

GI SPECIAL 2#24



New Majority Says Iraq War Not Worth It; Bush Dead Meat

The Associated Press 07 February 2004

WASHINGTON (AP) -- President Bush's January decline in public opinion started soon after a top adviser on the search for weapons of mass destruction said he did not believe Iraq had large stockpiles of chemical or biological weapons, a tracking poll suggests.

David Kay made his initial comments about doubting the weapons existed soon after the administration announced Jan. 23 that Kay was being replaced as the top U.S. weapons inspector in Iraq.

Bush's job approval rating dropped 10 points from Jan. 25 through Jan. 31, according to the National Annenberg Election Survey. The tracking poll takes a nightly sample and rolls together two or three nights' findings at a time to produce periodic reports.

Support for the war in Iraq also dipped in that period, from a majority saying the situation in Iraq was worth going to war over, 53 percent, to 46 percent during the last few days of January saying it was worth going to war and 49 percent saying it was not.

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:

Resistance Attacks Kill U.S. Soldier; Three Wounded

2.8.04 TheSanDiegoChannel.com & The Irish Examiner.com

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- Another American soldier has been killed in Iraq.

The U.S. military says it happened Sunday when a roadside bomb exploded in the median of a highway south of Baghdad. The explosion occurred near Mahmudiyah, 20 miles south of the Iraqi capital,

Earlier Sunday, witnesses said three other U.S. soldiers were hurt in two separate attacks.

They said one soldier was wounded when a convoy was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade near Mosul in northern Iraq.

West of Baghdad, witnesses say a roadside bomb exploded near an Army convoy in Fallujah, injuring two soldiers.

Two U.S. Soldiers Killed In Munitions Explosion

Feb. 9, 2004 (AP)

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Two U.S. soldiers were killed and six wounded Monday during an explosion while troops were trying to dispose of explosives, a U.S. officer said.

The blast occurred near Sinjar near Mosul, Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt told reporters. Kimmitt said the explosion appeared to have been an accident and not a result hostile action.

Coordinated Attack Wounds Four Soldiers Near Baquba

Four U.S. soldiers were wounded while investigating a roadside bomb near Baquba, 40 miles north of Baghdad, a spokesman for the Army's 4th Infantry Division said.

Master Sergeant Robert Cargie said one soldier was injured as he approached a roadside bomb that was believed to be inactive. The bomb exploded when the soldier was 30 feet away, Cargie said.

"As the others on the scene attempted to evacuate the wounded soldier, a second improvised explosive device detonated, wounding three more," Cargie said.

The Army was investigating whether the bombs were activated by remote control, Cargie said. **(Fucking brilliant. No, actually it was the three guys standing right there wearing big signs that said "I belong to the resistance.")**

Car Bomb at Iraq Police Station Kills At Least 55; Another US Colonel Makes Complete Fool Of Himself

2.9.04 By Mariam Fam, Associated Press, AFP & Reuters

ISKANDARIYA, Iraq (Reuters) - **A truck bomb ripped through a police station south of Baghdad Tuesday killing about 50 police and police job applicants, *in the latest attack on Iraqis seen as collaborators with U.S. occupation forces.***

"The target was not the police," Colonel Doug Mubari of the US 82nd Airborne Division told AFP at the scene of the blast. "One of the messages I want to convey is that the people who did that, I don't know who, are attacking innocent people." (Where do they get these dimwits? And who do they think will believe their stupid lying bullshit?)

The Toyota pick-up truck exploded in Iskandariya, 45 kilometres (30 miles) from Baghdad, as hundreds of people queued outside the police station to fill in applications to join the force, police Lieutenant Hussein Sani said.

The bombing left more than 65 wounded.



**BAD PLACE TO BE
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**

A U.S. soldier walks in front of the bombed police station in the town of Iskandariya, some 30 km (18 miles) south of Baghdad, February 10, 2004. REUTERS/Faleh Kheiber

Iskandariya hospital chief Razzak Jabar Janabi said his facility had received 50 dead and 29 wounded, while others had been transferred in critical condition to hospital in Hilla, capital of the province of the same name. "This figure might increase," he said. "There were some body parts that haven't been identified yet. Some more bodies may be trapped under the rubble."

Policeman Wissam Abdul-Karim said he was standing in front of the nearby courthouse when "I heard a very strong explosion" and "the blast threw me on the ground."

"It was the day for applying for new recruits," Abdul-Karim said. "There were tens of them waiting outside the police station."

Abdul-Karim said security for the facility included a checkpoint surrounded by sandbags and barbed wire.

Hussein Mohammed, 18, said he was standing in the public market when he heard a tremendous explosion about 9:15 a.m. Another witness, who refused to give his name, described the blast as "really strong" and said body parts littered the street near the station.

“There was not one body in one piece,” he said.

Iraqi Police Major Killed In Fight With U.S. Troops

Feb. 9, 2004 (AP)

TIKRIT, Iraq - Iraqis, including a major in the new Iraqi police force, attacked a group of American soldiers, sparking a gunbattle in which the officer was killed and two other attackers wounded, the U.S. military said Sunday.

The soldiers were observing a house belonging to a person suspected in rocket-propelled grenade attacks on American forces in the village of Qadisiyah, 30 miles south of Tikrit, when the Iraqis opened fire Saturday evening, the military said in a statement.

The Americans fired back and threw a hand grenade at the attackers, killing one and wounding two. Two more were captured. The slain attacker was identified as an active Iraqi police major.

The troops were from the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment of the 4th Infantry Division.

Fiji Mercenary Killed In Baghdad

February 09, 2004. fijilive.com/news

A Fijian man has died while on duty in Iraq with the London based security firm Global Risk Strategies International Limited.

The company's local director Colonel Sakiusa Raivoce confirmed that 41-year-old Lance Corporal Tomasi Ramatau of Navunievu, Bua was a casualty of a mortar attack in Baghdad.

“Lance Corporal Tomasi Ramatau died as a result of head injuries caused by mortar shrapnel whilst on duty at Baghdad International Airport at about quarter past ten last night,” says Colonel Raivoce.

“He was evacuated by helicopter to a nearby US hospital, but pronounced dead on arrival at 11.15pm.

“Together with him was one of his comrades; Private Tevita Tukana suffered leg injuries from the shrapnel as a result caused by a mortar fired at their position where they were at Baghdad International Airport.

Explosion Kills Four More Occupation Cops In Baghdad; Interior Minister Caught Lying About Number Of Dead Cops

2004-02-10 Middle East Online

BAGHDAD - Four police officers were killed Tuesday by an explosion in Baghdad, the head of Iraq's police force, Lieutenant General Ahmed Kazem Ibrahim said. "The four were driving in a car in Zayyuna," a district in eastern Baghdad, "when an explosive device went off", he told reporters.

Ibrahim said a total of 604 policemen have been killed in attacks or during operations since a new police force was established by the US-led coalition after last April's fall of president Saddam Hussein.

In late January, interim interior minister Nuri Basra gave a death toll of some 300 for the force.

Bomber Attacks Collaborator Sheikh's House

2004-02-10 Middle East Online

A bomber being searched by guards of a suspicious tribal chief in Iraq blew himself up and wounded the three men checking him, one of the sheikh's relatives said on Tuesday.

The attack, in Ramadi 100 km (62 miles) west of Baghdad, took place at the home of Sheikh Amir Abdel Jabbar, head of the Bu Ali Suleiman tribe, close to the US-led forces in Iraq.

"The attack occurred on Monday at 2100 hours (1800 GMT) in the courtyard of Sheikh Amir Abdel Jabbar's house," said Omar Arraq, one of the sheikh's nephews.

Sheikh Amir is head of the provincial council in the Sunni rebel area of Al-Anbar. **His brother, Majed Abderrazzak, leads a tribal confederation which backs the Americans in Iraq.**

Their father was a strong supporter of the British who ruled Iraq in the 1930s.

"Someone calling himself Mohammed al-Dulaym came to the house and asked to meet the sheikh. Guests in the salon told him that he (the sheikh) was resting in his room. The man went to the toilet and on coming out met Sheikh Amir," said Arraq.

According to Arraq, the sheikh found the visitor very nervous and told his guards to take the man out and search him.

"Just as they started to inspect him, the suicide bomber put his hand in his pocket, pulled a string and the explosion occurred," the nephew added.

"The three guards were wounded, one of them very seriously," he said.

In November, a booby-trapped car targeted the two brothers' "guest house", killed two people and wounding 15.

The Sunni tribes in this province west of Baghdad are split between those who collaborate with the US-led occupation forces and sympathisers with those fighting them.

TROOP NEWS

Lt. Says Bush “Played On Fear” With WMD Lies

By Chris Brummitt, Associated Press February 06, 2004

Lt. Jerry England said it appeared that Bush had “played on the fear” of weapons of mass destruction in arguing the case for war. “It was a harder case to sell without them,” said England, from Overland Park, Kan.

Army Sec. Lied About Providing Body Armor

Army Times Letter To Editor, 2.2.04

After reading [“Lawmakers introduce bills to reimburse troops who bought body armor”] in the Dec 18 edition of Army Times, one thing came to mind: The vest wasn’t in short supply for the troops deploying to Iraq, it was the ceramic plates that were almost impossible to obtain.

I wonder if [acting Army Secretary Les] Brownlee was counting the incomplete vests that were issued to the troops before departure when he made the statement that all troops should have the new body armor by the end of December:

The-Army should modify the “three B’s” philosophy (beans, bullets and bandages) and add a fourth: body armor. At least the Army is trying to do something. Too bad it took

nine months after the start of the war to cover shortages. **Maybe the Senate should ask how many of the more than 500 deaths of American troops could have been prevented.**

Sgt. Robed Bell
Fort Hood, Texas

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.

Officers Stuffing Their Wallets While Troops Lack Shoes, Armor

Army Times Letter To Editor, 2.2.04

I was made aware of 'responsibly pay as discussed in the Dec. 8 edition ['Promises made, promises kept'].

Who authorized this? This additional pay makes no sense. Isn't responsibly/critical decision pay inherent in the pay of officers? Isn't such additional pay for officers considered double dipping?

If such pay is to continue, why only for officers? Isn't the sergeant who tells his soldiers, "Move out and draw fire!" making a critical decision, one involving life and death? Does this not merit responsibility/critical decision pay?

I'm a big fan of money, and I am usually eager to accept the possibility of additional pay. But this pay makes no sense. It needs to go away and the money currently being used to fund it put toward better things, like better desert combat boots, improved body armor and better MREs.

Capt. Morgan Smiley
Indianapolis

Canada Gets Its First Iraq War Deserter

(THANKS TO MAX WATTS E-MAILED THIS IN: HE WRITES:

Late 1966 American soldiers began arriving in Amsterdam, Paris, a little later in Stockholm, Zurich, elsewhere, rather than Vietnam or just the stockades. Canada was always an obvious destination, but initially "we" thought only draft resisters (who could stay almost anywhere outside CONUS--the US) were welcome. With time, and a lot of political education, Canada "worked out" for GI resisters as well. And now ? mw)

Toronto Globe and Mail, February 7, 2004:

Jeremy Hinzman tells MICHAEL VALPY that he enlisted to get an education, not to kill people. But his superiors wouldn't listen and ordered him to pack for Iraq. Instead, he packed up his family and hightailed it north. Now, Canada must decide: Can a U.S. Army deserter be considered a refugee?

By MICHAEL VALPY

On a snowbound afternoon 955 kilometres north of where the U.S. Army says he should be, Private First Class Hinzman, Jeremy D., No. 503946779, is sitting in the sunroom of the rambling old mansion owned by Toronto's pacifist Quakers. He is describing the chants he learned in basic training.

"You're always walking around in formation. And you have this [marching] chant: 'We're trained to kill, and kill we will.' And during bayonet training, the instructors ask this question, 'What makes the grass grow?' and everyone chants in response, 'Blood, blood, blood.' "

The U.S. Army wants him in Fort Bragg, N.C., home of the 82nd Airborne Division, "America's Guard of Honor." But this week Mr. Hinzman, 25, passed the 30-day limit for being absent without leave. He officially became a deserter.

Just before midnight on Jan. 2, he and his wife, Nga Nguyen, 31, quietly loaded their 21-month-old son, Liam, and a few belongings into their 1996 Chevrolet Prism and disappeared into the darkness for a 17-hour drive to the Canadian border. They left just before his unit -- the second battalion of the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment -- was shipped overseas.

As a result, Mr. Hinzman is believed to be the first U.S. soldier to apply for refugee status in Canada after refusing combat duty in Iraq -- the first echo of the 12,000 deserters and 20,000 draft resisters who came north more than 30 years ago to escape the Vietnam War.

In 2002, Mr. Hinzman asked the army to declare him a conscientious objector because he had arrived at the religious conviction that killing and wars in any guise are wrong. His request was rejected.

He has in principle the basis for a refugee claim. **He believes that the invasion of Iraq is an international human-rights violation in which he cannot morally take part;** he says he will be subjected to persecution for this belief if sent back: imprisonment and dishonourable discharge, leading to discrimination in the job market. ("They were always

telling us, 'You get dishonourable discharge and you're going to be flipping burgers your whole life.'")

There is a precedent of sorts. Canada accepted an Iranian conscript who said he had deserted thinking his country was going to use chemical weapons.

Chuck Fager is executive director of Quaker House in Fayetteville, the city bordering Fort Bragg. **Last year, his counselors received 6,000 calls from troubled soldiers.** He says Mr. Hinzman fits the profile of today's recruits: undereducated people from small-town and rural America with few employment opportunities who join up for the money.

Both Mr. Hinzman and his wife grew up in Rapid City, S.D., population 62,000, in the shadow of Mount Rushmore. After high school, he decided not go to college because he was afraid of saddling himself with student debt and "starting a whole cycle of middle-class existence." He went to work as a baker.

Ms. Nguyen earned an undergraduate social work degree from the University of South Dakota and found a job working with disadvantaged preschool children. She met her future husband through a mutual acquaintance and fell in love.

They moved to Boston in 2000 to experience life in a big city. Ms. Nguyen, burned out from social work, found a job in a health-food store. Mr. Hinzman took whatever employment he could find.

They wanted to start a family, but Mr. Hinzman felt his life was going nowhere and hit on the idea of joining the army. If he served a four-year stint, the military would give him \$50,000 he could use for college. Ms. Nguyen tried to talk him out of it. "I could see his thinking . . . but the military! I finally said, 'You decide, and I'll support you.' "

He enlisted on Jan. 17, 2001, leaving Ms. Nguyen -- they had married a few weeks earlier -- in Boston while he did his basic training at Fort Benning in Georgia.

At first, he liked the army. He signed up for a paratroop regiment. He liked the camaraderie. He liked the idea of free housing and subsidized groceries. "Shooting rockets and machine guns and jumping out of planes, it's all fun until you start to think about the bigger picture and what it's all about."

Meaning an army's bottom-line purpose is to kill people. "Right. And the chants, that was disconcerting to me. I mean, you could play the game and yell it, but you could see that your fellow trainees were really getting into it--like they were totally losing their whole notion of self, turning into these little automatons. It was kind of frightening to me, but I pushed it to the back of my head. It was a pretty easy game to play."

Before enlisting, he had become interested in Buddhism, and one day at Fort Benning, the sergeant was doing his rounds and found him in the lotus position, meditating. "There was a big to-do about that, and people found out and were asking questions -- 'What the heck were you doing?' -- and I had to explain myself."

In July, 2001, Mr. Hinzman finished training and was posted to Fort Bragg. He was assigned a two-bedroom sixplex house with a little yard, and Ms. Nguyen joined him.

She felt isolated at the base, home to 45,000 service people. She tried going to wives' meetings, but she didn't fit in. The other women were either patriotically proud of their husbands or afraid to voice dissent for fear of harming their husbands' careers.

In the first week of September, she learned that she was pregnant. On Sept. 11, she heard a news broadcast and knew immediately that life was going to change.

The young couple suddenly found themselves amid frenetic patriotism they didn't share. They were horrified by the jetliner attacks but intellectually (Mr. Hinzman read the left-tilting Nation and Noam Chomsky) saw them as a consequence of U.S. foreign policy.

They attended Quaker meetings in Fayetteville, where they found friends and a spiritual approach to violence in the world that, says Ms. Nguyen, "felt very right." Mr. Fager recalls that Mr. Hinzman didn't rush into applying for conscientious objector (CO) status. "He had philosophical issues to work through." And Mr. Hinzman says he felt "conflicted." **He liked his job. He was a good soldier.** But he didn't want to kill.

Finally, on Aug. 2, 2002, he asked to be transferred, as a conscientious objector, to non-combat duties. He submitted a six-page eloquent, thoughtful, often moving explanation of how spiritually he had come to change his mind about using a gun. He wrote that he had entered the army "to be part of a force that was working to do good--to help stem the tide of senseless conflict-- Although I still have a great desire to eliminate injustice, I have come to the realization that killing will do nothing but perpetuate it. Thus, I cannot in good conscience continue to serve as a combatant in the Army." **The army lost the application.**

Which happens a lot, says Mr. Fager, who now advises soldiers to apply by registered mail.

Mr. Hinzman was told on Halloween that his paperwork had never turned up. By then, his unit knew it was going to Afghanistan.

He reapplied immediately. And he went to Afghanistan, where he was assigned to kitchen duty for eight months until his application could be considered.

A hearing was held before Lieutenant Dennis Fitzgerald at Kandahar Airfield on April 2, 2003.

Three of his sergeants testified that he was a good soldier who "embodied Army Values." But one of them, **First Sgt. James Carabello**, said he couldn't understand how Mr. Hinzman, with all his training, could suddenly decide he was a conscientious objector.

"He fully knew what our mission is, and that is to do an Airborne Assault onto an objective and destroy the enemy. This did not become an issue until it was apparent we were going to deploy to Afghanistan."

That wasn't true. He had applied several weeks before learning about the deployment. (And lifer Carabello is obviously a vicious lying brass-kissing stack of shit.)

Even so, Lt. Fitzgerald rejected the application. His hearing was over 25 minutes after it began.

In a volunteer military, the presumption is that soldiers are not opposed to war, says Lt.-Col. Rick Mathis, a senior policy army chaplain at the Pentagon. The purpose of the hearing, he says, is to allow applicants "to rebut that reasonable presumption." And although army regulations do permit a successful CO applicant to be assigned to non-combat duties -- medic, clerk, cook -- in practice, Col. Mathis says, "I haven't seen it."

(NOTE FROM MAX WATTS: In 1972 Spec/4 David McCampbell, 1/81st Field Artillery, Wiley Barracks, Neu Ulm, learned his Pershing 1 50 Kiloton nuclear missile was aimed at Prague. He was the Azlay man (direction lay out). He asked his Captain Wade "why" ? and was told they were Communists. When he re-asked: The women and children, too ? Wade told him to get lost. The Chaplain Capt Cochrane ?? said: "CO's are cowards". McCampbell threw down his gun in formation, and --- after much support from his mates and the local Germans – got an honorable CO discharge. Some of his mates took more direct actions, first cutting the brake fluid tubes on 7 missile launchers, then burning down the barracks. Not conscientious objectors. The Pershing missiles have now left Neu Ulm.)

In other words, the army thinks that you're not reasonable if you become morally opposed to war after you've voluntarily enlisted. But if you make your case, you're discharged. And if you don't, you pick up your gun. There's no middle ground.

When Mr. Hinzman and his unit finally returned to Fort Bragg, he was made his company's armourer, looking after the weapons. Eight months later, on Dec. 20, he was told that his regiment was shipping out again, this time to Iraq.

Back in Rapid City for Christmas, he agonized over what to do, sharing his thoughts with family members, except for his highly patriotic grandfather. His mother and grandmother were sympathetic (his father is dead), and on Dec. 28, he decided to join the 1 per cent of U.S. soldiers -- about 4,000 a year, the Pentagon says -- who desert.

His wife felt relief. For Ms. Nguyen, the issue was simple: "I wanted Liam to have a father. The college money? It would be no good if you're dead."

The family returned to Fort Bragg, and on Jan. 2, Mr. Hinzman had the day off work. The couple cleared out their refrigerator. They packed up their books and stored them in the basement of Quaker House. They arranged for a civilian friend with a truck to pick up other belongings after they had left. They had already wired their savings to a bank in Rapid City. And they had looked up maps on the Internet to find the best route to Toronto.

At 11 p.m., they bundled Liam into the 1996 Chevrolet Prism and drove into the night.

Jeffrey House, picked by Mr. Hinzman from a list of lawyers provided by the Quakers, says the first thing his new client asked was whether U.S. officials could cross the border and take him back.

They can't. They never could. But other things have changed. In the Vietnam era, the federal government never declared fugitives from the military to be refugees; it just didn't look too closely at how they got into the country or qualified as landed immigrants. Mr. Hinzman isn't likely to receive the same laissez-faire scrutiny.

The family moved into a basement apartment this week to await their hearing. Mr. Hinzman wants to be a bicycle courier once he can legally work. "He's very fit," Ms. Nguyen says.

Officers Covering Up Sex Assaults On Troops in Iraq

By Will Dunham 2.6.04

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has ordered a probe into Pentagon measures to prevent sex attacks within the ranks.

The Pentagon did not give details of the individual cases, but said sexual assault may include rape, attempted rape, indecent assault and sodomy.

The incidents involved U.S. military personnel attacking one another, with most of the cases involving women being assaulted by men, according to a defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Some female service members who have reported sexual assaults in Iraq and Kuwait have gone public with complaints the U.S. military often failed to launch criminal investigations into their allegations and did not provide them proper medical attention or counseling after an assault.

Their complaints included allegations that male superiors retaliated against them after they accused a male comrade of sexual assault.

A defense official called Rumsfeld's action "a prudent step," adding, "*I wouldn't say that we've been lax.*" (Wonder what the "official" would call "lax?" Ignoring gang rapes and serial killings?)

Thousands of Hondurans Protest U.S. Imperialism In Iraq; Demand Their Soldiers Come Home Now

(02-05) 18:28 PST TEGUCIGALPA (AP)

Thousands clogged the streets of five major Honduran cities Thursday to protest the U.S.-led war in Iraq and decry American "imperialism."

Organized by the Popular Block, a consortium of more than 50 student groups and leftist organizations, the demonstrations snarled traffic in the capital of Tegucigalpa as well as San Pedro Sula and Tocoa in the north of the country.

Protesters simultaneously took to the streets in the western city of Copan and in Comayagua in central Honduras.

"Es are against the politics that Washington has pushed on Honduras and the world," said Carlos H. Reyes, the Popular Block's coordinator. "We will fight until we stop American expansionism."

Reyes was among those who led the demonstration in Tegucigalpa, where protesters marched more than 2 miles (4 kilometers) through the capital's congested streets. **They eventually gathered in front of the presidential palace before blocking a major highway on their way out of town.**

The protesters waved mammoth signs condemning U.S. President George Bush and Honduran President Ricardo Maduro, who they attacked as too-sympathetic to the Bush administration. One of the placards featured a large portrait of the Maduro with an American flag covering his mouth.

Labor leaders representing unions of primary teachers, doctors, nurses, farmers and day-laborers joined members of the Popular Block in protesting.

The government was so worried about protest-related violence that it urged thousands of civil servants to go home early, prompting many government offices to shutdown due to high absenteeism. There were no reports of arrests, however.

Honduras sent 370 troops to Iraq to participate in the war. Since July, the Popular Block has organized five major anti-U.S. demonstrations, two of which turned violent.

Nicaragua Bringing Troops Home; Won't Send More

(USA Today, February 9, 2004, Pg. 6)

Nicaragua will not replace soldiers returning home from Iraq this month because it lacks the money, military officials said. In September, Nicaragua sent about 115 soldiers as part of a Spanish-led Central American delegation. Those troops are to return home by the end of February.

Down In Flames

[Los Angeles Times, February 6, 2004]

The House Armed Services Committee, **concerned by aircraft crashes abroad and at home, will probe problems with the Marine Corps Harrier attack jet and other aging aircraft.**

Parcels For Iraq Troops Looted

Army Times, Feb. 2, 2004

Items are being pilfered from some boxes mailed to service members in Iraq; according to troops, family members and morale-mail organizers.

Army Staff Sgt. - Charlie Goodreau, who is deployed to Iraq, said it seems that boxes are rifled through for the best items, then sealed back up. Another soldier's wife at Fort Sill, Okla., who asked not to be identified, said tobacco has been taken from boxes she sent to her husband. She has stopped listing it on the customs form that must be placed on packages.

Mary Kay Salomone, founder of Operation Support Our Troops, said her volunteers have reported complaints about troops not receiving items that were mailed to them.

"We're not missing whole boxes...it's items out of boxes," she said. "None of the boxes that had pilfering were broken open. And they were taped over. Ridiculous things are missing, like 12 rolls of toilet 'paper.'"

Frankie Mayo, who founded "Operation AC," said many of the 1200 Christmas trees her group sent didn't reach their destination in Iraq.

"A lot of the combat boots we send get grabbed but I got wise to them," she said in an e-mail. The group now sends boots in plain brown boxes to conceal the manufacturer's name.

The postal agency offered these tips for avoiding theft:

Wrap parcels securely to make tampering or theft more difficult. For example, tape the opening of your box and reinforce all seams with 2-inch-wide clear or brown packaging tape, reinforced packing tape or paper tape.

Attach the top portion of the U.S. Customs Form 2976A to the outside of the parcel, but put the portion listing the contents inside the parcel. Most senders are unaware that they can do this.

Insurance is encouraged, especially when high-value items are shipped.

After Army Caught Lying About Halliburton Desperately Trying To Cover-Up

By Larry Margasak, Associated Press February 10, 2004

WASHINGTON — After stating that a multi-agency team of government experts evaluated Halliburton Co.'s new Iraq contract, the Army Corps of Engineers now says it alone picked the company despite allegations that it overcharged U.S. taxpayers.

“The one person that made the selection was the source selection authority” — an official in the Corps of Engineers — the Army unit told The Associated Press.

The AP had sought further information about assertions, on the Corps Internet site, that a contract evaluation team was assembled and included experts from five other federal entities.

While the team existed, the Corps now acknowledges what the public site never mentioned: The other agencies had no role in choosing Halliburton for oil restoration work worth up to \$1.2 billion. Rather, the experts provided technical advice on the contract process.

The Corps said it considered the past performance of Vice President Dick Cheney's former company, **but shrouded its decision-making in secrecy.**

“We cannot discuss or release any of the conclusions, as that is part of the evaluation process not releasable” under federal contracting rules, the Corps said on its site.

The site also advised readers not to bother filing Freedom of Information requests to get the information, saying it won't be publicly released under the law used to obtain government documents.

The Jan. 17 Halliburton award, to restore the oil industry in southern Iraq, was controversial from the start. A Pentagon draft audit report the previous month said the company may have overcharged taxpayers up to \$61 million in its importation of oil to Iraq.

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/>

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Informers Killed In Fallujah

By Chris Brummitt, Associated Press, February 06, 2004

In Fallujah residents said Friday that two men suspected of having been informants for the Americans were slain by insurgents. The killings, which occurred late Thursday and early Friday, followed warnings in pamphlets circulated in the area west of Baghdad warning Iraqis against cooperating with the occupation force.

A Real Pain In The Ass: Exploding Couch Kills Collaborator Cops

By the Associated Press - 02/08/2004

SUWAYRAH, Iraq (AP) — A bomb inside a police station exploded soon after the morning roll call, killing three police officer and injuring 11 others, officials said Sunday. An explosive device hidden under a couch in a police station 40 miles west of Baghdad was detonated during the daily briefing. The explosion occurred about 9 a.m. Saturday in this town 30 miles south of Baghdad, according to police Lt. Odai Salman Abed.

It was unclear who planted the bomb, which left a large hole in the floor of the station and caused extensive damage inside.

Insurgents have carried out frequent attacks on police stations since the Iraqi police force was reconstituted last year. More than 300 policemen have been killed, according to U.S. military commanders.

Leading Collaborators Attacked In Ramadi

By Mariam Fam, Associated Press, February 09, 2004

A man wearing a belt of explosives blew himself up outside the home of two prominent tribal leaders in a city west of Baghdad, police said.

Three Iraqi guards were seriously injured in the blast, which occurred in Ramadi outside the residential compound of brothers Majid and Amer Ali Suleiman, two of the city's most prominent tribal leaders who have cooperated with U.S. authorities.

Witnesses said the brothers were receiving callers when a man approached the compound but was told by guards to leave. He returned moments later and triggered the explosives, the witnesses said. **The attack follows a number of threats to Iraqis who cooperate with the Americans.**

Iraqi Armed Militias Defy U.S. Pressure To Disband

(New York Times, February 9, 2004, Pg. 1)

Several of the biggest political parties in Iraq say they are determined to keep their well-armed militias despite American opposition. They contend that the private armies, whose members total in the tens of thousands, remain necessary because of the lack of security throughout the country.

<p>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

(For more, see the article "Resistance In Iraq Will Only Grow" at www.isreview.org.)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Who Pays The Price? Who Gets The Glory?

Ralf W. Zimmermann, Army Times, 2.2.04

A final thing to remember in 2004 for Americans who love to celebrate politicians, generals and colonels for their brilliance on television.

Our grunts are the ones who mostly pay the price in precious life and blood.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Bremer Needs Four Guards To Go To Toilet

Newsweek 2.9.04

The lack of a sense of legitimacy--both in Iraq and the international community--is Bremer's most fundamental problem at the moment. First, it means his life is in constant danger as an occupier. **Bremer's safety is more closely guarded than that of his boss back in Washington, George W Bush.**

The president, at least, can go to the bathroom on his own in the West Wing.

Bremer is ringed by concentric circles of blast walls, razor wire and chicanes (zigzagging concrete blocks to slow vehicles) in a four-square-mile area called the Green Zone that is crawling with troops and armored vehicles.

Still, so grave is the risk of infiltration by insurgents and terrorists (disguised as one of the many Iraqi workers at the CPA) that even inside that protective bubble, **Bremer must be accompanied by four fierce-looking bodyguards armed with Bushmaster rifles when he needs to use the restroom 20 feet from his office. It's not the kind of thing that MacArthur had to worry about.**

Few Iraqis can admit, even to their family or friends, that they are working for a U.S. company, much less the CPA. The reason: they would be shunned or killed. Despite Saddam's capture on Dec. 13, the insurgency persists. It is now inseparable from the occupation itself, fueled by deep resentment of Americans and their foreign and Iraqi collaborators. **Just last Friday there were 35 attacks, nearly as many as occurred daily in the worst month before the capture.**

“Something Suspicious” Not Found

2.9.04 By Mariam Fam, Associated Press

The Baghdad Convention Center, which houses the U.S. military press center and other coalition facilities, was evacuated Tuesday after bomb-sniffing dogs detected something suspicious, Williams, the coalition spokesman, said. The center was later reopened.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Banks Defy U.S. Pressure To Hand Over \$300 Million It Says Hussein Stashed:

Nobody Believes Bush Anymore

(Denver Post, February 9, 2004, Pg. 1)

Treasury investigators believe they have found at least \$300 million Saddam Hussein hid in banks, but they do not have enough evidence to get countries such as Syria and Switzerland to hand over the money. **Countries that acted quickly on relatively weak evidence involving Al Qaeda funds have been unwilling to do the same on Iraq, partly because of growing doubts about the quality of U.S. intelligence.**

POLITICAL HACK DESECRATES MEMORIAL TO WAR DEAD



U.S. Governor Ted Kulongoski of Oregon autographs one of the helmets, part of the 'Crossed Sword Monument' dedicated to Iraqi soldiers, who fought during the Iran-Iraq war, in Baghdad, February 10, 2004. REUTERS/POOL/Bullit Marquez

Rumsfeld Fails To Convince Europe That NATO Should Join Occupation Disaster

(London Times, February 9, 2004)

The United States, with Donald Rumsfeld, its outspoken Defense Secretary, in the vanguard, failed to convince Europeans that NATO should take on a leading role in Iraq. The breakdown in communications soured the mood at the Munich Security Conference, attended by 50 NATO and non-NATO ministers, which had been supposed to patch up quarrels within the alliance.

ONE UGLY, EVIL MOTHERFUCKER



U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney at Aviano Air Base in Italy Jan. 27. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

U.S. Empires' Great Victory In Afghanistan: 2003 Opium Output Hits A Record High

(Los Angeles Times, February 9, 2004)

Opium output hit a record high in Afghanistan in 2003, with another increase expected this year in the war-torn country that does not have any other significant exports, the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime reported.

CLASS WAR NEWS

Ignorant Inquisitors Turn School Into Hell: Student Suspended Five Days For Having Two Tylenol

BY ALLEN SCAIFE, senior at Stafford High School. 2.3.04.
FREDERICKSBURG (VA.) NEWS

For one Chancellor High School student, second period on Friday, Dec. 12 was no daydream.

Rachel Warrick changed into her PE clothes and headed for the gym, leaving her book bag in the locker room as she always did. She then joined the other students as they waited for class to begin.

Shortly, an announcement came on through the PA system explaining that all students would be locked into their second period classes until further notice. Drug bust. This is a normal event in almost every high school across America.

Warrick had nothing to worry about. She had never been in trouble before in her life. The only sedatives she carried came in the form of heavy textbooks.

She was not in the least bit unnerved, and waited until Jacqueline Bass-Fortune, Chancellor's principal, dismissed the students from second period.

When she walked back into the locker room, she was shocked to find that her bag had been taken. A gym teacher was waiting for her. She explained that the police had taken her bag after one of the dogs had barked upon sniffing it.

Warrick was to report immediately to the office.

Upon entering the office, she was faced by a panel of grim looking adults. Her backpack was on a table. A small plastic zip-lock baggie lay beside it.

"We found this in your bag," someone told her.

There were two Tylenol tablets enclosed in the plastic.

The police, performing a routine canine drug-search, had been alerted by the dogs of something suspicious when they inspected Warrick's belongings.

Drug dogs are not trained to smell Tylenol. They barked when they caught the scent of the peanut butter and jelly sandwich that she had brought with her the day before.

Warrick was suspended for five school days. Apparently this was to be considered lucky--according to the Spotsylvania Student Code of Conduct, the possession or use of alcohol, drug paraphernalia or restricted substances (other than tobacco) requires a minimum punishment of 10 days of out of school suspension.

"This has been the only time I've ever been in trouble," she said. "They have to take that into consideration. It's Tylenol--not a drug."

However, the Code of Conduct's "zero tolerance" policy makes no concession for first-time offenders. The punishment is pretty non-negotiable.

Normally there is an appeals process that one can go through to attempt to null punishment, but not for drug-related suspensions.

"The intent behind the zero tolerance is a good one," said Bill Warrick, Rachel's father. "The goal is to prevent dangerous drug use and to make sure the students are safe, but there's a serious flaw if this kind of situation can arise.

"I think this policy is being too strictly interpreted--and in this case, the repercussions were too heavy handed. There's no discretion, and it doesn't allow for any exceptions."

According to healthsquare.com, "Tylenol is a fever and pain reducing medication that is widely used to relieve simple headaches and muscle aches; the minor aches and pains associated with the common cold; backache; toothache; minor pain of arthritis; and menstrual cramps." The back of the bottle states that the typical dose for adults and children 12 and over is two tablets. Users are instructed not to take more than 12 Tylenol over the course of 24 hours.

"She had two Tylenol, not the whole bottle," said her father.

Bass-Fortune, the school's principal, did not return repeated calls and e-mails regarding this story.

This offense will show up on Rachel's permanent record. Fortunately for her, the Warricks were informed that this infraction would not be divulged to any universities to which Rachel might apply.

Students in the school were outraged by the news--but **one Stafford High teacher, who spoke on condition of anonymity, supports the policy.**

"Regardless of reason or innocence, these procedures for administering medication at school were established for a reason and must be followed," the teacher stated.

"My teachers seemed disappointed in me," she said, "but all my friends and my parents were very supportive.

"They all asked 'How can they do this to you?' Everyone was telling me to do something about it, but there's not really much I could have done."

Having completed her suspension, Rachel is back in classes. **She knows that she will have to suffer any future aches and pains without the benefit of Tylenol.**

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