

GI SPECIAL 2#C45



Medevac Helicopter, Vietnam 1970

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, U.S. Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (Please contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) for more examples of his outstanding work. T)

Rumsfeld In Retreat: Tries To Soothe Angry U.S. Troops

[THANKS TO B WHO E-MAILED THIS IN: B WRITES: Rumsfeld said: "I don't know what the facts are but somebody's certainly going to sit down with him and find out what he knows that they may not know, and make sure he knows what they know that he may not know, and that's a good thing. I think it's a very constructive exchange, Rumsfeld said of the questioner." **IN OTHER WORDS, DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH. THEY SHOULD MAKE JAY LENO SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (SEE JOKE BELOW)**]

09 December 2004 AFP & By Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters

NEW DELHI, India (Reuters) - Under fire from troops who complain they are being sent to war in Iraq with inadequate gear, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld promised on Thursday that more would be done to protect forces.

Rumsfeld was bombarded on Wednesday with criticism from U.S. soldiers based in Kuwait, one of whom complained U.S. forces were forced to dig up scrap metal to protect their vehicles in Iraq because of a shortage of armored ones.

"I don't know what the facts are but somebody's certainly going to sit down with him and find out what he knows that they may not know, and make sure he knows what they know that he may not know, and that's a good thing. I think it's a very constructive exchange," Rumsfeld said of the questioner.

Late night comedians have seized on the issue as well, and comic Jay Leno poked fun at Rumsfeld for saying that armor did not always provide protection. "Then he got in his armored car and left," said Leno to laughs from the audience.

"When I visit Iraq, I ride around in an armored vehicle, and I am sure the secretary does, as well," Republican Gene Taylor said in a statement. "If it is good enough for the big shots, it is good enough for every American soldier."

Republican Ted Strickland of Ohio called Rumsfeld's remarks "callous." Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey said they were "contemptuous", while Senator Christopher Dodd settled for "stunning."

MORE:

Now The Grunts Are Talking Back

By DBH, December 09, 2004

The story shows that the morale problems of the U.S. Army have become extremely serious. It raises the question of the extent to which the discipline and military effectiveness of the U.S. Army have deteriorated.

There was a mutiny a couple of months ago when a supply unit refused a mission because it was too dangerous for them. **The Army could only impose light penalties for this extremely serious infraction of discipline. That incident was a measure not only of morale (bad) but of the unpopularity of the war in the United States.**

Now the grunts are talking back to the Secretary of War. People: that just isn't done! Armies and wars don't work like that!

If conditions like these become widespread enough the U.S. Army will no longer be an army.

Bush must do something about it.

Whether or not he CAN do something about it is another question.

MORE:

Soldier Says He'd 'Feel Safer In A Volvo: Military Families Criticize Use Of Unarmored Vehicles

(USA Today, December 9, 2004, Pg. 2)

Richard Murphy spent 15 months in Iraq and remembers well the unarmored vehicles that carried him and other soldiers across the landscape.

"I would feel safer in a Volvo than I would in one of these Humvees," says Murphy, 25, a reservist with the 372nd Military Police Company out of Cumberland, Md., and currently a law student at George Washington University.

MORE:

Please, Sir, May I Have Some Armor?

(New York Times, December 9, 2004)

"We're used to hearing Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld answer questions about things that went wrong in Iraq by saying they went right.

When he does that to reporters, it's annoying.

When he does it to troops risking their lives in his failed test of bargain-basement warfare, it's outrageous . . . Mr. Rumsfeld talks a lot about supporting the troops. We wish that someone powerful would explain to him that doing so includes treating them with respect and telling them the truth."

MORE:

Yes He Did

From: Richard H., Vets For Peace, Vietnam Veterans Against The War

To: GI Special

Sent: Thursday, December 09, 2004 6:19 AM

Subject: Rumsfeld

G.I. Special continues to be cutting edge. I hope a lot of soldiers in Iraq are reading it. This war is coming unraveled real quick. It's Keystone Cops with limbs gone. **I see where Rumsfeld stepped on his dick again.**

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:

Baghdad IED Wounds U.S. Soldier

December 9, 2004 BAGHDAD, Iraq (CNN)

A Task Force Baghdad soldier was also wounded by a roadside bomb Thursday, the U.S. military said. The incident took place at 2 p.m. in Baghdad. The soldier was taken to a military medical treatment facility.

NO WAY OUT: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. Marines during a search operation in Falluja, December 8, 2004. (Sgt. Clinton Firstbrook, USMC/Reuters)

Former Conway Resident Suffers Brain, Lung Wounds

December 08, 2004 KATV

Conway – A former Conway Resident has been injured while serving in Iraq.

Lance Corporal Jeff Hudgens was seriously injured in a roadside bomb blast near the Tigris River. Hudgen's Great Uncle Jerry Daves says the 19-year-old's Brain and one of his lungs were injured in the blast.

Daves says his nephew is now at a hospital in Maryland and he's doing as well as can be expected.

Hudgens' parents both attended Conway High School and graduated from UCA. They moved to Oklahoma when Hudgens was 9-years-old.

Abu G Reflects Rising Sabotage In Iraq: 'Whatever We Build, They Are Going to Destroy'

(Washington Post, December 9, 2004, Pg. 1)

Iraqi insurgents are increasingly targeting reconstruction projects and the people associated with them. At Abu Ghraib, improvement projects worth \$10 million have been undertaken in the past nine months. **But during that period, five major projects have been sabotaged, contractors have been killed or driven from work by threats and Iraqis have become more reluctant to help because they fear retribution.**

TROOP NEWS

Kent Man Braves Injuries To Save Another; “There Was Anger About President Bush”

12/09/2004 By: Eric Gross, Putnam County Courier

"They were angry. There was discussion about President Bush. Danny's attack opened the floodgates. Putnam residents now know that this is real. Incidents like this one are happening everyday to tons of families of young people. Wives, parents, siblings and children are being torn apart by the horror. It's so sad," she said.

TOWN OF KENT-Army reservist Dan Swift of Kent, saved another soldier's life when a car bomb ripped apart his Humvee outside Baghdad.

Swift, 24, a 1998 graduate of Carmel High School, who is a New York City firefighter as well as a member of the Lake Carmel Fire Department, was working as a medic in Iraq at the time of last week's attack that killed his firefighter buddy Chris Engeldrum.

Swift's mom, Kate Daly, received a phone call from her son several hours after the incident took place half a world away. "It was about 10:30 a.m. when the phone rang at my office. I asked Dan how he was doing and he replied: 'Not so well, mom.' He told me that he was in the hospital after his Humvee had been blown apart. It took me a few minutes to hear. I went weak in the knees," said Daly.

Daly was advised that her son suffered massive shrapnel wounds of the face, arms and legs. A piece of shrapnel went through his leg and his eye suffered serious trauma.

"A sergeant got on the phone and told me: 'Be glad. He's talking to you. That means he's OK.' I agreed that **Dan was all right but since I'm a nurse, I wanted more detailed information.** Dan got back on the phone and informed me that he was being flown to a hospital in Germany," she said.

Daly recalled during an interview last week at her home in Kent that she was thankful the call came while she was at work. Daly is employed at Graymoor in Garrison where she serves as assistant director of nursing and admissions coordinator. "My friends and colleagues were so supportive," she said.

Daly admitted being "wound very tightly" ever since her son was deployed overseas. "I worry when the phone rings and I'm always looking at the door praying that two soldiers don't walk up to my doorstep. It's a daily anxiety. You hope the call or visit never comes but it's a constant worry," she said.

Daly paused and called her son a hero. "I'm so proud of Dan. **After the attack, he was the only one who was conscious and despite being able to see out of only one eye and being covered in blood, he opened one guy's airway with his knife that saved the young soldier's life.**"

Swift told his mom only after the heroics were over did he realize how close he came to meeting death. "Dan said under normal circumstances, the Iraqis return to the scene of the bombings with handguns and slaughter whomever is alive. My son thought he would be shot in the back. Thank God, he survived. He did what he had to do and I am so proud of him," she said.

Daly sat back on her sofa and looked at a portrait of her son. "I wish this horrible situation would be over with as soon as possible.

Even at work when my co-workers experienced my pain with the call, it became too real and close to home. They went through a flood of emotions.

"They were angry. There was discussion about President Bush. Danny's attack opened the floodgates. Putnam residents now know that this is real. Incidents like this one are happening everyday to tons of families of young people. Wives, parents, siblings and children are being torn apart by the horror. It's so sad," she said.

War Surgery Saving Lives -- At A High Cost



"A common type of injury associated with roadside improvised explosive device run over by a Humvee." Caring for the Wounded in Iraq — A Photo Essay, George E. Peoples, M.D., James R. Jezior, M.D., and Craig D. Shriver, M.D. *New England Journal Of Medicine*, Volume 351:2476-2480, Dec. 9, 2004. Number 24 [When you read in some media report that two soldiers were wounded, and you think, that's not so bad, think again. And then think about the criminal Rumsfeld telling the soldiers not to complain about Humvees with no armor on the bottom, and remember this photo.]

December 9, 2004 By The Washington Post & December 8, 2004, By Esther Schrader, L.A. Times Staff Writer & By MARILYNN MARCHIONE, AP Medical Writer

The survivors today often have injuries so severe and maiming that their prospects are uncertain, Gawande writes.

Gawande writes about the case of an airman who lost both legs, his right hand and part of his face.

"How he and others like him will be able to live and function remains an open question," Gawande writes.

WASHINGTON -- **Just 10 percent of soldiers injured in Iraq have died from their war wounds, the lowest casualty fatality rate ever**, thanks in large part to technological advances and the deployment of surgical SWAT teams right at the front lines, an analysis to be published Thursday has found. **But that system is nonetheless overwhelmed by the scope and severity of injuries among troops in Iraq.**

But the remarkable lifesaving rate has come at the enormous cost of creating a generation of severely wounded young veterans and a severe shortage of military surgeons, wrote Atul Gawande, a surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

The war in Iraq has produced the "largest burden of casualties our military medical personnel have had to cope with since the Vietnam War," said Gawande's report in the New England Journal of Medicine. **By contrast, 24 percent of soldiers wounded in the Vietnam War or the Persian Gulf War did not survive.**

"It used to be our thinking that the number of deaths reflects the violence of the war," Gawande said in an interview. "Now, the number of deaths reflects how well surgical teams are doing in saving lives."

About 10,700 U.S. service members have been injured in Iraq and more than 1,000 of them killed in action, according to Defense Department statistics cited in the report.

"This can no longer be described as a small or contained conflict," Gawande wrote.

During the Vietnam War, it took injured soldiers an average of 45 days to reach a hospital in the United States. At the beginning of the Iraq war, the average was eight days, and now it is four. One airman hit by a mortar attack in September "was on the operating table at Walter Reed" Army Medical Center in Washington "just 36 hours later," Gawande said.

The battlefield triage is called "damage control" because the emphasis is on stopping bleeding, keeping a patient warm and leaving almost everything else to doctors at a permanent hospital.

"The combination of Kevlar vests and a system that allows them to stop the bleeding makes it possible for them to survive injuries that were unsurvivable before," he said. "How you rehabilitate physically, let alone emotionally, someone who has that kind of loss is a serious question."

"The critical core, your chest and your abdomen, are protected," said Dr. George Peoples, a Walter Reed Army Medical Center surgeon who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. **"Paradoxically, what we've seen is devastating extremity injuries because people are surviving wounds they otherwise wouldn't have."**

American military hospitals collectively have had 200 amputees from Iraq and Afghanistan, three of them triple amputees.

For every soldier killed, an average of 10 are injured, he said. Early in the conflict, when the fighting was more traditional battlefield combat, the most common injuries came from artillery wounds to limbs unprotected by body armor. **More recently, as the engagement has shifted to guerrilla-style warfare with explosive devices, more injuries result from shrapnel that hits under vests and through neck and arm holes, Gawande said.**

"And with suicide bombers you see not just metal shrapnel, but also clothing, dirt and even bone from the attacker that is infectious," he said, "and can lead to more extensive surgeries and multiple surgeries."

Blast injuries from suicide bombs and land mines are up substantially in recent months and have proved particularly difficult to treat without risking infection, Gawande writes.

Eye injuries have caused blindness among a dismaying number of soldiers.

Soldiers who survive the initial blasts and field treatment are suffering at high rates from later complications, including pulmonary embolisms and deep venous thrombosis, the article states.

Some of those soldiers have died of the complications. According to the article, 5% of the wounded being treated at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington have had pulmonary embolisms, a condition in which a blood clot travels to the lungs. Of those, two have died.

Army medical teams are also worried about what Gawande calls an epidemic of multi-drug-resistant bacterial infection in military hospitals. Among 442 medical evacuees seen at Walter Reed, 8.4% tested positive for the infection — a far higher rate than ever seen among wounded troops.

"Just as the rest of the military structure was unprepared for the length of the war and the evolution in the nature of the war, so has the military medical establishment been understandably unprepared for that," Gawande said in an interview.

With just 120 general surgeons on active duty, the Army has been forced to use urologists, plastic surgeons and cardiothoracic surgeons to conduct general surgery on soldiers in Iraq.

That's fewer than the 80 general and orthopedic surgeons on staff at two Boston hospitals — Brigham and Massachusetts General.

The doctors work in difficult circumstances. In many cases, the military has taken over Iraqi hospitals, and the facilities are flooded with a surge of civilian patients that doctors are unable to treat.

With no clear directive from the Pentagon on treating civilians, some doctors refuse to help even pediatric patients, for fear the children could be booby-trapped with bombs, Gawande writes.

Gawande argued the teams are overextended and operating in far more dangerous circumstances.

Dr. Michael Kilpatrick, deputy director of deployment health support with the Pentagon's office of health affairs, acknowledged that Army surgeons working in Iraq have had to improvise in some cases, and work outside their specialties in others.

"There are certainly going to be times in any location where the workload is going to exceed the personnel present."

"Many surgeons have been on a second deployment or an extended deployment, and even this has not been sufficient," he wrote. "Planners are having to contemplate pressing surgeons into yet a third deployment."

Iraq has brought other unanticipated medical challenges.

Soldiers were suffering a "dismayingly high incidence of blinding injuries" because they refused to wear goggles that they described as " 'something a Florida senior citizen would wear.' So the military bowed to fashion," Gawande said, and purchased hipper eye wear that now appears to be serving its purpose.

The survivors today often have injuries so severe and maiming that their prospects are uncertain, Gawande writes.

Gawande writes about the case of an airman who lost both legs, his right hand and part of his face.

"How he and others like him will be able to live and function remains an open question," Gawande writes.

Notes From A Lost War: Ready For 26% Casualties?

December 8, 2004 by Paul Craig Roberts, Information Clearing House

Turning to the human toll, from March 20, 2003 to December 7, 2004 (approximately 21 months) the Pentagon says 1,280 US troops have been killed and 9,765 wounded in Iraq. The Pentagon's wounded figure conflicts with the report from the US military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, that as of Thanksgiving week the hospital has treated

almost 21,000 Americans injured in Iraq. According to the hospital, more than half were too badly injured to return to their units.

Assuming no escalation in the insurgency, a continuation of four more years of war would result in another 2,925 US troops being killed for a total of 4,205. Using the Pentagon's wounded figure, 22,320 more US troops would be injured for a total of 32,085. Using the US military hospital's figure, another 48,000 US troops would be wounded for a total of 69,000.

Assuming the US is able to keep 138,000 US troops in Iraq during Bush's second term, US dead and wounded (Pentagon figure) would comprise 26% of the US force in Iraq.

Using the military hospital's figure, US dead and wounded would comprise 53% of our entire army in Iraq.

The present military manpower system cannot provide replacements for these losses.

Current troop strengths are being maintained by calling up reserve and national guard units and by extending soldiers' tours of duty beyond the contractual period, a practice that US troops are contesting in court.

Tens of thousands of careers, marriages, and family finances are being disrupted and destroyed by the commitment of reserve and national guard units to war in Iraq.

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOP HOME: PAYBACK IS OVERDUE



The casket of Army Pfc. Wilfredo Urbina of New York Guard's 1st Battalion, killed in Iraq on Nov. 29 when his vehicle struck a bomb, at Long Island National Cemetery in Farmingdale, N.Y. Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2004. (AP Photo/Ed Betz)

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)

For 3rd ID It's Back To Iraq, Ready Or Not

(Christian Science Monitor, December 9, 2004, Pg. 1)

Mentally and physically, the Army's 3rd Infantry Division is marching into uncharted territory as the "long, hard slog" envisioned by the Pentagon in Iraq and Afghanistan tests America's all-volunteer Army as never before.

Next month, the armored force that led the thrust into Baghdad in 2003 will become the first division to return to Iraq for a second, year-long tour. Many of the strains are already showing as the 3rd trains in the Louisiana backcountry for another Iraq deployment, grappling with an abrupt reorganization, an influx of new troops and equipment and veterans with combat stress.

[This is otherwise known as how to encourage combat refusal and mutiny. In Vietnam, soldiers knew that if they weren't killed or maimed in exactly one year, they left Vietnam never ever to return. The insane policy here is to use them up like so many disposable pieces of meat. Every soldier can figure out the odds of living through two tours. Stay tuned for the fraggins to start.]

Stop-Loss Protester Sent To Iraq: Court Says It's OK For Army To Trick Recruits

(Washington Post, December 9, 2004, Pg. 24)

A federal judge ruled that the military can ship an Arkansas soldier back to the front lines in Iraq this weekend, despite the serviceman's objection that the military forced him to extend his tour after tricking him into believing he was enlisting for just one year. The judge said an Army recruiter may have stressed to David W. Qualls, 35, that he was enlisting for a one-year hitch, but the contract he signed spelled out that his duty could be extended against his wishes. [Lesson learned, never believe a shit-eating professional liar called a "recruiter."]

Reserve Officers Literally Running For Lives: Brass Hammered By Extreme Stop-Loss; Resignation Denied To Iraq Combat Vet With 11 Years Service

December 09, 2004 By Hal Bernton, Seattle Times staff reporter

The Army Reserve policy extends well beyond the combat-zone, stop-loss program. If an officer's specialty is in short supply, the Reserve may opt to reject a resignation even if the soldier is not on active duty in Iraq or scheduled for any such deployment. So far this year, the Army has rejected more than 40 percent of the resignation requests of lieutenants and captains.

As of September, the Reserve had only 8,583 captains — about 59 percent of the target, according to an Army document obtained by The Seattle Times.

The Army Reserve is facing an extreme shortage of company officers, a situation aggravated by a surge in resignation requests.

The shortage — primarily of captains — has seriously reduced the capabilities of the Reserve, and continued losses will further reduce the readiness of "an already depleted military force," according to an Army briefing document submitted last month to Congress.

Army Reserve resignation requests have jumped from just 15 in 2001 to more than 370 during a 12-month period ending in September.

To preserve its leadership ranks, the Reserve increasingly has rejected resignation requests, forcing some officers to stay on even after they have fulfilled their initial eight-year service requirement.

To help maintain troop strength, the Pentagon now routinely invokes a "stop-loss" program that prevents thousands of enlisted soldiers and officers from leaving the military until their unit is through their combat tour.

Only after the unit returns to the United States can soldiers who have completed their volunteer contract then leave the service.

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"Exercise of this discretion is potentially controversial because it invites claims of involuntary servitude and arbitrary action," stated the briefing document submitted Nov. 16 to Rep. Jim Cooper, D-Tenn. [No shit. It also invites disaffection and resistance to the Bush's Imperial War, even by officers.]

In one case reviewed by The Seattle Times, a Reserve Army captain was unable to resign after he completed 11 years as a commissioned officer that included a 2003-2004 tour of duty in Iraq. While in Iraq, the officer said the thought of resigning once he got home helped to get him through a difficult year.

"Sadly, that was not to be," said the captain, who requested anonymity. "This matter has become increasingly black and white to me: We are either a volunteer army, or we are not. I fail to see how I can be considered a volunteer at this point after I have been denied an opportunity to move on with my life."

The Reserve does not have enough officers moving through its chain of command. Currently, **the Reserve has staffed only 70 percent of the 18,719 officer positions for lieutenants and captains.**

Captains, who may command companies of up to 160 soldiers, are in the shortest supply. The Army Reserve has openings for 14,629 captains, who typically serve seven years as junior officers prior to appointment. **As of September, the Reserve had only 8,583 captains — about 59 percent of the target, according to an Army document obtained by The Seattle Times.**

In a full-staffed Reserve, these captains and other officers would train stateside with the same units that they join in Iraq. This follows the Army philosophy that units that train together perform best in the field. **But in the current short-staffed Reserve, Iraq-bound units often may be filled out by last-minute reassignments from other states.**

Lt. Gen. James Helmly told the House Armed Service committee at a Nov. 17 hearing. **"We've recognized that ... it will be about five to seven years before we can correct the imbalance."**

"I personally know a lot of guys who are looking forward to just finishing up and being done," said 1st Lt. Lewis Miller, with the Army Reserve, 671st Engineers Company out of Portland, which returned from Iraq earlier this year.

"A lot of them tend to be better educated and have strong civilian jobs, and they took some massive (pay) hits when they went on active duty."

In the meantime, Army Reserve is crafting a new policy to curb resignations.

Under the policy, which has yet to be finalized, company-grade officers who have not yet been deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan would generally not be allowed to resign unless they could demonstrate "extreme personal reasons," such as hardships posed by the death or disability of a spouse.

Several Military Recruiting Vehicles Burned In Recent Days

December 07, 2004 Silver Spring, Md. (AP)

Fire investigators in three area counties are trying to determine whether government passenger cars used by military recruiters are being targeted for arson.

The three latest cases involved cars authorized for Army use that were parked outside of a recruiting office in the 8,200 block of Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring. They were burned early Monday.

The case is similar to an incident that occurred outside of a military recruiting office in Fairfax last Monday. The Washington Post reports that a car parked near a recruiting station in 7,600 block of Richmond Highway was burned. Another vehicle was burned early Friday in the 13,900 block of Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



(Graphic: London Financial Times)

Baghdad Mortar Attack Wounds 8 Occupation Guards

December 9, 2004 BAGHDAD, Iraq (CNN)

Eight Iraqi National Guard members have been wounded in a mortar attack on their base in Baghdad, police said.

Police said five mortars landed on the base in the al-Waziriya neighborhood of the capital on Thursday. They declined to say whether any of those critically wounded later died.

Interior Ministry Collaborator Shot

December 9, 2004 BAGHDAD, Iraq (CNN)

Interior Ministry official Col. Mohammed Abdul Rahman was wounded in a drive-by shooting in Baghdad Thursday morning. He was in critical but stable condition at Yarmouk Hospital.

Six Iraqi Occupation Guards Wounded In Mosul

MOSUL, Iraq, Dec 9 (AFP)

Six Iraqi national guardsmen were wounded in two bomb attacks in the northern city of Mosul on Thursday, police said.

A bomb concealed in a motorcycle side-car exploded at around 2:00 pm (1100 GMT) at the Yarmuk roundabout in the centre of Iraq's third city, targeting a joint Iraqi-US patrol, said Lieutenant Bassam Salim.

Turkish Food Firm Halts Iraq Supplies

9 December 2004 Gulf Daily News

ANKARA: A Turkish food distributor announced yesterday that it was suspending operations in Iraq because of the deteriorating security situation there, the Anatolia news agency said.

Solmaz Gida - the main distributor in Iraq for eight Turkish food companies - is the latest Turkish firm to halt activities in Iraq following a spate of attacks on Turks working in the country.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Lose Lose

December 9, 2004 Steve Chapman, the Chicago Tribune

The more American troops in Iraq, the greater the resentment they inspire.

More American troops may be able to kill more insurgents, but they also seem to generate more insurgents to replace the ones who are killed. Not that fewer troops would help matters. The existence of a problem, alas, doesn't mean it has a solution.

That's been the maddening paradox of Iraq from the start. **We liberated Baghdad, but we can't use the airport road.**

The victory in Fallujah could very well turn out to be a reminder of what we learned in Vietnam about the difficulty of fighting a guerrilla war. An American colonel once said to a North Vietnamese counterpart, "You know, you never beat us on the battlefield."

His reply: "That may be so, but it is also irrelevant."

**On War:
Some Bitter Truth:
“We Are An Isolated And Reviled Nation.
We Are Tyrants To Others Weaker Than
Ourselves.”**

11.17.04 Excerpt by Chris Hedges, The New York Review

Physical courage is common on a battlefield. Moral courage is not.

Those who defy the machine usually become its victim.

Those who make war betray those who fight it. This is something most enlisted combat veterans soon understand.

They have little love for officers, tolerating the good ones and hoping the bad ones are replaced or injured before they get them killed.

Those on the bottom rung of the military pay the price for their commanders' vanity, ego, and thirst for recognition.

These motives are hardly exclusive to the neocons and the ambitious generals in the Bush administration.

They are a staple of war. Homer wrote about all of them in The Iliad as did Norman Mailer in The Naked and the Dead. Stupidity and callousness cause senseless death and wanton destruction. That being a good human being - "that possessing not only physical courage but moral courage" - is detrimental in a commander says much about the industrial slaughter that is war.

These Marines have learned the awful truth about our civil religion. They have learned that our nation is not righteous. They have understood that there are no transcendent goals at the heart of our political process. The Sunday School God that blesses our nation above all others vanishes in war zones like Iraq.

These young troops disdain the teachers, religious authorities, and government officials who feed them these lies.

This is why so many combat veterans hate military shrinks and chaplains, whose task is largely to patch them up with the old clichés and ship them back to the battlefield.

It is why they feel distance and anger with those at home who drink in the dark elixir of blind patriotism, and absorb mythology about themselves and war.

One of the Marines in the book returns to California and is invited to be the guest of honor in a gated community in Malibu, a place where he could never afford to live. The residents want to toast him as a war hero.

"I'm not a hero," he tells the guests. "Guys like me are just a necessary part of things. To maintain this way of life in a fine community like this, you need psychos like us to go out and drop a bomb on somebody's house."

We are losing the war in Iraq.

There has been a steady increase in the assaults carried out by the insurgents against coalition forces. The attacks over the past year have risen from about twenty a day to approximately 120.

We are an isolated and reviled nation. We are tyrants to others weaker than ourselves.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to

contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request.
Replies confidential.

OCCUPATION REPORT

WAKE UP, KID YOU JUST BEEN LIBERATED



A US Marine with Fox company 2nd Battalion 24th MEU finds a sleeping Iraqi boy while conducting a house search in Jawan. (12.7.04 AFP/Odd Andersen)

Mercenary Supply Corporations Turn To Poor Salvadorans For Fresh Cannon Fodder

U.S. Security Firms Find Eager Recruits Among Former Soldiers, Police Officers
(Washington Post, December 9, 2004, Pg. 24)

With the U.S. military unable to meet all the security needs in Iraq, private U.S. firms are now providing thousands of armed guards for diplomatic installations, oil wells, businesses and contractors there. **These firms are aggressively recruiting in El Salvador**, viewing it as an ideal source of guards. **The country has low wages, high**

unemployment and a large pool of men with military or police experience - many of whom were U.S.-trained - from the 12-year civil war that ended in 1992.

OCCUPATION HAITI

Chinese Empire On The Move In Haiti

(Washington Times, December 9, 2004, Pg. 13) Concerns over Chinese occupation troops in Haiti, once seen as an effort to undermine Haiti's diplomatic recognition of Taiwan, have given way to speculation that Beijing is more interested in building a long-term presence in the United States' back yard.

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