

## GI SPECIAL 2#C61



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**"All The Other Soldiers,  
They Just Really Want  
To Come Home."  
"He Doesn't Really Know  
Why They Have To Be  
There."**

[The truth will come out, no matter what.]

December 25, 2004 Boston Globe

PORTSMOUTH, N.H. -- A Portsmouth man was among the injured in an attack on a US Army Reserve base in Mosul, Iraq, that killed 22 people Tuesday.

Specialist James Collins, 24, of the Army Reserve's 133d Engineer Battalion, suffered hearing loss from bleeding in his left ear and was bruised on his side, said his mother, Gloria.

She spoke to the Portsmouth Herald about her son Thursday in a phone interview from her home in Moscow, Maine, where James grew up. Her son lived in Portsmouth for nearly four years before going to Iraq. His Belfast, Maine, Reserve unit was activated in December 2003.

Gloria Collins said her son told her in an e-mail after the attack that he was in a dining tent at Base Marez when the explosion occurred.

"He was 50 feet away," she said.

Gloria Collins said she first heard about the attack from a friend, then sent her son an e-mail asking if he were OK. Her son replied later that day.

**"He said, 'Mom, I've never seen so much blood and body parts everywhere,' " she said.**

Collins later wrote in a separate e-mail that he knew two Maine soldiers who died in the attack: Sergeant Lynn Robert Poulin Jr. and Specialist Thomas Dostie.

**"He said it freaked him out. He didn't sleep at all Tuesday night," Gloria Collins said. "I don't blame him. How can you go to sleep when just down from where you bunk, the dining hall got blown up?"**

Collins's girlfriend, Sarah Tone, said he is looking forward to returning to Portsmouth.

**"All the other soldiers, they just really want to come home. He doesn't really know why they have to be there," she said.**

James Collins's unit is due to leave Iraq in March.

**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:**

# “Several” U.S. Soldiers Wounded In Bayji

December 25 By DUSAN STOJANOVIC Associated Press Writer

A bomber targeted a U.S. military convoy and wounded several U.S. soldiers in Bayji, Iraq, Saturday, the al-Jazeera satellite network said.

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## The War In Falluja

25 December, 2004 Gulf Times Newspaper & 24 December 2004, Borzou Daragahi, The Independent

FALLUJAH: Fallujah residents returning to their home city yesterday expressed reluctance to settle in a “ghost town” as **others were deterred from even entering as fighting erupted for the second straight day.**

**About 10 cars had entered the city when the sounds of fighting rang out from inside Fallujah yesterday morning.**

A series of small explosions prompted Mohsen Hassan al-Dulaimi, 45, to leave the city after spending just one hour inside yesterday.

“I did not bring my family and I just nipped in and out,” he said as he came out through the checkpoint. “The situation is really bad and I do not think we can go back any time soon.”

**A marine was also wounded in Fallujah on Thursday when an a “semi-alive” insurgent lobbed a grenade in his direction, said Major General David Natonski, one of the top marine officers in Iraq.**

US commanders warned it would take a long time to restore basic services to the point where all residents could return.

**“Being to where we were before the war will take years, being in a position to start again some activity in the city will take months,” said civil affairs officer Lieut Col Leonard DeFrancisci.**

Bilal Sami Sabri, a 29-year-old living in a tented camp with nearly 1,000 other Fallujans near Baghdad University, is not going anywhere. “What can we do? **What are we going to do except stay here until the Americans and Iraqi National Guard have left the city. Once they're gone we'll go back and rebuild Fallujah with our hands.**”

**Mr Sabri said nothing short of an end to the US presence in the city would entice him to go back.** He was trapped in Fallujah until three weeks ago, witnessing the worst of the war. He was detained by soldiers who initially put him in a camp outside the city.

He was later reunited with his wife and four children, who had left Fallujah just before the fighting began.

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## **“Administration Officials” Admit The Resistance Is Winning The War**

**"The insurgents have grasped that we cannot be everywhere at once, and they can hit us where they wish, and we can't do anything about it," this source said.**

**O'Hanlon agreed, noting, "The guerrillas are building on their growing strength."**

**A former senior CIA official said that a network that could number as high as 100,000 is supporting this group.**

**"The problem is, this number is growing," he added.**

December 23, 2004 By Richard Sale, UPI Terrorism Correspondent

**The U.S. victory in Fallujah last month has backfired in prompting insurgents to switch from fighting pitched battles against U.S. forces to staging simultaneous, well-orchestrated attacks against key cities in the Sunni triangle, according to administration officials.**

The rebels' new hit-and-run strategy "could pose new problems for U.S.-led forces," a Pentagon official said. "By not standing their ground and fighting, but retreating only to return to attack select targets, **the rebels have put us on the defensive.**"

**"We now lack the initiative at a time when we need it very badly,"** he added, saying the aim of U.S. operations was to bring stability to the Sunni triangle.

**"It's the same story over and over," a senior Pentagon official said. "Too few men, too few forces. We have too big an area to have to defend."**

According to a former senior CIA official, the recent Mosul raid was designed to distract the attention of U.S. forces away from Fallujah. The raid "killed a lot of Kurds," heightened ethnic tensions, drew 1,200 U.S. troops away from Ramadi and Fallujah, and prompted 300 newly recruited Iraqi police to desert.

The insurgents then launched fresh attacks on Baqubah and Samarra, this source said.

**"The insurgents have grasped that we cannot be everywhere at once, and they can hit us where they wish, and we can't do anything about it," this source said.**

**O'Hanlon agreed, noting, "The guerrillas are building on their growing strength."**

U.S. intelligence experts continue to try and create a guerrilla order of battle that shows their exact numbers, locations and leaders. According to the U.S. military, there are about 11,000 to 20,000 insurgents spread throughout Iraq, the New York Times reported.

**But a former senior CIA official said that a network that could number as high as 100,000 is supporting this group.**

**"The problem is, this number is growing," he added.**

Former CIA counter-terrorism chief Vince Cannistraro concurred, saying, **"In spite of all our efforts to divide and weaken this insurgency, it is deepening and spreading."**

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## **One More Stupid Fiasco Run By Even Stupider "U.S. Officials"**

Dec 25, 2004 By Matt Spetalnick, ISKANDARIYA, Iraq (Reuters)

**The first stroke of Christmas found U.S. Marines blasting down doors in a hunt for an insurgent leader in one of Iraq's most hostile towns, hoping to serve him up to their commanding officer as a Yuletide gift.**

Bursts of gunfire and deafening explosions shook an upscale neighborhood of Iskandariya, in a lawless area south of Baghdad commonly dubbed the "Triangle of Death." **But the target of the house-to-house search was nowhere to be found. [Of course not. He knew it was coming. Duh. See article above.]**

"Let's hope the rest of Christmas won't be as disappointing," said one 21-year-old Marine who had started out on the meticulously planned mission if anything even more gung-ho than his comrades.

**Instead of spending a tense Christmas waiting for attack, commanders ushered in the holiday by going on the offensive; their target was Ali Kazar, a suspected leader of the Sunni Arab insurgency.**

**U.S. troops and Iraqi police commandos swept into town in a convoy of Humvee patrol cars, smashing their way into a building where he was thought to be living.**

**Dazed, barefoot residents, including women and children, were forced out,** but only two people, including a member of Saddam's now dissolved Baath party, were detained.

**Many Iraqis say American forces use heavy-handed tactics that alienate ordinary people -- something U.S. officials deny. [One of the more incredible sentences of this new century. Iraqis say the tactics alienate them. U.S. officials say the Iraqis are not alienated, even though Iraqis say they are alienated. Oh fuck no, these quaint Iraqis just love having people kick down their doors in the middle of a**

winter night, “forcing them” out in the cold. Wouldn’t you? And then they pretend to be “alienated” when they’re really not.]

Leaping back into their vehicles, troops then converged on a nearby mosque in hopes of finding Kazar there, but instead only came away with three lesser suspects and several assault rifles.

Within minutes, the Marines were back at their base where a banner outside the command center read: "Peace on Earth."

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## **Notes from a lost war:**

# **Insurgents Infiltrating Command Structure, U.S. Says: “It’s Far Worse Than Vietnam”**

[Thanks to D in Atlanta, who sent this in:]

December 25, 2004 By Bryan Bender, Boston Globe Staff & December 24, 2004 Dan Murphy, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON -- **Iraqi insurgents and their informants have been infiltrating US and coalition organizations, Iraqi security units, and political parties in growing numbers**, posing a daunting challenge to efforts to defeat the guerrillas, according to US military officials, Iraq specialists, and a new study of Iraqi security forces.

Insurgents in Iraq are increasingly operating within their midst.

**And in many cases, they appear to be gathering better intelligence on US military movements and the activities of the new Iraqi government than coalition forces are gathering on guerrilla plans.**

**"Penetration of Iraqi security and military forces may be the rule, not the exception," according to a draft version of a study of Iraqi security forces by a senior Pentagon consultant.**

"There are more and more infiltrators out there," said Army Colonel Paul Hughes, who served as a political adviser to US occupation authorities in Iraq. "It is the nature of insurgency."

The new study, by Anthony Cordesman, a Pentagon adviser who interviewed numerous US and Iraqi officials in Iraq, draws worrisome parallels between the Iraq insurgency and the failed US military effort to battle the Communist insurgency in Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s.

**"Developments in Iraq indicate that the US faces a repetition of its experience in Vietnam in the sense that as various insurgent factions organize, they steadily improve their intelligence and penetration of organizations,"**

In Vietnam, US forces suffered dramatic losses at the hands of Vietcong guerrillas who were able to slip spies into areas where US military forces and their South Vietnamese allies were operating, the study notes. Family and other close ties between guerrillas and local civilians combined to give the Vietcong a bird's-eye view of US fire bases and troop movements, allowing them to launch precise and deadly attacks on American infantry units and installations.

**"The end result may be an extremely high degree of transparency on US, Iraqi government, aid, and every other aspect of Iraqi operations," according to the report. "This enables them to locate soft targets, hit at key points in terms of Iraq's economy and aid projects, and time their attacks to points of exceptional vulnerability."**

**"The lack of highly visible Iraqi forces... [has] also reinforced the image of a nation where fighting is done by foreigners, non-Muslims, and occupiers. The end result has been that many Coalition and Iraqi Interim Government tactical victories produce a costly political and military backlash. Even successful military engagements can lead to the creation of as many new insurgents as they do kill or capture," writes Cordesman.**

Moreover, tackling the problem in Iraq may prove even more difficult than it was in Vietnam, where the North Vietnamese Communists ultimately took over South Vietnam, analysts say, because there is a high premium for Iraqi participation in the nation-building effort, and the United States simply cannot cut local ties.

**"It's far worse than Vietnam," said retired Army Colonel David Hackworth, who spent five years as an infantry officer in Vietnam and now writes about Iraq. "In Vietnam, we did not allow civilians on our tactical fire bases. We learned the hard way that most of the civilians worked for the enemy and they were there to spy."**

In Iraq, he said, "A lot of those people go home at night, and just like Vietcong provide intelligence to the guerrillas -- to a brother, a cousin, or someone who comes by the house."

**Widespread infiltration does not only provide insurgents with critical intelligence about possible US and Iraqi targets. It also potentially compromises US and Iraqi operations aimed at locating insurgent hide-outs and arms supplies,** according to Andrew Krepinevich, a specialist in counterinsurgency and president of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments in Washington. "Insurgents can be forewarned of any plans we might have to defeat them," he said.

**Increasing security at US and Iraqi facilities to avoid another Mosul, he added, will require more of something already in short supply: US troops.**

**"It drives up troops requirements," Krepinevich said. "It's extremely difficult to get a handle on it. This is a major problem."**

**MORE:**

## **The Resistance Is Everywhere: Camp Falluja Infiltrated**

December 23, 2004 By Nick Wadhams, Associated Press

At Camp Fallujah, Iraqis drive truck convoys full of food, gravel or other supplies and roam the grounds clearing trash. They eat at the base's two mess halls, often sitting at tables to chat with the Americans.

"Iraqis here on this base are supposed to be escorted, but you see them walking around by themselves," said Lance Cpl. Chris Roell, member of a K-9 unit deployed to Iraq.

**"They've got better digital cameras than we do.**

**"We've got Iraqis trying to make us feel better, saying this is the holiday season, cheer up, and then they're leaving base and giving their buddies grid coordinates."**

**One Marine, who spent three months at the camp guarding Iraqi detainees, said interrogators told him to watch Iraqi workers because prisoners were reporting the base had been infiltrated by insurgents.**

"The interrogators say to check the Iraqis on the base, to be aware of their actions — if they walk past a certain area too many times, writing down stuff, that kind of thing," **the Marine said, who spoke on condition of anonymity.**

**MORE:**

## **Major Says Iraqi Resistance Fighting "A People's War"**

December 25, 2004 By Thomas E. Ricks, Washington Post Staff Writer

Army commanders still misunderstand the strategic problem they face and therefore are still pursuing a flawed approach, writes Maj. Isaiah Wilson III, who served as an official historian of the campaign and later as a war planner in Iraq, and who is scheduled to teach at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point next year.

"Plainly stated, the 'western coalition' failed, and continues to fail, to see Operation Iraqi Freedom in its fullness," he asserts.



"Reluctance in even defining the situation . . . is perhaps the most telling indicator of a collective cognitive dissidence on part of the U.S. Army to recognize a war of rebellion, a people's war, even when they were fighting it," he comments.

**MORE:**

## **“Widespread” Hostility To U.S. Occupation, Vet Says**

December 23, 2004 By John Diamond, USA Today

“The idea that these are our allies, that’s a lot of bunk. That’s a really bad attitude,” Patrick Lang, an Iraq expert and former Army intelligence officer, said.

“There has to be a much larger support group in the population which doesn’t turn them in, which turns a blind eye, which cooperates with them.” He said there is widespread hostility to U.S. and allied forces face in Iraq.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

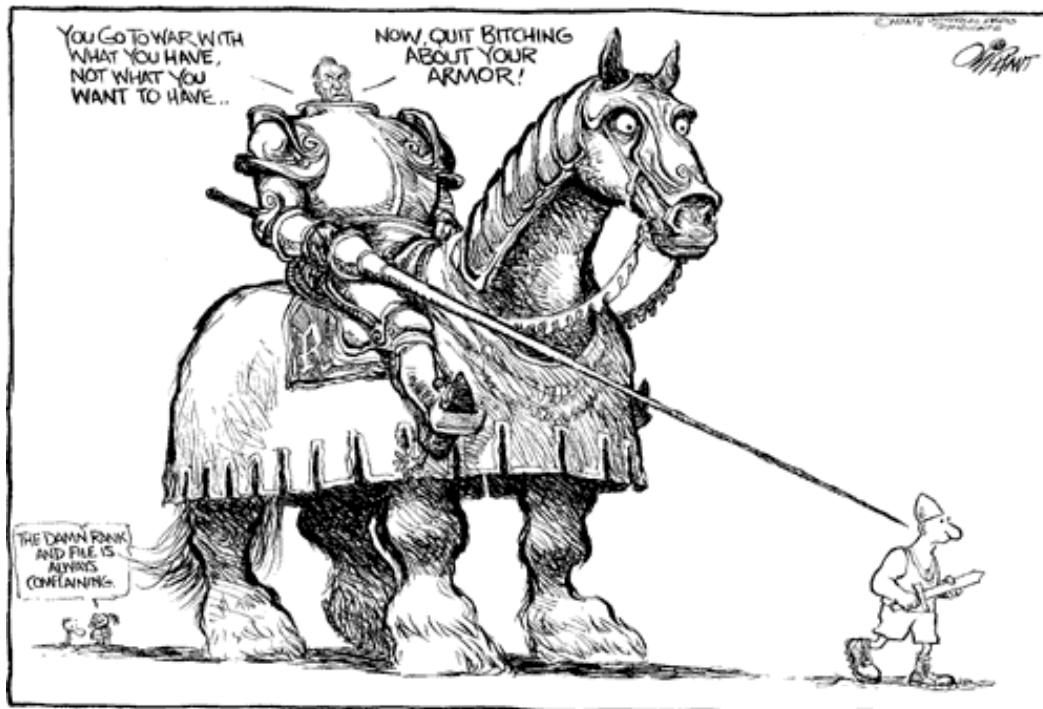
# **"Perhaps We Should Throw Stones?" More Guard Troops Sent Unprepared To War**

The unit's M-60 machine guns reportedly were in such bad condition when the soldiers deployed in February that one sergeant -- in a section of a post-training summary sent to his commanders that was titled "gun maintenance" -- wrote: "Perhaps we should throw stones?"

December 23, 2004 By SCOTT GOLD, Los Angeles Times

HOUSTON -- Members of a second National Guard unit that prepared for duty in Iraq at the Army's Fort Bliss compound have come forward with allegations that they were not adequately trained.

The soldiers said in interviews, e-mails and official documents that they were sent to war earlier this year with chronic illness, broken guns and trucks with blown transmissions.



Pat Oliphant

**The unit's M-60 machine guns reportedly were in such bad condition when the soldiers deployed in February that one sergeant -- in a section of a post-training summary sent to his commanders that was titled "gun maintenance" -- wrote: "Perhaps we should throw stones?"**

The allegations come a month after another National Guard unit alleged that its training at Fort Bliss was so poor that soldiers feared incurring needlessly high casualties when they arrive in Iraq early next year.

**Although the military has defended its troop preparedness, the willingness of units to go public with allegations suggests growing concern among National Guard and reserve members.**

**In the summary document obtained by the Los Angeles Times, the sergeant reported that some soldiers had arrived in Iraq without ever having fired some of the weapons they would use in war.**

Military commanders at the Fort Bliss complex, which straddles the Texas-New Mexico line, had misread mobilization orders, costing the soldiers a month of training, the sergeant wrote.

"We have been called away from our homes and families for hostile operations. We are owed a chance to be trained properly and given the tools to obtain that objective," the sergeant wrote.

The new charges are from members of Company F, 425th Infantry Battalion, a unit of the Michigan Army National Guard that is scheduled to return to the United States within two months. Company F has about 140 soldiers on its rolls. Both units trained at desert compounds in New Mexico that are part of Texas' Fort Bliss Training Complex.

The document in which the sergeant summarized his unit's training is known as an After-Action Review -- or AAR -- and is fairly common in the military. This one was widely disseminated among Company F soldiers, five of whom said it accurately outlined concerns shared by the entire unit.

The soldiers said the document was sent to commanders at Fort Bliss and the Pentagon. **The document was shown to The Times on condition that the name of the sergeant, who has extensive experience in both the National Guard and the active-duty armed forces, not be used.**

**According to the AAR, the unit's pistols and grenade launchers still had "deficiencies" after they were supposed to have been fixed up for battle. And of the unit's 21 M-60 machine guns, "upon deployment to the theater we have a total of 3 guns that are deficient-free," the document said.**

"That is something that should not be happening," David Segal, director of the Center for Research on Military Organization at the University of Maryland said. "Americans have the right to assume that their sons and daughters, when deployed, are being deployed with what they need to do the job."

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## Death From Rumsfeld Negligence Obvious At Camp Falluja

December 23, 2004 By Nick Wadhams, Associated Press

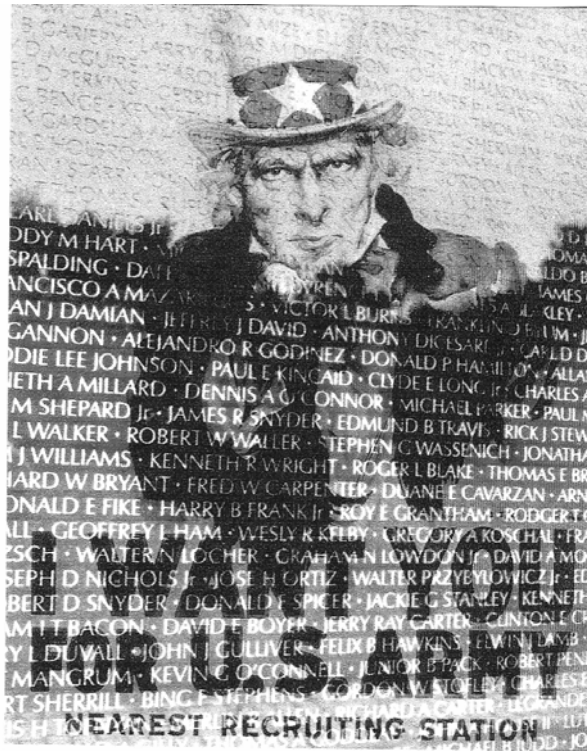
At Camp Fallujah, most convoys will include armored vehicles, **but there also are many Humvees and trucks, some 20 years old, whose side armor consists of a single sheet of metal.**

Marines have made some improvements, covering the floors and truck beds with blast mats. They point to scars left by roadside bombs, universally referred to here as IEDs, short for improvised explosive devices.

**"Shrapnel will go through this thing like paper," Bryce Rogow, a combat medic with the Marines' 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, said on a recent night as his five-vehicle convoy moved along dirt roads south of Fallujah littered with IEDs. [Thanks to Rumsfeld, at Camp Fallujah the shrapnel also goes through troops "like paper."]**

**"I basically ride around these roads expecting to get hit. It's very grating."**

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I  
Remember  
Another  
Quagmire  
Mike Hastie  
Vietnam Veteran

**One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.**

**Mike Hastie  
U.S. Army Medic  
Vietnam 1970-71  
December 13, 2004**

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 examples of his outstanding work. T)

## **Spc. Jonathan Castro Dead: U.S. Should 'Bring Them All Home,' His Mom Says**

**"We need to bring them all home. But we can't admit we're doing it wrong. So we'll keep sending more."**

**He became disillusioned, she said, by the Army's failure to back its mission with overwhelming force; by the huge profits he saw U.S. contractors making in Iraq; by the amount of oil he realized came with Iraq as a prize.**

December 25, 2004 By Robert McClure, Seattle Post-Intelligencer

**Spc. Jonathan Castro, 21  
Hometown: Corona, Calif.**

In one of Vickie Castro's lasting images of her son, Jonathan, he's a little boy waiting for his dad to come home so they can go ride a horse together.

As he pulls on his boots, the giddy child fairly squirms with anticipation.

He'll soon be bouncing along on the horse's rump, holding on to his dad's belt loops.

"Pepito!" the boy cries when his dad comes through the door, mangling the Spanish for "Papacito," an affectionate term for one's father. "I'm ready to go!"

It is an image of sheer joy.

**By the time of Vickie Castro's last conversation with Jonathan, his world was very different indeed. He was nursing a nagging, painful ankle injury that never received proper care, she said. His phone call from Iraq was hurried.**

"I said, 'Jonathan, you sound exhausted.' **And he said, 'Mom, it's pretty hard to do these 18-hour shifts, seven days a week,'**" she said. "He said, 'I don't have a lot of time. I need to take a shower and go to bed.'"

**"But he wanted to let me know he was safe and he wasn't going to die in a foreign land."**

**Jonathan Castro died this week in Mosul.**

**By the time he made that phone call, he was to have been safely back in his Southern California home.** He lived near the border of Orange and Riverside counties by the Cleveland National Forest, where he used to go riding with his dad.

He joined the Army before the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. **His initial four-year hitch was up June 28.**

**But one week earlier, he was issued a "stop-loss" order, which requires a soldier to stay on past his initial enlistment. Castro, a combat engineer who was an expert with explosives, didn't gripe, his mother said.**

"He knew he signed that contract. He said, 'Mom, I read the small print. I know it's an eight-year commitment and they can keep me for eight years,' " she said.

A combat engineer in the Stryker Brigade, his Fort Lewis-based unit deployed in October.

**He became disillusioned, she said, by the Army's failure to back its mission with overwhelming force; by the huge profits he saw U.S. contractors making in Iraq; by the amount of oil he realized came with Iraq as a prize.**

Today, Vickie Castro wants people to remember how good her son was. And in his short life, Jonathan Castro was a remarkable man. A remarkable boy, really.

A member of the Technical Education Club at Centennial High School, Castro built his own battery-powered car from the ground up and raced it in a national competition in Portland, Ore. He designed and built his own electric guitar -- even though he didn't know how to play it.

Castro's mother says his death should serve as a lesson.

"The whole nation should be sorry about that, and until we open our eyes to realize that, more and more of these wonderful women and men are going to lose their lives over there," Vickie Castro said.

**"We need to bring them all home. But we can't admit we're doing it wrong. So we'll keep sending more."**

## **56% Say War Not Worth It**

Dec 24 WASHINGTON, Dec 24 (IPS)

A majority of 56 percent of respondents in a Washington Post-ABC News poll released Tuesday concluded that, given the cost in military casualties, the conflict "was not worth the fight." **That marked an eight-point increase since last summer, and, as the Post pointed out, "the first time a decisive majority of people have reached this conclusion."**

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## Merry Christmas --- Not

Thousands of miles from loved ones, working with little rest and facing an increasingly frustrating and deadly insurgency, most troops were hardly in a holiday mood. Several Marines said they were using Christmas to remember fallen comrades or were marking the day until the end of their tours of duty.

"You get homesick but you have to push it to the back of your mind or you go nuts," said Lance Corporal Andrew Alderson, 20, of Pelham, North Carolina, who plans to marry on his return. Dec 25, 2004 By Matt Spetalnick, ISKANDARIYA, Iraq (Reuters)

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## DONALD RUMSFELD: POLITICAL GENIUS The Secretary Of Defense Speaks

December 23, 2004 By John Diamond, USA Today

The answer most often cited by outside experts — more troops — has its own risks, Rumsfeld warns. **Sending more troops, he said, "has the counterproductive aspect of creating additional targets and *creating* a sense of occupation."**

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## GENERAL RICHARD MYERS: MILITARY GENIUS The JCS Chair Speaks

December 23, 2004 By John Diamond, USA Today

In the wake of the Mosul bombing, the immediate imperative facing U.S. forces is protecting the troops. **Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff called it "Job One." He said at the Pentagon briefing that the solution is simple.**

**"The way we prevent this is we win."** Myers said.

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## Mosul:

# "It Was Horrific Inside There"

December 25, 2004 By CHRISTINE HAUSER, THE NEW YORK TIMES

MOSUL, Iraq -- On Tuesday, Sgt. Michael Posner was standing in the middle of a crowded dining hall at Forward Operating Base Marez, holding a cheeseburger and fries on a lunch tray and looking for his friends, when a huge force blew him off his feet.

The rows of tables and chairs shattered in a chaos of debris and blood. Screams tore through the room. The air turned dusky with the gray aftermath of smoke and dust, out of which the faces of the living and the dead slowly emerged.

Yesterday, Posner, 34, from Farmingville, N.Y., was one of hundreds of service members who went to the base's movie theater to honor two of the 14 U.S. soldiers killed in the attack. In pairs, they filed past a now-familiar battlefield monument: the dead men's helmets and dog tags slung on their M-16s, propped up between their combat boots.

The mourners touched the helmets, sobbed, bowed their heads.

Posner clumped forward on crutches, his right leg broken. Facing the first helmet, he leaned to balance on his left leg and rapidly executed a clumsy but vigorous salute. He moved to the second helmet and saluted again. Then he leaned back into his crutches and made his way back down the aisle. Outside, he turned his back. His shoulders heaved as he sobbed.

**Posner's injuries are mapped out across his body, from the place on his head where a ball bearing was removed, his hip where shrapnel entered and exited, down his thigh still implanted with shrapnel and on to his fractured lower right leg, swathed in bandages.**

Officials have said the suicide attacker embedded the bomb with small ball bearings that, propelled by the explosion, drove deeply into bodies, killing and maiming.

Posner, who weighs about 260 pounds and is 6 feet 6 inches tall, said he felt as if he had been "launched" by the force of the blast.

"The next thing I knew, I was wiggling around on the floor," he said. "I was hurt. It felt like something had hit me on the hip. It hurt like hell. I tried to crawl away."

On his stomach, his face to the floor, he wormed along, peering through the dim light, only to find himself awash in carnage. "It was pandemonium," he said. "It was gruesome. There were body parts everywhere.

**"I remember crawling over some guy writhing in pain," he said. "He was screaming in pain. He was a civilian American. He was bleeding, calling out for help. I climbed over him and crawled underneath a broken table or chair, throwing it out of my way. But the place was destroyed. People everywhere were screaming. It was horrific inside there."**



Dazed, he groped for a weapon and struggled to get out to a bunker, thinking it was a mortar attack and that more would follow. Many of the soldiers interviewed here thought the blast was from mortars or rockets. None interviewed said he had seen anything suspicious inside the mess hall. The authorities now believe a suicide bomber, dressed in an Iraqi uniform, set off the explosion.

**"I had total tunnel vision," Posner said. "I kept seeing my wife and my baby's face in front of my eyes. That's what drove me."**

He found a bunker, where one soldier was helping another who had multiple chest punctures. A dazed young private, also wounded, sat shocked and quiet nearby. Posner tried to dress his own wounds.

"Bro, go get help," Posner told the private. But the young man did not move. Finally, a medic arrived. He cut strips from the sergeant's uniform for temporary bandages.

In Farmingville, N.Y., yesterday, the sergeant's wife, Nanci Posner, said that when he called Tuesday to assure her that he was all right, he said, "All my vital organs are fine." But the phone went dead. "Let me tell you something: that was the worst feeling in the world," she said. Then he called back.

Other soldiers interviewed here yesterday recalled the attack, saying that a call went out over a loudspeaker for combat medics to rally to the mess hall. Soldiers already inside who were not badly hurt helped out.

One of them was Spc. Jeremiah McMurray. He said he rushed in and was somehow drawn to a body that was lying face up on the floor. It was a member of his battalion, Sgt. Lynn Poulin Sr.

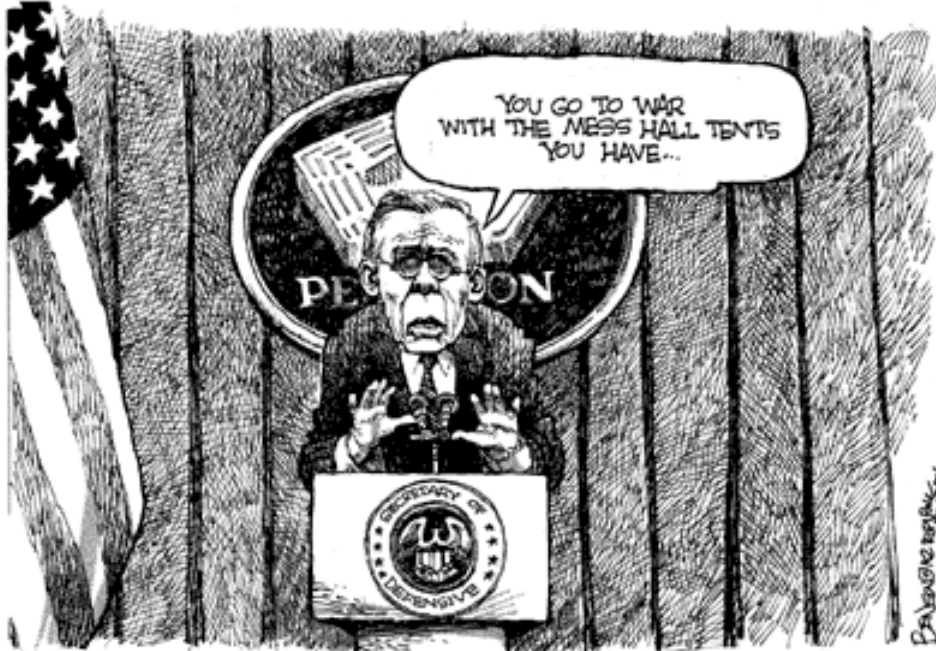
"I noticed his glasses," McMurray said. "I crouched down next to him and realized he was dead."

**McMurray was at the memorial service, too, along with hundreds of other men and women in the 133rd Engineer Battalion to remember Poulin and another soldier killed in the attack, 20-year-old Spc. Thomas Dostie. Hours later, a reporter asked Posner, who had been wounded once before in a roadside bombing, what he was thinking when he hobbled up to salute the dead men.**

**"That could easily have been me," he said.**

**MORE:**

## **Dad Outraged Over Son's Mosul Death; Condemns Army Incompetence**



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Steve Benson

December 25, 2004, Steve Rubenstein, San Francisco Chronicle Staff Writer

**The father of a 23-year-old Army staff sergeant from Seaside who was killed by an insurgent's attack on an Iraq mess hall says he was outraged to learn that a security failure apparently led to his son's death.**

During a telephone interview on Christmas Eve, Peter Johnson said he couldn't accept official explanations about the death of his son, Robert, in the attack that killed 22 people and wounded 60 near Mosul on Tuesday.

**"This is a country filled with terrorists that want to kill us, and we have better security at our own airports," Johnson said. "How could we have let our surveillance down? Why weren't people checked more carefully? I'm furious."**

Johnson and the slain sergeant's mother, Mina Schrock, were notified Wednesday that mortar fire had killed their son. Later, they were informed that the initial report was incorrect, and that a suicide bomber had walked into the mess hall and exploded a device.

**"How could this person have gotten in?" Johnson asked. "There have been repeated attacks at this mess hall. Why wasn't there better security?"**

Johnson had enlisted in the Army in 2000, after attending Seaside High School and graduating from an affiliated high-school studies program. He was stationed in Korea from 2002 until last year and was promoted to sergeant shortly after his arrival in Iraq two months ago.

**His family remembered him as a friendly, athletic young man who loved dancing, bicycling, going to action movies, building computers and playing sports.**

His father said he had last heard from his son about a month ago, by e-mail.

"He said that he had been fired upon, and had fired back, and that he was all right," Johnson recalled. "He also said he hated the food."

Johnson said his son had turned down an opportunity to join him in his construction business in order to enlist in the Army. He had recently re-enlisted for three more years.

"My son was a stand-up guy," he said. "He wanted to help the country, but he didn't make a big deal about it. He always did what was required, and more. He just couldn't stand still. **There was a gentleness about him, and if you befriended him he was your pal for life.**"

**MORE:**

## **Traitors At Work: Major Says Central Command Refused To Spend Money To Save Troops Lives**

December 23, 2004 By Nick Wadhams, Associated Press

In November, Central Command issued a reminder about its force protection requirements, which include buildings made of reinforced concrete and blast walls. **But it has not made new funding available, said Maj. Brian O'Leary of Camp Fallujah.**

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## **Greencastle Man Injured In Mosul: "Now It's Like He's Disconnected"**

December 25, 2004 By JIM HOOK, Senior writer, Public Opinion

Staff Sgt. George Weber is spending Christmas a half a world away from his family and recovering from the trauma of a suicide bombing in northern Iraq.

Weber, 38, lost some hearing in both ears in the blast that killed 22 people and injured 72 on Tuesday, according to his wife, Tammy Weber of Greencastle.

Tammy Weber hasn't spoken to her husband since the bombing of the mess tent in Mosul, but he has communicated with her by e-mail.

"He said he wasn't ready to talk about it," Tammy Weber said. "He keeps seeing it in his head. He's very stressed out."

"You want him to come home," Tammy Weber said. "You want him to come home the same person. Something like this will change him forever. It's scary."

George Weber, a native of Altoona and a veteran of Desert Storm, was in the Marines for 10 years before the Pentagon downsized the military, and Weber was forced out. A machinist and truck driver in civilian life, George Weber missed the military. He signed up for the Army reserves.

A driver with the 309th Transportation Company in Greencastle, he arrived in Iraq on Feb. 24. He is serving with the 283rd Trucking Company from Fort Devins, Mass.

Tammy Weber said she has worried in the past when she heard that truck convoys were attacked. Her husband's fuel truck was a target, but she always thought the odds favored her husband.

She last saw her husband almost a year ago. He was gone eight months out of the previous year.

"It does take a toll on the whole family," Tammy Weber said.

He's missed the senior year of 17-year-old daughter Kadee. Leah turns 16 next week.

On Sunday he listened on the telephone to Sara, 5, play her recital piece.

"He was in good spirits and laughing," Tammy Weber said. "Now it's like he's disconnected. They say that happens to them over there."

This is the first Christmas that the family has been apart.

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## Wound Brings Wyoming Soldier Home For Unexpected Holiday Time

**"All the stories you read are about Wyoming kids that come back in a coffin," said his brother, Brian.**

December 25, 2004 Associated Press

CASPER - Even a month ago, Kelly Sorensen was hardly planning on having a traditional holiday season. **For a second year in a row he was stationed half a world away from the people he loved.**

Then, while on patrol in Ramadi, Iraq, he was shot in the shoulder.

The wound required two surgeries \_ and he still has a bullet in him. He was sent back for rehabilitation in Fort Carson, Colo., and time to spend with his parents, eight brothers and sisters, and fiancée. He hadn't expected to be home at least until March.

While the soldiers tried to assure the Iraqi citizens of their intentions, they also had to use caution at every turn.

**"You never know an enemy from a civilian," he said. "The same person who's waving at you could be the same person who shoots you."**

While his family held their breaths, Sorensen was meeting other wounded soldiers and spending Thanksgiving appreciating his good fortune.

**"All the stories you read are about Wyoming kids that come back in a coffin," said his brother, Brian.** "There's nothing more to be grateful for than a healthy brother coming back from the war."

Sorensen finally got a chance to meet up with his family in early December, when his fiancée, Emily Thompson, drove from school in Greeley to Fort Carson.

"I try to keep busy. Everybody does," Thompson said, leaning close into Sorensen's side. "We don't really allow ourselves to miss him too much; it'll drive you crazy."

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## National Guard Running On Empty

**The Guard's nondeployed units lack 33 percent of essential items such as principal weapon and mission systems, the study concluded. As of June, the Guard's stocks had been depleted to the point where it had to ask the Army to provide 13,000 pieces of equipment for deploying units.**

December 27, 2004 By Jane McHugh, Army Times staff writer

Traditionally, the Guard has built 50 percent of its force out of soldiers leaving active duty. But after the war in Iraq began, the Army adopted stop-loss policies that bar some eligible active soldiers from leaving the service at their regular separation and retirement dates.

**At the same time, many active soldiers who have left the service don't want to join the Guard when there's a strong likelihood they will be pressed into full-time duty and go back to a combat zone.** The result is that recruiters no longer can count on a 50-50 mix of prior- and non-prior service soldiers, Lt. Gen. Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau said.

As a result, the mix of recruits is probably going to be more like 65 percent non-prior and 35 percent prior service, he said.

**For all the problems that the operations tempo has caused the Guard, Blum said there's an important upside. "At the rate we're using the Guard now, we'll probably have a force that's 70 percent combat experienced two years from now," he said. [Those that aren't killed or too fucked up to serve, that is. That's an "upside" for this disgusting ghoul. Time to send his worthless ass to Iraq and see how he feel about getting more "combat experience."]**

According to a recent study by the Government Accountability Office, Guard readiness has declined as a result of the high use of personnel and equipment.

Between September 2002 and May 2004, for example, the Guard transferred more than 18,000 night-vision goggles; 1,700 chemical monitors; 900 wheeled vehicles; 700 radios;; and 500 machine guns, among other items, from non-deployed units to deployed ones, the study said.

**By June 2004, the Guard had transferred more than 35,000 pieces of equipment and had "critical shortages" of about 480 types of items, including machine guns and heavy trucks, the GAO said.**

A critical shortage is defined as having five or fewer of an item in the total Guard inventory.

**The Guard's nondeployed units lack 33 percent of essential items such as principal weapon and mission systems, the study concluded. As of June, the Guard's stocks had been depleted to the point where it had to ask the Army to provide 13,000 pieces of equipment for deploying units.**

# **Miss. Unit Locked Down At Christmas; Troops Headed For Iraq Denied Visits With Families By Sadistic Assholes In Command**

December 23, 2004 Associated Press

**HATTIESBURG, Miss. — Officials with the 1st U.S. Army are looking for five missing weapons and are keeping about 400-700 soldiers on lockdown at Camp Shelby while the search for the weapons is underway.**

The soldiers on lockdown are members of the 1st Battalion of the 155th Brigade Combat Team.

**On Wednesday, the 155th held a deployment ceremony. Many of the soldiers' family members described the bittersweet moment — knowing their loved ones would be home for Christmas but in war-torn Iraq within weeks.**

The 155th was called up in June and has been training at the sprawling 136,000-acre south Mississippi base near Hattiesburg since then. The training included a month-long stint in the Mojave Desert at Fort Irwin, Calif.

**However, the soldiers on lockdown will remain at Camp Shelby prior to their deployment until the weapons — four 9mm handguns and a M4 semiautomatic rifle — are found, First Army officials said in a statement released Wednesday.**

Military officials said the weapons were discovered missing Tuesday. Officials said the weapons were on the post Monday.

Officials said a search of the barracks and vehicles did not turn up the weapons.

### **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))**

## **Three Ordered To Stand Trial In Staged Shooting Of Soldier**

December 23, 2004 By Patrick Walters, Associated Press

**PHILADELPHIA — A judge on Wednesday ordered a soldier, his wife and her cousin to stand trial in an alleged plot to keep the enlisted man out of Iraq by shooting him in the leg.**

Prosecutors said **Spc. Marquise J. Roberts, his wife, Donna Roberts, and her cousin, Roland Fuller, had originally planned to find someone else to undertake the shooting but decided to do it themselves when they got no takers.**

Marquise Roberts, 23, a supply specialist who had spent seven months in Iraq, was distraught about having to return to combat duty and wanted to stay with his family, authorities said.

Scott Schweiger, an attorney for Donna Roberts, said the three simply wanted to keep their family together. "Their intentions were good," Schweiger said. "The judgment was horrible."

**The three had originally planned on shooting the soldier three times, Winter said, but "they decided once was enough."**

"There was no doubt that there was a criminal element involved because of what they did," said Craig Mitnick, an attorney for Fuller. "It was stupidity, but it was youth, it was fear." **[Maybe stupid, maybe not. One thing for sure, he's definitely not going to Iraq anytime soon. Mission accomplished.]**

Military officials have said that Roberts could face military discipline if the charges prove to be true. **"I've been put on notice that in all likelihood he will face court-martial charges,"** said William T. Cannon, Spc. Roberts' attorney.

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **More Attacks On Collaborators**

December 25 By DUSAN STOJANOVIC Associated Press Writer & BAGHDAD (AFP)

An Iraqi working as an interpreter for the US military and his wife were shot dead by gunmen near the northern city of Mosul -- their bodies riddled with 30 bullet holes, said police.

And just north of the capital, gunmen mowed down a local council member

**Gov. Abdallah al-Juburi of Diyala escaped an assassination attempt, but four of his bodyguards were injured, when his convoy was targeted with an explosive charge in Baghdad.**

**In Mosul, several Iraqi National Guardsmen were wounded after they were targeted by an explosive charge.**

**"The current Mosul situation is best described as tense," Lieutenant Colonel Paul Hastings told AFP on Thursday. [No shit?]**

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

### **Dead End -- Game Over**



December 23, 2004 By John Diamond, USA Today

The implications of the audacious suicide attack in the center of a heavily guarded U.S. military base in Mosul go beyond a failure of base security. **The attack is the latest evidence that Iraqi insurgents have better intelligence about U.S. forces than U.S. forces have on the insurgents.**

**“The message that the attack on the base sends to average Iraqis is that if the Americans can’t protect their own soldiers on their own bases, how are they going to protect you,”** said Andrew Krepinevich, a military analyst with the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.

**“We have to expend more resources trying to make bases secure, which leaves fewer resources for dealing with insurgents,”** Krepinevich said.

## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

### **MOSUL: PROOF RUMSFELD IS RIGHT!**



**From: Pentagon Press Office:** Donald Rumsfeld pointed out during his visit to Mosul 12.24.04 that the press only reports the bad news from Iraq, not the wonderful accomplishments of the occupation and the deep love Iraqis have for all the help President Bush is giving them.

Here is the proof. **Read the negative caption the enemies of freedom gave this photo:**

**“Iraqis throw stones at a burning bus in the northern city of Mosul. The bus was hit by a roadside bomb in Mosul after dropping off a group of special Iraqi security forces. (12.25.04 AFP/Mujahed Mohammed)”**

**What this AFP reporter is concealing is that the Iraqis gathered around the burning police van *were throwing the stones in an effort to put out the fire.***

Furthermore, the reporter failed to explain that because the Iraqis are a primitive, backward, tribal people, they do not understand that a fire can't be extinguished by the throwing of stones, but requires special fire-fighting equipment.

To help these happy, childlike people learn about modern life, the United States will need to spend at least an additional 20 years and \$500 trillion in the effort to civilize them. Until they prove they are capable of managing their own affairs, they will need guidance and a firm hand from the U.S. government, as any child would need from a loving, concerned parent.

**Progressive people everywhere understand that the U.S. armed forces came to Iraq in peace and friendship only to free the Iraqis from their oppressors. Long live the glorious friendship of the Iraqi and American people! Long live the deeply humane spirit and wise thoughts of George Bush, the sun and moon of democracy, he whose wisdom is higher than the Rocky Mountains!!**

## **DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

# **While The Bloody Criminal Class Called "Politicians" Stuff Their Own Pockets And Turn Their Backs, Others Must Go Begging For Help For Wounded Troops**

[War profiteers rake it in, Bush gives away the Treasury to his rich campaign contributors, with the Democrats a close second, a truly bi-partisan effort. This small item says more about who pays the price for war than 100 long, windy articles.

[The scumbags in DC send troops to fight for The Evil Empire, and then make them beg for charity when they get fucked up.]

**Azalea Charities Aid to Wounded Soldiers**

[The complete list and how to help at <http://www.azaleacharities.com/aid.htm>]

The Azalea Charities Aid to Wounded Soldiers project provides comfort and relief items for soldiers and Marines sick, injured or wounded from service in Iraq and Afghanistan. Donated items are distributed to soldiers and Marines at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the National Naval Medical Center Bethesda each week. Many of the soldiers and Marines are grievously wounded and will require long hospitalization and rehabilitation.

**Phone Cards: patients who have regular communication with loved ones have better morale and better morale helps patients to heal faster.** Phone cards also help the parents and loved ones of the wounded who must be reassured and comforted by regular communication with the soldiers and Marines.

***Unfortunately, many soldiers and their families lack the financial means to communicate regularly.***

Phone cards of at least 120 minutes are requested. Highest priority on the list.

Women's Clothes: our supply of women's underwear is extremely low. New only.  
Medium sized top and bottom sweat suit sets  
Medium and large panties, all styles  
Medium and large sports bras

Men's Clothing: **many soldiers arrive at in hospital with only the clothes on their backs. [And obviously this government of, by, and for the predators has no intention of handing any out for free.]**

Some of these items are required for soldiers undergoing rehabilitation training. Good quality, new only.

Medium and large boxer shorts (any color but white)  
Medium and large basketball style exercise shorts  
Medium and large light jackets  
Medium and large breakaway exercise pants (also known as snap-sided sweat pant bottoms)

These clothing items are required for soldiers undergoing rehabilitation training - the swim trunks for pool physical training.

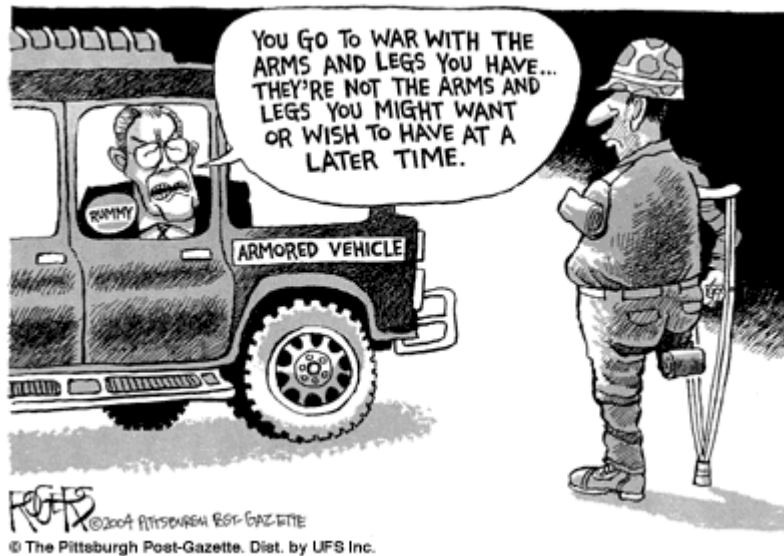
Rolling Luggage: in black, 26"-30" sizes; new only. **Soldiers returning home on convalescent leave have no luggage to carry their clothes and personal items. [Hey, maybe your Senator or Congressperson can spare some used supermarket bags to help out. Their servants can bring them to the hospital.]**

**Stamps:** no envelopes, no writing pads or any other kind of stationary; just the stamps.

**[Right, wouldn't want to bust the Federal budget by giving stamps to the wounded. Meanwhile, if you're a member of Congress, guess what, every fucking scrap of your "official" mail is free, does not cost you one cent.]**

[So, no phone calls home, no clothes, and no stamps unless the wounded pay for it; or their families do, if they have any money left from paying for their own travel expenses to the hospital; or the troops have to go begging, or do without.

[Senators, Representatives, and the assholes around Bush in the Executive Branch make more money than 99.9% of the troops ever will, and these disgusting motherfucking worthless corrupt pieces of shit treat the troops like dogs begging for table scraps. This is the kind of evil treatment of the wounded that has, should and hopefully someday will bring on the kind of revolution that puts the politicians responsible for this war on trial for their lives.]



Rob Rogers

**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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