brothers”

7.10.06 By Lutfi Abu Oun and Ross Colvin, Reuters & By Jonathan Steele, The Guardian UK & July 8, 2006 Julian E. Barnes and Borzou Daragahi, LA Times Staff Writers

Sadr's group rejected accusations by minority Sunni leaders and police that it was behind killings in the mainly Sunni Jihad district of west Baghdad on Sunday, when bands of gunmen set up roadblocks and hauled people with Sunni-sounding names from cars to shoot them. They also killed others in streets and homes.

Sadr, whose supporters have waged two rebellions against U.S. forces in Iraq, blamed Sunday's violence on a "Western plan aimed at sponsoring a civil and sectarian war between brothers."

Sadr City political leaders announced they were suspending their cooperation with U.S. forces and Iraqi troops following a massive raid Friday meant to capture a militia leader in the Baghdad slum.

Sheik Abdul-Hadi al-Darraji, a senior official of the Sadrist movement, denied the Mahdi army was involved.

He said the attackers put on black uniforms, which are often worn by Sadrists, to provoke sectarian tension.

<p>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

Assorted Resistance Action

Jul 10 By QAIS AL-BASHIR (AP) & Reuters & By Sameer N. Yacoub, Associated Press

A police patrol in the southern city of Hillah hit a roadside bomb, leaving one policeman dead and four wounded.

Clashes broke out between Interior Ministry commandos and insurgents in Dora in southern Baghdad, leaving one commando dead and two wounded.

A member of the provincial council in Diyala, Adnan Iskandar al-Mahdawi, was killed and two of his guards, and three of his guards were wounded in a drive-by shooting.

Five policemen were wounded when a bomb planted inside a car exploded near a police patrol in Baquba, police said.

Militants attacked the bodyguards of a judge in Baghdad, killing two and wounding three, an Interior Ministry source said.

Five policemen were wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in northeastern Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas captured an agriculture official in Dujail, 55 miles north of Baghdad.

An Iraqi police said the translator, whose name was not released, was slain in a drive-by shooting in southwestern Baghdad. She worked for the Americans but was off-duty at the time, police Capt. Maithem Abdul-Razaq said.

Interpreters and others working for the Americans have long been targeted by insurgents who accuse them of "collaborating" with "occupation forces."

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Ain't Marchin' Anymore: GIs Revolt in Vietnam; A Personal Account

“The Security Platoon Did What We Called ‘Search And Avoid’ Patrols, Instead Of ‘Search And Destroy’”

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

The debate was over whether to frag the Company Commander. To settle the thing, somebody put forward that maybe we could unite around giving him one more chance, just give him a warning, and everyone generally agreed. Somebody left a grenade on the CO's bunk with a note tied to it, "Quit fucking with us." About a week later, the CO opened the door to his hooch and a charge went off and blew him away. For a while after that, everybody was nice to us, everybody was friendly-it was like a fresh breeze blowing in the air. None of us ever figured out who fragged the CO.

By Dave Blalock, Libcom.org

I grew up in Western Pennsylvania, in a coal mine/steel mill region. I graduated from high school in '67. At that time, you couldn't really get a job in the mills or mines unless you had a draft exemption. About the only way to get a draft exemption was going to college or getting married.

I got lousy jobs, flipping burgers and that sort of thing, but I didn't have an exemption. A couple of us decided we might as well go in the Army. There was a little of that patriotism and it was the traditional thing anyway. Everybody went in the army, everyone's father and uncle had been in the army.

It seemed like the only thing to do, so I went and saw the recruiter and signed up to be a communication specialist. While I was in basic training, I went AWOL and ended up in the Fort Jackson stockade.

Shortly after I got sent to the stockade there was a stockade uprising after the guards blew away a couple Black dudes. The MPs came in with gas and dogs. That was an eye opener. Because of where I grew up, I hadn't really known any Black people and didn't know what they were up against. The Army, and this stockade experience, was my first glimpse of what life was like for them.

Eventually I was released from the stockade and sent back to complete basic training. My Company Commander told me that since I had been to the stockade, and now had a "record," I probably wouldn't be allowed to keep my MOS (military job category). He said I would have to prove to the government that I was sincere and loved my country. He told me the only way I could prove myself was to volunteer for Vietnam. I said, "OK" and was sent to Fort Gordon, GA for communication school.

One day we came back to the company area from training classes, and on all the bunks were copies of an underground GI newspaper called the Last Harass. The

officers were running around trying to snatch them up, but one guy managed to save a copy of it.

That copy was passed around through the whole barracks, hand to hand.

"Wow," I thought, "this is really cool." After the stockade and basic training, I hated the whole set-up with a passion.

The underground paper had an anti-war edge and was definitely anti-military, almost like a union paper would be. And since the officers really hated it, I liked it even more. The paper was my introduction to the underground movement of GIs, but I never really hooked up with it before I got my orders to go to Vietnam.

I arrived in Vietnam right around the Tet holiday, 1969. The first thing I noticed, besides the fact that everyone was nervous about Tet, was that everyone was wearing peace signs. Black Power stuff was everywhere, and everybody seemed to have a FTA attitude.

I was assigned to a communications unit on a little camp called Long Than North. At least I wasn't in the infantry, so I figured I didn't have it too bad.

But after about two months, they decided to set up a Security Platoon to do guard duty as the gate guard, tower guard, and to do short range patrols. Every company in our little complex had to provide 4 or 5 people to be part of this Security Platoon. I was the new guy in my unit, so I ended up in the Security Platoon.

I didn't know what to expect. I had enlisted and then volunteered for Viet Nam to be a communications specialist, and here I was in this. But the security platoon turned out to be a very loose sort of unit.

The Commanding Officer was from S-2, Intelligence, but he never came around. The Sergeant that ran the show was this Black dude named Sugar-Bear. Right after I arrived, Sugar-Bear pulled me aside and said, "Blalock, we ain't here to kill no VC, we're here to fuckin' survive. If you want to be gung-ho, you're gonna die quick."

I said "Hey, no problem, man, I ain't gung-ho, I don't even want to do this shit." We got along fine.

The security platoon did what we called "Search and Avoid" patrols, instead of "Search and Destroy."

When we were supposed to go out on night patrol, we'd go out about a quarter of a mile to this rubber plantation, and hang out there all night.

There wasn't much action because generally there was an unofficial truce with the local VC.

We didn't mess with them and they didn't mess with us.

The only time we even went by the village was when we'd drive the deuce-and-a-half into the ville each morning to pick up the house girls who we had hired to clean our hooches. Each evening we'd drive them home again. Whenever we went by the ville, it was a friendly scene, we'd go by, say "Hi," and we'd split.

I remember one time when Sugar Bear asked me if I knew what imperialism was. I said "What, you mean Chrysler Imperial?" He just about fell over laughing, but he invited me to join these discussion groups they were having. He was getting the Panther Paper in the mail. We'd have these discussion groups about the paper, most all the Black guys, and quite a few of the whites too. That's where I learned the accurate spelling of "Amerikkka."

This was about the same time that this other incident occurred. I came in from a night patrol and went into the hooch and flopped down on the bunk. I noticed the house girls were unusually quiet, and one was crying. I thought for a minute one of the guys had given one of them a bad time or something.

I kept asking "What's wrong, what's wrong?" Finally one of them told me: "Ho Chi Minh died." "So what, he's a communist," I replied. "What's the big deal?" She went into this whole rap. She knew American history better than I did, and she told me how "in the U.S. when you had your revolution against the British imperialists, a third of your population were for the revolution, a third didn't care and about a third backed the British.

"Here in Vietnam, 75% of the people back the revolution against the imperialists. Ho Chi Minh is our national leader, everybody loves Ho Chi Minh."

She went on to compare the Vietnamese war against imperialist domination to what had gone on in the U.S. against the British.

That conversation shocked me. There she was, in our barracks, and she was sympathetic to the revolution and saw it as an anti-imperialist struggle!

I knew the VC were all around, but until then I hadn't really known the VC first hand. Here was this woman who shined our boots and did our laundry and all of a sudden I realized that she was who we were supposed to be fighting against. I realized right then that the U.S. was on the wrong side of a terrible war of aggression.

Frag!

In August, '69, we got some new guys in the Security Platoon, burn-outs from the First Cav. I think they were supposed to be on easy duty for a while to try to get themselves back together. I remember one day we went out on patrol. We told them, "Just take it easy, tag along, we're just going into the ville to pick up some stuff."

As we're leaving the ville we hear these burn-outs open up. They blew away a bunch of people, couple kids. We all ran back there and immediately a big debate broke out among the other guys.

Some thought we ought to kill these assholes right on the spot for what they had done. Maybe we should have, because after that we started getting hit by the VC.

But before we could decide, the Commander caught a chopper out into the field-he was so happy to finally be getting a body count. There were 6 or 7 civilians who were killed. But in the report that went from Battalion to Brigade level, they doubled the numbers. It must have kept getting pumped up all the way up the chain of command because by the time the incident was reported in my home town paper, which I got in the mail, the count was two hundred VC killed.

Our side had broken the unofficial truce and now we started getting hit.

The guys wanted to get back to "Search and Avoid."

Unfortunately the Brass, from the comfort of their desks, had the scent of blood. Our Company Commander started putting a lot of pressure on us to get some body count. We started getting harassed about our hair, the Black guys were getting harassed about their Black Power symbols and their Afros, and generally life was getting miserable.

After putting up with an awful lot of this constant harassment, the GIs had this big gathering in the bunkers one night.

The debate was over whether to frag the Company Commander. The Brothers were mainly the ones who wanted to waste him. We all hated him, but some people didn't think we ought to kill him.

To settle the thing, somebody put forward that maybe we could unite around giving him one more chance, just give him a warning, and everyone generally agreed. Somebody left a grenade on the CO's bunk with a note tied to it, "Quit fucking with us."

The CO flipped out, and intensified all the shit he was bringing down on us.

So about two weeks later, there was another meeting of the GIs in the bunkers. There was even more sentiment to waste the CO, but one guy had worked in a union shop before the service, and he said "Look, we'll give him a final warning," so that's what happened. This time the pin was pulled part way out of the grenade. You give a guy a chance, you bend over backwards, show good faith, and try to be reasonable.

But instead of getting a clue, the CO heaped it on everybody even more, with even more intensified harassment and bullshit.

The CO must have thought that the warnings were coming from the Security Platoon, because all of a sudden there were all these new guys in our Platoon, obviously Military Intelligence.

But we were just a small Platoon in the whole place, and we were being real cool, because we weren't the ones anyway. About a week later, the CO opened the door to his hooch and a charge went off and blew him away. For a while after that, everybody was nice to us, everybody was friendly-it was like a fresh breeze blowing in the air. None of us ever figured out who fragged the CO.

GI Strike

The next CO they brought in was a lot slicker than the old one.

Everything was going pretty well, but then a guy in our Platoon went to Hawaii for R&R and met his girlfriend there. When he came back, we were hanging out in the bunkers partying. He walks in and pulls out a full page ad from the New York Times, signed by 1500 active duty GIs denouncing the war, and supporting the big moratorium demonstration that was going to happen.

The talk started going around and we all thought it was pretty neat.

We knew guys in the First Cav, and in the Engineers and pretty much all over base. We spread the word around to the other units and when that day happened, it was 100% in my company. The CO was pretty slick though, so rather than make a big deal out of it, when he saw all the black armbands, he said, "Hey, you guys have been working pretty hard, and I'm going to give you guys a break today. You don't have to go on patrol, take a day off."

We jumped into a vehicle and drove around to the other units to see how it was going with them. It was pretty wide spread in the other units too. The guys in the First Air Cav, were pretty much 100%. Even some of the Warrant Officers were wearing the black arm bands.

But it had only been partially successful over at the Engineers. As we drove up, their CO was standing in front of the formation, with his pistol out, holding it up to one guy's head, saying that he was going to give the guy a summary court martial right on the spot if anybody didn't go to work that day.

The CO said he would charge the guy with mutiny and shoot him on the spot. We could see that only part of the formation was wearing the arm bands, and it looked like the CO was scaring everybody pretty bad. We were pretty bummed out, but then the formation was dismissed and one guy came over to us and said slyly, "Don't worry, nobody around here will work for weeks, we fucked up all the bulldozers!"

But probably the wildest thing that happened that day was the MPs. There was a small MP detachment-dog handlers. They ran the sound system on base. We didn't even think of going to them, we figured, "Oh they're MPs," but they got wind of the thing somehow. That morning, instead of playing reveille over the loudspeakers, they played Jimi Hendrix's "Star Spangled Banner." That's how we woke up, all over the base that morning.

Bringing The War Home

When I got back to the world, I still had a year and a half left before discharge. What I had to show for being in Vietnam was a piece of shrapnel that cut me right above my eye, messed up knees from when a guy landed on them backwards during a mortar attack, and a new and strong understanding of the ugly face of America.

The GI anti-war movement was flourishing, and I was glad to join right in. I was determined to bring the war home.

We had a GI organization, put out leaflets, underground papers, did all sorts of things to harass the military, pushed real hard on the anti-war stuff, linked up with the local civilian Black rights movement there in Anniston, Alabama, linked up with striking hospital workers locally, and generally used our remaining time in the military to act on the understandings we had gotten in Nam.

For me the GI movement was a big and very positive thing. All my patriotism was blown away in Vietnam.

I loved the rebelliousness of the GI movement.

It concentrated the spirit of so many people and really, that spirit carried me for years even after I got out of the service.

Of course, like so many others, I found myself getting a job, having kids and everything that goes with that.

But reality has a way of forcing itself back in your face. The images never leave my mind about the war and what we did to people over there. But I always think about how many of us stood up to all that bullshit and helped turn it around, too. That hasn't happened very often in history.

After I got arrested in DC for burning the flag, the press asked my brother was he embarrassed by me burning the flag.

My brother says, "Hell no, he wanted to burn a flag from the day he came back from Vietnam. I'm surprised it took him 20 years to decide."

That's where I'm coming from, my experiences. I came back, eyes open very wide. Now I'm saying "enough is enough."

Vietnam veteran Dave Blalock was one of the defendants whose Supreme Court legal challenge overturned Pres. Bush's law prohibiting the burning of the U.S. flag. The following piece details his experiences in Vietnam.

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

**contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request.
Replies confidential.**

“Lady, We Are The Troops”

Ward Churchill added, "VVAW [Vietnam Veterans Against The War] did these silent marches. All you could hear were boots hitting the street. Once a Republican woman came up to us and said, 'What are you doing to the morale of the troops?' And VVAW would say, 'Lady, we are the troops.'"

Spring 2006 By Brooke Anderson, The Veteran, Vietnam Veterans Against The War [Excerpt] *Brooke Anderson is a VVAW member and lead organizer for the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy in Oakland, California.*

On December 4, 2005 I arrived at the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, just a few blocks away from my new home in Oakland, California, to see Barry Romo on a panel convened by AK Press and KPFA. Having recently moved from Champaign, Illinois and missing my friends, I reveled in the idea of Barry and VVAW coming to Oakland, even if only for the evening.

The panel was called "The Future of Struggle: Movement Veterans Discuss Yesterday's Lessons for Today." The idea was to have key figures from various radical movements discuss lessons learned over the last four decades of organizing, how these lessons could be applied to work being done today, and how to move forward.

In addition to Barry Romo, the panel featured Kathleen Cleaver (Black Panther Party), Russell Means (American Indian Movement), Mike James (SDS and Rising Up Angry), Elizabeth Martinez (Chicana activist and author), Ward Churchill (American Indian Movement), Bo Brown (George Jackson Brigade) and a former member of I Wor Kuen. Since I know him so well, sometimes I forget what a movement celebrity Barry really is, but after seeing him in this impressive crowd, I won't forget again!

The panel opened with a lightning round of obligatory introductions: name, organization, and lessons learned. Barry opened by saying, "I never thought that there would be a war worse than Vietnam, but this is worse.

“These vets have to worry about going back. Today, we are working with these younger vets. We didn't think that we would make it to thirty years old, let alone form an organization that is now almost forty years old.”

During the introductions, Ward Churchill also mentioned VVAW in his remarks, saluting the organization for standing in solidarity with AIM. "VVAW was at Wounded Knee with us, and it is in large part because of VVAW that our lives were saved."

After introductions, the first four questions from the panel and audience were directed at Barry. Kathleen Cleaver opened the questions by asking Barry to talk more about VVAW, saying, "I want more people to know about VVAW. I've always been very

impressed with their clarity of views. VVAW's statement on Iraq was literally the only coherent statement I saw."

Then Elizabeth Martinez asked Barry to speak about counter-recruitment. Barry responded, "We get into high schools, even with a name like Vietnam Veterans Against the War. And we were recently on the NewsHour with Jim Lehrer talking about the education we do in high schools."

When an audience member asked if they should feel ill will toward the soldiers currently in Iraq, Barry responded, "The people in the military are not your enemies. Some of them are. They tend to wear four stars. They tend to work in the Pentagon and send poor kids to war who only dreamed of buying a home for their parents."

Ward Churchill added, "VVAW did these silent marches. All you could hear were boots hitting the street. Once a Republican woman came up to us and said, 'What are you doing to the morale of the troops?' And VVAW would say, 'Lady, we are the troops.'"

**HONOR THE WARRIOR,
NOT THE WAR**

Vietnam Veterans Against the War
Fighting for Veterans, Peace and Justice since 1967
www.vvaw.org



“The Idea That You Can Successfully Occupy A Hostile Land Into Peace Remains A Delusion Of Consultants On Big Expense Accounts In Washington”

The Taliban, in other words, are easily found even near a British military base. They include the most ordinary-looking men. The American effort at building-up the country, if it ever was serious, is a failure.

09 July, 2006 John Chuckman, Countercurrents.org [Excerpt]

Two men, both bearded and wearing the trademark thick-coiled black turban, were sitting in the shade behind a friend's workshop. They had agreed to talk to The Observer.

'I am proud to be a Talib,' said Fazl Rahman, 40. 'Why should I deny it? Why should I be afraid?'

'The foreigners are here for their own reasons,' said his younger comrade.

'If they were here to help us, everyone would be living better. But look.' He pointed to the dirt street outside, the shacks, the sagging electricity cables, the thin trees that provide scant protection from the heat of the early afternoon sun and then waved his hand towards the camp a few hundred metres away, the longest-established British base in Helmand province.

'All foreigners are our enemy,' he says. 'You are a journalist, so we don't harm you. But if you were a soldier we would kill you. Afghanistan is the castle of Islam and the foreigners are destroying our religion.'

The Taleban, in other words, are easily found even near a British military base. They include the most ordinary-looking men. The American effort at building-up the country, if it ever was serious, is a failure.

Burke's report suggests the Taleban cause strongly appeals to feelings against foreign occupation and in defense of religion.

What Americans do not understand is that the Taleban is not a fixed organization but a fluid alliance of interests. The fierce mountain men of Afghanistan move back and forth between one alliance and another, depending on changing needs and advantages.

The sad state of American achievement was demonstrated by recent bragging headlines about one old, crippled warrior chief changing sides, leaving the Taleban. Afghanistan is the land of ferocious (male) libertarianism if ever there was one, something you might think Americans, with all their rhetoric about freedom to bear arms against tyranny, would understand.

There is no reason to feel hopeful or idealistic about anyone's role in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan and Iraq are neither wars in the traditional sense nor humanitarian projects.

They are foreign occupations of people who do not want to be occupied.

The idea that you can successfully occupy a hostile land into peace remains a delusion of consultants on big expense accounts in Washington.

Just ask Israel nearly four decades after the Six Day War.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

“Israel Perceives A Greater Danger From Attacks Against Its Soldiers Than Attacks Against Civilians”

July 9, 2006 By: Dr. Azmi Bishara, newdemocracyworld.org. [Excerpt] Member of the Israeli Knesset from Nazareth. He is heading the National Democratic Coalition "Balad". Thanks to John Spritzler for posting Via Anti-Allawi Group

Contrary to the general belief, Israel perceives a greater danger from attacks against its soldiers than attacks against civilians -- it does not want the precedent to catch on.

This is why it will respond much more harshly to attacks against the military and why it attaches the greatest importance to gauging its response and to gauging how the Arabs react to this response. If anything, therefore, the incursion is about the superiority of the value of the soldier over the value of the ordinary human being.

Israel knows that if military confrontation became the rule this would threaten the unity of Israeli society.

As long as civilians are at risk, Israelis can tell themselves they are being attacked because they are Jews and that they have no choice but to defend themselves, or that war is an imperative.

But attacks against soldiers are attacks mounted directly against the occupation and the armed forces that embody the occupation.

States can choose their policies, unlike people on a bus or in a restaurant. Soldiers who are killed are not said to have been murdered, like civilians who happen to have been in the wrong restaurant or on the wrong bus at the wrong time, but rather to have "died in the line of duty".

The Zionist establishment is also acutely sensitive to the fact that the army, security and the military myth are fundamental to the credibility and prestige of Zionism as a historic solution.

No doubt, too, selecting military targets would also alter the image of the resister. He would become a formidable adversary who plans his strategies and tactics in order to accomplish a certain agenda, instead of just a mad suicide bomber driven by dreams of martyrdom or personal revenge into blowing himself up in a marketplace so as to take the greatest number of civilian casualties.

The Zionist establishment does not want anything to shake this carefully constructed and marketed image of Palestinian otherness, because otherwise the Palestinian fighter would become a legitimate party in a comprehensible struggle for liberation.

Israelis do not know whether or not the recent Palestinian act of resistance marks a turning point in the approach to resistance. By no means do they want it to be.

On the other hand, you would think that the international community and the Arabs would at least draw a line between a resistance operation mounted against an Israeli military target and other operations that target civilians. But no, that is not the case.

When it comes to the Palestinians and Israelis, at least, such fundamental distinctions have been gradually smudged and perverted over the past two years.

Consequently, a captured Israeli soldier has been transformed into a kidnapped hostage, the attack on a military installation is treated as though it were an assault on a café filled with elderly aunts and a blown up tank is mourned as though it were an urban bus.

Arab and Western officials have raced to their microphones to issue appeals to the "kidnappers" to release the soldier, yet none of these have issued a serious appeal to Israel to release Palestinian women and children in Israeli jails.

Nothing could more unequivocally attest that the world has fallen for Israeli propaganda hook, line and sinker.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

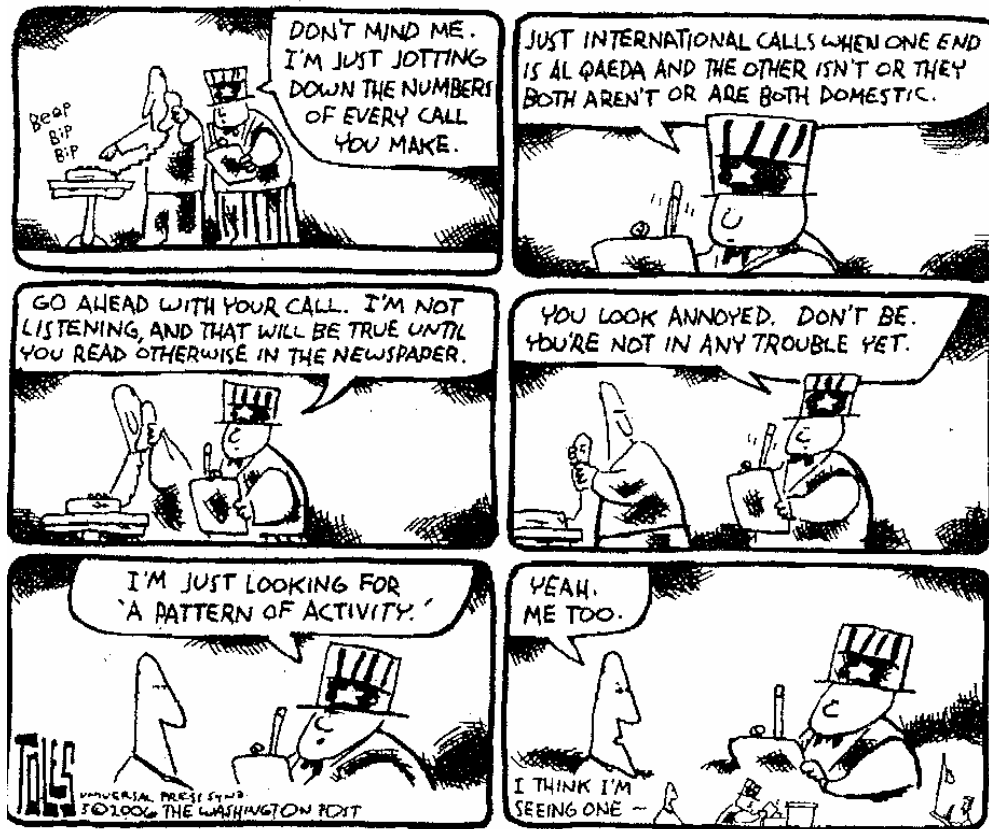
Domestic Enemies At It Again: FBI Plans New Net-Tapping Push

Jul 08 06 By Declan McCullagh, news.com

The FBI has drafted sweeping legislation that would require Internet service providers to create wiretapping hubs for police surveillance and force makers of networking gear to build in backdoors for eavesdropping, CNET News.com has learned.

FBI Agent Barry Smith distributed the proposal at a private meeting last Friday with industry representatives and indicated it would be introduced by Sen. Mike DeWine, an Ohio Republican, according to two sources familiar with the meeting.

The draft bill would place the FBI's Net-surveillance push on solid legal footing. At the moment, it's ensnared in a legal challenge from universities and some technology companies that claim the Federal Communications Commission's broadband surveillance directives exceed what Congress has authorized.



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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

Baghdad On The Mississippi: New Orleans In Ruins:

Bush Regime Doesn't Give A Shit

[Thanks to PB who sent this in. He writes: ETHNIC CLEANSING RIGHT HERE AT HOME]

29 June 2006 By Bill Quigley, Truthout Perspective [Excerpts] & Jul 6 By MICHELLE ROBERTS, Associated Press Writer

We are still finding dead bodies. Ten days ago, workers cleaning a house in New Orleans found a body of a man who died in the flood. He is the twenty-third person found dead from the storm since March.

Over two hundred thousand people have not yet made it back to New Orleans.

Vacant houses stretch mile after mile, neighborhood after neighborhood. Thousands of buildings remain marked with brown ribbons where floodwaters settled. Of the thousands of homes and businesses in eastern New Orleans, thirteen percent have been re-connected to electricity.

The mass displacement of people has left New Orleans older, whiter and more affluent. African-Americans, children and the poor have not made it back - primarily because of severe shortages of affordable housing.

Thousands of homes remain just as they were when the floodwaters receded - ghost-like houses with open doors, upturned furniture, and walls covered with growing mold.

Not a single dollar of federal housing repair or home reconstruction money has made it to New Orleans yet.

Public education in New Orleans is mostly demolished, and what remains is being privatized. The city is now the nation's laboratory for charter schools - publicly funded schools run by private bodies.

Before Katrina, the local elected school board had control over 115 schools - they now control 4.

The majority of the remaining schools are now charters. The metro area public schools will get \$213 million less next school year in state money because tens of thousands of public school students were displaced last year. At the same time, the federal government announced a special allocation of \$23.9 million which can only be used for charter schools in Louisiana.

The teachers' union, the largest in the state, has been told there will be no collective bargaining because, as one board member stated, "I think we all realize the world has changed around us."

Public housing has been boarded up and fenced off as HUD announced plans to demolish 5,000 apartments - despite the greatest shortage of affordable housing in the region's history. HUD plans to let private companies develop the sites. In

the meantime, the 4,000 families locked out since Katrina are not allowed to return.

Public health care is in crisis. Our big public hospital has remained closed, and there are no serious plans to reopen it. A neighbor with cancer who has no car was told that she has to go 68 miles away to the closest public hospital for her chemotherapy.

The criminal justice system remains shattered. Six thousand cases await trial.

There were no jury trials and only 4 public defenders for 9 of the last 10 months. Many people in jail have not seen a lawyer since 2005.

The Times-Picayune reported that one defendant, jailed for possession of crack cocaine for almost two years, has not been inside a courtroom since August 2005, despite the fact that a key police witness against him committed suicide during the storm.

You may have seen on the news that we have some new neighbors - the National Guard. We could use the help of our military to set up hospitals and clinics. We could use their help in gutting and building houses or picking up the mountains of debris that remain.

But instead they were sent to guard us from ourselves. Crime certainly is a community problem. But many question the Guard helping local police dramatically increase stops of young black males - who are spread out on the ground while they and their cars are searched. The relationship between crime and the collapse of all of these other systems is a one rarely brought up.

It has occurred to us that our New Orleans is looking more and more like Baghdad.

People in New Orleans wonder, if this is the way the US treats its own citizens, how on earth is the US government treating people around the world? We know our nation could use its money and troops and power to help build up our community instead of trying to extending our economic and corporate reach around the globe.

"Basically, you're telling low-income families, 'You cannot come back here. You have nowhere to come home to,'" said Cherlynn Gaynor, 42, who lived in a housing project now slated for demolition and is now staying in Texas. "Where are we going to go? We're citizens of New Orleans."

[R]edevlopment of the St. Thomas housing project, which already was undergoing development before Katrina, mostly benefits wealthier residents. Public housing residents were given vouchers or moved to other housing projects before demolition.

Before redevelopment, there were more than 1,500 public housing apartments there. But of the less than 1,200 units eventually expected on the site, only about 180 are currently set aside for public housing residents.

Pamela Mahogany, who was a lifelong resident of St. Bernard, said the cost of living has jumped dramatically since Katrina. Charity Hospital, the city's main health care provider for the poor, is still closed too, she said.

"They don't open public housing. They don't open up Charity Hospital. They don't open up things for poor people, so what does that say?" Mahogany said.

The future of New Orleans depends on those who are willing to fight for the right of every person to return. Many are fighting for that right.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

GI Special issues are archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org> .

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://qi-special.iraq-news.de>;

http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/;

<http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>; <http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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