

## GI SPECIAL 2#C53



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Army Times 12.20.04: From Denver Post

# “A Growing Number Of Awakened Soldiers”

“It is not some small numbered bad seeds, but a growing number of awakened soldiers that hold the American values to heart rather than abuse them to manipulate our military into a bullshit war.”

**From:** Soldier, Iraq  
**To:** GI Special  
**Sent:** December 15, 2004  
**Subject:** The Effects Of Censorship:

The US Army is trying to quiet bloggers and whistle blowers, because their fear that the outspoken few are a minority of disgruntled service men with subversive goals.

In the long run the censorship will hurt the military more than the content of the expressive soldier. **Censorship blinds society to critical problems that need to be addressed.** Any form of expression is a chance for two parts of society to communicate. Any person that restricts free speech is damaging our nation by not allowing solutions to growing problems.

**I have been under pressure for months now to stop writing about my experiences and opinions on the war in Iraq.**

However, I feel that I am more patriotic than the majority of proud soldiers in the US Army.

**Because I don't blindly follow orders makes me appear a traitor, but if George Washington obeyed commands we might still be governed by the British.**

**A patriot is a person that does the right thing despite what his superiors demand. Jullian Goodrum; the Tennessee Guardsman that backed Rummy in a Kuwaiti corner; the transport soldiers that refused a suicide mission are all patriots in my book.**

**It takes more courage to stand up for what is right in a military world backed with intense peer pressure and an unforgiving Uniformed Code Of Military Justice.**

**The fear of punishment keeps most soldiers marching in step to their death. Those soldiers are afraid of the consequences of disobedience more than Iraqi bullets. So I can quickly dismiss claims of outspoken men being labeled cowards. The truth is, these men that speak out are people of rare courage.**

Many soldiers feel the same, but fail to express themselves because they lack the confidence, skill or bravery.

**It is not some small numbered bad seeds, but a growing number of awakened soldiers that hold the American values to heart rather than abuse them to manipulate our military into a bullshit war.**

**If we listen to these progressive soldiers we can get a glimpse into a world that needs repair.** If we allow the system to sweep all of societies problems under the rug they will grow until it becomes unmanageable, just as explicit lyrics in today's music is an expression of real issues that plague the world. To ignore these sores can cause them to become infected.

Artists express their lives to communicate with other subcultures that live unaware in their safety bubbles. **To be offended by the content is natural, but the real offense is the fact that the issues are real and nothing is being done to remedy the situation.**

When men speak out against the defected parts of the military it is a chance to revamp the system to make it more efficient and true to its purpose. A purpose that I thought was to defend America with the most effective means while upholding our honor and high morals by fighting in ways that preserve our soldiers' lives as safely as we can. **We**

**shouldn't view a single US soldier as expendable. And, we shouldn't sacrifice our allegiance to honest ideals and decency over unlawful orders.**

**Every time that we ignore a soldiers' judgment on current events we miss an opportunity to right the shortcomings of the military and the Iraq war.**

To silence a soldiers expression is to deny the nation of its patriotic duty to do what is fair and just. **Once we learn to communicate openly and present information from all sources we will make the necessary steps towards a progressive future.**

Heretic

**"The Pentagon recently justified its' position on censorship by insisting: 'If we let people see that kind of thing, there would never again be any war.'": - from 'Military Blunders' - article by Geoffrey Regan in 'Night and Day' (Mail on Sunday supplement) 23rd January 2000 (John Gingerich, Veterans For Peace)**

## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS:**

### **ONE MARINE KILLED IN ACTION**

December 17, 2004 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND  
NEWS RELEASE Number: 04-12-20C

**AI ANBAR PROVINCE, Iraq - One Marine assigned to the I Marine Expeditionary Force was killed in action Thursday, December 16**

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### **Three Westerners Killed In Mosul; One Head Chopped Off**

Dec 17, 2004 MOSUL, Iraq (Reuters)

**Insurgents have attacked a car carrying at least three Westerners in the northern Iraq city of Mosul, killing them and their Iraqi driver, and chopping off the head of one victim, local witnesses say.** The white sedan car was attacked on Friday while driving through western Mosul and set on fire.

A photographer for Reuters saw three bodies lying on the street close to the blazing vehicle, all apparently Westerners. One of them had been beheaded. A fourth person, apparently an Arab, could be seen lying nearby.

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## 2 Foreigners Among Six Killed In Baghdad

18th December 2004 "PA" & AP 12.17.04

Rebel attacks across Baghdad killed five people today – including three paramilitary policemen and a foreigner – as insurgents kept up their campaign to derail Iraq's general election.

**A roadside bomb exploded near a passing 4X4 in the west of the capital, badly damaging the vehicle.**

**After the blast, gunmen opened up on the survivors with automatic fire, killing two foreigners and wounding two others, Al-Khadra police commissioner Ali Hussein Al-Hamadani said.**

**Al-Hamadani said three Iraqi National Guardsmen died and six others were injured when another roadside bomb exploded in western Baghdad as their pick-up truck was driving by.**

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## Abrams Hits Mine, Soldier Wounded

12.17.04 AP

**A US soldier was wounded when an Abrams main battle tank he was riding in struck a mine near Beiji, 250km north of Baghdad, a spokesman said Thursday.**

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## Falluja Victory (Via Stalingrad?)

12.17.04 AP, CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq — **A recent flare-up of fighting in Fallujah is not a setback in efforts to bring order to the city, Marine officers said Friday.**

**“What we’ve said from day one is that these clearing operations are dangerous. Some days, you’re going to have a bad day,” said Lt. Col. Dan Wilson, an operations planner with I Marine Expeditionary Force.**

Wilson said Marine and Iraqi government troops continue to sweep through the city, pursuing rebels and discovering hidden weapons. **There was combat in the city again Friday.**

**The Iraqi interim government announced Thursday it planned to begin resettling civilians in the city sometime next week. But Marine planners said they would not recommend that civilians return until the city is secure.**

*"We'd love for them to be able to return quickly, but the insurgents aren't cooperating with us," Wilson said.*

## VICTORY IS ASSURED

**"The occupation of Stalingrad, which will now be concluded, will become a gigantic success ... No human being ever shall push us from that spot."**

Adolf Hitler, speech in Berlin, September 30 1942

**"I wanted to take it [Stalingrad]. And--you know we are modest--we actually have it."** Adolph Hitler, statement in Munich, November 8 1942

[Thanks to CZ for sending in.]

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## Australia's Baghdad Barracks Bombed

18/12/04 AAP

**An attack on Australian troops who are housed in Baghdad has left their building damaged but no troops hurt.**

Two rocket-propelled grenades were fired at the accommodation building of the Australian security attachment at 7.10am Baghdad time.

One fell 50 metres wide, while **the other hit the side of the Baghdad building.**

The 120 troops who stay in the building are from the 5/7 Royal Australian Regiment and the 2nd Cavalry Regiment, both based in Darwin.

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## Several Turkish Embassy Guards Killed

ANKARA, Dec 17 (AFP)

**Several Turkish embassy guards, on their way from Turkey to the Iraqi capital Baghdad, were killed Friday in an armed attack on a road in Mosul, the Turkish foreign ministry said.**

"According to information obtained by our embassy in Baghdad, there have been casualties in the incident ... We are very upset that some personnel were killed," a statement said.

**It did not specify how many guards died, but CNN Turk television put the number at four.**

One of the guards and a driver survived the attack and returned to Turkey, while two other guards made it safely to the embassy in Baghdad, the ministry said.

**About 70 Turkish nationals, mainly truck drivers, have so far been killed in Iraq, most of them in road violence.**

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## **Even The IED's That Don't Detonate Fuck Things Up**

December 17, 2004 Gordon Trowbridge, Army Times staff writer

Improvised explosive devices — roadside bombs — are among Iraq's biggest hazards, not only for the damage they do, but **because even when spotted, they can hold up a convoy for hours waiting for busy explosive ordnance disposal teams.**

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### **HOW MANY MORE FOR BUSH'S WAR?**



Corey Shanaberger holds her daughter Grace, 3, during her husband's funeral. Sgt. First Class Wentz "Baron" Shanaberger was killed in Iraq, leaving behind his wife and five children. (SHNS photo by Brendan Fitterer / St. Petersburg Times)

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## **TROOP NEWS**

# 3<sup>RD</sup> I.D. Soldier Held After Staging Shooting To Avoid Deployment

[THANKS TO KEVIN RAMIREZ, G.I. RIGHTS HOTLINE, WHO E-MAILED THIS: HE WRITES: ACCORDING TO FOX NEWS MARQUISE ROBERTS WAS CHARGED WITH CONSPIRACY AND A LAUNDRY LIST OF CHARGES. WE NEED TO DEFEND HIM AND PROTEST THIS.]

12.17.04 By Thomas J. Gibbons Jr., Inquirer Staff Writer & By Randy Pennell, Associated Press

**Marquise Roberts absolutely did not want to return to Iraq, where he previously served a seven-month Army tour, police said yesterday.**

**So Roberts, they said, who lives on Williams Avenue in the Cedarbrook section of Philadelphia, concocted a plan to have a relative shoot him during a purported robbery.**

But detectives said they unraveled the plot after Roberts went to a city hospital for treatment of a bullet wound to one of his legs. Now, Roberts and his wife's cousin are charged with a series of offenses.

**In addition, Roberts missed his date Wednesday to return to Fort Stewart, Ga., where he probably will be extradited to face further action.**

**"They are extremely interested," Philadelphia Police Lt. James Clark said yesterday, referring to inquiries from military officials. "He didn't want to go back."**

Police said Roberts' plan to desert the Army came to their attention about 2 p.m. Tuesday, when officers were notified that Roberts had arrived at Albert Einstein Medical Center with a gunshot wound. Roberts told police he was shot while walking in the 1500 block of Somerville Avenue in Logan.

Roberts said he was walking with his wife's cousin, Roland Fuller, 28, when they passed two men arguing. Suddenly, Roberts said, shots rang out and he was shot in the back of the leg.

Roberts went to the hospital for treatment and was released.

However, detectives from the Special Investigations Unit of the Northwest Detective Division weren't through with Roberts. They drove him to the spot where Roberts said the shooting had occurred. No evidence of gunfire was found.

Other investigators tracked down Fuller, whose account contradicted Roberts', police said. Fuller told investigators the shooting occurred in the 1500 block of Duncannon Avenue, several blocks from Somerville Avenue.

Investigators later tracked down Roberts' wife, Donna Roberts, who gave yet a third version of events. Clark said the conflicting versions piqued detectives' interest.

The victim and his two family members were kept separated and questioned at length. During that time, Fuller tried to escape but was caught, police said.

Later, a different story began to emerge.

Detectives said they discovered that Roberts was in the Army, assigned to Fort Stewart, and due to return there the next day.

They said they found that Roberts, his wife, and Fuller concocted a plan in which Fuller would shoot Roberts, and all three family members would report that the shooting was committed by two men during a robbery.

The motive was to prevent Roberts from being redeployed to Iraq, detectives said. "They just broke down and confessed that they concocted the whole story so he didn't have to go back to the war," Clark said.

**Police said Roberts, a supply specialist who had spent seven months in the war zone, was distraught about having to return to combat duty, and wanted to stay with his family, and did not want to return.**

Roberts, 23, was visiting family in Philadelphia while on a two-week leave from the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which led the assault on Baghdad in 2003 and is scheduled to return to Iraq within the next month.

**"He was very, very emotional about the whole thing," Clark said. "He was breaking down, crying a lot."**

Police said they recovered the gun used to shoot Roberts, who also lists an address in Hinesville, Ga. Roberts was shot with a handgun, according to police, who said the gun was not the soldier's military weapon.

Fuller was charged with aggravated assault, weapons offenses, and filing a false police report. Roberts was charged with recklessly endangering another person and filing a false police report. Detectives said they were not ruling out charges against Donna Roberts.

Lt. Col. Cliff Kent, a spokesman for the 3rd Infantry, said Roberts had been scheduled to return this week to Fort Stewart, Ga.

**Roberts could face military discipline if the charges prove true, Kent said, *but that likely wouldn't occur until the civilian courts were through with him.***

***In Roberts' case, his return to duty is delayed indefinitely.*** He was in custody Thursday night under \$50,000 bail while awaiting a court hearing, police said.



Military officials said Roberts also could face punishment under the military justice system. **They said the military normally waits until civilian courts have ruled before deciding whether to charge soldiers in military court.**

The 3rd Infantry division had 44 soldiers killed in action during the invasion of Iraq. Roberts returned from Iraq in mid-summer.

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## **Sailor Who Refused War Declared A Deserter**

December 17th, 2004 SAN JUAN (AP)

The U.S. Navy decided that Pablo Paredes, the sailor son of a Puerto Rican mother and an Ecuadorean father who refused to participate in the war in Iraq, is a deserter. It will seek his arrest, however he is expected to turn himself in to authorities on Friday.

Lt. Jonathan Groveman, spokesman for the Southeastern Region of the Navy in San Diego, Calif., said Paredes, 23, was declared a deserter because he had announced his intentions to not fight in Iraq.

“We have notified the pertinent authorities to proceed with his arrest,” Groveman said in a telephone interview with a Puerto Rican newspaper.

**Paredes had orders to sail to the Persian Gulf Dec. 6 from the naval base in San Diego, but he refused to do so and held a protest on the pier in which he announced his opposition to the war in Iraq, calling it “criminal and immoral.”**

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## **Guard Reports Huge Drop In Enlistment**

[New York Times, December 17, 2004, Pg. 1]

**The Army National Guard reports it has fallen 30 percent short of its recruiting goals during the past two months. [How can this be? Isn't just everybody eager to go to Iraq and die for George Bush and his dreams of Empire?]**

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## **Assholes In Command Cancel Christmas Leave For 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Over Missing “Item”**

December 17, 2004 Associated Press

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — **About 130 82nd Airborne Division soldiers have been confined in their unit area for a week as criminal investigators search for a “sensitive item” that a post spokesman would not describe.**

The soldiers are assigned to Company C of the 3rd Battalion of the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment. They are scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan for a year this spring.

The Army confines soldiers to their unit areas to find missing items that have to be accounted for at all times, such as weapons or equipment that is expensive or secret. **Each unit can determine what equipment is sensitive, division spokesman Sgt. Chuck Meseke said.**

**The lockdown is not punishment, Meseke said.** “It’s to give the investigators a controlled environment,” he said. **[Lying stack of shit. Everybody know it’s pressure tactics to try to get somebody to come up with whatever has gone missing, or rat somebody out.]**

**The restrictions will continue “until all investigative means have been exhausted,”** Meseke said. The Criminal Investigation Command is investigating, he said.

Post officials declined to say what is missing until the investigation is completed.

**The restriction order has generated complaints from family members who planned holiday travel to be with the soldiers.**

**“My son has been deployed both to Afghanistan and Iraq and will be deployed for the third time early next year,”** a mother wrote in an e-mail to The Fayetteville Observer. **“These soldiers deserve to come home to be with their families before deploying again.”** **[Somebody asked last month what could piss off troops in Vietnam enough to frag an officer. Case in point.]**

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## **Ft. Bragg Take Note: Navy Captain Relieved Of Command For Bullying And Harassment**

16 December, 2004 BBC News

**Cdr David Axon has been removed permanently from the command of HMS Somerset after an investigation into complaints of bullying and harassment.**

He was relieved of his command at the weekend to face an internal inquiry into complaints from two crew members about his leadership.

HMS Somerset returned to Plymouth on Thursday after six months in the Gulf protecting Iraq oil platforms.

**The equal opportunities investigation found that Cdr Axon's leadership and management style fell "significantly short of the exemplary standards the Royal Navy requires of its commanding officers".**

**The navy said that Cdr Axon, from Southsea, Portsmouth, would be appointed to a shore-based, non-command post with immediate effect.**

**A male officer and a female crew member had made separate complaints of a similar nature against Cdr Axon, the Ministry of Defence confirmed.**

The navy said it would be "inappropriate" to comment on the allegations in order to respect the privacy and confidentiality of people concerned.

However, it said that "the indispensable bond of trust and respect between a commanding officer and the ship's company had been irrevocably damaged" as a result of Cdr Axon's actions.

And it stressed that the investigation had not found any evidence of "mutinous behaviour, insubordination, [or] disobedience" among the ship's company.

**Cdr Axon was initially relieved of his command when the ship reached Gibraltar, but his removal has now been made permanent.**

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## **'Nonhostile Fatalities' Leave Grieving Families With Unanswered Questions; "I Don't Trust Them At All Anymore"**

### **PART 1:**

**At least half of the families complained that the military hadn't provided them with enough information, and some didn't believe what little information they were given. The examination found dozens of deaths in which the military failed to include specific causes in press releases, and spokespeople refused to provide further details, even for deaths occurring more than a year ago.**

12/10/04 By Russell Carollo, Mike Wagner, Mehul Srivastava and Ken McCall, "Dayton Daily News"

Staff Sgt. Aaron Reese and Spc. Todd Bates of the Ohio Army National Guard were sent to patrol the Tigris River in an Iraqi boat that had no life preservers, no rope, no poles or any other safety device to rescue them from the water in case they went overboard.

Army Staff Sgt. Nathan Bailey had a long history of mental illness and was taking a drug used to treat schizophrenia the night the Army sent him to guard Camp Arifjan in Kuwait.

Corporals Dustin H. Schrage and Jeffrey G. Green were weighed down with M-16 rifles and at least five magazines of ammunition each the night they were sent to swim across the Euphrates River in Iraq.

Like more than 1,250 Americans sent to the war in Iraq, Reese, Bates, Bailey, Schrage and Green never returned.

But they weren't killed by the enemy.

**They are among at least 280 Americans killed while supporting the war in Iraq but not officially counted by the military as combat deaths. For months, even major media outlets didn't include them in official death totals.**

**The military calls them "nonhostile" fatalities, deaths caused by something other than direct combat, and they account for more than 22 percent of the deaths during the war.** During the Vietnam War, noncombat deaths accounted for 18.5 percent of all fatalities.

War deaths are difficult for all families, but a combat death usually comes with some sense of clarity and honor. **For families of soldiers who die of illness, in accidents or at their own hands or the hands of fellow soldiers, the suffering can be made worse by the uncertainty of what occurred and the difficulty of getting information from the military.**

Many of the more than 40 families contacted during a Dayton Daily News examination said they did not have major complaints with the cooperation they got from the military.

"The Navy was very good to us," said Wyvonne Bollinger, whose son, Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Doyle Wayne Bollinger, was killed in an accidental explosion.

"They were very good to my family."

**But at least half of the families complained that the military hadn't provided them with enough information, and some didn't believe what little information they were given. The examination found dozens of deaths in which the military failed to include specific causes in press releases, and spokespeople refused to provide further details, even for deaths occurring more than a year ago.**

"I just think that it is intolerable — a stunning lack of sensitivity — to the very legitimate needs of these families to understand what happened to their loved ones," said U.S. Rep. Earl Pomeroy, D-N.D., who for nearly a year now has battled the Army on behalf of a North Dakota couple trying to find out more about the Nov. 28, 2003, death of their son, Army Spc. Thomas J. Sweet, 23. "I read the (Army) unit of investigation the riot act.

Their conduct up to this point was absolutely without justification because of the delays in terms of getting timely information to the families.

"I just think that the families have a right to know all of the information surrounding the circumstances, and they have a right to have this information in a timely fashion."

James Turner, a Department of Defense spokesman at the Pentagon, said the policy of the military is to provide "all facts and circumstances" of deaths to the immediate family.

**Still, several families waited months to learn what happened to their relatives. Some are still waiting.**

"My son died more than a year ago, and just about a week ago we finally received the accident report," said Dennis Geurin, whose son, 18-year-old Marine Lance Cpl. Cory Ryan Geurin of Santee, Calif., died July 15, 2003, after a 60-foot fall.

**"I got more information from driving to 29 Palms (Marine base) and looking into the eyes of the men who held his hand as he died than I did from the lousy report," Geurin said. "You want the truth no matter what it is. There's no good way to lose your son or daughter.**

"My son will never sit at this table again. He will never spend the money he earned while he was in the military. It drives you nuts. I just don't know why it took so long."

The family of 22-year-old Army Spc. Melissa Jennifer Hobart of Ladson, S.C., was told she collapsed and died on June 6, 2004, while on guard duty.

Though her spirits were low and traces of an antidepressant were found in her system, an autopsy report provided to the family found no lethal doses of drugs or heart defects or other physical problems that would explain the death.

The report called arrhythmia "the most common cause" in such deaths, but it did not say she had a heart arrhythmia. The otherwise healthy woman died of an "undetermined cause," according to the report.

"She didn't die of any illness that they could find," said her mother, Constance Hobart. "She was on guard duty, and she just dropped.

**"First they told me that she had a heart attack. I don't trust them at all anymore."**

The family of Lance Cpl. James A. Casper of Coolidge, Texas, also heard conflicting stories about his death.

**An investigative report provided to his mother, Darlene Mitchell, says her son grabbed the barrel of another Marine's gun as the two were in the barracks, and Casper was shot as the Marine struggled to pull the gun away. The Marine who shot Casper eventually admitted that he lied in a statement because he was "scared."**

**"We started e-mailing senators and governors and the president and everybody else trying to find an answer because they (the Marines) didn't want to tell us anything," Mitchell said.**

Before joining the Marines, Casper worked at a Wal-Mart with his mother and did odd jobs raking leaves, mowing lawns and bailing hay.

On his 20th birthday, he paid off the loan on a 1½-acre lot, where he planned to build a house next to his mother and stepfather's house.

**"First they walked in with the medals, the War on Terrorism medals," Mitchell said, choking back tears as her voice grew more and more defiant. "They started giving a spiel about (how) this medal was personally awarded by the president to James Casper. I go, 'I don't care about medals. I want to know what happened to my son.' "**

**Mitchell said she still doesn't know exactly what happened.**

Casper's stepfather, Joe Mitchell, said the pain seems unending.

"Just like today, I got a flag in the mail from somebody who makes quilts," he said. "I have to show it to my wife when she comes in.

"It tears us up every time."

About 100 soldiers in Iraq have died the way Lt. Col. Dominic Rocco Baragona of Niles, Ohio, did — in a vehicle accident. Vehicle crashes accounted for more than a third of all noncombat deaths.

On May 19, 2003, Baragona, nicknamed "Rocky" after the former Cleveland Indians slugger Rocky Colavito was riding in the last of three Humvees traveling from Camp Victory in Kuwait on what is known as Main Supply Route Tampa.

About 90 minutes after crossing the Iraq border, the soldier driving the Humvee noticed debris in the highway ahead and merged into the left lane, according to a report obtained by the Dayton Daily News. As he did, the report says, the driver watched an approaching tractor-trailer with Arabic license plates lose control as it drove through the debris, striking the passenger side of the Humvee.

Immediately after the collision, a captain also in the Humvee tried to remove her seat belt, "but was too nervous to take it off," according to a statement from the driver. The driver helped the captain out of the Humvee and saw Baragona lying on top of a rear passenger tire that had broken off the vehicle.

"I did not render first aid due to (the fact) he was obviously deceased," the driver's statement says.

Baragona, who went to West Point after graduating from John F. Kennedy High School in Warren, was one of 43 Ohioans killed supporting the war in Iraq through late November, including at least eight who died in noncombat incidents.

**Less than a year before her brother was sent to Kuwait, Robbie Snapp found him wandering around his Nashville apartment shouting, "You're in danger."**

The news release for the death of her brother, Staff Sgt. Nathan J. Bailey, says he died Nov. 12, 2003, of a "nonhostile gunshot wound." Though the family was provided records more than six months ago indicating that Bailey committed suicide, Randy Harris, a National Guard spokesman in Nashville, Tenn., said he couldn't confirm how Bailey died because it was still under investigation.

**In more than 50 of the 280 noncombat deaths in Iraq, Department of Defense news releases identify the cause in much the same way, using general terms such as "noncombat-related injury" without providing a specific cause. Of those, the Daily News examination found that at least 13 were suicides and four others were likely suicides. In a number of other cases, neither the families nor the military would discuss the specific causes.**

The Dayton Daily News searched more than 1,000 Department of Defense news releases and found none that identified suicide as a cause of death. Military representatives often will not confirm suicide as a cause, even when families already are openly discussing the circumstances.

Turner, the military spokesman, said that information is updated once investigations are complete. A military Web site with casualty statistics does identify 29 "self-inflicted" deaths, but it does not identify specific incidents or soldiers. Seventeen other cases are listed as "pending."

Bailey's suicide wasn't a shock to his sister.

**"I was worried because I felt like they should not have sent him over there being in the state of mind he was in," Snapp said.**

**Army records provided to the family show that Bailey had a "long history of mental illness requiring medication."**

**A toxicology report found that he was taking the drug Olanzapine, which is used to treat schizophrenia by decreasing high levels of brain activity.**

As a teenager, Bailey served in the Navy and, after he got out, held a variety of jobs before becoming a maintenance man at a Nashville housing complex, the job he held when his National Guard unit was sent to Iraq. He fought an addiction to drugs, his family said, before becoming a minister and helping others with drug and alcohol problems.

He joined the Guard sometime before 1990 and served in the first Gulf War, according to his family.

**Less than a year before her brother was sent to the most recent war in Iraq, Snapp said, she visited him at his Nashville apartment because her mother was concerned that he sounded strange on the phone.**

**"He started talking like he was in a combat zone, running from people," Snapp recalled.**

**Snapp said she drove her brother to a Veterans Administration hospital in Nashville, where he was placed in a closed mental ward for several days before being released. Less than a year later, when she heard about his deployment, Snapp said she unsuccessfully tried to stop the military from sending him to Iraq.**

**"The statement that they made was that as long as he had enough medication (in Iraq) he'd be OK," Snapp said.**

**A report from the Army surgeon general found that the suicide rate among soldiers in Iraq from January to October 2003 was 21.2 per 100,000, nearly double the overall Army rate of 11.9 from 1995 to 2002 and nearly double the overall U.S. rate of roughly 10.7 per 100,000. Five of the suicides in Iraq occurred in the first 17 days of July 2003, the report says.**

The report says that in addition to 17 suicides in Iraq and Kuwait by October 2003, two other soldiers with histories of "psychiatric treatment" committed suicide after leaving Iraq or Kuwait, one occurring in a U.S. treatment facility. **A Daily News examination published in October found that at least 16 veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom committed suicide after returning home.**

The surgeon general's report cited marital problems, legal problems, adjustment problems, financial problems and other personal problems as reasons for the suicides.

For a number of families, however, there appeared to be no real explanations.

**In a letter to his father postmarked less than four weeks before 23-year-old Spc. Thomas J. Sweet of Bismarck, N.D., apparently shot himself in the head with an M-16 rifle, Sweet asked his parents to send him Ritalin or another drug to help him cope.**

**"I feel it's the only thing that will get me through all of this without killing someone," Sweet wrote.**

**In the same letter, he wrote, "I can't help but say I'm having a great deal of trouble dealing with my co-workers. Many of them, it seems, like to go out of their way to piss me off."**

Like the families of other soldiers whose deaths were ruled suicides, the Sweets are suspicious. **They don't believe the Army's investigation was sufficient, and a captain quoted in an investigative report said he did not believe the gunshot wound was self-inflicted.**

Fueling the family's suspicions further is Sweet's autopsy report, which describes his wound as a "near contact gunshot wound," meaning the gun muzzle wasn't resting on his head. The soldier's mother, Elizabeth Sweet, believes it would have been difficult for her son to stretch his arms far enough to place the rifle muzzle away from his forehead.



**Sweet's parents were so angry they hung two banners in front of their homes in North Dakota and Maryland. The banners, both accompanied with a photo of their son, read: "George W. Bush sent our son back from Iraq in a body bag."**

Pomeroy, the North Dakota congressman, has been trying to help the Sweets.

"I believe that there has been a lot of unnecessary distress to Mrs. Sweet from not being able to know the circumstances that caused the death," he said.

The family of 20-year-old Army Spc. Dustin K. McGaugh isn't convinced he committed suicide, either. McGaugh's body was found Sept. 30, 2003, lying near a bunker, a rifle at his side and a single gunshot wound to his head.

"Dustin wasn't depressed or stressed about the war or anything like that," said his mother, Angie Fischer of Derby, Kan. "He loved the Army. He ate and breathed it. We just don't want his honor to be smeared."

The Army believes McGaugh committed suicide, Fischer said, but the investigation remains open.

"They are just claiming the investigation is stalled," she said. "They sent investigators down to talk with us, but only after we threw a fit.

**"We don't want anyone's head on a platter or people to go to jail or anything like that. We just know it wasn't a suicide, and I can't let them do this to Dusty. He wouldn't have done that."**

### **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))

## **Returned Soldier: 1. Says Resistance Has Effective Radar System**

## 2. Reports An Iraqi City Empty Of All But Dead People In February



December 17, 2004 By ALEJANDRO CANO, Fontana Herald News

By the age of 21, most people have not lived extremely eventful lives.

Others, however, have undergone several extraordinary experiences, and Crystal Gonzales certainly falls into this category.

Gonzales, a 21-year-old soldier in the U.S. Army, returned home to Fontana recently after spending three years overseas defending the United States in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

The graduate of Fontana A.B. Miller High School returned home after receiving her second surgery to treat bone spurs (also known as hammer toes), caused by the excessive amount of time wearing boots and the carrying of a heavy load.

"I'm glad I'm back, even though it is under these circumstances," said Gonzales. "My foot bones got damaged because when you are in the military, especially on duty, you have to wear your boots for long periods of time. I was also carrying more than 100 pounds of equipment."

From Afghanistan, Gonzales was transferred to Iraq in February of this year. Gonzales remembers the day she arrived by air in Iraqi territory and recalls what she witnessed once daylight arrived.

"We arrived at night, and in order to be undetected by their radar, we had to fly high and then low, quickly. That scared me because you couldn't see anything," said Gonzales. "Once it cleared, all you could see was an empty town because everybody had fled. Only the dead stayed; there were bodies everywhere."

Gonzales hopes to recover soon so she can report back to duty. **She is willing to do whatever it takes to fulfill her duty, although she said that when she has children later on, she would not want them to be grow up to be in the military.**

"They (doctors) told me it will take about a year to completely recover. Once I recover, I will have to go back," said Gonzales.

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**



**A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift, is approaching spiritual death.**

**Martin Luther King  
April 4, 1967**

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](mailto:hastiemike@earthlink.net)) for more of his outstanding work. T)

# Poems Too Dangerous For Soldiers To Read

12.17.04 In solidarity, Z

By Bertolt Brecht; From A German War Primer

WHEN THE LEADERS SPEAK OF PEACE  
The common folk know  
That war is coming.  
When the leaders curse war  
The mobilization order is already written out.

THE WAR WHICH IS COMING  
Is not the first one. There were  
Other wars before it.  
When the last one came to an end  
There were conquerors and conquered.  
Among the conquered the common people  
Starved. Among the conquerors  
The common people starved too.

THOSE AT THE TOP SAY COMRADESHIP  
Reigns in the army.  
The truth of this is seen  
In the cookhouse.  
In their hearts should be  
The selfsame courage. But  
On their plates  
Are two kinds of rations.

THOSE AT THE TOP SAY:  
This way to glory.  
Those down below say:  
This way to the grave.

THOSE WHO TAKE THE MEAT FROM THE TABLE  
Teach contentment.

Those for whom the contribution is destined  
Demand sacrifice.  
Those who eat their fill speak to the hungry  
Of wonderful times to come.  
**Those who lead the country into the abyss  
Call ruling too difficult  
For ordinary men.**

GENERAL, YOUR TANK IS A POWERFUL VEHICLE  
It smashes down forests and crushes a hundred men.  
But it has one defect:  
It needs a driver.

General, your bomber is powerful.  
It flies faster than a storm and carries more than an elephant.  
But it has one defect:  
It needs a mechanic.

General, man is very useful.  
He can fly and he can kill.  
But he has one defect:  
He can think.

**WHEN IT COMES TO MARCHING MANY DO NOT KNOW  
That their enemy is marching at their head.  
The voice which gives them their orders  
Is their enemy's voice and  
The man who speaks of the enemy  
Is the enemy himself.**

**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.**

## **Exactly Right**

A people that wants to win its independence cannot limit itself to ordinary means of war. Uprisings in mass, revolutionary war, guerillas everywhere, that is the only means through which a small nation can get the better of a big one, a less strong army be put in a position to resist a stronger and better organized one. Friedrich Engels

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# PONDERABLE QUOTE

[THANKS TO G. MACAN, WHO E-MAILED THIS:]

December 17

*"It is only those who have neither fired a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded who cry aloud for blood, more vengeance, more desolation. War is hell."*

William Tecumseh Sherman,  
Union General -American Civil War (1820-1891)

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## Stan And Ollie Do Eye-Rack

TO: GI SPECIAL  
12.16.04 By Cipris Zeljko

[Sounds of explosions and gunfire, now near now far. Somewhere, a baby is bawling.]

OLLIE: Well Stan, getting stuck in this hellhole sucks big time, but believe you me: it could be a lot worse.

STAN: Why, what do you mean, Ollie? How could it be worse?

OLLIE: We could be stuck in Asia, Stan. And you know what they say: "**Never get involved in a land war in Asia!**" Now ain't that the truth! Why my grandpa lost a leg in northeast Asia, and my old pop—bless his soul—lost his mind in southeast Asia. We ought to count our blessings, Stan.

STAN: Ollie... Ollie, you know... Ollie, we um... We actually are in Asia...

OLLIE: Why, don't be ridiculous Stan! We ain't in no Asia! We are in the *Middle East!* Go ask our British chums, they named this place: This here is the Middle East! See, first there's the Near East, then here's the Middle East, and then way out over that horizon there's the Far East.

STAN: .....

OLLIE: Why Stan, it's simple. See... Oh no... Oh good Lord... Oh my God! This is Asia. We're in SOUTHWEST Asia! ... How in God's name did we get here? ... What in the world are we doing here! ... Why the fuck did you let me come here?!

STAN: But Ollie, I didn't... I, I...

[pause]

OLLIE [with a Job-like sigh]: This is another fine mess you've gotten me into!

[pause]

OLLIE and STAN: *WE GOTTA GET OUT OF THIS PLACE! THERE MUST BE SOME KINDA WAY OUTTA HERE!*

[pause]

OLLIE: Sir, would you care to get down off of the Abrams? Me and Stan here have a vital mission to accomplish. Thank you, Sir. Why certainly Sir, I shall get this thing out of your face presently, Sir. Good-bye Sir, we'll be sure to drop you a line. Toodle-oo!

[Sound of a tank engine revving up, building to a roar, and then rapidly fading into the distance. Somewhere, a baby is bawling.]

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## OCCUPATION REPORT

# Iraq's Oil Flows From Persian Gulf Cut Sharply For Second Day

Dec. 17 (Bloomberg)

Oil flows from southern Iraq were disrupted for a second day because of a broken-down turbine that pumps crude along a pipeline to the country's Persian Gulf export terminals, three shipping agents said.

**A turbine at the onshore Zubair 1 pumping station wasn't working, reducing flows to the Basra terminal, Iraq's largest, by a third to about 58,000 barrels an hour, said the agents, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. They didn't know when the turbine would be repaired.**

**Iraq's average monthly exports in November fell to 1.26 million barrels a day, the lowest since September 2003, according to ship agents data. Total production fell 22 percent to 1.75 million barrels a day, a Bloomberg survey showed.**

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**Received:**

## Useful Information

[Thanks to John Gingerich, Veterans For Peace:]

**"I hate it when they say, 'He gave his life for his country.'  
Nobody gives their life for anything.  
We steal the lives of these kids.  
We take it away from them.  
They don't die for the honor and glory of their country.  
We kill them."  
~ Admiral Gene LaRocque.**

Freedom had been hunted round the globe; reason was considered as rebellion; and the slavery of fear had made men afraid to think. But such is the irresistible nature of truth, that all it asks, and all it wants, is the liberty of appearing.  
~ Thomas Paine, Rights of Man, 1791 ~

"I went down on my knees and prayed to Almighty God for light and guidance ... and one night late it came to me this way ... We could not leave (the Philippines) to themselves--they were unfit for self-government--and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's was... There was nothing left for us to do but take them all and educate the Filipinos, and uplift and Christianize them."  
~President William McKinley

"This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling our nation's homes with orphans and widows, of injecting poisonous drugs of hate into veins of peoples normally humane, of sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice and love.  
~ Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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

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