Bush Bashing

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

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Bush Bashing

A rope that went round and round
like Saddam’s did, without the hood
is too good for the White House,
the Penitentiary, where the criminals
stay, never thinking
that they can be impeached
but that is too good for them
for all the death they caused
all the money they made.
Hang them from the trees
hang them upside down
like Mussolini was,
when good people took their turns
with a baseball bat, hit him
and his wife all over in the head
until his head swelled up
almost twice it's size,
as big as Bush’s ego
as big as his war crimes,
a water melon all red inside.
Hitler heard the news
he took his life in fear,
he had his body burned
so it couldn't happen to him.
Bush is a madman that kills,
a Dictator speaking, hiding
behind the TV screens.
He and the rest of his criminals
have their money bags
thrown over their shoulders
as outlaws in Texas.
But first impeach this animal
who doesn't care who dies,
nothing inside, surging forward
with blinders on,
this Dictator for Wall Street.
After impeachment,
string him upside down,
grab a baseball bat
and don’t forget about the others.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS
Four U.S. Soldiers Killed In Diyala, Two Wounded

Feb 14, 2007 Army Times Staff writer

BAGHDAD — Four soldiers were killed and two others were wounded Wednesday during fighting northeast of Baghdad, the military said.

The Task Force Lightning soldiers were attacked while conducting combat operations in Diyala province, where U.S. and Iraqi forces have been battling insurgents for months.

Three of the soldiers died from injuries sustained after explosions near their vehicles, while a fourth died later at a military medical facility.

IED Kills U.S. Soldier North Of Baghdad

14 February 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070214-10


The patrol received small arms fire while providing security around an improvised explosive device they discovered during a combat patrol, wounding one Soldier. The Soldier later died of wounds sustained from the attack Feb. 14.

Soldier Dies In Non-Combat Related Incident

14 February 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070214-12

TIKRIT, Iraq – A Task Force Lightning Soldier died Tuesday in a non-combated related incident, which is currently under investigation.

Slain Santa Ana Marine Comes Home

29 January 2007 by Bruce Daniels, ABQnewsSeeker

Interstate 25 was closed briefly this morning as procession moved north. Gov. Richardson directed that state flags be flown at half-staff.
The body of Marine Lance Cpl. Emilian Sanchez arrived around 10:30 this morning at Cutter Aviation at the Albuquerque International Sunport and was transported home to Santa Ana Pueblo in a hearse, accompanied by an honor guard and police escort, KOB-TV reported.

Police briefly closed I-25 as the procession passed by, Eyewitness News 4 reported.

The 20-year-old Marine, who had been in Iraq just two months, died of wounds he received during a combat operation in Iraq's Anbar Province on Jan. 21. He assigned to E Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines out of Camp Pendleton, Calif., the Journal reported last week.

Funeral services haven't been publicly announced yet, but Eyewitness News 4 reported that family and friends will be able to pay their respects at Sanchez's family home in Santa Ana Pueblo until 7 p.m. tonight.

He is survived by his parents, David and Jennie Sanchez of Santa Ana Pueblo, and a brother, Joey Sanchez.

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Hemet High Graduate Dies In Iraq

February 7, 2007 By KENNY KLEIN and HERBERT ATIENZA, The Press-Enterprise

HEMET - A 1984 graduate of Hemet High School who found his calling as a pilot is the fifth from the school to die in Iraq since 2004.

Chief Warrant Officer Keith Yoakum, 41, a U.S. Army pilot, was killed Friday in Taji, Iraq, after succumbing to injuries he suffered when the Apache helicopter he was in was forced to land during combat operations, according to a statement from the U.S. Department of Defense.

A fellow soldier in the helicopter, Chief Warrant Officer Jason G. Defrenn, 34, of Barnwell, S.C., also was killed, the statement said. Both soldiers were assigned to the
1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Cavalry Regiment, 1st Division, in Fort Hood, Texas. The incident is under investigation, the statement said.

"We're saddened by the loss of another Hemet High grad," said Principal Bill Black, who said the death of another alumnus is shocking news for the school.

**Four other graduates have been killed while serving in Iraq in the past two years.**

"It leaves us speechless," Black said. "It's an awful lot for a small community ... it's more than our fair share."

Friends of Yoakum, who moved to Alabama with his wife, Kelly, and their two children, a few years ago, remember the fallen soldier as someone whose goal was to fly.

"He was a good friend, a very likable person," said Jim Duran, 40, of Hemet, who was Yoakum's classmate during junior and high school. "You don't ever think of something like that happening to anybody that close to you."

Duran, a transmission technician at Rancho Ford in Temecula, said he and Yoakum shared an interest in auto mechanics. Shortly after high school, he said, Yoakum talked to him about joining the military.

Yoakum's fraternal twin, Kevin, recently retired from the U.S. Army, said Duran's wife, Dina.

Jim Duran, who said Yoakum kept in touch with him over the years and took him and his wife on a plane ride once, said his friend wanted to see the world. "When he put his mind into something, he'd do it. He said he was going to be a pilot, and he did," Duran said.

Yoakum, who was restoring a 1946 Fairchild single-engine military trainer that is still kept at Hemet-Ryan Airport, learned to fly there and obtained his private pilot's license in the early 1980s, said Lloyd Cliff, of Hemet-Ryan Aviation.

Cliff, 60, of Hemet, said the company considered Yoakum "one of the Hemet-Ryan Family" and always kept track of him no matter where he was -- even in Iraq.

"He was one of those kids who all he wanted to do was fly," Cliff said. "It was his passion. He lived to fly." Cliff said Yoakum not only flew military helicopters, but he was a certified instructor on several types.

"He was doing exactly what he wanted to do," Cliff said. "He will be missed."

Joe Riedell, 78, of Hemet, who friends said was Yoakum's mentor, gave him his first job at United Transmission on Florida Avenue. First, he was a pickup and delivery boy and then he worked his way up to transmission repair. "He did not last long as a PUD. He had too much going for that," Riedell said.

From the shop, which was along the final approach path of the runway at Hemet-Ryan Airport, Yoakum would stop everything he was doing and run out to watch the planes -- every chance he got, Riedell said.
"I said ... 'Why don't you fly?' " he said. "He said 'I've been told I'm not bright enough.' I told him, 'if I can do it ... you can do it.' "

Yoakum soloed in a single-engine Cessna 150 at the airport in the mid-'80s.

"He spent all the money he made on flying and dreamed of being an aviator of some kind," Riedell said. "He cleaned yards. He did anything and everything to fly. He spent money that was not even cold yet."

Riedell said he and Yoakum were "buddies." The two spoke once a week and exchanged letters.

"If I ever had a son, I'd want him to be just like Keith," Riedell said. "He was the sunrise and sunset to me. If I had a thousand Keiths in this world, we could take care of everything."

He said the Yoakum family moved to Alabama and purchased 51 acres. His two brothers were finishing the landing strip there, where he planned to fly the Fairchild plane when he returned from the war.

Yoakum never got the chance.

"He believed in his country," Riedell said. "But he could not understand how people could strap bombs to themselves and blow themselves up."

Black said Yoakum's name and picture will be added to the memorial plaque set up to honor alumni who died in Iraq. The plaque hangs among historical U.S. documents in the Freedom Shrine on the second floor of the school's main classroom building.

Hemet Vice Mayor Lori Van Arsdale called Yoakum's death one of the worst things she has ever heard.

The impact of the deaths on the community has been overwhelming, she said.

"I don't even know what to say but it makes me sick," Van Arsdale said.

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**Local Marine Is Killed By Sniper**

2/7/2007 By Brian Baer, The Free Lance-Star

Joshua J. Frazier was scheduled to return from Iraq in April, but decided to re-up for a third tour.

The newly promoted sergeant didn’t want to leave the young Marines he was now leading on their own. By staying, he told friends and family, he believed he could keep his men safe.
The Spotsylvania County Marine was killed by a sniper in Iraq late Monday, his family said yesterday. He was 24.

Frazier had been serving in the Ar Ramadi area of Iraq as part of the Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment.

His mother, Shelia Cutshall, last spoke with him Sunday night, when he called home with news of his promotion.

“He was upbeat,” she said. “I told him I missed him, and he said he missed me, too.”

Frazier, who left for his second deployment to Iraq last September, also told her about his plan to extend his stay, and the reasons for that.

To those who knew him best, it was typical Josh.

It was the same guy who would stay with a friend all night after a buddy lost a relative.

It was the same young man who would visit a casual acquaintance in the hospital for hours.

It was the same person who would spend what little free time he had on leave taking family and friends’ kids to Lake Anna and birthday parties.

And, above all, they said, it was the same son and brother who would drop anything for his family.

Yesterday afternoon, his mom’s house was filled with tangible reminders of the Spotsylvania High graduate.

At one end of the living room, a family friend held onto “Teddy,” the stuffed bear Cutshall received as a gift when she was six months pregnant with her second son.

The 5-foot-11, 200-pound Frazier still slept with the bear when he was home.

On one couch was a blanket with a dragon on it that he had sent his mom for her 50th birthday. A dragon is a sign of strength in Korea, where he once deployed, he told her.

On another sofa rested a small quilt with the Marine insignia and the large words, “Welcome Home Josh.” It was prepared for his last return home from Iraq.

The blanket was signed by many of the same friends and family who were gathered at the home yesterday.

Memories flowed.

Frazier collected guns and loved all things Spider-Man. He had a huge handshake, but a warm, sheepish smile.

He was a partier, they recalled with a laugh, but that never kept him from church come Sunday morning.
Michelle Luehrs had known him since grade school.

“He was so full of life and energy and so passionate about so many things. And he cared so much about people,” she said.

Frazier was the godfather to her 7-year-old son, Xavier.

She remembered what he said when she tried to talk him out of extending his term with the Marines. “He said, ‘Michelle, there’s a lot of really bad people over here and I can’t go home while they’re still here.’ He didn’t want Xavier to have to go over when he was 18. He felt like it was on his shoulders.”

Aaron Mallin, 29, Frazier’s older brother, said Josh was proud of the difference he was making in Iraq.

He once told Mallin, for instance, that his unit was serving in what has been described as the most dangerous intersection in the world. Since Frazier and his fellow Marines moved in, he told Mallin, people could once again cross the street without being killed. “And he was very proud of that,” Mallin said.

Dad Rick Frazier said his son’s strong will was what made him unique.

“That helped him get through life. He worked very hard at being an individual.

“But I think the most important thing I can say about my son was that he loved his family and we’ll sorely miss that part of him,” he said. “He believed in the United States and believed what he was doing was right. He gave his life for what he thought was the right thing to do.”

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**Fort Worth Marine Killed In Iraq**

February 8, 2007 By JIM DOUGLAS, WFAA-TV

FORT WORTH - The body of Clarence Spencer, a former high school star athlete and student leader in Fort Worth, is headed home after he was killed while serving in Iraq.
Spencer served three tours in Iraq, but his mother, Juanita Spencer Cole, said he felt he had to go back again. The mother and son gave each other one last hug before he left on his fourth and final tour in Iraq.

“I'm going to be okay momma,” she said he told her. “Don't worry; I'm going to be back.”

However, Cole found out he wouldn't be coming home when soldiers came to her house in east Fort Worth Sunday.

“My Godson called me and said, 'The army people are here at your house and it's not going to be good momma,'” Cole said.

As the soldiers informed Cole of her 24-year-old son's death, she said everything went quiet and black.

“Once they told me, I didn't hear nothing,” she said. “I didn't see nothing. I just passed out.”

While Cole said she knows little about how her son died, there was plenty to share on how he lived.

At Dunbar High School he led a Junior ROTC platoon and made all-district in football.

“He had the grades to go on and get a scholarship,” said Sgt. 1st Class Don Harris. “He opted to do this. I tried to talk him into going to college.”

Spencer joined the Marines right out of Dunbar High School in 2001. He was wounded in Iraq, retired from the Marine Corps and joined the Army to stay close to his little girl and mom.

“He hated that word baby,” Cole said of her son. “’Momma, I'm 20-something-years-old. Why you still calling me baby?' You could be 50, you're still my baby.”

Cole said she still checks daily for his e-mails.

“I'm not accepting that my baby is gone until I actually see him,” she said.

Texas has lost nearly 300 service members in Iraq. Twenty-seven of those have been from Houston. San Antonio has lost 23, and there have been 14 military deaths in Fort Worth.

The most recent was Pvt. Clarence Spencer, who left behind a wife and 5-year-old daughter.
THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE

The casket of Marine Lance Cpl. Adam Emul, 19, who was killed in action in Anbar province Iraq on Jan. 29 while on foot patrol, arrives on the island of Saipan, Northern Marianas, Feb. 10, 2007. (AP Photo/Gemma Q. Casas)

THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH; TIME TO COME HOME, NOW

A U.S. soldier at Camp Loyalty in Baghdad February 11, 2007. (Carlos Barria/Reuters)
Support Agustín Aguayo

Iraq War Veteran – Conscientious Objector
Imprisoned awaiting court martial for refusing to return to Iraq

Community Fundraiser Dinner with Agustín’s wife Helga Aguayo

Tuesday, February 27, 2007 ~ 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM
War Memorial Veterans Building, 2nd Floor
401 Van Ness Avenue (across from City Hall), San Francisco
Hosted by Courage to Resist & Veterans for Peace Chapter 69
More info: 510-764-2073 or www.couragetoresist.org

Support Army SPC. Agustín Aguayo
Iraq War Veteran – Conscientious Objector
Imprisoned awaiting court martial for refusing to return to Iraq

Community Fundraiser Dinner with Helga Aguayo

Tuesday, February 27, 2007
6:30 PM to 8:30 PM
War Memorial Veterans Building, 2nd Floor
401 Van Ness Avenue (across from City Hall), San Francisco

Please join us for a community dinner with Agustín’s wife Helga Aguayo to raise funds for the Aguayo family’s legal and travel expenses. Agustín faces a military court martial in Germany, and seven years in prison, on March 6 for refusing to return to Iraq. For nearly three years, he has unsuccessfully fought the Army for a conscientious objector discharge.

For more information about the Aguayo’s, including leaflets, videos, etc.: http://www.couragetoresist.org and http://www.aguayodefense.org
If you can’t make the dinner, please consider an urgently needed and much appreciated tax-deductible donation to Agustin’s defense fund. Online at http://couragetoresist.org/donate – or make check payable to “Courage to Resist / IHC”, note “Agustin Aguayo defense” on the memo line, and send to: Courage to Resist, 484 Lake Park Ave #41, Oakland CA 94610.

Dinner hosted by Courage to Resist and Veterans for Peace SF Bay Area Chapter 69.

Co-sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, and others TBA

(If your organization would like to contribute as a co-sponsor, please contact us!)

For more information: 510-764-2073 or http://www.couragetoresist.org

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**OK, You’re Right, Bush Really Is Stupid; He Says “His Commanders Would Tell Him If The Troops’ Morale Was Fading”**

Feb 14, 2007 By Gordon Lubold, Army Times Staff writer [Excerpt]

*Asked if he believed his commanders would tell him if the troops’ morale was fading, Bush responded “absolutely” — just as commanders told him they needed more troops on the ground in the past, those commanders would tell him if there was a morale problem, he said.*

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**IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

*75% Of Baghdad Residents Say Don’t Let The Door Hit You On The Way Out*

2.13.07 Nicholas D. Kristof, New York Times

* A poll conducted by the State Department found that nearly three-quarters of Baghdad residents would feel safer if American forces left Iraq.*
“I For My Part Will Be Cheering On The Iraki Resistance”
“This Is My Home, These Are My People. Leave”

February 12, 2007, Mohammed Ibn Laith, Gorilla’s Guides, Uruknet.info [Excerpts]

If you think that the "surge" is about protecting the people of Irak from bombers you are a fool.

It is about protecting the puppet government in the green zone.

The Americans have never kept their promise to issue the Baghdad police bomb detection unit with explosive detection equipment. There is no reason to believe they ever will issue the Baghdad police bomb detection unit with explosive detection equipment.

No I do not care about your feelings.

I am interested in what if anything you have done to stop your country from murdering yet more of my people. That is all I am interested in. When I want to decide about someone I look at what they do not at what they say.

Enjoy your surge and have a nice day America.

I do not think you will enjoy the countersurge but that is your problem not mine.

I for my part will be cheering on the Iraki resistance.

Irak is for the Irakis.

This is my home, these are my people.

Leave.

The only thing a predator understands is force.

Predators can become prey.

IF YOU DON’T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION
Ho Chi Bird says...

He who's history is contaminated with forgetfulness, will find himself duped in same old shit.

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
February 13, 2007

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.
“Arrest Bush, Cheney, The Entire Civilian Contingent In The Pentagon”

“Bush And The Congressional Sheep Say ‘Support The Troops,’ By Which
They Mean, Of Course, ‘Continue The War””

02/14/07 By Paul Craig Roberts, Information Clearing House [Excerpts]

With the "mainstream media," that is, the government's propaganda ministry, bombarding the American public with "news reports" from unidentified sources that the US government has proof that "the highest reaches of the Iranian government" is supplying weapons to the Iraqi insurgency, Marine General Peter Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, demurred.

General Pace told the Voice of America on February 12 that he has no information indicating that Iran's government is supplying weapons to the Iraqi insurgency.

Perhaps America could regain its reputation if General Pace would send a division of US Marines to arrest Bush, Cheney, the entire civilian contingent in the Pentagon, the neoconservative nazis, and the complicit members of Congress and send them off to the Hague to be tried for war crimes.

Bush and the congressional sheep say "support the troops," by which they mean, of course, "continue the war."

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

Hey, Somebody Figured Out What’s Going On!

Feb 14, 2007 Stephen Zunes, Foreign Policy In Focus [Excerpt]

Faced with growing public opposition to the U.S. war in Iraq, the Bush administration has been desperately trying to divert attention to Iran.

February 15, 2003:
The Anniversary Of The Single Largest Day Of Protest In World History: NO To War

Carl Bunin Peace History February 12-18

In the single largest day of protest in world history, millions on 6 continents demonstrated against the U.S./U.K. plans to invade Iraq.

Reported totals included 1 to 2 million in London and Rome; 1.3 million in Barcelona, Spain (a city of 1.5 million); 500,000 each in Berlin, Paris, Madrid, and New York.

Smaller demonstrations were held in over 600 cities and towns across the US, including tens of thousands in several cities, and 150,000 the following day in San Francisco.

Totals estimated: 25 million in more than 100 countries.

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

An Iraqi citizen watches foreign occupation soldier Army Spc. Christopher Harland, 21, from Wildmar, Calif., of C. Co., 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, second Infantry Division search his auto repair garage in Baghdad, Feb. 11, 2007. Iraqi citizens have no right to refuse these unannounced searches. If they resist, they may be arrested, wounded or killed by foreign troops. The area was suspected to have been used to build car bombs, but nothing was found. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

[There’s nothing quite like invading somebody else’s country and busting into their houses and shops by force 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!
The Great Iraqi Collaborator Troop Training Fiasco Rolls On:
“They Run Away When Things Happen”
“Iraqi Officers Sold New Uniforms Meant For Their Troops”
“Their Soldiers Abused Prisoners And Solicited Bribes To Free Suspects They'd Captured”

Feb. 08, 2007 By Tom Lasseter, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

Two weeks with American units that patrolled with Iraqi forces in west and east Baghdad found that Iraqi officers sold new uniforms meant for their troops, and that their soldiers wore plastic shower sandals while manning checkpoints, abused prisoners and solicited bribes to free suspects they'd captured.

During a patrol last week in a violent west Baghdad neighborhood that's the scene of regular sniper fire at U.S. and Iraqi troops, Staff Sgt. Jeremie Oliver saw Iraqi soldiers gathered in the middle of the road, near a streetlight, making them an easy target for gunmen on the surrounding rooftops.

Thinking that something might be wrong, Oliver, 30, of Farmington, Maine, jogged over. The Iraqis were looking at pornography on a cell phone.

American forces usually keep the Iraqis in the dark about upcoming operations, said [Staff Sgt. Erik H] Helton, 27, of Richlands, Va. “We're careful not to give them information before a raid. Who knows who they're affiliated with or who they're going to call?” he said.

Interviews with U.S. soldiers, and reporting from accompanying them on patrols, made it clear that there are profound problems with the Iraqi troops, ranging from worries that they're operating on behalf of Shiite death squads to aggravation with their refusal to carry out basic tasks such as wearing flak vests.

In a west Baghdad neighborhood where bodies often turn up beside the road, facedown on the pavement with bullets in their heads, U.S. Army 1st Lt. Brendan Griswold looked on last week as Iraqi soldiers patted down three men at a checkpoint and thumbed through their documents. The Iraqi soldiers found a fake Iraqi passport on one of the men, whom they suspected was Jordanian and possibly an insurgent.
Griswold didn’t stir, determined to let the Iraqis conduct the search on their own.

“I like going out with some of them. But some of the others are hard to control; they run away when things happen,” said the 24-year-old 1st Cavalry Division platoon commander from Leavenworth, Kan.

An Iraqi soldier approached him. “Where do we put them?” he asked.

Griswold pointed to the Iraqi army Humvees in front of him. Iraqi soldiers grabbed the three men, opened the back trunks of their Humvees and started to stuff them inside.

“No, not in there,” Griswold yelled, as he cussed under his breath and walked over to supervise.

After he made sure the detainees were seated in the Humvees, the convoy drove to an Iraqi army intelligence office. The Iraqi troops led the three men into what looked like a darkened closet. Griswold asked the Iraqis not to abuse the detainees, then shook hands and said goodbye.

As he left the intelligence building, he asked his interpreter what the Iraqi troops would do to the detainees.

“They were asking them how much they would pay to be released,” the interpreter replied with a grin.

On a patrol in east Baghdad, Capt. Dave Eastburn, a company commander in the 2nd Infantry Division, came upon a civilian car stopped in the road with a cluster of Iraqi police trucks nearby. Two dead men were in the middle of the street.

“When we rolled up, the guy had been dead for 15 minutes; the police said they didn’t know what had happened,” said Eastburn, 30, of Columbus, Ohio. “But we found (police-issued) 9 mm shells on the ground.”

The shortcomings of Iraqi units make it difficult at times for U.S. soldiers to know what, exactly, is going on.

On a patrol in west Baghdad with Iraqi soldiers last week, 1st Lt. Schuyler Williamson told his driver to stop as Iraqi soldiers pulled a car over. Williamson got out of his Humvee and asked why they’d stopped the car. The Iraqi lieutenant, who gave his first name as Zuhair, didn’t respond.

Williamson stood and watched for a few minutes. The Iraqis looked as if they were going to detain the two men in the car, whom they were starting to shove around.

When a reporter walked up, Zuhair said in broken English, “No come back here!” He dragged one of the men to the back seat of a Humvee.

Williamson asked again: “Why are you detaining them?”

Zuhair didn’t respond.
Williamson, 24, of Pensacola, Fla., turned to his interpreter and asked, “Why are they detaining them?” The interpreter asked Zuhair, who still didn’t respond.

“Why the hell are we detaining them?” Williamson asked.

Still no answer.

Williamson walked back to his Humvee and screamed a string of obscenities.

The Iraqis took the two men back to the intelligence section at their base. One of the men had an identification card naming him as a lieutenant in the Interior Ministry. The card, which appeared to be of high quality, was a fake, Zuhair said.

The two men, said Zuhair - who's a Shiite - were Sunnis who'd been trolling the streets for Shiites to kidnap and kill.

A group of Iraqi soldiers took one of the men into a back room. There was yelling and what sounded like someone being punched, followed by a pounding noise. More yelling followed.

Williamson left a few minutes later, not knowing whether the two men were innocents detained by vengeful soldiers or members of a death squad picked up because of vigilant soldiers.

Asked which he thought it was, Williamson said: “I wouldn’t be surprised either way.”

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

“TALK ABOUT NOT GIVING A SHIT ABOUT IRAQIS”

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in. He writes: TALK ABOUT NOT GIVING A SHIT ABOUT IRAQIS:

2.14.07 By ANNE GEARAN, AP Diplomatic Writer]
The Bush administration agreed Wednesday to greatly expand the number of Iraqi refugees allowed into the country and to pay more to help Iraq's Arab neighbors cope with the human tide fleeing increasing violence and economic hardship in their country.

Although the United Nations estimates that 3.8 million Iraqis have fled their homes since the war began nearly four years ago, the United States has allowed only about 600 to settle in the United States.

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

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

http://www.traveling-soldier.org/ And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)
Protesters march during a demonstration, part of a general strike in Conakry, January 2007.

Guinea's embattled President Lansana Conte slapped martial law on the west African country in a bid to end deadly protests against his rule. His regime killed nearly 60 citizens but failed to end the general strike, he has been forced out, and a new prime minister will take office.

After the victory unions in the poverty-stricken west African state ended the crippling strike. Guinea's army chief said the curfew that has sparked worldwide condemnation after the deaths of protesters would be relaxed.
170 Children Held In Texas Prison; “It’s Almost Like A Guantánamo In The Middle Of Texas That Nobody Knows About”

“We Just Didn’t Know About It,’ Said Jane Van Praag, A Resident Of Williamson County”

February 16, 2007 By Cindy Beringer, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

A PALESTINIAN family was finally released from an immigration prison earlier this month in a case that has exposed awful conditions at the former high-security private jail.

The Ibrahim family was held for three months in the T. Don Hutto Residential Center, a former prison run by Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) in the small town of Taylor, Texas.

According to the Austin American Statesman, approximately 75 families and 170 children representing about 29 nationalities, many of them asylum seekers, are held in the prison.

Activists say the facility’s “prisoners” are kept in their cells for 22 hours a day. They receive an hour of English instruction and an hour of recreation, mostly indoors. Children have had their education interrupted and little medical care is available.

Everyone wears prison uniforms bearing their names and numbers. “It was really bad,” said 15-year-old Hamzeh Ibrahim following the family’s release. “Terrible.”

The release and reunion of the family represents a victory for Texans United for Families, a local grassroots coalition, and other organizations that have staged vigils and other protests to bring attention to this jail for “non-criminal aliens,” as ICE calls them.

“We just didn’t know about it,” said Jane Van Praag, a resident of Williamson County, where the jail is located. “When we heard what was going on and did a little research, it turned out that what sounded pretty bad was really bad.”

A week after the Ibrahims’ release, CCA slapped some pictures on the wall, stuck in a couple potted plants, threw down some rugs and reluctantly opened its doors to the media for the first time.
Determined not to lose the more than $2.8 million a month ICE pays them to run the jail and torture children, CCA sought to counter the negative attention forced on them by protesters.

But the media inside and the protesters outside didn’t buy it. “It’s almost like a Guantánamo in the middle of Texas that nobody knows about, and we don’t know who’s there or why they are there or how long they have been there,” said Dallas attorney Domingo Garcia.

The Statesman described the tour as “hurried and controlled,” pointing out that reporters were not allowed to talk to the prisoners. The New York Times noted the “thin slit windows”; the bare cells with a metal bed, a sink and a toilet; and the laser beam alert that lets guards know if anyone leaves the room after the strictly enforced bed times of 9 p.m. for children and 10 p.m. for adults.

ACLU lawyer Lisa Graybill said she couldn’t “describe how depressed people are in there.”

Riad Hamad of the Austin branch of Palestinian Children’s Welfare Fund worked tirelessly to secure the release of the Ibrahims and two other families. Hamad brought money to the jail every week to give to the families. Prisoners with money in Texas prisons can buy slightly better food in prison commissaries.

Hamad was able to visit with the families behind a glass partition. Hanan Ibrahim, who was pregnant, told him that she received little prenatal care, and that her children sobbed when she was taken away in shackles to go to medical appointments.

The last time Hamad visited the prison, he was threatened with a background check for asking too many questions. “I was told in no uncertain terms that I’m not welcome there anymore,” Hamad said.

The fight to close down this jail and prevent new ones from opening will continue. ACLU attorney Vanita Gupta is investigating human rights abuses at Hutto, as well as reports of a recent hunger strike.

Jail officials boast that children now receive education for four hours a day. Texas law requires seven, and the Texas Civil Rights Project is threatening a lawsuit.

According to Greg Moses of the Texas Civil Rights Review, a coalition called Free the Children Now plans a nonviolent campaign against child prisons.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations, the League of United Latin American Citizens, and civil rights activists Peter Johnson and Andrew Young are among its supporters.

Meanwhile, activist Jay Johnson-Castro, who organized several vigils in Taylor, is leading a caravan along the Mexican border, pointing out the ugliness of the border wall and the atrocities that have occurred at the hands of the border patrol.
He visited a mass grave near San Diego where border crossers are buried in the middle of the night by women contracted by the federal government. “These are totally anonymous people who died as a result of our pathetic immigration system,” he says.

John Wheat Gibson, attorney for the Ibrahim family, thanked everyone who worked on this case of persecution of Palestinians.

“This project will be over,” he said, “when the U.S. government stops putting children in prison, stops torturing prisoners, and stops funding the murder of children abroad, so that no child has to flee his or her homeland.”

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**Received:**

**Moscow: Invitation To Deserter Day Festival;**

“Let Generals And Presidents Do Their Geo-Politics While Sitting In Trenches!”

“Boycott Call-Up! Trash All Call-Up Papers!”

“We Support General Arming Of Workers And Formation Of A Self-Governing Militia”

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]
Trash all call-up papers!

We should not protect state and capital, which only exist in order to oppress us.

Boycott call-up! Trash all call-up papers!

We support general arming of workers and formation of a self-governing militia without drilling, humiliation of human value and prison-like procedures.

Right now we stand for whole and total refusal of young people from military service.

According to official statistics, each year 1000 young men die in Russia while in military service, and according to association "Pravo Materi" this number is closer to 3000.

Last year, deputies cancelled more than justified social deferments from service, for example for young fathers. In this situation, avoiding duty and desertion by any legal and illegal means is not only morally justified, but the only reasonable and adequate response to army system, to system which is founded on humiliation of human dignity, prison-like conditions, cult of unmotivated violence, power of some over life of all the rest, unbridled chauvinism and conscious reproduction of war.

Promises to shorten time of military service do not change anything. Such shortening demands increasing share of conscripted youth, and thus also amount of youth educated in spirit of obedience to power.

It will also mean soldiers conscripted for various periods locked up in same barracks, which will increase "dedovchina" - abuse of newcomers. With current level of violence in Russian army, not only one year but one months is already enough to make a disabled (physical or moral) out of a healthy young man.
Only boycott of call-ups may force generals and government to halt injustice, which is currently rampant in army.

Army should be an open structure, soldiers should serve in their places of residence, returning to home every evening. This is a minimum program, a first step to formation of a militia type of army, which will be followed by a struggle to elimination of armies and military as institution in the whole world.

For peace all around the world! Free people have nothing to divide! Arm the people, disband army! Without military, there will not be wars! Leave sky to birds and seas to dolphins!

**Let generals and presidents do their geo-politics while sitting in trenches!**

Long live deserter - defender of humanity!

We call everyone, with any kind of political affiliation, who may not join our festival, to organise their own events directed to undermine system of slavery in conscription, and militarism in principle. We should break through to social conscience, and to give another meaning to main celebration of Russian militarism, in which even men who never served in army and never will are celebrated as "great warriors", and women are given role of supporters of the myth of "heroic conquerors".

A preliminary schedule of the festival: (look for updates from sites www.avtonom.org and russia.indymedia.org).


A video screening from anti-militarist actions by rebel clown army, a lecture by activist of War Resisters' International Andreas Speck on Global resistance to militarism.

Friday 23rd of February A street action, movie screenings and discussions in Moscow

Saturday 24th of February Movie screenings and discussions in Moscow

Sunday 25th of February Festival program in Nizhni Novgorod

Additional information: adm ATT avtonom DOTT org (on program in Moscow), ad_nn ATT mail doTT ru (program in Nizhni Novgorod).

**You may also write to addresses above if you need places to stay in respective cities.**


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