

## GI SPECIAL 2#12



(1.18.04: AP Photo/Muhammed Muheisen)

# Huge Bomb At Gate To Occupation Headquarters, Two From DoD Killed

Jan. 18, 2003 By SARAH EL DEEB, Associated Press Writer & AFP

**BAGHDAD, Iraq - A bomber detonated 1,000 pounds of explosives in a pickup truck outside the headquarters of the U.S.-led coalition Sunday, killing at least 20 bystanders, including two U.S. Defense Department workers *in the boldest assault yet on a symbol of US power in Iraq and a blow to its hopes for a return of the United Nations.***

**A military official said the two dead people associated with the Defense Department were wearing department uniforms or had items identifying them as department workers.**

**Flames devoured cars and licked at the brick walls of Saddam's former Republican palace complex, a vast heavily fortified compound now known as the Green Zone.**

Witnesses claimed US soldiers opened fire in panic on Iraqis moments after the blast, but a military spokesman denied this.

The 8 a.m. attack on a major street in the heart of the Iraqi capital was the deadliest in Iraq since Saddam Hussein was captured Dec. 13 **and one of the bloodiest days since US President George W. Bush declared major combat over in May.**

A confirmed death toll of 25 would make it the heaviest single attack in Baghdad since May, although 43 people were killed in a series of blasts in the capital last October 27.

U.S. Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said there were "indications" that at least two of those killed were American citizens. **At least about 100 people were injured, including six Americans**-three soldiers and three civilians.

The bomb exploded near the "Assassin's Gate" to Saddam Hussein's former Republican Palace complex, now the U.S.-led occupation authority's headquarters. **The gate is used by hundreds of Iraqis employed by the Coalition Provisional Authority, as well as U.S. military vehicles.**

U.S. administrator L. Paul Bremer, who is in the United States for the talks with Annan, called the bombing "another clear indication of the murderous and cynical intent of terrorists to undermine freedom, democracy and progress in Iraq. They will not succeed." **(As usual, Bremer stands reality on its head. The "cynical terrorists" undermining freedom, democracy and progress in Iraq were the objects of the attack: the U.S. Occupation Headquarters.)**



AP Photo / APTN / RTL)

**The timing of the latest carnage could not be worse as far as the coalition is concerned.**

***The blast occurred a day before the top U.S. civil administrator in Iraq is to meet with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan*** to ask for the world body's help in rebuilding Iraq.

Annan withdrew all international U.N. staff from Iraq after two bombings at U.N. headquarters — one a 2,200 pound car bombing that killed top U.N. envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello and a spate of attacks. **Annan's chief concern has been whether the situation was secure enough for the world body to return. (Brilliant strategic timing. Annan got his answer.)**

The explosives were packed inside a white Toyota pickup truck, said Col. Ralph Baker, division commander of the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Armored Division. He discounted witness accounts that more than one vehicle was involved.

"There was not a second car bomb," said Baker, who is in charge of security in the so-called "Green Zone," a large swath of land on the west bank of the Tigris River that contains the U.S. headquarters compound.



US soldiers inspect destroyed vehicles after a massive car bomb blew up at US headquarters Jan. 18, 2004. (AP Photo / Xinhua, Huang Jingwen)

Brig. Gen. Mark Hertling, deputy commander of the 1st Armored Division, said the blast occurred "literally at the last point a vehicle could get to without being stopped. The barriers absorbed most of the blast."

Some of the Iraqis killed had been waiting to go through security checks when the bomb exploded.

My friend was standing behind me in the line when the explosion happened," said Nabil Abdul Zahar. **"There were lots of injured. I called for help and no one came to help me.** He died right there on the ground."

**Also in line was Mohammed Jabbar, who works at the Ministry of Planning.** The explosion "lifted us into the air," he said. "People fell on top of one another."

The gate includes an arch built a few years ago by Saddam in imitation of those that protected ancient Baghdad from Persian invaders. It was nicknamed "Assassins' Gate" by American troops after they seized the capital in April.

One witness, Salah Farhan, said he was going through the checkpoint when he saw a Land Cruiser try to cut to the head of the line. The vehicle exploded about two cars back from the gate, he said. U.S. troops guarding the gate took cover when they saw the vehicle try to move to the front of the line. **(Good. Dying for Bremer would be really dumb.)**

The coalition headquarters is one of the most heavily protected areas in Baghdad. U.S. soldiers guarding the gate usually stand about 20 yards from the road behind coils of barbed wire and concrete barriers.

Karar Abbas, an Iraqi civil defense trooper, said the blast engulfed seven cars parked along the street. At least three separate fires were seen after the blast.

Coalition tanks also moved in near the blazes. **(What for? Why, war by PR. Command's got to look good for the cameras.)**

The explosion could be heard along the banks of the Tigris River, which flows through the center of the city of 5 million. Dense morning fog blanketed the city at the time.

**The last large explosions in the center of Baghdad occurred Monday when mortars exploded near the river.**



**TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE**

A US soldier carries razor wire to block off the street. (AFP/Ramzi Haidar)

**BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**

## **GET SOME TRUTH: CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

Telling the truth - about the occupation, the cuts to veterans benefits, or the dangers of depleted uranium - is the first reason Traveling Soldier is necessary. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>

# **Two UK Soldiers Injured In Basra**

BBC NEWS: 2004/01/18

**Two UK soldiers have been injured in an explosion in the southern Iraqi city of Basra, the Ministry of Defence says.**

**The troops were on patrol in the south west of Iraq's second city when a small package on the roadside detonated.**

Local reports said one soldier was seriously injured, but an MoD spokesman said: "The two soldiers suffered a couple of cuts and bruises, no more."

Iraqi traffic police said the blast happened when a British military convoy approached a crossing.

An Iraqi traffic policeman in Basra said one of the British soldiers was seriously injured, and two Iraqi officers were slightly injured, APTN reported.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

# **Secret Pentagon Report Says Resistance Has Advanced Heat-Seeking Missiles**

By ERIC SCHMITT, January 18, 2004, New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 17 — A classified Army study of the downings of military helicopters in Iraq found that guerrillas have used increasingly sophisticated tactics and weapons — including at least one advanced missile — to attack American aircraft, senior Army officials in Iraq and the Persian Gulf region say.

**The insurgents have proved adept at using both rocket-propelled grenades, which are point-and-shoot weapons, and heat-seeking shoulder-fired missiles, which require greater maintenance and skill,** said Army officials familiar with the study.

The team recommended specific changes to help pilots better evade ground fire, Army officials said. **Senior officers declined to elaborate, but changes in the past have included flying more missions at night with lights off to avoid detection.**

The study was conducted before the three most recent downings this month, but those incidents in the restive area near Falluja, west of Baghdad, have only reinforced the team's findings and raised fears that **insurgents are closely studying the flight patterns of helicopters and other aircraft,** Army officials said.

**"The enemy has clearly seen the possibilities from earlier successes,"** said one senior Army aviator in the Persian Gulf region. **"The enemy enjoys a strategic success each time one of our aircraft is shot down. It becomes a major media event, and questions arise as to who is winning. So the enemy sees this as very useful."**

***One troubling finding, Army officials said, is that on at least one occasion the insurgents used an SA-16 shoulder-fired missile, which has a guidance system that is harder to thwart than the SA-7 shoulder-launched missiles and rocket-propelled grenades that insurgents have typically used in other attacks.***

**Since Oct. 25, nine military helicopters have been shot down or have crash-landed after being hit by what the authorities believe was hostile fire, killing a total of 49 soldiers.**

American intelligence analysts have said that during Saddam Hussein's rule, Iraq stockpiled at least 5,000 shoulder-fired missiles, and that fewer than a third have been recovered. The missiles are also easy to smuggle across Iraq's porous borders; they weigh 30 pounds or less and are less than six feet long.

"It's unclear just how many SA-16's are in the theater," the senior Army aviator said, "but it is a worrisome development which both helicopter and fixed-wing forces will have to fully understand and counter."

There are trade-offs in different tactics, Army aviators said. Flying at high altitudes protects aircraft from rocket-propelled grenades, but somewhat increases the likelihood of being spotted and engaged by surface-to-air missiles, one officer said.

On a flight last month between Tikrit and Ad Dwar, the village where Mr. Hussein was captured, a visitor aboard a UH-60 Black Hawk was treated to a roller-coaster ride as the pilot banked sharply several times and flew just above treetops at more than 130 miles an hour during a 10-minute trip, to pose a more fleeting target to potential shooters on the ground.

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# Pentagon Still Fucking Over Troops On Leave Travel Money

*Washington Post, January 16, 2004, Pg. B3)*

Three House members are asking the Pentagon to reimburse troops in Iraq and Afghanistan for personal travel costs incurred in a popular home leave program. **Congress approved \$55 million for travel costs in November, but the Pentagon has said it will not reimburse costs incurred before Dec. 19.**

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**OOPS**

A US soldier aims his weapon at another soldier leading a sniffer dog around a car parked near the site of a massive truck bomb explosion. (AFP/Ramzi Haidar)

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## Soldier Taped Fears About Equipment Before He Died; Told To Give Back Body Armor

By Wesley Johnson, PA News 14 Jan 2004

**The widow of a British soldier killed in Iraq after being ordered to hand back body armour told today how her husband revealed his fears about the lack of equipment in a series of tapes he made.**

Samantha Roberts, the wife of Sergeant Steve Roberts who was shot dead in an attack by Iraqi dissidents on March 24, said the tapes showed how concerned he was at the standard of equipment issued.

In the tapes, given to Mrs Roberts on the day of her husband's funeral, Sgt Roberts tells how equipment which had been promised to troops had not arrived. Later he describes the situation as a "joke".

**A Ministry of Defence report showed that Sgt Roberts, 33, from Bradford, was issued with body armour but was told to hand it back because a tank regiment did not have enough.**

Mrs Roberts, 32, revealed that her husband wished her a final emotional “good night” at the end of the recording.

She told PA News tonight: “It (the tape) was very emotional. There was quite a lot of emotion in his voice.

“He had left me a tape with my father-in-law, before he left for Iraq, in the event that anything happened to him. But I had not heard his voice since he’d died until I played these tapes.

“I’m pleased I’ve got them. They were very upsetting when I first heard them, but I’ve listened to them hundreds and hundreds of times now.

“He was quite nervous about the situation he found himself in.”

Sgt Roberts’s final words to his wife were: “I love you lots. Sleep tight, babe. Bye.”

**Speaking of his fears about the standard of equipment he said: “Things we have been told we are going to get, we’re not.**

**“It’s disheartening because we know we are going to go to war without the correct equipment.**

“It fills me with remorse really and I think remorse is the right word because I know we have received our orders.”

**On another occasion he said: “We are now back into one of the camps to up-armour, which again is a bit of a joke in itself because they are running out of the frontal armour.**

“It will be interesting to see what armour I actually get. I will keep you posted.”

**Mrs Roberts visited the House of Commons yesterday to hear Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon dismiss allegations of inadequate supplies of body armour, protective equipment and weapons.**

**And she backed calls by shadow defence secretary Nicholas Soames for Mr Hoon’s resignation.**

**She said: “It’s only by the luck of the Gods that more men have not died through a lack of equipment.**

“It’s for the benefit of the country for him to go.”

**(US Guard And Reserve soldiers still do not have the body armor the Bush Regime promised then last fall.)**



(AFP/File/Manny Ceneta)



**WANTED FOR PREMEDITATED MURDER OF UNITED STATES SOLDIERS IN IRAQ: Bush, Rumsfeld, and Chairman of the JCS Myers.**

**Specific: Refusal To Provide Body Armor**

**Be Advised: Approach and apprehend only with overwhelming force.**

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### **Pentagon Caught Lying Again; Withholds Medical Data On Secret Experiments On Sailors**

*(New York Times on the Web, January 16, 2004)*

**The Pentagon is continuing to withhold documents on Cold War chemical and biological weapons tests that used unsuspecting sailors as "human samplers" after telling Congress it had released all medically relevant information.** The Defense Department acknowledged that it kept sensitive documents laying out the scope and methods of the tests on grounds they identified vulnerabilities of military vessels to chemical and biological warfare agents.

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### **U.S. Soldiers Not Only Ones Treated Like Shit; Russian Soldier Dead, Dozens Ill After Ordeal In The Cold**

*(Philadelphia Inquirer, January 16, 2004)*

**Forced to sleep in a freezing airport building and later abandoned on a windy Siberian airfield, a Russian military draftee has died and more than 50 of his fellow conscripts have landed in the hospital.** The incident has outraged President Vladimir Putin and prompted an investigation by the Russian military prosecutor's office. **It was the latest instance of neglect in a military that has long been known for abusing its draftees.**

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### **Capitalism At Work: More War Profiteers Caught**

*(Bloomberg.com, January 15, 2004)*

The Pentagon inspector general said he is considering a criminal probe of United Technologies' Hamilton Sundstrand division after an audit found the company gave "inaccurate and misleading" data that led the U.S. military to overpay for spare parts for helicopters.

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **Shiites Promise General Strike And Resistance If US Won't Allow Elections**

The Daily Star 1.17.04, Compiled by Daily Star (Lebanon) staff

**Iraq's leading Shiite Muslim cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, Friday threatened a wave of protests if the US-led coalition presses on with plans to hand power to an unelected government by June.**

**"In the coming days and months, we're going to see protests and strikes and civil disobedience and perhaps confrontations with the occupying force if it insists on its colonial and diabolical plans to design the country's politics for its own interests,"** said Sheikh Abdel Mahdi al-Karbalai, Sistani's representative.

With the support of the main Shiite religious parties, Sistani is demanding general elections before the coalition hands over sovereignty in less than six months' time.

"The marja will do all in his power to stop those who would throw away the rights of the Iraqi people and will not give up its cause," he said.

The term marja at-taqlid, or source of emulation, is used to refer to the elite group of clerics, headed by Sistani, to whom Iraq's long oppressed Shiite majority looks for spiritual guidance.

**"In these closed-door meetings, they (the Americans) want to decide the political, social, economic and even geographical future of Iraq for their own benefit,"** he said.

I guarantee you that the marja is determined to continue this battle until the end. You must support this (struggle) because if you do not support this you will know the anger and curse of God," he said.

**Karbalai later told AFP that Sistani was sending a clear message to the Iraqi people that if "a solution cannot be reached with the occupation forces and the transitional Governing Council then the people are free to do whatever they want.**

A huge section of the Iraqi people and ***the Shiites asked the marja to take a position and he has recommended to them to keep the peace. But the marja will lift this order if he finds himself at an impasse with the occupying power on the negotiations over the country's future.***

However Karbalai added that the Shiite hierarchy had yet to reach breaking point in its talks with the Americans. "We have not yet reached an impasse, but we must prepare the Iraqi people psychologically to support the marja because we do not know what will happen these next three or four months but it will be decisive.

**"The marja's actions will be progressive - we will begin perhaps first with mass protests, then move on to a civil disobedience campaign, and then finally a general strike."**

On Friday, thousands of people flocked to prayers in Iraq's Shiite heartland as Sistani met tribal leaders to discuss his opposition to US plans for transferring power to Iraqis. **Residents said attendance was higher than usual at mosques in Najaf, reflecting growing support for Sistani and his demand for an elected government to replace the US occupation authorities.**

Sistani remained in his rooms during the day in Najaf, within meters of the gold-domed tomb of the sect's most revered imam, Ali. **Aides said he was meeting tribal leaders from around Iraq to discuss the transfer of power.**

**An aide said Thursday that Sistani could issue a fatwa, or edict, banning Shiites from cooperating with any authority installed by Washington unless direct elections are held.**

**The move could pit the country's majority Shiite community squarely against the coalition forces, but there was no immediate sign that Sistani was planning such a step. On Friday, another of Sistani's aides told Reuters Television there was still time to find a compromise and that people would continue to stage peaceful demonstrations to show their opposition to the US plan.**

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## Resistance Report

From Iraqi Resistance Report for 15 January through 17 January 2004. Translated and/or compiled by Muhammad Abu Nasr, member, editorial board, the Free Arab Voice.

### Attack On U. S. Base Kirkuk

On Thursday, Iraqi Resistance fighters directly attacked a base of the American military occupation in Kirkuk with Katyusha rockets. Two Katyushas landed with thunderous explosions inside the base, in an assault that was heard over a large area. Afterward, occupation forces raced about going on an elevated state of alert, deploying tanks and military vehicles around all major buildings in the area. The extent of material and human losses caused by the rocket attack, however, was not disclosed. Turhan Yusuf, puppet

police commander in Kirkuk, said that on Thursday morning two Katyusha rockets struck the main headquarters of the American occupation forces in the city. At precisely 6:10am local time, the two Katyushas hit Kirkuk airport, 5km west of the city itself. The US occupation forces have turned the occupied airport into their local headquarters.

The Agence France Presse (AFP) on the scene said that tighter security was imposed in the city after the attack and that sirens wailed in the early morning hours.

### **Police Stations Hit**

In the southern Iraqi city of Karbala, the Iraqi Resistance attacked a security center with rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) causing direct damage during the night of Wednesday to Thursday. Rahman Mashawi, the press officer for the puppet regime in the province of Karbala', spoke to the AFP and said that two RPGs struck the police station of Nahiyat al-Harr, 5km north of Karbala' at about 10:00pm local time on Wednesday, but denied that there were any casualties. He said that the first rocket hit the outer wall surrounding the building and the second fell in the garden of a residence next to the station but that neither caused any human losses.

### **Unemployed Soldiers Demonstration In An-Nasiriyah**

In an-Nasiriyah there were demonstrations by Iraqi soldiers demanding their pay and demanding to be allowed to work and begin to live their lives after the disbanding, shortly after the US invasion, of the Army of the Republic of Iraq. Some 300 unemployed people, most of them former soldiers, rallied peacefully to call for jobs outside the headquarters of the occupation forces in the city. Sattar Kazem, a former soldier in the Iraqi Army said, "I haven't received any pay for four months." Unemployment in the city hypertrophied after the American aggressor forces announced the dissolution of the Iraqi Army in May 2003. There have been repeated promises that pay for the veterans would be provided. Kazem said that the monthly pay, which he is supposed to receive, is 75,000 occupation Dinars or US\$75. He said "that's not enough to feed my family of seven."

'Aziz 'Abed ash-Shahid said, "I'm disabled and I've tried to get work everywhere or to get assistance but nobody cares about my case."

**'Adel Turki said, "I went to the oil protection services to look for work, but they asked for a bribe of 200,000 occupation Dinars (US\$200)."**

A representative of the demonstrators read a declaration in which he demanded that government employees be allowed back to their jobs, that promised stipends be paid to veterans, and that jobs be provided for all Iraqis.

Saturday, 17 January 2004.

### **Polish General Headquarters Attacked**

Iraqi Resistance fighters attacked the General Headquarters of the occupation forces that covers the five provinces supervised by the so-called multinational forces under Polish command. Occupation sources would not disclose information about possible

losses in the attack which took place in the town of al-Hillah. They did announce, however that one Iraqi had been killed and others injured in the Resistance assault.

### **Checkpoint Bombed In Al-Huwayjah**

In al-Huwayjah, the commander of the puppet so-called civil defense force that collaborates with the occupation said that four of its members were wounded in a Resistance attack, two of them seriously. Major General Anwar Muhammad Amin commander of the puppet so-called civil defense forces in Kirkuk said that the four Iraqis were guarding a checkpoint at the entrance to al-Huwayjah when explosives were thrown at them.

### **Body Of Cop Found**

In Karbala' a spokesman for the puppet police said that the body of a puppet policeman who had been abducted nine days ago had been found. 'Ali Isma'il Habib left his home heading for work nine days ago, an occupation spokesman said, indicating that he was abducted and killed yesterday. His body was then thrown into the street, the spokesman said.

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

### **Kindred Spirits**

A squad of Marines drove up the highway between Basra and Baghdad. They came upon an Iraqi soldier badly injured and unconscious. Nearby on the opposite side of the road was an American Marine in a similar state, but he was alert.

As first aid was given to both men, they asked the injured Marine what happened. The Marine responded "I was heavily armed and moving north along the highway. Coming south was a heavily armed Iraqi soldier". "What happened then?" the corpsman asked.

"I told him Saddam Hussein was a miserable piece of shit and then the Iraqi told me that George Bush, Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld were miserable pieces of shit!"

"What happened then?" the corpsman asked.

"We were shaking hands when a truck hit us."

<p><b>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.</b> 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</p>
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# The Army's Best At Counterinsurgency, An Arrogant, Ignorant Racist Asshole. Thinks Iraqis Just Don't "Understand" Benefits Of Occupation Because Hussein Rule Left Them Stupid

## Part Two: Conclusion In Next GI Special

(Note: Much garbage has been cut, such as assertions by the reporter the resistance is made up of foreign terrorists and Saddam Hussein remnants, how wonderful the invasion is for the Iraqis, blah blah. Despite the propaganda, the truth about a military and political disaster keeps leaking through.

By Peter Maass, NY Times 1.11.04

On a bright Sunday morning in December, insurgents in Khaldiya struck a soft target -- the police station. Not long before, the officers there had been jumping out windows to avoid working with the Americans, but in the intervening months, Nagl had begun to build trust, and relations had improved. That changed on Dec. 14. At 8:32 a.m., a car packed with plastic explosives and ball bearings detonated outside the station, killing 24 policemen as well as two women and a child. Colonel Swisher and his troops arrived at the blast site within minutes, and Nagl followed soon after. When Nagl arrived, the smell of cordite was still in the air, with blood and charred flesh on the ground. An eight-foot crater had gouged the spot where the car exploded.

That evening, as we sat in the cramped room in the battalion's tactical operations center where Nagl worked and slept, he told me about the attack and its aftermath. A portrait of Saddam Hussein was hung, with coy humor, over his bed. **Above his desk, he had taped up a Dilbert spoof that a few of his soldiers had created about him. The Dilbert character, intended as Nagl, says: "At Oxford I learned to use my huge brain. But I try not to frighten ordinary people with any gratuitous displays of mental superiority."**

The crowd that gathered after the blast, Nagl told me, didn't seem angry at the insurgents responsible for the carnage. Instead many of them blamed the G.I.'s. **The mother of a dead policeman, who was allowed inside the hastily formed perimeter, shouted insults at the Americans until an Iraqi police officer escorted her out.** A rumor swept through the crowd that it wasn't a car bomb that had caused the blast but a missile fired by the Americans, who were angry, so the rumor went, because the police were not supporting the occupation.



Though a car bombing like this one might seem indiscriminate, there are in fact at least two strategic reasons for such attacks. First, they discourage cooperation with American forces, creating precisely the kind of fear that made the police reluctant to aid the Americans in the first place. They also create chaos. **If an occupying power is unable to guarantee security -- and car bombs have a way of showing it can't -- the insurgents might, over time, win over the populace.**

In the early afternoon, a funeral procession passed by Nagl and the police station, on its way from a mosque to the cemetery. A bit later, as Nagl and other soldiers recounted it to me, another procession neared the station, larger than the previous one, with about 1,000 people, many of them shouting anti-American slogans. Nagl, who was on the street, couldn't see much of the crowd, but one of his tank commanders, Capt. Ben Miller, had a better vantage point. "Crowd coming," Miller warned over the radio. "Recommend we mount up now and pull back."

"Roger," Nagl replied. "Execute."

The crowd threw rocks at the retreating soldiers, who sprinted to an American outpost 400 yards away. The rocks hit some of Nagl's men, and as the mob surged forward, on the verge of overwhelming the G.I.'s, the Americans fired warning shots to disperse the protesters. Nagl's soldiers then retreated behind coils of concertina wire at the outpost. Most of the crowd continued to the cemetery, but several hundred stayed behind, staring at the Americans from the other side of the wire. Anything could happen, Nagl recalled thinking: perhaps they'll rush the wire; perhaps they'll throw grenades or fire AK-47's.

**Sitting in Nagl's room, I mentioned that a few days earlier a commander in a nearby area had told me how he'd instructed his snipers, before a planned anti-occupation march on their base began, to identify the leaders of the march and, if the crowd became violent, to shoot the leaders dead.**

**Nagl said he wasn't surprised by the idea that Americans would fire on protest leaders. "I'm only surprised he told you that," he said.**

In his own standoff, Nagl went on to say, "I was running through what to do if they rushed us, and there were not any particularly good answers to that question."

What if the crowd attacked?

"You look for the leaders," he replied, quietly.

After a half-hour, the crowd filtered away, leaving Nagl with a metaphor for his hearts-and-minds effort: **"Across this divide they're looking at us, we're looking at them from behind barbed wire, and they're trying to understand why we're here, what we want from them. Almost inconceivable to a lot of them, *I think, that what we want for them is the right to make their own decisions, to live free lives. It's probably hard to understand that if you have lived your entire life under Saddam Hussein's rule.* And it's hard for us to convey that message, particularly given the fact that few of us speak Arabic."**

**(Nagl's blindness is breathtaking. He says the Iraqis, who he called "clowns" in part 1, don't understand that the Occupation wants them to "have the right to make their own decisions.")**

**(He has no grip whatsoever on the fact that the Iraqis facing him had already "made their own decision" which is: they don't want him or his soldiers in their country. No, for blind, arrogant, racist Nagl, they're still stupid children because of living "your entire life under Saddam Hussein." The counterinsurgency expert can't face the truth, and that's the fatal flaw.)**

Nagl seemed to want to find a positive lesson in the day's events, and eventually he did. "We had soldiers surrounded by an angry crowd, and if the soldiers had not acted under pressure with discipline, as they had been trained to do, it could have been a very ugly situation," he said. "It is very easy to imagine one of the soldiers panicking and firing into the crowd, and that would have really set us back a very long way."

A few hours after the car bomb detonated, the American military announced that Saddam Hussein had been captured. The news did not elicit shouts of joy at Nagl's base. **The reaction among Nagl's men was summed up by a soldier who didn't hesitate when I asked whether he thought Hussein's capture would make his job easier. "Nah, there are too many bad people here," he replied. "They don't need Saddam Hussein to tell them to do bad things."**

I went on several cordon-and-search raids with him and his men, and as we drove in his Humvee he would always make a point of waving at civilians. A small gesture, for sure, but it showed what was on Nagl's mind. The gesture was appreciated by some; from others it elicited hard stares.

The paradox might be impossible to resolve. **For every raid that finds its target, there seem to be nine that don't, and in those nine, soldiers often point weapons at civilians, drive through fields and backyards, break down doors and detain people who are later released.**

"I didn't realize how right Lawrence of Arabia was," Nagl said to me once. Even when I was writing that insurgency was messy and slow, the full enormity of that did not sink in on me. I am seeing appreciable progress, but I am starting to understand in the pit of my stomach how hard, how long, how slow counterinsurgency really is. **There is no prospect it's going to end anytime soon."**

Soon after arriving at Camp Manhattan, Nagl's battalion was the target of mortar attacks by an insurgent who was nicknamed "the mad mortarman." The soldiers were unable to catch him in the act, but counterbattery radars pinpointed the field he was operating from, and Nagl's troops fired artillery and mortars at it one night. When American soldiers went to the scene the next morning, local civilians, who hadn't enjoyed the experience of having American shells landing by their homes, told the Americans who had been firing the mortars; four men were detained later that day.

According to the American troops, there were no complaints from local men and women about the American shelling; nobody was injured, and the locals apparently understood it was not an indiscriminate assault but a targeted response to targeted attacks. Nagl says

he believes that makes a difference, and he points to declining attacks to support his case.

"Direct-fire attacks on us have dropped dramatically," he told me. "We have a pretty clear message. If you shoot at us we will do our damndest to kill you, and most of the time we will. And if you live in a neighborhood and you know there are bad people and you don't want Americans to return heavy fire into your neighborhood, endangering your families, you need to turn in the bad guys. That message is being received."

The picture was the same across Iraq as the year ended: the number of attacks against American forces, which averaged about 40 a day in November, fell to an average of about 20 a day in December, according to American officials.

### **Comment:**

**(This last paragraph contains a piece of Coalition propaganda that must have been tattooed on the forehead of every officer in country. In the past two weeks, it has been repeated over and over again at every press conference and by every reporter too dim or lazy to check out reality. Reality is that December had more dead coalition soldiers than any month since the invasion campaign—except for November!**

**So, if increasing numbers of occupation soldiers are being killed in a decreasing number of engagements, is that something to be bragging about? Or does that mean the resistance is becoming more militarily skilled, coordinated and effective? Assuming a continuation on the same trajectory, who wins the war? Duh!**

### **Reality:**

#### **Military Fatalities: By Month:**

Period	US	UK	Other*	Total	Avg	Days
<a href="#">1-2004</a>	23	3	0	<b>26</b>	1.44	18
<a href="#">12-2003</a>	40	0	8	<b>48</b>	1.55	31
<a href="#">11-2003</a>	81	1	27	<b>109</b>	3.63	30
<a href="#">10-2003</a>	42	1	2	<b>45</b>	1.45	31
<a href="#">9-2003</a>	31	1	1	<b>33</b>	1.1	30
<a href="#">8-2003</a>	35	6	2	<b>43</b>	1.39	31
<a href="#">7-2003</a>	46	1	0	<b>47</b>	1.52	31
<a href="#">6-2003</a>	29	6	0	<b>35</b>	1.17	30
<a href="#">5-2003</a>	37	4	0	<b>41</b>	1.32	31
<a href="#">4-2003</a>	73	6	0	<b>79</b>	2.63	30
<a href="#">3-2003</a>	65	27	0	<b>92</b>	7.67	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>1.96</b>	<b>305</b>

(<http://lunaville.org/warcasualties/Summary.aspx>)

### **Article Continues:**

Military officers and scholars are conducting an unusually open debate about counterinsurgency tactics in Iraq, focusing on the question of calibration of firepower and the use of other pressure tactics, like surrounding hostile villages with barbed wire -- this has been done on at least two occasions by American units in the Sunni Triangle -- and demolishing houses used by insurgents and detaining their relatives.

In March, the Marines will return to Iraq, and the man who will command the 20,000-strong force, Lt. Gen. James T. Conway, said in an interview last month with The New York Times that the Marines will use a softer touch than the Army. "I don't want to condemn what people are doing," General Conway said. "I'll simply say that I think until we can win the population over and they can give us those indigenous intelligence reports, that we're prolonging the process." Referring to the Army's use of airstrikes against insurgent targets, Conway added: "I do not envision using that tactic. It would have to be a rare incident that transcends anything that we have seen in the country to make that happen."

When I asked Nagl what he thought of Conway's critique, he shrugged in a dismissive manner -- his way of saying the Marines don't understand the reality on the ground in the Sunni Triangle. **But at least one Sunni leader said he thinks Conway's critique is spot on. Ghazi Ajil al-Yawar is deputy chief of one of the largest Sunni tribes and a member of the American-appointed Governing Council. Al-Yawar is a moderate who wants the occupation to succeed and Iraq to become a democracy. However, he doesn't see the Army's counterinsurgency doing much to bring real security and peace.**

**"The United States is using excessive power," he said when I visited his residence in Baghdad. "They round up people in a very humiliating way, by putting bags over their faces in front of their families. In our society, this is like rape. The Americans are using collective punishment by jailing relatives. What is the difference from Saddam? They are demolishing houses now. They say they want to teach a lesson to the people. But when Timothy McVeigh was convicted in the bombing in Oklahoma City, was his family's home destroyed?"**

**Al-Yawar continued: "You cannot win the hearts and minds of the people by using force. What's the difference between dictatorship and what's happening now?"**

The formation of "indigenous" forces, as they are called, is considered a paramount element of successful counterinsurgency. During one of our discussions, Nagl explained the use of Iraqi forces as a matter of efficacy and necessity.

"There are lots of reasons why Iraqis are going to be better at it than we are," he said. "They know who is supposed to be where and what they are supposed to be doing. They can see patterns of behavior that are irregular in a way that our untrained eye cannot. They can talk to everybody in a way that we cannot."

A patchwork of Iraqi security forces is being created. In addition to the beleaguered police, there are, most notably, the new Iraqi Army and the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, or I.C.D.C. The I.C.D.C. already numbers more than 10,000 and is regularly engaged in joint patrols with American troops. Still, members of the I.C.D.C. appear far from ready to take over the hard-core missions being carried out by the occupation force.

last month, I went to a base in Balad, about 50 miles from Camp Manhattan, where the Fourth Infantry Division's First Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment, was training a class of about 50 I.C.D.C. recruits. Each course takes two weeks, the first week in the classroom and the second week in the field. The battalion had already trained three classes, but not without hitches. The first commander and deputy commander of the I.C.D.C. in the area were fired after it emerged that they were extorting kickbacks from the recruits. **One recruit was found to be trying to organize other recruits into an anti-American cell that would use its training to mount attacks against the occupation force; he was thrown into prison.** "In every class there are people we're concerned about," an American officer told me. "There are people in the I.C.D.C. now who we're concerned about."

The classroom was situated in a concrete airplane hangar in which Iraqi and American flags hung from the ceiling. The recruits, wearing red baseball caps with "I.C.D.C." printed in English and Arabic, ranged in age from their late teens to their mid-40's. **Because the American trainers were having a hard time recalling the recruits' Arabic names, the Iraqis were given English nicknames.** (One of the recruits, a pudgy Iraqi in his 20's, was called Flounder, after the character in the movie "Animal House.") **When I visited, they were being trained to say, in English, "Raise your hands!" and "Drop your weapon!" – a strange choice in a country where few people speak English.**

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

## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

### **U.N. Sides With U.S. To Oppose Elections In Iraq**

*(Washington Times, January 16, 2004, Pg. 1)*

U.N. officials said that direct elections could not be organized before a July deadline for restoring sovereignty to Iraq, placing the international body on the side of the United States in a looming confrontation with Iraq's Shiite community led by Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Husseini al-Sistani.

**(If you know anybody who still has illusions that a UN Occupation would be an improvement over the US occupation of Iraq, send this along to them. Of course, since the Official UN Sanctions killed about a million Iraqis over the past 10 years, the Iraqis understand perfectly that the UN is an enemy power and will attack them. They are right to do so.)**

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# Iraqi Tells Of Torture In US Prisons

Peter Conradi and David Enders, Baghdad, Sunday Times (London) January 18, 2004

When Abd al-Rahman, a minor official at the agriculture ministry in Baghdad, was detained by coalition forces last June, he began a rapid descent into hell.

**Rahman claims that in the three months that followed he was beaten frequently, given shocks with an electric cattle-prod and had one of his toenails prised off. Rations were often laced with pork - forbidden to Muslims - and scorpions were a menace around the tent in which he slept.**

**Like many of the thousands of Iraqis held by the Americans, Rahman, who was finally released after three months, still does not know why he was arrested.** He suspects that a colleague with a grudge falsely denounced him as a member of Saddam's Fedayeen militia.

**"I am free and healthy now but I no longer have a job and many of my friends and relatives are still detained,"** he told representatives of Christian Peacemaker Teams, an American human rights group, who interviewed dozens of former detainees and their families during a seven-month investigation. Attempts to obtain compensation have come to nothing.

Rahman was taken at gunpoint from his home in Baghdad early one morning.

**His problems began when he was taken to a base in the city's al-Shaab district where he claims he was kept alone in a room with his hands tied behind his back for two days. Despite the heat, he was allowed only two glasses of water. "During these two days, some interrogators beat me frequently, shoved me around, stood on my back and prised off one of my toenails," he said.**

**Conditions were just as bad when he was transferred to the airport camp. When he complained of swollen arms after his hands were tied too tightly, he was taken to a large, muscular soldier who was introduced as a doctor.**

**"The 'doctor' examined me by kicking me to make me roll over or turn around and boring his fist into my chest to check my consciousness," he claimed.**

He was repeatedly asked for information about Saddam and other members of the regime. When he insisted he knew nothing, soldiers threatened to harm his family, he said.

Rahman's release was as unexpected as his arrest. "They drove me to the middle of Baghdad near the Al Rasheed hotel and dumped me out of the car, shouting 'Go! Go! Go!'" Too weak to walk, he had to be helped into a taxi by a traffic policeman.

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



## **DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

### **Bush Support Drops 19% Among Independents Since December**

The Associated press, 17 January 2004

WASHINGTON - President Bush's support among political independents, a critical voting group in the coming year, has been slipping in recent weeks, a poll released Saturday found.

The CBS-New York Times poll found that fewer than half, 45 percent, of independents approve of the job Bush is doing as president. In December, Bush's approval among independents had soared to 64 percent in the same poll.

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## **CLASS WAR NEWS**

### **The Bankrupt Empire: Foreign Cash Flow Vital to U.S. Is Failing**

Wall St. Journal, January 15, 2004

**Every day, foreign individuals, companies and governments plow \$1.5 billion into U.S. stocks, Treasury bonds, factories, companies and real estate.**

**This money is the economic lifeblood of America.** It helps the U.S. expand and modernize factories, secure mortgages, build highways -- **even fight the war in Iraq.** Two decades ago, Americans sent more money abroad than foreigners invested here. **But since then, the U.S. has essentially been living beyond its means, consuming more than it makes, investing more than it saves by borrowing from abroad.**

How long will the decision-makers in the global market continue to favor the U.S. with their money?

***In the past few months, the dollar has been falling against the euro, the Japanese yen and the British pound. It's a symptom of waning demand for the U.S.***

*currency, an indication that foreigners may be growing less enthusiastic about investing in the U.S.* A weakening currency can also cause demand to weaken further: If foreigners think the currency will keep falling, big profits in dollars might turn into small profits, or even losses, in their own currencies when they take their money home.

Were foreign investors to flee the U.S., it would depress the dollar further and faster. Reduced foreign purchases of U.S. stocks could cause the market to tumble. Reducing foreign purchases of U.S. bonds could boost the interest rates set in bond markets. If the foreign flight were severe enough, it could push the U.S. back into recession.

The nation is now more dependent on foreign capital than it has been at any point in the past half-century. Over the 12 months ended June 30, the latest data available, foreigners bought \$231.5 billion in U.S. Treasury debt, which was more than during any 12-month stretch in the past six years, according to Bianco Research LLC, a Chicago research and trading firm. The purchases amounted to nearly two-thirds of all the borrowing the Treasury did in that period. Foreigners -- including foreign central banks -- now hold more than \$1.3 trillion of U.S. Treasury debt, about 36% of all Treasury paper outstanding.

(For a deeper look, check out the article “Marx’s Theory Of Economic Crisis,” by Stuart Esterling at [www.isreview.org](http://www.isreview.org).)



**WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON/**

An antiglobalization activist, surrounded by riot police, protests against the Special Summit of the Americas in Monterrey, Mexico.(AFP/Mario Vasquez)

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