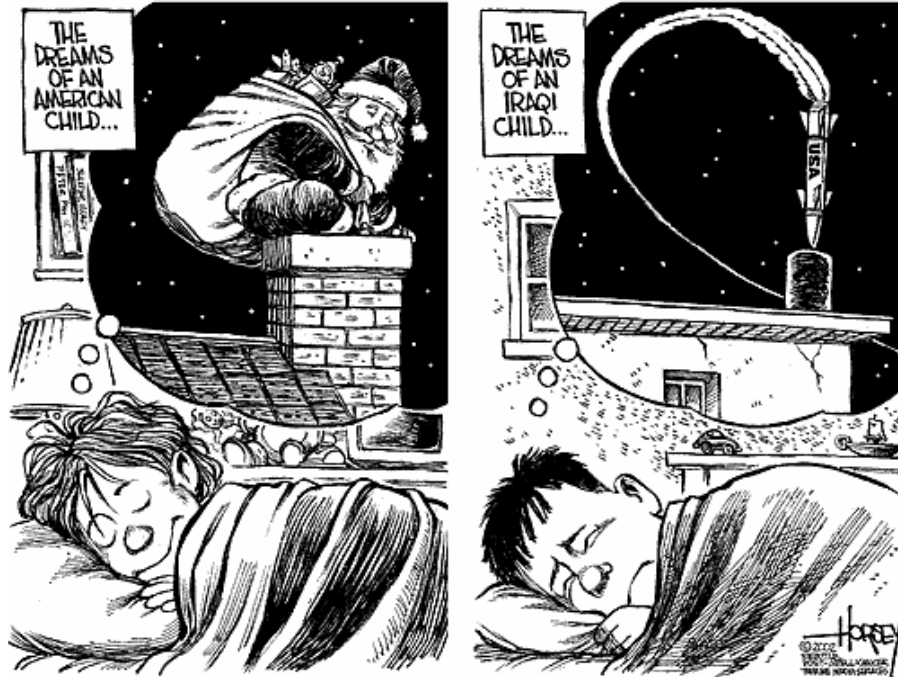


## GI SPECIAL 2#C40



# Us Vs. Them

From: Heretic, Soldier, Iraq  
To: GI Special  
Sent: Thursday, December 02, 2004 4:05 AM  
Subject: Us vs Them

I am a manipulated stooge who sold his soul to exploit the ignorant with the proud lies our own leaders.

I am told on a regular basis "The Army is not like it used to be." Most of the lifers think that the military lacks discipline and blame the new "Nintendo generation" soldiers for the weakness.

However, I think a hard look should be given at the uses of America's advanced military in the modern era. Due to the operations the military has been tasked in the last forty years, the nobility of the professional soldier has been destroyed.

**From Vietnam to Iraq the Armed Forces has been a chess piece in a game for money and power by elite Americans. Back in the world wars the military**

**represented every citizen's will. Today the people are duped with lies and phony values to support imperial progress.**

Weapons of mass destruction, links to the two towers tragedy, and the ousting of an oppressive dictatorship are all bait for a revenge hungry over-patriotic American.

I doubt that the men in power are as incompetent as the world imagines. For that reason I dismiss the apparent failures in Iraq as not the true goals of this war. After these errors are eliminated you are left with the truth behind the media smoke screens.

**This war is about money.**

**Most people believe that dollars are being handed over to Iraq to rebuild their country on the backs of the American tax payers and under the protection of US troops.**

**However, the money never sees Iraq. It leaves your wallet and goes through the system in DC and ends up in a corporation with the sizeable government contract. Sure the product is a new road, a school house or AK-47s for the Iraqi National Guard, but the money is only making a rich man richer.**

Even the soldiers are brain washed into hating the "rag heads".

I have overheard soldiers telling racist jokes like "Why do Iraqis smell so bad? So blind people can hate them too." It becomes easy to hate the Arab people. We don't understand their culture, their religion and their language. They are a poor people with a lesser quality of lifestyle and standard of living. The average soldier can not relate to living without electricity, plumbing, and toilet paper.

If we see them as inferior it makes it easier to kill them. Just as one might kill a dog that digs through his trash. As a soldier gets into combat situations the prejudice grows as they blame every Middle-Easterner for the conflict.

The Joes hate Iraqis because the command hypes about being in Iraq to stabilize a democracy and fight terrorists on their own ground. **The leadership never explains the fact that a majority of Iraqis don't want a republic that is just a branch of the Western materialistic culture and that they see America as a tyrant equal to the fallen Saddam's Baath Party.**

Most soldiers mistake the word insurgent to mean a person that is inserted. **As if we are fighting men from other countries than Iraq. When, insurgent means rebel.**

**The common GI won't investigate why the insurgent will sacrifice himself, because most soldiers would never do the same.**

**But somewhere in the back of the GI's mind he has a sense that what he is doing here is wrong. It gives him doubt and discourages his morale.**

**The lifers hold on to the lies of the system because the truth would destroy the core of their beliefs. The fact that the stars and bars is only an illusion for the real**

**power behind the throne could ruin their psyche and crash their egos. They will never let go of their pride and use it as an excuse to cover their fear.**

A war backed by our nation's cowards. What else would a preemptive strike be good for. Americans get so afraid they will kill in cold blood and thump their chests to claim it for a good cause.

**History is written by the victors and might makes right. After all is said and done it will go down that way in the books. We will kill communists, drug dealers and terrorists. Next will be homosexuals and atheists. Then full circle back to Jews and Blacks. Fear and prejudice is destructive and we dominate using it.** Every country folds to American policies afraid their homes will become the next Baghdad.

And, our leaders use media to force the United States people into anxiety using colored threat levels, video of violence, and worse case scenarios presented as emergency updates. We even had Colin Powell lie to the world's most powerful council, the U.N., about Iraq's malicious intent with nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. **America intimidates the world while calling the insurgent freedom fighters terrorists.**

So Americans can't let go of their fear. Like it is a security blanket from a childhood memory. Just as most people can't relax their guard, in Nam lifers couldn't relate to the men that was turned on to marijuana.

To let your mind and body go and become open to the chaos of the world is impossible for a person who lives in constant fear of the unknown truth. Drug usage isn't as much of a problem here in Iraq amongst the soldiers, yet. However with a draft, the inactive reserve and more stop-loss it won't be long before more soldiers discover the potency of Arab hashish and opium based narcotics.

**There will be a division between lifers and the heads again. It has already started with the stop-losses soldier obviously not wanting to be in service any longer. Many of them get court marshaled or chaptered out with dishonorables saving the military from paying an already deserved Collage GI Bill and other veterans benefits.**

**As war here in the middle-east gets more violent the soldiers will become less afraid of punishment. Prison will become a more sane option than trying to take Fallujah for the fourth time.**

Most the soldiers I have talked to have joined for selfish reasons. They wanted money for collage, travel the world, get out of a dead end, avoid going to prison, or had no direction in life.

The boys who joined up to defend the red white and blue are few and far between. I met some soldiers that were motivated by September 11th, but not many. It is a need in today's society to find alternate advantages to enlist, and when kids learn what they really signed themselves up for it is a rude awakening. Many soldiers are counting down to their last day in the military from the first few hours at basic training.

For all these reasons, whether the G.I.s are conscious of it or not, the military personal have a decreased motivation and intensity.

We fight for lies, are alienated by our chain of command and are only trying to ride out the clock until we can finish our contracts without losing what we have worked for or seeing the inside of a prison cell.

The Armed Forces will never have a loyal troop base until its goals change. If there was something worth fighting for, something the common man can gain, rather than just being underpaid mercenaries for some elitist, then the soldiers would have more encouragement to join in work hard.

I myself find it difficult to have discipline in an Army full of ass-kissing lying hypocrites who enforce a wicked US policy with a violent war I disagree with.

I serve in shame,

The Heretic, Iraq  
<http://www.ftssoldier.blogspot.com/>

**MORE:**

## A Note From The Author

From: Heretic <http://www.ftssoldier.blogspot.com/>  
To: GI Special  
Sent: Thursday, December 02, 2004 4:05 AM  
Subject: Us vs Them

GI Special is an excellent alternative form of media and all soldiers should read it. The women who wrote the article was right in her praise of what you are doing. However, it is not [as she wrote] "a breath of fresh air."

GI Special gives it's readers a good healthy dose of truth and right now the truth is a disgusting and frightening. But, that is no reason to shield our eyes. The censorship involved in our apathetic society is it's biggest down fall. If the people were more aware of current events and more educated on world affairs we would not be in such an awful situation.

**[The article Heretic refers to next said soldiers should stand up as individuals and loudly proclaim to their officers that they will defy orders because the war is wrong. This is what Heretic has to say about that:]**

**Before any soldier risks going to prison he should realize that from a prison he can't have much effect on the movement. His ability to communicate with the outside world will be limited and he will make himself useless. There has to be a point when we reach a high enough number of troops in our peace effort that a unified boycott of all military action will have a desired affect.**

**We choose our battles and continue to speak out in our underground action.**

Here is another piece I wrote about Lifers against the resistant GI. [Us vs Them] What do you think? Anything I send you, you can use some or all of.

Thanks for doing the GI Special, you are making a difference,

Heretic of <http://www.ftssoldier.blogspot.com/>

**Reply:** GI Special may focus on what's going on, but the real difference, the one that counts, is being made by soldiers who have decided the war is wrong, and are doing something about it. Here is the weak link in the chain of slavery for Empire.

It comes as a shock to many civilians back here opposed to the war to learn that there are an ever growing number of troops that feel betrayed by this Imperial government. It may well be that the words of Heretic, hEkle, and other soldiers do more for the morale of the movement at home to stop this war than the movement is doing to help the soldiers right now.

That must change, and we must all reach out to these truly brave men and women.

The flowering of articles like this represents a turning point in history. The soldiers who speak out to say what they think give us hope -- hope that someday soon things can change for the better, and not just keep on getting worse, both for soldiers and working class people back home.

If we act together to take back our lives and our futures from those who would steal both, there is no force on earth that can stop us. We need our soldiers by our side. Without them we are truly lost. With them, everything is possible. T

**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:**

# **U.S. Officers VIP Lounge Blown Up: Two Killed, 5 Wounded At Iraq-Jordan Border**

December 4, 2004 BAGHDAD (AFP)

**Two U.S. soldiers were killed and five wounded in a car bombing at the Trebil border crossing between Jordan and Iraq on Friday night.**

**Earlier Friday, drivers at Trebil said that a light truck laden with explosives blew up a VIP lounge frequently used by ranking US military at the border crossing.**

"I heard a powerful explosion as I was leaving the Jordanian frontier post and was approaching the Iraqi post at Trebil," said one Jordanian driver.

**He and other witnesses said a refrigerated truck slammed into the VIP lounge and exploded.**



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## **Ghalabiya IED Kills One U.S. Soldier, Wounds Another**

12.4.04 Aljazeera

**A bomb near the town of Ghalabiya, about 10km west of Baquba, north of Baghdad, hit a truck in a US military convoy, killing a soldier and wounding another, Master Sergeant Robert Powell said.**

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## **ONE SOLDIER KILLED, FIVE WOUNDED IN IED ATTACK**

December 4, 2004 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS  
RELEASE Number: 04-12-06C

**BAGHDAD, Iraq -- One Task Force Baghdad Soldier died Dec. 4 after an improvised explosive device detonated at about 8:45 a.m. in eastern Baghdad. Five other Soldiers were wounded in the attack.**

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# Mosul: Bomber Kills 7 U.S. Allies In Mosul; Resistance Attack In Force On U.S. Patrol

**WELCOME TO MOSUL. HAVE A NICE DAY.**



Insurgents carry weapons in Mosul, Iraq Dec. 3, 2004. (AP Photo)

December 4, 2004 BAGHDAD (AFP) & AP & By Luke Baker, Reuters

On Friday, a **U.S. patrol in the Yarmuk district of the city was attacked by an estimated 70 assailants**, according to the US military. Insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades also fought street battles with U.S. troops in the northern city for a second day.

A car bomber exploded his vehicle alongside a bus carrying Kurdish peshmerga militiamen in this northern city, killing at least seven and injuring eight, a Kurdish official said.

The blast went off in the afternoon in an eastern neighborhood of Mosul as the bus carrying militiamen loyal to the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan were arriving from Irbil province, said Saadi Ahmed, a PUK official.

**The PUK and the other main Iraqi Kurdish group, the Kurdistan Democratic Party, are mostly secular U.S. allies. The PUK backed the U.S.-led war to topple Saddam Hussein and is part of the interim government.**

The militiamen were being brought in from the mainly Kurdish city of Arbil to Mosul, where US and Iraqi forces have been battling fighters who staged an uprising last month, attacking police stations and government offices.

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# Phone Calls Can Kill; “It Sometimes Makes You Wonder Why We're Even Over There”

December 4, 2004 By JAMIE JONES, gctelegram

When Garden City native and U.S. Marine Joel Newport, 31, went to a Baghdad phone center to call his wife, Trisha Newport, from Iraq Wednesday, he found out even that wasn't safe, his wife said.

**The couple was getting a rare chance to talk when Iraqi rebels shot three mortars at the phone center. One of them hit Newport on his left side and spread shrapnel all along the left side of his body.**

Trisha said she heard a loud bang and her husband said, "I've gotta go babe," and then they were disconnected.

She waited by the phone for two hours before she received a call from her husband's commanding officer telling her he was hurt but would have no permanent damage and was in a Baghdad Hospital, she said.

**One Marine died in the attack and another one will never be able to walk again because the shrapnel cut through to the bones in his feet, she said.**

The attack was in Baghdad's Arasat neighborhood. It was one of several mortar attacks around Baghdad that day.

**Trisha said the phone center is a target because it's open 24 hours a day and the lights are always on. The Iraqi rebels just aim for the light, she said, and you can't see where the mortars are coming from.**

Trisha said she and her husband's time on the phone is limited and very precious. He calls every Saturday to talk to the family and also on Wednesday mornings. They often talk on Yahoo! Messenger with a Web cam so he can see Trisha and the boys, she said.

**From now on, though, she said, she thinks their phone time will be even more limited because her husband probably will be more leery of spending time at the phone center. [No shit.]**

"His smile always makes me smile, so when I can't see it, it's hard," she said tearfully.

Trisha said she worries every day and prays every night for his safe return. **She said she is especially worried she will get a knock on her door from officials telling her that he won't be there anymore.**



**"I don't think anybody is safe in Iraq, no matter which part they're in," she said.**

Joel is in Iraq with the MSSG24 ship. He is a landing support specialist and helps unload everything from helicopters to armored equipment, his wife said. His group's motto is "first ones in, last ones out."

With Christmas coming soon, Trisha said, it has been hard to have her husband away. She and their sons will spend Christmas together in North Carolina and hopefully will be able to communicate with Joel via Yahoo! Messenger, she said. She and the boys sent a miniature Christmas tree with homemade ornaments with pictures of all of them to Joel.

"Hopefully, that will remind him of home," she said.

**When Joel's father found out from Trisha that he had been hurt, he said, he was shocked and scared.**

**"It kind of immobilizes you. You don't know what to do or think. It sometimes makes you wonder why we're even over there," he said.**

Dan Newport said he has mixed emotions on his son being in Iraq. **He's proud of him and certainly glad he's safe, but he wishes Joel was not over there,** he said.

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## TROOP NEWS

# **Death By Stryker: Rolling Coffins Useless, Deadly For U.S. Troops, But Make \$\$ For War Profiteers**

December 06, 2004 By Eric Miller, Army Times. (The writer is a senior defense investigator with the Project On Government Oversight, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, Washington-based watchdog group.)

**Although it has yet to see extensive battle action, five soldiers have been killed in Stryker rollovers, another by an exploding grenade, and in mid-October, a soldier was killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near the vehicle. A few Strykers have been gutted by fires resulting from roadside bombs or rocket-propelled grenade hits.**

**In e-mails from troops stationed in Iraq, criticisms are numerous: The Stryker has too many blind spots looking out from the inside; the 5,000-pound “bird cage” armor makes it top-heavy and prone to rollovers; it breaks down too often and chews up tires quickly; and doesn’t yet come mounted with a big mobile gun system.**

Despite a critical need to get more armored vehicles to soldiers engaged in the toughest guerrilla clashes in Iraq, the Army last year instead chose to deploy its first Stryker armored vehicle brigade to one of the country’s more relatively calm, remote regions.

**Why? Retired Army Col. Douglas Macgregor says it’s because the Pentagon knows the Stryker is a flawed weapon.**

**“The Army’s senior leadership wisely decided to keep the Stryker brigade remote from the scene of the action in central Iraq, where the lethal quality of close combat might inflict serious casualties on it,”** he told a congressional subcommittee in July.

**Macgregor, an independent defense consultant and former director of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe’s Joint Operations Center, is so convinced that the Stryker is a bad choice for the street fighting in Iraq that he recommended the Army not be permitted to fund the last two of the six planned Stryker brigades.** Instead, the Pentagon should spend procurement dollars on more promising technologies, he said.

**Macgregor said Stryker lacks not only the joint command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance connectivity it needs to operate independently, but also the “firepower, protection, mobility and organic logistical support to be a full-dimensional war-fighting organization, and its operational utility will continue to be limited to peace support or paramilitary police operations.”**

Macgregor has not been alone in his criticism of the Stryker, an eight-wheeled, 19-ton armored vehicle touted as the first high-tech installment in the Army’s fighting force of the future.

**The Government Accountability Office said in a recent report that it barely fits in a C-130 cargo aircraft, can’t always defend against a rocket-propelled grenade or a roadside explosive device, and takes too long to get to the battlefield — if it even makes it to the battlefield.**

In a high-altitude country like Afghanistan, a C-130 transport may not even be able to take off with a Stryker in its belly, the GAO said.

**So why are the Army and Congress in a rush to fund, build and deploy the last two Stryker brigades?**

**Although it has yet to see extensive battle action, five soldiers have been killed in Stryker rollovers, another by an exploding grenade, and in mid-October, a soldier**

**was killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near the vehicle. A few Strykers have been gutted by fires resulting from roadside bombs or rocket-propelled grenade hits.**

**At \$4 million a vehicle and rising, according to a GAO report, the Stryker has become a new poster child for bad weapon development.**

The Stryker is one in a string of new weapons — the C-130J and an Alaskan national missile defense system are others — that represent a new Pentagon “capabilities-based” or “spiral” development philosophy that basically comes down to this: **Aim high, spend a lot of money, but take whatever the defense contractor gives you and rush it to the battlefield.**

**The taxpayers and our fighting men and women are the losers in this perilous new way of doing business.**

Thomas Christie, the Pentagon’s director of operational test and evaluation, said as much in his most recent annual report.

**First, he warned that the Stryker was not ready for prime time, because he could not guarantee that soldiers inside Strykers would survive rocket-propelled grenade hits. He also singled out the Stryker as an example of a trend in which the military services are committing fewer and fewer resources to test and evaluate their weapons.**

Lives are at stake, yet program managers increasingly complain that they spend too much time and money testing new weapons.

The bottom line, Christie said, is that American and allied fighting men and women may be going to war with weapons without knowing their capabilities and limitations.

**Nonetheless, the Army has been speaking glowingly of the Stryker’s performance in Iraq, but providing little proof.**

**In e-mails from troops stationed in Iraq, criticisms are numerous: The Stryker has too many blind spots looking out from the inside; the 5,000-pound “bird cage” armor makes it top-heavy and prone to rollovers; it breaks down too often and chews up tires quickly; and doesn’t yet come mounted with a big mobile gun system.**

Cost is a factor, too. Only a few months ago, the Army was saying that \$7.8 billion will buy 2,100 Strykers, but the latest figure is just over 1,800. Yet the 2005 Defense Appropriations bill authorizes more Stryker purchases.

Isn’t this a little like a parent signing his child’s report card before the grades are filled in by the teacher?

**MORE:**

# Now Read What This Soldier-Killing Freak Says: He Lies And Lies And Lies And Lies

“Army Finds Stryker Shines In Iraqi Combat Zone”

[No. Not “Army.” This is one lying Colonel sucking up for a fat job with a war profiteer when he finishes fighting the desperate battles of project management.]

(Defense Today, December 1, 2004, Pg. 1)

The Army's project manager of its Stryker brigade teams gave the new vehicle high marks in its initial use in the war in Iraq.

Some 311 Strykers in Iraq have driven more than 3 million miles, according to Col. Peter Fuller. **Speaking at a conference in Washington, Fuller heaped praise onto the new platform for its mobility, survivability and other capabilities.** [Washington? You mean he's not over there in Iraq? Why on earth not? That can be fixed. Fly him there under arrest and tie him on top the next Stryker that goes through Mosul. That way, he can testify first hand about how wonderful it is. Option B: turn him over for trial to the families of the troops who have died in these worthless pieces of shit and let them decide whatever punishment they think is appropriate, no limits.]

## **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))**

# Iraq's Gravity Pulls a Soldier Down A Fateful Path From Nigeria, Through Brooklyn, To War

November 30th, 2004 by Kareem Fahim, Village Voice



"Freddie" Akintade in Kuwait, February 2004 photo: Jeffrey Gross

**"He thought the war was unjustified," said Lawrence. "He thought it was Bush's war, and it was disastrous. But he said he was trying to make the best of it."**

Among the family, friends, and colleagues who inhabited his short life, the broad, handsome National Guardsman went by several names.

His college professors and classmates knew him as Lekan, a shy, diligent student working toward a bachelor's degree in computer science. The men from Alpha Company, 108th Infantry Regiment out of New York State, called the Nigerian-born machine gunner with the deep voice by his last name, Akintade. His family, many of whom traveled from Lagos two weeks ago to mourn their boy, just called him Sunday, for the day he was born.

And to the surrogate family he had gathered in Flatbush since he immigrated to the U.S. in 1997—Liyah Njoroge, his Kenyan fiancée; Lawrence Koleosho, his "cousin"; and Ojo Oyebisi, another friend—he was just Freddie.

**Specialist Segun Frederick Akintade was killed when a bomb, buried in an Iraqi road, detonated near his Humvee on October 28. His company had set out on patrol at eight in the morning, and linked up with another unit to transfer prisoners.**

On the way back to headquarters, Forward Operating Base O'Ryan, just south of the town of Al Dujayal, they were attacked. No one in the armored Humvee was injured apart from Freddie, who died within minutes of the blast. The army says he would have turned 35 in December.

His friends in New York say Freddie saw military service as not just a noble calling for a country he loved, but perhaps an immigrant's lucky path to achievement, and status. **He hoped that serving would help him bring the rest of his family, including four siblings and his mother, to the U.S.** Friends remembered him weighing different plans for his future, maybe working with computers, joining the police force, or getting his MBA. And he wanted to build a life with Liyah.

**Like millions of other Americans who join the National Guard—and many of the young, black men who live in neighborhoods like Flatbush, where U.S. military recruiters routinely trawl—Freddie couldn't afford to pay for college, even though**

**he worked nights as a computer systems consultant at Bear Stearns, the investment bank.**

So he joined up a few months before September 11, 2001, securing money for his classes at City Tech, medical benefits, and a life insurance policy.

Two years later, in the spring of 2003, Freddie realized a dream by becoming an American citizen. In February 2004, he shipped off to Iraq, joining the thousands of foreign-born soldiers on active duty there. **Some 29,000 U.S. troops are green-card holders. Since the September 11 attacks, another 18,341 have become citizens.**

For many immigrants, the armed services offer a largely color-blind system in which they can advance on their own merits. Serving in the military can also be a way of proving one's patriotism. "It's a statement of commitment to the nation," said David Segal, a sociologist at the University of Maryland who specializes in military affairs. Wartime, he said, raises the cost.

But for Freddie, Iraq was a cruel gauntlet, another trial for a young immigrant who had already been tested.

"I remember clearly the day he told me he was going to Iraq," said Belinda G. Smith, who taught Freddie in a class on personnel psychology and called him smart, with a beautiful face. "I was writing on the board at the front of the room, and he walked in and asked if he could talk to me. We went out into the hallway, and he told me he had gotten his orders. My jaw dropped open.

**"He was terrified," she continued. "He was trying to be courageous. I went back in and told the rest of the students. People don't make connections. They think it happens to people they don't know."**

**"He thought he would be defending New York," said Lawrence Koleosho, Freddie's best friend, who lived a few blocks away from him. "Even after 9-11, he thought he would just have to guard the subways." Freddie was one of the roughly 55,000 reservists and National Guard soldiers serving in Iraq. Many of these "citizen-soldiers"—at least the ones who enlisted before 9-11—thought the most action they'd see was putting down a riot, or maybe guarding a nuclear power plant.**

According to military officials, six Army National Guardsmen from New York have died in Iraq. **The most recent fatality was David Roustum, whose Syrian-born father tried to convince him to flee to Syria when the deployment orders came. Roustum, 22, had been part of the military honor guard that performs funerals for soldiers. He was killed when his unit was ambushed.**

Lawrence sat at home late on the night before Thanksgiving, wearing red shorts with cargo pockets, and a white T-shirt. Stick-thin, he said he'd had trouble eating anything except fruit in the last three weeks. His phone rang constantly. Liyah called, to find out what time Lawrence was picking her up for Thanksgiving dinner. The pair would join Freddie's family, who were staying with Lawrence's parents in East New York.

On a table in front of him sat a thick, leather-bound photo album filled with pictures of Freddie, most of them with Liyah. There they were at an amusement park; at home, playing with someone's kid; at his graduation in 2003, when he earned an associate's degree in computer science. And there were dozens of pictures of Freddie alone, clowning for the camera. "He used to think he was the sexiest guy around," said Lawrence, laughing.

There were other pictures, of Freddie the soldier, dressed in his fatigues, cleaning his gun. And then a photo of just the weapons, an M240-B machine gun and a 9mm pistol. There was one of him on patrol at Camp Smith, in the woods of Peekskill, New York, where he trained for several months in 2003. And toward the back of the album, there was another of him in a short-sleeved button-down, sitting alone. He looked angry. "He wasn't happy the last time he was here," said Lawrence.

**"The last time he called me on the phone from Iraq, he said he might not fight anymore,"** Lawrence remembered. "He was still angry that he hadn't gotten an extension to stay." Freddie, it turned out, had requested another two weeks on top of the two-week furlough he got in September, but had been turned down. He told his superiors he wanted to get married. Lawrence also said he simply had too much to take care of, including sorting out a case of identity theft.

During that September visit, Freddie, Lawrence, and their friend Ojo Oyebisi had one of their typically spirited discussions, here on the worn white leather couches that take up half of Lawrence's tiny apartment. In happier times, the three, along with Liyah, went out to clubs like Nell's, on 14th Street, or Metronome, blending into the New York scene. There was a regular rotation of house parties too, and they went as a team.

"We got into an argument over Iraq," said Ojo, who, like Lawrence, is 30 and from Lagos. "I didn't support the war at all. And I don't think he supported the war." Still, Freddie argued that America had a duty to stabilize Iraq. At one time, the three had discussed joining the National Guard together, just as they had applied for their American citizenship together. But Ojo decided that three to six months was too long to go away for training; and then Lawrence got the financial aid he needed for college, and decided army service wasn't work the risk.

The argument lasted 45 minutes. "In the end, we agreed to disagree," said Ojo.

**The two discussed attacking Freddie and breaking his legs, so he wouldn't have to return to the war. They were only half joking. Freddie's unit wouldn't come home until February 2005, which was uncomfortably far off, especially with the way things were going in Iraq.**

Lawrence had accidentally erased several of Freddie's voice-mail messages, except one. He played it a couple of times. "Lawrence, pick up the phone," Freddie had said. Then he insulted him in Yoruba.

**"He thought the war was unjustified," said Lawrence. "He thought it was Bush's war, and it was disastrous. But he said he was trying to make the best of it."**

Hong Li taught Freddie three computer science courses in a row at City Tech and had gotten used to having the tall Nigerian around. During their last semester together,

Freddie left for Iraq, and so she had the class run a famous mathematical model, in the student-soldier's honor.

The so-called "Josephus Problem," named for Flavius Josephus, borrows from a battle during the Jewish revolt against Rome. Josephus and 39 fellow soldiers hid in a cave, surrounded by Romans. They decided they would rather die than surrender, and so they gathered themselves in a circle. Moving clockwise, they killed every seventh man. Josephus is said to have figured out where to place himself, in order to be the last person standing. When he was the only one left, he joined the Romans.

In class that day, the students picked their favorite numbers, and Li picked for Freddie. As luck had it, in their simulation, he was the soldier who survived.

"I feel bad for international students," said Li, who is from China. "They come here and struggle—myself too. I have another student in the marines. He hasn't been sent yet. I hope he'll never be sent."

### **The last visit**

**Freddie had been gone a long time. The last time Liyah saw him before his visit in September was around Valentine's Day. She still has his flowers, carefully dried, on her dresser in the ground-floor apartment she shares with her brothers and sisters in Queens.** A picture of her with Freddie sits in a frame on the table next to her bed. He's wearing the same short-sleeved shirt from the angry picture in Lawrence's album.

"I forced him to take these pictures last time he was here," she said. The furlough had begun happily. He had proposed to her in his apartment, and they planned to get married at the courthouse in Brooklyn. But then he found out that someone had stolen his identity and applied for credit cards in his name, and the trip turned sour. He spent most days on the phone, on hold, trying to sort it all out before he had to leave.

The couple met three years ago on the dancefloor of Nell's, when she was 22. They were both there with friends, including Lawrence. After a night of clubbing, they all had breakfast together, and Freddie gave her every phone number he had. Liyah called him before he got home.

She said he always made time for her, through a manic schedule. He was in class all day, and worked all night at Bear Stearns. He would have to go away weekends on National Guard duty. He slept in the afternoons, mostly. He liked to cook for her.

**Liyah said Freddie changed after he returned to Iraq. He seemed on edge. He no longer sent letters, and they just communicated through instant messaging. "If they can't help me out," he told her, "why am I fighting their war?" On Election Day, her sister took her out for a meal and told her Freddie had been killed. Liyah didn't believe it. She went home and sent him an e-mail. "I've heard rumors that something happened to you," she wrote.**

Freddie had kept the dangers of Iraq from his fiancée, assuring her over and over again that things were fine, even routine. He'd told her about his friends in his platoon, guys he called Jim and Perez. He had visited one of Saddam Hussein's palaces in Tikrit. Mostly, though, Iraq was a chore, an errand to run before they got on with the next



stage. "I have to be here now," he had written in another letter, "so that I will have the rest of my life to be with you."

**"I don't know how to put my foot forward," Liyah said, leafing through old cards from Iraq. "I want to hear his loud voice again. I want him to cook for me one more time."**

### **Gravity in Iraq**

In many ways, Sergeant Jeff Gross said, things were routine for Freddie's platoon in Iraq. The town where they were stationed was mostly Shiite, and he said that things were quieter than in other parts of the so-called Sunni Triangle. Alpha Company helped patrol the supply route, Highway 1.

Freddie was popular, he said. "There's always friction in a group like this, but he never seemed to have a problem with anyone." Part of that was a function of his age, Gross said, and the fact that he was from Nigeria, a country that, like Iraq, had seen its share of conflict. He was among the company's best gunners, with steady hands and bulk enough to absorb the recoil."

Like all National Guard soldiers, Freddie knew his responsibilities when he signed up. But as Gross put it, "I never thought New York infantrymen would be deployed to Iraq."

Gross, who lives eight subway stops away from Liyah, in Astoria, was in the Humvee with Freddie the day he was killed. "The bomb went off pretty much under the truck," he said. Specialist Perez was driving, with Gross in the front passenger seat. "We thought we'd hit a land mine. I felt most of it. There was a lot of smoke, and sparks. The truck lifted up, and we rolled forward on the force of the blast."

When Gross got his bearings again, he saw that Freddie was slumped forward at the turret. Blood started to seep down into the Humvee. A piece of the bomb had skittered past all the protection that surrounded Freddie, slicing through a gap in the gunner's armor plates and slipping in somewhere above his Kevlar collar and below his helmet.

After Freddie was gone, Gross said, things changed in his platoon. "They don't get upset with each other as easily. Or argue about silly things." He said he had worried that they would take out their anger on Iraqis. "You can't allow that kind of emotion—people acting their anger. But it hasn't been an issue. This platoon has never made a mistake and shot a civilian, or used too much force."

The attack that killed Freddie was the worst the platoon faced in its eight months in Iraq. "It was like he was struck by lightning," said Gross, who is returning to Iraq this week.

It's hard to re-create a person from memories, and the details of Freddie's life are often confusing. The men in his platoon believed that he was well-to-do, and that his family owned a textile plant in Nigeria; his friends in New York said he supported his relatives. He was said to have opposed the war politically, but Sergeant Gross called him "gung ho," and said when he returned from his furlough, he was jealous that he had missed a firefight. He appears to have kept his two lives—the one in Brooklyn and the one in Iraq—separate.

Then there is the issue of his name, which he changed, inexplicably, a few years ago. Liyah said she didn't know what was behind the switch. "He had things that were private," she said. "So do I."

But everyone remembers him fondly in Brooklyn, where he had carved a life for himself. "He's the kind of person who doesn't like it when a place is too quiet," Lawrence recalled. "If we would be sitting at a meal, and it was too quiet, he would bring a silly argument, and say something like, 'Maybe it's not gravity that pulls objects toward the floor.' Then we'd talk about that for the rest of the meal."



Liyah Njoroge said her fiancé, Freddie Akintade, seemed on edge when he returned to Iraq in September. photo: Brian Kennedy

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## Discharged Troops Tell National Guard To Fuck Off; Recruiting Collapses

December 4, 2004 CORAOPOLIS, Pa. (AP)

Increasing numbers of soldiers are deciding not to join the Army National Guard after they leave active duty, a trend so troubling that the Guard is hiring 1,400 more recruiters to reverse it.

**In fiscal 2004, the Guard had expected 7,100 soldiers to sign up after active duty tours. Instead, only 2,900 did -- not even half. As a result, what's supposed to be a 350,000-member organization had just 342,918 soldiers when the year closed out on Sept. 30.**

**"If a soldier is near the end of their term of service and looking to stabilize their life, they know the likelihood is they're going to be deployed if they join the Guard,"** said Lt. Col. Mike Milord, spokesman for the Guard's headquarters in Arlington, Va.

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# Navy Probes New Iraq Prisoner Torture Photos

[THANKS TO D WHO E-MAILED THIS IN]

Comment from editor Left Hook: "Here is perhaps the most priceless part of the article --- talk about priorities:"

"The wife [of the torturing SEAL] said she was upset that a reporter was able to view the album, which includes family snapshots. Hundreds of other photos depict everyday military life in Iraq, some showing commandos standing around piles of weapons and waving wads of cash."

Dec 3 By SETH HETTENA, CORONADO, Calif. (AP)

The U.S. military has launched a criminal investigation into photographs that appear to show Navy SEALs in Iraq sitting on hooded and handcuffed detainees, and photos of what appear to be bloodied prisoners, one with a gun to his head.

The images were posted to the Internet site Smugmug.com. **The woman who posted them told the AP they were on the camera her husband brought back from Iraq.** She said her husband has returned to Iraq. He does not appear in photos with prisoners.

**The wife said she was upset that a reporter was able to view the album, which includes family snapshots. Hundreds of other photos depict everyday military life in Iraq, some showing commandos standing around piles of weapons and waving wads of cash.**

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## Soldiers Face Jail; Assholes In Command Face Promotions

December 3, 2004 By Derrick Z. Jackson, By Derrick Z. Jackson

**Soldiers face jail. Commanders get 15-gun salutes. Soldiers are pilloried. White House officials are promoted. The cost of hypocrisy in the billowing prison abuse scandal has not mattered much up to now. Tomorrow we might care a lot more. The next victim of the hypocrisy could be you or me.**

This week there was a hearing for Lynndie England, the soldier who became the face of Abu Ghraib for two photos, one in which she held a naked Iraqi prisoner by a leash and a second in which she smiled while pointing at the genitals of another detainee.

Her lawyers want the photos thrown out as evidence, saying she was pressured to pose for them by superior officers. **Lawyers for the Army, of course, deny this. If England is convicted, she could get up to 38 years in prison.**

**Another hearing was scheduled this week for three soldiers accused of smothering an Iraqi general to death in an interrogation. They may get life behind bars.**

*Superiors dream of adding stars to their bars.*

**Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, the commander in Iraq during the abuse at the Abu Ghraib prison, returned to his base in Germany in October to a 15-gun salute. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz praised Sanchez on behalf of President Bush and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld for his "courage, his perseverance, and his concern for his troops."**

Sanchez was passed over for one possible four-star promotion in the wake of Abu Ghraib. But the Los Angeles Times reported later in October that Rumsfeld and Richard Meyers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, still want to make him a four-star general despite Army reports indicating that Sanchez approved of controversial interrogation tactics and did not move quickly to halt abuse.

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## **100% Wrong: That's Why He's A General**

Dec. 4, 2004 By SLOBODAN LEKIC, The Associated Press

The visiting NATO commander expressed surprise Friday that Iraq's insurgency had proven so resilient by comparison with Afghanistan, where he said security has improved significantly.

**"At the beginning I would have projected the opposite, with Iraq coming along faster," said U.S. Gen. James Jones, the supreme allied commander in Europe.**

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### **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

## **Resistance Command Says Resistance Not Blowing Up Churches, Mosques**

**Excerpt from: "Letter from Iraqi Patriotic Alliance addressed to our brothers all around the world"**

Dec 04, 2004, Nada Al-Rubaiee on behalf of the Iraqi Patriotic Alliance (IPA), Al Basrah

The different resisting groups in Iraq have developed a network between each other in order to achieve their ultimate goal. This goal was clearly addressed in their political program released after the liberation of Fallujah in April this year (2004). **The program of the Iraqi resistance is as follows:**

1. End the occupation and liberate the country
2. Transition period of 2 years
3. Iraqi united- National government for all
4. Iraqi constitution written by Iraqis themselves
5. Democratic rules
6. Free election and full participation of the different political parties

**Schools, churches, mosques and other civilian places have never been the target of the Iraqi resistance.** Besides, we have to be very critical and careful about any kidnapping or killing process of a foreigner-worker in Iraq. The resistance has no benefit in attacking people like Margaret Hassan, two Simona's or others. These actions are meant to discredit the legal resistance of our people.

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## **Bodies Of Four Occupation Cops Found In Tal Afar Market**

December 5, 2004 The Associated Press & Aljazeera

**THE bodies of nine slain men wearing Iraqi National Guards uniforms have been found in north-western Iraq** after being repeatedly shot, a hospital official said today.

**The grisly discovery, was made yesterday in Tal Afar**

**Dr Saleh Haider, director of the Tal Afar General Hospital, said the latest four bodies were retrieved from a Tal Afar market,** adding that each was found wearing uniforms and holding personal identification documents.

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## **Occupation Cops Attacked In Samarra**

12.4.04 Aljazeera

Police in the northern city of Samarra also came under attack Saturday. Mortars were fired at a station after midnight, wounding two officers. Partisans injured two policemen in another attack at about 10 a.m., according to police Maj. Sadoon Ahmed Matroud.



## Baghdad Car Bombs Kill Occupation Cops

12.4.04 Aljazeera & AP & Reuters

In the second major assault on Baghdad's police force in two days, **two car bombs exploded next to an Iraqi police station by a police station across the street from a checkpoint leading to the heavily fortified Green Zone** on Saturday, killing seven people and wounding 59. **Officials said most of the victims were police officers, but the identities of all the dead were not yet known.**

Only one blast was heard at the time, suggesting the bombs may have been timed to detonate simultaneously.

Police sources said the Baghdad attack, which shook the city centre shortly after 9:30 a.m. (0630 GMT), also destroyed 35 vehicles, including 17 police cars.

A thick column of black smoke rose from the site of the blasts, near a main entrance to the Green Zone, home to the interim Iraqi government and several foreign embassies.

The heavy thud of machinegun fire could be heard immediately after the explosions as Iraqi police returned fire.

"I was in the criminal investigation department and saw our guards open the gates for a police patrol," policeman Rafid Khudeir said from his hospital bed, his head swathed in blood-stained bandages. "Then a white car followed them in and blew up outside our building."

One blast was so powerful it blew a car onto the roof of an annex next to the police station.

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE  
END THE OCCUPATION**

## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

# **Be Advised: Your Chaplin Knows Where The Paycheck Comes From, And It Ain't From God**

**From:** Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War Co-founder/Western Region  
Contact  
**To:** GI Special  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 04, 2004  
**Subject:** Re: GI Special 2#C39: "Maimed For Bullshit"

In response to the last GI Special with this quote:

*"From 2002 to 2003, according to military records, conscientious objection (CO) applications tripled for the Army and quadrupled for the Marines, the two branches most involved in combat in Iraq. The actual number of applications, however, is probably much higher. Official numbers reflect only those applications that make it to headquarters. CO applicants complain they find it hard to get accurate information about the process and are discouraged from applying once they do. Military counselors estimate that several hundred are in the works."*

**I was on my last deployment in Saudi Arabia in August-October of 2003.**

At this time the war rhetoric was in fully force.

**I was able to do research on the internet and came to find out for myself that the war in Iraq was wrong.**

I also found the peace community in this same way. Not wanting to fight an unjust, illegal war, **I went to the base chaplain and told him my concerns, as well as asking about CO status.**

**I remember him telling me, "Oh, you only have six months to finish your enlistment. You should be fine. If I were you I would just ride it out. Besides, by the time anything happened, you would be out by then anyway."**

**This is just another prime example of how the troops are discouraged from applying for CO status.**

**Just think; if I had been in the Marines instead of the Air Force, I would have been stop loss'd and forced to fight, all the time pissed off because of what that chaplain had said.**

Tim Goodrich  
IVAW Co-founder/Western Region Contact

Join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! Check out: [www.ivaw.net](http://www.ivaw.net)

## **SALAM**

# **To My American Friend With Love**

December 04, 2004 12:33 PM Via lizburbank@speakeasy.net

In a time when I thought all American men are without heart, you proved to me there are still some with one

In a time when I heard the screams of women, kids and elderly coming from far away pleading for help, you told me you could hear it too

In a time when I felt helpless watching my country being destroyed because of big lies, you told me it breaks your heart too

In a time when I discovered they were there for the oil and not for the people, you told me you could see it the same way too

In a time when I read the horror stories about my country and couldn't sleep, you soothed me and told me it bothered you too

In a time when I watched them shooting wounded people, you understood why I couldn't forgive them and you told me you wouldn't forgive them too

In a time when I saw them torturing, raping and kicking my people's heads with their boots, I felt embarrassed, you told me that they were doing it by your name and you're ashamed of their doings too



In a time when I thought American people are arrogant and selfish, you made me feel not all of them are and they do have feelings too

In a time when I thought our Allah is different from your Jesus, you were puzzled but you told me there is no difference between the two

In a time when I thought your people are murderers, you proved to me that not all of them are and they do have heart too

**In a time when I thought there would be no future to my country, you told me there would be no future to yours and eventually killers will pay the price too**

In a time when I felt down, you proved to me that there is a friend who cares and that's why I believe in you

**In a time when I felt that we couldn't change the world, you proved to me that we could if we put our hands and hearts together and this is what we all have to do**

Love,  
Nesreen Melek

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

## OCCUPATION REPORT

# **Fallujah Residents Face Choice: Retina Scan And Take ID Card....Or Die**

December 2 2004 Alex Jones Show

**A caller to the Alex Jones show played a segment from Tom Brokaw's last broadcast on NBC which featured a report from Iraq clearly stating that residents of Fallujah (civilians, NOT insurgents) would be forced to give fingerprints, retina scan and take an ID card or be killed.**

Here is the transcript from the report....

Reporter: "So far the plan is for most of the city's 250,000 residents to return in stages and first only a few thousand will be let in.

They'll be fingerprinted, given a retina scan and then an ID card, which will only allow them to travel around their homes or to nearby aid centers which are now being built.

The Marines will be authorized to use deadly force against those breaking the rules....

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## **DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

# **Government Lawyer: Detainees Have “No Constitutional Rights”**

**[Every member of the Armed Forces has the duty to protect us against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Guess what? While you've been off dying in Bush's war for Empire, the enemies domestic have taken charge big time. Check this one out. Time to come home and do some protection. We need all the help we can get.]**

December 02, 2004 By Michael J. Sniffen, Associated Press

Under detailed questioning by a federal judge, government lawyers asserted Wednesday the U.S. military can hold foreigners indefinitely as enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, Cuba, **even if they aided terrorists unintentionally and never fought the United States.**

**Could a “little old lady in Switzerland” who sent a check to an orphanage in Afghanistan be taken into custody if unbeknownst to her some of her donation was passed to al-Qaida terrorists? asked U.S. District Judge Joyce Hens Green.**

**“She could,” replied Deputy Associate Attorney General Brian Boyle. “Someone’s intention is clearly not a factor that would disable detention.” It would be up to a newly established military review panel to decide whether to believe her and release her.**

Boyle said the military can pick any foreigner who provides support to terrorists or might know of their plans. And the foreigners held on the U.S. naval base in Cuba “have no constitutional rights enforceable in this court,” Boyle told the judge.

“That’s really shocking,” Thomas B. Wilner, attorney for 12 Kuwaiti detainees, told reporters after Green’s hearing. **“People throughout the world will fear the United States is asserting the power to pick up little old ladies and men who made a mistake.”**

**Green asked if a hypothetical resident of England who teaches English to the son of an al-Qaida leader could be detained. Boyle said he could** because “al-Qaida could be trying to learn English to stage attacks there,” and he compared that aid to “those shipping bullets to the front.” Some detainees have been picked up in Bosnia and others in Africa.

Noting the Supreme Court said detention was to keep combatants from returning to the battlefield, Green asked, "What and where is the battlefield the U.S. military is trying to detain the prisoners from returning to? Africa? London?"

Boyle: "The conflict with al-Qaida has a global reach."

Green asked if detainees are told how long they might be imprisoned. "When will this end?" she asked. "Can hostilities last as long as Muslim fundamentalists vow attacks on the United States?"

Boyle replied that was "a question for the president," not judges.

**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.**

#### 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.qifightback.org) ;

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

[www.williambowles.info/qispecial](http://www.williambowles.info/qispecial)

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