

## GI SPECIAL 2#B86



Mike Hoffman, Iraq Veterans Against The War

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# "Major Screw-Up": Boot-Camp Virus Kills Troops; Murderous Pentagon Pukes Cut Off Vaccine To "Save Money" Cover-Up Revealed

Military foot-dragging and high turnover of procurement officers have caused the replacement vaccine to fall behind schedule, making pills unavailable until at least 2007, possibly 2009, military health-care records show.

Dr. Margaret Ryan, a commander at the Naval Health Research Center in San Diego and an expert on the virus, calls the vaccine lapse "indefensible."

October 04, 2004 By Michael J. Berens, Seattle Times staff reporter

**More than three decades ago, the Pentagon created two pills to ward off a lethal virus infecting boot-camp recruits. But defense officials abandoned the program in 1996 as too expensive. Now recruits are dying, thousands are falling ill, and the military is desperately racing to bring back a vaccine it once owned.**

**A top Pentagon official called it "a major screw-up,"** hobbling U.S. efforts to rapidly deploy troops abroad.

***The respiratory virus now infects up to 2,500 service members monthly — a staggering 1 in 10 recruits — in the nation's eight basic-training centers, an analysis of military health-care records shows.***

**Since the oral vaccinations stopped, the flulike germ, adenovirus, has been associated with the deaths of at least six recruits, four within the past year,** according to military records and internal reports obtained by The Seattle Times.

In addition, hundreds of bed-ridden recruits miss critical training and have to be sent through boot camp again, at a cost of millions of dollars each year.

**Some are dismissed permanently with medical disabilities.**

The virus is expected to kill an additional six to 10 recruits before a vaccine is again available, according to a classified Defense Department briefing this year.

The virus can strike beyond military boundaries as well.

Six children of service members in the Puget Sound area were diagnosed with the virus last winter, according to doctors at Madigan Army Medical Center near Tacoma.

Most people rebound from the infection within four days, but **if untreated, it can quickly turn ferocious, with fever, sore throat and labored breathing leading to severe respiratory problems such as pneumonia and even death.**

Adenovirus spreads by cough or touch, thrives in confined places such as overcrowded barracks, and targets those with weakened immune systems. **Overstressed recruits, trying to get in shape and adapt to the military, turn out to be ideal incubators for the virus.**

**Military foot-dragging and high turnover of procurement officers have caused the replacement vaccine to fall behind schedule, making pills unavailable until at least 2007, possibly 2009, military health-care records show.**

**Dr. Margaret Ryan, a commander at the Naval Health Research Center in San Diego and an expert on the virus, calls the vaccine lapse "indefensible."**

Original vaccine manufacturer Wyeth Laboratories warned as early as 1984 that it would stop churning out pills costing \$1 each unless defense officials allocated \$5 million to repair a deteriorating production plant.

Wyeth executives shuttered the facility in 1996.

**A military health budget later gave a reason: "suppression of program to pay higher priority items."** The Pentagon's unwillingness to spend \$5 million on health care is now costing taxpayers tens of millions of dollars to remedy.

In September 2001, plagued by boot-camp outbreaks, defense officials finally agreed to spend \$35.4 million to develop a new vaccine through Barr Laboratories of Forest, Va. Shortly afterward, Assistant Secretary of Defense William Winkenwerder Jr. ordered vaccine efforts accelerated, according to transcripts of a Feb. 19, 2002, meeting at North Island Naval Air Station in San Diego.

"This is one of the most disappointing facts and stories that I've learned upon coming into my position," he said. "I don't want to cast aspersions on anybody who had responsibility in the past, but to be blunt this is a major screw-up."

Few vaccinations have proved as easy or free of adverse reactions. Recruits swallow two off-white pills, which cause a mild intestinal infection that in turn creates protective antibodies against the two most virulent strains, Type 4 and 7.

The military began using the vaccine in 1971 after adenovirus blanketed military bases during the 1950s and '60s, killing an undisclosed number of troops. The vaccine essentially vanquished the germ, military studies show.

Later, doctors ruefully noted that a newer, younger cadre of Pentagon leaders failed to understand that the latent virus was controlled — not eliminated — and that it could escape once again if vaccine restraints were loosened.

Pentagon funds "were unavailable" for Wyeth in the mid-1990s so the company "was forced to end vaccine production," said Army epidemiologist Terrence Lee of the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine at an April 2002 symposium.

After Wyeth's shutdown, defense officials scouted for a new manufacturer. There were no bidders for a \$14 million contract offer. In the interim, the military pushed for better hygiene, such as hand washing, records show.

**Other Pentagon officials, particularly in the Air Force, questioned the need to restart a costly vaccine program,** according to records at the Army Surgeon General's Office.

At Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Air Force officials, acting on their own, had quietly stopped giving recruits the pills in 1987. There had been no outbreaks and scant infections since, Air Force commanders assured the Pentagon in April 1997.

As a result, defense officials adopted a wait-and-see strategy. They waited just seven weeks.

On May 22, 1997, a feverish soldier staggered into the medical clinic at Fort Jackson, S.C., the Army's largest basic-training center. Within weeks, he was followed by 673 confirmed adenovirus diagnoses of Type 4, peaking at 70 hospitalizations weekly.

The outbreak was quickly detected — and deaths averted — because of the foresight of Dr. Gregory Gray, a supervisor at the Navy's health-research center in San Diego.

He was worried about what would happen when the vaccine was halted and, working in collaboration with others, had established a system to track adenovirus at boot camps.

**But the military responded sluggishly after learning of the outbreak. It took seven months to ship the vaccine from its dwindling supply to Fort Jackson as the infection raged, according to records at the Army Surgeon General's Office. The epidemic stopped once the pills were in use.**

Dr. Kevin Russell, a Navy commander at the San Diego center, said, "We saw, as we feared and as we expected, adenovirus rates jump up." Russell, who works with Ryan, says his research with Marine platoons shows that only half of infected troops seek treatment, suggesting that adenovirus has penetrated the military far deeper than suspected.

Before long, adenovirus struck another boot camp, this time at the Lackland base, starting in October 1999 during its grueling, first-time "Warrior Week." Over the next eight months, with no pills available, 1,371 cadets ended up flooding the base hospital, Lackland records show.

The adenovirus had irrevocably "found a home in Lackland" after all, Air Force Col. Dana Bradshaw would later acknowledge.

***Within three months in 2000, the virus killed two recruits.***

It wasn't long before adenovirus killed a recruit, the first one in 28 years. On May 19, 2000, a healthy 21-year-old man arrived at the Great Lakes Naval Recruit Training Center, just north of Chicago, where up to 15,000 white-clad recruits packed the shoreline installation daily.

The trainee developed a fever June 20 and sought medical treatment and returned to his barracks. When symptoms remained unabated, he revisited the clinic June 23 and was given an antibiotic for suspected bronchitis. On June 24 he was found unconscious in the barracks. He never regained consciousness and died July 3, according to case reports from the CDC.

**Within three months, the virus killed another young recruit at Great Lakes.** The 18-year-old had gone to the medical clinic three times complaining of respiratory difficulties, and had been given a decongestant and acetaminophen. On Sept. 18, he went back a fourth time, suffering from severe indigestion, severe weakness and a purplish rash on his legs, suggesting hemorrhaging. ***He died nine hours later, according to CDC records.***

**At the San Diego Navy research center, Ryan investigated the deaths. Her findings provided a chilling warning: The virus could quickly kill healthy people.**

**"Therefore, it is quite possible that undetected adenoviral illness contributed to many more recruit deaths — especially those deaths with ill-defined causes or no**

**pathogen identified — after the vaccine was lost," Ryan wrote this year in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine.**

After the two highly publicized Navy deaths, the Institute of Medicine, an independent advisory committee of civilian doctors in Washington, D.C., began to investigate the abandonment of the adenovirus vaccine. **In a scathing report, the doctors pointed to seven adenovirus epidemics at bases that could have been prevented had the vaccine been properly funded.**

**Their November 2000 report said the military's procurement system proved "incapable" of securing adenovirus vaccine, and its \$14 million contract offer was "clearly not sufficient."** It called for "extreme urgency."

Spurred by the report and the rising infection rates, the Defense Department signed the \$35.4 million contract with Barr in September 2001.

**However, the vaccine will not be finished until at least 2007, with a "potential push out" date of 2009, Alan Liss, Barr's senior director of biotechnology, said.**

Although the new vaccine is a mirror of the old formula, he said the drugmaker still must adhere to a lengthy clinical-trial process.

**The military has closely held information about four of the six deaths associated with adenovirus. The Times learned of the four deaths, each of which occurred in the past year, when it obtained an internal March 31 report by the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command at Fort Detrick, Md.**

"Within the past six months, four military recruits died from suspected adenovirus infection," the report said. "This accentuates the urgent need to quickly develop the adenovirus vaccines."

Another report by the Armed Forces Epidemiological Board in February gave scant details about three of the four deaths: the death of a Marine recruit in San Diego on Sept. 3, 2003; the death of an Army recruit at Fort Sill, Okla., on Nov. 3; and the Dec. 3 death of an Army recruit who had just returned home from Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

**When contacted for this story, the military would not provide names of the recruits or information on the fourth death.**

***The virus has killed children at several civilian facilities.***

At Madigan Army Medical Center near Tacoma, Dr. Andrew Wiesen, chief of epidemiology and disease control, is trying to keep the potentially fatal adenovirus from spreading within his hospital and leapfrogging into the community. He tests all young patients exhibiting respiratory-disease symptoms at Madigan, which sees about 3,000 patients a day.

**Wiesen, a lieutenant colonel, detects four to six cases of severe pediatric adenovirus each year, usually in children of current or former service members living in the Fort Lewis area.**

By segregating infected patients and treating symptoms aggressively, doctors manage to keep the isolated cases from sparking outbreaks.

Researchers have never linked a major civilian outbreak to exposures by infected military personnel, although some military doctors fear that has been the case, according to records at the Army Surgeon General's Office.

**Military and public-health professionals are deeply concerned about one of the virus' most deadly strains: Ad7d2. This strain flared up in the civilian world in June 1996, just months after the military began limiting the vaccine pills in boot camps to the winter months. The outbreak killed seven children and infected six others at a pediatric chronic-care facility in Houma, La.**

**In November 1998, the Ad7d2 strain killed eight children and infected 23 others in a long-term pediatric care center in Chicago.**

**The Chicago center was just miles away from the Great Lakes naval base that had been hit the year before with an Ad7d2 outbreak that infected 396 recruits, CDC records show.**

The germ spread rapidly child to child, carried by nurses who didn't wash their hands or who had become ill themselves, a CDC investigation found.

In Iowa, four children at a pediatric chronic-care facility died from Ad7d2 in October 2000. Sixteen others were infected.

Dr. Gray, who had set up the boot-camp tracking system for the germ, now is spearheading the nation's most ambitious civilian studies of adenovirus, at the University of Iowa. He has a \$2.8 million grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to collect adenovirus samples over three years.

Gray said he thinks the Ad7d2 strain has become prevalent nationally. The 15-city study targets high-risk populations, including young children, transplant patients and military recruits. At Madigan, Wiesen suspects the study will confirm that adenovirus is a largely unrecognized civilian problem.

"Nobody routinely tests for adenovirus because it looks like other respiratory diseases," he said. "If you don't test, you'll never know it's a problem."

**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 WAR REPORTS:**

# **ONE TASK FORCE DANGER SOLDIER DEAD, ONE HURT BY IED NEAR TUZ**

October 8, 2004 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Release  
Number: 04-10-07C & (Xiu)

TUZ, Iraq -- One Task Force Danger Soldier was killed and another was wounded when resistance forces attacked their patrol near Tuz on Oct. 8 at about 11:43 a.m.

The Soldiers were evacuated to a Coalition medical facility for treatment. The wounded Soldier is in stable condition.

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# **TASK FORCE BAGHDAD SOLDIER DIES OF WOUNDS**

October 9, 2004 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Release  
Number: 04-10-08C

BAGHDAD, Iraq – A Task Force Baghdad Soldier died of wounds at 2 p.m., Oct.8. The soldier was injured when an IED exploded in southwestern Baghdad on Oct. 1.

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# **Crossett Native Killed in Iraqi War Sunday**



Sgt. Russell L. Collier

10.8.04 Ashley County Ledger (Arkansas)

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON - The Department of Defense announced Monday evening, October 4, the death of an Arkansas Army National Guard soldier. He was born in Crossett.

Sgt. Russell L. Collier, 48, of Harrison died Sunday, October 3, in Taji, Iraq. His unit was conducting traffic control operations when enemy forces attacked with small arms fire. Collier was assigned to 1st Battalion, 206th Field Artillery Regiment, Arkansas Army National Guard in Russellville.

Sgt. Collier was born in Crossett and graduated from Wuerzburg High School in Germany. He began his military career in 1975 when he enlisted in the U.S. Army. In 1978, he transferred to the U.S. Navy and then joined the Arkansas Army National Guard in Sept. 1999.

**Sgt. Collier leaves behind his wife and nine-year-old son.**

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## Illinois Soldier Killed

October 8, 2004, MSNBC

The war in Iraq is a major topic at every level this political season.

An east-central Illinois woman is among the latest American soldier casualties overseas.

Specialist Jessica Cawvey, originally of Mahomet, was killed and two others were seriously injured Wednesday when a roadside bomb went off near the convoy.

Cawvey served with the 1544th Transportation Company based in Paris, Illinois.

**Cawvey had been living in Normal before her deployment. Cawvey was a junior accounting major at Illinois State University. ISU professor Joyce Ostrosky says Cawvey had to leave school before the end of the fall semester when she was called up last year. She described Cawvey as an excellent student who was going to do great things.**

**She leaves behind a six-year-old daughter.**

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## Two Italian Soldiers Wounded By Esplosi

09.10.2004 La.Repubblica.it

### [Due militari italiani feriti da fuoco amico](#)

Due militari italiani sono rimasti feriti, oggi all'alba, da alcuni colpi di arma da fuoco esplosi da una pattuglia rumena. Le condizioni dei due feriti non sono gravi. Sono stati trasportati in elicottero all'ospedale militare da campo italiano ed hanno avvisato essi



stessi i loro familiari. Sull'incidente è stata aperta un'inchiesta da parte del Comando del contingente italiano.

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## More Dead South African Mercenaries

October 7, 2004 By Graeme Hosken, The Cape Times

Pretoria: A South African, who was injured in a suicide bomb blast in Iraq, is in a critical condition in a German hospital.

**The blast killed former Pretoria policeman Johan Hattingh**, bringing the number of South Africans killed in Iraq to eight.

The injured man, whom government authorities have declined to name until next of kin have been told, was injured when **a truck slammed into a convoy which he and several other South Africans were escorting from Jordan to Baghdad.**

**Hattingh and the injured South African were both working for US paramilitary company DynCorp, which has a \$50 million contract to train the new Iraqi police force.**

**Both men, who were thought to be part of a large South African contingent in Iraq,** were on a year's contract, which was expected to end in February next year.

**Meanwhile, another man, believed to be a South African, was reportedly killed in fighting in Fallujah, south-west of Baghdad. [Many of these pieces of shit used to torture and kill Africans fighting for their freedom against the racist apartheid governments in South Africa. Now they have a new arena for their murderous bigotry, killing Iraqis for fun and profit, courtesy of George W. Bush.]**

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## What's It's Like To Occupy Somebody Else's Country: Up Close And Personal

MAIN SUPPLY ROUTE TAMPA, IRAQ -- **Without warning on a street in the outskirts of Baghdad, early morning traffic came to a complete stop.**

**For the Army convoy and the Fort Eustis-based 7th Transportation Group soldiers manning three of the gun trucks providing escort, there was nowhere to go, no place to take cover.**

**Buildings lined both sides of the street.**

**Cars and trucks piled up around the convoy, sealing off any emergency exits.**

**The soldiers' adrenaline started pumping.**

They'd been told in every pre-convoy briefing that speed is one of the best defenses against ambushes.

Stopping can be deadly. It turns a truck into an easy target for insurgents with small arms or rocket-propelled grenades.

Wednesday was day three of the group's first convoy from Camp Arifjan in Kuwait to Anaconda, north of Baghdad. They arrived at Anaconda on Tuesday, unloaded their truckloads of supplies, grabbed some food and a bit of rest and geared up for the return trip.

Wednesday morning, they were bound for safer, southern areas.

But to get to the next "green zone" they had to wade through what the truck drivers call "IED alley" - the stretch of road through Baghdad where most of the fatal roadside bombs have been detonated.

It was there that traffic snarled.

Immediately the radios connecting the Humvees and flat-bed semitrailer trucks came to life.

"What's holding us up?"

"Not sure, trying to push traffic aside to see."

Col. Jeff Miser, the group's commanding officer, began typing a message into his Humvee's on-board instant messenger and global positioning system tool to notify the control center at Arifjan about the situation.

Spc. Steven Webb, Miser's driver, shifted the M-16 next to his seat to make sure he had easy access to it and gripped the wheel a little tighter.

**Capt. Robert Insani, the group's attorney riding in the back seat, opened his bullet-resistant window just enough to push the muzzle of his weapon out. Cars heading in the other direction kept honking at the convoy; it made Insani nervous.**

**"The problem is, you don't know if they are honking to say hello or I hate you," he said.**

Sgt. Brian Melson, standing up with his body poking out of the top of the Humvee to man the .50-caliber machine gun, scanned the street, the traffic, the buildings.

**Above the convoy, Iraqis peered down from rooftops.**

**Melson said later that he felt like he couldn't move his eyes fast enough.**

**"From where I was, which is about six feet above where the driver sits, I could see people riding in the back of dump trucks," Melson said. "I was also looking inside the cars rolling up next to us to see if they had any explosives in their back seats."**

**He looked over guardrails, into dark alleys.**

**"Basically anything that catches my eye," he said. "Which is hard because this is a different kind of enemy we are fighting. It's an enemy in civilian clothes."**

The only thing Melson couldn't see was what was holding everyone up.

After 20 or more minutes, the gun truck inched forward.

Other escort vehicles had managed to push local traffic to the side of the road to let the convoy pass.

**Within seconds everyone knew what had caused the delay.**

**Hours before, a truck heading in the same direction had been hit by a roadside bomb. The blast had left the trailer disabled and it was still blocking the road. There was no way to find out if anyone had been injured or killed in the attack.**

The adrenalin rush subsided as the convoy moved south, out of Baghdad and back into a countryside of mud huts, shepherds and camels. Thirteen tense but uneventful hours later, the convoy pulled into the safe confines of Camp Cedar, near Nasiriya. They arrived just in time for dinner.

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## **Red Crescent Building Blown Up; Used As U.S. Sniper Nest**

09 October 2004 Mail&Guardian

Insurgents blew up the Iraqi Red Crescent Society building in the Iraqi city of Ramadi, west of Baghdad, on Friday, the United States military said in a statement. There were no reports of injuries.

**An Iraqi police officer said on condition of anonymity US snipers had used the building in the past.**

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## **Operation Losing-Hearts-And-Minds Rolls On:**

# “Precision” Slaughtering Hits Fallujah Wedding Party

October 9, 2004 Associated Press & Oct 8, By Fadel al-Badrani, (Reuters)

BAGHDAD, Iraq - American warplanes struck a building in rebel held Fallujah

A doctor said the attack killed 13 people, including a groom on his wedding night, and wounded 17 others.

**In Fallujah, 40 miles west of Baghdad, Dr. Ahmed Saeed said his hospital received 13 dead, including the groom, and 17 wounded, including the bride. He said most of the injured were female relatives of the groom who were staying at the house after the wedding celebration.**

At the hospital, where blood pooled on the floor, Khaled Nasser, said nine females aged between 5 and 50 had been among the wounded.

Reuters television footage showed four of the wounded women lying bloodied and bandaged in the hospital.

Mohammed Jawad, who lives next door, said he had just moved into the central neighborhood to escape repeated shelling on Fallujah's outskirts. **His brother and six nephews were killed in the strike, which damaged their house.**

**"This attack shows that there is no safe place in Fallujah, and the Americans are not differentiating between civilians and armed men," Jawad said in tears, as he was treated for shrapnel wounds to his face and hand.**

## **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](http://www.ivaw.net))

# The Great Iraq Border Fiasco

Oct 1 By Ed Cropley, AL WALEED, Iraq (Reuters)

**In al-Anbar, there are plans for 32 castellated border forts in time for Iraq's planned democratic elections in January, but already, there are signs of trouble. Of eight forts already completed, two have been attacked and destroyed.**

With an expansive gesture toward his crumbling border checkpoint, RDA's Samarrai expounds upon the digital, paperless future he says lies in store for Iraqi customs control.

"Next month, there will be no paper here only computers," he proclaimed during a visit by U.S. Marines to his crumbling concrete offices on the Iraqi-Syrian border.

His enthusiasm goes down well with the visiting troops.

It does not yet appear to have infected his colleagues, a collection of middle-aged men behind creaking wooden desks who show few signs of life apart from flicking away a passing fly or reaching for another cigarette.

**With few light bulbs let alone computers in offices falling apart after more than a decade of sanctions against Saddam Hussein's Iraq, Samarrai's goal of securing his country's borders with technology is at best a fanciful ambition.**

So far, the only computer visible in the checkpoint is used to identify stolen cars.

**"We don't have any connection to Baghdad,"** said Ibtissem Hussein, the new machine's operator, tucked away in her booth next to the customs hall. **"Somebody has to come along with a new disc once a week so we can update our data."**

After being shot at three times in the last month alone, Samarrai admits he is facing an uphill struggle in a border outpost where the smuggling of anything from people to gas has been a way of life for centuries.

**"Do people round here want to stop the foreign fighters? If I'm honest, no," he said.**

Besides patrols by U.S. Marines, equipped with heavy machine guns, night vision goggles, helicopters and armored vehicles, the task since the handover of sovereignty in June 2004 is falling increasingly on Iraq's fledgling border security forces.

**In al-Anbar, there are plans for 32 castellated border forts in time for Iraq's planned democratic elections in January, but already, there are signs of trouble. Of eight forts already completed, two have been attacked and destroyed.**

**Morale among the border police, most of them teen-age recruits who have been pushed through a crash course by the U.S. Marines, is low.**

**Receiving about 240,000 Iraqi dinars (\$17) a month in pay, they complain they are worse off than their urban counterparts.**

Holed up in a makeshift, dusty training camp, they are also woefully short of basic equipment such as boots, let alone machine guns and night vision goggles.

**"Each time we go out on patrol, we are only given five rounds of ammunition," one recruit complained to the U.S. marine delegation. "I have to pay for the fuel myself."**

**The Americans, meanwhile, appear to have only one concern.**

**"So, are you guys keeping out the foreign fighters?"** the visiting Marine commander asked the recruits the moment he arrived. **[No. Obviously. You're still here.]**

Foreigners are occasionally picked up -- five Afghans were intercepted at Al Waleed last month, according to police Maj. Maher Dib -- but a nationwide recruitment drive to boost the total number of 16,000 border officials to 24,000 is hitting red tape and cash shortfalls, he said.

At al-Waleed, border officials also complain about a lack of cooperation from Syrians, who "come and see us only when they want a cigarette," said Dib.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

# **Local Marine Joins Ranks Of Wounded; Mom Has Had Enough Of The War**

10.08.2004 By Carol Ann Alaimo, Arizona Daily Star

**"I've tried to be a supportive military mom, but I don't know if I can take this anymore."**

**It angers her, she said, that so many service members are paying with their health and their lives when she doesn't see things improving in Iraq. "All these children are being asked to risk their lives for a cause, and I don't see that it's making a difference."**

Lance Cpl. Nathan Henderson is still visited in his dreams by the suicide bomber who nearly killed him in Iraq.

Lying in bed at night in Tucson, the 20-year-old Marine can see the Middle Eastern man darting out of traffic and heading straight at him, behind the wheel of a beat-up sedan.

Henderson barely had time to shout a warning to his buddies before everything went dark.

"When I woke up, I thought I was dead," he said this week, describing the surreal feeling that he had left his body.

"I could feel all this wet stuff on my face," Henderson said. Groggily, he realized it was blood.

He could barely hear his Marine buddies as they screamed at him to get up and get inside a nearby bunker. His eardrum had been shattered by the blast, and they sounded far away.

Still thinking himself dead, Henderson, a 2001 Amphitheater High School graduate, got up and staggered toward them. "It felt like my body didn't fit, like it was something I had to drag around," he recalled.

It wasn't until he reached the bunker and a fellow Marine started wrapping him in bandages that Henderson realized he was still alive.

"It was a miracle I wasn't killed," he said.

The Sept. 14 incident was the second time he was wounded in action in 18 months. Now home on a 30-day convalescent leave, he'll soon receive another Purple Heart.

Troops who are shot, mortared or hit by homemade bombs can have a hard time recovering, experts say.

Col. James A. Polo, an Army psychiatrist who has worked at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and is now the head of behavioral health at Fort Carson, Colo., said he's seen wounded troops respond to the experience in a variety of ways.

Some are eager to get back to their units even before their bandages are off. Others dread the thought of returning to combat.

Those reactions are normal, Polo said.

**"In general, any reaction they have is normal," he said. "You can't tell someone how they 'should' feel. People respond to very stressful situations in a broad variety of ways."**

Of the 8,117 troops listed as injured by the Department of Defense through Thursday morning, 3,670 returned to duty - and 4,447 did not.

The majority who went back had to get over tremendous hurdles," Lt. Cmdr. Gary Hoyt, a Navy psychologist at Camp Pendleton, Calif. said, because being injured "really shatters your sense of control."

Combat troops often psych themselves up by convincing themselves that they're invincible - an illusion that can evaporate when they are injured, he said.

Henderson, a radio operator with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, said he faced a kaleidoscope of emotions both times he was wounded. Besides his injured eardrum, he lost about a 2-inch chunk of his left arm in the latest incident. His forehead and scalp

required stitches and one finger was broken in the attack south of Baghdad that also wounded several fellow Marines.

He was first injured in March 2003 a few days into the war, when he was hit by flying pieces of jagged metal that lodged in his head, back and knee.

**It was tough to go back to the front lines after the first time, he said.**

**"A lot of guys feel like they're bulletproof. We're kind of taught to feel that way," he said.**

**"After you see how easily your flesh can be torn apart, it does make it harder."**

He isn't complaining, though. Some of the wounded he's met in military hospitals have it much worse, he said, such as a soldier he roomed with who was having both feet amputated after stepping on an explosive.

**Henderson isn't sure if he'll be sent back to Iraq a third time.**

**His mother is hoping he isn't.**

"When I saw him in the hospital the second time, I just lost it," said Becky Henderson, 42, a Northwest Side resident.

**"I've tried to be a supportive military mom, but I don't know if I can take this anymore."**

**It angers her, she said, that so many service members are paying with their health and their lives when she doesn't see things improving in Iraq. "All these children are being asked to risk their lives for a cause, and I don't see that it's making a difference."**

He said he isn't bothered by the thought that he will carry the scars of war on his body for the rest of his life.

"If anything, it's a mark of honor," he said.

"I've shed my blood for my country. There aren't that many people who can say that."  
**[Wrong. 16,000 have passed thru military hospitals in Germany so far, and thousands more are on the way, if Bush and Kerry get their way. Of course the over 1,000 dead can't say anything at all.]**

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## **25% Of Female Troops Report In-Service Sex Assaults: Raped Twice;**



# Once By Attacker, Again By Command After Reporting

10.9.04 By ROXANA HEGEMAN\Associated Press Writer

**"After the interview we learned they were going to court martial her and one of the charges was adultery," Wharton said. "That is when I flew to Fort Lewis because I just had enough of the Army."**

**At 22, Natalie Longee is already a veteran in the war on terror. She has guarded prisoners at Guantanamo Bay and escorted truck convoys in Iraq. She has heard the bombs, survived ambushes and seen the cost of war first hand. And she is traumatized.**

**The Department of Veterans Affairs now routinely asks all veterans that come to it for services whether they suffered sexual trauma in the military. What the VA found was that that between 20 and 25 percent of women veterans told them they were sexually assaulted, said Carol O'Brien, director of the Center for Sexual Trauma Services at the Bay Pines VA Medical Center in St. Petersburg, Fla.**

**Between 1 and 2 percent of men also said they experienced a sexual assault.**

***Those VA numbers are far higher than official military estimates, victim advocates contend, because many victims are afraid to report it to superior officers.***

Sexual assault in the military differs from rape in civilian life because the military experience is all-encompassing, O'Brien said. Victims often have to go to work the next day with their attacker and have less control over their lives than do civilians.

"People in the military see the military environment as family, their protector, and they expect that to be a very safe environment. ... When sexual assault happens in the military, it is something that flies in the face of everything they expected," O'Brien said.

**The Bay Pines VA hospital, which offers a treatment program for sexual post traumatic stress disorder, has a months-long waiting list. Half of its military sexual trauma patients are men, she said.**

Among one of the most publicized at the time was the rape of Sgt. Andra Wood at a desert post in Kuwait in November. Wood - a member of the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division in Fort Lewis - was hit in the back of the head near the showers at Camp Udairi shortly after she got off guard duty in the middle of the night.

**When she regained consciousness, she was tied, gagged and unclothed. Wood said in a March interview with the television show "Dateline NBC" that the Army initially denied her counseling and asked her to take a polygraph. She said Army officials told her the best therapy was to go back with her unit, which was getting ready to go into Iraq.**

Her mother, Barbara Wharton, told The Associated Press in a phone interview from her Pennsylvania home that the NBC interview subsequently made things "very much worse" for her daughter in the Army.

**"After the interview we learned they were going to court martial her and one of the charges was adultery," Wharton said. "That is when I flew to Fort Lewis because I just had enough of the Army."**

Longee was deployed to Iraq shortly after the incident - something she said she initially welcomed because it got her away from daily contact with her alleged attacker at Fort Hood.

**But while in Iraq, Longee said she was taunted by her superiors and fellow soldiers for reporting the sexual assault. She said she had to discuss intimate details of the rape with military investigators over a satellite phone within earshot of others.**

**Her team leader in Iraq was the former roommate of her accused attacker in Fort Hood. A mock rape was staged in front of her, she said.**

But at the hearing for her alleged attacker, much of the testimony focused on her own mother's criminal past as well her mother's contacts with the media and her efforts to raise money to hire an attorney, according to redacted transcripts obtained by the AP and interviews with the family.

The investigating officer wrote in his report following the hearing that Longee was not a credible witness. He cited inconsistencies in her testimony and her failure to cry for help during the alleged attack.

Following a long hospitalization after her discharge, Longee is now back in Andale and getting outpatient treatment at the VA hospital in Wichita. She still wants the military to prosecute her alleged attacker.

"I need to have some type of justice, so I can rest," Longee said.

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

## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **Salman Beik Police Chief, Two Guards Killed**

KIRKUK, Iraq, Oct 7 (AFP)

**The chief of police in a town near Kirkuk was shot dead Thursday in front of his house along with two security guards, police in this oil-rich northern Iraqi city said.**

"Colonel Rashid Ali al-Bayati, 49, was killed with two of his guards in an attack by two men on a motorbike as he returned home from work," said General Anwar Hamad, national guard chief in Taamin province where Kirkuk is located.

"The attack took place at 9:10 pm (1810 GMT)," he said adding that Bayati was in charge of the police force in the town of Salman Beik, 80 kilometres (50 miles) south of Kirkuk.

The attackers managed to escape, the police general said.

**Police are a favoured target of a bubbling insurgency.**

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## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

# **Iraqi Governor Tells Americans To Get Out Of Green Zone: They Say Fuck You; So Much For That "Sovereignty" Bullshit**

October 8, 2004 By KIM HOUSEGO, BAGHDAD (AP)

It's touted as the safest place in Baghdad, but even the thousands of normal Iraqis whose homes wound up in the U.S.-occupied Green Zone want the Americans to move out and the fortress dismantled.

**"We want and demand that the Americans evacuate the Green Zone because it contains Iraqi state and private properties," Baghdad Gov. Ali al-Haidari told The Associated Press. "We believe that Iraqi authorities should regain control of this area."**

<p><b>While U.S. President George W. Bush insists that sovereignty was returned to Iraq three months ago, 10-square-kilometres in the heart of the Iraqi capital along the banks of the Tigris river - the site of several Saddam Hussein-era palace complexes and some of the city's finest real estate - remains U.S. territory.</b></p>
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The American Embassy, military command centres, preferred embassies and U.S. contracting firms occupy some of the most prominent buildings, while dozens of trailer parks shielded by sandbags to guard against mortar shells and rockets are dotted around palace grounds.

"It's a world within a world," said a Western diplomat who has only left the Green Zone twice in three months. **"I imagine there are some people here who never meet Iraqis."**

While car bombings, kidnappings and gunfights rage across the capital, life behind the blast walls resembles suburban America: women in shorts jog along tree-lined avenues, off-duty soldiers lounge by the pool and the Green Zone Cafe and two Chinese restaurants are packed in the evenings. Everything from pornographic movies to mobile phone accessories are on sale at the local bazaar.

One problem is that officials have run out of space. Dozens of white wooden shacks in Saddam's former marble-floored reception halls have been erected to provide office space to the various government branches.

**But security officials fear the violence outside is threatening to intrude.**

"There is a realistic threat of kidnapping there," said a Western security official familiar with the Green Zone. "Because it's so huge, it's very, very difficult to secure the perimeter." **The Green Zone also suffers an average of three mortar attacks a day.**

**The American planners who drew the Green Zone perimeter had to include hundreds of middle class homes because they were located near important government buildings** that couldn't be left out.

**"There are young men crawling all over perimeter and nobody knows whose side they are really on," the security official said. [God, imagine their nerve! Iraqis actually living in part of Baghdad. Why don't they get the fuck out and go home!]**

The distrust is mutual.

"There aren't any kind of friendships between Iraqis living in the Green Zone and the Americans," said an Iraqi housewife who lives in a compound of 50 buildings that was absorbed into the zone and would only give her name as Umm Omar. "Our only contact with the Americans is at the checkpoint when we enter and leave."

**"Theoretically, we are supposed to take over from the Americans in the Green Zone, but we have other priorities to worry about," said Sabah Khadim, press secretary for Interior Minister Falah Hassan al-Naqib.**

**"This area needs heavy protection and this is difficult for us because we do not have extra forces to take care of it," he said. [Translation: All us Bush stooge assholes and traitors would be dead in 5 minutes if you lovely foreign occupiers weren't protecting us.]**

Baghdad residents on the street say interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi can never claim to be fully in charge until the symbol of American military and political power is gone.

**"Iraqi sovereignty is incomplete," said Imad Sabir, a 42-year-old shopkeeper. "American troops have to leave."**

He wants to see the Green Zone turned into a series of museums, parks and municipal swimming pools.

"People are going through a hard time," Sabir said. "The government should rearrange those places so that people can enjoy themselves and have a picnic."

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

## **Bribing Crooked Hearts And Minds**

10.5.04 By Greg Jaffe, W. St. Journal

Col. Jesse Barker, who coordinates reconstruction projects in this insurgent stronghold, may have one of the toughest jobs in Iraq. **Insurgents blew up the building where he had been meeting with potential contractors to discuss projects. In late August, the governor of al Anbar province, fearing he would be targeted by militants for associating with U.S. forces, asked the colonel not to visit at his office here.**

In some cases, federal-spending rules designed for the U.S. can lead to bizarre machinations in Iraq. Recently Marines in western Iraq set out to rebuild a school in Kharma, a small city outside Fallujah that was battered during April's fighting. Sheik Shawlkat Talab Abbas, who heads Kharma's largest tribe and sits on its city council, controls almost all construction projects in Kharma.

**In an effort to meet the federal rules, requiring multiple bids, the sheik brought in three bids—one from his company and two others from his relatives. All three bids included such items as a \$5,000 ping pong table and a \$2,500 basketball goal. Lt. Cmdr. Joe Stricklin, an engineer overseeing the reconstruction project, asked the sheik, regarding the ping pong table, "Is it made out of gold?"**

For the next hour Lt. Cmdr. Stricklin and Maj. Larry Kaifesh, a civil-affairs officer in Kharma, combed through the contract with the sheik, striking the most outrageous items and knocking about \$35,000 off the sheik's \$110,000 bid. At the end of the meeting, Maj. Kaifesh and Lt. Cmdr. Stricklin encouraged Sheik Shawlkat to bring in bids from other construction firms.

But both were skeptical they would get better bids. **"We'll get three contracts with three different signatures, which we hope will be enough" to satisfy U.S. regulations, says Maj. Kaifesh, a reservist who in the civilian world is a financial adviser.**

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# **Occupation Incompetents Don't Spend Available Money For Basic Iraq Needs; (Not Even To Fix Oil Industry)**

October 06, 2004 By Alan Fram, Associated Press

Less than seven percent of the \$18.4 billion that Congress approved last year to rebuild Iraq has been spent, the Bush administration said Wednesday in its latest report on progress there.

The State Department report, which said just under \$1.22 billion had been spent through Sept. 22, affirmed anew that the U.S. effort to speed an Iraqi economic recovery is lagging well behind initial plans.

- \$127 million out of nearly \$2 billion provided has been spent for protecting facilities and other public safety projects;
- **\$300 million out of \$4.4 billion has been spent for rebuilding the electrical system;**
- \$43 million out of \$1.7 billion has been spent for oil facilities;
- \$19 million out of \$2.3 billion has been spent for water projects and sanitation;
- \$11 million out of \$500 million has been spent for transportation and telecommunications;
- \$2 million out of \$786 million has been spent for health care.

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## **DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

# **The Mystery Of The Bulge In The Presidential Jacket**

October 9, 2004 By ELISABETH BUMILLER, New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 8 - **What was that bulge in the back of President Bush's suit jacket at the presidential debate in Miami last week?**

**According to rumors racing across the Internet this week, the rectangular bulge visible between Mr. Bush's shoulder blades was a radio receiver,** getting answers from an offstage counselor into a hidden presidential earpiece. The prime suspect was Karl Rove, Mr. Bush's powerful political adviser.

When the online magazine Salon published an article about the rumors on Friday, the speculation reached such a pitch that White House and **campaign officials were inundated with calls.**

**First they said that pictures showing the bulge might have been doctored. But then, when the bulge turned out to be clearly visible in the television footage of the evening, they offered a different explanation.**

**"There was nothing under his suit jacket," said Nicolle Devenish, a campaign spokeswoman.**

"It was most likely a rumpling of that portion of his suit jacket, or a wrinkle in the fabric."

**Ms. Devenish could not say why the "rumpling" was rectangular.**

Nor was the bulge from a bulletproof vest, according to campaign and White House officials; they said Mr. Bush was not wearing one.

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## **BUSH PROVES CRITICS WRONG**



President Bush told reporters today that critics who say he has his head up his ass are wrong. Arriving at Andrews Air Force base, the President placed both hands firmly behind his head, moving it from side-to-side. "If I had my head up my ass, I couldn't do that," he smirked.

Bush went on to accuse Senator Kerry of undermining the morale of troops in Iraq by refusing to condemn "irresponsible elements" who have said Bush is dumber than a box of rocks and crazy as a shit-house rat.

"If you were an Iraqi, would you want your country occupied by a shit-house rat," he asked? If you were a soldier, would you die for one?" Kerry replied that the troops he kills in Iraq will be ratless. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

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## **PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY DESTROYED** **BY FIRE**

Crawford, Texas - A tragic fire on Saturday destroyed the personal library of President George W. Bush.

Both of his books were lost. A presidential spokesman said the president was devastated, as he had not finished coloring the second one.

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### **RECEIVED:**

#### **Check It Out:**

[Thanks to John Gingerich] Check Out: [Watch "Debating For Ratings" now at www.debatingforratings.com](http://www.debatingforratings.com)

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### **RECEIVED:**

## **Full-Time Jobs: The Same The World Over**

10.4.04

From: albasrah

Dear GI Special,

Just a question. If you have your newsletter every day at 10:00 PM GMT ready please send it to me because after that time I will not be able to publish it till 5:00 PM GMT next day and I need most of the people of the Middle East read it at time.

Thank you

God bless you for your human message.

### **REPLY:**



Because I have a full time job and must work on the newsletter after I get home from work about 6 pm NYC time, that's not possible. That's why it comes out around midnight New York Time or sometimes even later.

Solidarity, T

**REPLY:**

10.4.04

From: albasrah

**God give you strength, full time job is the same here.**

Thank you  
best regards  
albasrah

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