

GI SPECIAL 4118:

The Sea Of Betrayal



**The Sea of Betrayal:
Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.
Mike Hastie, Vietnam Veteran**

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)

“1,200 IED Attacks Against U.S. Troops In August”

“Enough Stocks Of Illegal Explosives To Continue The Same Level Of Attack For 274 Years”

Even with the billions invested in technological countermeasures, Meigs said, there has been “a huge increase in placement” of the bombs, but only a slight rise in the number of IEDs detected and cleared before they detonated.

September 18, 2006 By Greg Grant, Army Times Staff writer [Excerpts]

Pentagon officials, who have spent billions of dollars in search of technological countermeasures for roadside bombs, said they may be bumping up against the limits of possibility.

As attacks with improvised explosive devices hit an all-time high in Iraq, U.S. military leaders said they will work harder to find and disrupt the organizations that support the bomb makers.

Insurgents are detonating 30 to 40 bombs a day, up dramatically in 2006 after falling slightly last year, said retired Gen. Montgomery Meigs, director of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization.

Insurgents carried out 1,200 IED attacks against U.S. troops in August. The monthly number of IED attacks in 2006 is running at four times that of January 2004.

When asked whether the increase in attacks indicated the U.S. military was winning the war against insurgents, Meigs, speaking to reporters Sept. 7, declined to comment on “politics,” and said his charter was to come up with counters to IEDs.

The U.S. military devotes tremendous numbers of troops and materiel to the effort to protect its forces from roadside bombs. Meigs’ organization, which leads the U.S. military’s anti-IED research, will spend \$3.4 billion in 2006 to develop and buy gear, train forces, gather intelligence and perform other duties.

Above Iraq, orbiting satellites and high-flying reconnaissance planes scan convoy routes, hunting for terrain variations that might indicate a hidden bomb. Electronic attack aircraft tune their emissions to jam trigger devices. Unmanned aerial vehicles try to catch people in the act of planting the bombs.

On the ground, most U.S. vehicles either carry or are slated to get jammers of their own. Many have been heavily armored against a blast. And small bomb-disposal robots are being rushed to Iraq as soon as they come off the production line.

This year, the anti-IED organization will spend \$1.4 billion just on developing and buying jammers.

Even with the billions invested in technological countermeasures, Meigs said, there has been “a huge increase in placement” of the bombs, but only a slight rise in the number of IEDs detected and cleared before they detonated.

There is no technological “silver bullet” that will defeat all IED attacks, Meigs said, adding that better intelligence on insurgent networks was the most effective counter to IEDs.

But it has proved extremely difficult for U.S. troops, who are generally equipped with limited cultural knowledge and language skills, to penetrate the complex tribal networks in Iraq, Meigs said.

Iraq is awash in explosives, providing insurgents access to bomb-making material, Meigs said.

An independent assessment, based on British military intelligence, said, “Based on current usage, there are enough stocks of illegal explosives to continue the same level of attack for 274 years without re-supply.”

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Sailor Killed In Al Anbar

17 September 2006 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
NEWS RELEASE Number: RELEASE No. 20060917-06

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – One Sailor assigned to 1st Marine Logistics Group died September 16 from wounds sustained by enemy action while operating in Al Anbar Province.

Soldier From Irmo Dies In Iraq

August 28, 2006 By JASON RYAN, The State, South Carolina

Cpl. David G. Weimortz was killed in Iraq on Saturday, just days short of his 29th birthday, when a roadside bomb went off while he traveled in his Humvee.

The Marine and Irmo native was on patrol in Al Anbar province, nearly 45 days into his second tour of duty in Iraq as an assault man.

This tour was to be his last before the Marine was to return home in February and study law, his father, Terry Weimortz, said.

David Weimortz is the 41st member of the U.S. military with S.C. ties to die in the Iraq war and the second this month.

Weimortz graduated as a golf standout from Dutch Fork High School and then from the University of South Carolina, where he majored in history.

Weimortz was stationed at Camp LeJeune, N.C., but kept a room at his sister Kelly Weimortz's house in Columbia, his father said Monday from his home in Crestview, Fla.

Before leaving for Iraq in mid-July, Weimortz visited family and friends, including playing a round of golf with his father.

'I kissed him, gave him a hug and that's the last time I saw him,' Terry Weimortz said. 'He died like a man. He's a hero as far as I'm concerned.'

Weimortz said that though his son claimed his Christian faith had prepared him for death, he was still scared of the upcoming mission in Iraq where he was trained to fire heavy weapons that can destroy tanks and bunkers.

'What was so eerie was that he started giving me things,' Terry Weimortz said, listing a pair of sunglasses, a Tommy Bahama shirt and a uniform.

As a boy, he played many sports, his father said, and his first word was 'ball.'

'He was 6 feet 6 inches, 225 pounds - solid man,' Terry Weimortz said.

After college, he worked for a publisher in Raleigh, for a car dealer in Charleston, and modeled products at NASCAR races before enlisting.

Weimortz joined the Marines in March 2003 and graduated from boot camp at Parris Island. His commendations included the Iraqi Campaign Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Medal, said Marine spokesman Lt. Barry Edwards.

In June 2005, Weimortz was attached to the headquarters section of the 3rd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, and participated in Operation Sword.

The operation aimed to drive out insurgent fighters in Hit, located along the Euphrates River in the Al Anbar province.

A story published by Infoline Marine, an online service of Marine Corps public affairs, quoted Weimortz as saying the troops also tried to connect with the local citizens and show they were liberators, not conquerors.

The publication featured a photo of Weimortz exchanging a handshake with a local child outside Camp Ripper in Iraq.

'We not only flushed out insurgents, but we also helped the people so they can build the infrastructure of their society,' Weimortz said in the story.

Fighting in Iraq's most volatile province helped him put life at home in perspective, he said.

'From the simplest things such as getting milk, to being stuck in traffic, or even going to college football games, it all comes to the surface and you realize how fortunate you are,' Weimortz said.

Weimortz also believed his efforts would help the Iraqis.

'This entire operation reminds me of a Boy Scout saying, 'Leave your camp better than you found it,' Weimortz told the publication. 'Not only will I leave this base in better shape and more secure, but we will have left this country in a greater shape for their future.'

Weimortz joined the 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division in June.

Terry Weimortz said his son warned him before his redeployment not to expect as many e-mails during this campaign because of his remote location.

Terry Weimortz also didn't expect the hysterical call from his daughter on Saturday telling him of David's death.

'She's suffering, I'm suffering his mother's suffering. It's just unbelievable.'

Weimortz is also survived by his mother, Fran Fellers of Irmo, a stepbrother, Jody Weimortz Harley of Lexington, and a grandmother, Helen Asbill of Aiken.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Six Occupation Troops Wounded: Three U.S., Three Canadian

9.17.06 AP

A youth carrying explosives jumped in front of a U.S. military convoy east of Kabul, killing a bystander and wounding three American soldiers, Afghan police said.

Earlier in the day, a bomber plowed his explosive-laden vehicle into a Canadian military convoy in southern Afghanistan, killing one civilian and wounding three soldiers.

TROOP NEWS

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



U.S. soldiers carry Staff Sgt. Angel D. Mercado Velazquez, inside a hangar at Muniz Air National Guard Base, in Carolina, Puerto Rico, Sept. 9, 2006. The 24-year old Velazquez had been a squad leader and paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division serving in Yusifiyah, Iraq, where he and two other members of his unit died last week from wounds sustained from mortar fire. As of Sept. 8, 2006, 2,666 members of the U.S. military had died in the Iraq war. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)

**Blair Government Tormenting
Wounded Troops:
“Another Soldier Recalled One Of His
Comrades Who Had Lost A Leg
Screaming In Agony Because The
Morphine Had Worn Off”**

He Had To Wait 45 Minutes Before A Doctor Could Be Found To Administer More Morphine

17/09/2006 By Sean Rayment, Defence Correspondent, Telegraph Group Limited

Soldiers injured on operations in Afghanistan and Iraq are being treated alongside civilian patients on mixed wards in National Health Service hospitals, it can be revealed.

The Ministry of Defence's policy of treating wounded soldiers in designated military wards has been officially declared "unsustainable" because of the growing number of troops being injured in combat and a lack of military medical staff.

The Sunday Telegraph has learnt that severely injured troops with bullet wounds and amputated limbs are being treated on open wards in beds next to civilian patients, including pensioners and mentally ill patients, at the Selly Oak NHS hospital in Birmingham.

Senior officers and MPs have branded this a "disgrace" and want the Government to reinstate the special military wards immediately. They are concerned that it is detrimental to the treatment and recovery not only of the troops but also the civilian patients.

It can also be revealed that Des Browne, the Defence Secretary, visited the hospital last month following complaints by senior officers. He has admitted that the treatment of injured soldiers needs improving and has ordered an investigation.

Nineteen soldiers are being treated on three wards at Selly Oak, with more expected over the weekend. Five were injured in Iraq and 14 in Afghanistan.

Selly Oak hospital is the main casualty reception centre for soldiers who have been injured on operations, and the location of the headquarters of the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine. But the troops are all treated at the NHS hospital on civilian wards, each of which contains 32 beds.

Liam Fox, the shadow defence secretary, called the crisis a "shocking indictment of the Government's attitude to its Armed Forces."

One soldier recovering from a gunshot wound has described how he spent three weeks in a bed next to a mentally handicapped man who was unable to care for or clean himself.

Another soldier at the hospital recalled one of his comrades who had lost a leg screaming in agony because the morphine had worn off. The pain was so intense that the soldier fainted twice during the 45 minutes he had to wait before a doctor could be found to administer more morphine.

The soldier said that civilians on the ward, many of them pensioners, had been deeply upset.

It is also understood that servicemen traumatised by seeing comrades killed in action have waited up to five weeks before they being offered any form of psychiatric counselling.

One soldier said: "When I was evacuated from Afghanistan I was assured I would be treated on a military ward, every soldier here was told the same. The circumstances at Selly Oak are degrading for civilian patients and soldiers alike. Every senior officer who has visited us has told me that the situation is disgraceful and has apologised."

Before the strategic defence review that followed the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, there were seven military hospitals. But under a programme entitled "Defence Cost Study 15" in 1994, all but one were closed.

Royal Hospital Haslar, in Portsmouth, survived but is now being mothballed and is due to close next year when the site will be sold to a developer.

After the closure of the service hospitals, special military wards were created in a number of NHS hospitals which were manned by Forces medical staff. But the MoD has confirmed that this policy has been abandoned because staff shortages and the so-called high tempo of operations made them "unsustainable".

Dr Fox called for changes to be made immediately, and said: "Those who are injured on active service deserve to recover, not only from their injuries but the trauma that they have endured, in security and dignity."

And Patrick Mercer, the shadow minister for homeland security and a former infantry commander, said: "Soldiers need their own military wards when they are recovering from war wounds. Anything less is a betrayal."

How Rumsfeld Set Up Honorable Soldier For Revenge Death

September 18, 2006 By Kelly Kennedy, Army Times Staff writer [Excerpts]

Joe Darby laughed, it came out as a bitter puff of disbelief, when asked about new Defense Department rules outlawing acts of detainee abuse during interrogations.

Darby was just another Army specialist until January 2004, when he leaked photos of fellow soldiers tormenting detainees at Abu Ghraib prison.

“The soldiers involved at Abu Ghraib were not interrogating inmates,” he told Army Times in a telephone interview. “These guys were doing nothing but occupying themselves in very sick ways. It was never about interrogations.”

Darby blew the whistle and set off an international scandal. The photos he provided first appeared on “60 Minutes” in April 2004. Much of the world was outraged by the abuses inside the prison walls.

At the same time, many soldiers were angry with Darby for taking what he knew outside the confines of the military establishment.

The seven soldiers pictured piling naked prisoners in pyramids; or pointing at a naked, hooded Iraqi; or grinning as leashed working dogs lunged at a naked, cowering man became poster children for detainee abuse.

Seven soldiers were court-martialed; six were sent to prison.

On Sept. 6, the Defense Department issued a new human intelligence field manual with detailed rules of interrogation procedures.

For Darby, now 27, the new rules are “too little, too late.” The 372nd Military Police Company soldier got out of the Army last month, but his life will never be free of the decision he made while at Abu Ghraib.

He says his decision earned him enemies who wish him harm.

He can never go home.

He refuses to reveal where he now lives.

He is so worried about his family’s safety that he won’t discuss how many children he has — if any.

Until recently, Darby has refused requests to discuss his decision to go public with the Abu Ghraib abuses and his experiences since then.

This is what he has to say: Despite the hardships he has endured and the turmoil the Army went through, he would do it again.

In January 2004, Darby asked Spec. Charles Graner for copies of some photos as mementos, and Graner gave him a CD. While sorting through photos on his computer, Darby hit one that stopped him.

“It was the pyramid of Iraqis, but I didn’t realize it was Iraqis,” he said. “Soldiers do some pretty messed-up things for entertainment, so I thought it was the MPs. I laughed at it and moved on the next picture. That’s when I realized they were prisoners.”

Graner was sentenced to 10 years in military prison for aggravated assault, maltreatment and conspiracy. Darby said he knew the deeds captured in the pictures were wrong, and he knew he had to do something.

Albert Pierce, chair of military ethics at the National Defense University, said Darby had to make that decision because of a “leadership vacuum” that developed at the prison.

Pierce said that although some soldiers have expressed animosity toward Darby, they should place him on a pedestal.

“We need to honor and celebrate those soldiers who try to do something to stop things like this as an example of positive leadership,” he said. “I think Joseph Darby is one of the ... heroes of Abu Ghraib.”

“I was afraid of Graner and the rest of his unit,” Darby said. “I knew when I turned them in that they were going to prison.”

Then, during a TV interview broadcast while Darby was eating in a dining hall with 400 other soldiers, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld named him as the whistleblower.

Darby spoke about the case for the first time in an interview with GQ — after a government gag order was lifted — and described hearing his anonymity slip away on national television.

“I actually got a letter from the SecDef after the interview,” Darby said. “(Rumsfeld) said he didn’t do it maliciously, and that what I did was the right thing to do. I don’t know how to take the letter other than that I got one.”

The photos Darby released to the CID made international headlines soon after, sparking thousands of blog entries that assailed “the whistleblower” for making his Army look bad. That title bothered Darby.

“I was an MP,” he explained. “My job is to enforce the military law. They were breaking the law, so I was just doing my job.”

But when Darby heard Rumsfeld mention his name on TV as the whistleblower, he was prepared for the worst from the other soldiers in the dining hall.

But they surprised him.

“I got a lot of slaps on the back, ‘good jobs,’ and handshakes,” he said. “I only got grief from people who were close to Graner’s group.”

The reaction back home in Corriganville, Md., hit a little harder.

“My wife was very proud, but then the media storm hit,” he said. “The media stalked her at home — she couldn’t leave the house.

“And the only people talking to the media were the ones who were being threatening.”

Darby’s friends and neighbors were also friends and neighbors of the soldiers facing prison. His family received death threats and letters, he said.

The people speaking to the media were so harsh, Darby said, that he was surprised when he heard personally from the many people back home who supported his decision. Web sites such as <http://thanksjoedarby.com> popped up, with people praising Darby for getting rid of the bad seeds in his Army.

"I've always loved being in the Army, and I've loved being a soldier," he said. "I want people to understand my unit has gotten a very bad rap. It was still one of the finest I served with — with the best individuals. No one knew this (was) going on."

As he began testifying at the courts-martial for the Abu Ghraib soldiers, he relocated his family. The Army allowed him to extend his contract for two years while he tried to readjust to life after Abu Ghraib. He now works as a government contractor.

Since he left, he has not spoken with Graner, Harmon, Lynndie England or any of the others he served with at Abu Ghraib — except for Staff Sgt. Ivan Frederick, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the night shift, who appeared in the photos. In 2004, Frederick was sentenced to eight years in prison on related charges and busted to private.

"At his trial, Frederick apologized for what I had to go through," Darby said. "He said I did the right thing."

Vietnam-Era Marine Deserter Arrested At Mexican Border

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

Sep. 15, 2006 Associated Press

SAN DIEGO: A man who deserted the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War was arrested as he entered the United States from Mexico, authorities said Friday.

Victor Aguirre, 63, was wanted on a 1966 felony warrant for desertion, according to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection bureau. He was arrested Thursday at San Diego's San Ysidro border crossing.

Aguirre will likely be taken to Camp Pendleton Marine base, about 50 miles north of San Diego, for processing and release, said Capt. Jay Delarosa, a Marine spokesman. He will likely be discharged without facing formal charges.

The circumstances of Aguirre's desertion were unclear.

Deserters can face punishment ranging from discharge to five years in jail. In March, a man who fled to Canada at the height of the Vietnam War was arrested after he and his wife tried to enter the United States at a border crossing in Idaho from their home in

Kingsgate, British Columbia. He was held briefly at Camp Pendleton before being discharged and released.

CBP agents make daily arrests after routine ID checks turn up outstanding warrants, said spokeswoman Angelica De Cima. But, she said, warrants as old as Aguirre's are unusual.

Gold Star Families Protest Banned At Labour Party Conference; No “Democracy” For Them; “But We’re Going Anyway”



16th September 2006 By ROSE GENTLE, whose son died in Iraq, Families of UK Forces in Iraq

When my son went off to the war in Iraq, I knew it would be the last time I ever saw him. Mother's intuition told me that when we said goodbye at Glasgow Central Station on May 17, 2004, I'd never be able to give my 'wee man', a hug again.

I called him 'wee man', even though he was 6ft 4in and I am only 5ft 2in. Although he was a strapping lad, he was never shy about showing his affection. Just before his train pulled out, he ran back down the platform to give me a cuddle and say: 'I love you, Mum.'

As I walked away through the crowds with tears running down my face, I turned to my youngest daughter, Maxine, and said: 'He'll not be coming back.'

Four weeks later, two men in military uniform came to the community centre in the Pollok area of Glasgow where I was working as a cleaner. They sat me down in the back of their car and said they had some bad news.

My son, Gordon Gentle, a 19-year-old soldier in the 1st Battalion, The Royal Highland Fusiliers, had been killed. He was in a convoy that had been hit by a roadside bomb and he had taken the full force of the explosion.

I remember getting out of the car and screaming.

Tony Blair's letter of condolence took seven weeks to arrive. By that time I was very angry.

Angry with Mr Blair for treating my son like a piece of meat and sending him to fight a war that was all about oil.

Angry with the Government for not properly training or equipping our boys.

And angry at the wasted life of my kind and loving 'wee man'.

That anger has never gone away. I felt it again last week when the organisation I founded after Gordon's death, Military Families Against The War, was told it would not be able to lead a peaceful protest outside the Labour Party's annual conference in Manchester later this week.

The Labour-run council told us we couldn't carry out our plans 'for health and safety', reasons.

I don't believe that for a second.

I think Mr Blair doesn't want us there because we are an embarrassment to him.

I was both disappointed and disgusted by the ban but I wasn't surprised.

We are grieving families of young soldiers killed in action who want to stage a peaceful, dignified protest. It is our democratic right to protest.

They say that our boys are in Iraq to create democracy there but it seems as if we don't even have it in our own country.

My family doesn't like Tony Blair. Whenever he comes on the TV, my husband George starts shouting 'murderer', at the screen and we have to switch channels. And I stopped believing anything the Government says about Iraq a long time ago.

We are told there will be civil war if the troops are withdrawn but what does it think is happening now, with innocent people dying every day? If that isn't civil war, I don't know what is.

Even before my son went there, I had never been in favour of war in Iraq. I knew Saddam Hussein was an evil man and had to be removed but Mr Blair kept changing his reasons for going to war until no one knew where he stood.

Now I feel the British Army was only ever really there for one reason - oil.

Gordon was too young to understand any of this. I tried to persuade him not to go but he would just shrug his shoulders. He wanted to travel. He wanted to serve for a while, earn some money and then come home to set up his own garage. He wanted a better life for himself.

He was recruited outside the DSS office while signing on for unemployment benefit. He was told he would be trained, given a regular wage and be set up for the future. It seemed very appealing to a young man with no clear direction.

But I think it is wrong that the army waits on street corners in deprived areas to prey on our sons.

My son grew up on the housing estate in Pollok where we still live. I don't think I'll ever be able to move because the house is so full of memories.

I now use his bedroom as an office for Military Families Against The War, and go there to answer the hundreds of e-mails I get, to set up meetings, arrange speaking tours and protest marches. It has become a full-time job. But apart from the computer, I've left the bedroom exactly how it was.

I can look up at the photos of Gordon on the walls. I can see his clothes hanging in the cupboard. It still smells of the aftershave he used to wear.

I still think he's going to walk through the door with the same old easy-going smile.

As a mother, you always want to protect your children and I feel that I failed him. I should have been holding him when he died. I think that is partly why I have thrown myself into Military Families Against The War: I wasn't able to help Gordon but perhaps I can help someone else's child.

We now have more than 300 members and, in time, we are looking at the possibility of suing the Ministry of Defence.

The Government had a duty of care towards my son and it failed. Gordon completed his 24 weeks' training in April. In May, he was sent to a war zone. That's not enough preparation for a young kid - it takes three or four years' training to become a qualified plumber or electrician.

Nor did he have the right equipment when he got there. Gordon could have been saved if the Land Rover he was travelling in had been fitted with an electronic signal-jamming device which might have stopped the detonation.

When I read newspaper articles about how our soldiers in Afghanistan still don't have the right equipment, I think it must be hell for them. It's like sending lambs to the slaughter.

The Government is willing to spend £50,000 of taxpayers money every year on a bullet-proof car for Cherie Blair but it won't find the money to protect our soldiers who risk their lives on a daily basis. Where is the sense in that?

But I've come to realise that there's no point searching for sense in anything Mr Blair says or does.

It is a disgrace that he will not let us voice our opinions in Manchester. If he is going to stand up and talk in favour of the war, we have a right to talk about protecting our sons.

Neither Euan nor Nicky Blair is out there fighting our corner in Iraq. So how can Mr Blair possibly know what it's like without listening to us and trying to understand our grief?

We've sent a letter to Manchester City Council asking it to reconsider. If it doesn't, we will go anyway.

All I want to do is ask Tony Blair one question. It is the same question I have been asking all along. It is a simple question and it needs a simple, straight answer. That question is: 'Why?'

Benefits For Disabled Vets In Jeopardy; Pressure Applied To Keep PEBs Slow And Incompetent To Save Money [For War Profiteers No Doubt]

September 14, 2006 Kelly Kennedy, Army Times Staff writer

The Military Officers Association of America has asked its members to pressure the House of Representatives to keep a piece of the Defense Appropriations Act that mandates better training for counselors and better oversight of the Physical Evaluation Board system.

The Physical Evaluation Board controls how much money a soldier will receive as he is medically processed out of the military for injuries or illness that prevent him from doing his job.

Retired Air Force Col. Michael Hayden said Thursday he's heard from Senate staffers that they're being pressured to leave out portions of the bill that call for a longer period of temporary disability retirement leave for soldiers who do not have stable injuries or diseases.

That extra time could mean soldiers might medically retire with higher benefits packages than they might if they were processed out immediately. Hayden serves as MOAA's deputy director for government relations.

"We haven't been able to get an official answer as to why," Hayden said, "but I think it is specifically that there is a financial issue associated with this."

The additions to the bill came about after a Government Accountability Office report found that:

Counselors and medical professionals assigned to help soldiers through the Physical Evaluation Board process were not well-trained, that they only tend to spend a year or two in the position.

That there is no monitoring system to track how quickly soldiers go through the system or if the soldiers are treated the same way across the board.

That soldiers cannot properly appeal decisions because they do not always get written feedback about how the Physical Evaluation Board came up with a ruling.

The bill asks that:

Board members document their decisions in response to questions soldiers have about the ruling.

That standardized training be created for the Physical Evaluation Board counselors who help soldiers through the process.

That those with less than a 30-percent disability rating not be removed from the temporary disability retired list unless the disability is permanent.

That regulations will be created to address the timeliness and consistency of board rulings.

Army Lt. Col. Michael Parker made headlines a few months ago when he began trailing the Physical Evaluation Board cases of several service members with similar diseases – and found that each person was treated differently.

"It's really important that this go through," Parker said. "We have to move fast."

Jesus Delays Defense Authorization Bill

September 14, 2006 By Rick Maze, Army Times Staff writer [Excerpts]

A fight over whether military chaplains can pray in the name of Jesus in nondenominational settings is one of the issues holding up negotiations on the 2007 defense authorization bill, according to sources involved in working out differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill.

At issue is a House-passed provision, opposed by the Defense Department, that prevents the military from having any policy limiting what a chaplain may say in a public prayer. The provision says that other than for military necessity, nothing should be done to limit chaplains from praying as their conscience tells them.

The Pentagon opposes the provision, saying it would “marginalize” chaplains by generating “discomfort at formations,” according to a statement provided to lawmakers.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action



9.17.06 The wreckage of a police vehicle in Kirkuk. (AFP/Marwan Ibrahim)

Sep 17 AFP & VOI

A suicide bomber firing a machine gun with one hand to warn away civilians and driving an explosive laden truck with the other blew up his vehicle near a police centre, killing 18 people and wounding 65 in Iraq's northern oil city of Kirkuk.

Many of the wounded were police officers, including the head of the investigation centre.

The bomber detonated his truck in front of a police investigation centre in Kirkuk -- a city claimed by both the Arabs and the Kurds - at 10:24 am (0624 GMT) Sunday.

"He drove towards the centre, firing the gun with one hand randomly to push back civilians, and then detonated the truck in front of the centre," a Kirkuk police officer said.

A local oil pipeline was sabotaged when a bomb was planted beneath it in the town of Balad, 80 km (55 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Two policemen guarding electrical infrastructure were killed and three wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in Baquba, police said.

Guerrillas killed two policemen in Taji, 20 km (12 miles) north of Baghdad, a source in the Ministry of Interior said.

Two Iraqi soldiers and a civilian were wounded when a roadside bomb went off near an army patrol near al-Shaab national football stadium in central Baghdad, a source in the Ministry of Interior said.

Two policemen were wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in the northern Adhamiya district of Baghdad, police said.

Car bombs and mortar fire killed five in the western city of Falluja on Sunday, including two Iraqi police and one Iraqi soldier in coordinated attacks against a U.S. military centre in charge of reconstruction and a bridge. No U.S. casualties were reported in the attack, which wounded 23.

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

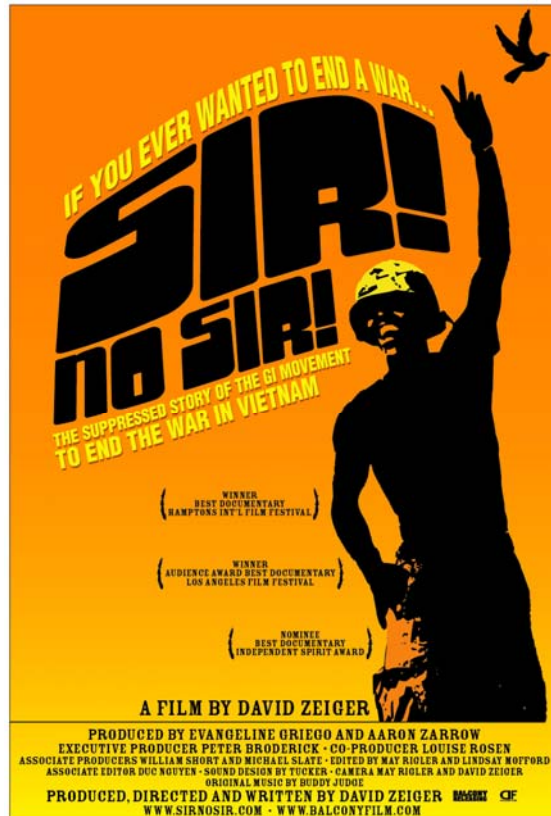
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<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“A Strong Resistance Movement Within The Lower Ranks Of The Military Itself”



Movie review by Mark R. Leeper, 2006, Rottentomatoes.com [Excerpts]

David Zeigler's documentary tells the story of how the Vietnam War bred a protest movement within the lower ranks of the military itself and how the military tried to suppress that movement.

Eyewitness testimony recreates the extremes of the war, the GI protest activity, and the commanders' attempts to subdue and hide the protests. This is a film about the past and about the present.

With the Vietnam War the United States military was faced with a kind of enemy and war that it had not much faced in the past. The North Vietnamese military was only a second-class force facing the most powerful military in the world, so there were initially high expectations of an easy victory. But at the same time the United States was facing a stubborn and widespread insurrection, a war in which the greatest enemy was very hard to distinguish from non-combatants. Much of this invisible force did not fight honorably by battlefield rules.

Faced with a conflict that they had not been adequately trained for and for which they had no clear strategy, the United States military fought the war in the way they thought was most effective. They fought in ways that were frequently barbaric and which they did not want publicized.

This soon bred a strong resistance movement within the lower ranks of the military itself, something that was very unusual in US history.

Again the commanders were in unfamiliar territory and frequently used force to try to overcome the political expression that the troops felt was their constitutional right.

David Zeigler's SIR! NO SIR! is a documentary covering US abuses in waging the war, the GI anti-war movement, and the military's reaction to a wide-spread resistance activity among its own troops.

Parallels to the Iraqi conflict are inevitable, but also intentional.

The bulk of SIR! NO SIR! is eyewitness accounts by participants in the GI anti-war movement. Over a dozen protesters tell their stories of the abuses from torture and murder of civilians to bombing and massacring villages. There are accounts of GIs with head and neck injuries paralyzed for life and asking their doctors to kill them. Once the case is put forward for the brutality of the military policy the film tells of the anti-war movement and of how the military attempted to suppress it.

The soldiers and others who resisted tell their stories of their protests and of how the military punished them. We hear of trainers court-martialed for refusing to teach others to fight the war. A Navy nurse tells of dropping anti-war leaflets over military bases.

The story of the Tyrell's Boycott is particularly amusing. Tyrell's was jewelry store chain that positioned itself near military bases. They were very open in their policy of selling GIs jewelry to send to their families as something to remember them by if they are killed in action. And as a special bonus, debt on the jewelry was cancelled if and when the purchaser was killed.

The ghoulish store kept their "honor roll" of customers killed in the fighting and absolved of their debt. Somehow the soldiers were not especially grateful for this magnanimity.

Other topics include the anti-war coffeehouses, gathering places of protesters. We hear about the mimeographed amateur protest magazines spread in secret around the military bases. There is also discussion of fragging--intentional killing--of commanders. During the war there were over half a million incidents of desertion. This massive resistance was a phenomenon entirely new to the American military.

With each form of protest, the film also covers how the military tried to suppress it.

Protesters were threatened with decades of imprisonment and frequently were sentenced to years in prison. There was an account of the over-crowded Presidio

Stockade. The military's measures, while they seem bad in this context, are probably minimal compared to what most militaries would do to repress revolt.

For the most part the military seemed to want to keep a lid on the situation so they would not be discredited in front of the American people.

While most of the protesters who speak are actual veterans, they also include Jane Fonda. She tells briefly of her actions at that time and her experiences with the traveling FTA anti-war show she organized with Donald Sutherland. The documentary gets added dignity by some minimal narration done by Edward Asner (admittedly a personal hero of my own).

Some of the accounts of military brutality, while verbal, are explicit and some viewers may find them disturbing. It should also be remembered that with this as with most political documentaries, the opposition does not get an opportunity to refute the case made.

This documentary is strong stuff with a powerful evocation of a past with strong implications about the present.

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."

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DECADE MAKES

From: David Honish
To: Thomas Barton
Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2006 4:27 PM
Subject: WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DECADE MAKES

"How long would we have to stay there to keep this regime in power? How effective would it be if it were perceived as the puppet regime of the United States military? It gets to be a very difficult, a very nebulous, a very long, drawn-out kind of commitment, what I would describe as a quagmire.

“We have absolutely no interest in getting U.S. military forces involved inside Iraq.”

Bush 41 Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney in 1991, as quoted in Maureen Dowd's excellent book, *Bushworld Enter At Your Own Risk*.

FUTILE EXERCISE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



A U.S. soldier stands on guard on a road as U.S. troops from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, turned over the security of Tarmiya district to the Iraqi police in Baghdad September 16, 2006. REUTERS/Thaier al-Sudani (IRAQ)

OCCUPATION REPORT

***So Much For That Silly
Sovereignty Bullshit:
U.S. Military Dictatorship Ignores
Demand To Turn Iraqi Prisoners Over
To Iraqi “Government”***

As with others, Karim's confinement may simply have strengthened support for the anti-U.S. resistance. "I will hate Americans for the rest of my life," he said.

September 17, 2006 PATRICK QUINN, Associated Press Writer

In Iraq, the Army oversees about 13,000 prisoners at Camp Cropper near Baghdad airport, Camp Bucca in the southern desert, and Fort Suse in the Kurdish north.

Meanwhile, officials of Nouri al-Maliki's 4-month-old Iraqi government say the U.S. detention system violates Iraq's national rights.

At the Justice Ministry, Deputy Minister Busho Ibrahim told the AP it has been "a daily request" that the detainees be brought under Iraqi authority.

Released prisoner Waleed Abdul Karim, 26, recounted how his guards would wield their absolute authority.

"Tell us about the ones who attack Americans in your neighborhood," he quoted an interrogator as saying, "or I will keep you in prison for another 50 years."

As with others, Karim's confinement may simply have strengthened support for the anti-U.S. resistance. "I will hate Americans for the rest of my life," he said.

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

Iraq Adopts U.S. Imperial Democracy: “Internal Investigations Into Secret Prisons, Corruption And Other Potential Criminal Activity Are Often Blocked”

September 17, 2006 By EDWARD WONG and PAUL von ZIELBAUER, The New York Times [Excerpt]

The government has stopped allowing joint Iraqi and American teams to inspect Iraqi prisons.

No senior ministry officials have been prosecuted on charges of detainee mistreatment, in spite of fresh discoveries of abuse and torture, including a little-reported case involving children packed into a prison of more than 1,400 inmates.

Internal investigations into secret prisons, corruption and other potential criminal activity are often blocked.

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.

U.S. Military Dictatorship Keeps AP Photographer In Prison For 5 Months; Criminal Scum Commanding U.S. Forces Make No Charges, But Do Offer Faked “Evidence”

9.17.06 By ROBERT TANNER, AP National Writer [Excerpts]

The U.S. military in Iraq has imprisoned an Associated Press photographer for five months, accusing him of being a security threat but never filing charges or permitting a public hearing.

Military officials said Bilal Hussein, an Iraqi citizen, was being held for "imperative reasons of security" under United Nations resolutions. AP executives said the news cooperative's review of Hussein's work did not find anything to indicate inappropriate contact with insurgents, and any evidence against him should be brought to the Iraqi criminal justice system.

Hussein, 35, is a native of Fallujah who began work for the AP in September 2004. He photographed events in Fallujah and Ramadi until he was detained on April 12 of this year.

"We want the rule of law to prevail. He either needs to be charged or released. Indefinite detention is not acceptable," said Tom Curley, AP's president and chief executive officer. "We've come to the conclusion that this is unacceptable under Iraqi law, or Geneva Conventions, or any military procedure." [Evidently he thinks the traitors in command give a shit about law. Traitors never do.]

Hussein is one of an estimated 14,000 people detained by the U.S. military worldwide — 13,000 of them in Iraq. They are held in limbo where few are ever charged with a specific crime or given a chance before any court or tribunal to argue for their freedom.

In Hussein's case, the military has not provided any concrete evidence to back up the vague allegations they have raised about him, Curley and other AP executives said.

Hussein proclaims his innocence, according to his Iraqi lawyer, Badie Arief Izzat, and believes he has been unfairly targeted because his photos from Ramadi and

Fallujah were deemed unwelcome by the coalition forces. [Can't have people seeing things traitors "deem unwelcome." And a lie from this reporter: "coalition forces" had nothing to do with it. The shitbags in command are responsible, not the troops. Get that straight now.]

AP executives in New York and Baghdad have sought to persuade U.S. officials to provide additional information about allegations against Hussein and to have his case transferred to the Iraqi criminal justice system. The AP contacted military leaders in Iraq and the Pentagon, and later the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad.

The AP has worked quietly until now, believing that would be the best approach. But with the U.S. military giving no indication it would change its stance, the news cooperative has decided to make public Hussein's imprisonment, hoping the spotlight will bring attention to his case and that of thousands of others now held in Iraq, Curley said.

One of Hussein's photos was part of a package of 20 photographs that won a Pulitzer Prize for breaking news photography last year. His contribution was an image of four insurgents in Fallujah firing a mortar and small arms during the U.S.-led offensive in the city in November 2004.

As the situation in Fallujah eroded in 2004, he expressed a desire to become a photographer. Hussein was given training and camera equipment and hired in September of that year as a freelancer, paid on a per-picture basis, according to Santiago Lyon, AP's director of photography. A month later, he was put on a monthly retainer.

During the U.S.-led offensive in Fallujah in November 2004, he stayed on after his family fled. "He had good access. He was able to photograph not only the results of the attacks on Fallujah, he was also able to photograph members of the insurgency on occasion," Lyon said. "That was very difficult to achieve at that time."

After fleeing later in the offensive, leaving his camera behind in the rush to escape, Hussein arrived in Baghdad, where the AP gave him a new camera. He then went to work in Ramadi which, like Fallujah, has been a center of insurgent violence.

In its own effort to determine whether Hussein had gotten too close the insurgency, the AP has reviewed his work record, interviewed senior photo editors who worked on his images and examined all 420 photographs in the news cooperative's archives that were taken by Hussein, Lyon said.

The military in Iraq has frequently detained journalists who arrive quickly at scenes of violence, accusing them of getting advance notice from insurgents, Lyon said. But "that's just good journalism. Getting to the event quickly is something that characterizes good journalism anywhere in the world. It does not indicate prior knowledge," he said.

Out of Hussein's body of work, only 37 photos show insurgents or people who could be insurgents, Lyon said. "The vast majority of the 420 images show the aftermath or the results of the conflict — blown up houses, wounded people, dead people, street scenes," he said.

Only four photos show the wreckage of still-burning U.S. military vehicles.

AP officials emphasized the military has not provided the company concrete evidence of its claims against Bilal Hussein, or provided him a chance to offer a defense.

Information provided to the AP by the military to support the continued detention hasn't withstood scrutiny, when it could be checked, Daniszewski said.

For example, he said, the AP had been told that Hussein was involved with the kidnapping of two Arab journalists in Ramadi.

But those journalists, tracked down by the AP, said Hussein had helped them after they were released by their captors without money or a vehicle in a dangerous part of Ramadi. After a journalist acquaintance put them in touch with Hussein, the photographer picked them up, gave them shelter and helped get them out of town, they said.

The journalists said they had never been contacted by multinational forces for their account.

Horton [Scott Horton, a New York-based lawyer hired by the AP to work on Hussein's case] said the military has provided contradictory accounts of whether Hussein himself was a U.S. target last April or if he was caught up in a broader sweep.

The military said bomb-making materials were found in the apartment where Hussein was captured but it never detailed what those materials were. The military said he tested positive for traces of explosives. Horton said that was virtually guaranteed for anyone on the streets of Ramadi at that time.

Hussein has been a frequent target of conservative critics on the Internet, who raised questions about his images months before the military detained him. One blogger and author, Michelle Malkin, wrote about Hussein's detention on the day of his arrest, saying she'd been tipped by a military source.

Carroll [Kathleen Carroll, AP's executive editor] said the role of journalists can be misconstrued and make them a target of critics. But that criticism is misplaced, she said.

"How can you know what a conflict is like if you're only with one side of the combatants?" she said. "Journalism doesn't work if we don't report and photograph all sides."

Turn Your Mind Into A Pretzel For This One

Sep 17 AFP

A bomb exploded in front of the Mahaba wa Tasamah (Love and Forgiveness) foundation, killing one woman and wounding four others.

The building was owned by a local tribal sheikh who had recently called for Saddam Hussein's release and reinstatement.

US forces in the area attributed the bombing campaign to groups with links to Al-Qaeda seeking to spark civil conflict.

[First, don't insult the intelligence of "U.S. forces." "U.S. forces" didn't say shit. "Propagandists for the Occupation command" may have tried this idiocy, but certainly not U.S. forces. By this logic, Al-Qaeda is attacking pro-Saddam Hussein anti-U.S. people. That makes them Bush and Rumsfeld's ally. So why complain about it? And if you believe that line of deluded fantasy try this: the headquarters for the resistance is on the dark side of the moon. Option two: conclude these bombers are working for the Occupation. Duh.]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in.]

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward GI Special 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.



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

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

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