

GI SPECIAL 3A11:

REALLY BAD IDEA: NO MISSION; HOPELESS WAR



Spc. Kenneth Lackey waits board a chartered airplane Saturday, Jan. 8, 2005, at Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Ga., while his company prepares to deploy to Iraq. **The division, which helped lead the charge to Baghdad, is the first Army division tapped to return to Iraq since the March 2003 invasion.** (AP Photo/Stephen Morton)

“A Domestic Enemy Of The United States”: MORE:

[This is too important not to repeat, with the additional information at the end.

[When the history of the movement that finally stopped the war in Iraq is written, this letter will have a very special place. Coming from a serving soldier, and a Sgt., who feels a special responsibility to the troops that serve under him, it is a declaration of principle and allegiance to the liberties of the people of the United States in the spirit of Tom Paine and Patrick Henry.

[Read it with loving care, consider carefully what it means, carry it with you, and draw strength from it. And if you come across one our troops, have spare copies to pass along.

[After the letter are comments by Monica Benderman, who is no less courageously standing up to defend her husband, and no less articulately speaks out against the way our troops were betrayed and sent to die in this evil war for oil and Empire.

November 20, 2004
To: George W. Bush
From: SGT Kevin M. Benderman

When are you going to tell the truth to the people of the United States?

Why don't you tell them why you want to be in Iraq so bad?

I was there for six months and I did not see the first weapon of mass destruction. I did receive orders from the company commander to shoot children if they threw small rocks at us and that was when I figured out that the entire thing was way over the line.

Over 1200 soldiers have died in Iraq so that you can have a couple billion more dollars, that should make you feel very good about yourself.

The soldiers that have died for this sham that you have put over on the American people are so much more deserving than that. You are not worth the dust off of their boots.

If you truly had respect for the military and the people that serve then you would not continue to kill them in your war.

I joined the Army to protect my country and not to be a mercenary for a political despot.

If you wish to put me in prison because of my views then you should make room for about 75% of the military.

And while you are at make some room for yourself and about half of your administration. You are responsible for what happened at Abu Gharaib and you are shirking your responsibility.

The commander in chief is not above the UCMJ, as you would like to believe.

I want to fulfill my contract that says I joined the Army to protect my country against all enemies foreign and domestic, and as far as I am concerned you are a domestic enemy of the United States.

You care nothing for this country; you just care about the profits that are to be made from the oil in Iraq. That much is evident to me from the way the contracts were passed out to Halliburton and KBR. It must be nice to have the deck stacked in your favor by the president of the USA.

Since you are raising the debt ceiling of America so that we can pay the bills that you have run up, why don't you forgive the debts of every one in the armed forces since they are the ones that are making it possible for you to make billions from the oil from Iraq.

Sincerely,

SGT Kevin M. Benderman

MORE:

From Monica Benderman:

[The War.8.2088](#): **Monica Benderman** Fri, 31 Dec 2004 09:10:42 CST (54 lines)

Unfortunately, I believe that no soldier is in Iraq by his own doing.

Most definitely, the Iraqis are not. But to understand why I say that about the US military, I believe you have to become more aware of exactly what is involved in saying NO to Iraq.

My husband spoke to his commander yesterday, his unit is scheduled to fly back to Iraq next week.

The commander refused to approve his request for Conscientious Objector Status. My husband then took it to the Brigade CSM who did his best to talk my husband out of it. Going so far as to tell my husband that "the people we are going over there to kill rape 8 year old girls."

My husband's response... fathers rape their daughters in America, uncles rape their nieces, and pastors rape altar boys, and yet no American soldier is ordered to go to where that person lives and shoot them with an M-16."

The CO status is pending, but they are making it very difficult for my husband. The other options, for any military personnel who have a conscience....jail for however long this government decides, moving to Canada, or some other foreign country that may or not grant asylum, or WHAT???

Are you aware of how many soldiers, marines and National Guard would willingly join in a lawsuit against the legality of this war, if they could afford the high priced team of Human and Civil Rights attorneys who have expressed an interest in this case, and if they could be assured that once having taken on this case, they would still have a home, a family, and a country that supported them?

My husband has spoken to just such a team of attorneys. They have researched this case, and believe that, while difficult, it is possible. The problem... cost, and naturally, the unknown.

Soldiers need the support of their country. Soldiers fight hard for this country, and do not have the benefit of knowing just how many people are truly there for them.

If we could find a way to show them that the support is real, that the support isn't just lip service in chat rooms and on forum pages, but that it is real, and open, and confident in the RIGHT of what these soldiers are doing... I guarantee you... there are a hundred thousand soldiers who would fight for the right thing.

America hasn't done enough to show these soldiers that they will stand behind them when they throw down their weapons.

Right now... our government is "brainwashing" our military.. and our military is falling into their trap because there are still not enough strong American civilians who are willing to stand boldly beside the soldiers and say NO to that government.

The soldiers have lives, and families that they feel responsible for. We can talk all day about what they SHOULD DO... but many, first and foremost believe that they have no other choice but to follow orders, so that the people they love stay protected, not from enemy terrorists, but from our government.

We are all willing to fight... but I don't think American civilians realize how much of the fight for the military depends on them.

Sometime the talk has to stop, and the action begin.

Thank you.

MORE:

08 Jan 2005 **Monica Benderman** [The War.8.2088](#)}

I just got back from the hospital, Winn Army Hospital, visiting 2 soldiers, both of whom were scheduled to deploy with Kevin's unit yesterday.

One didn't make it.. he had knee problems and went to the doctor on Wednesday. The dr. gave him a full bottle of Percoset.

When his wife woke up yesterday morning, she found him on the floor. He had taken 32 Percoset. The doctor said that she was 10 min. from not being able to save him.

Today, he was still groggy, but determined.

They had told him that it didn't matter that he was in the Psych. ward, he was just "malingering" and he would be deployed on Monday, as soon as he was released. I talked with him and told him that his Sgt. Benderman had sent a message, "I got your back."

The soldier has decided to refuse to deploy, and he will stay here and fight alongside Kevin.

The second soldier also did not get on the plane. He missed the deploy time, and they thought that he had gone AWOL.

They found him along a highway about 30 min from here. He had driven to a point, stopped his car, taken a full bottle of pills, the gotten out and walked along the highway with a gun in his hand.

Fortunately, he passed out before he could use the gun. I gave him the same message from Kevin.

He too is ready to refuse deployment and stand with Kevin.

Both of these soldiers said that they would rather die here than die in Iraq. The details will come out, but I can assure you, it is due to an ungodly amount of pressure, very, very negative pressure from the same command structure that Kevin is now speaking out about.

These two soldiers are going to be okay. They are getting stronger, one is still a little more groggy than the other, but they are ready to fight.

Both are very grateful to everyone of you. I told them about all of the support they have waiting for them, and they really can't believe it.

For your information, there are many more to follow.

It is just the beginning.

There will be little communication with the soldiers "in country" until the end of this month, for "security reasons." But some of the soldiers did manage to find a way to be able to have access.. at very great risk to themselves.. so please know that there is a great problem with this unit right now.

We will keep you up to date, as we hear more. Just know, what you are doing does matter to these soldiers, and we are getting word to them. They are sooo happy to know that you all are there.

Thank you. Monica

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.

BAD TRIP



Pfc. Lesley Joiner listens to her MP3 player while she waits to deploy to Iraq Dec. 8, 2005, at Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Ga. **The division, which helped lead the charge to Baghdad, is the first Army division tapped to return to Iraq since the March 2003 invasion.** (AP Photo/Stephen Morton)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Two More Louisiana Soldiers Killed In Baghdad By Huge Bomb

1.10.04 PINEVILLE, La. (AP) & CJTF7 Release #050110I & By Dusan Stojanovic, Associated Press

Two more soldiers from Louisiana were killed early this morning in southwestern Baghdad. That's according to family members of Robert Sweeney, III of Pineville and William Manuel of Oberlin.

Sweeney and Manuel were members of the 256th Infantry Brigade of the Louisiana National Guard. Sweeney and Manuel were killed when a huge roadside bomb blast destroyed the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, one of the more heavily armored U.S. military vehicles, Lt. Col. James Hutton said.

That suggests the roadside bomb was more powerful than those typically used in recent months.

The military says four Americans were also wounded in the blast.

Today's blast came four days after another powerful roadside bomb hit a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, killing seven soldiers, six of them from Louisiana.



Louisiana Guardsman Robert Sweeney, of Pineville, La., Louisiana Guardsman killed in Iraq Jan. 10, 2005 when a roadside bomb exploded near his Bradley Fighting Vehicle. (AP Photo/Louisiana College)

**FALLUJA: DO NOT ENTER:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**



A US Marine from Lima Company takes cover as they patrol devastated city of Fallujah, some 50 kilometers west of capital Baghdad. (1.10.05 AFP/Hrvoje Polan)

TROOP NEWS

3,000 British Wounded; Mom Campaigns To Bring Troops Home

Jan 9 2005 Exclusive by Rupert Hamer, Defence Correspondent, sundaymirror.co.uk

On Thursday a British soldier was injured after rounds landed near tents in the Shatt Al Arab Hotel base, Basra.

Since the war began 3,000 troops have been sent back to Britain with battle wounds, mostly from mortars or roadside bombs.

Last June the RHA lost Pte Gordon Gentle, 19, to a roadside bomb in Basra. Since then his distraught mother, Rose, has led a campaign for troops to be recalled.
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MORE:

**“We Will Not Shut Up,
Till He Gives Up”**
From Rose Gentle:

From: Rose Gentle
To: GI Special
Sent: January 09, 2005

blair at it again
650 more scots troops to iraq.
the royal highland fusiliers will return within days,
blair has the killer dug

get the troops home
not in

is this man nuts,

let him go to iraq
see kids getting killed,

troops getting blown up,
send his sons,
to iraq,

how can he sleep at night,
we cant.

gordon did 6 month training
he didn't have enough training,
blairs done it for years
and still cant get his job done right.

i am asking the government to get its finger out of its back side
and
get the troops out,,,,

home

we will not shut up
till he gives up

rose gentle

MORE:

Britain Sending 400 More Troops To Iraq

Jan. 10, 2005 **Associated Press**

LONDON - Britain will send another 400 troops to Iraq ahead of elections there, Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon said Monday.

The soldiers from the 1st Battalion Royal Highland Fusiliers will be sent from Cyprus to southeast Iraq, Hoon told lawmakers in the House of Commons.

MORE:

Home The 12th Of Never

From: artisan
To: GI Special
Sent: Monday, January 10, 2005 3:43 PM
Subject: Geoff Hoon quote

Today on Channel 4 News Geoff Hoon (Minister of Defence) admitted that 'we do not really know what the situation on the ground will be after the (Iraqi) elections'

after being asked when the additional 400 British troops being sent to Iraq would return home (!)

HOW MANY MORE FOR BUSH'S WAR/



Hayle Burdine, right, hugs her father, Sgt.1st Class Riley Burdine at Fort Carson, Colo., Monday, Jan. 10, 2005, following a farewell ceremony for soldiers with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division as they prepare to deploy to Iraq (AP Photo/The Gazette, Mark Reis)

ArchAngel Update on Spc. Barron 01-09-05

ArchAngel would like to report what has happened to Spc. Barron an infantry Soldier with the 2/142 Infantry B. Co.

Spc. Barron called his wife to inform her that he had reported to sick call the following day that he arrived in Kuwait, and saw a Lt. Col. DeLeon for his constant pain in his knees.

The Lt. Col. asked Spc. Barron how in the hell did he get past SRC, that if he had anything to do with it, that he would have him sent right back home and be given a MEB (Medical Board) out of service because of his knees. **But, he also said this, " I can get you through this deployment, but there is no guarantee that you won't be crippled when it's done."**

The doctor also said that he would be given a Permanent Medical 3 Profile and that he was to report back to him the following day. **For the current pain though, Barron was given the steroid shot cortisone into the knee, and according to Barron when the needle was inserted, his knee had so much fluid on it that it squirted out. Unfortunately, the shot was to no avail for the pain.**

That very next day, he reported back to the doctor and for some reason now, instead of being sent home for his medical situation, DeLeon said that they will keep him with the command as long as if he doesn't have to run.

What kind of crap is this, ArchAngel asks?? How in the hell do you expect an infantry Soldier to not have to run. So if the enemy is attacking, what is he supposed to do, just sit there and be a shooting target?

The man cannot run, can only carry a load of up to 40 lbs., unable to do 3-5 sec. rushes under direct or indirect fire, and one thing that is also on his profile that we forgot to mention and it is one of the most important, and that is under item 5 letter f marked **NO**, it ask the question "is Soldier healthy without any medical condition that prevents deployment?"

Also, Spc. Barron is taking the medications called Ultram and Vicodin, which both have a warning label of, this drug may make you dizzy or drowsy; USE CAUTION ENGAGING IN ACTIVITIES REQUIRING ALERTNESS SUCH AS DRIVING OR USING MACHINERY. Vicodin can increase drowsiness and dizziness of other medications. With all this in mind, they still are giving him a P-3 medical profile.

ArchAngel just wishes to say this, "what in the hell is this doctor thinking when he says that command will keep him as long as if he doesn't run?"

Personally, I think that Spc. Barron's commander, asked for a favor of this doctor to change his mind so as to keep him there. Not only is Spc. Barron medically unfit for service, he also does not meet the Army qualifications of an 11B, infantry Soldier.

According to the rules, a Soldier must meet the **Physical demands of very heavy: Lift on an occasional basis over 100lbs. with frequent or constant lifting excess of 50lbs.** Also, he must have a **Physical Profile under the P.U.L.H.E.S. of a 11221 under at least one of these letters.** According to his profile, Spc. Barron has a 3 under the L of the P.U.L.H.E.S. and if you noticed, according to the qualifications, Spc. Barron must have at least a 1.

So according to the Army itself, Spc. Barron is no longer quantified as an infantryman. What do you think America? Once again we have a case of a Soldier who, too his commander, is just another number, medically fit or not. This needs to be addressed America.

Please if you wish for this to be corrected, write your Congressman, Senator and even the President and ask why are our tax dollars being used to force medically unfit Soldiers into war, when according to the rules and qualifications of the Army, the Soldier is no longer qualified. You can also make a statement by emailing ArchAngel, or perhaps you can even post on GI Special for all to read.

Just as a reminder, ArchAngel is not against the war, we are against how the war is being fought. Remember, Wars cannot be won with broken Soldiers!"



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Ukraine Decides To Get Troops Out Of Iraq Fast; “The Situation Has Deteriorated”

1/10/2005 By Anna Melnichuk, KIEV, Ukraine (AP)

President Leonid Kuchma on Monday ordered the foreign and defense ministries to develop a plan for withdrawing Ukraine's troops from Iraq within months, his office said.

Ukraine, whose 1,650 troops are the fourth-largest contingent in the U.S.-led operation in Iraq, previously expressed intentions to withdraw this year, but Kuchma's order speeds up the apparent timetable.

That order came a day after eight Ukrainian soldiers died in an explosion at an ammunition dump in Iraq, which was reported as an accident.

"The situation in Iraq has deteriorated and as a consequence we lost our men," acting Defense Minister Oleksandr Kuzmuk was quoted as saying by the Interfax news agency after meeting with Kuchma.

Kuzmuk added that the withdrawal could begin in March.

The withdrawal could be a symbolically significant blow against the U.S.-led operation, not only because of the Ukrainian contingent's size but because of the country's reputation for eagerly participating in dangerous peacekeeping missions.

Injured Soldier Says He's Lucky; "He's Been Plenty Grateful To Be Home."

January 10, 2005 By ALLISON STEELE, Concord Monitor Staff

ACONIA - In the days after he survived an attack on his Humvee last May, Sgt. Doug Sirois felt nothing more than the aches and pains one might have after a minor car accident. His shoulders and arms got sore when he reached for things, for instance.

A few days later, his right arm locked stiff and wouldn't move when he hoisted his gun to his shoulder. Within a few weeks, Sirois, a National Guardsman with the 197th Field Artillery Forward, was sent from Iraq to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where he began what would become many months of physical therapy.

Walking the halls of the massive military hospital, his arm in a sling as he saw room after room filled with men who had lost limbs, Sirois remembers feeling distinctly out of place.

"You certainly feel lucky when you see people training with prosthetics," he said. "And there were a lot of those people there."

Sirois, 41, was presented with a Purple Heart for his injuries, making him one of at least two dozen New Hampshire guardsmen to receive the award. **Since arriving back in the states, he has had surgery on his right arm and learned he will need an operation on his left, as well. It may be many more months before he can do simple household chores.**

Now, back at his home in Laconia with his wife, Stacie, 7-year-old daughter, Rebecca, and 5-year-old son, Duncan, Sirois feels an odd blend of regret and relief.

"It's great to be home," he said. "But they're still over there, so many others. You get so close to them - it feels like being away from your other family."

Having her husband home has also brought conflicted feelings for Stacie Sirois.

"In a way, I was happy he was hurt," she said. "And it makes you feel even worse for the families who still have people over there."

Doug Sirois joined the National Guard in 1986, but he had never been called up before this year. He left his job as a truck driver for the Laconia Ice Co. in February and was stationed about 40 miles north of Baghdad.

He had been in Iraq for fewer than three months when his convoy was hit by a roadside bomb, which exploded just 8 feet from the Humvee he was driving with two other soldiers. The explosion shot out a massive fireball that lifted the 6-ton truck into the air and slammed it back down to earth, crashing him hard against the sides of the Humvee. He didn't feel pain at the time, but he figures that's how his shoulders got hurt.

He doesn't remember hearing the sound of the blast, either - just that it felt like it lasted for half an hour, instead of half a minute. When the Humvee stopped moving, the first sounds he and his fellow soldiers heard were gunshots.

"When I heard that, I thought we were being ambushed," he said. "At that point, I thought basically that there was no way out."

Later, he learned the gunfire had come from a nearby unit that fired off rounds into the air to ward off any nearby attackers.

He spent almost a month trying to tough out the increasing pain in his arms and shoulders and was sent to Walter Reed when he realized his arms weren't strong enough to protect himself or others.

Sirois returned to New Hampshire in late July and began rehabilitation. In August, he had surgery to repair muscles and remove bone spurs in his right shoulder. In a few months, he'll have surgery on his left shoulder, and he'll also need an operation to repair nerve damage to his hands.

The physical therapy has been slow and grueling. He sees a doctor twice a week to stretch his muscles with pulleys, push-ups against the wall and weights. He has been given a strict regimen of exercises to do at home and recently bragged to his wife that he had worked up to lifting 5-pound weights. **It's frustrating for Sirois not to be able to shovel snow from the walk or help more around the house, but he thinks often of the soldiers he met who will never be able to do those chores again.**

While Sirois doesn't have any regrets, he admits he isn't sure he'd be willing to head back overseas if he could. His close call has made him even more appreciative of his family, he said. And though he misses being with his fellow soldiers, he's been plenty grateful to be home.

In the months he was gone, his wife had much of the house painted and redone. Sirois, meanwhile, had lost 35 pounds from the heat in Iraq. The first thing his daughter Rebecca did when she saw him was make him get on the scale. Then, she said, she showed him her room.

P.B. Soldier Recovering After Surviving Injuries From Iraqi Blast; "This Was Enough For Me"

To add a little injury to insult for the wounded man, his company was originally scheduled to leave Iraq on Dec. 2 but received orders extending the soldiers there until March -- meaning if they had not been extended, Kelley would have made it back home uninjured.

01/10/05 By MANDY PHILLIPS ~ Staff Writer, Daily American Republic

As a battle-weary Cpl. David Kelley describes the roadside bomb in Iraq that left him with several injuries, he reaches down to gingerly adjust his right foot -- a foot that, for now at least, he has no feeling in it.

The 1995 Poplar Bluff High School graduate was injured on Dec. 12 while on patrol in western Baghdad. A member of the Army's 1st Cavalry Division, 91st Engineer Battalion, Kelley, 27, and his company were headed back to base in their Humvee that Sunday when an IED (improvised explosive device) suddenly exploded to their right.

The blast was so powerful that it literally picked the up-armored Humvee off the ground and threw it about 15 feet away. Metal and other parts were sheared off the vehicle and it was left spattered with shrapnel holes.

The uninjured men quickly went to taking inventory of their crew -- three, including Kelley, were injured. As he tried to emerge from the crippled vehicle, Kelley said he fell to the ground, unable to stand. Members of his company rushed to his aid and were shocked to see their comrade without a pulse and not breathing.

After about two minutes of first aid, the men were able to revive Kelley and quickly load him and the other injured soldiers into the vehicles and make their way back to base. Once there, Army medical personnel stabilized Kelley, who suffered shrapnel wounds in his legs, shoulder, back and behind one ear.

He was then taken by helicopter to Iraq's International Zone, where he underwent three surgeries to remove shrapnel and clean the deep wounds -- one that stretches several inches across. Finally, Kelley got to make his way home.

On Dec. 20, he returned to the United States on a flight from Germany and was back home in Poplar Bluff by Dec. 23, which ended up being the silver lining for the wounded soldier.

"It got me home in time for Christmas," Kelley said.

On Jan. 20, he is scheduled to head back to his base at Fort Hood, Texas to begin a physical therapy program that will determine whether he will continue his military career with the Army or be honorably discharged.

And after his eight years with the U.S. Navy and the nearly two years spent with the Army -- over 11 months of that time spent on the front lines in Iraq -- the injury may be enough to make the veteran want to try a different path, or at least be done with the daily combat he faced in Baghdad.

"This was enough for me," he said.

And for his family, he added.

And Kelley wasn't the only soldier on the battlefield in his family. His stepbrother, Heath Smith, was deployed to Iraq with the National Guard unit stationed in Dexter. The stepbrothers were deployed at the same time for several months.

To add a little injury to insult for the wounded man, his company was originally scheduled to leave Iraq on Dec. 2 but received orders extending the soldiers there until March -- meaning if they had not been extended, Kelley would have made it back home uninjured.

Well, almost.

During his year in Iraq, Kelley received five concussions from bombs like the one that recently injured him. On eight occasions, the vehicle he was in was hit by an IEDs.

He later found out that the IED that injured him was a huge explosive, comprised of a missile warhead and six large artillery rounds.

Senate Guard Leaders Oppose Longer Duty

[USA Today, January 10, 2005, Pg. 8]

The Senate National Guard Caucus will oppose any effort by the Pentagon to extend the time period for which National Guard and reserve troops could be called into action.

Lt. Col. Sassaman

From: "Anita Job"
To: GI Special
Sent: Monday, January 10, 2005 2:30 PM
Subject: Lt. Col. Sassaman

The below is from the last GI Spec.

This is the same guy that said, "With a heavy dose of fear and violence, and a lot of money for projects, I think we can convince these people that we are here to help them."

GI Special:
Sassaman Nailed At Last;
Corrupt Thug In Uniform Publicly Exposed

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Car Bombing In Baghdad Kills Four Cops, Wounds Ten: Deputy Police Chief Shot

January 10, 2005 The Associated Press, BAGHDAD, Iraq & icWales

A car bomb has gone off in Baghdad killing at least four policemen in the southern part of Iraq's capital city.

Authorities say militants used a fake police car packed with explosives. The bombing, in the courtyard of a police station, also injured ten officers.

The explosion took place in the Zafarniyah district, police commissioner Abdul Khaleq Hussein said. Witnesses said the explosion happened as policemen were changing shifts.

Brigadier Amer Ali Nayef and his son, Lt. Khalid Amer, were assassinated in Baghdad's south Dora district while travelling in a car on their way to work, said a spokesman for the ministry, Captain Ahmed Ismail.

Gunmen sprayed machine-gun fire from two cars which were driving parallel to the police chief's vehicle before fleeing the scene of the attack, police said. The two were alone in their car.

Convoy Attacked In Mosul; Three Occupation Guards Killed



Iraqi soldiers lie on the ground seconds after a roadside bomb went off targeting a joint convoy, in the northern city of Mosul. Three Iraqi personnel were killed and four were injured, one of them seriously (AFP/Mauricio Lima)

1/10/2005 KRQE News 13

It was a close call for KRQE News 13's Bob Martin in Iraq as his convoy that was ambushed near Mosul on Monday.

His convoy was first hit by a roadside bomb in that northern city. Then, enemy snipers opened-fire on soldiers trying to rescue the Iraqi National Guardsmen whose truck was hit by the bomb.

No Americans were injured, but three Iraqi guardsman were killed and others seriously wounded.

Bob was riding with the 24th Infantry Battalion operating in Mosul.

Attackers Strike In Basra; 5 Occupation Cops Wounded

10 Jan 2005 "PA"

Attackers targeted an Interior Ministry office and a police station in the southern city of Basra today, wounding five policemen, a spokesman said.

The first attack targeted the Interior Affairs Department, which supervises the work of police and intelligence, in central Basra at 10pm (1900 GMT). Three police were wounded, said police Lt Col Karim al-Zeydi said.

He said the second attack occurred five minutes later and targeted a police station in the town of Abu al-Khaseeb, some 12 miles south of Basra. Two policemen were wounded in the second attack, he said.

The attackers were both killed.

Militants Kill Drug Dealer

January 11, 2005 News Limited

IRAQI militant group Army of Ansar al-Sunna said it killed what it called a drug dealer in the northern city of Mosul and posted a video of the shooting on its website today.

The video showed a man standing in front of a banner bearing the group's name and holding packets of pills in his hands.

"My name is Hussein Ali Hussein, also known as Hussein Haya, and I sell narcotics," the man said before he was blindfolded and shot in the back of the head.

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

Iraqi Electoral Board Resigns; "They Are Kidding Themselves"

10 January 2005 By Jackie Spinner, The Washington Post

BAGHDAD - In another significant blow to Iraq's upcoming elections, the entire 13-member electoral commission in the volatile province of Anbar, west of the capital, resigned after being threatened by insurgents, a regional newspaper reported Sunday.

Saad Abdul-Aziz Rawi, the head of the commission, told the newspaper that it was "impossible to hold elections" in the province, which is dominated by Sunni Muslims and where insurgent attacks already have prevented voter registration. The province includes the restive cities of Fallujah and Ramadi.

"They are kidding themselves," Rawi said about officials hopeful that the elections, set for Jan. 30, could take place in Anbar.

An Iraqi interviewed at the commission's office said the members had resigned and had gone into hiding.

Iraqi Resistance Fucks Up Bush Plans For More Wars

January 10, 2005 By Pauline Jelinek, Associated Press

"At the Pentagon, policy-makers are utterly absorbed with Iraq," said analyst Loren Thompson of the Lexington Institute.

The fact that the military is severely stretched restrains those who might be tempted to use force in new places, Thompson said.

"Inner counsels at the White House — people like Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld — would very much like to do something about troublemakers like Iran and Syria, but in order to act on that impulse they would need a much larger" force, he said.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

In Washington: "The Foul And Unmistakable Odor Of Failure"

[Thanks to Alan S., who sent this in.]

January 10, 2005 By Bob Herbert, New York Times

The assembly line of carnage in George W. Bush's war in Iraq continues unabated. Nightmares don't last this long, so the death and destruction must be real.

You know you're in serious trouble when the politicians and the military brass don't even bother suggesting that there's light at the end of the tunnel. The only thing ahead is a deep and murderous darkness.

With the insurgency becoming both stronger and bolder, and the chances of conducting a legitimate election growing grimmer by the day, **a genuine sense of alarm can actually be detected in the reality-resistant hierarchy of the Bush administration.**

The unthinkable is getting a tentative purchase in the minds of the staunchest supporters of the war: that under the current circumstances, and given existing troop strengths, the U.S. and its Iraqi allies may not be able to prevail.

Military officials are routinely talking about a major U.S. presence in Iraq that will last, at a minimum, into the next decade. That is not what most Americans believed when the Bush crowd so enthusiastically sold this war as a noble adventure that would be short and sweet, and would end with Iraqis tossing garlands of flowers at American troops.

The reality, of course, is that this war is like all wars - fearsomely brutal and tragic. The administration was jolted into the realization of just how badly the war was going by the brazen suicide bombing just a few days before Christmas inside a mess tent of a large and supposedly heavily fortified military base in Mosul. Fourteen American soldiers and four American contractors were among the dead.

Mr. Bush's so-called pre-emptive war, which has already cost so many lives, is being enveloped by the foul and unmistakable odor of failure.

That's why the Pentagon is dispatching a retired four-star general, Gary Luck, to Iraq to assess the entire wretched operation. The hope in Washington is that he will pull a rabbit out of a hat. His mission is to review the military's entire Iraq policy, and do it quickly.

I hope, as he is touring the regions in which the U.S. is still using conventional tactics against a guerrilla foe, that he keeps in mind how difficult it is to defeat local insurgencies, and other indigenous forces, as exemplified by such widely varying historical examples as the French experiences in Indochina and Algeria, the American experience in Vietnam, the Israeli experience in Lebanon, and so on.

A temporary increase of 30,000 soldiers for the Army, already approved by Congress, will most likely be made permanent.

The Pentagon is also considering plans to further change the rules about mobilizing members of the National Guard and Reserve. Right now they cannot be called up for more than 24 months of active service.

That limit would be scrapped, which would permit the Army to call them up as frequently as required.

That's not a back-door draft. It's a brutal, in-your-face draft that's unfairly limited to a small segment of the population. It would make a mockery of the idea of an all-volunteer Army.

Something's got to give.

The nation's locked in a war that's going badly.

The military is strained to the breaking point.

And it's looking more and more like the amateur hour in the places that are supposed to provide leadership in perilous times - the Pentagon and the White House.

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

You Know You've Been In Iraq Too Long When...

January 10, 2005 Via Vietnam Veterans Against the War VVAWNET:

(From ambotchka, the weblog of a woman deployed in Baghdad.)

this is likely only funny for those who've been to Iraq, but i just had to put this out for public perview....

i picked only the best ones, and most of them apply to myself, which is scary..

You know you've been in Iraq too long when...

~ mortars land near your compound and you roll over in bed and think, "still way off, i've got another five minutes."

~ you actually volunteer for convoy security duty because you still haven't seen the country yet

~ driving around in SUVs with weapons pointing out the windows and forcing cars off the road seems normal to you

~ you see celebratory fire going over the compound at night and think, "wow, the tracer colors are so pretty" and want to fire back

- ~ you forgot there are colors other than brown that can be found in places other than PowerPoint slides
 - ~ when you go on R&R, you duct tape your child to the roof of your car, hand him a pellet rifle, and assign him a sector of fire for the ride to "Olive Garden"
 - ~ when 12 hours is a short work day
 - ~ when, during a brief, "DIV asked MNSTC-I for the FRAGO that MNC-I was supposed to publish, but couldn't because MNF-I hadn't weighed in, since they were too inundated with MOD and MOI war-gaming the JCCs within the ISF to square us away!" is a valid comment and generates no questions
 - ~ when you start using words like "G'day mate," "Cheers," and "bloody 'ell" as part of your normal vocabulary
 - ~ when the trailer next to you catches on fire and instead of helping to put it out you grab a bag of marshmallows and start roasting
 - ~ when you step into any office and there are 6 Colonels, 12 Lt Colonels, 15 Majors, and 8 Captains supervising the work of one NCO
 - ~ when the weapon buy-back program has become so successful that you've issued the same AK47 to the Iraqi Army 3 times
 - ~ when you cant tell the difference between the sound of an exploding car and an exploding mortar
 - ~ when on R&R you go to Church and wonder why no one is wearing body armor or carrying an automatic weapon to the service
 - ~ you know that you need to run inside immediately after any win of an Iraqi sports team to keep from being hit with celebratory fire
 - ~ you decide that for shits and grins - "lets take a run around Lost Lake at Camp Victory to see if we can get shot at by the sniper"
 - ~ you never worry about oversleeping because if the morning prayer calls don't wake you, the 0430 rocket attack will
 - ~ you decide it's a better course of action to pull your blankets over your head than put on your body armor during an attack -- the woobee will save you and at least you're comfortable
 - ~ a rocket attack isn't a big deal until the crater it leaves is big enough to trip over in the dark on the way to the latrine
 - ~ you go to a social gathering and intermittent gunfire doesn't cause a pause in the conversation
-

OCCUPATION REPORT

Killing Hearts And Minds

10 January 2005 By Borzou Daragahi, The Independent U.K.

The shadowy nature of the insurgency has made Americans wary of Iraqi civilians. On roads, soldiers smash into civilian vehicles that do not move out of the way of their Humvees and armoured vehicles quickly enough. They aim their weapons menacingly at drivers who get too close and scream profanities at locals who do not understand their commands.

"If a car comes within 10 metres of them here on this street," Mohammad Salah Abdul-Rahman, 28, an unemployed management studies graduate, says as he gestures down an avenue near one of the entrances to the fortified Green Zone, "they're going to shoot at him.

After one particularly harrowing day of explosions, soldiers killed a mentally disabled man who failed to heed their commands, said Ali Salman Ali, 37, a shop owner. "The soldiers knew this guy and joked with him all the time. But on this day, they ordered him to stop, and he didn't. So they shot him dead."

<p style="text-align: center;">OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

Received:

Operation Iraqi Liberty (OIL)

From: Z
To: GI Special
Sent: Monday, January 10, 2005 11:53 PM
Subject: Operation Iraqi Liberty (OIL)

My body got wrecked for petroleum
My body got wrecked overseas
My body got wrecked for petroleum
Oh bring back my body to me

Bring back, bring back
Bring back my body to me, to me
Bring back, bring back
Bring back my body to me

Oh brothers and sisters don't ever
Pay heed to some dumb White House ass
Who'd fuck up your mind and your body
To fatten his damn ruling class

Bring back, bring back
Bring back my body to me, to me
Bring back, bring back
Bring back my body to me

In solidarity,
Z

Received:

The Murder Of An Hadi Salih

From: EJ
Sent: Monday, January 10, 2005 9:58 PM
Subject: Re: The Murder of an Hadi Salih

The Iraq FTU is not an independent trade union, it is entirely dependent on the Iraqi Communist Party which created it, for its survival, **and upon the occupation government which legitimised it and supports it.**

There needs to be a more thorough understanding of the political terrain in Iraq and the influence of political parties within trade union organizing which, under a brutal military occupation and under a competing occupation propped political party race for power, cannot be compared, neither historically nor politically with trade union organising and state repression in Central America, nor Europe.

It is incomparable, it needs to be understood and analyzed within the conditions it is emerging.

Received:

A Puzzling Silence On The Left; (Of Frogs And Kings)

To: GI Special
Sent: 1.8.05
From: Jack Doyle

We saw this letter about Chomsky at a web site which has an editor named Mark. The author is a US educated Iranian who is a college professor in Japan.

Dear Mark,

Post-Christmas greetings from Japan. I hope this note finds you well and in good health.

I am writing to address a puzzling silence taken on by, it seems, just about everybody in the US who writes on behalf of the downtrodden and the meek: the Left, that is. The silence is of a peculiar kind; of the naked emperor kind.

The puzzling silence is with regards to Chomsky's and Zinn's support (albeit with a nose well-held) for Kerry during the elections that we suffered this past year. The silence is so huge and so disconcerting, that one must be forgiven for having forgotten so fast that the good professors did in fact advocate such a position. So, why all the silence?

To take one extremely painful example, you just published an interview of Junaid Alam's with the good professor, in which not a single word is exchanged regarding this. Not even a softly couched question. Instead, our good young friend, much like a good polite interviewer would when interviewing a state functionary on the mainstream media, stayed WAY clear of any embarrassing topics, handing the professor one soft question after another, all to do with things that we have seen and heard a good million times already.

ANYBODY who has EVER heard Chomsky speak, or read any of his articles or millions of other interviews, has heard ALL he says in this interview, a good many times. So, why not be a little more imaginative?

Here is a perfect opportunity for some hard questions by our friend, whose Left Hook website was one of the louder billboards for trashing (rightly) the ABBs throughout the election year, and who did not say a word regarding Chomsky's stance THEN, and who continues to pretend that everything is A-OK here.

Again, why all the silence?

What is the point of this interview? To have one more interview (for its own sake) with the good professor? To secure a political 'standing' (whatever that is)? To repeat what has already been said a million times and get established as a redundancy?

What is the point of THAT?

Maybe the good professor, in retrospect and with the help of the vast wisdom that he does have, can shed some light on the reasons for the political advocacy he committed during this last election. Maybe Mr. Alam could have learned something (as well as relayed the learning) instead of loving every minute of listening to himself get chummy with 'America's leftist guru'.

During this past election year, I (as a socialist Middle Easterner) watched in horror as one after another of the so-called 'leftist icons' lined up and said: Vote for Kerry

(who, incidentally, wants more war-mongering in the Middle East)! Am I the only person totally outraged here?

Are we even paying attention to what we say and write any more? Why isn't a single one of you calling on Chomsky to explain himself as loudly as James Petras recently in Counterpunch called pretty much for the excommunication of Saramago.

I agreed with the spirit of Mr. Petras' letter, and became even hopeful that maybe somebody will now also come out and dare call attention to the need for certain soul-searching regarding Chomsky's support for Kerry, no matter how conditionally it had been expressed. But instead, we get an out-of-this-reality 'interview', in which everybody pretends that the good professor did not just run across the stage stark naked, a short time ago!!

The fact remains that Chomsky's mouth is watched (at times too sycophantically, I must add) for signs of how to orient oneself, by (in the least) many tens of thousands of people who in turn shape others' political orientation.

So, when Chomsky or Zinn says, "Hold your nose and vote for Kerry," this is a categorical mistake; some would say a (momentary at least) betrayal, since, as we heard in horror as Kerry said repeatedly, and most significantly in the debates, "Mr. President, you are not doing enough in Iraq nor enough about Iran, or Syria ... You haven't done enough in Fallujah!" Mr. Kerry must be feeling reassured now that the city has been decimated.

One could not have supported a more odious candidate. For Democratic Party functionaries to do so, we can understand perfectly clearly. But for leftists? (Never mind the 'guru' designation!)

Another reason the silence regarding Chomsky and Zinn's political positioning is disturbing: Chomsky, as well as a good section of the US left, are as readily an enemy of the Bolsheviks as they claim to be the enemies of the US imperialism. In fact, they are more consistent when it comes to opposing Bolsheviks. And one of the reasons provided for this enmity invariably is a variation on the theme of 'party discipline/party line' which is supposedly adhered to 'blindly' by the Bolsheviks, all of whom get collapsed into 'Stalinists'.

Well, taking our friends in the US left seriously in their dislike for blind conformity to a collective political positioning, we are forced to ask: Where does the 'party' of the US luminaries of the left stand on Zinn's and Chomsky's political positioning this past election?

As a publication that very loudly and in very principled fashion (in my opinion) exposed the pitfalls of ABB stance, you have been curiously silent regarding Chomsky's and Zinn's positions.

Why?

All this is meant to be taken in comradely fashion, out of love, and out of a spirit of friendly critique, something that in fact is essential to building any healthy relationship.

Be it a relationship of friendship, familial bonding, or comradery in the field of politics. In all these, **honesty of purpose requires that we ask difficult questions.**

Yours, as always,
Respectfully,
Reza Fiyouzat

Web Copies

For back issues see: GI Special web site at <http://www.militaryproject.org/>

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

<http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/> ; www.qifightback.org ;

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

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