



MotherSpeak UPDATE

ISSUE 1

SUMMER 2005

Welcome to the first issue of MotherSpeak Update. We're not sure how frequently we'll publish Updates but we' invite you to be involved. Submit pertinent articles, event details, poetry, images, cartoons, or artwork and we'll share them with our readers.

MotherSpeak is always interested in news about families and military personnel affected by war and terror, military and veterans' benefits received (or not received) military culture and militarism, arms, ammo and arsenals, and reviews of books, videos, and movies. We are particularly interested in news and stories that present views from beyond US borders that inform Americans about diverse cultures and lands, that highlight the effects on others of our (American) government, corporate, and foreign policies, and that challenge the American mainstream myth that "They hate us for our freedoms".

Real Support for the Troops: Bring Them Home Now!

On the second anniversary of the US invasion of Iraq, March 19, about 3,000 concerned citizens from all over the US and Europe gathered in Fayetteville, North Carolina, to urge the Bush Administration to end the terrors of war and occupation.

A small group of military personnel from Ft. Bragg joined the rally in Rowan Street Park to share experiences from this war and occupation as well as other terrors – Vietnam, Gulf War 1, sanctions against Iraq, and September 11 – to express grave misgivings about what is happening in our country and in Iraq and Afghanistan, and to describe the effects of war and terror on real, live, human beings.

Speakers included Camilo Mejia, Stan

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Goff, Dennis Kyne, members of Iraq Veterans against War and Military Family Speak Out, David Couso (brother of Spanish journalist Jose Couso killed when a U.S. military tank shot into Baghdad's Palestine Hotel) and many others.

Get the flavor of the event by ordering the MotherSpeak produced and distributed CD with audio and visual files of the rally. Email motherspeak@motherspeak.org for details or see page 4 for more information on MotherSpeak Media Collection.

What about You?

Is something going on in your neighborhood to end war and occupation? Share the happenings in your community by emailing details to MotherSpeak (motherspeak@motherspeak.org subject line: Update).

Forward this issue of MotherSpeak Update to your friends and colleagues.

PROFILE: A Military Mom & Dad

Three weeks after he was discharged from a U.S. military hospital, Jeffrey Lucey committed suicide by hanging himself with a hose in the cellar of his parent's house.

The dog tags of two unarmed Iraqi prisoners Jeffrey said he was forced to shoot while he was deployed to Iraq, lay on his bed.

Kevin and Joyce Lucey, Jeffrey's parents and other members of Military Families Speak Out (MFSO) participated in the rally at Fayetteville's Rowan Park.

Listen to Kevin and Joyce's speech made at the rally ... then consider working with MotherSpeak to educate fellow Americans about war and terror and how we, as a nation, perpetuate these horrors that break the spirits and the bodies of our children.

Order the MotherSpeak Media CD that includes Kevin and Joyce Lucey and other participants in the anniversary rally.

ARTIFACTS OF WAR & TERROR: Inside Walter Reed Army Medical Center

by Diana D. Hunter

Ramon's right leg is a \$60,000 prosthesis. He's also lost the full functioning of his left leg and has undiagnosed neurological damage to his hands. He's 21 years old.

Until October 2004, Ramon was a member of a US military mechanized brigade. He was injured when an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) exploded under the vehicle ferrying him, three other US military personnel, and one Iraqi man to a military base north of Baghdad. This spirited father of two girls has been a patient at WRAMC's since November 2004.

On the day of our visit, Ramon shares the Washington, DC medical ward with six other young men, all amputees. Most appear in good humor although one man, about 35 years old, has an expression that epitomizes "the thousand yard stare" – street speak for a psyche traumatized beyond the comprehension of people privileged by never having been sent to war. This man's left leg is missing at the thigh. Our eyes meet and I'm torn between reassuring him with the hackneyed platitude that, after all, he still has his life. But, I intuit that he's deciding



March & Rally in Fayetteville, NC. March 19

whether he wants to settle for just that.

As Ramon grimaces through his therapy, his cell phone lies within reach on the seat of his wheelchair. "My wife calls often to ask how I am doing. I miss her and my kids."

At his prompting, I admire the \$60,000 prosthetic that will, upon his discharge, carry Ramon for the rest of his life. The hollow shape into which Ramon's bandaged stump fits is thick clear plastic. The mechanically articulating knee and ankle joints glide silky smooth. The foot is dressed in a sock and shoe matching that on Ramon's left foot.

What does Ramon think each day when he holds this leg in his lap to dress it in a matching sock and shoe, then slips the remains of his limb into that glossy hollow?

"I owe my life to that Iraqi man," Ramon states. "If he had not insisted medics put the IV into my arm I would be dead. They thought I was beyond trying to save. My heart stopped twice – once before and once during surgery -- but here I am. Everybody has learned I'm a survivor.

"I didn't know I was supposed to die. I just kept fighting so I'd see my family again. I heard the injured Iraqi man pray for a wounded American and insist medics treat me; I'd be dead if he hadn't.

"Our baby was 3 weeks old when I was deployed. She's 9 months now and never knew me with legs. But my 5-year-old is scared of ... (he gestures to his legs). I have to coax my own child to kiss me. That is harder than losing my legs and almost losing my life."

SUPPORT RESISTERS & RESISTANCE

PABLO PAREDES

"I'd rather do a year in a prison in the military than do six months dirty work for a war I don't believe in - and not many other people believe in either."



On December 6, 2004 Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Pablo Paredes refused to board the USS Bonhomme Richard as it departed San Diego for six-months in the Pacific and Indian oceans. Instead, Pablo, wearing a t-shirt that declared, "Like a cabinet member, I resign," stayed on the dock and spoke about his opposition to the Iraq War.

Pablo had already applied for a conscientious objector discharge. A Navy chaplain investigating Pablo's appeal reported that it was "morally imperative" the military discharge him. But the military intends to convict Pablo for standing against war and occupation.

On May 11, 2005 the US military will bring Pablo and Kevin Benderman (whose story follows) before military courts martial on charges of absence without leave and missing movement. They face a year in jail, and forfeiture of pay and benefits.

■ For more information...

KEVIN BENDERMAN

On January 5, 2005, Kevin Benderman and the Third Infantry Division was deployed for a second tour to Iraq. That day two soldiers attempted suicide, another convinced a relative shoot him in the leg, and seventeen others went AWOL.

Sergeant Benderman's family has sent a son to every war since the American Revolution. For this war, however, Kevin

National Day of Action for GI Resisters

Tuesday May 10, 12 Noon
War Memorial Veterans Building
401 Van Ness, San Francisco

On the day before Pablo and Kevin's scheduled courts martial gather at noon at the War Memorial Building to urge the Bush Administration, the U.S. military, and fellow Americans to:

- RESPECT CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION
- RESIST ILLEGAL WAR & OCCUPATION – RESISTANCE IS NOT ONLY **NOT** A CRIME BUT IT IS A CIVIC DUTY.

applied for conscientious objector status. He was refused. So he followed his conscience and refused to deploy.

On January 16, Benderman was charged with Desertion with Intent to Avoid Hazardous Duty and Missing Movement by Design. On May 11 he will face a court martial at Fort Stewart, Georgia.

San Francisco, Saturday, April 30, 2 pm at Saybrook Graduate School, 747 Front Street (Third Floor) Kevin and his wife, Monica will speak of their experiences.

■ For more information...

CAMILO MEJIA

Camilo Mejia spent a year in the brig for his stance against war. Recently released, he will speak in the Bay Area as follows:

San Jose, Sunday, May 1, 2 pm, at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 405 South 10th, with Kevin Benderman.

San Jose, Sunday, May 1, 7 pm at the Unitarian Church of Palo Alto, 505 E. Charleston Road, with Kevin Benderman.

Palo Alto, Sunday, May 1, 7 pm at Unitarian Church at Charleston & Middlefield.

Oakland, Monday, May 2, 7 pm at 1st Congregational Church, 27th & Harrison, Oakland

Santa Cruz, Wednesday, May 4, 7 pm Veterans Building 846 Front Street.

\$5-15 sliding scale donation (no one turned away). Wheelchair accessible.

For more information: 415-255-7331 or www.veteransforpeace.org.

Press contact: 510-418-3436. Sponsors: Global Exchange, CCCO, AFSC, International ANSWER, Not in Our Name, Code Pink, Stop Impunity, Veterans for Peace, MotherSpeak, Courage to Resist.

Courage to Resist

Courage to Resist represents concerned communities, veterans and military families supporting military resisters of illegal war and occupation and the policies of empire. CTR's people power strategy is designed to weaken the pillars supporting war and occupation, support GI resistance, and reduce the supply of troops to combat.

As thousands of U.S. troops are refusing to fight the war and occupation in Iraq, Courage to Resist asserts widespread public pressure to defend the choice to follow conscience instead of the dictates of State.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? *GET INVOLVED!*

- To express your opinions to Sec. Def. Donald Rumsfeld, or
- To send letters of support to resisters or
- To follow the Courage to Resist caravan to San Diego to support Pablo at his court martial May 11 and 12
- Go to [More Information](#)

Also:

- Show public support on May 10, the national day of action.
- Let CTR and MotherSpeak know what you're doing so we can highlight your actions on our websites, in our publications, and in this Update.
- Pass this Update on to your friends, family and associates

MotherSpeak & CodePink Joint Project: Training and DVD on Speaking to the Media

If you have ever been tongue-tied in front of an audience or the media or if you have wondered what is "safe" to say in front of a TV camera, this training or DVD is for you.

CodePink Women for Peace and MotherSpeak will present training for women and mothers on how to handle the media.

Out of that training will come a DVD that communities and groups can use to boost the confidence of women facing television and other media.

The training will begin in the Bay Area and Los Angeles. If you are interested in participating in the training and the video recording or getting involved in other ways, [contact MotherSpeak](#).



MotherSpeak media collection presents multimedia material - DVDs, CDs, slides, photographs, and print media - related to war and terror on the home front and in war zones.

These audio, video, and print items document the experiences of US military personnel and their families, victims of devastation, and concerned citizens around the world.

Inform yourself and your friends, family, and communities about the effects of war by sharing these varied materials. Use them to stimulate discussion in classrooms, workshops and events, and share them with as many people as possible. Together, we can stop war and terror.

The growing collection includes:

- Audio visual panel discussion with conscientious objectors from Vietnam to the Gulf Wars
- Reports and photographs from Iraq and the assaults on Fallujah in 2004
- Collection of speeches and pictures from March 19, 2004, rally in Fayetteville, NC
- Interviews with US military personnel, Depleted Uranium experts, delegates delivering medical supplies to Iraq, Iraqi psychiatrist working with victims of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Israeli refuseniks, Russian mothers fighting conscription, and more
- Resources for learning and inquiry
- Printed articles and book list.

- GET INVOLVED -

MotherSpeak offers this not-for-profit collection at our production and manufacturing costs of **\$30 plus tax and shipping**. To order or to learn more email motherspeak@motherspeak.org

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE US ARSENAL: Cluster Bombs Units (CBUs)



Brightly colored, submunitions are attractive to children. Above left, a bomblet with parachute next to a candy dispenser.

Facts on Cluster Bombs

(See Glossary of Terms for definitions)

- There are over 32 varieties of CBUs – cluster bomb units - in US military arsenals. They may be antipersonnel (APERS), antimateriel (AMAT), antitank (AT), dual-purpose (DP), **incendiary**, or **chemical**.
- Regardless of its type or purpose, **ordnance** can be dropped from aircraft or ground-launched and is divided into three subgroups: bombs, dispensers (containing submunitions) and **submunitions**.
- Using either **mechanical time or proximity fuze**, aircraft dispensed bombs are stabilized by fins and explode at predetermined heights above targets. Frequently, unexploded bombs are picked up by curious children and explode in their hands.
- Each CBU's **payload** is composed of 200 to 700 bomblets that fragment upon explosion and "can spray incendiary material to start fires, chunks of molten metal that can pierce tanks and other armor, or shrapnel that can slice with ease through 1/4-inch plate -- or human flesh and bone."
- 'The United Nations estimates that it would take seven years and cost about \$660 million to clear Afghanistan of its unexploded ordnance and mines. Finishing the job in three years would raise the price tag to about \$ 900 million.'

Cluster Bombs: Drop today, kill tomorrow



U.S. fired M-42 cluster munitions ready for demolition on the Hussain Mansour farm near the Baghdad airport, February 2004. Clearance teams found nearly 400 of these submunitions on the Mansour farm. Photos from Mennonite Central Committee ([see more pix](#) from MCC)

[For articles on CBUs](#)

Glossary of Terms

Chemical weapon: (a) Toxic chemicals and their precursors (b) Munitions and devices, specifically designed to cause death or other harm through the toxic properties of those toxic chemicals (c) Any equipment specifically designed for use directly in connection with the employment of munitions and devices.

Fuze, time or proximity fuze: an electronic device for detonating a warhead as it approaches a target.

Incendiary weapon: designed to start fires. Many cluster bomb submunitions have this effect and are specifically designed for this with payloads of white phosphorus or napalm.

Ordnance: quantity usually specifying the ammunition for artillery, bombs, or other large weapons.

Payload: the contents of a transport system, bomb dispenser, etc.

Submunition: munition that separates from a parent munition to perform its task.

Email your concerns about CBUs to the US Department of Defense. Find address on the [More Update](#) page.

To access more information and links for this Update and Update submission guidelines, go to [More Update](#). A page will append to the Update and link to the Internet.