

GI SPECIAL 4H15:



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

172nd Betrayed Again; 300 Soldiers Forced Back To Iraq; “Case By Case” Review So Much Lying Bullshit

[Thanks to David Honish, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

8.14.06 By LOLITA C. BALDOR, Associated Press Writer

About 300 Alaska-based soldiers sent home from Iraq just before their unit's deployment was extended last month must now go back, the Army said Monday,

setting up a wrenching departure for troops and families who thought their service there was finished.

The soldiers — all from the 172nd Stryker Brigade — are among the 380 troops who had gotten home to Fort Wainwright when Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld ordered the unit to serve four more months. The remaining 80 will not have to return to Iraq.

Army officials have sent a team of personnel and pay experts to Alaska to help sort out all of the soldiers' vacations, school enrollments and other plans torn apart by the decision to return them to Iraq. The unit is now being stationed in Baghdad, one of the most violent parts of the country.

Lt. Col. Wayne Shanks, a service spokesman, said the Army fully realizes the hardships triggered by the move and is "bending over backward to accommodate" the families. [

The bulk of the 172nd Brigade was still in Iraq when Rumsfeld extended their deployment as part of a plan to quell the escalating violence in Baghdad. Overall, the brigade has about 3,900 troops.

Another 300 soldiers from the unit had left Iraq and gotten to Kuwait, and were about to board flights home when they were called back.

Before Monday's announcement, the troops who had already returned home to Alaska had been told that decisions on their fates would be made on a case-by-case basis.

About 50 of the approximately 80 soldiers who do not have to return to Iraq were the advance team that headed back to Alaska early to prepare for the unit's return. They will stay in Alaska and plan for the unit's eventual return late this year.

The other 30, said Boyce, were allowed to stay in Alaska based largely on their individual duties and needs of the brigade.

Army officials said they don't recall another time during the three-year-long Iraq war when the Pentagon so quickly recalled soldiers who had served a year on the battlefield and gotten home.

The 300 soldiers recalled from Alaska on Monday got to spend between three and five weeks at home, and will head back to Iraq in the next two weeks.

Most of the brigade is expected to leave Iraq by the end of the year, although Army spokesman Paul Boyce said Monday there are no assurances the unit's stay will not be extended again.

For some, the return to Iraq may mean they will miss the holidays or much-anticipated vacations. For others, it means rescheduling military or civilian college classes, or postponing long-planned moves out of state or to different Army units.

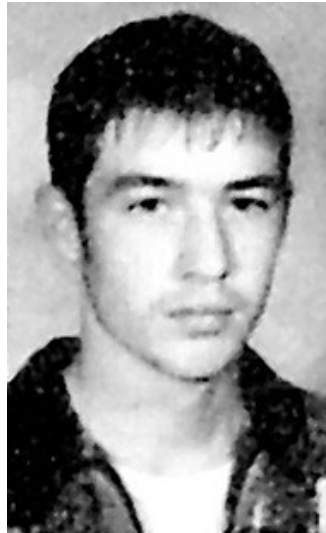
Last week eight Army officials went to Alaska to meet with the soldiers and their families to work out scheduling conflicts and other problems brought on by the sudden change. Hotlines also have been set up to assist family members.



[<http://www.bringhome172nd.org/stryker/>]

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Brunswick Man's Son Killed In Iraq



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Stephen A. Seale

August 10, 2006 By Alison Walker-Baird, News-Post Staff

FREDERICK: A West Virginia soldier who was killed in Iraq on Sunday was the son of a Brunswick man.

John Seale learned of the death of his son, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Stephen A. Seale, of Grafton, W.Va., on Sunday evening.

Sgt. Seale, 25, had been deployed to Iraq for the second time in September and was scheduled to return to the United States in three weeks. He was stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky.

John Seale said his son had predicted before going to Iraq last fall that he would not survive to return home.

John and Lori Seale, Sgt. Seale's stepmother, were notified of his death by soldiers who visited their home.

"It was totally devastating," Lori Seale said Wednesday.

An improvised explosive device exploded outside the Humvee in which Sgt. Seale was riding while conducting combat operations in Baghdad.

Sgt. Carlton A. Clark, 22, of South Royalton, Vt., and Spc. Jose Zamora, 24, of Sunland Park, N.M., were also killed. The three were assigned to the Army's 2nd Brigade Troop Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.

Sgt. Seale was a combat engineer who joined the Army in 1999, the year he graduated from Martinsburg High School in West Virginia, Lori Seale said.

He is survived by his 3-year-old daughter, Isabel, of Hopkinsville, Ky.; his mother and stepfather, Roxanne and Darryl Ruppenthal of Martinsburg; and brother John Seale, 28, of Hurricane, Utah.

He is also survived by a half-brother, Ian Seale, 5, and two stepsisters, Tiegen Hauser, 15, and Zoe Hauser, 12.

Sgt. Seale always wanted to be a soldier, said John Seale, who described his son as very patriotic.

Rocket Attack On Green Zone Wounds Four Australian Troops

August 14, 2006 The Sydney Morning Herald

Four Australian soldiers, including a woman, have been injured in a rocket attack in Baghdad.

The soldiers, part of Australia's security detachment, were injured when three rockets were fired into Baghdad's fortified international zone.

Two fell harmlessly in the river but a third exploded near the soldiers' accommodation.

Australian Defence Force chief Angus Houston said the attack had occurred very early on Monday morning, Baghdad time, when the soldiers were in their quarters.

Three male soldiers were discharged after treatment but a female soldier has remained in Baghdad's combat support hospital.

"She has got injuries consistent with blast and lacerations to the head, internal injuries, bruising and obviously some shrapnel injuries as well," Air Chief Marshal Houston said.

There are no immediate plans to move her.

The attack is thought to have involved 122mm rockets.

Air Chief Marshal Houston would not detail the exact location of the blast, fearful the information could be used by insurgents, but indicated it had not involved any damage to the Australian embassy.

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



A U.S. soldier arrives at the site of a car bomb attack in Kirkuk, July 26, 2006.
REUTERS/Slahaldeen Rasheed

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

“I Have One Word: Crap” “They’re There Because They Have To Be There And There’s No End In Sight” Dead Soldier’s Vet Uncle Slams Afghanistan Mission

[Thanks to Tom Palumbo, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

August 12, 2006 By SHAWN LOGAN, CALGARY SUN

The uncle of the latest Canadian soldier killed in Afghanistan says Canada’s role in the mission should be abandoned before more young men are sacrificed.

Cpl. Andrew James Eykelenboom of Comox, B.C., was killed Friday when a suicide bomber drove an explosives-laden truck into a NATO convoy near Spin Boldak, about 100 km south of Kandahar.

Bob Eykelenboom of Penticton, B.C. said his 23-year-old nephew, a medic who served with the 1st Field Ambulance based in Edmonton, was one week away from seeing his six-month tour come to an end before heading to Cyprus.

Now he will return home in a flag-draped coffin as the 26th Canadian killed in the conflict since soldiers were deployed to Afghanistan in 2002 and Bob said Canada should rethink its role in the war-ravaged and dangerous country before more lives are lost.

“They’re not keeping the peace, it’s a war zone and I don’t see what they’re doing there,” said the Canadian military veteran who served from 1964 to 1976.

“Why are we getting sacrificed there?”

“I believe in defending this country, not in meddling in someone else’s affairs.”

Eykelenboom’s immediate family, including his brother Gord from Calgary, gathered in Comox yesterday (SAT) after receiving word Andrew had been killed.

A family spokeswoman said distraught kin were not ready to comment.

Bob said Eykelenboom was in his second term of enlistment and with two years left to serve, but had already begun planning to leave and follow his brothers to work in Alberta’s oilpatch.

"He was planning to get out as soon as he could," Bob said.

"But he was looking for adventure and he found it."

While he offered some advice to his nephew prior to his joining the Canadian Forces, Bob said like most soldiers, Eykelenboom did what he was told and didn't question the mission.

"You don't go into the military with these noble ideas like bringing democracy or helping (Afghanistan) rebuild," he said.

"I have one word: crap.

"They're there because they have to be there and there's no end in sight."

Four French Soldiers Wounded In Kabul

08-14-2006 AFP & Xinhua

Four French NATO soldiers suffered minor injuries when a bomb exploded near their convoy during the morning rush hour in the Afghan capital Kabul, officials have said.

The blast, in the city's northern Khair Khana district, appeared to have been caused by a roadside bomb, said the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Monday.

"The bomb went off when the French military medical convoy was passing by," said Colonel Jacky Fouquereau, a spokesman for ISAF's regional command.

"Three soldiers were wounded on an armoured military carrier and a fourth soldier was wounded in a small light armoured vehicle."

Interior ministry spokesman Yousuf Stanizai said the bomb had been fixed to a bicycle and was parked by the roadside.

A Xinhua reporter on the spot saw the attacked vehicle had been drawn away and broken glass scattered on the ground.

Some ISAF armored vehicles and jeeps were staying on the road, and some ISAF soldiers were guarding beside.

Assorted Resistance Action

13 Aug 2006 KABUL (AP) & 8.14.06 Reuters & Arab Times

A clash between militants and Afghan troops left one soldier dead and two others wounded in southeastern Afghanistan, while a gunfight between local police left an officer dead, officials said Sunday.

The Afghan soldier was killed in Barmal district of Paktika province Saturday during the clash with militants, said Sayyed Jamal, the spokesman for the province's governor. No information was available about any militant casualties.

Meanwhile, a clash between police officers in Andarab district of central Baglan province, left one police officer dead and four wounded Saturday, said Kamin, a police official in the province, who goes by only one name. It was not immediately clear what caused the fight.

A suspected Taliban insurgent was killed and another wounded after militants attacked and clashed with police in Aka Ghar district of southern Zabul province late Saturday, said district police chief Momuand Khan. There were no police injured.

Separately, militants blocked the main Kandahar-Kabul highway in Zabul province Sunday, hijacked three trucks and torched two, said Noor Mohammad Paktin, Zabul's chief of police.

On Monday, a car-bomber rammed a vehicle into a convoy of Afghan troops in the southeastern province of Paktika, wounding six soldiers and a civilian, a provincial official said.

Five Afghan soldiers were killed in an ambush in southeast Afghanistan on Sunday, the US-led coalition said. Six Afghan soldiers were also wounded in the ambush when extremists attacked their command post with small arms and rocket-propelled grenades in the Bermel district of Paktika province, the coalition said in a statement.

Three of the wounded soldiers suffered only minor injuries and returned to duty after being treated on the scene, the statement said. The three others were evacuated by air to a hospital run by the coalition.

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

**“As For The Americans, They Come,
Make Promises, Then Disappear”
“They Should Let The Taliban Come
Back!”**

10 August 2006 By Sara Daniel, Le Nouvel Observateur [Excerpts]

In their sand-colored shalwar khamiz, wearing blue and beige longhi headdresses, two tribal chiefs from Ghazni province - where the Taliban are reinforcing their presence - approach the politician's desk. One is a school teacher, the other a member of the municipal council. They don't even dare say their names out of fear of potential reprisals. In an undertone, they both paint a worrying picture of the situation in Ghazni province.

According to the two men, several days ago, Taliban regime sympathizers rode through the streets of six Karabah district villages with loud speakers, threatening any who cooperated with the Afghan government with death.

For three months, the Taliban have become emboldened, and now they make these "visits" with their faces uncovered.

The village residents could, in consequence, recognize these Taliban, who have even established their headquarters in a mosque. Yet no one has denounced them.

Why would they? The last time the villagers pointed out who was responsible for an attack, the perpetrators were released immediately after paying the district's chief of police some money.

Moreover, the "Kabul people" are as feared here as the Taliban. The "governor's men" take what they want in stores and at the gas station, and then get indignant when someone asks them to pay. When merchants protest, the warlords' protégés threaten to denounce them to the Americans as al-Qaeda....

As for the Americans, they come, make promises, then disappear: "If they can't guarantee our security, why waste their time?" wonders Karabah's elected representative. "They should let the Taliban come back!"

The situation described by the two Ghazni tribal chiefs is a recurrent scenario in the south, according to an international official who preferred to remain anonymous: "A group or a tribe is designated to the Americans as al-Qaeda members by another group that wants to appropriate its revenues (from corruption or drug trafficking) for itself.

The Americans arrive, arrest the old guys, imprison people left and right. And the populations are pushed into the arms of the Taliban. In Oruzgan, we're the ones, we Westerners, who have put them in power!"

According to this person, the international community has collapsed in the last few weeks: "We tried to impose a state of law and we were directed by tribal predators."

Another point of friction between the international community and the Afghan president: the question of police reform. Everyone in Afghanistan complains about these violent officials with their Mafia behavior, the kingpins of corruption.

As soon as one leaves Kabul, one sees them on the roads, at check-points, there to exact their "tax" on automobile drivers. For in this predation economy that survives in Afghanistan, the post of police chief, even a local police chief, is a center of crucial power that buys itself a fortune....

"We've worked really hard on the new list of police to expunge the scum. But Karzai sat on our work. He threw out the good guys and promoted the worst, rapists and war criminals," despairs one Western diplomat.

TROOP NEWS

“Thank You Lieutenant Watada!”



Lt. Watada backed by members of Iraq Veterans Against the War. Photo by Jeff Paterson, Not in Our Name (Indybay.org)

SEATTLE (August 12, 2006) Hundreds of military veterans rose to their feet this evening in an impromptu chant, “Thank You Lieutenant Watada!” Lt. Ehren Watada publicly refused to deploy with the Fort Lewis, Washington-based 3rd Stryker Brigade on June 22 becoming the first military officer to take such a stand.

JCS Chief “Detects Frustration” Among Iraq Troops;

[No Shit?]

Aug 14 ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer

Gen. Peter Pace said in an interview at the conclusion of a two-day visit; his first since surging sectarian violence triggered talk of all-out civil war; that his meetings with U.S. commanders and their troops left him convinced that the Pentagon is correct to focus its effort mainly on training Iraqi security forces.

Pace said his encounters with U.S. troops at each stop in Iraq reinforced his belief that they are proud of what they are doing and satisfied with what they have accomplished.

But he also said he had detected among them "some frustration at the Iraqis for not yet grasping the opportunity that's in front of them."

The troops feel, "We're doing our part. When is the (Iraqi) governance part going to kick in? And that's a fair question."

Pace preached patience. [A Marine General? Preaching *patience* to the troops? Now you can be 100% sure the war is fucked.]

Recruiters? Criminals, Sexual Abusers, Liars; The Predators' Wrongdoings Underreported, Government Says

[Thanks to David Honish, Veterans For Peace, and PB, who sent this in.]

08/14/06 By ANNE PLUMMER FLAHERTY, Associated Press Writer & By Rick Maze, Army Times Staff writer

The Government Accountability Office, the investigative arm of Congress, says a 50 percent increase occurred between fiscal 2004 and 2005 in substantiated cases of recruiter wrongdoing.

A 100 percent increase in criminal violations, such as falsifying documents and sexual harassment, took place over the two fiscal years.

Military recruiters have increasingly resorted to overly aggressive tactics and even criminal activity to attract young troops to the battlefield, congressional investigators say.

Grueling combat conditions in Iraq, a decent commercial job market and tough monthly recruiting goals have made recruiters' jobs more difficult, the Government Accountability

Office said Monday. This has probably prompted more recruiters to resort to strong-arm tactics, including harassment or criminal means such as falsifying documents, to satisfy demands, GAO states.

According to service data provided to the GAO, substantiated cases of wrongdoing jumped by more than a third, from about 400 cases in 2004 to almost 630 in 2005. Meanwhile, criminal cases, such as sexual harassment or falsifying medical records, more than doubled in those years, jumping from 30 incidents to 70.

More than half the recruiting crimes reported in 2005 were by the Army, which is bearing the brunt of the war in Iraq.

GAO warned that reports of recruiter misconduct are likely too low because the services do not track such cases and many incidents likely go unreported. The Defense Department, GAO found, is not "in a sound position to assure the general public that it knows the full extent to which recruiter irregularities are occurring."

Combat Veteran Military Resister Says Iraq A “War Of Aggression”



Iraq combat veteran Sgt. Ricky Clousing speaks out against the war in Iraq. Photo by Jeff Paterson, Not in Our Name (jeff @ paterson.net) Indybay.org

SEATTLE August 11, 2006: Iraq combat veteran Ricky Clousing, a 24-year-old Army sergeant and interrogator from Seattle outlined his opposition to a "war of aggression" that has "no legal basis to be fought" today at a morning press conference today joining a growing number of military objectors to the "illegal" Iraq occupation war.

Activists Protest Military Ban On Gays: “I Made A Commitment To Fulfill My Duty, And I Never Got To Do That”

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in.]

Aug 11 By PATRICK CONDON, Associated Press Writer & August 14, 2006 By Nancy Zuckerbrod, Associated Press

On paper, Haven Herrin seems to be an ideal candidate for military recruiters.

She can easily run five miles and was valedictorian of her college class. "Frankly, I'm exactly the kind of person the military says it wants," she said.

But when Herrin tried recently to sign up for the Minnesota National Guard, she was turned down because she told the recruiter she is a lesbian, a revelation that tripped the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy banning openly gay service members.

Her admission was the opening round of a nationwide campaign against the 13-year-old policy by a group of young activists. In the next few months, gay men and women in their late teens and early 20s will attempt to enlist at recruiting offices in 30 cities. They will also disclose their sexual orientation.

If they are rebuffed, the activists plan to stage sit-ins at the offices, hoping to attract media coverage and support from a public they believe increasingly opposes the ban.

Organizers have dubbed the campaign Right to Serve. It was conceived by Herrin and Jacob Reitan, the 24-year-old young adult coordinator for the Virginia-based gay rights group called Soulforce.

The Pentagon's policy on gays is "as clear-cut an example of discrimination that you could find," Reitan said. "No one can deny it, and it's happening every day."

Since the policy was adopted, more than 11,000 gay service members have been discharged, according to the Service Members Legal Defense Network, which is opposed to the policy. Critics argue that in many cases military officials have violated its spirit, pursuing service members based on rumors or innuendo.

"Even service members who try to keep their end of the deal — who 'don't tell' — are being routinely subjected to malicious outings and investigations," said Steve Ralls, spokesman for the network.

"The American people have a perception of don't ask, don't tell being true to its name, and in reality that's just not the case."

The Right to Serve activists know they are in for a lengthy battle. President Bush supports don't ask, don't tell, and legislation in Congress to overturn it has few sponsors from the Republican majority.

All of the gay activists who try to enlist in the next few months are ready to serve, Reitan said. In many cases, they have wanted to join the military for years, but were unwilling to conceal their sexual orientation.

Shane Bagwell, a Philadelphia teen, took part in one of Right to Serve's first efforts to enlist gays. He was refused his lifelong goal of joining the Air Force.

Bagwell's grandfathers served in the Air Force and the Navy. He also has an uncle in the Navy and another who works at the Pentagon. His great-uncle served in World War I. "It's such an important part of my family," he said.

The gay activists hope such stories will attract public support.

"People need to know, these are their kids," Herrin said. "These are strong leaders who are intelligent, who have ethics and morals, who have nothing amiss with their lives. And they want to serve their country."

An Army base in Missouri used the "don't ask, don't tell" policy to kick out more soldiers than any other military installation last year, followed by an Army base on the Kentucky-Tennessee border and a naval base in Virginia.

Sixty people were dismissed last year from Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., according to Defense Department documents shared with The Associated Press by the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network. That was up from 40 discharges under the policy from the training facility in 2004.

The second-highest number of discharges were at Fort Campbell, a sprawling Army base on the Kentucky-Tennessee line. But the 49 people dismissed there, up from 19 in 2004, also represented the single-biggest increase in discharges anywhere.

It was at Fort Campbell where a soldier, Pfc. Barry Winchell, was bludgeoned to death in 1999 by a fellow soldier who believed Winchell was gay. Gay discharges from the base went up sharply on the heels of that murder but later subsided.

"The numbers at Fort Campbell remain disturbing because of the history there," said C. Dixon Osburn, executive director of Servicemembers Legal Defense Network. "The discharge numbers had gone significantly down. This seems to be a rebound. It's not clear why."

The Pentagon has said there were 726 military members discharged under the policy last year — up 11 percent from the year before — but did not publicly release base-specific information.

The data provided to the legal advocacy group showed the Norfolk, Va., naval base had the third highest number of gay dismissals in 2005, with 35 people leaving under the policy. The Fort Benning Army base in Georgia was next with 31 discharges.

Dr. Elizabeth Recupero, an internist and pediatrician discharged under the policy last year, said she is confident it will eventually be repealed.

“It’s going to be overturned because people are needed, and it’s not going to matter who they’re sleeping with,” she said. “We’re in a situation of high alert and war.”

Recupero was discharged last year after an investigation that lasted about five years. She was to be stationed at Fort Drum, N.Y., after doing her medical training but never served there, having been put on leave during the inquiry.

Recupero says she regrets the way things turned out. “I’m an honorable person,” she said. “I made a commitment to fulfill my duty, and I never got to do that, and I kind of feel lousy about this.”

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.

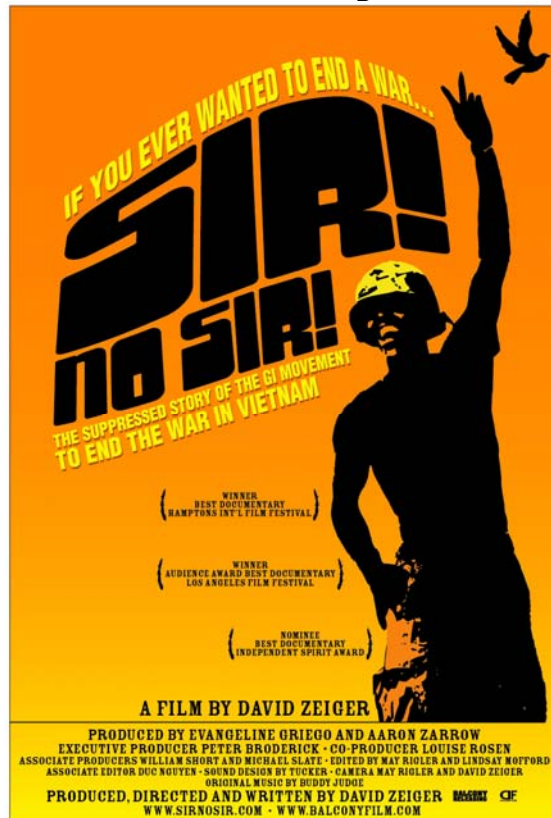
NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“The Little-Known Protest Of The Vietnam War Staged From Within The Ranks Of The Military”



2006 By Jason Buchanan, All Movie Guide

The little-known protest of the Vietnam War staged from within the ranks of the military is explored in director David Zeiger's revealing documentary.

Despite the well-documented media coverage of Vietnam War protests that took place on college campuses across the nation, few people but the most ardent history buffs remain aware of the massive protests that flourished in U.S. barracks and military bases at home and abroad.

Staged by countless military men disillusioned with the ongoing war, these protests reached from the hallowed halls of West Point to the bullet-riddled rice fields of Vietnam.

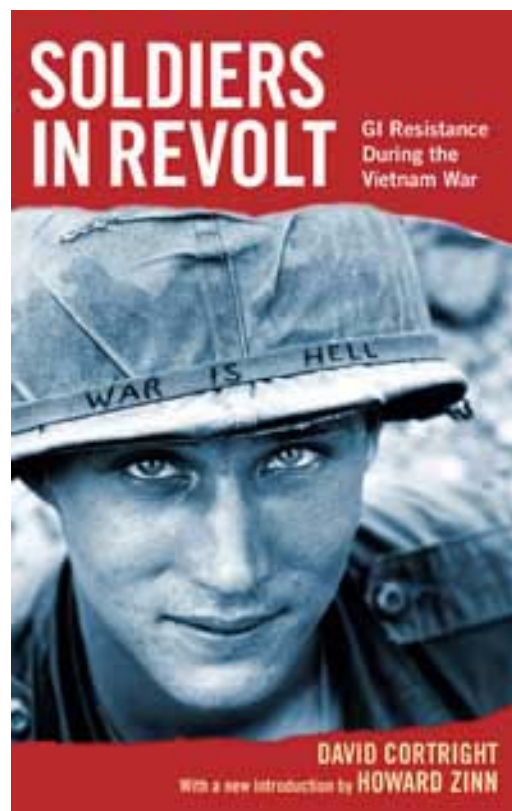
Though hundreds of soldiers were imprisoned for voicing their controversial views and thousands more sent into exile for their subversive activities, the tireless efforts of the government and media to suppress this remarkable tale would eventually falter as the dissenting voices became too numerous to silence.

Thirty years after the last bombs were dropped on Vietnam, the remarkable tale of the soldiers unafraid to stand up for their beliefs comes to the screen in a film that will forever alter the manner in which contemporary audiences view one of the most controversial wars in modern history.

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

The Sir! No Sir! DVD is on sale now, exclusively at www.sirnosir.com.

Also available will be a Soundtrack CD (which includes the entire song from the FTA Show, "Soldier We Love You"), theatrical posters, tee shirts, and the DVD of "A Night of Ferocious Joy," a film by me about the first hip-hop antiwar concert against the "War on Terror."



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.

WAR

Aug. 1915 V.I. Lenin: From: The Defeat of Our Government

The war cannot but call forth among the masses the most stormy feelings which destroy the usual sluggishness of mass psychology. Without adjustment to these new stormy feelings, revolutionary tactics are impossible.

What are the main currents of these stormy feelings?

1. Horror and despair. Hence growth of religious feelings. Once more the churches are full, the reactionaries rejoice. 'Wherever there are sufferings, there is religion,' says the arch-reactionary, Barres. He is right, too.
2. Hatred for the 'enemy,' a feeling carefully fanned by the bourgeoisie (more than by the priests) and of economic and political value only to the bourgeoisie.
3. Hatred for one's own government and one's bourgeoisie; a feeling of all class-conscious workers who understand, on the one hand, that war is a 'continuation of politics' on the part of imperialism, which they meet by 'continuing' their hatred for their class enemy, on the other hand, that 'war against war' is a silly phrase if it does not mean revolution against their own government.

It is impossible to arouse hatred against one's own government and one's bourgeoisie without wishing their defeat, and it is impossible to be a non-hypocritical opponent of 'civil' (class) 'peace' without arousing hatred towards one's own government and bourgeoisie!!!"

“The New Movement For Immigrant Rights Is The Most Exciting Development In The Struggle For Social Justice And Workers’ Rights In A Generation”

July August 2006, By Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, International Socialist Review [Excerpt]

The debate over immigration in this country is racist.

Its intention is to demonize Mexicans and other Latinos, about whom the debate is almost exclusively focused.

It is no great revelation to say that politicians and the media focus on undocumented Latinos to avoid the real debates about what is happening to this country. The fact that Black elected officials and much of the Black Left have either been on the sidelines or passively in support of this movement only points to their further political degeneration.

Instead of talking about how to organize and fight for better jobs and higher wages, we are marooned in a surreal discussion about how the worst jobs with the lowest wages are “Black jobs” and we are mad at Mexican immigrants for “stealing them.”

Instead of embracing the movement and organizing and mobilizing the Black community to participate in the demonstrations that have brought literally millions of people onto the streets, Black leaders sit jealously on the sidelines nitpicking and haggling over whether or not immigrants should refer to the new struggle as a civil rights movement.

Are there ordinary Black workers who are afraid of what the future of immigrants in this country will mean for them? Of course there are, but we have to patiently argue that if the state is allowed to criminalize the undocumented and stigmatize the documented, it will only increase division and promote racism.

It would be a huge step backward.

The new movement for immigrant rights is the most exciting development in the struggle for social justice and workers’ rights in a generation.

It should be embraced, studied, and generalized to a whole number of social and economic ills afflicting this society.

Imagine a new movement against racism, against poverty, against the war.

The most dispossessed of our society are showing us all that, not only is it possible, but it really is the only way forward from here.

OCCUPATION REPORT

1,900 Of 2,000 Fallujah Cops Desert;

“1,400 Policemen Had Left Their Jobs Since Friday”

August 14, 2006 By Solomon Moore, Los Angeles Times

BAGHDAD, Iraq: Hundreds of newly recruited police officers in Fallujah failed to show up for work Sunday after insurgents disseminated pamphlets threatening officers who stayed on the job, according to police officials in the restive western Iraq city.

Fallujah Police Lt. Mohammed Alwan said that the force, which he estimated had increased to more than 2,000, has now shrunk to only 100.

Alwan said that insurgents have killed dozens of policemen in their homes and also attacked family members in a weeklong intimidation campaign.

A Fallujah police major, who spoke on condition of anonymity due to a fear of reprisals, said that at least 1,400 policemen had left their jobs since Friday, 400 of them police officials above the rank of officer.

“During the last three months more than 100 policemen were killed here,” including a number of senior officers, the police major said.

The U.S. military has dispatched some units from Fallujah to Ramadi, a nearby insurgent hotspot, during the same period of time that police officials in Fallujah claim insurgents have mounted their intimidation campaign.

The Marines stationed in western Anbar province - the heartland of the Sunni Arab insurgency - have struggled to recruit police officers in Fallujah, which was the scene of major clashes in 2004 and has since remained under a strict Marine cordon and curfew. **[Right. Well, we see how well that works, don't we?]**

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE/LEBANON

“Hizbollah Sprang Their Trap, Killing More Than 20 Israeli Soldiers In Less Than Three Hours”

14 August 2006 Robert Fisk, The Independent [Excerpts]

In all, at least 39 - possibly 43 - Israeli soldiers have been killed in the past day as Hizbollah guerrillas, still launching missiles into Israel itself, have fought back against Israel's massive land invasion into Lebanon.

Israeli military authorities talked of "cleaning" and "mopping up" operations by their soldiers south of the Litani river but, to the Lebanese, it seems as if it is the Hizbollah that have been doing the "mopping up".

By last night, the Israelis had not even been able to reach the dead crew of a helicopter - shot down on Saturday night - which crashed into a Lebanese valley.

Thousands of their [Hizbollah's] members remain alive and armed in the ruined hill villages of southern Lebanon for just this moment and, only hours after their leader, Sayed Hassan Nasrallah, warned Israel on Saturday that his men were waiting for them on the banks of the Litani river, the Hizbollah sprang their trap, killing more than 20 Israeli soldiers in less than three hours.

“Support Palestinians In Their Struggle For Self-Determination Against A Colonial Settler State”

The movement also looks to an end to apartheid, where the land of Palestine/Israel will be a single, democratic state, with one vote for every citizen regardless of race or religion. This is a realistic vision. It points to an end to the racism and war that are inherent in apartheid, and to the creation of real democracy worthy of the name.

July 8, 2006 By Abbie Bakan, Socialist Worker (Canada)

On the front page of the June 29 Globe and Mail was a story about the Israeli military's raid on occupied Gaza, including a "round up" of democratically elected Cabinet ministers. Among those "detained" were the Palestinian Deputy Prime Minister Nasser Shaer, and Labour Minister Mohammed Barghouti.

As the newsletter of Al Awda Toronto, put the case:

“(U)nsatisfied with the destruction it has forced upon Palestinian society, (Israel) is now engaged in a massive assault on the people and refugees of the Gaza Bantustan - the place with the highest population density in the world, made up mostly of Palestinian refugees expelled from their real lands in the ethnic cleansing of the past 59 years.

“It is clear that Israel now intends to kill and ethnically cleanse as many more as their military can.”

In the state of Israel, there is one set of laws for those who are deemed to be legally Jewish, and another set of laws for those who are not, the indigenous Palestinians.

This is not a “democracy”, despite the claims of Israel’s apologists, in any standard meaning of the word.

The central concept in democracy is equality Israel is not based on a political system where all are born free and equal citizens, where there is equality of opportunity, or where there is universality in the administration of rights or justice.

Instead, there is a fundamental divide based on legally enforced rules of race and ethnicity.

Residents of Israel are compelled to carry identity cards that separate Jews from Palestinians.

These state-enforced identities determine every aspect of daily life.

There are separate and distinct areas of residence, enforced by concrete walls, military checkpoints, and the threat of being shot on sight.

There are separate schools for every level of education, separate employment markets, and separate access to markets and credit.

There are separate license plates on cars and taxis, separate roads, separate hospitals and separate rights to assembly, marriage and inheritance.

And there are separate processes of being able to access, or of being denied, justice.

Increasingly, following an initiative among Palestinian organizations and the indefatigable campaigning of numerous activists, the label of “apartheid” is being applied to the Israeli state. And it’s is starting to stick.

This is an important and welcome development, adding clarity and accuracy to every discussion and debate about the Palestinian struggle for freedom. The term is not some arbitrary charge. It is an accurate explanation of the operation of Israeli law and politics.

Virginia Tilley, author of *The One State Solution: A Breakthrough for Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Deadlock*, summarizes the case:

“The special standing of Jewish identity under Israeli law is not well understood by most but is fundamental to the Israeli- Palestinian conflict ...

“A cluster of laws defines Israel as a ‘Jewish state’ and establishes Israel’s two-tiered system of citizenship, which privileges Jewish’ nationality. The Law of Return (1950)

grants any Jew the right to immigrate to Israel The Citizenship Law (1952) ... grants anyone arriving in Israel under the Law of Return (i.e., Jews) Israeli citizenship without further procedures, immediately upon entering the country.

“The Population Registry Law (1965) then provides such citizens are classified as having Jewish nationality’ (not ‘Israeli nationality,’ which is prohibited under Israeli law).

“The World Zionist Organization-Jewish Agency (Status) Law (1952) authorizes the Jewish Agency and its various arms to administer most of the state’s land and properties and a plethora of other resources in the interests of that Jewish nationality.

“The Jewish Agency’s administrative authority reaches far through Israeli society, including ‘(t)he organization of immigration abroad and the transfer of immigrants and their property to Israel; youth immigration; agricultural settlement in Israel.. .(and) the development of private capital investments in Israel’...”.

Describing Israel as an apartheid state suggests a direct comparison with South Africa when it was governed by an overtly racist regime.

Un Davis, author of *Apartheid Israel: Possibilities for the Struggle Within*, explains the meaning of the analogy:

“... I refer to the term ‘apartheid’ in the narrow and technical sense of the word, namely, as a term designating a political programme predicated on discrimination in law on a racial basis; and I refer to ‘racial discrimination’ as defined in Article 1 (1) of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 1966. ...

“Classifying Israel as an apartheid state does not mean equating Israel with South Africa. ... But the relevant differences (for example, that one million Palestinian Arabs in Israel are citizens, though not equal citizens) in the first case do not imply that one (South Africa) is apartheid and the other (Israel) is not...”

To identify Israel as an apartheid regime challenges the claims that there is anything progressive in the state of Israel.

It points to the links between the interests of Palestinians and black South Africans. And it calls on all those who identify with the oppressed against the oppressor; with the anti-racists against the racists; to support Palestinians in their struggle for self-determination against a colonial settler state.

One difference between South Africa and Israel is that the latter is defended by an international machine of intellectuals and organizations in civil society

They hide behind the claim that Israel represents the interests of Jewish people, domestically and internationally.

This is a lie.

Israel is sustained by US imperialism, and by the ideology of Zionism.

Zionism is a secular ideology, not a religious one.

It claims that Jews are a “nation” rather than those who adhere to a certain set of religious beliefs.

The anti-Israeli apartheid movement also draws inspiration from the successful movement against South African apartheid. The lessons of the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against South Africa have inspired the call for a similar campaign against Israel, which is now rapidly gaining ground.

The movement also looks to an end to apartheid, where the land of Palestine/Israel will be a single, democratic state, with one vote for every citizen regardless of race or religion. This is a realistic vision. It points to an end to the racism and war that are inherent in apartheid, and to the creation of real democracy worthy of the name.



Rally In San Francisco For Lebanon and Palestine Aug 12th, 2006 by Robert B. Livingston

[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



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

How We Can Fund A New War With Iran Without Giving Up Precious Tax Cuts For The Rich (Memo From D. Rumsfeld)

August 2006 By Dan Greenburg, Funny Times [Excerpt]

1. Convert our troops' pay from salary to piecework.

Why waste money subsidizing soldiers while they're eating, sleeping, shaving, smoking, reloading, dressing wounds, traveling to and from firefights, and not killing anybody?

If we dispense with salaries and simply pay soldiers on a per-kill basis, this will be a far more efficient use of our money, and will be an exciting incentive to increase their output!

2. Charge our troops for ALL their equipment.

Our troops, God bless 'em, have shown their pluck by buying their own body armor, and by cannibalizing abandoned vehicle parts from the darnedest places to use as Humvee armor!

They take such pride in their resourcefulness.

Why not increase that sense of pride by having them buy their own helmets, boots, night vision goggles, M-16s, RPGs, and Bradley Fighting Vehicles?

If we follow the above suggestions, we'll not only have enough money for that war in Iran, we'll have plenty left over for some really satisfying ones in Syria and North Korea!

Bush Grants Self Permission To Grant More Power To Self

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

August 1, 2006 The Onion

WASHINGTON, DC: In a decisive 1-0 decision Monday, President Bush voted to grant the president the constitutional power to grant himself additional powers.

"As president, I strongly believe that my first duty as president is to support and serve the president," Bush said during a televised address from the East Room of the White House shortly after signing his executive order. "I promise the American people that I will not abuse this new power, unless it becomes necessary to grant myself the power to do so at a later time."

The Presidential Empowerment Act, which the president hand-drafted on his own Oval Office stationery and promptly signed into law, provides Bush with full authority to permit himself to authorize increased jurisdiction over the three branches of the federal government, provided that the president considers it in his best interest to do so.

"In a time of war, the president must have the power he needs to make the tough decisions, including, if need be, the decision to grant himself even more power," Bush said. "To do otherwise would be playing into the hands of our enemies."

Added Bush: "And it's all under due process of the law as I see it."

"The president can grant himself the power to interpret new laws however he sees fit, then use that power to interpret a law in such a manner that in turn grants him increased power."

In addition, the president reserves the right to overturn any decision to allow himself to increase his power by using a line-item veto, which in turn may only be overruled by the president.

Senior administration officials lauded Bush's decision, saying that current presidential powers over presidential power were "far too limited."

"Previously, the president only had the power to petition Congress to allow him to grant himself the power to grant more power to himself," Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez said shortly after the ceremony. "Now, the president can grant himself the power to interpret new laws however he sees fit, then use that power to interpret a law in such a manner that in turn grants him increased power."

In addition, a proviso in the 12th provision of the new law permits Bush the authority to waive the need for any presidential authorization of power in a case concerning national security, although legal experts suggest it would be little exercised.

Despite the president's new powers, the role of Congress and the Supreme Court has not been overlooked. Under the new law, both enjoy the newly broadened ability to grant the president the authority to increase his presidential powers.

"This gives the president the tools he needs to ensure that the president has all the necessary tools to expedite what needs to be done, unfettered by presidential restrictions on himself," said Rep. John Cornyn (R-TX). "It's long overdue."

Though public response to the new law has been limited, there has been an unfavorable reaction among Democrats, who are calling for restrictions on Bush's power to allow himself to grant the president more powers that would restrict the powers of Congress.

"This is a clear case of President Bush having carte blanche to grant himself complete discretion to enact laws to increase his power," Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) said. "The only thing we can do now is withhold our ability to grant him more authority to grant himself more power."

"Unless he authorizes himself to strip us of that power," Reid added.

Despite criticism, Bush took his first official action under the new law Tuesday, signing an executive order ordering that the chief executive be able to order more executive orders.

In addition, Republicans fearful that the president's new power undermines their ability to grant him power have proposed a new law that would allow senators to permit him to grant himself power, with or without presidential approval.

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