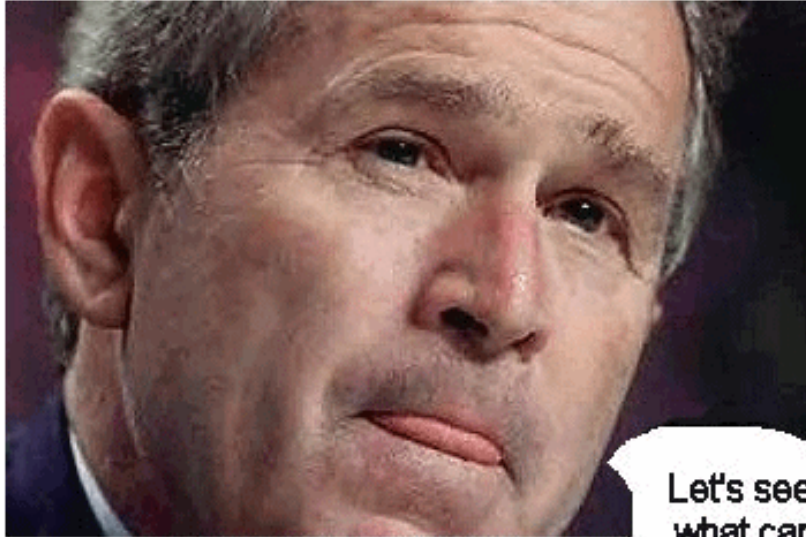


GI SPECIAL 4/30:



earthhopenetwork.net

Let's see
what can I
fuck up next?

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

***Another Sadistic Piece
Of Shit In Command:
“His Commander Refused To
Allow Him To Seek This Medical
Treatment Because He Will Not
Delay His Deployment”***

From: Veterans Against Iraq War: vaiw@hotmail.com

To: GI Special

Sent: September 27, 2006

Received this letter today and made a feature article of it on VAIW. I want to get it out and about everywhere. More will come.

Shows how desperate this military is!

They're promising to keep him in a nice cool quite area of Iraq...right, like tents in Kuwait!!!

So far she's getting tremendous responses from just this VAIW article.

Thanks and peace,
Bunkie.

[Names withheld to protect the innocent:]

Dear VAIW,

I have no where else to turn.

All options including Senators Clinton and Schumer and Congressmen McNulty have not helped.

Congressman Sweeney has strung us along until it is too late and I received an email today saying he cannot stop the deployment.

My nephew, LT. [X]. US army, is being deployed to Iraq October 6th. He has Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD), cysts on his liver and uncontrollable high blood pressure.

We have letters that we gave to his Commander from the National Kidney Foundation doctors Shuman and Vassillotti, Dr. Steinman, the top PKD specialist in the nation who is currently running the HALT-PKD study in Boston, of which he is a part, Dr. Horn of Albany and Dr. Winklhofer of Kansas, stating it would be a medical mistake to send him to Iraq and the complications he may have from the environment.

He will be prone to kidney stones, heat failure (of which he's already had 2 in the last 18 months), acceleration of his PKD and possible kidney failure. This will also shorten his life.

His Commander overrode the recommendation of the top PKD specialists and says he is deployable because they quoted a PART of one regulation saying he does not have recurring urinary tract infections so he is deployable.

Several of the doctors wrote that not everyone with PKD gets infections. They overlooked all the other regulations stating he is not deployable and should be medically discharged.

Because his Commander will not take the recommendation of CIVILIAN doctors, even though they sent him to them, Dr. Steinman wrote his Commander requesting he see Dr. Neff, a military nephrologist, at Walter Reed.

M's mother spoke with Dr. Neff and he is willing to evaluate his PKD to see if he is deployable or not.

His Commander refused to allow him to seek this medical treatment because he will not delay his deployment.

My father died at the age of 48 and my brother (his father) at the age of 41.

Our family has a history of rapid advancement of PKD with kidneys the size of a basketball and early death.

This deployment will certainly shorten his life.

I am turning to you for guidance.

What do we do?

Who do we contact?

Do we need a lawyer and where do we find one?

Any help would be appreciated.

**Sincerely,
[X]**

MORE:

UPDATE: 9.29.06

From: j
To: Veterans Against Iraq War
Subject: WooHoo!!! You guys have done it!
Date: 29 Sep 2006

Bunkie,

I just got an email from [X] and there's great news!!!!

He had his last physical before deployment today and **THEY ARE SENDING HIM TO WALTER REED [X] TO SEE A NEPHROLOGIST!!!!!!**

WooHoo!!! Yippee!! Thank you, thank you, thank you!!! To you and all of the other groups you have forwarded this too. You have made an impact in a few days!!!!

It's not over yet so we still need the support.

Hugs, peace and love,
[X]

[If you got some ideas or something to say about this, the VAIW Email address is up top. Do not offer to frag the asshole; those letters have probably already come in by the time you read this. T]

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Bush Regime Hiding Level Of Violence Against U.S. Troops: 100 Attacks A Day

September 28, 2006 Reuters

The Bush administration is concealing the level of violence against U.S. troops in Iraq and the situation there is growing worse despite White House and Pentagon claims of progress, journalist Bob Woodward said in advance of a new book.

Insurgent attacks against U.S.-led forces in Iraq occurred, on average, every 15 minutes, Woodward said in a CBS "60 Minutes" interview taped for broadcast on Sunday.

"It's getting to the point now where there are eight, 900 attacks a week. That's more than a hundred a day. That is four an hour attacking our forces," Woodward said in excerpts of the interview released on Thursday before the release of his book on the administration, called "State of Denial."

"The assessment by intelligence experts is that next year, 2007, is going to get worse and, in public, you have the president and you have the Pentagon (saying) 'Oh, no, things are going to get better,'" Woodward added.

According to Woodward, Bush was absolutely certain he was on the right course on Iraq.

The writer said that when Bush invited key Republicans to the White House to discuss Iraq, the president told them, 'I will not withdraw even if Laura and Barney are the only ones supporting me,'" referring to his wife and Scottish terrier.

REALLY BAD IDEA:

NO MISSION; HOPELESS WAR: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. soldiers patrol a road in central Baquba September 18, 2006. (Mohammed Ameen/Reuters)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Canadian Soldier Killed On Foot Patrol In Zhari

9/29/2006 Agence France Presse

"A Canadian soldier was killed by an improvised explosive device in the Panjwayi area about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) west of Kandahar," spokeswoman Lieutenant Carole Brown said. "He was conducting a dismounted patrol at the time of the explosion. He was on foot," she said.

The soldier was on patrol in southern Kandahar province's Zhari district, part of an area where ISAF this month wrapped up its biggest anti-Taliban offensive which it said had driven out entrenched rebels.

The fallen soldier, whose name has not been released at the request of his next of kin, was evacuated by helicopter to the Kandahar airfield, Brown said.

TROOP NEWS

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



The funeral of 2nd Lt. Emily Perez at the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., Sept. 26, 2006. Perez, the highest ranking black and Hispanic woman cadet in corps history, was buried two weeks after she was killed by a bomb in Iraq. (AP Photo/Tim Roske)

***Through A Different Lens:*
Reporter For Saudi Arabian Paper
Interviews U.S. Iraq Veterans
Against The War In DC:
“I Was Disappointed By The Iraq War As
I Realized That It Was A War Against
Iraqis”**

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

23/09/2006 By Mohammed Ali Saleh, Asharq Al-Awsat, Saudi Research and Publishing company [Excerpts]

Within the proximity of the US Capitol building where Congress meets, since the beginning of September, there lies a coffin containing the body of an American soldier who served in Iraq. The coffin is draped by an American flag and is surrounded by smaller flags, crucifixes, military boots as well as banners criticizing the American President, George W Bush.

These posters also convey prayers for soldiers who have died in Iraq and demand that all American soldiers are returned to the USA.

The symbolic coffin was placed in front of the US Capitol building by Camp Democracy, which encompasses organizations against the American war in Iraq such as Veterans for Peace, Stop the War Coalition and Military Families Speak Out. **[And, most important of all, Iraq Veterans Against The War.]**

Geoffrey Millard, an American soldier who fought in Iraq told Asharq Al Awsat, with the US Capitol building behind him, “We do want freedom for Iraq but this is something the Iraqis ought to achieve for themselves.

“The Iraqis did not ask us to occupy their country and to establish freedom there.”

Millard wore the same military attire that he wore in Iraq that carried his name and the number of his regiment. However, in addition, he wore a traditional Arab “koffiya” (scarf) and a black t-shirt that bore the words “We will not be silent” in Arabic and English.

Millard told Asharq Al Awsat, “I worked for one year in Iraq and learnt some Arabic words and phrases. The best phrase that I learnt was ‘We will not be silent’.”

Millard stated that he deliberately wore the black t-shirt for the demonstration against the war as he learnt that in Iraq black is the colour of protest.

Legally, Millard explained that it is prohibited for him to wear the military uniform since he had left the armed forces. He added, “I’m a rebel and a rebel does whatever he wants!”

Millard had not witnessed or taken part in military operations in Iraq as he was an assistant to the commander of the 42nd Infantry Division that was sent to Iraq from the National Guard base in New York. This division was responsible for guarding the Iraqi town of Tikrit for one year.

However, Millard revealed that many of the killings of the Iraqi people at the hands of American soldiers take place out of fear of Iraqi civilians and that many of these attacks take place at checkpoints.

American soldiers opened fire on many occasions such as when Iraqi citizens refused to stop at checkpoints, when cars would rush towards the soldiers, when citizens refused to get out of their car, when citizens would take their hands out of their pockets (as soldiers

feared that civilians were armed) and when Iraqis would insult, slap or spit at American soldiers.

Millard nevertheless, was against the war even before he was dispatched to Iraq. He says, "I was against the invasion of Iraq because it is illegal. Primarily, it was against American law as Congress did not declare war and it was against international law because the Security Council did not approve it."

However, Millard added that he is not against the concept of war; he is not a "pacifist", he is not a "conscientious objector" and he is not "against any religious creed", (American law takes into consideration those who oppose military enlistment based on these reasons).

He added, "I believe in war if it is just and the Iraq war cannot be considered just."

Charlie Anderson, another American soldier who participated in the invasion of Iraq told Asharq Al Awsat that he, like Millard is proud of military action and war if it is fair.

He stated that he joined the armed forces for two reasons. "Firstly, I am very patriotic and I am proud of the United States and I believe that it is the best country in the history of the world." The second reason, he continues, "is that I was raised as part of a poor family that could not pay for my university fees but the armed forces would cover these expenses for any recruit."

Anderson stated that he entered Basra with the American forces at the beginning of the invasion as a member of the military aid division with Marine Corps second tank battalion. He witnessed the "murdering of thousands of Iraqis" during the invasion and the expansion of American control of Iraq. He did not participate in the killings because, as he explains, "I was part of the medical team and we followed tanks and armored vehicles. I treated the wounded and gathered corpses when battles had ended. I could not do anything. I changed my opinion of the war."

[Camilo Mejia] said that he saw Iraqi captives "barefooted, with paper bags on their heads and bound by electric wires. We would deprive them of sleep for two or three days, threaten to kill them, put guns to their heads and detonate fake bombs next to them to see their reactions."

Asked why Mejia did not refuse to take part in such acts, he replied, "I was scared and others were participating too. Perhaps they had the same feeling as me but I did not know at the time."

He said that he later discovered that the so-called interrogation camp was in fact where captives were tortured. One year after the invasion, Mejia returned to the United States and refused to return to Iraq. He declared his position and disappeared for a few months after which he surrendered himself to his military base where he was tried and imprisoned for one year and was released from prison last year.

Mejia said, "Some people call me a traitor whilst others call me a hero. I guess I am somewhere in between the two. I am not a traitor and I am not a hero. I do not believe in heroes." **[No, Brother Mejia doesn't go around saying "whilst." Must be the translation.]**

Contacting Ricky Clousing, a friend and colleague of Mejia, proved a difficult task and like his friend, he too disappeared after objecting to the Iraq war. Clousing also surrendered himself to the military base of Fort Bragg which is based in North Carolina and is awaiting trial. Asharq Al Awsat questioned Clousing through his lawyer Laurence Hildes, however he stated that Fort Bragg refused to allow him to answer these questions.

Hildes stated, "I expect that Clousing will be tried and imprisoned for one year like his colleague, Mejia."

At the entrance of Fort Bragg and before turning himself in, Clousing addressed reporters saying, "I was disappointed by the Iraq war as I realized that it was a war against Iraqis."

Clousing quoted Martin Luther King, the black reverend and leader of the American civil rights movement who forty years ago said, "Cowards ask: will this opinion protect me? Opportunists ask: is this a politically acceptable opinion? Those with a conscience ask: is this the correct opinion?"

From time to time, the Pentagon announces the names of soldiers who have left the military. However, it does not explain whether they left because their term has ended, whether they are in protest or if they fled the army.

Joshua Casteel who fled the army, said that the turning point in his life was when he interrogated a Saudi man imprisoned in Abu Ghraib. Casteel asked the prisoner, "Doesn't your religion prohibit you from killing," to which he replied, "Didn't Jesus Christ also prohibit killing?" Casteel continued, "I thought about what the prisoner said a lot because I am a devout Catholic."

A recent opinion poll directed at American soldiers showed that 70% want American forces to withdraw from Iraq within one year and 30% of American soldiers want immediate withdrawal.

The opinion poll was conducted before George W Bush delivered his speech on 9 September 2006 to mark the fifth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, in which he clearly stated that the war in Iraq is part of the war on terror.

The American president said, "Despite that mistakes have been made in Iraq, the biggest mistake would be to withdraw." He added, "The security of the United States depends on the ongoing battles in the streets of Iraq."

That very morning however, a number of soldiers who fought in Iraq demonstrated in front of the Pentagon and distributed leaflets against the war.

The protestors were surrounded by military police and were even arrested including Geoffrey Millard.

After his release he told Asharq Al Awsat, "What kind of war is this when American soldiers are arresting fellow American soldiers?"

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.

“Watada Is The First Officer To Publicly Refuse To Serve In Iraq”
“I Know In The Army, There Has Been Tremendous Support From All Ranks, From Soldiers All Around The Country, All Around The World”

[Thanks to KG, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

September 19th, 2006 Democracy Now [Excerpts]

Conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentlemen. That is the latest charge that Lieutenant Ehren Watada was hit with on Friday by the Army. Watada is the first officer to publicly refuse to serve in Iraq.

Army spokesman Joe Piek said that this latest charge is based on Watada's remarks last month at the national convention for Veterans for Peace. At that convention Watada attacked the Bush administration for waging a war "for profit and imperialistic domination" and urged soldiers to refuse to fight.

I spoke to Lieutenant Watada on Saturday night at the Seattle Town Hall. I began by asking him his response to the latest charges.

1ST LT. EHREN WATADA: On Friday, yesterday, I was charged with conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, another count that was added onto the charges already that the military has referred to me based on the speeches that I had made kind of saying why I was not deploying, my beliefs on what the administration was doing.

And I made another speech recently at the Veterans for Peace conference. And because of that speech, they then charged me again.

AMY GOODMAN: What is your response to that charge, conduct unbecoming an officer? What did you say at the Veterans for Peace convention?

1ST LT. EHREN WATADA: I said many things. Basically I was talking to the peace activists, people who I believe are on the frontlines working for an end to this war and for peace and justice in general.

And I was speaking to them generally to say that all Americans have a responsibility to support those service members who are trying to do the right thing. And I was basically saying why I believe this and telling them how they can help out soldiers, service members, who are resisting this war.

The most important thing for me is that in our democracy, according to our constitution, one person, one man, cannot hold absolute power, hold himself above the law, including in actions in declaring war or waging war on another country.

And it is my belief that in deceiving the American people, through which a majority of us now know to be true, the leaders of our country were violating their oath to this country and violating constitutional law.

That was the main reason.

And I just felt that the policies that were made were forcing soldiers, including myself, to commit actions that violated international and domestic laws.

AMY GOODMAN: So what happens to you now? How many counts, how many charges have been brought against you?

1ST LT. EHREN WATADA: Basically, there's one count of missing movement, which has a maximum penalty of two years; two counts of contempt against officials, which is another two years, specifically contempt against the President of the United States; and now four charges of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, all total about eight-and-a-half years.

AMY GOODMAN: You live in Olympia. Are you allowed to leave the state of Washington now?

1ST LT. EHREN WATADA: No. I cannot leave the state of Washington. I have tried to request to go home to visit friends and family, for which will probably be the last time I will see them if I'm incarcerated.

And they have restricted me from going anywhere outside of the state on the basis that they don't want me making any speeches that will incite people or inspire people. But they have not put any limitations on what I can do in the state of Washington.

AMY GOODMAN: You've got a tremendous response here at town hall of over 1,000 people. What is your response to that? And are you ready to go to jail?

1ST LT. EHREN WATADA: First of all, I think with the response of the people in general, I'm eternally grateful. There has been so much warm, encouraging words of support from all over the country, all over the world and even within the military itself.

And that strengthens me, and it gives me more courage to do what I'm doing. Certainly I don't think anybody is ready for prison, but I feel it's a necessary sacrifice, if that's what it comes down to, and one that I'm willing to make, and to do whatever I can to bring democracy back to this country.

AMY GOODMAN: Have people in the military expressed their support to you publicly or privately?

1ST LT. EHREN WATADA: Not publicly.

I think a lot are taking a risk in using the military email servers to communicate to me their words of support and encouragement.

But, yes, all over -- I don't know about the other services, but I know in the Army, there has been tremendous support from all ranks, from soldiers all around the country, all around the world, even veterans just coming back from Iraq, and certainly not in the majority, I would assume, in the military, but they are out there, many of them.

AMY GOODMAN: And specifically, the charge, conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, and the charge, expressing contempt towards the President of the United States, can you address this conduct?

1ST LT. EHREN WATADA: The charges -- or that article that they charged me with is very arbitrary.

They basically list and quote things that I have said, to wit, as they say. And they say that it's conduct unbecoming, because those words are disgraceful and dishonorable.

But those terms are so ambiguous, and they could mean different things.

The ACLU has really -- has come out to my defense publicly, and they've even written an amicus brief, which we presented at the Article 32 hearing, saying that past instances of which officers have been charged with conduct unbecoming really have no jurisprudence for this case in regarding free speech.

Usually things like if an officer fails to pay child support or they commit adultery or they're caught stealing, those are really what they have charged or what they used to charge officers with.

Something concerning your free speech is unprecedented.

AMY GOODMAN: Lieutenant Ehren Watada, what gives you your strength?

1ST LT. EHREN WATADA: The opportunity to make a difference.

I see the path that our country is taking is so wrong and so destructive, all from the conduct and the ideology of our leadership.

And I just think anything I can do to put a stop to this, to make things right, I'll do it.

Iraq Vet Says “We Need To Either Stay And Finish Or Stop Endangering The Troops”

“I Always Think About The Soldiers That Are Still There”

[As you read, be aware there came a time during the war on Vietnam when this was heard more and more often from the troops: “Win or get out.” It was a transitional formulation that soon changed to simply: Get Out! T]

September 25, 2006 by Adrian Nida, Vanguard Staff Writer

As Ben Lanning dresses in his army fatigues, he casually mentions that he was being shot at the last time he wore them. And while most would be surprised at the nonchalant manner in which he discusses putting his life on the line, it doesn't take long to recognize that he tells most his stories this way.

His truck exploding in Beiji, Iraq, being awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star Medal - all told with the same sense of duty. For Lanning, it was just about doing his job.

Lanning, an Oakland County native, returned home in December 2004 after a year-long tour of duty in Iraq. Today, the Engineering Technology and Management major is busy doing research with the chemistry department, working to develop alternative fuels that will decrease the country's dependence on oil from foreign lands.

Yet, ironically, it was only two short years ago that Lanning gained first-hand knowledge of one such foreign land as a member of the Army Reserves, and he tells a story of a time in which alternative fuel was the last thing on his mind.

For Lanning, the decision to join the Reserves came natural. With a grandfather, uncle, and aunt all having been in the Army, he says it was a sense of patriotism that drew him to serve. In addition, the educational benefits and training he would receive made enlisting a logical choice.

"Here I am just getting ready to graduate school, and I wanted to move on and get some experience and a job to help get a career started," he says. "I thought it would be a good stepping stone."

And so Lanning joined. One weekend a month and two weeks a year, Lanning trained with the 401st Transportation Company from Battle Creek. In the meantime, he worked as a contractor at General Motors and Delphi and attended school at Delta College.

But then everything changed. The United States invaded Iraq in March 2003 and Lanning knew it was only a matter of time before he too would be headed overseas. Five months later, Lanning received the letter he knew was coming: he had been involuntarily activated and was to report to Battle Creek with the rest of the 401st.

From Battle Creek, Lanning's company was sent to Fort Lewis, WA where his company spent several months training before being sent to Mosul, a city in Northern Iraq. In Mosul, Lanning and his company ran convoy security, escorting supplies from one base to another. For the most part, his time there went as planned, until a day in July 2004 when chaos erupted.

The day started as routine as any other. Lanning and his friend and fellow soldier, Sgt. 1st Class David Hartman, were running convoy security. Hartman was driving the truck while Lanning was the gunner on the passenger side. That's when the truck hit an IED - an improvised explosive device - essentially, a bomb insurgents set up alongside the road and remote detonate as trucks go by.

After the truck exploded, Lanning says he wasn't sure what had happened, just that it was something bad.

The force of the explosion was so powerful that he would have been thrown from the truck had something on his gear not caught hold of a piece of the truck and kept him inside the burning vehicle. Though Lanning says he is uncertain whether being thrown from the vehicle would have caused greater injury or less, he does know the explosion left him momentarily incoherent.

"You're just knocked into a daze," he says. "You don't know what is going on. You know a bomb went off.... It felt like someone hit you in the head with a baseball bat."

As Lanning worked to unhook himself, he looked over and saw that the entire driver side of the cab had been destroyed in the explosion. Immediately, his attention turned to Hartman. Ignoring the piece of metal shrapnel imbedded in his leg, Lanning ran around to the other side of the truck. At the time, Lanning knew his leg was injured, but was unsure as to the extent of the injury.

"I knew I couldn't walk," Lanning says. "Basically, I was limping and my leg was bleeding, but you don't really comprehend what is going on."

By the time Lanning reached the driver side of the truck, there was nothing he could do. Hartman had been killed in the explosion.

"You don't know what is going on," Lanning says, "All you know is total chaos."

After the explosion, Lanning underwent surgery on his wound. To this day, he still carries a small piece of metal in his leg that doctors were unable to remove. After the surgery, Lanning spent several months on crutches. When he was healed enough to return to duty, he was given a choice to just stay at the base and work on trucks or to continue doing missions. Lanning chose the missions.

"You just suffered this huge loss but you can't let it beat you," Lanning says of his decision to return to the field. "You can't let that situation affect you for the rest of your life."

After his injury, Lanning was awarded the Purple Heart, a decoration given to those wounded or killed while serving with the U.S. Military.

While Lanning expected the Purple Heart, he had not expected to be awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the fourth-highest award for bravery, heroism, or meritorious service. He was awarded both decorations during a ceremony while still in Iraq.

While Lanning is proud of his medals, he doesn't brandish them, instead choosing to keep them in his closet at home.

"I felt I was just doing my job," he says.

A short time after returning to active duty, Lanning's tour was up, and he was sent back home in December 2004.

Now that he has returned home, Lanning's life has regained some normalcy, though he still trains with the 401st as a member of the Reserves. In addition, Lanning's experiences both inside and outside of Iraq left him with opinions about the United States' involvement.

"We need to either stay and finish or stop endangering the troops," he says.

And while Lanning suffered injury and saw a friend killed in action, he is quick to point out that he still feels a call of duty and would return to Iraq if needed.

"I am very proud to have served and I'd go back if I had to," he says. "I always think about the soldiers that are still there."

Scum Who Disgrace Navy Uniforms Steal Guantanamo Prisoners' Proofs Of Innocence

"It was a minor miracle for the detainee to even obtain some letters in support of his claim of innocence. For the NCIS to then confiscate the evidence from him ... just illustrates the unfairness of the whole proceeding. "

September 28, 2006 By Andrew O. Selsky, Associated Press

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL STATION, Cuba: His ankles chained to the floor of the hearing room, a Saudi detainee hoped to convince three U.S. military officers that he is

not a danger to the United States, has no intelligence value and should be released from the Guantanamo Bay prison.

But in his one shot this year at getting out of here, the detainee could not produce letters from his family that he wanted to submit as evidence.

They were seized by the military, along with thousands of other documents from detainees, as it investigates whether the suicides of three prisoners in June were assisted or encouraged.

While the letters on their own may not have convinced the panel that the detainee should be released, the hearing shows that the Naval Criminal Investigative Service's confiscation of more than 1,100 pounds of documents is hampering detainees' ability to confront accusations against them.

Correspondence between attorneys and their clients was among the documents seized. Lawyers for detainees say the military is violating attorney-client privilege and exacerbating the isolation of detainees by taking family pictures and other personal items.

A federal judge last week ordered an independent "filter team" to review the paperwork for evidence of complicity in the suicides. Irrelevant and protected documents must be returned to detainees, the judge ruled.

Defense attorneys are bitter.

"Attorneys working at Guantanamo have never believed they could tell clients with certainty that attorney-client communications are truly confidential," lawyer Joshua Colangelo-Bryan told The Associated Press in an e-mail. "Now that the government has admitted to reviewing the legal materials of many detainees, it is obvious that these concerns were well founded."

Patricia A. Bronte, another attorney, said detainees will now have a harder time trying to clear themselves.

"I believe that their ability to present evidence in their defense, already severely circumscribed, will be further harmed," Bronte said.

"It was a minor miracle for the detainee to even obtain some letters in support of his claim of innocence. For the NCIS to then confiscate the evidence from him ... just illustrates the unfairness of the whole proceeding. "

At his appearance last week before the Administrative Review Board, the 22-year-old Saudi detainee, who is not allowed an attorney for the hearing and instead is assigned a military representative, told the presiding Marine colonel and two other board members that he had come empty-handed.

"I tried to bring the letters, but they took them away from me," he told the officers sitting at a table some 10 feet away, an American flag thumb-tacked to the speckled-tile wall behind them.

Reporters from The Associated Press and three other news organizations attended the hearing. Under media ground rules, the detainee and board participants could not be identified.

The hearing, held in a small room inside a trailer in the detention center, provides a rare glimpse into the issues the military wrestles with in recommending whether a detainee should continue to be held or sent away.

Bronte said it is was too early to judge how wide-reaching the effects of the document seizures are.

“Prisoners’ lawyers are not allowed to attend the ARB proceedings and can only find out about them through their clients,” she said. “Because of the restrictions on attorney-client communications, this can be weeks or months after the fact.”

Sitting on an office chair with his manacled hands resting in his lap, the bearded prisoner openly acknowledged he had gone to Afghanistan before the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks to fight the Northern Alliance. The alliance was battling Afghanistan’s hard-line Islamic rulers, the Taliban. But he insisted he never wanted to kill Americans.

“After Sept. 11, there was talk about the United States entering Afghanistan, but I never thought of fighting the United States,” the detainee, wearing baggy white pants and a white cotton shirt, said in a soft voice. White is reserved for compliant detainees; others wear orange.

He acknowledged he receiving training in firing a pistol, assault rifle and a rocket-propelled grenade in the Arab-run Al Farouq training camp in Afghanistan. He said he also was once shown a surface-to-air missile in Afghanistan, but never received training on the SAM-7. He was captured near the Afghan-Pakistan border, according to military records.

U.S. interrogators, tasked with uncovering plots against the United States and determining if a detainee is a security risk, have repeatedly asked questions about surface-to-air missiles, the detainee said.

A clerk, reading from the record, said the detainee has denied knowing of any plans to attack U.S. aircraft at Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia. It was unclear why interrogators pursued that line of questioning. Parts of Administrative Review Board hearings and documents are classified, closed to detainees and the press.

The detainee said he wanted no more queries about surface-to-air missiles, believing that each new set of interrogators was not being told the topic has already been covered.

“Could you write that down, that I didn’t train in that weapon,” he asked the board president.

“I will personally tell the interrogators that you said this,” the colonel responded.

The Marine told the detainee the board tried to get his letters from the Navy investigators. He invited the detainee to recount for the record what the letters said.

The detainee said family members noted he was only 17 when he went to Afghanistan and was innocent. He declined to describe the letters in depth.

“I prefer to wait until you have the letters in your hands so you can see them with your own eyes,” he said.

British Internal Military Memo: “We Are Now Fighting (And Arguably Losing Or Potentially Losing) On Two Fronts”

[Thanks to J, who sent this in.]

September 29, 2006 Richard Norton-Taylor, The Guardian

Senior military officers have been pressing the government to withdraw British troops from Iraq and concentrate on what they now regard as a more worthwhile and winnable battleground in Afghanistan.

Pressure from military chiefs for an early and significant cut in the 7,500 British troops in Iraq is also motivated by extreme pressure being placed on soldiers and those responsible for training them.

Army chiefs have expressed concern about opinion polls showing the increasing unpopularity of the war and the impact on morale and recruitment.

Political arguments, including strong US pressure against British troop withdrawals, have won, at least for the moment. US generals in Iraq privately made it clear they were deeply unhappy about British talk of troop reductions and complained that the British seemed interested only in the south of the country.

The fierce debate at the highest military and political levels in the MoD is reflected in a passage of a leaked memo written by a staff officer at the Defence Academy, an MoD thinktank.

It reads: "British armed forces are effectively held hostage in Iraq - following the failure of the deal being attempted by COS (chief of staff) to extricate UK armed forces from Iraq on the basis of 'doing Afghanistan' - and we are now fighting (and arguably losing or potentially losing) on two fronts."

VA Refused To Spend PTSD Money On Troops: Fraud And Incompetence, As Usual

September 28, 2006 By Rick Maze, Army Times Staff writer. [Excerpts]

House lawmakers on both sides of the political aisle are upset because the Department of Veterans Affairs has not spent the entire \$300 million it vowed to devote to post-traumatic stress syndrome among combat troops.

The Government Accountability Office, the investigative arm of Congress, says in a report issued today that the VA spent less than half of a promised \$100 million in 2005 on PTSD and \$158 million of a promised \$200 million in 2006.

True spending on PTSD programs might be even less, the report says, because money released to VA medical facilities has not necessarily been spent, *and even if spent may have gone to other purposes.*

GAO officials expect to issue a full report later this year with more details on what happened to the money.

“The administration is far short of fulfilling its commitments,” said Rep. Michael Michaud of Maine, ranking Democrat on the house Veterans’ Affairs health subcommittee.

“Clearly, our oversight of the VA’s implementation and delivery of mental health services will have to be more vigorous.”

Michaud said that contrary to the Bush administration’s claims, the GAO’s preliminary findings “reveal that ... there is no accountability for spending the resources required to fulfill VA’s own mental health plan and to address the mental health care needs of veterans.”

“The administration has critically shortchanged veterans by failing to spend needed funds to address gaps in access and quality of mental health care, instead offering false claims that VA is ready and able to provide these services,” Michaud said.

Rep. Henry Brown, R-S.C., the subcommittee chairman, agreed that Congress needs to take a closer look.

“Veterans expect that wounds suffered in service, be they to mind or body, will be cared for by the nation they served,” Brown said.

“While the quality of veterans’ health care has come far, I find disappointing today’s GAO statement that VA last year used less than the full \$100 million Congress allocated for mental health.

When our young men and women serve their nation, they give their all; Congress expects that those entrusted to care for them do the same.”

Brown vowed to exercise “greater oversight” to determine what VA is spending and how it is being spent.

Thailand's Military Dictators Forbid Outreach To Troops



Thai dancers on outreach mission to Thai soldiers on the streets of Bangkok 25 September 2006. **The generals who run the country's military dictatorship were not happy when the dancers performed in front of tanks and said it would not happen again.** (AFP/File/Pornchai Kittiwongsakul)



A soldier gives the group of Thai women some water. Sept. 25, 2006. (AP Photo/Ed Wray)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“Withdrawal Of U.S. Forces From Iraq And Afghanistan Is The Only Principled And Practical Position That The Antiwar Movement Can Take”

The antiwar movement in the United States needs to oppose the various phony “exit strategies” put forward by the Democratic Party. Some are just election-year posturing to fool voters disgusted by Bush and Rumsfeld, while others--for example, Rep. John Murtha’s “redeployment” plan--are schemes for continuing the war on Iraq from outside its borders, most likely by intensified bombing.

September 29, 2006 JOE ALLEN, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

BY EVERY conceivable measure, the antiwar movement in the United States should be a vibrant, mass movement.

Forty percent or less of the U.S. population gives the Bush administration a favorable job rating; other polls show that two-thirds of Americans think the Iraq war was a “mistake”; and, most importantly, 80 percent of Iraqis want the U.S.-British occupation of their country to end.

The increasing number of U.S. war dead and the inadequate treatment of injured and disabled veterans has infuriated many people in the U.S., while the exposure of torture and war crimes by U.S. military personnel has wiped away any “moral superiority” the U.S. claimed over its former client Saddam Hussein.

When one adds this list to the mounting social cost of paying for the war with increasing cuts in social welfare programs, one has to ask: why is our antiwar movement so passive?

The reasons for this are many.

The Democrats--the so-called “opposition” party in the U.S.--have provided crucial support for the war and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Another crucial reason for the weakness of the antiwar movement is the political course chosen by United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), the largest and most visible antiwar coalition in the U.S.

UFPJ’s main claim to leadership was the role it played in organizing the U.S. end of the worldwide antiwar protests on February 15-16, 2003, a month before the invasion took place.

Yet in the three-and-a-half years since, UFPJ has organized only a very small number of national mobilizations. And even these have not always been unambiguously antiwar demonstrations. For example, the clear target of UFPJ’s protest outside the Republican National Convention in August 2004 was George Bush, not the war on Iraq, which has taken place with bipartisan support.

UFPJ’s response to the major crisis points for U.S. policy since the invasion--the leveling of Falluja, the Abu Ghraib torture scandal, the threats to attack Iran, the recent Israeli-U.S. assault against Lebanon--has been feeble in terms of protest, while its emphasis on building support for the so-called antiwar Democrats in Congress has grown more distinct.

ONE FACTOR in this strategic orientation is the influence of the Communist Party (CP) USA, which plays an important part in shaping the direction of UFPJ.

For the past 70 years, with few exceptions, the CP has argued that it is essential for progressive movements hoping to win social change in the U.S. to support the Democratic Party against the Republicans.

During the [2004] campaign, Kerry called for 25,000 more U.S. troops to be sent to Iraq. He voted for every funding bill for the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and is an ardent supporter of Israel. He could by no stretch of the imagination be called an antiwar candidate.

Far from being a “positive choice,” Kerry’s campaign was so right wing and inept that Bush--who four years before had to steal the vote in Florida to take the White House--won easily with a 3 million-vote margin.

The Democrats--who, before and since the 2004 election, ducked every opportunity to challenge the Bush administration’s policies--got the unswerving support of a large section of the left, including the Communist party, to the detriment of the struggle against the Bush agenda.

When the Republicans called the Democrats’ bluff and put forward a resolution last spring calling for immediate withdrawal, only three House Democrats voted for it.

The rest voted against it--including Rep. John Murtha, whose “redeployment’ plan has been supported by UFPJ, and Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio), an “antiwar” candidate in the 2004 Democrat primaries, who said the Republican resolution was “a trick.”

But most congressional Democrats are opposed to setting a deadline for withdrawal, and even the “antiwar” resolutions put forward by the “out of Iraq” caucus contain qualifications and vague timetables.

The antiwar movement in the United States needs to oppose the various phony “exit strategies” put forward by the Democratic Party.

Some are just election-year posturing to fool voters disgusted by Bush and Rumsfeld, while others--for example, Rep. John Murtha’s “redeployment” plan--are schemes for continuing the war on Iraq from outside its borders, most likely by intensified bombing.

The demand for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq and Afghanistan is the only principled and practical position that the antiwar movement can take to end the misery brought to the region by the United States.

Support for the Democratic Party is pulling antiwar organizations further from this principled position--and must be rejected.

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.

What Happens When History Is Buried



Homeless Vietnam Veteran in San Francisco 2003.

From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: September 29, 2006 5:34 AM
Subject: What Happens When History Is Buried

What Happens When History Is Buried

BETRAYAL is the final lethal injection--it was this lie that defined the Vietnam War, and it will be this lie that will define the war in Iraq.

The hand grenade is the American soldier,
the pin is the U.S. Government.

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
September 29, 2006

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)

Wonders Never Cease: A General Gets Something Right:

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in.]

September 15, 2006 Government Executive. Government Executive Editor Timothy B. Clark spoke to [Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter] Schoomaker on Aug. 23 about the challenges facing the Army today. An edited transcript follows: [Excerpts]

Q: What lessons do you take from the Israeli-Hezbollah war?

A: One of them is you never underestimate your enemy. Money doesn't solve everything, and neither does armor and neither does a lot of things flying around the air and floating in the sea. Ultimately, this is a test of human wills.

Q: In Lebanon, a fairly clear lesson seemed to be that airpower can't win the war. Would you agree with that?

A: I believe in airpower, and there's nothing like having somebody on the other end of the radio when you need something done in a hurry.

But to overstate what's possible with airpower is easy to do, and people have a certain tendency to love things that go fast, make noise and look shiny.

Like I told you, never confuse enthusiasm with capability. It takes a team. I wouldn't denigrate airpower at all, but anybody who thinks that you can win these kinds of things in one dimension is not being honest.

OCCUPATION REPORT

The Sooner The Better

"It is the right of the Iraqi government, as it combats terrorism, to silence any voice that tries to harm the national unity," said Mr. Sadr, of the Iraqi Media Network.

September 29, 2006 By PAUL von ZIELBAUER

“Don’t be surprised if you wake up one day to find that I have also been killed,” said Habib al-Sadr, the chief executive of the government-financed Iraqi Media Network, the nation’s largest media organization.

Last month, more than 70 news organizations signed a nine-point pledge supporting the national reconciliation plan of Prime Minister Maliki, promising not to use inflammatory statements or images of people killed in attacks, and vowing to “disseminate news in a way that harmonizes with Iraq’s interests.”

Days later, the police barred journalists from photographing corpses at the scenes of bombings and mortar attacks. Since then, policemen have smashed several photographers’ cameras and digital memory cards.

At Al Arabiya, the Baghdad station shuttered by the Iraqi authorities earlier this month, the studio door handle is sealed in red wax and bound in police tape. (The door is adorned with a photo of Atwar Bahjat, who was kidnapped, tortured and killed in Samarra in February while reporting on the bombing of a Shiite shrine.)

Some news executives express support for Al Arabiya’s closing.

“It is the right of the Iraqi government, as it combats terrorism, to silence any voice that tries to harm the national unity,” said Mr. Sadr, of the Iraqi Media Network.

Oil Production Continues Below Pre-Occupation Levels

Sept 28 By Tom Doggett, Reuters

Iraq's oil production averaged 2.2 million barrels a day in August, based on the latest estimate from the U.S. Energy Department. The country's oil exports have been running at almost 1.7 million barrels a day in September.

Those levels are far below pre-war conditions, when energy experts had estimated that Iraq pumped between 2.8 million and 3 million barrels per day and had a net oil export potential of 2.3 million to 2.5 million bpd.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE/LEBANON

Zionist Government Minister Calls For Wiping Out Palestinian Villages

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in. She writes: A government minister has a very simple solution to Israel's problems. How would you rate this idea in the local competition for "Best Qualified Nazi"??]

26 September 2006 Agence France Presse

JERUSALEM, Sept 26 2006-- Israeli Trade Minister Eli Yishai said Tuesday that the Jewish state should raze Palestinian village in the Gaza Strip to stop militants there from firing rockets.

"What is needed is to evacuate the villages from where the rockets are being fired, and raze them," Yishai, from the ultra-Orthodox Shas party, told public radio.

"And to do this village after village until they stop firing rockets against us," said Yishai, who also serves as deputy prime minister and is a member of Israel's security cabinet. "This situation cannot continue as is."

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



9-17-06 The American Soldier: Veteran Press Syndicate

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

U.S. General Says He Is Going To Arrest The Traitor Bush

(22 Sep 06): U.S. Department of Defense News Briefing from Iraq: Presenter: Commander, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, Maj. Gen. James Thurman [Excerpt]

GEN. THURMAN: What I would tell you is we're going to arrest anybody that's operating outside the rule of law, that's conducting violence against people, the Iraqi people and civilians.

**LIAR
TRAITOR
TROOP-KILLER
DOMESTIC ENEMY
UNFIT FOR COMMAND**



The traitor Bush responds to dissent among Senate Republicans during a news conference in the Rose Garden at the White House, in Washington, Sept. 15, 2006. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

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

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT THE NEW 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)

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://qi-special.iraq-news.de>; http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/;

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

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