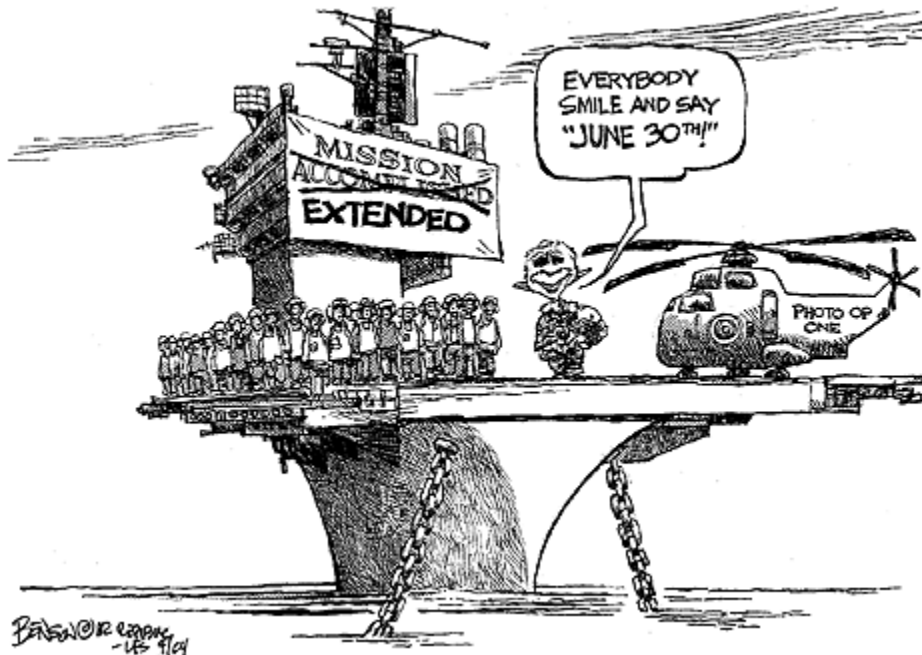


GI SPECIAL 2#B6



A Night At The Movies; Back From Iraq & Afghanistan, Soldiers “100% Anti-War”

From: [Lou Plummer](#) (Lou Plummer is an army vet with a son serving in Iraq now.)

Sent: June 25, 2004

Friends,

I just returned from handing out 175 copies of WarTimes outside of the only theater in Fayetteville, NC showing Fahrenheit 9/11. (**Fayetteville is the home of Ft. Bragg.**)

I talked to literally dozens of Iraq and Afghanistan vets who were there to see the film. Many were close to their discharge (ETS) date and were eager to talk about the many problems the military has maintaining credibility in the information age.

Everyone I questioned said that reenlistment in their units was negligible and that we should not believe what we read in the papers.

I also distributed Bring Them Home Now Buttons and had people taking my email so that they could get buttons after I ran out. We are out of War Time so tomorrow night I'll be handing out a flyer that touts BTHN, Military Families Speak Out and Fayetteville Peace With Justice. A local person who has been supportive of the movement but not real active is having a house party after a showing of the film tomorrow to further discussion of the points raised.

It was an energizing experience. Even though I had one Vietnam vet who was ready to "whup" me, it turned out to be all good. He calmed down and several other vets gathered around to listen to our exchange.

Once the "whupper" left, the vets who had heard his spiel stopped by to give me their perspective, which was 100% antiwar.

What a night! Thanks for your support as we continue to organize outside of Ft. Bragg

Peace,
Lou Plummer
Military Families Speak Out
Bring Them Home Now!

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and in Iraq, and information about other social protest movements here in the USA. **Send requests to address up top. For copies on web site see:**<http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/>

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Resistance Offensive Day Three; Baqouba Fighting Rages; Office Of U.S. Stooge "Prime Minister" Burned

6/26/2004 By JIM KRANE Associated Press Writer

Insurgents launched attacks in the strife-ridden city of Baqouba on Saturday.

Attacks occurred in other cities north and south of Baghdad.

The attacks in Baqouba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, occurred only two days after U.S. tanks and jets routed insurgents who assaulted police stations and government offices there as part of a widespread offensive that killed about 100 people nationwide. (Don't sound very "routed"; command underestimating the opposition as usual.)

In the Saturday attacks, rebels targeted offices of two political parties - one of them run by Iraq's prime minister - a police station and a government building in Baqouba. U.S. soldiers and Iraqi security forces took up defensive positions across the city, the center of Iraq's orange-growing region.

A taxi apparently filled with weapons and ammunition blew up a street about 250 yards from one of the political party offices which was attacked earlier, witnesses reported.

Elsewhere, insurgents killed two Iraqi National Guardsmen in an ambush in Mahmoudiyah, about 20 miles south of Baghdad. A police officer was also killed in a separate attack Saturday, said the director of the Mahmoudiyah general hospital, Dawoud al-Taei.

A car bomb exploded Saturday in the Kurdish stronghold of Irbil, injuring the culture minister of the pro-American Kurdistan Democratic Party and killing his bodyguard.

In the Baqouba attacks, insurgents fired rocket-propelled grenades at the offices of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, said party member Maitham Ibrahim. Three party members died and two were injured, hospital officials said.

Insurgents also stormed the offices of interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's political party, the Iraq National Accord, setting off an explosion before fleeing, witnesses said. No one was hurt. Flames and smoke poured from the building's third story windows. Police sealed off the area.

A guerrilla in an Arab dishdasha robe ran through the streets carrying a rifle and with belts of ammunition draped over his shoulders.

Four guerrillas also attacked Baqouba's blue-domed government building, said Maj. Neal O'Brien, spokesman of the 1st Infantry Division. Armed guards returned fire and killed the four, O'Brien said. One of the attackers wore an explosive suicide vest, he said. Two other insurgents died in an attack on a police station, O'Brien said.

Both parties hold important posts in the interim government.

US Soldier Dies In Rocket Attack

June 26, 2004 AFP

A US soldier was killed when his patrol was attacked early today by rocket propelled grenades in the centre of Baghdad, the US military said today.

The soldier died around 1.30am local time. The patrol was hit by rocket propelled grenade fire, a US-led coalition military official said.

Shiite Militia Attack US Military Convoy In Najaf

26 June 2004 (AFP)

NAJAF, Iraq - Militiamen loyal to radical Iraqi Shiite leader Moqtada Sadr opened fire on Saturday on a US military convoy, which had entered the centre of the holy Shiite city of Najaf, an AFP correspondent reported.

There had been a halt in violent clashes between Sadr's Mehdi Army and US forces for more than three weeks following a truce and the opening of negotiations between the two sides, mediated by leading Shiite figures.

Gunshots rang out as the convoy, comprising lorries and Humvees, arrived in the heart of Najaf, 160 kilometres (100 miles) south of Baghdad, a few hundred metres (yards) from the sacred Imam Ali mausoleum, the AFP reporter said.

An intense exchange of fire was heard, including the sound of rocket-propelled grenades, the reporter said, noting that local shops hurriedly closed and residents deserted the streets.

The US military had no immediate comment to make on the report. **(Let's try : "Fucked up again.")**

Najaf, 160 kilometres (100 miles) south of Baghdad, **was in the grip of a fierce rebellion by Sadr's militia against forces of the US-led coalition until early this month.**

("Was??" This is the first time somebody in command tried to send a convoy into Najaf since the truce, and it sure looks like the fool who wrote this story has been spending too much time at General Kimmit's lying press conferences. Getting this kind of welcome isn't a "was." The resistance is still there, alive, well, and ready.)

Command Breaks Truce, Bombs Falluja; Fallujans To Retaliate

25 June 2004 Aljazeera

US warplanes have launched a fresh attack on the eastern suburbs of Falluja and an industrial area in the city.

The raid came despite a truce sealed between Falluja notables and US marines after Thursday's clashes.

A US military plane fired four missiles at a house in the town.

Abd al-Adhim Muhammad met the owner of the targeted house and he rejected the claim that his house was an al-Zarqawi hideout. "Look at the wreckage, is this al-Zarqawi's hideout? Look at the destroyed furniture..." the house owner said.

The strike comes after a ceasefire reached yesterday following the US military's use of 10 laser-guided bombs on targets in Falluja yesterday.

"Whenever we reach a deal with them they break it, and of course the people of Falluja would not keep silent, they have to retaliate," said Falluja notable Abd Allah al-Janabi.

A group of Falluja resistance fighters appeared on TV Friday, reading a statement rejecting US allegations.



"The American invading forces claim that al-Zarqawi, and with him a group of Arab fighters, are in our city," a masked man read from a written statement on Friday.

"We know that this talk about al-Zarqawi and the fighters is a game the American invader forces are playing to strike Islam and Muslims in the steadfast city of mosques."

Al-Janabi addressed a crowd of Fallujans Friday saying al-Zarqawi was being used as a pretext to attack Falluja in the same way unproven WMD allegations were used to attack Iraq.

"Falluja people are brave, bold, and are not afraid from death for the sake of their country. They do not need to have Abu Musab al-Zarqawi among them, they are fully capable of protecting their town and country," al-Janabi said.

Battle Report: Adversary's Tactics Leave Troops Surprised, Exhausted

June 25, 2004 By Scott Wilson, Washington Post Foreign Service

BAQUBAH, Iraq, June 24 -- The 1st Infantry Division soldiers who walked off the battlefield Thursday, exhausted by the frantic pace of combat and a baking summer sun, had seen nothing like it in their three months here.

In dawn-to-dusk fighting, more than 100 armed insurgents overran neighborhoods and occupied downtown buildings, using techniques that U.S. commanders said resembled those once employed by the Iraqi army. Well-equipped and highly coordinated, the insurgents demonstrated a new level of strength and tactical skill that alarmed the soldiers facing them.

By the end of the day, infantry and armored patrols had driven the insurgents from the battered center of the city, **though some remained in control of two police stations in districts long hostile to the U.S.-led occupation.** Two U.S. soldiers were killed in the fight, including a company commander struck by a rocket-propelled grenade.

"They were definitely better than what we normally face," said Lt. T.J. Grider, 25, whose platoon fought for more than 12 hours. "But I think what we did today was pretty significant."

Coming less than a week before the U.S. occupation formally ends, **the attacks brought into sharp focus the threat that lies ahead for Iraq's interim government and the challenge that remains for U.S. forces who will stay here to defend it. The U.S.-trained Iraqi police were routed or abandoned their posts rather than face a more capable foe, and military commanders here said the battle for this city 35 miles northeast of Baghdad was far from over.**

The insurgents fought in large, coordinated squads, set complex ambushes and occupied downtown buildings from which they apparently planned a long fight, U.S. military commanders said. Striking first along two key avenues bracketing the city, the insurgents intended to isolate and overrun the local Coalition Provisional Authority compound and other downtown government buildings, the commanders said.

Several U.S. commanders suggested the insurgents had learned the tactics in recent weeks from skilled guerrilla commanders from outside the city, perhaps led by foreign fighters who came to Iraq to fight the occupation. **(More than several U.S. commanders are unreconstructed racist assholes who think Iraqis have to be led by "foreign fighters" to put their shoes on. The same kind of idiots used to say that the Vietnamese were led by Russians. They got their ass whipped then, and**

they're getting their ass whipped now. Unfortunately, it's not the "U.S. Commanders" who do the dying for this stupid, hopeless, defeated Imperial fiasco.)

They noted that the city's merchants received no warning of the attack, as they had before an armed uprising here in April. Many people struggled through rush-hour traffic, only to be turned away by the fighting.

The preparation had apparently been underway for weeks, with the attacks timed to be part of a series across Iraq on Thursday. After a powerful U.S. airstrike stopped the insurgents' momentum here before noon, soldiers found large weapons stockpiles in the rubble of a building and machine-gun positions set up at a technical college nearby.

"He's still in the city, and he's hiding. But he'll be back," said Lt. Col. Steve Bullimore, the task force commander responsible for Baqubah, referring to his enemy. "I'm regrouping and waiting for the next fight. But I don't know when that will be."

Baqubah, which sits amid groves of date palms and scorched plains, has troubled U.S. forces throughout the occupation. Its political life was controlled for years by tribal leaders and former military officers, who lived well when Saddam Hussein was in power. Now many of them are the foot soldiers and mid-level commanders of the local insurgency, U.S. commanders here said.

In what he believed was a major blow to the insurgents here, Bullimore's troops killed a man suspected of being the local leader of the insurgency, Hussein Ali Septi, in a gun battle last week in the rebellious village of Buhriz, south of the city. Thirteen insurgents and one U.S. soldier were killed in the fighting. But the attacks on troops have continued.

For the past several weeks, Bullimore has been sending sniper teams into the city to kill insurgents planting roadside bombs under cover of darkness. **The bombs, made of artillery shells or tank rounds and detonated by remote control, have ravaged his soldiers as they move along main supply routes.**

Late Wednesday night, Grider, the platoon leader, worked with a sniper team in the Tahrir district, just south of the government center. Overlooking Canal Street, a main avenue through the city of 250,000 people, the sniper on the team fired on two men setting bombs. Grider said both fell dead -- the fourth and fifth of the week.

Soon afterward, AK-47 assault rifle fire whistled around the neighborhood. It would continue for several hours, lighting the predawn sky with tracer bullets. But Grider and his men pulled into their camp safely at 4:30 a.m., heading to bed.

Two hours later, as a platoon of Bradley Fighting Vehicles moved along the western edge of town sweeping for roadside bombs, Capt. Travis Van Hecke was awakened by a screeching radio in the office next to his room.

"We're hit," the voice screamed. The ambush with rifles and rocket-propelled grenades killed two soldiers, including the captain commanding the company.

"The group that came down here today was more accurate and a little more feisty than we have seen," said Van Hecke, 29, of Lomira, Wis. "Today this place just blew up."

Over the next few hours, groups of insurgents took over police stations in Buhriz and in the western district of Mufrek, where they killed seven Iraqi police officers.

Meanwhile, soldiers rushed the wounded from the ambushed Bradleys to a hospital across the city. **A convoy carrying several wounded soldiers was ambushed several times by insurgents who appeared to be expecting them. Two Bradleys were disabled and had to be towed away.**

By 9 a.m., the insurgents had seized three buildings on the eastern edge of the city near the soccer stadium. Bullimore said he tracked groups of men entering the buildings and taking up fighting positions inside. He called in an airstrike.

Minutes later, three 500-pound guided bombs fell through the buildings, collapsing them in heaps of rubble. Van Hecke's company, which had been ordered to secure the area around the stadium, picked through the sites. They found dozens of 50mm rockets, boxes of AK-47 ammunition and an array of mortars.

"It looked like he planned to fight there for a while," Bullimore said. "It was more than just a hit-and-run attack."

By early afternoon, fighting in the streets had ebbed. After hours in tanks and Bradleys, in temperatures that reached 111 degrees, dozens of soldiers were feeling the effects of heat exhaustion. Many in Van Hecke's 115-man company received fluids intravenously.

Across several downtown blocks, damage was extensive. At the university, the scene of heavy fighting early in the day, glass from blown-out windows littered the campus. A group of people began looting the buildings when U.S. troops left the site, but they stopped once the troops returned.

In the early afternoon, Apache helicopters skipped over the city's edges, firing rockets that sent up columns of black smoke when they detonated. Bullimore said later that their target was a black sedan that had been carrying men wearing the insurgency's black uniforms.

Hours after the fighting calmed, only a few people had returned to the streets.

In recent weeks, young company and platoon commanders here have been told to prepare for the June 30 handover to the interim Iraqi government by giving the Iraqi police more authority on the streets. But the inability of the police to stand up to the insurgency Thursday will slow the process, soldiers said.

"That changeover is going to be a little tougher," said Van Hecke, a West Point graduate. "But I guess some can say the only reason they are doing these attacks is because we are here. There are two sides to every coin."

With only two hours of sleep over the past two days, Grider cleaned his M-4 rifle on the sofa of a common room as night fell. "Jeopardy" played on the television as he tested the infrared scope. He said he was on standby, prepared to lead his platoon out if called on later in the evening.

"I don't know what's going to happen," said Grider, a West Point graduate from Chicago. "You have to give Iraqis a chance to do it themselves. **That's going to happen over the next few weeks, and they'll prove they can do it or our mission will stay pretty much unchanged.**"

Australian Training Base Mortared

June 26, 2004 AAP

A TRAINING base in Iraq, where Australian Army personnel are training the Iraqi military, was attacked by mortars today, but no Australian troops were injured, the Australian Defence Force said.

Six to eight mortar rounds were fired at the base but only one landed inside the compound.

"A quick reaction force responded to the attack. However, no evidence of the attackers could be found."

Channel 9 said five Iraqis suffered shrapnel injuries in the attack, with two of them in a serious condition.

Nine reporter Robert Penfold, who was at the training base during the attack, said five mortar rounds had hit the compound.

TROOP NEWS

Defective Weapon And Lack Of Basic Medical Supplies Cost Soldier His Leg

26 Jun 2004 Edinburgh Evening News

A SOLDIER accused of firing a gun which hit a colleague and cost him one of his legs has been cleared.

Thomas Henderson, 37, from Dunfermline in Fife, was reportedly cleared of shooting the Lothian soldier after experts said electrical faults could lead the chain gun to fire by itself.

The shooting in Iraq sparked an investigation by the Ministry of Defence, which had been criticised for giving British troops sub-standard equipment.

After the incident Sergeant Albert Thomson, from Whitburn, had to have his leg amputated because of a lack of essential surgical equipment.

Medics were forced to amputate his left leg above the knee, it was claimed, because they had not been issued with basic vascular repair kits which could have saved the limb.

The case increased pressure on Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon amid the row over Sergeant Steven Roberts, a tank commander shot dead after being told to hand back his body armour.

It was reported today that the chain gun could fire "undemanded". **The accident happened on March 24 last year during an operation to recover the body of Lance-Corporal Barry Stephen, 31, who was killed by a grenade.**

A Young Soldier's Last Battle One U.S. Death Shows The Heartbreak Behind Headlines

June 23, 2004 By Edward Cody, Washington Post.com

FORWARD OPERATING BASE GABE, Iraq, June 22 - Army Pfc. Jason N. Lynch was taking his one-hour shift behind a Humvee-mounted .50-caliber machine gun when the AK-47s started crackling again, just before dusk. As he responded by raking the source of enemy fire, sticking his head and torso out the roof to aim, a single 7.62mm round found a mortal opening just below Lynch's body armor and ripped into his right side.

Lynch, 21, a 6-foot-2 St. Croix islander who reveled in reggae music and yearned to return to his Caribbean home, immediately slumped down into the Humvee, his comrades in Charlie Battery recalled, and he shouted out to no one in particular: "Ah! I'm hit." Those words -- uttered Friday at 6:50 p.m. in Buhriz, a rebellious, date-growing village about 35 miles northeast of Baghdad -- were the last they heard him say.

Although medics struggled to save his life, the internal bleeding was massive, they said, and Lynch swiftly went into shock. Within an hour, the young soldier had joined the slowly but relentlessly growing list of American troops killed in the occupation of Iraq.

Of the 842 U.S. service members who have died in Iraq since the invasion 15 months ago, 622 were killed by hostile fire, according to a Pentagon tally. The largest part of that combat death toll, 513, has come since President Bush's declaration on May 1 last year that major combat was over.

Most of the 513 have died one or two at a time in roadside bombings or skirmishes too small to make headlines back in the States. But for those involved -- the soldiers who fell, the men and women who lived through the battle, the families left behind -- each casualty has been a large-scale tragedy, filled with their sweat, their rage, their courage, their blood and, ultimately, their tears.

When Lynch sank mortally wounded from his machine-gun perch, Pfc. Kyle Lautenhiser, 20, of Fort Wayne, Ind., had just trotted up to the Humvee to relieve him. Along with those in the vehicle, Lautenhiser recalled, he pulled Lynch out a back door, laid him on the ground and called for medics. Then, Lautenhiser said, he jumped into the Humvee, grabbed the machine-gun handles and sprayed several hundred .50-caliber bullets toward the two-story building across the road where the AK-47 assault-rifle fire had come from.

By then the medics, including Spec. Michael Miranda, 21, of Roma, Tex., and Pfc. Stu Eubanks, 22, of Lakeland, Fla., had arrived with emergency first-aid equipment and a litter. Hunching down to avoid the rifle fire, which still had not been suppressed, they ran their hands around Lynch's torso to assess his wounds. What they found, they recalled, was one bullet hole and signs of heavy internal bleeding.

Sliding Lynch onto the litter, they carried him back to the command center and casualty collection point that had been set up nearby in a building their unit had been ordered to capture. There, Miranda said, they ripped off Lynch's body armor and other gear. Fighting to find a vein, they stuck a needle into his arm to give him intravenous fluids, seeking to compensate for the blood loss. As they worked feverishly, trying all the tricks of their training, Lynch's pulse came and went.

"About a minute into it, he started going into shock," Eubanks recalled three days later, sucking on a cigarette in Iraq's stifling evening heat. "We were cutting clothes off him left and right. And when he went into shock, his breathing started closing off. So we had to bag him" -- fit him with a respirator.

Although Lynch's condition was still not stable, Miranda said, the medics decided he had to be moved to a field hospital. About six minutes had elapsed since he was hit, and he did not look good. So the medics loaded him into a Bradley Fighting Vehicle -- armored to withstand the persistent gunfire -- and transported him to a pickup point for transfer to a Humvee ambulance and a 20-minute drive to the Army's regional headquarters at Forward Operating Base Warhorse.

As they were opening the Bradley's back hatch and moving Lynch to the waiting ambulance, a rocket-propelled grenade hit nearby, Eubanks said. A roadside bomb exploded near the ambulance as it approached, forcing it to run on flattened tires designed to function with or without air, the unit commander recalled.

Sgt. Maria Kammerer, 21, of Houston, was in the back of the ambulance. As they drove toward Warhorse at about 45 mph, she said later, Lynch seemed to respond to stimuli. He swatted at the uncomfortable breathing bag in his mouth and complained he could not breathe. He nodded his head when she asked if he was still with them. And, in a triumph of military bureaucracy, Lynch was able to give Kammerer the last four digits of his Social Security number to get the paperwork started for his medical care on arrival.

Within a half-hour of his delivery to the hospital, however, Lynch died, Kammerer said. The paperwork from then on would be about his death, a death far from St. Croix, on a dusty road near a dilapidated two-story house surrounded by date palms, a death in a fertile agricultural plain of east-central Iraq where some men are determined to kill as many U.S. soldiers as they can.

"Our mission was to go in, take the strong point, and hold it," said Capt. Matt Davenport, who commands Charlie Battery, part of the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery, and who led the young gunner into battle.

Davenport, 36, of Deerfield, Va., said Lynch was normally the machine gunner on his command Humvee. But last Friday, during a day of incessant clashes that began before dawn, Davenport had pulled his vehicle close to the command post for use as a communications platform. So Lynch made himself useful by taking rotating shifts on a machine gun mounted on another Humvee posted outside the command compound.

The command post was set up in a building and surrounding compound used by agricultural officials during Saddam Hussein's rule. Davenport's team had been ordered to seize it because insurgents were using it to fire on patrols. It was one of many such spots in and around Buhriz, a hornet's nest on the edge of the agricultural hub of Baqubah, the capital of Diyala province.

Even before the 1st Infantry Division pulled into this region in late March, Buhriz was a trouble spot...attacks on nearly every U.S. patrol that ventured into town.

Col. Dana J.H. Pittard, who commands the division's Baqubah force, said he was determined to end that. Using a mix of economic development projects and aggressive military patrols, he made it clear to village and tribal leaders that he had money to spend on their community if they cooperated, but that attacks on U.S. forces would lead to bloody counterattacks.

A group of insurgents using Buhriz as their base made their intentions clear last week by firing rocket-propelled grenades as U.S. officers met with the mayor. So Pittard's U.S. occupation forces went into town, waited for an attack and responded hard when it came.

"We waxed them," he said in an interview.

Davenport's assignment to seize and hold the agricultural building was part of the crackdown. Because his field artillery unit had been retagged infantry to meet new needs in Iraq, Davenport said, he found himself commanding three motorized platoons with Humvees and a unit of M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicles instead of an artillery battery.

As the Americans approached in those Humvees and Bradleys, Davenport said, insurgents in the house across from the agricultural building hit them with AK-47 fire, RPG-7 rocket-propelled grenades and 120mm mortar shells fired in a direct line rather than the normal high arc. Sniper fire also pinged in occasionally from what his soldiers thought were three separate locations, he added.

For most of a 120-degree day -- 14 hours straight, Davenport remembered -- the soldiers traded fire with the insurgents, including the exchange that killed Lynch.

The heat, even more intense in the vehicles, drove dozens of men into the command post for intravenous injections of fluid to counteract dehydration, the medics said. At one point, a grenade launched by U.S. troops hit a nearby wall and sent chunks of concrete flying back at them, wounding one soldier in the groin.

"And while all this was going on, the guy who was direct-laying the mortars was walking the mortar rounds toward us," Davenport said.

Such missions are expected to continue for months. The U.S. military has expressed hopes of lowering its profile in Iraq after the partial transfer of power to an interim Iraqi government next week, but even so expects to continue routinely engaging in combat with insurgents.

Davenport said the clash Friday was not the worst experience he and his men had been through since arriving at Forward Operating Base Gabe, but it seemed like the longest, and for Lynch it was forever.

The soldiers of Forward Operating Base Gabe, a dusty expanse on Baqubah's outskirts, held a memorial service Tuesday to honor Lynch. A feeble breeze rasped in the eucalyptus leaves as the unit chaplain, Capt. Michael Jeffries, called attention to the grief of Lynch's family in St. Croix, and officers stepped to the podium one by one to eulogize him.

"We occupied the strong point because we knew then we would not have to chase down an elusive enemy," said the first to speak, Lt. Col. Steve Bullimore, 43, of St. Joseph, Mo. "We owe it to Jason, to his family, that his death not be in vain, that his sacrifice not in any way be diminished."

Lautenhiser, the soldier who had jumped up to take Lynch's place when he fell, joined the line with a simple message: "My name is Pfc. Kyle Lautenhiser," he said, "and I am here to tell you about a great person, and a real person. His name was Jason Lynch."

Lynch's beige combat boots were standing empty on display. The flak helmet he was wearing when he died was perched on his M-16 rifle, and his Purple Heart and Bronze Star were laid out for all to see. When the speechmaking was over, when taps was played, after the rifles were fired in a final tribute, officers and men filed past one by one to salute his photograph.

In the silence, several soldiers wept.

Cpl. Evrod Folkes, 22, a native of Ocho Rios, Jamaica, who enlisted after moving to New York, said he and Lynch used to sit back, turn up the volume on their reggae CDs and dream of returning to their islands. Roommates and close friends, they talked of their families, their music, their hopes for a leave, but rarely about Iraq, he said. Like many enlisted soldiers here, Folkes said, Lynch regarded the pros and cons of the U.S. occupation as a subject above his pay grade.

"We didn't really talk about it," Folkes said. "We just talked about the leave coming up, about going home to see the family."

Lynch enlisted in the Army almost a year ago, Folkes said, but never explained why. "I guess he was bored of the islands," Folkes said, only a trace of Jamaican lilt remaining in his speech. "He wanted to travel."

Lynch left a memory with Folkes and his other friends of a man who kept quiet most of the time. He mostly spoke only when spoken to, they said, and tended to keep his answers short. The loping rhythm of reggae was what he wanted to hear, they recalled.

"He would just sit there and listen to it for hours," said a colleague and friend, Sgt. Steven Sherrod, 34, of Philadelphia.

Lynch's death took Folkes and his other friends by surprise. They had heard in radio traffic at the battle tracking station that he was hit, but their initial information, they recalled, was that he was alert and responding to medics. So they assumed he would be on the wounded list, nothing more, and maybe get transported back to the division's home in Germany for treatment.

"When they did the medevac, he wasn't bleeding or anything, so I thought he was going to be okay," Folkes said.

Then, after midnight, the real news came down. Lynch was dead. He did not get out of the field hospital at Warhorse.

"You couldn't hear nothing after that," Folkes said. "Everything just froze. . . . Everybody knows that can happen, but when it does, everybody wishes it could just rewind."

Folkes shared his memories of Lynch just outside the battle tracking station here, sitting in a plastic chair and looking straight ahead. He emphasized repeatedly how Lynch was looking forward to leaving soon to visit his mother. Just above his head was posted a list of those waiting in line for the two-week escape. Lynch's name was at the top of the list.

He would have been the next to go.

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/>

FAT PIG IN CLOVER; THIS IS ONE OF THE THINGS YOU'RE DYING FOR



Iraqi Vice president Rowsch Shaways listens to a speech **in the mountain resort of Crans-Montana, Switzerland** June 24. The Crans Montana Forum, **a platform for government officials and business leaders**, takes place from June 24 to 27, 2004. (AP Photo/Keystone, Olivier Maire)

Killed Soldier Felt Deceived Over War

June 24, 2004 East Anglian Daily Times (UK)

A SOLDIER murdered in Iraq along with five colleagues had told his family that he and others felt "completely deceived" by the reasons for going to war, it has been revealed.

The news emerged on the first anniversary of the deaths of six military policeman from Colchester, who were massacred near Basra on June 24 last year.

Reg Keys said his son, Lance-Corporal Thomas Keys, 20, had told his family he and friends felt "completely deceived" by the reasons for going to war and that morale "was on the floor".

Mr Keys, who is still battling to discover what went wrong on the fateful day, said he had also told Thomas' brother Richard, also a soldier, to go AWOL if ever deployed to Iraq.

Reflecting on his agonising year yesterday, Mr Keys, from North Wales, said: "I only have one other son and he's serving with the Royal Engineers.

"But we've told him in no uncertain terms that if he ever gets the call to go to Iraq, he's to jump in the car and come straight home.

"We'll deal with the consequences, but I'm not having him go out there after all that's happened."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Iraqis "In General" Support The Armed Resistance; 92% See U.S. As Occupier; Much Of Iraq Out Of U.S. Control

By Patrick Cockburn in Baghdad 25 June 2004

The attacks in the cities and towns of central and northern Iraq show that the insurgents have achieved a level of co-ordination not seen before.

The attacks also show that the US army has an uncertain grip on swaths of Iraq. The US-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) even warns its own employees only to use the airport road at certain times of the day.

Many of the dead yesterday were Iraqi policemen of whom there are 89,000, mostly ill-equipped. One of the many extraordinary aspects of the US occupation is that after a year of heavy military expenditure Iraqi policemen still lack effective submachine guns, bullet-proof vests and armoured vehicles. **Even farmers are often better armed than the police.**

The CPA's own poll in May showed that 92 per cent of Arab Iraqis say they consider the Americans as occupiers and just 2 per cent see them as liberators. Soon after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, polls showed Iraqis to be almost equally divided on this question.

The rebels are nationalist and religious. *The US always appears to underestimate the strength of Iraqi nationalism.*

(Hardly surprising: For a look at Army War College's racist past and present see http://www.socialistworker.org/2004-2/504/504_04_ArmyCollege.shtml)

Most of the resistance in Iraq is intensely local. The US army has found to its cost that if a town or city is threatened then all the young men are likely to join the battle. They are united by bonds of religion, nationality, tribe, locality and family.

Iraqis in general distinguish between the suicide bombers and the resistance who attack the Americans, condemning the former and approving the latter.

The attacks yesterday show how difficult the guerrilla war will be to end while the occupation continues and until there is a general political settlement.

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

An Interview With Resistance Military Officers: “The Liberation Of Baghdad Is Not Far Away”

06/24/04 By Alix de la Grange, "Asia Times " – BAGHDAD

On the eve of the so-called transfer of sovereignty to the new Iraqi caretaker government on June 30, former Saddam Hussein generals turned members of the elite of the Iraqi resistance movement have abandoned their clandestine positions for a while to explain their version of events and talk about their plans. According to these Ba'ath officials, "the big battle" in Iraq is yet to take place.

"The Americans have prepared the war, we have prepared the post-war. And the transfer of power on June 30 will not change anything regarding our objectives. This new provisional government appointed by the Americans has no legitimacy in our eyes. They are nothing but puppets."

**Why have these former officers waited so long to come out of their closets?
"Because today we are sure we're going to win."**

Hotel Babel, Wednesday, 9am. At the entrance of the cybercafe, mobbed by foreign mercenaries, the man we saw the day before lays it down: "Tomorrow, 10 o'clock, al-Saadoun Street, in front of the Palestine. Come without your driver."

We arrive at the meeting place on Thursday morning by taxi. The contact is there.

We drive for more than two hours.

"We'll be there soon. Do you know Baghdad?", asks our man. The answer is clearly no. To get oriented in the sprawling city, one must circulate freely, and on foot. With criminal behavior spreading like a virus, a wave of kidnappings, the 50 or 60 daily attacks against the occupation forces and the indiscriminate response of the American military, there's hardly any incentive to do any walking.

The car stops in an alley, near a minibus with tinted windows. One of its doors opens. On board, there are three men and a driver carefully scrutinizing all the streets and houses around us. If we don't know at all what we are confronted with, our interlocutors seem to know very well who they're talking to. "Before any discussions, we don't want any doubts on your part about our identities," they say, while extracting some papers from inside a dusty plastic bag: identity cards, military IDs and several photos showing them in uniform beside Saddam Hussein. **They are two generals and a colonel of the disbanded Iraqi army, now on the run for many months, chased by the coalition's intelligence services.**

"We would like to rectify some information now circulating in the Western media, that's why we took the initiative of meeting you." Our discussion lasts for more than three hours.

Back to the fall of Baghdad

"We knew that if the United States decided to attack Iraq, we would have no chance faced with their technological and military power. The war was lost in advance, so we prepared the post-war. In other words: the resistance. Contrary to what has been largely said, we did not desert after American troops entered the center of Baghdad on April 5, 2003. **We fought a few days for the honor of Iraq - not Saddam Hussein - then we received orders to disperse.**" Baghdad fell on April 9: Saddam and his army were nowhere to be seen.

"As we have foreseen, strategic zones fell quickly under control of the Americans and their allies. For our part, it was time to execute our plan. Opposition movements to the occupation were already organized. Our strategy was not improvised after the regime fell." This plan B, which seems to have totally eluded the Americans, was carefully organized, according to these officers, for months if not years before March 20, 2003, the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The objective was "to liberate Iraq and expel the coalition. To recover our sovereignty and install a secular democracy, but not the one imposed by the Americans. Iraq has always been a progressive country, we don't want to go back to the past, we want to move forward. We have very competent people," say the three tacticians. There will be of course no names as well as no precise numbers concerning the clandestine network. "We have sufficient numbers, one thing we don't lack is volunteers."

Fallujah

The lethal offensive of the American troops in Fallujah in March has been the turning point as far as the resistance is concerned. The indiscriminate pillage by American soldiers during their search missions (according to many witnesses) and the sexual humiliation inflicted to prisoners, including Abu Ghraib in Baghdad, have only served to magnify the anger felt by most Iraqis. "There's no more trust, it will be hard to regain it." According to these resistance leaders, "We have reached the point of no return."

This is exactly the point of view of a Shi'ite woman we had met two days earlier - a former undercover opposition militant against Saddam: "The biggest mistake of the occupation forces was to despise our traditions and our culture. They are not satisfied with having bombed our infrastructure, they tried to destroy our social system and our

dignity. And this we cannot allow. The wounds are deep and the healing will take long. **We prefer to live under the terror of one of our own than under the humiliation of a foreign occupation."**

According to Saddam's generals, "more than a year after the beginning of the war, insecurity and anarchy still dominate the country. Because of their incapacity to control the situation and to maintain their promises, the Americans have antagonized the population as a whole.

The resistance is not limited to a few thousand activists. Seventy-five percent of the population supports us and helps us, directly and indirectly, volunteering information, hiding combatants or weapons. And all this despite the fact that many civilians are caught as collateral damage in operations against the coalition and collaborators."

Who do they regard as "collaborators"? "Every Iraqi or foreigner who works with the coalition is a target. Ministries, mercenaries, translators, businessmen, cooks or maids, it doesn't matter the degree of collaboration. **To sign a contract with the occupier is to sign your death certificate. Iraqi or not, these are traitors. Don't forget that we are at war."**

The network

Essentially composed by Ba'athists (Sunni and Shi'ite), the resistance currently regroups "all movements of national struggle against the occupation, without confessional, ethnic or political distinction. **Contrary to what you imagine in the West, there is no fratricide war in Iraq. We have a united front against the enemy. From Fallujah to Ramadi, and including Najaf, Karbala and the Shi'ite suburbs of Baghdad, combatants speak with a single voice. As to the young Shi'ite leader Muqtada al-Sadr, he is, like ourselves, in favor of the unity of the Iraqi people, multiconfessional and Arab. We support him from a tactical and logistical perspective."**

Every Iraqi region has its own combatants and each faction is free to choose its targets and its modus operandi. But as time goes by, their actions are increasingly coordinated. The generals insist there is no rivalry among these different organizations, except on one point: which one will eliminate the largest number of Americans.

Weapons of choice

"The attacks are meticulously prepared. They must not last longer than 20 minutes and we operate preferably at night or very early in the morning to limit the risks of hitting Iraqi civilians." They anticipate our next question: "No, we don't have weapons of mass destruction. *On the other hand, we have more than 50 million conventional weapons."*

By the initiative of Saddam, a real arsenal was concealed all over Iraq way before the beginning of the war. No heavy artillery, no tanks, no helicopters, but Katyushas, mortars (which the Iraqis call haoun), anti-tank mines, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and other Russian-made rocket launchers, missiles, AK 47s and substantial reserves of all sorts of ammunition. And the list is far from being extensive.

But the most efficient weapon remains the Kamikazes. A special unit, composed of 90% Iraqis and 10% foreign fighters, with more than 5,000 solidly-trained men and women, they need no more than a verbal order to drive a vehicle loaded with explosives.

What if the weapons' reserves dwindle? "No worries, for some time we have been making our own weapons." That's all they are willing to disclose.

Claiming responsibility

"Yes, we have executed the four American mercenaries in Fallujah last March. On the other hand, the Americans soldiers waited for four hours before removing the bodies, while they usually do it in less than 20 minutes. Two days earlier, a young married woman had been arbitrarily arrested. For the population of Fallujah, this was the last straw, so they expressed their full rage against the four cadavers. The Americans, they did much worse to living Iraqi prisoners."

The suicide attack which provoked the death of Akila al-Hashimi, a diplomat and member of the Iraqi Governing Council on September 22, 2003, was also perpetrated by the resistance, as well as the car bomb which killed the president of the Iraqi executive body Ezzedin Salim in May 17 this year at the entrance of **the Green Zone (which Iraqis call the Red Zone, due to the number of resistance offensives)**.

They are also responsible for the kidnapping of foreigners. "We are aware that the kidnapping of foreign nationals blemishes our image, but try to understand the situation. We are forced to control the identity of people circulating in our territory. If we have proof that they are humanitarians or journalists we release them. If they are spies, mercenaries or collaborators we execute them. On this matter, let's be clear, we are not responsible for the death of Nick Berg, the American who was beheaded."

As to the attack against the UN headquarters in Baghdad on August 20, 2003: "We have never issued an order to attack the UN and we had a lot of esteem towards the Brazilian Sergio Vieira de Mello [special UN representative who died in the attack], but it's not impossible that the authors of this suicide attack come from another resistance group. As we have explained, we don't control everything. And we must not forget that the UN is responsible for the 13 years of embargo we have endured."

What about the October 27, 2003 attack against the Red Cross in Baghdad? "This had nothing to do with us, we always had a lot of respect for this organization and the people who work for them. What would be our interest to attack one of the few institutions which has been helping the Iraq population for years? We know that people from Fallujah have claimed this attack, but we can assure you they are not part of the resistance. And we also add: for political and economic reasons, there are many who have an interest in discrediting us."

After June 30

"Resolution 1546 adopted on June 8 is nothing but one more web of lies to the eyes of many Iraqis. First, because it officially ends the occupation by foreign troops while authorizing the presence of a multinational force under American command, without stipulating the date of their removal. Second, because the Iraqi right to veto important military operations, demanded by France, Russia and China, was rejected. Washington has conceded only a vague notion of partnership with the Iraqi authority and did not think of anything in case of disagreement. **Iraqis are not fools, the maintenance of**

American troops in Iraq after June 30 and the aid money they will get from the American Congress leave no doubt over the identity of who will really rule the country."

What about a possible role for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)? "If NATO intervenes, it's not to help our people, but to help the Americans leave this quagmire. If they wanted our well-being, they would have made a move before," say the three officers while looking at their watches. It's late and we have largely exceeded our allotted time.

"What American troops cannot do today, NATO troops won't be able to do later on. Everyone must know: Western troops will be regarded by Iraqis as occupiers. This is something that George W Bush and his faithful ally Tony Blair will do well to think about.

If they have won a battle, they have not won the war yet. The great battle is still to begin. The liberation of Baghdad is not far away."

"In A World of Shit"

June 17, 2004 http://www.tompaine.com/articles/in_a_world_of_shit.php

A remarkable briefing yesterday at the Middle East Institute by Ahmed S. Hashim, a Naval War College professor just returned from Iraq, painted in broad outlines the potentially catastrophic situation that the Bush administration faces in Iraq the next few months.

The subject of Hashim's report was the evolving resistance in Iraq. **The resistance, he reports, is highly organized. "They have web sites, both the Baathists and the Islamists. It's an incredibly sophisticated outreach program."**

The organizational infrastructure for the resistance is not visible to U.S. counterinsurgency teams. Why? It's in the mosques. "The mosques are organizational centers."

Said Hashim, at the same time, they've held on to the fierce Iraqi nationalism that they've imbibed over the past 30 years.

Hashim predicted the growth of what he calls a "complex warfare pattern" over the next few months. The insurgency will grow. Iraqi organized crime is expanding by leaps and bounds, tied to drug lords in Iran and Afghanistan. "They've coalesced into a kind of Iraqi mafia."

<p>What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to the E-mail address up top. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.</p>

"Our first issue of the U.S.S. Chicago "Pigboat Blues" was geared towards getting crewmen to write in to the closed circuit TV show called "XO's Forum". Usually the XO (Second in Command) would come on TV and answer a few lame questions that people wrote in.

This time though there were almost a hundred letters, many about living and working conditions and one even asking about our paper...We would write, and layout, and print the paper off base, legally. Then we'd sneak it onto the ship and whoever had the mid-watch would distribute it, illegally"

These days with the Web, shipboard and unit websites are a fantastic way to get the word out. Email discussion lists with anonymous email addresses are good ways to organize too.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

U.S. Imperial Servants In Kabul Want Kerry For Their New Raj

Jun 25, By MATTHEW PENNINGTON, Associated Press Writer

KABUL, Afghanistan - With armed Afghan guards at the gate and a Democrat donkey mascot chewing leaves in the shade, dozens of American expatriates held a fund-raiser in Kabul on Friday for U.S. presidential hopeful John Kerry.

About 60 people, mostly nongovernment aid workers, gathered at a restaurant garden across town from the fortress-like American Embassy, declaring "Kabul for Kerry."

Said organizer Karen Hirschfeld, of Winchester, Mass., who is helping Afghans get ready for this year's national elections, "We think John Kerry will be a good leader."

They pinned Kerry badges on the lapels of participants who paid \$10 to cover the cost of the breakfast and hired "Franklin the Democratic Donkey" from its Afghan owner to serve as the party mascot.

Organizers said plenty of U.S. Embassy workers expressed an interest but were barred from coming for security reasons — although 11 Interior Ministry guards were deployed at the venue.

Stephen Landrigan, 55, an education aid worker, said most of the people at the fund-raiser were likely working on U.S. government projects.

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To: GI Special
June 26, 2004
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