

GI SPECIAL 2#B78



Sabo for NEWS

Guardsmen Gerard Darren Matthew, sent home from Iraq with mysterious illnesses, holds baby daughter, Victoria, who has deformed hand. He has tested positive for uranium contamination.

Depleted Uranium Test + Soldiers Baby Born Deformed

September 29, 2004 New York Daily News

But Matthew never got the results of his Army test for DU. When he called Fort Dix last week, five months after he was tested, he was told there was no record of any urine specimen from him.

In early September 2003, Army National Guard Spec. Gerard Darren Matthew was sent home from Iraq, stricken by a sudden illness.

One side of Matthew's face would swell up each morning. He had constant migraine headaches, blurred vision, blackouts and a burning sensation whenever he urinated.

The Army transferred him to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington for further tests, but doctors there could not explain what was wrong.

Shortly after his return, his wife, Janice, became pregnant. On June 29, she gave birth to a baby girl, Victoria Claudette.

The baby was missing three fingers and most of her right hand.

Matthew and his wife believe Victoria's shocking deformity has something to do with her father's illness and the war - especially since there is no history of birth defects in either of their families.

They have seen photos of Iraqi babies born with deformities that are eerily similar.

In June, Matthew contacted the Daily News and asked us to arrange independent laboratory screening for his urine. This was after The News had reported that four of seven soldiers from another National Guard unit, the 442nd Military Police, had tested positive for depleted uranium (DU).

The independent test of Matthew's urine found him positive for DU - low-level radioactive waste produced in nuclear plants during the enrichment of natural uranium.

Because it is twice as heavy as lead, DU has been used by the Pentagon since the Persian Gulf War in certain types of "tank-buster" shells, as well as for armor-plating in Abrams tanks. Exposure to radioactivity has been associated in some studies with birth defects in the children of exposed parents.

"My husband went to Iraq to fight for his country," Janice Matthew said. "I feel the Army should take responsibility for what's happened."

The couple first learned of the baby's missing fingers during a routine sonogram of the fetus last April at Lenox Hill Hospital.

Matthew was a truck driver in Iraq with the 719th transport unit from Harlem. His unit moved supplies from Army bases in Kuwait to the front lines and as far as Baghdad. On several occasions, he says, he carried shot-up tanks and destroyed vehicle parts on his flat-bed back to Kuwait.

After he learned of his unborn child's deformity, Matthew immediately asked the Army to test his urine for DU. In April, he provided a 24-hour urine sample to doctors at Fort Dix, N.J., where he was waiting to be deactivated.

In May, the Army granted him a 40% disability pension for his migraine headaches and for a condition called idiopathic angioedema - unexplained chronic swelling.

But Matthew never got the results of his Army test for DU. When he called Fort Dix last week, five months after he was tested, he was told there was no record of any urine specimen from him.

Thankfully, Matthew did not rely solely on the Army bureaucracy - he went to The News.

Earlier this year, The News submitted urine samples from Guardsmen of the 442nd to former Army doctor Asaf Durakovic and Axel Gerdes, a geologist at Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany. The German lab specializes in testing for minute quantities of uranium, a complicated procedure that costs up to \$1,000 per test.

The lab is one of approximately 50 in the world that can detect quantities as tiny as fentograms - one part per quadrillionth.

A few months ago, The News submitted a 24-hour urine sample from Matthew to Gerdes. As a control, we also gave the lab 24-hour urine samples from two Daily News reporters.

The three specimens were marked only with the letters A, B and C, so the lab could not know which sample belonged to the soldier.

After analyzing all three, Gerdes reported that only sample A - Matthew's urine - showed clear signs of DU. It contained a total uranium concentration that was "4 to 8 times higher" than specimens B and C, Gerdes reported.

"Those levels indicate pretty definitively that he's been exposed to the DU," said Leonard Dietz, a retired scientist who invented one of the instruments for measuring uranium isotopes.

According to Army guidelines, the total uranium concentration Gerdes found in Matthew is within acceptable standards for most Americans.

But Gerdes questioned the Army's standards, noting that even minute levels of DU are cause for concern.

"While the levels of DU in Matthew's urine are low," Gerdes said, "the DU we see in his urine could be 1,000 times higher in concentration in the lungs."

DU is not like natural uranium, which occurs in the environment. Natural uranium can be ingested in food and drink but gets expelled from the body within 24 hours.

DU-contaminated dust, however, is typically breathed into the lungs and can remain there for years, emitting constant low-level radiation.

"I'm upset and confused," Matthew said. "I just want answers. Are they [the Army] going to take care of my baby?"

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Abu Ghraib Car Bomb Takes Out Bradley, One Soldier Dead

September 30, 2004 The Associated Press, By ALEXANDRA ZAVIS, & Aljazeera.Net

A car bomber struck in the Abu Ghraib area outside of Baghdad, killing one US soldier and two Iraqi policemen, and wounded 10 Iraqis and four US soldiers Iraqi and U.S. officials said.

The four American soldiers were evacuated, said Maj. Philip Smith, spokesman for the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division.

Iraqi National Guard members were also on the scene at the time of the attack.

The bomb exploded near a checkpoint at a crowded intersection in Abu Ghraib, just west of Baghdad.

That bomb targeted a compound housing the mayor's office, a police station and other buildings, police 1st Lt. Ahmed Jawad said. A U.S. Bradley fighting vehicle parked in front of the compound was hit, Hutton said. US forces were guarding the complex.

Sources told Aljazeera that US forces had closed all roads leading to Abu Ghraib.

Smoke and fire could be seen rising from the scene as U.S. forces sealed off the area. The wounded Americans were evacuated, said Maj. Philip Smith, spokesman for the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division.

"I saw people flying in the air and falling on the ground," said Saad Mohsin, who has a table in front of the mayor's building where he helps people fill out forms. "I had fragments in my neck and my back."

Policeman Ali Shihan was hit by shrapnel in his left ear and was covered in blood.

Baghdad Logistical Support Area Rocketed; One Dead, Seven Wounded

September 30, 2004 The Associated Press

Insurgents fired a 122mm rocket Thursday at a logistical support area for coalition forces on the outskirts of Baghdad, killing one soldier and wounding seven, the military said. No further details was disclosed.

Greene County Soldier Killed

09/30/2004 By Josh Krysak, Herald-Standard

CARMICHAELS - Greene County suffered its first fatality as a result of the ongoing war in Iraq when area residents learned Wednesday that a 21-year-old Carmichaels man died in a Humvee crash.

Spc. Gregory Cox, who was a gunner aboard the Humvee, died Monday when the armored vehicle rolled over, but **the military has released conflicting reports of what happened to the military vehicle.**

An Associated Press account said the vehicle was bombed with an improvised explosive device, causing the armored carrier to roll over, according to Jack Gordon, a spokesman for the 99th Regional Readiness Command.

But according to Major Elizabeth Robbins, spokesperson for the Department of Defense, Cox was not killed as a result of hostile action but an unintentional vehicle accident when a civilian automobile ran the Humvee off the road causing it to roll over.

John E. Cox Jr. declined to comment on his son's death Wednesday.

Cox was a 2001 graduate of Geibel Catholic High School in Connellsville.

School officials also declined to comment on Cox's death.

Two U.S. Soldiers Die Of Wounds

September 30, 2004 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 974-04 & No. 973-04

Pfc. Joshua K. Titcomb, 20, of Somerset, Ky., died Sept. 29 in Ar Ramadi, Iraq, of injuries sustained on September 28 when an improvised explosive device exploded near his military vehicle. Titcomb was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 72nd Armor Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Casey, Korea.

Sgt. Tyler D. Prewitt, 22, of Phoenix, Ariz., died Sept. 28 in Landstuhl, Germany, from injuries sustained in Baqubah, Iraq, on September 24 when a rocket-propelled grenade struck his vehicle and exploded. Prewitt was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, Vilseck, Germany.

Granite Hills Grad Dies:

Dad Says “We Shouldn’t Be There To Begin With”

September 30, 2004 By LEROY STANDISH/Staff Writer Daily Press

APPLE VALLEY — Twenty-year-old Pfc. Kenneth L. Sickels, a 2002 graduate of Granite Hills High School, was killed Monday in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq in a non-combat incident, the U.S. Marine Corps said.

Sickels is the first resident of Apple Valley to be killed in the war in Iraq.

"He was my huggy bear," said his mother, Joyce Lacy, from her two-bedroom apartment off Wanaque Road in Apple Valley. Sickels lived there with his mother and his stepfather, Clifford Lacy, before joining the Marine Corps in October.

A yellow ribbon, imprinted with the words "support our troops," is tacked to their front door below a fluttering American flag.

Inside, pictures of Sickels in full military dress rest on a mantel. **The photographs, the memories and a couple of telephone voice messages left a day before his death are all the Lacys have left of the son they say would always go out of his way to help anybody.**

"He didn't have a mean bone in his body," said Clifford Lacy, a veteran of the Vietnam War.

Sickels was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, based at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms. **His parents said he shipped out to Iraq Aug. 25 and worked patrolling an area along the Syrian border.**

Sickels' father, Glenn Sickels, lives in Hawaii. He said he was proud of his son's decision to join the Marines but worried he was heading into harm's way.

"I was proud of him but it was a bad time," Glenn Sickels said. "We shouldn't be there to begin with."

Kenneth Sickels spent just one year at Granite Hills High School. Though he was a resident of the High Desert since he was 2 — after his parents moved from his birthplace of Colorado Springs, Colo. — Kenneth Sickels attended Long Beach Polytechnic High School for three years. "We moved down there a few years for work," Clifford Lacy said.

They eventually tired of Long Beach, returned to the High Desert in 2001 and found an apartment in Apple Valley.

His parents remembered Kenneth Sickels as a teen who enjoyed playing video games, liked listening to heavy metal music and enjoyed ancient Viking mythology.

Services for Kenneth Sickels have not yet been determined, but Clifford Lacy said his stepson would have wanted a Viking send-off.

"They would set a ship on fire and send it out to sea, but we couldn't do that," Clifford Lacy said. Instead, they plan on a small service at the Victor Valley Memorial Park Cemetery on 11th Street in Victorville.

"Some time later, we will take his ashes to the sea," Clifford Lacy said.

On July 29, before Kenneth Sickels left for Iraq, he came home and celebrated his birthday with family and friends. It is a week's worth of memories his mother will always cherish.

Her son had the opportunity to fulfill many of his life's ambitions, she said. He went to Magic Mountain, rode a mechanical bull and shared time swimming with his cousins and nieces.

"There was only one thing he didn't do before he left that he wanted to do," Joyce Lacy said. "He wanted to go sky diving."

Ceremony, Convoy Attacks In Baghdad

September 30, 2004 The Associated Press, By ALEXANDRA ZAVIS & 10.1.04
Telegraph Co. UK

A series of bombs killed 42 people and wounded 141, including 10 U.S. soldiers at a government ceremony to inaugurate a new sewage treatment plant.

Two bombs went off in quick succession at the ceremony about 1 p.m., then were followed by a third explosion a short distance away, said Interior Ministry spokesman **Interior Ministry spokesman Colonel Adnan Abd al-Rahman said two car bombs and a roadside bomb exploded on Thursday in swift succession as a US convoy was passing through Baghdad's al-Amal neighbourhood.**

The hospital received 42 bodies -- including those of 35 children -- and 131 wounded, said lyhsan Nasser, head of the facility's statistics department.

The attack came after the United States struck in the troubled city of Fallujah, killing at least four Iraqis.

At the site of the blasts, body parts were strewn in the streets amid pools of blood. A U.S. helicopter evacuated some of the wounded while other aircraft circled overhead and soldiers sealed off the area.

Lt. Col. Jim Hutton, spokesman for the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division, said 10 American soldiers were among the wounded.

American troops were taking part in the ceremony to inaugurate the sewage plant, said Maj. Phil Smith, another division spokesman

Smith said the first two explosions targeted the ceremony, while the third was aimed at a nearby Iraqi National Guard checkpoint.

Another witness said two of the bombs exploded as American soldiers went to help those hurt in the first blast,

The children were at the ceremony because the school year in Iraq has not yet begun.

"The Americans called us, they told us, 'Come here, come here,' asking us if we wanted sweets. We went beside them, then a car exploded," said 12-year-old Abdel Rahman Dawoud, lying naked in a hospital bed with shrapnel embedded all over his body.

British Mercenary Killed Near Samarra

30 September, 2004 Oldham Evening Chronicle

AN Oldham-born father-of-three has been killed in a bomb attack while working in Iraq for a security firm. Alan Wimpenny (46), who grew up on the Holts estate, died on Monday after an explosion ripped through his vehicle as he travelled near Sammara, north of Baghdad.

He had been in Iraq only three weeks, working for an American firm

An ex-marine who served in Northern Ireland and the Falklands, Mr Wimpenny settled and married in Plymouth a number of years ago, but his parents and other relatives still live in Oldham.

His cousin, Linda Hunt (49), from Shaw, said the whole family was devastated.

She said details of the attack were sketchy. "All we've been told is that a bomb went off and that another man who was sitting next to him survived.

"He rang his dad last week and told him he was miles away from all the trouble. He was very happy out there, doing what he loved.

"The most important thing at the moment is to get him home. We have no idea at all when he will be back in this country. "It's a case of waiting for the phone to ring. We feel so helpless because we are so far away and can't help his wife and children."

Mr Wimpenny was due to visit his family in Oldham in November, when it would have been his birthday.

He left the army after serving 25 years and also worked with young offenders in Devon, before offering his help in Iraq.

His brother-in-law, who went to Iraq at the same time — also to begin security work — has just returned home safely.

Mr Wimpenny leaves a wife, Terri, and three children.

Another British Mercenary Dead

30 September 2004 Johnston Press New Media

A POPULAR security worker has died after a road smash in Iraq. Iain Hunter, who was engaged to be married, was part of a vital operation to rebuild an area of the trouble-torn country when tragedy struck in Tikrit last Wednesday. The 31-year-old had been travelling at the head of a convoy when his vehicle collided with an Iraqi vehicle.

Experienced worker Mr Hunter was airlifted by helicopter to a coalition forces hospital but died soon after. One of his colleagues received minor injuries as a result of the crash.

His employers ArmorGroup said Mr Hunter had been providing security support for "a valuable Iraqi infrastructure reconstructure project."

A spokesman said: "Our deepest sympathies go out to Iain's family and we share in his family's loss. It is a devastating blow to the company. Iain was a popular colleague with a great deal of expertise.

At the family home in Redding last night (Wednesday), Mr Hunter's father Jim said he did not wish to comment.

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)

TROOP NEWS

“End The Occupation Of Iraq-Bring Our Troops Home!” Vermont AFL-CIO Calls For Immediate Withdrawal From Iraq

28 Sep 2004 From New York City Labor Against The War

Report from Hal Leyshon Vermont AFL-CIO Executive Board member and central labor council president

On September 25th the Vermont State Labor Council's annual convention voted, nearly unanimously, to support bringing our troops home and to affiliate to US Labor Against the War.

The Resolution:

Submitted by: Washington-Orange-Lamoille Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO

WHEREAS, there is general agreement in the United States and throughout the world that Iraq did not possess weapons of mass destruction that posed an imminent threat to this country or to Iraq's neighbors, and that the government of Iraq had few if any discernable ties to those who perpetrated the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon; and

WHEREAS, the pretexts for war have been systematically revealed to have been fabricated, manipulated, exaggerated, or distorted to justify an invasion of Iraq planned long before September 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has approved \$150 billion in public funds for the U.S. war in Iraq, draining those funds away from domestic priorities including transportation, health care, and national security; and

WHEREAS, working families have paid a heavy price for the U.S. involvement in Iraq with dead and wounded loved ones and Vermont has paid a disproportionate share of the loss of citizens to the war, and

WHEREAS, the Bush Administration has kept in force Saddam Husseins ban on public sector labor unions and used the Iraq war as an excuse to attack labor unions in this country; and

WHEREAS, the Bush Administration has used the Iraq War and the "War on Terrorism" as a platform to advocate for restrictions of civil liberties, with measures such as the Patriot Act; and

WHEREAS, the best way to support our troops is to bring them home; and

WHEREAS, US Labor Against the War was founded to represent the millions of working people who oppose the war and who pay a disproportionate cost in dollars and the lives of our sons and daughters; be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the Vermont State Labor Council, AFL-CIO recognizes the courage and sacrifices of U.S. military personnel who have faced extraordinary dangers in the U.S. war in Iraq and who now want to come home; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Vermont State Labor Council, AFL-CIO calls on Vermont Governor James Douglas to demand the discharge from duty in Iraq and the immediate return of all Vermont National Guard and Reserves to Vermont; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Vermont State Labor Council, AFL-CIO calls on the National AFL-CIO to demand an immediate end to the US military occupation of Iraq and speedy return of all U.S. military personnel to their homes and families, and to support the repeal of the Patriot Act and the reordering of national priorities toward the human needs; and be it finally

RESOLVED. that the Vermont State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, in recognition and furtherance of its position in opposition to current U.S. policy in Iraq, will affiliate with and help actively support and promote U.S. Labor Against the War (USLAW) to protect our members, their families, communities and jobs, and the lives and livelihoods of working people everywhere.

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.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Tal Afar Car Bombs Gets Occupation Cops

September 30, 2004 The Associated Press, By ALEXANDRA ZAVIS

In the northern city of Tal Afar, a car bomb targeting the police chief killed at least four people and wounded 19, including five policemen, police and hospital officials said. The police chief escaped unharmed.

The chief, whose name was only given as Col. Ismail, escaped the assassination attempt, police said.

Bodyguard Of Kirkuk Mayor Killed

01oct04 Advertiser Newspapers Pty Limited

THE chief bodyguard of the mayor of Kirkuk, a northern Iraq city, was shot dead today, police said.

The 39-year-old officer, 1st Lieutenant Jalal Fattah Mohammed, was gunned down in his vehicle which was then driven away by the attackers, said the city's police chief General Turhan Youssef.

The assailants threw the body of the officer out of the car and took his weapon before leaving the city. Kirkuk, a centre of Iraq's oil city, is 290km north of the Iraqi capital Baghdad.

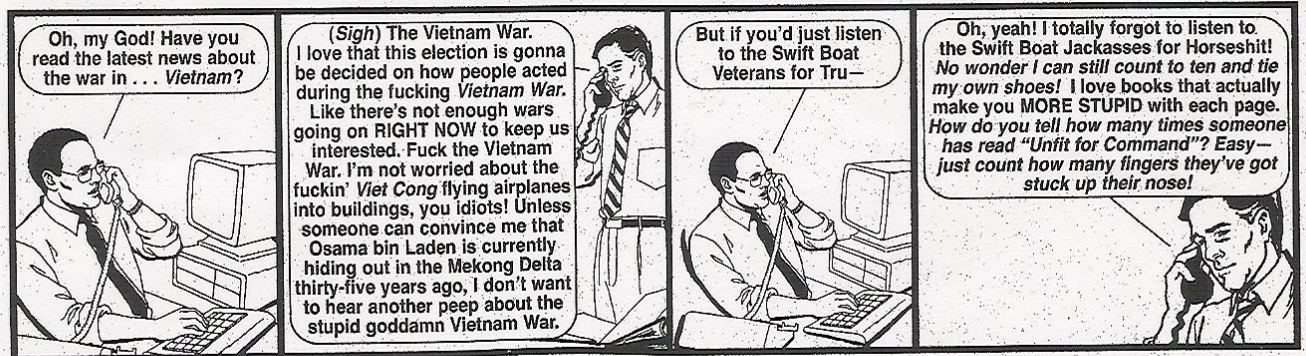
Police Official Assassinated In Mosul

September 30 MOSUL, Iraq (AP) - Unidentified gunmen killed a police official in this northern Iraqi city, provincial authorities said.

Maj. Ghassan Mohammed, director of internal affairs for Abi Taman police station, was headed to his office when the attack took place, said Hazim Jalawi, a provincial government spokesman. His driver was also killed.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

GET YOUR WAR ON By David Rees



ROLLING STONE, OCTOBER 14, 2004

**Memo To Troops In Iraq:
Come On Home Now. We Got Some Asshole Terrorists
Right Here Badly In Need Of Your Direct Attention.**



Members of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan participate in a neo-Nazi rally **at Valley Forge National Historic Park, in Valley Forge, Pa.,** Sept. 25. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

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.qifightback.org ;

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

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