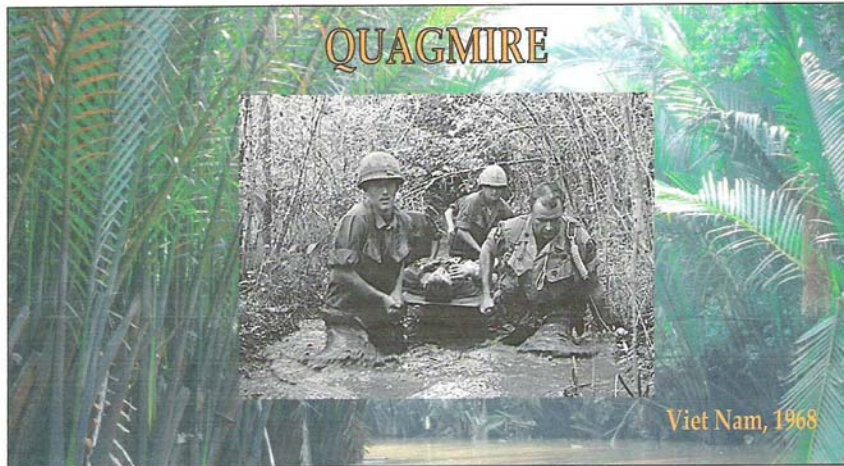
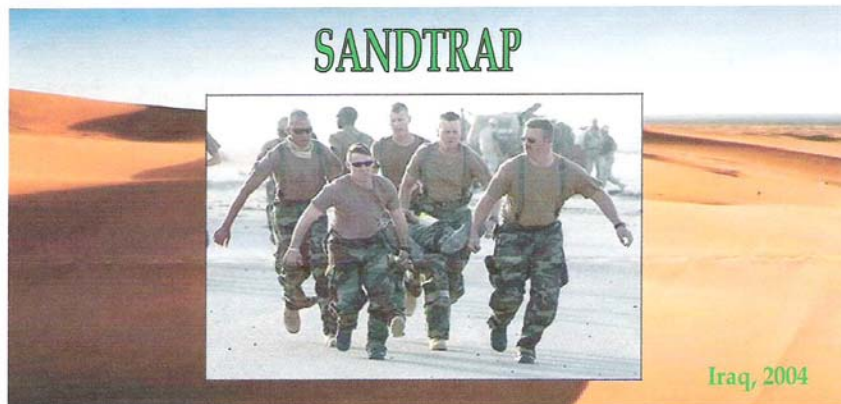


GI SPECIAL 2#B38

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this is now.



IMPERIALISM



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IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

US Soldier Killed By Baghdad RPG Attack

BAGHDAD, Aug. 21 (Xinhuanet)

One US soldier was killed and two others were wounded when their vehicle was attacked by rocket-propelled grenade in Baghdad early Saturday, the US military said.

Insurgents attacked the vehicle around midnight Friday in the southern part of the capital, according to a US military statement.

Three Polish Soldiers Killed, Six Hurt In Huge Explosives Ambush And Separate Vehicle Detonation

Aug 21 WARSAW (AFP) & (CNN)

A Polish soldier was killed and six others wounded in a car bomb attack in southern Iraq, the Polish military said, the third attack against its soldiers in four days.

One Iraqi civilian and five others were wounded in an ensuing shoot-out with the soldiers, medical and police sources said in Hilla -- though the Polish military said its troops had shot and killed several attackers.

The parked car was detonated by remote control as a 19-truck convoy under the protection of Polish troops was driving by, said Colonel Artur Domanski, the spokesman for the multinational force under Polish command.

The massive explosion, which occurred close to midday (0800 GMT), was heard several kilometres (miles) away.

The wounded were evacuated by helicopter to hospitals in Karbala and Baghdad, and towards the base at Hilla, he said.

Five of the wounded were in stable condition but without life-threatening injuries, while a sixth person was slightly wounded, defense ministry spokesman Piotr Petrak told AFP.

Petrak said that Polish Defense Minister Jerzy Szmajdzinski would travel as soon as possible to Iraq to see the situation for himself.

Polish public opinion remains overwhelmingly opposed to Poland's participation in the US-led multinational force in Iraq.

In a separate incident, two more soldiers were killed when their vehicle exploded.

**“What The Fuck Am I Doing *Here?*”
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**



A US soldier rests under a blackboard inside a classroom at a school in Najaf (AFP/Nafea Al-Nadawi)

Alabama National Guardsmen Wounded In Najaf

August 21, 2004 By Cindy West, Gadsden Times Staff Writer

Two soldiers from Marshall County were wounded in Iraq on Wednesday, the first from the county to be hurt.

Sgt. Michael Austin and Sgt. Daniel Martin, both of Grant, were in Najaf when a mortar round exploded just a few feet away. Martin's injuries were minor, but Austin's were more serious.

Austin's worst wounds were to his chest, and he was listed as very seriously injured but in stable condition late Thursday night. Surgeons operated at the Baghdad Medical

Facility and removed shrapnel from Austin's diaphragm and areas close to his heart. The surgeon had to remove a very damaged spleen, too.

Austin's wife, Lindsey, who had a baby three days before her husband was deployed in December, plans to fly with her husband's father, Jimmy, to Germany.

HOLDING THEIR GROUND: Kufa And Najaf



#1: Mahdi Soldiers peak out from a hole in the facade of the Maitham al-Tamar mosque in Najaf's twin city of Kufa after fierce overnight fighting between US forces and Mehdi Army militia. (AFP/Saeed Khan)

#2: Mahdi Army soldier takes a position Saturday during the standoff with U.S. and Iraqi forces in Najaf. (CNN) BBC reports armed fighters have also been seen covering defending positions outside the shrine.

#3: An Iraqi Shiite Madhi militiaman flashes the victory sign while taking rest at the front line next to the Shrine of Imam Ali in Najaf. Moqtada Sadr's militiamen were still holding their Najaf mosque stronghold. (AFP/Saeed Khan)

Rolling Coffins Claim Another Victim; Stryker Falls Off 30 Foot Embankment

August 20, 2004 KATU TV

A local soldier is recovering in a German military hospital after he broke his neck while on duty in Iraq.

Sergeant Justin Little, 24, was on night patrol Wednesday in Mosul, Iraq when the Stryker vehicle he was in went over a 30-foot embankment.

Thursday night Little's family in Longview learned that even though his neck is broken, he will not end up paralyzed.

The 8-Day Battle for Najaf: Showboating Marine Officers Pissed On The Chain Of Command And Their Troops Paid The Price

18 August 2004 By Alex Berensen and John F. Burns, The New York Times

NAJAF, Iraq - Just five days after they arrived here to take over from Army units that had encircled Najaf since an earlier confrontation in the spring, new Marine commanders decided to smash guerrillas loyal to the rebel Shiite cleric Moktada al-Sadr.

Acting without the approval of the Pentagon or senior Iraqi officials, the Marine officers said in recent interviews, they turned a firefight with Mr. Sadr's forces on Thursday, Aug. 5, into a eight-day pitched battle. Eventually, fresh Army units arrived from Baghdad and took over Marine positions near the mosque.

What the Marines had hoped would be a quick, decisive action has bogged down into a grinding battle that appears to have strengthened the hand of Mr. Sadr, whose stature rises each time he survives a confrontation with the American military.

It **may** have weakened the credibility of the interim Iraqi government of Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, showing him, many Iraqis say, to be alternately rash and indecisive, as well as ultimately beholden to American overrule on crucial military and political matters. (“may?” !!!)

As a reconstruction of the battle in Najaf shows, the sequence of events was strikingly reminiscent of the battle of Falluja in April.

In both cases, newly arrived Marine units immediately confronted guerrillas in firefights that quickly escalated. And in both cases, the American military failed to achieve its strategic goals. Falluja is now essentially off-limits to American ground troops.

The Najaf battle has also raised fresh questions about an age-old rivalry within the American military - between the no-holds-barred, press-ahead culture of the Marines and the slower, more reserved and often more politically cautious approach of the Army. Army-Marine tensions also have surfaced previously, notably when the Marines opened the Falluja offensive.

When the United States transferred power to the interim government in June, both American and Iraqi officials insisted that authority for major decisions on the use of force would be exercised by the new Iraqi leadership, in particular Dr. Allawi, a former enforcer for Saddam Hussein's Baath Party who defected in the 1980's and became leader of an exile political party.

But in the battle in Najaf, at least, the marines here say they engaged Mr. Sadr's forces at the request of the local Iraqi police. They did not seek approval from senior military commanders or from Iraqi political leaders, with the exception of the governor of Najaf. The governor, Adnan al-Zurfi, an Allawi appointee, refuses to confirm having given the green light, although American commanders in Baghdad cited his commands repeatedly as the political cover for the Marine attack.

In past week, the interim government has twice halted major American-led attacks on Mr. Sadr's forces as they were about to begin. It now says it will use Iraqi troops for future battles. But it is far from clear, judging from the lukewarm assessments of American commanders in Najaf, that the American-trained Iraqi units that fought alongside the Americans last week are capable of taking the lead in any showdown with Mr. Sadr.

The seeds of the Najaf battle were sown on July 31, when the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, commanded by Col. Anthony M. Haslam, replaced units of the Army's First Armored Division and First Infantry Division. The marines began to skirmish with the Iraqi fighters almost as soon as they took responsibility for this holy city of 500,000, American officers and Mr. Sadr's militiamen say.

Senior officers in Baghdad, as well White House officials who discussed the battle in Washington, say the latest fighting began when a Marine patrol drove directly past one of Mr. Sadr's houses in Najaf - violating an informal agreement that American units would stay away from Mr. Sadr's strongholds, treating them as part of an "exclusion zone" that was at the heart of the cease-fire in the city.

Two days later, on Aug. 5, fighters in Mr. Sadr's Mahdi Army staged a 2 a.m. attack on a police station in Najaf. Usually, the police are an easy mark, but this time, the White House official said, "they shot back" and called for American reinforcements. When the militiamen pushed forward a third time, about 7 a.m., American commanders in Baghdad said, the governor, Mr. Zurfi, called for American reinforcements.

American intelligence officials monitoring Mr. Sadr said he then summoned reinforcements from around the country, and Ambassador John D. Negroponte, the top American official in Iraq, "decided to pursue the case," one official said.

One result was a domino effect, with the fighting in Najaf soon replicated in more than half a dozen cities and towns across southern Iraq that are Mahdi Army strongholds, including the Baghdad slum of Sadr City, Diwaniya, Kut, Al Hayy, Nasiriya, Amara and Basra.

The battle in Najaf quickly centered on a huge cemetery adjacent to the Imam Ali Shrine, which had been off limits to American troops as part of a truce worked out after earlier fighting in April. At its closest point, the L-shaped cemetery, more than five square miles of tombs and catafalques and crypts, is only a few hundred yards from the shrine. **Marine commanders in Najaf acknowledge that they did little planning for the battle, but say they gambled that they could reach the walls of the Old City so fast that they would outrun the political firestorm sure to result.**

"We just did it," said Maj. David Holahan, second in command of the Marine unit in Najaf.

Inside the cemetery, the battle was exceptionally fierce, marines said.

The ferocity of the rebel resistance surprised the marines, who had seen Saddam Hussein's army disintegrate last year as they marched north to Baghdad. "The ones we fought the other day are a hell of a lot more determined," Lt. Scott Cuomo said.

By early evening on Aug. 5, the battalion had sent out an urgent request for reinforcements. Senior commanders sent the First Battalion of the Fifth Cavalry Regiment, a heavy Army unit, from Baghdad.

Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, the First Cavalry Division commander overseeing American troops in Baghdad, said during a visit to an American base in Najaf on Sunday, Aug. 15, that the division did not know until the last minute that the 1,800 marines in Najaf might need reinforcements. The Fifth Cavalry Regiment's tanks and other armored vehicles were patrolling in Baghdad when the request for help arrived, he said. By then, American troops in the capital were under intense pressure themselves, fighting Sadr militiamen in Sadr City and in skirmishes in other Shiite districts.

Army units began to prepare to move immediately, but the 120-mile drive from Baghdad, through some of the most rebel-infested territory in Iraq, took two days, Colonel Miyamasu said, with the forces arriving in Najaf on Saturday. By then, many marines had been fighting for almost 48 hours straight, in temperatures that topped 120 degrees each day.

Still, they had managed to press forward to the west and south, reaching the southern edge of the cemetery, just a few hundred yards from the mosque. **But with the Army battalion unprepared to fight Saturday, the marines decided to retreat.**

The next day, Aug. 8, the Army re-entered the cemetery. But by then, with political pressures building in Iraq and across the Muslim world, American forces faced immense pressure not to damage the Imam Ali Mosque. The Army never tried to reach the south wall of the Old City, and soldiers fighting inside the graveyard needed permission to fire heavier weapons in the direction of the mosque. **The fight became a stalemate.**

"If we had arrived one day earlier or the marines had attacked one day later, I'm not sure we'd be in this position," Colonel Miyamasu said.

In Baghdad, commanders seemed curiously disconnected. On Monday, Aug. 9, a senior military official told reporters that American forces had cut off Mr. Sadr's forces in the Old City and the cemetery from the rest of Najaf. But no cordon existed, and none would be set up until Thursday, when the second Army battalion arrived.

On Friday, the Iraqi government and Mr. Sadr's forces reached a tentative cease-fire. Although negotiations with an Allawi government delegation from Baghdad quickly collapsed, amid new threats from Dr. Allawi and his aides of a resumed push on the mosque, **Mr. Sadr appeared to have once again withstood American threats and firepower.**



Mahdi Army combat team takes cover from incoming fire during skirmishes with US forces at the front line near the shrine of Imam Ali in the holy city of Najaf.(AFP/Saeed Khan)

TROOP NEWS

Dying In Vain

From the column Fraggin' by Bill Shunas, The Veteran, Spring 2003

Members and friends of VVAW will soon be attending Memorial Day ceremonies, much as we have been doing for over thirty years. At these ceremonies, as well as on Veterans Day, we have honored the dead of our wars. We have honored the veteran and have been advocates for better care for veterans. We have used these occasions to speak out against unjust wars which needlessly create more memorials and more veterans.

Another reason we hold ceremonies on Memorial Day is because the memory of those who never made it back alive is used to try to justify participation in unjust wars.

We point this out and oppose it. In wars of longer duration, such as Vietnam or the Gulf, how many times have the politicians and hawks urged us on so that those who already died “won’t have died in vain”? They try to obscure the fact that the war has no good purpose. *They appeal to a desire for retribution and help ensure that more will die in vain.*

They use veterans too. In these wars as well as any shorter military actions, you’re likely to see TV images or newspaper photos of war-supporting vets saluting the flag. This is a call from those who have gone before to urge on the new generation to fight.

It is this use of war dead and veterans to promote the new war, or to promote trust in the political leadership, that we in VVAW have long opposed. They would not have you question whether a war or military police action is just. Instead they play on the emotions and respect the American people have for veterans and soldiers who died.

We say this is a bogus use of that respect.

Those leaders (most of whom are not veterans) who are responsible for our wars always evoke these emotions. In essence, this misuse of memory is showing disrespect for the dead.

If the dead soldier could talk, quite likely he would be the last to promote war, especially unjust war. Such a war means death, dismemberment and agony for no good reason, only for the advantage of the few. This is the ultimate disrespect for the dead.

Support Our Troops??

From the article by Fred Samia, The Veteran, Spring 2003

Now that the United States has invaded Iraq, I have been told that, regardless of what I think or feel about such an invasion, I should support the troops that are in harm's way. As someone who was a "troop," I have some thoughts on what it means to be "supported."

Support them how and to what purpose?

Do I hope that no harm comes to those mostly young and innocent women and men? Of course, but who put them in harm's way and why? Do I want them to forgo experiences that will change forever who they are? That will rearrange the very core of their being?

Yes, most assuredly.

Do I want them not to see, firsthand, what it's like to be the best and the bravest before, exalted and cajoled by recruiter and politician, only to return to indifference, lies and neglect? (The Bush administration cut billions from veterans' benefits the same day the invasion began.)

Do I want their bodies to remain free of wounds and sickness, and their minds free of scars? *Certainly.*

Do I want them to enjoy their virility and sexual energy unperverted by the mantra that killing equals manhood? Do I wish them lasting relationships?. And freedom from the waking nightmares of other families blown apart? To spare them the long nights when no amount of darkness will blot out what plays on the backs of their eyelids? To liberate them from being the walking dead, unseen in a blind society? And to never have to realize what being a pawn really means? Yes, without question.

Do I want them not to be the tragic statistics of their generation as we are of ours, comprising the largest minority in prison, and greatest percentages of homeless, and drug and alcohol addicted?

Estimates of Vietnam veterans who have taken their own lives since their return range from 100,000 on up, or at least twice the number that died in combat.

The Department of Defense for years ignored Vietnam veterans' pleas for help with PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and Agent Orange-caused illness, denying that there was any connection to their service, much the way they ignore Gulf War vets' complaints about the many depleted uranium-induced and other illnesses that have plagued them. As many as 10,000 vets may have died from Gulf War Syndrome, while another 160,000 have been diagnosed with related problems.

If this is what is meant by supporting our troops, then yes, count me among the staunchest. I would have been very happy, at nineteen, to have had such an ally in 1967, before the Marine Corps sent me to the killing fields of the "demilitarized zone" in Vietnam.

If, however, supporting the troops means that I should condone their being sent 7,000 miles away to attack a sovereign nation that has not attacked or threatened
--

us, no matter how reprehensible its leader, to invade a country already decimated by twenty years of war and twelve years of punitive sanctions, then I have to say no, I don't, support the troops.

The Gulf War never ceased for the Iraqi people, 200,000 of whom died then, and who were bombed almost daily since. The United Nations documents more than a million deaths directly attributable to the sanctions, including 500,000 children.

If supporting the troops means letting them be used to secure "cheap" oil. unless you count lives per barrel, for our one person-per-SUV lifestyle and the obscene profits of corporations who bankroll candidates and influence elections, then I say no again.

If it means letting them subordinate their humanity to the techno-fix of weapons, which Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld actually called "humanitarian," --even Orwell never envisioned such perversion of language-- then no again and always.

If it means making them unwitting, and, usually, uninformed, enforcers of a foreign policy that is as wrong as it is murderous, that uses brute force as a first resort, while ignoring the will of a majority of the world's people, then no, never.

Guards, Reservists Families Condemn Bad Treatment; Tell Senator Enough Is Enough

Aug. 21, 2004 By Russ Keen, American News Writer

The United States may find itself short of National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers unless they get a fairer shake, some area military personnel and their families said Friday.

Knowing for sure when returns will take place would be a big plus for soldiers who are not part of the regular Army, said Barb Wacholz, a sergeant's wife and leader of the local support group for soldiers' families.

"Not knowing: That has to be the absolute worst," Barb said. "It's like a roller coaster ride. Dates and time lines would make it more bearable."

Lack of proper equipment is also a major concern.

Guards, reservists or their families raised these concerns on Friday, too:

- The nation is becoming too reliant on the Guard and Reserves.

• **Regular Army soldiers spend about six months on active duty in Iraq, while Guards and Reservists usually serve at least a year; the tours of duty should be equal, some said.**

The Wacholzes made their comments to Sen. Tom Daschle, D-S.D., at the United Defense plant in Aberdeen on Friday morning. United Defense hosted a panel discussion featuring Daschle and some area Guard and Reserve members, mostly workers at United Defense. The military contractor employs about 140 in Aberdeen.

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/>

Family Wants Wounded Marine To Get Real Medical Exam!

August 21, 2004 By JOSHUA STOWE, South Bend Indiana Tribune Staff Writer

LAKE OF THE WOODS -- The family of a Bremen Marine wounded in Iraq no longer must worry for his safety.

Anthony Stamper, who received a concussion from an Aug. 12 blast while on patrol with fellow Marines, is now on light duty.

It's good news for Dan Vogelgesang, his stepfather, and Kelly Vogelgesang, his mother. But they're still concerned for the health of Stamper, a 2003 Bremen High School graduate.

"I am (relieved), but when he called ... I found out he has no reflex in his right leg and his right arm," Kelly Vogelgesang said. "I wanna get him home and get him checked out."

Her husband agreed.

"It's kinda of a good-news-bad-news thing," he said, adding that while a field exam found no permanent damage, **Stamper's base has no x-ray capabilities.**

He was injured when the light armored vehicle bearing him and his fellow Marines struck an improvised explosive device.

The impact threw off Stamper's helmet and left him unconscious, his stepfather said.

Stamper called home the day after the bomb blast, his stepfather said.

"He sounded a little shook up," Dan Vogelgesang recalled. "He kinda played it off like it was no big deal, but you could tell from the tone of his voice that it affected him.

"I think guys like him, 18, 19 years old, think they're invincible," he added. "I think it just gave him a little reality check."

The Vogelgesangs didn't learn about Stamper's reflex problems -- and his new light duty -- until early Friday morning.

That's when Stamper called to update them.

His mother's not sure he would have even mentioned his condition, had not one of his friends called the family several hours before to update them. (And that "friend" is a real, true brother.)

Tyngsboro Marine May Lose Limbs; Was The Humvee Up-Armored?



August 21, 2004 By MATT MURPHY, Lowell (Mass.)Sun Staff

TYNGSBORO Marine Cpl. Matthew Boisvert, a 21-year-old Tyngsboro native, suffered life-threatening injuries Tuesday in Iraq when the Humvee he was driving struck a bomb in the road, nearly severing his leg and arm.

Boisvert was on routine patrol in Fallujah driving along a U.S. military supply road when the Humvee detonated an explosive device hidden beneath the road.

The explosion tore through the bottom of the vehicle, severing the main artery in Boisvert's thigh, fracturing his thigh bone and tearing through a blood vessel in one arm, his mother, Brenda Newell, told The Sun last night.

Newell, who has spoken to her son several times since the accident, said doctors do not know whether they can save his injured limbs.

Boisvert grew up in Tyngsboro, graduating in 2001 from Tyngsboro High School, where he played hockey. Newell said many of her son's friends have been dropping by their Chestnut Road home to check in with the family as news of the accident spread.

Boisvert, who turned 21 on June 26, signed up for the Marines the summer after finishing high school.

Boisvert told his mother that after the bomb exploded, he saw that a chunk of his thigh had been blown off. Two lieutenants traveling had been left unscathed by the explosion and dragged him from the burning Humvee. A fourth soldier was struck by shrapnel in one of his eyes.

Boisvert couldn't feel his arm or leg, and thought they might have been blown off, Newell said. When the plumes of black smoke cleared, her son saw a widening pool of his own blood and his leg barely held together.

Doctors have reattached Boisvert's leg, but his circulation is so poor that his foot remains a dark purple and doctors are uncertain whether his leg and or foot will require amputation.

Asked about her son's spirits, Newell said she had just gotten off the phone with him and he was scared.

"He had a nightmare that none of this happened, but then he woke up," she said.

It has also been a nightmare for Boisvert's parents and family, who have watched as Boisvert served two tours of duty in Iraq.

After enlisting in the Marines in August 2001, Boisvert went to boot camp before being deployed in March 2002 to Iraq, when he was stationed in Um-Qasar.

He was deployed again in March 2003, this time to Fallujah.

That phone call did come on Tuesday, from Marine Corps base Camp Pendleton in California.

Newell and her husband are flying to Washington this morning and the family plans to stay in the Washington home of Congressman Marty Meehan, who has given them the keys to his apartment.

In Congress, Meehan has been a vocal critic of the lack of protective equipment U.S. forces are provided with in Iraq, particularly armor for Humvees, but said last night that it was too early to tell if the Humvee Boisvert was driving had "up-armor" or could have prevented serious injury.

Med Services At Wright-Patterson Medical Center Trashed By Iraq War

August 21, 2004 By James Hannah, The Associated Press

DAYTON - A large group of medics who work at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base will be sent to Iraq, resulting in a reduction of some surgeries and surgical appointments at the base hospital, officials said Friday.

It also will mean that some patients will be referred to other medical facilities for surgeries, said Al Eakle, spokesman for the 74th Medical Group.

Wright-Patterson Medical Center is the largest military hospital in Ohio and one of the largest in the country. About 40,000 patients, primarily military personnel and their families along with retired servicemen and women, use the hospital.

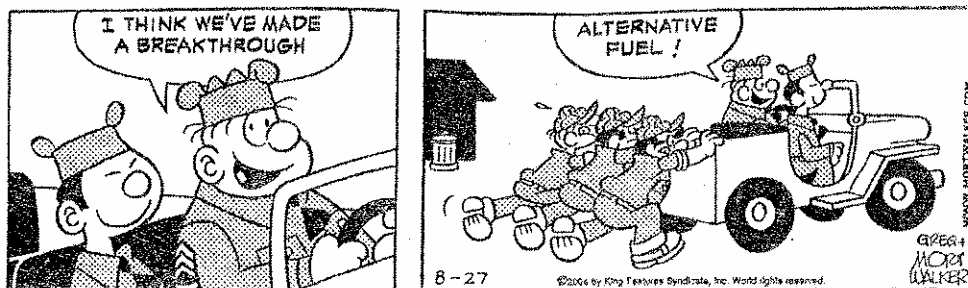
The deployment will hit the surgical staff at the hospital the hardest.

Col. Gary Walker, surgical specialties flight commander for the 74th Surgical Operations Squadron, said the deployment will include surgeons, nurses and anesthesia personnel, affecting the entire operation.

"Even if we were to have a full complement of surgeons, our ability to offer surgery in a timely fashion will be adversely affected," Walker said.

Eakle said the surgeries affected include thoracic and vascular, and that officials expect a 20 percent decrease in elective surgeries being done at the hospital.

Most patients come from within a 50-mile radius, but a few come from neighboring states and from as far as 400 miles away.



Army Times 8.25.04

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Fallujah Sends Men And Arms To Najaf; Sets Up Military Training Camp: Najaf Police Helping Mahdi Army Too

'My brother and I are against my cousin, but my cousin and I are against the foreigner.'

Aqil Jabbar, SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

NAJAF, August 20 — A colonel from Saddam Hussein's most elite fighting force, the Special Republican Guard, has been training members of the Shi'ite militia battling U.S. forces in this holy city for more than two weeks.

The former colonel, Rifaat al-Janabi, said he and nine other officers from the Special Republican Guard had been sent to Najaf from Fallujah, the main Sunni flash point west of Baghdad.

"The Fallujah Consultancy Council of Mujahideen sent me with nine other officers and 40 soldiers who are well-trained in using mortars and RPG-7 grenade launchers," said Col. al-Janabi, who, unlike most Iraqi insurgents, had no qualms about giving his name.

"We had to stand by our Shi'ite brothers in Najaf, who stood by us in Fallujah," he said.

That was a reference to aid provided by the Mahdi's Army during a major insurrection in Fallujah in the spring.

"It is an honorable stance of Fallujah people, who sent us experts in using weapons," said one Mahdi's Army militiaman. "We are in need of military training."

Indeed, although a few of the Mahdi's Army trainees had military training, many were inexperienced volunteers.

"I'm not a kid ... I can kill many Americans," said 13-year-old Hassan Kamel, a preparatory-school student who stood guard with his rifle at a checkpoint.

Outside the Mahdi's Army base in Najaf, Col. al-Janabi's fellow officers and soldiers from Fallujah could be seen drilling the Shi'ite militiamen in the use of RPG-7 grenade launchers.

"We welcomed the mujahideen of Fallujah who came, without being asked to come, to help us out in training the fighters who lack experience in using weapons," said Sheikh Kudair al-Ansari, who runs Sheik al-Sadr's office in Kufa, just outside Najaf.

While he spoke, militiamen swarmed around trucks unloading AK-47 assault rifles that had been smuggled into the city under a load of watermelons.

Minibuses from the southern towns of Amara, Kut and Diwaniya disgorged more young men who gathered outside the Kufa mosque and chanted: "By our blood and souls, we sacrifice for you, Muqtada."

"I left a wife and three children to come and defend Muqtada," said one volunteer from Diwaniya, who refused to give his name.

During this week's fighting in Najaf, there also was evidence that some U.S.-trained police have been cooperating with the Mahdi's Army militiamen.

Near the mosque, four uniformed policemen were seen standing beside their car with three militiamen. Hidden behind a building, they were listening to their radios and informing the militiamen of their fellow officers' movements.

"I have four cousins in the Mahdi's Army," one of the police officers explained. "According to the proverb, 'My brother and I are against my cousin, but my cousin and I are against the foreigner.' Thus, I can't fight against my cousins and stand beside the Americans."

Soon after, one of the fighters ran into the street and shouted "Ali." He fired a rocket-propelled grenade at a concrete barrier erected by U.S. forces.

Then he ran back into the alley, climbed into the police car and was driven away.

Resistance Takes Move From Bush Pre-Emptive Playbook; Attacks Closed Pipeline To Keep It From Opening

Basra, Iraq, Aug 21, SPA

Insurgents bombed Saturday an oil pipeline in southern Iraq that had not been in use for several days, setting it ablaze, security forces in the area said.

That attack took place at Berjisiya, 35 kilometers (20 miles) southwest of the southern city of Basra, said Lt. Mohammed al-Mousawi of the Iraqi National Guard. **The pipeline, which connects the Rumeila oilfields with export storage tanks in the Faw peninsula, had been shutdown for a week due to threats from insurgents,** and it was unclear what effect the bombing would have on exports.

"The aim behind attack is to damage the pipeline in case it is turned on again," al-Mousawi said. The bomb exploded near a pipeline valve, he said. National Guard troops discovered and defused a second bomb nearby, he said. --SPA

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

Bush Says: These Are Terrorists. Kill Them.



A young Iraqi girl holding a picture of Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr (R) and his assassinated father Mohammed Sadeq Sadr, and her younger brother flash the victory sign in the holy Shiite city of Najaf.(AFP/Ahmad al-Rubaye)

Senior Collaborator Officer Killed In Ramadi

Ramadi, Iraq, Aug 21 IRIB News

A senior policeman was shot dead early Saturday in the restive city of Ramadi.

Colonel Saad Samir Al-Dulaimi, head of the crime fighting unit in the Sunni Muslim bastion of Ramadi, west of Baghdad, was gunned down as he left home at around 8:30 am (0430 GMT), said police captain Ghassan Kadhim.

Mosul Resistance Hits Occupation Locals

August 21, 2004 (CNN)

A roadside bomb attack in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul Saturday killed an Iraqi national guardsman and wounded three others -- two other guardsmen and a civilian -- according to an Iraqi police official. **The bomb ripped through the guardsmen's convoy around 12:15 p.m. (4:15 a.m. ET) in the western part of Mosul,** Gen. Mohammed Khairi Barhawi told CNN.

Casualties In Rocket Attack On Nassiriya Police Post

NASSIRIYA, Iraq, Aug 20 (Reuters) & (Xinhuanet)

Three Iraqis were killed and several others injured late Friday in a blast that targeted a fuelcontainer in a police station.

The cause of the blast is not clear, but a policeman on the scene said it appeared that a rocket hit the building of the police station.

Nassiriya is controlled by Italian troops. (In your dreams.)

Iraqi Olympic Football Players Condemn Bush & Praise The Resistance

20 August 2004 Aljazeera.net & By Dave Zirin, sports editor, St Petersburg post

According to the monthly Sports Illustrated, Iraqi football players, who have performed exceptionally well at the Olympics, are warning US President George Bush not to use their success in his re-election campaign.

US media has touted the success of Iraq's under-23 team as it beat Portugal 4-2 and Costa Rica 2-0 and sailed through to the quarterfinals.

Iraq's soccer squad is perhaps the surprise of the entire Olympics, advancing to this weekend's quarterfinals despite the war and occupation that has gripped their country for the last 17 months. **Yet amidst cheers and triumph, they were infuriated to learn that Bush's brain, Karl Rove, had launched campaign ads featuring their Olympic glory as a brilliant by-product of the war on terror.**

The commercial, subtle as a blowtorch, begins with an image of the Afghani and Iraqi flags with a voice over saying, "At this Olympics there will be two more free nations -- and two fewer terrorist regimes."

Bush has also been exploiting their exploits in stump speeches. Much more comfortable talking sports than foreign policy or stem-cell research, Bush brayed with bravado in Oregon, "The image of the Iraqi soccer team playing in this Olympics, it's fantastic, isn't it? It wouldn't have been free if the United States had not acted."

However, the sudden interest in the team - particularly from the US Republican re-election campaign platform - has irked some of its members.

"Iraq as a team does not want Mr. Bush to use us for the presidential campaign," Iraqi player Salih Sadir told SI.com.

"He can find another way to advertise himself."

Sadir has reason to be upset . He was the star player for the professional soccer team in Najaf. Najaf has in recent weeks been swamped by US troops and the new Iraqi army in an attempt to uproot rebel cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr. Thousands have died, each death close to Sadir's heart.

"I want the violence and the war to go away from the city," said Sadir, "We don't wish for the presence of Americans in our country. We want them to go away." Sadir has so far scored two goals for the team.

But some players went further: **substitute Ahmad Manajid, who played as a midfielder in Wednesday's match against Morocco (1-2) told the monthly sports magazine "How will he meet his god having slaughtered so many men and women?"**

"He has committed so many crimes."

Killed so many people

Manajid went on to say "I want to defend my home. If a stranger invades America and the people resist, does that mean they are terrorists?"

"Everyone [in Falluja] has been labeled a terrorist. These are all lies. Falluja people are some of the best people in Iraq."

According to Sports Illustrated, one of Manajid's cousin was a resistance fighter who was killed by US occupation forces. He allegedly told SI.com that he would have become a resistance fighter had he not been on the Olympic team.

Iraq's second coach, who filled the gap left behind when German manager Bernd Stange left the team due to security concerns, told SI.com that he believes US occupation forces destroyed everything in his country.

"My problems are not with the American people," Adnan Hamad told the sports monthly.

"They are with what America has done in Iraq: destroy everything. The American army has killed so many people in Iraq. What is freedom when I go to the [national] stadium and there are shootings on the road?"

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.militaryproject.org/> or <http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/> or www.gifightback.org**

“The People Feel Anger”

8.13.04 By Mike Dorning, Chicago Tribune correspondent

At the Al-Sadiq Bakery, where the hearth is decorated with a blue-tile verse from the Koran, hot air blasted from the oven Thursday and the staff seethed.

A few hours earlier, they had heard that U.S. forces had begun an assault on followers of Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr who have taken up positions at a shrine in Najaf.

"Saddam made mass graves in 1991," Haidar Abbas, the owner of this small neighborhood bakery, fumed. **"Now the Americans are making mass graves in 2004, filled with Shiites again."**

The 39-year-old Shiite's thoughts turned back more than a decade, when Saddam Hussein attacked the mosque while suppressing another Shiite rebellion, after the first Persian Gulf war.

The counterman, Qasim Khudhayer, 22, bitterly agreed.

"I'm sure the Americans are enjoying this, dropping their bombs from airplanes," Khudhayer said.

Saad Jawal, a spokesman for Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, a rival party to Sadr's movement, said the confrontation in Najaf has the feel of a fight against Shiite Islam to many people.

"The people feel anger," Jawal said. "They feel the [Shiite community] has been attacked by the American forces."

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Arguments For The Anti-War Movement:

1. The Case For Immediate Withdrawal

July-August International Socialist Review, by Eric Ruder. For the full article, go to www.isreview.org

The tragedy is that the antiwar movement could rapidly and dramatically expand its base—but only if it is politically equipped to explain why ending the bloodshed in Iraq requires **nothing short of an immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops.**

This requires building an organizational vehicle that is able to articulate this demand to this broad audience.

This could have direct consequences on the size of the antiwar movement. During the national day of action on March 20, organizers across the country were surprised by the turnout, which exceeded all expectations. In New York City; where organizers had hoped for a crowd of 20,000, roughly 70,000 turned out. ***But since then, the presidential campaign has taken center stage—and protests against the war have dramatically diminished in size.***

There could be no sharper illustration of **the dire need to build a principled anti-imperialist movement in the United States. *We must start by patiently arguing the case for immediate withdrawal.*** (And nothing less will do. Since none of the three leading Presidential candidates are for immediate withdrawal, the conclusion is obvious.)

2. What About The Resistance?

July-August International Socialist Review, by Toufic Haddad. For the full article, go to www.isreview.org

The Islamic movements—which arose out of the great defeats of Arab nationalism and the secular Arab Left by Israel, the U.S., and U.S.-backed dictators over the last thirty years—are becoming umbrellas of resistance of all types---nationalist, Islamic, and even remnants of the Arab Left.

They have correctly placed resisting U.S. imperialism in Palestine and Iraq as their first priority, and fighting for the self-determination of their peoples. In this respect, these Islamic movements need the unconditional support of the U.S. antiwar movement, which must reject any hair-splitting regarding the nature or character of this 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

Fables Of The Reconstruction

August 30, 2004 CHRISTIAN PARENTI, The Nation

(This is a very small part of a terrific article giving the full horrors of all the “reconstruction” work that Bechtel and others have *not* done while pocketing billions. Check it out at: <http://www.thenation.com/docprint.mhtml?i=20040830&s=parenti>)

What does the failure of reconstruction mean for the average Iraqi? The answer is evident in places like the village of Amar Bin Yasser, not far from where the Rustimiyah’s untreated sewage hits the Diyala River.

In a palm-frond-and-plywood kiosk by a road, Khalid Salman and his three young nephews sell lamb and mutton. The meat hangs in the shade, greasy and dotted with flies. Beside Salman and the boys are two peaceful sheep, oblivious to the fate awaiting them. Across the road is the river: a thick soup of sewage.

Salman explains that since the war, he has been unable to use the river water even for his animals. Instead he has to buy water at ten dinars a liter (less than a penny) from tanker trucks that come down from Baghdad. The price is not high, but neither is Salman’s income.

“The farmers here suffer from rashes and disease,” says Salman. “To irrigate their fields they sometimes have to stand in this water up to their chests. Many children are sick with some kind of poisoning, and we all have stomach pains.” He says the pollution contaminates the local wells and has brought swarms of insects, and because there is so little electricity it is hard to keep the bugs away from the children at night with electric fans. Medical care is meager at the local clinics; there are doctors but no medicine.

His tirade is cut short as a convoy of US tanks rolls by, towed on heavy-duty flatbed trucks. From the turrets, grim-looking soldiers behind .50-caliber machine guns watch the mud huts pass below them. **Salman glares at the convoy with hate in his eyes.** This is resistance country, and the local base gets mortared regularly. Each tank has a nickname stenciled on its cannon barrel: Fat Bastard, Controlled Rage, Crotch Rocket, Another Tank and Chubby Cowboy.

Farther downriver the situation is the same. In the village of Azhira a woman in a black abaya with blue tattoos on her chin explains how the village is dependent on the tanker trucks and cash for its water. Her husband says all the fish are dead and that the fishermen have no work. They get only three hours of electricity and then are cut off for up to five hours at a time. It is hard to keep food fresh, and the heat only makes it worse.

Outside the village I stop and talk with a squad of GIs whose armored Humvee is tucked beneath a stand of trees along a raised dirty road. Their mission is to guard a bridge over the Diyala and keep tabs on Azhira.

“Everything’s pretty mellow,” says one of the soldiers. His comrades read magazines in the Humvee or watch the surrounding trees and houses. “Sometimes they take potshots at us from over there.” He points to the village. “But when you meet the people, they’re not all bad.”

None of the GIs are aware of the water situation or the sewage problem or the real extent of the economic crisis around them. But they are not unsympathetic. “Living near a river of shit—that would definitely suck,” says one of them. “No wonder these people are pissed.”

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Afghan Resistance Marks Anniversary Of Attack On UN Office In Iraq: Blows Up UN Office In Afghanistan; Cops Arrest UN Workers (!)

8/21/2004 By EDITH M. LEDERER, The Associated Press

The bombing of a U.N. election office in Afghanistan that injuring six policemen drew calls from a U.N. union Friday that the world body consider withdrawing staffers from the embattled nation.

The bombing of a U.N. election office in Afghanistan that injuring six policemen drew calls from a U.N. union Friday that the world body consider withdrawing staffers from the embattled nation.

The blasts occurred on the first anniversary of the bombing at U.N. headquarters in Iraq, which killed 22 people, including top U.N. envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello.

U.N. chief Kofi Annan said this week that violence has increasingly been aimed at U.N. staff and offices in Afghanistan.

In the latest attack targeting election workers, a series of bombs went off Thursday at a U.N. voter registration office in Farah City in western Afghanistan, near the border with Iraq. Six policemen were injured, two seriously, vehicles were set ablaze and windows shattered.

Police have detained four security guards, two Afghans working for the United Nations, and a U.N. security guard for questioning.

Taliban militants have been blamed for a series of attacks on workers preparing the country for its first presidential vote. Scores of election workers and civilians have been killed in the attacks.

In other violence, militants attacked police in central Ghzani province, killing one officer and injuring two others, state television reported Friday.

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