

GI SPECIAL 2#C44



ArchAngel Update 12-06-04

To GI Special:

ArchAngel would like to inform you that Spc. Barron's Command has banned the reading of GI Special from their Soldiers. We do not know how many others are banned from your newsletter, but it is obvious that you are making commanders NERVOUS.

From: ArchAngel1BL@aol.com

To: GI Special

Sent: December 06, 2004 11:24 PM

Subject: ArchAngel Update

How did this accident happen? Because, my husband is being forced to work on only 3 hours of sleep. Why is my husband, an American Soldier, being treated like a prisoner?

My husband is with the Texas ARNG he has been mobilized since August 15th 2004.

When he was first mobilized, he was given a T-3 Profile for Chondromalacia Pattellar. Well, 17 weeks later he has his 3rd T-3 profile and deployment papers.

How did this happen, you ask? Well it's the National Guard, need I say more?

In reality when my husband went to his SRC on November 17th his Ortho doctor didn't think deployment would be the best idea and told my husband to return in 30 days. When he returned this to the commander, his commander said that was the wrong answer, he was to return the next day and see a different doctor, one who saw all soldiers needing SRC clearance. **When he saw this Doctor she said that while she agreed with all previous diagnosis/prognosis, she was rubber-stamping him as deployable, with limitations.**

Does that sound about right??? I might add that the first Doc that my husband saw at SRC was IRR, the second one he saw was Active Duty.

I guess that I need to add also that in the 17 weeks that he's been mobilized, he has received no training due to the Profiles.

He's at JRTC now and still doing nothing but driving and doing paperwork. He's being kept separate from the rest of his unit, in the orderly room under the pretence of "guarding the weapons room."

He's having to drive and wait at Night Range, so that when he finally returns to his quarters he ends up sleeping through sick call. Does it sound to you like someone is trying to hide him away from the rest, so that no one else can see the extent of his limits? That leaves me to wonder what else is the NG hiding?

On Dec. 3, 2004, my husband called me to inform me that he had to see the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Beroer, not sure of spelling, about all of this on the following day. He told me that basically his unit commander wants him to deploy, "no matter what".

The meeting was in reference to a letter received from congress. This would be because since day one, I have been sending our State Senator, Senator Cornyn all the information pertaining to my husband's medical history which in turn makes him physically unfit as a Soldier.

Dec. 4, 2004, my husband informed me what had happened after reporting to the commander. He was informed that the commander replied back to Senator Cornyn, that my husband's medical condition was improving.

I must ask this. How can he be improving if his condition is degenerative deterioration of the cartilage in both knees.

Which means that he isn't getting better, he is getting worse, and in fact my husband's pain has gotten worse since his last visit with a doctor back at Fort Hood, Tx.

How can his commander say that my husband's condition is better? Is he a doctor?

No, he isn't. Also, if my husband is getting better, then why is he still requesting to go to sick call because of pain, and after requesting so, why is his squad leader, Sgt. Darr telling him that the medics there say that there is nothing more they can do for him, when in fact there is and that is refer him to an actual doctor there at Fort Polk.

Why, when he requested to go to sick call, is he being told that he has to complete a task first, or they have no one to take him, or and this draws some question, there is no sick call set up. If there is no sick call, then why can't they take him to the hospital were he has been requesting to see a doctor.

Today Dec. 6, 2004 my husband called and told me that he had fallen off a Hummer and had hyper extended his knees causing great pain.

A medic who was there to witness the incident and heard a popping noise that his knees made when he fell.

Was he taken to the hospital? NO, he wasn't.

He was told to go to sick call the next morning. So now, tonight my husband is lying in bed with great pain, and is being denied proper medical treatment.

Also, I thought that there was no sick call. Now all of a sudden after my husband has an accident there is a sick call. **How did this accident happen? Because, my husband is being forced to work on only 3 hours of sleep. Why is my husband, an American Soldier, being treated like a prisoner?**

What about his lack of training? He has not been able to go through any of the training his command is going through either at Fort Hood, or Fort Polk.

If Lt. Col. Beroer says that my husband is getting better, then why isn't he training with the others? Why has he been turn into the company clerk, duty driver, etc. which is not his actual job in the military?

So not only would they be taking a medically unfit Soldier to Iraq, but they would also be taking one who received inadequate training for the mission ahead.

I ask you, does this not sound screwed up?

The 5 doctors he has seen at Fort Hood, Tx., all concur that my husband has degenerative cartilage in his knees, and that will not go away or regenerate itself, **4 out of 5 doctors agree that he is nondeployable.**

The one doctor that says he is deployable has the job to say all troops needing medical clearance are deployable. This is called "RUBBER STAMPING." Just what does the Army hope to accomplish by doing things like this?

I have been in contact with another spouse whose husband was forced into Iraq despite being medically unfit for service, and that spouse is Mrs. Brandie Lampin.

Talking to her has been a great help.

She has given me advice on what all I need to do involving contacts of certain government officials. If you remember, she was the spouse who fought for the return of her husband who is now home.

She is the one who started ArchAngel which I am now part of.

Also, I have been in contact with a 1st Sgt. Gerry Mosley (retired) who has been making some contacts himself. Some include members of Congress in Washington.

He too has been a great help in my quest for the return of my husband who is being treated unfairly in every way.

Kimberly A Barron (ArchAngel2KB)
wife of SPC Patrick G Barron 2/142 Inf.
a medically unfit for service Soldier.

MORE:

After hearing what had happened to her husband, Kim emailed the Army Surgeon General a letter on Dec. 7th, in which she plans to forward to her State Senator and others.

Dear General Peake,

My name is Kimberly A. Barron, and I don't mind telling you that I am mad as hell.

My husband, Spc Patrick G Barron with the 2/142, has been on a T-3 Profile since being mobilized on 15 Aug 2004. He has complained about pain in his knee and has been diagnosed with Chondromalacia Patellar. He has seen several Army Doctors there and all agree that he has this condition.

Yesterday on 06 Dec 2004, while at JRTC at Ft Polk, he fell from the back of a Hummer, hyper-extending his knee yet again. The medic that happened to be standing near-by heard an audible popping noise, and replied "that can't be good".

He then checked my husband's knee and gave him Tylenol. **Patrick wanted to go to the ER and have it checked out, but since sick-call was over he was denied this.**

I need someone to explain to me why he could not be seen by a real doctor like he asked?

I also need you to explain to me the protocol for injured soldiers. If an injury happens, unless the soldier first goes to sick call before being sent to the hospital?

That's how it was explained to him.

I want you to know that I have been in contact with several Senators offices, as well as the media about this.

I will not stop speaking out about this until the situation of unfit soldiers is rectified. I am so tired of the Army tell me that you will look into it when I believe you are all sitting on your collective butts.

Somebody needs to do something for these men and women, so I have decided that if you won't hear them I will make sure that someone will hear me and I will use every tool I can find to make sure that these stories are heard (and there are plenty of horror stories out there).

I have joined forces with two other spouses whose soldiers are suffering similar problems, as well as 1st SGT Gerry Mosley (ret) with whom I understand you know personally.

Something needs to be done, and done now before this starts gaining momentum nationally, and if I have anything to do with it, it will.

Kimberly A Barron

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 inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Resistance Offensive Hits Samarra

December 8,2004 By NICK WADHAMS, Associated Press Writer

Iraqi officials have said the city has been an example of how the Americans and the interim government can restore order in communities reclaimed from the insurgents. [!]

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Guerrillas carried out a series of raids in the city of Samarra on Wednesday, capturing weapons from a police station, blowing it up, and exchanging fire with police and U.S. troops. Two police were killed. The city police chief resigned.

A bomber detonated his explosives-packed car near Bradley fighting vehicles parked outside an American base in Samarra, wounding an Iraqi civilian, and insurgents attacked American forces elsewhere in the city with machine-gun fire and rocket-propelled grenades.

At about the same time, American soldiers came under attack by small-arms fire near a traffic intersection, **but no one was hurt.** The soldiers began checking cars and fired at two vehicles that failed to stop, **killing both drivers,** the military said. **[So, for this reporter, dead Iraqis are "no one." What an arrogant, blind, stupid piece of shit.]**

Samarra was once overrun by militants, but the U.S. military retook it in September and October. [Yeah, we can see that from this story, all about how “retook” it is.] Though violence there has persisted [Could he possibly mean war? , “Violence” is what happens at a professional basketball game.] Iraqi officials have said the city has been an example of how the Americans and the interim government can restore order in communities reclaimed from the insurgents.

Residents, however, say many police in Samarra are refusing to work, fearing insurgents will target them. **On Wednesday, Samarra's police chief announced he was resigning; his house was attacked earlier in the day and he said his family had asked him to quit. [Right, this sure is an example of “restoring order.”]**

"When I felt that I wasn't carrying out my duties as I should, I had to give an opportunity for someone else to carry on," Maj. Gen. Talib Shamel al-Samarrai said.

Fighting In Ramadi; “A Base For Rebels” For Six Months

12.8.04 Reuters By Majid Hameed

Fighting raged between rebels controlling the western Iraq town of Ramadi and U.S. Marines Wednesday.

Ramadi, the capital of the Anbar province, has been occupied [translation: liberated] by insurgents for the past six months or more. Like Falluja previously, it has become a stronghold of anti-American resistance.

Warplanes were heard over Ramadi, where witnesses said a U.S. armored vehicle was in flames and smoke rose from an American base that was hit by a mortar.

U.S. forces have a small base in the city.

Insurgents in black masks and red and white checkered scarves took up positions along Ramadi's streets Wednesday, aiming their rocket-propelled grenades toward U.S. targets. Fighting spread from the center of the city to the industrial zone in the east

Two Iraqis were killed in shooting after a bomber had attacked a US military checkpoint, witnesses and a hospital official said.

Witnesses also said there had been overnight shooting in eastern Ramadi, and mortars were fired at a US base west of the city centre.

Ramadi remains a base for rebels opposed to Iraq's interim government and their US allies.

**NO MORE FOR BUSH'S WAR:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE**



Soldier of Task Force 2-7, 1st Cavalry Division, recently returned from operations in Fallujah, pays final respects to Atlanta, Ga. native Sgt. Jonathan Shields and Lubbock, TX native Spc. Jose Valez during a memorial service in their honor on Camp Taji Nov. 27, 2004. (AP Photo/US Army, Cpl. Benjamin M. Cossel)

Car Bomb Attack On Baghdad Patrol; Two U.S. Wounded

12.8.04 Reuters, By Majid Hameed

At dawn Wednesday, insurgents carried out a car bomb attack on a U.S. patrol in southern Baghdad. The U.S. military said two soldiers were slightly wounded but had returned to duty. Witnesses said several Iraqis were wounded.

TROOP NEWS

Iraq-Bound Soldiers Confront Rumsfeld Over Lack of Armor: Rumsfeld Tells Troops Armor Doesn't Matter; You Can Die With Or Without It

8 Dec 2004 By ERIC SCHMITT, New York Times & By ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer

Moreover, he said, adding more armor to trucks and battle equipment did not make them impervious to enemy attack. "If you think about it, you can have all the armor in the world on a tank and a tank can be blown up," he said. "And you can have an up-armored Humvee and it can be blown up."

That some soldiers would dare confront Mr. Rumsfeld directly on the readiness and equipment issue in such a public setting was highly unusual. In his town-hall style meetings with troops, Mr. Rumsfeld usually gets general policy questions or very specific complaints about pay or benefits.

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait, Dec. 8 - In an extraordinary exchange at this remote desert camp, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld found himself on the defensive today, fielding pointed questions from Iraq-bound troops who complained that they were being sent into combat with insufficient protection and aging equipment.

After delivering a pep talk designed to energize troops preparing to head for Iraq, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld got a little "talking to" himself from disgruntled soldiers.

A soldier asked, without putting it to Rumsfeld as a direct criticism, how much longer the Army will continue using its "stop loss" power to prevent soldiers from leaving the service who are otherwise eligible to retire or quit.

Specialist Thomas Wilson, a scout with a Tennessee National Guard unit scheduled to roll into Iraq this week, said soldiers had to scrounge through local landfills here for pieces of rusty scrap metal and bulletproof glass - what they called "hillbilly armor" - to bolt on to their trucks for protection against roadside bombs in Iraq.

"Why don't we have those resources readily available to us?" Specialist Wilson asked Mr. Rumsfeld, drawing cheers and applause from many of the 2,300 troops assembled in a cavernous hangar here to meet the secretary.

Rumsfeld hesitated and asked Wilson to repeat his question.

"We do not have proper armored vehicles to carry with us north," Wilson said after asking again.

Mr. Rumsfeld responded that the military was producing extra armor for Humvees and trucks as fast as possible.

A few minutes later, a soldier from the Idaho National Guard's 116th Armor Cavalry Brigade asked Mr. Rumsfeld what he and the Army were doing "to address shortages and antiquated equipment" National Guard soldiers heading to Iraq were struggling with.

Mr. Rumsfeld seemed taken aback by the question and a murmur began spreading through the ranks before he silenced them. "Now settle down, settle down," he said. "Hell, I'm an old man, it's early in the morning and I'm gathering my thoughts here." [Agreed. He has definitely lived far far too long and killed far far too many troops.]

Moreover, he said, adding more armor to trucks and battle equipment did not make them impervious to enemy attack. "If you think about it, you can have all the armor in the world on a tank and a tank can be blown up," he said. "And you can have an up-armored Humvee and it can be blown up."

A senior officer in Specialist Wilson's unit, Col. John Zimmerman, said later that 95 percent of the unit's more than 300 trucks had insufficient armor.

The complaints voiced by the soldiers here are likely to reinvigorate the debate that the Bush administration failed to anticipate the kind of tenacious insurgency now facing troops in Iraq, and that the Pentagon is still struggling to provide enough such basic supplies as body armor and fortified Humvees and other vehicles.

The soldiers' concerns here may also rekindle deep-held suspicions among many National Guard and Reserve troops that they are receiving equipment inferior to what their active-duty counterparts get, despite assurances from senior Army officials that all Army troops are treated equitably.

Some 10,000 soldiers, many of whom are reservists from Oregon, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Tennessee and North Carolina, are here on their way to one-year tours in Iraq or passing through this camp on their way home after serving their stints.

That some soldiers would dare confront Mr. Rumsfeld directly on the readiness and equipment issue in such a public setting was highly unusual. In his town-hall style meetings with troops, Mr. Rumsfeld usually gets general policy questions or very specific complaints about pay or benefits.

But in interviews afterward, the equipment issue resonated with many soldiers and commanders here. Specialist Blaze Crook, 24, from Cleveland, Tenn., said he and other members of his Tennessee National Guard felt shorthanded going into their mission in Iraq. "I don't think we have enough troops going in to do the job," said Specialist Crook, who is a truck driver.

In an interview, Specialist Wilson said the question he asked Mr. Rumsfeld was one that had been on the minds of many men in his unit, the 1st Squadron, 278th Regimental Combat Team. "I'm a soldier and I'll do this on a bicycle if I have to, but we need help," said Specialist Wilson, 31, who served on active duty in the Air Force for six years, including in the 1991 Persian Gulf war, before leaving the military, and then re-enlisting in the National Guard after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Col. John Zimmerman, the staff judge advocate for the 278th combat team, said in an interview that the unit's Humvees were sufficiently armored, but that most of its heavy trucks were not. He said that Army supply officials had given the unit 70 tons of steel plates to attach to their vehicles, but that it was not enough.

Colonel Zimmerman suggested that the Army would not have let this happen to an active-duty unit about to deploy into Iraq.

"We've got two Armies," he said. "We've got the active-duty and we've got the National Guard. We're proud to serve. We just want what everyone else has. We're not asking for anything more."

When asked about the soldiers' complaints, General Whitcomb's deputy, Maj. Gen. Gary Speer, acknowledged in an interview that many vehicles would head north from here into Iraq without the bulletproof windshields or the Kevlar flooring that protect against bombs exploding underneath Humvees or trucks.

General Speer said many vehicles were not armored because they would be assigned duties inside headquarters compounds where there was virtually no threat of roadside bombs. **[That will be a great comfort to those who are not killed or maimed for life trying to get to their.]**

Colonel Zimmerman said he appreciated the efforts by Army supply officials here, but he and his troops said they could not help but fume at the sight of the fully "up-armored" Humvees and heavy trucks set out on display here for Mr. Rumsfeld's visit.

"What you see out here isn't what we've got going north with us," he said.

In his opening remarks, Rumsfeld stressed that soldiers who are heading to Iraq should not believe those who say the insurgents cannot be defeated or who otherwise doubt the will of the military to win. **[And do not think of the number 7.]**

MORE:

Wilson's Wife Says Rumsfeld Stuttered And Stumbled



U.S. Army Spc Thomas Wilson, left, speaks to US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, not pictured, during Rumsfeld's visit to Camp Udeira, Kuwait Dec.8, 2004. **Wilson, of the 278th Regimental Combat Team that is comprised mainly of citizen soldiers of the Tennessee Army National Guard, asked Rumsfeld why vehicle armor is still in short supply, nearly three years after the war in Iraq began.** (AP Photo/Gustavo Ferrari)

December 08, 2004 By Bill Poovey, Associated Press

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — Regina Wilson wasn't entirely surprised to see her husband, a guardsman bound for Iraq, on television Wednesday challenging Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld with a tough question.

"He is always like that," she said. "I don't think he understands the concept of biting one's tongue. It wouldn't matter if it was Bush himself standing there. He would have dissed him the same."

Army Spc. Thomas Wilson, a 31-year-old member of a Tennessee National Guard unit, asked Rumsfeld why vehicle armor is still scarce, nearly two years after the start of the war.

The question prompted shouts of approval and applause from the estimated 2,300 soldiers assembled in a hangar in Kuwait to hear Rumsfeld.

Wilson's wife said she saw the TV news reports about her husband's question Wednesday after taking the children to meet the school bus. **She doesn't watch TV reports on the war while their two children — 10-year-old Megan and 5-year-old Thomas — are home because "it scares them to death."**

She said she was not impressed with Rumsfeld's answer.

"He seemed like he was stuttering and stumbling — like he was caught off guard," she said. "Rumsfeld's answer seemed like he was sidestepping around the question."

She added, "If there is something lacking perhaps that is why our death toll is climbing."

Regina Wilson said her husband called home on a Saturday two weeks ago. His unit is about to drive north into Iraq for a one-year tour of duty.

MORE:

Picking Through The Garbage: U.S.A. & Iraq

From: David Honish, Veterans For Peace
To: GI Special
Sent: Wednesday, December 08, 2004 4:07 PM
Subject: Justice, or Just Us?

Editor:

On 7DEC04 Rumsfeld was in Kuwait & GW was at Camp Pendleton.

Looks like GW must have won the coin toss?

If one is seeking a photo op, the Marines are much more likely to be beaten into submission and forced to either censor or hold back questions.

Rummy had no such luck. He should have known better than to appear before a mixed audience that included Reservists and National Guard troops. National Guard & Reserve component forces, in spite of often having second rate hand me down equipment, usually outperform equivalent active Army forces.

Why? The Reservists are often former Regular Army folks that have enough military experience to know when to be military, AND ENOUGH CIVILIAN COMMON SENSE TO KNOW THAT THERE IS USUALLY A BETTER WAY TO GET THE JOB DONE THAN THE ARMY BOOK ANSWER! Also, while the Marines have a tradition of saluting and saying "yes sir, yes sir, three bags full" to all orders, no matter how silly they may be; **the Army has a long tradition stretching back to the American Revolution of asking the dreaded question, WHY?**

Why, Rummy?

Why still not enough armored vehicles to protect the troops 21 months after the invasion?

Why are troops picking through mideast garbage dumps trying to find scrap metal to improvise their own vehicle armor?

Why are family & friends of the troops getting requests to send body armor, socks, hand held radios, batteries, and other essential supply items not being provided by the military?

Why does the Defense Dept not honor the terms of enlistment contracts with repeated extensions of duty tours under the backdoor draft guise of stop loss policy?

Why do politicians only dare to appear in front of disarmed troops, with even the MP's required to surrender their ammo while the VIP is on post?

Unspoken was why is the GW regime not held accountable for the lies about WMD's that got the troops in over their heads in the first place?

You really have to be a corporate greedhead with no soul to look those troops in the eye and explain that the budget can provide tax cuts for millionaires, but not essential equipment for the troops in SW Asia.

Clearly there is a two tier system of citizenship in the U.S.A.

The top tier gets tax cuts big enough to pay for a house remodeling or next year's country club dues. The lower tier gets the opportunity for educational funding on The "New" GI Bill, IF they can survive an indefinite tour of service as mercenaries providing security for Haliburton.

Not much of a bargain.

A couple weeks ago while traveling through the Midwest I saw an interesting thing at 2:30am at a freeway rest area in Iowa. A man who looked to be in his late 70's driving a battered and aging pickup truck was trying to be discreet about picking through the garbage cans looking for cans to sell for scrap or plastic beverage bottles that had a return deposit on them.

He still had enough pride to make no eye contact and try to be subtle about his task.

Was his 2:30am timing mere chance, or calculated to avoid being seen in his present circumstances?

I must say that I have infinitely more respect for this man trying to make a few bucks on used beverage containers than I have for a president that forced him into these economic circumstances with failed economic & tax policies, and a war based on lies in violation of international law.

Is this what the GW regime really means? The rich get richer, while the elderly in the U.S. and troops in Iraq have to pick through garbage for survival.

It is not a very pretty image.

David Honish
Denton Texas

<http://www.veteransforpeace.org>

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.

Seward Grad Wounded

December 08, 2004 by Lauren Adams, Seward County Nebraska Independent

U.S. Marine Jason Cook didn't want his family to worry on Thanksgiving Day.

So when he called and told his dad, Rick of Lincoln, that he was in the hospital with a broken arm, he wasn't telling the whole story.

In a phone interview Dec. 1, Rick said his son's voice betrayed that he was holding something back. "I had a feeling there was more," Rick said.

His feeling was right.

Jason, a 2001 Seward High School graduate, had been seriously wounded in Iraq that day. The exact circumstances of his injuries are unknown, only that he was north of Baghdad and he wasn't the only one wounded.

Jason, 21, was hit in the forehead by a mortar round and suffered a broken arm and a broken sternum. Part of his right hip was ripped by the explosion. **Jason told his dad that everything two finger-widths above his eyebrow had been blown off.**

"He's very lucky to be here," Rick said.

Jason later called back and apologized for not giving them the whole story. Rick said it wasn't hard to forgive the white lie. "I know he did it out of respect," he said.

Rick, who works in Tamora for the Seward County Road Department, and his other two children, Thomas, 17, and Teresa, 22, were headed out to Maryland Dec. 2 to be with Jason at Bethesda Hospital.

Rick said he was anxious to actually see his son and get the details of his condition ironed out. Rick said he's not sure the severity of Jason's injuries. He said he's sure that Jason will be doing a lot of physical therapy for his hip and will probably have to have skin grafts for his forehead. **Rick said Jason has already had a metal plate installed in his head since the injury. All the unknowns have been stressful for the family.**

"It's been nerve-wracking," Rick said.

However, it has been reassuring to hear Jason's voice on the telephone.

"I think he's handling it very well," Rick said. "He seems to be in good spirits."

He described his son as a fun-loving kid who likes to joke around. Rick said he's been very proud of Jason and the way he worked to keep his grades up in high school in order to join the Marines.

"He busted his rear end to get there," he said. "What else can I say? He's my son and I love him."

Rick said he wasn't sure how long he would be in Maryland or what Jason's treatment would look like. But, he was content to know one thing.

"The only thing that really matters is that he's alive and he's safe," he said.

Local Man Loses Legs And Arm

December 8, 2004 WorldNow

A local man who was seriously injured while serving in Iraq has received the Purple Heart.

Sergeant Joey Bozik, from Wilmington, is stationed with the 118th Military Police Company based at Fort Bragg. **He lost both legs and an arm when the HUMVEE he was riding in ran over a land mine just outside Baghdad.**

Casualty Ratio Signals A Losing War

12.6.04 Paul Craig Roberts, lewrockwell.com

According to the US military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, the hospital has treated 20,802 US troops for injuries received in Iraq.

According to the Pentagon's figures, 54% of the wounded are too seriously injured to return to their units.

If that figure is correct, it would mean that the insurgents have put 11,233 US troops out of action. Add in the 1,254 US troops who have been killed for a total of 12,487.

That's 9% of our total force in Iraq and a much higher percentage of our combat force.

There is no indication that we have put 12,487 Iraqi insurgents out of action. Indeed, until very recently the US military estimated that there were only several thousand active insurgents in all of Iraq.

In Iraq our soldiers are not fighting terrorists.

They are fighting an insurgency that Bush created by invading Iraq.

For all our firepower, we are not winning the war.

Fallujah has been destroyed, but the US military can claim only 1200 - 1600 insurgents were killed. Many of the dead counted as insurgents are probably civilians killed by the US military's indiscriminate use of high explosives.

But even if we assume the military's estimate of enemy dead is accurate, it is an unimpressive figure in view of the 850 wounded and 71 dead Americans.

US Fallujah casualties of 921 is a strikingly high figure considering the heavy armor, artillery, helicopter gunships, jet fighters, and sophisticated communications that back up US troops.

1588 More For Bush's War More National Guard And Reserve Mobilized

December 8, 2004 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 1262-04

This week, the Army announced an increase in the number of reservists on active duty in support of the partial mobilization. **The net collective result is 1,588 more reservists mobilized than last week as of December 8, 2004**

This brings the total National Guard and Reserve personnel, who have been mobilized, to 185,019 including both units and individual augmentees.

A cumulative roster of all National Guard and Reserve personnel, who are currently mobilized can be found at

<http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Dec2004/d20041208ngr.pdf>.

Training Camp A Useless Hell: Incompetents Risk Lives Of Guards Troops;

Equipment, Ammunition, Cold Weather Gear Missing; "Morale Was Really Low"

December 8, 2004 By Gregg K. Kakesako, Honolulu Star-Bulletin

At least 30 percent of one of the companies belonging to the Big Island battalion hasn't fired their .50-caliber and M240 machine guns because there is no live ammunition.

"Even if they could fire the machine guns," she said, "there are no mounts on the vehicles for them."

Hawaii Army National Guard soldiers at Fort Bliss, Texas, who are preparing for a yearlong mission in Iraq have not been issued proper cold weather gear or proper training equipment, family members say.

The complaints have gone to U.S. Rep. Ed Case, who yesterday wrote to Maj. Gen. Bob Lee, who heads the Hawaii National Guard as adjutant general.

Case told Lee that family members of soldiers in the 29th Infantry Brigade -- which includes Army Reservists of the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry -- said they lack:

- » Cold weather gear.
- » Live ammunition during target practice.
- » Mission-specific training. For instance, maintenance units have not received adequate training for maintenance of vehicles and tanks in a desert environment.

Case told the Star-Bulletin that he is working with "a bit of a handicap because I **promised some of the families anonymity. They are afraid of what might happen to the soldiers.**"

However, his staff over the past several weeks has received "seven to eight individual complaints" from family and friends who have soldiers training at Fort Bliss near El Paso.

"I am not the only member of Congress to get these complaints," Case said. "I don't want to overreact or under-react. I am telling Gen. Lee what I have been told so he can check it out."

Lee said he visited Fort Bliss twice since Oct. 6, when the Hawaii Army National Guard and 100th Battalion soldiers arrived at the remote Texas training post.

The last time was when he had a Thanksgiving dinner with the troops.

Several soldiers have contacted the Star-Bulletin over the past three months with similar complaints. All of the soldiers and family members who talked to the Star-Bulletin asked not to be identified because of fear of retribution.

A soldier assigned to the 1st Battalion of California's 184th Regiment said his unit was assigned to a portion of Fort Bliss that is located in New Mexico called Dona Ana Army Camp -- a former World War II prisoner-of-war camp 25 miles from the main post.

The California soldier told the Star-Bulletin that "morale was really low since they had been confined to the old prison of war camp and had only one day off in September."

The wife of a Big Island Hawaii Army National Guard soldier told the Star-Bulletin that soldiers in her husband's battalion, which is at another part of Fort Bliss at Forward Operating Base McGregor, still haven't received their cold-weather gear.

"It's tough on soldiers from here," she said. "The temperature on the outside is 27 degrees and 38 degrees in the tent."

"Only last week were the soldiers issued tool boxes. That has been a problem since August."

She said her husband is in a maintenance unit that is supposed to recover damaged vehicles from the battlefield, but it hasn't been able to train for that task because the base has no wrecker.

At least 30 percent of one of the companies belonging to the Big Island battalion hasn't fired their .50-caliber and M240 machine guns because there is no live ammunition.

"Even if they could fire the machine guns," she said, "there are no mounts on the vehicles for them."

All of the training is centered around infantry skills, she said, ignoring advanced training for mechanics, medics and communication.

"My husband is concerned that he isn't learning stuff he will need to know when he gets to Iraq and I am also concerned."

"There has been no down time, except for the day after Thanksgiving. The men average four to five hours of sleep a night.

"The food is adequate, but it's just cold."

Maj. Mike Peeters, executive officer of the 100th Battalion, said a soldier's "typical day" begins at 5 a.m., followed by physical training. "Soldiers are in formation after breakfast and showers by 8 a.m.," Peeters said.

"Training is conducted from approximately 9 a.m. to midnight, depending on the training schedule and requirements."

But the conditions and the hours are necessary to prepare the soldiers for the harsh job they will face during a year in Iraq, Hawaii Army National Guard and Army Reserve leaders maintain. **[Prepare for death due to command fuck-ups would be just a bit more honest.]**

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)

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME; BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



Marine Honor Guards carry the casket of Sgt. David Caruso after a service in Naperville, IL. (Photo: Frank Polich / Reuters) [Thanks to John G., who sent this photo in.]

Hell No, We Don't Want To Go!

Reservists Fighting Stop-Loss Orders

December 10, 2004, By Nicole Colson, www.socialistworker.org

As Hiken commented, the growing discontent among soldiers will be key to ending the war today, just as it was during the Vietnam era. "There is no more 'mission' among the majority of troops," she said. "[Their mission] is to save their own lives. If the Bush administration wants to fight a war, they're going to have to have soldiers who are willing to fight it."

SENDING MORE U.S. soldiers to kill and be killed. That's the Bush administration's plan for the occupation of Iraq.

Pentagon officials announced last week that 12,000 more troops would be deployed to Iraq in time for the country's scheduled January elections--raising the total number to 150,000. **For soldiers who were promised a "quick" war and told that they would be welcomed as "liberators," the news will add to growing bitterness and frustration.**

That frustration is beginning to drive some soldiers--particularly reservists--to take action. Like Emiliano Santiago, an Oregon reservist who recently filed a lawsuit challenging the military's "stop-loss" policy, which prevents soldiers whose enlistments are up from leaving the military.

Emiliano was due to be released from his National Guard service in June 2004, but his unit has been told that it will be activated on January 2, 2005--and he will be sent to Afghanistan. According to a letter to his attorney, the military's stop-loss order has unilaterally extended his military service for more than 25 years--to December 24, 2031.

As Marguerite Hiken, of the National Lawyers Guild Military Task Force, told *Socialist Worker*, "The military's position is--and that's part of the argument against stop-loss--that a soldier becomes an indentured servant when they enter the military...And no soldier feels that when he or she has signed that contract that that's what that contract is about."

As *Socialist Worker* went to press, the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) announced that it had filed a similar lawsuit against the stop-loss policy on behalf of eight reservists.

One of them, David Qualls, says that he's in favor of the war. But, he said, it's "a matter of fairness." "My job was to go over and perform my duties under the contract I signed," he told the *New York Times*. "But my year is up, and it's been up. Now I believe that they should honor their end of the contract," he told the *New York Times*.

Qualls signed up for a one-year National Guard stint in July 2003 and now expects to be in Iraq until next year because of the stop-loss policy. He decided to look for legal help

while he was deployed in Iraq--and read a story on the Internet about another reservist who was also fighting the policy in court.

Nationally, an estimated 40,000 National Guardsmen have had their tours extended under the stop-loss program. Meanwhile, frustration at the military is driving other soldiers to begin to look for different ways to resist.

“Initially, it was an ‘all-volunteer’ Army, although it was an economic draft,” said Hiken. “GIs turned very inward in terms of this. It was a new generation of people, feeling that something was wrong with them, or they really didn’t have a history in terms of the United States military and military invasions. It led to a large number of suicides and inward introspections and depression. Now, it has turned more external. The disgruntlement and frustration is leading to anger. As this war continues, we’re going to see more refusals, disobeying of orders, stop-loss lawsuits--I understand that today there was just a lawsuit filed by 12 GIs around ‘don’t ask, don’t tell’. There’s going to be more and more resistance.”

That resistance includes soldiers like Jeremy Hinzman, David Sanders and Brandon Hughey. They fled to Canada and are currently waiting to see if Canadian officials will grant them asylum.

Bill Galvin of the Center on Conscience and War, a member of the GI Rights network, recently told Inter Press Service that an estimated dozen other U.S. soldiers are already in Canada “underground,” awaiting the outcome of Hinzman’s refugee hearing.

“When I left for basic training, I didn’t hold any political beliefs,” Hughey told writer and activist Frida Berrigan. But later, he says, “I realized that basically the U.S. has attacked a country that was no threat to them in an act of aggression.”

When he requested a discharge, he was denied. “They kept brushing me off,” he says. “They told me I was going to Iraq, and there was nothing I could do about it. I was never informed of any route I could take to leave the military, such as applying for conscientious objector status.”

So Hughey linked up with an Indianapolis peace activist, and the night he was scheduled to report for deployment, they traveled across the border. Now, says the 19-year-old Hughey, “I am proud of what I’ve done. I am standing up for what I believe is right.” The public objections from these soldiers are only the latest signs of escalating tension within the ranks. With the November death toll for U.S. troops reaching 140--the deadliest of any month since the war began--it’s no wonder that more soldiers would begin speaking out.

That includes hundreds of Individual Ready Reservists--former soldiers who believed that they were through with their service, only to be recalled because of a rule allowing the military to call them back--who have simply failed to report for duty.

It also includes the members of the 343rd Quartermaster Company, the Army Reserve unit that refused a mission transporting fuel in October. Recent letters to *Army Times*--a newspaper published for soldiers and their families--defend the actions of the 343rd and

spell out the level of disgust that many feel at the Pentagon's treatment of ordinary soldiers.

"I'm a member of a small joint military team that has been working in Baghdad for the last several months," wrote Sgt. 1st Class John Giersdorf. "It is amazing to me that anyone would order a fuel convoy to travel over 100 miles through Baghdad without an armed escort...I can't think of any way to fill out a risk assessment for that mission that doesn't scream doom."

"Finally some soldiers put their heads together and said we're not going to stand for this," wrote Crystal Luker, whose husband is deployed in southern Baghdad. "I am proud of the [343rd] soldiers for standing up for themselves and the safety of their unit."

In a victory for the developing resistance, the Army recently announced that the soldiers of the 343rd would not be facing courts-martials after all--though they still could face "non-judicial" punishment, including loss of pay or rank.

As the pressure on soldiers grows in the run-up to the January elections, antiwar activists in the U.S. should show their solidarity.

In the case of the soldiers fighting the stop-loss policy, they were referred to lawyers through groups like the GI Rights Hotline. The wife of one soldier represented by the CCR said she received an e-mail message from the antiwar group Military Families Speak Out. **Groups like the Campus Antiwar Network and others organized petitions to support the soldiers of the 343rd.**

As Hiken commented, the growing discontent among soldiers will be key to ending the war today, just as it was during the Vietnam era. "There is no more 'mission' among the majority of troops," she said. " [Their mission] is to save their own lives. If the Bush administration wants to fight a war, they're going to have to have soldiers who are willing to fight it."

5,500 Deserters: We Won't Go To Iraq

12.6.04 Scott Pelley , CBS News - 60 Minutes Wednesday

It's an offense punishable by death during wartime. It's been committed by 5,500 soldiers since the war with Iraq began.

The men, who have violated military orders and oaths, tell 60 Minutes Wednesday that it isn't cowardice, but rather the nature of the war in Iraq, that turned them into American deserters.

American soldiers currently living in Canada tell Correspondent Scott Pelley why they made the decision to desert their units, in a report to be broadcast on Dec. 8, at 8 p.m. ET/PT.

One soldier, Pfc. Dan Felushko, 24, tells Pelley, "I didn't want... 'Died deluded in Iraq' over my gravestone."

It was Felushko's responsibility to go with the Marines to Kuwait in January 2003. Instead, Felushko slipped out of Camp Pendleton, Calif., and deployed himself to Canada.

"I was a warrior...I always have been," Felushko tells Pelley. "I've always felt...that if there are people who can't defend themselves, it's my responsibility to do that."

"As we're sitting here, something just short of 1100 Americans have died. What do you say to their families about the choice you made?" asks Pelley.

"I honor their dead. ...Maybe they think that my presence dishonors their dead, but they made a choice the same as I made a choice, and my big problem is that, if they made that choice for anything other than they believed in it, then that's wrong," says Felushko.

"The government has to be held responsible for those deaths, because they didn't give them an option."

Military Appeals Court Says Oral Sex OK

(Washington Post, December 8, 2004, Pg. 11)

A military appeals court has overturned the conviction of a soldier for consensual sodomy in a decision that gay rights activists are hailing as an important legal victory that removes some of the barriers to homosexual activity in the armed forces. **It is believed to be the first time that a military court has upheld the right of consenting adults to engage in oral sex in private.**

Air Force's Top Lawyer May Face Charges; Investigation Finds Fiscus Had Improper Relations Over A Decade

(Washington Post, December 8, 2004, Pg. 29)

A military investigation has concluded that the Air Force's top lawyer engaged in improper relationships with more than a dozen women over the last decade, two Defense Department officials familiar with the findings said.

While overseeing the work of 3,200 persons, Maj. Gen. Thomas Fiscus, Air Force judge advocate general, allegedly conducted affairs with enlisted women, officers and civilian

employees in violation of military rules against fraternization, according to the officials, who said formal charges could be lodged as early as today.

Video Of Sailor Who Refused War Duty

From: Jim Carter

To: GI Special

Sent: Wednesday, December 08, 2004 1:28 AM

On Dec 6 as the Amphibious Assault Ship USS Bonhomme Richard pulled out to sea to "fight terrorism", one of her sailors stayed behind.

Petty Officer Pablo Paredes who has been in the Navy since 2000 finally decided he'd had enough, he could no longer support the administration's war in Iraq. While talking with reporters on the pier as his ship pulled out he said.

"I don't want to be a part of a ship that's taking 3,000 Marines over there, knowing a hundred or more of them won't come back," he said.

"I can't sleep at night knowing that's what I do for a living." And about doing time for taking his antiwar stance he said, "I know other people are feeling the same way I am, and I'm hoping more people will stand up."

"They can't throw us all in jail."

Later that day Pablo sat down with GI Fightback and did an interview. This sailor is well spoken and thoughtful. You can view the 9 minute video at <http://www.gifightback.org>

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Campaign Against Translators Isolating Occupation Command

December 08, 2004 By C. Mark Brinkley, Army Times staff writer

The message is clear: Stay away from Americans and the interim Iraqi government. **The message has gotten through to interpreters.**

“We have very few left,” says Maj. Brian Kenna, 42, an Army civil-affairs team chief from Spokane, Wash., whose job demands regular interaction with local officials and the public. **“It makes work a lot more difficult. We’re able to get some things done, but in Mosul itself, it’s hard to accomplish anything because of the security situation.”**

Translators are integral to battling an insurgency. Kenna’s unit once had as many as 70 translators, most hired locally. Now it has four.

The shortage of interpreters is a problem for every command, from Army engineers working at police stations to infantry battalions fighting insurgents.

Local hires in Mosul make about \$600 a month, more than the triple average wages in the area.

“We need more of both of them,” says Brig. Gen. Carter Ham, commander of multinational forces in northern Iraq. “It’s a very specific skill set, obviously, and in high demand.” But the risks aren’t worth it for many.

“Most of them would rather make \$200 a month on the street and be safe,”

The losses leave many U.S. military units juggling interpreters, borrowing and lending them so they can work with Iraqi forces or the public. The language barrier can shut progress down cold. [Translation: the language barrier makes it harder for the Bush Regime of Imperial Conquest to keep its filthy hands on Iraq.]

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

Occupation Runs Out Of Gas; Resistance + Corruption = Disaster; Electricity Failing Too

December 9 2004 By Steve Negus in Baghdad, "Financial Times"

Baghdad has been hit by what many residents of the capital say are the worst fuel shortages since the immediate aftermath of the invasion, the result of both insurgent attacks on pipelines and corruption in the distribution of fuel.

For the past week, queues for petrol have stretched for kilometres along the capital's main streets, while black market fuel sells at 10 times its pre-crisis price - if it can be found at all.

Much of the city remains dark at night, with the diesel fuel needed for private generators running short at the same time as municipal electricity distribution has fallen to as little as nine hours a day, down from around 15 hours during the summer.

Petrol has been rationed using licence plates numbers, with odd and even numbers able to buy on alternate days. On Sunday, a policeman was shot in the neck when he tried to stop a driver with an odd-numbered licence plate joining a queue.

The following day, two motorists were prevented from getting petrol because the police recognised them as black market fuel vendors. The two pulled off their T-shirts, threatening to set them alight and hurl them into the station as makeshift firebombs if they were not allowed to queue. They were promptly shot dead.

The same day, the station director said, national guardsmen showed up to drive away the police, who have been accused of taking bribes to let motorists jump the queues. The police fled, and the guards took control.

Baghdad's petrol supply has always been fragile, due to guerrilla attacks as well as heavy government subsidies by which the fuel is sold at just over \$0.01 a litre, encouraging a domestic black market as well as smuggling abroad.

In a speech to Iraq's interim parliament on Tuesday, Barham Salih, deputy prime minister, blamed "sabotage" on the country's main pipelines and "administrative corruption".

An energy source in the capital said insurgents had managed to hit pipelines bringing fuel to Baghdad's main refinery as well as the distribution grid for refined products.

However, an inspector for the capital's oil distribution company said the crisis was "manufactured" rather than real - storage depots were full, but oil ministry officials and station owners were collaborating in selling wholesale to smugglers.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bush Says His Occupation Has “No Future” In Iraq



U.S. Terrorist Chief Admits Defeat
(AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

The Guardian U.K. 08 December 2004

"You see, the terrorists understand what is at stake. They know they have no future in a free Iraq, because free people will never choose their own enslavement."

Web Copies

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The following that we know of have also posted issues:
<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/> ; www.gifightback.org ;
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