

GI SPECIAL 2#B56



U.S. Conceding Rebels Control Of Key Regions In Iraq

08 September 2004 By Eric Schmitt and Steven R. Weisman, The New York Times

WASHINGTON - As American military deaths in Iraq operations surpassed the 1,000 mark, top Pentagon officials said Tuesday that insurgents controlled important parts of central Iraq and that it was unclear when American and Iraqi forces would be able to secure those areas.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and Gen. Richard B. Myers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said at a news conference that the American strategy in retaking rebel-held strongholds hinged on training and equipping Iraqi forces to take the lead.

Mr. Rumsfeld said Iraqi officials understood they must regain control of the insurgent safe havens. "They get it, and will find a way over time to deal with it," he said.

But General Myers said the Iraqi forces would probably not be ready to confront insurgents in those areas until the end of this year.

Their comments, which came after a two-day spike in violence in Iraq led to a surge in American military deaths, represented an acknowledgment that the Americans had failed to end an increasingly sophisticated insurgency in important Sunni-dominated areas and in certain Shiite enclaves.

The cities of greatest rebel control are Ramadi, Falluja, Baquba and Samarra, in the so-called Sunni triangle, west and north of Baghdad.

Administration officials say no decision has been made yet for American forces to attack those strongholds. The preference is for Iraqi forces to do the job

A senior American official said force would be tried by the Iraqi government only after a couple of months' discussions with rebels.

A two-month hiatus before major force is applied to rebel areas would also mean a delay until after the American presidential election

Maj. Gen. John R. Batiste, the commander of the Army's First Infantry Division, whose area north of Baghdad includes Tikrit and Samarra, disputed reports that the United States had given up in Samarra.

"Samarra is a city where Iraqis are taking charge to throw out anti-Iraqi forces," he said in an e-mail message on Tuesday. "No one has ceded the city to insurgents and there is no cordon. What we have in Samarra is the good people of Iraq, led by far-sighted provincial and city leadership, senior sheiks, and clerics, standing up to the enemy." **(In the field of psychology, this is called a "delusional system," meaning a view of the world having nothing whatever to do with reality. Just exactly what one wants in a commanding officer when one's life is at stake.)**

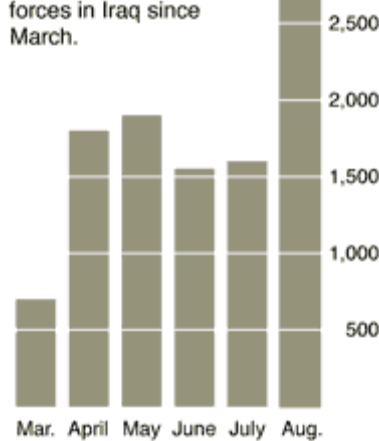
Residents, however, say insurgents effectively control Samarra. (What the fuck do they know? They just live there. Well, silly General Batiste can prove who is right. He can rent a nice apartment in downtown Samarara and move in so he can see the Occupation "taking charge" up close and personal.)

Other American officials are more pessimistic about the prospects for regaining control of those areas.

One noted, for example, that attacks on American forces rose to 2,700 in August, from 700 in March.

A Jump in Attacks

Estimated number of attacks on American forces in Iraq since March.



Source: Multinational Force-Iraq
The New York Times

Resistance Takes Control Of Basra: British Limited To 100 Yard Patrols; All Roads Cut

September 8, 2004 Green Left Weekly, Doug Lorimer

The August 27 London *Daily Telegraph* reported that since “the start of the uprising in the holy city of Najaf earlier this month **there has been a `lockdown' at the Office of the British Embassy in Basra, an extension of the Baghdad embassy, as militiamen loyal to the radical cleric Moqtada al Sadr have taken control of large areas of the city**”.

The only way in or out of the British diplomatic office in Basra, Iraq's second largest city with 2 million inhabitants, has been by helicopter.

On August 31, the London daily reported that “the British army has stopped patrolling the streets of Basra... With troops now moving only in armoured vehicles on patrols not more than 100 yards from base, forces loyal to rebel cleric Moqtada al Sadr have stepped into the vacuum, roaming the streets with rocket-propelled grenades and AK-47s.”

One By One, Iraqi Cities Become No-Go Zones

[New York Times, September 5, 2004]

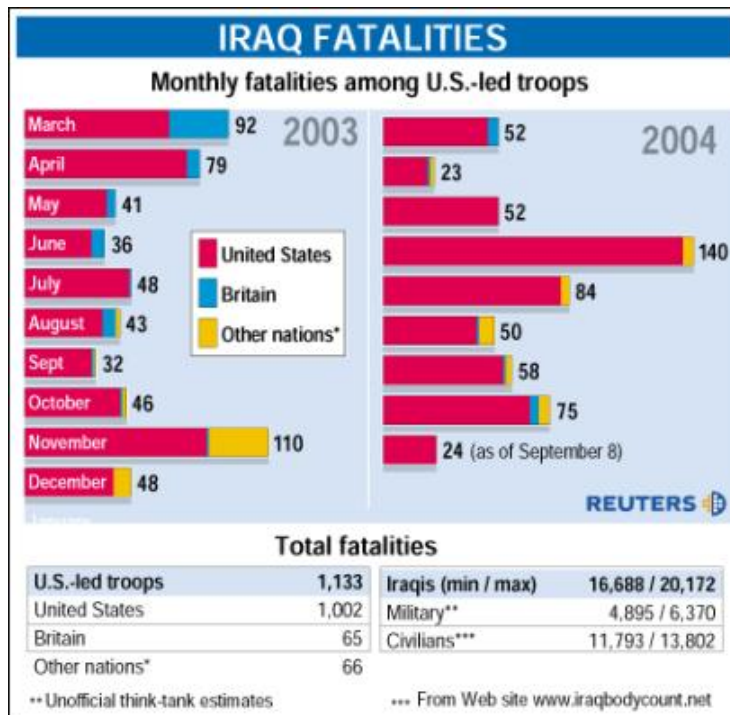
The U.S. military has begun stepping back from various locales in Iraq, feeling the better part of valor is to let insurgents take over. **The list of places where American soldiers have either withdrawn or visit only rarely is growing.** Places like Fallujah and Ramadi are on that list.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Rumsfeld Calls 1000 Fatalities So Far “Relatively Small”

[Los Angeles Times, September 8, 2004, Pg. 1]

U.S. military deaths in Iraq have reached the 1,000 mark. Secretary Rumsfeld said the death toll illustrates that the U.S. is aggressively engaging terrorists around the world, and in the overall scheme of the Iraq war, the losses are “relatively small.”



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.

TASK FORCE BAGHDAD SOLDIER KILLED IN IED ATTACK

September 8, 2004 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
Release Number: 04-09-12C

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- One Task Force Baghdad Soldier was killed Sept. 8 at about 5:30 a.m. after an improvised explosive device detonated in eastern Baghdad. Two additional Soldiers were wounded in the attack. The wounded Soldiers were evacuated to a medical facility.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Convoy Attack

9.8.04 BAGHDAD (Reuters) - One U.S. soldier was killed and another wounded in an attack on a convoy early on Wednesday near the town of Balad, 50 miles north of Baghdad, the U.S. military said.

Friends Talk Of Dead Soldier's Fears; “A Feeling Something Bad Was Going To Happen”

September 8, 2004 The Associated Press, DALLAS

Army Pvt. Ryan Michael McCauley died Sunday, just 17 days after visiting family and friends in Lewisville. Before shipping out, he confided in his friends he was concerned about going back to Iraq.

"He wasn't, like, not wanting to go -- he was just scared," Donald Templeton, 20, of Lewisville told The Dallas Morning News in Wednesday editions. "He had a feeling deep down that something bad was going to happen. We both kind of did."

"He was a big teddy bear. He had a lot of friends who really cared about him," said Tiffany McCauley, 23, his sister. McCauley, who sported a tattoo on his arm of an eagle bursting through an American flag, joined the Army and graduated from boot camp at Fort Benning, Ga., in June 2003.

The 20-year-old was adamant about going into the Army, said his friend Austin Cude, 20, of Denton.

"He told us that he knew what he was doing and liked what he was doing. He wasn't doing anything he didn't want to do," Cude said.

McCauley will be buried in Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery.

Convoy Ambush Wounds Three



9.8.04: A burning US Humvee lies on the road after it was hit by a roadside bomb on the outskirts of Baghdad. (AFP/Marwan Naamani)

9.8.04 Reuters: Insurgents attacked a U.S. military convoy on the motorway west from the Iraqi capital Baghdad, setting three military vehicles on fire and wounding at least three troops, a Reuters witness said.

Military Copter Crash Near Baghdad

9/8/2004 BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)

A U.S. military helicopter crashed Wednesday west of Baghdad, but all four personnel aboard survived, the U.S. command said.

A terse statement from the U.S. Marine base at Camp Fallujah gave no precise location, no time of the crash and did not say what type of helicopter was involved nor whether it was downed by hostile fire.

U.S. officials refused to provide more information.

However, residents of the area said the crash occurred about 20 miles south of Fallujah, controlled by Sunni Muslim militants.

"The helicopter is still burning and warplanes are flying over the area," one resident, Ahmed Mosleh, told The Associated Press. "A military convoy is heading in the direction of the crash."

About 25 U.S. military helicopters have crashed in Iraq since May 2003, of which some 15 were brought down by hostile fire.

**EXCEPTIONALLY BAD PLACE TO BE;
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**



A silhouette of US troops under the Tar Tar bridge on the outskirts of the Sunni Muslim city of Fallujah. (AFP/File/Mauricio Lima)

A Patrol In Baghdad; Under Attack Every Step; In And Out In A Hurry

September 07, 2004 By Matthew Cox, Army Times staff writer

BAGHDAD – The column of 12 1st Cavalry Division up-armored Humvees moves up a main road here in Sadr City on Monday as if they are on a routine presence patrol.

“We are ready to make our move to the target — Blue, White, Red [platoons] make your move. Let’s go. Kick it!” Capt. Steve Gventer, commander of Cobra Company, orders over his radio.

Four M1A2 Abrams tanks from 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment roll in to provide security as Cobra’s Humvees accelerate up the road and converge on a strip of storefronts and two-story buildings.

Soldiers jump out of the Humvees and form into a squad.

Then several rifle shots ring out from a hidden position in the nearby buildings.

An improvised explosive device detonates just down the block near a tank but inflicts minor damage.

“We’ve got to be prepared for a counterattack,” Lt. Col. Lopez Carter, 2-8’s commander tells Gventer. **“They definitely don’t like us being here, so they may come at us.”**

One of the detainees turns out to be the assistant of the prayer house’s Sayed, or prayer leader. He quietly tells Gventer, through an interpreter, that the Sayed lets fighters come to the prayer house with weapons and leave them there.

Another explosion erupts nearby.

An unseen gunman continues to fire as soldiers search several of the surrounding buildings but can’t locate his position to return fire.

The unit quickly wraps up its search and leaves the area with the weapons and seven Iraqi detainees.

A Small Slice Of Daily Combat

September 07, 2004 By Matthew Cox, Army Times staff writer & 9.8 Luke Hardin, The Guardian

BAGHDAD – A 1st Cavalry Division soldier was wounded today when insurgents fired a rocket propelled grenade into an up-armored Humvee that was part of a Humanitarian Aid mission.

Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion of the 7th Cavalry regiment had just delivered a truckload of food and cooking supplies to a women’s hospital in Sadr City when an explosion rocked the tail end of the vehicle column. Soldiers immediately opened up with heavy machinegun fire.

“Medic! Medic!” came an urgent cry from down the road.

A medic and several other soldiers sprint down the main road, toward the wounded soldier’s location. At the same time, the Humvee that was hit speeds past them and screeches to a halt.

The soldier is gently lifted out of his rear passenger seat by his buddies and placed on the road.

“Hey, I’ve got right shoulder and right arm” wounds, one soldiers calls out as the group removes the soldier’s body armor and bloody desert camouflage top.

The RPG round hit the Humvee in the rear directly behind where the soldier sat.

“Watch that way, damn it! Get security!” one sergeant shouts to soldiers, who scan the area with weapons pointed in the direction of the attack.

Medics work quickly to bandage the shrapnel wounds on the soldier's arm, shoulder, underarm and right side of his face.

"Keep talking to me," Sgt. 1st Class Wade Ragland tells the soldier, trying to keep him from falling unconscious. "Keep talking to me. I want you to stay awake."

Capt. Steve Gventer, runs up.

"Hey, I need him in a truck as soon as he's set!" Gventer shouts, while talking into a radio. He decides to send the soldier by Humvee to nearby Forward Operating Base Iron Horse, where he could be flown out if necessary.

Just as the soldier is loaded into the Humvee, an Iraqi interpreter and another man come running up, carrying a wounded Iraqi man, lying limp on a stretcher, from direction of the attack.

"Is that the guy that shot us?!" Gventer shouts, pointing at the wounded Iraqi. The interpreter shakes his head and explains the man was not involved in the fight.

"Then pick him up and let's go!" Gventer yells, as he and another soldier help carry the man to the women's hospital, before leaving the scene.

As the soldiers head out, an insurgent positioned between two vehicles at the roadside fires another RPG round at them, it sails between two Humvees. A soldier on one Humvee wheels the M240B machine gun and takes out the shooter.

The wounded soldier, whose injuries reportedly are not life-threatening, soon was medevaced to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

<p>Yesterday, the US military said it came under attack numerous times. "We just kept coming under fire," said Captain Brian O'Malley.</p>

Samarra Resistance Will Fall, 1st ID Commander Says

September 08, 2004 By Jim Krane, Associated Press

TIKRIT, Iraq — **One way or another, the Army and its Iraqi allies will seize the rebel-held city of Samarra before January's general election**, the commander responsible for the city said Wednesday.

"It'll be a quick fight and the enemy is going to die fast," Army Maj. Gen. John Batiste said in an interview at his headquarters in a grandiose palace complex built by Saddam Hussein in Tikrit.

“The message for the people of Samarra is: peacefully or not, this is going to be solved.”

(Sept. 9, 1781: One way or another, the British Army and its American allies will seize the rebel held city of Philadelphia before January, the British commander responsible said Wednesday. “It’ll be a quick fight and the enemy is going to die fast,” Army Maj. Gen. Cornwallis said in an interview. “The message to the people of Philadelphia, Trenton, Boston, and Richmond is: peacefully or not, this is going to be solved.”

(General George Washington, leader of the terrorist forces, could not be reached for comment. Mr. Patrick Henry [one of the most fanatical of the terrorist leaders who have brought ruin and devastation to the Colonies in their vicious guerilla warfare campaign against British troops organizing peace and stability] claimed that the insurgents would continue the fight. However, informed sources report the American population welcomes the British Army, and the insurgents are quickly losing support, except for a few die-hard remnants.)

TROOP NEWS

US Officers In Iraq Say 1,000 Deaths Meaningless; “It’s Just Another Number” But Bullshit “Wearing Thin” For Young Soldiers: “I Want To Go Home”

(THANKS TO B WHO E-MAILED THIS IN: B WRITES: LIFERS ARE ASSHOLES)

BAQUBA, Iraq (AFP) - The deaths of 1,000 American troops in Iraq since the 2003 invasion to topple Saddam Hussein has only strengthened US resolve to restore security to the strife-torn country, officers said.

Dismissing parallels with the 1961-75 war in Vietnam, officers lashed out at the media for playing the grim-reaper over the mounting casualty toll.

"It sucks. The newspapers glorify it. Everyday, reporting the numbers going up and up, trying to push a point," said Captain Gregory Wingard, 39, at the 1st Infantry Division's Camp Warhorse near Baquba, north of Baghdad.

"Sad as it is for those 1,000 families and their friends, **they're nothing to the number of Iraqis that get killed trying to defend their own families,**" he added, smoking a cigar with friends under the stars. **(He's right, and they're fighting, arms in hand, to defend their families from the U.S. invasion and occupation of their country. They are right to do so.)**

"The scary thing is its not like facing a normal enemy and you've got a good chance of fighting back. You're just tooling down the road and boom there's an explosion," **said National Guard Major Tony Quinn, from North Carolina.**

"**If 1,000 died today, that'd be pretty significant, but its just another number,**" said 36-year-old Quinn, who is based along the Iran-Iraqi border.

"Every single soldier knows the risk. You do the best you can with your day and don't think about it. If I was to get killed tomorrow by an IED, I would not regret coming over here," said Captain Michael Adams, 37, from Oregon.

But for several young soldiers, barely old enough to graduate from college or have a beer in a US bar, the horror of war and the separation from loved ones is wearing thin.

"I'm scared even to take a shower in case they mortar us. I want to go home and be with my wife and start a family," said Specialist Luis Cruz, 21, from Puerto Rico, also based near Baquba.

"Once in a while people make comparisons, but I don't think *the majority* of soldiers feel there are any similarities [with Vietnam]," said Quinn.

"We are winning the hearts and minds... It's nothing like Vietnam. We're still missing 60,000, 52,000 were killed. We've had 1,000 soldiers die, how can you make a comparison?" said Wingard. (The U.S. government now admits that the resistance troops are up from 5,000 earlier this year to 20,000 now. If Wingard isn't lying, he's too stupid to find his feet with a flashlight and a roadmap.)

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/>

Government Fucks Over Their Own Called Up Workers

[Washington Post, September 7, 2004, Pg. B2]

Congress and the White House don't appear to be enthusiastic about a proposal that would make up any shortfall in salary when a federal employee is called to active duty in the National Guard or reserves.

Kansas Town Of 19,000 Loses Four In The War; Believes Someday It Will Make Sense

[USA Today, September 8, 2004, Pg. 1]

Derby, a small town in Kansas, has lost four of its young men to the war on terror. Residents of Derby believe that at some point the sacrifices made by those men will make sense---right now, though, their deaths are just hard to accept.

Small Town Mourns Loss Of Two Soldiers; Father Says America "Badly Misled" About War



SGT. SHAWNA MORRISON

"In spite of the fact that we all support the troops in every little way that we can, we want them back as soon as possible," she said.

September 8, 2004 WLS Television, (Paris, Ill.) & By Jamie Fetty and Howard Greninger/Tribune-Star/Paris, Ill.

War has intruded again in this eastern Illinois town of 9,000 people. It has intruded before; when the 177 members of the Illinois National Guard's 1544th Transportation Co. left late last year for duty in Iraq and when two unit members from other Illinois towns were killed in explosions two months apart this spring.

But this time, the war has taken the life of a native daughter, Sgt. Shawna Morrison, and one of her comrades, Spc. Charles Lamb, from nearby Martinsville.

"The 1544th is housed here. This is their home base, so this is the kind of news that we had been dreading since they left," said Mayor Craig Smith. "You hear about the mortar attacks, you hear about the suicide bombers and you keep thinking, 'Is it going to happen to our kids?' Now it has."

Morrison, 26, and Lamb, 23, died Sunday when mortar rounds struck their base on the western outskirts of Baghdad, the military said. Fifteen other soldiers from the unit were injured, one of them critically.

Morrison, who handled computer and satellite communications for the unit, died after sustaining shrapnel wounds to her head, said her father, Rick Morrison of Paris.

"She was super. She had a bubbly personality," he said. "She was a person you always wanted to be around. She wore her heart on her sleeve."

It was Shawna Morrison's adventurous spirit that propelled her to seek the new, the different, the stimulating, in life.

"She liked to try things, go new places, try new food," said her brother, Allan Morrison. "She liked to test stuff out."

While still in high school, the Paris girl signed up for the Illinois Army National Guard. Last November, while away in college in Champaign, Ill., she was called to active duty.

Morrison had been studying psychology at the U of I while working jobs in two restaurants to support herself.

The Morrisons moved to the Paris area from Detroit when Shawna was 10, her father said.

Shawna belonged to the track team and the flag corps at Paris High School. She had hoped to attend Allan's graduation this spring, Allan said.

"She will be dearly missed. It hit a lot of people hard, not just the family," Rick Morrison said.

The family often took fishing trips that Shawna looked forward to, Rick Morrison said, and his daughter never minded threading a worm onto a hook.

"She always had a smile. She had a super personality and was great to be around. She would laugh at anything," he said.

A junior in college when she arrived in Iraq, Shawna planned at some point in her life to have children, her father said. Shawna often reported to her family with awe the things teenagers and young adults in her unit did.

"She felt like a mother to those kids in her unit," Rick said of Shawna, who was in the Guard eight years. "She was impressed by it all."

While Shawna never complained about her military duties, she sometimes got frustrated working to help a nation while many of its people tried to push her and other soldiers out. Rick Morrison said the recent murder of an Iraqi family working with Shawna and other Guard members left her somewhat disenchanted.

The last time they spoke was by telephone on Saturday, when she asked him for a new vacuum for a rug she couldn't get clean.

Rick Morrison said he was a supporter of the Iraq war when it was first proposed in 2002. Since then, he has begun to feel that America was "badly misled" and fears that generations of soldiers may have to work to finish what was started.

A stream of people, reporters and neighbors alike, have visited the family since his daughter died, Rick Morrison said. A fellow soldier's mother arrived wearing a button with Shawna's picture and shared a tearful hug with Rick on Tuesday evening.

A sign outside the McDonald's restaurant where her mother worked read: "In memory of Shawna. You will be missed."

Lamb's father, Tom Lamb of Martinsville, said his son was a mechanic and had joined the National Guard after graduating from high school six years ago. He is survived by his parents and wife, Erin. "He was proud of what he was doing," Tom Lamb said.

Wanda Ciulla left a basket of purple mums adorned with an American flag under the sign bearing Morrison's name Tuesday evening.

"I wanted to help in whatever small way that I can," said Ciulla, whose own son, Satya, is a former member of the 1544th now serving with another unit in Iraq. "I'm sure I would be feeling a sense of comfort if someone did little things for us."

But Ciulla said she and other parents want to know when the troops will come home.

"In spite of the fact that we all support the troops in every little way that we can, we want them back as soon as possible," she said.

Smith said those deaths were difficult to bear, but Morrison's will be even tougher because she was from Paris. "My children knew Shawna," he said.

Three other members of the unit were seriously hurt in Sunday's attack, and a dozen more suffered minor injuries, said National Guard public information officer Bud Roberts in Springfield.

Roberts had no other information about the injured, but one was identified by family members as Aaron Wernz of Marshall, which is about 15 miles south of Paris. He was in critical condition at an Army hospital in Germany, suffering from shrapnel wounds to his face, chest and abdomen, said his father, Albert Wernz.

"One of his best buddies picked him up and took him straight to the hospital," Wernz said. "That may have saved his life, right there."

The 1544th is attached to the Army's 13th Corps Support Command, which oversees distribution of military fuel, food, water and other supplies to U.S. forces across Iraq. Shawna Morrison was working mostly in ensuring that communication was maintained between units.

A prayer service for the troops' families was planned Wednesday evening at the First United Methodist Church in Marshall, Wernz said.

Smith, the Paris mayor, said a tribute to Morrison and Lamb would be planned "once the families have had a chance to grieve."

"We're not used to this," he said. "This is a National Guard unit, and I'm sure none of their parents envisioned ... their children would be in harm's way in a war."

Fathers Of Soldiers Killed In Iraq Took War Protest To Floor Of RNC

9.3.04 Joshua Bearman & September 2, 2004 by David Washburn, San Diego Union-Tribune

Three protesters made it into Madison Square Garden on the final night of the RNC to disrupt President Bush's speech. **The third protestor was Jorge Medina, whose son Irving was killed in Iraq in November 2003.**

Medina was not charged because the authorities sympathized with his loss.

On Tuesday, another activist who lost his son Jesus in Iraq, Fernando Suarez del Solar, stood up during Laura Bush's speech and held up a poster with a picture of his lost son.

Suarez, standing near the Texas delegation, held a banner that read, "Bush Lied. My Son Died."

Suarez, who had made it through security on a borrowed credential and hid the banner under his clothes, was quickly escorted out.

Yesterday, the father of 20-year-old Marine Lance Cpl. Jesus Suarez del Solar, who died in Iraq, said he welcomed the opportunity to perform his act of civil disobedience.

"A friend told me, 'Now is your chance,' so I took it," Suarez said.

As Suarez was being escorted out of the hall, many of the Republican delegates expressed their sympathy and said they agreed with him.

Medina said that as he left he could see the compassion from the delegates in their eyes. "They watched the picture of my son," he said, "and they didn't say anything to me, except a few said they were sorry." As did the police, who, Medina says treated him very well. Suarez's courageous moments were unusually effective.

Speaking For The Dead

03 September 2004 By Bruce Mulkey, Asheville Citizen-Times

Jane Bright, West Hills, Calif., mother of Army Sgt. Evan Ashcraft, who was killed in action in Iraq when his Humvee was hit by enemy fire on July 24, 2003:

"Several months ago when George Bush was performing his skit for the media in which he was looking under his desk and under chairs for weapons of mass destruction, I was horrified by the insensitivity of his performance.

I thought to myself, here is the president of the United States making a joke out of a pre-emptive war and laughing about WMDs (weapons of mass destruction), the basis for going to war, a war in which my dear son died, over 1,000 coalition troops have died and thousands of Iraqi civilians have died. How dare he!"

Sue Niederer, Pennington, N.J., mother of 1st Lt. Seth Dvorin, who was killed in action in Iraq on Feb. 3:

"I asked Congressman Rush Holt (D-N.J.), how many wives, husbands and children of U.S. congressmen and senators actually are in a war zone in Iraq. You know what he told me? None. Let the president and senators and congressmen send their children over there to fight this war and see how they feel then."

Jean Prewitt, Birmingham, Ala., mother of Pvt. Kelley Prewitt, who was killed in action in Iraq by enemy fire on April 6, 2003:

"I saw the two soldiers in the hall where I worked. 'Please tell me he's just wounded,' I cried. 'Please tell me he's wounded.' They took me to our district manager's conference room and said that Kelley was hit by shrapnel and must have bled to death. After that one of the hardest things was telling my mother. She saw me and said, 'What's wrong?' And I told her it was about Kelley. She asked, 'Did he get hurt?' And I said, 'Yes, ma'am, but he didn't make it; he died.' She said, 'Oh, God, not my baby. I wish it had been me.'"

How The Army Takes Care Of Its Own: Relatives Of Wounded Must Beg For Charity

September 6, 2004 Chillicothe Gazette Staff

Two area military men, seriously injured recently in Iraq, need your help.

John Rardin Jr., of Chillicothe, and Terry Dean, of Hillsboro, were injured in a homemade bomb attack on their Humvee Aug. 20 near Samarra, Iraq -- an attack that killed two of their fellow soldiers.

Both men -- part of the 216th Engineering Battalion in Chillicothe -- are back in the United States, but have specific needs.

"We really need to help support these men and their friends and families in a time like this," said Bob Shoultz, who is guiding a local effort to help the men.

Shoultz is joined by Maj. Brenda Rosenberry, a former 216th commander who now works with the Joint Operations Center in Columbus.

Rardin's need is for transportation for his wife, who is unable to see her husband each day because they don't have a vehicle to get to and from Fort Knox, Ky. -- where Rardin is recuperating from shrapnel wounds to his arms and legs.

"She gets down there whenever anyone from (Chillicothe) or Columbus is heading down there, but she's not able to stay for very long," Shoultz said.

A used vehicle could really help her efforts to see her husband regularly, he said.

Meanwhile, Dean is recovering in Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C., after his leg was amputated.

"He's going to be there quite a while, recuperating from his surgery, undergoing therapy and getting his prosthesis," Shoultz said.

Dean has a DVD player and needs movies to watch while he recuperates, Shoultz said. "Any businesses that could come forward with some DVDs to give to him would be greatly appreciated," he said. The effort would also take donations, but needs to set up a fund at a local bank before it can take monetary donations.

Injured Sgt. Turned Every Which Way But Loose; “Grateful” No More Iraq

Sept. 6, 2004 By John Byrne, Post-Tribune Staff Writer

Sgt. Robert Williamson has been in Army medical limbo.

The Hobart man, injured three times in combat while serving with the U.S. Army in Iraq, has spent most of the past two months in Fort Campbell, Ky., awaiting treatment.

Though he was diagnosed and began receiving treatment for hip and elbow injuries in the spring through the Office of Veteran's Affairs in Chicago and Crown Point, Williamson was ordered to get second opinions from U.S. Army doctors.

Williamson has been living in a hotel near the base since the beginning of July.

He finally buckled and got a cell phone so he can keep in touch with his wife, Beth, and sons, Alex and Matthew.

“Now I know why they say 'Don't get injured,' ” Williamson said.

Home for the Labor Day weekend before returning to Kentucky, **the sergeant sent word out to his friends in the 542nd Army Reserves out of Hobart. The group recently mobilized, and soon could be headed overseas.**

“Keep your heads down,” Williamson said.

“They need to get us off the bases, first of all,” he said. “Also, they say you heal quicker when you're at home, which makes sense.”

While enduring recurring hip and elbow pain, the sergeant has had trouble getting the three Purple Hearts for which he was nominated because of his battlefield injuries.

Because he is still officially on active duty, the Army ordered Williamson to report to Kentucky, though he was already receiving treatment near his family in Indiana.

He has been sitting around in Kentucky, waiting to get an MRI on his hip, injured May 5 when the truck in which he was riding hit a roadside bomb near Baghdad.

To help the time pass, Williamson volunteered at the 101st Airborne Division's museum on the base while awaiting tests to determine where he will be sent next.

“At first, they had me putting together syringes for medical kits for eight hours a day. After a little of that, I said 'Not this guy,' went to the museum and offered to make myself useful,” he said.

In addition to the hip injury, an incident in which he also smacked his head, Williamson suffered shrapnel wounds in two separate fire fights with Iraqi insurgents. He also hurt his arm when his truck hit a hole while rolling at night on a rural Iraqi highway.

The injuries have prevented the heavy-equipment driver from going back to the Middle East, for which he is grateful.

They also have jeopardized his military pension, however.

Williamson enlisted in the Army reserves about three years ago after 10 years in the Navy so he could get his 20 years in and retire with full armed-forces benefits. He'll be re-evaluated by Army doctors in six months.

If he is still deemed unfit to return to his reserve unit, an Army medical board will review his case. He could then be placed on medical leave, with the board determining what percentage of his pension Williamson would receive, based on the severity of his injuries.

A boat mechanic in civilian life, Williamson worries he might need to learn a new trade if his injuries never heal to the point he can lift heavy objects or hold himself in awkward positions.

"Right now the main thing is to get me as healthy as possible," Williamson said. "After that, it's hurry up and wait some more."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Falluja Unshaken By U.S. Commands' Terror Raids

9.8.04 FALLUJAH, Iraq (AP)

U.S. jets pounded insurgent positions in Fallujah for a second straight day Wednesday, raising plumes of smoke but doing little to weaken the resolve of Sunni militants who firmly control this symbol of Iraqi resistance.

There was little sign that two days of U.S. attacks had weakened the grip of the insurgents, who have steadily expanded their control of this militant stronghold about 35 miles west of Baghdad.

Following the Wednesday attacks, bands of fighters, many wearing loose black pajama-like pants and T-shirts, lounged outside abandoned buildings facing the

American lines, seeking to escape the intense sunlight of a day when temperatures topped 45 degrees Celsius.

Most hid their faces with Arab keffiyah shawls or ski masks. Some quenched their thirst with water from coolers beside them. Most appeared to be in their late teens or early 20s and 30s, but a few looked as old as 50.

Elsewhere in this city of 300,000, fighters from the mujahedeen, or "holy warriors," patrolled the streets in brand-new American pickups. One resident, 33-year-old Abu Rihab, said they were part of a 16-vehicle fleet commandeered while travelling to Baghdad from Jordan.

In Fallujah, real power is in the hands of the "Mujahedeen Shura Council," a six-member body led by Sheik Abdullah al-Janabi, spiritual leader of the militants and the undisputed ruler of the city since May.

The mujahedeen run their own courts that try people suspected of spying for the Americans or other offences. Abu Rihab said that since May, the mujahedeen have executed about 30 people convicted of spying.

Get The Message?



An elderly Iraqi woman, a member of the 'Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq, calls on U.S. troops to leave the country during a demonstration in Baghdad, September 4, 2004. REUTERS/Ceerwan Aziz

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

Deputy Governor Captured,

Occupation Official Killed

9.8.04 Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq Iraqi government officials say militants in separate attacks have kidnapped the deputy governor of the country's Anbar province and killed an interior ministry official.

They say in the latest incident gunmen opened fire on the deputy governor's car and seized him when it stopped. The official's son was said to be injured in the attack.

Earlier, in Baghdad, militants opened fire on the car of the assistant director of the Interior Ministry's criminal division, killing him. Officials say he was ambushed near his home in the western part of the capital.

US Convoy Truck Drivers Killed

September 8 AFP

A Turk and two other foreign truck drivers travelling in US-protected convoys have been killed in ambushes north of Baghdad in the last 24 hours, Iraqi police said today.

Two drivers, whose nationalities were not specified, were killed when insurgents fired a rocket-propelled grenade at their truck carrying supplies to the US military.

The attack happened on the road between Baghdad and Balad, police said, while US soldiers arrested two people.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

IRAQ IS VIETNAM LOOKING BACK

**1,000 American soldiers are dead,
so the corporate fat cats stay fed.
Eventually the wounded will fall apart,
because betrayal is the Purple Heart.**

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
September 2004

I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire)

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.**

Bush Slaughtering Saddam Hussein's Enemies

07 September 2004 By James Carroll, The Boston Globe

Thinking of ourselves as only motivated by good intentions, we cannot fathom the possibility that we have demonized an innocent people, that what we are doing is murder on a vast scale.

There is the single most troubling aspect of the war in Iraq. We launched it against the wicked Saddam Hussein, yet the majority of so-called "insurgents" against whom our forces are arrayed hated Hussein more than we did. We are killing people by the thousands who threaten absolutely nothing of ours.

The boys in the Iraqi resistance are not terrorists. They are not Ba'athists. They are not jihadists - or they weren't until we gave them reason to be. Whatever the justifications for the invasion of Iraq were a year and a half ago, why are we in this war today?

The war answers the Bush administration's need to justify an unprecedented repressiveness in the "homeland," and simultaneously prompts widespread docile submission to the new martial law.

So the final truth about this war is that there is no real enemy (although we are creating enemies by the legion). There will be no victory. I resume this regular column by declaring, President Bush was right.

The Evil Of Two Lessers

Sep. 04, 2004 By JOE KLEIN, Time Magazine

I have never seen a presidential campaign in which the strategies of the two parties are so different, and so dreadful.

The Republican strategy is to demolish Kerry, posit the President as a man of simple strength and do everything possible to avoid a discussion of Iraq or the effects of globalization on the American economy.

The Kerry strategy is to present an "optimistic" candidate with a "positive plan for the future."

The Kerry consultants, who actually believe this claptrap and have zero sense of political theater, sound like a bunch of low-budget Ginzu-knife salesmen when they represent their candidate on television: We're offering you a \$4,000 college-tuition tax credit and-for no extra charge-a \$1,000 reduction in your health-care costs!

They also seem to believe this election isn't about the most important decision Bush has made: to go to war in Iraq. Kerry's adherence to that strategy-including the robotic repetition of the words strong and values-has made him seem weak, transparent, a focus-group marionette with neon strings.

Got That Right Twice

Gannett News Service September 07, 2004 By Frank Oliveri

Army Capt. Lou Bauer, who is a voting assistance officer in the Mosul area, said voting isn't always on the minds of troops under fire.

"A soldier that is working a 10-hour patrol in 110-degree heat and got shot at a few times will not give a damn about voting when he gets in," Bauer said. "All he wants to do is shower, get some food and go to sleep. Then wake up and talk to his son who (he) hasn't seen in eight months."

Illinois Army National Guard Spc. Autumn Grimsley, 23, a military journalist based in Iraq, said this vote would be memorable, depending on the outcome.

<p>"I know that families of servicemen and women really would like to know what is going to be done to get their loved ones home," she said.</p>

OCCUPATION REPORT

China Sending Police Troops To Help U.S. Occupy Haiti

[Washington Times, September 6, 2004, Pg.1]

China is sending a 130-man "special police" unit to Haiti, the first deployment of Chinese forces to the Western Hemisphere. The Chinese unit will join with the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

The RNC: Life In Occupied New York; Republican Kid Arrested, Jailed For Disrupting Himself

(In case you run into somebody who says all those arrests during the Republican Convention were justified because the police were careful to protect peoples' rights blah blah blah, hand them this one.)

September 4, 2004 BY JOIE TYRRELL Newsday, Inc., STAFF WRITER, Staff writer
Keiko Morris contributed to this story.

In their sweep of protesters from the floor of Madison Square Garden Wednesday, authorities apparently nabbed the wrong person.

Benjamin Traslavina, a 16-year-old Malverne High School student, was on the floor of the Republican National Convention with a student leadership group when he got too close for the Secret Service's comfort to a protest that erupted.

As editor of the Malverne Mule, Traslavina thought the protest by AIDS activist group Act Up would make a good photo for his convention article and moved in to take a picture.

That's when the Secret Service grabbed him and turned him over to New York police. Benjamin, an honors student who repeatedly told authorities he was not with the protesters, was booked with a felony and held in jail for the night.

"At every step of the way, I told just about everybody that I wasn't part of the protest," Benjamin said, sitting Friday on the front porch of his family's Lynbrook home. "I was frightened when I first got in and extremely frightened when I was informed of the charges." **(Whine whine whine.)**

Now, he is worried that the felony arrest could mar his chances at college. Benjamin, who is going to be a senior this year, is vice president of the Honor Society and would like to attend Columbia University. (Welcome to life in the Prison Nation.)

It all started on Wednesday about 11 a.m. Benjamin and other students with the summer election symposia offered by the Junior Statesmen Foundation attended an event at the Republican National Convention.

They were listening to White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card when protesters from Act Up stood up, holding banners and a sign and started to remove their clothes to reveal shirts with a message on them.

Benjamin said he stood up to take a picture from his seat and walked toward them but they had already been dragged away. **He sat down and that is when the Secret Service grabbed him and "decided I was part of the protest," he said.**

Even though the Act Up protesters told authorities that Benjamin wasn't part of the group, he was taken away in metal handcuffs. They took his camera and his credentials and threw away his film.

"I was cooperative," he said. "I assumed it would work out and I wouldn't be sent to jail and left overnight."

Benjamin was loaded onto a police wagon and taken to Chelsea Piers for processing. He was checked for weapons and his mug shot was taken.

Meanwhile, the student group had contacted Benjamin's mother, Eileen, who was frantically looking for her son. She didn't find out where he was until midnight, when a police officer let Benjamin make a call from his cell phone.

"I couldn't get any information," his mother said. "For 12 hours we didn't know where he was. It was like he vaporized."

By Thursday afternoon, he was allowed to meet with a lawyer from the Lawyer's Guild. He found out the charges against him - a felony for inciting a riot, a misdemeanor for assault and a violation for disorderly conduct.

"This is a kid who wants to be a public servant," his mother said. "He watches CNN for fun." Jeff Harris, senior program director for the Junior Statesmen, based in San Mateo, Calif., said the action was extreme.

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

"I am a war president."

President George W. Bush, Feb. 8

"Nobody wants to be the war president. I want to be the peace president."

Bush, July 20

J. Kerry, Candidate For War And Empire

7, September, 2004 Stephen J. Sniegowski, Arab News

Many of Kerry's anti-war supporters are of the belief that Kerry's belligerent language does not predict the policy he would adopt if elected president, but simply represents a

political ploy to gain support of some pro-war voters in the swing states — Kerry already having locked up the anti-war vote.

They imagine Kerry to be a stealth peace candidate. But the facts point in another direction. Kerry's influential backers, who are apt to determine the direction of his foreign policy, actually uphold his hard-line policy stance. Influential Democrats have been pushing this liberal justification for US intervention in the Middle East for some time.

The major proponents of this military-interventionist liberalism are the "New Democrats." As British critic of American imperialism, John Pilger writes: **"What the New Democrats object to is the Bush gang's outspokenness — its crude honesty, if you like — in stating its plans openly, and not from behind the usual veil or in the usual specious code of imperial liberalism and its 'moral authority'.**

New Democrats of Kerry's sort are all for the American empire; understandably, they would prefer that those words remained unsaid."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Black Hawk Shot Down

September 07, 2004 Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A U.S. helicopter carrying coalition soldiers was damaged in a "hard landing" in southern Afghanistan, the military said Tuesday.

No one was hurt when the Black Hawk came down Monday morning near Deh Rawood, 250 miles southwest of Kabul, said spokeswoman Lt. Col. Susan Meisner.

Taliban spokesman Mullah Hakim Latifi claimed the ousted Islamic militia shot the helicopter down with a rocket.

"The helicopter sustained moderate damage."

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