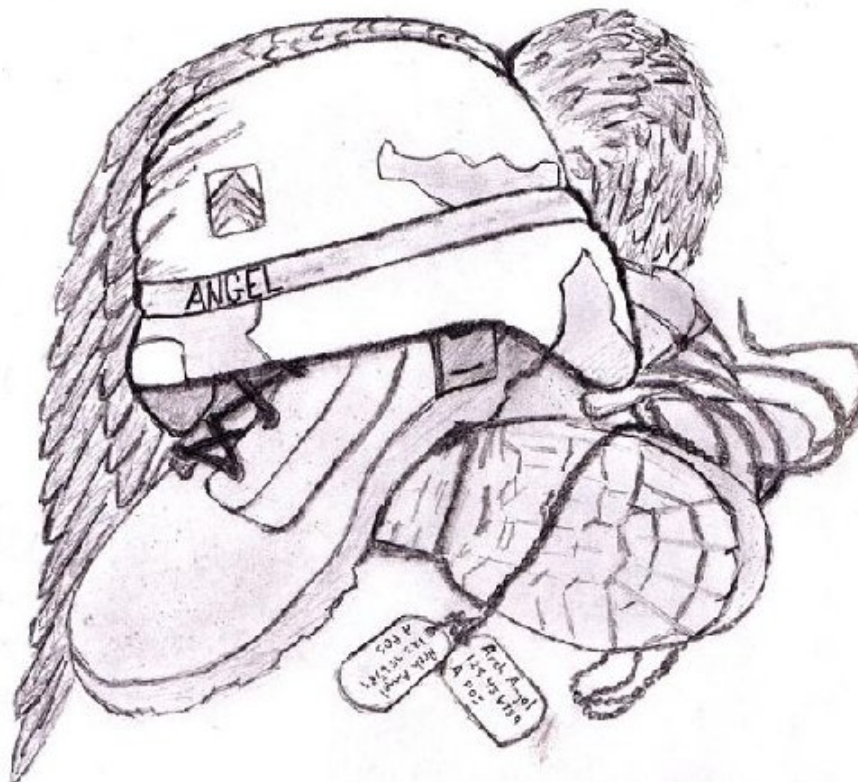


## GI SPECIAL 2#C28



# Let Us Be Your Voice

## ArchAngel Update

### 11-21-04

Please if you want to be heard but are afraid to speak out loud, let us be your voice.

It can be about anything and everything from being medically unfit for service, to just wanting to say something that just isn't right.

All names will be edited out unless told otherwise, and please if you wish for us to post, please make sure you tell us, and don't forget to make the subject or heading of the emails/letters say "LETTER FROM TROOP."

From: [ArchAngel1BL@aol.com](mailto:ArchAngel1BL@aol.com)

To: GI Special

Sent: Sunday, November 21, 2004 6:21 PM

**Subject: ArchAngel update**

ArchAngel would like to inform America that we have some good, and some not so good news to report.

**As you know, ArchAngel is a new group based on military spouses who wish to fight for troop's rights, and also to speak for them.**

Two of our members have husbands that are in the NG, who we had reported in our first article that we sent out. **We have also been contacted by an IRR Soldier who received a mail-gram to report back for duty asking for our help and advice.**

**In our first article, we mentioned two Soldiers, both of whom are medically unfit for service, and are being forced into Iraq.**

We are pleased to inform you that Spc. Marliere, stationed at Camp Atterbury for training, is now home.

How did this happen? Because ArchAngel has an Angel on our side that knows his stuff. His name is Gerry Mosley, and he is a Veterans Advocate as well as a retired 1st Sgt., who went before a congressional hearing and testified his case about the military forcing medically unfit Soldiers/Troops to war. **Involving this Soldier's case, 1st Sgt. Mosley, contacted the soldier's chain of command and various other contacts to notify them of their wrong. This is a copy of that letter.**

**CPT Kovats**

**I would like to speak with you in reference to the medical condition of SPC Marliere.**

**I am a First SGT (RET) U.S. Army Reserves. I am retired medically due to disability from injuries received during Operation Iraqi Freedom.**

**I am now a Veteran Advocate working closely with Senator Cochran's office, and also with Mr. Steve Robinson who is the Exec Director of Nat'l Gulf War Resource Center. I have testified before a Congressional subcommittee back in March 04 in reference to the medical care Nat'l Guard and Reserve receive as well as the Medical Screening procedures during mobilization stations processes. The latter of which was not a screening, only a way to increase numbers deploying.**

**Lt. Gen. James Peake, Surgeon General U.S. Army, assured Congress that the medical screening would no longer deploy Soldiers who were not fit for combat duty.**

**Based on physician notes and a letter from Sr. Armen Kelilian at Northwestern Orthopedic Institute, Northwestern University Medical School, it was medically determined by him that SPC Marliere would be unfit for deployment until 3 Jan. 2005 at the earliest.**

**As a commander, you should have access to these same reports and could make a command decision as such. SSG Bell should be able to supply these reports to you.**

**I also understand that the Soldier in question, is being processed thru a MRB. Is it complete, and if so, what as the decision? Is he being processed thru a MEB at the present time?**

**I also understand that SPC Marliere has a T3 profile in the "L" of his PULHES. Has he been properly evaluated by an orthopedic physician rather than a physician assistant?**

**I think it would be of best interest of all parties to resolve this at your level rather than at the level of Senators, Congress persons, Lt. Gen Peake, or Hon. Les Brownlee?**

**Thanks  
Gerry Mosley  
First Sgt. (ret)  
U.S. Army Reserves**

<p><b>After this letter was received, Spc. Marliere, was re-evaluated and after doing so, his command made the right decision and had him sent home so that his primary care giver can continue to treat him for his disability.</b></p>
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**For the other Soldier, Spc. Barron, his command is still not getting the picture.**

Spc. Barron, for 3 months now, is currently stationed at Ft. Hood, Tx. He is a National Guardsman and has been activated to go to Iraq in the coming months. During his time there, he has gone through 2 SRP's and has been issued two profiles. One is a permanent H2 for hearing loss he suffered in the Gulf in '91. The second profile is a temporary L3 for both of his knees.

Along with Spc. Marliere, 1st Sgt. Mosley was also notified about Spc. Barron and his problem with his command. In response to his wife's call, Mosley wrote a letter that was sent out to numerous contacts including ones in Washington. Below is a copy of that letter:

**I, as a medically retired First SGT due to injuries from Operation Iraqi Freedom, am alarmed to see the Army once again declaring unfit soldiers as being fit for deployment!**

**On March 30, 2004 while testifying at a Congressional Subcommittee hearing, Congressman Shays was assured that, while unfit soldiers had been deployed, the screening process had been restructured and now only fit soldiers are deployed.**

**Senator Kit Bond of Missouri stated he " Raised Unshirted Hell" when the army had admitted the deployment of unfit soldiers.**

If the process is reverting back to the ways of the early deployment procedures (deploying unfit soldiers) I do not feel like he will be the only senator voicing his disbelief and taking actions on this wrongful deed.

As a veteran advocate, working closely with Senator Cochran's office and also with Mr. Steve Robinson, Executive Director for Nat'l Gulf War Resource Center in Washington DC, I am communicating on behalf of SPC Barron, Patrick, 2/142 INF.

SPC Barron was mobilized in Aug 04. Prior to being mobilized he sustained injuries to his knees bilaterally. He was evaluated by an Orthopedic surgeon in San Antonio TX, Dr. Palmer. I will be receiving a recommendation from Dr Palmer on SM behalf. The Dx was Chondromalacia Patellar, bilateral and the prognosis was only further deterioration and no chance of medical improvement. SPC Barron was told he was too young for any invasive techniques or surgical reconstruction/replacements.

Upon reporting to CP Bullis he was issued a T3 (L) on PULHES. It was for 60 days. While at CP Bullis, SPC Barron's condition did not improve.

Upon reporting to Ft Hood, his T3 was reissued for 30 days. He had Physical Therapy RX which he complied with. There was not any improvement. SM pain and frequency increased.

SM was sent to Ortho Clinic for evaluation and deployability determination. He was seen by Dr Collinge. Dr Collinge did not make a deployability decision. He renewed the T3 profile. On 18 Nov 04, SRC returned the SM to the Ortho Clinic. They wanted a decision. SM requested to see Dr Collinge but was told Dr Lydia Coffman was seeing all SRC soldiers needing a deployability decision.

The exam was very brief and no ROM testing actually performed. There was some palpation over the patellar region. *While Dr Coffman said she agreed with all the previous medical diagnosis and decisions she stamped SM as fit for deployment.*

The T3 has the following limitations:

1. NO RUNNING
2. NO WALKING WITH FIGHTING LOAD
3. NO LIFTING OVER 40LBS (previously no lifting over 15LBS)
4. NO RUCK

As stated, the SM pain has increased as has the frequency.

Having been to Iraq, I will say with certainty that this man's condition will deteriorate rapidly. I fully understand the time frame that is imposed on units to clear the SRC process. *However, I disagree that a physician should declare a soldier as deployable if he/she is unfit.*

This is not the way to reduce the numbers just to manifest a unit.

If a soldier is unfit, as is SPC Barron, they should be declared unfit and REFRAD within the 25 days as is instructed in DASG (Dept of the Army Surgeon General) in his message to all MEDCOM dated 23 October 2003. This message was dated and

transmitted 6 days after the Medical Hold problems at Ft Stewart GA was first put in the media lights.

I would think, and for the most part you would also, that with DJD aggravated by an injury in June 04 which has aggressively worsened in 5 months (as evidenced by the numerous sick-call evaluations and temporary profiles) is not remotely expected to improve. It will not even reach any level of stability living or working in an environment such as is in Iraq.

I am also concerned about the allegation that personnel at SRC removed several medical documents from SM Med Records Jacket and commented to the point that those records should not be there.

SM is unsure to exactness what was removed but does know it was some important medical records or copies of temporary profiles etc.

I would hope a Command decision would be made to have this SM reevaluated and , upon declaring him unfit, REFRAD SM and initiate either a MMRB or MEB.

Regards,  
Gerry Mosley  
First SGT (Ret)

From what his wife says, his orders came in saying that he can be deployed but with limitations. Like her, ArchAngel asks this.

How can a Soldier be deployable if he has limitations? These commanders just are not getting the picture that they are not God. Not only would they be putting this Soldier at risk of getting hurt, but the command is also putting his fellow Soldier's at risk.

*Now, we have a new case that we are looking into.*

An IRR Soldier has been contacted by mail gram informing him that he is to report back for duty.

According to him he wrote a letter back to the Army requesting exemption, and is still waiting for an answer, but feels that it will not get approved.

What was his exemption request for? Not only was it because of personal reasons, but he too is a medically unfit Soldier. His medical handicap keeps him from running, marching, etc. He has a bad ankle which while stationed in South Korea he injured multiple times on runs through uneven terrain and also since being discharged the same ankle was broken and severely twisted and has never been the same.

Also, he has had recent back problems. As of right now, his appeal is all that he waits for, but ArchAngel is not going to wait.

**We think that his story needed to be started by mentioning him in this letter, because if he gets rubber stamped to be physically fit, then this would prove that Congress failed to keep it's promise that no medically unfit Soldier would be deployed.**

ArchAngel would also like to inform our troops and their family members that there are two other email addresses that they can contact us, and also we have a mailing address.

So if you would like to contact ArchAngel, you can email at these address [ArchAngel1BL@hotmail.com](mailto:ArchAngel1BL@hotmail.com), [ArchAngel2KB@hotmail.com](mailto:ArchAngel2KB@hotmail.com), and our new emails are [ArchAngel3CM@hotmail.com](mailto:ArchAngel3CM@hotmail.com) and [ArchAngel1BL@aol.com](mailto:ArchAngel1BL@aol.com) .

The mailing address is ArchAngel P.O. Box 57, LaPryor Tx. 78872-0057.

**Please if you want to be heard but are afraid to speak out loud, let us be your voice.**

**It can be about anything and everything from being medically unfit for service, to just wanting to say something that just isn't right.**

**All names will be edited out unless told otherwise, and please if you wish for us to post, please make sure you tell us, and don't forget to make the subject or heading of the emails/letters say "LETTER FROM TROOP."**

Thank you  
ArchAngel

**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.**

## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS:**

# **OOPS: Militant Groups Control 60% Of Fallujah: Witnesses**

NEAR FALLUJAH, Iraq, Nov. 21 (Xinhuanet)

**Militant groups in battle-torn Fallujah have controlled 60 percent of the central Iraqi city and surrounded dozens of US Marines in Jolan district, witnesses said Sunday.**

**"Defenders of the city are controlling 60 percent of the city and they are encircling dozens of US soldiers in Jolan neighborhood," eyewitnesses who managed to sneak out of the city told Xinhua.**

Residents of Fallujah said the southern part of Fallujah, which is still under control of the militant groups, constitutes the larger part of the city, and US troops only control the north and small eastern spots in the city.

**"Some American troops are based in government buildings and they are pounded by fighters," they said.**

**"In daytime, groups of mujahedeen (Holy War fighters) engage with hit-and-run attacks with US Marines, and at the same time they gear themselves up for the night battles," they said. Fierce fighting and loud explosions resonated throughout Jolan district before the sunset.**

US troops continued pounding the area as plumes and columns of smoke covered the sky over Jolan and the southern al-Shuhadaa district.

Early this month, US and Iraqi forces launched a major offensive to crush insurgents, including Zarqawi group, in Fallujah, 50 km west of Baghdad.

**About one week later, the US military claimed it had controlled the city.**

**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](http://www.ivaw.net))

**Valley Marine Hurt In Fallujah;  
"We Just Want Him To Come Home."  
"We Want Them To Bring Everybody  
Home."**

November 21, 2004 by Sheila Gardner, recordcourier

A Gardnerville Ranchos couple is waiting anxiously to hear from their son, Lance Cpl. Miguel Angel Melara, 19, injured last week in a bomb blast in Fallujah.

**"We don't know exactly what happened," said Maria Melara, the young Marine's mother. "We don't even know which leg was injured."**

The Melaras were told by the Marines that Miguel was wounded when his leg was pierced with shrapnel.

"They took him to the hospital and said he was fine," she said Friday. "They asked him if he wanted to come home or go back on duty and he said he wanted to go back. They gave him the Purple Heart."

Miguel's sister, Joanna, 14, answered the telephone when the Marines called at 5 p.m. Tuesday.

"She was crying when she called me," said Junior Melara, her father. "She said, 'Dad, something happened to Miguel.'"

**Melara said he took two days off work waiting to hear from his son, but as of Friday, Miguel had not been able to call.**

**"I just want to hear him say, 'Dad, I'm OK,'" Melara said.**

Miguel, a 2003 graduate of Douglas High School, was 17-1/2 when he enlisted. His parents had to give their approval.

"Some kids want to be on the street at that age," his father said. "Miguel said he didn't want to waste any more time. We are very proud of him."

Miguel is in the infantry and assigned to the 3rd Battalion from Camp Pendleton.

"He had his choice when he enlisted. He wanted the infantry. His mother wasn't happy when he picked the infantry, but he said he wants to be on a SWAT team and he thought the infantry would be better experience," Melara said.

Maria Melara said she worries about Miguel, and keeps herself busy with his three younger sisters and a brother.

**"I try to keep busy, but inside it's killing me," she said.**

**The Melaras said Miguel's experiences have changed him. "He's a lot quieter," his mother said. "He doesn't joke around like he used to."**

**Two of his best friends were killed in combat.**

**"He wrote us a letter thanking us for the life he has had here," Melara said. "He said there are a lot of poor people over there and conditions are terrible.**



**"We just want him to come home. We want them to bring everybody home."**

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## **Fighting In Samarra**

November 21, 2004 - AFP

In the city of Samarra, two Iraqi national guardsmen have been wounded by a roadside bomb.

**Colonel Hassan Abbas says fighting then broke out between US troops and insurgents, and three large explosions have been heard from the direction of the US army's main base in the city.**

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## **British Base Burns, Ammunition Blows Up In Mysterious Fire**

21 November, 2004 BBC

**A large fire broke out on Sunday at Camp Dogwood, the central Iraq base of British Black Watch troops.**

**The fire started at around 1830 local time (1530 GMT) in a tent at the base - flames reached 40ft in the air and ammunition inside the tent exploded.**

Soldiers were evacuated to more than 100m away, while Royal Engineers spent an hour getting the fire under control.

Officers think the fire was an accident rather than sabotage. **[Or a soldier very pissed off about being there? What other kind of "accident" might this be? Spontaneous combustion?]** There were no reported casualties.

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## **Ramadi; Nine Occupation Guards Killed, 17 Wounded**

11.21.04 Aljazeera & AP

**In Ramadi armed men ambushed a convoy of Iraqi National Guards on Sunday, killing nine soldiers and wounding 17,** local hospital officials said.

The Iraqi forces were on patrol in the city center when gunmen opened fire on their convoy around 4:00 p.m., said Capt. Nasser Abdullah from the Anbar provincial police force.

The attackers then torched the guards' two trucks

### **HOW TO RECRUIT FOR THE RESISTANCE, LESSON #3: (ONLY 12,387 HOUSES IN RAMADI LEFT TO BUST UP)**



US soldiers force their way into a house in Ramadi. (AFP/Ahmed al-Rubaye)

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## **TROOP NEWS**

**“Anxiety Among The Troops”  
Only Nine Months Home:  
Back To War With Broke Down  
Tanks, Equipment Shortages, And  
Handguns!  
Silly Liars In Command**

November 22, 2004 By Sean D. Naylor, Army Times staff writer

**A former Army officer who has paid close attention to the brigade's combat preparations was alarmed: "They're hurting; their stuff is broken. They haven't finished the reset from the first time they went to Iraq [and] they've come to NTC at a lower training level than most arriving units."**

FORT IRWIN, Calif. — Twenty months into the war in Iraq, there are few better places to judge the resulting strains on the Army than at the National Training Center.

**The balmy sunshine of mid-November found 1st Armored Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team, from Fort Riley, Kan., racing to prepare for a return to Iraq in February — just nine months after the brigade came home from there.**

Leaders of the 3,500-soldier team acknowledge they face a series of challenges, including:

- Poor tank-operational ready rates, which fluctuate between 55 percent and 70 percent, far lower than the 90-percent goal for a unit to be considered fully mission-capable.

- A shortage of rifles and other individual soldier equipment they are supposed to have**, thanks to the Army's desire to have tankers and other mounted soldiers conduct infantry-like tasks in Iraq.

- A 40 percent turnover of personnel since the brigade's return from Iraq** — meaning little time for leaders, from tank commander to brigade commander, to turn new soldiers into cohesive combat teams.

- Doubt about whether hardened Humvees await the brigade in theater.

- Late fielding of several digital command-and-control systems, meaning **soldiers will have, at most, a few weeks to learn how to use and repair the high-tech gear before relying on it in combat.**

- The absence from the mission rehearsal exercise of Special Forces, psychological operations and civil affairs teams that will be attached to the brigade in Iraq. That means relationships that could prove critical to the brigade's success or failure will be developed in combat.

**The problems have some observers worried.**

**A former Army officer who has paid close attention to the brigade's combat preparations was alarmed: "They're hurting; their stuff is broken. They haven't finished the reset from the first time they went to Iraq [and] they've come to NTC at a lower training level than most arriving units."**

#### **Busted tanks**

The issue raising the most concern here is the condition of the M1A1 Abrams tanks.

The rate at which the tanks have broken down is troubling.

The tanks the brigade is taking to Iraq this time were left behind in its last deployment, when soldiers used tanks already in theater. **The brigade's own tanks — the ones it uses now and is taking to Iraq — sat in storage for a year, and that had negative consequences.**

It is important to regularly drive tanks, rotate their turrets, raise and lower their main guns and keep their seals lubricated, said Lt. Col. John Hinkley, commander of the 125th Forward Support Battalion, responsible for performing high-level maintenance on the brigade's tanks. When these steps are not performed regularly, maintenance problems are inevitable.

**"Tanks are designed to be run," said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Valdez, platoon sergeant with 1st Platoon, A Company, 1st Battalion, 13th Armor Regiment. "If they sit, things just go bad with them."**

**Exacerbating the situation is the tanks' age; they have been at Fort Riley since just after the 1991 Gulf War.**

**"We have pretty much the oldest tanks in the Army's inventory," said Staff Sgt. Kurt Daniel, a tank commander in Valdez's platoon. Now that the tanks finally are being given a thorough workout, their age is showing.**

**Bishop identified the tanks' fire control system as the source of most of the faults. "That's the most delicate part of the tank," he said.**

Valdez, who said one of his platoon's four tanks was down for maintenance, also noted that **every tank in his platoon suffered hydraulic problems since coming to NTC.**

**The three Riley companies and two Irwin companies leaving their heavy gear behind expect to use Humvees that are up-armored or were armored in theater. But those Humvees are in use by other units.**

**Originally, departing units were to hand off the Humvees to arriving units. But now that so many units are staying in Iraq for a month or two longer than first envisioned, questions have been raised about how it is possible to equip two units with one set of stay-behind gear.**

The decision to convert so many heavy units to motorized formations also created a huge demand for equipment mounted soldiers never use, but dismounted troops find it hard to do without, such as rifles and night-vision goggles. The Army supply system is finding it hard to keep up with the demand.

**Bishop's brigade requested 542 M4 carbines from the Army, which promised, instead, that number of the older, longer M16A2 rifles. But by Nov. 10, just a couple of days from the end of their rotation at NTC, the Army had yet to deliver the rifles or night-vision goggles that also had been requested.**

**Most four-man tank crews have only one or two M4s between them; the other soldiers are armed with 9mm pistols.**

Daniel, the tank commander, said NCOs are worried about “not knowing if everybody’s going to have M4s or not.” **The pistol is accurate only to 50 meters, he noted.**

**Valdez, the platoon leader, noted the contrast between the M4’s 30-round magazine and the pistol’s 10-round magazine.**

**An Army officer in Washington, D.C., who tracks the issue, said there is a shortage of small arms, radios and other equipment “across the board,” but particularly in the National Guard brigades deploying to Iraq.**

The shortages, he said, were the result of several factors:

- The need to outfit multiple heavy units deploying to Iraq with gear for dismounted soldiers.
- National Guard and Reserve units are deploying at a higher rate and for longer periods than was planned. **They need simple command-and-control equipment just to communicate with active-duty units.**

**“Combat attrition is taking a toll,” he said. “Not just equipment that has been destroyed or damaged, but equipment that is simply wearing out. I’m seeing some figures that units are putting six or seven years’ worth of peacetime mileage on their wheeled vehicles in theater.” Work required to refurbish or replace these vehicles causes a backlog in the industrial base.**

- And, he said, “the industrial base is not large enough to get equipment to soldiers as quickly as possible.”
- The conversion of units like 3rd Infantry Division to a modular force design, which creates a demand for new equipment to outfit the extra brigade-size “units of action” that result.

**Other gear — including the Modular Load-carrying Lightweight Equipment individual load-bearing system and the “Blue Force Tracker” digital communications system that allows commanders to track friendly forces across the battlefield in real time — also has yet to arrive.** Leaders are confident they’ll get it before going into combat, but acknowledge it would have been better if they could familiarize their soldiers with the gear during their training here.

“Everybody in the Army was trying to get us these things,” Kearney said. “It just didn’t work.”

**Commanders say they know some of these issues have caused “anxiety” among their troops, but they are putting an official-Army face on their problems and projecting a confidence that the service will not allow them to go into harm’s way unprepared. [That is such transparent bullshit it’s like hanging up a huge banner that reads, “Run For Your Life While There’s Still Time!” It’s right there with the**

**killers who told people not to leave the World Trade Center after the planes hit because they were oh so safe.]**

And they cite several factors they say will offset readiness problems.

One is the combat experience retained in the brigade from the previous rotation. Although the Army's individual replacement system has robbed the unit of 40 percent of the soldiers who saw combat in Iraq, 60 percent remain, including many NCOs.

**"The silver lining in the short turnaround [between tours] is that a lot of people know about Iraq *and impart that to the new guys,*" said Lt. Col. Eric Wesley, commander of 1-13 Armor. ["OK new guys, I will now impart to you that with unreliable, broke down vehicles and waving handguns, you will be d-e-a-d."]**

Daniel, who was part of the brigade's first tour in Iraq, agreed, saying this time around younger soldiers had greater faith in what their NCOs were saying. The new soldiers' attitude, Daniel said, was, "He knows what he's talking about, he's been there." **[Didn't get it the first time? Try again: "OK new guys, I will now impart to you that with fucked up vehicles and waving handguns, you will be d-e-a-d."]**

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## **Rally At Ft. Brag March 19; Mark Your Calendar**

Subject: Military Families Speak Out Members Invited to Fayetteville, North Carolina, March 19, 2005

Dear Military Families,

**Below is a note from MFSO member Stan Goff about a rally and demonstration to commemorate the 2nd anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, to take place in Fayetteville, North Carolina on Saturday, March 19, 2005.**

**Fayetteville is the home of Ft. Bragg; many MFSO member families live in Fayetteville and Ft. Bragg. One purpose for this event will be to say , stronger and louder than ever, Support Our Troops -- BRING THEM HOME NOW!!!!!!**

Last year many members of MFSO commemorated the first anniversary of the war on March 20, 2004 in Fayetteville. This year MFSO members in North Carolina are hoping that the 2005 commemoration of the second anniversary of the war will be much bigger.

All MFSO members are warmly invited and encouraged to come to Fayetteville for March 19, 2005. We will be joined by many members of Iraq Veterans Against the War [www.ivaw.net](http://www.ivaw.net) and Veterans for Peace [www.veteransforpeace.org/](http://www.veteransforpeace.org/)

**Mark Your Calendars For MARCH 19, 2005.**

From: Stan Goff <http://www.bringthemhomenow.com/>

On March 20 last year, we staged the biggest demonstration Fayetteville, NC has seen in 35 years.

Fayetteville is next to Ft. Bragg, NC – ground zero for the 82nd Airborne Division (that is preparing for their third trip to Iraq) and most of the US Special Operations community.

**On MARCH 19, 2005 in FAYETTEVILLE this year, we will mark the anniversary of the 2003 ground offensive AGAIN with a far bigger demonstration than the last.**

***Come to NC, come to Rowan Park in Fayetteville, and help us continue to undermine the legitimacy of this gangster-government.***

We want this to be not only national but international (international press was there last year), and we need everybody available to come.

**The wheels are falling off this war wagon, and we need you in Fayetteville this March to give them another hard kick.**

For more Information on March 19, 2005 in Fayetteville, NC, contact MFSO member Lou Plummer at [lou.plummer@mac.com](mailto:lou.plummer@mac.com)

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## **Vet, 56, Called Up For Iraq: "Their Ghosts Are In My Rucksack, The Guys I Knew In Vietnam" Thousands Making Out Their Wills**

Nov. 21, 2004 The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

**ATLANTA** - At 56, Sgt. 1st Class Michael Conley is one of the oldest men in the 48th Brigade of the Georgia Army National Guard.

He was awarded a Silver Star and several Purple Hearts after seeing some of the fiercest fighting in Vietnam. Now, Conley is going back to war along with thousands of other Georgians.

His brigade got word two weeks ago that it was being sent to Iraq.

About 1,200 of the brigade's soldiers, some of whom need additional training to be fully qualified in their military jobs, will be mobilized the first week of December and sent to Fort Stewart near Savannah.

The remaining 2,800 will be mobilized Dec. 15 and report to Fort Stewart the first week of January.

In armories in Gainesville, Hinesville, Thomaston, Winder and Covington, guardsmen gathered to clean weapons, fill out wills and other paperwork and learn from commanders about when exactly they will be shipping out.

**"Their ghosts are in my rucksack, the guys I knew in Vietnam," Conley said, pointing to his bag.** "I can save lives, and that's why I'm going. And these soldiers, my boys, would rather go with me than anybody else."

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## **Blown Up By Bomb In Drinking Water**

November 21, 2004 By Sylvain Metz, The Clarion-Ledger

**When Michele Case opened her door that August afternoon and saw an Army Chaplain and her husband's best friend standing there, a sense of dread shrouded her.**

**"Did my daddy die?" her 12-year-old daughter asked them.**

"No," came the reply. But Maj. Thomas Case had been seriously injured in a suicide bombing mission at Al Kasik Army Base, northwest of Mosul, where he had been stationed since May 17.

As it turned out, Case, 42, suffered broken ribs, a dislocated shoulder, lacerations to the left side of his face and a cut to his left eyeball which is now being corrected with a contact lens.

Case recalled snippets of the events on Aug. 7. **Two water trucks had just been cleared to enter the base following an intensive search. But what the soldiers didn't find were the bombs which had been submerged in the water.**

Case remembers hearing the first blast then telling his interpreter and a fellow officer to head into the hallway for protection.

"I don't remember that second blast" which came less than a minute later, exploding 50 feet from his office.

A mortar-fired rocket had also hit the interpreter's office but failed to explode, Case said.

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## **Macomb Soldier Wounded; IED Explodes Twice**

November 21, 2004 By Stacey Creasy/Editor, The Macomb Journal



MACOMB - Lance Cpl. Michael B. Smith Jr., a Marine from Macomb who was recently injured in an explosion near Fallujah, would like to hear from family and friends.

**Smith, 23, was driving a Humvee out of Fallujah on Nov. 9 when the Humvee bumped into the wreckage of a vehicle off the side of the road. The vehicle exploded, seriously injuring Smith and killing two fellow soldiers.**

**"This was a car that had already been exploded," said Carla Dimmitt, Smith's mother. "When the Humvee bumped it, it exploded again."**

**Smith suffered a broken leg; shrapnel wounds, lost the hearing in his left ear, and seriously damaged his nose.**

Smith was serving his second tour of duty in Iraq. He had been in the war-torn country since June 1. Smith is hospitalized at Bethesda, Maryland, where he has had a couple of surgeries, and will have more operations to treat his wounds.

The soldier seated behind Smith and the gunner in the Humvee were both killed in the blast.

<p><b>It was a bad week for soldiers from Illinois. Five young men from Illinois, including Joshua Palmer from Blandinsville, were killed. Dimmitt said Smith said son knew Palmer.</b></p>
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Since they were from the same area, they spent some time together prior to Palmer's death. The explosion that injured Smith occurred the following day.

**"We were told Michael may be able to come home in three to four weeks," Dimmitt said. "Right now he is having surgery about every-other day." Dimmitt said being at Bethesda is an eye-opening experience, watching wounded soldiers coming into the hospital on a daily basis.**

Smith is stationed with the Marine unit in Peoria, but Dimmitt said he was detached to a unit in Battle Creek, Mich. to be deployed to Iraq. Smith was serving with a motor transport unit when he was injured.

**It is unlikely Smith will be home for Thanksgiving.**

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## **27% Of Iraq Humvees Still Got No Armor**

November 17, 2004 By Frank Oliveri, Gannett News Service

About 73 percent of all Humvees operating in Iraq now have some type of armor, compared with a little more than 1 percent at the start of the war, according to military figures. **[And now, for the big prize, guess what % of the Humvees with no armor are used to transport officers.]**

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# Iraq Vet Shakes Up Republican Fools

Michael Hoffman, Iraq Veterans Against The War [iraqvet@mail.com](mailto:iraqvet@mail.com)  
Sent: Nov 17, 2004

I just finished my first talk here in western Mass and was protested for the first time. Of course no one was really sure what problem they had with me.

**There where about ten members of the college republicans holding signs outside the room I was speaking in, one of which read "John Kerry and IVAW are traitors". Some one approached the person holding that sign and asked what IVAW was to which the republican responded, "I don't know."**

The talk went incredibly well.

I invited the republicans in to hear the talk and have a real honest discussion. To my surprise they took me up on my offer and I made a real impact.

**Several of them where dumb struck and slack jawed after hearing the real truth about what is happening on the ground.**

**The chair of the college republicans seemed to be in complete shock and I think he might have actually been turned against the war judging by the look on his face.**

From what I heard one of the protesters walked out in tears. Needless to say I feel damn good right now. Just goes to show that the honest truth can change anyone.

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## Vets Send Solidarity Greetings To Irish Anti-War Rally

Nov 17, 2004

To the people of Ireland:

As many of you know, the U.S. military has used Shannon airport for some time now as a refueling stop to transport troops to Iraq.

The situation there continues to deteriorate on a daily basis as U.S. troops move into Fallujah and Black Watch troops move closer to Baghdad.

I urge you to continue speaking out against the use of this airport by the U.S. military for the purposes of continuing an illegal and immoral war.

According to the Irish Constitution, a UN Resolution would have been needed to declare war against Iraq to allow use of any Irish airport such as Shannon, or Irish airspace for the purposes of military action or war.

Together we can help bring an end to this terrible war, and bring all of the troops home.

**Alex Ryabov**  
**Iraq Veterans Against the War**

Nov 17, 2004

The use of Shannon Airport as a refueling stop for US planes involved in the occupation of Iraq is a threat to the independence and neutrality of your nation which should not be tolerated by free Irish men and women.

We have seen the reasons given for this war by GW Bush and Tony Blair all proven to be misrepresentations and lies to justify what can only be called imperial aggression.

While the men and women of our military and unknown thousands of Iraqi citizens lives are sacrificed for corporations seeking control of natural resources and plundering the wealth of that ancient civilization, we have a sacred duty to stand up for what is honest and right.

Real security for the US, Ireland or any other country will not be gained by foreign aggression. It will only be insured by following policies based on justice, both economic and social, and on the quest for peace.

As veterans who have fought in Vietnam and other wars, we are outraged and saddened by the actions of our government and will continue to do what we can to reverse the course our beloved nation has been set upon by the neo-con chickenhawks in Washington.

We salute you today and are encouraged to know that throughout the world people are saying NO to this ill conceived and unjustified war. Together we will win.

**David Cline, coordinator of Vietnam Veterans Against the War and national president of Veterans For Peace**

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

# **One, Two, Three, Many Oil Wells Blown Up And Burning**



21 Nov 2004 KIRKUK, Iraq (AFP)

**Saboteurs set ablaze another well in Iraq's northern oilfields overnight, bringing to six the number firefighters are trying to extinguish in the region, security guards said.**

"Saboteurs exploded a bomb, setting oil well number 20 on fire," said Lieutenant Colonel Hammudi Ali, of the security force operating for the state-owned North Oil Company.

The well is located in the Al-Khabbaza field, west of the city of Kirkuk, **where five other wells were already ablaze following previous attacks.**

**"The firefighters are still trying to put out the fires, but so far they haven't managed to extinguish a single one," Ali said.**

## FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

# FALLUJA THREW US ARMY 60 YEARS BACK: An After-Action Assessment

2004-11-19 16:44 MOSCOW (RIA Novosti) By military commentator Viktor Litovkin

**This prompted Russian military experts to make one more conclusion: The storming of Falluja will not stop terrorist attacks against US troops and their allies. The attempts to restore order in Iraq by military measures have no future.**

Officially, over 50 US servicemen were killed and 425 wounded during the storming of Falluja and subsequent street fighting. **This is a serious number of casualties per 10,000 of the Americans deployed in the city.**

**A purely military conclusion: The absolute technological and operational-tactical superiority of the army that used the latest weapons and equipment of the 21st century against an army of the mid-20th century, which Shock and Awe demonstrated to the world, was reduced to naught by months of occupation.**

**Despite their state-of-the-art weapons and tactics, the US troops stormed Falluja using WWII schemes and rules, said Colonel General Valery Mironov, a former deputy defense minister of Russia.** For example, the Americans employed greater military strength than seemed necessary, including aviation and artillery strikes, which frequently hit Americans. And they used mixed groups of motorized and tank forces who combed the city street by street.

**In point of fact, they did almost the same the Russian troops did in winter 1995 and 1999, when they stormed Grozny, the capital of the Chechen republic, which is twice the size of Falluja.**

**It is true that the Americans have better weapons and equipment, though. The Russian mine-launch operators did not have laptops on which they would get target acquisition coordinates in real time and which they could use to correct artillery fire, as the Americans did in Falluja. Neither did the Russian army have such a broad variety of infrared night-vision equipment.**

**And yet, experts say that the absolute technical superiority over terrorists did not allow the Americans to use the new methods of warfare they had tested in Yugoslavia, meaning no-contact strikes at resistance centers and pockets, the fighters' headquarters and bases, and crucial life support facilities.**

**Though they had reliable air support and uninterrupted radio communication with fire support helicopters, the Abrams heavy tanks and Striker armored personnel carriers had to enter the narrow streets where the terrorists fired grenades at their exposed flanks. There is no official information about the number of tanks and APCs destroyed in street fighting, but we can assume that the figure is a high one.**

Moreover, the lack of water, electricity and sewage facilities did not affect the fighting ability of the Sunni resistance forces. The fighters of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi did not even notice the loss of the benefits of civilization, which had effectively cut short the resistance in Belgrade. It turned out that these men can sit for days amidst decomposing bodies and rubble in the city ruins, survive on one dry piece of bread a day, yet shoot at US vehicles and troops until they run out of bullets and grenades.

**This prompted Russian military experts to make one more conclusion: The storming of Falluja will not stop terrorist attacks against US troops and their allies. The attempts to restore order in Iraq by military measures have no future. But then, the Russian military experts did not suggest any recommendations for the Pentagon, as *they say there are enough experienced and responsible people on the Potomac*. [That kind of brilliant “thinking” must be from whatever genius thought the Russians could win in Afghanistan.]**

# Falluja Arithmetic Lesson

November 15, 2004 by Prof. Greg Palast, The Observer

Today's *New York Times*, page 1:

"American commanders said 38 service members had been killed and 275 wounded in the Falluja assault."

Today's *New York Times*, page 11:

"The American military hospital here reported that it had treated 419 American soldiers since the siege of Falluja began."

Questions for the class:

- 1. If 275 soldiers were wounded in Falluja and 419 are treated for wounds, how many were shot on the plane ride to Germany?**
- 2. We're told only 275 soldiers were wounded but 419 treated for wounds; and we're told that 38 soldiers died. So how many will be buried?**
3. How long have these Times reporters been embedded with the military? Bonus question: When will they get out of bed with the military?

Today's *New York Times*, page 1:

"The commanders estimated that 1,200 to 1,600 insurgents had been killed."

Today's *New York Times*, page 11:

"Nowhere to be found: the remains of the insurgents that the tanks had been sent in to destroy. ...The absence of insurgent bodies in Falluja has remained an enduring mystery."

"Every time I hear the news  
That old feeling comes back on;  
We're waist deep in the Big Muddy  
And the Big Fool says to push on."

Pete Seeger, 1967

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

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"Irreverence is the champion of liberty and its only sure defense."- Mark Twain

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**Received:**

**Do It Ancient Chinese Style**

**From:** Joan M

**To:** GI Special

**Sent:** November 16, 2004

**Subject:** Wounded Iraqi-filmed whilst being murdered (Probe into Marine shooting unarmed Iraqi) Tue 16 November, 2004

I think the whole destruction, of Falluja, is a war crime of enormous proportions.

**The leaders should stand trial. [The Ancient Chinese had the right idea - they punished the leaders and forgave those who followed commands].**

This is one soldier's crime - he may get a dishonourable discharge, for cold blooded murder, because someone saw him do it.

---

**this aint war, its genocide.**

**From:** Soldier, Iraq

**To:** GI Special

**Sent:** Saturday, November 20, 2004 6:28 AM

**Subject:** Re: FALLUJA

**falluja was the most awesome display of mass destruction i have ever witnessed.  
this aint war, its genocide.**

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**ON WATCH**

**The official publication of the MILITARY LAW TASK FORCE**

Winter 2004, Vol. XVHI, No. I  
(first published in 1977)

***On Watch* Editor -- Kathleen Gilbert**

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*On Watch* is an electronic newsletter, although some MLTF members, libraries and institutions request and receive written copies. Troops can request copies: see contact information below:

#### **MILITARY LAW TASK FORCE**

**National Lawyers Guild** <http://www.nlg.org/mltf/>  
318 Ortega Street, San Francisco, CA 94122

#### **Co-Chairs:**

Kathleen Gilberd, ([KathleenGilberd@aol.com](mailto:KathleenGilberd@aol.com)) 619-233-1701 (work)  
Marti Hiken, [mlhiken@pacbell.net](mailto:mlhiken@pacbell.net) 415-566-3732

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Online subscription to ON WATCH is free for MLTF members.

Please make checks payable to the MLTF NLG and send to 318 Ortega Street, San Francisco, CA 94122

Donations are gladly accepted.

#### **The MLTF is a national committee of the National Lawyers Guild.**

National Lawyers Guild  
143 Madison Ave., 4th Floor  
New York, NY 10016  
212-679-5100  
212-679-2811 fax  
[www.nlg.org](http://www.nlg.org)

<p><b>The Military Law Task Force has been asked by Vets for Peace, the GI Rights Hotline member organizations and counseling groups, and Military Families Speak Out (as well as other anti-war organizations) to re-publish "Hold Onto Your Humanity." The 6,000 copies were originally distributed to GIs in the U.S., Europe,</b></p>
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Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait. They went fast and there are no more available. We need \$1,000 to re-print this booklet. If you can donate, please do. Send checks to the MLTF at 318 Ortega Street, San Francisco, CA 94122.  
Thank you.

## Received:

### Who Benefits?

**From:** R  
**To:** GI Special  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 21, 2004 4:12 AM  
**Subject:** RE: GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

Hello Tom:

Tonight's newsletter brings to mind good news and bad news of late.

The good news is that Wolfie didn't get NSC, the bad is reflected in that senior officer's hots to blow things up. W's bad enough at Defense, but would have been worse at NSC. Would have been another Walt Rostow dominating another Texas prez's ear, and filtering out all discordant messages. WWR died still certain he was right about Vietnam. Intellectuals in high politics are a bad mix. As my late father would say, none of us have ever met a payroll.

**That career officer's fervent desire to get another combat ribbon is equally worrisome.**

While you and I and your readers lament the plight of the poor foot soldier who has to carry out the policies, and applaud those with enough consciousness to resist the deadly pursuit, we need to consider that it may now be the professional officer corps with, their career ambitions, who are driving the policy in Iraq.

Yes, the civilians of course started it, but as Churchill observed of the Boer war and Halberstam of the Vietnam conflict, bureaucratic momentum carries it forward.

**We already have several career bureaucracies engaged: the higher military, the CIA, State, AID, and all those sub-agencies, NGO's, and contractors feeding off the so-call 'reconstruction' of the country.**

**For these folks in the post-Cold War doldrums, the second, prolonged Gulf War is a godsend which will yield medals, promotions, kudos, consulting fees, and new bold lines on tired résumé's.**

Keep up the good work.

P.S. The Economist spied a most apt bumper sticker in the recent campaign:  
Bush/Cheney - Four More Wars

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# Dear U.S. Soldier

From: "joy"  
To: GI Special  
Sent: Friday, November 12, 2004 2:18 AM

dear US soldier

GISpecial - breath of fresh air in this stale bullshit environment in the states.

democracy is a scam in america. by the time you return in a decade or so it will be just another totalitarian nightmare run by a corrupt ruling elite, just like the one you helping install in iraq.

I am sure you will find a lot jobs on your return, all that training will come in handy here as your government is slowly is turning on its own people. Perhaps, they will just redeploy you here on Operation: Freedom Over.

Can't thank you for the job you doing in iraq as I am opposed to war and pissed at the disgrace that you have brought on our country; following orders just doesn't cut it in the land of the free. Resistance is a two letter word: NO

You all know right from wrong and you know the system is so fucked up and you know the army is about as fucked up as you can get. But let me get to my point.

The problem is not in iraq, it is in america, and it is with all these little fuckers with \$400 suits and plastic bibles who live inside the beltway and who are making a killing off your ass, the blood of your comrades and the innocent iraqis you brutalize and kill.

YOu are not protecting america and you are not doing your duty – you are doing a job for a corporation and getting paid shit for it.

It doesn't take a college degree to figure this out. Yeah, ass is in the wringer, between the rock and hard place but you are not the innocent victim but just another generation that got suckered into fighting a rich man's war.

Don't worry, they will throw a parade for you and you'll get to drink cheap beer at the legion, and every veteran's day they will pull off one of those sappy tearjerkers, build you a cheap statue, the press will write stories about how great you are. Sounds really worth it.

**But I am not going to spit on you when you return cause you going to be in your own world of hurt. Too many of my family are ex-service/ex-combat to be that disrespectful.**

**My little brother, exarmy, blew his brains out last year.**

**But I am gonna ask you all to think about taking all that good training and experience you got over there as well as and all that burning anger your going**

**have when you get back and realize just how big that shit they're taking on you really is and putting it to use helping america clean some clocks.**

**Perhaps then, you can redeem yourself in the eyes of the world, in the eyes of your own people and in the eyes of god.**

**Perhaps, too, the iraq people might even forgive you.**

Resistance is a two letter word: NO  
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