

GI SPECIAL 2#43

Active Duty Soldiers Join War Protest



Photo by Debbie Liebers

Among the crowd who sat and listened as speaker after speaker spoke from the heart against this disastrous occupation were perhaps a half dozen active duty soldiers, in civvies but with unmistakable "high and tight" military haircuts.

Fayetteville, North Carolina

(Story from and more photos at

http://www.bringthemhomenow.org/what/campaign_news/040320_NCfayetteville.html)

At 12 noon, just over 1000 demonstrators fell in behind a contingent of veterans and military families and swung out of the assembly point onto the main drag in Fayetteville, home of Fort Bragg and other military facilities. Behind a banner with the demo's slogan —"Real Support for Our Troops: Bring Them Home Now!"— Veterans For Peace members in the lead contingent started chanting marching cadences. Call and response rang over the Fayetteville streets:

One year ago this very day
Bush betrayed the USA
A year of lies has come and gone
Time to bring our children home!

Bush and Cheney talk that talk
But we know they're chicken hawks
If they think they're so damn right
Let Bush and Cheney go and fight!

When the GIs come back home
And take off their uniform
"Support our Troops" will sure sound fine
On the unemployment line!

Sound Off: One, Two
Sound Off: Three, Four
Bring It On Down: One, Two, Three, Four,
One, Two, THREE FOUR



Photo by Debbie Liebers

On a beautiful spring day, the march proceeded to Rowan Park for what even veteran activists agreed was one of the best and most inspiring rallies they had ever attended.

Among the crowd who sat and listened as speaker after speaker spoke from the heart against this disastrous occupation were perhaps a half dozen active duty soldiers, in civvies but with unmistakable "high and tight" military haircuts.

They listened, and talked earnestly with activists like Philadelphia VFP's Mike Hoffman, who recently ETS'd from the Marine artillery company he served in during the invasion last year.

Throughout, the voices of military families and veterans of wars rang out. Some well known voices in this growing movement, like Nancy Lessin of Military Families Speak Out, David Potorti of September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, Michael McPhearson of Veterans for Peace and MFSO, served as voices for those in whose name Bush and company claim to speak.



Photo by Debbie Liebers

Others who took the stage were among those have begun speaking out more recently.

Camilo Mejia's aunt, Norma, read greetings from the Army Staff Sergeant who has just turned himself in and applied for conscientious objector status after being AWOL since October. Elaine Johnson from Cordoba, SC seemed hesitant as she approached to the stage and then stepped firmly to the mike and delivered a searing condemnation of the administration and the policy that left her son Darius dead in Iraq.

Beth Pratt's husband drives trucks in convoys in Iraq, highly vulnerable to attack by roadside bombs planted by the Iraqi armed resistance. She told the crowd how important the demonstration was, because opposing the war in a military town, "You can feel very isolated and alone. Ending this war and bringing them all home safely would be the best form of support that I can see."

MORE:

Ft. Bragg Protest Takes Aim At Iraq War

The Charleston Post and Courier March 21, 2004 BY RON MENCHACA, Post and Courier Staff



Staff photo by Tracy Wilcox, The Fayetteville Observer

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C.--War protesters returned to this military town's Rowan Park Saturday, hoping to do for soldiers in the Middle East what an earlier generation of activists helped do for soldiers in Vietnam: Bring them home.

On the first anniversary of the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, about 1,500 people from across the Southeast, including the South Carolina Low country, rallied here against the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

They came to the front gates of Fort Bragg, home of some of the military's toughest combat units, outfits that have lost soldiers in the war. But with the exception of a few verbal insults, the protesters met with no confrontation.

The event was one of several coinciding protests around the country, including a small one in Charleston. **The protests are among the first large-scale public demonstrations organized in part by family members of soldiers serving in Iraq.**

Among the attendees was Harriet Johnson, mother of Army Spc. Darius T. Jennings of Orangeburg, who was killed in Iraq on Nov. 2, 2003, when a helicopter he was riding in was shot down over Fallujah.

Vietnam and Gulf War veterans marched alongside college students, grandmothers and state government employees. Most said they support the troops but not the war.

They descended on a town with a vaunted military installation, Fort Bragg, home to famed military units such as the 82nd Airborne Division and Special Forces.

Casey Burns-Thompson of Fayetteville said she didn't tell her husband that she and their 7-month-old daughter were going to the rally to protest the war he is fighting in.

"I don't think he would be bothered by it," she said. "I'm doing it because he can't."

She said her husband is a sergeant with a Fort Bragg active duty unit, but she declined to give specifics for fear that her attendance at the rally would cause problems for him.

"He just feels like the Iraqi people don't want him there," said the 27-year-old Burns-Thompson, as she marched up Hay Street, her daughter bouncing in a backpack baby

carrier.

Her husband has seen his daughter only once in her life, in October when he came home on leave. She said he is frustrated because he can share his true feelings only with a few of his military buddies and is suffering mostly in silence.



Photo by Debbie Liebers

Michael Hoffman said that's about how it was in his Marine Corps unit. Hoffman, a former artilleryman and lance corporal from Camp Lejeune, N.C., was part of the initial invasion of Iraq last March.

After completing his four-year enlistment, Hoffman moved to Pennsylvania, where he's now active with a chapter of Veterans for Peace.

"I went in there saying we shouldn't be there," he said. "But our mindset was 'we are here, so let's look out for each other so we can go home.' "

Hoffman said he had reservations about taking part in the Fayetteville rally, knowing that he'd be protesting a war just outside a military post that has lost soldiers in Iraq. "I was edgy last night. This is the first time I've been back in a military town."

The protestors were greeted along the marching route by counter-protestors, many of them former and current military from the Fayetteville area.

The counter-protestors revved motorcycle engines to drown out speakers at the anti-war rally.

Al Ely of Cary gritted his teeth as the protestors marched past him up a hill. "It's making me very angry," said the Vietnam veteran. "They did this to me when I was in Vietnam. I'd like to see them all go back to France."

Daniel Regenscheit, 20, a graduate of Summerville High School, came to the rally on a chartered bus from Columbia.

A political science major at the University of South Carolina, Regenscheit said he came

to the rally not so much to change other people's minds but to express his own frustration about the war.

"We are just in a rut," Regenscheit said. "There's really no hope for either side. I don't think that staying over there is going to provide a solution."

BRAGG BRIEFS

VOL. 5 no. 2 MAY 1972 DONATIONS

THIS IS YOUR PERSONAL PROPERTY (AN 210-10)
ANYONE WHO TRIES TO TAKE IT FROM YOU IS COMMITTING A CRIME.

Make Your Own History or



They'll Make It For You

(From "Make Your Own History" Documents from the GI Resistance, 1969-1975 Fayetteville/Ft. Bragg. An Exhibit from the Bruce Pulliam Collection in the Quaker House Archives May 18-19, 2002)

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/>

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Marine Killed Near Ar Ramady

March 22, 2004 RELEASE No. 207-04

The Department of Defense announced today the death of a Marine who was supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Lance Cpl. Andrew S. Dang, 20, of Foster City, Calif., died March 22, due to hostile fire near Ar Ramady, Iraq. He was assigned to 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Dead Marine, Mortar Attacks? Just An "Average" Day In Iraq; Iraqis Not Celebrating Invasion Day

By CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA. Associated Press 03/20/04

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- The first anniversary of the start of the war that ousted Saddam Hussein was a day like many others in Iraq: a mortar attack in a northern city, an attempt to kill a politician and news of a U.S. Marine cut down by rebel fire.

Overall, Saturday was average by recent Iraqi standards.

The millions of Iraqis who exulted in Saddam's downfall did not publicly celebrate the day. Even those who opposed Saddam are uncomfortable with the invasion and extended occupation of Iraq by foreign armies and said they felt more insecure now than they did before the United States launched military strikes.

Insurgents fired four mortar rounds at the offices of a Kurdish political party in the northern city of Mosul on Saturday but missed and killed a driver on a nearby street, Iraqi police said. Guards fired at the rebels; three party members and a passer-by were wounded in the shootout.

In the northern city of Kirkuk, Iraqi police said Subhi Saber a Turkman politician, survived an assassination attempt Saturday. Assailants opened fire on Saber's car, injuring his driver, but the politician escaped.

Another Fool In Command

By CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA. Associated Press 03/20/04

At the handover ceremony at a U.S. base in Ramadi, Marine commander Maj. Gen. James Mattis issued a warning to insurgents.

"And for those who want to fight, for the foreign fighters and former regime people, they'll regret it. We're going to handle them very roughly," he said. (**"We?" Not only is this halfwit still peddling the old stale shit about "foreign fighters" and "former regime people," the last thing Maj. Gen. James Mattis handled roughly was his dick, jerking off to fantasies about how his AP press interview will go over in the Pentagon. His troops will do the dying while he plans his next step up the military corporate ladder. See the next story about who's getting "handled roughly."**)

Three Marines Killed In Anbar

By CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA. Associated Press 03/20/04 & Mar 20, 2004 BAGHDAD (Reuters)

Hours after U.S. Marines officially took control Saturday from the 82nd Airborne Division of a swath of territory west of Baghdad, the U.S. military said rebels had killed a U.S. Marine in the area, Anbar province, a day earlier.

Two Marines also died in combat Wednesday in Anbar, which includes parts of the so-called Sunni Triangle where guerrilla attacks have been fierce.

The Marine died near the restive town of Fallujah, west of Baghdad, the U.S. military said on Saturday.

"Enemy action killed a Marine with the 1st Expeditionary Force in the Al Anbar province on Friday," the military said in a statement, referring to a region west of Baghdad which is an area of *unrest*. (How about using the word "war?" Oh, shit no, that might be too real. His family will no doubt be reassured to know he was killed by a bit of "unrest." And the enemy in action who killed the Marine is George Bush, who sent him to Iraq. Payback is overdue.)

"The Marine was participating in security and stability operations when the attack occurred," the statement said. **(The Marine was participating in an occupation of somebody else's country ordered by a bunch of murdering scum in change of the U.S. government to grab some oil, but it sounds so much sweeter to say "security and stability." The soldiers know the truth, whatever inane bullshit command comes up with to try to deceive the public.)**

The Marines this month took over responsibility for the region from the 82nd Airborne Division as part of a massive rotation of U.S. forces serving in Iraq.

Rocket Attack Near Fallujah Kills Two US Soldiers, Wounds Six Soldiers And A Sailor

3.21.04 By Fiona O'Brien and Suleiman al-Khalidi, BAGHDAD (Reuters)

A rocket attack on Saturday night killed two U.S. soldiers and wounded seven near the flashpoint town of Falluja.

Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt, deputy director of U.S. army operations in Iraq, on Sunday said three rockets hit a base near the town west of Baghdad and two landed outside. The wounded comprised six from the army and one from the navy.

The U.S. military, which blames the insurgency on former Saddam loyalists and foreign Islamist militants, said rocket attacks were on the rise, though still less deadly to its forces than improvised bombs, small arms fire and mortars.

Task Force 1st Armored Division Soldier Killed In Abu Ghurayb Explosive Attack

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
March 21, 2004 Release Number: 04-03-17C

BAGHDAD, Iraq - A Task Force 1st Armored Division Soldier and an Iraqi interpreter were killed and three other Soldiers were wounded during an IED attack March 21.

The incident occurred in western Baghdad at about 7 p.m. **The Soldiers were conducting a mounted patrol in the Abu Ghurayb district.**

US Soldier Electrocuted Working On Equip

Dow Jones Newswires 20Mar2004 & UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Release Number: 04-03-16C 3.21.04

TIKRIT, Iraq (AP)--A U.S. soldier was fatally electrocuted while working on communication equipment at Forward Operating Base Comanche north of Baqubah March 19 at approximately 2 p.m. the Army said Saturday.

Army spokeswoman Maj. Debra Stewart said the 1st Infantry Division soldier was evacuated to the 31ST Combat Support Hospital at Balad where he died from injuries.

One Soldier Killed, Two Hurt In Road Accident

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
March 20, 2004 Release Number: 04-03-15C

TIKRIT, Iraq - One Task Force Ironhorse soldier died and two were injured when their vehicle rolled over near Taji at approximately 10:00 a.m. Thursday.

The injured soldiers were evacuated to the combat support hospital on Forward Operating Base Anaconda for treatment. The name of the deceased soldier is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

1st Infantry Division Soldier Killed in Live-Fire Accident

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
March 21, 2004 Release Number: 04-03-18C

TIKRIT, IRAQ - This morning at approximately 10:00 a.m. one 1st Infantry Division soldier was killed during a pre-patrol test firing in preparation for a mission near Samarra.

STRYKER BRIGADE SOLDIER DIES IN SHOOTING

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
March 23, 2004 Release Number: 04-03-19C

MOSUL, Iraq - A soldier from 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team), under the operational control of Task Force Olympia, died from a non-combat related shooting here yesterday.

The incident is under investigation.

US Soldier Wounded In Mosul; Karbala Police Station Blown Up

www.albawaba.com March 20, 2004 &3.21.04 By Fiona O'Brien and Suleiman al-Khalidi, BAGHDAD (Reuters)

A US soldier was wounded in northern Iraq. The soldier was wounded Friday in the city of Mosul when a rocket-propelled grenade was fired at the convoy he was traveling in.

According to *AFP*, Iraqi police too have been targeted. A blast hit the police station in Karbala to the south causing heavy damage but no casualties.

In other attacks on Sunday, a bomb exploded at a police station in Khalis, north of Baghdad, killing a policeman and wounding two. A roadside bomb intended for a U.S. convoy hurt a municipal worker in the northern city of Mosul, police said.

U.S. Military Helicopter Shot Down

The Associated Press 3/20/04

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) -- A U.S. military helicopter was downed by rebel fire west of Baghdad, but there were no injuries, the U.S. military said Saturday.

The downing occurred Friday near Amariya, south of Fallujah, said Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt, the U.S. military's deputy director of operations. **Insurgents are active in the area. (No shit?)**

"Both pilots were recovered without injury and forces secured the crash site and completed recovery efforts," Kimmitt said.

On Friday, Spc. Justin McCue, a military spokesman in Baghdad, said a military OH-58 Kiowa helicopter made a precautionary landing because of mechanical problems in Amariya, and that both pilots were uninjured.

It was not immediately clear whether Kimmitt was referring to the same helicopter cited by McCue.

Resistance Marks Anniversary Of Start Of War; Mortars Hit U.S. Coalition HQ in Iraq

By DANIEL COONEY, Associated Press Writer 3.21.04

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Two mortar rounds landed in the headquarters compound of the U.S.-led coalition Sunday, sending command staff to bunkers for safety inside the fortified complex in the center of Iraq's capital.

The attack in Baghdad came a day after the first anniversary of the Iraq war amid a spike in attacks on coalition forces throughout the country.

It was not immediately clear whether there were any casualties from the mortar attack on the U.S. command compound.

A third mortar round landed in the upscale neighborhood of Mansour outside the compound damaged cars and shops. Officials at the nearby Yarmouk Hospital said one civilian was killed in the attack and 10 were wounded.

Mortar and rocket attacks on the coalition headquarters are common. Staff there are often told to move into bunkers

In other developments The U.S. military said it charged six soldiers, members of a military police unit, Saturday over the alleged abuse in November and December of about 20 Iraqi detainees at Abu Ghraib prison on the outskirts of Baghdad.

MORE:

US Soldier Wounded In Daylight Attack On Occupation HQ; "Freedom Rest" Nailed

Mar 21, 2004 By Fiona O'Brien and Suleiman al-Khalidi, Reuters & CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA, Associated Press Writer

Anti-U.S. guerrillas fired rockets into the middle of Baghdad in a rare daylight salvo Sunday, killing two civilians and **wounding six people, including an American soldier**, a U.S. military spokesman said.

"Three rockets impacted in central Baghdad on Sunday morning," a U.S. army spokesman said.

He said one rocket landed in the Green Zone, one of Saddam's former palace complexes west of the Tigris river, where the U.S.-led administration is based, and two outside.

"We have reports of two Iraqi civilians killed and five injured. One U.S. soldier was slightly injured," the spokesman said. The injured soldier was hit by flying glass. **The rocket that hit the Green Zone landed in "Freedom Rest," a 1st Armored Division rest and recreation area. The missiles used were probably 127-mm rockets, he said.**

Guerrillas have repeatedly fired rockets and mortars at the Green Zone, but usually under cover of darkness.

Two Finnish Capitalists Shot In Baghdad

22 Mar 2004 HELSINKI, March 22 (Reuters)

Two Finnish businessmen on a trip to Iraq were shot dead by sniper fire in Baghdad on Monday, the foreign ministry said.

National Finnish broadcaster YLE said the two men, part of a Finnish business delegation, were killed at 0900 GMT while on their way to the Ministry of Electricity.

14 British Soldiers Hurt In Basra Blasts

22/03/2004 News.telegraph.co.uk & Associated Press & The Hindu, 3.23.04

LONDON - Iraqi demonstrators threw petrol bombs and stones at British troops in the southern Iraqi city of Basra on Monday, wounding 14 soldiers, an official said.

A British Ministry of Defense spokesman said the 14 soldiers were evacuated in vehicles or helicopters to a nearby British military hospital at Shaibah. Three of them were seriously wounded, but none had life-threatening injuries, he said on condition of anonymity.

A MoD spokesman said that the attackers appeared to have deliberately targeted coalition forces. There were no reports of Iraqi civilians or police being wounded. (Imagine that, deliberately targeting coalition forces. What will they think of next?)

As the demonstration began, one soldier was hurt, but the main attack occurred later in the day when "an explosive device" and several petrol bombs detonated close to the British forces, wounding 13, the spokesman said.

British television showed the demonstrators throwing rocks at British soldiers riding tanks and standing behind plastic shields. **Two Associated Press photographs showed a British soldier running down one street with his head and shoulders on fire, presumably from one of the petrol bombs.**

The several hundred Iraqi demonstrators were protesting a failure to get jobs with the local customs police. Some protesters shouted slogans in support of Saddam Hussein, and others denounced the killing of Hamas leader Sheikh Yassin.

The spokesman said it would be wrong to see the incident as "a terrorist-related attack" because it involved British soldiers acting to bring public unrest under control, he said.

Eight Iraqi Collaborator Troops Bombed At U.S. Camp Anaconda

22/03/2004 News.telegraph.co.uk

Eight Iraqi soldiers were injured in a bomb attack outside an American military base north of Baghdad.

Two of the soldiers are believed to be in a serious condition after the blast in the early hours of this morning.

The attack took place at Camp Anaconda which is a major centre for American operations in central Iraq. It has been regularly targeted by militants opposed to the US-led occupation in Iraq.

15 Fijian Men 'Missing In Iraq'

03/22/04 **FijiLive:** [Fifteen former soldiers serving with international security firm Global Risk Services have gone 'missing' in Iraq, confirms their former employer Colonel Sakiusa Raivoce.](#)

TROOP NEWS

Iraq Vet Says “We Are Stuck;” The Empire Is “Going To Lose”

Fayetteville Observer 3.20.04

Spc. Anis Attia packed a copy of the Quran in his rucksack when he went off to war.

Attia, 30, is a native of Tunisia who moved to New York six years ago. He shares a common religion and language with the people of Iraq.

Attia said he is not devout. “I believe in my religion, but I am not practicing,” he said. “I like to go out, drink and hang out.”

But his Muslim heritage raised some questions among his fellow paratroopers. He said they would ask him what he would do if he were attacked by the Iraqis. “I am a soldier. If they tried to kill me, I would have to kill them,” he said.

Attia was frustrated by his year in Iraq.

“You can’t change the world,” he said. “If you try, like any great empire, you are going to lose. By creating more wars, we are creating more terrorism.”

He did the best job he could, he said. But he fears that even the best effort can’t save Iraq. **“We are stuck. Iraq is going to be a dangerous place for a long time;” he said.**

Since Attia could speak fluent Arabic, he was the point man for much of the intelligence gathering for his battalion, and was instrumental during the combat phase of the conflict in establishing contact with the sheiks who ran Rumaythah, a village just north of the city of Samawah.

His work with Iraqis has not left him optimistic about the chances for peace.

"Some people work with you in the morning and at night shoot mortars at you," Attia said.

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.

Soldiers Have To Buy "A Years Worth Of Socks"

Diane March 22, Veterans For Peace

Susan Galleymore spoke, who recently spent 12 days in Iraq with Code Pink. Her son is serving there. Her story was painful and shocking (although her son, so far, is ok). As much as I've read about what is going on there, it was still difficult to hear the words from a first-hand witness.

She talked of the fact that our soldiers are given a "shopping list" of things to buy, with their own money, before they leave the US. Included on this list, amazingly, are a years' worth of SOCKS. We already had heard stories about soldiers having to buy their own body armor.

And then there was the story about a young Iraqi woman who was left for dead by American troops. A female US soldier stole her gold earrings.

Susan's convoy was attacked. One of the vehicles was run off the road and robbed at gunpoint.

The Deep Thoughts Of General Dempsey

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, March 19, 2004

"We were fighting them knowing full well the better we did the harder it would get," said Maj. Gen. Martin Dempsey, the commander of the U.S. Army's 1st Armored Division, which oversees security in Baghdad. **(So, when the situation becomes irredeemably hopeless, that will be a sure sign of complete victory.)**

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/>

Delivery Delays Hurt U.S. Effort To Equip Iraqis

[New York Times, March 22, 2004, Pg. 1]

U.S. commanders in Iraq are publicly upset about delays in delivering radios, body armor and other equipment that hamper their ability to construct an effective Iraqi security force capable of replacing American troops in the country. **(How about the body armor the US troops don't have? Or doesn't that matter?)**

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Shias And Sunnis Together Demonstrate Against Occupation “No To American Terrorism”

March 19, 2004. Dr. Geert Van Moorter,
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Iraq/message/6445>

It is Friday today, the Muslim holiday. But it is also one year after the start of the war on Iraq.

Right after the Friday's prayer in the mosque, there is a demonstration. I march along with them. First with a big group of Sunni Muslims. But at a certain point they waited for the people who were coming out of a Shia mosque, at the other side of the Tigris River. A beautiful moment to see important imams of both religious groups join hands.

Together, the marchers – I estimate them at between 2,000 and 3,000 – walked to a certain plaza. Some of the slogans they carried along were written in English on

placards and streamers. They read: “Geneva Conventions???” , “No to American terrorism” and “No to occupying” (sic).

I reflect upon the fact that exactly one year ago, on the eve of the first bombings, I was also marching here with the Iraqi people, against the threatening war. Someone then gave me a small olive branch as a symbol of peace. I have always kept it, and I brought it even with me here in Iraq. During this demonstration, I take it up again. **Our worldwide and massive rallies last year were not able to stop the war. And yet, today, we are marching once more, this time against the occupation, and for freedom.**

My friend Ghazwan is of the opinion that the occupation is but the prolongation of the embargo, with the insecurity added to it. The embargo? “Yes, now, too, many things are not functioning, many things are lacking.” And insecurity was something unknown to the Iraqi’s back then. “Now, you can not even let your children go out on the street alone”, Ghazwan says. “Things are worse than before.”

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

Resistance Gets 11 Collaborator Cops One Day

Mar 23, 2004 By Ali Jasim, BAGHDAD, Iraq (Reuters) & The Hindu

Insurgents shot and killed 11 Iraqi police and police trainees in two daylight attacks Tuesday, the latest deadly strikes against Iraqis working with the U.S.-led occupation.

Near Hilla, south of Baghdad, gunmen in a red Opel car opened fire on a minibus carrying policemen and recruits to work, killing nine and wounding at least two others on board, local police chief Major Kadhim Ajmi told Reuters.

At almost the same time, two police officers were shot and killed and two others were injured in a drive-by shooting near the oil-rich northern city of Kirkuk, police said.

And in Mosul, Iraq's third largest city in the far north of the country, a mortar attack on an Iraqi military base killed two Iraqi civilians and wounded six, local officials said.

Monday, an Iraqi security guard was shot dead and three were wounded as they walked to work in Mosul.

About 50 miles north of Baghdad, eight members of the new US-trained Iraqi Civil Defence Corps narrowly escaped death when a car bomb went off at an American base near Balad, killing the driver.

Iraqis Demonstrate Against Israeli Killers; Occupation Cops Fire On Crowds

Mar 23, 2004 By Ali Jasim, BAGHDAD, Iraq (Reuters)



Demonstrations were held across central Iraq to protest the killing of Hamas leader Ahmed Yassin by Israeli rockets in the backstreets of Gaza Monday.

In Ramadi, a volatile, Sunni Muslim city west of Baghdad, those demonstrations turned violent after protesters shouting anti-American slogans attacked a police car, setting it ablaze.

Anxious police *fired their weapons into the air* to disperse the stone-throwing crowds *and wounded at least two Iraqis*. One man ran down the street cradling a small boy in his arms. (The wounded Iraqis must have been levitating?)

In Baghdad, large numbers were expected to gather in the rundown Shi'ite neighborhood of Sadr City later Tuesday to start three days mourning for Yassin organized by Moqtada al-Sadr, a staunchly anti-American cleric.

Judge Blown To Judgment

Baghdad, Mar. 23 (NNN): Indolink

An Iraqi judge was killed when his car blew up over the weekend in the city of Hilla, 100 kilometres south of Baghdad.

Twin Cops Killed In Kirkuk

March 23, 2004 Dow Jones Newswires

KIRKUK, Iraq (AP)--Gunmen killed two policemen -twin brothers -and injured two others in northern Iraq on Tuesday, authorities said.

The policemen were gunned down near their station by assailants in a car in Kirkuk city, police Capt. Abdul-Salam Zangana said. He identified the slain police as Ahmed and Mohammed Kadhim.

Policeman Shot In Kirkuk

The Australian 20mar04 From correspondents in Kirkuk, Iraq

AN Iraqi policeman was shot dead west of the northern city of Kirkuk today - hours after US troops arrested a police officer suspected of plotting anti-American attacks, Iraqi police said.

Mohammed Omer Abdullah, 42, was killed when three men opened fire with automatic weapons at a checkpoint on a road outside Kirkuk, prompting soldiers manning the position to return fire, Lieutenant Colonel Rashid Mohammed said. The attack on the Riyadh-Biji road, 45km west of Kirkuk, came at 8am local time (4pm AEDT).

Earlier, US troops arrested Colonel Hamid Mutlaq al-Mufraji at his Kirkuk home for alleged links to anti-US attacks that took place in Hawijah, 50km west of the oil city, a police officer said.

He was "arrested by US troops at his home after they received information that he was setting up cells to carry out attacks against the American forces", Lieutenant Colonel Adnan Abdullah said.

The man's wife, lawyer Zaheda Mardan, said that more than 50 American soldiers backed by two armored troop carriers and six transport vehicles stormed their home after 2am local time (10am AEDT).

"One of the Hummers (transport vehicles) knocked down our front gate and the soldiers entered, searched the house, handcuffed my husband while one of them asked him: 'Why do you go often to Hawija?'," she said.

In a separate incident a policeman claimed today that he had been the target of an assassination bid the previous night when another policeman put a bomb in his car in Rashid, south of Kirkuk.

Captain Arkan al-Obeidi, who commands the Rashid police force on the road between Kirkuk and Tikrit, accused Walaa Najm Zamad, 29, of placing the one kg device.

Zamad arrested and handed over to the US military authorities after he admitted that he planted the bomb at the request of a Palestinian man who "was acting on behalf of outside forces", in exchange for \$US10,000 (\$13,300).

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“U.S. Occupation Is Evil Continuation Of Saddam Regime”

(THANKS TO A WHO E-MAILED THIS IN: B WRITES: Here's one for you. This is from a rag called The Egyptian Gazette. It's published as a worship piece for the great president of this great republic (sic.) But has the following on it's front page top left corner by logo of paper Monday, March 22.)

The Egyptian Gazette March 22, 2004 Baghdad

The Iraqis are still campaigning for the restoration of their political, economic sovereignty, **a member of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC)** said yesterday on al-Arabiya satellite channel.

IGC member Dr. Ibrahim Al-Jaafari also condemned the US occupation as an evil and that any country would resist. Al-Jaafari described the American occupation as a continuation of the occupation of Iraq by the regime of Saddam Hussein.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Doonsebury 3.20.04 By Gary Trudeau



Reporters Protest Colleagues' Killings

March 21, 2004 CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA, Associated Press Writer

Sunday, about 50 people, many of them Arab journalists, demonstrated in Baghdad to protest the shooting deaths by American soldiers, of an Iraqi cameraman and correspondent from the Arab satellite television station Al-Arabiya. They gave a letter of protest to officials at the coalition headquarters.

Eye-Witness Report; The Attack On The Mount Lebanon Hotel.

Dr. Geert Van Moorter Mar 21, 2004 <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Iraq/message/6445>

A little after 8 pm we hear an enormous explosion and feel the vibrations through the air. Behind the mosque, at the square where the statue of Saddam was toppled on April 9, a plum of smoke is rising up. We see flames.

We speed to the place of the incident in a taxi. Chaos. People blocking each other's way. The first ambulances have already left. The fire brigades are trying to extinguish the fires. An oil drum is on fire, several cars and the houses around it also. People are looking for survivors in the debris.

I ask an Iraqi policeman whether a medical outpost has been set up and if I can be of help. Marc, who is a volunteer with the Red Cross, and me are still allowed to proceed, while others are pushed away. We cannot find the medical outpost.

A little later American soldiers arrive. I wonder how they can be of help. A US soldier shouts at me that I have to go. I tell him: "I am an emergency doctor, I am checking if I can help." He pushes me away roughly and says that I have to go. I persist, after which he shouts: "Show me your card". I give him my ID of Medical Aid for the Third World with my picture on it. **He looks at it scornfully and throws it away, on the ground.**

"We do not need your help." I can't believe it and say: "Is that the American way of helping people? I did not come here for you, but for the victims." He again: "I advice you, if you go one step further, I have you arrested." In the meanwhile four soldiers have gathered around me. I feel that they are very tense, so I retreat, but internally I am boiling. A higher officer has been brought up. The officer gives a sign that I have to come with him. He brings me to the nearby hospital.

Medical supplies? "Maku"..., "none"....

They want to evacuate the hospital. An Iraqi colleague, himself wounded at his leg, asks me if I can bring a patient to the Nafez Hospital. Marc and me enter the ambulance together with the patient and his family.

Arrived at the Nafez Hospital, I start to help with the first aid of a number of wounded patients. I ask for gloves. "Maku" is the answer, which means "none". Bandages are

also hardly available. I bandage the wounded arm of George, an Iraqi patient, with his own shirt. He speaks a little English, so it is easier for me to try to calm him down. He is injured on his ear, has bruises on his ribs, and on the back of his head a bleeding wound. He has inclinations towards vomiting and tends to faint. His blood pressure drops.

I ask for plasma expanders. This is the intravenous liquid to compensate the loss of blood and to increase the blood pressure. "Maku". I want to give him something against vomiting: "Maku". An emergency department that has none of these supplies!

In the four hospitals I visited until now there has been no improvement in medical equipment over the past year, and everywhere materials are lacking. And this in a situation that was already disastrous because of the 13 years of embargo. **Now, after the downfall of the regime of Saddam, the sanctions have been lifted, and still nothing has improved in the medical field.** The old equipment is yet one year older, and a number of equipment has broken down in the meanwhile. And for the rest there is a lot of "maku".

George has to be kept awake: he tends to faint constantly. I let the intravenous liquid run inside. Then to the X-ray department. It is an old piece of equipment, but luckily it still functions. In the meanwhile I continue talking to George, slap him on the cheeks in order to keep him awake. I ask him if he knows where he is. "In hell", is his answer. "Then I am the devil", I say to him, and he has to laugh. That is a good sign. But in Belgium this guy would go in the scanner for a comprehensive check-up. Here the scanner is "maku". It is eleven-thirty and Marc and I think that it is safer to return to the hotel. The families thank us. I say that we have to thank them that we were able to help them.

Freedom?

We cannot find any taxi outside, but a helpful Iraqi is willing to bring us back, for free. He still has worked for a while in the American army, as interpreter. But he quit. "They are crazy, those Americans." A little further we are not allowed to proceed at a checkpoint. The driver shows something, and then he can proceed. "Easy, you just show something with an American flag on it!" It is a case of the US army with a card in it with the driver's picture. On the case are the flags of the US, Great Britain and Australia, with the text "Operation Iraqi Freedom". In the meanwhile shooting is taken place again outside.

Iraqi freedom? The 'freedom' not to get appropriate medical care, the 'freedom' to get laid off, the 'freedom of speech' as long as you say the right things,.... Above all, it is the 'American freedom' to control the oil, to shoot at whom and when they want, to stop a doctor, ... What is the future of this country?

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bush To Wed College Athlete

The White House stunned the nation today by announcing that President Bush has filed for divorce from his wife, Laura Bush, and plans to marry a young college football star. "Something just came over me," Bush told the White House press corps. "And he's really cute. Don't you just love that dimple?"

Bush also announced that his request for a Constitutional Amendment to ban gay marriage will be withdrawn, and that he will immediately drop the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in the military. "Everybody should have an equal chance to give their lives for me, Halliburton, Bechtel, my oil industry buddies, and the American Empire," the President said.



President Bush offering engagement ring to University of Southern California quarterback Matt Leinart, right, during the NCAA Sports Champions ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House, March 23, 2004 in Washington. (AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

More Chaos

Wall St. Journal 3.22.04

Factional fighting erupted in Afghanistan, where as many as 100 people died following the assassination of the country's Aviation Minister.

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