

# *The Rock River Times*<sup>TM</sup>

*The Voice of the Community*

## **Families demand: 'Bring them home'**

By Joe Baker, Senior Editor

Families of more than 600 U.S. troops serving in Iraq have unleashed a broadside at the Bush administration and the president's pretexts for invading Iraq.

The families are launching a campaign to bring the troops home, according to Agencie France Presse. The report also appeared on Arab television.

"George Bush said: 'Bring them on,'" said Nancy Lessin, co-founder of Military Families Speak Out. She referred to the president's response to attacks on our troops in post-war Iraq.

"Those three words," she said, "galvanized Military Families Speak Out, Veterans for Peace and other veterans' organizations to initiate the campaign we are launching today," Lessin said Sunday.

"We say: 'Bring them home now,'" she continued. "Bring them home because our troops should not have been in Iraq in the first place. Bring them home because there was no imminent danger to the United States. Bring them home because there were no weapons of mass destruction. Bring them home because there was no link between al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein," Lessin said.

She declared the invasion of Iraq was wrong and the occupation is wrong. "...[T]here is no right way to do a wrong thing," she said.

Members of the group said they are mostly Republicans, voted for Bush and supported the war based on intelligence presented earlier this year.

"From proud liberators in the great American tradition, our troops have become oppressors and occupiers in a hostile nation," said Susan Shuman, whose son is a Massachusetts National Guardsman serving in Iraq. "Our troops are stuck in a quagmire of urban desert guerrilla warfare for which they are not prepared or equipped," she said.

Fernando Suarez de Solar lost his son, Jesus Alberto, in action in Iraq. "My question to Mr. Bush is: 'How many more of our sons do you need to bring our children home? How many American lives are worth one gallon of oil?'"

Stan Goff was a 26-year career soldier and is a retired Special Forces master sergeant.

"...in all the administration's fictions of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear programs and...the phony al-Qaeda connections that are being exposed as fabrications, this is not the rule of law," Goff said. "These are rich men in very expensive suits conducting statecraft like gangsters."

Charlie Richardson, co-founder of the group, said the U.S. has a responsibility to the Iraqi people to clean up the mess we have made.

Richardson added: "It can't be done with U.S. troops. In launching the 'Bring Them Home Now' campaign, we are calling on military families and others in the military and veterans' communities to speak out against the use of our troops as cannon fodder...against the reckless occupation of Iraq."

Meanwhile, Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) has returned from a tour of Iraq and said we need to send more troops to do the job right.

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