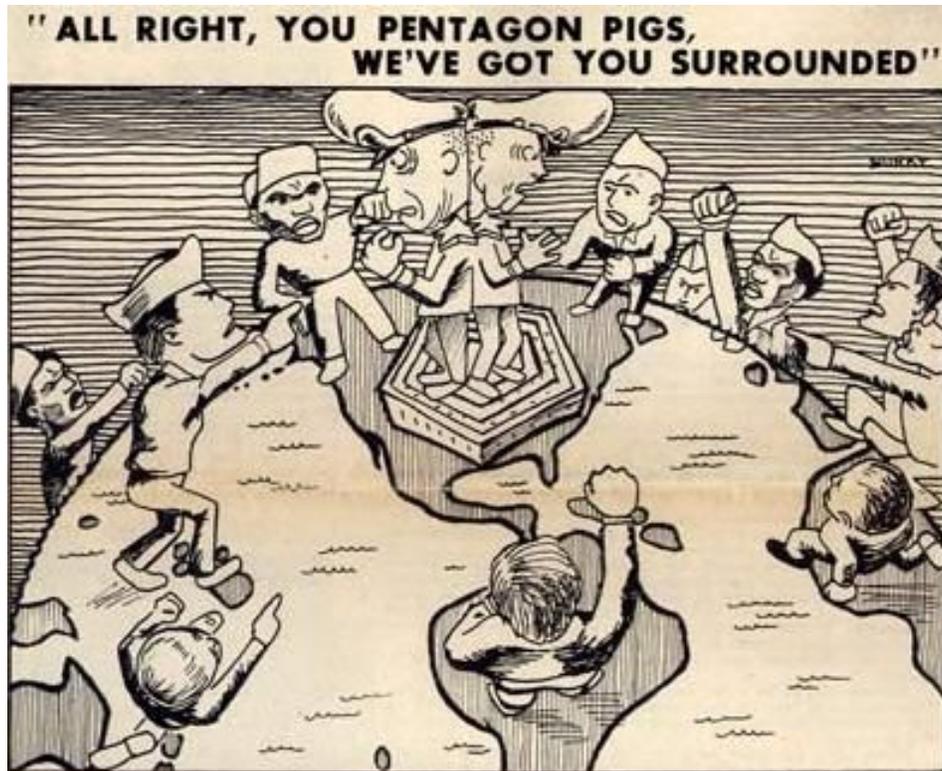


GI SPECIAL 4126:



The GI Movement: From Vietnam Days

Rebuilding The GI Movement

By Seaman Jonathan W. Hutto,
Sr.

From: Jonathan Hutto
To: GI Special
Sent: September 11, 2006
Subject: Rebuilding the GI Movement

Jonathan Hutto is an active duty sailor stationed in Norfolk Virginia. You can reach him at citizensailors@yahoo.com

For my generation of activists born post the Civil Rights and Peace Movement of the 1960's, the struggle against the Vietnam War conjures up images of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's advocacy and the conscientious objection of heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali.

For others, images of peace activists being viciously beaten and attacked by Chicago police in the summer of 1968 and Jimi Hendrix giving his rendition of the "Star Spangle Banner" at Woodstock holds a place in our national conscious.

Over thirty years after the U.S. lost the war in Indochina, my generation is coming to know the history of the GI resistance in Vietnam.

As documented by David Cortright's "Soldiers in Revolt", first published in 1975, and David Ziegler's 2005 documentary film "Sir No Sir", the movement of soldiers and sailors against the occupation of Vietnam was pivotal in ending U.S. Imperialist aggression against the Vietnamese people.

The GI Movement was also instrumental in advancing reforms to the military command structure.

In the aftermath of the racial rebellions of the early 70's on the USS Kitty Hawk and the USS Constellation, the military attempted to address racism and discrimination through the creation of Equal Opportunity (EO) advisors.

Over thirty years later, I have gained personal and political experience dealing with equal opportunity on my ship. It is my hope these experiences can be a road-map for soldiers and sailors dealing with discriminatory and abusive conditions within their workplace.

I enlisted in the United States Navy in January of 2004.

After having worked at non-profit organizations and an unsuccessful stint at teaching 5th grade post graduating from Howard University in 1999, I was searching for a clean slate, a chance to repay my student loans and obtain a new lease on life.

However, what I found was an institutional culture laced with discriminatory behavior based on race, gender, sexual orientation and geography. I still remember the West Virginia recruit in my division in boot camp being asked repeatedly by our Chief Petty Officer (E7) whether or not he had ever slept with his cousin.

Upon arriving on my ship in the summer of 2004, I realized my adjusting to the existing culture within the shop would be impossible.

Racial and sexual remarks were constantly made to both males and females.

One petty officer (E4) was notorious for his comments admiring the Ku Klux Klan and Adolf Hitler.

I vividly remember this same petty officer making derogatory statements regarding the national celebration of Dr. King's birthday.

Every-time I related these incidents to the chain of command, it was always excused and swept under the rug.

In the summer of 2005, during the evaluation process, I wrote my Chief Petty Officer (E7) and Senior Chief Petty Officer (E8) a two and half page memo detailing the gross equal opportunity abuses in my shop and the need for reform.

The result was me being targeted as an agitator and not being a team player. As usual, my complaints were ignored and business as usual continued in the shop.

My ship deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in September of 2005. **During the deployment in January of 2006, a junior petty officer (E4), in the company of other petty officers, displayed a hangman's noose in my face mocking the mass lynchings of African-Americans in this country.**

At this point, enough was enough.

I vowed to resist this oppressive culture to the fullest extent of military law and beyond.

I immediately drafted a memo on the situation and rallied support from other shipmates adversely affected.

The military preaches the doctrine of handling situations at the lowest level possible. The purpose is to ensure higher enlisted and officers are never fully exposed and held accountable in these situations.

Instead of handling this situation at the lowest level, I sent a memo to my entire departmental chain of command including the EO advisor.

A full level investigation was opened to investigate the matter. The investigating officer found the perpetrator did engage in racial intimidation. The result was the perpetrator going before the Captain and being reduced in rank and confined to the ship for 30 days. The senior petty officer in the situation (E5) was given a letter of reprimand.

Despite the small victory, this investigation had its challenges.

My Senior Chief (E8) stated in the investigative report that I had never told him of the situation in the shop which is contrary to the letter I gave him six months prior to the incident.

Also, shipmates in the shop told me of the hostility of the chain of command towards the investigative process.

Lastly, after the Captain awarded punishment to the perpetrators, I was denied a copy of the investigative record by the legal office.

I filed an appeal to the EO advisor on three points in March of 2006.

First, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), I believe I was entitled to a copy of the investigative file. Second, that my Senior Chief needed to be held accountable for being untruthful in the investigation and lastly the punishment given to the perpetrator was not appropriate given the severity of the incident.

On March 21st, I was denied the investigation files and told I could appeal within 30 days.

From the GI Rights Hot-line I learned that all military members can send a protected communication to a member of Congress on any matter.

I sought assistance from Congressman John Lewis's office. His office sent a letter to the Navy on my case and received a response on April 19th. Although my appeal was denied I felt a sense of closure in knowing I had exhausted my rights in this situation.

The atmosphere in my shop has changed for the better although some resentment is present.

For any military member going through an adverse situation in their shop which is discriminatory and unfair in nature, several points to remember. First, document all instances of discriminatory and unfair treatment and report it promptly to your chain of command.

If the chain of command fails to take action, you should seek out your EO advisor and continue to document accordingly.

There are civilian/veterans organizations that will help you in filing a complaint and resolving adverse situations.

You can call the GI Rights hot-line at 1-800-394-9544 or email them at girights@objector.org. They have counselors on call ready to help with any questions or concerns you have.

You can also contact the National Lawyers Guild Military Law Task Force at www.nlg.org/mltf/. The task force helps to provide direct legal assistance to active duty members.

The late abolitionist and fighter against slavery, Frederick Douglass, taught us power concedes nothing without a demand.

A revitalized GI movement of the 21st century in America must deal with the basic grievances of active-duty along with the higher issues of War and the proper distribution of resources for human need.

In the spirit of the Civil Rights Movement, we shall overcome one day!

[This article is taken from the new issue of Traveling Soldier, <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> Check it out!]

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)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Eastwood Graduate Killed In Iraq



Velton Locklear III

09/25/2006 El Paso Times

An Eastwood High School graduate died Saturday while on patrol in Iraq. Army Sgt. Velton Locklear III, 29, was killed when an improvised explosive device destroyed the vehicle he was riding in while on patrol in Kirkuk.

Locklear was on his second tour in Iraq, his family said, having earlier completed a 12-month tour.

Locklear is survived by his wife, Denise, and his two sons, Nathan, 5, and Velton IV, 7.

Funeral services in El Paso are pending.

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



A US soldier patrols the streets of Baghdad's Risalah neighborhood on September 10.
(AFP/File/Paul Schemm)

Task Force Soldier Killed Near Mosul

25 September 2006 MNF Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20060925-02

BAGHDAD: A Task Force Lightning Soldier was wounded by enemy fire Monday near Mosul. The Soldier was transported to a military hospital where he later died of wounds.

Kentucky Sgt. Dies In Baghdad

September 25, 2006 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 955-06

Sgt. 1st Class Charles J. Jones, 29, of Lawrenceburg, Ky., died in Baghdad, Iraq, from a non-combat related incident on Sept. 20, Jones was assigned to the National Guard's 149th Brigade Combat Team, Louisville, Ky.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

British Occupation Command Abandons Forward Outposts; “It Is Like World War I, We Are Living In Trenches. We Have To Fight To Get Out Of The Base, We Have To Fight To Get Back In”

24 September 2006 By Kim Sengupta in London and Ahmed Rahim in Lashkargar, Independent News and Media Limited [Excerpts]

British forces in Afghanistan are restructuring their operations after months of fierce combat which have taken a mounting toll on the battlefield and caused rising concern at home.

The policy of setting up "advanced platoon houses", which have drawn relentless attacks in the heart of Helmand province's Taliban country, will be quietly abandoned.

British troops will instead be concentrated in more easily defended bases near the towns of Lashkargar, Grishk, Sangin and Musa Qala, as well as their main base, Camp Bastion.

The outposts in the Sangin Valley are still being manned by British troops, but they are due to be handed over to the Afghan army, and no new ones are likely to be established.

Supply runs from the regional HQ in Kandahar, which are routinely attacked despite being escorted by entire battle groups, are getting greater protection.

The reality of conditions on the ground, and the privations faced by the troops, have remained largely hidden from the public back home, despite General Richards's warning that they are taking part in the most intense fighting since Korea.

Brigadier Ed Butler, in command of 16 Air Assault Brigade, said his men had used 400,000 rounds of ammunition. "The fighting is extraordinarily intense. The intensity and ferocity is far greater than Iraq on a daily basis. It is up close and personal. It is hand to hand."

Corporal Trevor Coult, who won a Military Cross in Iraq, is based at Sangin. In his view, "this is worse than Baghdad. It is like World War I, we are living in trenches. We have to fight to get out of the base, we have to fight to get back in. You have to fight every day."

Another soldier who has served in Helmand said: "The problem is telling between civvies and the Taliban. We have been walking through a village and suddenly men will appear out of a doorway with a gun. Even then you are not sure whether he is out hunting, or out to hunt you."

An officer added: "We are flattening places we have already flattened, but the attacks have kept coming."

"We have killed them by the dozens, but more keep coming, locally or from across the border. We have used B1 bombers, Harriers and Mirage 2000s. We have dropped 500lb, 1,000lb and 2,000lb bombs. At one point our Apaches ran out of missiles, they have fired so many."

"Almost any movement on the ground gets ambushed."

"We need an entire battle group to move things."

"Yet they will not give us the helicopters we have been asking for. We have greater firepower, and we are good soldiers, so we tend to win, But, of course, they can take their losses while our casualties will ... lead to concern back home."

"You also have to think that each time we kill one, how many more enemies we are creating among his brothers and sons."

Nato says hundreds of Taliban were killed in Operation Medusa, a Canadian-led operation in Kandahar Province. It was declared a "significant success", but the declaration of victory was followed by a series of suicide bombings - a tactic relatively unknown in Afghanistan until last year, but only too prevalent in Iraq.

The Islamist fighters have been strengthened by the controversial opium poppy eradication programme which has seen farmers, with crops destroyed without compensation, become a recruiting pool for the Taliban. Meanwhile, the Government's position on the matter has been, at best, confusing.

A senior British officer in Helmand's capital, Lashkargar, asked British journalists, on the initial deployment six months ago: "When you see the ambassador in Kabul, can you ask him what exactly is the policy towards eradication? We certainly do not know."

The British military have tried to distance themselves from the crop destruction, but they acknowledge that many Afghans do not differentiate between them and the private contractors from the US company DynCorp, charged with the task.

As an elder at a village shura in Helmand pointed out: "The Westerners cannot tell the difference between our tribes, how should we be able to tell the difference between theirs?"

At this uncertain time, Afghans are hedging their bets. Men in Lashkargar have started to don black turbans, growing their beards long and taking their daughters out of school, precautions for the day the Taliban may return to run their lives.

Less than half a mile from the British base in the Helmand capital, extremist clerics who had fled to Pakistan after the fall of Mullah Omar's regime are again preaching jihad.

Preachers who spoke up against the Taliban have been assassinated, without receiving the protection promised by Afghan government forces.

Stallholder Ali Jawad Ali, 33, measured the length of his growing beard with his fist. "We do not know what is going to happen here," he said. "We have already had killings and I do not want to offend anyone.

"There are people who only used to come in the night, but now walk about in daytime. I do not want to say any more."

Gul Mohammed, a carpenter, is keeping his two daughters away from school. "It is a pity, they liked their lessons," he said. "But the situation is difficult. We need to be safe for the time being. We are not safe now, it is more dangerous than it was just a few months ago."

Notes From A Lost War:

Silly Body Counts Return: "An Early Sign Of Coming Defeat"

9.23.06 John Chuckman, Middle-east-online.com [Excerpt]

It was an early sign of the coming defeat when body counts began to dominate American news.

It is easy to kill large numbers of people, especially when you have complete air superiority and high-tech weapons, but constant killing may mean little progress against a serious opponent. Often, as in the Blitz, bombing people is completely counter-productive.

In recent weeks, body counts re-appeared in Afghanistan, much the same way opium poppies re-appeared after America's claim to victory over the Taliban (who had suppressed opium).

The bodies are supposed to be Taliban, but who can tell whether a dead villager is Taliban?

Even when the body is Taliban, how do we regard that as a victory?

The Taliban is a loosely-knit organization, a kind of political party and anti-invader guerilla force, bound to conservative traditions in a hardscrabble land of tough mountain people.

Death does not intimidate where people typically live to forty-seven.

Except in the bizarre mind of George Bush, the Taliban is not a terrorist organization.

So when one of them is killed, does it really represent a victory?

Or is it viewed by many in Afghanistan as murder by unwelcome foreigners?

Clearly, this is the view of many because the Taliban is becoming stronger, surprisingly so according to expert observers.

TROOP NEWS

**“The Army Is Coming To The
End Of Its Rope In Iraq”
This Time 1st Brigade Of 1st
Armored Division Gets Fucked:
Not Coming Home:
Pentagon Orders Them To Stay In
The Ramadi Kill Zone**

[Thanks to David Honish & Alan Stolzer, Veterans, who sent this in.]

"The Army is coming to the end of its rope in Iraq," said Loren Thompson, a defense analyst at the Lexington Institute, a private research group. "It simply does not have enough active-duty military personnel to sustain the current level of effort."

9/25/2006 By ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer

The Army is stretched so thin by the war in Iraq that it is again extending the combat tours of thousands of soldiers beyond the promised maximum of 12 months, the second such move since August.

Soldiers of the 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division had been expecting to return to their home base in Germany in mid-January. Instead, they will stay an extra 46 days in Iraq, until late February, the Pentagon announced Monday. The soldiers are operating in western Anbar province, one of the most violent parts of Iraq.

The soldiers' families were notified of the extension Monday, the official said.

The Pentagon also announced that the 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division will deploy to Iraq 30 days earlier than scheduled, starting in late October.

The announcement did not say why the speedup was deemed necessary, but three officials who spoke on condition of anonymity said it is part of a plan to beef up forces in Baghdad, where U.S. and Iraqi troops are struggling to contain insurgent and sectarian violence.

"The Army is coming to the end of its rope in Iraq," said Loren Thompson, a defense analyst at the Lexington Institute, a private research group. "It simply does not have enough active-duty military personnel to sustain the current level of effort."

The tour extension affects about 3,800 soldiers in the 1st Brigade, 1st Armored, officials said.

They are not the first to be extended.

In late July the Army extended the Iraq tour of the Alaska-based 172nd Stryker Brigade. About 300 soldiers from that unit had already returned home and were required to go back to Iraq. The brigade is now operating in Baghdad.

The Army has a stated goal of giving active-duty soldiers two years at home between overseas combat tours, but it is unable to achieve that "dwell time," as the Army calls, because it does not have enough brigades to meet the demands of simultaneous wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It would not be a problem now if the situation in Iraq had improved enough to allow the Army to reduce its presence as originally planned.

The extension reflects a dilemma for Army leaders: either keep one group of soldiers in Iraq longer than promised, or replace them with another group that has not yet had its minimum 12 months at home between combat tours.

Either choice risks upsetting some soldiers and their families. [No shit? “Upsetting” indeed. It is not unknown for greedy Imperial governments to be “upset” by soldiers they send to die for their personal enrichment. Perhaps there may indeed be some “upsetting” coming down the road, arms in hand.]

And the fact that the choice cannot be avoided is a sign that troop rotations in Iraq are squeezing the Army from several directions.

In August, one soldier at Camp Victory in Iraq told ABC News he's missing out on his kids' childhoods.

"I've got a wife and four kids back home I miss terrible. I miss them very much. They're growing up without me," said Sgt. Major Norm Vasparrentak. Sept. 25, 2006, By JONATHAN KARL, ABC News

“It Kind Of Stinks”

Under-equipped, Under-strength, Under-trained, 3rd ID Troops Forced Back To Bush’s Imperial Slaughterhouse



The division has only a few dozen fully armored Humvees for training because most of the vehicles are in use in Iraq. Erik S. Lesser for The New York Times

[Thanks to AS, the Military Project, who sent this in.]

September 25, 2006 By DAVID S. CLOUD, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

FORT STEWART, Ga.: The pressures that the conflict in Iraq is putting on the Army are apparent amid the towering pine trees of southeast Georgia, where the Third Infantry Division is preparing for the likelihood that it will go back to Iraq for a third tour.

Members of the Third Infantry Division have been conducting training exercises in preparation for a third deployment to Iraq. But equipment for the training is short, and the time for it has been reduced.

Col. Tom James, who commands the division's Second Brigade, acknowledged that his unit's equipment levels had fallen so low that it now had no tanks or other armored vehicles to use in training and that his soldiers were rated as largely untrained in attack and defense.

A compressed training schedule has given soldiers less time to learn their weapons systems.

The First and Third Brigades started receiving tanks to begin training in the field only in the last month.

Only 6 of the First Brigade's 15 operators have qualified so far in operating unmanned aerial vehicles from a ground station, a sergeant said.

But at a time when Pentagon officials are saying the Army is stretched so thin that it may be forced to go back on its pledge to limit National Guard deployment overseas, the division's situation is symptomatic of how the shortages are playing out on the ground.

The Second Brigade, for example, has only half of the roughly 3,500 soldiers it is supposed to have. The unit trains on computer simulators, meant to recreate the experience of firing a tank's main gun or driving in a convoy under attack.

"It's a good tool before you get the equipment you need," Colonel James said. But a few years ago, he said, having a combat brigade in a mechanized infantry division at such a low state of readiness would have been "unheard of."

Other than the 17 brigades in Iraq and Afghanistan, only two or three combat brigades in the entire Army, perhaps 7,000 to 10,000 troops, are fully trained and sufficiently equipped to respond quickly to crises, said a senior Army general.

Most other units of the active-duty Army, which is growing to 42 brigades, are resting or being refitted at their home bases.

But even that cycle, which is supposed to take two years, is being compressed to a year or less because of the need to prepare units quickly to return to Iraq.

After coming from Iraq in 2003, the Third Infantry Division was sent back in 2005. Then, within weeks of returning home last January, it was told by the Army that one of its four brigades had to be ready to go back again, this time in only 11 months.

Yet almost all of the division's equipment had been left in Iraq for their replacements, and thousands of its soldiers left the Army or were reassigned shortly after coming home, leaving the division largely hollow. Most senior officers were replaced in June.

Since this summer, 1,000 soldiers a month have been arriving at Fort Stewart, 400 of them just out of basic training.

As a result, the First and Third Brigades are now at or near their authorized troop strength, but many of the soldiers are raw.

The two brigades started receiving tanks and other equipment to begin training in the field only in the last month, leaving the division only partly able to respond immediately if called to Korea, General Lynch said.

"I'm confident two of the four brigade combat teams would say, 'O.K., let's go,'" General Lynch said in an interview. "The Second and Fourth Brigades would say, 'O.K., boss, but we've got no equipment. What are we going to use?' So we'd have to figure out where we're going to draw their equipment."

Meanwhile, the division is also preparing for deployment to Iraq on an abbreviated timeline.

The brief time at home does not sit well with some soldiers. ["Some"?!]

Specialist George Patterson, who re-enlisted after returning from Iraq in January, said last week that he was surprised to learn he could end up being home with his wife and daughter for only a year.

"I knew I would be going back," Specialist Patterson said. "Did I think I would leave and go back in the same year? No. It kind of stinks."

Army Chief Of Staff Defies Rumsfeld; Refuses To Submit Budget

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

September 25, 2006 By Peter Spiegel, Army Times Staff Writer

The Army's top officer withheld a required 2008 budget plan from Pentagon leaders last month after protesting to Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld that

the service could not maintain its current level of activity in Iraq plus its other global commitments without billions in additional funding.

The decision by Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, the Army's chief of staff, is believed to be unprecedented and signals a widespread belief within the Army that in the absence of significant troop withdrawals from Iraq, funding assumptions must be completely reworked, say current and former Pentagon officials.

"This is unusual, but hell, we're in unusual times," said a senior Pentagon official involved in the budget discussions.

Schoomaker failed to submit the budget plan by an Aug. 15 deadline. The protest followed a series of cuts in the service's funding requests by both the White House and Congress over the last four months.

According to a senior Army official involved in budget talks, Schoomaker is now seeking \$138.8 billion in 2008, nearly \$25 billion above budget limits originally set by Rumsfeld. The Army's budget this year is \$98.2 billion, making Schoomaker's request a 41% increase over current levels.

"It's incredibly huge," said the Army official, who, like others, spoke on condition of anonymity when commenting on internal deliberations. "These are just incredible numbers."

"It's kind of like the old rancher saying: 'I'm going to size the herd to the amount of hay that I have,' " said Lt. Gen. Jerry L. Sinn, the Army's top budget official. "(Schoomaker) can't size the herd to the size of the amount of hay that he has because he's got to maintain the herd to meet the current operating environment."

Funding was further complicated this summer, when rising sectarian violence in Baghdad forced the Pentagon to shelve plans to gradually reduce troops in Iraq.

Because of those pressures, the Army in July announced it was freezing civilian hiring and new weapons contract awards and was scaling back on personnel travel restrictions, among other cost cuts.

Schoomaker has been vocal in recent months about a need to expand war funding legislation to pay for repair of hundreds of tanks and armored fighting vehicles after heavy use in Iraq.

Veterans For Peace Activist Reports “A Clear Shift In The Sentiment”

September 25th, 2006 Democracy Now, Interview With Stephen Sherrill. [Excerpt]

[Thanks to KG, who sent this in.]

AMY GOODMAN: Last evening, as we drove to Santa Barbara, we pulled up to the pier. There, we saw thousands of crosses dug into the beach. We talked to the man who started this, what is called Arlington West. His name is Stephen Sherrill, and he is with Veterans for Peace.

STEPHEN SHERRILL: It started November 2 of 2003 with about 340 crosses. It was designed for two purposes: one, a memorial, to recognize the kids that have lost their lives over in Iraq; and also a wakeup call for Americans to show them the terrible price that we have paid for this war in Iraq.

AMY GOODMAN: Talk about the numbers here.

STEPHEN SHERRILL: Today we just hit 2,700 crosses. The average number of soldiers dying has been about 14 per week, about two per day. The last four weeks we've been above our average. We had 16 this week, we had 23 the week before, and 23 the week before that.

AMY GOODMAN: And how are people responding to this display?

STEPHEN SHERRILL: Well, we've been here almost three years now, and we have noticed a clear shift in the sentiment of the visitors that come here. In the beginning we used to get a lot of people that would shout at us and call us communists and terrorist sympathizers. But we have definitely noticed a shift in the sentiment of the American people. We get almost no derogatory comments now at all.

“Aguayo Is The First Known Case Of A Soldier Being Threatened With Physical Force, Including Hand-Cuffs, To Bring Him To Iraq Against His Will”

September 25, 2006 Elsa Rassbach, American Voices Abroad (AVA) Military Project
Elsa_Rassbach@compuserve.com; Phone: 1-646-400-9206 Via Meike Schubert
melepi@gmx.net

Army Specialist Agustín Aguayo, 34, a conscientious objector (CO) who went absent without leave (AWOL) in Germany on September 2nd when the Army tried to ship him to Iraq by force, will turn himself in to the Army base Fort Irwin in Barstow, California, tomorrow afternoon, according to his wife, Helga Aguayo.

“Agustín Aguayo is a religious conscientious objector whose legitimate claim for an honorable discharge was wrongly denied,” says one of his attorneys, Peter Goldberger.

He is the first to refuse to publicly refuse to deploy to Iraq from Germany, where 67,000 U.S. soldiers provide essential troops and logistical support for U.S. wars and occupation in the Middle East. Aguayo is also the first known case of a soldier being threatened with physical force, including hand-cuffs, to bring him to Iraq against his will.

But Aguayo could fare better than other U.S. war resisters to date.

Tomorrow, as he turns himself in and prepares for an Army court martial for refusing to deploy to Iraq for a second time, his attorneys -- Peter Goldberger and James H. Feldman, Jr., of Ardmore, Pennsylvania, James Klimaski, of Washington, DC, and the nonprofit Center on Conscience and War in Washington -- will file Aguayo's appeal papers in his habeas corpus lawsuit against the Secretary of the Army for wrongfully refusing to recognize his application for conscientious objector (CO) status.

A motion by government attorneys to reject Aguayo's appeal summarily was denied by a panel of three appellate judges on August 30th.

The U.S. District Court in Washington, DC, has jurisdiction over all military personnel stationed overseas, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit hears appeals from that court.

This will be the first such appeal since 1971, during the Vietnam War. If Aguayo prevails, the Army must discharge him, even if he under court martial charges which result from acting on his antiwar beliefs, and give him an honorable discharge, his attorneys explained.

Aguayo filed his application to be recognized as a CO and released from military service at the start of his deployment to Iraq for a year as a medic with the 1st Infantry Division in February, 2004.

The Army chaplain and psychologist who interviewed him found him to be sincere and recommended granting his CO application. Throughout his year in Iraq, he refused to load munitions into his gun. Aguayo joined the Army prior to the U.S. war on Iraq. He was promised by an Army recruiter that his college loan would be paid, that he would receive medical training, and that he would have non-combatant status.

After higher-up officers, who did not meet with Aguayo to discuss his beliefs, recommended rejection of his CO application, it was denied by the Army in August, 2004. With the help of the Military Counseling Network in Bammantal, Germany (a project of the German Mennonite Peace Committee) and of American Voices Abroad Military Project (a network of U.S. peace activists living in Europe and the Middle East), Aguayo raised the funds necessary to file the habeas corpus suit against the Army. U.S. District Court Judge Royce Lamberth ruled in favor of the Army on August 24th, 2006. Aguayo filed his notice of appeal on August 25th. Oral argument of the appeal before three different judges will be heard in Washington on November 21st, 2006.

In August of this year, Aguayo told the court in DC that, on grounds of conscience, he would not deploy to Iraq again: "By helping countless soldiers for 'sick-call' as well as

driving soldiers around on patrols, I helped them get physically better and be able to go out and do the very thing I am against – kill....I cannot carry that burden on my conscience. When you know better, you do better. Therefore, this time I will not deploy.”

Nevertheless, he received an order to deploy to Iraq for a second time.

After denying Aguayo’s request to be discharged as a conscientious objector, the Army even used the “stop-loss” provision authorized by President Bush to extend Aguayo’s active duty service obligation against his will past the agreed-upon four years in his enlistment contract. He was due to be released in January, but the Army ordered him to remain in Iraq until at least September, 2007.

Aguayo missed the movement of his unit from Germany to Iraq on September 1st, 2006. The next morning at 8:30 AM, he turned himself in to the Military Police in Schweinfurt, expecting to be court-martialed and willing to receive a prison sentence and a less than honorable discharge for the sake of his beliefs. He had retained a German attorney, Christian Rieker of Frankfurt, to represent him at the court martial.

But Rear Detachment Commander Ricky Torres of the 1st infantry Division insisted on sending Aguayo to Iraq by force, in hand-cuffs if necessary.

At about noon on September 2nd, as two sergeants waited in the Aguayo family living room for Aguayo to get his uniform and gear to deploy to Iraq, he jumped out of a back bedroom window to escape and has been in hiding since then, planning the best time and place for his surrender to face any consequences which may result from his act of conscience. He has returned to the U.S., where he will turn himself in.

The Army has cut off Aguayo’s pay and the family’s benefits, including health insurance, according to his wife, Helga.

On August 16th, she flew from Germany to Los Angeles, where her and her husband’s family reside and has enrolled the Aguayos’ twin daughters, aged eleven, in school in Los Angeles.

Air Force Cuts Pilot Training So War Profiteers Can Keep Their R&D Contracts

9.25.06 Aviation Week & Space Technology

The Air Force is planning to reduce funding for pilot training and construction around the globe, although Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley says he hopes to keep procurement and research accounts intact as the Pentagon builds its fiscal 2008 budget.

The Air Force's strategy in recent years to keep afloat its R&D accounts has been to reduce manpower, passing the savings on. Now, the impact will be felt in the operations and maintenance accounts, which pay for pilots to execute proficiency flights and hone their skills.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

24 Sep 2006 Reuters & 09.25.2006 By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press Writer & Reuters

About 70 miles west of Baghdad in Ramadi, a bomber drove a car into a police checkpoint. Seven policemen were killed and seven others injured, police and hospital officials said.

One policeman was killed and six were wounded when their station in Musayyib, about 40 miles south of Baghdad, came under heavy attack, police said.

Six cars drove up to the building at about 8:30 a.m. and opened fire with machine-guns, then began firing volleys of mortar shells, police Capt. Salah al-Maamouri said. The unidentified attackers fled when American troops arrived.

In the capital's eastern Wahda neighborhood, three policemen were wounded in a bomb attack. A bomb planted under a civilian car exploded, setting it alight. When police moved in to investigate, a second bomb exploded, wounding the officers, Majeed said.

Gunpersons burst into the house of the head of the municipal council in Falluja, Najim Abdullah al-Isawi, killing him and his son, police said.

Mortar rounds and a suicide truck bomber targeting a police station killed three policemen and wounded 10 in the small town of Jurf al-Sakhar, 85 km (53 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Gunpersons killed a translator working for U.S. forces on Sunday night in the Shi'ite city of Najaf, 160 km (100 miles) south of Baghdad.

BAIJI: Police found the decapitated head of a police lieutenant, Sameer Hazim, who was kidnapped on Sunday, police said. Nine other severed heads were found on Saturday.

The corpse of an Iraqi soldier who had been shot dead was found on Sunday on the main road between Baiji and Haditha, police said.

An Iraqi soldier died on Monday of wounds sustained from small arms fire on Sunday in the town of Balad, 80 km (55 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

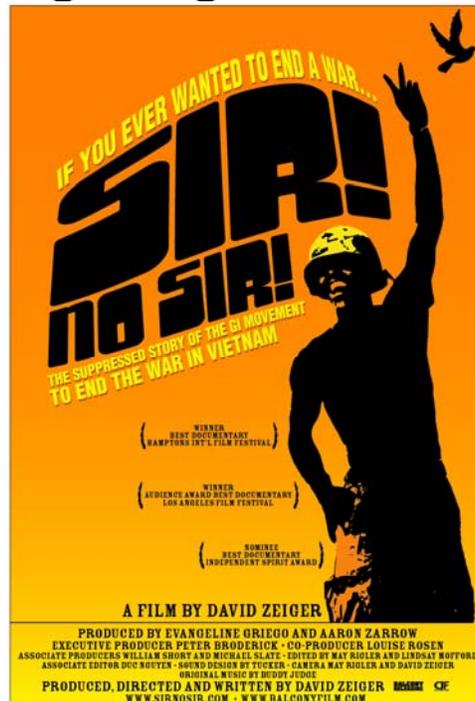
On Sunday night, assailants in four cars pulled up outside the United Arab Emirates Embassy in Baghdad and fired a rocket-propelled grenade at it, police Lt. Maithem Abdel Razzaq said. The round hit an external concrete block and caused no injuries.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“The Courageous Story Of Mass
Resistance To The Vietnam War
By Active-Duty GIs”**

**“The Pentagon Was Eventually Forced
To Recognize That The US Army In
Vietnam Was No Longer Capable Of
Fighting The War”**



Near the end of SIR! NO SIR! there are scenes of masses of GIs throwing their medals in disgust onto the White House lawn.

We do see and hear one soldier make the famous statement, "I don't want to fight anymore. But if we have to fight, it will be to take these steps."

April 15, 2006 by Marc Norton, Mark Norton Online

SIR! NO SIR! tells the courageous story of mass resistance to the Vietnam war by active-duty GIs.

This is a story that the corporate media, the politicians, establishment historians and the entertainment industry have worked overtime to bury. As the preview says, you need to know this story.

There have been many movies about the war in Vietnam, but the war wasn't a movie.

It was a time when hundreds of thousands of armed American men and women participated in grassroots, rank-and-file politics in a way that hasn't been seen since.

SIR! NO SIR! tells the story of soldiers Dennis Mora, David Samas and James Johnson, who, early in the war, refused to board a troop ship to Vietnam, and allows us to hear from Howard Levy, a military doctor who refused to train Special Forces troops.

We hear from members of the Presidio 27, prisoners on the Presidio Army Base in San Francisco, who, in 1968 -- after a prisoner was brutally murdered by the guards -- tore apart their stockade and staged a sit-in on the post lawn. They were then charged with mutiny, a capital offense. Unlike today's media-staged sit-ins, they weren't expecting to be cited and released.

We hear from members of the Fort Hood 43, black soldiers in Texas who were prosecuted for refusing riot-duty at the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago. The rest of their unit, sent to Chicago to protect the masters of war, were kept in their barracks because the brass wasn't sure which side they would take if put on the streets.

SIR! NO SIR! goes on to tell the stories of an ever-growing rebellion, of hundreds of underground GI newspapers, of thousands of GIs who refused to fight, of hundreds of thousands of soldiers who went AWOL.

We hear the story of the weeks-long revolt by GI prisoners in Long Binh Jail (LBJ) in Vietnam.

And we hear the story of Billy Dean Smith, who was framed for fragging his commander. Fragging was the not-uncommon practice of tossing a fragmentation grenade in the direction of gung-ho officers, often with deadly results.

Billy Dean Smith was made a scapegoat for many successful fraggings. He was acquitted at trial, but, as with many Vietnam-era anti-war veterans, suffered ongoing indignities and repression from the powers-that-still-be, and is even now locked away in one of america's dungeons.

The Pentagon was eventually forced to recognize that the US army in Vietnam was no longer capable of fighting the war.

Erased from history, even from the memory of most of the anti-war movement, is the fact that it was the resistance of the GIs, more than anything else, that brought the war to an end -- except, of course, for the resistance of the Vietnamese people themselves.

The brave soldiers who refused to play the role assigned to them by the masters of war were part of a real movement, one that grew directly from the ranks of poor and working class people, from every part of the US, and most particularly from people of color.

The movement grew from the most basic needs of the GIs -- the need, first and foremost, to survive; but also the need to live with some kind of human dignity, to feel that they were not the flunkies or cannon-fodder for a sick set of war-mongers, racists and imperialist scumbags.

The millions who marched and fought in the streets of america played their part, but the GIs were quite literally on the front lines.

While there were many committed, self-conscious political organizers involved in the GI movement, both inside and outside the military, it was the soldiers themselves who provided the leadership and, no pun intended, the troops. The GI movement didn't draw its momentum from some set of armchair theorists, or some cabal of political posers and non-profit funders.

Near the end of SIR! NO SIR! there are scenes of masses of GIs throwing their medals in disgust onto the White House lawn. Thankfully, we are spared any sight of John Kerry faking it.

We do see and hear one soldier make the famous statement, "I don't want to fight anymore. But if we have to fight, it will be to take these steps."

In the years since the victory of the Vietnamese people in 1975, the political leaders of this country have sent our young men and women off to war many times. And every time, the corporate media and the politicians are eager to claim that the "Vietnam syndrome" -- the unwillingness of large sectors of the US working class to fight, kill or die in unjust wars -- has been put to rest.

But the fact remains that, even to this day, three years into a war in Iraq the US is clearly losing, our ruling class betters are afraid to re-institute the draft and up the ante in a way that would risk the military collapse they suffered in Vietnam.

In that way, the legacy of the GI resistance movement lives on. SIR! NO SIR

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 about the first hip-hop antiwar concert against the "War on Terror."



The GI Movement: From Vietnam Days

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

This Is Not A Parody **"Iraq Is Not In Chaos"**

9.25.06 Washington Post

An interview with Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, visiting New York after a meeting with President Bush.

Q. While many here in the U.S. believe the war is a mess, you believe the opposite.

A. Iraq is not in chaos. I want to assure the American people that Iraqis are now enjoying democracy and human rights and are struggling to secure the country.

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE/LEBANON

Whipped In Lebanon, Zionist Trash Find Something They Can Do: Torment Families Of Political Prisoners

September 24, 2006 Via Gush Shalom

In a pre-dawn raid on Friday, 8 September 2006, Israeli security forces closed down the offices of Ansar al-Sajin (The Prisoners' Friends Association), an NGO registered under Israeli law which offers support to Palestinian political prisoners.

Police officers and General Security Services agents confiscated computers and hundreds of documents from the organization's offices in the Galilee town of Majd al-Krum. Raids were conducted also in Ansar al-Sajin offices in the West Bank. The raid followed a formal declaration by the Israeli Minister of Defense that the organization was illegal.

Ansar al-Sajin has been active since 1979, helping prisoners and their families to cope with the difficulties they face during periods of imprisonment.

Thus, beyond providing legal aid to prisoners, the organization has also helped Palestinian families to overcome bureaucratic obstacles in organizing family visits and, in cases of difficulties with the postal service, transferring letters from the Occupied Territories to prisons located within the 1967 borders of Israel.

It has also cared for the health of prisoners and helped them to receive medical treatment.

Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, has taken on the legal battle on behalf of Ansar al-Sajin and is challenging the Defense Minister's decision.

However, the legal battle is not enough.

The decision to shut down the organization's offices and the police raid are clear cases of political harassment, consistent with previous attempts to obstruct and hinder the work of any human rights organization dealing with the welfare of Palestinian political prisoners.

In this case, the order came in the wake of the launch of a campaign by the organization, in which it called for the inclusion of 1948 Palestinian prisoners (citizens of Israel) in the current talks on the exchange of prisoners.

We call upon the international human rights community to protest against Israel's actions in this matter. Please call or write to the Israeli Embassy in your country or directly to the Israeli Ministry of Defense and the Prime Minister's office expressing your concern about their blatantly anti-democratic behavior.

The Ministry of Defense:
Tel: 972-3-6975423; Fax: 972-3-6976711
Email: pniot@mod.gov.il

The Prime Minister's Office:
Tel. 972-33-6109898, 972-2-6705555; Fax: 972-2-6705475
Email: pmo.heb@it.pmo.gov.il

Adalah, The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel
Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI)
Hamoked Center for the Defence of the Individual
Physicians for Human Rights (PHR)
The Israeli Action Committee for Palestinian Prisoners and Detainees
Women's Organization for Political Prisoners (WOFPP)

[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."]

Terrorists Rape South Lebanon; “Shepherds Refrained From Escorting Their Herds To The Fields For Fear Of Being Shot By The Israeli Soldiers”

September 20, 2006 Mohammed Zaatari, Daily Star staff

SOUTH LEBANON: Israeli bulldozers started to level the soil and cut down olive trees in Yarin in the Tyre region on Monday, spoiling several cultivated fields and preventing farmers from inspecting their lands.

"Israeli bulldozers have spoiled my land, cutting down the fruit trees I've planted," said farmer Shaker Afleh on Tuesday, as he and his daughter watched the bulldozers on his land from a kilometer away.

Israel's earth-movers have cut down several trees belonging to more than 10 members of the Abu Dellah family.

"Bulldozers have been leveling the soil for two days, trying to expand the Blue Line at the expense of our land and livelihoods," Abdallah Abu Dellah said on Tuesday.

"The international force has done nothing but register Israel's daily violations of Lebanon's territory," he said.

Shepherds refrained from escorting their herds to the fields for fear of being shot by the Israeli soldiers, one resident told The Daily Star.

"Israeli bulldozers are trying to level the greatest number of trees in order to monitor the border easily," the source said.

The area's residents said they feared that Israel would erect barbed-wire fences in their lands and set up a so-called "buffer zone."

Israeli troops set up a fence last week in a Marjayoun field, leveled soil and created a large trench despite the presence of UNIFIL forces.

Meanwhile, an Israeli bulldozer carried out digging work on Tuesday before laying water pipes in the Wazzani River in Marjayoun in a bid to funnel water to the town of Ghajar, the National News Agency (NNA) reported this week.

Five Israeli tanks were seen in Tallat Mahames inside the eastern sector in the South, the NNA added.

Further Israeli violation of Lebanese airspace took place when Israeli reconnaissance jets flew over several Tyre-area villages on Tuesday at noon, the NNA further reported.

Palestinian Prisoners Send S.O.S. Message In An Attempt To Save The Life Of Fellow Inmate

Ma'an News 9/22/2006

Bethlehem: Palestinian prisoners in Be'er Sheva prison have managed to send out an S. O. S message expressing their concern for the life of fellow inmate Mustapha Abu Atsha who was arrested in May 2004. The 39 year old father of six from Ramallah in the West Bank has been in jail ever since.

From the contents of the message it would appear that Abu Atsha is suffering from blood clots of the heart and brain which may have caused partial paralysis. The prisoners further stated that it is difficult to move him as he is also suffering from severe back pains, but that they fear his condition is critical.

The prisoners have also complained that the prison authority has refused to assist Abu Atsha with the proper medicines or treatment. They also stated that the prison authority will not move him to the prison hospital in Ramla.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



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

Protesters Attack Aceh Tsunami Reconstruction Office

September 21, 2006 By Reuters

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia: Hundreds of Indonesian protesters vented their anger on Wednesday against the state body tasked with reconstructing tsunami-hit Aceh province, throwing stones at police and the agency's office.

The mob, which had camped outside the office since Tuesday night, accused the reconstruction agency, BRR, of sluggishness in providing decent housing for survivors of the Dec. 26, 2004, tsunami that left 170,000 killed or missing and half a million homeless in Aceh.

The rally turned violent after police tried to disperse the crowd, which in return showered the officers with stones, officials said. "The stone-throwing damaged police facilities including two cars. We decided to disperse the crowd because they had been staying outside the BRR office beyond the timeline that we gave them," said Banda Aceh deputy police chief Dedy Setyo.

Most of the protesters were among those still living in temporary wooden barracks for tsunami survivors that dot areas surrounding the provincial capital Banda Aceh.

They have long demanded the government provide them the permanent housing already constructed for many residents of other devastated coastal areas.

The agency is under fire after a leading Indonesian anti-graft group last month accused the body of financial irregularities in five of its projects worth 23.9 billion rupiah (\$2.6 million).

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

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.

Received:

Bush

From: LR
To: GI Special
Sent: September 24, 2006
Subject: RE: GI Special 4125: The Devil

Bush is the DEVIL is too good a name for him
Never did I have hate in me
Bush I HATE
You live and you learn

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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http://robinlea.com/GI_Special/; <http://imagineaworldof.blogspot.com/>; <http://gi-special.iraq-news.de>; http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/;
<http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>; <http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/gi-special.htm>

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