

## **GI SPECIAL 2#79**

**THIS IS WHAT IMPERIAL WAR LOOKS LIKE:**



**BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW.**

US soldiers survey the scene where a US Humvee was attacked by rocket-propelled grenade on a highway north of Baghdad. (AFP/Roberto Schmidt)

# **Losses “A Platoon A Day”; “This Cannot Be Sustained”**

5.15.04 U.S. News & World Report, Kevin Whitelaw

**Not only was April the deadliest month of the Iraq mission, but more than 1,000 soldiers were wounded, creating a huge drain on resources. These losses averaged out to losing the equivalent of a platoon a day in manpower last month. "This cannot be sustained," says another State Department official.**

**But officials contend that there is little being done to plan strategically to replace the wounded. Instead, marines in units set to deploy to Iraq later this year from**

**Camp Pendleton, Calif., are being asked to volunteer to head over early--a form of borrowing from the future that will eventually come due.**

**After spending the past year reciting the mantra that the U.S. military footprint in Iraq was adequate, the Bush administration has been forced to concede that the security situation is getting worse, not better.**

With the Pentagon announcing that it would keep roughly 135,000 troops in the country through the end of 2005, 30,000 more than originally planned, it means that what had previously been called a "spike" in deployments is becoming more of a plateau.

**The change also throws the troop rotation plan into even greater disarray, forcing the Army to dispatch one brigade of the overworked 10th Mountain Division to Iraq after only nine months of being back home from Afghanistan.**

**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/>

**IRAQ WAR REPORTS:**

**Marine Dies at Camp Al Asad;  
Marine Corps Won't Explain Why**

5.14.04 Combined Joint Task Force Seven Release #040514a

A Marine assigned to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force died May 13 at Camp Al Asad. The Marine's death is classified as non-hostile.

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**Harvard Man Recovering;  
Meeks '01-'02 Wounded Near Fallujah**

May 14, 2004 The Harvard Crimson, By Daniel J. Hemel

Jim J. Meeks '01-'02, an Army second lieutenant who was severely wounded in Iraq on Saturday, is recovering at a military hospital in Germany and expects to be back in the United States this weekend.

Meeks, a former social studies concentrator in Lowell House, was injured when his convoy struck an improvised explosive device (IED) 15 miles west of Fallujah. Both of Meeks' eardrums were punctured and a piece of shrapnel struck his right eye, Jinnett said.

Jinnett said that several Harvard students and alums who are studying in the United Kingdom this year have arrived in Landstuhl, Germany to offer support to Meeks.

Meeks said yesterday he had become accustomed to danger during his tour of duty in Iraq.

**“Every day I rolled out of my base camp, I knew I potentially could be killed,” he said. “I had run that route 12 times, and five out of the 12 an IED had hit some part of the convoy, so I pretty much thought it would be inevitable.”**

The wounded soldier's father, Louis W. Meeks, an assistant clinical professor of orthopedic surgery at Harvard Medical School, was not in his office yesterday and could not be reached for comment.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

# **Bush And Rumsfeld The Real Morons: A Failure Of Leadership At The Highest Levels**

Army Times Editorial May 17, 2004

**Around the halls of the Pentagon, a term of caustic derision has emerged for the enlisted soldiers at the heart of the furor over the Abu Ghraib prison scandal: the six morons who lost the war.**

Indeed, the damage done to the U.S. military and the nation as a whole by the horrifying photographs of U.S. soldiers abusing Iraqi detainees at the notorious prison is incalculable.

**But the folks in the Pentagon are talking about the wrong morons.**

There is no excuse for the behavior displayed by soldiers in the now-infamous pictures and an even more damning report by Army Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba. Every soldier involved should be ashamed.

**But while responsibility begins with the six soldiers facing criminal charges, it extends all the way up the chain of command to the highest reaches of the military hierarchy and its civilian leadership.**

**The entire affair is a failure of leadership from start to finish. From the moment they are captured, prisoners are hooded, shackled and isolated. The message to the troops: Anything goes.**

In addition to the scores of prisoners who were humiliated and demeaned, at least 14 have died in custody in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Army has ruled at least two of those homicides. This is not the way a free people keeps its captives or wins the hearts and minds of a suspicious world.

How tragically ironic that the American military, which was welcomed to Baghdad by the euphoric Iraqi people a year ago as a liberating force that ended 30 years of tyranny, would today stand guilty of dehumanizing torture in the same Abu Ghraib prison used by Saddam Hussein's henchmen.

One can only wonder why the prison wasn't razed in the wake of the invasion as a symbolic stake through the heart of the Baathist regime.

Army commanders in Iraq bear responsibility for running a prison where there was no legal adviser to the commander, and no ultimate responsibility taken for the care and treatment of the prisoners.

**Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, also shares in the shame.** Myers asked "60 Minutes II" to hold off reporting news of the scandal because it could put U.S. troops at risk. **But when the report was aired, a week later, Myers still hadn't read Taguba's report, which had been completed in March. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld also failed to read the report until after the scandal broke in the media.**

**By then, of course, it was too late.**

Myers, Rumsfeld and their staffs failed to recognize the impact the scandal would have not only in the United States, but around the world.

**If their staffs failed to alert Myers and Rumsfeld, shame on them. But shame, too, on the chairman and secretary, who failed to inform even President Bush.**

He was left to learn of the explosive scandal from media reports instead of from his own military leaders.

**On the battlefield, Myers' and Rumsfeld's errors would be called a lack of situational awareness — a failure that amounts to professional negligence.**

To date, the Army has moved to court-martial the six soldiers suspected of abusing Iraqi detainees and has reprimanded six others.

**Brig. Gen. Janis Karpinski, who commanded the MP brigade that ran Abu Ghraib, has received a letter of admonishment and also faces possible disciplinary action. That's good, but not good enough.**

**This was not just a failure of leadership at the local command level. This was a failure that ran straight to the top. Accountability here is essential — even if that means relieving top leaders from duty in a time of war.**

## **Fire Myers! JCS Fool Must Go:**

Army Times, May 17, 2004 By Robert F. Dorr.

(The writer, an Air Force veteran, lives in Oakton, Va. He is the author of numerous books, including "Air Force One.")

Who should bear the blame for the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by Americans in Iraq?

**As I wrote this column, it appeared that low-ranking American soldiers from one Reserve unit would face court-martial for a failure that ought to be pinned on our nation's leaders.**

**An Army report by Maj. Gen. Antonio M. Taguba that lay around the Pentagon largely unnoticed from March 3 until early May.**

As of this writing, the highest-ranking person to be blamed for this global outrage is a one-star. And the highest-ranking person to face a possible court-martial apparently is a sergeant first class.

**Does the word "scapegoat" come to mind? It's obvious mistakes were made in apprehending, incarcerating and mistreating Iraqi prisoners. Those mistakes could not have been solely the fault of a few reservists.**

Pictures don't lie. A few reservists apparently were inhumane and inexcusably stupid. But what about their bosses at U.S. Central Command, the Pentagon and even the White House?

Abu Ghraib prison is notorious as the prison where Saddam Hussein tortured political prisoners. What our troops allegedly did qualifies as the same thing. It was not merely abuse. It was torture.

Now for some questions:

**• Who is the U.S. military leader who decided to use Hussein's torture center as an American prison?** The instant our troops seized Abu Ghraib prison, we should have

bulldozed it to the ground and pledged to the world that jailhouse torture in Iraq would be a thing of the past. So why isn't that officer bearing some of the blame?

• **Who are the leaders who decided which Iraqis to take prisoner and how to treat them? From press reports, it appears that many of the prisoners were ordinary Iraqis who had no quarrel with us and no intelligence value. Why aren't the leaders who made those decisions facing punishment?**

**The blame goes all the way to the top.** The United States has held prisoners from Afghanistan since 2001, and publicly flouts the Geneva Conventions in the process.

For ignoring reports of prisoner abuse, for allowing the Taguba report to gather dust and for refusing to face the issue of torture of prisoners squarely, much of the blame must be placed on Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

***The president should announce punishment for everyone in the military chain of command, including Rumsfeld and combatant commander Gen. John Abizaid.***

The president should announce that, henceforth, all captives held by the United States will be subject to independent monitoring and accountability, and the names of all will be released.

**Finally, instead of sugarcoating this outrage on Sunday morning talk shows, Gen. Richard Myers should resign as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Myers reportedly requested that CBS not air its "60 Minutes II" report of abuse.** As the nation's top officer, he should have acted on prisoner abuse rather than passively waiting for the Taguba report. A new, top military officer who will make everyone in uniform abide by the law should replace him.

The nation should cut a little slack for a few reservists who ought to be penalized but who shouldn't be alone in bearing blame for a huge failure by a great nation.

## **Worthless Piece Of Shit**



Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Richard Myers March 23, 2004. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

**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.**

## **Silly Politician On Iraq Tour Babbles Bullshit As Resistance Grows More Powerful**

May 17, 2004 By Ralf W. Zimmerman, Army Times

**(The writer is a former tank battalion commander and decorated Operation Desert Storm veteran. He writes on numerous military topics.)**

One year after blitzkrieg victory in Iraq, it's time to reflect on the realities confronting our troops.

It now seems the war is far from over. Maybe it has just begun, with many troops extended on combat duty and others alerted to return.

**Consequently, I was appalled to read the recent commentaries on the situation in Iraq by Sen. Wayne Allard, R-Colo., a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.**

In a recent interview with the Colorado Springs Gazette, he demonstrated that he hadn't lost his well-known political naiveté. **Allard was absolutely convinced that the recent uprisings against the occupation forces were merely the work of a few thugs and that it soon would be over.**

**Allard furthermore insisted that U.S. troop morale was sky-high, even after the Army announced that the 1st Armored Division and the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment would stay longer in Iraq.**

**Who is he kidding?**

Then the senator glowingly elaborated on his visits to Mosul and Balad. **He especially praised the Halliburton gang for doing a splendid job in feeding our grunts:**

"They have four main courses," he told the paper. "Then they had fast foods — hot dogs, hamburgers, pizza, and they had desserts. **Everyone was happy and had high morale,**" Allard insisted. **Yes, the Iraqis loved us being in charge.**

I'm a nonpolitical ex-grunt, and I don't deny that our troops are doing their best to make candy out of crud in Iraq.

Still, Allard and many of the political cheerleaders of the war have no clue what tough Army grunts and brave Marines really experience in Iraq. *Too often, our politicians fall victim to the head-table syndrome and associate only with handpicked troopers who are well-rehearsed in sweet-talking VIPs.*

**Had Allard have talked to the troops in the muck and on patrol, his story might be different.**

The job in the red zone remains tough and dangerous. Cities are like jungles or, at least, three-dimensional battlefields. Inside, bad people are trying to kill you.

GI Joe and Jane must return fire, often causing civilian casualties, further increasing the hatred by the locals.

**Even with shoddy intelligence, we should know by now that the resistance movement is growing, and it's organized. Each operating cell has its own weapons cache. Operational orders are issued in decentralized fashion.**

**When interviewed by a western reporter a few months ago, one group leader gave the guerrilla strength as around 100,000.... He quoted weapon supplies as large as 7 million Kalashnikovs, 2 million hand grenades and about 80,000 to 100,000 rocket-propelled grenades. Many of the fighters are former Fedayeen who've learned their lessons not to play open warfare against America's high-tech killing systems.**

They appreciate the city jungle where their AK rifles, the homemade bomb and the RPG are miraculous equalizers.

***And does the population love us as Allard stated? I don't think so.***

**I came across a report by another European journalist who followed several American patrols through Baghdad. One patrol was led by a young sergeant and was greeted in a downtown bar by many happy Iraqis. The Iraqis offered the troops gratuitous alcoholic drinks, which they happily accepted. The Americans felt good to be loved.**

**But as soon as the troops left the place, the bar crew threw the Americans' shot glasses against the walls, rendered the one finger victory salute and swore to kill more Americans during the night.**

**That's the reality of guerrilla war, and we must come to grips with it.**

The Iraq war ain't over. The recent religiously motivated uprisings and the continuous road bombings demonstrate it. **This is a war that will take time and is best judged by those in the front lines, not by politicians enjoying four-course Halliburton meals.**

Nonetheless, as the war drags on, Americans must continue to do right by our little grunts, the ones paying the price in precious life, blood and devastating injuries. **Please make their homecomings honorable and heartfelt, not superficial sales gigs, especially since many might be sent back.**



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# Soldier Refuses Anthrax Shot: Gets Honorable Discharge

May 17, 2004 Army Times

Kurt Hickman, who refused three times to be vaccinated against anthrax, was discharged from the Ohio National Guard on May 3.

**Hickman, a sophomore journalism major at Ohio University, received an honorable discharge from the Army at the rank of private first class, down from his rank as a specialist.**

He first refused to be inoculated in November while serving as a guardsman, saying he believed the vaccine was unsafe.

Hickman must repay some of the money the Guard contributed to his education.

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

## “Combat Now Is A Lot Worse”

May 13, 2004 By Philip Jensen, KIDK TV Idaho Falls

Bryon Curnutt swept through Iraq with the First Marines when the invasion started. A year later he returned for a second tour in the war zone. Now he's home in Ucon, recovering from a grenade wound, and anxious for a third trip into Iraq to be reunited with his unit in Fallujah.

Curnutt had been stationed with them when the recent uprising began. They were being fired upon almost every day, but on April 26th insurgents hit Curnutt's position especially hard: **"They threw three grenades on the rooftop I was on, and another rooftop...then they just hit us with RPG's and machine gun fire,"** he explained. One blast nearly took off the forearm of a Marine nearby. Curnutt felt blood near his ear: **"I took shrapnel to the face, legs and chest."**

Curnutt helped the other Marine to safety down some stairs. Curnutt was later flown to a hospital in Germany, before returning home to Ucon last weekend. Initial paralysis of

the right side of his face went away after awhile with medication, but recently he once again lost full control over those muscles.

From U.S. invasion to Iraqi insurgency, Curnutt has seen a lot of change in Iraq, both in the people he's fought and in his fellow Marines as together they became veterans: **"The first time there was more anxiety because none of us had ever seen combat before. But the combat now is a lot worse than it was last year."**

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## Iraq Marines Enraged Over Prison Abuses

By MICHAEL M. PHILLIPS Wall St. Journal 5.10.04

QA'IM, Iraq—Watching a computer screen in a U.S. Marines command post here this weekend, Sgt. Maj. Philip Freed stared in disbelief at a photo of Army Pfc. Lynndie England holding a leash attached to naked Iraqi prisoner.

"Ooh—not good," Sgt. Maj. Freed said, wincing. "Not good."

**In the U.S., the abuse of Iraq prisoners by American soldiers at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison is causing both strategic and political problems for Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. But on the battlefield, the revelations are stirring anger, dismay and deep concern that the scandal is creating more enemies for U.S. troops.**

The Abu Ghraib situation also has put the U.S. military on the defensive on the public-relations front.

**"A lot of Marines may get killed because of these idiots [the Army prison guards],"** said 1st Lt. Justin Engelhardt, 28 years old, of Denison, Iowa.

The Third Battalion of the Seventh Marine Regiment is about as isolated a military unit as there is in Iraq. Its positions are spread among a series of towns along the Euphrates River and the Syrian border. Only now are these troops seeing— via military Internet hookups and military newspapers—the incriminating photos of abuse at Abu Ghraib.

'What's bad is this is undermining everything guys are putting their lives on the line for on a daily basis,' said: the Sgt. Maj. Freed, 41, of Colusa, Calif.

**With the Baghdad photos in mind, U.S. commanders have barred the use of empty sandbags to hood detainees.**

Maj. Anthony Henderson, the battalion executive officer, fears such disturbing images of U.S. forces will weaken public support for the war and the troops. **(Yes!)**

The Marines insist they have strictly adhered to military and international guidelines for humane treatment of prisoners. **Marine officials are investigating the death of a detainee in their custody last month. Initial Marine reports suggest the Iraqi died**

**when, during the middle of a fire- fight, he tried to escape through a window, landed on his head and then refused medical attention, officials said. (This is about the lamest bullshit yet tried. “Yes, I have fractured my skull and my brains are hanging out, but no thank you, I will decline medical attention.”)**

The Qa'im facility houses some prisoners, under the charge of First Lt. Jesse Larca, 31, from Jordan, Minn.

“I run my facility the way it's supposed to be run—no doubt in my mind.” said Lt. Larca. He says he has no interest in seeing the Abu Ghraib photos. But over a dinner of processed turkey and canned peaches this weekend, Maj. Henderson encouraged his officers to take a good look to see exactly how they don't want to behave.

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## **Thought Your Combat Tour Was Over? So Sorry, Bush And Rumsfeld Have News Just For You**

May 17, 2004 Army Times

**The United States is sending another 20,000 troops to Iraq this summer to replace those on emergency extensions, and the Pentagon plans to keep a force of 135,000 in the country through all of 2005.**

Elements of the 2nd Brigade of the 10th Mountain Division will go to Iraq by mid-July, as will the 11th and 24th Marine Expeditionary Units, officials announced May 4.

“The secretary of Defense approved deployment of approximately 2,000 10th Mountain ... soldiers to the Central Command Area of Operations,” according to a May 4 press release issued by the division, based at Fort Drum, N.Y.

<p><b>It was unclear at press time when these soldiers had been in Iraq before, but a Pentagon spokeswoman confirmed that the majority of the 2nd Brigade redeployed to Fort Drum last December from a mission in Afghanistan.</b></p>
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## **Combat Vets Cheated Out Of Travel Pay**

May 17, 2004 Army Times

**Military retirees who served in Iraq, Afghanistan or other combat operations before retirement should be reimbursed for the expense of traveling to and from a military hospital to be treated for any war-related medical problems, said Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C.**

Jones, whose congressional district includes Camp Lejeune, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base and several other bases, said **military retirees deserve the same travel benefits provided to veterans being treated for non-combat medical problems.**

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## **Impostor Runs Jolly Good Bar Tab**

May 17, 2004 Army Times

**British military officials are red-faced and rethinking security policies after a 35-year-old woman conned her way onto an air force base and lived there for five months while pretending to be a doctor, according to an Agence France-Presse report. The woman, who ran up a \$530 bar tab in the process, wasn't discovered to be an impostor until she applied for and got an assignment to another base, which paid more attention to her credentials.**

The woman pulled off the ruse by using a genuine ID card from her service in the British reserves and moved into officer quarters by claiming to have been visiting her fiancé, who had broken up with her. She was allowed to run up the bar tab after claiming she was waiting for her payroll records to catch up to her. **Her unfettered access to two bases has prompted a major investigation of security procedures.**

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

**It Would Appear U.S. Central Command Reports Of Success In Najaf Have Been Slightly Exaggerated**



**Shiite militiamen jubilate as they display destroyed U.S. Army equipment in the holy city of Najaf, Iraq May 14, 2004 after American tanks charged into the center of the city. (AP Photo/Hadi Mizban)**

## Baghdad, However, Is Reported Calm Under Occupation Control



A Shiite Iraqi raises his gun as hundreds of others shout anti U.S. slogans during Friday prayers in the Sadr City district in Baghdad May 14, 2004. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

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

## A Soldier Writes From Iraq; “You Likely Would Not Stare Down A Soldier”

May 14, 2004 Via and with comments from Fred Feldman, [NCAN]

(This is a real-life letter from a real-life GI in Iraq. I think his observations are intelligent, his sense of the surrounding hostility accurate, his estimate of the loyalties of the Iraqis employed by his corner of the occupation probably dead right, and his clear desire to be just about anywhere else perfectly reasonable.)

### **Introduction:**

Family and friends...I just wanted to pass along some words and sentiments from a friend of mine who's currently serving our country as a soldier in Iraq. Greg (Weiss) and I went to college together and "served" in the fraternity together. He was always one of the smartest, most intelligent and intuitive guys around....he went to Law School and

joined the US Army JAG Corps....anyhow, please feel free to read his perspective while IN the warzone...pretty fascinating, actually...

## The Letter:

We all know that the last person in power here ruled with an iron fist, but at times I wonder if there can be a government here that does not. **And do not kid yourself, we aren't exactly here keeping things together with kid gloves, but I am sure you see that on television.**

I was on a convoy a few days ago between Forward Operating Base Danger and FOB Speicher. Speicher is where CPT Burgess, the New York civil litigator turned combat JAG has his jurisdiction. I assumed my standard posture, sitting in the vehicle with my upper torso turned 90 degrees to face directly out the window of the HMMWV.

The reason is two fold. First, the front plate in the body provides the greatest protection, so you want to square up the maximum protection to the threat. Second, you want to be able to react to and engage a target without much movement.

**While we were driving and I was analyzing whether anyone displayed hostile intent, i.e. the threat of the imminent use of deadly force, I could not help but notice that no civilian was phased by the fact that a convoy of 12 heavily armed vehicles, all with multiple weapons pointed at them, drove by.**

**All of them looked me right in the eye as my M-16, with a round locked and loaded "in the pipe", pointed directly at them. Imagine being in your neighborhood on a normal Saturday morning with your kids and seeing vehicles with crew served weapons and soldiers with automatic weapons pointed at you drive by. You likely would not stare down a soldier with the weapon, when only an easily rotated mechanical safety and a low-pressure squeeze of the trigger separate life and death.**

Finally, we employ many Iraqis at Anaconda. All of them are friendly while they are on post, as they must be in order to keep their jobs. Each night they leave our base and go back to their communities.

**I am certain that the barbers or janitors or latrine emptiers depart each day and give good intelligence to the insurgents who attack our post. When we are attacked with rockets or mortars, the employees likely serve as spotters to help their friends, family members and neighbors---all of whom have had a friend, family member or neighbor killed by during American invasion/occupation---adjust fire or select targets.**

It is such a strange proposition to attempt to win the hearts and minds of people who want to crush your minds and hearts. **(Iraqi hearts and minds are fighting for independence. They are right to do so.)**

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# FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

## Today The Czar Ate Sandwiches For Lunch And Played Bridge. There Were Some Disturbances In St. Petersburg.

THE STRATFOR WEEKLY 11 May 2004

Error is common in war. **The measure of a military force is how honestly errors are addressed and rectified. When a command structure begins denying that self-evident problems are facing them, all is lost. The administration's insistence over the past year that no fundamental errors were committed in Iraq has been a cancer eating through all layers of the command structure -- from the squad to the office of the president.**

**Remember the objective; respect the enemy; be your own worst critic; exercise leadership at all levels -- these are fundamental principles of warfare. They have all been violated during the Iraq campaign.**

At the same time that the United States was struggling to stabilize its position in Iraq, the prison abuse issue emerged. It was devastating not only in its own right, but also because of the timing. It generated a sense that U.S. operations in Iraq were out of control. **From Al Fallujah to An Najaf to Abu Ghraib, the question was whether anyone had the slightest idea what they were trying to achieve in Iraq.**

**It is not clear that the Bush administration understands the crisis it is facing.** The prison abuse pictures are symptomatic -- not only of persistent command failure, but also of the administration's loss of credibility with the public. **Since no one really knows what the administration is doing,** it is not unreasonable to fill in the blanks with the least generous assumptions. The issue is this: Iraq has not gone as planned by any stretch of the imagination.

**If the failures of Iraq are not rectified quickly, the entire U.S. strategic position could unravel. Speed is of the essence. There is no longer time left.**

The issue is one of responsibility. Who is responsible for the failures in Iraq? The president appears to have assumed that if anyone were fired, it would be admitting that something went wrong. At this point, there is no one who doesn't know that many things have gone wrong. **If the president insists on retaining all of his senior staff, Cabinet members and field commanders, no one is going to draw the conclusion that everything is under control; rather they will conclude that it is the president himself who is responsible for the failures, and they will act accordingly.**

The issue facing Bush is not merely the prison pictures. It is the series of failures in the Iraq campaign that have revealed serious errors of judgment and temperament among

senior Cabinet-level officials. We suspect that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is finished, and with him Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz.

Vice President Dick Cheney said over the weekend that everyone should get off of Rumsfeld's case. What Cheney doesn't seem to grasp is that there is a war on and that at this moment, it isn't going very well. If the secretary of defense doesn't bear the burden of failures and misjudgments, who does? **Or does the vice president suggest a no-fault policy when it comes to war? Or does he think that things are going well?**

This is not asked polemically. It is our job to identify emerging trends, and we have, frequently, been accused of everything from being owned by the Republicans to being Iraq campaign apologists.

**In fact, we are making a non-partisan point: The administration is painting itself into a corner that will cost Bush the presidency if it does not deal with the fact that there is no one who doesn't know that Iraq has been mismanaged. The administration's only option for survival is to start managing it effectively, if that can be done at this point.**

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## Epitaph For A Defeated Imperial Occupation

Army Times 5.17.04

**“As things happen, we have to keep reacting.”**—“Anonymous Pentagon planner”

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## What Next For Haiti?

From “Aristide’s Rise And Fall,” by Ashley Smith, at [www.isreview.org](http://www.isreview.org).

**“You took our president—now you’re taking our country!” was the greeting to a U.S. marine convoy in Port-au-Prince from a Haitian youth.** Once again, the U.S.—with UN approval, it must be noted—has used the pretext of “disorder” to invade, occupy, and impose a “regime change” in Haiti. Our first duty is to expose the coup and demand that the occupiers get out of Haiti and allow Haiti’s democratically elected president to return. But there are also crucial lessons to be learned from what has taken place.

The U.S. coup in Haiti has produced confusion on the left both inside Haiti and in the U.S. Some became Aristide’s uncritical supporters while others, frustrated with his betrayals, have called for his resignation. But neither position offers a way forward.

**Uncritical support for Aristide means blinding oneself to the way in which his accommodation to American imperialism demoralized and demobilized the**



**movement in Haiti.** Unfortunately, many progressives in the U.S. accepted uncritically Clinton's 1994 invasion as a legitimate "humanitarian" intervention rather than what it really was—another illegitimate exercise of imperial control.

**But calling for Aristide's resignation without a popular, progressive alternative to his left only aided and abetted the U.S. coup. Many Haitian activists, disillusioned by Aristide's betrayals, fell into this trap. A new movement in Haiti against the occupiers and the Haitian bosses they are there to defend can only be built successfully if it stakes its ground *independently* of Aristide and the politics of compromise.**

It is necessary to defend Aristide against the coup-makers, but also to recognize the way in which Aristide himself contributed to the ease with which the coup-makers seized power.

At the same time, the movement in Haiti must develop a new strategy to win liberation. Any strategy to transform Haiti that remains within a national framework will founder on the hard reality of Haitian capitalism's underdevelopment.

This is not to absolve Aristide for his compromises with imperialism and with the Haitian capitalist class. Nevertheless, it remains true that the Haitian masses, no matter how determined to free themselves from unemployment, low wages and domestic and foreign repression, cannot shoulder their liberation alone. **Haiti's future depends not only on what happens in Haiti, but what happens in the rest of Latin America, and in particular, on the building of a strong anti-imperialist movement in the United States.**

**The Haitian poor and working class will fight again; but its success requires that it be united with the movements against neoliberalism, imperialism, and capitalism from the Dominican Republic to Brazil and the United States.**

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## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

### **Classic Occupation Idiocy; “For Security Reasons, No Security Reports”**

May 17, 2004 Army Times

#### **Tight security on security reports**

The official Web site for the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq provides regular updates on reconstruction projects, such as improvements in the electrical grid, but provides no information about current security risks, according to a Reuters report. **“For**

security reasons, there are no security reports,” states a rather Orwellian notice on the Web site.

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## Terrorist Evildoers Visit Iraq



Rumsfeld and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Richard Myers (R) are greeted by Lt. General Ricardo Sanchez (C) in Iraq. **Sanchez told Rumsfeld and Myers he was terribly sorry, but because of supply shortages, there were no extra protective body armor vests for them to wear, and his own wouldn't fit them anyway.** (AFP/POOL/File/David Kennerly)

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## “Free at last, free at last...”



## Only 10,000 More To Go

An Iraqi father (C) hugs his two sons who were released from the Abu Ghraib prison. The newly released prisoners complained of being hung by their hands from walls for hours and humiliated by grinning American guards. (AFP/Marwan Naamani)

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# **Bremer: U.S. Will Leave Iraq if Requested; Another Imperial Politician First Says Yes, Then Says No; Clowns Can't Get Their Story Straight**

**(THANKS TO PG & B WHO E-MAILED THIS IN: B WRITES: BREMER BEATS BUSH FOR LIAR OF THE YEAR! WOW!!)**

May 14, Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq - The U.S. governor of Iraqi told regional officials Friday that the United States would leave Iraq if requested to do so by the new Iraqi government — although he thinks such a move is unlikely.

**On Thursday, Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman said the new Iraqi government will not have the authority to evict American forces from Iraq, quickly reversing a statement made minutes earlier before a House of Representatives panel.**

When first asked by House International Relations Committee members whether an interim Iraqi government could force U.S. troops to leave, Grossman stressed that Iraqi leaders wanted them to remain. He also said that the Iraqi interim constitution and a U.N. resolution gave them authority to do so.

**Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, a California Republican, kept asking Grossman, "If they ask us to leave, we will leave, will we not?" Pressed for a yes-or-no answer, Grossman eventually said yes.**

But he later agreed with another panelist, Lt. Gen. Walter L. Sharp, that the interim constitution and U.N. resolution gave U.S.-led forces responsibility for Iraqi security for the immediate future.

***After the hearing, Grossman was asked if that meant U.S. forces would not leave if asked by the interim government. "That is correct," he said.***

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## **DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

**Bush Turned Down For Film Role**



US President George W. Bush learned today that his request to play the role made famous by George C. Scott in the film "Patton" has been turned down. The White House released this still from the Presidents portfolio, submitted to a Hollywood film studio considering a remake. An ABC producer said that while Bush had no future left in politics, the likelihood that he would be sent to prison for his role in invading Iraq reduced his marketability. "Maybe he can do a Nixon type thing later on," the studio executive said. (AFP/File/Paul Richards)

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## Leading Criminals Reject Ashcroft Plan



**US Attorney General John Ashcroft launched the National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan in Washington this week. However, spokespersons for a number of the nation's leading crime syndicates say they will not participate.**

**While not disputing that Ashcroft is a leading American criminal, they disagreed that he has any intelligence to share.**

"The stupid fuck can't find his feet with both hands and a roadmap," said Anthony "Hard Tony" Testaquadra, who operates several loan operations in New Jersey. "Dumber than a box of rocks," commented New York City goon Jimmy "Smelly Belly" Nuccharelli, who added that Ashcroft "goes psycho at the sight of tits." He was referring to Ashcrofts'

insistence that the exposed breasts on a statue of Justice in his Washington headquarters be draped with a cloth covering. (AFP/File/Paul J. Richards)

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## **Received:**

**From:** G

**To:** GI Special via [vfpdiscussion@yahoogroups.com](mailto:vfpdiscussion@yahoogroups.com)

**Sent:** May 14, 2004

**Subject:** RE: GI Special 2#78: The Marine vs. The Senator

Comments?? Why continue to make a simple decision into a complex discussion that leads to nowhere?

Michael Hoffman is disappointed by the Kerry flip flop? Michael -welcome to the club. You are in good company. But swallow your disappointment for a minute and put this issue into proper perspective:

DO YOU WANT 4 MORE YEARS OF BUSH-ASHCROFT-CHENEY - RUMSFELD-RICE-etc? It's still a choice between PNEUMONIA or CANCER. It's not a difficult decision to make. I choose to go on living - and to fight for change.

Peace, brother Michael Hoffman

G

## **Reply:**

Why continue to make a simple decision into a complex discussion that leads to nowhere?

Swallow your panic for a minute and put this issue into proper perspective.

Do you want 4 more years of dead American soldiers in Iraq, and four more years of dead Iraqis?

**It's still a choice between cancer and cancer. Kerry is cancer and Bush is cancer. Cancers kill. As Mike Hoffman points out, Bush and Kerry both want more dead Iraqis and more dead American soldiers.**

We've seen it before: Humphrey, for the war in Vietnam, vs. Nixon, for the war in Vietnam.

The Vietnam war was stopped when Nixon was president. Despite Nixon.

**That war was stopped by the Vietnamese resistance, and people who built the movement against the war at home, and the rebellion of the Army in Vietnam. People who made these same kind of arguments for supporting Humphrey against**

**the evil McCarthyite “fascistic” end-of-the-world Nixon just muddied the waters and made the work that finally did stop the war all the more difficult.**

**Every minute spent promoting Kerry is a time wasted doing what doesn't work, and not doing what does work.**

**Without giving one minute of time or one ounce of support to Kerry, our job is to win people to what can stop the war--building a movement, at home and in the armed forces, that can bring all the politicians to their knees. T**

**It's not a difficult decision to make. I choose to go on living - and to fight for change, in a way that actually has some hope of working in the real world, instead of joining the pro-war bandwagon of Imperial candidate Kerry.**

**Please help. T.**

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