GI SPECIAL 2#B66

BAD PLACE TO BE:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW

US soldier near Baghdad's International Airport. Two US convoys were hit by bombs on the main highway to the airport 9.18 (AFP/Jewel Samad)

Bush's Vietnam

17 September 2004 By Bob Herbert, Vietnam Veteran, The New York Times

Arlington, Va. - The rows of simple white headstones in the broad expanses of brilliant green lawns are scrupulously arranged, and they seem to go on and on, endlessly, in every direction.

It was impossible not to be moved. A soft September wind was the only sound. Beyond that was just the silence of history, and the collective memory of the lives lost in its service.

On Tuesday morning I visited the grave of Air Force Second Lt. Richard VandeGeer. The headstone tells us, as simply as possible, that he went to Vietnam, that he was born Jan. 11, 1948, and died May 15, 1975, and that he was awarded the Purple Heart.

His mother, Diana VandeGeer, who is 75 now and lives in Florida, tells us that he loved to play soldier as a child, that he was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam and that

she longs for him still. He would be 56 now, but to his mother he is forever a tall and handsome 27.

Richard VandeGeer was not the last American serviceman to die in the Vietnam War, but he was close enough. He was part of the last group of Americans killed, and his name was the last of the more than 58,000 to be listed on the wall of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington. **As I stood at his grave, I couldn't help but wonder how long it will take us to get to the last American combat death in Iraq.**

The Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation put me in touch with the lieutenant's family.

"I'm still angry that my son is gone," said Mrs. VandeGeer, who is divorced and lives alone in Cocoa Beach. "I'm his mother. I think about him every day." She said that while she will always be proud of her son, she believes he "died for nothing."

Wars are all about chaos and catastrophes, death and suffering, and lifelong grief, which is why you should go to war only when it's absolutely unavoidable. Wars tear families apart as surely as they tear apart the flesh of those killed and wounded. **Since we learned nothing from Vietnam, we are doomed to repeat its agony, this time in horrifying slow-motion in Iraq.**

Three more marines were killed yesterday in Iraq. Kidnappings are commonplace. The insurgency is growing and becoming more sophisticated, which means more deadly. Ordinary Iraqis are becoming ever more enraged at the U.S.

When the newscaster David Brinkley, appalled by the carnage in Vietnam, asked Lyndon Johnson why he didn't just bring the troops home, Johnson replied, "I'm not going to be the first American president to lose a war."

George W. Bush is now trapped as tightly in Iraq as Johnson was in Vietnam. The war is going badly. The president's own intelligence estimates are pessimistic. There is no plan to actually win the war in Iraq, and no willingness to concede defeat.

I wonder who the last man or woman will be to die for this colossal mistake.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Airport Road Car Bomb Attack Wounds 3 U.S. Troops; Occupation Issues "Travel Warning"

Heavy smoke billows from a burned US Humvee and a civilian car at a bridge that leads to Baghdad's International Airport. A US convoy was hit by a roadside bomb on the main highway to the airport in southern Baghdad. (AFP/Jewel Samad)

September 18, 2004 KTVU.com & AP & Focus 1 News

Three U.S. soldiers are hurt after a car bomb hit their convoy on the main highway to Baghdad's international airport. Plumes of black smoke were seen rising from the scene, witnesses said.

The military says the soldiers have been evacuated to a hospital. Witnesses say troops sealed off the area of the blast near an overpass.

In a travel warning Saturday, the State Department called the airport road one of Iraq's most dangerous areas. It is the site of frequent attacks on U.S. troops and supply convoys.

MORE:

Second Airport Road Car Bomb Attack Kills 2 U.S. Soldiers, Wounds 8, On Way

To Scene Of Previous Airport Road Car Bomb Attack

9/19/2004 The Peninsula & September 18, 2004 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Release Number: 04-09-20C

Two Task Force Baghdad Soldiers were killed and eight wounded when a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) detonated at approximately 4 p.m. today.

The Soldiers were en route to the blast site of a previous car bomb attack when a second one detonated. Three vehicles were destroyed in the attack.

British Troops Evacuate Al-Sadr's Basra Office After Ultimatum From Mahdi Army Says Get Out Or Lose The Oil Fields

British troops withdraw from the office of radical cleric Moqtada Sadr in Basra. (AFP/Essam Al-Sudani)

September 18, 2004 BASRA, Iraq (AP) & 9.17 (AFP)

British troops pulled out Saturday from radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's main office in the southern city of Basra a day after they occupied the building and

seized an arms cache in fighting that killed three and wounded five, the British military and police said.

Iraqi Mahdi Army soldiers take cover behind a wall during clashes with British troops in Basra, September 17, 2004. (Atef Hassan/Reuters)

The British withdrawal came just hours after al-Sadr's top representative in the city threatened to order al-Mahdi Army militiamen to attack oil fields if British troops did not immediately pull out.

"The al-Mahdi Army is ready to carry out these military operations against British forces, oil fields and oil pipelines in Basra," Sheik Asaad al-Basri said. He also demanded the British return the seized weapons and warned al-Mahdi militiamen were mobilized for a fight.

Explosions and gunfire again echoed across the city Saturday before the soldiers withdrew from the offices in the city center and handed over the keys to local authorities, said British military spokesman Capt. Donald Francis.

"We handed the building ... over to the police," he said. "For the British troops this operation is complete."

Police and national guardsmen immediately took over the building Saturday pending a decision by the provincial governor on whether to give it back to al-Sadr's supporters, Basra police chief Brig. Gen. Mohammed Kadhim al-Ali.

During Friday's raid on the offices, British troops seizes a large arms cache after fighting that left three dead and five wounded, including a British soldier, officials said.

Tensions have been mounting recently in Basra between the militia and British troops, who raided a smaller al-Sadr office in the city a couple of days ago.-

The Mehdi Army opened fire after coalition forces violated an agreement not to drive in front of the street that leads to the cleric's Basra office, said Sadr's Basra representative, Sheikh Assad Basri.

"The British soldiers fired back. There was rocket-propelled grenade and light arms fire," Basri said.

As tensions soared, a Sadr representative demanded that Iraqi police return the weapons they seized from the militia earlier in the week and issued a threat against Basra's governor.

"Basra governor Hassen Rashed must return all weapons. Otherwise, I will send a battalion of the Mehdi Army to arrest him," Sheikh Assad Basri said in a sermon at the Muslim weekly prayers.

U.S. Force Retreats from Ramadi

17 September 2004 Aljazeera.net

Aljazeera has learned that US soldiers and marines have withdrawn from the center and eastern neighbourhoods of Ramadi, after launching a massive sweep that resulted in killing seven Iraqi civilians and injuring five others on Thursday.

Insurgency Takes The Upper Hand

September 15, 2004 Steven Komarow, Cesar Soriano and Tom Squitieri, USA TODAY & Patrick Cockburn, The Independent

At a time when U.S. plans had called for Iraq's new government and Prime Minister Ayad Allawi to be gaining respect and organizing for national elections, insurgents appear more powerful than ever.

By some counts, more than three dozen Iraqi cities and towns are in the hands of hostile leaders backed by the resistance. **The resistance that was spotty a year ago now launches an average of more than 50 attacks against U.S. or coalition forces a day.**

Says Lawrence Korb, a former assistant secretary of Defense under President Reagan who is now an analyst at the Center for American Progress, insurgents "are going after people aligning themselves with the new government, **and they show they have the ability to disrupt the oil, which is the center of the economic plan, even in the so-called safe south."**

"The bottom line is, at this moment we are losing the war," says Andrew Bacevich, a former Army colonel who teaches international relations at Boston University. "That doesn't mean it is lost, but we are losing, and **as an observer it is difficult for me to see that either the civilian leadership or the military leadership has any plausible idea on how to turn this around."**

While insurgents have gained control of some major towns and cities outside Baghdad, they can also strike with apparent impunity inside the capital itself.

"The people who are fighting the Americans are real men, heroes who are defending their country against the Americans," says Saddam Arak, 29.

"The Americans fired into a crowd when it was very clear they were unarmed. If the Americans pulled out, things would go very fine for us," Arak says.

"The Allawi government is losing control. The Americans are losing control. It is the mujaheddin (holy warrior) resistance who are in complete control," says painter Mazin Mohammed Aboud, 20, resting in the shade of a palm tree near the Tigris River.

The Iraq war marks the first time since Vietnam that U.S. troops have been involved in sustained combat for more than a few months. And for now, at least, the Iraq war seems to have no obvious end in sight, and after more than a year of fighting, things seem to be getting worse.

Even aspirant police officers injured by a massive car bomb in Haifa Street earlier this week expressed approval of resistance attacks on US forces.

TOAST

Iraqi fireman runs next to a burning Occupation Police car, following explosion at police station, Rashid Street in Baghdad, September 17, 2004. (Akram Saleh/Reuters)

Impotent Marine Generals Babble Loony Bullshit About Taking Fallujah (Reality Never Enters Their Minds)

16 September 2004 By Anne Barnard, The Boston Globe

After he took command Sunday of the First Marine Expeditionary Force and its 42,000 troops in many of Iraq's toughest areas, from Fallujah and Ramadi west of Baghdad to trouble spots south of the capital, **Lieutenant General John F. Sattler declared, "The status quo in Fallujah cannot stand."**

Sattler said Marines were capable of taking over Fallujah in a matter of days. "We could arm the 1,000-pound grizzly bear and take it into town," he said.

Marine commanders said their mission is to support Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's government. **They said Allawi plans to issue an ultimatum to Fallujah as soon as Iraqi security forces from other parts of the country are ready to lead an assault on the city** and maintain security there once it is subdued.

Yet the Marines' experience in Fallujah offers a caution for the Iraqi government.

Marines are by far the strongest fighting force in the region yet are politically unable to win over residents through force alone. And their attempts to set up Iraqi forces have been plagued by rampant attacks on those forces and widespread suspicion among Marines on the front lines that they are not trustworthy. Now, the Marines are starting from scratch in several places, after some of their dearest projects were scuttled by insurgent pressure.

The only hope, Lieutenant General James T. Conway, the outgoing commander, said, **is to bring in police from Baghdad or units such as the new Iraqi Army's 36th Battalion**, which US commanders say has fought cohesively against rebels in Najaf and elsewhere. Conway said military planners are likely to take the same "fire brigade approach" around the country, **bringing Iraqis from other regions to fight insurgents in places like Samarra and Baqubah. (And when they leave the "other regions" guess what happens there? OK, take the police from Baghdad. Take the 36th from Najaf. The resistance needs to get total control in both cities, and that would do it. These "commanders" are too stupid to live.)**

The rebel-held city is risky to ignore, but a fight to bring it under control could blacken the image of the US-backed government, and ***no Iraqi force is ready to maintain security there afterward.***

Even as they pledge to solve the problem before national elections set for January, top Marine commanders in Iraq acknowledge they are facing many of the

same problems that they hoped to solve in April - yet the insurgents are more entrenched now and US forces are even less popular.

In sovereign Iraq, a major attack by US forces would be even less palatable, but *Marine commanders say Iraqi security forces are not ready to lead an all-out assault*.

In Haditha, a city that had been relatively peaceful, a program in which Marines lived and worked with Iraqi police in their station - modeled on a Vietnam-era counterinsurgency program - was called off recently after the police station was bombed. Living with Marines proved too risky for the Iraqi police, who received numerous death threats.

The Marines blame the setbacks in part on political decisions made far up the chain of command.

Bringing in outsiders could dangerously inflame ethnic tensions. In April, when an Iraqi Army unit with many Kurdish members fought in Fallujah, many Sunni Arabs protested that "peshmerga" - the Kurdish militia - had been let loose on the Fallujah population.

Meanwhile, Iraqis say the only way to calm the insurgency is for US troops to leave the cities. Coleman said there is nothing he would like better. "We'd like to be Zorro-like: **You don't know where we come from, you don't know where we live, we're quick to put a 'Z' on the chest of the problem and then disappear,"** he said. **(This Coleman is stark raving insane. When you are a foreign army occupying somebody else's country, his idea that you can move your troops in secrecy simply proves Coleman is completely incompetent and unfit to command his dick with both hands, if he can find it.)**

"I'll be damned if when I'm 65 I'm going to be sitting on the redwood deck of my double-wide and read some snot-nosed grad school thesis about another failed US foreign policy example in the early part of the century," he said. **"I'll die staying here so I don't have to read that." (Hopefully this loony will get his suicidal wish, but does he really have to take the troops with him?)**

NEED 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/ And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

Fallujah Revenge Bombing Mark Of Losers

September 17, 2004 Jonathan Steele, The Guardian

Armies which resort to revenge are usually ones that are losing.

Within the Sunni region, Ramadi, Falluja and Samarra have become no-go areas. The same is true of the Shia holy cities of Kerbala and Najaf.

It is not that US forces are impotent. With their overwhelming fire-power they are unbeatable. **What is changing is the growth of resistance, both military and political, and the ebbing-away of US legitimacy. Increasing numbers of influential Iraqis tell US commanders to keep out of populated areas and withdraw to barracks, as Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani did most notably in Najaf.**

An Iraqi man carries a wounded boy in a hospital in Fallujah following a US air strike. **The US military said it conducted a "successful precision strike."** (AFP/Fares Dlimi)

Full Tilt Idiocy, High School Level

The United States military seemed set to press ahead with more attacks in Fallujah. In areas just outside the city, **American forces spoke through loudspeakers and called for a local militant, Omar Hadeed, to "come out and fight,"** witnesses said Monday. (Sabrina Tavernise, The New York Times, 14 September 2004)

The Killings In Haifa Street:

Murderous Clowns In Command Stumbled Over Their Own Lies Trying To Excuse A Massacre

An injured man is carried away after U.S. helicopters fired missiles at a crowd of people cheering near a burning U.S. Bradley Fighting Vehicle at Haifa street in Baghdad Sept. 12, 2004. Five people died and over 40 injured in the incident. (AP Photo/Hussein Malla)

(Thanks to B, who emailed this in. B writes: Amazing article!..when you read between the lines.)

1. The soldiers from the Bradley were under fire, so the copter was protecting them. Oops, no they weren't, they had left.
2. The copter itself was under fire. Except it wasn't.
3. Sensitive military technology in the Bradley had to be protected from capture but we can't say if it was or not, and
4. In another news account the same day, the copter opened fire "to save civilian lives" by killing all the civilians in sight.

Sep 16 By Patrick J. McDonnell, Times Staff Writer & Edward Wong, NY Times

Sunday's deaths sparked a rancorous debate after the Army initially said the helicopters fired to scatter a crowd gathered around the burning armored vehicle. **Iraqi commentators have suggested that it would have been more humane to allow the Bradley to be ransacked, or to have retaken it with ground forces.**

"A tank can always be replaced, but you can't replace human lives," said Kadhim Sultani, chairman of the Iraqi National Human Rights Assn., a nongovernmental group.

But U.S. commanders said it was crucial to disperse the crowd and ensure no one looted the contents. Troops are authorized to use deadly force to protect "sensitive equipment" from falling into hostile hands, Maj. Gen. Chiarelli said.

Military commanders acknowledged Wednesday that earlier U.S. accounts that the helicopters were providing cover for escaping troops were incorrect. The Bradley's six wounded soldiers had been evacuated and the troops had already retreated to a strong point more than 400 yards away by the time the two Kiowa Warrior helicopters appeared overhead about 7:30 a.m., commanders said.

The Army said it was not the sight of the insurgent flag on the Bradley vehicle that triggered the helicopter strike. **Commanders said a "preliminary investigation" showed that soldiers in the helicopters fired only after bullets from the vicinity of the disabled Bradley came their way.**
The helicopters made three passes each and fired a total of seven rockets and 30 rounds from .50-caliber machine guns, Col. McConville said. **He said soldiers in the helicopters were aiming at "insurgent or terrorist forces firing at our aircraft," and not at civilians gawking and poking at the disabled vehicle.**

Officials disavowed an earlier U.S. account that a rocket was fired at the Bradley to destroy it and ensure it did not fall into hostile hands. **The fire was aimed solely at insurgents in the vicinity of the disabled vehicle, the commanders said.**

The crowd dispersed after the firing, and U.S. ground forces were eventually able to reach the blazing vehicle and tow it away. **U.S. officials could not say whether sensitive equipment had been looted.**

At Karama Hospital in Baghdad on Wednesday, several survivors disputed the U.S. account.

"I saw no one among the people near or on top of the burning tank who had a weapon," said Alaa Naeem Alwan, 30, who had shrapnel removed from his abdomen and was being treated for a broken leg. "The Americans felt angry when they saw the people celebrating and carrying the black banner" of Zarqawi's group, he said.

"I saw American helicopters bomb one of the cars, and then they bombed another car," said Sgt. Kassim Mahmoud, 32, as he sat grimacing in pain in Karkh Hospital, his left leg wrapped in a bloody bandage. **"But I don't think this will make us afraid."**

Hamoodi Abdul-Hadi, 24, said gunmen who had earlier fired at U.S. ground troops had fled the area by the time the helicopters arrived.

"There were people surrounding the burnt tank," Abdul-Hadi said, "but the fighters had left the scene by then."

MORE:

When The Rabbits Get A Gun

15 September 2004 By William Rivers Pitt, t r u t h o u t | Perspective

On Sunday, September 12, 2004, a large crowd of Iraqi civilians came under fire from U.S. attack helicopters on Haifa Street in Baghdad.

An American Bradley Fighting Vehicle had been attacked and destroyed by 'insurgents' fighting the ongoing occupation of their country, and the civilians - after more than a year of deprivation and violence which came on the heels of a decade of deprivation and violence - were dancing on top of and beside the vehicle. 13 of them were killed and dozens more wounded. A reporter from the UK Guardian named Ghaith Abdul-Ahad was there, and was wounded in the attack.

"One of the three men piled together," wrote Abdul-Ahad, "raised his head and looked around the empty streets with a look of astonishment on his face. He then looked at the boy in front of him, turned to the back and looked at the horizon again. Then he slowly started moving his head to the ground, rested his head on his arms and stretched his hands towards something that he could see. It was the guy who had been beating his chest earlier, trying to help his brother. He wanted help but no one helped. He was just there dying in front of me. Time didn't exist. The streets were empty and silent and the men lay there dying together. He slid down to the ground, and after five minutes was flat on the street."

The survivors of this attack were probably not terrorists before the fire came raining down. It is a safe bet they are now, after seeing what they have seen, willing to trade their lives to see Americans die.

We are learning now that the game isn't much fun when the rabbits get a gun.

TROOP NEWS

Iraq Vet Betrayed By Bush

16 September 2004 PBS

Jon Soltz was an army captain who served in Iraq during the occupation, from May to September of 2003. He is now a graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh. He's also Pennsylvania state co- coordinator for the group Veterans for Kerry.

JON SOLTZ: My experience on the ground was that, you know, we had a president who, prior to 9/11, his policies in Europe going against the Kyoto Accords, and deciding he wanted to build super-duper missile defense systems, had no credibility to build a coalition, spent our defense money on, you know, things like missile systems when we needed body armor and tanks.

My unit did not have body armor when we went to Iraq. When we got on the ground, I went from Kuwait to Baghdad in a convoy. Baghdad's very different from the southern part of the country where there's a British contingent.

Baghdad has lost... we've lost more American soldiers in Baghdad than any other place. That's why we're footing 90 percent of the bill for the war and 90 percent of the casualties.

And when we went to Baghdad, I heard my president tell our country that our mission was accomplished, and that same night I had two RPG's flung at my convoy and one of my trucks blown up. He clearly wasn't leveling with the American public. And then when I was in Baghdad, we started losing soldiers every day.

Every day we went out, there was combat. And when one of my soldiers died, I had to hear my commander-in-chief so eloquently entice my enemy with, "Bring it on," a deep sorrow day for me as an officer inside Iraq.

New U.S. Strategy To Help Iraqi Resistance Kill More U.S. Troops

18 September 2004 By Rory McCarthy, The Guardian U.K.

The increased violence -- particularly in Baghdad and the so-called ”Sunni Triangle” where Falluja, Ramadi, Baquba and Samarra, among other towns, are controlled by insurgents -- has created a serious dilemma for administration strategists who, on the one hand, reject the notion that there are ”no-go” areas for U.S. troops, and, on the other, want to keep U.S. casualties down and off the front pages and U.S. television sets, particularly before the November elections here.

As a result, they appear to have settled on a strategy -- bombing suspected insurgent hideouts from the air -- *that further alienates the civilian population.*

***”I don't believe that you can flatten cities and expect to win popular support,”* noted Center for Strategic and International Studies' Frederick Barton.**

Criminal Officers In Violation Of U.S. Army Regs Of Land Warfare:

US Forces Hold Iraqi Women As "Bargaining Chips"

BAGHDAD, September 13 By Samir Haddad, IOL Correspondent

An Iraqi resistance group threatened Sunday, September 12, a volcano of attacks against the US occupation forces, who have taken Iraqi women hostage to exchange them with fighters.

A group calling itself the Saladin Al-Ayyubi Brigades, the military wing of the Sunni Islamic Front for the Iraqi Resistance, said the occupation troops kidnapped a mother and three girls on August 26 in Al-Latifia district, 70 kilometers south of Baghdad.

"The coward Americans demanded Iraqi resistance fighters in the area to lay down their arms and hand themselves in to release the four female hostages.

"We vow to teach the US troops a lesson for such a cowardly act unless they set the four free and unharmed," read the statement, a copy of which was obtained by IslamOnline.net.

"Only men with brave hearts could stand up a fight at battle fields, but cowards resort to such mean ways.

"It is high time that the Iraqis, Sunnis, Shiites, Arabs or Kurds, took an action to defend their honor. We are ready to sacrifice ourselves and offer our lives as a simple token to protect our women," it added.

The Islamic Front for the Iraqi Resistance was formed on May 30 as an umbrella for all Sunni resistance groups.

The incident is not unprecedented. In the wake of the downfall of the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein, US occupation forces held captive the two wives and sister of the former Iraqi vice president Izat Al-Douri to pressure him.

One wife was released in May, but the fate of the other is still unknown, according to an Iraqi female lawyer who was released from detention in May, 2004.

According to Iraqi sources, there are at least 15 Iraqi woman detainees still in US-run detentions camps across Iraq.

So Much For The Bullshit About How Patch-On Armor Protects Strykers:

Soldier Loses Arm;
His Family Has To Beg For Money;

Catron says Trevor and his family are in a desperate financial situation. Even with disability pay they'll have barely enough to survive. She says they deserve better for the sacrifice he's made.

September 17, 2004 By Keith Eldridge, (KOMO TV)

LEWIS COUNTY - A huge fundraising effort is underway to help Trevor Phillips from the town of Onalaska.

Phillips told us from his hospital room near Washington, D.C., "and all of a sudden just 'boom' the loudest thing I've ever heard in my life."

Phillips recalls the moment an explosion ripped through his Army Stryker vehicle in Iraq.
"My goggles shattered and the smell of flesh and metal burning and I was like 'oh man, we got hit.' I looked down and I saw my hand hanging there from a tendon."

His arm was lost. Right now he's recuperating at Walter Reed Army Medical with his wife and two young daughters by his side.

Back home in Onalaska, Sandy Catron heard about what happened and just had to do something. As if she doesn't have enough to worry about one son, Aric, just back from Iraq and another one, Caleb, there now.

"And having two sons in the military and knowing that it could be either one of them, it was just like I was going to be his mom and I need to help take care of him," she says.

Catron says Trevor and his family are in a desperate financial situation. Even with disability pay they'll have barely enough to survive. She says they deserve better for the sacrifice he's made.

There's a $15,000 fundraising effort to help the Phillips purchase a new home.

Sandy says, "It's tough. We're the rear detachment and it's tough being back here and just sitting and waiting and watching the news and listening and this way we get to help and be a benefit to the families."

Trevor is asked, "What do you think about this whole effort back here home in Onalaska to help out you and your family?" He answers, "I didn't know there were that many people out there that really cared, you know. But I really appreciate their help."

Celebrities including Tom Hanks and Ozzy & Sharon Osbourne have visited Trevor. But he says his biggest honor is what's taking place back in his hometown.

Trevor hopes to be back home in about a month.

There is a fundraiser Saturday, Sept. 18, at the Junction Sports Bar and Grill in Rochester from 3-8p.m. You can also give at any Washington Mutual Bank (account # 097-405340-8)

Silly Bush Tells Stupid Lie To National Guard Association About Reserve GI Bill

September 14, 2004 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer

President Bush told a National Guard Association convention in Las Vegas that he had asked Congress to increase Reserve GI Bill education benefits and was urging quick passage. But in fact, the administration has not asked Congress for anything along those lines — and the lack of a specific proposal is holding up work on an omnibus veterans' benefits bill.

Speaking Tuesday at the annual conference of the Guard group, Bush said his administration has been pushing for improvements in benefits and quality of life for Guard and Reserve members and their families.

However, Democratic aides on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee said the White House and Defense Department have not submitted any legislative plan.

"We asked the Department of Defense for details, and they said they don't have them yet," one aide said.

The failure to produce those details is holding up negotiations between the House and Senate over a compromise veterans' benefits bill.

Occupation Command Wants To Move Bulgarians Into Combat Area: Bulgarians Diplomatically Tell Command "Fuck You Very Much"

18 September 2004 Sofia News Agency

There has been no official request for consideration over a possible relocation of Bulgarian troops from Karbala to Najaf, Defense Minister Nikolay Svinarov said on Saturday.

Upon his return from an informal meeting with EU counterparts in Netherlands, **Bulgarian defense minister confirmed that such a request would demand profound political consideration and prompt decision.**

There is a general understanding that relocation of military units from one region to another will emit positive effects, but **Bulgarian troops make an exception from that rule, the defense minister said.**

Bulgarian troops know the situation in Karbala well and have good communication with local people, *unlike other parts of Iraq where the multinational troops are clearly seen as an occupation force.*

He backed up the stance expressed a day earlier by President Georgi Parvanov who suggested that any possible redeployment of the 480-strong infantry unit must be preceded by a thorough analysis.

"We are participating in a coalition of willing nations not only with armed forces, but also with the political decisions and the state institutions of the State," Minister Svinarov told reporters.

Bulgarian politicians have expressed their concerns over the surprising statement of Major General Andrzej Ekiert, Commander of the Polish-led multinational division in Iraq, who said several weeks ago that Poland was preparing to take over control of Qadissiya province, with Najaf, and to hand over control of Karbala province to the US force.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Big Surprise: Iraqis Want All U.S. Troops Out Now

September 17, 2004 Jonathan Steele, The Guardian

The US army's excessive use of force is a key factor. But there is also a growing sense among Iraqis that the occupation is causing more problems than it is solving. **Polls have shown for several months that the number of Iraqis who say they would feel safer if foreign troops left immediately exceeds the number who would feel less safe.**

Loud And Clear

At Karama Hospital [Baghdad] another woman threw a shoe at a car carrying an American reporter and photographer as it left the area. "Kill the Americans," she

said. "Slaughter them one by one." (Sabrina Tavernise, The New York Times, 14 September 2004)

Occupation Recruiting Station Hit In Kirkuk, 20 Killed; Cops Shoot Each Other

An Iraqi firefighter sprays water on the wreckage of a car-bomb that ripped through the Iraqi National Guard headquarters in Kirkuk.(AFP/Marwan Ibrahim)

September 18, 2004 KTVU.com & AP & Middle East Online

A bomber has blown up a car bomb near a crowd of people waiting to apply for jobs with the Iraqi National Guard, killing at least 20 in the northern city of Kirkuk.

The vehicle passed through three barriers before it reached the outer gate to the headquarters and exploded, sending shrapnel flying toward young national guard recruits lined up outside.

The street outside the guard headquarters was littered with bloodied bodies, debris and shards of glass.

Ambulances raced to the scene amid scenes of panic which saw several policemen open fire on each other.

"I saw a speeding car crossing an open field heading toward the would-be recruits, then there was a huge explosion and a big fire," said Asu Ahmed, a street vendor.

Kirkuk's National Guard chief says at least 16 people were wounded.

The road leading to the headquarters had been closed for a long time as a security precaution, but a fuel shortage in Kirkuk had recently led the local authorities to re-open it to allow residents to use a nearby petrol station.

Another Day, Another Pipeline: No Oil For Blood

A sabotaged a key pipeline pumping oil exports from northern Iraq to Turkey and a local supply line west of the main northern oil capital of Kirkuk. (AFP/Marwan Naamani)

Senior Oil Official Survives Assassination Attempt; Five Bodyguards Killed

9/18/2004 By Associated Press

MOSUL, Iraq (AP) A senior official with Iraq's state-run North Oil Co. survived an assassination attempt Saturday after his convoy came under attack in the northeastern city of Mosul, police said.

Mohammed Zibari, the head of the company's oil products department in the Nineveh province, was traveling in a three-vehicle convoy on his way to work in Mosul when

unidentified gunmen opened fire, killing five of his bodyguards and wounding four others, said police Lt. Mohammed Ali.

Zibari, who is in charge of supplying the province with oil and gas, escaped unharmed, Ali said. Two cars were badly damaged in the attack.

Resistance Tactics Grow More Sophisticated, Effective

Sep 15 By KIM HOUSEGO, Associated Press Writer & Sep 16 By Patrick J. McDonnell Times Staff Writer

The scale and sophistication of militant attacks in Iraq are steadily increasing, with coordinated strikes and complicated ambushes that increasingly hit their targets, officials and analysts said Wednesday.

Insurgents have learned from past mistakes and shifted strategy, cooperating more closely with each other and devising new ways to put their relatively simple arsenal to effective use.

"More thought is going into the execution of the attacks," said Lt. Col. Paul Hastings of Task Force Olympia.

Militants now follow up roadside bomb attacks with a deluge of rocket-propelled grenades instead of fleeing, or fire off mortar rounds to lure soldiers out of their base and into freshly laid mine fields, military commanders say.

In a July attack in Samarra, for example, militants detonated a car bomb and then hammered a military headquarters with a mortar barrage as troops fled the building. Five American soldiers died.

"The enemy has been able to construct IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) that are more complex, include more rounds in the form of a "daisy chain," and tend to have a higher lethality," said Maj. Neal O'Brien of the Army's 1st Infantry Division.

"They graduated to more coordinated attacks," he said.

On Sunday, militants in Baghdad struck the U.S.-guarded Green Zone — the seat of the Iraqi government and the U.S. Embassy — **with their biggest mortar and rocket barrage to date, many of them showing signs of careful aim.**

Hours later, guerrillas used a car bomb to disable a U.S. patrol on a main Baghdad thoroughfare before detonating a second car bomb that wrecked a Bradley fighting vehicle sent to assist the patrol. They then opened fire on the wounded crewmen as they fled the vehicle. "**The set of attacks that occurred over the weekend were definitely more simultaneous than in the past," said Lt. Col. Steven Boylan, spokesman for coalition forces in Baghdad.**

"Groups start small, get know-how and become more lethal over time."

On Wednesday, militants fired a rocket-propelled grenade at U.S. and Iraqi soldiers guarding a council building in Samarra, 60 miles north of Baghdad. **The assault came just days after the Americans negotiated a deal with local leaders to enter the city without risk of attack.**

U.S. commanders say their soldiers are fighting a guerrilla force that wears no uniform and quickly blends into the civilian population and are often required to respond swiftly to life-threatening situations.

Urban settings give insurgents ample opportunities to fire from within crowds, apartment buildings and other civilian sites. Edgy U.S. troops on patrol have to view people on the streets as potential threats and approaching vehicles as possible car bombs.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

"The worst policy is to besiege cities."
Gen. Sun-Tzu in The Art of War

Republican Senator Says "We Are Not Winning. Things Are Getting Worse"

Sen. Chuck Hagel (Neb.) joined a small, but growing, chorus of GOP voices sounding grave concerns about Iraq. **"We've got to be honest with ourselves," Hagel said. "The worst thing we can do is hold ourselves hostage to some grand illusion we're winning. Right now, we are not winning. Things are getting worse."** (17 September 2004 Dana Priest and Jim VandeHei, The Washington Post)

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

PHOTO: GENEROUS, KIND, NOBLE GEORGE BUSH, THE LIBERATOR OF IRAQ, ALLOWS IRAQI REFUGEES TO COME BACK TO LIVE IN THEIR

IRAQI CITY PROVIDED THEY AGREE TO KISS HIS ASS. THEY PLAN TO KILL AS MANY OCCUPATION SOLDIERS AS THEY CAN ASAP, OF COURSE.

QUESTION: IF THESE WERE IRAQI SOLDIERS OUTSIDE FAYETTEVILLE OR SAN DIEGO, WOULDN'T YOU BE MAKING EXACTLY THE SAME PLANS?

SO WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING THERE?

U.S. soldiers search residents of the town of Tal Afar, before allowing them to enter the city, September 15, 2004. An estimated 50,000 Turkmen started returning to their homes in the northern town of Tal Afar, during a pause in fighting between U.S. forces and insurgents, witnesses said. (Namir Noor-Eldeen/Reuters)

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

Occupation Training Resistance Troops

Sep. 13, 2004 By BRIAN BENNETT, Time Magazine

"Until we have trained soldiers," says Major Kevin Collins, who runs India Base, a dusty boot camp on the outskirts of Fallujah, "the situation is not going to get much better."

One of the most vexing challenges for the Marines at India Base is figuring out whether the soldiers they are training are really on their side. All Iraqis who sign up for the army go through a vetting process, says Collins, but it isn't airtight. **U.S. officers believe enemy fighters are sneaking recruits into U.S.-run training camps.**

The Marines have received reports from scouts saying insurgents wearing U.S.-issued desert camouflage have attacked American positions. "We joke that after shooting at the range here, the shooting is better at TCP-1," Collins says, referring to a U.S. checkpoint at the entrance to Fallujah.

The notion that the Marines are unwittingly training enemy fighters has become the source of dark barracks humor. Some drill sergeants joke about making T shirts that read INDIA BASE: AMERICA'S ONLY OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED TERRORIST TRAINING CAMP.

The recruits are attracted by the money, and in some cases want to do their part to help the new government, they don't want to be seen as traitors.

(THANKS TO B WHO E-MAILED THIS IN WITH THE PHOTO CAPTION BELOW)

Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, left, addresses new police recruits at the Police Academy in Baghdad Sept. 16. **He told them "Bush chopped off my hand when I looked cross-eyed at him, and I will do the same to you if you don't cooperate with our liberators."** (AP Photo/Samir Mizban)

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

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

"It wasn't all that long ago that Saddam Hussein was in power with his torture chambers and mass graves, and today this country is headed toward elections," Bush said in St. Cloud, Minnesota. 17 September 2004, The Los Angeles Times

(And now George W. Bush is in power with his torture chambers and mass graves, and today this country is headed towards independence, thanks to a resistance movement with the support of the Iraqi people, that will not tolerate being occupied by assholes from Washington, Republican or Democrat. T)

Unhappy Camper

(THANKS TO AB WHO E-MAILED THIS IN: AB WRITES: child abuse)

A young girl wears her hair braids in the shape of a "W" made by her mother using a bent clothes hanger for a campaign visit by George W Bush in Rochester, Minnesota. (AFP/Tim Sloan)

Two Assholes For The Empire

9.14.04 David Batstone

As a father, the campaign trail leaves me cold. **The presidential candidates trip over themselves to convince me that they are more warrior than the other.**

George W. Bush, who apparently could not even make time to check into his military base in Alabama, tells us that he will rattle the sword to usher in freedom to the Middle East. Not to be outdone, John Kerry greets us with a military salute and wants us to believe that his true legacy from Vietnam is as a war hero, not as a principled anti-war veteran.

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.

If printed out, this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.

Web Copies

For back issues see: GI Special web site at http://www.militaryproject.org/
The following that we know of have also posted issues:
http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/ ; www.gifightback.org ;
http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/gi-special.htm