

GI SPECIAL 2#16

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME



U.S. Marines perform the honors during the funeral of 22-year-old U.S. Marine Juan Lopez, in his hometown of San Luis de la Paz, Mexico, July 4, 2004. Lopez was killed in an ambush on June 21. (AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

Missing Marine Free

July 7, 2004 WEST JORDAN, Utah (CNN)

Marine Cpl. Wassef Hassoun is safe with family members in his hometown in Lebanon, a source close to the family told CNN on Wednesday.

Earlier Wednesday, the Lebanese Foreign Ministry said its embassy in Iraq informed the Beirut government that Hassoun was "in a safe place," but it gave no further details.

On Monday, a group claiming to have kidnapped Wassef Hassoun said it had taken him to safety, Al-Jazeera reported.

He "has been sent to a safe place after he had announced his forgiveness and his determination not to go back to the U.S. forces," said the group -- which calls itself "Islamic Response," the security wing of the Islamic Resistance of Iraq -- in a statement faxed to Al-Jazeera and posted on the network's Web site.

The group said its members treated Hassoun well.

Two FBI agents visited the Hassoun family at their Utah home Wednesday afternoon to discuss a phone call apparently from the Marine, an FBI official said.

A source close to the family said Hassoun contacted family members in West Jordan, Utah, and in Tripoli, Lebanon, and told them he had called the U.S. Embassy in Beirut and asked to be picked up from an undisclosed location in Lebanon. **The source said Hassoun sounded healthy and happy.**

Wednesday's visit to the Hassoun family home in Utah by two agents represented the first by the FBI since the hostage ordeal began, according to special agent Kelly Kleinvachter.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Group Claims Major Attack On U.S. Forces At Al-Saqlawiya; U.S. Confirms 7 Marines Killed

July 7, 2004 The Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt - Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's group has claimed responsibility for an attack on U.S. forces in western Baghdad earlier this week, according to a statement posted on an Islamic Web site Wednesday.

The military wing of al-Zarqawi's Tawhid and Jihad group claimed 100 of its fighters attacked U.S. forces on Monday in al-Saqlawiya, 43 miles west of the Iraqi capital.

The U.S. military on Tuesday announced that three Marines assigned to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force were killed while on duty in western Iraq. Two died in action Monday in the Anbar province, while a third died of his wounds later Monday.

Another four U.S. Marines were killed Tuesday in the Anbar province while conducting security and stability operations on Tuesday, the U.S. military said in a statement Wednesday.

"One hundred of the lions of God ... made a trap in al-Saqlawiya for the American devil soldiers," the statement claimed. It also said that two helicopters and two humvees, including the U.S. forces inside the vehicles, "were destroyed."

Ramadi Vehicle Accident Kills One, Injures Four

July 7, 2004 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Release Number: 04-07-08C & Associated Press

BALAD, Iraq - One 13th Corps Support Command Soldier was killed and four injured as the result of a vehicle accident near Ramadi at approximately 1 a.m. July 7.

Four injured soldiers were evacuated by air to a military medical facility at Camp Ramadi. **Two of the injured soldiers were scheduled to be further evacuated to a higher level military medical facility.**

A statement says a tire on a military truck blew out. A second truck apparently swerved to avoid it, rolled over and burst into flames.

DoD Identifies Army Casualty

July 7, 2004 United States Department of Defense News Release No. 645-04

Staff Sgt. Stephen G. Martin, 39, of Rhinelander, Wis., died July 1 at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., from injuries sustained in Mosul, Iraq, on June 24 when a car bomb exploded near his guard post. Martin was assigned to the Army Reserve's 330th Military Police Detachment, Sheboygan, Wis.

Fallujah Resistance Using Anti-Aircraft Guns, Copter Pilots Hit

6 Jul 2004 FOREIGN STAFF, The Scotsman

Guerrillas fired anti-aircraft guns, rocket-propelled grenades and light arms at a US military medical helicopter, which was travelling over Fallujah, wounding the pilot and co-pilot.

One Soldier Wounded In Indirect Fire Attack

7.7.04 Combined Joint Task Force 7 *Release #040707f*

BAGHDAD, Iraq - One Soldier assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division was wounded during an indirect fire attack in west Baghdad around 7 a.m. July 7.

The Soldier sustained minor injuries and has since returned to duty.

Two vehicles were damaged during the attack.

Street Fighting Breaks Out In Center Of Baghdad

NO FRIENDS HERE; BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. soldiers near Martyrs' Square in Baghdad July 7, 2004 during running gun battles between U.S.-backed Iraqi National Guards and masked insurgents. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)

Jul. 07, 2004 HAMZA HENDAWI, Associated Press & Aljazeera.Net

Four Iraqi policemen have been killed and 13 wounded in fighting between armed assailants and security forces in central Baghdad even as the interim government signed into effect a new emergency law giving itself wider powers to control the fighters.

A daylight gunbattle between Iraqi security forces and insurgents raged for hours in the streets of central Baghdad.

U.S. armored personnel carriers moved to the scene of the fighting on Haifa Street to help the Iraqi forces. Two Apache helicopters hovered overhead.

The US helicopters fired at a building in the central Haifa Street area during the fighting on Wednesday, witnesses said. Black smoke poured from the building after the strikes.

The helicopters launched their attack after machinegun fire and grenade explosions echoed along the street, sending drivers and pedestrians fleeing the normally busy commercial thoroughfare on the west bank of the Tigris river.

Our correspondent reported that four Iraqi policemen were killed and 13 wounded in the fighting.

US forces have often clashed with Shia fighters in the slums of the Sadr City suburb, but daylight street battles have rarely erupted in the heart of Baghdad.

WAR HITS HOME: Kosy soldier injured

July 08, 2004 By Mark Thornton, The Star-Herald, Kosciusko, Mississippi

Rosa Newell had been praying she would hear from her son in Iraq. Ten minutes later, at about 3 a.m., the phone rang in her Kosciusko home. It was 19-year-old PFC Arthur Newell calling with bad news and good news -- he had been seriously injured, but he was going to be OK.

The trailer ahead of the transport truck he was driving struck a mine, rocketing some of its contents through his windshield. A 1-inch x 1-inch piece of steel went through his cheek and lodged in his gum. He is recovering from surgery in a German hospital, where he will undergo a few more medical procedures -- including implants to replace at least three teeth.

Mrs. Newell said she didn't even know it was her son on the phone at first.

"I couldn't understand him," she said.

She made out the words "momma" ... "serious injury" ... "not life-threatening." That was all she needed to hear. After learning the details, she was even more thankful.

"(The steel) could have gone through his eye or through his heart," Mrs. Newell said, shaking her head. "He is so blessed."

The truck he was driving for the 66th Transportation Brigade was hit on June 27. He didn't call home until three days later because "his face was so swollen, he couldn't talk," Jamison said.

Her son had been contacting her or other family members by e-mail or phone at least once a week. But before last week, she hadn't heard from him in more than a week. She was starting to get worried.

Arthur Newell joined the Army a year ago this month, right after graduating from Kosciusko High School, where he played on the basketball team. He went to Germany in December and was sent to fight in Operation Iraqi Freedom in January.

Mrs. Newell said she hasn't paid much attention to the news since then -- "it worries me too much," she says.

Arthur Newell was blessed from the beginning it seems. He was only 4 pounds when he was born, which earned him the nickname "PeeWee." Luther and Rosa Newell, who are his biological grandparents, adopted him when he was 6 weeks old.

"And now he's a grown man," Mrs. Newell said, holding a picture of him in his U.S. Army uniform. "I miss my baby."

Jamison will also have to watch as her husband, Mack Jamison, ships off soon with his Winona-based National Guard unit. Arthur Newell's biological father, Doc Newell, has been in the Army for 20 years and teaches ROTC at Jackson State.

Joint U.S.-Iraqi Patrols Are Getting Off On Wrong Foot; “Don’t Shoot, I’m The Police Chief”

July 5, 2004 By Edmund Sanders, LA Times Staff Writer

BAQUBAH, Iraq — The squad of U.S. soldiers waited impatiently to embark on a joint foot patrol with Iraqi police last week through the streets of this hostile city.

Military commanders hoped the sight of Americans and Iraqis walking side by side would symbolize the start of the transfer of control over security back to Iraqis.

The Iraqis didn't see it that way. Loath to be seen marching through their hometown with heavily armed Americans, none of them showed up.

"Is this a joint patrol, or what?" Capt. Chris Solinsky, the patrol leader, said into his shortwave radio. "Where are the Iraqis?"

Ten minutes later, eight unhappy-looking police officers joined the U.S. squad and reluctantly began the patrol.

"Great," Solinsky said dryly. "Sovereignty is bringing us together."

After that, it was a game of red-light-green-light, with the Iraqis staying at least 20 feet away from the U.S. soldiers. When the Americans stopped to allow the Iraqis to catch up, the Iraqis would stop too.

The Iraqis don't want to appear to be working for the Americans, and they also know that being next to a U.S. soldier can be dangerous. Two Americans were killed two weeks ago while on patrol in Baqubah.

When Solinsky suggested that a couple of the Iraqi officers split off down a side street, all eight disappeared down the road.

Iraqi Gen. Walid Khalid, who oversees police in Baqubah and the larger Diyala province, picked up a tip that foreign fighters were hiding in some houses in the village. The Americans organized a raid with about 80 soldiers and four Bradley fighting vehicles. Three Iraqi police officers were ordered to participate.

When soldiers arrived at the first house, they broke down the front door, handcuffed bleary-eyed residents and ordered them at gunpoint into the front yard for questioning.

"OK, just tell them what we're doing here," a U.S. soldier told one of the Iraqi policemen, who was also serving as interpreter.

The policeman — wearing a black ski mask to hide his identify — paused for a moment, and then asked the soldier, "What are you doing here?"

"Searching for foreign fighters!" the exasperated soldier shot back.

An hour later, more than 15 homes had been searched and no foreigners were found.

"It looks like we've got some bad intelligence here," Capt. Ty Johnson, leader of the Brigade Reconnaissance Troop, radioed his commanders back at the U.S. base. **"I suggest we finish up and leave. We're going to end up pissing the town off and making these people into insurgents."**

Once the raid turned sour, some finger-pointing began. Iraqis characterized the raid as U.S.-led. The police chief said he had learned about the details only a few hours earlier.

When the searches came up dry, Johnson said it was the Iraqis who were in charge.

"This was their information," he said. "They are the ones really leading this."

Iraqi Gen. Walid Khalid has paid a price for his ties with the U.S. military. He has been the target of numerous assassination attempts. A rocket landed next to his desk one day, and he uses the charred shell as a flower vase. During a series of attacks June 24, insurgents set fire to his house.

In the chaotic hours during the attack, the police chief's convoy was stopped at gunpoint by U.S. soldiers who didn't recognize him. Khalid found himself with his arms raised above his head, shouting, "Don't shoot! I'm the police chief!"

In Baqubah, the Americans have found that there are limits to how much can be shared. The center is actually two rooms. One is for Iraqis and includes a big conference table, a large map, a television and several 911-type emergency telephone lines.

Behind a door marked "restricted access" is the Americans' room.

"We have to share, but we can't give them access to everything we know," said Kreg Schnell, intelligence officer of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team.

Trust will grow as both sides work together, Pittard said. "It's a process," he said. "It's going to come in stops and starts."

The colonel learned that lesson first-hand last week when he led a raid on a suspected cell leader's house north of Baqubah, based on a tip from the Iraqi National Guard.

Dozens of troops with night-vision goggles and M-16 rifles broke through the windows and ordered a terrified family to lie on the floor. Within minutes, soldiers had determined that they had invaded the house of a Kurdish schoolteacher, not a suspected terrorist leader. Afterward, Col. Dana Pittard, commander of the 1st Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team quietly fumed in front of the house, saying he regretted using such heavy force and lamenting the bad intelligence.

"We have to find a way to hold these guys accountable for the information they provide," Pittard said. "It's not been a good morning."

Mercenaries Say Resistance Using Extremely Sophisticated Attack Technology

July 4 AFP

Heavily armed foreign security contractors immune from Iraqi law are likely to increase their presence in the country as violent attacks continue and international forces begin to scale back. "The security business now in July is going to pick up," said the owner of one of at least 30 companies currently operating in the country.

"The industry has never seen anything like this before in magnitude," said one senior company official, who has been working in the sector for nine years.

Convoys come under almost daily attack and security guards are killed regularly.

"The threat level is immense trying to work here -- it's higher than anywhere else in the world," the company owner said.

"One of my teams has had six contacts -- been shot at, ambushed. Front car shot up, second car tires shot up. Another time they were approached from the back and shot up," he added.

The firms are in no doubt about the sophistication of their enemy.

"Surveillance, tracking, radio surveillance -- they can do all that stuff," the company owner said.

"As we can, they can. They have sophisticated stuff and there's more and more surveillance being done."

One security guard, who has been working in the industry for 18 years "on and off", said the toughest part of working in Iraq was the seemingly random nature of the violence.

"They can wake up in the morning and invent something to disrupt our day. We just have to react to what they invent," he said.

"We have to be lucky every day. They only have to be lucky on the day they choose to do an operation."

TROOP NEWS

Injured Soldier Being Sent Back to Iraq "I Don't Want Him To Go," Says Vietnam Vet Dad

7.5.04 By Jackelyn Barnard First Coast News

JACKSONVILLE, FL -- It was April 4, 2004. Sgt. Pete Sutherland was in the middle of battle in Iraq. "You could almost see a wall of bullets. We were taking fire from everywhere like there were one million guns pointed at us. I thought for sure this was it."

A letter Sgt. Sutherland wrote to his best friend's family. Their son didn't make it out of Iraq alive and Sgt. Sutherland barely did. He was shot five times. A bullet is still trapped in his leg.

His mom, Diane, is still trying to cope with the news. "I'm very concerned. The first phone call was bad enough. I don't know if I could stand a second call."

A mom with a new worry. Her son has received more orders. He's headed back to the battle zone.

I don't want him to go. He's my only son," says his dad, Pete Sutherland.

A son inspired by his father who was a Marine in Vietnam. It was a picture of his dad in war that made him want to join the Army. "Had I have known I would have destroyed that picture before he was born."

Hungarians Want Troops Out Of Iraq

CPOD Jul. 6, 2004

Most citizens of Hungary want their soldiers out of Iraq, according to a poll by Gallup. 62.9 per cent of respondents disapprove of their country's involvement in the Iraqi conflict.

Last year, the government of prime minister Peter Medgyessy of the Socialist Party (MSZP) committed 300 soldiers to the coalition effort in Iraq.

On Jun. 17, Hungarian soldier Richard Nagy was killed by a hidden road bomb. Nagy is the first casualty for the country's contingent since the military operation began in March 2003.

Thousands Call for Ukrainian Withdrawal from Iraq; General Pukhno Calls On Troops To Refuse To Obey War Politicians

6.22.04 KIEV (Reuters)

Thousands of Ukrainian protesters on Tuesday demanded the government bring troops home from Iraq, saying politicians had no right to spill the blood of others for their own gain.

They swarmed the central independence square in Ukraine's capital Kiev and then marched to parliament, where speaker after speaker called for the troops' return.

Retired general Mykhailo Pukhno said soldiers should never do politicians' bidding. "The government...sent them there for their own interests. People should die for something their country needs, not for someone else's interests," he said.

President Leonid Kuchma's motives for sending about 1,600 peacekeepers to Iraq has come under fire, with many opposition politicians saying it was a crude attempt to repair ties with the United States which were strained by reports of illegal arms sales to Baghdad before the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

Calls for a withdrawal mounted earlier this year after two Ukrainian soldiers were killed in ambush, bringing the total number of dead in Iraq to six since deployment in August.

Many of the protesters pointed their attack at Kuchma, calling on him to "don his military uniform and get to Iraq."

"I have come to express my outrage that our children have been sent to foreign lands to spill their blood for something no one needs," Anna Dorohova said. "If there were jobs here and if they were paid...our children would stay."

The “Grand Daddy Units”

From VetPax 6.29.04

There is an angle on this most recent National Guard deployment story coming out of the Chicago Tribune (but I picked up in Military.com) which just dawned on me via conversations with my son. The advanced age of members of the National Guard compared to members of the Regular Army.

It's an aspect that definitely affects combat readiness. WE can send National Guard Troops through the most extensive training programs under the sun, but if their leadership and senior NCOs are my Age. YO - NOT GOOD! THAT'S DESPERATON!!!

Check out the article - They are talking about a 41 year old Corporal. A 41 year old two striper, and a 54 year old Sergeant Major who enlisted in the National Guard in 1971 to avoid the Vietnam draft and now is too PROUD to leave his kids behind. THIS IS NUTS

I make it a habit not to discuss what my son talks to me about his experiences in Iraq, because of a promise not to, but as I read this article I must point out something that Josh, my son, says is notable among Regular Army Troops regarding some National Guard Troops they see deployed in Iraq. **Regulars refer to them as Grand Daddy units, because of all the old guys in them in contrast to regular Army units.**

He says to me Dad we saw one support unit that had guys in it on average that were your age and should have been retired. Well given the points and age it takes to retire in the National Guard that is not surprising. **Anyway, it may interest you to know that we even have Vietnam Veterans still waging war in Iraq.**

June 29, 2004 Chicago Tribune

SWEETWATER, Tenn. - Even as the U.S. prepares to hand over sovereignty to Iraqis this week, National Guard units across America are leaving their hometowns for assignment to Iraq.

For more than 50 years, Guard troops in rural east Tennessee trained for wars that passed them by. But hundreds of flag-waving folks lined the streets under gray skies here Friday to say an emotional good-bye to the 1st Squadron of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment as it headed off to war. It is the regiment's first combat deployment since before the Korean War.

"I guess it's now our turn at last," said Sgt. Maj. John Ridgell, 54, a grandfather, school principal, church deacon and sports coach who bid farewell to his family.

Members of the National Guard are not as well-prepared for active duty as regular Army servicemen and women, critics charge. **Mostly in their 30s or older, they are not in**

top-notch physical shape, critics contend, and lack the training for the complex battleground of Iraq.

A survey last December by military sociologist Charles Moskos of Northwestern University found a lower morale level among Guard soldiers in Iraq than among full-time soldiers.

"They are nowhere near the level of proficiency that active troops are," retired Army Col. David Hackworth, a frequent Pentagon critic, told The Associated Press recently.

The deployment of Guard troops has been playing out throughout June across a huge swath of eastern and central Tennessee where nearly 4,000 men and women of the 278th Regiment have been leaving home. Beyond the emotional strain on families, their departure has left these small communities struggling to replace their skills and duties.

The regiment's deployment is expected to last at least 521 days but may be up to two full years, according to the assignment orders. At most, soldiers would get two weeks leave during that period, commanders say.

Soldiers from Tennessee range in age from 18 to 59, and about one-quarter of them served during the 1991 Persian Gulf war, Somalia or elsewhere while on active duty, commanders say. There are even a few Vietnam veterans in the bunch.

"I hate the thought of losing one soldier," said Hart, 49, who spoke candidly about the challenges for his squadron. "But it ain't all going to go all well. That's part of the deal when you go into a multifaceted battlefield like this."

Hart is on leave from a Defense Department contractor that deals with possible fallout exposure from radiation accidents. **Hart's father, William, 78, was an armed forces veteran at age 40. After 30 years in the Guard, his son will now see combat duty for the first time.**

"It's kinda screwed up," William Hart Sr. said. "It's like he should be a veteran now when he is just going out."

While many of Hart's soldiers expressed pride at serving their nation, some admitted they are emotionally unprepared and even fearful. Many rued the disruptions to life and family.

Cpl. Craig Kennedy, 41, sold his trucking business and has been trying to console his daughter, Sylvia, 12, who stuck by his side last week at a small armory in this town of 5,500.

"She's scared I won't come back," Kennedy said as his daughter sat sullenly. "We've been dealing with a lot of crying lately."

A few miles from the armory, Sgt. Maj. Ridgell sat with his wife on a swinging porch bench, spending his last night at home with two grown children and a 2-year-old grandchild, Dylan.

To avoid the draft, Ridgell had signed with the Guard in 1971 after college. Through the years, as he became a school administrator, he never thought of leaving the Guard. He liked the training sessions and the bonding with the soldiers, he said. Plus the money helped put his kids through college.

At 54, Ridgell figures he could have found a way to get a medical waiver out of serving. "But I am still in good physical shape," he said. "I knew this was a possibility when I signed up, and I'll honor my commitment."

On Friday morning, Ridgell's family stood in tears on a rain-soaked street at dawn as a convoy of soldiers in army vehicles drove out of Athens escorted by police and fire units. Ridgell saluted as he moved out in a Humvee.

"These soldiers will come back changed forever," Lt. Col. Hart said.

Fresh Meat For The Imperial Slaughterhouse; Mississippi Guard Unit Mobilized

July 08, 2004 By Mark Thornton, The Star-Herald, Kosciusko, Mississippi

As expected, the Mississippi National Guard's 155th Separate Armored Brigade -- which includes Kosciusko's unit -- was mobilized last week. The 3,500 soldiers will be sent to Camp Shelby near Hattiesburg for training in mid- to late August, then await deployment orders in the next three to four months.

The Kosciusko unit has 56 soldiers.

The mobilization order came under a Presidential Partial Mobilization of Reserve Forces in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Reservists can be activated for up to 24 months under partial mobilization, though that doesn't mean they will be mobilized for that long.

The 155th, which is known as "Dixie Thunder," was put on alert in May. It is the largest military support group in the state. The last time the 155th was mobilized was in November 1990, for Operation Desert Storm. The soldiers trained at bases in Texas and California for several weeks, but the war ended before they were deployed.

As of last week, 14 Mississippi soldiers had been killed in the War on Terror -- the highest per capita rate in the country.

Reserves Near Breaking Point

July 7, 2004 Associated Press July 7, 2004

WASHINGTON -- In a bipartisan show of concern that the military is dangerously overworked, lawmakers said Wednesday the Pentagon is stretching troops to their limit and perhaps undermining the nation's future force.

"We're taxing our part-time soldiers, our Guard and Reserves nearly to the breaking point," said Rep. Ike Skelton of Missouri, top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee. "We have to be aware that the families back home are paying a significant price. We don't want to break the force."

"At some point there's a limit in terms of personnel, and I think you're there, Rep. Tom Cole, R-Okla said.

The Army in April broke a promise to some active-duty units, including the 1st Armored Division, that they would not have to serve more than 12 months in Iraq. It also has extended the tours of other units, including some in Afghanistan.

Critics have charged that wide use of the stop-loss device and dipping into the Individual Ready Reserve amount to conscripting people to fight in Iraq.

"D-Smooth" Green Rejects War; From Division I Basketball Player to Disabled Army Vet

June 18, 2004 By DAVE ZIRIN, Counterpunch

"Coach, you know how you were always on me about working on my right hand dribble. Well, I'm going to start."

With this line delivered amid laughter and tears, former Notre Dame southpaw basketball standout Danielle "D-Smooth" Green told her ex-Fighting Irish Coach Muffet McGraw, the horrifying news. **A grenade blew off army MP Green's left hand while she patrolled a Baghdad police station.**

Green could easily be used as a symbol of patriotic resolve. She would fit neatly into that potent place where athletics meets war. **D-Smooth has chosen not to be treated like an icon but to speak out against what she sees from first hand experience, as an unjust war.**

From her hospital bed, Green told the New York Times, "They just don't want us there. I personally don't think we should have gone into Iraq. Not the way things have turned out. A lot more people are going to get hurt, and for what?"

<p>Secretary of State Colin Powell confronted with her words on Meet the Press could only mutter, "I hope she will see in time that her sacrifice was worth it." Green respectfully disagrees. "I'm not going to lie, I didn't understand the mission,</p>

the purpose. If you understand what you're fighting for, then you've got something to hang on to. But we didn't even have that. I think if I hadn't lost my arm, I would have lost my mind. It was enough to drive you insane, and I think that's where I might have been headed."

If D-Smooth weren't so quick to speak her mind, she would be perfect fodder for a pro-war press desperately searching the rubble of Iraq for positive news about the US occupation.

Green was a decorated athlete at Chicago's Roosevelt High School, winning 11 letters in four sports. She was also sports editor of the school newspaper, a lieutenant colonel in Junior ROTC, treasurer of the student council and a member of the National Honor Society.

"The most disappointing thing about Iraq is that I thought I was going to change those peoples' lives," she said. "But in the four months I was there, I don't think I touched one life."

But by not being silent, Green will touch more lives than she can imagine. "D" has never been so "Smooth."

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL 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 in Iraq, and information about other social protest movements here in the USA. **Send requests to address up top. For copies on web site see:**<http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/>

South Florida Guardsman Struggles With War Brain Damage

July 6 2004 By Jonathon King, Staff Writer, Sun-Sentinel Co

"Doin' good. Yeah. Doin' good," says the wounded soldier and his answer, you know, is not a lie. Even though you have to lean close to hear his once-strong voice, to make out his once-clear words, to look past the folded fingers of a once-strong hand.

Sgt. John Adams is a Florida National Guardsman, living in Miramar. He survived a hot chunk of Iraqi shrapnel that hit him in the back of the neck and lodged in his brain. He is alive, despite the expectations of military surgeons in Germany where he was flown after a roadside bomb exploded near him last August.

On that summer day he lost his ability to speak and the use of his right arm, but he has made an incredible comeback since returning home. Today he is out of his wheelchair and walking. He tells a joke at the table and laughs with a listener who shakes his head in amusement.

So, "Doin' good," no matter which injured soldier says it, is a relative statement, not a lie.

Adams is a good-looking man with the dark eyes of his Puerto Rican heritage. Before he was sent to Iraq, his wife, Verlorene, says he was the handyman of the house, always fixing things, always working with his hands. **He was preparing to buy his father-in-law's landscaping business. With two young sons to care for, he was both a disciplinarian and "a goof ball" dad, says Verlorene.**

"He likes to joke a lot," she says. "He was always smiling, but he also knew when to be strict and always knew how to talk and deal with the military."

Today the 38-year-old has difficulty using his right arm and hand. Today he works each week with speech therapists at the VA. He carefully forms each word. Today his speech is quiet and still slurred, but he is smiling.

"It's better, but they don't know," Adams says, lifting his arm and showing both the lost muscle from atrophy and the lack of control he has over his wrist and fingers. "It's from the neck," he says, turning his head, where the scars of surgery are still obvious. "It came down to my hand. They don't know how," he says, looking at the hand, moving it and watching, like it is something apart from him.

Calderon was only 22 when he lost the use of his arms and legs last May in the Iraqi city of Tikrit. His Army infantry unit was destroying a wall with an armored vehicle when the stonework collapsed on him.

Eventually his wife and family members moved to Miramar from Puerto Rico and have rallied around him in their new home.

Those with the obvious, physical wounds, the Purple Heart wounds, will carry their freight for years to come, maybe a lifetime. But they are not the most numerous.

Says Dr. Gonzalez, who oversees a special office in the intake section of the VA, set aside for the newest soldiers coming in, "I would say that anecdotally, half of the soldiers I see are testing out with post-traumatic stress disorder."

S Korean Airline Unions Refuse To Transport Troops To Iraq

6-25-04 By Lee Wee-jae, The Digital Chosunilbo - English Edition

The labor unions of the nation's two airlines, Korean Air and Asiana Airlines, declared Thursday that they refuse to transport anything related to the troop dispatch to Iraq, including Korean soldiers to be stationed in Iraq along with armor and related equipment.

The Association of Airline Unions, founded by both the national airlines and the employees of Incheon International Airport and Kimpo Airport, said Thursday that in accordance with the policy of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, that they are against sending more troops to Iraq and will launch an all-out struggle against the deployment.

The association said, "Both Korean Air and Asiana Airlines should not sign contracts with the government to transport troops to Iraq... If they sign such contracts, the security of our union members cannot be guaranteed as they may become a target of terror during operation... **Also, in order to show our rejection to a war of invasion, we will suspend all flights.**"

Sgt. Gets Shit On For Reporting Fraud And Abuse; Scum In Command Publicly Humiliate Him

Army Times 6.21.04

I was shocked by the lack of discipline displayed by military reserves at Iraq's Abu Ghraib military prison. But I was not surprised.

More than a year ago, I followed the directives of the Defense Department's Inspector General's office to the word as I reported abuse of authority by my chain of command. In addition to the documentation of travel fraud and false official statements for personal gain, I pointed out a lack of training and concern for proper qualifications by all levels of my command.

These allegations were investigated, and my immediate chain of command received a formal reprimand. The system seemed to be working, but I soon found myself identified as a traitor and not a team player.

My technical capabilities and job performance were unquestioned by all of my command, but I was continually identified as a troublemaker and substandard soldier.

<p>The Army preaches that the soldiers assigned to Abu Ghraib should have disobeyed any unlawful orders. But behind the scenes, soldiers know that identifying wrongs within their command is viewed as disloyal.</p>

I recently participated in our company's award and demobilization ceremony. All of our company's soldiers were present in formation. One by one, they came forward to receive their award and congratulations from the highest levels of our chain of command. **At the end of the ceremony, every soldier was awarded except for one. I stood alone in a formation of many watching the reprimanded soldiers receive congratulations for a job "well done."**

I believe the Army trains us to live the Army values, and I believe that the reservists in Iraq should have paid whatever price doing the right thing cost.

But as a soldier who more than a year ago pointed out many of the failures being claimed by these soldiers, I've started to find now meaning in the "Army of one."

Sgt. 1st Class Dave A. Clements
Atlanta

GET SOME TRUTH: CHECK OUT THE NEW TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation, the cuts to veterans' benefits, or the dangers of depleted uranium - is the first reason Traveling Soldier is necessary. 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/>

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Mortar Rounds Strike Near New Interim Prime Ministers' Home

7/7/2004 By Sameer N. Yacoub, Associated Press & Aljazeera.Net

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) Four mortar rounds shook the neighborhood near the political party headquarters of Iraq's new interim prime minister on Wednesday, injuring six people, an Interior Ministry official said.

The attacks on a stretch of Zeitoun Street in central Baghdad were also near a home owned by interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, the official said on condition of anonymity. Allawi was not present at the home at the time, the official said.

The mortar hit the house of the Allawi's Iraqi National Accord (INA) party chief's deputy, Hani Idrees.

Gas Pipeline Blown Up

July 6, 2004 Iraq Pipeline Watch <http://www.iags.org/n070604.htm>

July 6 - **blast on gas pipeline that feeds multiple power plants in the center and north of Iraq and a gas canister factory in Taji, north of Baghdad, that provides gas for many homes.** Head of the Northern Gas Company, Huner Hassan, said "A device exploded along the pipeline about 90 km (56 miles) south of Kirkuk, sparking a fire." **He noted "This is going to affect electricity production for the country and the production of gas for domestic use."**



Five Collaborator Soldiers Killed Near Taji

7.7.04 RFE/Reuters/AP/APF

The U.S. military has said five Iraqi soldiers were killed in a rocket attack on their base near Taji.

The city north of Baghdad is the site of a major U.S. army base and Iraqi security facility.

OCCUPATION REPORT

The Multibillion Robbery Bush Calls Reconstruction: A Shameless Corporate Feeding Frenzy

June 26, 2004 Naomi Klein, The Guardian

Good news out of Baghdad: the Program Management Office, which oversees the \$18.4bn in US reconstruction funds, has finally set a goal it can meet. Sure, electricity is below pre-war levels, the streets are rivers of sewage and more Iraqis have been fired than hired.

But now **the PMO has contracted the British mercenary firm Aegis to protect its employees from "assassination, kidnapping, injury and" - get this - "embarrassment".**

I don't know if Aegis will succeed in protecting PMO employees from violent attack, but embarrassment? I'd say mission already accomplished. The people in charge of rebuilding Iraq can't be embarrassed, because, clearly, they have no shame.

In the run-up to the June 30 underhand (sorry, I can't bring myself to call it a "handover"), US occupation powers have been unabashed in their efforts to steal money that is supposed to aid a war-ravaged people.

The state department has taken \$184m earmarked for drinking water projects and moved it to the budget for the lavish new US embassy in Saddam Hussein's former palace. Short of \$1bn for the embassy, Richard Armitage, the deputy secretary of state, said he might have to "rob from Peter in my fiefdom to pay Paul"

In fact, he is robbing Iraq's people, who, according to a recent study by the consumer group Public Citizen, are facing "massive outbreaks of cholera, diarrhea, nausea and kidney stones" from drinking contaminated water.

Unwilling to let go of their own money, the shameless ones have had no qualms about dipping into funds belonging to Iraqis. After losing the fight to keep control of Iraq's oil money after the underhand, occupation authorities grabbed \$2.5bn of those revenues and are now spending the money on projects that are supposedly already covered by American tax dollars.

Meanwhile, insurance brokers selling sudden-death policies to contractors in Iraq have doubled their premiums, with insurance costs reaching 30% of payroll. **That means many companies are spending half their budgets arming and insuring themselves against the people they are supposedly in Iraq to help.**

And, according to Charles Adwan of Transparency International, quoted on US National Public Radio's Marketplace programme, "at least 20% of US spending in

Iraq is lost to corruption". How much is actually left over for reconstruction? Don't do the maths.

The White House is also trying to get immunity from prosecution for US contractors in Iraq and has requested the exemption from the new prime minister, Iyad Allawi.

RECRUITING FOR THE RESISTANCE



A frightened Iraq girl cries holding her younger sibling as U.S. soldiers kick down a door and enter a house in Baghdad July 7. (AP Photo/David Guttenfelder)

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

**Israelis Told Cheney Last Fall Iraq War
Was Lost;
“Choose The Size Of Your Humiliation”**

2004-06-28 by SEYMOUR M. HERSH, New Yorker Magazine

A former Administration official who had supported the war completed a discouraging tour of Iraq late last fall.

Ehud Barak, the former Israeli Prime Minister, who supported the Bush Administration's invasion of Iraq, took it upon himself at this point to privately warn Vice-President Dick Cheney that America had lost in Iraq; according to an American close to Barak, he said that Israel "had learned that there's no way to win an occupation."

The only issue, Barak told Cheney, "was choosing the size of your humiliation." Cheney did not respond to Barak's assessment. (Cheney's office declined to comment.)

In a series of interviews in Europe, the Middle East, and the United States, officials told me that by the end of last year Israel had concluded that the Bush Administration would not be able to bring stability or democracy to Iraq, and that Israel needed other options.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to the E-mail address up top. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

Wow! Big Surprise! Democrats And Republicans United For Empire, War And Death In Iraq

6.24.04 By Vicki Allen, WASHINGTON (Reuters)

The U.S. Senate on Thursday unanimously passed a \$416 billion bill to fund the Pentagon, **including several months of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.**

Voting 98-0, the Senate sent the bill to a conference to work out differences with the House of Representatives which passed its \$417 billion version of the spending bill earlier this week.

WAR TROOPS ON LITTER DUTY FOR POLITICIANS VISIT: Brits Ordered To 'Tidy Up' Basra

Jul 5 2004 By Helen Cook, Mirror.co.uk

BRITISH soldiers in Iraq were told to pick up litter and sweep streets before a visit from Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon.

Last night the humiliating duty was branded an insult to troops who daily risk their lives on the orders of the minister.

One of the soldiers said: "We're supposed to be here as peacekeepers, not roadsweepers."

Mr Hoon travelled to Basra, in southern Iraq, last month to meet troops and tour the local administration's HQ.

Hours before he arrived, every soldier not on patrol was called out to tidy up litter around the Basra Palace. Both the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and the Royal Highland Fusiliers were stationed in the town at the time.

Shadow Scottish Secretary Peter Duncan said: "This is unbelievable. The Defence Secretary should be there to learn what the real situation in Iraq is like.

"The families of these soldiers will be insulted by this revelation."

Scottish Nationalist Party spokesman Angus Robertson added: **"If they're not considering disbanding historic Scottish regiments, they're ordering highly qualified personnel to window-dress for Geoff Hoon's ego. Scottish soldiers deserve better."**

Admitting the clean-up order, the Defence Ministry said: "Tidying up probably goes on daily. But it increases when a VIP is due. It's always happened."

The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders returned home yesterday after a six-month tour of duty.

During their tour Lance Corporal Andy Craw, 21, was killed in an accident on a training range near Basra. Two other soldiers were seriously injured.

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