

GI SPECIAL 4H27:



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

**“This War Is Going
Nowhere And It’s
Decimating Me And
Mine”**

**“You Can Tell Our Government
That This War Is Not Justified”**

“You Can Bring Me Home!”

Dear citizen,

I need you to do something for me. Something to help you understand.

Come out to Iraq and sit with me in the 110+ weather. Stand guard duty in the tower protecting your fellow soldiers on the Forward Operating Base that doesn't protect you from rockets and mortar attacks because you can't fire back.

Better yet, why don't you come and turn a wrench on a Humvee that's been running all day?

Try 200+ degree heat coming off the engine and you have to replace an alternator, because the truck must be fixed RIGHT NOW.

Do all this while wearing 35+ pounds of gear. Sweat dripping in your eyes, stinging, turning everything hazy so you can't see. Burning your hands even though you're wearing gloves.

Stand with me at a checkpoint, checking vehicles for illegal contraband.

Knowing that every day there is someone that you've searched secretly wanting to kill you.

Ride with me in my support convoy and download food by hand. Because the forklift that was supposed to do it is broke, because my unit can't get the part in time.

Get in my tank and man the machine gun. Watch your fellow soldier get shot in the head from a sniper. Knowing you can't do anything about it because you must have positive identification of a target BEFORE you can even fire in the direction it came from.

Stand with me as I receive a Purple Heart for shrapnel embedded in my chest because of my 'Valor'. Which the military will never take out because it's not causing undue pain and could make me non-deployable or worse send me back home.

Go out on a combat patrol and watch as the truck in front of you is blasted with an IED. Soccer ball-size holes in the door that's supposed to protect you. Killing men or women that have become your extended family.

Then attend 'Roll Call' with me. Listen as Taps is played and the 1st Sergeant calls the dead soldier's name three times.

Hear the silence in the room.

Sit with my family around the Christmas Tree and watch my children open their presents. Some marked from Dad, so that they remember that they still have one. Watch them walk for the first time, or graduate high school. Celebrate their birthday with them and then answer their questions when they ask you if I'm ever coming home. Hoping that they won't ask you if I'm dead.

Sleep in my room and watch me wake up. Not remembering any dreams, for the last three years. The only ones being nightmares that leave me shaken, that quickly fade with the morning.

Stand with me while I try to reintegrate into a marriage that's lasted six years, for which I've only physically been with my spouse for three of them.

Get to know her all over again. Hoping that this time she's not going to say that it's over. That you haven't been there for her or the kids. She can't take it anymore. She needs someone more stable.

Fly with me home when my deployment is over only to find out that I'll be deployed within three to eighteen months back to the same country for my third time.

Then explain to me why I can't get out because the new unit I'm going to is deploying and my enlistment is up one month into their deployment.

Explain to me about stop loss and how it's going to extend my military obligation involuntarily for another 14 months. Tell me why my recruiter never told me about that.

I need you to understand. I'm not complaining.

I just want you to know what I've given up. So YOU don't have too.

I do this so YOU won't have too. So YOU can do all those things, freely, that I can't do day after day.

But this war is going nowhere and it's decimating me and mine.

So I'm asking you.

Please, citizen, talk to our government! Fight my battle there while I fight this one here.

YOU can bring me home! YOU can tell our government that this war is not justified. That you want your fellow citizens back.

We do after all have a government founded BY THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE. Isn't it time the people started telling the government what to do?

**Sincerely,
A Soldier**

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

Four Nebraska Guard Soldiers Injured When Humvee Falls In Canal

8.26.06 By The Lincoln Journal Star

One of the Nebraska National Guard soldiers injured in Iraq Monday could be on his way back to the United States today, according to his uncle.

Cory Walcott, 32, of Lincoln, is one of four Nebraska National Guard soldiers who were trapped underwater in a Humvee after it fell into a canal. The accident occurred during a patrol near their base at Camp Anaconda, north of Baghdad.

His uncle, Buck Walcott of Lexington, said he was told Cory “almost drowned” and was airlifted to a hospital in Germany, where he was in serious condition for a time.

He was upgraded to stable condition, and “they expect him to make a full recovery,” Buck Walcott said. He said he did not know the nature of his nephew’s injuries.

Cory Walcott was expected to be flown to the United States today and return to Nebraska soon, his uncle said. The accident occurred near the time Cory Walcott was scheduled for military leave.

Maj. Gen. Roger Lempke of the Nebraska National Guard said two of the soldiers were taken to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. The other two were treated for minor injuries in Iraq, he said.

All four are from Southeast Nebraska, according to Lempke, and members of the 1st Squadron, 167th Cavalry.

Buck Walcott said he was told the Humvee accident was not caused by enemy activity and instead occurred when the road caved in. The accident occurred, he said, while the soldiers were patrolling a military base.

His nephew is not married, does not have any children, he said, and has lived in Lincoln most of his life. Cory Walcott worked as a home repairman and joined the guard about a year ago hoping to get financial help so he could go to school, his uncle said.

“He knew it was possible,” Buck Walcott said when asked if his nephew had reservations about joining because of the chance he might go to Iraq. “I don’t know if it was a tough decision for him.

“I was always worried something was going to happen to him.”

Local Soldier Wounded

August 23, 2006 WMBD Television

A Knoxville soldier is recovering in Iraq after being hit by a roadside bomb. Twenty-three-year-old specialist Jeremiah Sullivan suffered shrapnel wounds to his arms and legs.

His mother says the bomb exploded near his Humvee on Monday. She says he received some stitches for his injuries, but is expected to make a full recovery.

Sullivan is an Army paratrooper based out of Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He's been in Iraq for nearly a year.

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



U.S. soldiers patrol in the Dora district in Baghdad, 8.5.06. REUTERS/Ross Colvin

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Corpus Soldier Killed

08/16/2006 Jesse Bogan, Rio Grande Valley Bureau, San Antonio Express-News

Relatives of Spc. Rogelio Garza Jr., 26, of Corpus Christi, who was killed in Afghanistan, opened up Wednesday, describing him as a fun-loving jokester who joined the Army more out of financial need than national pride.

"He really wanted to be home all the time with his family," said Garza's widow, Renee, 25, the mother of his three kids, Myracle, 3, Rogelio III, nearly 2, and Antonio, 8 months. "But he knew it was something he had to do in order to provide for his family as well."

Garza was killed Friday when his platoon came under attack by gunfire and rocket-propelled grenades, officials said.

He left a job as a trash collector for the city of Corpus Christi in 2004 and joined the Army.

Renee Garza, a member of the Texas Army National Guard at the time, was going to switch to active duty, but found out during a medical screening at Fort Sam Houston that she was pregnant with their second child, a circumstance she described as a "wonderful shock."

Her husband joined instead with the understanding that it would ensure their children would be taken care of.

"Sometimes they get fevers and you don't know why and we don't have insurance, you know what I mean?" Renee Garza said, adding that she joined the Guard as a teenager to support her father, who was a school bus driver in Brownsville.

The Garzas met at Robstown High School. After she moved away her junior year, they remained friends and eventually eloped in 2002. Both "financially handicapped" at the time, she said, he got down on a knee, grabbed a ring already on one of her fingers and asked her to marry him.

As a sanitation worker, he was known to bring things home that he picked up on his route, including a stereo with a blown-out speaker.

"He was like, 'I am going to fix it and we are going to use it. It will be like brand-new again.' He was so funny," his wife said. "He never did, but he would try to fix it. ... I would tell him there is a reason why they throw it away."

Groton Native Burned

August 22, 2006 By Scott Waltman, American News Writer

A Groton native serving in the Army was severely burned Saturday in Afghanistan.

Spc. Nick Bratland, 20, a troop with the 10th Mountain Division stationed at Fort Drum, N.Y., was injured when an improvised explosive device hit the Humvee in which he was riding, said Bratland's mother, Cindy Sippel of Groton.

Sippel said she learned of her son's injuries on Saturday, when she got a telephone call from the Army. She said she was told her son has burns over half of his body, but that his condition is not life-threatening.

Bratland is being treated in a military hospital in Germany with his condition listed as very serious, Sippel said. He's in intensive care.

Sippel said she has not been able to talk with her son since he was injured. She said he's soon supposed to be transferred to the burn center at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. Exactly when is not known. As soon as Bratland arrives in United States, Sippel and other family members plan to visit him.

"We're doing the waiting game. We don't know when we're going," Sippel said. "We're very proud of him."

Sippel said her son joined the Army when he was 17 and still a student at Groton High School.

The 10th Mountain Division has been in Afghanistan since March 1. The light infantry division was to serve 18 months in Afghanistan, helping with the war on terror.

Sippel said Bratland was to come back to South Dakota in October for rest and recuperation, then return to Afghanistan. She said her son was looking forward to doing some pheasant hunting during the break.

Bratland's military future is unclear, Sippel said. She said she still doesn't know some of the details about the explosion, let alone what will happen once he arrives in Texas.

"I'm pretty anxious to get my eyes on him and see how he is," Sippel said.

She said Saturday's explosion was the second time her son was injured in Afghanistan. In May, he was hit with shrapnel when the Humvee he was riding in was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade. He underwent surgery and treatment in Afghanistan before returning to duty, Sippel said.

Sippel said she doesn't have a passport, so she can't get to Germany quickly to see her son. She said it would be a good idea for people with family members serving in the military to have passports in case they need to make sudden travel plans.

Canadian Soldiers Aid Resistance:

Kill Afghan Occupation Cop And Wound Random Civilians

8/26/2006 Agence France Presse

KANDAHAR: Canadian troops in southern Afghanistan shot and killed a plainclothes policeman and wounded five other Afghans on Saturday, mistakenly thinking they were attackers, the force said.

International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops shot at the Afghans in two incidents that took place 40 minutes apart in a Taliban stronghold in southern Kandahar province where troops come under regular attack.

The first shooting on Saturday involved a civilian truck carrying armed men in civilian clothes who later turned out to be plainclothes policemen, spokesman Major Scott Lundy told AFP.

One of the men later died from his wounds.

About 40 minutes afterwards, two people on a scooter approached the same ISAF position at high speed.

"They were warned to stop and failed to do so. As a result of this, warning shots were fired and one of the people on the scooter was wounded by a single gunshot," Lundy said.

The five wounded people were being treated at the main foreign military base in southern Afghanistan and the Kandahar Air Field.

Assorted Resistance Action

26 August 2006 Agence France-Presse

Taliban insurgents stormed government and police posts in two southern districts, sparking gun battles lasting hours.

A secretary at a district court was killed when Taliban stormed a government building in Ghazni province Friday, provincial spokesman Abdul Ali Fakori told AFP.

Late on Thursday, rebels captured for several hours three police posts in a remote district of troubled Zabol province.

TROOP NEWS

“If Anybody Has A Right To Judge Me It Should Be The 35 Soldiers I Fought With For Six Months”

Aug 26, 2006 By Jim McMahan, Workers World [Excerpts]

Seattle: Lt. Ehren Watada’s case highlighted a week of growing GI resistance that began at the national Veterans for Peace Convention in Seattle, Aug. 10-13, when Sgt. Ricky Clousing opened the events with a news conference announcing his opposition to the Iraq War. Sgt. Clousing stated his intention to turn himself in at nearby Ft. Lewis, Wash., and confront charges against him after being absent from the military.

The conference closed on the U.S./ Canadian border, where Kyle Snyder, an Iraq War veteran absent from the military, came forward as an objector.

“If anybody has a right to judge me it should be the 35 soldiers I fought with for six months.”

“Our Patriotism And Bravery Can Only Be Abused So Far”



www.ivaw.net

August 24, 2006 Campdemocracy.org [Excerpts]

Kelly Dougherty, Cofounder of Iraq Veterans Against the War, said:

“During the year I spent in Iraq and over a month spent along the Gulf Coast, I've seen first-hand the results of the Bush administration's policies.

“One of the most shocking things for me was to witness greater destruction in our own country than in war-torn Iraq. The similarities were sickening, displaced families, poverty, destruction of entire neighborhoods, and the militarization of the cities, to name a few.

"Every day I witness the leaders in Washington lie to the public and propagate fear, while their actions show that they don't care about the soldiers and veterans, the Iraqi people, or our own citizens along the Gulf Coast."

Garett Reppenhagen, Iraq Veteran Against the War, said:

"After my service as a Sniper in the Iraq War, I have a new appreciation for a true democracy that has leaders that represent the majority's views and stand for the opinions of the citizens of their nation. At this point in time we have an administration that fails to stand by its people.

"As the desires of our nation turn toward removing our military from a disastrous occupation in Iraq, our 'Decider' chooses to ignore popular request and 'Stay the Course'.

Our patriotism and bravery can only be abused so far. America has become wise to the empty jargon. It is time we demand that our government acts responsibly and in the interest of its citizens.

Bring the troops home now."

Opposition Among Americans To The War In Iraq Has Reached A New High: Majority Also Say Bush Is Not Honest

21 August 2006 CNN

Opposition among Americans to the war in Iraq has reached a new high, with only about a third of respondents saying they favor it, according to a poll released Monday.

Just 35 percent of 1,033 adults polled say they favor the war in Iraq; 61 percent say they oppose it -- the highest opposition noted in any CNN poll since the conflict began more than three years ago.

Most Americans (54 percent) don't consider him honest, most (54 percent) don't think he shares their values and most (58 percent) say he does not inspire confidence.

Bush's stand on the issues is also problematic, with more than half (57 percent) of Americans saying they disagree with him on the issues they care about.

**New York City Fundraiser For
Howie Hawkins,
Green Party Candidate For U.S.
Senate:**

“Immediate Withdrawal From Iraq”

**Sunday, August 27, 4:00pm at Rocky
Sullivan’s;
129 Lexington Ave. (between 28th & 29th St.)
\$25 per person, \$10 low income/students**

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in.]

Proceeds go to the Hawkins for Senate campaign.

Featuring New York rappers, Third Party

Have a drink at the legendary Rocky Sullivan's, loosen up to some great hip hop from Third Party, and talk to Howie Hawkins about his positions on these and other issues:

Immediate withdrawal from Iraq

Stop funding Israel's occupation

Universal health care

Convert the economy from oil to renewable energy

Full marriage equality for same-sex couples

Living wage and union rights for all workers, including immigrants

Please RSVP to dannykatch@gmail.com. For more info on Howie's campaign, go to www.hawkinsforsenate.org.

Israeli Infantry Petition:

We Refuse To Report For Duty Anymore

Tuesday evening the company soldiers and their friends formulated a petition declaring that in light of the lack of consideration and the sense of inequality between them and other reserve soldiers who received more recovery days, they don't intend to report for reserve duty.

08.22.06 Hanan Greenberg. Ynetnews.com

A petition written by soldiers of the 300th brigade of the Galilee division of reserve soldiers was submitted Monday to the brigade commander, Colonel Chen Livni.

In the petition it was written: "At the completion of the fighting, a difficult sense of deprivation and lack of consideration on the part of our senior officers have accumulated among us.

"The source of these feelings is the disregard of our company commander who has yet to see it fit to talk with the soldier or to interview some of them in order to draw conclusions on the management of the fighting, equipping of the soldier, and their manner of release.

"Therefore, we are announcing that we don't intend to continue serving as reserve soldiers in the IDF and are requesting that we not be called up for active reserve duty."

Until now, the reservists' protest hadn't come to a situation of declarations that they don't intend to serve.

Yet, according to the soldiers in the Orev company, who are about to be released from reserve duty Tuesday, the difficult decision was made in the face of great frustration and bitterness from their last reserve service in Lebanon. They signed the petition with "shaking hands."

One of the soldiers told Ynet, "We have been active since the end of July in the western zone. We carried out operations deep in the field, we destroyed launcher and damaged terror infrastructure.

"We received degrading treatment, the equipment was unsound, and there were supply problems on top of it all. But we kept quiet and drove on."

The soldiers are complaining about the fact that they received fewer days to prepare for service than other soldiers who received an emergency call-up. "Until now, soldiers from our company were stationed in Lebanon.

"Leading up to our release, we checked if we receive similar conditions as other reserve soldiers, in other words, five to seven days to recover. At first, they didn't answer our

questions. Afterwards, they told us that we will receive only two days because we weren't operating deep in Lebanon," said the same soldier.

Company soldiers say that they feel hurt. "We are running after the company commander and the deputy company commander in order to talk to them, but no one is listening. They're at the end of their rope," the soldier explained.

Tuesday evening the company soldiers and their friends formulated a petition declaring that in light of the lack of consideration and the sense of inequality between them and other reserve soldiers who received more recovery days, they don't intend to report for reserve duty.

"We gave our all – and this is what we get? We can't do it anymore," the soldiers say.

The petition has been signed by 40 company soldiers. The officers, it was agreed, won't sign, but expressed that they support the petition in principle. "The officers preferred not to sign, but we sense that they are no less hurt than we are," said one of the soldiers.

According to the reservists, they would have been happy not to get to such a situation. "We are part of the IDF and want to continue being a part of it. If only we could prevent this, but one must also think about the soldiers.

There are soldiers here that have never missed reserve duty, that report every time they are called. In this year alone we served 24 days in operational activity and another four days in brigade exercises.

"The feeling is so terrible that we can't keep quiet anymore," they said.

Soldiers of the reconnaissance company in the brigade have not signed the petition at this point.

"We feel the same, as if we have been used. But on the other hand, it's hard for us to sign on such a thing – that we will never do reserve duty again.

"In any case, we won't let this treatment become part of the agenda and we are thinking how to act.

"If they don't listen to us, we also will sign on this document," said one of the reconnaissance soldiers.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

“This Is The First Iraqi City That Has Kicked Out The Occupier!”

August 25, 2006 By Amit R. Paley, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpt]

BAGHDAD, Aug. 24

British troops abandoned a major base in southern Iraq on Thursday and prepared to wage guerrilla warfare along the Iranian border to combat weapons smuggling, a move that anti-American cleric Moqtada al-Sadr called the first expulsion of U.S.-led coalition forces from an Iraqi urban center.

"This is the first Iraqi city that has kicked out the occupier!" trumpeted a message from Sadr's office that played on car-mounted speakers in Amarah, capital of the southern province of Maysan. "We have to celebrate this occasion!"

[J]ubilant residents flocked to Sadr's office to offer their congratulations. Drivers in the street honked their car horns in celebration. Some prepared to take to the streets to rejoice.

"Today is a holiday in our province," said Abu Mustaffa, an unemployed 45-year-old from the city's al-Hussein district. "Thanks be to God!"

Abu Mustaffa said anger toward the British reached fever pitch in recent days after soldiers entered a mosque and arrested several local men. The provincial government is controlled by Sadr's movement, he said.

Assorted Resistance Action

26 Aug 2006 Reuters & The Associated Press & (KUNA)

Guerrillas killed a policeman in the town of Samarra, 100km (62 miles) north of Baghdad and killed a policeman in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul on Friday.

Militants in a speeding car opened fire Saturday on two sisters working as translators for the British consulate, killing one of them and seriously wounding the other, police said.

The two women were walking near their house in central Basra when they were shot, police said.

A man claiming to represent the Brigades of Imam al-Hussein, a known Shiite militia, called an Associated Press reporter in Basra to take responsibility for the attack. The caller said the group is "giving Iraqi people the good news of killing two agents who work for the British forces."

The police said that armed men clashed today with Iraqi soldiers in Al-Haswa town in Babel governorate south of Baghdad. Five Iraqi army soldiers were wounded.

Man Captured; His Firm “Doing Business With The United States”

August 27 Reuters

A little known Iraqi Islamist militant group said on Saturday it had captured a Turkish employee of a Turkish firm and demanded Ankara sever its ties with Baghdad's government for his release.

"We demand that the Turkish government closes this company and severs all forms of dealings with the traitorous Iraqi government which is allied with the occupation," said the Brigades of the Lions of Righteousness in a statement posted on a Web site used by militants.

The man who identified himself in a recording posted with the statement as Yildirim Tek of Istanbul urged his country to heed the group's call to save his life.

"I plea to the officials of my country ... to agree with this group to save me, to save me and bring me to my country, to my children and to my family. For God's sake," said Tek.

Tek's hands were shackled with chains.

He sat on a white plastic chair in front of a black banner carrying the name of the group and the phrase: "God is Great, there is no god but Allah."

The group said the Turkish firm, identified by Tek as Vinsan, was working with U.S. forces in Iraq and described Tek's statement as a "confession".

Tek said his Ankara-based construction company told its employees it was "doing work with the Iraqi government ... But here we learn that they are also doing business with the United States".

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

The Mosquitoes

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: August 25, 2006
Subject: The Mosquitoes by Dennis

[Written by Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan]

The Mosquitoes

"Sometimes I think my religion just makes it easier to die,"
Pat commented to his buddy Al who popped another beer open.
They were deep into the Vietnam jungle and after looking around,
he took a sip. Al didn't carry C-rations, extra socks or any of that,
just ammo and beer.

Pat began again, "I mean, they're saying
if I lead a good life that when I die, I'll live forever. Christ,
how can I live a good life here, I mean, I already made
my mistakes Al, you know that."

Al brushed away in the half dark
what felt like a million mosquitoes flying around his face,
so thick that sometimes he would breathe in one through his nose
or mouth or it would fly in his eye.
The silence and pain diving in and out of his ears.

Pat reflected again, "I mean, I hear they tell Charlie that he will go
straight to Buddha heaven when he dies fighting for his country.
And that sounds right Al,
but what the fuck are we fighting for?
I mean, Charlie's trying to kill us, the Vietnamese hate us,
why are we here ?

Al just shook his head, it was unclear if he was commenting
or shaking off mosquitoes.
"I mean, if I'm going to live life everlasting,
what's this thing inside me that doesn't want to die.
This fear, I mean, what am I afraid of ?"
Al just shook his head again.

Later when it was so dark that they could not see each other,
Pat heard the sound of a beer popping and the fizz
and he knew Al was still awake
and on guard.

“Fuck You Cheney, From The Soldiers Who Died In Vietnam”



From: Richard Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: Monday, August 21, 2006
Subject: "The Hawk Who Played Chicken"

“The Hawk Who Played Chicken”

“Chicken Cheney,” a Hawk with no balls.

**All the “Bring 'Em On”
tough guys, where do they all come from.**

**To think, 2,606 American soldiers have died in Iraq,
so this Limousine Warrior can pretend to
support the troops.**

**He sees American soldiers as objects to be moved around
on a Monopoly Board.**

When I was in Vietnam, I was part of the Green Machine.

This man's green machine fits in his back pocket.

All these guys think alike.

They do not give a shit about your life.

They play poker with your lives.

Three of my best friends died as a result of being in Vietnam.

Dick Cheney stated that he didn't go in the military because he had other priorities.

I witnessed an American soldier commit suicide in Vietnam with his M-16. I had another friend try to kill himself while he was in Vietnam.

I unzipped a body bag one time to view a soldier who had shot himself in the head with a pistol.

I saw another soldier take his last breath because he was shot in the stomach by a fellow soldier.

All of these young men had other priorities, but they put them on hold, because that is the way it is.

Fuck you Cheney, from the soldiers who died in Vietnam.

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

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Bush's Mission In Iraq



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

Baghdad: A Living Monument To U.S. Occupation Failure

August 22, 2006 Msnbc.com

Fuel prices in Iraq have reached peak levels, with gasoline costing approximately \$6 per gallon.

The costs of diesel, liquid propane gas used for cooking, and kerosene have risen to levels totally disproportionate to Iraqi's incomes, having a huge impact on day to day life for regular people.

Many people in Baghdad have abandoned their cars, even selling them. Those who can afford to buy gas go through extreme frustration to get it, sometimes waiting all night in endless lines to fill up their tanks, or are forced to buy gas on the black market at extremely inflated prices.

Meantime, the costs for taxis and the mini buses, widely used by Iraqis, have risen dramatically, too. For example, two months ago the bus fare used to be 500 Iraqi dinars or about 33 cents. Then a month ago the minibus drivers raised their fares to about 50 cents; now the drivers are charging about 67 cents.

Four hours of electricity a day, or pay

Elsewhere, the major problem for people remains electricity. The state power supply average is just four hours a day! That's been my personal experience in my neighborhood and the same goes across Baghdad from what I've gathered chatting with people on gas lines and elsewhere.

That means that most Iraqis are left relying on private generators in their neighborhoods to get power and forced to pay whatever the owners of the generators are charging.

It used to cost about \$5.40 per ampere, or unit of electricity, per month, the average Iraqi family requires at least 10 amperes a month per housing unit. Now, owners of the power generators are charging almost double, about \$10 a month per ampere.

Many people can't afford to pay that much each month. Others are forced to accept the costs because they know very well that they have no choice: either tolerate the nearly intolerable heat in August or pay.

Some generators owners have even stopped supplying power saying that the \$10 per ampere doesn't even cover their costs.

The vegetables and fruits markets have not been exempt from the fuel crisis either. Everything is getting more and more expensive.

Hassan Al-Baldawi, recently went shopping with his wife and spent around \$70 just buying basic foodstuffs.

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE/LEBANON

***The Enemy At Work:* Zionist Military Dictatorship Decides Leaving Occupied Nablus In A Taxi Merits Summary Execution**

August 26, 2006 By Amira Hass, Haaretz via The Other Israel [Excerpts]

On Jerusalem's Jabotinsky Street, opposite the President's Residence, a medium-sized plaque is fixed on a locked gate, enclosing a broad building and a lovely garden: "This building was the location of the British Mandate Government's High Military Court, which held the trials of the Hebrew resistance fighters from the Haganah, Etzel and Lehi."

The sign bears the emblems of the Jerusalem municipality and the three resistance organizations.

It further notes: "The resistance fighters refused to acknowledge the authority of the court to judge them, and asked to be recognized as prisoners of war."

The speaker of the Palestinian Authority's parliament, who was arrested two weeks ago by the Israel Defense Forces, also refused to acknowledge the authority of the Military Court to judge him.

Obviously the two latest detainees, whose arrest was deemed by Israel to be the appropriate solution to its shortcomings in releasing kidnapped soldier Gilad Shalit, will make the same declaration. Nasser A-Shaer, the Palestinian education minister and deputy prime minister, and Mahmoud Ramahi, chief whip of the Palestinian Legislative Council, were arrested on Saturday and Sunday.

Incidentally, the Palestinians have lately ceased using the verb "arrested" in regards to the arrests of Palestinians by Israeli soldiers. Instead they use the verb "abducted."

These three detainees/abducted join about 10,000 other Palestinian prisoners and detainees.

As with the prisoners of the Hebrew resistance, who saw themselves as POWs regardless of their actions (killing British soldiers or Arab civilians), some Palestinians request that their prisoners be declared POWs.

Others prefer the definition of political prisoners. Let's let the definitions rest.

In any case, from the offense to the jailing, Israel, as an occupying force, plays around with the definitions as it sees fit.

On Sunday, at 4:30 A.M., IDF soldiers shot and killed a worker, Jalal Uda, 26, and injured three other Palestinian civilians. This happened not far from the Hawara checkpoint, south of Nablus.

Palestinian newspapers referred to it as the 'crime scene.' The young men rode a taxi in a road bypassing the checkpoints. For the last several weeks the army has again forbid young men under age 32 from leaving Nablus.

But people have to make a living, and thousands are looking for hidden routes. An offense punishable by death, so it seems.

The soldiers acted as prosecutor, judge and executioner.

According to the rules of occupation, when soldiers kill Palestinian civilians, they and those who sent them are never criminals, suspects, accused or convicts.

The brigadier general who limits the age of those who exit the Nablus compound, by virtue of his belonging to the 'Defense Army' can also not be considered a criminal, suspect or convict.

When a Palestinian kills an Israeli - soldier or civilian - his name, picture and details of his indictment will be published. He will automatically be condemned to life in jail, and his prime minister or the leader of his organization will be considered responsible and hence a target for arrest or assassination.

The soldiers who kill Palestinian civilians are sheltering under the wide apron of the occupation army. Their names will not be known in public, and their prime minister and commanders will not be deemed accountable.

The Palestinian detainees are led to a military court:

The same military establishment that occupies and destroys and suppresses the civilian population is the one that determines that to resist occupation - even by popular demonstrations and waving flags, not only by killing and bearing arms - is a crime. It is the one to prosecute, and it is the one to judge. Its judges are loyal to the interest of defending the occupier and the settler.

Allegedly every Palestinian is tried, convicted and jailed as a private person who committed a criminal offense. But a sharp discrimination in the conditions of imprisonment proves that the Palestinian security prisoner is punished not as an individual, but as a representative of a group, as part of its overall suppression.

Contrary to international law, the majority of Palestinian prisoners and detainees are not held in the occupied territory, but rather inside Israel. **[Wrong. "Israel" is occupied territory.]**

Contrary to popular myth, Israel does not respect the right to regular family visits.

It is no wonder that the Palestinians support every action - such as kidnapping soldiers - that tries to break the rules of this discrimination game. Every Palestinian prisoner's personal history is an expression of the freedom Israel allows itself in the implanting of an extreme subculture of double standard, discriminating blood from blood, human being from human being, nation from nation.

Here Is The Despicable Face Of Racist Dictatorship:

One-Quarter Of Freely Elected Palestinian Parliament Thrown Into Prison By The Zionist Theocracy

August 21, 2006 Conal Urquhart in Tel Aviv, The Guardian

Israel has arrested almost one quarter of the members of the Palestinian parliament as part of its campaign to free an Israeli soldier captured on the Gaza border in June. Mahmoud Ramahi became the 33rd member of the legislative council (PLC) to be taken in by the Israelis during an operation yesterday.

Amani Rahami, 36, said her husband had been avoiding home for fear the Israelis would arrest him, but did not realise he was important enough to warrant surveillance.

"They came to arrest him many times but he was not here. This time they arrived minutes after he did. He is a father, an educated man and they take him away like a criminal. It is the Israelis who are criminals in this," she said.

Mr Ramahi is an anaesthetist at a Jerusalem hospital and is considered a Hamas moderate who opposes violence. When he arrived at his home in Ramallah yesterday, a squad of Israeli soldiers in jeeps were waiting nearby. They surrounded the house and summoned him by loudspeaker before tying him up and taking him away.

[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"]

“The IDF Is A Spoiled, Confused And Tired Army That Is Specializing Solely In Terrorizing Civilian Populations”

08/22/06 By GILAD ATZMON, Information Clearing House [Excerpts] **Gilad Atzmon was born in Israel and served in the Israeli military.**

As much as it clear to the Israelis, it is clear to the Americans that unlike the bold Hezbollah, the IDF soldier has lost his will to fight.

The IDF is a spoiled, confused and tired army that is specializing solely in terrorizing civilian populations while being engaged in constant tactical withdraw.

This Israeli Army is not trained to win wars anymore. Instead, its tank battalions are mainly engaged in daily shelling of schools and hospitals.

Its Air Force uses the best American fighter planes to flatten neighborhoods and shoot deadly rockets at cars in the streets of Gaza.

Its command units are expert in abducting democratically elected middle-aged Palestinian politicians.

The IDF is basically a heavy army specializing in merciless regional bullying.

Yet, it cannot win a war, and as such it has nothing to offer the American empire.

But the Israeli military defeat has some further implications. Israel without a victorious army, has nothing to offer to world Jewry either. It can never present itself as the ultimate cosmic Judeo bunker.

It is pretty shocking to prospect the relative silence of the infamous Zionist media shield.

While just six weeks ago the loud supporters of Anglo-American interventionism were still pushing for democracy in the Arab world and beyond, they were enthusiastic about killing in the name of human rights and about Israel being the only democracy in the Middle East.

Somehow, since the war began, since Israel revealed once again its murderous tendencies and Hezbollah proved to be the new Robin Hood, these voices are caving in.

Many among the global Zionists do already understand now that the Anglo-American assault on the Arab world just suffered a major blow.

Standing up to Zionism and Americanism, it is the Lebanese, the Palestinians, the Iraqis, the Afghanis and the Iranians who happen to be at the vanguard of the war for humanity and humanism.

Olmert knows very well that if Israel doesn't win this war, it is global Zionism that is defeated, he knows as well that without the backing of global Zionism, Israel is basically a dead entity.

Olmert knows that without America, it won't take long before Israel turns into an historic event.

Get The Message?



NYC Die-In Images: 08-06 [Jewishconscience.blogspot.com]

“He Saw Lots Of Old Combat Vests Handed Out’

Aug. 22, 2006 By MAX KITAJ, Jerusalem Post [Excerpts]

Reservists and their supporters protesting outside Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's Jerusalem office for the second day on Tuesday said their primary objective was to see Olmert, Defense Minister Amir Peretz and Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Dan Halutz resign because of "their incompetence in the Second Lebanon War."

Demonstrators also cited problems with supplies, training and coherence of orders as serious issues they hoped to bring to the public's attention.

One reserve officer said "capricious and confusing orders" made it very hard for soldiers to "get anything done."

"Go here. No, go there," he said, giving examples of orders he had received. "Try to kill Hizbullah. No, catch them alive. We didn't know what they wanted from us. For a soldier that's very difficult."

The officer said there shortages of supplies, and cited three years of budget cuts as one of the causes.

He said goggles, sleeping bags and even sometimes rifles were among the things the soldiers lacked.

Yossi Magao told a similar story. "There was lots of old equipment," he said. "Equipment that already needs to disappear from the army's view."

Magao said that he saw lots of old combat vests handed out and that one friend didn't even have a uniform for three days.

There was a consensus that training had been inadequate in almost every respect.

Magao said he had not been trained long enough, and that what he was taught did not prepare him to enter villages and to conduct house-to-house searches, a major component of the fighting in Lebanon.

MORE:

**“It Was Almost Considered As
Chutzpah”**

**“What, An Enemy Who Shoots
Back? What Next?”**

It is easy to drive a tank along the main street of Gaza or over a row of houses in a refugee camp, facing only stone-throwing boys, when the opponent has no trained fighters or half-way modern weapons.

23.8.06 Uri Avnery, Gush Shalom [Excerpts]

THE SIMPLE truth is that for decades now our army has not faced a serious military force. The last time was 24 years ago, during the First Lebanon War, when it fought against the Syrian army.

Inside Lebanon, why did the soldiers congregate in the rooms of houses, where they were hit by anti-tank missiles, instead of digging foxholes?

It seems that the army has been weaned from this practice.

No wonder: an army that is dealing with "terrorists" in the West Bank and Gaza does not need to take any special precautions. After all, no air force drops bombs on them, no artillery shells them. They need no special protection.

THAT IS true of all our armed forces on land, in the air and on the sea.

It is certainly a luxury to fight against an enemy who cannot defend himself properly. But it is dangerous to get used to it.

The navy, for example. For years now it has been sailing along the shores of Gaza and Lebanon, shelling at pleasure, arresting fishermen, checking ships. It never dreamed that the enemy could shoot back.

Suddenly it happened, and on live television, too. Hizbullah hit it with a land-to-sea missile.

There was no end to the surprise. It was almost considered as Chutzpah.

What, an enemy who shoots back? What next?

And why did Army Intelligence not warn us that they have such an unheard of thing, a land-to-sea missile?

AND THE ground troops? Were they prepared for this war?

For 39 years now they have been compelled to carry out the jobs of a colonial police force: to run after children throwing stones and Molotov cocktails, to drag away women trying to protect their sons from arrest, to capture people sleeping at home.

To stand for hours at the checkpoints and decide whether to let a pregnant woman reach the hospital or send back a sick old man.

At the worst, they have to invade a casbah, to face untrained "terrorists" who have nothing but Kalashnikovs to fight against the tanks and airplanes of their occupiers, as well as courage and an unbelievable determination.

Suddenly these soldiers were sent to Lebanon to confront tough, well trained and highly motivated guerilla fighters who are ready to die while carrying out their mission. Fighters who have learned to appear from an unexpected direction, to disappear into well-prepared bunkers, to use advanced and effective weapons.

"We were not trained for this war!" the reserve soldiers now complain.

They are right.

Where could they have been trained? In the alleys of Jabalieh refugee camp? In the well-rehearsed scenes of embraces and tears, while removing pampered settlers with "sensitivity and determination"?

Clearly it was easier to blockade Yasser Arafat and his few untrained bodyguards in the Mukata'ah compound in Ramallah than to conquer Bint Jbeil over and over again.

That applies even more to the tanks.

It is easy to drive a tank along the main street of Gaza or over a row of houses in a refugee camp, facing only stone-throwing boys, when the opponent has no trained fighters or half-way modern weapons.

It's a hell of a difference driving the same tank in a built-up area in Lebanon, when a trained guerilla with an effective anti-tank weapon can lurk behind every corner. That's a different story altogether. The more so as our army's most modern tank is not immune from missiles.

The deepest rot appeared in the logistics system. It just did not function.

And why should it? There is no need for complex logistics to bring water and food to the soldiers at the Kalandia checkpoint.

A Sign That Reads “Made In The USA” In South Beirut



[Maysoun Sukarieh from Beirut, Live from Lebanon: Electronicintifada.net]

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)

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

***This Is Not A Parody:* Silly Republican Politician Says “Terrorists” Will Attack Philadelphia Supermarkets**

Aug 24 By TOM RAUM, Associated Press Writer

In the thick of an election campaign, President Bush has revived and retooled his argument that the U.S. must fight terrorists overseas or face them here. Despite the unpopularity of the Iraq war, some GOP candidates are borrowing Bush's line.

"We leave before the mission is done, the terrorists will follow us here," Bush warned at a news conference this week. **[In many societies, a traitor in command of the government, who is also a murderous imbecile, has been considered abundant grounds for revolution, for reasons of self-preservation, if no higher cause were found.]**

Rep. Curt Weldon, R-Pa., locked in a tight Philadelphia-area re-election race, went a step further. "We either fight them there, or we fight them in the supermarkets and streets here," he said Wednesday in an interview with CNN.

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