

GI SPECIAL 2#52



The Shias Go To War: Anti-Occupation soldier. Shia Army of Mehdi control Baghdad's Sadr City (AFP/Ahmad Al-Rubaye)

12 Marines Overrun, Killed In Ramadi: Command Reports “Large-Scale Attack” By “Fewer Than 100 Insurgents”

April 6, 2004 Associated Press & CNN.COM & By BASSEM MROUE, Associated Press Writer

Reports from the city of Ramadi, near Fallujah, said dozens of Iraqis attacked a Marine position near the governor's palace, a senior defense official said from Washington. **"A significant number" of Marines were killed, and initial reports indicate it may be a dozen, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.**

The large-scale attack was mounted by **suspected remnants** of ousted Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's Baath Party, officials said. **(Very effective “remnants.” Command must be in a complete pants-pissing panic to go back to this stale old bullshit about “Hussein remnants” again. Or, this time, “suspected” remnants, whatever a “suspected remnant” is.)**

A high-ranking military source said initial reports indicated several government buildings had been seized by fewer than 100 insurgents.

The insurgents attacked a Marine position near the governor's palace.

The source said as many as 20 Marines had been wounded.

Yesterday in Ramadi U.S. troops and insurgents clashed on a downtown street. One Iraqi was killed and three wounded, doctors said. (Payback today.)

The 1st Marine Expeditionary Force recently took over from the Army in the region, which includes the area extending to the border with Syria.

One Pentagon official described the region as "the badlands."

Shia Resistance Takes Najaf; Sadr Moves Headquarters; More Fighting In Baghdad

April 6, 2004 Associated Press &

An attempted occupation crackdown on Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr al-Sadr, who has drawn backing from young and impoverished Shiites with rousing sermons demanding a U.S. withdrawal, sent his black-garbed militiamen against coalition troops Sunday, Monday and Tuesday.

In the holy city of Najaf in southern Iraq, al-Sadr's militia was in control of government, police and spiritual sites, a coalition source said.

Al-Sadr also was busing followers into Najaf from Sadr City, a Baghdad neighborhood, according to the coalition source, who said that many members of his outlawed militia, Mehdi's Army, were from surrounding provinces.

Al-Sadr -- who is wanted on murder charges in connection with the killing of a rival last year -- reportedly has taken refuge in the Imam Ali mosque in Najaf, one of Shiite Islam's holiest shrines.

A posting on al-Sadr's Web site said he has called for a general strike.

Qais al-Khazaal, a spokesman for al-Sadr, said the young cleric wants coalition troops to withdraw from populated areas and release prisoners taken into custody in recent demonstrations.



Iraqi Shiite supporters of Muqtada al-Sadr chant anti-U.S. slogans Tuesday in Najaf.

In Nasiriyah on Tuesday, 15 Iraqis were killed and 35 wounded in clashes between militiamen and Italian troops, coalition spokeswoman Paola Della Casa told an Italian news agency Apcom. **Eleven Italians troops were wounded.**

In Baghdad, firefights continued Tuesday, particularly in the Shiite area of Sadr City.

The U.S.-led coalition announced a murder warrant against al-Sadr on Monday and suggested it would move to capture him soon. U.S. officials would not explain why they were only releasing word of the warrant Monday. They said an unnamed Iraqi judge had issued it in the past months.

Escaping a U.S. move to arrest him, al-Sadr on Tuesday left a fortress-like mosque in the city of Kufa, south of Baghdad, where he had been holed up for days, his aides said.

In a statement released earlier, al-Sadr said he was moving to avoid bloodshed in a mosque. "I feared that the sanctity of a glorious and esteemed mosque would be violated by scum and evil people," he said. The Americans "will have no qualms to embark on such actions."

Al-Sadr issued a statement saying he was ready to die to oust the Americans. He urged his followers to resist foreign forces.

"America has shown its evil intentions, and the proud Iraqi people cannot accept it. They must defend their rights by any means they see fit," the al-Sadr statement said.

"I'm prepared to have my own blood shed for what is holy to me," he said.

Al-Sadr moved to his main office in Najaf, in an alley near the city's holiest shrine, according to a top aide, Sheik Qays al-Khaz'ali. Hundreds of militiamen were protecting the office Tuesday.

Perhaps more worrisome than the current fight with al-Sadr's forces is the possibility that he will start drawing support from more mainstream Shiite leaders who have largely supported the Americans until now.

The heavy battles over the past three days showed that even with limited backing, al-Sadr's al-Mahdi Army militia is capable of a damaging fight.

In Najaf, spokesman al-Khazaal said al-Sadr had "received many letters from other religious leaders" supporting him, mentioning Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani -- the most senior Iraqi Shiite cleric.

Shias Attack Occupation In Nasiriyah, Karbala, Diwaniyah, & Amarah

April 6, 2004 Associated Press & Sofia News Agency

Shia troops early Tuesday fired on Italian soldiers near Euphrates river bridges in Nasiriyah, a mostly Shiite city. A coalition spokeswoman in Nasiriyah, Paola Della Casa, said 15 Iraqis were killed and 35 were wounded. **Twelve Italians were wounded, she said.**

A Bulgarian truck driver was killed when Shia fighters ambushed a truck convoy near Nasiriyah, Bulgarian radio reported. The truck driven by Mario Manchev, from the Bulgarian hauler company SOMAT, and several other vehicles were attacked.

Shia soldiers firing automatic weapons and grenades ambushed a joint Polish-Bulgarian-U.S. patrol Tuesday afternoon near the Shiite holy city of Karbala. Two Poles and three Bulgarians were wounded, according to the Polish military.

Isolated skirmishes occurred overnight Tuesday near Spanish and Latin American garrisons near Diwaniyah and Najaf, both largely Shiite communities, but there were no casualties, according to the Spanish defense ministry.

Fighting continued overnight in Amarah between al-Sadr's followers and British troops.

Widespread Battles Test Occupation; As Shias War Against Coalition Ten More Occupation Troops Killed Monday;

Witless General Dempsey Says “We’re Looking For Them,” Then Admits Shias Fighters In Control Of Parts Of Iraq

06/04/2004 Irish Examiner.com & Associated Press & Reuters 4.5.04 & April 6, 2004 Washington Post Foreign Service, By Anthony Shadid and Sewell Chan

U.S. authorities also launched a crackdown on radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr al-Sadr and his militia after a series of weekend uprisings in Baghdad and cities and towns to the south that took a heavy toll in both American and Iraqi lives. The fighting marks the first major outbreak of violence between the U.S.-led occupation force and the Shiites since Baghdad fell a year ago.

Two more coalition soldiers -- an American in Baghdad and a Ukrainian in Kut -- were killed in fighting. The deaths brought the three-day total to up to about 30 Americans and 136 Iraqis killed in the worst fighting since the war that toppled Saddam Hussein.

In Kut, militiamen attacked an armoured personnel carrier carrying Ukrainian soldiers, killing one and wounding five others, the Ukrainian Defence Ministry said. Two militiamen were killed in the fight. Ukraine has about 1,650 troops in Iraq.

In the latest U.S. deaths, five Marines were killed Monday -- one in Fallujah and the others on the western outskirts of Baghdad. Four U.S. soldiers were killed in attacks in Baghdad, Kirkuk and Mosul on Monday.

In Karbala, Sadr's followers attacked a police station and a television station.

In Basra, Iraq's second-largest city, they occupied the governor's office and traded fire with British troops. About 1,000 Sadr supporters swarmed around the governor's building after occupying it overnight. Gunmen were on the roof and posters of Sadr were plastered on the gate.

Britain, whose troops control Basra, said Iraqi officials were holding talks with Sadr's group to resolve the issue.

In nearby Amarah, members of Sadr's militia, the Mahdi Army, marched in the streets, clashing with British soldiers near the governor's office. Two Iraqis were killed, witnesses said.

In Najaf, near the Spanish military base where some of the fiercest fighting occurred Sunday, government offices were closed, as were schools and colleges. **Members of the Mahdi Army were out in force near the Imam Ali shrine.**

In nearby Kufa, Sadr's militiamen controlled police posts and government offices.

The clashes between their forces and the Mahdi Army on Sunday amounted to the heaviest fighting since nearly a year ago, when President Bush said major combat had ended in Iraq.

"They've essentially declared themselves hostile to us, and so now we're looking for them specifically," said Maj. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the commander in charge of troops in Baghdad. (He doesn't have to worry. They'll find him if he can't find them.)

"Hey Dempsey, Here We Are"



Iraqi Shi'ite supporters of cleric Moqtada al-Sadr celebrate near a burning U.S. Army truck in the Shuala neighborhood of Baghdad April 5, 2004. Shia militia were firmly in control when the clashes ended. (Ceerwan Aziz/Reuters)

Dempsey added: "If he makes an appearance in Sadr City, he'll be detained, or in Baghdad -- ***anyplace that we control.***"

The top U.S. military spokesman in Iraq, Army Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt, said "He's free to surrender," Kimmitt said. "He's free to walk into any police station. He's free to have that warrant served upon him. He'll be treated with dignity. He'll be treated with respect. He'll be treated the same way every other alleged criminal in the Iraqi justice system is treated." **(New York City, April 6, 1780. General Wentworth Durgan, Commander of His Majesty's Troops, said that "George Washington is free to surrender. He's free to walk into any police station. He's free to have that warrant served upon him. He'll be treated with dignity. He'll be treated the same way every other alleged criminal in the English justice system is treated.")**

Sadar Tells Bremer To Fuck Off;

U.S. “Cedes Control” Of Part Of Baghdad To Resistance; “Is This Our Country Or Is This Not Our Country?,” Iraqi Asks

April 6, 2004 Washington Post Foreign Service, By Anthony Shadid and Sewell Chan

In Kufa, where Sadr's father had cultivated grass-roots support before being assassinated in 1999, the young cleric responded defiantly.

"I'm accused by one of the leaders of evil, Bremer, of being an outlaw," he said in a statement read at the city's sprawling brick mosque. "If that means breaking the law of the American tyranny and its filthy constitution, I'm proud of that and that is why I'm in revolt."

Violence across Shiite areas of Baghdad and southern Iraq signals a second front for U.S.-led forces already stretched thin trying to fight insurgents in Sunni Muslim areas.

In parts of Baghdad where Sadr enjoys his most fervent support, streets were ceded to his militiamen.

Dressed in black, some of them were armed with rifles, grenades, machetes and swords. In two neighborhoods populated by the poor -- from whom Sadr draws his following -- **armed supporters set up blockades of concrete, steel beams and scrap metal across streets, often with U.S. forces just a few hundred yards away.** Smoke from burning tires wafted overhead, and shops in those areas stayed shuttered through the day.

In one Shiite neighborhood, residents said two AH-64 Apache helicopters fired on a street, damaging a row of restaurants, sweet shops and photo stores and shattering their windows.

The Army acknowledged that attack helicopters fired on targets in the Shuala neighborhood. Kimmitt, the military spokesman, said insurgents fired five to six rounds from small arms at the helicopters. One helicopter was hit by a round, he said, but the crewmen were uninjured. The aircraft returned fire with about 100 rounds of 20mm ammunition, Kimmitt said.

Four people were detained in an Army raid at one of Sadr's offices in Sadr City, the Shiite slum named after the cleric's father, officials said. (Wow! Four people!)

By Monday, an uneasy calm had descended over Sadr City. **On the main street, militiamen and Sadr's supporters gathered in front of the movement's headquarters, with a heavy U.S. military presence less than a mile away. Some held guns, pistols or grenades aloft. Others broke into impromptu chants.**

"Long live Sadr!" they shouted.

Inside Sadr's offices, tribal elders rushed to see a director of the movement, Amr Husseini. One cleric was overhead saying, "We have the money, we have the weapons, we're waiting for the word of jihad."

The Americans "came as liberators and now they're making the people suffer," said Kadhim Hamza, 55, standing in the street near Sadr's headquarters. "Is this our country or is this not our country?"

In Shuala, angry men strolled through the streets blackened by burning tires. **Militiamen directed traffic**, and residents angrily gestured at the damage their shops sustained in the attack by Apache helicopters.

"They talk about human rights. That means freedom of expression. We reject the occupation and the presence of the Americans, so they fire on us. They're supposed to respect human rights," said Hussein Kadhim, 24.

Standing before his photo shop, its windows reduced to shards on the sidewalk, Kadhim said: "Even in the time of Saddam, this didn't happen."

In the street outside, the conversation was reminiscent of the anger in the more restive Sunni regions north and west of Baghdad. No one spoke in favor of Hussein, but the complaints were similar, the anger familiar.

"They don't want Iraq to be stable," said Ziad Tareq, 18.

A friend, Ahmed Saadi, 35, interrupted. "They don't want Iraq to be an Islamic state," he said.

Ali Kadhim, his brow sweaty, ran up to them. He gestured to a U.S. tank transport smoldering in the background.

"This is the future," he said.

More On Shia War

05apr04 Advertiser Newspapers Ltd. from correspondents in Najaf, Iraq & BY CAROL ROSENBERG, Knight Ridder Newspapers

U.S. commanders sent Air Force fighter jets and Army Apache helicopters to shore up a small Spanish battalion in the south and sent aircraft and armor into a Shiite slum in Baghdad to retake a police station that gunmen had overrun.

"Yes, yes Muqtada," and "No, no America," Sadr supporters shouted in demonstrations that broke out just after dawn around Baghdad's Green Zone.

Coming nearly a year to the day since Baghdad fell, the violence was significant both for who took up arms against the Americans and their allies and for its scope - spanning more than 300 miles from the capital through the sacred Shiite heartland and the port city of Basra.

"This was combat operations today," said a senior coalition military official late Sunday as the fighting still raged on the southern outskirts of Baghdad. Aircraft were brought in, he said, because "we needed to add some combat power to change the terms of the battle." The official spoke on the condition that he not be identified.

Witnesses said U.S. tanks and armored personnel carriers rumbled inside to stop them from taking more police stations and government buildings.

U.S. Administrator L. Paul Bremer said "This will not be tolerated by the coalition. This will not be tolerated by the Iraqi people." (Hey asshole, these *are* the "Iraqi people," and they're not tolerating you, Bush, or your whole rotten occupation.)

In the southern city of Nasiriyah, Italian troops traded fire with militiamen demonstrating against the arrest of al-Yacoubi, said Lt. Col. Pierluigi Monteduro. One Italian officer was wounded.

In Kufa, near Najaf, al-Sadr supporters took over a police station and seized guns inside. No police were in sight.

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

**Falluja:
At Least Two Marines Wounded;
They Withdraw After Heavy Fighting &
Advancing "Several Blocks" Into City;
U.S. Rocket Attack Gone Wrong Kills 26
Civilians**

06/04/2004 Irish Examiner.com & CNN.com & BBC News & News.com.au 4.7.04

Sixteen Iraqis died in battles with US Marines in Fallujah, and at least 26 more – many of them women and children – were killed in a late-night rocket strike by the US military, hospital officials said.

About 1,200 US troops as well as Iraqi security forces began the offensive in Falluja on Monday. **(NOTE WELL: The fools in command have decided to take on an armed resistance city of 300,000 with 1,200 Marines. The biggest problem Marines have is there is no assurance whatever that the officer who made this decision will die there, relieving the troops under his command of his stupidity. His troops will pay the price instead.)**

WORST POSSIBLE PLACE TO BE



BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW

Marines At Falluja

Marines moved into Fallujah from several directions -- coming under heavy fire from insurgents -- in a second day of an operation to lock down the city.

Tanks, amphibious assault vehicles and Humvees have moved into the south-eastern industrial sector said Lieutenant Colonel Brennan Byrne.

The force, backed by AC130 gunships and Cobra helicopters, took six hours to secure control of the area, amid sporadic hit-and-run attacks by insurgents firing mortars and assault rifles from rooftops, he said.

Mortar and rocket-propelled grenade blasts were heard, **and one witness said a Humvee was ablaze.**

Abrams tanks and infantry fighting vehicles led the Marine columns across a railway line north of the city into urban areas, where they were fired on by assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenades.

Heavy fighting also occurred between Marines entrenched in the desert and guerrillas firing from houses on Fallujah's northeast outskirts. For hours into the night, the sides traded fire, while teams of Marines moved in and out of the neighborhood, seizing buildings to use as posts and battling resistance fighters. Helicopters weaved overhead, firing at guerrilla hide-outs.

U.S. Marines encircled Fallujah early Monday, and on Tuesday.

"We are several blocks deep in the city of Fallujah," said Marine Major Briandon McGolwan. He said several helicopters were hit by small arms fire but none were downed.

Marines drove into the Sunni city in heavy fighting before pulling back before nightfall. The assault had been promised after four American armed mercenary occupation contractors were killed in battle there last week.

Tonight US warplanes fired rockets that destroyed four homes in Fallujah, witnesses said.

Rafie al-Issawi, a doctor at Fallujah General Hospital, said the bodies of 26 Iraqis were brought in after the strike, and at least 30 more were wounded.

The US military brought out a deadly AC-130 gunship to lay down a barrage of fire against the guerrillas. **At least two Marines were wounded.**

Four More Marines Dead; Marine Command Tries To Hide Where And How They Died; Everybody Knows It's Falluja

6 April, 2004 BBC News

Four US troops died in Anbar province on Monday, **but the military did not say whether they were killed in Falluja.**

Four members of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force were killed on Monday while "conducting security and stabilisation operations", the US military said in a statement.

It did not give any details but said the deaths came "as a result of enemy action" in western Anbar province.

AP Reporter Confirms Marines Killed, Wounded In Stalled Attack On Faluja; (Can You Spell S-T-A-L-I-N-G-R-A-D?)

By BASSEM MROUE, Associated Press Writer 04-06-04

The military reported five Marines were killed and two wounded in the operation, which was more than 24 hours old.

Witnesses reported another American had been killed in Tuesday's fighting, but that report could not immediately be confirmed.

The bulk of the coalition force has remained on Fallujah's edge, apparently held at bay by tough resistance from anti-American fighters against Marine forays probing the outskirts.

In Fallujah, explosions and gunfire were heard from the city through the night Monday and into Tuesday morning, apparently U.S. troops shelling targets and clashing with guerrillas as Marines probed the outskirts with reconnaissance patrols.

A force of Marines pushed into an eastern neighborhood, clashing with guerrillas Tuesday. Gunmen carrying automatic weapons were seen in the streets. **Guerrilla fire set one vehicle ablaze, said a witness, Issam Mahmoud, who said a soldier inside was killed. There was no immediate confirmation of the death.**

Troops broke into houses in the neighborhood, carrying out searches, and entered a mosque, witnesses said.

U.S. troops waiting on the northern edge of Fallujah for orders to move in came under fire from nearby houses Tuesday, wounding two Marines. Tanks and Humvees moved into the neighborhood where the fire came from, and the sound of tank fire was later heard.

THREE TASK FORCE 1AD SOLDIERS KILLED IN KADHIMYAH

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
April 6, 2004 Release Number: 04-04-11C

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Three Task Force 1st Armored Division soldiers were killed during separate attacks April 5-6 in the Kadhimyah district here.

The first soldier died of wounds received during an attack that took place at about 11 a.m. April 5. The soldier was traveling with a southbound convoy when it was attacked with small-arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire.

A second soldier died later that day, at about 9:30 p.m., when his vehicle was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade during a firefight in the same area.

A third soldier died from wounds he received during a rocket-propelled grenade attack on his Bradley Fighting Vehicle at about 12:30 a.m., April 6.

Three U.S. Troops Killed In Baghdad Attacks

4.6.04 BAGHDAD (Reuters)

Three U.S. soldiers were killed in separate attacks in a Shi'ite area of Baghdad on Monday and Tuesday, the U.S. army said.

It said one soldier was killed in a rocket-propelled grenade attack in the Kadhimiya neighborhood of Baghdad on Tuesday.

On Monday evening a soldier was killed in the same area when his vehicle was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade, and earlier that day a soldier was killed when his convoy was attacked by rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire.

The attacks raised to 11 the number of U.S. troops killed since Sunday in clashes in Shi'ite areas of Baghdad.

Two More U.S. Troops Die In Baghdad & Mosul

BAGHDAD (AFP) & Reuters 4.5.04

MOSUL, Iraq (Reuters) - A roadside bomb attack on a U.S. convoy in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul Sunday killed one American soldier and wounded another, a U.S. military spokesman said Monday.

The attack was on a main road in Mosul, 240 miles north of Baghdad.

A US soldier also died Monday of wounds received Sunday during clashes with radical Shiite militants in Baghdad.

IED Kills Soldier In Kirkuk

United States Department of Defense News Release April 5, 2004, No. 261-04 & April 6, 2004 Washington Post Foreign Service, By Anthony Shadid and Sewell Chan

The Department of Defense announced today the death of a Soldier.

Pfc. John D. Amos, II, 22, of Valparaiso, Ind., died April 4, in Kirkuk, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device hit his military vehicle. Pfc. Amos was assigned to the Army's 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division (Light), Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

The car bombing Sunday wounded six other U.S. soldiers.

Soldier Dead Of “Unknown” Cause

United States Department of Defense News Release April 5, 2004, No. 256-04

The Department of Defense announced today the death of a U.S. Department of the Army civilian who was supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Emad Mikha, 44, of Sterling Heights, Mich., died April 3, in Muqdadiyah, Iraq. At this time, the cause of his death is unknown.

Two U.S. Soldiers Wounded In Kirkuk

05/04/2004 ABC News Online

A bomber has blown up his vehicle beside US soldiers keeping order at a mass protest in the Iraqi city of Kirkuk.

Two US soldiers and five Iraqi civilians were wounded in the blast, police say.

Parts of the bomber's body had been found in the destroyed car.

The bomb was detonated in Kirkuk, 250 km north of Baghdad, as U. soldiers kept watch on a rally by supporters of Moqtada al-Sadr, a radical Muslim Shiite cleric.

US helicopters circled the skies as demonstrators marched to the Kirkuk governorate headquarters, escorted by Iraqi police.

US Army Interpreter Killed In Baquba

Baquba, April 6, Agence France-Presse

An Iraqi interpreter working for the US army was shot dead early on Tuesday in central Baquba, north of Baghdad, police Lieutenant Ahmed Alisaid.

"According to witness accounts, interpreter Luay Majid Rashid (25), had just bought food when he was killed by two unknown people who shot him before fleeing the area," he said.

"Police came to the scene and found in his personal papers that he had been working for the US army," he said.

Czech Petrochemical Specialist Blown Up

05.04.2004 Czecg Happenings

PRAGUE- A Czech petrochemical expert was killed and two others severely burned during a gas explosion in one of the three oil refineries in southern Iraq, Dana Pavlouskova from the Foreign Ministry said.

Her information was confirmed by the director of the company Chemoprojekt, Tomas Plachy, which is participating in the reconstruction of the refinery.

"Our employee was one of those caught in a gas outburst inside the refinery. He and two other employees of different companies suffered severe burns, one of them critically," Plachy said.

Czech experts in southern Iraq are participating in the reconstruction of the petrochemical industry, but are also active in other areas.

Spanish Troops Under Mortar Fire; Collaborator Cops Run Away; Resistance Controls Najaf Streets

05 Apr 2004 MADRID, April 5 (Reuters)

Spanish troops in Iraq came under mortar fire on Monday, one day after deadly clashes with protesters in and near the holy Shi'ite city of Najaf, Spain's Defence Ministry said.

"Both in Najaf and in Diwaniya the bases occupied by the (Spanish-led) Plus Ultra Brigade have been under sporadic attack from mortar launchers, although none of the rounds has caused personal or material damage," a Defence Ministry statement said.

Until then, Spanish troops in the relatively peaceful Shi'ite areas south of Baghdad had avoided the kind of hostilities that American troops have encountered in the Sunni triangle around Baghdad.

"The situation in Najaf has been one of high tension, with members of the so-called Mahdi army occupying the streets of the city," the statement said, adding that it was made worse because Iraqi police have abandoned the city.

Bulgarian Karbala Base Under Fire

6 April 2004 Novinite Ltd

The Bulgarian Kilo base in Karbala came under heavy fire from light weapons and grenade launchers at about 01:40 a.m. local time. No casualties or damages were reported in the attack.

Bulgaria's Defence Ministry says the situation remains tense.

The attack happens amid escalating violence across the war-torn country.

Bulgarian soldier Nenko Kotov got lightly wounded Sunday night, when patrolling troops came under gunfire. Doctors have taken a bullet out of his shoulder.

Samara Checkpoint Blown Up; Three Cops Dead

4.6.04 By KHALID MOHAMMED, Associated Press Writer

A bomb killed three security officers and wounded another at a checkpoint in Samarra, about 60 miles north of Baghdad, that was manned by Iraqi Civil Defense personnel, workers at Samarra General Hospital said.

Bremer Condemns Bush As "Unacceptable"

April 6, 2004 Associated Press

L. Paul Bremer, the top U.S. civilian administrator in Iraq described him as "a guy who has a fundamentally inappropriate view of the new Iraq."

"He believes that in the new Iraq, like in the old Iraq, power should be to the guy with guns," Bremer said. "That is an unacceptable vision for Iraq."

State Department Spokesman Condemns Bush Regime For Invasion And Occupation Of Iraq

State Department deputy spokesman Adam Ereli said "...they're acting in the name of arrogating for themselves political power and influence through violence, because they can't get it through peaceful persuasion."

Bremer Nominated For Demented Liar Prize Of 2004

April 6, 2004 Associated Press & By BASSEM MROUE, Associated Press Writer

Despite the widespread unrest, L. Paul Bremer, the top U.S. civilian administrator in Iraq, said there was no question coalition forces were in control of the country.

"I know if you just report on those few places, it does look chaotic," Bremer said.

After Sunday's violence, Bremer canceled a trip to Washington this week, a Senate aide said Monday. No reason was given, the aide said. (Perhaps intense investigation can uncover the secret?)

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and in Iraq, and information about other social protest movements here in the USA. **Send requests to address up top. For copies on web site see:**<http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/>

TROOP NEWS

Government Dishonors War Dead; The Ultimate Cruelty; Tormenting Military Families With Stupid Bullshit Lies

April 05, 2004 By Karen Jowers, Army Times staff writer

Sue Niederer needed to go to Dover Air Force Base, Del.

She felt compelled to be there when the body of her son, Army 1st Lt. Seth Dvorin, returned to American soil.

“I wanted to see Seth come back to this country,” said Niederer, of Pennington, N.J. “I needed to know he had safely arrived. I didn’t want him to be alone. I felt he’d know we were there. I wanted to at least meet his coffin and kiss his flag.”

Niederer didn’t make the trip to meet the flight carrying the remains of her son, killed Feb. 3 in Iraq by an improvised explosive device. The military never expressly prohibited her from meeting her son’s coffin, but she said it did everything it could to deter her.

Questions from family members about military policies at Dover — port of entry for the remains of all U.S. troops killed in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom — are on the rise as casualties mount. Like Niederer, many feel a powerful desire to ensure their loved ones’ bodies are not alone and are treated respectfully.

Defense Department and Dover officials say there is no outright prohibition on family member visits to the base when remains return.

But the officials openly acknowledge they “highly, highly discourage it,” said Lt. Col. Jon Anderson, senior spokesman for the 436th Airlift Wing at Dover. **“There is nothing to see. We take [the remains] from the airplane to a van, then to the mortuary.” (Nothing to “see”? This disgusting piece of shit Lt. Col. is so utterly insensitive he thinks the families are some kind of voyeurs who want to come to “see” their dead loved one come home. What a twisted, sick fuck.)**

The current policy is meant to “protect the wishes and privacy of the families during their time of greatest loss and grief,” a Pentagon point paper states. **(Another incredible bullshit lie. It’s the families who want to come to Dover. All these Pentagon suits are doing is protecting themselves. How utterly disgusting to try to pretend they’re doing this out of concern for the families. It’s like the scum in the segregated south who used to say that slavery, and later segregation, was in place to be helpful to blacks.)**

Niederer said the military “totally discouraged” her from traveling to Dover.

“They asked why I wanted to go,” she said. “They cited health and sanitation reasons in the mortuary. They said they were not sure what time my son would be coming in. They said I wouldn’t be able to get near the plane. They said they didn’t know if they could deal with the emotions if I [broke] down.”

At 10 p.m. the night after she learned of her son’s death, she said military officials called to tell her they thought he was coming in at midnight.

“They didn’t say I couldn’t go, but they knew damn well I couldn’t get there in two hours,” Niederer said.

She believes officials should give families the choice of whether to meet the remains of their loved ones; have a grief counselor on hand at Dover for families who decide to go; and allow families to view the body if they wish.

Army widow Lisa Vance said military casualty assistance officers talked her out of going to Dover after her husband, Staff Sgt. Gene Vance, died in Afghanistan in May 2002.

Vance said she **was much less cooperative when officials also tried to keep her from meeting her husband's coffin when it was flown from Dover to the civilian airport in Pittsburgh before being driven to the Vances' West Virginia hometown. (!)**

"They said, 'He's just going to be in a shipping crate.' I threw temper tantrums. I wanted to be there with him. I needed to be with him ... to bring him home.

"I felt so alone through the whole thing," she said.

In Pittsburgh, Vance asked that the crate be opened so she could be sure it was her husband.

"He was in a big plastic bag," she said. "They wouldn't take him out of that bag. I can still see him lying there with that plastic bag over his head.

"After what he had just given for my freedom, that's not the way I would expect him to be treated," she said. "I don't want others to go through this."

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/>

Bush Regime Fights Push To Improve Reserve Pay & Benefits; Top Pentagon Official Tells Reservists Tough Shit, Quit Whining

April 05, 2004 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer

The Bush administration is weighing several improvements in pay and benefits for National Guard and reserve members, but is not in any hurry.

In fact, a top Pentagon personnel official said March 24 he doesn't have a lot of sympathy for reservists who complain about financial problems when they are called to active duty.

Charles Abell, the principal deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said when those career service members complain about financial problems after mobilization, "they are being a little disingenuous."

Under a congressional order to study reserve pay, the Defense Department has found plenty of places where improvements could be made, but little reason to do so.

In a report to Congress dated March 15, military officials generally conclude that reserve pay inequities, when they exist, either do not need to be immediately addressed or deserve more study.

For example, the report acknowledges that the value of GI Bill education benefits for reservists has not kept pace with active-duty education benefits. But, citing a cost of \$154 million a year to restore that value, defense officials see no need to provide an increase. Current benefits are "sufficient," the report says.

In the report, defense officials show little inclination to lower the reserve retirement age, arguing this would do little to help recruiting or improve retention. Any changes in retirement need careful study, something defense officials said they are beginning to do.

Rep. John McHugh, R-N.Y., chairman of the House Armed Services total force panel, said he is feeling a lot of pressure from lawmakers to improve benefits, particularly retired pay. McHugh said he isn't sure what improvements he might recommend and cautioned reservists should not expect much because money is tight.

In the report, defense officials see no inequity in prorating special and incentive pays for reservists, who generally get 1/30th of the payment for active-duty members for skill- and hazard-based pays.

MORE:

See, You Reservists Can Go Out And Publicly Beg If You Want More Money

April 05, 2004 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer

The United Way of Pulaski County, Ark., is raising money to help families of National Guard or reserve members who are on extended active duty.

The chapter created the Arkansas Homefront Fund to help those left at home for a year or more and trying to cope with unexpected bills, other financial obligations and unforeseen hardships.

John Nazzaro, president of the United Way of Pulaski County, said the fund was set up in November. He said about \$40,000 has been raised with minimal effort, and 20 families have been helped so far.

Command Refuses To Obey Law And Provide Health Benefits To Reservists

April 05, 2004 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer

The Defense Department won't prove expanded Tricare health benefits for reservists that were ordered by Congress last year, according to congressional investigators.

Congress ordered the Defense Department to conduct surveys in 20 locations each year to determine how many health-care providers accept new Tricare patients.

Congress also demanded that a defense official be designated to ensure adequate numbers of doctors are available in the Tricare networks.

Neither action has been taken, investigators said.

A final decision about who in the Defense Department will be responsible for monitoring the number of doctors will not be made until June, the report says, and the first market surveys are not expected to begin until May.

The survey holdup stems from the Pentagon's difficulty in getting approval from the White House Office of Management and Budget, the report says.

Defense officials were unable to predict when the survey results might be analyzed,

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates the six-month test will cost \$70 million while the White House budget office estimates the expense at \$1 billion, plus \$400 million to implement the other three provisions.

If the White House estimate is correct, the Pentagon will need a lot more money to pay for the programs, with no new funding bill expected before fall.

The Ugly Numbers

Campus Anti-War Network, April 5, 2004 Bob Reuschlein

Extensive use of the Guard and Reserve for the war has disrupted and depleted the civilian economy and their families; **352,000 called up since 9-11-01.**

From a Google search:

Reserve and National Guard Call-ups in response to recent US conflicts:

(Four in 10 members of the National Guard and reserves lose money when they are activated.)

1950	Korean Conflict	138,600
1961	Berlin Crisis	148,034
1962	Cuban Missile Crisis	14,200
	Vietnam War	37,643
	Haiti conflict	6,250
	Cuban Refugee Crisis	4,481
	Persian Gulf War	239,187
	Bosnia conflict	28,294
	Iraq-related operations	6,479
	Kosovo conflict	9,105
	Bushs' Wars (Since 9/11/01)	352,000

Four in 10 members of the National Guard and reserves lose money when they are activated.

More than 768,183 members of the Guard and reserves have been mobilized in the last 12 years since the Persian Gulf War. For the previous 36 years, the figure was 349,208.

In 1980 the Army National Guard had 368,000 personnel. In 2000 the Army National Guard had 353,000 personnel. They are doing more missions and activations with fewer personnel.

Since 9/11/01 over 10,000 men and woman of the Reserves and Guard have been called to active duty just from Illinois.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

White House, With Kerry Backing, Vows To Win War In Iraq; Imperial Assholes Unite In Face Of Iraq Disaster

WASHINGTON, April 1, New York Times

The White House, buoyed by support from a Democratic rival, vowed today that the United States would finish its peacekeeping mission in Iraq despite the grisly attacks on civilian contractors on Wednesday.

Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts, President Bush's probable Democratic rival, issued a statement late Wednesday in which he said Americans know that all who serve in Iraq — soldier and civilian alike — do so in an effort to build a better future for Iraqis," Mr. Kerry said. "These horrific attacks remind us of the viciousness of the enemies of Iraq's future. United in sadness, **we are also united in our resolve that these enemies will not prevail.**"

Representative Nancy J. Pelosi of California, the House Democratic leader, said the United States should persevere, even though "**we can't be in denial about what is happening there in our enthusiasm to talk about progress that is being made.**"

"We're not going to run out of town because some people were lawless in Falluja," she 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.

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