

## GI SPECIAL 2#57

**NO WIN SITUATION: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



Shi'ite Muslim protesters chant slogans in front of a line of U.S. troops. (Oleg Popov/Reuters)

# Iraqi Battalion Mutinies; Won't Fight Other Iraqis

April 11, 2004 By Thomas E. Ricks Washington Post Staff Writer

BAGHDAD, April 10 -- **A battalion of the new Iraqi army refused to go to Fallujah earlier this week to support U.S. Marines battling for control of the city, senior U.S. Army officers here said,** disclosing an incident that is casting new doubt on U.S. plans to transfer security matters to Iraqi forces.

**It was the first time U.S. commanders had sought to involve the postwar Iraqi army in major combat operations, and the battalion's refusal came as large parts of Iraqi security forces have stopped carrying out their duties.**

The 620-man 2nd Battalion of the Iraqi Armed Forces refused to fight Monday after members of the unit were shot at in a Shiite Muslim neighborhood in Baghdad while en route to Fallujah, a Sunni Muslim stronghold, said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Paul Eaton, who is overseeing the development of Iraqi security forces. **The convoy then turned**

around and returned to the battalion's post on a former Republican Guard base in Taji, a town north of the capital.

**Eaton said members of the battalion insisted during the ensuing discussions: "We did not sign up to fight Iraqis." (Soldiers having "discussions!" That's the end, for sure.)**

**He declined to characterize the incident as a mutiny, but rather called it "a command failure." (And shit ain't shit, it's aromatic organic residue.)**

**The refusal of the battalion to perform as U.S. officials had hoped poses a significant problem for the occupation. (Having no head poses a significant problem for sustaining life.)** The cornerstone of the U.S. strategy in Iraq is to draw down its military presence and turn over security functions to Iraqis.

Over the past two weeks, that approach has suffered a severe setback as Iraqi security forces have crumbled in some parts of the country. **In recent days perhaps 20 percent to 25 percent of the Iraqi army, civil defense, police and other security forces have quit, changed sides, or otherwise failed to perform their duties, a senior Army officer said Saturday. (If they admit 20%, figure 50% minimum. They lie a lot.)**

**"I wouldn't say it is so widespread that it's the majority," the senior officer said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "But it concerns us.")**

**Eaton added: "The lines are blurring for a lot of Iraqis right now, and we're having problems with a lot of security functions right now."**

**A soldier with the 1st Armored Division, who has recently been engaged in combat in Baghdad, said many of the Iraqi security troops with whom he has worked are no longer reporting for duty.**

**"I think what we are seeing is not some mass quitting and mutiny by ICDC [Iraqi Civil Defense Corps], but rather just plain fear," the soldier said. "And all it takes is one Iraqi to take the lead in leaving, and they all do out of fear." (All honor and respect to that one who takes the lead. Cowards don't start mutinies. There's a great movie about that, called "Battleship Potemkin." Check it out.)**

**When the 2nd Battalion graduated from training camp on Jan. 6, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld hailed it as a major part of the future of Iraq. Lt. Gen. Ricardo S. Sanchez, the U.S. commander on the ground in Iraq, attended the ceremony and said: "We are now into the accelerated period of providing Iraqi security forces, and these soldiers look very proud, very dedicated. I have high expectations that in fact they would help us bring security and stability back to the country."**

**The battlefield refusal of the battalion -- one of just four that exist in the Iraqi army -- began Monday when it was ordered to travel about 60 miles to support the Marines, then locked in battle with fighters in Fallujah. The mission of the Iraqi troops was to help with secondary military tasks such as manning road checkpoints and securing the perimeter, Eaton said.**

One of the problems, Eaton said, was that the Iraqi troops were not told they would be given a relatively benign role, and assumed they were being hurled into the middle of a bloody fight, battling on the side of the Americans against Arabs. "The battalion thought it was going to be thrown into a firestorm in Fallujah," he said.

Complicating communications, he said, was that the battalion had 10 new U.S. advisers who rotated into their jobs April 1, just four days before the incident, replacing the advisers who had trained the unit for months.

The battalion, traveling by truck and escorted by troops from the U.S. Army's 1st Armored Division, passed through a Shiite area in northwest Baghdad. **They were fired on, and six members of the unit were wounded, one seriously, Eaton said. A crowd of Shiites gathered and "surged" at the convoy, he said. "They were stunned that they were taken under fire by their fellow population," he said. (The dynamics of insurrection and revolution hold good again.)**

**The battalion was then sent back to Taji, where preparations were made to fly it to the Fallujah area. But opposition to the mission stiffened,** Eaton said, "so we decided not to involve them in the Fallujah operation."

**Accounts differ on whether the other Iraqi battalion based at Taji also indicated that it would decline to go to Fallujah.** Eaton said it was not involved, because it was not yet deemed ready to fight.

But the other Army official said that a decision was made not to force the issue with that unit's commanders. **"I don't think they pushed them to the brink where they said, 'Hell, no, we won't go,' "** the official said.

**The two senior officers also differed on what motivated the refusal.**

**The Iraqi rebuff was based on "pure fear," said the Army official. "They just got cold feet."**

**But Eaton, who visited the unit the day after the incident, disagreed. He noted that Iraqi troops have "fought very, very bravely" against Iran. He said that, in his view, the problem was caused by poor leadership and complicated by the fact that the unit was trained by U.S. advisers who emphasized that their job would be to defend Iraq against outside forces.**

Eaton, who oversees the organization, training and equipping of the Iraqi army, the civil defense force, the police, security guards and border patrol, said the recalcitrant battalion's Iraqi leadership would be "reorganized." **(When fucked, "reorganize." Typical.)**

He also said that training would be different for future battalions, and handled almost exclusively by Iraqi officers, a group of which recently finished re-training in Jordan. "They will train their own men," he said.

Eaton, who previously was chief of infantry training for the U.S. Army, said that solutions would be found to the setback. **(Like the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all Occupation troops might be a start.)**

"Is it disappointing? Obviously," he said. "We're just going to work our way through it."

**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/>

# **Anti-U.S. Outrage Unites a Growing Resistance; "Tens Of Thousands" Joining The Fight**

April 11, 2004 By JEFFREY GETTLEMAN, New York Times  
Iraqi employees of The Times's Baghdad bureau contributed reporting for this article.

BAGHDAD, Iraq, April 10

**Moneer Munthir is ready to kill Americans.**

**For months, he has been struggling to control an explosion of miserable feelings: humiliation, fear, anger, depression.**

**"But in the last two weeks, these feelings blow up inside me," said Mr. Munthir, a 35-year-old laborer. "The Americans are attacking Shiite and Sunni at the same time. They have crossed a line. I had to get a gun."**

**Ahmed, a 29-year-old man with elegant fingers and honey-colored eyes, has been planting bombs inside dead dogs and leaving them on the highway. He and a team of helpers have been especially busy recently.**

**"We start work after 11 p.m.," Ahmed said. "Our group is small, just friends, and we don't even have a name."**

**Khalif Juma, a 26-year-old vegetable seller, said he and his cousins bought a crate of Kalashnikov rifles last week.**

"To be honest, we weren't like this before," he said. "But we're religious people, and our leader has been threatened. We would be ashamed to stay in our houses with our wives at a time like this."

**A new surge of Iraqi resistance is sweeping up thousands of people, Shiite and Sunni, in a loose coalition united by overwhelming anti-Americanism.**

**In Baghdad, Kufa, Najaf, Baquba and Falluja, interviews with Sunnis and Shiites alike show a new corps of men, and a few women, who have resolved to join the resistance. They also reveal a generation of young people inured to violence and hankering to join in the fighting.**

**There is no way to estimate the size of the mushrooming insurgent force, but demonstrations in several cities by armed and angry people indicate that it probably runs in the tens of thousands.**

**Many people said they did not consider themselves full-time freedom fighters or mujahedeen; they have jobs in vegetable shops, offices, garages and schools.**

**But when the time comes, they say, they line up behind their leaders — with guns.**

"I'm in my shop right now but if anything happens, I'll close up and take my weapon and join them," Mr. Juma said. "I'm ready."

Several people described a loose command structure. Mr. Juma said he supported Mr. Sadr but is not part of his militia, the Mahdi Army. He said he received instructions from an imam at a mosque near Kufa.

American officials have announced an arrest warrant for Mr. Sadr, who had entrenched himself in his hometown, Kufa, in southern Iraq, last weekend, then disappeared.

Many Iraqis have weapons, in part because the American-led occupiers have often failed to protect them from looters and other criminals. Now, people are taking their guns into the streets.

**Ala Muhammad is a 24-year-old mechanic in Baghdad. He likes to work on trucks. The other day, when trouble broke out in the predominantly Shiite neighborhood of Khadamiya, he dashed home from work, grabbed a clip for his Kalashnikov and took it out front.**

**"If the Americans come this way, we will fight them," Mr. Muhammad said. "I'm going to defend my house, my street, my land, my religion."**

**He stood on the sidewalk in sweat pants, without shoes.**

**"I like to fight barefoot," he said.**

Mr. Muhammad said he recently joined the Mahdi Army. And while some of his neighbors watched him admiringly as he strapped on an ammunition belt and gulped down a glass of water before a battle started, others scowled.

"Many of these young men are just criminals," said Adil Hassan, **a contractor**. "We don't want them. We don't want their guns. **The problem is, more and more are coming.**"

A whole generation of Iraqi youth is coming of age in the bitter heart of the resistance. When the four American security consultants were ambushed and killed in Falluja, it was a mob of boys that set the bodies on fire and dragged two to a bridge where they hung them over the Euphrates River.

**Soran Karim, a 16-year-old with thick, man-size hands, said killing Americans was not just a good thing.**

**"It is the best thing," said Soran, outside a Falluja school. "They are infidels, they are aggressive, they are hunting our people."**

His friend spoke up.

**"We just want to play football — or marbles," said Omar Hadi, 12. "But the soldiers don't let us go out."**

**Another boy, Suhail Najim, 13, added: "We may be scared of their weapons. But we're not scared of them."**

A few days after the contractors were killed, United States marines invaded Falluja, 35 miles west of Baghdad, in a major offensive to wipe out the insurgents behind the attack. So far, more than 300 people have been killed.

Before the fall of Saddam Hussein a year ago, young men in this city were told they were the vanguard, the elite, top prospects for top jobs because of their tribal connections and Sunni alliances. Now, they are adrift, subject to the most aggressive American tactics and the full brunt of occupation.

Like the angry youth of the West Bank and Gaza, Iraqi children are increasingly surrounded by music, images, leaflets and praise for fighters. **"The men of Falluja are men for hard tasks," sings Sabah al-Jenabi, a popular Iraqi performer, in a song that made the rounds even before the killing of the contractors. "They paralyzed America with rocket-propelled grenades. The men of Islam will fight the Americans like leaderless soldiers. We'll drag Bush's corpse through the dirt."**

**Abdul Razak al-Muaimy, a 32-year-old laborer, said: "I train my son to kill Americans. That is one reason I am grateful to Saddam Hussein. All Iraqis know how to use weapons."**

**Like so many other parents, Mr. Muaimy said American soldiers had humiliated him in front of his children.**

"They searched my house," he said. "They kicked my Koran. They speak to me so poorly in front of my children. It's not that I encourage my son to hate Americans. It's not that I make him want to join the resistance. Americans do that for me."

**Mr. Muaimy said his 10-year-old son did not take part in the violence against the contractors. But, because of all the miseries he knew Americans had brought, he would have.**

**"He said: `Dad, it was exactly like what they did to us. They burned our women, they burned our children, they burned our men.' My son said this time we killed and burned four of their dead but hopefully one day we will kill and burn them all.**

"Just imagine, he is only 10, and he says that."

Mr. Muaimy shook his head, more than a little sad.

"My son is just like a piece of white paper, ready for anything to be written on it. He receives everything. It stays in his memory."

### **GET SOME TRUTH: CHECK OUT THE NEW APRIL TRAVELING SOLDIER**

**Telling the truth - about the occupation, the cuts to veterans benefits, or the dangers of depleted uranium - is the first reason Traveling Soldier is necessary. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>**

## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS:**

# **U.S. Apache Shot Down, Two Crew Killed**

Apr 11, 2004 BAGHDAD (Reuters) & By LOURDES NAVARRO, Associated Press Writer

The two crew members of a U.S. Apache helicopter were killed when it was shot down in Iraq on Sunday, the U.S. army said.

The helicopter was downed five km (three miles) west of Baghdad airport, Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt, deputy director of operations for the U.S. army in Iraq, told a news conference.

Smoke rose on Baghdad's western edge where the AH-64 Apache helicopter was downed by ground fire in the morning. More helicopters circled overhead, while U.S. troops closed off the main highway — a key supply route into the capital.

Heavy firing was heard, and tanks and Humvees moved into the area

**Armed men clashed with U.S. soldiers in the Sunni neighborhood of al-Azamiyah in Baghdad on Saturday. Four Iraqis were killed.**

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## **Attacks Kill Eight More U.S. Service Members April 9 And 10**

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND

April 11, 2004 Release Number: 04-04-17C

**IRAQ - Attacks killed eight U.S. service members April 9 and 10. The casualties occurred in the following incidents:**

**Baghdad - Three 1st Armored Division soldiers were killed in a coordinated attack at about 8:30 a.m., April 9.**

**Tikrit - Three 1st Infantry Division soldiers were killed and two were wounded in an ambush on the south side of Bayji at 3:40 p.m., April 9th.**

**Baghdad - A Task Force 1st Armored Division Soldier was killed during a convoy attack in north-east Baghdad at about 7 p.m., April 9.**

**Camp Fallujah - One Marine assigned to I Marine Expeditionary Force was killed on April 10 as a result of enemy action.**

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## **'Two Dead US Intel Officers'**

11 April 2004 (Reuters) & By LOURDES NAVARRO, Associated Press Writer

**DUBAI - Arab television station Al Jazeera aired a tape on Sunday showing the bodies of two men it said were US intelligence officers killed in the Sunni town of Falluja.**

**“The audio recording accompanying the footage said the two men were intelligence officers working in Iraq,” Al Jazeera said.**

The videotape showed the bloodied bodies of two foreign men lying on the ground, one shot in the back and another in the leg, surrounded by several Iraqi men.

Both wore dark T-shirts and khaki pants often worn by private contractors.

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# US Soldiers Missing In Baghdad Convoy Attack

April 10, 2004 From correspondents in Washington, news.com.au

**TWO US soldiers are missing following an attack by Iraqi insurgents on their convoy west of Baghdad.**

Military spokesman Justin McCue said: "There are two soldiers missing as a result of an attack on the convoy today ... the attack occurred right around Baghdad International Airport."

McCue said it was unknown if the soldiers had been abducted by insurgents following a flurry of kidnappings of foreigners across Iraq in recent days.

Earlier today, US Central Command announced that **a member of the 13th Corps Support Command had been killed and 12 wounded in an attack on their convoy near Baghdad International Airport.**

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## Truce Takes Hold In Fallujah; "Progressive Pullout Of Marines" Promised

4.11.04 AFP & Reuters

FALLUJAH, Iraq : A truce appeared to take hold in the bloody US drive in Fallujah.

Fighting eased off dramatically in this battered Sunni Muslim stronghold west of Baghdad after the 10:00 a.m. (0600 GMT) start of a 12-hour ceasefire which a mediator said would pave the way for a US withdrawal.

**An AFP correspondent in Fallujah said the guns went nearly silent in the town. Early sporadic firing gave way to a relative calm punctuated in the first hour by a single explosion, likely from a mortar round, and occasional shots.**

A senior official of the US-led coalition, who asked not to be named, confirmed a ceasefire was in effect "for most of the day" between US marines and insurgents in Fallujah. He gave no other details.

Hatem al-Husseini, a senior member of the Iraqi Islamic Party who helped broker the deal, said the two sides had agreed to an initial six-hour halt to hostilities in the town where more than 400 Iraqis have died since Monday.

**"After that, a second phase will start with the progressive pullout of the marines from Fallujah and the deployment of Iraqi police and Iraqi Civil Defence Corps (ICDC) to take over," he added. (If true, that's called giving Falluja to the**

**resistance, who now control the Falluja police. The so-called "Civil Defence Corps" have no intention of fighting other Iraqis.)**

Husseini, who said he met with top US civil administrator Paul Bremer late Saturday, would not discuss specifics of the accord but said he was "very, very optimistic" it would stick. **"Minutes ago, I was just on the phone with Fallujah, and they told me that the situation was calm. ... They said that hospitals in Fallujah did not receive anyone injured last night," he said.**

**Hundreds of U.S. reinforcements moved in place on the city edge, joining 1,200 Marines and nearly 900 Iraqi security forces already involved in the fighting.**

About a third of the city's population of 200,000 fled Friday and Saturday, though Marines turned back any military-age men trying to leave, said Lt. Col. Brennan Byrne, commander of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment.

"Families are holed up in houses. They have been told to stay inside. But they are running out of water and food," said Marine Capt. Jason Smith, 30, from Baton Rouge, La.

**The formal ceasefire came after US forces, facing mounting criticism of their bruising drive in Fallujah from even their Iraqi allies, announced Saturday a 24-hour suspension in offensive operations in the town.**

"I would say more than 600 have been killed, but the number may not be absolutely accurate because many families have already buried their dead in their gardens," Rafa Hayad al-Issawi, the director of Falluja's hospital, told Reuters.

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## **Two Marines Wounded In Fallujah**

April 11, 2004 AFP & By LOURDES NAVARRO, Associated Press Writer

Two US marines were wounded by sniper fire and an armed Iraqi was killed in a subsequent street clash on Sunday despite the start of a ceasefire in the city of Fallujah, Marine sources said.

Captain Jason Smith told AFP one marine was hit in the head and another in the leg after a squad went to take out the suspected hideout of a sniper who had started to fire on their compound at about noon (local time).

Sergeant Daniel Almond said another group of marines sent to root out the sniper clashed with four Iraqis armed with rocket-propelled grenades, killing one of them.

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## **Medhi Army Controls Karbala**

# U.S. Proposes They Disband; Calls It “Ceasefire” Proposal;

4.11.04 AFP

The US-led coalition was reported to be making overtures to Moqtada Sadr, the radical Shiite cleric, whose militia has battled occupation forces across central and southern Iraq, an intermediary said Saturday.

A proposed ceasefire called on Sadr's Mehdi Army militia to disband, withdraw from public buildings and respect state institutions and the law, said Jawad al-Maliki, a member of the Dawa party, a mainstream Shiite religious faction. **(Lots of luck.)**

He said Sadr, who is wanted by the coalition for his alleged involvement in the murder of a pro-western cleric last year, welcomed the draft under certain conditions. "There are ways to reach a compromise," he said.

In southern Iraq, some 1.5 million Shiite pilgrims marked one of their holiest religious days, al-Arbaeen. **In the city of Karbala, hundreds of Shiite militiamen — but no police — patrolled the street preparing for a possible U.S. assault against rebellious followers of al-Sadr.**

U.S. commanders have suggested they will move against al-Sadr, whose militia has control of Karbala and two other cities, after the al-Arbaeen ceremonies, which mark the end of a 40-day mourning period for a 7th-century martyred Shiite saint.

**(So, Bush-Bremer are willing to “negotiate” with “gangsters and thugs.” The water must be up to their necks.)**

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## Two German Agents Reported Killed

April 11, 2004 DeepikaGlobal.com

Hamburg, Apr 11 (DPA) The German Foreign Office today declined to comment on a published report that two missing German security agents had been killed by insurgents in Iraq.

A British press report, meanwhile, said the two men, members of the elite GSG-9 counter-terrorism unit, died in a hail of bullets after they refused to stop their car at a roadblock on the Amman-to-Baghdad road last Wednesday.

The report in The Sunday Telegraph, which ran a photo of a body lying in a pool of blood, quoted Mujahedin fighters as saying the two men had been driving a white Japanese 4x4 vehicle as part of a six-vehicle convoy that ran a roadblock erected by the guerrillas near Fallujah.

As the convoy raced on towards Baghdad, the guerrillas took up pursuit, taking aim with guns and rocket-propelled grenades at the last vehicle in the convoy, which was the one with the Germans.

Firing at the vehicle's tyres, the fighters forced the Germans to a stop. The two men were shot to death immediately, a Sunday Telegraph correspondent wrote.

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## **Blasts in Baghdad, Smoke Near U.S.-Led Authority HQ**

Apr 10, 2004 BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Loud explosions echoed across Baghdad before dawn on Sunday and smoke rose from near the headquarters of the U.S.-led administration in the heavily fortified "Green Zone" on the banks of the Tigris river.

**Gunfire could be heard crackling in central Baghdad after the blasts.**

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## **TROOP NEWS**

### **Among Military Families, Questions About Bush**

By ELISABETH ROSENTHAL, New York Times

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky., April 8

The billboard across from the huge Army post here reads patriotism, pure and simple: "We Support Our Troops, Our President."

But talk to members of military families in the parking lot next door, and the emotions are a good deal more complex. Samie Drown, 28, voted for George W Bush in 2000, and she was stoic and supportive when her husband, a member of the Army's elite 101st Airborne Division, was secretly shipped off to Iraq with less than a week's notice last year. Mrs. Drown took care of their four young children as the 101st led United States troops into Baghdad.

But now, with the occupation dragging on and casualties mounting week by week, she says she feels her views shifting. And not just about the war, but about the president who sent her husband to Iraq.

**"This has completely changed my view of the administration," said Mrs. Drown, wearing an American flag T-shirt and sunglasses. "My husband is a soldier and**

**his job is to fight for freedom. But after so many months and so many deaths, no one has shown us any weapons of mass destruction or given us an explanation.**

**"So a lot of military wives are now asking: 'Why? Why did we go to Iraq?' The administration talked a strong story, but a lot of us are kicking our butts about how we voted last time around. Now we're leaning the other way."**

This ambivalence seems particularly startling to hear at Fort Campbell, a huge base that straddles the Tennessee-Kentucky border, where the ideas of God, country and service permeate the air like oxygen. On Mugsy's Coffee Shop is a message to returning troops: "Welcome Home. Try Charbucks Dark Roast." In the parking lot of the Dollar General convenience store: "Victory USA, God is With Us."

The 101st Airborne based here has been a mainstay of American forces in Iraq, a company of dedicated soldiers.

**But even in this world of patriots committed to the hardships of military life, the deepening conflict has produced a sense of exasperation and exhaustion.**

**"Everybody here is feeling like it's enough already and we're scared because we think now we may need to go back; we're asking, 'Why, why, why us?' " said Tina Johnson, 22, whose husband spent six months in Iraq with the 101st last year. "We say 'grrrrr' about it, but we are behind George Bush. We understand that it was necessary to go."**

Brittany Wood, 19, whose stepfather has spent most of the past 18 months in Iraq, said she was a Bush supporter a year ago. Though she still "loves the President, since he's serving his country," she said she would vote for Mr. Kerry this fall.

**"I was glad we were doing this because we need to help other countries fight for freedom, but now lots of people feel there's been a cover-up and it is a lie and we were not told the real reasons for being in Iraq," Ms. Wood said.**

Part of the ambivalence about the war and the election is driven by the personal hardship endured by families here, as parents and spouses are far away. Ms. Wood, a university student, helps her grandmother run an on-base day care center. "Now you have kids growing up without mothers," she said.

**Such feelings, many say, were greatly inflamed by the length of the conflict. They have also been exacerbated by the failure to find unconventional weapons in Iraq and by the rising number of deaths, particularly grisly ones, in recent weeks.**

**On both sides of the issue, the tension was clear, with voters chafing in response to questions about the recent deaths: "Don't ask me; it's a total mess that should have been done a long time ago," said Mike Snapp, who has many cousins in Iraq. "It hasn't accomplished anything except messing up families."**

<b>What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to the E-mail</b>
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address up top. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

# **Sick Troops Back From Iraq Blast Army's Response To Uranium Poisoning**

2004-04-11 Associated Press

**Six soldiers who have fallen ill since their return from Iraq said Friday that the Army ignored their complaints about uranium poisoning from U.S. weapons fired during combat.**

**They also said they were denied testing for the radioactive substance.**

"We were all healthy when we left home. Now, I suffer from headaches, fatigue, dizziness, blood in the urine, unexplained rashes," said Sergeant Jerry Ojeda, 28, who was stationed south of Baghdad with other National Guard members of the 442nd Military Police Company.

He said symptoms also include shortness of breath, migraines and nausea. Sergeant Herbert Reed, 50, said that when a dozen soldiers asked for treatment last fall, they initially were turned away.

Three of them persisted and were tested in December, said Reed, who has yet to receive his results.

**Five of the men said they also were recently tested independently by Dr. Asaf Durakovic, a former Army doctor and nuclear medicine expert, who found traces of depleted uranium in their bloodstream, with four registering high levels.**

The men said that Army officials are now testing urine samples they supplied. Results are expected in about three weeks.

Since the start of the Iraq war, U.S. forces reportedly have fired at least 120 tons of shells packed with depleted uranium.

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## **Wounded Reservists Treated Worse Than Dogs:**

# **“Blow ’em off, get ’em through, let’s get to lunch.”**

April 12, 2004 By Deborah Funk, Army Times staff writer

**Army Spc. John Ramsey does not wear the combat patch he earned for service in Kuwait and Iraq because he doesn’t consider his combat tour to be over.**

**The Florida National Guard soldier said he’s fighting to get the military to pay for his medical bills for an injury he incurred on active duty, and to get follow-on care in an active-duty status.**

**“I feel like ... I’m by myself fighting a large enemy with no results,” Ramsey told the House Government Reform national security subcommittee.**

Ramsey, who deployed from January to June 2003, was one of four Guard and reserve members who talked to lawmakers March 30 about the care they received when called to active duty and after demobilization.

**Among the problems cited: undocumented medical records, unanswered requests for behavioral health counseling and expiration of active-duty orders while the troops still needed care. Delays in getting paid also cropped up.**

**One injured soldier had to pay out of pocket for his hotel while awaiting an outpatient appointment at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, although he later was reimbursed.**

**Ramsey said he receives phone calls nearly every day from health-care providers trying to collect more than \$15,000 worth of unpaid medical bills.**

**The screening process still falls short “because those individuals who are responsible for screening soldiers don’t listen and don’t validate soldiers’ accounts of the physical and mental health problems they are experiencing,” retired Army Reserve 1st Sgt. Gerry Mosley said. “A great motto for the process would be: ‘Blow ’em off, get ’em through, let’s get to lunch.’”**

**The pre-deployment screenings were “grossly inadequate,” and troops were “rubber-stamped” fit for duty even though they had medical conditions that should have kept them home, Mosley said.**

People with profound hearing loss, severe cardiac disease, insulin-dependent diabetes and other conditions were deployed to Iraq, Mosley said.

**He said his symptoms were ignored during his Army medical evaluation board and only many months later was his Parkinson’s disease diagnosed by a civilian doctor.**

Although improvements have been made in the force health strategy, “military medicine is still a contradiction in terms” for some troops, Rep. Chris Shays, R-Conn said.

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## **Raped Soldiers Raped Again By Command Harassment**

April 12, 2004 By Jane McHugh, Army Times staff writer

It’s time for the Defense Department to get serious about sexual assault and start putting the uniformed assailants behind bars, a group of congresswomen has declared.

“The reason you prosecute these cases in civilian society is because that deters [attackers] and makes everyone get the point,” said Rep. Eleanor Holmes-Norton, D-D.C., at a March 31 hearing of the Congressional Caucus on Women’s Issues.

**“Instead, in the military, the command is taught, ‘Remember, a [man’s] career is at stake.’ The military doesn’t take it seriously at all.”**

Testifying at the hearing was Lt. Jennifer Machmer, who said she was sexually assaulted by two different soldiers, a noncommissioned officer and a chaplain, in Kuwait and Germany.

Rape and sexual assault in Iraqi Freedom became an issue Feb. 6 when Rumsfeld, responding to congressional pressure, announced that a “detailed review” would be conducted by the end of April. He formed a task force to visit the theater and conduct interviews about the issue.

**“Yet another task force,” Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y., said.**

**Eighteen studies have been done in the past 16 years investigating the problem of sexual assault in the military, she said.**

Caucus members heard testimony from representatives of two sexual-assault victims’ groups — the Miles Foundation and the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network.

**They told of victims:**

- **Routinely having to salute their uncharged, unpunished assailants who are superior in rank.**
- **Having to continue working in the same environment as their attackers and come face to face with them every day.**
- **Being forced to visit psychiatrists because commanders suspect they’re making up the assaults.**
- **Being discharged, often dishonorably, after reporting sex crimes.**



- **Receiving little or no medical attention, especially tests for AIDs and other sexually transmitted diseases.**

According to Christine Hansen, the group's executive director, the Miles Foundation has received 129 "credible" reports of sexual assaults in Iraqi Freedom in the past 18 months. But only 27 of these cases were reported to military authorities, such as command authorities and chaplains, she said.

During that same period, the foundation also received 347 reports of "credible cases of sexual assault associated with U.S. military installations" in the United States and overseas, she said.

Machmer, 27, now assigned to the holding facility at Walter Reed Medical Center, said she was raped in Kuwait several weeks before the ground invasion into Iraq last year while serving with the V Corps' 22nd Signal Brigade. The culprit was an NCO who was a friend, she said. The rape took place when they were riding in a vehicle on Army-related errands.

Machmer testified that she didn't think the punishment he subsequently received was enough. "This soldier was reduced in rank to specialist, fined \$876 for two months and given extra duty for 30 days," she said.

Machmer has told her story to other media outlets, but she told the caucus March 31 that she also was sexually assaulted in 2002 in Germany by a chaplain to whom she had turned for marriage counseling. However, she admitted she didn't report him until recently.

"If there was one thing you could do to prevent sexual assault in the military, what would it be?" Maloney asked her.

"It starts with punishing them accordingly," Machmer said, "so these other perpetrators know they will be punished."

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **"The American Forces Should Get Out"**

4.10.04 By Christine Hauser, New York Times

"I'm a Shiite, but I do not want the Madhi Army, said Nahla Abdel Wahid. **"But the American Forces should get out," she said. "They just attract gunfire now. They should leave it to us:"**

**Few people say they have much trust in the American-backed Iraqi Governing Council, complaining that it is not elected. They are also mistrustful of the interim**

**constitution and of the promise that their lives will be improved when the United States returns sovereignty to the Iraqis in a largely ceremonial transfer in June.**

**“More people will just pour into the streets if they try to arrest Sadr,”** said Abed Jumaa, a 38-year-old war veteran, as he sat in a cafe in the Zayona neighborhood here, bustling with shoppers and diners.

His friend, Sabah Anwar, has a deep scar across his head, which he said was a wound from the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980's. He said the guerrillas fighting the United States had served as a sort of rallying point for Iraqis, giving them common ground. “We have decided we should all say we are behind Sadr,” he said. “We thank the United States only on one point — for getting rid of Saddam Hussein. After that we have been left on our own with nothing tangible.”

**“The Americans have no right to interfere with our freedom of movement”** said a cleric, Sheik Niseem al-Abadj, sitting in a tent on the roadside where charities gave away food and water to pilgrims en route to Karbala. **“There had better not be checkpoints or attempts to impede the pilgrims.”**

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## A Poet's Questions

Baghdad is burning

Karbala in uprising

Fallujah is revolting

Kut is always still resisting

Kirkuk blown up

Nasseriayh stands up

Najjaf stands up, also

And

George Bush calls them "**a small faction**"

General Kimmitt calls them "**a Tiny Minority**"

If this "**small tiny minority faction**"

**is doing** all this.....what happens ?

if once a Popular uprising comes ??

or are those **thousands armed people**

not a Popular Uprising ??

Raja Chemayel 4.10.04

*asking himself how big is a minority*

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



A U.S. Army tank burns after being attacked on a Baghdad, highway, April 10, 2004. Insurgents attacked U.S. troops and Iraqi security forces north of Baghdad. (AP Photo/Jerome Delay)

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## **More Attacks On Occupation Cops**

4.11.04 By LOURDES NAVARRO, Associated Press Writer

Resistance fighters ambushed Iraqi police before dawn Sunday in the northern city of Kirkuk, sparking a battle joined by U.S. troops. Four attackers were killed, said Iraqi Col. Sarhad Qadir.

Insurgents attacked two Iraqi police patrols in Mosul on Saturday in fights that killed two Iraqi police, a gunman and two passers-by, according to the hospital.

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

# Third World Resistance And U.S. Intellectual Cowardice

By James Petras April 7, 2004

**Falluja, Baghdad, Ramadi, Nasiriya - an entire people has risen to confront the colonial occupation army, its mercenaries, clients, and collaborators. First in massive peaceful protests, they were massacred by US, British, Spanish and Polish troops: Bare hands against tanks and machineguns. The armed resistance, in the beginning a minority now indisputably the most popular force, backed by millions.**

The colonial armies, fearful of every Iraqi, shoot wildly into crowds and retreat; they encircle whole cities, fire missiles into crowded working class neighborhoods, helicopters pour machinegun fire into homes, factories, mosques. **In the eyes of the colonial soldiers, the enemy is everywhere. For once they are right.**

**The resistance resists, every block, every house, every store rings out with gunfire, the resistance is everywhere. Every house takes hits, the resistance fight on. The people aid the wounded fighters, wash their wounds. They provide water to the thirsty to quench their parched throats and cool their hands - the automatic weapons are hot.**

**And where are the western mercenaries? The \$1,000 dollar a day hired guns with their flak vests, dark glasses, --their swagger and insolence have disappeared. They too have seen the charred bodies of their ex-partners of death.**

**Hundreds of Iraqis have been killed, thousands have been injured, many more will die but after each funeral tens of thousands more, the peaceful, apolitical, "wait and see" ones have taken up the gun.**

**'It's a civil war', brays the bourgeois press. This is wishful thinking. Shia and Sunni are in this together, brothers and sisters (yes, women street fighters) in arms, each covering their comrades' backs as they confront the tanks.**

**And the resistance is winning. Never mind the "proportions" - five or ten or twenty Iraqis for each colonial soldier. The Iraqi Resistance has won politically: No appointed official has any future : They exist as long as the US military remains but they will flee from the rooftops of their bunkers as the US withdraws.**

**Militarily, the US and the mercenaries are taking thousands of casualties -scores of deaths and wounded everyday. In Washington, the civilian militarists, the architects of the destruction of Iraq are panicking. "Send more troops!" say Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and the would-be president Kerry.**

From his Texas ranch, Bush proclaims the resistance leader Moqtada Sadr a "killer". Far from the fire, the mayhem, the massacres, his television doesn't show the child with the mangled face. Bush once again is far from the killing fields - Vietnam and now Iraq.

Now he can claim a draft deferment - he is nominally the President who unilaterally declared the end of the war in May 2003.

Now, April 2004 the Iraqi resistance rose to meet Bush's challenge "Bring them on" and took the streets from the colonial army, then they came on and conquered the cities and with sheer courage and absolute determination they hold their ground.

In the early spring of 2004, in April to be exact, the dreams of a new colonial empire came crashing down on the masterminds of the New World Order, an undisputed, unilateral Empire. The end of the Sharon-Wolfowitz-Blair-Chaney "Greater Mid-East Co-Prosperity Sphere". **The Iraqi resistance has turned the Rumsfeld-Wolfowitz dream of a series of wars against Syria, Iran, Cuba, and North Korea into a nightmare of bloody street battles on every block in Falluja and Sadr City, Baghdad.**

**The heroism, the valor, the inspiration, the mass resistance is all the more so as the Iraqi people draw on their resources, their own solidarity, their own history, their belief that they will be free or take down every colonial soldier as they fight to the death.**

**The phrase "Patria o Muerte" takes on a special and very specific meaning in Iraq: It is not a slogan of a leader, a vanguard, to arouse and inspire the people - it is the living practice of a whole people. Patria or Muerte comes out of the mouths of teenage street fighters as well as street vendors and widows with black scarves.**

**The "Iraqi April Days" are a lesson to for the whole Third World and other would-be imperial colonialists: Mass armed resistance cannot be politically or militarily defeated. The heroism of the Iraqi resistance stands in stark contrast to the cowardly self-styled Arab leaders:**

The Jordanian and Saudi monarchs, the garrulous corrupt "President for Life" Mubarak, the Iranian Ayatollah collaborators. Not one has moved a finger to aid the Iraqi national liberation struggle. They fear the example of the successful Iraqi resistance will light a fire under their ample buttocks.

**And the Western intellectuals? Since the resistance began a year ago, not a single US intellectual, of the dozens of progressive, critical thinkers ("Not in My Name") has dared to declare their solidarity with the anti-colonial struggle. They have "problems", I hear, "about supporting Arab fundamentalists, terrorists, anti-Semites etc."**

Echoes of the French intellectuals who also opposed the popular armed resistance movements against the Nazis because the "Communists had taken over." or later because the 'colons' in Algeria also had a "right to be in Algeria" (Albert Camus).

The Western intellectuals are a problem. They are sitting on their hands. **"But", they protest, "we oppose the war" while they scramble to endorse candidate Kerry who does support the war and even calls for 40,000 more troops to pour missiles into crowded neighborhoods., under U .N auspices to be sure.**

So where are the Western intellectuals in these days when the Iraqi people have risen arms in hand to resist the US military juggernaut? There are two sides: An entire nation fighting a colonial occupation army and US imperialism. Serious and consequential political intellectuals must make a choice:

To refuse to take sides is tantamount to complicity, intellectual complacency is a luxury for intellectuals in the empire which doesn't exist in Iraq. The issues are not obscure or complex. One side demands..... self-determination while the other, the colonial officials, ban newspapers, appoint puppet rulers and murder their opponents.

**The paralysis of the US leftist intellectuals, their inability to express solidarity with the Iraqi resistance is a disease which afflicts all "leftist" intellectuals in the colonial countries. They are fearful of the problem (the colonial war) and fearful of the resolution (national liberation).**

In the end, the comforts and freedoms they enjoy, the university applause and adulation they receive in the colonial motherland weighs more heavily than the mental costs of a straightforward declaration of support for the revolutionary liberation movements.

They resort to phony "moral equivalences", against the war and against the "fundamentalists", the "terrorists", the 'whoever' who is engaged in their own self-emancipation and has not paid sufficient attention to the self-appointed guardians of Western Democratic Values. **It is not difficult to understand the absence of solidarity with liberation movements among the progressive intellectuals in the imperial countries: they too have been colonized, mentally and materially.**

**Thousands of humble people in Iraq are giving these erudite intellectuals a practical lesson in solidarity: on April 4, 2004 in the midst of hostile tanks and helicopter gunships, thousands marched from Baghdad to Fallujah carrying food and medicine to the embattled and encircled people in that city which will forever be remembered as the cradle of emancipation.**

Will our intellectuals take note? Can they at least circulate a statement "In Our Name" in solidarity with the Iraqi resistance?

In the meantime, the mass popular resistance in Iraq takes on the well-fed, over-armed armies of occupation in hand to hand warfare. They do not ask if their neighbor, friends or comrades are Sunni, secular, Shia, Baathist or Communist, they do not stand aside when a mosque, a school or a housing project is bombed or machine-gunned. They have made a commitment to engage in the struggle, to join in one national movement to oust the invader, the oil thieves, the murderers at hand and afar.

**It's a pity, more for themselves than for any material contribution they could make to the historical struggle that the US progressive intellectuals have chosen to abstain and once again demonstrate the irrelevance of the Western intellectuals to Third World Liberation.**

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**Received:**

# Letter From Baghdad

From: "khury PS"  
April 09, 2004 5:00 PM

Friends,

The explosion of resistance on the part of Iraqi people in the past week has been met with a brutal US crackdown, as occupation forces attempt to "pacify" Iraq.

When i visited Baghdad this January, i met a young doctor named Allaa Yousif who practices as a surgeon in the Khadhimya district of Baghdad. Allaa told us about the lack of supplies in the hospital and showed us the facility, which has been devastated by the economic sanctions, the invasion, and the occupation.

**yesterday, i emailed him to ask about the situation in the area and in his hospital. below is his reply. (i did not change Allaa's words, but spelling errors are decipherable). i apologize for cross-posts.**

in solidarity  
khury

From Baghdad:  
hi

i really don't have the words to diacribe the condition, we are working day & night in our hospital, the condition is called crises, not taking about the medical supply which have not changed from the day you visited us.

**yesterday the us forces attacked al-shala district. there was no armed man agianst them thay just opened fire on al-sader office in the area and started to shout at any body in the street.** i operated on 4 the head bullit shouts, 2 died after operation & 1 in the operation. thay were comon people, with no weapons, the 4th was a 11 year old boy.

in faluja the us forces toke over the hospital prvinting injured malishia, & people from medical assistant, as doctors from faluja say most of the operations are down in non collafated operating rooms, what i'm tring to say here is, that thier is incianty above every thing, i no other discribe to the condition.

best , say hello to everybody  
allaa

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**Don't Fuck With Falluja**

11th April 2004 fiona @ 9:53 am

*Tonight I got an email message from the commander of a battalion of US troops, somewhere near Tikrit, asking me to evaluate the Iraqi personality. He cut his message short because he thought that his position was being attacked by mortars. This is the reply that I sent him...*

Thanks for your message.

Iraqi people have huge reservoirs of dignity and pride and nationalism. In themselves – for Iraq.

I spoke to my mother's cousin who lived in Baghdad in the late 50s / early 60s tonight. This was her impression about the people as well.

Her comment to me (if you can cope with truthfulness) was about the occupation of your forces. Her comment was so blatantly obvious in its simplicity. How would we like it if Iraqis were to take over the UK? We wouldn't. America would respond to such a situation in the extreme.

**In Fallujah, you are fighting fighters. This is an integral part of their culture – to fight and not allow surrender. We're not talking about West Point here. This is a way of life. No one can win the battle in Fallujah, unless your army withdraws. That would be the only kind of victory you could achieve.**

**Your only victory can be to minimise the loss of life – both in your forces and within the civilians of Fallujah. It is a fiercely independent and tribal system that is operated there. Our 'fixer' in Iraq learnt to shoot a gun, ride a horse and swim at the age of seven. He is from the Fallujah area. The tribal system remains strong.**

**Imagine the pride that beats within the chests of Iraqis, who have spent the majority of their lives being manipulated and repressed, yet whose history and culture pre – date most of what are now considered to be 'the civilised world'.**

**I have not left Baghdad hating Americans. I hate the manipulators who have put you and your kind into the situation that you are in.**

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