

GI SPECIAL 2#C25

**NO HOPE NO WIN NO JOY:
BRING THEM ALL BACK HOME NOW**



U.S. Marines battle with insurgents in the Iraqi city of Falluja, November 15, 2014. (Pool TV via Reuters)

**Marine Report Says
Troops Can't Leave
Falluja
(Resistance Will Come
Back)**

“Gloomy” Assessment Says Resistance Growing

November 18, 2004 By ERIC SCHMITT and ROBERT F. WORTH, New York Times

The report offers a stark counterpoint to more upbeat assessments voiced by military commanders in the wake of the Falluja operation.

"The enemy will be able to effectively defeat the marines' ability to accomplish its primary objectives of developing an effective Iraqi security force and setting the conditions for successful Iraqi elections."

WASHINGTON, Nov. 17 - Senior Marine intelligence officers in Iraq are warning that if American troop levels in the Falluja area are significantly reduced during reconstruction there, as has been planned, insurgents in the region will rebound from their defeat. The rebels could thwart the retraining of Iraqi security forces, intimidate the local population and derail elections set for January, the officers say.

They have further advised that despite taking heavy casualties in the weeklong battle, the insurgents will continue to grow in number, wage guerrilla attacks and try to foment unrest among Falluja's returning residents, emphasizing that expectations for improved conditions have not been met.

The pessimistic analysis is contained in a seven-page classified report prepared by intelligence officers in the First Marine Expeditionary Force, or I MEF, last weekend as the offensive in Falluja was winding down. The assessment was distributed to senior Marine and Army officers in Iraq, where one officer called it "brutally honest."

Marine commanders marshaled about 12,000 marines and soldiers, and roughly 2,500 Iraqi forces for the Falluja campaign, but they always expected to send thousands of American troops back to other locations in Iraq eventually, after the major fighting in Falluja. This intelligence assessment suggests that such a move would be risky.

The report offers a stark counterpoint to more upbeat assessments voiced by military commanders in the wake of the Falluja operation.

Although the resistance crumbled in the face of the offensive, the report warns that if American forces do not remain in sufficient numbers for some time, **"The enemy will be able to effectively defeat I MEF's ability to accomplish its primary objectives of developing an effective Iraqi security force and setting the conditions for successful Iraqi elections."**

"It will take a security presence for a while until a well-trained Iraqi security force can take over the presence in Falluja and maintain security so that the insurgents don't come back, as they have tried to do in every one of the cities that we have

thrown them out of," Gen. George W. Casey Jr., the top American commander in Iraq, said on Nov. 8.

But if many American troops and the better-trained specialized Iraqi forces, like the commando and special police units, are committed to Falluja for a long time, they will not be available to go elsewhere in Iraq, possibly creating critical shortfalls.

Already, hundreds of American troops in a battalion of an Army Stryker Brigade in the Falluja area have been returned to Mosul in the north to help quell insurgent attacks there.

The Marine report paints a generally gloomy picture of the insurgents' expected reaction if American forces are reduced too much during the critical reconstruction.

"At current projected force levels, the enemy will be able to maintain a sufficient level of intimidation of the Al Anbar and Babil Province populations and infiltrate or otherwise further degrade the capabilities" of the Iraqi security forces in western and south-central Iraq, where the Marines operate, the report says.

The insurgency has shown "outstanding resilience."

Finally, the report says, the insurgents believe they are more willing to suffer casualties than the American military and public, and "will continue to find refuge among sympathetic tribes and former regime members."

The report predicts that insurgents will try to disrupt voter registration, which the officers say is already two weeks behind in Al Anbar Province, and that elections in the region will be cast into doubt.

[After reading a year and a half of drooling idiocy from officers at every level, it's absolutely stunning to learn that somebody, someplace, has a grip on reality. Watch your back. Having a grip on reality is not going to win friends in a military machine run at the top by liars, ass-kissers and other careerists, and commanded by an organized criminal enterprise made up of the bi-partisan politicians who run the government and the bankrupt U.S. Empire as a piggy bank for the corporate master class. T]

NEED 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/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Promoted To Sgt. And Killed Same Day

November 18, 2004 The Associated Press

WHITE LAKE, N.Y. -- A soldier from the mid-Hudson Valley was killed Saturday by a mortar round in Baghdad, his mother-in-law said.

Army Sgt. Catalin Dima, 31, called his wife Florika earlier in the day to tell her he had been promoted to sergeant.

Dima immigrated from Romania eight years ago and became an American citizen last month. He worked as a truck driver before joining the Army three years ago, and served in Iraq since last Christmas.

Dima and his wife recently bought a house in Smallwood, 80 miles northwest of New York City.

The Death Of Two Marines

November 18, 2004 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 1180-04

The Department of Defense announced today the death of two Marines.

Sgt. Christopher T. Heflin, 26, of Paducah, Ky.

Lance Cpl. Louis W. Qualls, 20, of Temple, Texas.

Both Marines died Nov. 16 as result of enemy action in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. Heflin was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. Qualls was assigned to the Marine Corps Reserve's 2nd Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, Grand Prairie, Texas.

Silly, Lying, Stupid General Says No Civilians Killed In Falluja:

He Can't Decide If City "Secure" Or Not; Another Soldier Killed; Death Toll Of U.S. Troops Escalating Rapidly

Nov. 18, 2004 ROBERT BURNS, Associated Press & By Seth Meixner – BAGHDAD, Middle East Online & Aljazeera & AP 11.17

Sattler said the total U.S. death toll so far in the Fallujah offensive, which began Nov. 7, stands at 51, with about 425 wounded in action. *Earlier in the week U.S. officials put the number of dead at 38.*

Fighters in Falluja are continuing to hold out in the face of massive firepower US forces are unleashing to try and seize overall control of the city.

"Fierce resistance is still raging with rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and machine guns against the US forces stationed on the outskirts of Falluja," an Iraqi journalist in the city, Fadil al-Badrani, said.

Badrani said American war planes and tanks had resorted to bombing the holdout sectors of the city and some areas were still not under their control.

"Clashes are still continuing the southern and eastern edges of the town. US forces have so far failed to storm the northern al-Julan neighbourhood," he said.

He added that US-led forces had abandoned al-Julan and the northern parts of the city, resorting to shelling and aerial bombing those areas.

The fighters fired RPG, mortar and machine gun rounds at US forces at several locations in the town, Abd al-Karim al-Hiti of Ramadi general hospital said.

The three-hour gun battle broke out after evening prayers at around 6pm local time. Another 13 people were injured in the fighting, according to al-Hiti. Several floors of two residential buildings in the Aziziya district were set ablaze by the firefight, residents said.

A group of insurgents attacked U.S. Marines and Iraqi government forces from a house inside the city Thursday, killing one Marine and one Iraqi soldier. One Marine and one Iraqi soldier also were wounded.

US marines may be broadly in control of Falluja but are getting bogged down in risky house-to-house searches.

Early Thursday, U.S. troops encountered intense rocket-propelled grenade attacks in Fallujah, said Lt. Col. Pete Newell, a commander in Task Force 22, 1st Infantry Division. The Americans returned heavy fire.

Militants' rockets fell on a U.S. camp on Fallujah's northern edge. The rockets that fell on the American camp shattered windows but caused no casualties.

Lt. Gen. John Sattler at one point said Fallujah "is not quite secure at this point," and isn't completely under U.S. and Iraqi government control, but later he said he had misspoken. "The town of Fallujah is secure, but we're in the search-and-clear phase that will make it safe - relatively safe is the best word," he said.

Sattler said the total U.S. death toll so far in the Fallujah offensive, which began Nov. 7, stands at 51, with about 425 wounded in action. *Earlier in the week U.S. officials put the number of dead at 38.*

Sattler said 25 to 30 civilians have been treated for injuries, but he was unaware of any civilians being killed during the offensive. [Where do they find these murderous clowns?]

US-led troops engaged in sporadic battles against insurgents in Fallujah.

Shelling continued on the southern outskirts of the city, an AFP photographer said, even after a US marine officer had declared Wednesday that the "the battle is over."

U.S. Casualties In Fighting Northeast Of Baghdad

11.18.04 Aljazeera

Northeast of the capital, in al-Mugdadiya and al-Khalis, an unknown number of US soldiers were wounded and several military vehicles damaged in heavy fighting between US troops and fighters, Aljazeera has learned.

Fierce Fighting Erupts In Western Ramadi; U.S. Copter Down

19 Nov, 2004 Manorama Online & 18 November 2004 FOCUS News Agency

Fierce fighting erupted between American soldiers and Iraqi heavily armed militants in the western part of the Iraqi city of Ramadi, reported RIA Novosti citing a correspondent of Al Arabia TV.

Earlier today, Qatar-based television channel Al Jazeera announced that Iraqi militants had shot down an American helicopter in the northern part of the city.

Residents said it appeared that US armoured units had entered parts of eastern and central Ramadi on Thursday to confront guerrillas who opened fire on them with mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and machineguns.

Grandbury Soldier Shot Through Head

November 17, 2004 Burl McClellan, Hood County News

The son of a Granbury resident is in critical condition with a head wound received while in combat with his Army unit in Fallujah, Iraq. His mother, Vicky Field, said Jeremy Chad Snowden was shot in the head as he and other soldiers were in a Humvee engaged in combat with terrorists in the large city.

He was hit in the left temple and the bullet exited on his right temple. After a two-hour Humvee ride from Fallujah to Baghdad, he underwent five hours of neurosurgery.

A neurosurgeon in Baghdad had to remove the damaged frontal part of his brain.

His condition has been described as stable/critical in the Baghdad hospital.

Tuesday morning, Mrs. Field said the soldier's father talked to the surgeon. He said that Jeremy, even though sedated, responded to requests to squeeze hands and wiggle his toes.

He grew up in Weatherford and attended school there. He was the leading golfer for Weatherford High School and worked on golf courses before entering the service.

The mother, who is publisher of Home Focus magazine, said the magazine would not be published this month because of her son being wounded.

Covington Teen Killed

November 18, 2004 NEW ORLEANS (AP)

A marine from St. Tammany Parish was killed in an enemy attack in Iraq's Al Anbar province over the weekend, the Department of Defense said Monday.

Lance Cpl. Justin D. McLeese, 19, of Covington, was killed Saturday.

McLeese was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, based at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

He was a 2003 graduate of Covington High School where he was an all-district defensive end on the football team.

McLeese joined the Marines in October 2003 and was deployed to Iraq eight months later with his unit. Family members said McLeese was scheduled to return home in January.

MARINE LOSES ARM, LEG

November 18, 2004 BY ROBERT LOWELL GOLLER, East Aurora Advertiser

Cpl. Mark P. O'Brien, 21, a 2001 Iroquois High School graduate, lost his right arm and leg after a rocket slammed into his vehicle in Ramadi, Iraq.

According to reports, a colleague was able to re-inflate O'Brien's lungs with an available medical kit and take him to a field hospital.

He was transported Wed., Nov. 10 to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., where he was treated in intensive care for his injuries.

O'Brien's sister, Kim Nottis, told WIVB-TV Channel 4 on Monday that her brother expected to get fitted with prosthetics by the end of the week.

He got out of bed for the first time early this week, she told the television station.

Ava Man Shot For Second Time

November 17, 2004 Suntimes News

Lance Cpl. Jeremy Mueller was injured when an improvised explosive device exploded near his patrol. **That explosion sent shrapnel into the back of Mueller's head but according to publish reports, he is doing ok.**

Mueller is currently on his second tour of duty in Iraq.

Meanwhile, another area marine was shot for the second time while serving in Iraq. Luke Tope of Ava was shot last year in the shoulder. Now word comes that he was shot in the thigh late last week during his second tour of duty in Iraq.

The Ava Marine is currently recovering in a military hospital in Germany.

Celebration Time In South Africa; Mercenary Killed In Iraq Formerly Helped Racist Regime Kill Blacks

17/11/2004 André Gouws News 24

Jacques "Oosie" Oosthuizen of Brackenfell is believed to be the first Capetonian to die in Iraq.

A statement by Erinys Iraq said on Tuesday that Oosthuizen had been part of a security team en route between Tikrit and Mosul when they were ambushed, reports Erica Gibson.

Oosthuizen was killed during a shoot-out. Another team member was wounded when he tried to pull Oosthuizen out of the vehicle.

According to Oosthuizen's father, Japie Oosthuizen, his son had been a well-trained policeman. *Jacques's father said his son had been in the bush war and knew what to expect in Iraq.* [Not quite. Opportunities to torture blacks, and perhaps throw a few out windows to their deaths, were lacking. Payback, however, for his "bush war" role, was not lacking. Good.]

But, in September when he found out he would not be promoted, he told Erinys he was ready to go to Iraq.

Local Soldier Shot; Commanding Officer Killed

Nov. 17, 2004 By Lori Mcnelly, Gazette City Editor

It's the call every military mom dreads, but Helen Norris got good news and bad news from Iraq Sunday -- in an unlikely way.

Spc. Joseph Seyford called his mom from a hospital north of Baghdad Sunday to let her know he'd been shot in battle.

Seyford, a 1996 graduate of Adena High School, used the wireless phone of a Time magazine reporter to call his mom in Frankfort. He had been shot in the shoulder while fighting with his Army unit in Fallujah and was being transferred to Lundstuhl, Germany, for treatment.

Seyford, or "Joe" to his family and friends here in Ross County, was with Alpha Company 2-2 when he was wounded Saturday during the U.S. efforts to quell insurgency in Fallujah.

"His commanding officer was killed," Norris said. "A couple other guys in his unit were killed, and three or four others were injured."

There are more wounds than just the physical.

"I said, 'Are you alright?' He said, 'Yeah, but I don't want to talk to my CO's wife," Norris said.

Now, Norris, a nurse, said her son may get convalescent leave and come home to recover. Otherwise, he's not due back home until February.

Either way, his mom is grateful.

"At least he's alive," she said.

TROOP NEWS

Rare Blood Infection Hits Wounded U.S. Soldiers

Nov 18, 2004 By Paul Simao, ATLANTA (Reuters)

An expectedly high number of U.S. soldiers injured in the Middle East and Afghanistan are testing positive for a rare, hard-to-treat blood infection in military hospitals, Army doctors reported on Thursday.

A total of 102 soldiers were found to be infected with the bacteria *Acinetobacter baumannii*. The infections occurred among soldiers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany and three other sites between Jan. 1, 2002, and Aug. 31, 2004.

Although it was not known where the soldiers contracted the infections, the Army said the recent surge highlighted a need to improve infection-control in military hospitals.

Eighty-five of the bloodstream infections occurred among soldiers serving in Iraq, the area around Kuwait and Afghanistan, the U.S. Army said in a report published on Thursday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Military hospitals typically see about one case per year.

Army investigators said they did not know whether the soldiers contracted the infections on the battlefield, during medical treatment on the front line or following evacuation to Walter Reed, Landstuhl and other military medical locations.

"Although some of the patients identified in this report had evidence of bloodstream infections at the time of admission to military medical facilities, whether the infections were acquired from environmental sources in the field or during treatment at other military medical facilities is unknown," the Army said.

A. baumannii, which is found in water and soil and resistant to many types of antibiotics, surfaces occasionally in hospitals, often spread among patients in intensive care units.

The infection was also found in soldiers with traumatic injuries to their arms, legs and extremities during the Vietnam War.

Spread of the infection is often halted when health-care workers wash their hands and those of their patients with alcohol swabs, actively monitor those with wounds to the extremities and promptly identify the infected. [If you're in one of these hospitals, DEMAND that this be done. And raise hell if it's not, because any hospital staff member that won't do this is trying to kill you.]

Development of better drugs also is needed to help contain future outbreaks of the infection, Army officials said. In some cases, the only effective antibiotic is colistin, an older drug that is rarely prescribed today because of its high toxicity.

Health-care providers in the United States are urged to watch for A. baumannii infections among soldiers who have been recently treated at military hospitals, especially those who were in intensive care units.

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. Send requests to address up top.

Marion Marine Injured; May Not Lose Leg

November 18, 2004 By KURT MOORE, The Marion Star

Family members here in Marion said earlier this week that John Moore, 26, is in the intensive care unit at Bethesda Naval Hospital for wounds that occurred Friday evening when a member of his unit came into contact with an explosive, said his aunt, Elizabeth Ruth.

"All they know is somebody set off a mine," she said.

Shrapnel became lodged in one of his legs, breaking his femur bone in several places. Ruth said doctors believe they will be able to save his leg and take him out of intensive care soon, though he will likely have to go through at least six to eight weeks of surgery and rehabilitation.

Ruth was at her sister Debbie DeVore's house on Saturday when she said she got a call for DeVore, Moore's mother. She said she originally thought it was a solicitor until the caller identified himself as a lieutenant colonel from Moore's base in Okinawa, Japan, and said he had to speak with DeVore.

"My heart just sank because I automatically started thinking the worst," she said.

Moore, a Marion Harding High School graduate, is serving with a Marine unit based in Okinawa. Loretta Ruth said he had been training in Kuwait over the past few months before he was sent into Iraq.

The timing coincided with planning for the offensive in Fallujah, where U.S. and Iraqi troops are trying to retake the insurgent-controlled city.

"I thought, 'Oh no,'" Loretta Ruth said, dreading at the time that he would be sent to Fallujah. "I watch the news every day hoping I'd catch a glimpse of him. I never do."

Loretta Ruth said she feels sympathy for any parents and grandparents of soldiers currently serving in Iraq.

"I think it's unfathomable what they're going through," she said.

Marine In Gladiator Photo Loses Foot

November 18, 2004 Andrew Bird, The Times-Standard

McKINLEYVILLE -- As Larry and Penni Nicoll boarded a plane here late Wednesday to fly to Bethesda, Md., their son, Marine Lance Cpl. Alex Nicoll, was en route from Germany to Bethesda's National Naval Medical Center.

Alex, a 2000 McKinleyville High School graduate, was severely injured in heavy fighting during the assault on Fallujah, Iraq, over the weekend.

The Marine lost the lower portion of his left leg and may have some cracked vertebrae, possibly from a grenade exploding at his back, according to information supplied by Penni on a website.

The Marine was injured while backing up a unit trying to clear some insurgents out of a building on Saturday, which would have been Friday evening in Humboldt County, his mother said.

It happened four days after the Times-Standard featured Alex in a story about the impending assault in Fallujah, where Sunni insurgents had been holding out for

months. The Marine had been featured in an Associated Press wire photo that was sent around the world.

The photo showed Alex in a gladiator's helmet as his unit staged mock "Ben Hur" type games to blow off steam before launching the assault.

Greg Aslanian, associate superintendent of Eureka City Schools and a close friend of the Nicolls, said Alex visited classes at Lincoln while home on leave between tours of duty in Iraq.

"It's really brought it home," Aslanian said Wednesday of the fighting in Iraq. "Not just the school, it's the whole district."

Fresh Meat For Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse: 1-17 Cavalry Deploys To Iraq



Samuel Wilbert, medic, 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, says goodbye to his wife Nov. 11, at Pope Air Force Base before boarding a flight. Pfc. Michael J. Carden

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (Army News Service Nov. 17, 2004) About 300 paratroopers from the 1st Squadron, 17 Cavalry, 82nd Airborne Division, deployed to Iraq from Green Ramp, Pope Air Force Base, Nov. 11-12.

More:

2,200 More National Guard, Reserve Mobilized

November 17, 2004 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 1173-04

This week, the Army and Air Force announced an increase in the number of reservists on active duty in support of the partial mobilization, while the Navy and Marines had a decrease. The Coast Guard number remained unchanged. **The net collective result is 2,294 more reservists mobilized than last week.**

Desperation Time; Air Force Drafted For Iraq Convoy Duty

Nov. 17, 2004 By Nathan Phelps Press-Gazette

It was his last mission escorting convoys in Iraq when Senior Airman Rusty Lison and the new guy turned around in the bed of their modified M-923 truck to see the aftermath of the roadside bomb.

Further back in the convoy, smoke filled the air; a Humvee had been hit and disabled — everyone was OK.

“The guy I was training ... looked at me and said ‘Hey, we just drove by that,’” said Lison, a 29-year-old Appleton native. “It was just luck, a thing of chance. The kid said ‘Wow, that could have been us.’”

Crews on the gun trucks escorting convoys around Iraq can be faced with hostile fire and long days out on the road. But enemy attack isn’t the only peril crews face.

On Monday, Pfc. Isaiah Hunt of Suamico was killed during a convoy escort mission when the truck he was riding in collided with another vehicle.

Family members said they were told the 20-year-old member of the 82nd Airborne Division was thrown from the back of his truck and died from his injuries.

The cause of the accident is under investigation.

Air Force personnel — as well as GIs — are using 5-ton trucks and Humvees fitted with additional armor and weapons to protect convoys moving supplies all over Iraq.

Some of those missions kept Lison and his crew working 12 to 18 hours on some days and sometimes on the road for weeks at a time.

“We got the cargo moved and helped ... get the supplies where they were needed,” he said.

While Lison and other members looked like the GIs they were working with, the “U.S. Air Force” name tape over their left shirt pocket set them apart from the Army comrades they were protecting.

“A lot of the Army guys didn’t even know we were providing security: ‘What are you, weather guys?’” said Lison. “The majority of them were surprised. It’s not something the Air Force usually does.”

Lison was attached to the First Infantry Division while in Iraq and now wears that unit’s patch on his sleeve. He came home at the end of September.

More than 500 Air Force personnel are still involved in convoy security operations in Iraq.

Among them is 35-year-old Tech. Sgt. Scott Bahnub, who grew up in Ettrick, about 30 miles north of La Crosse.

Like Lison, Bahnub didn’t expect joining the Air Force would put him on the front lines.

“To be on a convoy is kind of nerve racking,” Bahnub wrote in a recent e-mail to the Press-Gazette. “Once we drive outside of the wire, everything changes.

“Everyone focuses on the mission at hand,” he wrote. “We are always on the lookout for small arms fire, RPGs (rocket propelled grenades), VBIEDs (car bombs) and IEDs (roadside bombs). You never know when or where you might see one of them.”

Lison said those threats were something he was able to put out of his mind most of the time.

“But if people you are close to, or people you know, get hit quite a few times in a certain area and you’re going through that area, then you’ll be on a higher alert,” said Lison, who faced everything from rocket propelled grenades to rocks.

“You pretty much go into (the situation) ... thinking you’re going to live forever because that’s the easiest way to deal with it,” he said.

Local Marine Too Injured To Leave Iraq:

Teacher Must Beg For Charity To Care For Husband; No Money From Government To Help

November 17, 2004 Channel 3000

Friends of a seriously injured Marine are anxiously awaiting word on his condition.

Staff Sgt. Chad Simon, a member of the 2-24 Marines Company G, was injured in an explosion Nov. 8. Friends told News 3 that Simon suffered a head injury when a homemade bomb exploded along a roadside in Fallujah.

Simon's wife, Regina, a third-grade teacher at Lincoln Elementary School, has been told to expect an extended recovery time.

Right now, Simon's condition is not stable enough for him to be flown out of Iraq.

Regina may need to take unpaid leave under the Family Medical Leave Act to be near her husband.

"The prognosis is that he potentially could have a long recovery due to the injury," said Lincoln Principal Beth Lehman. "She would need to be with him as his only and primary caregiver right now."

Friends have set up a fund to help with living expenses for Regina and son Dylan during Simon's recovery. Donations may be dropped off at any First Federal Bank or mailed to:

First Federal Bank
448 S. Gammon Rd.
Madison, WI 53719

Drill Sergeants Running Rackets Threatened To "Track Down And Kill" Recruits

November 22, 2004 By Jane McHugh, Army Times staff writer

<p>Jones, with Womack standing there nodding his head, once warned a group of recruits that if they talked about the alleged scheme, "they'd never leave Fort Sill</p>

alive, and if they did, they'd track them down and kill them," said Taylor, who was in the group.

FORT SILL, Okla. — A former recruit at the Artillery Training Center here said two of his three drill sergeants threatened his life if word got out that they were selling passing physical training scores and such "contraband" items as candy and Cokes to soldiers for personal profit.

Pfc. John Taylor, now an artilleryman with the Tennessee National Guard, said he paid \$150 or \$200 for "PT insurance" to pass his final Army Physical Fitness Test at the end of his four months of basic and advanced individual training in 2003. He said he also paid the sergeants for candy, chewing tobacco and soft drinks — treats that are banned during the spartan months of induction into the Army.

Still sounding shaken many months after the alleged events took place, Taylor testified Nov. 10 by telephone at the Article 32 hearing of Sgt. 1st Class Larry Jones and Staff Sgt. Kelvin Womack. The Army accuses each soldier of dozens of charges and specifications related to allegedly running a racket using privates as middlemen to illicitly profit off the trainees.

In addition to allegedly selling PT insurance to ensure passing scores, the defendants are accused of peddling little, unauthorized luxuries such as Gatorade, CDs and DVDs. DVDs, which were burned, cost \$8 to \$10, and a regular-size bottle of Gatorade went for \$10, Taylor and several other soldiers testified.

Taylor said that the two drill sergeants used fear and intimidation to keep trainees quiet about their activities.

Asked by Capt. Kathleen Allred, the Army prosecutor, whether anyone threatened him in basic training, Taylor said Jones and Womack did. He said the two drill sergeants told soldiers individually and in small groups, "if anyone was ever to find out about this, there [were] ways we would not make it home," Taylor said.

Jones, with Womack standing there nodding his head, once warned a group of recruits that if they talked about the alleged scheme, "they'd never leave Fort Sill alive, and if they did, they'd track them down and kill them," said Taylor, who was in the group.

James Willson, Jones' civilian lawyer and a former Army judge advocate general, found the statement a bit incredible.

"You are asserting," Willson interjected, "that an E-7 and an E-8 drill sergeant were going to kill you over candy and PT insurance?"

Taylor responded: "For messing up their careers, yes."

And the warnings about not making it home, the private first-class added, "shook me up enough not to say nothin."

Robinson was jailed July 26, allegedly after he called a private who was to testify against him; he had been ordered not to contact witnesses, Hurley said.

Jones is charged with aggravated assault based on an incident in November 2003 in which he allegedly lined up Diaz and nine other soldiers and choked them one by one with his bare hands because he didn't approve of wall displays they'd made.

"He held me for 10 or 15 seconds, telling me how I was supposed to have my wall display hanging. He grabbed me and choked me to the point where I couldn't breathe," said Diaz, who testified in person.

Diaz said he and other soldiers denied or did not mention the incident when questioned by Army Criminal Investigation Command agents, because they were scared. Asked why he didn't bring it up with the agents, Diaz said, "I really didn't want to get my drill sergeant in trouble for that."

"He Knew He Couldn't Get Through The Flak Vest."

November 17, 2004 By NANCY POSTER, Evening Sun Reporter

A South Western High School graduate wounded Sunday in Iraq is expected to return to the United States today.

U.S. Army Spc. Justin Henke, 20, of West Manheim Township, was shot by an Iraqi sniper, said his mother, Cheri Henke, this morning.

"The guy was smart," Cheri Henke said of the gunman who wounded her son. "He knew he couldn't get through the flak vest."

So the sniper aimed lower, shooting Justin Henke through his thigh and nicking his femoral artery, his mother said.

While Cheri Henke said she hasn't spoken with her son's doctors, she has been told Justin will need extensive skin grafting and rehabilitation. He remains in serious condition, she said.

But that trip will depend on the availability of transportation to the United States. Because of the recent heavy fighting in Fallujah, there has been a large number of casualties, many needing transportation home.

Cheri Henke said she learned of her son's injury Sunday evening from a West Manheim Township police officer who tracked her down while she was at choir practice.

Justin had not received word that she had disconnected her telephone. So when the military had no way of contacting his mother, they called the police department.

The officer found Cheri Henke, told her Justin had been injured, and gave her a number to call for information.

It was the second time Justin Henke has been wounded during his tour of duty.

In the first attack, a rocket-propelled grenade exploded in front of Justin and another soldier during one of their missions. That explosion "barely missed his head," she said.

Injured, the soldiers went on to raid six more houses.

"Even after that, he was sent back into war again," Cheri Henke said.

She said she knows her son has a long recovery ahead of him.

"I keep telling him to take one day at a time," she said.

Serving in the war-torn nation since February, Henke is a tank driver and was on duty with the First Cavalry Division.

Justin Henke is a 2002 graduate of South Western High School. He enlisted in the Army in June 2001.

Injured Marine's Parents Fight To Get Other Son Home From Iraq; *"I Cannot Afford To Give Up Two Sons."*

(Bethesda, Md.-AP, Nov. 17, 2004 6:45 AM)

The parents of two Marines from Connecticut want to get their youngest son out of Iraq after his brother was hurt in the assault on Fallujah.

24-year-old Brian Johnston lost his right arm and most of his right leg in an explosion on November 9. His younger brother, Kevin, remains in Fallujah with a different Marine unit.

Their parents want the military to let Kevin visit his brother at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda or to assign him to non-combat duty. They are in Bethesda, where Brian Johnston is in a semiconscious state.

The father, Bruce Johnson, says, "I cannot afford to give up two sons."

Officials with the Marines would not discuss the explosion that injured Brian Johnston.

AF Major Admits Gabbing War Booty; Caught With Private Arsenal

Army Times 11.22.04

An Air Force major admitted to investigators that he had shipped war souvenirs that were found at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla, including parts for AK-47 assault rifles and dozens of Iraqi uniforms and bayonets.

Other booty included a dummy rocket-propelled-grenade round, about a half-dozen RPG launchers, several inert land mines, four antique rifles, two empty artillery shells, a pistol, a flare gun and a pair of seats from anti-aircraft artillery guns.

Testimony at Maj. Gregory McMillion's Article 32 hearing was expected to continue for several days. He could face no punishment or up to 37 years in prison and a discharge.

McMillion, a maintenance officer, initially denied knowledge of the contraband when agents questioned him, but later admitted his involvement.

McMillion deployed to Iraq with the Eglin-based 728th Air Control Squadron, a ground radar unit, in April 2003.

The alleged contraband was found in crates of communications shipped back in September 2003, about two months before the squadron returned.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Pipeline Scorecard For Today

November 17, 2004 Energy Security

November 17 - blast at 1am on oil pipeline from the Bai Hassan field, 30 miles (42 km) west of Kirkuk, to storage facilities in Dibis, 20 miles (32 km) west of Kirkuk.

November 17 - bomb on oil well in Barajwan, 20 miles (32 km) northwest of Kirkuk.

November 17 - blast at 8am 2.5 miles (4 km) west of Samarra on pipeline from Bayji to the Daura refinery in Baghdad.



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

Partisans Attack Mosul Governor's Office; Resistance Urges Citizens To Go Back To Work, Promises Protection

November 18, 2004 By Luke Baker in Mosul, The Australian & By Seth Meixner –
BAGHDAD, Middle East Online & Nov 17, 2004, By Kathleen Ridolfo, RFE/RL Inc

REBELS attacked the provincial governor's office in Iraq's third city of Mosul today, killing one of his bodyguards and wounding four more, the US military said.

Five Iraqi troops were wounded in a powerful blast in the west of the town, US military officials said.

Insurgents lobbed 10 mortar rounds at the governor's office in Mosul, 390km north of Baghdad, setting ablaze a fuel tanker parked nearby, a US military spokeswoman said.

Governor Duraid Kashmoula, whose predecessor was assassinated in July, was unhurt. Rebels also fired six mortar rounds at a US military base in Mosul.

Reports indicate that fighting remains sporadic but US, Kurdish and Iraqi National Guard personnel have secured at least half of the city, which is divided by the Tigris River.

Al-Jazeera reported on Friday that gunmen could be seen in the city urging residents to return to their jobs without fear. A statement was also issued by the "Higher commission of the Mujahideen Brigades" calling on residents to return to work, adding that the mujahideen would protect state institutions and banks in the city, and that there was no reason for citizens to close their shops.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Troop Discontent Growing

November 19, 2004 By Eric Ruder, Socialist Worker
http://www.socialistworker.org/2004-2/521/521_04_Soldiers.shtml

THE MAINSTREAM media love to interview gung-ho soldiers when they're revved up for a mission, but there's another side of the story that hasn't appeared on our TV screens.

"Using Vietnam as a model, one of the things that fed the deep disenchantment of troops was the failure to see success defined in military terms," Tod Ensign, director of the GI rights group Citizen Soldier, told *Socialist Worker*. "Many Vietnam vets reported that they would go into a village, have a firefight, clear it and maybe kill a few Vietcong--or, who the hell knows, a few civilians--and then they'd move on. And when they would return, they would encounter fire again or booby traps.

"In other words, the enemy had not been defeated, and it appeared that no end was in sight, and no victory was attained. That's a key component of morale. Falluja would be a likely example of that happening. You go through, you wipe out whole neighborhoods, you destroy mosques and schools and even people's homes."

Even if the U.S. succeeds in “taking” Falluja, as it claims, it will be impossible to keep resistance fighters from returning. And the very experience of battling a resistance using classic guerrilla strategies is devastating to troop morale.

Rob Sarra, an infantry sergeant who served in Iraq at the start of the war and is now a member of Iraq Veterans Against the War, explained last week at a campus antiwar group meeting in Chicago that soldiers are dangled like “bait” in the streets to find out if the street has been cleared. If they get shot at, then they’ve succeeded--in flushing out their target. If they don’t, then they move on.

But soldiers who conclude that they’re being used as targets will undoubtedly be left with a bitter taste in their mouths.

Last month, troop discontent appeared through the media’s smokescreen of war cheerleading when a platoon of reservists refused a combat mission. Soldiers from the 343rd Quartermaster Company disobeyed orders to carry out a futile mission--delivering fuel that had already been deemed contaminated.

That story got headlines around the world. But only a couple papers reported on the refusal of National Guard soldiers at Camp Shelby, Miss., to conduct training exercises. Three officers disobeyed orders--with the support of their platoon--and were detained for a short period before being reassigned.

The incident was sparked off when troops weren’t given a hot meal they had been promised--a minor indignity that uncorked their anger at other injustices, ranging from pay and promotion to other poor conditions at the base.

Undoubtedly, these two incidents are only the tip of the iceberg. “This is only conjecture, but I generally operate on the principle that for every one bad thing you hear about, there are 10 others that happen,” said Ensign. “I’m certain there have been other acts of resistance.”

Even after soldiers leave the battlefield and come home, the battlefield doesn’t necessarily leave the soldiers.

Former Army sergeant Matt LaBranche is filled with despair since returning to the U.S. He lies at home, haunted by images of an Iraqi woman who died in his arms after he shot her--and of the children injured by his gunfire. “I’m taking enough drugs to sedate an elephant, and I still wake up dreaming about it,” said LaBranche. “I wish I had just freaking died over there.”

A recent study by Army officials found that 17 percent of soldiers returning from Iraq suffered from intense psychological trauma, including major depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. But mental health experts say that the crisis must be deeper, because the study included only those willing to report their problems--and didn’t include reservists, who tend to suffer such problems at a higher rate than full-time military personnel.

"The bad news is that the study underestimated the prevalence of what we are going to see down the road," Dr. Matthew Friedman, director of the Veteran Administration's National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, told a reporter.

And despite the pledges from the military not to abandon veterans like after Vietnam, a 2003 Army study found that too few psychiatrists had been sent to Iraq. Only this year did Congress allocate more money to deal with the looming mental health care crisis--a paltry \$5 million a year for the next three years.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Bush Buddy Says Iraq "Spinning Out Of Control"

18 November, 2004 BBC

Jordan's Prince Hassan has warned that the situation in Iraq is "spinning out of control" and threatens the elections scheduled for January

The prince told the BBC that even Iraq's Shia population, who had supported the elections, were now having cold feet.

Received:

Yes, GI Special Available In PDF Format

From: Peter D. Bronson, Chair, New York City Veterans For Peace
To: GI Special
Sent: Thursday, November 18, 2004 12:10 PM
Subject: GI Special/ PDF FORMAT

Please try to send me GI Special as a PDF so that it will be easier for me to make copies.

I'm trying to make a sort of GI Special Readers Digest, 6 page brochure highlighting some of the stories in each issue that we could distribute.

The idea is to get those who want to receive the whole issue to contact us so that we can capture their information to use to get new members or just to build a data base of people who oppose the war and want to learn more about it.

Thanks,
Pete

Reply: Please use anything in GI Special in any way that will be helpful. Delighted to be of service. T

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