

GI SPECIAL 2#C38



[Thanks to E. T. for sending in]

The Civilians We Killed: If Only Those Who Sent Us To Iraq Lay Awake At Night

[THANKS TO JOHN G WHO E-MAILED THIS IN:]

By Michael Hoffman, 12/02/04 The Guardian

Michael Hoffman took part in the invasion of Iraq as a US marine and is co-founder of Iraq Veterans Against the War (www.ivaw.net). He is speaking in London on Sunday.

The chaos of war should never be understated. On the way to Baghdad, I saw bodies by the road, many in civilian clothing. Every time a car got near my Humvee, everyone

inside braced themselves, not knowing if gunfire would suddenly erupt out of it. **When your enemy is unclear, everyone becomes your enemy.**

I will not judge the marine who killed the wounded Iraqi. I do not know what was going on around him or what he experienced in the hours before. But I do know what the stress of combat will do. I remember talking to a friend who told how, after a greatly loved lieutenant was killed in Nassiriya, the unit started shooting anyone that got close. I remember when a pickup truck got too close to my convoy, the armored vehicle up front shot the passenger to get the message to the driver. ***Just as these marines should face charges, then those that put us in these situations should have to answer for their actions.***

In his book *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien said: "You can tell a true war story by its absolute and uncompromised allegiance to obscenity and evil." This is something people in the US have forgotten after years of watching CNN. War is dirty, always wrong, but sometimes unavoidable. **That is why all these horrible things must rest on the shoulders of those leaders who supported a war that did not have to be fought.**

I know the commitment it takes to serve your country, but I also know this war has nothing to do with protecting my country. My sergeant put it best a week before we left for the Middle East: "Don't think you're going to be heroes. You're not going for weapons of mass destruction. You're not going to get rid of Saddam, or to make Iraq safe for democracy. You're going for one reason, and that's oil."

War for oil: is a term the troops in Iraq know well. That is the only reason left for this war, leaving those on the ground with only one reason to fight - get home alive. When this kind of desperation sinks in, it is easy to make the person across from you less than human, easier to do horrible things to them.

Did the soldiers who committed those acts in Abu Ghraib view Iraqis as equals? Those who committed these acts will have to live with the memories - just as I wonder how many Iraqi children were killed by my artillery battery, or how many Iraqis were trapped in burning vehicles on the road to Baghdad. These are the thoughts that keep me up at night: the bodies of children and the burned remains of Iraqi troops that couldn't get out in time.

But those who put all of us there will never understand this. That is why they need to be judged. But they will never receive the most just punishment: feeling what myself and all the other veterans of this hideous war will deal with for the rest of our lives.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

November Deadliest Month Ever For U.S. Troops: Monthly Tolls Keeps Rising

Dec 01 The Taipei Times

US troops suffered their worst one-month losses in Iraq last month since the US-led invasion in March last year, according to statistics released by the US military yesterday.

The number of US killed in one month rose above 100 for the second time since April of this year, with 137 personnel dead as of yesterday morning.

Each month's death toll since the interim Iraqi government was put in power June 28 has been higher than the last, with the single exception of October, when it was 63.

The monthly totals grew from 42 in June to 54 in July to 65 in August and to 80 in September.

Fighting Continues In Falluja: Marines Say "Senior Officers" Happy Talk Is Bullshit "Politics"-- Resistance Will "Hit Us Again" When Citizens See City Is Destroyed

December 2, 2004 FALLUJAH, Iraq (AFP)

"They know what they're doing, when things change, and they're just going to wait until we're at our weakest point and hit us again."

US Marines keeping a tenuous peace in the battered Iraqi city of Fallujah say they expect an explosion of violence as rebels hiding among returning refugees renew their deadly campaign of bombings and ambushes.

They also fear the insurgency will find increasing support from Fallujah residents who return to find their homes and businesses devastated by last month's massive US-led assault on the Sunni Muslim enclave.

Heavy fighting has devastated much of the city, leaving block after block of torched shopfronts and bullet-scarred homes that continue to come under heavy fire from US marines searching for lingering rebels.

Most of Fallujah's 300,000 residents fled the city in the weeks before the assault, and though the military has said no date has been set for their return, marines are already braced for the flood of people.

"Right now it's hard enough, but when you inject a bunch of civilians into this city it's going to be that much harder," Captain Tom Tennant of the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines said, warning of a campaign of daily bombings.

"These guys are just going to filter back in.

"They know what they're doing, when things change, and they're just going to wait until we're at our weakest point and hit us again," said another marine after an evening patrol of the neighborhood around the marine's compound.

Senior military officials acknowledge that insurgents have found refuge among Fallujah's displaced residents. They also say they are confident Fallujah's residents will cooperate with US and Iraqi forces and turn suspected rebels in.

But some marines in the city say politics are pushing some officers to make dangerously optimistic assessments of the situation in Fallujah.

Insurgents are likely to find allies among Fallujah's residents, some of whom are at best indifferent to the US presence, they say.

And the damage caused by the fighting and continuing security operations in the city -- marines are daily blasting homes with gunfire before storming them as they search for weapons and rebels who still ambush them from abandoned buildings - has likely turned others against US and Iraqi forces.

"The hardest part of this is you have fence-sitters, a lot of them support the insurgents and a lot of them aren't going to be too happy when they see what's happened to their homes," Tennant said.

Falluja U.S. Dead Count Suddenly Revised Up By 20

02 December 2004 Aljazeera

Seventy-one US troops have been killed so far in the attack led by US marines to take control of the Iraqi city Falluja, the US military says.

Wednesday's reported toll is 20 more than had been previously reported.

The Falluja offensive caused more than half of the total US military fatalities in Iraq in November, the deadliest month of the 20-month war.

Lieutenant-Colonel Steve Boylan, a US military spokesman in Baghdad, said 71 US troops were killed in Falluja during the offensive launched on 8 November. **The previous official tally was 51, given by Marine Corps Lieutenant-General John Sattler on 18 November.**

Sattler said on 18 November the offensive had "broken the back of the insurgency", scattering the fighters and disrupting their operations nationwide.

A day later, air force Lieutenant-General Lance Smith, the second in charge at US Central Command, said it was "too early" to make such a prediction.

Falluja U.S. Wounded Count Suddenly Revised Up By 200; Iraqi "Allies" Losses Microscopic

12.2.04 By PATRICK J. McDONNELL, Los Angeles Times

An additional 623 American troops were wounded, said Marine Lt. Gen. John F. Sattler, up from an injury count of 425 issued more than two weeks ago.

U.S. officials said casualty figures during the largely completed fight for Fallujah were among the highest in recent years for any battle involving U.S. troops.

"They (casualties) were lighter than history would have predicted by a pretty large factor," said Sattler, who heads the I Marine Expeditionary Force. "We were expecting well above that. ... It could have been a lot worse." **[Of the 6,000 U.S. troops in the attack, with the dead that comes to 11.6% casualties. How bad that is depends on your point of view. If Sattler had lost a leg or two, or maybe been paralyzed for life, he might be a little less happy about it. Oh, one other little problem. More are killed and maimed in Falluja every day, because the fighting hasn't stopped. How could Sattler forget to mention that? Why easy, the truth wouldn't play well among the Imperial dictators at the Pentagon or in the White House. Sattler has to think about his career, and fuck the troops and the truth.]**

Seven Iraqi troops have been killed and 43 wounded, Sattler said. [Guess who obviously wasn't doing any fighting. Except, of course, for their brave attack on a Falluja hospital, kicking the shit out of patients and doctors alike, and stealing everything that wasn't nailed down. Chopping their fucking heads off is too good for them.]

Two More Soldiers Killed In Falluja

December 1, 2004 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 1236-04

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

They died Nov. 30 in Fallujah, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near their military vehicle. Both were assigned to 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

Killed were:

Sgt. Pablo A. Calderon, 26, of Brooklyn, N.Y.

Sgt. Jose Guereca, Jr., 24, of Missouri City, Texas

**THIS SHIT NEVER ENDS:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



US marines prepare to enter a house in Fallujah. (AFP/Mehdi Fedouach)

US Soldier Killed In Mosul Attack

02 December 2004 Aljazeera & December 3, 2004 News Limited

INSURGENTS attacked a joint US-Iraqi government patrol in Mosul today, killing one American soldier and wounding two Iraqi commandos, the military said.

The attack occurred at about 3pm in an eastern part of the city, said US military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Paul Hastings.

The soldier from Task Force Olympia was shot dead during an attack on his patrol.

Marine Gunny Dies Of Wounds At Landstuhl

December 1, 2004 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. No. 1238-04

Gunnery Sgt. Javier Obleas-Prado Pena, 36, of Falls Church, Va., died Dec. 1 at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, from injuries received Nov. 25, as result of enemy action in Al Anbar Province, Iraq.

He was assigned to 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Baghdad Vehicle Wreck Kills Soldier, Injures 4

12.2.04 AP & December 1, 2004 U.S. Department of Defense News Release Number: 04-12-02C

The U.S. military said a vehicle accident in western Baghdad on Wednesday killed one Task Force Baghdad Soldier and injured four. It was the first reported U.S. military death in Iraq for December, and brought the number of American deaths since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003 to 1,257, according to an Associated Press count.

Local Soldier Dies In Iraq; “I’m In A Safe Place”

12/1/2004 By: Capital News 9 web staff

A Capital Region soldier died while serving in Iraq Tuesday.

Watervliet native David Fisher just left for Iraq in October. Family members told us that the 21-year-old said it was his duty to go overseas and serve. **The family also told us that they had just received a letter from Fisher dated November 22. In that letter David Fisher said that he was OK and things were going well in Iraq.**

David's duties were to patrol the area, and so far his family knows very little information about what exactly happened to Fisher. They said what they do know at this point is that the vehicle Fisher was riding in flipped over and possibly killed the driver as well as David. **The family said they are not getting very much information from the military, they were just notified Wednesday and are extremely heartbroken.**

His uncle said just reading that letter brought him to tears.

Joe Patane said, "I've been crying all day because I can't believe this letter. He just wrote it the 22nd of November and we got it today. And he was very upbeat, said 'don't worry about me, I'm in a safe place.'"

Specialist Fisher graduated from Watervliet High School.

**HELLO? SEE ANYBODY THROWING FLOWERS DOWN THERE?
(TIME TO STOP THE WHOLE FUCKING THING.)**



A US Marine in watchtower at the forward base St. Michael in the central Iraqi city of Mahmudiyah. (AFP/Odd Andersen)

A Father Loses Two Sons

Dec 2, 2004 Harney, MD (AP)

A soldier who grew up in Frederick and Carroll counties was killed in Iraq by a roadside bomb, his father said Thursday.

Spc. Erik Hayes, 24, was killed Monday when the bomb exploded as he rode through Baghdad in a military vehicle, according to his father, Douglas Hayes of Harney.



Erik Hayes

Erik Hayes was born in Gettysburg, Pa., and grew up in Thurmont and Harney where his father still lives. He graduated in 1998 from the Living Word Academy in Blue Ridge Summit, Pa.

After high school Erik had jobs that ranged from electrical work to working on a dairy farm, Douglas Hayes said.

"Erik could do anything," Hayes said. "He was artistic. He could draw like you couldn't believe. He was a good son."

He joined the Army in 2001 to get a college education and had been stationed at Fort Benning, Ga., Germany, Bosnia and Kosovo before he was deployed to Iraq.

Hayes' younger son, Bradley, 20, was injured in a car accident two years ago and is now on a feeder tube at a Hagerstown medical facility. Erik was devastated by his brother's injury, his father said.

"Erik loved him with all his heart," Douglas Hayes said.

The military will fly Erik Hayes' body from Germany to Dover Air Force Base on Friday, and funeral arrangements will be made after the body returns, the father said.

Lomita Soldier Killed: Second Immigrant From City To Die; He Wanted To Buy His Mother A House

December 02, 2004 By Doug Irving, Daily Breeze. Staff writer Andrea Sudano contributed to this article.

Sergio Diaz Varela always said he would buy his mother a house some day. That's why he joined the Army.

Diaz was on patrol in Iraq late last week when a roadside bomb exploded, blasting shrapnel into his left side.

Diaz was 21 years old, an Army specialist who had been in Iraq only a few months.

"All he wanted was to help his mother," said Leticia Garibay, a neighbor who had known him for years. "He was fighting for his mother."

Diaz was born in Guadalajara, in central Mexico. He came with his family to Lomita in the early 1990s; a school picture taken shortly after his arrival shows him as a serious-looking 11-year-old.

He followed his mother, Maria, back to Mexico a few years later. But he decided to return to Lomita as a junior high student so he could learn English and go to school. He lived with his father, Sergio Sr.

His neighbors describe him as quiet, hard-working. They remember that he always seemed to have his head in a school book or under the hood of the gray Mustang he kept out front.

He played basketball at Narbonne High School, and found time for pickup games with the younger children in the neighborhood. He would teach them to stay low as they dribbled, to bring the ball up and aim for the basket.

"He was a quiet type of guy," said Nelson Sanchez, who went to school with him. "Wouldn't mess with anybody."

Diaz talked often about his dream of buying his mother a house. She was struggling to make ends meet in Guadalajara; he told his neighbors that all he wanted was to give her a place of her own.

He joined the Army after earning his high school diploma. He enlisted as a legal immigrant; his neighbors said they hope the government will recognize him as a citizen now.

Diaz was the second Lomita soldier to die in the war in Iraq. Lance Cpl. Jose Gutierrez, himself an immigrant from Guatemala, died in one of the first engagements of the war.

Diaz wore a crisp Army uniform when he visited the old neighborhood last year, with a marksman's medal on his chest. He knew he might be on his way to Iraq, but he told friends he didn't think anything would happen.

He spent a year training in Korea, then left in September for the war zone, said his father's partner, Lorena Diaz. **His combat team was assigned to Ramadi**, a city west of Baghdad that has been a flash point in the Iraqi insurgency.

He told his father in a recent phone call that it was hard to sleep at night because of the crash of bombs, said Darcey Griffis, the manager of the trailer park where the father lives. But he had also told friends that he planned to enlist for another three years, to save a little more money toward the house.

He died on the day after Thanksgiving, the Department of Defense said in a prepared statement released Wednesday afternoon. The officer who visited his father said Diaz had stepped out of his vehicle and was walking when the bomb went off, tearing through his hip and side.

Diaz's body was flown to Guadalajara, Mexico.

That's where the funeral and burial will be held later this week. His old neighbors stood in the cold as night fell Wednesday and swapped stories -- Sergio talking about racing his Mustang, or shooting hoops at the park. "He was just a good guy," 15-year-old Jairo Garibay said.

Beiji Checkpoint Car Bombed; Bradley Trashed, Two U.S. Troops Wounded

02 December 2004 Aljazeera & AP

A US source told Aljazeera a car bomb exploded at an Iraqi National Guards checkpoint on the main road west of Baiji.

The car bomb exploded next to a Bradley fighting vehicle, wounding two U.S. soldiers and two Iraqi National Guardsmen, said Master Sgt. Cynthia Weasner of the 1st Infantry Division.

U.S. Embassy Admits Airport Road Cut; Says Don't Come To Iraq; (Helicopters From Embassy Roof Still OK?) (Can Troops Go Home Now??)

12.2.04 AP

The U.S. Embassy banned its employees from using the highway linking Baghdad to the international airport, regarded as one of the country's most dangerous roads.

"Until further notice, no mission personnel will be permitted to use the main road from the international (Green) zone to the Baghdad International Airport for

security reasons," a warden's message said. [Well, that leaves helicopters from the Embassy roof.]

The embassy statement also cautioned U.S. citizens in Iraq to review their security and warned those planning to travel to Iraq to consider whether such a trip was "absolutely necessary."

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)

Mobile Phone Office & Green Zone; Mortared



Iraqi firefighter sprays a vehicle damaged after a mortar landed on a parking lot in central Baghdad Thursday. By Hadi Mizban, AP

12.2.04 AP

In Baghdad, at least five mortar rounds exploded Thursday, **including two in Baghdad's Green Zone, the compound that holds Iraq's interim administration and foreign diplomatic missions.**

A mortar that exploded outside the offices of a mobile phone company **in Baghdad's Arasat neighborhood killed one person and wounded three, police Lt. Muhsin Khazim said.**

Witnesses also said people were wounded in the other blasts around Baghdad, but the number of casualties wasn't known.

Thick smoke rose from the site of the blasts and sirens blared across the fortified area. Two U.S. Blackhawk helicopters arrived and landed within minutes of the detonations.

At least five more blasts from an area west of the Green Zone were heard, but their exact location was not known.

U.S. soldiers and Iraqis ran for cover in the compound housing Baghdad's international hotels.

TROOP NEWS

U.S. Troop Level In Iraq Going To Record High; Failed Strategy Means Troops To Stay 14 Months, More Than In Vietnam: Democrat Mouth Warrior Says War To Go On 5-10 More Years

December 2, 2004 By Thomas E. Ricks, Washington Post Staff Writer

Reed, who served in the Army with the 82nd Airborne, also said in an interview that it is becoming increasingly clear that Iraqi forces will not be capable of taking over from U.S. forces for five to 10 years.

The Pentagon said yesterday that it will boost the number of U.S. troops in Iraq to about 150,000, the highest level since the U.S. occupation began 19 months ago.

Most of the increase in the troop count -- which now stands at about 138,000 -- will come from the extended deployment of units already there as others arrive.

That will keep some troops in Iraq for combat tours of 14 months, beyond the year-long mission that most service members are told to expect, Pentagon officials said. **[Vietnam deployments were one year and not a day more. Some soldiers explained that the reason they hadn't killed more officers was because they knew that a year meant a year and they could leave, which was better than life in a military prison. The idiots running this war just don't have a clue, but then, the idiots running this war never had a clue.]**

Military experts, said the escalation reflects the more intense nature of the war after the U.S.-led assault on the rebellious Sunni city of Fallujah, west of Baghdad.

"The ferocity with which the war is being waged by both sides is escalating," said Jeffrey White, a former Defense Intelligence Agency analyst who is now at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. "It is not just that the number of incidents are increasing. The war looks to be changing in character."

Retired Army Col. Ralph Hallenbeck, who worked in Iraq with the U.S. occupation authority last year, said he is worried that the move represents a setback for the basic U.S. strategy of placing a greater burden on Iraqi security forces to control the country and deal with the insurgency. "I fear that it signals a re-Americanization . . . of our strategy in Iraq," he said. [Talk about a blinding flash of the obvious!]

Before the invasion, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz dismissed an estimate by Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, the Army chief of staff, that several hundred thousand troops would be needed to occupy Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein's government. **"I am reasonably certain that they will greet us as liberators," Wolfowitz told a congressional committee, "and that will help us to keep requirements down."**

U.S. troop numbers have risen in response to the unexpected strength and growing sophistication of the enemy.

"Plan A -- what the U.S. actually did -- failed, and Plan B -- the adaptations since the end of 'major combat' -- hasn't worked either, so far," said retired Army Col. Raoul Alcala, who has served as an adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, referring to President Bush's May 1, 2003, announcement that major combat operations had ended in Iraq.

Some observers said the latest announcement indicates that the Pentagon is recognizing just how long the effort in Iraq may take.

"This announcement makes it clear that commanders in Iraq need more troops and that this will be a long and very expensive process for the United States," said Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.), a member of the Armed Services Committee who recently returned from a visit to Iraq.

Reed, who served in the Army with the 82nd Airborne, also said in an interview that it is becoming increasingly clear that Iraqi forces will not be capable of taking over from U.S. forces for five to 10 years.

One of the units affected by yesterday's move, **the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division, based at Fort Hood, Tex., is being extended for the second time.**

Originally sent to Baghdad for a 10-month tour, it had already been told that it would not leave in November but would stay until January. Now, it is being told to remain in Iraq for an additional 45 days.

The second major Army unit extended, the 2nd Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division, was supposed to go home to Hawaii in January but is being held in Iraq until March.

Iraq Amputation Rate Double World Wars I & II

Dec. 02, 2004 By Anne Hull, Washington Post

Amputations account for 2.4 percent of all wounded in action in the Iraq war – twice the rate in World War I and World War II, said Chuck Scoville, the amputee program manager of Walter Reed.

Falluja Combat Unit Took 68% Casualties; Quack Doctor Tried To Make Severely Wounded Soldier Go Back To Combat

12/2/04 By GARY BASS The Lufkin Daily News

After being wounded in the battle for Fallujah last month, a 24-year-old Marine from the Huntington area will be making a homecoming today.

A sniper shot Lance Cpl. Jody Perritte as he and other members of his unit were going house to house in search of enemy combatants.

Of the 41 people in his platoon, three were killed and 25 were wounded in the fighting.

"Just prior to the battle, the Marines were called together and told to write what would be their last letters home and to make their phone calls because this was going to be the mother of all battles there in Iraq," Jerry Perritte wrote.

At 5 a.m. that next Tuesday, Jerry Perritte received a phone call from Jody saying he had been hit in the upper arm by a sniper, and that the his wounds were not life-threatening.

"He was still in tremendous pain and very sedated and our conversation lasted only a couple of minutes," Jerry Perritte wrote. "And being awakened out of a dead sleep to that news only left me with more questions than answers."

Jody's father said they now believe he was taken to a trauma hospital about 40 miles north of Baghdad. **There, doctors operated on the young Marine's upper right arm, but were unable to remove the bullet.**

The elder Perritte said a doctor told his son that he was going to "patch him up" and send him back to the fighting in Fallujah. [Find this contemptible piece of shit who pretends to be a doctor. Send him off to Falluja for some house to house combat. Plenty of that still going on. If he gets hit, tell him he's going to get "patched up: and send him back to the fighting. See how he likes it.]

While Jody wanted to go back to help his buddies, he told the doctor that he wouldn't be able to shoot his rifle because of the injury to his arm.

Marine Wounded By Insurgent Napalm Attack Comes Home

December 1, 2004 OMAHA, Neb., The Omaha Channel

An injured Lincoln Marine came home Wednesday.

Lance Cpl. Daniel Paulsen in home on leave for the holidays. He was hurt in June when a car filled with napalm exploded next to the convoy he was riding in. Both of his hands were burned.

Paulsen, 20, is expected to receive the Purple Heart.

After this home visit, Paulsen will go back to his base in California. His battalion is scheduled for another tour in Iraq in September 2005.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Occupation Guard Killed In Karbala

02 December 2004 Aljazeera

An Iraqi guardsman died in a car-bomb attack in the same area as another was killed near the Shia pilgrimage city of Karbala.

Collaborators Attacked, Killed In Baquaba

02 December 2004 Aljazeera & (AP)

In central Baquaba, fighters attacked the house of Major-General Iyad Ibrahim al-Karwi, commander of joint operations in al-Dubbat neighbourhood in central Baquaba, Aljazeera has learned.

Al-Karwi's son was injured in the attack and later transferred to the city's hospital.

Two town council members were also killed in an armed attack in Baquaba.

Occupation Official Captured Near Beiji

(AFP) 2 December 2004

In northern Iraq, a local official for Salahuddin province, Damaher Shaker Sudani, was captured by insurgents Thursday near the town of Baiji.

“Unknown assailants opened fire on the convoy of Mrs Sudani, a member of the provincial council, and kidnapped her together with two guards,” a police officer said.

In nearby Tikrit, police colonel Jassem Juburi told AFP that security services suspected that a “terrorist group” **had set itself the goal of wiping out local government officials [translation: local collaborators working for the occupation] in Saddam’s home province.**

Attack On Occupation Guards Checkpoint Kills 7 At Latifiyah; Other Attacks Reported

12.2.04 Pakistan Times Monitoring Desk

Seven were wounded when a suicide car bomb exploded near a national guard checkpoint south of Baghdad.

The attacker detonated his charge on the edge of Latifiyah, where US-led forces are conducting a vast operation against insurgents behind a string of attacks in the area in recent months, an AFP reporter said.

North of the capital, a bomb attack in Baquba killed an Iraqi truck driver.

Separately, Ansar al-Islam group claimed to have killed three Iraqi collaborators with US forces west of Baghdad, in a web site statement. It was not clear when the killings took place.

Collaborator Cop Col. Killed In Baladruz

12.2.04 AP

In Baladruz, a town, about 50 miles northeast of Baghdad, attackers gunned down a police colonel as he walked through a market, according to a policeman there, Ahmed Hassan. **Insurgents repeatedly have targeted Iraqi police, who are cooperating with U.S. forces.**

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Totally For The Cause

From: "HEKLE," Soldier, Iraq
To: GI Special
Sent: November 28, 2004 10:55 AM
Subject: knowledge is power

something ive been meaning to tell you about... there is a very good punk band from canada called Propagandhi. anyways, the last album they put out BEFORE 9-11 is called Today's empire, tomorrows ashes.

I just recently discovered if you pop in the cd into a dvd player a series of documentaries and essays appears. stuff about the black panther movement and

the fbi's efforts to quell them, plus some of the other shady stuff our government has done to undermine democracy.

also some assorted essays from key dissident figures. lots of GOOD and USEFUL information!! even if you don't dig the music, the dvd part is outstanding.

I don't think the band is too active these days on stage, but they do run an internet site, www.g7welcomingcommittee.com -totally for The Cause.

anyways, I thought you may be interested.

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.

Inconsolable

From: "Ewa Jasiewicz"
To: GI Special
Sent: December 02, 2004 7:47 PM

[Ewa J. helped oil workers organize a union in Basra, in spite of the Occupation regime, local thugs, scum from Iraqi political parties that tried to use the union for their political careers, and other assorted assholes.]

I miss Iraq!

Want to go to Basra. Miss my dead friend and brother Ghareeb. Can't stop thinking about him.

Every thing, every day, anything remotely connected to there and him, little things just catch me unawares, I can't believe I think them sometimes, that they can come into my mind, the furtherest associations.

Sometimes I feel like I'm under attack.

Now was the time we got really close in Basra, in spite of everything, and went through hell.

I'm sure many of the soldiers in Iraq are thinking the same way, feeling the same way, about the brothers they've lost, playing the same old horror movie in their minds, ignoring the fact that they're inconsolable, probably wishing they could flush it out with drink or worse.

God I wish they'd all come home.

Anyway

All the best

Bring Them Home Now!



December 3, 2004 http://www.socialistworker.org/2004-2/522/522_01_BringThemHome.shtml

THE U.S. military has reduced Falluja to a pile of rubble. "They used everything--tanks, artillery, infantry, poison gas," resident Abu Hammad told reporters. "Falluja has been bombed to the ground."

The full extent of the horror is still hidden to many in the U.S.--thanks to the see-no-evil, pro-war propaganda pumped out by the U.S. media.

But the Pentagon is ready to inflict more death and destruction. And that means finding fresh troops to deploy from the U.S.--increasingly, National Guard members and reservists snatched away from civilian life.

At the Doña Ana training camp in New Mexico, Army National Guard troops from California expressed their anger at the sped-up deployment by fleeing the camp during the Thanksgiving holidays--despite armed guards and barbed wire used to lock them down. "I feel like an inmate with a weapon," Corporal Jajuane Smith, a six-year Guard veteran, told the *Los Angeles Times*.

Staff Sgt. Lorenzo Dominguez was even more blunt in his criticism of poor training and lack of equipment--despite the risk of being punished for speaking out. "Some of us are going to die there, and some of us are going to die unnecessarily because of the lack of training," he said. "So I don't care. Let them court-martial me. I want the American public to know what's going on. My men

are guilty of one thing: volunteering to serve their country. And we are at the end of our rope.”

Bitterness is growing among troops already in Iraq. Like the 18 soldiers of the 343rd Quartermaster Company, who were disciplined for refusing to carry out a dangerous-verging-on-suicidal mission in October. The Army Reserve company was ordered to transport fuel--in unarmored, run-down vehicles without an armed escort along a 200-mile route known for heavy fighting.

And for what? The fuel they were transporting had already been rejected as contaminated at another fuel depot. Now, the 18 face military discipline, prison sentences and courts-martial.

Even soldiers who support the war can be driven to resistance by such conditions--and the pointlessness of orders from the brass. During the Vietnam War, the refusal of troops to carry out missions was critical to ending the war--by forcing Washington's war makers to confront the fact that they were losing control of their own military.

But in order for soldiers' doubts to be turned into action, the antiwar movement must be strong enough to project the real story of what the war on Iraq is all about. Our presence must be strong enough to convince more people that the U.S. war for oil and empire won't make anyone safer--but will instead only lead to more deaths, of Iraqis and U.S. soldiers alike.

We need greater numbers, and we need a clear analysis--so soldiers feel that they're part of a movement that rejects this war. Bring the troops home now!

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

IRAQI ELECTIONS DELAYED TO ALLOW TIME FOR NEGATIVE ADS: Swift Boat Veterans Parachute into Baghdad

December 1, 2004 The Borowitz Report

The Iraqi elections, originally set for January 2005, have been delayed six months to give the Iraqi people enough time to produce and air negative political ads, the White House announced today.

"The purpose of these elections is to foster democracy in Iraq, but without negative ads, there is no democracy," said White House spokesman Scott McClellan.

The decision to delay the Iraqi vote was the brainchild of White House political strategist Karl Rove, who said he was "dismayed" by the state of Iraq's negative advertising infrastructure.

"Their understanding of how to use distortions, unflattering photographs and scary-sounding announcers is rudimentary at best," Mr. Rove said. "If the elections were to go forward without professionally-produced attack ads, the whole process would be seen as a sham."

In order to teach the Iraqi people how to make corrosive, below-the-belt television spots, Mr. Rove has ordered the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, a group whose ads proved particularly effective during the 2004 presidential campaign, to parachute into Baghdad at once.

Davis Hartnett, a spokesman for the veterans group, said that they were already helping Iraqi citizens produce a series of negative ads attacking the Vietnam record of one potential presidential candidate, the Shiite politician Hassan Yousif.

Reached at his campaign headquarters in Mosul, Mr. Yousif angrily called the ads "the work of madmen," telling reporters, "I did not even serve in Vietnam."

"Our point exactly," Mr. Hartnett said.

Elsewhere, in a major policy shift, the government of Pakistan said it would no longer pretend to be looking for Osama bin Laden.

CLASS WAR NEWS

Corporation Bosses Figure Out New Way To Fuck Retired Workers Out Of Their Pensions

25 November 2004 By Molly Ivins, The Free Press

Austin, Texas - As we take this long weekend to digest our Thanksgiving dinners and the ensuing leftovers, let us also devote some time to digesting a few political developments that have flown in under the wider media radar recently.

The Wall Street Journal spotted yet another depressing trend in the pension field. Many companies have started suing their own retired employees in order to cut their pension benefits.

"Many companies have already cut back company-paid health-care coverage for retirees from their salaried staff," the Journal notes. "But until recently, employers generally were barred from touching unionized retirees' benefits because they are spelled out in labor contracts. Now some are taking aggressive steps to pare those benefits as well, including going to court."

Here's the part I love: The companies' legal argument is that the "lifetime" coverage specified in the contracts does not mean the lifetime of the workers, but the "lifetime" of the labor contract. Cute, eh?

Received:

THE UKRAINIANS – JUST ANOTHER SITCOM?

By Alan Stolzer 12,2,04

It is interesting to note that the recent electoral crisis in the Ukraine is headed (at this point anyway) toward a conclusion that might satisfy two antagonistic sides of that country feuding over the questionable results of a November 21 runoff.

But the crisis never could face resolution if masses of Ukrainians, highly displeased with, by all accounts, a corrupt vote tally hadn't stopped their country in protest.

Independent poll watchers almost unanimously questioned the tally for prime minister and, I presume, other offices immediately after the election thereby setting off daily, prolonged demonstrations in Kiev that Western pundits feared would lead to civil war.

Civil war? Isn't that a bit drastic? Is that how far Ukrainians would go to defend democratic institutions and ideals? Goodness, it sure seems like it.

But not us. Or should I say us as in U.S.?

Why, while 2000's so-called election went through the media washing machine complete with sudsy chards, you couldn't hear a pin drop on the head of our democratic traditions and still didn't remove the stink that wafts hypocritically even now over our collective heads. Where were the hundreds of thousand or even millions of phone calls and e-mails inundating Congress with demand for investigation or electoral reform? Guess there were more important things to do. Remember?

How could you forget staying glued to TV and the chard show as if O.J. Simpson was still on trial, Bill Clinton hadn't zipped up yet and whichever entertainer's costume got more revealing? But democracy? What's that?

Oh yes, a society every once in a while has to refresh with the input of people's will. A fair and objective outpouring of conscious choice provided by an informed electorate oblivious to tawdry distractions that might soil the cultural fabric of the body politic. Whew.

Anyway, isn't that what America's about? That's what we're taught. Gee, Ukrainians never had George Washington or even Thomas Jefferson for that matter. But we show them on our money. And money was the pursuit of most after the Supreme Court made up our minds for us (as in U.S.) back in 2000.

You might ask why a country not long separated from a totalitarian noose should care about a crooked election? Aren't they used to skullduggery? Don't they know the guys on top always win out so what's the difference anyway? Apparently they've forgotten how to go along with city hall. And they didn't even have Richard Nixon to kick around but still found out what to do.

They denied access to pols that wanted to enter government buildings to do their thing.

They stood in freezing temps (in relays for sure) to remind the crooks and themselves they are the burning match that was lighted to pierce a darkness brought on by those operating behind closed doors. They stunned a nodding world into attention with obvious relish and showed no signs of quit with or without confrontation, with potential very serious repercussions, at their doorstep.

What a bunch of wackos. All that for a crummy election.

That's old hat to us. We know it's corrupt (that's how smart we are) so what's the point of protesting?

Deny a politician entrée to his/her job isn't on our agenda, uh-uh. Make them do their job? Hell no, we're too sophisticated. We watch television and eat what we're told. Democracy or hypocrisy? What's the difference? I wonder what the Ukrainians are doing tonight? Or isn't that just another sitcom?

<p>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.</p>
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Interview Request

From: [Alumno 23. Escuela de Periodismo](#)
To: GI SPECIAL
Sent: Wednesday, December 01, 2004 10:52 AM
Subject: interview request

Hello

My name is Jason Sinclair and I am studying journalism in Madrid, Spain in a newspaper called EL PAIS. This week I am writing an article about effects of the Iraq war on U.S.

soldiers. I am interested in speaking with soldiers who have passed through or are in the hospital in Landstuhl, Germany. We will publish a paper as part of the final project but it will not be circulated, and I of course would be willing to change the names of anyone who is concerned with revealing their identity.

I can be reached at this e-mail or by telephone +34 637 893 719

Thank you very much
Sincerely,
Jason Sinclair

Web Copies

For back issues see: GI Special web site at <http://www.militaryproject.org/>

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

<http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/> ; www.qifightback.org ;

<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>,

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