

GI SPECIAL 2#B40

**NOT A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. Army soldiers search building in Najaf Aug. 22, 2004. (AP Photo/Jim MacMillan)

Pissing In The Wind: U.S. Sweep Of Baghdad Slum Only Boosted Support For Resistance

August 22, 2004 By Alissa J. Rubin, LA Times staff writer

BAGHDAD — The singing could be heard from more than a block away as the pickup truck careened along the unpaved streets of District 10 deep in the heart of Sadr City.

Crammed into the flatbed, 25 mostly young men hoisted their semiautomatic weapons, a few of them carrying rocket-propelled-grenade launchers.

Despite a five-day onslaught by U.S. troops intent on clearing the poor Baghdad neighborhood of supporters of Shiite Muslim cleric Muqtada Sadr, late Saturday they were still visible, they were still armed, and they were singing. "The Shiites will be victorious," they sang, smiling broadly with a campfire look of good cheer.

Residents waved at the men, pointing and saying, "Mahdi army" — referring to the militia loyal to Sadr, whose supporters are occupying the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf, south of the capital.

Even as the takeover of the shrine has dwarfed all other news from Iraq, the U.S. military has launched what it calls one of its largest urban initiatives yet in the neighborhood where Sadr has his biggest base of support. Scores of Iraqis reportedly have been killed in the sweep.

The military estimated Friday that in the preceding 24 hours, 50 Al Mahdi fighters had been killed, **but that number appeared high given the relative scarcity of the black banners usually posted to notify the neighborhood of a death.**

And the jubilant singing of the young men told a story of continuing defiance.

Sadr City appeared more supportive of Sadr on Saturday than it did before the U.S. sweep and the Najaf standoff.

Because much of the cleric's appeal to poor Shiites has been his willingness to stand up to the Americans, the U.S. operations here and in Najaf have only served to rally support for him. That is all the more true in Sadr City, where the Americans appeared to have received little or no help from Iraqi security forces or police.

"What he's doing in Najaf makes us stronger," said Khalid Jassim, a 39-year-old tailor who was talking with friends at a car repair shop as the sun set. **"Everybody now is part of the Mahdi army."**

That is far from true, but in Sadr City, with a population of about 2 million, widespread anti-American sentiment has hardened in recent days.

On the walls of the houses, even the graffiti are committed to protest. "Yes, yes ... to the IED that terrified Americans," reads one message, referring to what is known as an improvised explosive device. Another says, "Peace upon the IED." Some children carry toy rocket-propelled grenades, pretending to be Sadr's insurgents.

Only a small percentage of Sadr City residents belong to Sadr's militia, but there appeared to be wide community support for the fighters' activities even among people who are not followers of the cleric. The slum is named after the cleric's father, who was assassinated under the Saddam Hussein regime.

"When people buy food, they buy a bag for their families and a bag for the Mahdi," said Mohammed Sugheir, 35, who was at the car repair shop with Jassim.

Taha Saddoun, 37, who has a small storefront where he repairs refrigerators, described himself as a supporter of the moderate Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, but he said he also admired Sadr's fighters. "The Mahdi guys are really brave men," he said.

What happens next in Sadr City, Saddoun said, will depend on Najaf.

"If there is fighting in Najaf, things will escalate again here," he said. "The Americans are trying to scare off the Mahdi army, but this is the Shiite resistance, and it is all over Iraq now."

Residents say Sadr is not about to go into politics, as sought by Iraqi officials who are trying to negotiate a peace deal with him. "He will not enter politics until the occupation has ended," said Jassim, the tailor, his tone confident.

As for a political program, Sugheir, like several Sadr City residents, noted only one tenet: "He wants the American troops to leave."

Saddoun said he believed that the Americans were so antagonistic toward Sadr's militant stance that they were willing to punish all of Sadr City to ensure the cleric was defeated. "The Americans don't want the Sadr [approach] to be effective. The evidence is all around you — look," Saddoun said. He pointed to the bare lightbulb in his shop, which was dark because there was no electricity, and gestured to the curb, where rotting food and debris lay heaped.

Underpinning this view, a number of Sadr City residents said, is the harsh reality that Americans have accomplished little to improve the living conditions despite repeated promises by U.S. officials of jobs and reconstruction.

"Electricity, sewers, road works — these are what the people need — and foodstuffs. Even if the Americans provided these things, we would be happy," taxi driver Saleh Haider Ajeel said from his bed at Ibn Nafees Hospital on the edge of Sadr City.

Ajeel was shot Wednesday morning. He said U.S. troops had fired on him as he was walking to his garage to start the day's driving.

The phenomenon of Iraqis being shot simply because they are in the wrong place at the wrong time has been a recurring problem for the Americans. Each time such incidents happen, it deepens the anger and skepticism among Iraqis about the Americans' reasons for being in the country.

In the same hospital as Ajeel was a mentally disabled man who had been walking with his father and a push-cart operator, both of whom had been seeking work. As the cart operator moved from shop to shop, he said, the Americans opened fire. He said he crouched down and tried to run to safety but was hit. The other man was in the hospital with shrapnel wound.

GET SOME TRUTH: CHECK OUT THE NEW TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation, the cuts to veterans' benefits, or the dangers of depleted uranium - is the first reason Traveling Soldier is necessary. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read,

we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.
<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

No Letup: Insurgency Launching Attacks By The Hundreds; Silly Marine Officer Thinks U.S. Won At Fallujah

August 23, 2004 USA TODAY

"No one is underestimating our opponents," says Marine Brig. Gen. Robert Neller, director of the operations division at Marine Corps headquarters. "These guys are adaptive. They learn. They are creative." Militants also have access to more dangerous surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft guns.

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Nearly two months after the establishment of a sovereign Iraqi government, the violent attacks on U.S. and Iraqi forces show no sign of abating.

A USA TODAY database, which analyzed unclassified U.S. government security reports, shows **attacks against U.S. and allied forces have averaged 49 a day since the hand-over of sovereignty June 28, compared with 52 a day in the four weeks leading up to the transfer.**

Iraqi guerrillas are relying heavily on weapons that allow them to attack and then slip away, such as roadside bombs and mortars.

In June and July, U.S. and Iraq forces were attacked with 759 roadside bombs and uncovered at least 400 others before they exploded.

U.S. officials had said they expected the attacks to drop as Iraqis re-established control over their country. (That's exactly what the resistance is doing, re-establishing Iraqi control over their country, and doing very well at their job indeed. The obvious proof of the growth of the movement to liberate Iraq from foreign occupation *is* the increase in the number of attacks. The clueless dimwits in Washington are too blind and stupid to understand that.)

While most attention has been focused on the showdown in Najaf between Shiites and the new Iraqi government, data show the insurgency is a stubborn and continuing

phenomenon throughout the country. **(That's putting it mildly. The resistance owns every foot of land the U.S. occupation forces aren't standing on at any given minute.)**

U.S. officers say the continuing attacks suggest that it will take time, possibly years, to crush the insurgency.

"If we have the political will and stamina to stay, I could see this going on for 10 years," says Randolph Gangle, a retired officer who heads the Marine Corps' Center for Emerging Threats and Opportunities in Quantico, Va. (Another asshole talking about "we" while he sits safely behind his desk back home. Fuck him. The troops will see to it the war doesn't last 10 years the same way they did in Vietnam: declaring war on the people who sent them there, and the people in command.)

The USA TODAY database shows a guerrilla war in which insurgents are making relentless hit-and-run attacks on U.S. forces:

Roadside bombs, which the military calls "improvised explosive devices," remain the insurgents' weapon of choice. **Half of the Army's 24 deaths from hostile action in July were attributed to roadside bombs. The Marines generally do not describe the specific cause of hostile-fire deaths.** Militants have become more innovative in devising the bombs. They are using cell phones and wireless garage-door openers to detonate the explosives.

Though generally not very accurate, mortars and rocket attacks are common. Mortars, some of them homemade, can be carried in the trunk of a car, set up quickly and aimed at U.S. positions. Militants often can drive off before their positions can be pinpointed. **In July, there were 468 mortar and rocket attacks. Of the Army's 24 combat deaths in July, seven were from rocket or mortar fire.**

Attacks are concentrated in the "Sunni Triangle" area north and west of Baghdad and in Shiite Muslim strongholds in Najaf and other southern cities. **But resistance attacks are common in almost every part of the country, with the exception of Kurdish-controlled areas in the north.**

Militants regularly fire on U.S. airplanes and helicopters. In July, there were 15 such attacks, mostly with rifle fire and rocket-propelled grenades. **But militants also have access to more dangerous surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft guns. (!)**

"No one is underestimating our opponents," says Marine Brig. Gen. Robert Neller, director of the operations division at Marine Corps headquarters. "These guys are adaptive. They learn. They are creative." (Miracle: A General who understands reality.)

U.S. officers say the insurgents generally use classic guerrilla hit-and-run tactics and avoid direct confrontation with American troops and firepower.

When insurgents have taken on U.S. forces directly, such as the al-Sadr rebellion in Najaf this month and earlier insurgent attacks in Fallujah and Ramadi, the

battles have been costly to the guerrillas. (And what about all the dead and maimed U.S. troops, or don't they matter? Costly to both sides, so the question is, who won in Fallujah and Ramadi? Now comes one Col. Larry Brown to answer that question.)

"Every time they stand and fight, they die," says Marine Col. Larry Brown, who recently returned from Iraq, where he served as operations officer for the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, *based outside Fallujah*. "Their survival tactic is sniping around the edges."

(This "recently returned" idiot is babbling away about how "they" die? Reality check, Col. Brown: Why not go back and take a little drive to downtown Fallujah and make your bullshit speech there? Can't do it? Why not, Col. Brown? Can it be that the resistance stood, fought, and didn't die? Can it be they won the battle of Fallujah and Fallujah is *their* free territory? Has that fact yet registered in your feeble mind?

(And the resistance also took and holds Ramadi. Don't think so? Go make your little speech there. Can't do it? Why not, Col. Brown? Can it be that the resistance stood, fought and didn't die in Ramadi either? I'm sure the reporter is very impressed by your bullshit, and somebody at the Pentagon is sure to notice. Always promotion opportunities there for a good bullshitting sycophant.)

<p>The forces fighting the insurgents find these pinprick attacks frustrating. "We can't see the enemy," Iraqi National Guard Brig. Gen. Mudhir Mawla Abbood says. "They see us, but we can't see them."</p>
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There is no way to attack the nerve center of Iraq's multifaceted insurgency.

"It is not classical guerrilla warfare in the sense there is no one in charge of it," Brown says. "There is no pressure point. ... There is no rebel leader that you would find in a Central American guerrilla war." (Where do they get these types? He's still looking for Fidel, 40 years too late. And thinking people are idiots and just have to have some asshole big shot "leader" [like Col. Brown no doubt] to get anything done. These types never learn anything about how people can organize themselves to fight, whether it's a foreign occupation or an insane war. That's why they're such disasters in command. Col. Brown is a poster-boy for utter failure to understand anything about how national resistance to foreign invasion works.)

MORE:

There It Is

August 10, 2004 PATRICK COCKBURN

Cities around Baghdad like Fallujah and Samarra are under the control of Islamic militants. In Ramadi, west of Baghdad, local police patrol this city of 400,000 people between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. At all other times Ramadi is run by the insurgents.

Najaf

August 23, 2004 By Edmund Sanders and T. Christian Miller, Los Angeles Times & **By** Abdul Hussein Al-Obeidi, *Associated Press*

Sporadic fighting continued around the shrine area. It remained unclear whether U.S. and Iraqi forces would launch an assault on the mosque, the most sacred site in Iraq for Shiites. Reuters reported that a top al-Sadr aide, Sheikh Ahmed al-Sheibani, said one wall of the shrine was hit during fighting early this morning. The report could not be immediately confirmed.

On Sunday, the U.S. military appeared to focus on clearing out nearby areas, including the shrine's expansive cemetery, the narrow streets of the surrounding Old City.

Militants hiding in a parking garage 400 yards from the shrine's outer wall fired rocket-propelled grenades and sniper rifles at U.S. troops, who responded with artillery and mortars.

Militants within the shrine compound walls fired 120 mm mortars at the governor's office in Najaf. There were no immediate reports of casualties in the attack.



Marine Cpl. Christopher Belchik, from Alton, Ill., in this undated family photo, was killed in action Sunday, Aug. 23, 2004, in Al Anbar Province. Belchik was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Lejeune, N.C. (AP Photo/Family Photo)

Marine Hits Tank, Dies

August 23, 2004 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Release
Number: 04-08-29C

One Marine assigned to I Marine Expeditionary Force was killed in a vehicle accident when the humvee he was in hit an M1A1 tank, causing the vehicle to flip Saturday in the Al Anbar Province.

Another Ohio Soldier Hurt In Attack; Loses Leg

August 23, 2004 Ohio News Now

An Ohio soldier injured by a bomb attack in Iraq is recovering after surgeons amputated part of his leg.

The explosion of a roadside bomb Friday killed two soldiers riding in a Hummer and injured two.

Specialist Terry Dean's wife says the soldier from Hillsboro is recovering in an Army hospital in Germany after the surgery to remove his right leg below the knee.

She said Army officials called her to say that her husband would be O.K., despite the amputation and treatment for shrapnel in his elbow.



Pfc. Ryan Martin, 22, of Mount Vernon, Ohio, in undated photo from the Ohio National Guard. Martin, who served with the 216th Engineering Battalion of the Ohio guard, died in Iraq when a homemade bomb went off near his Humvee Friday, Aug. 20, 2004. (AP Photo/Ohio National Guard, handout)

While Pentagon Obsessed With Najaf, Mahdi Army Takes The Rest Of Southern Iraq

Donald Macintyre 22 August 2004 Independent.co.uk

Recovering from the loss of three fingers from his right hand, Abu Muqtada, as he called himself, was eager to get back to the fighting.

Hit by US machine-gun fire in Najaf's large, hallowed and now badly damaged Wadi al-Salam cemetery a week ago, the 38-year-old Mehdi Army insurgent was relaxing, his hand bandaged, in the shade outside Kufa's mosque, the second oldest in Iraq. "My hand is finished but the other is still working," he said. "We are still fighting, and we will not stop."

Kufa is no doubt a sensible place for one of Muqtada al-Sadr's militants to convalesce. To visit this second holy city six miles to the north is to see what Najaf might be like if there were no American Abrams tanks or Bradley armoured vehicles surrounding and exchanging fire with the 1,000 or so Mehdi gunmen in the streets around the Imam Ali Shrine. Najaf is where the prophet's son-in-law was buried; Kufa is where he lived and was stabbed in AD661 as he prayed in the mosque, martyred in the schism that created Shia Islam.

And it is totally in the control of the Mehdi Army, who patrol the streets with AK-47s, rocket launchers and light machine-guns, many of them with ammunition belts draped over their shoulders. One armed insurgent had even dragged a chair into the middle of the road to monitor the Saturday morning traffic.

There are fully manned Mehdi checkpoints inside the city, at one of which, close to the bridge over the Euphrates, another journalist and myself were briefly detained yesterday. With an armed escort of one car in front and two behind, we were taken for our press credentials to be pored over at the Kufa mosque, the Mehdi Army's base.

This is an entire town where the writ of American forces, let alone that of the Iraqi police, does not even begin to run.

But not for want of trying.

Yesterday, US forces launched an attack on Mehdi strongholds in Kufa at what appears to be the cost of at least some US casualties. A local Mehdi commander, Abu Mohamed al-Hilu, told how his forces had lain in wait for the attack after seeing warplanes reconnoitring the area on Friday afternoon.

When the tanks and Humvees, which he said had been carrying heavy machine-guns, approached the Maitham Al-Tamar Mosque, "we let them come in until they were in the range of our weapons. With the shelling and bombardment they didn't expect resistance. But suddenly we started shooting."

Perhaps this US advance, an attempt to broaden the front on which it is fighting to recover the region from the Mehdi Army, had been repelled. But could Mr Sadr win in Najaf against the world's greatest military power? One of Mr Sadr's senior political lieutenants, Sheikh Azhar al-Renani, scarcely hesitated before replying: "The Americans are fighting us with all their money and weapons. We are fighting with the power of God."

And with the power of urban warfare.

While many of the guerrillas come from far across Iraq, they have extensive local knowledge, not least of the Najaf cemetery, which has been a key battleground over the past fortnight. **It stretches north from the holy sites of the city - holy sites which remained firmly in the control of the Mehdi Army yesterday.**

What Kufa helps to illustrate is that even if formal control of the shrine fell into neutral hands, such an advance would hardly mean an end to the fighting. The guerrillas would still control the approaches, just as they control Najaf's neighbour and sister city.

Combat Reports: Resistance Point Of View

Iraqi Resistance Report for events of Monday, 16 August 2004 through Wednesday, 18 August 2004 Translated and/or compiled by Muhammad Abu Nasr, member editorial board The Free Arab Voice

Monday, 16 August 2004

Al-Karmah

Five US troops killed in Resistance bombing in al-Karmah:

An Iraqi Resistance roadside bomb exploded on a road in the city of al-Karmah, destroying one US Humvee and killing all five American troops aboard.

The correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam reported that the blast occurred at 2:30pm Monday afternoon on an earthen road near the ath-Tharthar inlet of the Tigris River. The Resistance planted the bomb along the road and as the Humvee was passing, the bomb went off directly under the vehicle, tossing it into the river where it sank in deep water, killing all aboard.

US divers later recovered the bodies of the dead soldiers from the river at about 3:30pm, all came out of the water dead.

Another Resistance bomb destroys US Humvee in al-Karmah Monday evening:

An Iraqi Resistance bomb exploded under a US Humvee in the city of al-Karmah according to another report posted at 11:30pm Monday by the correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam. The correspondent wrote that the bomb struck the vehicle directly but that the extent of casualties as a result of the blast was not clear, because US troops

sealed off the area shortly after the incident. The Humvee had been a part of an American military column.

Basrah

Resistance attack in al-Basrah leaves nine British troops dead.

Iraqi Resistance forces killed nine British soldiers and wounded five others in a concentrated attack with mortars and rocket-propelled grenades on a British military emplacement in the as'i neighborhood in the southern city of al-Basrah.

The local correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam reported that the attack took place at about 4:30am Mecca time and left several Humvees destroyed and burning.

The attack appeared to have been carefully and well planned to coincide with the presence of the vehicles full of British occupation troops preparing to move out on patrols of the city. The local Mafkarat al-Islam correspondent was told by an Iraqi puppet security source that the British military had acknowledged that there were indeed no fewer than nine dead and five wounded in that particular Resistance attack.

The al-Basrah correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam reported that the Resistance attacked a British patrol on al-Jaza'ir street in the city, and that another Resistance attack struck British forces near the al-Khurah meeting place near the Educational Hospital.

The large concentrations of puppet police and British troops in those areas made an accurate account of British casualties impossible, however.

The Resistance launched a large-scale attack on az-Zubayr Street on a British patrol, leaving heavy losses in materiel and men. Two Humvees were destroyed in the ambush. Eyewitnesses reported that they saw fire blazing at the scene of the attack which showed clear signs of a violent ambush.

Resistance blows up British helicopter parked in al-Basrah: A detachment of Iraqi Resistance fighters destroyed a British helicopter that was parked at a location on the edge of the Shatt al-Arab waterway in al-Basrah from which it would observe movements of the Jaysh al-Mahdi militia.

The local correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam in the city reported that in the attack, which took place at about 3:15am Monday morning Mecca time, the Resistance fired four RPG7 rocket-propelled grenades at the helicopter, destroying it.

Baghdad

US takes losses in heavy battle with Jaysh al-Mahdi in Madinat as-Sadr area of Baghdad Monday afternoon.

Heavy fighting between the Jaysh al-Mahdi and US aggressor troops raged on Monday from afternoon until just before sunset in the so-called Madinat as-Sadr area of Baghdad. **The battle left one tank and five US Humvees destroyed and one other tank knocked out of commission.**

Taji

Resistance pounds four US bases in at-Taji with powerful Grad rockets.

In one of the largest Resistance attacks on a US occupation in Iraq, the Resistance struck four US bases in at-Taji with 10 powerful Grad rockets after sunset on Monday, inflicting heavy damage on the bases. Fires blazed inside and were still burning when the correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam filed his report at 10:00pm Mecca time.

The correspondent wrote that four giant Chinook transport helicopters were observed transporting the dead and wounded out of the bases, an operation that was still underway as the correspondent filed his report hours later in a sure indication of the extent of the losses inflicted by the attack.

The four at-Taji bases serve as support bases for the major US installation at Saddam International Airport.

SUPPLY TRUCKS CAPTURED!

Resistance attacks US column, makes off with four American supply trucks, kills at least six US troops north of Baghdad Monday night.

In an unusual operation Iraqi Resistance forces destroyed one US supply truck laden with provisions for the American troops and drove away four other trucks loaded with food supplies intended for US troops.

The local correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam reported that at 10:15pm Monday evening, the Resistance attacked a column of US troops that was passing along the at-Taji road, north of the city, at the at-Tarimiyah crossroads northeast of at-Taji. The five-truck US column was loaded with food and provisions for American troops. Five or six Humvees accompanied the truck convoy, one at the head of the column and five at the rear.

As the column passed by, the Resistance opened up with rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and the five Humvees at the rear of the column immediately fled, leaving the lead Humvee and the five trucks to the Resistance. Eyewitnesses reported that two of the five truck drivers were killed -- all US military personnel. The Humvee was set ablaze and four soldiers who were aboard it were killed as the vehicle was completely destroyed. **The fire spread from the Humvee to the first truck in the convoy, but the Resistance took the four remaining trucks as war booty, driving them to an unknown destination.**

Tuesday, 17 August 2004.

Six US troops killed on the outskirts of Baghdad Tuesday morning:

At least six US troops were killed on Tuesday morning in the al-Yusufiyah area on the outskirts of Baghdad, when Iraqi Resistance bombs went off under two Humvees. A source in the Iraqi puppet police told the local correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam that the blast, which occurred at 9:00am Tuesday killed at least six US soldiers and wounded four others who were aboard the two vehicles.

As-Saqlawiyah

Resistance rockets a house near as-Saqlawiyah as a spy and his American operators hold a meeting.

According to a report by the local correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam, at noon on Tuesday a known agent of the US aggressors held a meeting with his American superiors at a farm in the Abu Sudayrah rural area in the region of as-Saqlawiyah in order to give them information on the activities of the resistance in the area. But the Resistance itself was observing the developments and fired three rockets at the house while the meeting was in session, striking the building directly and setting it ablaze.

The correspondent writes that it is the habit of the agents of the occupation to hold their meetings in places such as these houses in the middle of farming areas, far from the eyes of the people. But, in this case, it was not far enough for the Americans and their agents.

An-Nasiriyah

Resistance land mine destroys Italian aggressor Jeep, wounding five Italian troops near an-Nasiriyah.

At 4:00am Tuesday morning a powerful Iraqi Resistance land mine exploded under an Italian aggressor patrol moving along the road to the Imam Ali base southwest of the city of an-Nasiriyah, according to a report by the local correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam.

The correspondent reported that one Jeep in the patrol was totally destroyed in the blast, and five Italian invaders who were in the patrol were wounded or possibly killed, though their exact fate is unclear.

The correspondent reported that a witness observed two other Jeeps in the Italian patrol carried away the casualties.

Jaysh al-Mahdi militiamen attacked a detachment of US-backed so-called "Iraqi national guardsmen" -- the so-called "Scorpion" - detachment and took their commander, a captain, prisoner, along with a number of his officers. Jaysh al-Mahdi also took possession of all their supplies and equipment.

Wednesday, 18 August 2004.

Taji

Resistance rockets US East at-Taji base Wednesday morning.

Iraqi Resistance forces attacked the US East at-Taji base with rockets on Wednesday morning according to the local correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam. Eyewitnesses recounted to the correspondent how black smoke rose over the base, indicating that the rockets had struck US materiel directly.

Resistance kills 15 Americans, destroys six tank trucks in convoy near at-Taji.

The Iraqi Resistance attacked a convoy of tank trucks bringing fuel to the US occupation forces at four bases in the area of at-Taji at noon on Wednesday. **The local correspondent of Mafkarat al-Islam reported that the convoy was made up of 12 tankers and six Humvees - two at the front of the column, and four following in the rear. As the convoy approached the Resistance fighters' hiding place, they ambushed it, firing C5K rockets at the vehicles, blowing up six of the tank trucks and killing six drivers.**

The Humvees that were bringing up the rear of the column fled, speeding away and leaving the two Humvees at the van easy prey to the Resistance men. The vehicles were totally destroyed.

A source in the puppet security forces in at-Taji told the Mafkarat al-Islam correspondent that nine US soldiers were killed in the two Humvees. A tenth American soldier was listed as missing, according to the source, but the US side did not know whether he had been captured by the Resistance or simply taken off and killed away from the main scene of the battle.

Abu Ghurayb

Collaborationist tribal leader liquidated by Iraqi Resistance near Abu Ghurayb.

The Shaykh of the al-Bu'Amir tribes in the Abu Ghurayb area was assassinated Wednesday morning by the Iraqi Resistance. According to a report carried by Quds Press, witnesses reported that Fadil ash-Shibli was killed when Resistance fighters ambushed him, firing five bullets into his head.

Residents of the area told Quds Press that Shaykh ash-Shibli had received death threats because of his relations with the US occupation, telling him that he would be assassinated if he did not break off his relations with the US occupation. **Ash-Shibli, they said, had played a major role in informing on the Resistance fighters and had far ranging relations with the occupation forces. The local people believed that it was ash-Shibli's activity in this regard that caused his killing.**

TROOP NEWS

**Reporter Makes Amazing Discovery
About Troops In Iraq**

[Los Angeles Times, August 11, 2004]

Despite military efforts, troops are unable to avoid combat during summer.

Health woes have sidelined some as temperatures near 130. Some GIs fighting rebels in Najaf have been struck down by the oppressive summer heat.

More Fresh Meat For Bush's Slaughterhouse; Isle Marines On Okinawa Get Orders For Iraq

August 23, 2004 By Gregg K. Kakesako, Honolulu Star-Bulletin

Two Kaneohe Bay units with nearly 1,000 Marines will be part of the USS Essex Amphibious Readiness Group for at least a seven-month Middle East deployment to support operations in Iraq.

A Pacific Fleet spokesman said the 2,000-member 31st MEU will be loaded on the amphibious assault ships USS Essex, USS Juneau and USS Harpers Ferry. **They are expected to leave Okinawa by the end of the week.**

The main ground combat unit of the 31st MEU is the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, with more than 900 Marines who left Hawaii July 3 on a scheduled seven-month deployment to Okinawa.

Also part of the 31st MEU are the 70 Marines and six CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters from Kaneohe's Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 463. The unit left Kaneohe in April and is assigned to Okinawa's Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265, the aviation element of the 31st MEU.

The Kaneohe aviators and air crews were supposed to be in Okinawa for only seven months.

There are more than 4,500 Schofield Barracks soldiers in Iraq. Also in Iraq are 300 Army reservists from the Hawaii-based 411th Combat Engineer Battalion; 200 Hawaii Army National Guard aviators and air crew members from Charlie Company, 193rd Aviation, with the 1st Infantry Division; and 200 members of Kaneohe's 3rd Radio Battalion. More than 2,000 soldiers from Hawaii's 29th Infantry Brigade reported for active duty last Monday in anticipation of a year-long assignment in Iraq beginning in February.

In Afghanistan are more than 5,500 Schofield Barracks soldiers and more than 60 Hawaii Army National Guard soldiers who belong to Bravo Company, 193rd Aviation.

Arrest This Officer

Aug 10 Chris Shumway, The NewStandard

The Christian Science Monitor reported that doctors at Al-Hakim told relatives of wounded residents that US and Iraqi forces had taken over the city's best-equipped hospital, turning it into a temporary military base and making it off limits to civilians.

The use of civilian hospitals for combat operations and the prevention of civilian access to emergency facilities are both strictly forbidden by the Fourth Geneva Convention.

(And therefore, the officer who ordered the hospital turned into a fortified position is a criminal subject to immediate arrest.)

Called "Un-American," Iraq Soldier Picks Nader

8.23.04 By CHRISTOPHER COOPER, Wall St. Journal

WHEN U.S. ARMY SPC. Colby Buzzell's squad in Iraq was asked who wanted to vote this November, only one soldier raised his hand—and he quickly lowered it when nobody followed suit, Spc. Buzzell recalls.

The Army's response was swift. Soldiers were told to show up at formation at 8 a.m. the next day with ID cards and pens. At this mass muster of about 150 soldiers, an Army captain delivered a stirring defense of the Constitution, reminding soldiers of the responsibilities of citizenship and the benefits of the American way.

"He didn't order us to register, but he told us that it was un-American if we didn't," Spc. Buzzell says in a phone conversation.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that even regular Army soldiers are far from unanimous agreement over the decision to wage war in Iraq.

"That captain's speech sparked some big-time political discussions around the base," says Spc. Buzzell, a regular Army soldier. "I think people back home would be shocked to find out how many soldiers could end up voting for Kerry."

Meanwhile, Spc. Buzzell says the captain's speech motivated him to vote, though his leanings seem destined to disappoint both major parties.

"I know it's trendy but I registered as an independent," the San Francisco native says. —"I think I'm going for Ralph Nader."

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

Missing The Point

(Washington Post, August 23, 2004, Pg. 14)

The Pentagon inspector general's office has issued its report on Lt. Gen. William G. Boykin's anti-Islamic remarks. And as one would expect, it avoids the important issue of whether the Defense Department ought to be espousing religious bigotry and whether the defense secretary ought to take action when a senior officer does just that. "We're still waiting for Mr. Rumsfeld to answer that question." **(Thanks to B, who pointed out that if you're an lunatic general and you support Bush, or the war, you can say what you want in uniform. But if you oppose Bush or the war, and you open your mouth in uniform, and sometimes out of it, the try to drop the world on you.)**

Wonderful News: Troops To Get Medical Treatment "Comparable To" Abu Ghraib Prisoners

8.20.04 By Jess Bravin, Wall St. Journal

Defense Department spokesman James Turner said medical care provided to prisoners and detainees meets standards "comparable to those for U.S. personnel."

Dr. Miles said in one instance at Abu Ghraib "a medic inserted an intravenous catheter into the corpse of a detainee who died under torture in order to create evidence that he was alive at the hospital."

Troops Return From Iraq, Voice Fear Over Attacks

Aug. 23, 2004 The Japan Times

SAPPORO (Kyodo) About 100 ground troops returned home from Iraq on Sunday, with some voicing concern over deteriorating security in the southern city of Samawah where they were stationed.

The troops arrived at an Air Self-Defense Force base in Chitose, Hokkaido, in the morning and went to a GSDF base in Sapporo to be reunited with their relatives and see colleagues.

Some of the GSDF personnel said the numerous mortar shells that were recently fired near their camp in Samawah had been a cause of extreme concern.

"I felt like, 'Oh, this is it'," Maj. Nobuo Kobayashi, 45, told reporters, recalling the fear he felt. "I never took off my bulletproof jacket."

Dutch troops also based in Samawah have recently come under a spate of attacks believed carried out by the Mahdi Army militia loyal to radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Mehdi's Army Attacks Amara Prison And Releases Prisoners

Amara, 22 August 2004 FOCUS News Agency

Shiite rebels from the Mehdi's Army of cleric Muqtada Sadr have captured the central prison in the city of Amara, South Iraq, and released all prisoners, News Ru announced, referring to the Qatar information agency.

According to witnesses, the Shiite rebels opened fire at local police, guarding the building of the prison and then they entered inside.

Among the released prisoners there were detainees accused of using arms against coalition forces and the police, RIA Novosti announced.

<p>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

Insurgents Kill Tikrit Bridge Repair Contractors

23 Aug 2004 (Reuters)

A Turkish contractor and two Iraqis were killed in an ambush in the northern city of Tikrit on Monday, a spokesman for the U.S. 1st Infantry Division said. The spokesman said the men worked for a construction company responsible for repairing bridges in Tikrit.

Be Advised:

August 23, 2004 Abdul Hussein Al-Obeidi, *Associated Press*

“If the confrontation in Najaf is not defused, it will inflame emotions and may create unpredictable conditions,” said Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who heads the 57-member Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Pro-U.S. Official Killed

23/08/2004 Kirkuk, Iraq, Aug 21, SPA

An official belonging to one of the main Kurdish parties in northern Iraq was gunned down in a drive-by shooting, police said Monday.

Sharzad Hassan, 31, was returning to his home in Kirkuk late Sunday when gunmen opened fire as they drove by his house in a mainly Arab neighborhood in the city said police officer Sarhat Qadir. Hassan was a "peshmerga" fighter and member of the pro-U.S. Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

Filipino Engineer Injured In Ambush

Aug 23, 2004 By TJ Burgonio, Inquirer News Service

A FILIPINO telecommunications engineer, who was wounded in an ambush in Mosul, Iraq last Sunday will undergo surgery for treatment of his bullet wounds, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said Monday.

Danilo Pasia, an engineer working for a unit of the German conglomerate Siemens, is confined at the Al-Jumuhiri hospital in Mosul, government officials said in a statement late Monday.

Pasia, an Indonesian engineer and two Iraqi security escorts were fired upon by insurgents while driving toward their compound in Mosul. The Indonesian and two Iraqis were killed.

War Supplies Truck Driver Killed

BASRA, Iraq, Aug 23 (AFP)

A Kurdish truck driver was killed and two others wounded on the road between Kirkuk and Tikrit when their convoy carrying concrete blocks used by coalition forces to protect their bases was attacked, the same source said.

OCCUPATION REPORT

The Day Allawi Talked The Talk And Ran Away

Aug 10 Chris Shumway, The NewStandard

Prime Minister Iyad Allawi made a brief visit to Najaf on Sunday during which he took a tough stance against Mehdi fighters. "There is no negotiation with any militia that bears arms against Iraq and the Iraqi people," he said.

In his Monday news conference, Al-Sadr rejected Allawi's offer and issued a sharp criticism of the prime minister's government, saying Baghdad "should be on the side of the people and not use the same weapons as Saddam Hussein."

Mehdi fighters also did not appear to heed Allawi's words.

While the prime minister was meeting with US and Iraqi military officials, militia members conducted a bold, daytime attack against Najaf's main police station, the LA Times reported.

As Iraqi police called for US help, Allawi and his entourage were quickly whisked out of town, back to Baghdad.

IRAQI DESERTION RATE EXCEEDS 80%; (WITH ALLAWI, MAKE THAT 80.5%)

August 22, 2004 [MENL] WASHINGTON, -- Iraq's security forces, ordered to prepare for an offensive against the Mahdi Army in Najaf, have been plagued by a desertion rate that exceeded 80 percent.

A U.S. report warned that Iraqi Interior Ministry troops remain unprepared to fight Shi'ite or Sunni insurgents and could not be deemed reliable. The report, published before the current showdown in Najaf, said the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, renamed

the Iraqi National Guard, has not been trained to fight insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades and heavy weapons.

The United States was said to have spent \$1.2 billion in developing Iraq's security forces, which now number around 220,000. The Iraqi units include the military, police and Interior Ministry forces.

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.**

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Murderous Clowns Assemble To Plan Fresh Disasters

August 23, 2004 By Deb Riechmann, Associated Press

CRAWFORD, Texas — President Bush was mapping out defense strategy with his top advisers Monday as U.S. deaths in Iraq inched toward 1,000 and analysts predicted U.S. troop strength in Iraq would dominate the policy sessions.

Vice President Dick Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Richard Myers and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice are among those set to attend the meeting Monday at the president's ranch. Gen. George Casey, the senior U.S. officer in Iraq, and Gen. John Abizaid, head of the U.S. Central Command, planned to participate via a video conference.

On Sunday, a small number of people opposed to the war in Iraq gathered a few miles (kilometers) from Bush's ranch at a home dubbed the "Peace House." It's has been run since last year by peace activists who don't want Bush to be the only voice in Crawford.

Amira Matsuda, 46, an Iraqi-born mother of four from Plano, Texas, said that while Bush talks of liberation and reconstruction, her homeland is "falling apart." She said many Iraqis think those being trained for the Iraqi security force are siding with Americans.

"That's why you see in Najaf police security forces being killed or kidnapped," she said. "Stability in my opinion will never take place because people are not happy with the occupation."

Soldier-Killers #1 And #2



(Kevin Lamarque/Reuters)



(Larry Downing/Reuters)

“JENNA CAUGHT IT. JENNA CAUGHT THE FISH!”

August 20, 2004 By David Vaughn, www.freebuck.com

“Bush shouted to journalists from his father’s boat.” Scott Lindlaw, Associated Press, 8-7-2004

Our world is becoming a more treacherous place. But in the middle of all these crises I feel comforted & at peace to know that “...JENNA CAUGHT THE FISH...”
And more?

“Rods & reels in hand, the family set out together in the morning on the Fidelity III, the new powerboat. Three 275-horsepower engines rumbled beneath the boat, which can reach speeds of up to 75 mph.” Scott Lindlaw, Associated Press, 8-7-2004

Yes, good to know that while our sons & daughters are dying in Iraq that Bush is making every effort to make certain that there will be a continued need for all that Iraqi oil as he powers up that new speedboat with not 1, not 2, but 3 - 275 horsepower engines.

And I know the fishing & boating industry is happy as they watch Jenna catch her fish & observe Daddy riding off into the sunset in his gas guzzling power boat.

“Earlier Saturday, several family members climbed onto the family speed boat for a fishing expedition. One of President Bush’s twin daughters reeled in a 38-inch striped bass, the president announced.” Scott Lindlaw, Associated Press, 8-7-2004

House Candidate Says Bring The Troops Home Now! Finally, Somebody Worth Voting For

Kevin Akin is the State Chair (2004-06) and a founding member of the Peace and Freedom party (PFP) in **California**.

Kevin has been involved in politics for over 38 years and he is still going strong.

Check out Kevin Akin's response to our questionnaire below, and then come out on August 28 to meet him personally at the Weapons of Mass Democracy (WMD) show featuring All Or Nothing HC, Conspiracy of Thought, and Death 4 Freedom!

Thanks again, Randall Lopez (909) 645-2776 hometown.aol.com/jaclord50/page1.html

Weapons of Mass Democracy Speaker Questionnaire Developed by Randall Lopez

Name: Kevin Akin

Age: 54

Q. Political affiliation:

A. Peace and Freedom Party

Q. Office you are seeking:

A. U.S. House of Representatives, 44th District

Q. Brief self-description

A. Long-time activist in Riverside area on peace and justice issues, life-long active union member, proud father of four adult children, married to Margie Akin for 31 years.

Next, please answer the following questions:

Q. What will be your first issue, or problem to tackle?

A. Two things: **All troops out of Iraq NOW**. And on the home front, double the minimum wage and index it to the cost of living.

Q. How will you deal with the U.S.-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan?

A. **Our troops should be brought home now.**

More Info: <http://www.la-peaceandfreedom.org/>

(Well, that's a start. Too bad all three leading Presidential candidates [Bush, Kerry and Nader] are flatly opposed to bringing the troops home now. But hey, they're not dying in Iraq. They're safe at home playing politician. Fuck 'em. No election ever stopped a war. Real movements on the ground do that.)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

U.S. Apologizes For Checkpoint Deaths

August 23, 2004 By Paul Haven, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S. military on Monday apologized for the deaths of three unarmed Afghans, shot by American troops after their pickup truck failed to stop at a road checkpoint.

A man and two women died and two others — a man and a woman — were critically wounded. They are being treated by the U.S. military and remain in serious condition. An infant who was uninjured in the shooting has also been brought to a military hospital.

Local leaders have repeatedly complained of heavy-handed tactics by the U.S.-dominated coalition, especially during searches that sometimes involve air power and take place in the dead of night.

Rights groups warn that the muscular approach may have caused unnecessary deaths and stoked sympathy for Taliban rebels who continue to defy the currently 18,000-strong force.

CLASS WAR NEWS

It's Official:

Money *Can* Buy Happiness

By JENNIFER CORHETT DOOREN, *Dow Jones Newswires*, 7.29.04

WASHINGTON—Perhaps money *can* buy happiness.

The results of a survey by researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that Americans with incomes of more than \$50,000 reported fewer “sad, blue or depressed” days than those with incomes below that amount.

Overall, the results from annual surveys of Americans from 1995 to 2000 showed Americans feel sad, blue or depressed an average of three days a month. The findings were published in the online journal *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*.

People in households with at least \$50,000 reported 1.7 depressive days each month, less than the 5.4 days reported by those earning less than \$15,000. People earning less than \$50,000 but more than \$15,000 reported feeling blue 2.2 to 3.2 days a month.

In general, the survey found that younger people reported feeling sad, blue or depressed more often than older people and **that those with college degrees were happier than those without a high school diploma.**

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Web Copies

For back issues see: GI Special web site at <http://www.militaryproject.org/>

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

<http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/> ; www.qifightback.org ;

<http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/qi-special.htm>