

GI SPECIAL 2#15



THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME

A U.S. Army Honor Guard carry Army Specialist Solomon Bangayan, killed in Iraq, during funeral Jan. 24, 2004 in his family's hometown of Sudipen, in the Philippine province of La Union. Bangayan, from the 2nd Battallion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division based at Fort Bragg, N.C., moved to Jay, Vt., after living for 21 years in the Philippines. (AP Photo/Vic Alhambra Jr.)

“Washington Can Kiss My Ass”

(K writes: “From a documentary that aired on German television. There were more quotes.. The soldier who said the "government can kiss my ass" had her face completely blanked out (by the producers I assume).

I'm sure if you comb various media outside the U.S., you'll find more like it. The press here in the states consists of a whole bunch of cowards. We shall overcome (bush!).")

www.kchronicles, reprinted in Funny Times, 12.03:

Quotes from U.S. soldiers in Iraq:

"We don't even know why we're here."

"It feels like Vietnam."

"I think it's about oil."

"Washington can kiss my ass."

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

2 U.S. Troops Killed, 8 Wounded In Series Of Resistance Attacks

Jan. 24, 2004: By VIJAY JOSHI, Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Two American soldiers and three Iraqis were killed in separate bomb attacks Saturday, a day after two U.N. security experts arrived in the capital to study the possible return of the world body's international staff.

The American soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb that struck their convoy near Fallujah,

In another attack, a truck bomb exploded soon after a U.S. patrol passed by in Samarra.

The blast killed three Iraqis and wounded 40 people including seven American soldiers, Capt. Jennifer Knight of the 720th Military Police Battalion said.

The American military police patrol was turning into a police station to join Iraqi police when the explosion occurred behind it, Sgt. Maj. Nathan Wilson of the 720th Military Police Battalion.

Also Saturday, at least one sniper in a building shot and wounded an American soldier who was in a foot patrol in a Baghdad neighborhood, Maj. Kevin West said.

A bridge across the Tigris River in Baghdad, leading to the coalition headquarters, was closed by U.S. troops for two hours Saturday. Witnesses said they were searching for a bomb, but this could not be independently confirmed.

TWO DEAD IN HELICOPTER CRASH

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
January 23, 2004 Release Number: 04-01-18C

MOSUL, Iraq - Two pilots died when their OH-58 Kiowa Warrior helicopter crashed northwest of the city of Qayyarah in northern Iraq today.

At approximately 8:30 p.m., the helicopter went down due to causes unknown.

TROOP NEWS

Raped GIs Raped Again By Brass; Some Threatened For Reporting

Jan. 24, 2004 MILES MOFFEIT AND AMY HERDY, Denver Post

Female troops serving in Iraq are reporting an insidious enemy in their own camps: fellow American soldiers who sexually assault them.

At least 37 female service members have sought sexual-trauma counseling and other assistance from civilian rape-crisis organizations after returning from war duty in Iraq, Kuwait and other overseas stations, women's assistance and advocacy organizations say.

"We have significant concerns about the military's response to sexual assault in the combat zone," said Christine Hansen, executive director of the Connecticut-based Miles Foundation, which says it has assisted 31 women.

The women, ranging from enlisted soldiers to officers, have reported poor medical treatment, lack of counseling and incomplete criminal investigations by military officials. Some say they were threatened with punishment after reporting assaults.

The Pentagon did not respond to repeated requests for information about the number of sexual assault reports during the conflict.

Thousands of women have been sexually assaulted in the United States military. Thousands more have been abused by their military husbands or boyfriends. And then they are victimized again.

This time, the women are betrayed by the military itself.

They are discouraged from reporting the crimes. Pressured to go easy on their attackers. Denied protection. Frustrated by a justice system that readily shields offenders from criminal punishment.

The women suffer for it.

Some cannot talk about what happened. They were killed by men whose violence was allowed to escalate. Other victims struggle with anger over a trusted system that betrayed them.

More than 50 women such as Beverly Kondel, Toni Walker and Iolanda Thompson, above from left, told The Denver Post their stories.

"They said they would order him not to talk to me, but I told them that that wouldn't stop bullets from hitting me," Walker says. "I felt the military abandoned me."

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/>

**War Dead Honored In Oceanside;
“American Boys Who Died For
What?”**

By Lola Sherman, UNION-TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER, January 21, 2004

OCEANSIDE, CALIFORNIA – More than 500 candles flickered in red plastic cups on the sand at the beach last evening to commemorate the lives of each serviceman or servicewoman lost in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Shelli Hallidy of Carlsbad, coordinator for the co-sponsoring North County Coalition for Peace and Justice, said a display like this one is presented on a California coastline on the 20th day of every month. The next one is scheduled for Feb. 20 at Moonlight Beach in Encinitas.

Jim Brown of Encinitas, head of the co-sponsoring Veterans for Peace chapter, said the beach tableau was a "somber memorial" to those who died.

Among them was Cpl. Jesús Suárez del Solar of Escondido, represented not only by his cross in the front row but by his father, Fernando, an activist for peace ever since his only son was killed March 27.

Last month, he journeyed to Iraq and visited schools and hospitals, as well as the place where his son died. "Five hundred and six crosses behind me," Suárez said. "American boys who died for what?"

There were a few visitors, such as Marine Master Sgt. José Chavez of Oceanside, who carefully inspected a panel of photographs erected by Suárez and then went over to offer his condolences to the grieving father. Chavez, an active-duty Marine, served in the Persian Gulf War, in Somalia and in Iraq. He said he had come to honor his fallen comrades.

National Guard Survey Warns Of Soldier Exodus

(THANKS TO B WHO E-MAILED THIS IN: B WRITES: See last paragraph. No one is panicking because everyone has their heads shoved far up their asses (or Rumsfelds) to see the light of day.)

January 23, 2004, By Dave Moniz, USA Today

Just as the Pentagon is increasingly relying on the National Guard and other part-time troops for duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, an internal Guard survey suggests that the demanding deployments could prompt a significant number of its soldiers to quit the military.

A recent survey of 5,000 soldiers from 15 states showed that the rate at which Army Guardsmen choose to leave the military could jump dramatically among those who have served long overseas tours.

The new survey data suggest that Guard members' patience may be wearing thin. The survey shows that among Army Guard soldiers who have been deployed overseas for long tours — typically a year — the percentage that says they plan to leave the service will jump to 20-22 percent this year.

A total of 97,000 soldiers — about 28 percent of the 350,000-member Army Guard — are now on active duty in the USA or overseas.

Some experts believe the survey hints at the leading edge of an exodus from the Army Guard and Army Reserve because part-timers don't want to be treated like full-time troops.

John Goheen, spokesman for the National Guard Association of the United States, says no one is sure how troops will react once they return home because the Army Reserve and Guard have never faced a similar situation. "Nobody is panicking, but there is some concern. We'll just have to wait and see."

Bureaucratic Bumbling Hit Reservists

January 20, 2004 By Jane McHugh, Army Times staff writer

Bureaucratic bumbling negatively impacted many reservists in Operation Iraqi Freedom

For example, 10,000 Reservists had less than five days' notice to report for mobilization. Another 8,000 mobilized and trained but never deployed. Then about half of them were re-deployed.

Reserve Chief Calls Iraq Duty "Bungled Bureaucratic Nightmare;" Troops Lied To About Length Of War Duty

Lieutenant-General James Helmly said many of the 31,000 "weekend warriors" now on frontline duty in Iraq or Afghanistan had been fed "a bungled bureaucratic pipe dream" about the length of their deployment that could trigger a recruitment and retention crisis.

A high proportion of those who signed up for a 12-month tour of duty in Iraq last year were told they would spend only six months abroad after training. Thousands have now had their deployment extended to 16 months, causing disruption with their civilian jobs and families.

"This is the first extended-duration war our nation has fought with such a large, all-volunteer reservist element. We must be sensitive to that and apply preventive measures to ensure we don't suffer a manpower backlash," General Helmly said.

Reservists' Pissed About Second-Class Status In Iraq

Joseph L. Galloway

(San Diego Union-Tribune, January 22, 2004)

The dean of military sociologists, Charles Moskos, toured Iraq recently listening to American soldiers, interviewing them and surveying their opinions and gripes. **He found morale compared to regular soldiers was markedly lower among reserve component troops. (Duh.)**

Families Can Send Off Troops At Airport Gates; Families Of Returning Troops Still Restricted

January 23, 2004 By Karen Jowers, Army Times staff writer

Military families seeing their troops off to a combat zone can now wait with them at airport gates, rather than saying goodbye at security checkpoints.

"This is a nice thing to do," said Joyce Raezer, director of government relations for the National Military Family Association. **"It would be really nice if they could be there when the [service member] got off the plane, too," she said. "I think this should be allowed both for picking up the service member and waiting with them. It's very difficult for people with children. At least if they come to the gate, they can sit."**

Bush Bureaucrat Confirms Clock Dead On Deployment Pay

Army Times website, January 23, 2004

Dr. David S.C. Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, met with Military Times reporters and editors Jan. 21 for an hour-long interview about military pay and personnel issues. From a transcript of the interview:

Q: Deployment pay. What is on the books now is a fairly useful deployment pay for people who are out frequently or for long duration. You also have, for the first time in the history of the all-volunteer force, a sustained overseas combat operation with a great deal of unknowns on what people will do when they come home. **Yet the deployment pay is frozen and the clocks aren't running on when people qualify for this. Can you enlighten us on the thinking of when should the clocks be restarted? Why isn't time in Iraq currently being counted for that so that if somebody decides we**

need to start this pay now, you can start it now instead of waiting a year from now?

Chu: When September 11 came around, did suspend the clock. At the same time, we went back to the drawing boards, said OK, we agree with the spirit of Congress' intervention here, [but] what might be a more thoughtful approach? Hence the deployment pay idea, which we advanced in the fiscal '04 legislative cycle and Congress adopted.

And the debate in front of the Department right now is, should we turn that on? If so, how should we turn it on? Exactly the issues you've discussed. We have not made a decision yet, is the honest answer.

Q: Is there a scenario where time currently served in Iraq would be counted?

Chu: That becomes partially a legal issue. And until I've heard decisive from lawyers, I think it's unwise for me to comment on [whether[you can] open the clock backwards or not.

Q: The Marines deploying right now to Iraq are the ones complaining because they're taking a second trip back. I think that they're the ones who think, "Why isn't this time counting? We went over. We fought the war. Now we're going back again. And this is unfair to us, particularly because it won't count in the future." So a year from now they won't get any credit for deployment pay for the duty that they're serving right now. The pay was developed for this need that everybody recognizes and it's here. This is exactly why it was developed, for continuous back-to-back deployment.

Chu: That's exactly why we are debating at this moment what the Department wants to do about this issue. So it's not —

Q: When do you think that debate might be resolved?

Chu: I've found it best never to hazard guesses about bureaucratic —

Q: It's not in your '05 budget proposal?

Chu: Let me not, again, comment on the '05 budget proposal. **The financing mechanism is not the issue. The issue is a philosophic one, and there are different voices on this subject, I should emphasize, in the Department, including some in the very service you've identified, saying, "No, no, the Marines never liked this idea at all." (What a lair. The Marines, as you just read above, are totally enraged!)**

So I hear you about what the troops are saying. So we have yet to conclude what we should do.

(What you have concluded is that the clock is off and stays off. All the rest is just smokescreen and bureaucratic blathering bullshit. Soldiers can die, but on the cheap, so Bush and his corporate masters can keep their pockets full.

The enemy is the government, not people in Iraq.)

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.

Don't Like Cops Or Your School Principal? Army Doesn't Want You

Army Times website, January 23, 2004

Dr. David S.C. Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, met with Military Times reporters and editors Jan. 21. From a transcript of the interview:

CHU: If you cannot get along with your high school principal, you are not going to like your drill sergeant. So if you can't succeed in a high school structure, you ain't going to like our system at all.

Q: It's sort of like if you can't get along with the police, you won't get along [in the military].

CHU: Right. Exactly.

Military Acknowledges Invasion Supply Fucked Up

(Newhouse.com, January 22, 2004)

The U.S. military juggernaut that swept into Iraq last March was plagued by shortages of ammunition, spare parts and fuel—an epic logistics mess for which the old military term "snafu" might have been invented. **In a devastating self-critique, the Army has produced an analysis that concludes, in essence, that its logisticians cannot see what is needed on the battlefield, cannot respond rapidly when they do find out what is needed, and cannot distribute what they have when it is needed.**

USO Crooks Steal Half Million

(Los Angeles Times, January 22, 2004)

A team of government auditors has found more than \$430,000 in improper, questionable or unsupported USO tour expenses that were charged to the Pentagon over a two-year period. The investigation revealed that taxpayers repeatedly paid for first-class plane tickets, liquor and limousine services for celebrities, in violation of Pentagon and federal regulations. Such charges are supposed to be paid for by the USO.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Airwaves, Music Stores Flooded With Songs Calling For Resistance Singers Praise Attacks On Coalition; “We’ll Drag Bush’s Corpse Through The Dirt”

Borzou Daragahi, Special to The Daily Star 1.23.04

FALLUJAH, Iraq: You can almost dance to the rhythm, but the lyrics call for guerrilla war.

“America has come and occupied Baghdad,” singer Sabah al-Jenabi croons. “The army and people have weapons and ammunition. Let’s go fight and call out the name of God.”

Though the US-led occupation has outlawed media calling for violence against coalition troops or other Iraqis, on the streets of Baghdad, Fallujah and Ramadi, Jenabi’s CDs and tapes - and a series of others calling for violent insurrection against the Americans - are the hottest sales items.

As rebels shoot down helicopters at a rate of about one a week in the Fallujah area, Jenabi’s tunes ring out in the bazaars

“The men of Fallujah are men of hard tasks,” he sings in an Arabic dialect only people from Fallujah and Ramadi can decipher. “They paralyzed America with rocket-propelled grenades. May God protect them from (American) airplanes.”

Even Iraqis who are supportive of the US occupation admit they are attracted to the music.

Though the lyrics are contemporary, the music is based on a centuries-old religious music called praising. The Sufi-influenced praisers say they’ve been told by the coalition authorities not to write songs that call for violence.

Dan Senor, a spokesman for the coalition, told reporters recently that “any sort of public expression used in an institutionalized sense that would incite violence against the coalition or Iraqis” is banned. (Lots of luck.)

Yet CD shops and cassette stalls sell Jenabi's albums as well as those of other musicians calling for jihad against the Americans for about 2,000 Iraqi dinars, or less than \$1.25.

They appear to be mass-produced by the CD shops themselves, with different versions carrying the names of the shops selling them.

At Sabah Recordings, a popular cassette shop in a Fallujah alleyway, owner Maher al-Ajrari at first denied he even sells Jenabi's music. **After an hour of hesitating, he finally admitted that the tapes are his best-selling products.**

Ajrari even carries multi-media "video" versions of the CDs. One shows scenes from the Anthony Quinn movie, Omar Mokhtar, in which Islamic warriors fight Italian occupiers in 1920s Libya. Another musician sings anti-American songs to news footage of American troops killing and maiming Iraqis.

"The men of Islam will fight the Americans like leaderless soldiers," Jenabi sings in one tune. "We'll drag (US President George W.) Bush's corpse through the dirt." But Ajrari said he was not promoting an anti-US agenda.

"We sell these just for business and for commercial profit," he said. (Well, Bush said he wanted to bring "the free market" to Iraq. There it is.)

Fatima Daher al-Rubaie, a musicologist at Baghdad's College of Fine Arts, said the music is part of Iraq's traditional folklore. "Even when I listen to this music I feel emotionally affected. The buildup in rhythms really builds up emotions. It's very captivating music," she said.

During the 1920s, when Iraqi clerics called for jihad against the British occupiers, praisers took the lead in coming up with creative resistance songs.

Hassani recounted the tale of his grandfather, who began writing religiously sanctioned praises against the British, inspiring guerrillas in their fight against the occupiers.

"Within a couple years," he said, "the British fled Iraq."

<p style="text-align: center;">OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

Shiia Leader Says Bush Plan "Unacceptable"

Jan. 24, 2004: By VIJAY JOSHI, Associated Press Writer

A U.S. plan calls for letting regional caucuses choose a legislature. The legislature would then name a new Iraqi government that will take over from the coalition on July 1, under the U.S. plan adopted on Nov. 15.

Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim, a Shiite leader, said Friday the plan "as it stands ... is unacceptable." But Americans and others are slowly coming around to the need for elections, he said.

Al-Hakim, who was among members of a Governing Council delegation that met with President Bush on Tuesday at the White House, heads the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, the country's most powerful Shiite political group.

The Bush administration said Friday that it was holding to its July 1 deadline for ending the U.S. occupation but the method of selecting a new government wasn't decided.

"We have an open mind about how to most effectively facilitate an orderly transfer of sovereignty," State Department deputy spokesman Adam Ereli said.

(A gun at the head can produce an "open mind.")

(For more see the article "No, No To The Occupation" at www.socialistworker.org.)

280 Iraqi Collaborator Cops Killed So Far

(Christian Science Monitor, January 23, 2004)

Insurgents are killing an increasing number of Iraqi policemen, who walk the front lines of the U.S. occupation.. **At least 280 Iraqi police have been killed since the fall of the capital last April.**

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Workers' Rights In Occupied Iraq

From: Ewa Jasiewicz <http://www.occupationwatch.org/> January 22, 2004 4:37 PM

(Hello everybody.

This is a speech I wrote and delivered at a conference I joint organised with the Federation on workers rights in occupied Iraq at the beginning of this month.

I thought I should send out now because it has good info in it and some of it has now become redundant!! Because since that conference, **I'm overjoyed to say that Southern Oil Company workers have won their fight for fairer wages, reconfiguring the occupation ordered wagetable dictated by Bremer in September and from this month onwards will, be paid higher wages.)**

2/1/2004 Occupation Watch and Federation of Iraqi Trade Unions Conference

Workers Rights in Occupied Iraq and Reclaiming ILO Conventions – Ewa Jasiewicz, The International Occupation Watch Centre Iraq

Salaam aleikum. Greetings to everybody. As an introduction I'd like to say for myself and on behalf of Occupation Watch, how honoured and privileged I feel to be working with Iraqi workers and the Federation in the struggle for workers rights, empowerment, autonomy and dignity.

My presentation will centre around two key themes: Workers' salaries and the struggle for labour justice now, with all the obstacles and tools of empowerment involved in it. Labour Justice means fair wages, safe working conditions, the security, health and welfare of the worker coming first, the freedom and safety to organize and elect worker representatives, collective bargaining, and the right to strike.

Labour Justice means the enshrinement of workers rights in law and the respect of those rights by employers and government. To illustrate Labour Justice and the forces of power, privilege and exploitation working against it, I will be using examples of Occupation Administration orders, and the so-called Geneva Conventions of workers rights - the conventions of the International Labour Organization - 66 of which have been ratified by Iraq.

Briefly, the Orders issued by the Occupation Administration and passed unilaterally through the veto of Paul Bremer, acting president of Iraq, are both immoral and illegal. They are based on legalizing the theft of Iraqi resources - **labour** - your lives, your time and energy, cheapened even further than they were by the 13 years of genocidal collective punishment sanctions you endured, and **natural** - despite oil and gas themselves being un-privatised, every aspect of the industrial processes from exploring, extracting, refining, marketing, transporting and exporting, are open to private management. What use is crude oil running through your fingers or natural gas wheezing into the air?

The occupation in the process of stealing Iraq and Iraqi lives, resources and futures. Troops will leave but foreign companies will stay - for up to 40 years at a time, and enjoying some of the cheapest labour costs and lowest taxes ever seen by this country, 15% tax and the lowest wage starting at 69,000 ID (\$50) per month. **You are the people best positioned to fight this process, to strike the Occupation where it really hurts - in its pocketbook, in its financial interests. And from what I have witnessed so far, you are doing an inspiring and hugely admirable job.**

Foreign companies are bringing foreign labour and so called experts using the racist myth of Iraqis being backward. 13 years of industrial degradation through US-UK imposed sanctions and Baath corruption is blamed on the 'negligence' of workers, as if Iraqi workers do not care about their workplaces or national services. I've met company chiefs who have told me Iraqi workers have 'no concept of safety'.

These myths of Iraqi backwardness, inability, negligence, laziness and any other old colonization justifying demonisations are being used to legitimize the longterm presence of foreign companies in Iraq, and are blocking the potential of Iraqi engineers, technicians, workers and inventors, who always know best, from

controlling the reconstruction of their own country. But again, I have witnessed workers taking the reconstruction of their workplaces and industries into their own hands, where it belongs, and exploding these racist, western-superiority myths in the process.

Wages

According to my meetings with workers in Iraq, the biggest issue affecting their lives is their wages: low wages, late wages and wages manipulated by corrupt accountants and occupation authorities from dollars to dinars according to their own profit motives. Now the dollar is weak, I reckon you'll all be receiving your next months wages in dollars.

Even a corrected salary table now, as the Occupation Administration views it, does not bring justice in wages. In the 1980s, the wage of a cleaner in Iraq was 300 ID per month or \$900 as 1 ID then was worth \$3.3. Hyperinflation in the 90s saw the dinar plummet to 4000 against the \$1 in 1993. The purchase power of the dinar fluctuated between prohibitively low to almost useless.

The regime provided workers with food, family, location, risk, longevity of service payments - all these factors, family size, job risk and food needs and market prices were taken into account. No such provisions or needs have been taken into account by the Occupation Administration. **Because they do not care about the living standards, potential, and futures of Iraqi people any more than the dictatorship did, they are here to make sure foreign companies can do business as cheaply as possible.**

Bremer's order on Salary and Employment Conditions of State Employees set the living standards of Iraqi families. **Order 30 cancels all 'special payments' as they call them or as we know them 'survival payments' - housing, food, family, location, service subsidies. Instead, they imposed a 130-position, 10 step, 13 grade wage table which sets the lowest wage for an Iraqi public sector worker at 69,000 ID per month, less than half of that of a sweatshop worker in one of neighbouring Iran's or Jordan's free trade zones.**

According to the occupation Administration scale, a chief engineer with 12 years experience can expect to earn 246,000 ID per month (\$120). A chief engineer who has worked for over 30 years gets the same level of pay after 30 years that an administration official would come in on their first day in a government ministry. Under the old emergency pay scale, an engineer on step 4 with five years experience would be getting 342,000 ID or (\$160). Under the new pay scale, he would be positioned on step 5 on 264,000 (\$130), with a cutback of \$30 - this is a weeks wages for some and a big difference for a big family.

The Occupation Administration's wage table does not take into account the purchase power of the dinar or current fluctuating market prices - from rent, gas, oil and petrol, to fruit, vegetables and baby milk – almost everything in Iraq has increased in price since the Occupation began.

Order 30 goes hand in hand with Order 39 on Foreign Investment. Bremer's order on Foreign Investment is the goal of the war and occupation in writing. It is a historical piece of illegal legislation. It has been described by economists the world over as 'A

Capitalists Dream'. And it is your nightmare. **Such law has never been seen before in history, and if your struggles succeed, it never will be again.**

Order 30 allows for 100% foreign ownership of Iraqi companies and industry. It also slashes the rate of tax for foreign companies from 45% to 15% At a time when Iraq is suffocating from a \$200bn debt and 70% unemployment, high taxes on any foreign corporations wishing to invest in Iraq are necessary to service the needs of Iraqi people, and not the profit interests of foreign companies.

The order---designed by the Occupation Administration to: **a) Disorganize you**

b) Empower the corrupt Baathist officials recycled into the management of your industries and aid them in continuing their intimidation and repression against you

c) and to ensure that the process of privatization of public services and industries proceeds without any interference

---that order was Bremer's Public Notice on Organisation in the Workplace, issued June 6. From the communiqués I've seen from various ministries and the talks I've had with General Directors, it is being implemented like an order.

This order states that the Occupation Administration 'respects Iraqi law' especially Baathist dictatorship law, and that 'this extends to Iraqi labor laws' prescribing the conditions under which employees of government instrumentalities and enterprises continue to work under the CPA', (that means you are all technically employees of the United States of America. America is your Boss.)

It goes on to say that ' the form of industrial and labor relations ultimately will be a matter for the Iraqi people and the future Iraqi government to decide'. When they say 'Iraqi people' they mean the final Iraqi Government. And **when they mention Iraqi labor laws, they mean that the 1987 anti-worker, anti-union law still exists and that you, as workers, do not. You can take this neo-Baathist attempt at keeping you down as slaves to the new Occupation regime and throw it back in their faces. You can take this Notice and interpret it as you like and use it against those who try to hide behind it to refuse to recognize your unions.**

Your bosses are Iraqi people, you are Iraqi people, and yes, it will be you deciding your futures and that process has already begun and does not rest on the authority of 25 unelected talking heads in Baghdad or the five secret lawyers working behind closed doors, in secret, drafting the labour legislation which will decide the legality of your means and possibilities for struggle. It is down to you.

You have decided you are a union and you are - if your bosses tell you they cannot recognize you because of the Occupiers laws, tell them they can and here are some ILO Conventions which they should remember - still valid if pre-existing labour legislation is still valid and still valid because your fore-fathers fought for them.

Challenge them to name the dictatorship law they want to prolong to oppress you with. And then challenge them with the laws you struggled for and the laws you recognize, and that are internationally recognized.

ILO Conventions 98 and 135: Iraq is a signatory to ILO Convention 98 1949 on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining which allows for workers to have representatives, engage in collective bargaining with management and take strike action as well as Convention 135 1971 - The Workers' Representatives Convention designed to protect trade union representatives, to safeguard them from intimidation and discrimination and allows them to conduct their duties safely. It states:

'Workers' representatives in the undertaking shall enjoy effective protection against any act prejudicial to them, including dismissal, based on their status or activities as a workers' representative or on union membership or participation in union activities, in so far as they act in conformity with existing laws or collective agreements or other jointly agreed arrangements'.

Representatives are defined as:

(a) trade union representatives, namely, representatives designated or elected by trade unions or by members of such unions; or

(b) elected representatives, namely, representatives who are freely elected by the workers of the undertaking in accordance with provisions of national laws or regulations or of collective agreements and whose functions do not include activities which are recognized as the exclusive prerogative of trade unions in the country concerned.

Conventions 98 and 135 can be used most effectively to defend and re-affirm your existence as trade unionists.

Iraq is also a signatory to the following ILO Conventions:

Convention 100 (1951) on Equal Remuneration - this enshrines the promotion of equal pay for men and women. Discrimination and discrepancies in pay according to gender are forbidden. The issue of equal pay is everybody's struggle and women workers I met are still suffering from this discrimination in the workplace and not enough is being done to help them. All unions should take up this struggle in solidarity with their sisters to deliver wage justice as soon as possible.

Convention 118 (1962) Equality of Treatment (Social Security Convention) which institutes benefits with regards to any one or all of the following:

(a) medical care; (b) sickness benefit; (c) maternity benefit; (d) invalidity benefit; (e) old-age benefit; (f) survivors' benefit; (g) employment injury benefit; (h) unemployment benefit; and (i) family benefit.

Iraq had provisions for all of these in some form except for unemployment benefit.

Not only are you suffering the violation of your rights by foreign powers and companies, supported by the corrupt remains of the Baath dictatorship - which is wide and clear to the international community of workers and social justice activists, who stand in solidarity with you, but the process by which your futures and struggles can be framed and decided in the future, the forming of Iraqi labour

legislation, is being kept a total secret from you and all your participation shut out from it. Only pressure on and exposure of this will ensure your voices will be heard in the struggle to form your own labour legislation and ensure your rights and the rights which those before you fought for, are protected and respected.

So with that, I thank you for listening to me, I thank you for the amazing and courageous work you are doing, fighting against so many enemies, the Baathists still holding their seats of power, and the representatives of the most experienced ruling class in Europe - the British Occupation - and the architects of the current world economic and military order, soon to fall, inshallah, the American Government.

You are many, you are not alone and your struggle is connected to a thousand carrying on simultaneously all over the world, but only you are facing directly the worlds only superpower reconfiguring your national economy, laws and living standards, and attempting to redraw the economic map in the middle east staring from your own.

You have much support and solidarity. You are not alone in your struggle. My struggle is your struggle and that's why I'm here. Thank you.

Seen This Movie Before?

They always hit us where we were the weakest, always decided when, where and how to fight us and when to break away and melt into the local populace or go down the tunnels.

They decided when and where to conduct ambushes and raids, plant booby traps, employ snipers, infiltrate U.S. areas, and gather constant intelligence. They did an awful lot with an awful little.

These guys would go out with old and primitive weapons, wearing no more than black pajamas and sandals made out of old truck tires; they were lucky if they had a bolt-action rifle of some sort.

They would ambush us, emerge from their spider holes, shoot down two or three of us at a time, and disappear very quickly. **Just grind us down and harass us constantly.**

Of course, he spoke the local language and knew the local areas, so he had some definite tactical advantages. Let me give you some examples. We captured homemade weapons: I wish I had them today to show people. Rifles with stocks made out of fence posts, metal pipes, screws and nails, and anything that could be found. These weapons were very crude but very effective. I was really amazed when I saw them.

From Red Thunder, Tropic Lightning; The World Of A Combat Division In Vietnam; Eric M. Bergerud, Westview Press, 1993

(Guess who won? Now check item the next story, from Iraq today.)

MORE:

Compare The Vietnam Experience Above With *This* Lecture On How To Handle “Subjugated” People

January 23, 2004 By Capt. Daniel Morgan

Editor's Note: Capt. Morgan is former commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

You will never know when you will be attacked — it just happens.

An explosion rocks the vehicle in front of you, throwing soldiers onto the street. You see the vehicle rise up onto two wheels before settling and rolling to a stop. AK-47 fire and RPGs are heard almost simultaneously. Your soldiers stagger about trying to shake off the effects of the concussion. Some fire wildly in different directions because the cracking of the AK-47s are echoing off the buildings, so you cannot pinpoint the direction of fire.

On this day, I lost a platoon sergeant and it was a devastating experience to many soldiers. He is alive but when I got to that truck he was a pile of blood and matter. His leg was completely blown off with shrapnel wounds all over him. **A hunch tells me that not much will change for months or a couple of years in how we do daily business in Iraq.**

The most important part of the urban patrol is the threat environment. **The congestion and overpopulation in these areas endanger any US patrol at any time. If you lack the number of boots on the ground, you could find yourself in a predicament where you get overwhelmed by an angry mob.**

For example, you are leading a three-vehicle convoy in the city center with just a squad and three enemy insurgents attack with AK-47s. You return effective fire, killing or wounding the attackers. You dismount and secure the area. **However, your return fire upset many citizens and now you are surrounded.**

At any time, a grenade will come from the rooftops and you must go after them with violence of action and speed.

Leaders must be prepared to react to contact from any direction — left, right, front, rear, or above. The urban area lends itself to distraction — pretty girls, vendors selling soda or ice cream, vehicle traffic, large crowds around vendors, etc.

In this threat environment, the enemy will choose the time, place, and type of attack. The enemy will run after a brief attack.

Leaders must balance speed and safety in their travels. The last thing that needs to happen is we run over Iraqi pedestrians and vehicles, or flip one of our own.

Urban environments present so many threats, ranging from rooftop shootings and drive-by shootings to civil unrest against the cordon and search.

Uninformed citizens in a country we just subjugated in war have the potential to demonstrate and possibly riot.

You must inform them of your goals and actions. (Start with “subjugation.” They’ll love that. Then move on to oil, making Bush look good, etc. etc.)

Force protection must remain on the forefront of every leader’s mind. Protecting your soldiers requires a tough balance between the safety of your soldiers and mission necessity. **Many times in this environment leaders will avoid missions in order to protect soldiers.** This bad habit is not force protection. **(Bullshit. In Vietnam, it saved thousands of lives. U.S. soldiers refused to fight, and the opposition didn’t attack. Good deal for all concerned.)**

An RPG will hit you so fast that if soldiers are not in the proper security position, you may never know the origin of fire.

American soldiers are facing men with a cell phone in one hand, a RPG in the other, and ill-conceived hatred in their heart. **This enemy is asymmetric in the most unpredictable way. US forces will face this threat for months in Iraq, if not years.**

OCCUPATION REPORT

Generals Say No Elections In Iraq As Long As U.S. Troops Stay

(New York Times, January 22, 2004)

Some American commanders in Iraq are saying privately that the continuing insurgent attacks present a daunting obstacle to holding direct elections demanded by Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the country's most powerful cleric among the majority Shiites.

(So, no elections while the resistance movement is fighting for Iraqi independence. Since the movement won’t stop fighting as long as the US has occupation forces in Iraq, there would never be elections if the generals had their way.)

Iraq Army Won't Be Ready For Many Years, General Says



READY IN 2007?

New Iraqi army recruits near Samawa Jan. 24, 2004. **Note their “leadership” is careful to stay behind them.** (AP Photo/Samir Mizban)

(Philadelphia Inquirer, January 22, 2004)

Iraq will require at least three to five years to put together a respectable armed force, and only if it gets generous foreign aid and cuts corners on welfare programs for civilians, said. Maj. Gen. Paul Eaton, head of a U.S. program to train the budding army.

Bush Regime Ending Agriculture Subsidies In Iraq; (But Keeping Them In USA For Giant Agricultural Corporations, Of Course)

(Washington Post, January 22, 2004, Pg. 1)

How food will be produced and distributed in the new Iraq is among the biggest challenges the interim authority faces as it tries to reform the slew of state-run or state-subsidized industries that existed under Saddam Hussein. **Under the old regime, Iraqis depended on subsidies and handouts as a way of life. The Coalition Provisional Authority is determined to change that and create a capitalist economy where the state provides little, if any, support.**

British Security Company Guards Kill Iraqi Cop Officer

January 21, 2004 Associated Press

On Tuesday night, armed Iraqi guards of a private company accidentally shot and killed an Iraqi policeman, Lt. Ahmed Mufeed, in the northern city of Kirkuk, Gen. Shakir Sherko, the chief of the city police, said.

Nine guards involved in the shooting, which resulted from an apparent misunderstanding, were arrested, Sherko said. He gave no other details.

He said the trainee guards worked for a British security company, but this could not be independently confirmed.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



George Johnson, a body double for U.S. terrorist chief Dick Cheney, addresses the assembly at the World Economic Forum, Switzerland, Jan. 24, 2004, as the real Cheney looks on from an undisclosed security cave in the Wyoming mountains.

Cheney told the assembly that the value of the U.S. dollar was dropping like a rock, wasn't worth a rats' ass, and by 2005 it would take a stack of dollars a foot high to buy a pack of chewing gum. He explained to assembled world capitalist leadership that having invested his own millions in oil and gold, he really doesn't give a shit. (AP Photo/Swiss Image, Jean Bernard Sieber, pool)

CIA: Bush Full Of Shit

(Philadelphia Inquirer, January 22, 2004, Pg. 1)

CIA officers in Iraq are warning that the country may be on the path to civil war, according to current and former U.S. officials, contradicting the upbeat assessment that President Bush gave in his State of the Union address. The warning, delivered to Washington this week, reflected growing fears that Iraq's Shiite majority, which

has until now grudgingly accepted the U.S. occupation, could turn to violence if its demands for direct elections are spurned.

Thanks To Bush, Bin Laden Winning

(London Times, January 22, 2004)

The West is losing the war on terror and Osama bin Laden is winning it, according to a panel of security experts who challenged President Bush's claim that he was making the world a safer place. **The analysts, speaking at the opening session of the World Economic Forum in Switzerland, were unanimous in warning that the war on terror was doing more to recruit terrorists than to defeat them.**

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Bush Lie About Afghanistan Nailed

(USA Today, January 23, 2004, Pg. 7)

In his State of the Union message, President Bush praised successes in Afghanistan as leading the way in transforming a troubled part of the world. But United Nations officials and aid workers say the reality is different. **Despite several positive developments—including completion of a vital highway link and an economic boom in Kabul—deteriorating security puts more of the country off-limits to foreign workers and investment each week.**

CLASS WAR NEWS

The \$5000 Toilet

Wall St. Journal 1.21.04 **(Where else?)**

Is happiness a warm toilet seat? Or perhaps automatic sensors to lift that seat, hands-free flushing, adjustable retractable spray wands, dryers, deodorizers and a “silent flush” cyclone flushing system? Or would the ability to flush 32 golf balls without clogging the bowl be more your preference

Toilet technology, it seems, is marching ever forward as marketers take aggressive aim at an apparatus that hasn't changed all that much for a very long time

But Toto, a giant Japanese toilet maker, hopes to change all that. **It recently introduced to the U.S. its luxe Neorest toilet, which has more features than an SUV. And it is just as costly on a comparable basis, with a sticker price of about \$5,000.**

The Neorest, of course, is its polar opposite with more bells and whistles than you would ever need, all of which worked perfectly in my test. It all comes in an exceedingly attractive and surprisingly compact footprint, mostly due to its lack of a tank. Without getting deeply into the specifics of its technology, cyclonic pressure, the lack of a rim, as well as a special glaze, makes the Neorest flush fast and completely. It's all controlled electronically either via an automatic setting or a wireless remote. The toilet can also sense if only liquid has been deposited in it and, if so, will use less water to flush it down. Even Barbara Walters isn't THAT nosy-

Other features include a deodorizer, a warm air dryer and water temperature, pressure and massaging options (oscillating and pulsating) for the self-washing wand, which has a wide range of adjustable motion too. I liked all these features except for the dryer, 'which was basically useless and had not, as a Toto flack suggested, "obviated the need for toilet paper."

But the Neorest did obviate much of the need for contact with the toilet itself. The seat can be set to rise automatically via sensors on the side of the toilet. Men can use the various remotes to lift the second seat without touching any part of the toilet. This is apparently a selling point with Toto, whose salesman noted to me that you don't ever have to touch any part of the toilet if you don't want to. **He compared the Neorest to a Mercedes or a Lexus, noting "it's not just a toilet, it's a lifestyle.**

More Corporate Crooks Steal DoD Money

January 21, 2004 By Matt Kelley, Associated Press

A defense contractor that overcharged the military for helicopter parts could face a criminal investigation, a Pentagon official said Tuesday.

Defense Department auditors determined in November that Hamilton Sundstrand gave "inaccurate and misleading" information about the true costs of military helicopter parts. Hamilton Sundstrand overcharged the military by millions of dollars, the report said.

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