

GI SPECIAL 2#B31

BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



American soldiers look towards Mahdi army positions at the world's largest cemetery in the holy Shiite city of Najaf Aug. 12. (AP Photo/Tod Pitman)

“People Are Tired Of Us Being Here”

"People are tired of us being here," said Lance Corporal Anthony Robert, 21, of Charlottesville, Virginia. "It's the same as if someone came to the U.S. and started taking over. You'd do what you'd have to do."

August 12, 2004, Anne Barnard, The Boston Globe, Ramadi, Iraq

Four months into their tour of duty at one of the most dangerous American bases in Iraq, young marines say the slow pace of progress is shaking their faith in their mission.

Playing cards one recent evening while on call to respond to any sudden outburst of violence, ***Lance Corporal David Goward and the rest of his squad voiced two growing concerns: that the U.S. military would linger here indefinitely and that the troops' very presence was provoking the fighting it was meant to stop.***

They are ready for any battle, they said, but a pervasive sense that Iraqis do not want their help has killed their enthusiasm for the larger goals of introducing democracy and rebuilding the country.

"I don't think any of us even care what happens to this country," Goward said, as a half-dozen marines, all stationed here in the capital of the restive Anbar Province, nodded in agreement. "I'm here to make sure these guys get home safely. And they're here to make sure I do."

Senior Marine Corps and Army commanders in this Sunni Muslim region west of Baghdad, an area they say must be tamed for the new U.S.-\$ backed Iraqi government to succeed, repeatedly cautioned a reporter that junior-level troops did not see the big picture. (The truth is these career loving assholes in command are absolutely shit-your-pants terrified that the junior level troops DO see the "big picture." The troops see it very well indeed: lies about what the war was about, betrayal, and a war for Empire and oil, while the politicians sit safely back home and stuff their pockets with corporate money.)

But Goward and his squad - and others who echoed them from Ramadi to Falluja - are sending a signal from the enlisted men who bear the brunt of the military's burden.

Many are on their second tour of duty in Iraq and may face a third if U.S. forces are needed, as expected, to guarantee security through the election of a permanent Iraqi government in late 2005.

From Goward's point of view, the United States has fulfilled its goals in Iraq: toppling Saddam Hussein, capturing him, handing off formal sovereignty to Iraqis. "What's left?" he asked.

His squad belongs to Golf Company, part of the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, which occupies three bases in downtown Ramadi and has faced some of the country's largest insurgent attacks.

Golf has fended off the most company- and platoon-size attacks, he said, with 4 marines killed and 43 injured.

Yet, for the marines, it is sometimes hard to see the results.

Goward's squad was assigned one recent evening to act as a quick reaction force. If fighting broke out, they would be first to respond. They played spades, using an empty cot as a card table. A hole in the wall showed where a rocket had burst through a few weeks earlier; it hit the floor without exploding.

Asked about their experiences in Iraq, they first reacted with sheepish silence; then poured out their own questions about their situation.

"I haven't seen any improvement since I've been here," said Corporal Jaime Duenas, 23, of Nogales, Arizona. He contrasted Ramadi to southern Iraq, where he was stationed last year just after the invasion and worked with locals happy to see Saddam toppled.

"Last year, it was pretty chill; kids ran up to us and waved," he said. "Here, kids throw rocks."

"People are tired of us being here," said Lance Corporal Anthony Robert, 21, of Charlottesville, Virginia. "It's the same as if someone came to the U.S. and started taking over. You'd do what you'd have to do."

Lance Corporal Kenneth Burke, 22, of Lufkin, Texas, looked up from his cards. "OIF-1 had a purpose," he said, referring to Operation Iraqi Freedom 1, the Marine Corps deployment in the invasion. "This one, I don't think so."

Burke is one of two marines called back to Iraq from stateside duties to fill out the ranks of the squad, which has 10 members instead of the typical 13 because several of have gone home with injuries. The squad boasts nine Purple Hearts.

"It makes your day to be in a firefight," Duenas said.

"It gets your blood flowing," Robert added.

But they are disappointed that they spend little of their time working with Iraqis to rebuild their country. An increase in violence since April and a U.S. decision to take a lower profile in the area have prevented that.

The squad members said they had come to resent Iraqi security forces who seemed unwilling to take risks and Iraqis who did not want them there.

"It doesn't matter how much America *looks like* it's trying to help," said the squad's leader, Corporal Glen Handy, 26, of Las Vegas. "If we stay 10 years or if we stay one year, we're going to leave and there's going to be chaos here."

The marines are surprised at some of their own ugly emotions. The Army troops whom the marines replaced told them, "You're going to learn to hate these people," Goward recalled. "I thought, 'With that attitude, no wonder you're having a hard time.' But you know what? They're absolutely right."

Goward, 26, said he would serve in whatever way his country demanded. But like the rest of the squad, he does not plan to re-enlist.

Handy has been overseas 19 of the last 24 months and had spent just 5 months with his 2-year-old daughter. **He worries that he will be called up involuntarily - as is permitted for four years - after his active duty ends.**

"Are they going to come back and die next time?" he asked, pointing to the younger marines.

The dangers and frustrations of the job were apparent as Golf's commanding officer, Captain Christopher Bronzi, met Kennedy on a street corner one recent morning.

Walking the streets, the marines got no friendly smiles, just hard stares. They settled on an old hotel, but to make it an observation post, they will have to block a busy

alley to foil car bombs, reinforce the roof and cut down some of the few tall trees for a better view - investments suggesting the marines will be there for a long time.

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/>

**NO JOY HERE:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



NAJAF (Islam Online)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Two U.S. Troops Killed In Al-Anbar

8.14.04 BAGHDAD (Reuters) Reporting by Matthew Green & AP

Two U.S. servicemen were killed while carrying out duties in western Iraq.

A U.S. military statement said one U.S. marine assigned to I Marine Expeditionary Force was killed in action and one soldier fatally wounded during separate incidents Friday in the al-Anbar province, which includes the volatile cities of Falluja and Ramadi.

Fresh Fighting In Samarra & Hilla

Matthew Green BAGHDAD, August 14 (Reuters) & BAGHDAD (Xinhuanet) & AFP From correspondents in Warsaw, Poland & Najaf

Fresh fighting erupted on the eve of a national conference aimed at advancing Iraq's progress towards democracy

Near the northern town of Samarra, warplanes screaming overhead dropped 500-pound bombs, while insurgents responded with rifle fire and rocket-propelled grenades.

More than 40 homes, the municipal building and the political party offices of Interior Minister Falah al-Naqib were destroyed.

Fighting also raged between U.S. troops and Madhi Army troops in the southern Shi'ite town of Hilla overnight. **Three police were killed.**

The clashes broke out on Friday when militiamen loyal to radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr attacked police stations and government buildings with mortars and gunfire, following a demonstration that turned violent, Hilla police said.

According to police and Iraqi hospital sources, the rebel militia managed to seize two police posts in the town during the night in fighting which left eight dead and 33 injured.

Three policemen were killed.

A police source said the militiamen had killed the chief of the Al-Jabal station, one of the buildings they occupied.

Resistance War Reports:

Mahdi Resistance Army Seizes Control Of An-Nasiriyah;

Iraqi Army Battalion 606 In Amarah Goes Over To Madhi Army

WELCOME TO NAJAF. HAVE A NICE DAY.



Mahdi Army soldier checks the sights on his rifle in Najaf August 14. Photo by Akram Saleh/Reuters

Iraqi Resistance Report for events of Friday, 13 August 2004. Translated and/or compiled by Muhammad Abu Nasr, member editorial board The Free Arab Voice

Iraqi Resistance forces of the Jaysh al-Mahdi have seized control of the city of an-Nasiriyah on Friday, driving Iraqi puppet police and the US-backed stooge army to withdraw from the southern Iraqi city.

The correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam in the city reported at 12:10pm Mecca time Friday that the Jaysh al-Mahdi had seized some 50 control points in the city, posting 15 to 20 fighters at each position.

The correspondent reported that the Jaysh al-Mahdi used rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and C5Ks and that **he had seen the militia in possession of truckloads of anti-aircraft missiles** in addition to the widely distributed automatic weapons that they carry.

Eyewitnesses reported that the Jaysh al-Mahdi was heavily deployed in the neighborhoods of ash-Shuhada' as-Salihyah, and in the environs of the highway that runs through an-Nasiriyah.

Witnesses also reported that large numbers of local residents were flocking to a large Husayniyah (Shi'i religious center) to prepare for a huge rally in support of Muqtada as-Sadr as he fights the US aggressor troops.

Also on Friday morning, a caravan of food supplies and 5 million Dinars left an-Nasiriyah bound for an-Najaf with the aim of bringing aid to the people of that defiant city under vicious US bombardment.

Battalion of Iraqi government troops goes over to Jaysh al-Mahdi in al-Amarah.

Sources in the Iraqi puppet army reported that Battalion 606 under the command of Major General Hikmat Abd al-Halim in the area of al-Amarah have switched sides and joined forces with the Jaysh al-Mahdi militia loyal to Shi'i religious leader Muqtada as-Sadr.

According to al-Quds al-Arabi newspaper the local puppet council in al-Amarah has threatened to turn against the Iraqi puppet government in Baghdad if the US attack on an-Najaf continues.

Resistance attacks US column north of al-Fallujah:

Iraqi Resistance forces launched a powerful attack on a US military column Friday morning according to eyewitness accounts reported by the al-Fallujah correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam. The witnesses said that the US column tried to close the road north of al-Fallujah in order to hinder the movements of the Resistance in that area. But they were suddenly surprised at exactly 11:05am with a sudden and severe attack lasting 10 minutes.

The witnesses reported that the US column resumed its march after the attack but that it had sustained an undetermined number of losses.

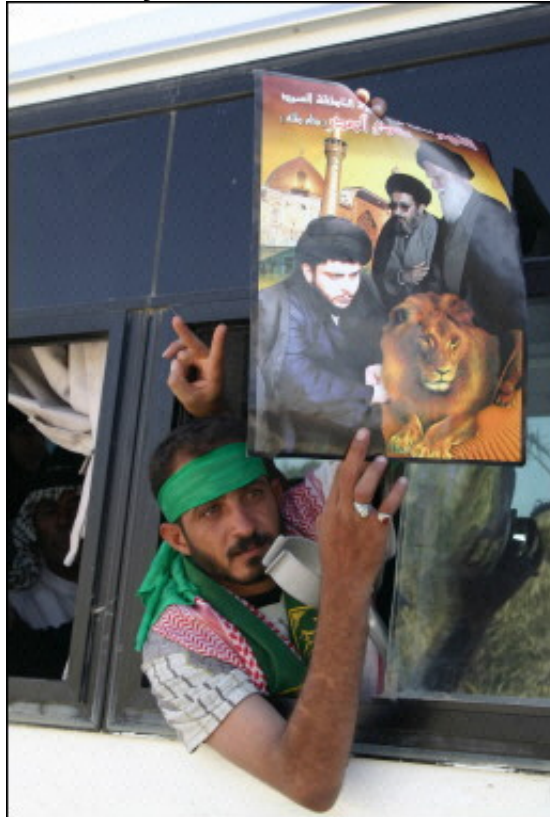
Resistance hits US command point north of al-Fallujah Friday morning.

A US command point north of al-Fallujah came under Iraqi Resistance rocket attack on Friday morning at 11:25am. The extent of damage was not available to the Mafkarat al-Islam correspondent who reported the attack, but plumes of smoke could be seen rising from the place of the attack, indicating that a number of US military vehicles had been directly hit.

In what appears to be a coordinated series of attacks, the Iraqi Resistance launched a heavy and concentrated attack at a US command point south of al-Fallujah Friday morning, as US troops north of the city were coming under repeated Resistance assaults as well.

The al-Fallujah correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam reported that the Resistance fired 120mm mortars at the US command point south of the city at exactly 12:04pm Friday. In his dispatch posted at 1:00pm Mecca time, the correspondent wrote that fighting was still raging around the emplacement at that time.

Basra Mahdi Army Reinforcements Head For Najaf



Iraqis flash the victory sign as they leave the southern city of Basra on their way to Najaf. (AFP/Essam al-Sudani)

...and arrive from Kufa



Mahdi Army soldiers cheer demonstrators from Kufa as they enter Najaf to show their support for the militiamen battling US and stooge Iraqi forces after the Friday prayers. (AFP/file/Karim Sahib)

...and arrive from Baghdad



Supporters of Shiite Muslim cleric Moqtada Sadr (pictures) arrive in Najaf from Baghdad. (AFP/Karim Sahib)

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

20 Polish Soldiers Surrounded At Hilla Get Loose

WARSAW, Aug 13 (Reuters) & AFP 8.14 From correspondents in Warsaw, Poland

Yesterday afternoon 20 Polish soldiers as well as several dozen Iraqi police found themselves surrounded by several hundred rebel fighters loyal to radical Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr at the police post in Hilla, about 5km from their main base at Babylon.

"Our soldiers were helping the Iraqi police, when their post was surrounded. Negotiations with the militant forces are under way, but there is no shooting going on," Polish General Staff spokesman Colonel Zdzislaw Gnatowski said.

MORE:

August 14 (Reuters) In Hilla, a group of about 20 Polish soldiers ended an overnight standoff with Sadr supporters and returned safely to camp early on Saturday from the police station where they had been holed up overnight, the Polish military said.

Two Highland Graduates Wounded: Fighting "Too Intense" For Evacuation" "He's Getting Tired Of Being Shot At"

August 13, 2004 By Debbie Bryce - Journal Writer, Pocatello Idaho State Journal

POCATELLO - Two Highland High School graduates were wounded in action in Iraq this week.

Lance Cpl. Nicholas Carson, a U.S. Marine, called his parents, Chubbuck residents Jerry and Crystal Carson, by satellite phone Wednesday night to tell them he had been wounded during a firefight earlier that day.

"He said he didn't want us to hear the news from the Marines," Jerry Carson said.

Nicholas Carson is the second soldier from the Pocatello area to be wounded in Iraq this week.

Army Sgt. Michael T.K. Norris was injured Sunday when a bomb exploded as he and his five-man team drove along an Iraqi road.

His father, Tom Norris, was informed early Tuesday.

"He's alive and he's talking. That's encouraging," Tom Norris said.

Nicholas Carson was leading a team when he and another Marine were injured by a rocket-propelled grenade, Carson's father said.

"(Nicholas) was hit in the left hand and right shoulder," Jerry Carson said. **"He told me he had a baseball-sized hole in his shoulder and he thought it would probably need surgery."**

His son told him the other man was wounded in the leg.

Nicholas Carson told his father the fighting was too intense to be evacuated. Both victims were administered pain medication and were later flown to a hospital for treatment. Jerry Carson said his son could not disclose where the fighting occurred or from where he was calling.

Michael Norris was driving a military vehicle when a roadside bomb, referred to as a improvised explosive device, was detonated by remote control. The explosion caused the vehicle to land on him, his father said.

Norris suffered second- and third-degree burns and lacerations to his hands and face. His eye was also ruptured, Tom Norris said.

No one died in the incident, but other members of the six-man team were also injured, Tom Norris said.

Brandie Norris, the wounded soldier's wife, said he spoke to her Thursday.

"He's in good spirits and anxious to get home and see his kids," she said.

Brandie Norris said her husband is currently in Germany, but will be flown to San Antonio, Texas, Saturday.

She said she is relieved that her husband will be coming home.

"I am ready for him to get better and get out of the Army. I'm sorry that this is the way he's coming home, but I'm glad he's coming home," she said.

She hopes the other members of her husband's team will recover and be able to come home soon.

"He tells me every time he calls that he's getting tired of being shot at. It's pretty tough to know people are shooting at your kid. I'm just glad he's still with us and that we're not planning a funeral," Jerry Carson said.

Nicholas Carson is the nephew of Brig. Gen. Al Gayhart of the Idaho Army National Guard.

Another of Gayhart's nephews was killed in Iraq this past year.

TROOP NEWS

Coalition Troops In And Withdrawn From Iraq

8.13.03 By The Associated Press

Countries with troops in Iraq:

United States: 138,000

United Kingdom: 9,000

Italy: 3,000

Poland: 2,400

Ukraine: 1,576

Netherlands: 1,400

Romania: 700

South Korea: 660; additional 3,000 troops being sent to northern Iraq

Denmark: 500

Japan: 500

Bulgaria: 480

El Salvador: 380

Australia: 300

Hungary: 300

Mongolia: 173

Azerbaijan: 151

Georgia: 150

Portugal: 120

Latvia: 116

Slovakia: 105

Czech Republic: 90

Lithuania: 90

Albania: 71

New Zealand: 60

Estonia: 45

Kingdom of Tonga: 44

Macedonia: 35

Kazakhstan: 27
Moldova: 12

Countries that are withdrawing or have withdrawn troops:

Thailand: 423 troops leaving early on Aug. 31 instead of Sept. 20; 20 withdrawn on Aug. 10.

Norway: 10 currently in Iraq; 140 withdrawn on June 30. Cited reason: growing domestic opposition and peacekeepers needed elsewhere, such as Afghanistan.

Dominican Republic: 302 withdrawn on May 4. Cited reason: growing domestic opposition.

Honduras: 370 withdrawn on May 12. Cited reason: Troops were sent for reconstruction, not combat.

Nicaragua: 115 withdrawn on Feb. 4. Cited reason: lack of funds.

Philippines: 51 withdrawn on July 19. Cited reason: to save lives of hostages.

Singapore: 160 withdrawn on April 4. Cited reason: completed humanitarian mission.

Spain: 1,300 withdrawn on May 4. Cited reason: new government fulfilled campaign pledge.

Coalition Of Unwilling Growing In Costa Rica

(08-13) SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (AP)

Attorney General Farid Beirute has urged the country's top, Constitutional Court to formally reject Costa Rica's membership in the U.S.-proclaimed coalition of support for the war in Iraq.

Beirute and Deputy Attorney General Ivan Vicente told the court on Thursday that a declaration of support for the U.S. war would violate at least two elements of Costa Rica's constitution.

Vicente said the constitution bars support for military action that is not authorized by the United Nations and said the statement violates the pacifist constitutional principles of a country that has no formal armed forces.

Controversy over the issue erupted when local newspapers noted that the U.S. White House had listed Costa Rica as a member of the coalition "that has already begun military operations to disarm Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction."

President Abel Pacheco and Foreign Minister Roberto Tovar acknowledged signing a statement of support for the United States on March 19, 2003, but they insisted it was support merely for the fight against terrorism -- not for an invasion of Iraq, as the U.S. statement implied.

Pacheco's action was widely criticized by Costa Rican news media and the Constitutional Court received three formal petitions from individuals and institutions to declare it unconstitutional.

The attorney general is chosen by the country's congress rather than by the president.

Wapato Marine Killed In Najaf Fondly Recalled

August 10, 2004 By Mike Barber, SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER REPORTER

Marine Sgt. Yadir Reynoso remembered to call his mother, Gloria, on her birthday Aug. 1.

Four days later, the 27-year-old from Wapato in Central Washington was dead, cut down by small-arms fire during one of the fierce firefights still raging with Iraqi insurgents in Najaf, Iraq. He was with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force based at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Reynoso was the oldest of their four children, and he was the father of a 4-year-old boy, who lives with his former wife in Yakima.

Reynoso said her brother phoned her by satellite phone just before surprising their mother on her birthday two Sundays ago. Patty and Yadir were especially close. "We went through school and everything together. Whenever he had girl trouble, guess who he would call?" she remembered with affection in her voice.

But this call wasn't like all the others. Yadir Reynoso, who arrived with his unit in Iraq in May, seemed a little sentimental but remarkably upbeat, mentioning the chance to visit religious sites he had only read about in the Bible. Reynoso didn't talk much about what it was like being in Iraq. Instead, his calmness struck Patty Reynoso.

"He said, 'I called just because it was so long since I heard your voice, just to say hi.' And he was so happy to hear our family had contact with his son and ex-wife," she said.

At 7 p.m. tomorrow, a Mass for Reynoso's family -- his parents; sisters Patty and Jasmin; and brother, Jose Jr. -- will be celebrated at St. Peter Claver Catholic Church in Wapato. Reynoso's son, Yadir Elias Jr., and Reynoso's ex-wife have joined the family in seclusion.

Rolling Coffins Can't Get Off The Ground

(Good news. The fewer of these deadly, worthless pieces of shit ever make it into combat, the better.)

Aug. 14, 2004 By Thomas E. Ricks, WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON - The Army's new medium-weight armored vehicle, the Stryker, weighs so much that it curtails the range of C-130 military cargo aircraft that carry it, **and under certain conditions make it impossible for the planes to take off, a new report for Congress found.**

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

10,000 Go To Najaf To Defend Sadr; "No Freedom Under Occupation"

8.14.04 NAJAF, Iraq (AFP) & August 14, 2004 Associated Press writer Abdul Hussein al-Obeidi

About 10,000 demonstrators from as far away as Baghdad also arrived in Najaf on Saturday to show their solidarity with the militants and promising to act as human shields to protect the city.

They poured into this besieged pilgrimage city, where fighting paused for the two-day truce talks, to protest against the US-led assault, denounce Prime Minister Iyad Allawi and embrace Mehdi Army fighters.

Aides of rebel leader Moqtada Sadr blamed the caretaker prime minister for the breakdown of truce talks.

The fiery cleric told Al-Jazeera television that "the war on Najaf" had been launched because he had stood up for people's rights, demanded the restoration of services **and refused to take part in a national conference opening Sunday.**

"Had I agreed to participate with them and to not ask for the rights of the people, they wouldn't have done this to me and they wouldn't have targeted me in particular and targeted Shiism," he said.

"I will never take up any post so long as the occupation is there. There can be no politics under occupation, no freedom under occupation, no democracy under occupation," he said.

"Nobody can force me to leave or depart you," al-Sadr said. **"We got rid of Saddam [Hussein] only to have him replaced by something worse than him."**

"I am demanding that the people of Iraq in all provinces to call for the immediate resignation of the Iraqi government because it is an imperialistic American government," he said. "We are demanding the occupier to leave our country."

"The Iraqi government will be responsible for the coming massacre in Najaf. Tanks and convoys are preparing to attack the city in the coming hours," said Sadr spokesman, Sheikh Qais al-Khazali.

Sunnis March To Show Support For Shia Resistance Leader



Iraqis march in the predominantly Arab Sunni Muslim northern city of Mosul carrying pictures of Shiite Muslim cleric Moqtada Sadr. (AFP/file/Mujahed Mohammed)

Fear Of Resistance Halts Oil Exports From Main Southern Pipeline

Aug. 14, 2004 BAGHDAD (Reuters)

Authorities have halted oil export flows from the main pipeline in southern Iraq after intelligence showed a rebel militia could strike infrastructure, an oil official said on Saturday.

The shutdown kept loadings at southern oil terminals at half their normal level, undermining the government's effort to raise revenue as oil prices hit record highs, partly in response to the instability in Iraq.

Pipeline Blown Up: Fuel Shortage Hits Baghdad

TOTALLY PISSING IN THE WIND



British soldiers fire mortars to illuminate the oil pipeline area for surveillance during a patrol on the southern outskirts of Basra last week. This only leaves several thousand miles of pipeline not under surveillance. (AFP/file/Saeed Khan)

August 14, 2004 Associated Press writer Abdul Hussein al-Obeidi & BAGHDAD (Reuters/BGNES)

An explosion hit a pipeline near Haswa that links the country's southern oil fields to refineries in Baghdad, setting it on fire, police Lt. Hadi Obeid said. Insurgents have ***routinely*** sabotaged Iraq's crucial oil industry. **(Ho hum, another day, another pipeline.)**

The saboteurs blew up a domestic oil pipeline south of Baghdad on Saturday, an oil official said, the latest in a series of attacks that have deepened fuel shortages as a Shi'ite uprising against U.S. forces continues.

The attacks have disrupted operations at the 110,000 barrels per day Dora refinery feeding Baghdad and queues have been growing at the capital's petrol stations.

"We are busy repairing pipelines and dealing with regular explosions," said the official, who was speaking on condition of anonymity.

Iraq, which has the second largest oil reserves, imports \$170 million a month worth of gasoline and other refined products. **Rising resistance attacks have restricted the imports.**

Saboteurs have been also targeting export pipelines, cutting crude oil exports by half since Monday

Idiot Stooze Allawi Shoots Self In Foot

Aug. 13, 2004 By HANNAH ALLAM and TOM LASSETER, Knight Ridder Newspapers

Sheik Fateh Kashef al Ghitta, a Shiite political analyst who was involved in earlier cease-fire negotiations, said **Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi painted himself into a corner by ordering his fledgling national security forces to face the Mahdi Army. Shiite troops wouldn't dare fire at their sacred shrines, while Sunni troops are banned by religious decree from battling fellow Muslims, al Ghitta said.**

The result, he continued, is that Allawi was forced once again to rely on unpopular U.S. troops to crush al-Sadr's rebellion, weakening the prime minister's leadership and raising questions about the extent of Iraqi sovereignty.

"For some time, the negotiations stumbled, but they are continuing now," al Ghitta said.

"We didn't believe the Iraqi National Guard and policemen were fighting near the shrines. It was the Americans. The Iraqi forces know how sensitive and sacred these places are."

"I'm proud of them and I'm worried about them," said Lt. Anis Ali, 34, an Iraqi National Guardsman overseeing protesters with U.S. soldiers. *"Part of me wishes I could be with them."*

Sheik Hazem al Araji, a top Baghdad representative for al-Sadr, linked arms with protesters under the blazing sun and made clear what would happen if Allawi refused conditions of the truce: "We'll all go to Najaf."

The crowd grew unruly as a U.S. helicopter flew overhead. Protesters sliced their hands as they thrust back the military's razor-wire cordons. Talk of al-Sadr's reported injuries to the chest and legs brought several protesters to tears.

"We will be shields for him, even if the tanks roll over us," said Rajaa Khayun, 26, part of a women's group supporting al-Sadr. "His injuries are a medal to him and to us. This shows he is on the path to martyrdom."

"It makes me wish I could become a bomb in the face of the Americans," added Saad Raheem, a 25-year-old protester.

"The situation in Najaf is a war crime carried out by the United States," said Jamal Seyyed Ali, a Sunni Kurd from the northern town of Sulaimaniyah who came to Baghdad to pray at Umm al Qura.

"The big, arrogant United States feels it must kill women and children. I want all the Americans to leave Iraq, along with the Iraqi agents they brought from the West."



Unarmed Shia demonstrators spend the night in front of the shrine of Imam Ali in Najaf as thousands of supporters of Sadr flocked to the holy Shiite city. They swear to die before allowing Occupation forces to go through them to take the shrine, where the cleric and his militia have held out against a US-led assault for over a week. (AFP/Karim Sahib)

Shias Call For Split From Baghdad

August 13 Michael Howard, The Guardian & Marjorie Cohn, T r u t h o u t

Shia leaders in southern Iraq yesterday called for a breakaway movement from the central government in Baghdad to protest against the heavy-handed approach to the insurgency.

Basra's deputy governor, Salam Uda al-Maliki, said he backed a breakaway as the interim government was "responsible for the Najaf clashes."

In Nassiriya, meanwhile, Aws al-Khafaji, the representative of Moqtada al-Sadr, echoed the call. **"We have had enough of Baghdad's brutality," he said. "The authorities in Nassiriya will no longer cooperate with Baghdad." He said it was a response to "the crimes committed against Iraqis by an illegal and unelected government, and occupation forces."**

Such a move, if decided upon by three governorates, could be legal according to the interim constitution, which Shia leaders rejected when it was drawn up last March.

Deputy Governor of Basra, Salam Uda al-Maliki, plans to announce the secession of Basra, Misan and Dhi Qar from the central government in Baghdad, and the effective cessation of oil exports. The separation of these three southern provinces would likely encourage the Kurds in the north to seek greater autonomy, enhancing the possibility of civil war.

"This reaction comes in response to the crimes committed against Iraqis by an illegal and unelected government, and occupation forces who claimed they came to liberate Iraq, but it turned out that they have come to kill Iraqis," Ali Hamud al-Musawi, head of the Misan governing council, told Al Jazeera Tuesday.

Fiery Sermons Scorch Occupation

Mazen Ghazi, IOL Correspondent, AN-NAJAF Iraq, August 14 (IslamOnline.net & News Agencies)

Friday sermons across Iraq strongly blamed the interim Iraqi government of Iyad Allawi for taking part in the blatant US aggression on the Shiite holy sites and Shrines, calling its members as a "bunch of treacherous people."

"Those who toe the occupation line and believe in the US military juggernaut are nothing but treacherous people, who will lose at the end of the day," said Sheikh Abdul Salam Al-Kubaisi at a Baghdad mosque.

Al-Kubaisi, a prominent scholar with the Sunni Muslim Scholars Association, urged the interim government to leave Iraq immediately "as they no longer belong to the noble Iraqis."

Sheikh Abdul Ghafour Al-Samarrai, on his part, likened the US occupation policies in Iraq to the ones adopted by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in the occupied Palestinian territories.

"They adopted the same iron-fisted, scorched-earth policies of Sharon," he said.

Egyptian Father: If My Son Spied For US Occupation, I Don't Want His Body Back

13 August 2004. Translated and/or compiled by Muhammad Abu Nasr, member editorial board The Free Arab Voice

Following reports that his son had been executed by Iraqi Resistance fighters for spying on them, the father of an Egyptian killed in Iraq told the press, "if it's proven that my son was involved in spying for the foreign occupiers of Iraq, then I don't want to claim his body."

A video broadcast on Tuesday showed scenes of the Egyptian saying "My name is Muhammad Fawzi Abd al-Al Mutawalli from the Egyptian Arab Republic, from the city of as-Sunbulawayn in ad-Daqhaliyah Province. **I worked as a spy for the Americans inside Iraq. I would throw down disks on positions of the Iraqi mujahideen and citizens to guide US warplanes to those targets, and the airplanes would track those discs that I threw down and bomb the area.**" He also said on the tape, "I would also take women to the airport for the Americans to do whatever they wanted to with them."

According to Islam on Line, the father, Fawzi Abd al-Al, 67 years old, had not seen the tape and said he knew nothing about what his son was doing since he left Egypt 18 years ago to work in Iraq. He said that he thought his son had died in the American raids on Iraq in 1991, since all contact with his family was broken off for so many years.

The father said, "If it's proven that he was my son and that he was involved in the crime of spying for the foreign occupiers of Iraq, I will decline to ask the government to retrieve his body, because if that's true he will be a lasting shame on his family and his country."

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Genius At Work

Aug. 14, 2004 SONYA ROSS, Associated Press

"The trouble with insurgencies is once they take hold, they're very difficult to defeat," said RAND analyst Bruce Hoffman.

Cause And Effect, Duh

Marjorie Cohn, T r u t h o u t, 13 August 2004

"You cannot resolve a fundamental political problem by force. The main problem in Iraq remains the occupation, and when there's an occupation, there's resistance."

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. Loses Millions Of Shiite Allies

08.14.2004 Feza Newspaper Publishing Co.

Moderates Shiites began distancing themselves from the US after American-led forces launched a major offensive in the Iraqi holy city Necef (Najaf).

Prominent Shiite Mohammed Bahrul Ulum disclosed yesterday that the US, by marching on Najaf, squandered the goodwill of the millions of moderate Shiites who had welcomed the US last year. Ulum, a former Iraqi Temporary Governing Council member, told Reuters news agency: "Americans turned Najaf into a ghost town. They seem full of hatred against Najaf and Shiites."

CIA Man Runs Iraqi Boy Scouts

Jul. 25, 2004 The Dallas Morning News, LAMPASAS, Texas

In a cool and dank basement office he calls "The Bunker," Texas businessman Mike Bradle believes he is working on a long-term solution to the chaos and carnage - Iraqi Boy and Girl Scouts.

Bradle, an Eagle Scout, said he is ready to raise \$4 million to transform a bomb-damaged former Iraqi intelligence compound into a training ground and playground for Iraqi Scouts.

"This kind of thing is more powerful than any tirade of any terrorist," Bradle said of the program, endorsed in February by the former U.S. administrator in Iraq, Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, and promoted on the White House Web site.

American servicemen and Scout leaders in Baghdad jump-started an Iraqi Scouting council. **The U.S. government and American donors are paying for it, and a former CIA operative, William "Chip" Beck, is promoting the program in Iraq.**

Beck, a cartoonist and former naval intelligence officer, is being paid by the U.S. government but said he volunteers his time on the Iraqi Scouting program. **News releases from the now defunct U.S.-led Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq and the White House praised the rebirth of Iraqi Scouting but omitted Beck's 23 years in the CIA's Clandestine Service.**

He angrily rejected questions linking his intelligence work for the American government and his role in Iraqi Scouting.

He asked The Dallas Morning News to exclude his intelligence background from this article because he said it might endanger his life and the lives of others working with him in Iraq.

The News decided to publish the information, in part because his role with the CIA is widely available in public databases, in video documentaries and on the Internet. Beck has testified before Congress, written numerous published articles and most recently served with the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office.

Coalition officials did not respond to written questions about Beck's clandestine experience or prospects for Iraqi Scouting.

Malek Gabr, deputy secretary-general of World Scouting in Geneva, said Beck did not tell him he was a former undercover agent when he pitched the idea of Iraq's Scouting rebirth in March.

He said it wouldn't have mattered.

"I have no doubt about his personal sincerity, and I think his background with the CIA is insignificant," Gabr said.

Scouting programs exist in 153 countries, but no other nation has offered to contribute to the Iraqi Scouts. Neither has the World Organization of the Scout Movement or the Arab Scout Organization.

Fawzi Farghali, the director of Arab Scouting, which is based in Cairo, said no Iraqi children are involved in Scouting because of concerns about safety.

"The parents did not agree to let the boys going to the camp or going to walk in the streets," Farghali said. "We must wait until everything should be quiet."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Copter Crashes, Sgt. Killed

August 13, 2004 United States Department of Defense News Release No. 774-04

The Department of Defense announced today the death of a soldier.

Sgt. Daniel Lee Galvan, 30, of Moore, Okla., died Aug. 12 in Salerno, Afghanistan, when the helicopter he was in developed mechanical difficulties and crashed. Galvan was assigned to the 2nd Battalion (Assault), 25th Aviation Regiment, 25th Light Infantry Division, from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Deliberate Starvation

A 2002 US A.I.D. study found 22.5% of Palestinian children under age 5 suffered from moderate or severe malnutrition. In 2004, a UK Parliamentary committee concluded after a six-month inquiry, the malnutrition was the result of "a deliberate Israeli strategy of putting the lives of ordinary Palestinians under stress."

Rafah: Days of Shelling and Devastation

Rafah Today 8/7/2004

7 August 04 - Apache warplanes and tanks began shelling Block "J" once again in a new incursion that targeted civilian buildings./ 6 August 04 - The Israeli Army withdrew from Yebna Camp in Rafah leaving 5 dead, 22 injured, and over 21 demolished buildings. "I don't know what they want exactly from us!" said Yasir Juda who was trying to get out his Mercedes taxi cab that was demolished under the rubble of his house. "If they want us to leave here, then it is no, because death is much easier than leaving our country."

(To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by a foreign power, go to: www.rafahtoday.org. The foreign army is Israeli; the occupied nation is Palestine.)

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