

GI SPECIAL 2:2



THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME

Iraq War: 14,000 U.S. Casualties So Far; December Was 2nd Deadliest Month Since Bush Said War Over: 49 Coalition Troops Killed

By David H. Hackworth 12-29-2003

Almost daily we're told that another American soldier has sacrificed life or limb in Iraq.

Even I – and I deal with that beleaguered land seven days a week – was staggered when a Pentagon source gave me a copy of a Nov. 30 dispatch showing that since George W. Bush unleashed the dogs of war, our armed forces have taken 14,000 casualties in Iraq – about the number of warriors in a line tank division.

We have the equivalent of five combat divisions plus support for a total of about 135,000 troops deployed in the Iraqi theater of operations, which means we've lost the equivalent of a fighting division since March. At least 10 percent of the total number of Joes and Jills available to the theater commander to fight or support the occupation effort have been evacuated back to the USA!

Lt. Col. Scott D. Ross of the U.S. military's Transportation Command told me that as of Dec. 23, his outfit had evacuated 3,255 battle-injured casualties and 18,717 non-battle injuries.

Of the battle casualties, 473 died and 3,255 were wounded by hostile fire.

Following are the major categories of the non-battle evacuations:

Orthopedic surgery – 3,907
General surgery – 1,995
Internal medicine – 1,291
Psychiatric – 1,167
Neurology – 1,002
Gynecological – 491

Sources say that most of the gynecological evacuations are pregnancy-related, although the exact figure can't be confirmed – Pentagon pregnancy counts are kept closer to the vest than the number of nuke warheads in the U.S. arsenal.

Ross cautioned that his total of 21,972 evacuees could be higher than other reports because "in some cases, the same service member may be counted more than once."

The Pentagon has never won prizes for the accuracy of its reporting, but I think it's safe to say that so far somewhere between 14,000 and 22,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines have been medically evacuated from Iraq to the USA.

Another Helicopter Shot Down

**(THANKS TO B WHO E-MAILED THIS IN: B WRITES:
(Hey maybe those guys wearing press jackets were journalists striking back - the US has killed a bunch since the start of the war. Or maybe they were acting preemptively since they know they will get shot at in the future. Or maybe they joined the resistance along with the donkeys.)**

By BBC News & MICHELLE FAUL, Associated Press Writer 1.2.03

An OH-58 Delta Kiowa Warrior US Army helicopter has been shot down near the Iraqi town of Falluja, killing one soldier and injuring another, the US military says.

The incident happened at about 12.20 pm (0920 GMT) on Friday

Insurgents have recently shot down several US helicopters in the area.

The US military said the two-crew helicopter crashed on the open ground near a main road.

"The downed helicopter's wingman provided over-watch as paratroopers operating in the area secured the site," the Central Command statement said.

Earlier, witnesses in Falluja said the helicopter came under fire and then crashed. "We were in a joint patrol with US troops to remove landmines and I saw a helicopter hovering in the sky which was hit by a missile," Iraqi policeman Mohammad Abdul Aziz was quoted as saying by Reuters news agency.

Attackers posing as journalists fired assault weapons and rocket-propelled grenades at American paratroopers guarding the burning aircraft, the military said.

Five men "wearing black press jackets with 'press' clearly written in English" fired on U.S. paratroopers guarding the crash site. U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said it was the first time he had heard of assailants in Iraq posing as journalists.

Resistance Nails Fuel Tanker

MICHELLE FAUL, Associated Press Writer 1.2.03

Friday, a truck traveling toward Baghdad International Airport flipped on its side, killing one soldier and injuring six others, the military said.

A 5,000-gallon oil tanker erupted in flames near a U.S. military base on the road to the western town of Ramadi on Friday. **The military said it was in a convoy attacked with a roadside bomb, a grenade and small arms fire. Three American soldiers suffered burns and shrapnel wounds.**

NOW CHECK OUT HOW THE LYING SHITS AT CENTRAL COMMAND REPORTED THE SAME STORY. JUST A "VEHICLE ACCIDENT." UNDERSTANDABLE. THIS IS WHAT YOU DO WHEN YOU'VE LOST A WAR: LIE LIE LIE LIE LIE.
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SIX INJURED, ONE KILLED IN VEHICLE ACCIDENT

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND

January 2, 2004 Release Number: 04-01-02C

HABBANIYAH, Iraq – This morning a 5-ton truck traveling south of Lake Habbaniyah towards Baghdad International Airport flipped on its side, injuring six soldiers and killing one.

Of the six soldiers injured, four have been returned to duty and two remain at the 28th Combat Support Hospital.

CONVOY ATTACKED INJURING THREE SOLDIERS

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
January 2, 2004 Release Number: 04-01-03C

AR RAMADI, Iraq – At approximately 10:45 this morning, a convoy was hit with an improvised explosive device (IED), small arms fire, and a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG), which injured three U.S. soldiers. The soldiers suffered burns and shrapnel wounds and have been medically evacuated to the 28th Combat Support Hospital (CSH).

The IED exploded as the convoy passed, hitting a vehicle and rendering it inoperable. As the convoy halted, small arms fire and a RPG hit a 5,000-gallon fuel tanker, which caught fire.

The Ar Ramadi fire department and elements from 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division arrived to the site to help extinguish the fire.

TROOP NEWS

Political Time Bomb Ticking; Most U.S. Iraq Deaths Are Reservists

By ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer Jan. 1, 2003

WASHINGTON - As they prepare to increase their role in Iraq, including more combat duty, soldiers with the Army National Guard and Army Reserve already are experiencing a bigger share of U.S. military deaths there.

Of the 39 deaths in December in Iraq for which the Pentagon has released the victim's names, 10 were citizen soldiers, according to an Associated Press review of the Pentagon reports. That is 26%, up from 14 percent in November, the deadliest month of the war with 81 American deaths. There actually were 40 reported deaths in December, but one soldier's name and affiliation have not been released.

It's too early to know whether December's proportional increase in deaths among citizen soldiers was the start of a trend, **but some analysts say the jump is both politically and militarily troublesome, even if it proves temporary.**

"It's one more strain on the Reserve," said Michael O'Hanlon, a defense analyst at the Brookings Institution, a private think tank. "We are living a gamble to keep the Reserve component intact" at a time when reservists are coping with the double worries of being called to active duty for long periods and facing grave dangers in Iraq.

Reservists in Iraq also are in direct combat roles, and their presence there is about to expand. **Of the approximately 130,000 U.S. troops in Iraq now, about a fourth are reservists. When the force rotates out this winter and spring, to be replaced by a slightly smaller contingent, the proportion of reservists will about double — to nearly 40 percent of the force.**

The fresh force will include three National Guard combat infantry brigades — one each from North Carolina, Arkansas and Washington state. **O'Hanlon said that although he believes the Guard and Reserve are performing well in Iraq, the use of the three infantry brigades is likely to spark debate — once they begin taking casualties — about the adequacy of their training.**

(Hello? How about mentioning these are the soldiers without the protective body armor?)

The Empire Comes Up Empty: “We Didn’t Design The Army To Fight Another Vietnam”

By Esther Schrader, Times Staff Writer, December 6, 2003

WASHINGTON - Its equipment and troops battered from fighting in Iraq, the Army will allow four of its divisions returning from overseas to fall to readiness levels that would make them not fully combat-ready for as long as six months, a senior Army official said Friday.

The divisions - which together make up more than 100,000 soldiers, 40% of the Army's combat troops - are reeling from yearlong deployments fighting first a war, then a counterinsurgency, that have wreaked havoc with everything from tank treads to helicopter rotors to nerves.

By permitting the divisions to, in effect, drop their guard and recharge, the Pentagon is taking a calculated risk that it won't be forced to fight a war with a major adversary like North Korea on short notice. Not since the all-volunteer military was established in 1973 has the Army allowed so many of its units to fall to such low readiness levels.

Because of the toll that Iraq has taken on the Army's equipment - not to mention its people - it could take six months to bring some units returning from the war zone back up to speed, the senior Army official said.

On Capitol Hill, lawmakers said the news is indicative of an Army stretched too thin by a war it was not prepared for or designed to fight.

About 369,000 of the Army's 1.04 million active-duty and reserve troops are now deployed away from home in 120 countries. That includes about 150,000 in Iraq and elsewhere in the Persian Gulf region in support of the war, and another 10,000 in

Afghanistan. Another 5,000 are in the Balkans, and 30,000 are in South Korea. **About 138,000 of those deployed overseas are reservists, many in specialties that are being called up repeatedly. An additional 67,000 reservists from other branches of the military also are deployed.**

The Army measures four degrees of readiness among its many units, and the two lowest ratings signify unpreparedness for combat. Army officials emphasized Friday that within the four divisions, not all companies or other units will be at depressed readiness levels. And they insist that even those at lower levels would be able to fight if a real need arose.

"Oh, there's a risk," the senior Army official said. "It's a manageable risk."

The official said commanders would have had no choice but to grant the time off.

"You're sitting there as a commander, and you're going home after 12 months of combat, and you're going to let your people take leave," the official said.

Former military officials and defense analysts said that by permitting troops some recuperation time, the Army hopes to stave off a mass exodus of its personnel.

"We got ourselves into a pickle here," said retired Army Maj. Gen. Edward B. Atkeson. "You've got to realize that this is not a draft Army. This is a volunteer Army, and it's a married Army. And people are not going to want to reenlist if we don't give them some kind of a break. We've stretched this thing way beyond its design capabilities. *We didn't design the Army to fight another Vietnam.*"

It is unclear how many units within the four divisions will drop their readiness to a point at which they are not ready for combat.

The nature of the Iraq mission has complicated the readiness issue. With the conflict largely a counterinsurgency effort, many of the returning units have been fighting a brand of combat for which they were not trained. As a result, their skill levels at their regular assignments have fallen. Tank units are in many cases using lighter vehicles, not tanks. Combat engineer battalions are not practicing building bridges in combat.

Army logisticians are laboring to set up a production flow that will allow the units to keep as much as 70% of their helicopters and other equipment ready at one time, while the balance undergoes maintenance, the senior Army official said.

He said that much of the equipment is usable but needs regular maintenance.

But, the official added: "We have to take good care of our tanks, our Bradley [fighting vehicles]. Because this is not Hertz rent-a-car. We own this stuff. And if we don't take care of it, we pay down the road."

A Broken Neck For Stupid Bullshit

By Margaret Kimberly [Black Commentators.com]

I recently watched a CNN story about soldiers wounded in Iraq.

Luis Calderon became a quadriplegic when the Army deemed it necessary that he and his tank unit knock down a wall because it displayed a picture of Saddam Hussein. The wall fell, but in the wrong direction. It struck Calderon's tank and broke his neck in the process. As I watched this heartbreaking story I waited and hoped that Calderon, his wife or his parents would say, "He is paralyzed so that Saddam's picture could be removed. He lost the use of his body over a picture? I hate Bush and the rest of his greedy cronies!"

But no one said anything like that. We will get the usual propaganda about brave soldiers enduring hardships, sounding like characters in bad war movies insisting that the doctor look after their friend first. But I don't want to hear any more lies. I don't want to hear a lie coming from Shoshana Johnson any more than I want to hear it coming from George W. Bush. Unfortunately, the truth can be uncomfortable and lies can be easy.

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/>

Piestewa Family Slams Airing of POW Video; "War Should Be The Last Option"

Jan 1, 3:17 AM (ET) By ANANDA SHOREY

PHOENIX (AP) - The family of a soldier killed in Iraq had harsh words Wednesday for the network that aired footage of her, bloody and bruised, in an Iraqi hospital bed shortly before she died.

The footage, aired Tuesday on "NBC Nightly News," shows Lori Piestewa and Jessica Lynch - Army privates and best friends - at a hospital where they were taken after a March 23 ambush. Lynch was rescued April 1.

Airing the tape - which NBC said was filmed but never broadcast by Iraqi television - created a sense of fear, anxiety and hurt, Piestewa's family said in a statement. **"This terrorism was not from any foreign group wishing to harm the United States, but from our own people wanting to make a quick buck off the misfortune of two beautiful young women," the family said.**

Although they disagreed with NBC's decision to air the footage, Piestewa's family said some people definitely should see it.

"Let us make sure that both President Bush, his father and each of his aides and advisers get a copy of Lori dying in agony so that they realize, from the comfort of their homes, that war should be the last option," the family said in the statement.

General Slips Up, Tells The Truth

By ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer Jan. 1, 2003

Brig. Gen. Martin Dempsey, who commands the 1st Armored Division that is responsible for securing the Baghdad area, told a news conference Wednesday that he has no doubt his troops believe the sacrifices are worthwhile.

"I've lost soldiers and there's nothing more important to me than my soldiers," Dempsey said. "But they believe in the mission we're doing. And so that makes it easy for me to sleep at night — not easy: It makes it possible for me to sleep at night."

THANKS TO B WHO E-MAILED THIS IN: B WRITES:

Arrogant brass idiot catches himself being an arrogant brass idiot: "I've lost soldiers and there's nothing more important to me than my soldiers," Dempsey said. "But they believe in the mission were doing. And so that makes it easy for me to sleep at night — not easy: It makes it possible for me to sleep at night."

Troops believing in the mission makes it possible for him to sleep at night because they don't throw fragmentation grenades under his cot. Duh.



THE FACE OF THE ENEMY: Egomaniac Major General David H. Petraeus, 101st Airborne Division, right, Jan. 1 at the division's base in Mosul. **Petraeus is famous for his showboat blathering last fall that thanks to his leadership, Mosul was free of resistance activity, shortly before resistance attacks turned Mosul into the most active theatre of operations for U.S. troops in the country. (This was the Petraeus version of "Bring 'Em On.")** Petraeus denied reports that upon his return to the United States he plans to solicit funds for a fifty foot high statue of himself to be erected on the roof of the Pentagon. (AP Photo/Julie Jacobson)

Extended Call-Ups "Totally Unfair"

Gina Cavallaro, Army Times Staff Writer, 9.22.03

For many reservists and Guard members, extended call-ups are an extended hardship on the homefront. Spouses labor alone to raise children, employers limp along short-handed and families often suffer significant financial stress as some soldiers take pay cuts when they give up civilian wages for Army pay.

Amy John son hoped to have her husband home in time for Christmas to share the holiday with their son, born three days before the lieutenant left for duty.

Now their son, Quinn, will be a year old by the time Lt, Jeff Johnson sees him again, she said.

"The last time we talked, he thought he'd be home around Christmas," Johnson said. "I think this is totally unfair."

More British Troops To Be Killed In Iraq

[London Daily Telegraph, January 2, 2004]

Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon said British forces would still in Iraq and fighting security threats next year.

The Forgotten War

My wife went to Afghanistan with a sense of duty, honor and commitment to our country. During her tour of duty, she came under fire on multiple occasions and had explosives thrown over the wall of the compound where she was housed.

In addition, she was able to enjoy the reality of having to wear body armor and carry her weapons at all times, with the exception of when she was asleep. The members of her unit served in the remote area of Qondozi and were on alert 24/7.

I refuse to accept the lack of appreciation for the troops who have and who will continue to serve in Operation Enduring Freedom.

I don't believe this lack of recognition is intentional or malicious. **Rather, it is my belief that Afghanistan has become a case of out of sight, out of mind.**

John Bologna,
Rexford New York
Army Times 9.22.03

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



QUICK, SOMEBODY REMIND THEM THEY'RE SHIITE AND ACCORDING TO U. S. PROPAGANDA THEY LOVE BUSH AND THE OCCUPATION. Iraqi Shiite muslims chant anti-American slogans during a rally after a sermon in Baghdad's Sadr City Jan. 2, 2004. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

News From The Iraqi Resistance Itself: (Try Getting This Point Of View On CNN)

Iraqi Resistance Report for Monday, 29 December 2003 through Wednesday, 31 December 2003.

Translated and/or compiled by Muhammad Abu Nasr, member, editorial board of the Free Arab Voice.

29 December 2003.

Baaqubah Soldiers Demonstration

In Baaqubah, dozens of former Iraqi soldiers demonstrated for the disbursement of their pay. The demonstrators gathered first in front of the old Governorate building which is now used by the American invaders, and then the marchers headed for the new Governorate building carrying signs saying that they were demanding their pay.

Later the protesters headed for one of the state banks where some of them threw stones at the building whereupon the puppet police who are in charge of guarding the facility fired their automatic weapons into the air in an attempt to break up the demonstration.

Finding their efforts unsuccessful, they called for more puppet police back up as two American helicopter gun ships flew in to hover overhead.

Sources: al-Arab al-Yawm daily newspaper, Amman, Jordan, Tuesday, 30 December 2003.

Tuesday, 30 December 2003.

Ambush At Khan Darri

One American occupation soldier was injured in an Iraqi Resistance bomb attack west of Baghdad on Tuesday, according to eyewitnesses who spoke to the Agence France Presse (AFP). 'Umar Walid, 28, a farmer from Khan Darri, an area 30km west of Baghdad told the AFP "an explosive device blew up while an American convoy was passing by the Khan Darri area.

The blast damaged one of the trucks and wounded its driver. The American soldiers closed the expressway to al-Fallujah and ar-Ramadi in both directions and forced motorists to turn around." Walid said, "Two American helicopters, one of them an Apache, arrived at the scene of the incident and hovered at a low altitude"

Convoy Hit In Abu Ghurayb

Al-Jazeera TV reported that an explosive device blew up in a crowded neighborhood in the Abu Ghurayb area south of Baghdad as an American military vehicle convoy was passing.

Witnesses told al-Jazeera that the explosion destroyed the vehicle and wounded the soldiers who were aboard. The witnesses said that the American troops evacuated their wounded by helicopter.

2500 Facilities Protection Service Guards Don't Really Exist

Meanwhile, the American newspaper The Washington Post reported on 30 December 2003 that collaborationist recruiters of the Iraqi puppet police are intent on making that body entirely subservient to American rule in Iraq.

Puppet Colonel Husayn Mahdi, dean of the training academy asks potential recruits individually what they think of America's "war of liberation" of their country. Mahdi told The Washington Post: "We want them to understand that the coalition forces are saviors, not occupiers." If a candidate has a different opinion, Mahdi told the newspaper, he will be rejected.

In their zeal to get shameless individuals who look upon the Americans as their "saviors," the occupation authorities have run into serious problems.

Other puppet personnel, it turns out, don't even exist. The American paper reports: In addition, roughly 2,500 people on the payroll of the Facilities Protection Service, which guards government buildings, either do not exist or have not been showing up to work, investigators say."

More Resistance Attacks

12.31 same

Three American occupation soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division were wounded in an exchange of gunfire with the Iraqi Resistance near al-Habbaniyah, west of Baghdad, according to a statement issued by the US military occupation forces. The statement said that 10 Iraqi Resistance fighters launched the attack on the US invaders, and indicated that the wounded had been taken to a near-by hospital.

Two Iraqis who were accompanying a British occupation convoy were killed and four others injured in an ambush by the Iraqi Resistance south of Baghdad, according to a statement issued by the US military occupation forces, which said that the ambush took place in the city of al-Mahmudiyah. The American account did not explain whether the dead and wounded Iraqis were translators or members of the new Iraqi puppet army.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

New Year's Day Thoughts: War, Race and Elections

Excerpts taken from the full article at www.counterpunch.org/goff01012004.html

For more, check out BRING THEM HOME NOW!: bthn@mfsso.org.

By STAN GOFF

Two hot little controversies are brewing among progressive and anti-war Americans. One is the question of how much energy we--if there is a "we"--put into the 2004 elections, and in what way.

The other is the question of whether the movement--if there is ONE movement--should continue to put forward the demand that we "Bring the troops home now," the word NOW being the bone of contention. I think these are related.

The 2004 elections will determine two things: Which party will control the executive branch and whether the Democrats will be able to wrest control back in either the US Senate or the House of Representatives. For reasons that could take us far afield here, there are actually real and differing consequences that accompany these electoral outcomes. But with regard to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (odd how Colombia and the Philippines have fallen off our maps even as they both crawl with Green Berets), looking at the executive branch, it seems fairly certain at this point (at least to me) that Howard Dean will win the nomination for the Democrats.

Dean has not given the slightest indication that he intends to withdraw from Iraq. He has said he would reach out to bodies like the UN (and maybe, it is whispered by some, the Arab League), and internationalize the occupation.

Sounds great on paper to someone, I'm sure, but I have a news flash for the obtuse. What is going on in Iraq is not merely an occupation. It is a very active war. So long as there is a guerrilla war going on in Iraq, neither the UN nor the Arab League nor anyone else with a shred of common sense will have anything to do with it. The prevailing attitude towards the US, quite sensible from certain perspectives, is "You fucked it up, you fix it."

The multi-form Iraqi resistance is making it clear to anyone with eyes and ears that they are united around at least one thing -- they do not want to be occupied.

So this UN "internationalizing" thing is a pretty predictable demagogic device by Dean to get elected. Dean seems to be a pretty smart guy, so he probably doesn't believe this simplified bullshit any more than some of us do. He is pandering--as politicians are wont to do--to two beliefs that have taken root in the American mass consciousness:

(1) That the Bush administration is slightly mad and has abandoned something sane called multilateralism, and

(2) that someone other than Iraqis has to oversee their future to prevent some amorphously defined but nightmarish post-Ba'athist reckoning.

Multilateralism--dear people--gave us savage neoliberalism, with the (US dominated) International Monetary Fund as a global loan shark, and for billions of people multilateral imperialism is precisely what has underwritten the suffering that corresponds to their dollar-a-day existence.

The break with multilateralism is not some break with a noble past; it is a falling out amongst gangsters as the turf dries up. Bush's cohort is not insane. They are responding quite logically to the exigency of a post-Cold War conjuncture with the forestalled crisis of profit back upon them, the dollar-a-day natives pissed off, and hydrocarbon energy preparing to exit the world stage.

"Progressives," whatever the hell that means, need to quit listening to NPR and confusing it with critical analysis... "this program underwritten by Archer-Daniels-Midland, Supermarket to the Universe, and Lockheed-Martin, designing technology for the Aryan Future."

The second assumption--that the people living within the former boundaries of the former state of Iraq must have outside oversight to put them on the proper path--is a dressed-up form of something that used to be called the "white man's burden:" a notion that no-one is entitled to make their own history except white Euro-Americans, with the rationalization that "those people" are incapable of self-governance. This racist assumption is exhibited about Iraq with amnesia about the scale of death and destruction visited on "those people" by thirteen years of war and sanctions, and with a disassociative disorder about the present--with violence already part and parcel of every day there, violence provoked by the presence and actions of the occupiers.

Perhaps--as a counterweight to this perennial liberal racism--we should be more forceful about making the point that Iraqis are at least as smart as us, and a lot smarter about how to go forward in the wake of the Anglo-American aggression.

There may be some civil strife. That happens. But Iraq is subdivided into relatively homogeneous regions, and it will not be the cataclysm that thrives in the lurid Islamophobic American imagination. Civil strife and even civil war is part of history. The United States unleashed the most spectacular bloodletting in history up to that time to resolve the struggle between a system of chattel slavery or one of "free" labor when the precocious Northern child rose up to conquer its Southern mother.

That same racialized American history leads us back to the question of electoral politics and the anti-war movement.

At the height of the homegrown resistance to the Vietnam War, we have to remember, Richard Nixon was re-elected. The antiwar candidate George McGovern was defeated in a landslide. Nixon was elected on the basis of his appeal to white supremacy, which remains strong among the majority of whites in the US, and Republicans have been working that angle successfully ever since: the same white supremacy that still today

underwrites even so-called progressives' disbelief in the capacity of Iraqis to determine their own future.

Elections didn't stop the Vietnam War. The anti-Vietnam War movement stopped the war in spite of electoral results.

Aside from the US military, stuck there in Iraq as the institution of the military rots internally from Rumsfeld's neglect and stupidity, there are two players who will determine the outcomes in Iraq: the international anti-war movement and the Iraqi resistance. **The latter has the dominant role, because of three things; they are there, they have weapons, and they have the battlefield initiative (all preposterous claims to the contrary aside). All they have to do to win... is endure.**

The Bush administration, on the other hand, is retrenching daily, managing the spin as best they can, and talking about something happening before July to "restore Iraqi sovereignty," though, of course... the troops will stay. This is their dilemma. They are now in a situation where it is "politically impossible" to leave, but it is militarily impossible to win. This is the central contradiction we have to consider if anti-war forces are to understand what the political situation is.

Political crises in the United States do not take the form, at least not yet, of a domestic security crisis (even if Tom Ridge is trying to create the impression of one). The Republicans and Democrats are not going to take up arms against each other. Dennis Kucinich's guerillas are not building IED's to ambush Republican convoys. Political crises in the United States happen when the intangible becomes tangible, and that is in the form of a legitimacy crisis.

Legitimacy crises are not created by elections.

On the contrary, elections are designed to legitimize the rule of the dominant class. After each election, political pundits and think-tank spokespersons all get together and puff up on TV to congratulate America for another peaceful transition, even as 2,000,000 people rot in prison, crappy factory jobs that pay \$13 an hour become crappier fast-food jobs that pay \$6 an hour, cops turn Miami into a paramilitary zone, thousands of women are beaten half to death by controlling spouses, and whole neighborhoods look more and more like the Third World.

Legitimacy crises are provoked by demands from the people that are real demands, not yassa-massa requests respectfully submitted to elected officials with our hats in our hands. **A demand that is really a request--this is what the faux-radical "reformer" presents--is an acceptance at the outset that the power relation will remain unchanged. A real demand does not seek to make itself respectable or "realistic." A real demand is an exercise of power that says we are not going to accept, we are not going to shut up, we are not going to compromise, we are not going to obey, and we are not going away.** It is not based on what we might be granted, but on the conditions we demand be created before we stop struggling.

Everyone has heard the old Frederick Douglas quote, that "power concedes nothing without a demand." People love to repeat it, and they slap it on bumper

stickers and open conferences with it on the program to prove they are down... but they have seldom studied it. And what he said merits study.

Here's what he said: "Let me give you a word of the philosophy of reform. The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions yet made to her august claims, have been born of earnest struggle...

"Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress."

What?

"These will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress." Put THAT in your next foundation funding request!

He didn't say find the limits of what the powerful are willing to do. He didn't say THEY draw the line. He said that WE draw it. It is only when it is proven that state power cannot stand us down, when their impotence is on display, that we will have mid-wifed the crisis of legitimacy that translates into a real change in the relations of power.

So here at last I come to the issue of the slogan, "Bring the troops home NOW." If we allow ourselves to be drawn by these charlatans and gangsters into a discussion of how a decision will be implemented as a precondition to the decision being made, then we have written them a nice, fat blank check. We will have entered into negotiations before our most fundamental demand is met. We will have surrendered the initiative.

Our demand is not how the decision will be implemented. That is a practical matter in any case, the circumstances of which cannot be foreseen. Our demand is for the decision to end the occupation. We will discuss the implementation of the decision only after it is made. That is the "demand-position." That is how WE draw the line.

"We don't care whether it is politically 'impossible.' We are not interested in your political survival. [It is the "impossible" demand that gives birth to the crisis.] Bring them home. Bring them home now. We are not going anywhere, and we do not consent to be governed by you."

Our job in the US is not to direct the history of Iraq. It is to take our own history in hand right here at home, by prescribing "the limits of tyrants."

Stan Goff is the author of "[Hideous Dream: A Soldier's Memoir of the US Invasion of Haiti](#)" (Soft Skull Press, 2000) and of the upcoming book "[Full Spectrum Disorder](#)" (Soft Skull Press, 2003). He is a member of the [BRING THEM HOME NOW!](#) coordinating committee, a retired Special Forces master sergeant, and the father of an active duty soldier. Email for BRING THEM HOME NOW! is bthn@mfs.org.

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/gi-special/>

Bringing The War Home

(Excerpts from the conclusion of **Johnny Got His Gun**; Trumbo, Dalton; Lippincott; New York 1939.)

(Incapable of moving, or speaking, but not incapable of thinking, confined for years in a veterans hospital after World War I destroyed his body, this is the message Trumbo writes for Johnny:)

It was five maybe six years now since he had been blown out of the world. The war must be over by now. No war could last that long killing so many people there weren't enough people to kill. If the war was over then all the dead had been buried and all the prisoners had been released. Why shouldn't he be released too? Why not unless they figured him as one of the dead and if that was true why didn't they kill him why didn't they put a stop to his suffering? Why should he be a prisoner? He had committed no crime. What right had they to keep him? What possible reason could they have to be so inhuman to him?

Why? why? why?

That was it he had understood it now he had told them his secret and in denying him they had told him theirs.

He was the future he was a perfect picture of the future and they were afraid to let anyone see what the future was like. Already they were looking ahead they were figuring the future and somewhere in the future they saw war. To fight that war they would need men and if men saw the future they wouldn't fight. So they were masking the future they were keeping the future a soft quiet deadly secret.

[If men} saw the future they would begin to ask questions. They would ask questions and they would find answers and they would say to the guys who wanted them to fight they would say you lying thieving sons-of-bitches we won't fight we won't be dead we will live we are the world we are the future and we will not let you butcher us no matter what you say no matter what speeches you make no matter what slogans you write.

If you make a war if there are guns to be aimed if there are bullets to be fired if there are men to be killed they will not be us. It will be you.

It will be you--you who urge us on to battle you who incite us against ourselves you who would have one cobbler kill another cobbler you who would have one man who works kill another man who works you who would have one human being who wants only to live kill another human being who wants only to live. Remember this. Remember this well you people who plan for war. Remember this you patriots you fierce ones you spawners of hate you inventors of slogans. Remember this as you have never remembered anything else in your lives.

We are men of peace we are men who work and we want no quarrel. But if you destroy our peace if you take away our work if you try to range us one against the other we will know what to do. If you tell us to make the world safe for democracy we will take you seriously and by god and by Christ we will make it so. **We will use the guns you force upon us we will use them to defend our very lives and the menace to our lives does not lie on the other side of a nomansland that was set apart without our consent it lies within our own boundaries here and now we have seen it and we know it.**

Put the guns into our hands and we will use them. Give us the slogans and we will turn them into realities. Sing the battle hymns and we will take them up where you left off. Not one not ten not ten thousand not a million not ten millions not a hundred millions but a billion two billions of us all the people of the world we will have the slogans and we will have the hymns and we will have the guns and we will use them and we will live. Make no mistake of it we will live. We will be alive and we will walk and talk and eat and sing and laugh and feel and love and bear our children in tranquility in security in decency in peace. **You plan the wars you masters of men plan the wars and point the way and we will point the guns.**

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

Bremer Officially Adopts Israeli Style Terrorism, Pioneered By The Nazi Armies In France

(Imitation Is The Sincerest Form Of Flattery)

MICHELLE FAUL, Associated Press Writer 1.2.03

Soldiers in Samarra also blew up the house of Talab Saleh, who is accused of orchestrating attacks against U.S. troops, witnesses said. They said the troops arrested Saleh's wife and brother and said they would not be released until Saleh surrenders. The military had no immediate comment.

(They've had the concentration camps since July, now they blow up houses and take hostages. All that's missing are the executions of the hostages and the mass firing squads for randomly chosen civilians. No doubt the \$3 billion to fund a new assassination program directed by the CIA will correct those omissions. See the Hersch article in the New Yorker.)

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



TEXTBOOK EXAMPLE

WHY IRAQIS JOIN THE ARMED RESISTANCE. WHY THEY ARE RIGHT TO DO SO
Iraqi Civil Defense Corp (ICDC) members *stop and search* an Iraqi man, during a joint patrol with U.S. Army soldiers of the 1st Regiment, 22nd Battalion 4th Infantry division in Tikrit Jan. 2, 2004. (AP Photo/Gregorio Borgia) **(OBVIOUSLY GUILTY OF BWI, BREATHING WHILE IRAQI)**

Just When You Thought The Occupation Couldn't Get Any More Hopelessly Stupid.....

MICHELLE FAUL, Associated Press Writer 1.2.03

In Baghdad, people protested outside the Ibn Taymiyyah mosque Friday after U.S. soldiers and Iraqi defense force officers raided the mosque overnight.

U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said they seized explosives, guns and ammunition and arrested 32 people believed to be non-Iraqi Arabs "based on their dialect."

(That sound you hear is the ticking of a time bomb. In the 1920's, when they Iraqis had enough of a previous occupation, by England, they rose up and killed thousands of British Troops. You can visit the graves if you go there. They didn't even bring the bodies home.)

Lunatic Dreams: U.S. Wants World's Biggest "Embassy" In Iraq

[Washington Times, January 2, 2004, Pg. 14]

The U.S. is making plans to create the largest American diplomatic mission in the world in Baghdad, complete with a staff of more than 3,000 personnel.



HEROIC TRAITORS IN ACTION: Occupation collaborators cover their faces with scarves, during a joint patrol with U.S. Army soldiers in Tikrit Jan .2. They cover their faces for fear of being recognized, and targeted by insurgents attacking Iraqi traitors. (AP Photo/Gregorio Borgia)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Thieves Fall Out: US Stooges' Council Collapses

[New York Times, January 2, 2004]

Afghanistan's grand council adjourned in disarray Thursday, leaving the entire process of drafting a new constitution badly damaged. The crisis has revealed a bitter struggle between leaders of the country, with President Karzai and his Pashtun kinsmen on one side, and Islamist leaders and ethnic minorities from the north on the other.

Received:

Fund Appeal for Iraq delegation

December 30, 2003

United For Peace and Justice (UFPJ) is sending a delegation of American activists to Iraq January 3-12. Khury Peterson-Smith, a representative of the Campus Antiwar Network (CAN) has been accepted to the delegation.

The purpose of the delegation is to gain a better understanding of what life is like in occupied Iraq, and bring that information back to the US. The delegation will be visiting hospitals, schools, and community centers, and meeting with workers, students, and community leaders. It is an invaluable opportunity to experience and learn about the effects of the United States occupation first hand. Upon their return, the delegates will participate in a speaking tour to share their experiences, and promote education about the occupation of Iraq.

The Campus Antiwar Network was founded in the fall of 2002 in response to the growing recognition that a war in Iraq was imminent. While several campuses had developed local organizing bodies for their own students, no national organizations existed to democratically represent the flourishing student antiwar committees in the broader antiwar movement. At regional conferences hosted on the east coast at George Washington University and on the west coast at San Francisco State University, students representing activist collectives at some 50 American colleges and universities met to form the Campus Antiwar Network (CAN). At this conference, the student founders began to develop strategies for collaboration and discussion among campuses nationally. CAN's national founding conference was held in Chicago in February of 2003.

Since that time, CAN has grown to represent student antiwar organizations on more than 150 campuses across the US. CAN's initial projects have included: developing a website; organizing days of action and education on various campuses; holding regional demonstrations in April calling for "Books not Bombs"; organizing a second round of regional conferences in the spring of 2003; organizing and coordinating actions for when the invasion of Iraq began at member institutions; developing literature and resources for new antiwar organizations; and speaking at several major anti-war demonstrations. This fall we had a very successful national speaking tour titled "Speaking Truth to Empire," which included prominent activists and intellectuals including Howard Zinn, Rania Masri, Lou Plummer, Noam Chomsky and Tariq Ali. We have also built international

connections with student groups in Japan, Britain, Mexico, Australia, France and Canada.

Going to Iraq is a costly endeavor. In order to attend the delegation, we will need to raise \$2200. We are currently in the process of looking at a variety of ways to raise the needed funds. CAN is a genuinely grassroots organization, with no source of funding. Up until this time, our limited financial resources have come from fundraising at individual campuses. With your help we can continue to build a grassroots student opposition to unjust war and occupation.

We are grateful for any support you can offer. Checks can be made payable to "Khury Peterson-Smith," and sent to Khury Peterson-Smith 360 Broadway, Rochester, NY 14607. If you have any questions you can contact Monique Dols at 212-865-4796.

Thank you,

Khury Peterson-Smith, Rochester Institute of Technology Antiwar

Monique Dols, MidAtlantic Representative to the CAN Coordinating Committee,
Columbia University Antiwar Coalition

Emily Goldstein, MidAtlantic Representative to the CAN Coordinating Committee,
Vassar College Antiwar

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