

GI SPECIAL 2#29

HOW MANY MORE FOR BUSH'S WAR?



Molley James, widow of 2nd Lt. Luke S. James of Hooker, Okla. AT funeral service, Arlington National Cemetery Feb. 10. James, 24, was killed near Iskandariyah, Iraq. (AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

The Ultimate Betrayal

by Howard Zinn The Progressive, April 2004 issue.

I cannot get out of my mind the photo that appeared on the front page of The New York Times on December 30, alongside a story by Jeffrey Gettleman. It showed a young man sitting on a chair facing a class of sixth graders in Blairsville, Pennsylvania. Next to him was a woman. Not the teacher of the class, but the young fellow's mother. She was there to help him because he is blind.

That was Jeremy Feldbusch, twenty-four years old, a sergeant in the Army Rangers, who was guarding a dam along the Euphrates River on April 3 when a shell exploded 100 feet away, and shrapnel tore into his face. When he came out of a coma in an Army Medical center five weeks later, he could not see. Two weeks later, he was awarded a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star, but he still could not see. His father, sitting at his bedside, said: "Maybe God thought you had seen enough killing."

The newspapers on December 30 reported that 477 American GIs had died in the war. But what is not usually reported is that for every death there are four or five men and women seriously wounded.

The term seriously wounded does not begin to convey the horror. Sergeant Feldbusch's mother, Charlene Feldbusch, who, along with his father, virtually lived at his bedside for two months, one day saw a young woman soldier crawling past her in the corridor. She had no legs, and her three-year-old son was trailing behind. She started to cry. Later she told Gettleman, "Do you know how many times I walked up and down those hallways and saw those people without arms or legs and thought: Why couldn't this be my son? Why his eyes?"

George Bush was eager to send young men and women half a world away into the heart of another nation. And even though they had fearsome weapons, they were still vulnerable to guerrilla attacks that have left so many of them blinded and crippled. Is this not the ultimate betrayal of our young by our government?

Their families very often understand this before their sons and daughters do, and remonstrate with them before they go off. Ruth Aitken did so with her son, an Army captain, telling him it was a war for oil, while he insisted he was protecting the country from terrorists. He was killed on April 4, in a battle around Baghdad airport. He was doing his job," his mother said. "But it makes me mad that this whole war was sold to the American public and to the soldiers as something it wasn't."

One father, in Escondido, California, Fernando Suarez del Solar, told reporters that his son, a lance corporal in the Marines, had died for "Bush's oil." Another father in Baltimore, whose son, Kendall Waters-Bey, a staff sergeant in the Marine corps, was killed, held up a photo of his son for the news cameras, and said: "President Bush, you took my only son away from me."

Of course, they and their families are not the only ones betrayed. The Iraqi people, promised freedom from tyranny, saw their country, already devastated by two wars and twelve years of sanctions, attacked by the most powerful military machine in history. The Pentagon proudly announced a campaign of "shock and awe," which left 10,000 or more Iraqi men, women, and children, dead, and many thousands more maimed.

The list of betrayals is long.

The people of the United States have been betrayed, because with the Cold war over and "the threat of communism" no longer able to justify the stealing of trillions of the public's tax dollars for the military budget, that theft of the national wealth continues. It continues at the expense of the sick, the children, the elderly, the homeless, the unemployed, wiping out the expectations after the fall of the Soviet Union that there would be a "peace dividend" to bring prosperity to all.

And yes, we come back to the ultimate betrayal, the betrayal of the young, sent to war with grandiose promises and lying words about freedom and democracy, about duty and patriotism.

We are not historically literate enough to remember that these promises, those lies, started far back in the country's past.

Young men—boys, in fact (for the armies of the world, including ours, have always been made up of boys)--were enticed into the Revolutionary Army of the Founding Fathers by

the grand words of the Declaration of Independence. But they found themselves mistreated, in rags and without boots, while their officers lived in luxury and merchants were making war profits. Thousands mutinied, and some were executed by order of General Washington. When, after the war, farmers in Western Massachusetts, many of them veterans, rebelled against the foreclosures of their farms, they were put down by armed force.

It is a long story, the betrayal of the very ones sent to kill and die in wars. when soldiers realize this, they rebel.

Thousands deserted in the Mexican War, and in the Civil War there was deep resentment that the rich could buy their way out of service, and that financiers like J. P. Morgan were profiting as the bodies piled up on the battlefields. The black soldiers who joined the Union Army and were decisive in the victory came home to poverty and racism.

The returning soldiers of World War I, many of them crippled and shell-shocked, were hit hard, barely a dozen years after the end of the *war*, by the Depression. Unemployed, their families hungry, they descended on Washington, 20,000 of them from every part of the country, set up tents across the Potomac from the capital, and demanded that Congress pay the bonus it had promised. Instead, the army was called out, and they were fired on, tear-gassed, dispersed.

Perhaps it was to wipe out that ugly memory, or perhaps it was the glow accompanying the great victory over fascism, but the veterans of World War II received a GI Bill of Rights--free college education, low interest home mortgages, life insurance.

The Vietnam War veterans, on the other hand, came home to find that the same government that had sent them into an immoral and fruitless war, leaving so many of them wounded in body and mind, now wanted to forget about them. The United States had sprayed huge parts of Vietnam with the chemical defoliant Agent Orange, resulting for the Vietnamese in hundreds of thousands of deaths, lingering cancers, birth defects.

American GIs were also exposed in great numbers, and tens of thousands, pointing to sickness, to birth defects in their children, asked the Veterans Administration for help. But the government denied responsibility. However, a suit against Dow Chemical, which made the defoliant, was settled out of court for \$180 million, with each family receiving \$1,000, which suggests that more than 100,000 families claimed injuries from the spraying.

As the government pours hundreds of billions into war, it has no money to take care of the Vietnam veterans who are homeless, who linger in VA hospitals, who suffer from mental disorders, and who commit suicide in shocking numbers. It is a bitter legacy.

The United States government was proud that, although perhaps 100,000 Iraqis had died in the Gulf War of 1991, there were only 148 American battle casualties. What it has concealed from the public is that 206,000 veterans of that war filed claims with the Veterans Administration for injuries and illnesses. In the dozen or so years since that war, 8,300 veterans have died, and 160,000 claims for disability have been recognized by the VA.

The betrayal of GIs and veterans continues in the so-called war on terrorism. The promises that the U.S. military would be greeted with flowers as liberators have disintegrated as soldiers die every day in a deadly guerrilla warfare that tells the GIs they are not wanted in Iraq. An article last July in The Christian Science Monitor quotes an officer in the 3rd Infantry Division in Iraq as saying: "Make no mistake, the level of morale for most soldiers that I've seen has hit rock bottom."

And those who come back alive, but blind or without arms or legs, find that the Bush Administration is cutting funds for veterans. Bush's State of the Union address, while going through the usual motions of thanking those serving in Iraq, continued his policy of ignoring the fact that thousands have come back wounded, in a war that is becoming increasingly unpopular.

The quick Thanksgiving visit of Bush to Iraq, much ballyhooed in the press, was seen differently by an army nurse in Landstuhl, Germany, where casualties from the war are treated. She sent out an e-mail: "My 'Bush Thanksgiving' was a little different. I spent it at the hospital taking care of a young West Point lieutenant wounded in Iraq..... When he pressed his fists into his eyes and rocked his head back and forth he looked like a little boy. They all do, all nineteen on the ward that day, some missing limbs, eyes, or worse. ... It's too bad Bush didn't add us to his holiday agenda. The men said the same, but you'll never read that in the paper.

As for Jeremy Feldbusch, blinded in the war, his hometown of Blairsville, an old coal mining town of 3,600, held a parade for him, and the mayor honored him.

I thought of the blinded, armless, legless soldier in Dalton Trumbo's novel Johnny Got His Gun, who, lying on his hospital cot, unable to speak or hear, remembers when his hometown gave him a send-off, with speeches about fighting for liberty and democracy. He finally learns how to communicate, by tapping Morse code letters with his head, and asks the authorities to take him to schoolrooms everywhere, to show the children what war is like. But they do not respond. "In one terrible moment he saw the whole thing," Trumbo writes. "They wanted only to forget him."

In a sense, the novel was asking, and now the returned veterans are asking, that we don't forget.

Howard Zinn, the author of "A People's History of the United States," is a columnist for The Progressive.

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IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Mine Kills Two U.S. Soldiers In Khalidiyah

February 19, By Michael Georgy, BAGHDAD (Reuters)

BAGHDAD (AP) 2.19.04 — An explosion killed two U.S. infantrymen in an insurgent center west of Baghdad on Thursday

The blast occurred as troops from Task Force All-American were investigating an earlier attack on a U.S. convoy near Khalidiyah, a Sunni Triangle town about 50 miles west of Baghdad, witnesses said.

One Iraqi was killed and another U.S. soldier was wounded, the U.S. command and witnesses said.

"About 20 U.S. soldiers and two Iraqi policemen were on foot inspecting the area after the first blast," witness Bilal Hardan said. "Then the second explosion came. I think they hit a land mine."

The latest deaths brought to 545 the number of American service members who have died since President Bush launched the Iraq war on March 20.

It was the latest of a series of guerrilla attacks that have made February the bloodiest month in Iraq since major hostilities were declared over in May, with about 250 Iraqis killed in guerrilla attacks.

TASK FORCE OLYMPIA SOLDIER KILLED BY IED

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
February 16, 2004. Release Number: 04-02-08C

MOSUL, IRAQ – A Task Force Olympia soldier was killed and one other was wounded when their convoy was attacked by an improvised explosive device at approximately 5:15 p.m. today near Tall Afar.

The soldiers were evacuated to the Brigade Support Medical Center at Forward Operating Base Fulda. One of the injured soldiers was then evacuated by air to the 67th Combat Support Hospital; however, he died en route to the hospital. The other soldier remains at the BSMC where he is being treated.

Following the IED detonation, enemy forces engaged the unit with small arms fire. There were no further injuries to Coalition soldiers. The unit attempted to pursue the attackers, but was unable to make contact.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE



BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW.

Two US soldiers stand guard on a highway after closing it following a warning of a roadside bomb on the outskirts of Baghdad(AFP/Marwan Naamani)

BUS ACCIDENT INJURES 25 SOLDIERS

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
February 17, 2004. Release Number: 04-02-10C

ALI AL SALEM AIR BASE, KUWAIT – Twenty-five members of the U.S. Military were injured Sunday, Feb. 15, around 2:30 pm, when the bus they were riding in overturned while traveling to Ali Al Salem Air Base.

The cause of the accident is unknown at this time and is being investigated.

Four soldiers who were seriously injured have been admitted to the Kuwait Armed Forces hospital. The other injured were treated at various U.S. camps in Kuwait.

Double Car Bombing First Attack On Polish Base

BAGHDAD (AFP) 2.18.04

A car bombing killed at least five Iraqis and wounded dozens other people, including 16 coalition troops, at a Polish base in central Iraq.

Following the explosion outside the Polish military logistics base in Hilla, south of Baghdad, an official at the local hospital said they had received five bodies.

An Iraqi Civil Defence Corps commander, Laith Hussein Abbas, said a first vehicle exploded 200 metres (yards) from the cement barriers shielding the base, called Camp Charlie by the Poles.

Officials said the second vehicle failed to explode in the twin attack at around 7:15 am (0415 GMT) and that the driver of the second car was shot dead by troops guarding the base.

The blast badly damaged three neighboring homes.



An Iraqi man walks from the bomb scene after two explosives-laden trucks were detonated outside a Polish military camp in Hillah Wednesday.

By Brennan Linsley, AP

At least two Iraqis died and eight members of coalition forces were wounded, Polish Lieutenant Colonel Robert Strzelecki said earlier.

The two dead were apparently the drivers of the explosives-laden vehicles, while the injured included six Polish troops, one US national and one Hungarian, a Polish military statement said.

In Budapest, however, Hungarian defence ministry spokesman Peter Matyuc told AFP that 10 Hungarian soldiers were injured, two of them seriously. He also said six Polish troops and one US national were wounded.

The Polish command spearheads a multi-national force patrolling five provinces in central-south Iraq and it was the first such attack on the Polish base.

Mortars And Rockets Rain On U.S. Prison

February 19, By Michael Georgy, BAGHDAD (Reuters)

On Wednesday evening, **insurgents launched 33 mortars and five rockets at the main U.S. prison in Baghdad** and troops killed one Iraqi as they returned fire, the U.S. military said on Thursday.

Humvee Bombed In Ramadi; Casualties Unknown

February 17, 2004 By Matt Moore, Associated Press

Witnesses said two roadside bombs exploded Tuesday outside the Anbar Medical College and hospital in Ramadi in the Sunni Triangle, damaging an Army Humvee. It was unclear if any soldiers or civilians were injured. A third bomb was defused.

Three Iraqi Civilians Killed By US Mortar

(AEDT) February 18

Three Iraqi civilians, including a 10-year-old girl, have been killed by a stray US mortar round which hit the backyard of a home near the main American military base in Baghdad.

US troops fire mortar rounds across the Tigris River from their base several times a day. US commanders describe the firings as part of a harassment-and-interdiction operation, which is designed to prevent insurgents from setting up firing positions in meadows across the river to attack the base.

A spokesman says it is not known how or why the latest mortar round went astray. The other two victims have been identified as young adults, one male and one female.

TROOP NEWS

Few See Caskets Come Home; “There’s Been Too Many Things Covered Up” Says Vet Dad Of Slain Soldier

Baltimore Sun, February 17, 2004

A news media blackout instituted to ensure privacy for soldiers' families also protects policymakers as war casualties mount.

The Defense Department says the policy is intended to respect the privacy of families who have lost loved ones. Skeptics, including some congressional leaders, say the Bush administration benefits from a policy that keeps images of mounting American casualties to a minimum.

Critics also say there haven't been enough public displays commemorating those who lost their lives. England and Italy, U.S. allies in Iraq, have held state ceremonies for those who died there, allowing news media to broadcast the events.

Some families who lost a relative overseas disagree with the blackout policy.

"I would've wanted it shown. I would've wanted people to know," said John Gifford, 53, whose 30-year-old son Jonathan, a private in the Marines, was killed March 23 in what he believes was a friendly fire incident in Iraq. An official report on his son's death is pending, he said.

"They should be able to know the truth. There's been too many things covered up since I can remember," said Gifford, who served in the Army for four years, including one in Vietnam.

Carolyn Hutchings, whose son, Marine Pvt. Nolen Ryan Hutchings, 20, was killed the same day and in the same area as Gifford, also was critical of the policy of denying media coverage at Dover.

"That's crap. I'm sorry, that's crap," she said of the government's desire to protect families' privacy. "Everybody knew my son had died," she said. "Why not acknowledge it? We already knew. ... Why not acknowledge it? He died for his country."

She said local news media covered her son's arrival at Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport in South Carolina, but public ceremonies and national coverage of the totality of the deaths is lacking.

"That's all you hear on TV, it's a count," said Hutchings, her voice quavering. "It's nothing but a count."

She said she received a "typed, generic letter" of condolence from President Bush.

"I'm sure everybody got the same one," Hutchings said. "I'm not impressed at all."

Sun staff writer Tom Bowman contributed to this article.

War Wounded #s Revised Up

(02-19) ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer

Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington announced Thursday that it has revised upward by as much as 10 percent the number of patients and battlefield casualties it has treated. It said the increase came because the hospital switched from compiling the statistics from manifests for each medical evacuation flight to using a Walter Reed computer database.

As of Wednesday, Walter Reed had treated 2,775 patients from the Iraq war -- 175 more than it had previously reported. Of the new total, 476 were classified as battle casualties, meaning their injuries were caused by "enemy action." That is 40 more battle casualties than Walter Reed had previously reported.

The Pentagon says 2,672 U.S. troops have been wounded in action in Iraq and 415 have suffered "non-hostile" wounds. Those figures are not directly comparable to the Walter Reed statistics because the numbers of wounded do not include those felled by illness or other health problems.

Oregon Reservists Cheated On Supplies Thier Families Get Abundance Of Bullshit

Army Times 12.1.03

Oregon reservists "have been treated like the stepchild of a stepchild" and not given basic supplies such as toilet paper, proper boots or body armor, said Carol Preston, whose son, Ryan; is training at Fort Hood, Texas, for duty in Iraq.

"If you can't take care of him here, how are you going to take care of him in Iraq?" Preston said.

"We are an army of one. We treat all of our soldiers in exactly the same manner," including reservists, said Lt. Col. Diane Battaglia, a U.S. Army spokeswoman in Washington, D.C. (Yeah, like shit.)

Reservists Mobilizations Twice As Long Since 1991

Army Times 12.1.03

Reservists are being mobilized for longer periods. During the 1991 Persian Gulf War, the average tour length for a reservist was 156 days, and call-ups for duty in Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti and Southwest Asia averaged 200 days.

Current tour lengths in Afghanistan and Iraq average 300 days or more, which is a matter of concern and a reason why the Pentagon is looking at ways to reduce its reliance on reservists.

“If You Get Shot There’s No ‘Play Again’”

February 16, 2004 By Melanthia Mitchell, Associated Press

FORT LEWIS, Wash. — Today’s military has switched from the traditional “Uncle Sam wants you” message to high-profile, high-tech recruitment tools: NASCAR sponsorships, online games and “power-point rangers.”

Web sites, games, television commercials and providing laptops to recruitment officers — sarcastically dubbed “PowerPoint rangers” among the rank and file — are the innovative ways the Army hopes to boost its numbers.

Soldiers, however, cautioned against enlisting without serious consideration — regardless of how real the game.

“If you get shot there’s no coming back. There’s no ‘play again,’” said Sgt. 1st Class Bernabe Quinones, 36.

Said David Segal, a professor of sociology at the University of Maryland, College Park, and a leading military sociologist, the Navy, Air Force and Marines all face various recruitment challenges, but they dim to the Army’s insatiable need for bodies. **“The Army is basically a big consumer of people,” he said..**

U.S. Forces Train In “Arab Culture” But Occupation Culture Left Out

(USA Today, February 17, 2004, Pg. 10)

As the Army and Marines prepare more than 100,000 fresh troops for Iraq, regular training is being supplemented with a helping of Arabic culture. The Army has flown select units to Jordan and other Arab countries for immersion in regional customs and

traditions. (They left one out: Palestine. For a real taste of what is like to live under a foreign occupation, there's nothing better.)

Soldier's Husband Accused Of Death Hoax

(New York Times, February 17, 2004)

A man whose wife was serving in Iraq was charged with falsely claiming that she had died in a firebombing in Baghdad. Police in Waterbury, Conn., said that Edward Valentin, who had been raising three children, had become interested in another woman who had resisted dating him because he was married.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

60% Of Iraqis Reject Occupation; Up From 35% In November

By Ahmed Janabi 15 February 2004 Aljazeera

A recent survey carried out by Al-Mustaqil Institute for Management and Social Studies, in Baghdad, has revealed that 60% of Iraqis reject the US occupation of Iraq. The percentage was 35% in November 2003.

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/>

Resistance Attacks Increasing

February 16, 2004 By Jim Krane, Associated Press

A spate of arrests — including the capture of Saddam Hussein — have broken rebel command networks and forced fighters underground, a top U.S. military official told The Associated Press. Yet attacks persist, crowned by a bold daylight assault this weekend

on security compounds in Fallujah that freed 87 prisoners and killed 25 people, mostly police.

U.S. officials here and in Washington have acknowledged a handful of Iraqi rebel groups remain active in Iraq.

They include:

- Muntada al-Wilaya, a Shiite group that has grown less troublesome since its leader's capture.
- The Return Party of former Saddam political allies that continues to mount attacks and distribute leaflets warning against cooperating with Americans.
- Muhammad's Army, an umbrella group of former Iraqi intelligence and security agents.
- And Ansar al-Sunna Army, which claimed responsibility for the Feb. 1 bombings in the northern city of Irbil that killed 109 people.

Despite U.S. gains, rebel attacks against U.S. troops in February have increased to between 20 and 24 a day, rising from 18 per day in January.

And guerrilla assaults have grown more spectacular — and devastating for the Iraqi police, whose death toll appears to have surpassed that of the far more numerous U.S. military forces.

At least 538 U.S. troops have died since the U.S. invasion began nearly 11 months ago. But some 600 Iraqi police have been killed since May, said Iyad Allawi, a member of Iraq's Governing Council.

Mayor of Fallujah Kidnapped By U.S. Army Command; Resistance Controls City, U.S. Patrols Limited To One Hour

February 16, 2004 By Rob Curtis and Robert Hoderne, Army Times staff writers

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Two days after an attack by forces opposed to the U.S. occupation killed 23 Iraqi policemen, the mayor of Fallujah has vanished. Iraqi militia officers say he was kidnapped by American forces.

The officers said Mayor Ra'ad Hussein was kidnapped after leaving a meeting at the nearby American military base.

Capt. Mark Zahaczewsky, an intelligence officer with the 82nd Airborne Division, confirmed that the mayor is missing but denied any knowledge of U.S. involvement.

The American military is also investigating why Police Chief Aboud Farhan al-Isawi was called out of town Saturday morning before the attack took place.

Fallujah, 35 miles west of Baghdad, remains the center of the best-organized resistance to the U.S. occupation. Americans send heavily armed patrols on brief daily forays into the town, but seldom stay longer than an hour. They rely on the Iraqis to maintain order.

But many questions remain about Saturday's attack. **The American military would like to know who organized and financed the hour-long Saturday morning assault, which according to Iraqi police and U.S. military officials featured such sophisticated touches as roadblocks, warnings to civilians to leave the area, radios to coordinate the estimated 30 to 100 insurgents fighters and ambushes set along expected reinforcement routes.**

"It was not an amateur event," said Capt. Ryan Derouin, a spokesman for the 1st Battalion of the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, the American battalion responsible for security in Fallujah.

The Iraqi police also captured some of the enemy fighters, but they haven't told the Americans how many. Derouin said the U.S. Army believes the Iraqis hold "several" prisoners, some of whom are in a local hospital.

An Iraqi assistant police chief, Brig. Gen. Ri'ad, would not tell an American military officer Monday afternoon how many prisoners they held, but Zahaczewsky said police did turn over one wounded prisoner to the Americans. "He is not being interrogated yet, but we fully intend to. His information is very important to the investigation," the intelligence officer said. "He is being treated for five gunshot wounds and he is being kept for safe keeping."

There is an open schism between the police and the U.S.-created ICDC. A feud between the two main security forces is not a promising sign for how things will go after the U.S. grants Iraq sovereignty on June 30. (Duh.)

MORE:

Fallujah Mayor Seized On Highway After Leaving Meeting With U.S. Lt. Col., Bag Put Over Head

February 17, 2004 By Robert Hoderne, Army Times staff writer

FALLUJAH, Iraq — The mayor of Fallujah was taken prisoner Sunday night by American forces and is being questioned on his knowledge of who was behind the bloody attacks Saturday in which insurgents killed 23 local police, according to the Army commander in the area.

Lt. Col. Brian Drinkwine said interim mayor Raad Hussein was stopped “by other coalition forces” on a road outside of Fallujah after leaving a meeting with Drinkwine at a nearby 82nd Airborne Division base camp. Raad had a bag put over his head, his hands cuffed and he was taken to an undisclosed location, Drinkwine said. While Drinkwine would not identify the men who captured Raad, the term “other coalition forces” usually refers to Special Forces or Delta Force troops.

Drinkwine said he did not think Raad took part in planning the well-coordinated attack.

He said he didn't think Raad was “adept enough” to have planned such an attack. “He not that smart enough a man and he's not a guy that's going to pull a trigger,” Drinkwine said. “But he may have run in circles of people that knew about the plans.”

(Lesson learned. Since the alternative is a bag over your head, first time you get an invitation to a cozy meeting with a U.S. Lt. Col., pick up your Kalashnikov and join the resistance.)

Collaborator Cops In Fallujah Hide Faces; City “Full Of Anti-American Insurgents”

February 16, 2004, By Paul Wiseman, USA Today

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Usually, it's criminals who hide their faces behind masks. In this troubled city, the police sometimes do.

A day after their headquarters was overrun in a daring daylight raid, many of Fallujah's finest were concealing themselves Sunday behind their checked scarves. **They feared reprisals in a city full of anti-American insurgents and their supporters.**

Fallujah is one of the most dangerous cities in Iraq. **Much of the city's population is sympathetic to anti-American insurgents.**

Assaults on U.S. patrols here are routine. U.S. troops call one particularly dangerous west Fallujah neighborhood "The Bronx," referring to what is considered one of the toughest areas in New York.

Saturday, Fallujah's police were outmanned and outgunned. Dozens of attackers swarmed into their compound in the center of Fallujah. The assailants fired machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and staged coordinated attacks elsewhere in the city. A command post, and a police substation and the mayor's office also were attacked.

Fallujah police complain that their AK-47 assault rifles are no match for the insurgents' RPGs and machine guns. **But U.S. forces have been reluctant to give the Iraqi police heavier arms, partly because corrupt officers have sold weaponry on the black market.**

Despite the threatening environment and these setbacks, Drinkwine said the Iraqi security forces just need time to learn to fight the increasingly sophisticated and bold insurgency. **(Despite the threatening environment and these setbacks, General William Westmoreland said the South Vietnamese security forces just need time to learn to fight the increasingly sophisticated and bold insurgency.)**

Key Police Collaborator Killed

Tuesday, police Maj. Hakim Abdul Reza, 36, was ambushed by a half-dozen gunmen hiding in a vacant lot as he drove to work. He was shot 28 times. His driver, Cpl. Haki Ismail, also was killed.

It wasn't the first attempt on Reza. A few weeks ago, insurgents strapped a bomb to his car. No one was in the vehicle when the bomb went off. Police say Reza, the most popular officer in the command post, was targeted specifically to demoralize them.

He also was the local police liaison with U.S. troops patrolling the Baghdad area.

Resistance Attacks Leave Occupation Command Disputing Each Other & Raving Incoherently; Everybody But Raging Grannies Blamed For Attacks

February 16, 2004 By Jim Krane, Associated Press

The capture of dozens of guerrilla leaders has left the U.S. military with a murky picture of a shadowy resistance here, **with American and Iraqi officials divided about whether Iraqis or foreign fighters are responsible for recent attacks.**

U.S. officials including Army Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said the “sensational” characteristics of the two suicide bombings pointed to al-Zarqawi, after a letter emerged that intelligence officials say was written by the Jordanian.

But others say attacks on Iraqi security forces are usually mounted by homegrown insurgents, not foreign terrorists.

In Tuesday’s Iskandariyah bombing, Iraqi police Lt. Gen. Ahmed Kadhum Ibrahim said evidence pointed toward an Iraqi’s involvement, when investigators traced the engine number of the vehicle used in the blast to one of Saddam’s intelligence officers.

A U.S. official in Washington also blamed Saddam loyalists for Wednesday’s suicide car blast on a Baghdad recruiting station — hours after a U.S. Army colonel on the scene said the attack was probably carried out by terrorists intending to show a U.N. mission that Iraq was too unstable for elections.

Saturday’s Fallujah attack also inspired contradictory pronouncements.

Administrator L. Paul Bremer told ABC’s “This Week” program on Sunday that he believed foreign fighters took part in the attack on the Fallujah police station. Iraqi officials echoed this claim.

However, a senior U.S. military officer discounted the role of foreign fighters saying the “complex, well coordinated attack” appeared to have been the work of former members of Saddam’s army or Republican Guard.

“This was something put together by people with knowledge of small-unit tactics,” the officer told AP, speaking on condition of anonymity. “This would not be the same tactics that al-Qaida would employ. These are military tactics. It points to former military members.”

U.S. military officials said privately they doubted the attack was carried out by foreign fighters or al-Qaida terrorists but rather by veterans of Saddam Hussein’s army.

The competing theories and lack of clear intelligence may stem partially from the U.S. military’s success. With their commanders in prison, the loose alliance of guerrilla cells has been disrupted and left leaderless and is fighting “with one arm tied behind their backs,” the U.S. military official in Baghdad said. **(If this is what happens “with one arm tied behind their backs,” releasing the other arm will have “the U.S. military official” getting lifted off the roof of the U.S. command Hq. by helicopter.)**

“Most commanders understood the insurgency would not fade after Saddam was captured, because all knew there were additional elements — religious extremists, terrorists, criminals, former regimists — who would continue to fight to gain their own specific form of power within Baghdad,” said Brig. Gen. Mark Hertling, a deputy

commander of the 1st Armored Division. **(He forgot to mention trolls, demons, Martians, child molesters, zombies--anything but Iraqis simply fighting for their independence and national liberation from a foreign Imperial invasion and occupation. What a surprise he left them out! Well, it's an old tradition. Hitler's generals used to blame the resistance on Communists, sub-humans, criminals, Jew-terrorists, etc. etc. etc.)**

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.

Big Surprise! Inside Job Suspected In Iraq Attacks; Resistance Likely Infiltrated Security Forces

(Washington Times, February 17, 2004, Pg. 1)

U.S. officials in Baghdad said that resistance may have infiltrated the coalition's security forces and supplied inside information to insurgents. The statements came in the aftermath of a brazen attack by pro-Baathists on a Fallujah police station during the weekend that killed 25 Iraqi police officers.

OCCUPATION REPORT

New U.S. Command Office Set Up In Baghdad To Run "Independent" Iraq

(Washington Times, February 17, 2004, Pg. 6)

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld will form an overriding military command in Baghdad consisting of about 200 personnel to coordinate military-civilian missions before Iraq's scheduled move to self-rule this summer. **Senior defense officials said the headquarters should be created by April and will continue after the transition.**

The Occupation Follies Roll On: Bremer Infuriates Shiia Majority

BAGHDAD (AFP) 2.18.04

US civil administrator Paul Bremer set off a chorus of protest from the country's Shiite majority after he warned Monday he would veto the fundamental law if it turned out to be an Islamic constitution.

Shiite leaders retorted Tuesday that the Americans could not dictate terms to the Iraqi people and to do so would be folly.

Despite the efforts to paper over the dispute, the rifts remained Wednesday.

Iraqi Women Taken Hostage

By Ahmed Janabi 15 February 2004 Aljazeera

The US occupation forces in Iraq have been arresting the wives of suspected resistance fighters in an attempt to force their husbands to turn themselves in.

"Surrender, we have your wife." This type of threatening note has been found at the homes of many Iraqis. According to Aljazeera's reporter in Baghdad, US forces leave such notes whenever they raid the house of an Iraqi suspect and find him out.

Scores of Iraqi women are believed to be in jail because US forces suspect their husbands of being resistance fighters.

Dr Muzhir al-Dulaymi, the spokesman for the League for the Defence of Iraqi People Rights, told Aljazeera.net that his organisation had "discussed the issue of the wives of Iraqi suspects with the US forces.

"We've also discussed the issue of Iraqi child prisoners, who are accused by the Americans of involvement in Iraqi resistance.

"A committee will be set up with US representation to look at the allegations."

Hundreds of Iraqis demonstrated on Saturday in front of Abu Ghuraib prison, where thousands of Iraqis are detained. The prison's rehabilitation was one of the first US achievements in Iraq.

The demonstrators raised banners calling for the immediate release of all Iraqi prisoners, threatening violence against US occupation forces if their demands were not met.

"We strongly call for the immediate release of Iraqi women detained by the US forces. They have committed no crime," a female demonstrator told Aljazeera's Atwar Bahjat at the demonstration.

"There are 23,000 prisoners in Abu Ghuraib, and 4000 in Um Qasr prison in southern Iraq, most of them held without charge," al-Dulaymi said. "What is really worrying us is

we have heard unconfirmed reports that the US authorities in Iraq have moved some Iraqi prisoners to Guantanamo Bay in Cuba."

Wide resentment has been increasing among Iraqis who say the US is not taking enough care in its treatment of Iraqis.



Detained Iraqi and his son

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

Coalition To Get Cash To Unemployed Iraqi GIs; (Too Little, Too Late, They Just Took Fallujah For The Resistance)

(Washington Times, February 17, 2004, Pg. 1)

Coalition authorities have moved aggressively to clear up problems with stipends promised to demobilized Iraqi soldiers, removing an irritant that had been contributing to the anti-U.S. insurgency.

New Iraqi Government May Screw U.S. Bankers

(Wall Street Journal, February 17, 2004)

The Bush administration and Citigroup are proposing a joint \$200 million arrangement to finance Iraq's imports, with the bank's revenue from the project guaranteed by Iraqi oil sales. **But it is far from clear whether the trade-finance project would accomplish**

much before the scheduled June 30 handover of sovereignty to the Iraqis or whether the new Iraqi government would abandon it.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Check It Out

Florida touch screen ballot

<http://www.gwbush04.com/touchscreenvotingdemo.html>

Rats Leave The Sinking Ship: Pentagon Eager To Wash Hands Of Iraq Mess It Created

Joseph L. Galloway

(Miami Herald, February 17, 2004)

A senior Bush administration official says that Iraq has turned into such a mess that "Rumsfeld and his people want out. They can't wait for July 1 when the CPA (Coalition Provisional Authority) turns into the U.S. Embassy and the whole mess they have made becomes Colin Powell's." *The only question is whether Rumsfeld and Co. can keep the lid on all the boiling pots until they can pass the CPA and the whole occupation buck to the State Department.*

But First, Rats Turn On Each Other; Rifts Widen In Bush's Foreign Policy Team

(Christian Science Monitor, February 17, 2004)

When it comes to Iraq, the Bush administration's foreign policy team is speaking with one voice: All the players are saying that despite faulty prewar intelligence, the president's decision to go to war was right. **But behind the unanimity is dissonance in tones and forcefulness that suggests the deeper differences that have been part of the Bush foreign policy since the beginning.**

U.S. War Ally Politicians Catching Hell Everywhere

(Washington Times, February 17, 2004, Pg. 13)

Foreign leaders who sided with the United States in the Iraq war are facing political heat at home over the so-far fruitless effort to find Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction. Opposition parties in Australia, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands have demanded official inquiries into their governments' decisions to support the war and into what was known about Iraq's weapons arsenal before the war began.

Thieves Fall Out; Poland, Spain Capitalists Pissed Over Loss Of Iraq Contract

(Los Angeles Times, February 17, 2004)

The award of a major contract to equip the new Iraqi army has triggered an uproar in staunch U.S. allies Poland and Spain, where officials are questioning why their nations' experienced arms firms lost out to an American company with a low-ball bid and little experience in such projects. The \$327-million contract to supply everything from canteens to AK-47s was awarded in January to Nour USA, a Virginia-based company whose president is A. Huda Farouki. He is a close friend of Ahmad Chalabi, a controversial member of the U.S.-appointed Iraqi Governing Council who has close ties with some Pentagon officials.

CIA “Out Of Control”: Indefensible Secrecy

(Washington Post, February 17, 2004, Pg. 18)

By resisting disclosure of its total budget figures, the CIA only highlights a security classification system that is out of control. The numbers would be of no use to Osama bin Laden, but they might give the American people some sense of the growth of the most secret parts of their government and spur useful debate over whether American spending in this area is an investment that is paying adequate dividends.

Union-Busting, DoD Style Work-Force Plan Would Slash Unions' Membership, Influence

(Federal Times, February 16, 2004, Pg. 1)

The Defense Department is proposing to drastically cut the size and influence of its unions in conjunction with a pay and personnel system overhaul. At least half of the more than 400,000 civilian employees covered by collective bargaining units could lose that right under the proposal.



Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge Feb. 19, 2004 in Mexico City points to shadow behind him proving he is actually a destroying angel sent to chastise evildoers. Ridge said he was instructed to manifest himself following a request made to God Almighty by George W. Bush. Bush had previously told the press he receives messages from the Deity every day after he consumes The Holy Pretzel and sticks his head up his ass. (AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Complete Goatfuck In Afghanistan

(Washington Post, February 17, 2004, Pg. 13)

Preparations for Afghanistan's first direct nationwide elections have gotten off to an alarmingly slow start, leading to widespread concern that voting scheduled for late June may have to be delayed. **Nearly two months since voter registration began, less than 10 percent of about 10.5 million eligible voters have signed up—only 2 percent of eligible women—and no political parties have been officially recognized.**

Zakheim: Desertions Won't Hurt Afghan Army (!)

February 17, 2004 By Matthew Pennington, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A top U.S. defense official played down the hundreds of desertions from the Afghan national army Tuesday.

Recruitment has been slow since the army was set up nearly two years ago: **Only about 7,000 of the eventual target of 70,000 soldiers are under arms because of a rash of desertions occurring amid complaints over poor pay and conditions.**

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