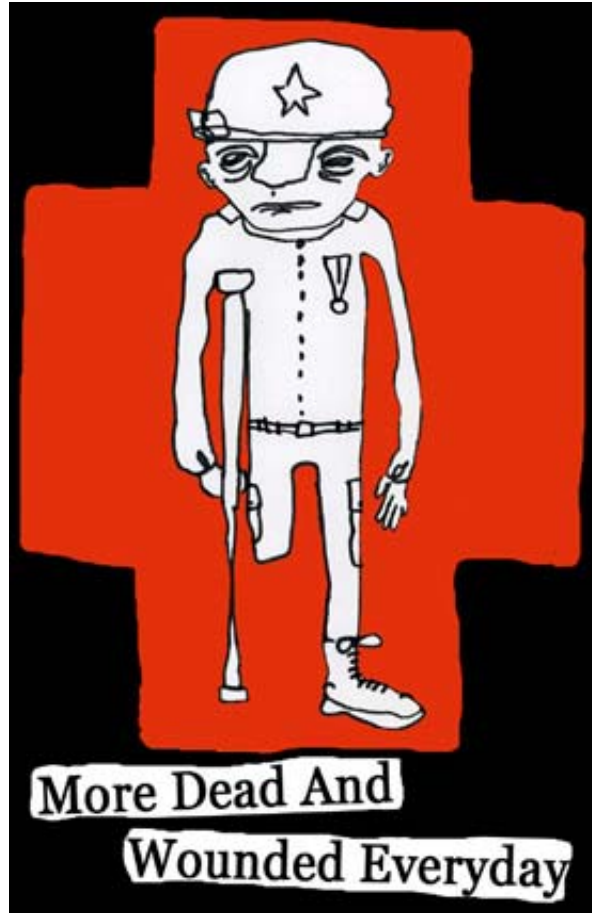


GI SPECIAL 4J10:



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

**“He Didn’t Want To Go
Back”**

**“He Said We’re Over
There For No Reason”**

To many Edgewood Independent School District students who struggle with poverty and other socioeconomic issues in the barrio every day, military service is seen as a way to improve their quality of life and secure money for a college education.

Such is the environment that shaped the life of Army Staff Sgt. Joe A. Narvaez, a former Kennedy High School football player who was killed Monday by a sniper in Iraq.

"When you don't have a lot and aren't going to college after you graduate, the only option for sure is to join the service," former teammate Philip Lucio said Friday. "Even though it's a tough life, that's a guaranteed paycheck."

Jaime Contreras, who graduated from Kennedy with Narvaez in 2000 and also played football with him, concurred.

"Joe joined the service to make a difference," he said. "Not only for the country but for himself. It's tough to get out of the West Side."

Narvaez, 25, is the first Edgewood ISD graduate to die in Iraq or Afghanistan, according to a district spokesman.

Narvaez, who enlisted in October 2000, was killed while serving his second tour in Iraq.

He was the son of David G. and Guadalupe Narvaez, who have asked the media to respect the family's privacy during this difficult time.

"I really would like to talk about my brother but it hurts too much right now," David J. Narvaez said.

One of Narvaez's former teammates said Narvaez expressed misgivings about the mess in Iraq the last time they talked in San Antonio last December.

"He didn't want to go back," said Leandro Gonzales Jr., now a coach at Pearsall High School. "He said we're over there for no reason, but he was more than willing to do what he had to do. Joe was just that kind of guy. If he's fighting for somebody, he's going to do his best."

The Kennedy football team was preparing for practice Monday afternoon when Coach Richard Cerda, who was the Rockets' offensive coordinator when Narvaez played, got a phone call from a relative of Narvaez.

What he heard was like a thunderclap on a clear day.

Two of Narvaez's nephews, Craig and Richard Escamilla, were among the players in the noisy Kennedy field house when Cerda learned of his death.

"I took them into my office and told them they needed to call their father," Cerda said, declining to name the players. "It was very, very sad, of course."

After comforting the players, Cerda asked if he could tell the team about their uncle's death. Given the go-ahead, Cerda gathered the Rockets and gave them the bad news.

An eerie silence, he said, fell over the room.

"You could have heard a pin drop 100 yards away," Cerda said. "Usually when we get together before practice, everybody is shouting and getting fired up. But that day, it was just quiet. I'll never forget that and the sacrifice Joe made."

Kennedy played at Crystal City on Friday night, but plans are under way to honor Narvaez at the Kennedy-Memorial game Nov. 11 at Mata Stadium.

Narvaez, a center, was remembered by teammates as a hard-working young man who was a leader on and off the field.

"Joe was a people person that everybody liked," said Omar Berrones, who played on the offensive line with him.

Said Gonzales: "He had tremendous heart and was always the first one to yell out, 'Let's go, guys.'"

Narvaez was only 5-foot-8 but he carried his 190 pounds well and packed a "powerful punch" as a blocker, Cerda said.

"Joe did everything right," Cerda said. "He never complained. He knew he was going to have to work hard, and he just did what he had to do."

Right up until the end of his life.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Marine Killed In Iraq Returned Home

10/5/2006 Reported By Duffie Dixon, WXIA-TV

A Metro Atlanta Marine killed in Iraq was brought home to his family in Fulton County on Wednesday.

A procession that included a number of Fulton County Sheriff's deputy vehicles left Hartsfield-Jackson airport late on Wednesday afternoon. The procession made its way to a funeral home in Fairburn, where Lance Corporal James Chamerouen will be laid to rest.

A long, slow, deliberate escort for Fulton County's first Marine killed in Iraq.

"I think it lets the family know, it lets the people in the community know that we're fully behind our armed forces, and any support we can give, we will give it," said one deputy.

Law enforcement officers from several agencies, and ordinary citizens paused to watch as fellow Marines brought home Lance Corporal Chamerouen's body.

His family was clinging to one another as the flag-draped casket went by.

"I was in the marines. It is really a sombering experience. It touches my heart," said the deputy.

A sight no one gets used to, a flag, flying at half-staff, honoring a fallen soldier who has made his last trip home.

Funeral services for Chamerouen are set for Friday.

FUTILE EXERCISE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



An Iraqi citizen and his children look at U.S. occupation soldiers from Alfa company 1-17 battalion of the 172th Stryker brigade combat team in their street, in eastern Baghdad, Oct. 2, 2006. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)

Widow Says Marine Didn't Want Her Tears

October 7, 2006 By John R. Ellement, Globe Staff

MALDEN: Before he went to Iraq, Marine Lance Corporal Edward M. Garvin, 19, told his family that if he did not return, they should laugh, not cry, in his memory.

"He didn't want people crying over him," his widow, Melissa Garvin, said yesterday at her family's home as she talked about "the love of her life," who died in combat in Iraq. "He wanted funny stories and everybody laughing. That's who he was."

Melissa Garvin, 20, who was married May 26 in a private ceremony, strained to hold back tears yesterday, trying to follow her husband's wishes that smiles mark his passing. He had been in Iraq for four weeks.

She recalled how she and her husband had a heated discussion when she learned he was going to war. But some of that tension abated when he explained that there were 150 Marines being deployed out of a pool of 200.

"He looked at me, and he told me that if he went over there, it kept one of those other guys here with their families," she said.

Garvin was a lanky man who loved being a Marine.

He studied culinary arts at the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational School in Wakefield, where he was a member of the class of 2005.

School superintendent Patricia Cronin easily recalled Garvin, who was among 10 members of the class of 2005 who joined the military after graduation, because he was always smiling. "He liked people, he liked the other kids in school, and he was very popular," she said.

Cronin said Garvin is the first student to make the ultimate sacrifice since the school opened in 1970.

Relatives said Garvin was drawn to a military life because an older cousin with whom he was close, Stephen Edwards, is also in the Marines. The 25-year-old Edwards is currently assigned to Iraq, relatives said.

"He was a good kid, a real good kid," said Allan Edwards, the father of Stephen and uncle of Garvin. Stephen Edwards "didn't tell him to join the military. He did it on his own. He wanted to follow in Stephen's footsteps."

Garvin's mother, Catherine Edwards, of Malden, was too distraught to be interviewed yesterday.

In a statement, the Department of Defense said Garvin and Corporal Benjamin S. Rosales, 20, of Houston were killed Oct. 4 while conducting combat operations in Anbar Province, Iraq. The two men were assigned to the Second Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, headquartered at Camp Lejeune.

Sitting on the couch in her living room, Melissa Garvey and Garvin's younger brother and older sister traded tales about Garvin.

Melissa Garvin recalled how the couple spent an hour arguing about the time zone in New Hampshire; Garvin insisted there was a one-minute difference once you crossed the border, she said, chuckling.

Garvin, according to his younger brother, 16-year-old Lawrence Price, "was mad confident about himself."

"He would know absolutely nothing about something -- and think he knew it all," Price said.

That attitude played itself out when the two were younger and had a battery-powered toy car. Garvin would demand to drive, but only in a circle because he did not know how to steer straight, said Melissa Garvin, who had known him since second grade.

The couple planned a public celebration of their private marriage for which Melissa Garvin had purchased a wedding gown. She said she will now sell the dress and send the proceeds to the Boy Scout camp in Barnstead, N.H., where he spent many summers.

Melissa Garvin would not discuss the political controversy about the war in Iraq.

"All the politics doesn't matter," she said. "It's not going to bring him back. What matters now is his memory."

TROOP NEWS

Bush Approving Rating At "A New All-Time Low" "53 Percent Believe It Was A Mistake To Go To War At All"

Oct. 7, 2006 NEWSWEEK Poll [Excerpts]

The president's approval rating has fallen to a new all-time low for the Newsweek poll: 33 percent, down from an already anemic 36 percent in August. Only 25 percent of Americans are satisfied with the direction of the country, while 67 percent say they are not.

And pessimism over Iraq is at record highs on every score: nearly two in three Americans, 64 percent, believe the United States is losing ground there; 66 percent say the war has not made America safer from terrorism (just 29 percent believe it has); and 53 percent believe it was a mistake to go to war at all, again the first time the NEWSWEEK poll has registered a majority in that camp.

As a result, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's approval rating has fallen to just 30 percent, and more Americans believe he should resign than remain, 48 percent vs. 37 percent.

A third of registered voters, 33 percent, say the single most important issue that will decide their vote will be Iraq; compare to 20 percent who say the economy and only 12 percent who say terrorism, which ties with health care.

MORE:

Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Peter Pace Says Military Can't Meet "Challenges" In Iraq & Afghanistan

10.5.06 Albuquerque Journal

Without the support of American families and employers, it would be impossible for the U.S. military, which has grown increasingly dependent on National Guard and Reserve troops, to meet the challenges in Iraq, Afghanistan and at home, Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Peter Pace told an Albuquerque audience. **[Since a very large majority of Americans no longer support the war, obviously Pace has just found a backhanded way to announce defeat, unless he's too stupid to know what American think.]**

OFFICER SURVIVAL 101: BY A PACE-SETTER

From: Don Bacon; smedleybutlersociety@msn.com
To: GI Special
Sent: October 09, 2006
Subject: OFFICER SURVIVAL 101-- BY A PACE-SETTER

GENERAL PACE CRIED FOR THE TROOPS

At the awards gala, Marine Gen. Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that the stories of the five servicemember honorees and other troops like them bring tears to his eyes and make his job a privilege.

ONE AMPUTEE/HONOREE SAID:

"We'd do anything for each other; I'd do anything for any of my Marines, and they'd do the same for me," he said. "I love my Marines; they saved my life." (September 29, 2006, DOD Defense Link)

**BUT MARINE GENERAL PACE WASN'T CRYING WHEN HE SAID TO WEST
POINTERS: "SEND ONE OF YOUR SOLDIERS OUT AND WATCH HIM GET
KILLED"**

"It's easier to do it yourself than to send one of your soldiers out and watch him get killed doing what you told them to do," Pace said. "But you've got to worry about more than one soldier and all of your soldiers are looking to you for leadership. "They will do whatever you tell them to do," he continued. "They do not want you to do it for them. They need to have you, lieutenant, on the radio calling in the fire support, giving the direction, telling them what to do. They'll go do it. They understand the risks." (April 28, 2005, DOD Defense Link)

**SOUNDS LIKE PACE UNDERSTOOD THE RISKS IN 'NAM:
HE SURVIVED TO BECOME RUMMY'S CHIEF BUTT-KISSER**

MORE:

**AFTER FIVE YEARS IN AFGHANISTAN
AND THREE IN IRAQ--**

From: Don Bacon; smedleybutlersociety@msn.com
To: GI Special
Sent: October 09, 2006
Subject: AFTER FIVE YEARS IN AFGHANISTAN AND THREE IN IRAQ--

**GENERAL PACE LEADS VICTORY PARADE:
EXALTS COALITION SUCCESS OVER INVADED INSURGENTS;
THOUSANDS CELEBRATE IN MANHATTAN**

News Report: The Columbus Day parade's grand marshal was Gen. Peter Pace, the Italian American chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. City agencies including the fire and police departments were represented and were joined by floats and marching bands. (October 9, 2006, AP)

NOTE: There were no Native Americans represented in the parade due to sovereignty issues.

**Senate Arms Service Chair Says U.S. At
Risk Of Losing Bid To Control Baghdad**

10.6.06 Washington Post

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Warner offered a stark assessment of the situation in Iraq after a trip there this week, saying that parts of the country have

taken "steps backwards" and that the United States is at risk of losing the campaign to control an increasingly violent Baghdad. **[This is called experiencing a blinding flash of the obvious.]**

AWOL Marine “Thought If He Would Have Gone Back To Camp Pendleton They Would Have Killed Him”

10.5.06 New York Times

A Marine staged his own disappearance because he feared harm at the hands of members of his own unit, some of whom face murder charges in the death of a civilian in Iraq, a friend who acknowledges aiding in the ruse told a newspaper.

The Marine, Lance Cpl. Lance Hering, 21, "thought if he would have gone back to Camp Pendleton they would have killed him," the friend, Steve Powers, told The Daily Camera of Boulder, Colo. Hering has been missing since August.

Iraq Vet War Resister Says: “If Enough People Just Threw Down Their Uniforms And Walked Away, The Military Would Be Crippled. They Could Do Nothing”

We pissed off enough people that now they're sick of us being there. You know, if you were here in D.C. and some other country was ramming cars off the road, and you got your brother shot and killed, and your house was broken into and stuff was stolen from it and all these crazy tragedies happening, all these atrocities, I would be a little bit pissed off and concerned about what am I going to do about it.

September 16, 2006 Sgt. Ricky Clousing speaks on his resistance to the Iraq War at Camp Democracy, National Mall, Washington, DC. Copyright 2006 Traprock Peace Center [Excerpts]

Transcript published October 2, 2006. Traprock thanks Mike Gorse for volunteering his time to transcribe this talk. It was a long program (over an hour, with Q and A that was not always easy to hear). He made an extraordinary effort to prepare this transcription.

Camp Democracy: This is someone in a very tough position who's taking on this war in a way that a lot of us can't and a lot of people don't have the courage to do, and he's facing court-martial for it. Give a round of applause to Ricky Clousing. *applause*

Clousing: Hello.... My name is Ricky Clousing, and I'm from Seattle, Washington. I'm just going to share my story of the last year and a half, the last few years that have led me to this point in my life where I am right now. Like David said, I'm facing court-martial from the army and a maximum of two years confinement in a military prison.

[Part 2: Continued]

One of the times, I was in route from one base to another, I was riding in the same Humvee as some of the infantry soldiers. They were actually transporting me from one base to another so I could conduct some interrogations on the other side of Mosul, which is where we were at, and I was in the back seat of the Humvee looking over some of the files and interrogation reports on the people that I was going to be talking to.

In Iraq, when convoys drive by on freeways, the Americans have been here long enough that the Iraqis know that they mean business and that people are getting shot and killed every day. So, when a convoy of American vehicles is driving by, it's standard protocol for the Iraqis to pull off to the side of the shoulder and turn their hazard lights on. It basically lets everybody know we're getting out of your way, and you can proceed, nobody's a threat, just drive through.

So we were driving, and I'm looking over a file, and all I feel is the vehicle being shaken and driven into something. If you follow the news, you know that the IED has evolved into the VIED, which is the vehicle-born IED, which is basically they put bombs in the cars and drive them into them now, in the U.S. troops and stuff. So I just thought what the hell was going on. The car was shaking. I'm freaking out, like what?

I look out the window, and we're slamming into vehicles on the side of the road. I looked up at the vehicle in front of us, and they're driving normally in the middle of the road, no problems, in the other lane. And then the driver swerves back in the road, and they're laughing in the front seat. And then the guy in the ... passenger rolls the window down, extends his baton, the driver smashes back into the vehicle, side-swiping them, and they're smashing out windows as they're driving by. And I just could not believe this was happening.

So I yelled at the people in the vehicle, like what the hell are you doing? Not only is that wrong, and they were harassing people, but, from your own safety, they could have bombs in their car, and you're totally pissing them off, and I don't understand why. So I yelled at the guys, and we kept driving.

And then, later on in that trip, it didn't even stop there, later on in that trip, the guys I was with, there are four people in a Humvee and one of them on the turret standing up on the top of the vehicle. We came to a point just before the base where there was an Iraqi man walking his herd of sheep across the road. And I heard a couple rounds pop off from the turret. I just heard pop pop pop, like two or three rounds. And then the soldier standing in the turret ducks down and kind of says jokingly that he just shot a couple of the guy's sheep, and I was livid. I could not believe that this was happening. The carelessness ... not even trying to be discrete and think that I might even care. They just thought it was a funny joke to them.

So, when we got back to our unit, I went directly to the battalion commander, who was a Lieutenant Colonel, and I said, sir, I need to tell you what I just witnessed and what your troops just did in route from this place to this place. Because not only was I already hesitant to be serving over there after I saw that kid die, but, now when I'm watching this behavior from U.S. soldiers, it just blew my mind that this was standard and happens over there.

So I told the commander, and he acted upset, and acted like he was really mad about things. We're briefed as interrogators on what war crimes are, because, as interrogators, as you know, with Abu Ghraib, we're kind of held to a higher standard of detainee treatment and how we treat the people over there. And what those soldiers did was a war crime, what would actually constitute as a war crime.

And I found out about three days later that the BC, the Battalion Commander basically had swept it under the rug and not wanted to bring it up as an issue, probably not to embarrass his command and his unit. They just kind of like discarded it, and they didn't pursue any punishment for it.

But, other than that, my feelings intensified more and more of what is going on over here, what am I doing. I really started to question the validity of us even being over there.

Whereas before I was skeptical, but I went in with an idealistic attitude where I wanted to see firsthand what was going on, and I wanted to be the exception. If I was interrogating people, I wanted to let them go and not keep them detained. So I kind of went in hoping I could make a difference and change the way things were going on over there.

But when I realized that this was the general attitude and the general behavior of soldiers, and, even when I addressed it, and it was on the top echelon of command that just swept it under the rug, I was really disturbed and really pushed to a point where I was questioning whether or not I could even do this anymore. Because I was in charge of a team of interrogators, I basically finished my time there. I worked mostly in the interrogation facilities after that, and then I chose not to go out on patrols.

When I got home, I really started digging into the politics and the premise of the war in general. Once I started reading that, that led me into a whole tangent of information that I was bombarded with, and I started reading about the Iraq war and what led up to that and the connection with Al Qaeda and that it didn't exist, how weapons of mass destruction didn't exist, and then questioning the premise of the war.

That led into even questioning the premise of the conflicts that have happened in the last 50 years, really post-World War II. I started analyzing foreign policy since World War II, and really the driving force of all the interventions that we've been involved in. And I just started debating whether or not I could even serve in the military anymore. It went from just being opposed to Iraq to feeling really like, I came to a point after I was reading some of this stuff and after I saw what I saw in Iraq, where, I was honestly, for the first time, embarrassed to be not only a U.S. soldier, but I was embarrassed to be an American. My family wasn't too liberal growing up.

They weren't really conservative. They were just kind of like politics wasn't that really big of an issue. And you go through school learning, you're conditioned as an American in the public education systems of what America stands for and all these ideals that we're supposedly trying to spread to other nations of the world. And, when I started reading the driving force behind not only what's going on in Iraq but what's been happening in the Middle East for as long as oil has been a concern, and other places around the world, in South America, all over, I just became so disturbed that I didn't even feel like I could wear a uniform.

So, when I got home, I talked to my command, and I was home for about three months, and I was studying. When I got home, I talked to my command and letting him know I was having some issues with some of the stuff I saw over there, and I needed to talk to somebody about these problems.

So they sent me to go talk to mental health advisors. I talked with them, and a lot of the issues I was feeling, I was reading about existentialism and reading about philosophy, and I've always been a spiritual person not identified with certain churches and denominations and stuff but just knowing. That's always been a driving force in my life. So I started reading a lot of things that have always inspired me, aside from the political stuff.

And I talked to my unit and told them I was having real concerns about being in the army, and they immediately were trying to find a way they could discharge me, and I told them I wasn't trying to be discharged. I wasn't just trying to get out of the army. That wasn't my issue.

I really needed help about how to deal with what I had seen and what I've been part of and what's going on, and, for a couple months when that first happened, I kept having really gruesome nightmares about that boy that died and really gruesome nightmares about just people being dismembered and crazy stuff that my mind just generally doesn't think about.

And I was really depressed for those couple months when I got home, and I just wanted to talk to somebody that's been to Iraq, like counselors or something that could tell me this is normal, this is what, whatever, blah blah blah, this is what you need to do, somebody that could help me out in any way.

Basically, when I was talking to people and telling them my concerns about serving in the army based on what I saw in Iraq and how I feel personally, they were asking me how I wanted to be discharged, and I wasn't really seeking a discharge. The counselor was even asking me, they told me if I wanted to be discharged, that there are ways to go about doing that and that I could tell them

that I was gay if I wanted to get out of the army. I could tell them that I'm not mentally stable, and they would do a series of tests and discharge me out.

And I was insulted. I wasn't trying to work the system over. I was actually trying to get a legitimate perspective on the things I'd been exposed to and what's happening now.

So I was frustrated with them. I went and talked to my command, my First Sergeant, my first-line supervisor, chaplains, I spoke to anybody and everybody I could and voiced my concerns politically about what's going on and also spiritually and what we reduced ourselves to, what we are reducing ourselves to, fighting for the reasons that we are fighting for.

So, when I started talking about spirituality, the first thing that they tried to do was offer me conscientious objector status, which basically states if you don't believe in war, if you're a pacifist, then you can go through an another series of interviews and a whole bunch of other paperwork, and, if you pass their criteria, they will discharge you out of the military. A lot of people lately since Iraq's happened, there have been handfuls of people, some even that are here right now, that have gotten ... out in CO status, which is great. I mean, everybody has their own set of morals and their own standards of what they think is right and wrong.

Me, personally, because I wasn't just trying to get out of the military, I contemplated that. I started reading up on what CO status meant and what it involved and who is it applicable to, and I was finding out that, to be selected for CO status, you have to believe basically that you will not fight in any wars.

Well, that was really hard for me to try to think about. I knew for sure that I didn't want to fight for this fake pretense of freedom that we try to say we are fighting for now. I knew obviously that that wasn't something that I was willing to fight for. Then I started thinking about past wars, World War II and these other circumstances, and even about civil disobedience and how I felt about violence in general, and I came to the conclusion that I could not say that 100% of the time that I would not fight in any conflict at all.

And I could not say 100% of the time that I was a pacifist and I believe in nonviolence 100% of every situation I found myself in.

So then I was in another predicament because I'm not filling this standard that they're laying for me. I knew that I could probably be discharged if I filed for that paperwork, but I felt personally that, if I said that I did feel that way, and they discharged me out for being a conscientious objector, that I would have lied in some way and been dishonest and manipulated my feelings and beliefs just to fit into their administrative window.

So then I'm in another predicament. So I told my command that I wasn't willing to apply for that, which they were hoping that I would so that I would be kind of quiet and brushed over. I told them that was not something that I was willing to do, and they were getting obviously frustrated at this point, and they just told me to suck it up and deal with it.

So this is three months after I'd gotten home.

This whole process took place over that amount of time. And my feelings kept intensifying more and more, and I felt that the only two options that lay before me were that I could either roll over and plan on just sweeping it under the rug and try not to worry about it, finish my time in the army, take my college money that they would be giving me, take the other VA benefits that I would get, and just try to finish my time out and go that route, which, at that point, I was fast-tracking with promotions.

I had promoted to Sergeant after two and a half years. I was really successful in all my training, and I never had any actions taken against me. I never was punished for anything. So part of me was like, okay, I committed to this, I signed this contract, I'm obliged to stay there, and there were benefits. I was being paid \$2000 a month and not having any bills, not having to pay for housing, food, anything. So it was decent money. I had college money that I was wanting to get when I finished, and so I was tempted to do that.

Or I could file for CO status and get discharged, which I didn't want to be in the military anymore, but I felt that both of those options to me were dishonest.

I could be dishonest to myself and my conscience and silence that and pretend that I'm not bothered by what I saw and pretend that I'm not bothered by being in uniform, and I could finish my time, get an honorable discharge, get my college money, all the benefits that were afforded to me. Or I could be dishonest and fill out this paperwork just so I could be separate from the army and go back home, which I wanted to do.

Like I said, I didn't know what I was supposed to do. The only other option that I felt like I had was to leave and separate myself from the army.

So, after thinking about that for a few days, I really decided that that was the only decision I could honorably do.

I told my unit, I talked to them and told them, because they offered to change me to a unit that wouldn't deploy, that wouldn't be going back to Iraq or whatever, but I felt that my involvement in the army, whether it be directly or indirectly, whether in Iraq or training guys to go to Iraq, I was still that piece of machine in the system that still allowing this war to take place and still supporting that.

My actions, whether or not they were on the front line or back safely at home, was still part of the body of the machine that's occupying this country. So I ultimately felt that the only thing I could do was to leave, so I packed my stuff last June, and I went AWOL.

I left a note on the door when I left that explained my decision. My unit was well aware how I felt. I explained that I couldn't fight under a false pretense of freedom. I couldn't train my soldiers to do exactly what I thought was wrong and be a part of what's happening over there.

And I left a quote by Martin Luther King that says "Cowardess asks the question 'is it safe'? Expediency asks the question 'is it politic?' And conscience asks the question 'is it right?'"

And that follows by saying "there comes a point in one's life where we must make a decision not because it's safe, not because it's politic, but because it's right."

I left that note on my door and packed my belongings in my car and drove back to Seattle. A few months afterwards, I didn't know exactly what I was going to do. I wasn't familiar with the process of what to expect, what's happening. I got linked in with a great group of people from the GI Rights hotline, and they kind of pointed me in the right direction of what to do now.

About six months after me being on AWOL, I wanted to turn myself in. I never had the intention of leaving and just running away forever.

I knew it was something that I was going to have to deal with.

But I also knew that, if I stayed away longer than 30 days, that I would be dropped from the roles in theory I believe, anyways, and that they would discharge me administratively from the army, so, when I came back, all they would do was basically discharge me and punish me.

My fear was that, if I returned to early, that, because the army invested so much money into me, into my security plans, and into my training as an interrogator, and in my language training, that they would not want to lose an asset in the training they would just re-enter me back into my unit, which I was not willing to do.

And, I felt that even wearing the uniform was an insult for myself, and ... putting on that uniform was something I was dreading and not wanting to do. But, at the same time, I knew I was going to turn myself in eventually.

So my lawyer started contacting Fort Bragg and telling them my client, Sgt. Clousing, is AWOL and wants to turn himself in but doesn't know where he's supposed to do that.

Is he supposed to go to Fort Bragg, or where is he supposed to go? Well, Fort Bragg, it was basically this huge conundrum. Administratively, nobody knew what was going on. Nobody in my unit would even talk to my lawyers. They said that my paperwork was transferred to Fort Lewis.

And my lawyers talked to people at Fort Lewis, and they had no idea who I was. So it was basically back and forth pointing a finger at who was supposed to do that. So, for a whole year, I was waiting for some sort of direction on what I was supposed to do, where I was supposed to turn myself in at.

After a year had passed, I made the decision that I was going to publicly speak out against the war and why I made my decision and then turn myself in. So, last month, on August 11, I held a press conference in Seattle at the Veterans for Peace rally. I had a press conference, and there was a lot of media. They received it well, and my story actually ended up going across the nation.

I spoke on Democracy Now the morning that I turned myself in. I did a couple other radio interviews. And I turned myself in at Fort Lewis, where they sent me straight back to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to be punished or to be discharged. So I was sent back to

Fort Bragg three weeks ago, which is where I'm currently supposed to be at right now. It's in North Carolina.

And I found out last week, rather than discharging me, they're going to court-martial me. So I'm faced with a charge of desertion, which is Article 85 under UCMJ, which I was told desertion carried a maximum punishment of two years confinement, or, if they charged me with AWOL, the maximum would be a year confinement.

So my court-martial is two and a half weeks from now.

So I have a really good team of people back in Seattle that are supporting me legally and in other ways and are just trying to rally support and effort behind stuff. I met with Lt. Watada before I came back to Fort Bragg.

It's kind of interesting. When I was in Fort Lewis for a few days before they sent me here, I was confined to the barracks and wasn't allowed--my family is from Seattle, so they naturally wanted to come up and visit me, but the General, the post actually called down and said that I wasn't allowed to leave the barracks. I had to sign in every hour. I wasn't allowed to sign any guests on the post. And I got a phone call from Lt. Watada, and he ended up coordinating me and my family and signing them in ... for me, and they got to come on base and see me before I went to Fort Bragg.

So right now I'm at Fort Bragg awaiting to see what's exactly going to happen. It's really been amazing the last year. I've talked to the media and stuff that I've spoke to, everybody's always interested and wanting to know before I turned myself in when I did all the (?), am I nervous, am I scared.

But I really have a peace about my decision, and a lot of my family and friends of mine asked me do I regret my decision. The day that I left and drove out, that was the only thing I was afraid of, that down the road I might regret my decision and think that I acted too irrational and I should have thought things through ...

Well, I can also say that, each day since I left, I had complete peace, and it's only grown with the time that I've spent away from the military. So it's really encouraging to be out here and to see that people outside of the military that aren't directly affected with the reality of that are concerned and care and want to speak up and let the government know that this is not something that should be tolerated.

We can take a few questions at this point for Ricky, so if anybody has any questions you'd like to ask Ricky?

Q: Do you have a legal defense fund set up so people can help you?

Clousing: There's a link on the web site -- www.sdmcc.org (it stands for Seattle Draft and Military Counseling Center). That web site was created by people at home. It has pictures of myself in Iraq and even journal entries of mine, the statement that I gave to the press, links to other interviews that I've had in the media, and updated information. There's a link on there.

I spoke to Iraqis every single day, and I was hearing their firsthand perspective of what they think about us. And these guys were telling me that, when you guys first came into our country, we didn't hate you at all. We were happy that you were here. We were ecstatic. We couldn't wait for Americans to be here. They were waving American flags when the first wave of troops went in.

Well, three years later, after the invasion happened and the daily assault and harassment that, I'm not going to say that every soldier that everybody does this because it's not true, but the assault and harassment that goes on without accountability and the abuse of power has basically pissed these people off to the point where they're not happy with us being there.

Q: Thanks for sharing your story. I just wondered if your family's been supportive of you, because I know that's been something that's been hard for Cindy, that part of her family at least doesn't support her. And, also, when you were younger, were you politically active, or did you consider yourself to have these kinds of doubts earlier in your life?

Clousing: First of all, my family has been amazing through all this, and my mom has just been really, really supportive. They were just really supportive in knowing that I sincerely felt the way I did.

When I went home on leave after I was in Iraq, I expressed my frustration and my concerns and my conflicts, and they could see what it was doing to me, and they could see that I was having issues, and so they have been really, really supportive, all of my family.

And, like I said, when I was younger, I really didn't know much politically about stuff. It's only been actually through this experience of me being in the army. I always had like the burden for the unfortunate, sticking up for the guy at school who got picked on. I was never really politically active when I was young. But, when I joined the army, that's the one thing that I'm really thankful for.

I don't regret going into the military. I don't regret being in the army because my experiences through that has made me who I am today and brought me to where I'm at. It has brought me to the point of awareness and then on the change, and I just want to square that with everybody else ...

Q: I just want to say I'm a military mom, too. My son spent a year in Iraq. And I'm very proud of what you're doing. And I expect, if he is recalled, I would like to see him also take a firmer stance against the war, and I think he will. He was at an anti-war forum the other night with Paul Hackett in Cincinnati.

Clousing: Awesome, that's really good. The thing is that most people don't realize, if there's one thing I can try to help a lot of my friends and a lot of the movement people who are involved in the anti-war movement back in Seattle and stuff, is to not look at soldiers as the enemy.

And a lot of people, and I have friends and stuff when I went back home and friends when I was in the army that I would meet that I hadn't seen in a couple of

years, and they would look at me in disgust that I was in the military and that I was a part of what's going on.

They would immediately associate me with the politicians that decided to go there. And, me, I joined after 9/11, and I joined before Iraq.

But ... just like your son, he's not saying that he agrees with what's going on. He's in that position, and, unfortunately, he's being exploited along with thousands and thousands and thousands of other people... So he had an earnest desire to want to serve, and the thing that people need to do is understand that there are a lot of people, a lot of soldiers out there.

Since I left, I have a lot of friends that have come to me and told me 'man, I really wish I could just leave. I really wish I had the courage to just leave, ' or 'I wish I wasn't financially strapped into this position where I can't leave; my family and my kid have to be fed.

There's people who aren't able to make the decision that I made, and I don't look down upon these people.

I think that they need to make their own decisions in their own way.

But we, as a nation and as a people in general and mankind, have to stand behind people like your son and the rest of the people that are refusing and really like team up.

Because the thing that I want soldiers to know from my experience and going public is that they have a choice, and that choice is more powerful than any bomb that they can drop on any nation, because, if enough people just threw down their uniforms and walked away, the military would be crippled. They could do nothing.

And I'm just trying to let people know, soldiers especially, that, number one, I don't look down on all soldiers and hate them, but they have a choice, and they need to fight for the right to make their own decision. But I wish the best for your son, and I hope he doesn't get called back.

Q: I just wanted to say that your decision is very consistent with international law and the Nuremberg Principles. Each person has their own responsibility to deal with illegal behavior in the military. The question that I have is I missed part of what you said about the vehicle you were riding in hitting this other vehicle. You said that that was a war crime. Could you explain that a little bit more in detail what happened. And, also, was that kind of behavior common?

Clousing: Actually, what I was referring to as a war crime wasn't the sideswiping of vehicles. It was soldiers firing upon non-targets. We fired upon the man's animals, that was constituted as a war crime.

As far as if that's a normal behavior, the amount of time that I was outside the wire and in the city, I saw that handfuls of times, not the exact incident, but the harassing of people. And I've heard stories from the infantry guys that were out there a lot more than myself and stories from the people I interrogated, telling me about how, two weeks ago, units kicked in the door and knocked over their dishes

and TV and stole stuff from their house, and there's no accountability whatever with that. And I've talked to soldiers, actually.

The unit that I'm in right now temporarily that has about 1500 soldiers that have gone AWOL, all for different reasons, but a couple of those guys have told me like 'man, when I was over there, I thought it was funny, and I kind of went along with it, but I saw this and this and this, and, when I was over there, soldiers stole TVs from people's houses and took them back to the little temporary places that we stayed at, took the Iraqis' stuff.'

And, eventually, if you guys remember when the war first happened, there were crazy amounts of looting and money that got stolen and artifacts. Soldiers have been caught coming back into the U.S. with artifacts that were stolen from the museums and stockpiles of money that they found in the palaces, and crazy amounts of stuff. And the people are not reimbursed at all.

The peoples' vehicles that we slammed into, imagine if you're driving down the street, and some army vehicle smashes into your car and wrecks it, and you're just like 'sucks to be you.' That's the attitude that's put out there. There's big signs on the back of the Humvees that say, in Arabic and in English, 'stay back a hundred meters or you will be shot. ' And they're given that authority.

Just like that boy I talked about earlier, if you're in the wrong place at the wrong time, it sucks to be you. You know, unfortunately, you're going to die. That type of behavior, it's not out on the media.

They talk about these isolated incidents. That's what I talked about in my press conference the most is that I didn't witness a huge atrocity like Haditha and the 14-year-old girl that was raped and killed in Abu Ghraib and this and that, and interrogation violations and all this. Because that's the stuff that made it in the media.

But, every single day, there's physical and psychological harassment that's going on every single day where people are getting beaten up, stuff stolen from them. That behavior definitely is widespread, to answer your question.

Q: In that car that was thrown off the road, did anyone stop and see if the people were okay?

Clousing: No.

Q: In other words, anything could have happened to them.

Clousing: They were actually not driving them right off the road. Like I said, when convoys were driving along the freeways, the vehicles pull over and put their hazards on and sort of stop. And the vehicle Humvees were driving into the vehicles, just side-swiping them, like if you drove down Constitution Avenue and just slammed into six or seven vehicles and smashing out windows. They weren't driving to run them off the road. They were just kind of a joke and drove off.

Q: So your responsibility as a military person is to see if people are injured, and that was totally...

Clousing: Yeah. Like I said, it was more of a joke. It wasn't any concern about anybody's safety. It was a funny thing to them to be damaging vehicles. It was more of a joke.

Q: The commanding officers were well aware of that behavior.

Clousing: When I saw it firsthand, I addressed it and told them when I was this happen. And there was damage on the Humvee to show that it actually did happen. The unit I was in actually, 82nd Airborne, has a reputation for that kind of behavior, and Human Rights Watch has a couple of investigations going on for that exact thing. But, yeah, that type of behavior, if you talk to a lot of even the Iraq vets that are here and some of the other people who have spoken out, that type of behavior is rampant. It's happening all over the place.

Q: I'm Harry Thursted, U.S. Navy commander, retired. I spent about a year in Vietnam, was an advisor day after day for a year, myself and 29 Vietnamese. I'd just like to say that I know what you're going through. I admire you. Thank you.

Clousing: Thank you. This to comment that, when I was at the Veterans for Peace conference, I spoke individually with a lot of Vietnam vets and a lot of Iraq vets, and, really, you guys, not even just the military but just the people who are part of this movement, really are empowering people like myself to make these decisions, because I know when I got home, I didn't even think.

The way you're conditioned in the military is to think that, if you go AWOL, if you leave, your world is done. Not only are you going to go to Leavenworth for twenty years, or you won't be able to get a job, and all this other stuff. For me to get back and read about people like Pablo Paredes and Camilo and Benderman, and all these other guys who said no, really was like, wow, I have a choice, I really do.

And reading about Vietnam vets that did the same thing, that really is empowering myself and other people in the military that are having feelings. And, also, mostly making you feel like you're not alone.

I felt like I was crazy for a while because I was the only one around me that was feeling the way I did. And to read about other people and to meet people like yourself is really--thank you, guys.

Q: I have several questions. One, ... that there's no effort on the part of the command to discipline the troops in these ways. I mean, I remember reading about all the ... wars, and the fact that the British really did make high-level efforts to keep their soldiers' civility is stated, for example. And we don't have anything like that ... discipline from the top. People aren't getting severely punished for infractions.

Clousing: Sure. I'm not going to say that there's no command out there that's trying to stop what's happening. I know from firsthand experience that I addressed serious issues, and they were neglected and ignored.

And I know that other people have voiced the same concerns, and they were ignored.

And the pattern that looks to me, personally, I can't speak for every commanding officer in Iraq or that has ever served there, but the pattern that I've seen, knowing the amount of soldiers that I've seen and the top two that have voiced the same concerns that I did, is that there's never really a crackdown until it's really exposed in the media, until there's really a huge amount of exposure of what's going on.

Then they pretend to care about issues.

And, ... when I got back to Fort Bragg a few weeks ago, I met with CID and a couple of investigative officers that wanted to investigate the allegations that I made and the things that I saw.

And it was obvious to me that they were doing the motion of it. They weren't inquiring names and exact stuff. They were just kind of making it look like they actually responded to the allegations I made, and there wasn't a lot of effort put in there. Like I said, I can't comment on every commanding officer that's over there, but I know the pattern that I've seen, and other people, is that it's not really brought up until or unless it's really a huge incident.

I mean, history is a pattern. We all know that. I mean, look at Abu Ghraib and all these big things that have happened. The military lied about it in the beginning. At first, they wanted to point the finger at Marines, and the Marines said this, and they said that, and no one wants to take the blame for it, because, naturally, I mean, what commanding officer wants to take the blame for his unit ... and have his career be ruined.

So it's easier, it's more convenient for a commanding officer to sweep it under the rug and verbally reprimand them instead of punishing them.

Q: The other question I have is that what you say is really understandable.... You were welcomed when you first went into Iraq, and then you explained how that attitude changed. What concerns me is the paradoxical situation you're saying, I believe you said you have no enemies over there among the other side. What do you do when you come to suicide terrorists? How do you analyze them? Do you justify their behavior in terms of our behavior, or what?

Clousing: No, I don't think that their behavior is justified because of it. I just think the problem is that that is a problem, that we're trying to justify the behavior instead of stepping back and looking at what causes their behavior. Why are they trying to drive a bomb into us? ... Why are they reacting the way they are reacting?

The thing is, the media, the way they portray the insurgency and the terrorists in Iraq is as if there is this big group of Moslems, maybe this whole country of people that hate us, and they're all coming to Iraq to fight us. That is so untrue. Not only are 85% of the people that are brought into the places to be interrogated by myself and my guys. Not only are they innocent, and they had no grounds to be held at all.

They're Iraqis.

They're not Syrians and Saudis and Pakistanis and Afghanis and Taliban people coming down.

That's the way the media portrays it, that that's the front of the war on terror.

The only front to that is that we pissed off enough people that now they're sick of us being there.

Like I said, I would speak to the guys I was interrogating, people who were labeled insurgents. Just like you said, if somebody's coming at our guys, and they're driving ... a car bomb ... with AK's hanging out rambo-style, shooting at us, sure, our guys are authorized, and they're able to engage the enemy and fire back, because the safety of American soldiers is first.

But the thing is is that the people that we're capturing and bringing in and asking 'what are you doing? What insurgent cell are you working for? Who's the leader of this cell? Where are you guys hiding your stockpile of weapons? Where are you receiving financial support from? Where are the logistics of your insurgent cell?'

You know, we're asking all these questions, and they're telling us, well, not all of them because not all of them want to talk, but the guys who are talking to us are saying, 'you know what? I didn't care about you guys a couple years ago.' Every Iraqi has their own story.

One of them might be because two weeks ago, his brother was killed at a checkpoint because he turned the wrong way and then turned the other way, and he was killed.

One of them might be that his mom was walking down in a market and looked at an American soldier and grabbed something out of their purse, and they thought they were going to be a firearm, so they killed her...

One of them now might be because their cousin was that 14-year-old girl that was raped and killed.

They all have their own personal stories of why they hate Americans now.

Because, after three years of occupation, we've oppressed them, and they've been totally exploited, and they're just labeled as collateral damage.

I mean, what's the death toll of Iraqi civilians killed?

Do you really think that that many Iraqi civilians are insurgents? I don't think so. That's not the way it is. And, the way the media misconstrues it is what's causing people to support the war, because they think, legitimately, that there's this big group of people that hate us, and they want to take us now.

No, there's people that are tired of this kind of behavior that's going on without accountability, so they're taking it into their own hands.

You know, if you were here in D.C. and some other country was ramming cars off the road, and you got your brother shot and killed, and your house was broken into and stuff was stolen from it, your neighbor's daughter was raped by U.S. soldiers and burnt alive, and the next town over had phosphorus gas dumped on them, and they were burning alive, and all these crazy tragedies happening, all these atrocities, I would be a little bit pissed off and concerned about what am I going to do about it.

Am I just going to sit back?

A lot of these guys were telling me they didn't feel the way they felt maybe now, but, once that kind of experience happens to you, and then they walk by the same street corner they walk by every day, and they hear these radical Moslems talk about fighting the occupation and fighting America, now their ears are open to it, and now they're a little bit receptive to what these guys are talking about, because they're, wow, they experienced firsthand that America is terrorizing this country.

Like I told commanders that their soldiers are creating the insurgency.

The behavior that the U.S. is inflicting upon the Iraqi population is creating the same people that we're trying to stop.

It's a cycle of nonsense that nobody seems to understand how it's happening.

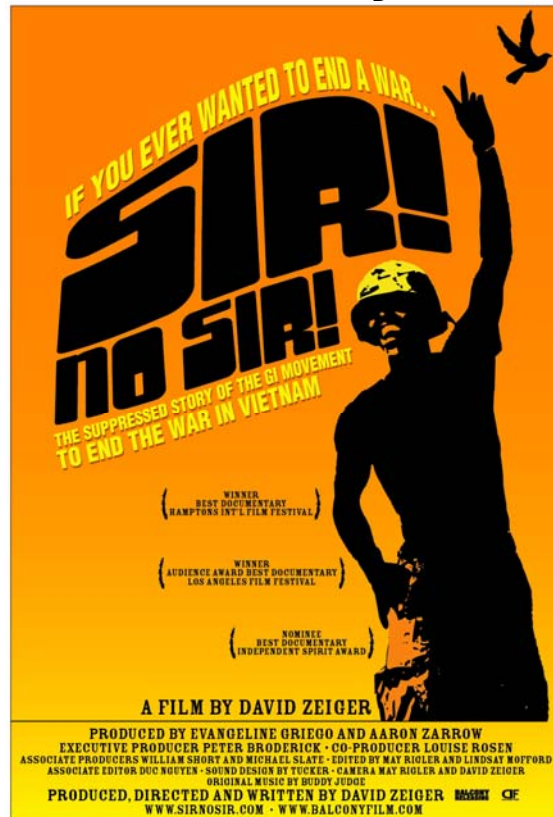
And so it's this crazy, mindless cycle of violence and death and killing and wasted money, and nobody seems to understand the big picture.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation's ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. Frederick Douglas, 1852

“The Little Known History Of Anti-War Pressures That Formed Within Military Units”



7th April, 2006 Mel Valentin, Movie Vault

Do we need yet another Vietnam War documentary?

Probably not, unless it covers new ground or rediscovers long-lost personal or partial histories that, when added to the overarching "official" narratives found in college textbooks, give us, as viewers, new insights, new understandings on the war and its consequences.

Sir! No Sir focuses on the little known history of anti-war pressures that formed within military units and outside, as returning GIs formed anti-war groups on or around military bases or joined the larger peace movement.

Using a combination of archival footage, some of it unseen for decades, and selected interviews with former military officers and soldiers, writer/director David Zeiger hopes to raise awareness of the nature of the movement, its breadth, and its impact on the war itself.

One part of the "official" history remains unchallenged, that the anti-war movement expressed popular discontent with the political and military policies of the Johnson and Nixon administrations, but more importantly, applied selective, constant pressure on both administrations to end the Vietnam War. How much that pressure expedited the end of the war is open to debate, but Nixon running for re-election in 1972 on a "secret plan" to end U.S. involvement in Vietnam certainly isn't.

Nixon's plan involved the phased withdrawal of U.S. ground troops, many of them near mutiny, replacing them with a South Vietnamese Army backed by U.S. air power.

That policy slowed the disintegration of South Vietnam for several years, and, while it saved American lives, it didn't spare the Vietnamese (North and South) nor the Cambodians or the Laotians (Nixon invaded both countries).

Nixon's policy choices in the early 1970s grew out of the concern that American troops had lost the will, the morale to fight against the North Vietnamese and their supporters in the South.

That concern, in turn, grew out of the anti-war movement within the U.S. military, or so Sir! No Sir! argues, beginning early in the war, with the resignations of individual officers, like Donald Duncan, a decorated member of the Green Berets, who resigned in 1966 after more than a year in Vietnam.

Duncan wrote a seminal article in Ramparts Magazine that voiced the concerns of officers and soldiers serving in Vietnam (e.g., the lack of clarity or endpoint to the mission, the collateral damage that resulted in high civilian death tolls, and, of course, the high death and injury rates of U.S. soldiers in Vietnam). Another officer, Howard Levy, a dermatologist drafted to train medics in Vietnam, refused to carry out the training. He was court-martialed and served three years in prison.

Director/writer David Zeiger argues that the 1968 Tet Offensive (a massive coordinated attack by the North Vietnamese on U.S. forces that caused panic in Washington and major disillusionment within the military) was also a turning point in the burgeoning GI anti-war movement.

Director David Zeiger focuses on the so-called "Presidio Twenty-Seven," AWOL (away without leave) U.S. soldiers who openly joined peaceful, anti-war demonstrations. They were arrested and thrown into the Presidio stockade in San Francisco where, due to a combination of poor facilities and mistreatment, they continued their opposition to the war. As a result, several of them tried for mutiny (far more serious than the AWOL charges that sent them to the brigade).

As the war went on, groups formed across the country, including the well-known Vietnam Veterans Against the War that staged demonstrations in front of the White House (the famous image of soldiers chucking their medals over a makeshift wall came at the end of one mostly peaceful demonstration which also led to several members of the group testifying before Congress). The GI groups began participating in public rallies, on their own and with other groups, including the general anti-war movement. The GI movement culminated in the controversial "Winter Soldier Investigation," a three-day conference where soldiers described their participation in the mistreatment of the

Vietnamese, up to and including war crimes (controversial due to the incendiary charges aired at the hearings, which many Americans failed to believe, and questions about the veracity of some of the ex-soldiers who testified or the lack of corroborating evidence to support their claims).

Zeiger wanted to also address what he considers the myth of anti-war activists spitting in disgust and calling out "baby killer" at returning U.S. servicemen. Zeiger's research finds that the story hardened into accepted fact without substantiation. None of the contemporaneous news sources describe any such incident, let alone incidents.

If the incident happened, it's lost in time, but the usual version of the story involves anti-American hippies, San Francisco International Airport, the returning servicemen, the spitting and the name calling. Zeiger suggests that even if an incident did happen, it was local and infrequent (if it was repeated at all). As Sir! No Sir! takes pains to point out, the peace movement was focused on ending the war and bringing the troops home (the disgust and revulsion was saved for the military leaders and the politicians who conducted the war).

Whether Sir! No Sir! gets much play in the redder parts of the United States is highly unlikely. Vietnam, like the Civil War that preceded it by a century, split the country into two groups, two memories, two narratives about the Vietnam War (the second narrative is not surprisingly missing from Sir! No Sir!).

These two narratives, about how and why we entered the Vietnam War, why we fought, and more importantly, why we lost, have come back to haunt us in Iraq. The lack of unity, the desire to fight and win a "lost" war has led the current political administration into another war, another occupation.

Public opinion has turned against the occupation of Iraq, but the demonstrations have been sporadic, and nothing approaching a GI movement has been formed (not yet at least).

If anything, Sir! No Sir! reminds us of the obligation politicians and citizens alike owe to servicemen and servicewoman, to fight only when we must, because if we don't, they will be facing the consequences, mental, physical, and emotional, for years to come.

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."

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 or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR; RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



A U.S. soldier from Alfa company 1-17 IN regiment of the 172th brigade takes Iraqis prisoner in their own homes, after breaking in a gunpoint. The Iraqi citizens are taken prisoner after weapons and propaganda material were found in their house in eastern Baghdad, Oct. 3, 2006. (AP Photo/Darko Bandic)

The “propaganda material”? “Pictures on the floor of Shiite clerics Muqtada al-Sadr and late Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr” the AP writers says.

The “weapons”? Every household in Iraq has weapons. Duh.

By these standards, there are only about 3 million more Iraqis in Baghdad to arrest like these citizens have been.

There’s nothing quite like invading somebody else’s country, busting into their houses by force, and arresting them on some bogus bullshit accusations to arouse an intense desire to kill you in the patriotic, self-respecting civilians who live there.

But your commanders know that, don’t they? Don’t they?

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

Rice, Surrounded By Mercenaries, Insists That Iraqis Are Making Progress; Her Landing Delayed By “Either Mortar Fire Or Rockets” At Airport

10.6.06 New York Times

Wearing a helmet and a flak jacket and flanked by machine-gun-toting bodyguards to defend against insurgents, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice came to Baghdad, insisting that there were new signs of progress in Iraq and that the Bush administration had never sugarcoated its news about the American occupation.

The visit began inauspiciously when the military transport plane that brought her to Baghdad was forced to circle the city for about 40 minutes because of what a State Department spokesman later said was either mortar fire or rockets at the airport.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

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)

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