

GI SPECIAL 3A14:

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



A soldier salutes one of the caskets bearing the remains of a Louisiana National Guard soldier killed in Iraq at the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base in Belle Chasse, La., Wednesday Jan. 12, 2005. The bodies of six Louisiana soldiers killed in a bomb blast in Iraq were returned to the state Wednesday. (AP Photo/Bill Haber)

Decorated US Marine Decides Cops In Racist Town Are His Real Enemy; Brings "Fallujah" Back Home;

Yes, it appears that the US Marine of Mexican descent decided that his real enemies were not innocent Iraqi civilians on the other side of the world but that they were here in his own hometown, in Ceres, *a redneck town notorious for its mistreatment of his people.*

This is what happened during the Vietnam War and is now happening in this heinous, racist and demonic US War against Iraq.

Los Angeles, Alta California, January 11, 2004 - (ACN) by Ernesto Cienfuegos, La Voz de Aztlan

A US Marine of Mexican descent home for the holidays from Fallujah, Iraq decided to wage battle yesterday against his own hometown police department of Ceres, California rather than return to Iraq to kill innocent Iraqi civilians.

Nineteen year old Andres Raya, a decorated for bravery US Marine out of Camp Pendleton, decided to utilize his superb marine training to take on the entire Ceres Police Department, Sheriff's and the California Highway Patrol in a stunning gun battle that was caught on video tape.

In the end, one Ceres cop was killed, another critically injured and US Marine Raya himself laid dead in an alley with over 18 shots in his body.

Andres Raya was only two years out of Ceres High School and the shootout has stunned not only his family but the entire usually peaceful small town of Ceres which is just a few miles east of San Jose and directly south of Modesto.

One can only speculate what horrors Andres Raya experienced in Fallujah.

The slaughter by US occupation forces of Iraqi civilians in Fallujah has been compared to the slaughter in Guernica by Nazi forces in 1937. Many US Marines with a conscience have found it very difficult to reconcile the Iraqi civilian murders in their minds and have committed suicide.

US Marine Andres Raya decided to take some cops with him. Most probably he was harassed by them while growing up Mexican in this small northern California town.

He expressed feelings that he did not want to go back to murder in Iraq.

He, however, rejoined his unit at Camp Pendleton on January 2.

Something happened between January 2 and Sunday January 9, the last day he was seen at Camp Pendleton. Yesterday, he showed up in Ceres with an SKS assault rifle.

He had the shootout all planned out. He knew what he was going to do. He would stage a situation where the cops will respond and he will ambush them with the military precision he learned so well in the US Marine Corps.

The battle raged for about 3 hours, from around 8:00 PM to 11.08 PM.

It brought in hundreds of police units from the Ceres, Modesto, Turlock and Newman police departments, as well as the Stanislaus and Merced Sheriff's Departments and from the California Highway Patrol.



US Marine Andres Raya

US Marine Andres Raya, the decorated fighter that he was, had to be shot 18 times before he went down. Andres Raya kept charging police positions set up in an alley, and even though mortally wounded, kept on charging until he dropped dead a few feet from a well entrenched police SWAT Team.

Yes, it appears that the US Marine of Mexican descent decided that his real enemies were not innocent Iraqi civilians on the other side of the world but that they were here in his own hometown, in Ceres, a redneck town notorious for its mistreatment of his people.

This is what happened during the Vietnam War and is now happening in this heinous, racist and demonic US War against Iraq.

MORE:

Anti-Police Graffiti Cover Scene Of Ceres Warfare



Grieving parents of US Marine hero. Andres' mom said that her son came back from the slaughter in Fallujah "different".

2005-01-12 Juliana Barbassa - Associated Press, San Diego Tribune & JOEL HOOD, Modesto Bee

Tuesday morning, Raya's family attended Mass before going to George's Liquors and the next-door tire shop, still riddled with bullet holes.

Spray-painted graffiti, much of it anti-police, appeared on both businesses and the supermarket across the street overnight, said deputy Jason Woodman, spokesman for the Sheriff's Department.

Much of the graffiti had been painted over by midday. Among the remaining graffiti was a statement that simply read: "RIP Andy," the name Raya often was called by friends.

Alvarez, Raya's cousin, said police suspected Raya had gang affiliations, based on his tattoos. She acknowledged that she had not seen the tattoos, but said other family members told her that the tattoos signified "Latino and Chicano pride."

"It was a display of honor for our culture," she said. "He was not a banger. That just wasn't him."

But family and friends said something seems to have happened to the young man when he was abroad.

He used to be "a motivated kid," said the Rev. Dean McFalls, who knew the Raya family for years when he served in Ceres' St. Jude Catholic Church. "He was friendly, outgoing, humorous. He got along well with people, and wanted to make the best of his life. He wanted to settle down in Ceres and raise a family."

When Raya returned from Iraq, family members said he was taciturn. One of his neighbors, George Alvarez, told the Modesto Bee that Raya confided in him during the holidays, saying he had "lots of trouble sleeping," and "a lot of mental things going on inside."

During his first visit to Iraq, Raya saw a convoy being blown up. He had friends in the vehicle, McFalls said.

Among the pictures the Raya family has to remember their teenager by are some in which he looks proud in his uniform -- **"but there's also one in which he holds up a sign saying, "Operation send me home," family friends said.**

"I think he wanted to be a warrior, a hero," said McFalls, describing Raya's room. Among the usual adolescent clutter --"Raya's bicycle shares space with posters of fast cars and young women" are Aztec symbols, and pictures from the time of the Mexican Revolution.

"Maybe once he got in the middle of the brutality, he found it was very different from the idealistic view he had of a soldier defending the values of his country," McFalls said.

A family member who asked not to be identified said Raya's parents never allowed guns in their home, so it was unlikely that Raya had owned the assault rifle used in the shooting for very long.

It was not a Marine-issued weapon, authorities said.

Raya used an SKS assault rifle, and it had been illegally modified with a detachable magazine, said Woodman.

He said investigators were trying to determine where Raya had obtained the weapon and could not rule out that he had an accomplice.

In an e-mail, a man identifying himself as a Marine and longtime friend of Raya's, said Raya could not have hidden the rifle at Camp Pendleton, because military police often do random checks of barracks.

"Before he joined, he was very motivated," the e-mail stated. "The first time I saw him back (from Iraq), he wasn't so motivated. He cracked negative jokes about people who were serious. He was negative towards the Marines. He still seemed like the same guy, he just had a hard time."

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)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

TWO MARINES KILLED IN AL ANBAR PROVINCE

January 13, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 05-01-16C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – Two Marines assigned to I Marine Expeditionary Force were killed in action on Jan.13.

US Soldier Killed In Mosul

MOSUL, Iraq, Jan 13 (AFP)

A US soldier was killed in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul on Thursday when his patrol hit a roadside bomb, the US military said.

"He was killed when his patrol hit a roadside bomb at about noon (0900 GMT) in the Palestine Street area in the southeast of Mosul," Sergeant Chris Schaeffer said.

Two 116th Soldiers Wounded

January 13, 2005 By Hailie Brook KBCI-TV Boise

Local2 News has confirmed two soldiers with the 116th Cavalry Brigade were wounded in an enemy rocket attack last week in Iraq. These are the first injuries suffered in Iraq by soldiers with the Idaho National Guard.

According to CPT Monte C. Hibbert, 116th BCT Public Affairs, two 116th Brigade Combat Team soldiers were wounded at F.O.B. Warrior on January 3rd around 8:20 p.m. local time.

Hibbert said the 1-148th Field Artillery Battalion soldiers were both treated for minor injuries and returned to duty within 48 hours.

Attack In Hyit Destroys Vehicles; U.S. Casualties Not Announced

13 January 2005 Aljazeera

In the city of Hyit west of Ramadi, two US military vehicles were destroyed in a rocket attack on Thursday, Aljazeera reported. US helicopters were seen evacuating wounded US soldiers.

Haqlaniya IED Destroys 2 U.S. Military Vehicles

13 January 2005 Aljazeera

In the Haqlaniya area, west of Ramadi, an explosive device went off near a US military patrol, destroying two military vehicles.

Silly General Batiste Admits Resistance Has The Military Initiative & Also Says General Metz Full Of Shit

WASHINGTON, Jan 13 (AFP)

Major General John Batiste predicted that the elections will be held successfully in all four provinces where his forces operate -- *Salahuddin*, Diyala, Tamim and Kurdish Sulaimaniyah -- but acknowledged difficulties with security in two key cities: Samarra and Bayji.

"We will succeed in all four of our provinces," he told reporters in a video teleconference from Iraq.

"In Samarra and Bayji, we are still working through some problems." [Yeah, like the fact that both cities are under resistance control. Let's see how he "works through" that one.]

Salahuddin is one of four provinces that Lieutenant General Thomas Metz, the number-two US commander in Iraq, said last week were not yet secure enough to hold elections. [So, Batiste is calling Metz a liar. Or Metz is calling Batiste a liar. Take your pick.]

Batiste said "My 25,000 soldiers -- and by the way, that includes an extra brigade and twice the helicopters -- will be in full support," he said.

"We will be working with our Iraqi security force partners to make sure what they're doing makes sense, to make sure that if they don't, we're there to mentor and advise," he said. [Meaning tell his stooges exactly what to do, what not to do, how to do it, and piss his pants if they run away, which is quite likely.]

"There will be more operations tomorrow, relentless operations chasing down the insurgent, **taking away his initiative and disrupting what he's trying to do,**" he said. "That'll go on continuously up through, to and after the elections." [Reading between those lines, he's just said the resistance has the initiative, and the best the mighty General can do is try "disrupting" them, i.e. launch spoiling operations --- an admission of defeat, retreat, and occupation impotence.]

Batiste said there were about 24 attacks in his area on Wednesday, about a quarter of them aimed at Iraqi security forces. [Meaning three-quarters were aimed at *his forces, or 18 in one day.]*

"We do all of this to ensure that that city is secure and that the insurgency is not allowed to regain a foothold. And the insurgency, let there be no doubt, is attempting

to do that. But they will not be successful," Batiste said. **[Hello? Earth to Batiste? "Regain" a foothold? You're the one reduced to a "foothold," or, more accurately, a finger-nail hold, and slipping fast.]**

Bayji is another area of concern because it is a crossroads for insurgents heading from Mosul to Baghdad, and from Fallujah to Kirkuk in the north.

"We are still in the process of developing and setting the conditions for successful elections in Bayji," he said. [Meaning the resistance controls Bayji. This isn't a general. This is a politician running for office, spinning as he goes.]

Car Bombs Increasingly Successful Resistance Weapon

1/13/2005 By NICK WADHAMS, AP

Car bombs echo across Baghdad and a constellation of cities around Iraq nearly every day, inflicting slaughter and billowing oily smoke, a reminder to all who see or hear them that the country's insurgents can strike almost anywhere.

Vehicles packed with explosives, often detonated by suicide attackers, have become one of the insurgency's most lethal weapons. An Associated Press tally shows there have been at least 181 of them since Iraq's interim government took over June 28 — just a handful at first but surging to a rate of one or more a day in recent months.

The tally found that 68 bombings were suicide attacks and the rest were detonated by other means. Most involved cars, but some used trucks and even motorcycles.

Less common before June, car bombs have become part of a punishing psychological campaign that has made almost everyone here feel unsafe.

While American officials say roadside bombs, known as improvised explosive devices, are still the insurgents' most favored weapon, car bombs are often more powerful and usually exact a higher toll.

The bombing total was compiled from AP's daily reports, based on government and police statements as well as information gathered by AP staff. No official statistics on such attacks have been publicly released and the number of incidents is almost certainly higher than reported.

The U.S. military and the Iraqi government were asked for their figures but provided none.

According to the AP tally, there were two car bombs on the last day of June, 11 in July and 12 in August. **The numbers surged in the following months, with 26 in September, 43 in October and 48 in November — eight of them on a single day,**

Nov. 6. December saw 27 and January is averaging about one a day — a dozen in the first 11 days.

While news of car bombings has become tragically routine, their frequency is an enormous change.

The Brookings Institution in Washington, which keeps track of suicide bombings and car bombs that kill two or more people, counted just 84 such attacks in the 12 months through last June.

Car bombings have drastically changed the way American troops operate. Patrols view every car with suspicion, and vehicles must stay about 100 yards behind. On narrow roads, approaching cars must pull over as a U.S. convoy drives by, sometimes just inches away. The strain on troops is clear.

The strategy is clear. The vehicle bombs have given the insurgents a potent weapon against the world's most technologically advanced military.

Shadow of Vietnam Falls Over Iraq River Raids

November 29, 2004 By JOHN F. BURNS (NYT)

CHARD DUWAISH, Iraq, Nov. 28 - As marines aboard fast patrol boats roared up the Euphrates on a dawn raid on Sunday, images pressed in of another American war where troops moved up wide rivers on camouflaged boats, with machine-gunners nervously scanning riverbanks for the hidden enemy.

That war is rarely mentioned among the American troops in Iraq, many of whom were not yet born when the last American combat units withdrew from Vietnam more than 30 years ago. A war that America did not win is considered a bad talisman among those men and women, who privately admit to fears that this war could be lost.

But as an orange moon sank below the bulrushes on Sunday morning, thoughts of Vietnam were hard to avoid.

Marines waded ashore through soft silted mud that caused some to sink to their waists, M-16 rifles held skyward as others on solid land held out their rifle barrels as lifelines.

Ashore, sodden and with boots squelching mud, the troops began a five-hour tramp through dense palm groves and across paddies crisscrossed by deep irrigation canals.

There were snatches of dialogue from "Apocalypse Now," and a black joke from one marine about the landscape resembling "a Vietnam theme park."

But behind the joshing lay something more serious: the sense expressed by many of the Americans as they scoured the area that in this war, too, the insurgents might have advantages that could make them a match for highly trained troops, technological gadgetry and multibillion-dollar war budgets.

The 40-foot river craft they used are called Surcs, for Small Unit Riverine Craft, a high-tech update on the Swift boats used in Vietnam. The craft were flown into Iraq aboard giant C-5 transport aircraft and were first deployed with five-man crews during the battle for Falluja this month, patrolling the stretch of the Euphrates that runs along the city's western edge to prevent attempts by insurgents to escape that way after American troops had thrown a cordon around the city.

Those patrols were judged a success by American commanders. Now they are eager to exploit the potential the patrol boats give them for mounting fast, unexpected attacks along the Tigris and the Euphrates. The rivers run through many of the cities and towns that are rebel strongholds, and the long stretches of verdant riverbank provide ideal hiding places for insurgents and their weapons caches.

The raid, backed by air cover from attack helicopters and pilotless drones, gave the Americans a chance to exploit another new dimension of their strategy for winning the war: twinning American combat units with newly trained Iraqi troops.

In many raids, they have heavily outnumbered American troops, as they did in the operation on Sunday, which included 40 marines and 80 members of a special Iraqi commando unit assigned to the country's powerful Interior Ministry.

As much as they wanted to test their new river boats, American commanders wanted to see how the commandos - many drawn from elite units of Saddam Hussein's special forces - would respond to an arduous and potentially risky mission.

This day, long before the three-mile sweep through the palm groves and citrus orchards and paddies was ended, the mood among the marines had soured as the Iraqis adopted a mostly dilatory attitude toward the tedious business of spreading out in long lines and moving methodically across the terrain, poking haystacks, running metal detectors over piles of palm fronds, peering into thick clusters of bulrushes, and digging in places of freshly turned earth.

"They've just about given up," said Lt. Jerman Duarte, 34, of Houston, his voice edged with exasperation.

Lieutenant Duarte, a native of Guatemala, led the raid in his capacity as commander of a reconnaissance and surveillance platoon that has honed its skills in many of the marines' toughest raids and stakeouts during their five months in Iraq. Among his men, he is known as "El Guapo," the handsome one, for his fine features and his bristling mustache. **But his sense of urgency and do-it-by-the-book briskness appeared lost on the Iraqi fighters, who used their rest breaks in the morning sunshine to trade quips about the Americans, not all of them friendly.**

As in so much else about the American venture in Iraq, cultural differences played their part. At one point, Lieutenant Duarte bridled when some of the Iraqis resisted his repeated urging that they spread out along the line, preferring to cluster together, ineffectively, at one end. A Marine sergeant told him that the Iraqis were officers and did not feel that they should be asked to work side by side with common soldiers.

One of the Iraqi officers, asked if he spoke English, replied snappily, "English no good. Arabic good. Iraq good." The message seemed clear.

Although recruits in the new Iraqi units undergo strict vetting, American officers say rebel sympathizers have infiltrated some of the new units - some of the soldiers have been caught tipping off rebel groups.

If there were sympathies for Hussein loyalists among these raiders, though, the area chosen for the sweep would likely have stirred them.

One American officer described the stretch of the Euphrates that runs southeast from Falluja as "Saddam's Hamptons" for the clusters of luxurious villas set along the riverbank, mostly built by favored stalwarts of Mr. Hussein. The territory controlled by the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, across the southernmost reaches of Iraq's Sunni heartland, served as an arsenal for Mr. Hussein, with dozens of weapons research facilities, munitions factories, and vast weapons storage sites.

Recent American sweeps in the area have uncovered some of the largest weapons caches found in post-Hussein Iraq. And the raid here on Sunday, about five miles from Al Qaqaa, followed a tip that more large caches might be found there.

But either the tipoff was flawed or the raid missed the target.

Altogether, Lieutenant Duarte's men discovered only an old shotgun and three Kalashnikov rifles, two of them in plastic bags that were clumsily buried in a paddy field.

They also found two sets of identity documents belonging to a high-ranking member of Mr. Hussein's Baath Party. After a marine stumbled across a yellow plastic bag lying in an irrigation panel with what he identified as a severed human head and intestines, Lieutenant Duarte radioed to headquarters and was told to leave it for investigation by the Iraqi police.

In the end, the day's main yield came not from the raid, but from the brutal chance that comes with every foray into the Iraqi hinterland.

On the road back to the Marine base at Camp Kalsu, 40 miles from the raiding site, the unit's convoy of armored trucks and Humvees was attacked near the town of Latifiya with a huge roadside bomb.

Unlike a similar device that killed two marines in a nearby incident later in the day, the bomb caused no injuries or damage.

But two Humvees broke away from the convoy and pursued two fleeing men with Kalashnikovs into a house about a mile back from the highway, shooting one dead and

capturing the other. The men were said to have been found with a cellphone that could have been used to set off the bomb.

TROOP NEWS

The Generals Speak: They Agree: Rumsfeld & Bush Fucked Up

Nothing in Iraq was guarded except for the oil fields, which tells you why we were there.

But the question to ask is: Is what we are achieving in Iraq worth what we're paying? Weighing the good against the bad, we have got to get out.

(Posted Nov 03, 2004) By PAUL ALEXANDER

The nineteen months since the war in Iraq began, some of the most outspoken critics of President Bush's plan of attack have come from a group that should have been the most supportive: retired senior military leaders.

We spoke with a group of generals and admirals that included a former supreme Allied commander and a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and they all agreed on one thing: Bush screwed up.

Gen. Merrill "Tony" McPeak
Air Force chief of staff, 1990-94

The insurgency seems to be gathering momentum. We are losing people at a fairly steady rate of about two a day; wounded, about four or five times that, and perhaps half of these wounds are very serious. **And we are also sustaining gunshot wounds, when, before, we'd mostly been seeing massive trauma from remotely detonated charges. This means the other side is standing and fighting in a way that describes a more dangerous phase of the conflict.**

The people in control in the Pentagon and the White House live in a fantasy world. They actually thought everyone would just line up and vote for a new democracy and you would have a sort of Denmark with oil.

I blame Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and the people behind him -- Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz and Undersecretary Douglas Feith. The vice president himself should probably be included; certainly his wife. These so-called

neocons: These people have no real experience in life. They are utopian thinkers, idealists, very smart, and they have the courage of their convictions, so it makes them doubly dangerous.

The parallels between Iraq and Vietnam have been overblown, because we were in Vietnam for a decade and it cost us 58,000 troops.

Adm. Stansfield Turner

NATO Allied commander for Southern Europe, 1975-77; CIA director, 1977-81

I think we are in a real mess.

There are eighty-seven attacks on Americans every day, and our people in Baghdad can't even leave the International Zone without being heavily armored.

We have lost the support of the Iraqi people who were glad to see Saddam go. I am very frustrated.

Having a convincing rationale for going in gives our troops a sense of purpose.

All in all, Iraq is a failure of monumental proportions.

Lt. Gen. William Odom

Director of the National Security Agency, 1985-88

It's a huge strategic disaster, and it will only get worse.

The sooner we leave, the less the damage.

In the months since the invasion, the U.S. forces have become involved in trying to repress a number of insurgency movements.

This is the way we were fighting in Vietnam, and if we keep on fighting this way, this one is going to go on a long time too.

The idea of creating a constitutional state in a short amount of time is a joke. It will take ten to fifteen years, and that is if we want to kill ten percent of the population.

Gen. Anthony Zinni

Commander in chief of the United States Central Command, 1997-2000

The first phase of the war in Iraq, the conventional phase, the major combat phase, was brilliantly done.

Tommy Franks' approach to methodically move up and attack quickly probably saved a great humanitarian disaster. But the military was unprepared for the aftermath. Rumsfeld and others thought we would be greeted with roses and flowers.

When I was commander of CENTCOM, we had a plan for an invasion of Iraq, and it had specific numbers in it. We wanted to go in there with 350,000 to 380,000 troops. You

didn't need that many people to defeat the Republican Guard, but you needed them for the aftermath.

When I left in 2000, General Franks took over. Franks was my ground-component commander, so he was well aware of the plan. He had participated in it; those were the numbers he wanted. So what happened between him and Rumsfeld and why those numbers got altered, I don't know, because when we went in we used only 140,000 troops, even though General Eric Shinseki, the army commander, asked for the original number.

Did we have to do this?

I saw the intelligence right up to the day of the war, and I did not see any imminent threat there.

If anything, Saddam was coming apart. The sanctions were working. The containment was working. He had a hollow military, as we saw. **If he had weapons of mass destruction, it was leftover stuff -- artillery shells and rocket rounds.** He didn't have the delivery systems. We controlled the skies and seaports. We bombed him at will. All of this happened under U.N. authority. I mean, we had him by the throat. **But the president was being convinced by the neocons that down the road we would regret not taking him out.**

Lt. Gen. Claudia Kennedy

Army deputy chief of staff for intelligence, 1997-2000

From the beginning, I was asked which side I took, Shinseki's or Rumsfeld's.

And I said Shinseki. I mean, Rumsfeld proudly announced that he had told General Franks to fight this war with different tactics in which they would bypass enemy strongholds and enemy resistance and keep on moving. **But it was shocking to me that the secretary of defense would tell the Army how to fight. He doesn't know how to fight; he has no business telling them.**

It's completely within civilian authority to tell you where to fight, what our major objective is, but it is absolutely no one's business but uniformed military to tell you how to do the job. To me, it was astonishing that Rumsfeld would presume to tell four-star generals, in the Army thirty-five years, how to do their jobs.

Now here's another thing that Rumsfeld did.

As he was being briefed on the war plan, he was cherry-picking the units to go.

In other words, he didn't just approve the deployment list, he went down the list and skipped certain units that were at a higher degree of readiness to go and picked units that were lower on the list -- for reasons we don't know. But here's the impact: Recently, at an event, a mother told me how her son had been recruited and trained as a cook. Three weeks before he deployed to Iraq, he was told he was now a gunner. And they gave him training for three weeks, and then off he went.

Rumsfeld was profoundly in the dark. I think he really didn't understand what he was doing. He miscalculated the kind of war it was and he miscalculated the interpretation of U.S. behavior by the Iraqi people. They felt they had been invaded. They did not see this as a liberation.

As for the recent news about the 380 tons of explosives that disappeared, it's irrelevant when they disappeared. This was known by the International Atomic Energy Agency as a site to be watched. Here is the issue: Bush tried to turn this into a political matter instead of answering questions about why he didn't follow the warnings of the IAEA. It was another example of Bush being a cheerleader instead of a leader.

Nothing in Iraq was guarded except for the oil fields, which tells you why we were there.

Gen. Wesley Clark

NATO supreme Allied commander for Europe, 1997-2000

Troop strength was not the only problem. We got into this mess because the Bush administration decided what they really wanted to do was to invade Iraq, and then the only question was, for what reason?

They developed two or three different reasons.

It wasn't until the last minute that they came up and said, "Hey, by the way, we are going to create a wave of democracy across the Middle East."

That was February of 2003, and by that time they hadn't planned anything.

But let's ask this question: Have you seen an American strategic blunder this large?

The answer is: not in fifty years. I can't imagine when the last one was. And it's not just about troop strength. I mean, you will fail if you don't have enough troops, but simply adding troops won't make you succeed.

Adm. William Crowe

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1985-89

We screwed up. we were intent on a quick victory with smaller forces, and we felt if we had a military victory everything else would fall in place. We would be viewed not as occupiers but as victors. We would draw down to 30,000 people within the first sixty days.

All of this was sheer nonsense. They thought that once Iraq fell we'd have a similar effect throughout the Middle East and terrorism would evaporate, blah, blah, blah. All of these were terrible assumptions.

A State Department study advising otherwise was sent to Rumsfeld, but he threw it in the wastebasket.

He overrode the military and was just plain stubborn on numbers.

Finally the military said OK, and they totally underestimated the impact the desert had on our equipment and the kind of troops we would need for peacekeeping. The Marines were advising the same way. But the military can only go so far. Once the civilian leadership decides otherwise, the military is obliged.

There is not a very good answer for what to do next.

We've pulled out of several places without achieving our objectives, and every time we predicted the end of Western civilization, which it was not.

We left Korea after not achieving anything we wanted to do, and it didn't hurt us very much.

We left Vietnam -- took us ten years to come around to doing it -- but we didn't achieve what we wanted.

Everyone said it would set back our foreign policy in East Asia for ten years. It set it back about two months. Our allies thought we were crazy to be in Vietnam.

We could have the same thing happen this time in Iraq.

If we walk away, we are still the number-one superpower in the world. There will be turmoil in Iraq, and how that will affect our oil supply, I don't know. But the question to ask is: Is what we are achieving in Iraq worth what we're paying?

Weighing the good against the bad, we have got to get out.

Homeless Iraq, Afghanistan Vets Already Start Turning Up At Shelters

Jan. 17, 2005 --By Julie Rawe. Reported by Jeffrey Ressler and Amanda Bower, TIME magazine

At the age of 23, James Brown has already spent four years in the Marines and two months in a homeless shelter.

After serving in Iraq and Afghanistan before being honorably discharged last summer, he moved from Dayton, Ohio, to Los Angeles seeking work but soon wound up in a 515-bed facility run by the public-private organization U.S. VETS.

Brown's plight is not unique. The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans is releasing a nationwide survey this week that counted 67 vets from Iraq and Afghanistan in homeless shelters at some point last year.

"A lot of guys I met in the service were loners," says Brown. "And when they get out, their support system is pretty small."

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has confirmed that there are 38 homeless vets from the Iraq campaign alone, and although this is a tiny fraction of the 168,000-plus soldiers discharged after serving there, **experts are surprised to see them show up in shelters so soon.**

"A lot of Vietnam vets didn't start to experience problems until eight, 10, 12 years later," says Ed Lowry, executive director of the Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service and Education Center.

But with so many deployed in a war that could be psychologically scarring, homeless shelters are bracing for an influx of returning soldiers.

And advocates fret that if the problem grows, resources may not: the federal budget has cut funds for veterans' housing two years in a row.

How U.S. Troops Die In Iraq

[Baltimore Sun, January 13, 2005]

**U.S. troops since 2003:
Blast injuries killed 486, bullets 310, accidents 225**

Blast injuries from roadside and car bombs, rocket-propelled grenades and mortars are responsible for over half the U.S. combat deaths in Iraq.

Boulder Marine's Legs Amputated

January 13, 2005 AP

Evan Morgan arrived in Bethesda, Md., last week from a hospital in Germany, where doctors had to amputate his right leg above the knee and his left leg below the knee. The Fairview High School graduate also suffered trauma to his right eye, a broken right arm, fractures in his right fingers and a broken nose.

Most of the surgery so far has been orthopedic, the Brad Morgan said. Doctors have reinforced fractures in Morgan's right arm and hand with metal so he'll regain strength faster and can start the rehabilitation process sooner.

Doctors also told the family that Morgan will walk again with prosthetics and that he's expected to have full use of his right arm and hand. He was expected to undergo surgery on his eye Thursday and doctors are hoping to save some vision in it, Brad Morgan said.

"What's helped is focusing on what he has left and to stop worrying about what he's lost," Brad Morgan said. "He's a smart kid, he's a strong kid and he's got a lot left."

Evan Morgan was assigned to the 1st Marine Division in Twentynine Palms, Calif., and was on his second tour of duty in Iraq when he was injured in an explosion in Al Qaim. He was first deployed when the war began in March 2003. He was redeployed to Al Qaim in August.

Poland To Cut Troops In Iraq To 1,700

13.01.2005 SOFIA (bnn)

Poland is planning to cut its military contingent in Iraq to 1, 700 from 2, 500 in February should Jan. 30 elections in the Arab country pass successfully, an official said Thursday.

Bush Clueless About Combat Reality

[New York Daily News, January 13, 2005]

President Bush's pledge to keep women out of front-line combat is virtually meaningless in Iraq, where insurgents make the entire country a battlefield.

Army Officers Disciplined For Allowing Crooks To Rip Of Green Troops

[New York Times, January 13, 2005]

Eleven Army officers at Fort Benning have been disciplined for letting life insurance agents give improper classroom sales pitches to hundreds of trainees last spring, in violation of military rules.

<p>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.</p>

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Saboteurs Strike Iraq's Oil Industry On Daily Basis; Resistance Cuts Off All Import Supplies; "We Were Unable To Go On"

"Sometimes all of these three lines become idle and as a result, oil stuff no longer reaches Baghdad. Then we find we have to rely on gas tankers, but the gas tankers are then attacked and the drivers either killed or kidnapped."

Iraq has stopped its imports of gasoline and propane from Syria and Saudi Arabia because of the constant attacks on the drivers, Ghadban said.

January 13, 2005 BAGHDAD (AFP)

Insurgents are carrying out at least one attack a day on Iraq's vital oil infrastructure, at times shutting down all fuel lines to Baghdad, Oil Minister Thamer Ghadban said.

"Over the past three months, attacks have increased to about one or two attacks every day," Ghadban told a press conference.

He warned the attacks were not random but part of a deliberate strategy to create fuel shortages in the capital. Ghadban said attacks numbered more than 200 in 2004 and had averaged about 24 per month.

"There is a leadership running these terrorist attacks. That leadership has maps and is aiming to isolate the city of Baghdad," Ghadban said.

Insurgents deliberately target fuel lines from Kirkuk, Baiji and Nafat Khana to the north that supply Baghdad's main refinery in the southern suburb of Dura, which in turn provides fuel to the capital's main electricity plant, Ghadban said.

"Sometimes all of these three lines become idle and as a result, oil stuff no longer reaches Baghdad. Then we find we have to rely on gas tankers, but the gas tankers are then attacked and the drivers either killed or kidnapped."

Iraq has stopped its imports of gasoline and propane from Syria and Saudi Arabia because of the constant attacks on the drivers, Ghadban said.

"There is a hostile campaign to stop Iraqi imports ... As the drivers were being killed or kidnapped, we were unable to go on," he said, estimating Iraq had bought 200 million dollars worth of fuel from the two countries each month.

The violence has resulted in fuel shortages across Iraq, with people waiting in line for several hours to fill their cars.

The relentless acts of sabotage have effectively robbed Iraq of the benefit of its oil reserves, estimated to be the second largest in the world after those of Saudi Arabia, he said.

"The oil industry has not been a real aid to the strengthening of Iraq's economy as attacks on oil and gas pipelines are comparable to cutting Iraq's economic veins," the minister said.

"Without security the oil industry will never be revived."

More Parties And Candidates Bail Out Of Fake Election

BAGHDAD, Jan. 12 (Xinhuanet) — **Due to the grim security situation in Iraq, more political parties and individuals have withdrawn from the landmark elections due on Jan. 30.**

According to the Al Furat newspaper, 53 political parties and organizations as well as 30 individuals have asked their names to be dropped from the election lists in a bid to show their rejection of elections under US occupation.

A Sunni tribal coalition, the Patriotic Front for Iraqi Tribes, said on Wednesday that it would withdraw from the elections unless it is postponed till the day when security improves.

The coalition said the announcement was also in protest against the US detention of the alliance's leader Hassan Zeidan Khalaf al-Lihebi.

The alliance is the latest major Sunni group that challenged the Iraqi authority which had refused to postpone the elections.

Observers claim that more withdrawals are expected due to disputes on the elections among various political groups and individuals.

Occupation Profiteer Captured, Six Killed

13 January 2005 Aljazeera

At 6.30am (0330 GMT) on Thursday, armed men opened fire on a minibus that had gone to pick up a Turkish businessman from the Bakhan Hotel in central Baghdad.

A Turkish news channel said the construction company was working in Iraq with the US.

All six on board were killed, police Lieutenant Bassam al-Abid said.

The businessman, identified as Abdulkadir Tanrikulu, was captured by at least 10 men.

Five of the dead were local Iraqi employees working for the businessman, who runs a construction company, al-Abid said. The other victim was the driver of the minibus.

An employee of the hotel, who gave only his first name, Alaa, said the businessman has been in Iraq for about a year.

Collaborator Killed In Buhriz

13 January 2005 Aljazeera

In the Buhriz neighbourhood, south of Baquba, Imad Majid, a member of the Iraqi Communist Party, was shot dead by armed men.

4 Occupation Cops Killed, 12 Wounded

13 & 14 January 2005 Aljazeera & (CNN)

Four Iraqi policemen and three civilians were killed, and eight police and 30 civilians were wounded when a car bomb exploded in front of a Shiite mosque in a town just north of the Iraqi capital Baghdad.

The bombing in the town of Khan Bani Saad, about 20 km (12 miles) south of Baquba, occurred at about 6 p.m. (10 a.m. ET), said Maj. Neal O'Brien, spokesman for the 1st Infantry Division in Tikrit.

Police said the bomb was apparently operated by remote control.

In al-Aziziya, south of Baghdad, four Iraqi police officers were wounded in an attack targeting their patrol.

Official Shot In Baqouba

January 13, 2005 The Associated Press

On Wednesday, in the city of Baqouba, northeast of Baghdad, gunmen shot and killed Jawad Ibrahim, an assistant to the mayor, as he was fixing his car, police said.

Allawi Official Killed

Jan. 13, CNN

Partisans killed the director of a Baghdad election center Thursday.

Baghdad police, who reported the slaying, did not release the director's name. He was in charge of an election center in the al-Khadoumiyah neighborhood in the northern part of Baghdad.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

"A slave who has become conscious of his slavery, and who has risen to the height of fighting for his emancipation, has half ceased to be a slave." (Lenin.)

No "Owning" Iraq

Jim Hoagland [Washington Post, January 13, 2005, Pg. 21]

Forget the slogans. It's time to let Iraqis remake their country. **No nation can ever be owned by another. So it's both glib and pernicious to air the notion that America has "broken" Iraq and therefore "owns" it.**

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

Iraqi Minister Resigns To Protest Abuse By Occupation;

Foolish Man Thought Iraqi “Sovereignty” Was Real!

January 13, 2005 (AEDT)

A Minister in the interim Iraqi Government has resigned in protest at the behaviour of US forces in the capital, Baghdad.

The Minister of State, Adnan Janabi, said he had been detained for more than half an hour at a checkpoint controlling access to the so-called green zone, where many military diplomatic and government offices are located.

The Prime Minister's office confirmed that Adnan Janabi had tendered his resignation as Minister of State and gone home.

It said Prime Minister Iyad Alawi was trying to persuade Mr Janabi to return to office.

Mr Janabi's resignation is being seen largely as a protest at what he regards as the arrogant and disrespectful behaviour by the Americans in their dealings with the interim Iraqi government.

Many Iraqi officials have complained at insensitivity towards Iraqi sovereignty on the part of the Americans, especially the military. [That's silly. There is no Iraqi sovereignty.]

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

A Classic Tale Of Imperial Arrogance; Giving “9th Grade Civics Lessons” To Iraqi Sheikh

January 13, 2005 By Gordon Trowbridge, Army Times staff writer

BAGHDAD — Teacup in hand, Army Capt. Dan Mark prepared to teach another lesson in what he calls “ninth-grade civics.”

For nearly an hour, Sheikh Alwan Shalal Talal al Kartani had dominated the discussion of Iraq's upcoming elections with a catalog of complaints against the interim Iraqi

government: Lack of security, creeping Iranian influence, long gas-station lines, corrupt and ineffective police.

Then came the civics lesson. “If the people don’t like the way the government is working right now, this election is their chance to fix it,” said Mark, a troop commander in 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment. “If they don’t vote, the people they don’t like will continue in power.” **[The Sheikh and everybody else in Iraq over the age of 3 knows the election has been rigged by the Occupation, and “the people they don’t like,” Allawi, the CIA asset, and the rest of the stooges for Bush, are absolutely guaranteed to continue in power. That’s why they fight the Occupation with force of arms. No other choice is left, except to be ruled from Washington DC by the Bush dictatorship.]**

“Over the last three months, it’s been a lot of, ‘This is what an election is; this is how an election works.’ It’s basically ninth-grade civics class.”

[Playing stupid for the Imperial occupier has been a standard tactic since the Roman Empire fell, and just as fatal now as then for fools who buy it. Capt. Mark. has just been suckered into the classic precursor to military defeat: underestimating the opponent. With commanders like this on the other side, the resistance can’t lose.]

Winning Hearts And Minds: Occupation Arrests Another Preacher; 50 In Prison So Far

13 January 2005 Aljazeera & Independent Online

Baghdad - United States forces detained a Sunni Muslim cleric in an overnight raid on his Baghdad home, an official from the influential Muslim Clerics' Association said on Thursday.

"American forces raided his home at 1.30am and searched it. When they found nothing they took Sheikh Ahmed al-Jibouri and left," Sheikh Omar Ragheb Zaydan told Reuters. **"No reason was given."**

Jibouri is a professor at the Islamic University and imam of the Khashab Mosque in northwestern Baghdad, he said.

The raid damaged his house and the mosque.

US and Iraqi forces have detained dozens of Iraqi clerics in recent months, including many Sunnis they suspect of being linked to insurgents bent on expelling foreign forces from Iraq.

Zaydan said more than 50 members of the Muslim Clerics' Association, which controls hundreds of mosques around the country, remained in US detention.

"We consider these arrests as pressure on the association to change its position over the election and its position over the presence of occupation forces," he said.

"This position will not change. We consider it one of our main strengths."

The Muslim Clerics' Association has called on Iraqis to boycott the January 30 poll over US attacks on Sunni areas.

Its officials met at the weekend with a senior delegation from the US embassy and offered to reverse that call in return for a timeline for the withdrawal of US forces from Iraq.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

No Iraqi WMDs, But Bush Don't Give A Shit

[Philadelphia Inquirer, January 13, 2005] The White House noted that its hunt for weapons of mass destruction had shut down in Iraq without finding the stockpiles used as a reason to invade Iraq. **A White House spokesman said President Bush has no regrets about invading Iraq. [Of course not, since it had nothing to do with WMDs. It was about oil and Imperial dreams. Now it's an Imperial nightmare, if not for the traitor politicians' who are safe and well paid in Washington, at least for the troops and their families.]**

White House Fought New Curbs On Torture, Officials Say

[New York Times, January 13, 2005, Pg. 1] **Congressional leaders, urged on by the White House, scrapped a legislative measure month that would have placed new restrictions on the use of torture by U.S. intelligence officers.**

Bush Accuses Saddam Of Telling Truth: Evildoer Knowingly Came Clean On WMDs, President Charges

January 12, 2005 The Borowitz Report

Just hours after confirming that the search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq was over, President George W. Bush leveled his harshest charge ever at Saddam Hussein, accusing the former Iraqi dictator of "knowingly telling the truth" about not possessing WMD in the months leading up to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

"After years of lying about his weapons, Saddam Hussein willfully decided to tell the truth about them," Mr. Bush said. "His treachery knows no bounds."

After Mr. Bush excoriated Saddam for his "wanton truth-telling," he added that "thanks to the work of our coalition, Mr. Saddam Hussein will never be free to tell the truth again."

Mr. Bush argued that even though the stated reason for invading Iraq no longer applied, preventing the former Iraqi strongman from telling the truth in the future was "reason enough" to go to war.

"In the wrong hands, the truth can destabilize regions and even destroy entire civilizations," Mr. Bush said. "In that respect, the truth itself is a weapon of mass destruction - one that Mr. Saddam Hussein will never be able to use again."

The president concluded his remarks with tough words for North Korea's Kim Jong-Il, whom Mr. Bush accused of telling the truth about his own weapons program.

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