

## GI SPECIAL 2#33

**JUNE: SEWING THE WIND  
FEBRUARY: REAPING THE WHIRLWIND**



U.S. Military Police detain men from the city of **Fallujah**. **June 6, 2003**. (AP Photo/Victor R. Caivano)

# Resistance Rules Fallujah

### **Comment:**

(As if any confirmation were needed, this Army Times story portrays a defeated command trying to pretend it has some control over Fallujah, a city of half a million Iraqis. In reality, the resistance has taken and holds the city.

As usual, it's the grunts who pay the price for command's deadly pretenses.

Few newspaper reports have described the reality of the Bush's lost war in Iraq or what life is like for U.S. soldiers sent to die for oil and Empire as clearly as this.

Neither Bush nor Kerry {nor Nader, as you will read below} want to stop the bloodshed. None want to bring the troops home now. For all of them, the Empire comes first.

As was the case in Vietnam, building a movement in the streets and in the Armed Forces is what it will take to bring this war to an end despite the politicians. The next step: mass demonstrations against the war called for cities all over the U.S. and the world March 20.)

March 01, 2004, By Robert Hodierno, Army Times staff writer

**“Pretty much every time you go down there you get shot at. I can almost count the times I *didn’t* get shot at.” Capt. Ryan Huston, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment,**

**Speed is our friend, the soldiers tell you, and they drive as fast as they can, cutting off traffic, shouting at civilian vehicles to get out of their way, bouncing over curbs and median dividers, running red lights. The last thing you want is to come to a dead stop in downtown Fallujah. Get in, get out, as fast as you can.**

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Even the guys who earned their Combat Infantryman Badges during seven months in Afghanistan and have been fighting here for six more get that look when they’re told they’re going on patrol in Fallujah.

**It’s the look you get when it’s hard to swallow, when your jaw locks and your weary eyes reveal the resignation of grunts who’ve been ordered time and again to do what no reasonable person would do the first time.**

“This place is crazy, that’s for sure,” said 1st Lt. Dennis Cook, 24, of Traverse City, Mich. Cook is a platoon leader in the 82nd Airborne Division, and he had just dumped two dead Iraqis in front of his battalion’s tactical operations center on Forward Operating Base Volturno, three miles from downtown. **The two had ambushed Cook on his way back to base, which is not that unusual except on this particular afternoon it was the second time Cook’s platoon had been attacked and it came within sight of the base and its relative safety.**

“This place is crazy,” Cook repeated, in case you didn’t get the message the first time.

**“Pretty much every time you go down there you get shot at,” said Capt. Ryan Huston, 25, of Huntsville, Ala., a liaison officer to the city from 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, the same regiment Cook serves in. “I can almost count the times I *didn’t* get shot at.”**

**No one from the Fort Bragg, N.C.-based 82nd lives in town.** Although Lt. Col. Brian Drinkwine, the 1-505 commander, is proud of the progress in pacifying Fallujah, he is under no illusions.

“Don’t misunderstand me,” he said. “Fallujah is not a safe place.”

Some Army officials felt insulted in January, when reports circulated that members of I Marine Expeditionary Force, which will replace the paratroopers here in March and April thought the Army somehow had missed an opportunity to win the hearts and minds of the local population.

**A Marine Corps planning document said Marines would live in town, learn the language and work to be less intimidating by forgoing helmets on some patrols.**

**Ask soldiers here about that, and they respond with wry grins, a knowing twinkle in the eye and this wish: Good luck, pal.**

**More recently, as they get closer to deploying, the Marines have tempered their remarks.** The man who will lead the 25,000 Marine Corps troops in Fallujah, Lt. Gen. James T. Conway, said in an interview at Camp Pendleton, Calif., that his Marines will pick their battles and targets carefully in Fallujah. “We are learning from what the Army has done,” he said.

#### **Mines before breakfast**

A resident told Iraqi police there was an anti-tank mine in the road along the southern outskirts, a neighborhood the troops call Queens. (They have divided Fallujah into the five New York City boroughs.)

Up the chain of command, this kind of intel is viewed as progress — a resident dropping a dime on the bad guys. But to the soldiers of Delta Company, 1-505, experience suggests it could be a baited trap.

Just at daylight, an explosive ordnance disposal van, two M113 armored personnel carriers and four gun trucks from Delta head into town. Where someone has thoughtfully piled up three rocks marking not one but two anti-tank mines, kids and adults and dogs have slunk back two blocks. The north side of the pitted road is lined with crumbling brown brick homes. To the south, open country with all the picturesque charm of a garbage dump.

The mined intersection is horribly exposed.

Into this tense scene speeds a pickup truck, barreling toward one of the APCs. Warning shots ring out before the truck stops, turns and speeds away. From a rooftop nearby, four rounds fire in the general direction of the soldiers.

The paratroopers set up a perimeter while the explosives ordnance disposal sergeant begins the unenviably touchy job of walking out in the open and detonating the mines. Viewed from a distance, the baggy BDUs, bulky body armor and Kevlar helmet obscure the fact that the sergeant is a woman, Staff Sgt. Melissa Kennedy, 28, of Syracuse, N.Y. She is a member of the 789th Explosives Ordnance Disposal Company, late of Baghdad but based at Fort Benning, Ga.

Knowing every eye is on her — because she is the one who has to walk out exposed in a neighborhood where soldiers believe the mines were nothing more than bait for an ambush — she gets to work.

The soldiers' eyes are on her, too. If she screws this up, she'll be shredded by mines powerful enough to blast the hell out of 60 tons' worth of tank. Kennedy places her explosives and saunters back with a casual, steady, this-don't-scare-me swagger that causes one of the joes to say, admiringly and without any evident irony, "She's got balls."

**When the mines blow, the soldiers pile back into their beat-to-hell Humvees with the mismatched armor-plated doors and race back to the base before someone can shoot at them.**

And then they had breakfast.

### **The civil defense force**

Delta Company's first sergeant, Steven Womack, was to receive 140 new recruits for the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, the militia the United States has created, recruited, trained and equipped.

The 140 showed up on time at the front gate of the base, along with an additional 200 clamoring for a chance to enlist.

**All this just a week after a different group of recruits was bloodied when insurgents fired two rocket-propelled grenades into the bus carrying them to the base. Ten were wounded, none killed.**

**Womack barely had begun sorting through the new recruits when, from Fallujah three miles away, there came those all-too-familiar sounds — the crunch of RPGs, the rattle of small-arms fire.**

**American soldiers and their interpreters listened on the radio to accounts of the Valentine's Day battle in downtown Fallujah, an hourlong attack against five Iraqi government installations. When it was over, the police headquarters had been overrun, 23 Iraqi policemen were killed, scores more wounded and 70 or 80 prisoners had been freed, the count depending on which day you ask the police.**

The Americans have chosen to let the Iraqi security forces keep order in downtown Fallujah, at the specific request, they say, of the locals. The Valentine's Day raid stands as a bloody symbol of how poorly that has worked out. And so, at midnight, four nights after the insurgent attacks, 200 Americans, with a Spectre gunship and a pair of Kiowas overhead, swept into town and raided four homes, scooping up nine men they believe helped stage the Valentine's Day attacks.

If you want a measure of how twisted and difficult the city of Fallujah is, you could do no better than the meeting of the Fallujah Provisional Authority Commission four days after the slaughter at the police station.

The F-Pac, as it's known, is the rough equivalent of a city council. **Its membership has been carefully crafted by the Americans** to make sure the tribal sheiks and religious leaders are balanced by businessmen and professionals.

When the council gathers in a dusty youth center auditorium, about a third of its 41 members wear traditional head scarves — keffiyahs — and robes. **Drinkwine leaves**

**his body armor and M4 backstage before joining the four top council members on a stage draped with faded burgundy curtains. But there are always several of his troops in full battle rattle in the room.**

Drinkwine and Stuart Jones, a 17-year veteran of the U.S. State Department and the Coalition Provisional Authority's representative in Fallujah, express sorrow and sympathy for the dead police and their families.

**And although the meeting goes on for two more hours and the sheiks, imams, businessmen and doctors speak at length about many things, the dead police are barely mentioned.**

**Instead, the council members complain about the hundreds of men the Americans hold for suspected involvement in anti-coalition attacks. They are angry that the men are being held without access to Iraqi courts or any clue to the evidence against them or when they might be released.**

**Those detained by the Americans include the previous mayor, whose replacement was picked at the meeting. In a demonstration of the joys of democracy, the new mayor's first speech is highlighted by a spirited attack on the Americans for holding the suspects.**

#### **Pictures in their pockets**

Here's how the patrols go. Four or more Humvees, some with heavy machine guns, some with M19 grenade launchers, loaded with half a dozen soldiers, the sides beefed up with steel plates.

The drivers put their M4 carbines across their laps or next to their legs, wherever they think they can get to them fast and fire while still driving. The right-side front-seat passengers, if they're right-handed, try to get arranged so they can fire out their windows.

It's the same drill whether the patrol is headed into Fallujah proper running over to the brigade headquarters for supplies or riding out in the barren wasteland on counter-mortar patrol.

The counter-mortar teams head out before dark and watch the Bedouin herd their sheep until it gets dark. **Then the troops move to a new spot and freeze their tails off in a cat-and-mouse game with the Iraqis, who sneak in close at night to fire RPGs, rockets or mortars at the base.**

**No patrol has actually caught an enemy team but, on one infamous night, the counter-mortar patrol was mortared.**

**Speed is our friend, the soldiers tell you, and they drive as fast as they can, cutting off traffic, shouting at civilian vehicles to get out of their way, bouncing over curbs and median dividers, running red lights. The last thing you want is to come to a dead stop in downtown Fallujah. Get in, get out, as fast as you can.**

**Soldiers go through rituals before these excursions. Specialists Scott Wolfe and Juan Torres from Charlie Company, 1-505, tap their pockets.**

“I got three pictures in here,” said Wolfe, 24, of Frankfurt, Ind., as he tapped his right front pocket. “One of them is naked. That’s my wife.”

“I got my letters and pictures here,” Torres said as he tapped a pocket.

**They said they don’t want anyone to get their hands on those photos. And they want someone to mail the letters. Just in case.**

**It’s a ritual they go through as they leave base, as much a part of their routine as chambering a round and adjusting their sights.**

**But this is the Army, and no serious moment ever goes unmocked. From the front of the Humvee, their squad leader, Staff Sgt. Jerry Tucker, 33, of LaGrange, Ga., shouts back: “They’ve been watching too many fucking movies, Pvt. Ryan and shit. They think this is Vietnam.”**

**Yeah, maybe, suggest the looks on Wolfe’s and Torres’ faces. But they still pat their pockets, showing their buddy where the letters home and photographs are.**

**Because when you go downtown in Fallujah, you just never know.**

**“The stakes couldn’t be higher. As goes Fallujah, so goes Iraq.” (Army Times editorial, 3.1.04) (“Goes”? It’s gone.)**

## **Blasts Heard Near U.S. Fallujah Base**

26 Feb 2004 news.scottsman.com

Large explosions were heard tonight in Fallujah – the heart of Iraq’s Sunni triangle –and it appeared the blasts were near the American military base.

Residents said they heard about a dozen explosions after sundown.

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### **IRAQ WAR REPORTS:**

## **Two Killed As Resistance Shoots Down Another Helicopter**

By Lee Keath, Associated Press, February 26, 2004

BAGHDAD, Iraq — An Army helicopter from a Colorado-based cavalry regiment crashed into the Euphrates River on Wednesday, killing its two pilots.

The OH-58 Kiowa helicopter from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, based at Fort Carson, Colo., went down about 2 p.m. near Haditha, 120 miles northwest of the capital, and was lying on its side in the Euphrates, Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said.

**Emad Rasheed, 45, said two U.S. helicopters were flying over the area when a missile hit one of them. The craft was burning as it went down after an explosion, witnesses said. Another witness, Saeed Hassan, 40, said the craft was on fire before it crashed.**

“I was standing near the river bank when I heard an explosion and saw one of the helicopters fall into the river,” said Ahmed Hamdan, a 35-year-old farmer. He and Hassan did not report seeing a missile.

**The U.S. military has lost 15 helicopters since the occupation began in May — mostly to hostile fire. Sixty-two Americans have died in the crashes.**

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**U.S. soldiers in front of a police station which was the site of a car bomb attack earlier in the day, in Kirkuk, Iraq Feb. 23, 2004. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)**

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## **Roadside Bomb Hits US Army Convoy; 4 Soldiers Hurt**

Dow Jones Newswires, February 24, 2004

BAGHDAD (Dow Jones)--A roadside bomb exploded Tuesday morning as a U.S. military convoy passed in the central Iraqi city of Baqouba, witnesses said.

The explosion damaged a Humvee and wounded four soldiers, the witnesses added.

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## Roadside Mine Hits Fuel Convoy

February 25, 2004 The Associated Press

Witnesses say a roadside bomb went off alongside a convoy of fuel tankers near a town south of Baghdad. They say a Saudi fuel truck was damaged and the driver injured.

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## Car Bomb Takes Out Kirkuk Police Station

24feb04 The Advertiser (Australia)

**KIRKUK, Iraq: A vehicle bomb detonated yesterday outside an Iraqi police station in a Kurdish neighborhood of this northern city, killing at least 10 police and wounding 45 others.**

**The attack – the latest in a string of vehicle and suicide bombings against Iraqi security forces and others seen as co-operating with the US-led occupation – came as US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld visited the headquarters of the 10th Armored Cavalry Regiment east of the capital, Baghdad.**

The blast in Kirkuk, 300km north of Baghdad, was the third since late January to target Kurds in the north.

About 20 policemen had gathered in front of the Rahimawa police station to get their day's orders when the car exploded, said the station's chief, Colonel Adel Ibrahim. The explosion heavily damaged nearby buildings and destroyed cars.

A US military rapid reaction team came to the scene, as ambulances ferried out casualties and police closed off the area.

**At least 10 people were killed, all of them believed to be policemen, and 45 people wounded, said officials at two Kirkuk hospitals.**

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## Baqouba Collaborator Police Blown Up

2.26.04 Associated Press

Iraqi police say a bomb planted in a police car parked outside a restaurant killed a police officer and injured eight other people. Officers were having lunch in the restaurant in the central city of Baqouba when the bomb was apparently slipped into the vehicle.



One officer says he and his colleagues saw a plastic bag in the car -- and that it blew up when a police lieutenant opened a car door. The lieutenant was killed. Six other police officers were hurt, along with two civilians.

Two police vehicles parked in front of a restaurant were set on fire, along with neighbouring shops.

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## **Resistance Kills 3 Iraqis Working For U.S. Military**

February 24, MOSUL, Iraq (Reuters)

Three Iraqis working for the U.S. military were killed by guerrillas who opened fire on their car, hospital officials said Tuesday, in the latest deadly attack on Iraqis cooperating with occupying forces.

The three Iraqis -- two translators and a technician -- were killed Monday evening as they drove to work at the U.S. military base at Mosul's airport. Two other Iraqis in the same vehicle were wounded, hospital officials said.

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## **Pipeline Cut Again**

2.26.04 Associated Press

An Iraqi security force member says an explosion damaged part of an oil pipeline about 60 miles north of Baghdad. He says an initial investigation points to a homemade bomb that was tossed under a network of oil and gas pipes.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

### **Still No Body Armor; Soldier Writes Guard Forced To Use Inferior Equipment**

As a Florida National Guardsman, I realize that going into a combat zone, we already have two strikes against us from active units.

What I cannot understand is that when units are shown in country, the Guard and reserves rarely are mentioned as anything but an afterthought.

When problems arise, active units are quick to explain the Guard unit is not organic but attached.

But when a cache of weapons is discovered, Saddam Hussein's son-in-law is arrested or a strategic goal is accomplished, guardsmen then are members of the active unit to which they are attached.

**Guard units make do with secondhand equipment and vehicles that are 10 or 15 years old, taking them into combat with fabricated defenses the Army says are not legal. Individuals, or their families, buy up-to-date body armor at personal expense because the Army has not provided it.**

**Active units have rotated out of theater, but the Guard remains. Pay problems, whether special pay or just a normal paycheck, are not an individual occurrence but epidemics encountered by all Guard units in Iraq and Afghanistan.**

In the end, members of the National Guard are not seeking the spotlight. We are career soldiers with a sense of service continued from our time on active duty.

We are not seeking headlines. We are not seeking glory.

We just want parity.

Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Feltman  
Ocala, Fla.  
Army Times 3.1.04

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## HOW MANY MORE FOR BUSH'S WAR?

February 27, 2004, By Joe Rothstein, Editor, USPoliticstoday.com

***"I still can't believe that I'm only 19 and had my combat patch when I was 18. To me that makes me feel very proud of my life. What's even cooler is that I will only be 20 years old when I do get out. That's very young and I will have already accomplished so much in my life. Cool, huh?"***

--Pfc Holly McGeogh in a January 9 email to her grandparents

**Holly's email was published by the *News-Herald*, a suburban Detroit newspaper, along with the story and a photo of her funeral.**

Holly was one of 3 U.S. soldiers killed January 31 near Kirkuk, Iraq, the victims of an explosive device that targeted their vehicle. The other soldiers were Sgt. Eliu A. Miersandoval, 27, of San Clemente, California and Cpl. Juan C. Cabralbanuelos, 25, of Emporia, Kansas.



Barbara Bucklew consoled by Army Sgt. First Class Mark Haines at the cemetery during the joint funeral for her husband, Sgt. Ernest Bucklew and his mother Mary Ellen Bucklew Nov. 8, 2003, in Beaver Falls, Pa. (AP Photo/Dave Miller)

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## Suicides Among Soldiers Who Served in Iraq

By Wayne Smith, February 24, 2004, Editor and Publisher

Any reporters researching the increasingly critical story of suicides among American troops who have served in Iraq are likely to suffer from a near-crippling bout of cognitive dissonance, a kind of temporal disconnect between the tragedy unfolding for some of our soldiers and the business-as-usual tempo of a nation largely unaware.

The army reports that 21 soldiers in Iraq and Kuwait have killed themselves since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom but this number will increase as suspicious non-combat deaths that have already occurred and might be suicides await classification by the army's Criminal Investigation Division (CID). **We have learned from a Pentagon source that the CID may not rule on these deaths until after the operation is over. Even the number of 21 is well above the average Army rate.**

**The army's peculiar calculus also excludes suicides that occur outside the "theater," that is, soldiers who served in Iraq or Kuwait but kill themselves once**

**they get home. The media is toting these up ad hoc.** United Press International discovered two at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and The Sun of Baltimore recently reported on one that occurred in a Shoney's Inn. But most of these tragedies will unfold anonymously since family members are often reluctant to speak publicly about a subject they consider taboo.

Now, over the next few weeks, as more troops rotate home, and the anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq approaches, the Pentagon faces the prospect of a potentially unwieldy public becoming more "casualty sensitive," something war planners have been conscious of since Vietnam brought the human or "blood" cost of conflict into America's living rooms.

**This looming milestone may explain a bizarre episode a few weeks ago when various Pentagon spokespeople began driving the suicide number down, to 18 or even 17, only to officially re-affirm a higher number later.**

Also hard to know are the reasons that soldiers are killing themselves. There is some evidence that the anti-malarial drug Lariam may be playing a role, but history tells us that the relentless stress and sheer bloodiness of this deployment will also be a factor. Last July, following a "spike" in suicides, Iraq forces commander General Ricardo Sanchez requested help from the Army surgeon general, and a 12-member "mental health advisory team" was quickly dispatched. **That team's much-anticipated report was reportedly finished months ago but its release keeps being postponed. The press should investigate why.**

Experts both on suicide and epidemiology, including the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, tell us that a cluster of suicides in a specific population, in this case the army, represents the thin edge of a numeric wedge. A report by UPI on Feb. 19 from the army's hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, offers a chilling glimpse at the size of the trouble heading for the military's already over-taxed and unprepared medical system. It said that about 1,000 soldiers have already been evacuated to Landstuhl for psychiatric reasons.

**The UPI story by award-winner Mark Benjamin also exposed what may be the Pentagon's internal mantra on an issue so explosive it could seriously downgrade the American public's support for this war. When asked how many soldiers the hospital has treated following actual suicide attempts, Col. Rhonda Cornum, commander of the hospital, wouldn't give a number, saying only, "This is a sensitive thing that some people might not want you to know, I guess."**

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## **Pentagon Eyes Malaria Drug In Troops Suicides**

*[UPI.com, February 25, 2003]*

Pentagon officials are examining an anti-malaria drug developed by the Army to determine if it might be causing suicides, **one month after asserting that the drug could not be a factor.**

<p><b>Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in</b></p>
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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/>

# POLITICIANS CALL SEXUAL TERROR AGAINST WOMEN "LAPSES"

February 26, 2004, By ERIC SCHMITT, The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25 **The United States military is facing the gravest accusations of sexual misconduct in years**, with dozens of servicewomen in the Persian Gulf area and elsewhere saying they were sexually assaulted or raped by fellow troops, lawmakers and victims advocates said on Wednesday.

There have been 112 reports of sexual misconduct over roughly the past 18 months in the Central Command area of operations, which includes Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan, military officials said on Wednesday.

The Army has reported 86 incidents, the Navy 12, the Air Force 8, the Marine Corps 6.

**The latest accusations are the most extensive set of sexual misconduct charges since the Navy's Tailhook incident of 1991 and the Army's drill sergeant scandal about five years later.**

The issue came to a boil at a contentious hearing on Capitol Hill on Wednesday, where Senate Democrats and Republicans sharply questioned the Pentagon's top personnel official and four four-star officers for ***what the lawmakers said were lapses in the military's ability to protect servicewomen from sexual assaults, to provide medical care and counseling to victims of attacks and to punish violators.***

Senator Ben Nelson, Democrat of Nebraska, voiced concern that senior Pentagon leaders had not sufficiently addressed the problem. "I don't get a sense of outrage by military leadership," Mr. Nelson said. **(No shit.)**

**Christine Hansen, executive director of The Miles Foundation, a victims' advocacy group in Newtown, Conn., told senators at the hearing that it had received reports of 68 cases of sexual assault, mainly from servicewomen in Iraq and Kuwait.**

**The women's complaints ranged from the lack of emergency medical care and rape kits, to incomplete criminal investigations into their reports to retaliation by peers for reporting an assault, she said.**

"We may just be beginning to see what the problem is," Ms. Hansen said in a telephone interview after the hearing.

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## **Report: Navy Drug Probe Leads To Charges Against Sailors While Bush Buddies Deal Tons Of Opium**

*[New York Times on the Web, February 26, 2004]*

A three-year Navy investigation has led to drug charges filed against 18 sailors on 10 nuclear vessels from Connecticut to Hawaii. (Meanwhile, Bush's new Afghan puppet government is exporting tons of opium all over the world. The sailors should have gone to Afghanistan. If you're a Bush buddy, you get hundreds of millions in tax dollars from narcotics.)

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **Iraqi Deputy Police Chief Assassinated**

2.25.05 Ananova Ltd

**The resistance assassinated the deputy police chief in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.**

**Militants warned of further attacks on Iraqi security forces and Kurdish militiamen, accusing them of protecting "infidel" Americans.**

Brigadier Hikmat Mohammed was killed by gunmen in a car as he headed to his office. **Hours earlier, a previously unknown militant group, the Mujahedeen Brigades in Iraq, distributed leaflets at police stations in the northern city of Kirkuk, threatening attacks on police and Kurdish militias for co-operating with Americans.**

**"Anyone who supports and co-operated with the infidels will be under threat of death," the group said. It threatened attacks on police checkpoints and warned, "We know all these forces' movements."**

**"This is the last word for you, our Muslim brothers: Don't be a shield for the infidel Americans and sacrifice yourself for a handful of dollars," the leaflet said.**

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## FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

# The Coming Implosion of the American Empire

by Gary North 02/23/04: ([www.LewRockwell.com](http://www.LewRockwell.com))

If you want a mental image of what is taking place in the White House today, picture Dorothy and her three companions walking through the forest of Oz. They are chanting, over and over, "Shi'ites and Sunnis and Kurds."

The contraction of the American empire will begin in June. It has already lost considerable legitimacy in the eyes of the voters, not because of some great alteration of their principles, but because we are being car-bombed out of the place. The oil is not flowing. Sand isn't worth the price.

**The war in Iraq has been costly in every sense, yet Americans still are paying higher prices at the gasoline pump. The price of oil has risen. The flow of oil out of Iraq today barely trickles. The pipelines cannot be defended by our troops. They are being blown up, although the media rarely report this.**

The implosion of the American empire is about to begin – not just the military one but also the commercial one. **An empire that can no longer afford to keep its troops on active duty in occupied areas is not a good credit risk.**

### **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/>

## **David Cline To Speak In NYC On “From Vietnam To Iraq, U.S. Soldiers Against War”**

Dave Cline is national president of Veterans for Peace, a coordinator of Vietnam Veterans Against the War, and helped to initiate the Bring Them Home Now campaign. He will be speaking on "From Vietnam to Iraq: US Soldiers Against War." See time, location below.

East Coast Socialist Conference:

## Resisting US Empire: Fighting for a Better World

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Saturday ★ March 6 ★ Columbia University ★ 115th & Broadway ★ NYC

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★ *Featuring*

★ Is Revolution Possible in the US?

★ From Guantanamo to Death Row: Criminal Injustice in America

★ From Vietnam to Iraq: US Soldiers Against War

★ Recovery for Who? The Wal-Martization of America

★ Why the Anti-war Movement should support the Iraqi Resistance

★ No Restrictions, Access for All: How do we Defend Abortion Rights?

★ Why we have to Fight for Gay Marriage

★ Anybody but Bush: The Politics of Lesser Evilism

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In reaction to the Bush agenda, our society is polarizing on almost every question from the occupation of Iraq to gay marriage. **It has grown so polarized that pundits have taken to calling America the "50-50" nation.** In the face of this polarization, and growing opposition to Bush, the Democratic Party has offered only tepid rhetorical opposition to Bush, and has backed almost all of his initiatives from massive budget cuts to the Patriot Act to the occupation of Iraq.

Nonetheless, we have seen the beginnings of a resistance against this rightwing political and economic offensive. Grocery workers in Southern California are striking for affordable health care and decent wages. And activists around the country are gearing up for protests this spring against the occupation of Iraq, for abortion rights, and against the IMF and World Bank.

As struggle from below begins to revive, political debates, which will have a real impact on the direction of resistance in the US, have taken center stage. Socialist ideas have never been more important for understanding the world, and helping to build broad, militant and effective movements for change. Join hundreds of socialists, activists, students and trade unionists to discuss the pivotal debates in the reviving opposition and how the capitalist system itself can be challenged to create a society based on human need, real democracy and equality.

East Coast Socialist Conference Schedule:



11am OPENING FORUM: Is Revolution Possible in the US

12:30-1:30pm Lunch Break

1:30pm WORKSHOP SESSION I:

- \* No Restrictions, Access for All: How do we Defend Abortion Rights?
- \* From Guantanamo to Death Row: Criminal Injustice in America
- \* Anybody but Bush: The Politics of Lesser Evilism
- \* Why the Anti-war Movement Should Oppose the Occupation of Palestine
- \* Mad Cows and Melting Ice Caps: How Can We Save the Environment?
- \* How do we Rebuild the Labor Movement?
- \* Capitalism: Can the System Be Fixed?
- \* In Defense of Leninism

3:30pm WORKSHOP SESSION II:

- \* Why we have to Fight for Gay Marriage
- \* The Rebellion Against Neoliberalism in Latin America
- \* Recovery for Who? The Wal-Martization of America
- \* From Civil Rights to Black Power: Lessons for Fighting Racism

**\* From Vietnam to Iraq: US Soldiers Against War**

- \* Why the Anti-war Movement should support the Iraqi Resistance
- \* No Scapegoating or Indentured Servants: Equal Rights for Immigrants
- \* Socialists in Movements: The United Front Strategy

Dinner Break

7:30PM CLOSING FORUM: \* The Struggle for Socialism: A World to Win

9pm-1am PARTY

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Location: Columbia University, Lerner Auditorium, 115<sup>th</sup> St. & Broadway, 1/9 trains to 116th St., \$5 registration

For groups that would like to reserve table space at the conference, please contact Joe at [JCleffie@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:JCleffie@gc.cuny.edu) Fee is \$25 per table and includes registration fees for two people.

For more info: call (212)502-0707 or email [nyciso@hotmail.com](mailto:nyciso@hotmail.com) or visit <http://www.nesocialism.com> To reserve free, on-site childcare, please call by Saturday, Feb. 28

Sponsored by the International Socialist Organization

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## **A Walk Down Memory Lane-Some May Not Want To Take**

**From:** James February 24, 2004

**Subject:** While there are Several 'Very Good', 'Excellent' WebSites on 'Vietnam' this one we found a few years back I consider 'The Best'!!

<http://www.vietnampix.com/index.html>

For some of my Fellow Brothers of 'Nam they may not want to Re-Visit that which took place so long ago, but still lives with us to this day! In light of Recent Occurrences pertaining to the 'Politics of War' than and the 'Politics of War' Now and Who Served there and Who Didn't, I just revisited the site after not doing so for months!!

**(Comment: These are the finest photos of armed forces life in Vietnam you can find, short of having the original glossy prints in your hand, including some wonderful shots of GIs obviously in a totally FTA frame of mind. Thanks to James for spreading the word.)**

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## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

### **“They Will Choke Me”**

NY Times 2.21.04

Mr. Othman, the Kurdish member of the Governing Council, said he was so frustrated by the current deadlock and by American policy that he was inclined to let Mr. Bremer be the one to explain the situation to the Kurdish people.

**“If I try to go back to my people and sell these things to them, they will choke me,” Mr. Othman said. “Let Mr. Bremer tell them.”**

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## **Bremer Tells Truth!**

Wall St. Journal 2.23.04

In any event the US intends to remain in Iraq long after the formal end of occupation. **“While the US. presence will change its name from ‘coalition provisional authority’ to an assistance mission, that’s about all that changes,”** said L. Paul Bremer, the U.S. administrator in Iraq.

<p><b>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></b></p>
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## **DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

# **Nader For More Dead American Soldiers And Iraqis; Wants U.S. Troops To Stay Until UN Occupation Takes Over**

From: <http://www.votener.org/issues/index.php#iraqwar>

“The quagmire of the Iraq war and occupation could have been averted and needs to be ended expeditiously, **replacing US forces with a UN peacekeeping force.....**” blah blah blah.

### **Comment:**

Some time ago, GI Special pointed out that candidate Kucinich, in a Rolling Stone interview last fall, said he was for getting U.S. soldiers out of Iraq---as soon as a UN occupation replaced them---and on that basis had the nerve to present himself as a “peace candidate.”

It was pointed out that this was really disgusting hypocrisy---let the UN troops occupy Iraq and do the dying and killing---and a real piece of weasel-work---let the U.S. soldiers keep on with the Occupation until the UN takes over, if ever. That’s exactly what Nader’s words mean. He is not calling for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops. He doesn’t even say “Bring Them Home Now.”

(Nader’s program also ignores the reality that Iraqis consider the UN offices and personnel in Iraq a legitimate target of war. They are right to do so. UN sanctions imposed after the first Gulf War killed at least a million Iraqis.)

Now Nader takes up the kinder, gentler Imperial banner dropped by the fallen Kucinich.

Those willing to see more dead American soldiers and dead Iraqis are certainly welcome to avert their eyes from the heaps of dead, blessing his candidacy. Hypocrisy loves company.

Deeply in trouble, the U.S. Empire needs all the friends it can find, even soft friends like Nader and whatever unprincipled political operatives he can gather around himself, willing to overlook his bloody program for the continued occupation and oppression of Iraq.

Opposition to the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq, whether naked and open or faintly concealed behind UN blue helmets, is not negotiable.

**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.**

### **THE FACE OF THE ENEMY**



February 23, 2004. (Kevin Lamarque/Reuters)

### **THE FACE OF THE FOOL**



Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge demonstrates how much his nose grows every time he issues another lying bullshit color-coded National Security Alert. Feb. 19, 2004. AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana.

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# Rumsfeld Praises Bloody Tyrant For Help In U.S. War

February 24, 2004 By Vince Crawley, Army Times staff writer

TASHKENT, Uzbekistan

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said Tuesday the United States has “benefited greatly” from its military presence in this Central Asian nation.

Rumsfeld, who visited Uzbekistan on his way to Afghanistan met with Uzbek leaders, including President Islam Karimov.

At a news conference Tuesday in Tashkent, Rumsfeld said the U.S. government was “pleased” by reports **that a prominent prisoner was released the day before his arrival, an apparent concession toward U.S. and international concerns. Fatima Mukadrinova, 62, had been convicted of antigovernment activities after claiming her son died while being tortured by Uzbek authorities.**

**A U.N. envoy who visited in 2002 filed a report saying torture was common in Uzbek jails.**

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## Capitalism At Work:

### **As Soldiers Go Without Body Armor: Pentagon Gives More Millions To Boeing, Lockheed—Because They Lost Customers!!!**

*[Los Angeles Times, February 26, 2004*

Boeing Co. and Lockheed Martin Corp. will be paid 50% more to send U.S. military satellites into space **to compensate for the collapse of commercial demand that threatens their launch business.**

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## **Bushrat Leaves Defense Policy Board**

*[Washington Post, February 26, 2004, Pg. 7]*

Richard Perle has resigned from the Defense Policy Board, saying he wanted to avoid becoming a lightning rod for criticism of the administration during an election year.

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## AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

### **ONE U.S. SOLDIER KILLED AND ONE INJURED IN VEHICLE ACCIDENT**

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND  
February 26, 2004, Release Number: 04-02-16C

KABUL, Afghanistan - One U.S. soldier was killed and another U.S. soldier injured at approximately 8 p.m. Feb. 25 in a single-vehicle accident here.

The soldiers, assigned to the Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan here, were traveling along a main road.

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### **Mine Wounds U.S. Soldier In Afghanistan**

February 24, 2004 Associated Press

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — A jeep on patrol hit a land mine in central Afghanistan, wounding one U.S. soldier, an Afghan provincial governor said Tuesday.

The U.S. soldier, who was not seriously wounded, was moved to a nearby base at Deh Rawood, said Gov. Jan Mohammed Khan.

Afghan troops also carried out a search operation in the village on Tuesday and arrested five more suspected Taliban, Khan said.

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### **“Defense” Official Says Afghan Resistance Fighters In Biggest Offensive Since Invasion**

*[Chicago Tribune, February 25, 2004]*

Vice Adm. Lowell Jacoby, head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, said attacks by a resurgent Taliban and fighters loyal to one of Afghanistan’s most powerful warlords have reached their “highest levels since the collapse of the Taliban government.”

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## OCCUPATION PALESTINE

----- Original Message -----

From: "M\*\*\*\*\*" (**Rafah, Palestine**)

To: <[thomasfbarton@earthlink.net](mailto:thomasfbarton@earthlink.net)>

Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2004 11:11 AM

Subject: RE: GI Special 2#32: Constant War

Dear Thomas:

Thank you very much for spreading my website in your list all best regards.

Mohammed

**Reply:** It's you who deserve the thanks of decent people everywhere for your fine and courageous work!

Solidarity, T.

**(To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by a foreign power, go to: [www.rafah.vze.com](http://www.rafah.vze.com). The foreign army is Israeli; the occupied nation is Palestine.)**

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### **Received;**

**MAX W. AUSTRALIA WRITES CONCERNING THE NEWS STORY BELOW:**

**ADD: THERE IS MUCH IRRITATION IN PORT MORESBY, PAPUA-NEW GUINEA, AS THE HELICOPTER BELONGED TO THE "PACIFIC HELICOPTER" COMPANY IN GOROKA, E. HIGHLANDS, AND HAD BEEN HIRED TO AFGHANISTAN VIA AUSTRALIA. THE OWNER IS A RECENTLY NATURALIZED PAPUA-NEW GUINEA CITIZEN/ EXPATRIATE AUSTRALIAN.**

(Story)

Resistance Shoots Down U.S. Helicopter, Pilot Killed Wall St. Journal, 2.23.04

On Saturday an insurgent opened fire on a helicopter carrying workers from a U.S. construction company in the region, killing the Australian pilot and injuring one U.S. passenger Afghan and U.S. officials said, according to the Associated Press.

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