

GI SPECIAL 2#B25

**No Light At The End Of The Tunnel. None.
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



(BBC)

Roswell Mother Says Her Son Died In Vain

8.7.04 The Albuquerque Tribune

ROSWELL - The mother of a Marine sergeant from Roswell who was killed during fierce fighting this week in Iraq says she doesn't believe going to war was for a good cause.

"And yes, our heroes have died in vain - and one of them is my son," Velina Sanchez told KOB-Channel 4 while clutching a photo of Sgt. Moses Daniel Rocha in his dress uniform.

Rocha, 33, was fatally shot during fighting that erupted this week in Najaf, where U.S. helicopter gunships and fighter jets continue to pound Shiite Muslim insurgents.

The military said two Marines and an American soldier were killed in the Iraqi holy city Thursday, and 12 troops were wounded.

Rocha is the fifth New Mexico soldier to die in Iraq.

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:



Number Of Dead, Wounded U.S. Troops In Najaf Rising Fast

August 8, 2004 AFP & AP

Five US marines have been killed and 12 wounded in the Najaf province fighting. Another US soldier was killed in an ambush in western Baghdad.

As Shias Fight Back, Leader Declares “America Is Our Enemy” Marines, Soldier Dead In Najaf



Fighters loyal to al-Sadr are battling US marines
(Al Jazeera)

NAJAF, Iraq, Aug 6 (AFP) & By Khaled Farhan, Reuters & foxreno.co & AlJazeera & By ABDUL HUSSEIN AL-OBEIDI, Associated Press Writer, Islamonline, & By Todd Pitman, Associated Press & By Jackie Spinner, Washington Post Staff Writer, August 6, 2004

Multinational troops continued to come under mortar and rocket-propelled grenade fire in Basra, Amara and Nasiriyah on Friday.

This came as chaos and insecurity hit a new low in Iraq.

Two U.S. Marines and an American soldier were killed in Najaf on Thursday, and 12 troops were wounded, the military said.

"This is a revolution against the occupation force until we get independence and democracy," the spokesman said in a telephone interview.

"We were forced to do this after the governor started his stupid idea to invade the city," Ahmed Shaybani, the spokesman for Moqtada Sadr, said.

In a message read out on his behalf at Friday prayers in Najaf's twin city of Kufa, Moqtada Sadr declared the United States his enemy.

"The Iraqi president said `America is our friend`, but I say `America is our enemy`, " Sheikh Jaber al-Khafaji told worshippers on the cleric's behalf.

Iraq's interim government had called America a partner, al-Sadr said in a sermon read for him in the Kufa mosque. "I say America is our enemy and the enemy of the people, and we will not accept its partnership."

"I blame the occupier for all the attacks going on in Iraq, such as the attacks on the churches and the kidnappings," he said in the sermon read by an aide, Sheik Jaber al-Khafaji.

"America is the greatest of Satans," he said, adding that violence was in the interest of foreign troops who want "to create divisions and to control our dear country"

In his sermon, al-Sadr called on his followers to continue the path of jihad -- or holy war -- even if he got killed.

"You have taken this path and you have to put up with the dangers and the obstacles. Heaven doesn't come at no price," he said. "Don't wait for me to get up on the pulpit and give you directions. I, certainly, will be gone because the enemy is lurking for me everywhere. Don't let my death divide you."

Deputy provincial governor and Sadr loyalist Salem Audeh vowed the fight would continue in Basra until the situation in Najaf returns to normal.

US planes pounded the central Iraqi holy city of Najaf on Friday. The streets were nearly deserted, shops were closed, and some residents near the cemetery fled with their belongings on carts. A dead woman lay abandoned on an empty sidewalk,

Associated Press Television News footage showed. Fire tore through a nearby outdoor market and smoke rose from several parts of the city.

Lieutenant Colonel Gary Johnston, operations officer for the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, said "If you kill a marine, the marines are going to fight back." **(Another trash-talking shitmouth Lt. Col. on the loose giving press conferences while in perfect safety, unfortunately.)**

Asked about American casualties, Johnston said there were two dead and 12 wounded from the two days of fighting. **(Baghdad command admitted 8.6 that casualties in Baghdad alone were 15.)**

U.S. military officials said there were indications that foreign fighters had joined the Mehdi militia. Criminal gangs were also involved, they said. (Unbelievable! Still trying to push this lame bullshit.)

The U.S.-appointed governor of Najaf put the militia death toll at 400, with 1,000 captured. He said he had information that 80 Iranians were fighting alongside Sadr's militia. **(Actually the militia death toll is 28,904 with 66,000 captured, with 873 Lithuanian demons and werewolves fighting alongside Sadr's forces. If you're going to lie, at least make it a big lie.)**

Sheik Raed al-Qathimi, a spokesman for Sadr, rebuffed the American version of the death toll. "I categorically deny these American lies," he said.

As dusk fell, explosions echoed throughout the holy city and US military planes were heard overhead. Only the sound of sporadic gunfire could be heard early on Friday. **Power lines were also cut.**

The unrest fanned out across Shiite central and southern Iraq, with insurgents targeting British-led troops in Basra and Amara and the Italians in Nasiriyah.

In southern Iraq, British troops backed by tanks fought with al-Sadr militiamen who seized four police stations on the outskirts of Amarah. The troops secured the main police station, said Maj. Ian Clooney, a British military spokesman. It was not clear if they recaptured the others.

Insurgents also attacked a Romanian patrol outside Nasiriyah with gunfire and rocket-propelled grenades, said Gelaledin Nezir, the Romanian Defense Ministry spokesman. No injuries were reported.

In Samarra, 100 kilometers (60 miles) north of the capital, **guerrillas attacked a convoy of 10 U.S. Humvees at dawn, witnesses said. U.S. helicopters fired rockets at insurgent positions, and the U.S. convoy pulled out.**

In Najaf, residents stayed at home with their doors bolted as fighters loyal to Sadr took control of the streets. US planes fired rockets over the city and its cemetery, a Sadr stronghold which suffered some of the worst fighting during his Mehdi Army's first standoff with foreign troops in the spring.

Explosions and gunfire crackled across the holy city for hours, before a lull at lunchtime on the Muslim day of rest. Dozens of US tanks and armoured vehicles drove into the city.

In the main southern city of Basra, Sadr representative Sheikh Saad al-Basri, who has declared war on British troops, said five people were killed and three wounded in fresh clashes.

Assailants also attacked a police station and City Hall in the southern city of Basra, wounding three police and five civilians, police and hospital officials said.

Six mortars hit a Basra police station, where some British soldiers were based, causing no injuries, according to police Col. Karim Sadkhan.

British and Italian troops also fought the Mehdi militia across Shi'ite-dominated southern Iraq -- in Basra, Amara and Nassiriya -- while fighting raged in Sadr City and Shoula, two Shi'ite districts of Baghdad.

In the southern city of Nasiriya, Italian forces clashed with Shia fighters in the early on Friday and tensions were still high, an Italian military spokesman said.

In more than a dozen attacks that began shortly after midnight, Mahdi Army fighters fired rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and light arms at Italian patrols, key installations such as a power plant and an Iraqi police base, the Italian army said.

"It has been an extremely tense night and we are maintaining maximum alert," said Captain Ettore Sarli, chief spokesman for Italian occupation forces in Nasiriya.

The Mahdi Army claimed to have destroyed at least four Italian armoured trucks in the fighting. Sarli confirmed various attacks on Italian patrols, but said there was no indication **so far** that four military vehicles had been destroyed.

"We have every confidence in our new government, our security forces and our allies to **contain** this conflict," Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari said. **("Contain?" That's all? No boasts about victory? The U.S. controlled Iraqi "government" must be taking a real ass whipping.)**

<p>U.S. marines recently replaced the U.S. Army in Najaf and analysts have suggested the upsurge in violence is linked to the marines taking a more aggressive approach with Sadr's militia. (Well, there it is. Same as in Falluja in April. New Marine commander shows up, replaces army troops, wants to prove what a hard case he is for career advancement, and gets his troops neck deep in the shit. And not a drop of his blood gets spilled, again unfortunately.</p>

In the northern town of Balad, Aljazeera's correspondent reported that three Iraqi national guardsmen were wounded when their convoy came under light weapons attack by unidentified armed assailants.

The attack set three of the convoy's vehicles ablaze.

"A US military convoy hit an explosive device that burnt a US military vehicle north of Ishaqi. No information about casualties among US forces were reported," he added.

On Friday, four Iraqi Occupation Police were blown up by a bomb in Baquaba.

Two Die In Najaf Thursday

8/6/2004 AFP by Hassan Abdulzahrah and Patrick Kamenka

The military said two US marines were killed in Najaf province on Thursday, bringing to more than 680 the number of US troops killed in action in Iraq since last year's US-led invasion.

16 Wounded In Baghdad Fighting

August 06, 2004 Combined Joint Task Force 7 Release #040806a

Baghdad - Sixteen Task Force Baghdad Soldiers were wounded here in four separate attacks by anti-Iraqi forces that occurred over a six-hour period Aug. 5.

Wounded Soldiers were evacuated to military medical facilities for treatment.

Five Soldiers were wounded when a rocket-propelled grenade round detonated on their position in eastern Baghdad. The attack occurred when a resistance fighter engaged Soldiers while they were inspecting a civil military project.

Seven Soldiers were wounded approximately 30 minutes later, in central Baghdad, when anti-Iraqi forces launched a coordinated attack using hand grenades and small arms fire.

Two other Soldiers were wounded at approximately 5 p.m. in northeastern Baghdad when their patrol came under attack by RPGs and small arms fire by insurgents.

At approximately 5:30 p.m., another Soldier was wounded by small arms fire in eastern Baghdad.

Madhi Army Controls Sadr City, Baghdad

August 8, 2004 AFP & 8.7 Journalstar.com

In Baghdad's Sadr City Madhi Army troops manned checkpoints around the north-eastern district, refusing to let people in.

An AFP correspondent said landmines had been strewn about on the streets as sporadic gunshots ricocheted through the neighbourhood.

The main Falah and Dakhil streets were completely shut down and three loud explosions boomed out from the southern entrance into Sadr City.

An AFP photographer said about 10 US tanks rolled into the sprawling slum, coming under rocket-propelled grenade and mortar fire from Mehdi Army fighters based about 100 metres away.

One militiaman, Khadim Mohammed, 39, said his forces had received orders to be prepared to fight after hearing the news from Najaf.

"Najaf is now under siege," said Ahmed al-Shaibany, a spokesman for al-Sadr. "We call on the Islamic world and on the entire world to intervene and solve this problem. ***The revolution will continue as long as the occupation forces keep bombing the city.***"

War In Basra

6 August, 2004 BASRA, Iraq (Reuters)

Clashes between British troops and fighters loyal to a radical Iraqi Muslim cleric have intensified this evening in the southern city of Basra.

A Reuters witness on Friday said residents took shelter as British troops fought street battles with members of the Mehdi militia in the centre of the city. Automatic weapons fire echoed from the area, along with the sound of mortars or rockets.

Shia Parties Rally Around Sadr

Aug 7 BAGHDAD (Reuters)

A number of Shi'ite political parties rallied around Sadr on Saturday.

The Shi'ite Political Council, a grouping of mostly small 42 parties, said Sadr represents a force to be reckoned with and the U.S. attacks on his followers are an affront to Iraqi Shi'ites.

"Sadr has a real presence. People are asking why the (Sunni) cities of Falluja and Samarra are left lawless while Najaf is targeted," said council member Mariam al-Rayes. **Abdel Karim Mohammadawi, a tribal leader from Iraq's southern marshlands, said Sadr expresses Shi'ite aspirations for a better living standards throughout Iraq.**

"Iraq cannot embrace democracy with more killings," he said. "We are with the rule of law and sovereignty, but we had enough. We cannot remain dispossessed."

GET SOME TRUTH: CHECK OUT 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/>

U.S. Forces Target Guerrillas *Near* Town of Samarra--- But Don't Set Foot Closer

Aug 6, 2004 BAGHDAD (Reuters)

At least three people were killed in the Iraqi town of Samarra on Friday during an operation by U.S. forces to crack down on insurgents ***around the town***, a U.S. military spokesman said.

Witnesses said gunfire and explosions echoed through Samarra, where an upsurge of violence since July has led the U.S. military to fear the town could become another Falluja.

U.S. soldiers began a series of raids and patrols on Thursday to capture guerrillas ***around the town***.

O'Brien said the U.S. military was determined to crack down on insurgents operating ***around the outskirts*** of Samarra and kill or capture any found to be carrying out attacks.

"The intent is to patrol aggressively ***around the city*** where anti-Iraqi forces have attempted to move freely," he said.

Resistance troops brandishing rifles could be seen in the streets of the town, while several houses were destroyed by explosions.

(Guess what. If you can't go downtown, it already *is* another Falluja.)

Marine From Milford Killed; Two Weeks From Coming Home



Gunnery Sgt. Elia P. Fontecchio (AP File Photo)

August 6, 2004 The New York Times Company

MILFORD, Mass. -- A Marine who was just weeks from completing his second tour of duty in Iraq was killed in fighting in the volatile Al Anbar Province, near the Syrian border.

Gunnery Sgt. Elia P. Fontecchio, 30, died Wednesday in a battle in the Sunni-dominated region west of Baghdad, the Department of Defense announced. **He was scheduled to return home in about two weeks, said his uncle, Dana Fontecchio of Milford.**

In an interview with The Associated Press in December, Fontecchio said he struggled for days trying to figure out how to tell his wife, Kinney, that he was headed back to Iraq. He added that there was no way to explain it to their 2-year-old son, Elia.

"You don't at that age. You just do what you can," he said. "Mommy bears the brunt of it."

He said he was helping other families struggling with the news, and added that he felt better equipped for his second tour.

"I'm very familiar with the territory and the culture now," he said. "We know some of the mistakes ... and we know how to handle them."

Fontecchio was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, based at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms, Calif.

Fontecchio grew up in Milford and had three sisters, including a twin. His father, Dennis, was a Marine who served in Vietnam, and Fontecchio wanted to be a soldier since he was a child, his uncle said.

Fontecchio enlisted in the Marines in 1993 after graduating from Milford High School, where his uncle said he excelled academically and starred in a production of "Grease."

"It just gave everybody goosebumps," Dana Fontecchio said. "He could sing."

Former Newark Resident Killed

August 6, 2004 By JASON MAIN, Advocate Reporter

NEWARK -- Former Newark resident Lance Cpl. Joseph Nice was killed Tuesday while serving in the Marine Corps in Iraq, according to family members.

His father, Lloyd Nice III, said he was notified of his son's death Wednesday evening.

"We had faith that he would come out of there alive. I told him I was very proud of him and that I couldn't ask for a better son," his father said.

His grandfather, Lloyd Nice Jr., said he last spoke with his grandson Friday evening. During that conversation, the young soldier told his grandfather that he was getting ready for a battle.

"He wasn't sure if he was going to make it or not," he said. "He was told 'Be prepared for the worst.' That was the last time I talked to him."

Growing up, Joseph Nice loved to learn and shared his father's interest in working on cars, Lloyd Nice III said. He also enjoyed playing sports and music and was quite artistic, his father said.

His family in Newark is trying to console each other as best they can as they grieve Joseph's loss.

"There's a lot of emptiness right now, hurt," Lloyd Nice III said. "Why did it have to happen to my son? I wish that it was me instead of him. I think we're all trying to deal with this in our own little way."

TROOP NEWS

Vietnam Vets In Iraq Ignore Idiotic Orders; “What Are They Going To Do, Send Me Home?”

August 6, 2004 Christian Science Monitor

BALAD, IRAQ - Dodging high-voltage wires and enemy fire over the dense palm groves of central Iraq, John Sharkey, helicopter pilot and chief warrant officer, feels a tinge of nostalgia - for Vietnam.

Perhaps the oldest Army pilot in this war zone, the wry, 61-year-old New Yorker is the dean of a small, unlikely cadre of gray grandfathers crisscrossing Iraq on daily missions. Combat veterans of the eclectic "Catfish" brigade, the Mississippi National Guard's 185th Aviation Group, they nurse aloft some of the Army's longest-flying aircraft with a deft instinct that only comes with experience.

Red-tape hampers missions and dampens initiative, some veterans contend, inadvertently creating new risks. Stringent rules aimed at divvying up the use of air space, for example, force some pilots to fly at higher altitudes where they are more easily targeted by insurgents with surface-to-air missiles. "We basically ignore them and fly where we need to fly," Sharkey says, adding, "What are they going to do, send me home?"

With such solid accomplishments, they bristle at any suggestion they are "weekend warriors" inferior to their active-duty counterparts, **and resent existing discrepancies in pay, retirement, and benefits. "We don't have the same benefits, but we take the same bullet," says Chief Warrant Officer Bob Percy, a C-12 pilot and LAPD policeman from Los Alamitos, Calif.**

Stupid Scum In Command Caught Covering Up For Military Intelligence Torturers

August 6, 2004 By DAVID DISHNEAU, ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

HAGERSTOWN, Md. -- **An Army reservist who saw naked detainees being humiliated at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq says military intelligence officials led and directed the abuse.**

The account by Kenneth A. Davis, a former sergeant in the Maryland-based 372nd Military Police Company, contradicts the government's position that only members of Davis' unit were directly responsible for the abuse.

No military intelligence personnel have been charged.

Davis says military intelligence soldiers were more culpable in the incident he witnessed than a military intelligence analyst acknowledged during testimony Thursday at the pretrial hearing of Pfc. Lynndie England, one of seven members of the 372nd charged with abusing detainees.

Davis, 33, said Friday that testimony given Thursday by Spc. Israel Rivera, an analyst with the 325th Military Intelligence Battalion, was "inaccurate."

Rivera testified Thursday that military police forced detainees to crawl naked "low enough that their genitalia were rubbing on the floor, causing pain." Rivera said two members of his unit, Spc. Armin J. Cruz and Spc. Roman Krol, participated in the abuse, and that he was disgusted by it.

Davis said it was Cruz and Krol who forced the men to crawl across the floor while demanding that they confess to raping a boy in the prison. Davis said he doesn't recall any military police joining in the abuse.

He said that when he questioned Rivera about the possibility that the men were innocent, Rivera replied, "I've been doing this longer than you've been in the military. You know, sergeant, they are guilty."

Davis said he happened upon the scene when he went looking for a soldier in a prison area where interrogations took place.

He said he found the soldier talking with Spc. Charles A. Graner Jr., one of the reservists charged with abuse. **Davis said Cruz and Krol were the perpetrators, while he and Rivera looked on.** The military intelligence soldiers called on Graner mainly to yell at the detainees using his commanding voice, Davis said.

Davis said Cruz and Krol also handcuffed the naked men together face-to-face, forcing them to embrace. He said Cruz approached him and asked sarcastically, "Do you think we crossed the line?"

Davis said he replied, "I'm not sure - you are MI." He said Cruz told him the men were being interrogated and said, "We know what we are doing."

Krol has denied engaging in improper conduct. Cruz did not respond to e-mailed requests for comment.

Col. Jill E. Morgenthaler, a public affairs officer for the Army in Baghdad, said Rivera, Cruz and Krol have not been charged.

Davis said he told his platoon leader, 1st Lt. Lewis C. Raeder, the next day that military intelligence soldiers were interrogating naked detainees. According to

Davis' written statement, Raeder replied, "They are MI and they are in charge. Let them do their job."

The Army has admonished Raeder for not training his troops on the Geneva Convention's prohibition on mistreatment of prisoners of war and civilian detainees.

Davis said he waited until the 372nd had returned from Iraq before speaking publicly. The Cresaptown-based unit returned on Monday to Fort Lee, Va., without the accused members.

Davis returned to the United States in December for treatment of a groin injury. He received an honorable discharge for disability on July 28.

Poles Want Troops Home Now: Polish Government Doesn't Give A Shit What Poles Want; So Much For "Democracy"

8.6.04 Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria One of America's staunchest allies in Iraq may be losing the battle for hearts and minds at home.

A new survey finds three out of four people in Poland oppose keeping soldiers in Iraq. Poland's a key member of the coalition, with 24-hundred troops on the ground.

Sixty-seven percent of respondents say they want a troop pullout as soon as possible, while 29 percent want to see Poland carry through with the mission.

Charleston Airmen To Drive Iraq Convoy Trucks For Army

August 06, 2004 WCIV, LLC

Charleston, SC - Twenty-nine men and women from Charleston Air Force Base are getting ready to head overseas.

Five of them will drive Army vehicles in Iraq, a job far more hazardous than loading or repairing airplanes. Staff Sergeant Jeffery Storie says the stress hit him Thursday. He is one of the five truck drivers.

The group will head to Camp Bullis, an Army post in Texas, then at Lackland Air Force Base near San Antonio. The Charleston airmen will brush up their skills on the M-16 rifle and heavier weapons, **then learn how to drive in an Army convoy before they actually arrive in the combat zone.**

The Air Force agreed last year to help the Army with convoys in Iraq. **As if Rumsfeld gave them any choice.)**

So far, no airmen from Charleston Air Force Base have been killed or wounded in combat in Iraq. **(Convoy duty will change that in a hurry.)**

More Local Troops Head For War, Some For Third Time

August 6th, 2004 By Trey Clark, The Desert Sun

TWENTYNINE PALMS -- About 100 local Marines bid farewell to loved ones in the California desert as they deployed Thursday to another desert -- one thousands of miles away and fraught with the dangers of war.

The Marines are from 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion.



Taya Kashuba / thedesertsun.com

Lance Cpl. James Gilham kisses his three-year-old son Kamryn Gillham at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms. Gilham is from the 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion being deployed to Iraq.

Some heading to Iraq for the first time, some for the third time, they packed gear and boarded buses as duty called them to an unspecified location in Iraq.

"I just worry, and every time I see the news (and hear about our troops dying) I'll wonder if it's someone I love and care about," said Shirley McGary as she fought

back tears. Her son William was deploying to Iraq for the first time. "My husband already went to Iraq as part of Desert Storm, and it just feels like déjà vu."

People came to the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center to bid farewell to their sons, boyfriends, husbands, brothers and fathers as they left the base.

The tour is tentatively scheduled for seven months. But the fear that the mission could take longer -- or that some of these troops might not make it back at all -- led to many tears, long embraces and words to remember.

The group is the first of several waves that will go to Iraq from the battalion.

This will be the second trip to Iraq for most of the troops.

But even those with prior war experience said the prospect of seven months is daunting.

"You don't ever get used to (going to war), you just accept it," said Lance Cpl. Thomas Moriarty, who will return to Iraq for the third time.

"I think it's surreal for most of us out here, but it hits us all at some point," he said. "For some of us, it hits you when the plane takes off. For others, it's when the plane lands, and others don't really face it until the first rounds go off. It took rounds for it to hit me."

There are some 12,000 active-duty Marines and sailors stationed at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. One-third of the 1st Marine Division is stationed there.

The center's Marines and sailors have been involved in some of the heaviest combat of the current Iraq war.

As of July 8, the Twentynine Palms casualty count was 34 killed since Operation: Iraqi Freedom began in March 2003 and many more injured.

No Bad Deed Goes Unrewarded

05 August 2004 By T. Christian Miller, The Los Angeles Times

Washington - **The U.S. Army on Wednesday announced the award of a no-bid contract worth up to \$23 million to CACI International Inc. to continue providing private interrogators to gather intelligence in Iraq.**

The contract came just as the Interior Department was preparing to cancel the existing contract with Virginia-based CACI, which came under intense scrutiny earlier this year after one of its interrogators was cited for involvement in the sexual humiliation of Iraqi captives at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Truck Drivers, Informers Working For Occupation Face Death

August 5, 2004. AFP

Insurgents in Ramadi, west of Baghdad, have warned all truck drivers delivering goods to US-led troops in Iraq that they faced death.

"We will kill anyone, whether Arab, foreign or Iraqi, inside any truck carrying goods to the damned occupation forces," said a statement from the advisory council for the mujahedeen, or insurgency leadership, in Ramadi.

"We will also kill anyone providing intelligence or information to the occupation while rewarding anyone who informs on a traitor."

Turkish Company Pulls Out After Driver Taken Prisoner

8.7.04 Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey A Turkish company says it's pulling out of Iraq after kidnapers threatened to kill one of its truck drivers. The company released a statement saying it is pulling out of Iraq "because of the events."

Iraq-Turkey Pipeline Hit Again; Fire Small Because Closed By Previous Attack (!)

August 6 NTVMSNBC Reklam Secenekleri (Turkey)

Iraq's northern oil export pipeline, which runs to the Turkish Mediterranean coast, has again been sabotaged, with yet another bomb blast damaging the line Thursday.

However, as a result of an attack against the pipeline on Tuesday which had halted pumping, the fire caused by the latest blast was quickly brought under control, according to an Iraqi official quoted by the AFP news agency.

“An explosion occurred at 4:10 pm on the pipeline linking Kirkuk to Ceyhan but **the fire was rapidly contained, since the pipeline was not working due to sabotage from two days earlier,**” Ardam Hussein, the head of firefighters for the Northern Oil Company, said.

The most recent attack took place about 100 kilometres from Kirkuk, in the Fatha region, Hussein said.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Got That Right!

8.6.04 Fred Feldman, NCAN

I think our attention needs to make a sharp shift from the elections -- not one of the central moving forces in world politics today -- to the struggle between the US military and the Iraqis who are struggling to defend and reconquer their independence and sovereignty.

In addition, I think any antiwar protests, however small, are better than none at present. It also means organizing on the ground to make the August 29 demonstration a genuine antiwar demonstration against Bush with the broadest united front character possible.

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/>

Vietnam And Iraq; How To Stop A War

ERIC WELTMAN, Boston Globe

August 7, 2004 - TODAY IS the 40th anniversary of the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, the congressional stamp of approval for the Vietnam War. There are important similarities and differences between the situation then and the Iraq invasion. In both, the justifications for military action were fabricated. President Johnson launched air strikes against Vietnam ostensibly in retaliation for two attacks on US ships -- the first of which was provoked by US maneuvers, the second of which didn't occur. President Bush's

arguments for invading Iraq -- weapons of mass destruction and, implicitly, links with the 9/11 terrorist attacks -- have been proven false.

Bush may ignore the lessons of his predecessor, but today's peace movement is more mature and sophisticated than that of the 1960s. In 1964, there was little opposition to our descent into war. Massive protests didn't occur for several years.

Last year millions of people around the world protested in advance of Bush's invasion. Coalitions have brought together labor and Latinos, Greens and Democrats, the suburbs and the inner city. Locally, groups from Dorchester to Arlington are organizing across race and class lines, embracing concerns of justice as well as peace. With smart organizing and hard work, the peace movement can help stop this reckless war.

(For more, see the article "End The Occupation Now" at www.socialistworker.org.)

OCCUPATION REPORT

Big Surprise! US Can't Guarantee Safety Of It's Employees

Press Trust Of India August 6, 2004

WASHINGTON - With efforts to secure release of three abducted Indians in Iraq still on, **the US has said it cannot guarantee the safety of Indian and other South Asian workers against terrorists attack in the troubled nation.**

Bush's Democracy Marches On: U.S. Occupation Shuts Al-Jazeera Station

BAGHDAD, August 7, 2004 The Associated Press & 8.4 Joel Campagna, The New York Times

The Iraqi government has decided to close the Baghdad offices of the pan-Arab television station Al-Jazeera for 30 days, the government said Saturday.

Government ministers have recently been critical of the television station.

Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari said "We will not allow some people to hide behind the slogan of freedom of the press and media."

Al Jazeera has long infuriated autocrats across the Arab world with its unfiltered news and political debates. Arab governments have hurled tirades at the station, withdrawn diplomats from Doha in protest and harassed the station's correspondents.

But in this case, the Iraqi government seems to have learned some troubling lessons from the United States, which has eagerly used its muscle against Al Jazeera.

U.S. pressure didn't stop there. In June, U.S. officials reportedly withheld invitations to Qatari officials to the G-8 summit in Georgia, in protest of Al Jazeera. The accompanying public protests from U.S. officials were not subtle. In April, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld accused the station of "consistently lying" and "working in concert with the terrorists."

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Occupation USA

By Tara Tuckwiller, The Charleston Gazette, July 14, 2004.

What do Kalamazoo, Evansville, Albuquerque, Stockton, Trenton, Phoenix, Columbia, St. Louis, Knoxville, and Charleston have in common?

All are among the cities where the secret service or police have jailed people for displaying anti-Bush signs during public appearances by his eminence, King George the W.

Is this America, The Land of the Free? That's what Nicole and Jeff Rank asked themselves this July 4th as they were taken away in handcuffs by police in their town of Charleston, West Virginia.

What was their heinous crime? They were guilty of not being Bush supporters. George W's Independence Day trip to Charleston was billed as an official presidential visit, not a campaign rally. Nicole and Jeff -- two patriotic, hardworking, taxpaying AmeAmericans - -were in the crowd, quietly exercising their free-se-speech rights.

They wore T-shirts declaring: "Love America, Hate Bush." They had proper tickets to the event, they proudly sang the National Anthem with everyone else, they were in no way disorderly -- but they we were not politically correct, so they were summarily arrested, taken to jail, finger printed and charged with "trespassing."

Others who were there wearing pro-Bush T-shirts and Bush campaign paraphernalia at this public event on public property were not arrested. It seems that the Bushites define "trespassers" by their political beliefs. **Nicole, who worked for the Federal Emergency Management Agency in Charleston, was promptly told that her services were no longer required.**

Technically, she wasn't fired, but she was "released" from her job and not reassigned -- meaning she no longer gets paid. But Nicole and Jeff are still not bowing to King George. Despite the financial hardship, they're fighting Bush's absurd, un-American assault on their constitutional right to dissent.

They're not the only ones being denied their right to speak out -- dissenters all across America are being treated like this. To fight this autocratic lockdown, call the ACLU: 212-549-2500.

Occupation USA #2

July 29, 2004 by Jim Hightower, The Nation

(In case you're wondering why not one Democrat politician catches hell in this article, the answer is simple. The writer is for Kerry. Never mind Kerry's love for the Patriot Act that gave the government hugely expanded power to attack citizens who express themselves. Bush is evil, Kerry is good is what you're supposed to think.

(Well, Kerry is just another Imperial thug in a suit with a big bank account who doesn't give a shit for civil or any other kind of liberties that aren't his own private property.)

An independent libertarian writer, however, James Bovard, chronicled George's splendid isolation from citizen protest in last December's issue of *The American Conservative*. He wrote about Bill Neel, a retired steelworker who dared to raise his humble head at a 2002 Labor Day picnic in Pittsburgh, where Bush had gone to be photographed with worker-type people. **Bill definitely did not fit the message of the day, for this 65-year-old was sporting a sign that said: The Bush Family Must Surely Love the Poor, They Made so Many of Us.**

Ouch! Negative! Not acceptable! Must go!

Bill was standing in a crowd of pro-Bush people who were standing along the street where Bush's motorcade would pass. The Bush backers had all sorts of Hooray George-type signs. Those were totally okey-dokey with the Secret Service, but Neel's...well, it simply had to be removed.

He was told by the Pittsburgh cops to depart to the designated FSZ, a ballpark encased in a chain-link fence a third of a mile from Bush's (and the media's) path. Bill, that rambunctious rebel, refused to budge. So they arrested him for

disorderly conduct, dispatched him to the luxury of a Pittsburgh jail and confiscated his offending sign.

At Bill's trial, a Pittsburgh detective testified that the Secret Service had instructed local police to confine "people that were making a statement pretty much against the President and his views." The district court judge not only tossed out the silly charges against Neel but scolded the prosecution: "I believe this is America. Whatever happened to 'I don't agree with you, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it'?"

This was no isolated incident. **Bovard also takes us to St. Louis, where George appeared last year. About 150 sign-toting protesters were shunted off to a zone where they could not be seen from the street, and--get ready to spin in your grave, Jimmy Madison--the media were *not allowed* to talk to them, and protesters were *not allowed* out of the protest zone to talk to the media.**

Now meet Brett Bursey. He committed the crime of holding up a No War for Oil sign when sensitive George visited Columbia, South Carolina, last year. Standing amid a sea of pro-Bush signs in a public area, **Bursey was commanded by local police to remove himself forthwith to the FSZ half a mile away from the action, even though he was already two football fields from where Bush was to speak. No, said Brett. So, naturally, they arrested him. Asked why, the officer said, "It's the content of your sign that's the problem."**

Five months later, Brett's trespassing charge was tossed on the rather obvious grounds that--yoo-hoo!--there's no such thing as a member of the public trespassing on public property at a public event.

But John Ashcroft is oblivious to the obvious, so the Justice Department of the United States of America (represented in this case by--can you stand it?--US Attorney Strom Thurmond Jr.) inserted itself into this local misdemeanor case, charging our man Brett with a *federal* violation of "entering a restricted area around the president." Great Goofy in the Sky--he was 200 yards away, surrounded by cheering Bushcalytes who were also in the "restricted area."

Ashcroft/Thurmond/Bush attempted to deny Bursey's lawyers access to Secret Service documents setting forth official policy on who gets stopped for criticizing the President, where, when and why. But Bursey finally obtained the documents and posted them on the South Carolina Progressive Network website, www.scpronet.com; they reveal that what the Secret Service did goes against official policy.

Then there's the "Crawford Contretemps."

In May of 2003 a troupe of about 100 antiwar Texans were on their way by car to George W's Little Ponderosa, located about five miles outside the tiny town of Crawford. To get to Bush's place, one drives through the town--but the traveling protesters were greeted by a police blockade. **They got out of their cars to find out what was up, only to be told by Police Chief Donnie Tidmore that they were violating a town ordinance requiring a permit to protest within the city limits.**

But wait, they said, we're on our way to Bush's ranchette--we have no intention of protesting here. **Logic was a stranger that day in Crawford, however, and Chief**

Tidmore warned them that they had three minutes to turn around and go back from whence they came, or else they'd be considered a demonstration, and, he reminded them, they had no permit for that. (Tidmore later said that he actually gave them seven minutes to depart, in order to be "as fair as possible.")

Five of the group tried to talk sense with Tidmore, but that was not possible. Their reward for even trying was to be arrested for refusing to disperse and given a night in the nearby McLennan County jail. The chief said he could've just given them a ticket, but he judged that arresting them was the only way to get them to move, claiming that they were causing a danger because of the traffic.

This February, the five were brought to trial in Crawford. Their lawyer asked Tidmore if someone who simply wore a political button reading "Peace" could be found in violation of Crawford's ordinance against protesting without a permit. Yes, said the chief. "It could be a sign of demonstration."

The five were convicted.

The Bushites are using federal, state and local police to conduct an undeclared war against dissent, literally incarcerating Americans who publicly express their disagreements with him and his policies. The ACLU and others have now sued Bush's Secret Service for its ongoing pattern of repressing legitimate, made-in-America protest, citing cases in Arizona, California, Virginia, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, Texas--and coming soon to a theater near you!

If incarceration is not enough to deter dissenters, how about some old-fashioned goon-squad tactics like infiltration and intimidation of protesters? In May of 2002 Ashcroft issued a decree terminating a quarter-century-old policy that bans FBI agents from spying on Americans in their political meetings and churches.

Not only were federal agents "freed" by Bush and his attack dog Ashcroft to violate the freedoms (assembly, speech, privacy) of any and all citizens, but they were encouraged to do so. This unleashing of the FBI was done in the name of combating foreign terrorists. The Bushites loudly scoffed at complaints that agents would also be used to spy on American citizens for political purposes having nothing to do with terrorism.

While officials scoffed publicly, however, an internal FBI newsletter quietly encouraged agents to increase surveillance of antiwar groups, saying that there were "plenty of reasons" for doing so, "chief of which it will enhance the paranoia endemic in such circles and will further service to get the point across that there is an FBI agent behind every mailbox."

Likewise, in May of last year, the Homeland Security Department waded butt-deep into the murky waters of political suppression, issuing a terrorist advisory to local law enforcement agencies. It urged all police officials to keep a hawk-eyed watch on any homelander who [Warning: Do not read the rest of this sentence if it will shock you to learn that there are people like this in your country!] have "*expressed dislike of attitudes and decisions of the US government.*"

Last November, Ashcroft weighed back in with new federal guidelines allowing the FBI to make what amount to pre-emptive spying assaults on people. **The Bush-Ashcroft doctrine allows government gumshoes to spy on citizens and noncitizens alike without any indication that the spied-upon people are doing anything illegal. The executive directive gives the FBI authority to collect "information on individuals, groups, and organizations of possible investigative interest."**

The language used by Ashcroft mouthpiece Mark Corallo to explain this directive is meant to be reassuring, but it is Orwell-level scary: What it means, says Corallo, is that agents "can do more research." "It emphasizes early intervention" and "allows them to be more proactive." Yeah, they get to do all that without opening a formal investigation (which sets limits on the snooping), much less bothering to get any court approval for their snooping. A proactive secret police is rarely a positive for people.

In California an antiwar group called Peace Fresno included in its ranks a nice young man named Aaron Stokes, who was always willing to be helpful. Unfortunately, Aaron died in a motorcycle wreck, and when his picture ran in the paper, Peace Fresno learned that he was really Aaron Kilner, a deputy with the sheriff's department. The sheriff said he could not discuss the specifics of Kilner's infiltration role, but that there was no formal investigation of Peace Fresno under way. He did insist, however, that there is potential for terrorism in Fresno County. "We believe that there is," the sheriff said ominously (and vaguely). "I'm not going to expand on it."

The attitude of police authorities was summed up by Mike van Winkle, a spokesperson for the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center (another spinoff of the Homeland Security Department--your tax dollars at work). After peaceful antiwar protesters in Oakland were gassed and shot by local police, van Winkle **[Note: I do not make up these names]** explained the prevailing thinking of America's new, vast network of antiterrorist forces:

You can make an easy kind of link that, if you have a protest group protesting a war where the cause that's being fought against is international terrorism, you might have terrorism at that protest. You can almost argue that a protest against that is a terrorist act. I've heard terrorism described as anything that is violent or has an economic impact. Terrorism isn't just bombs going off and killing people.

Anybody But Bush? Try This Very Special Moment

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BREAKING NEWS: BUSH TELLS TRUTH



Bush Aug. 6. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

**GEORGE BUSH: POLITICAL GENIUS:
The Commander-in-Chief Speaks**

"Our enemies are innovative and resourceful, and so are we," he said. **"They never stop thinking about new ways to harm our country and our people, and neither do we."** Washington Post 8.6.04

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Eight Soldiers Wounded

August 06, 2004 By Stephen Graham, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Insurgents attacked American forces with rocket propelled grenades and explosives on roads in southern Afghanistan on Friday, injuring at least eight U.S. soldiers, two seriously, the U.S. military said.

The first attack occurred at about 7 a.m. as a 10-vehicle convoy moved along a road east of Daychopan in southern Zabul province. About 10 suspected Taliban insurgents fired rocket-propelled grenades at the convoy, prompting the U.S. forces to fire back with small arms.

One of the RPGs struck a Humvee, injuring five troops, two of whom were being prepared for evacuation to a military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany.

About six hours later, rebels set off a roadside bomb near Zabul's provincial capital, Qalat, as a U.S. convoy passed. Three soldiers were injured, but all returned to duty.

In neighboring Uruzgan province, a convoy carrying election workers was also reportedly ambushed Thursday.

Four jeeps carrying staff from a U.N.-sponsored program to register voters for upcoming elections and their guards came under fire in remote Char Cheno district, provincial police chief Rozi Khan said.

He said the vehicles were “completely destroyed” and that two drivers and one election worker were missing. He had no further details.

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