

GI SPECIAL 3A17:

“I Didn’t Go Into The Army To Kill People.”



Spc. Connie Spinks (Kelly Pace/News & Record)

“I didn’t go into the Army to kill people. For real,” she says. “That was the furthest thing from my mind.”

She thinks America is paying too high a price in the war, but she won’t say it was a mistake for the United States to go into Iraq.

“The military teaches you one thing, and that is that you support your chain of command. That’s all I’m going to say on that.”

1-16-05 By Maria C. Johnson, Staff Writer, News & Record **[Respect to Maria C. Johnson, who honors the name “reporter.”]**

What Connie Spinks remembers about the suicide bomber is his eyes.

She was riding in a convoy of three armored Humvees heading home to Camp Freedom in northern Iraq when she saw a small pickup drive from between two homes, coming straight for them.

The truck, maroon with a white design on the side, reminded her of a Toyota pickup that her father once owned back home in Asheboro. The driver was the only occupant. He had thick, curly hair, caramel-colored skin, a broad nose, chunky cheeks and a mustache.

Army Spc. Spinks, in the gun turret of the middle Humvee, yelled in Arabic for the driver to stop. For a moment, their eyes met.

She expected to see defiance. Maybe hate.

She saw nothing. He looked as if he were doing an everyday job.

She took her trigger finger off her tripod-mounted machine gun and motioned, palm down in the Iraqi way, for him to stop.

He accelerated. It was too late.

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At Randolph Hospital, physical therapist Corey Christensen bends Spinks' left knee and lifts her ankle off the bright blue table.

"I'm going to let go, but keep holding it," Christensen says.

Spinks holds her breath, grips a white pillow and fixes her eyes on the ceiling.

Her leg sinks to the table.

"Oh, God, why can't I hold my own leg?" she says.

She knows the answer: shrapnel that sliced into her left thigh, shattering the largest bone in her body and requiring surgeons in Germany to insert a metal rod before they sent her back to the States.

About 10,000 American soldiers have been wounded in Iraq, with increasing numbers shot or blasted every month.

Many of them, including Spinks, are reservists who have suspended civilian life to keep a promise: to go to war if needed.

"I accepted the terms," she says. "I had to go."

As little as she can move her leg, it's more than she could do when she got to Brooke Army Medical Center in Texas, where she finally saw her parents a week after the accident.

"I look bad, don't I?" she said when her mother appeared at the door of her hospital room.

“Baby, you’re beautiful,” Annette Spinks said. “You’ll always be beautiful.”

But the sight was hard for her mother to take. Her daughter’s oozing, shiny face was seared white from the mouth up. Her hair was singed. Her legs were in casts. Her father, Eddie Spinks, couldn’t take it. He left the room.

Connie Spinks’ injuries covered every extremity.

Her face was covered by second-degree burns.

Her hands and wrists were cooked by third-degree burns.

Two fingers on her left hand were broken.

Her left leg was chewed by shrapnel.

Her right ankle was blown to bits; a surgeon compared it to a crushed egg shell.

Doctors repaired her as best they could. They said she probably would regain all of her abilities, and she is working hard to make sure that prognosis comes true. Her therapy has pushed her to sobs at times.

She clings to her can-do attitude because that’s who she is: a skinny, young woman with a fixed grin, a buoyant voice and a middle-child streak of independence wider than the creek down the hill from her family’s Asheboro home.

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Connie Spinks relished country life as a kid. She rode horses and ATVs, hunted squirrels and plinked off cans and bottles in shooting contests with her younger brother and ready competitor, Ernest.

“She’ll try you, you know what I mean?” 15-year-old Ernest says. “Like, if you told her she could not do something, she’d do it. Like, if you told her she couldn’t ride that horse, she’d ride it.”

Her first taste of the military came at Asheboro High School, where she joined the Air Force ROTC because she thought the rifle team looked smart twirling their mock weapons at school assemblies.

She swapped Air Force blues for Army greens when she transferred to Southwestern Randolph High School. A part-time waitress at Henry James Bar-B-Que, she was intent on joining the Army Reserve because it would pay for college.

Her parents fought the military idea.

“See, I know people who went in the military, and they have issues. I always heard that when you go in the Army and you come out, you’re either crazy or you got bad feet,” her mother says with a half-chuckle. “I didn’t want that kind of life for my child.” Still, she and Eddie Spinks respected their daughter’s desire to make her own decisions. When

she graduated with a B average at age 17, her parents went to the recruiting office at the Asheboro Mall and signed for her to join the reserve.

They knew there was a chance she could go to war, but at the time, in May 2000, the odds of Connie Spinks getting hurt seemed remote.

Her reserve job would be in civil affairs. She would be trained to go into a country, usually after a U.S. invasion, to find out what local people needed. It could be a new car or home or goat — whatever was needed to replace what U.S. forces had destroyed.

That role appealed to her.

“I didn’t go into the Army to kill people. For real,” she says. “That was the furthest thing from my mind.”

The first time she was called up, she was working as a pharmacist’s assistant at Wal-Mart and taking classes at Randolph Community College. She guarded the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion building in Greensboro in the tense days after the Sept. 11 attacks.

A year later, she moved to Los Angeles and switched her reserve unit to the 426th Civil Affairs Battalion in Upland, Calif. She was working in customer service at a bank when she got orders for Iraq last July.

“It felt surreal, you know,” she says. “I never really thought I’d have to go fight in a war.”



Oct. 13 started out as a good day for Connie Spinks, owing much to the day before: her 22nd birthday.

Fellow soldiers had helped her celebrate. They’d baked two cakes. That night, they’d built a bonfire, and a couple of guys had dragged a bunk bed to the roof of Spinks’ mobile-home-style cottage. She’d spent hours laughing, talking, listening to music and watching the sparks fly from the bonfire under a starry sky.

Spinks had been happy to land in Mosul in northern Iraq, where it was supposed to be safer. She worked with local people as she had been trained to do.

“They appreciated what we were doing, and they thanked us,” Spinks says.

She knew that wasn’t the whole story. One day, an Iraqi who worked in the camp announced that he wouldn’t return. His cousin had been beheaded by other Iraqis for cooperating with Americans.

Still, Spinks felt safe. Homemade bombs went off at the front gate once in a while, but they didn’t seem too threatening, and Spinks had ridden in four convoys with nary a shot fired. **Her fifth convoy loomed on that Wednesday.** They would travel to the

ruins outside the ancient city of Nineveh to guard another civil-affairs team building a marketplace to help the Iraqi economy.

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When the pickup hit the Humvee, Spinks felt three jolts, as if she were in a runaway roller coaster. She saw a flash of red.

The explosion hurled Spinks from the turret. A second later, she hung by a piece of her uniform on the Humvee's driver's side door, which had been blown open. She unfastened a piece of Velcro and dropped to the ground. She tried to crawl. Her legs wouldn't move. She looked down and saw the bones in her left hand. She tried to pull herself forward on her elbows. She went nowhere.

"Help me," Spinks cried.

She smelled burning flesh. She had never smelled it before, but she knew without a doubt what it was.

She heard gunfire from the hills. The Humvee in front of hers answered with its own fire. She felt a tug on her uniform. An officer from the third Humvee was dragging her to his vehicle.

She remembers sitting there, looking at another soldier rescued from her Humvee. His face was bloody and swollen. He was looking at her, too.

"You're gonna be OK," he slurred. "You're gonna be OK."

Later in a field hospital near Mosul, the soldier came to see her off. His jaw was broken. "We just looked at each other, and he held my arm," she says. "They wheeled me out. After that, I don't remember too much."

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Hang around Spinks for long enough — maybe 15 seconds — and you'll probably see her pictures of Denzel Washington. During a visit to the hospital in Texas, the actor presented Spinks with a Purple Heart and sealed the deal with a hug and kiss.

"I was dying, for real," Spinks says.

She was quick to make friends in the hospital. One of them was Leon Watson, a reservist from Cleveland. He had been burned in a suicide bombing, too. An infection festered in one leg. He was waiting to see if they would have to amputate. His buddy, Benny Washington, was in the intensive care unit, wrapped in bandages for burns covering more than 75 percent of his body.

"They said, 'You don't need to go in there; he looks like a mummy,' " she says. "He was in a lot of pain."

Spinks felt pain, too, not all of it physical. One day, Michael Perry, a lieutenant from her reserve battalion, told her what had happened to the other soldiers in her Humvee. The soldier with a broken jaw was OK. So was another guy. But two were dead. One had been sitting in the front seat, where Spinks usually sat.

“I was crying,” Spinks remembers. “I said, ‘I should have shot the driver.’ They said, ‘You can’t blame yourself.’ I said, ‘It was my job. I was on the gun.’ They said, ‘It was God’s will. If it hadn’t been, they wouldn’t have died.’ ”

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Washington, the soldier in the ICU, is no longer in pain. He died two weeks ago.

Watson is still waiting for a decision on his leg. Spinks talked to him after his friend died.

“He’s feeling OK. He’s a little sad,” she says. “He couldn’t really talk about it.”

Ever since she came home on leave, right before Christmas, it seems everyone — family, friends, acquaintances — has been telling her to get out. Take the medical discharge, they say. Leave the military. Let them finish paying for your education.

She argued at first. The Army had done nothing wrong by her. She wasn’t going to let one bad person, the suicide bomber, spoil her plans. She wanted to go to air assault school in Hawaii and learn to rappel from helicopters.

Now, Spinks, who returns to Texas Tuesday for more treatment, is not sure.

She has listened to her mother testify in church about being overwhelmed by news of her injury. She has watched her father lovingly rub lotion on her hands, which are crisscrossed with the mesh of grafted skin. She has heard her swaggering brother say “I love you” aloud.

“If I get out, it’ll be because of my family,” she says. “If I get out, it won’t be because of me. But there’s more than myself to think about now.”

She feels old these days. Her hips feel heavy. Her legs ache. Her joints are stiff. She wonders if they’ll always feel that way. She feels old, too, when she thinks about the world, about war.

“I guess I was sort of naive that people can be so cruel,” she says. “You know, you can always hear stories, and you can always see movies, but you don’t really know how real death is and how real the threat is until you’re in that situation. War is very real.”

Sorting out her feelings is difficult, she says.

She wants to be a good soldier but honor her family.

She wants to help the Iraqis, but she’s not sure enough of them want it.

She thinks America is paying too high a price in the war, but she won't say it was a mistake for the United States to go into Iraq.

"The military teaches you one thing, and that is that you support your chain of command. That's all I'm going to say on that."

She's sitting in her wheelchair in her family's living room. She looks down at her left hand as she talks. "It's itching, so I think it's healing," she says.

On the television a few feet away, the morning game shows are giving way to soap operas. A news break says more U.S. service people have been killed by a suicide bomber in Iraq.

Over there, the struggle goes on. Over here, in Connie Spinks' living room, it's just beginning.

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:

Baghdad Armored Vehicle Wreck Kills U.S. Soldier

1/16/2005 By Associated Press

A U.S. soldier was killed Sunday when an armored vehicle flipped and plunged into a canal in western Baghdad.

Insurgent Attacks In Baghdad

January 16, 2005 The Columbia Daily Tribune & Jan 16 (KUNA)

In Baghdad, three mortar shells exploded yesterday near the heavily guarded Green Zone, causing no casualties but sending U.S. and Iraqi officials scurrying for cover. It marked the third straight day of rebel attacks on the zone, the nerve center of the U.S. and Iraqi administration, after a lull of a couple of weeks.

A roadside bomb ripped through a U.S. convoy yesterday on the western edge of Baghdad, destroying a truck, police Lt. Akram al-Zubaie said. There were no reports of casualties.

Armed clashes erupted Sunday between police and unknown gunmen in the Zaytoon neighborhood of the capital city and in the town of Habbaniya, security forces said.

Bradley Hit In Mosul

Jan 16, 2005 By JASON KEYSER, Associated Press Writer

A Bradley Fighting Vehicle was damaged Sunday in Mosul when an explosion occurred as a U.S. convoy passed by, witnesses said. It was unclear whether there were casualties.

**EXCEPTIONALLY BAD PLACE TO BE:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. Army 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry soldiers raid a vacant hotel in Mosul, Iraq, Jan. 16, 2005, after a report of insurgent sniper fire in the area. (AP Photo/Jim MacMillan)

U.S. Ramadi Base Under Fire

Jan 16, 2005 By JASON KEYSER, Associated Press Writer

In the city of Ramadi, five explosions rocked a joint U.S.-Iraqi National Guard base, sending columns of smoke rising above the area, witnesses said. Sporadic clashes were reported in the city center.

U.S. Convoy Hit By Karbala Car Bomb; Casualties Not Reporter

BAGHDAD, Jan 16 (KUNA)

In the western part of Karbala, witnesses said a booby-trapped car exploded as a US convoy drove by, leading the US forces to close the area for examination of the damages.

TROOP NEWS

“Limousine Cabal” Bureaucrats Killing Our Troops

Sadly, many uniformed leaders have become mere vassals to implement the personal whims of a few hardheaded and aging bureaucrats.

Foolhardy ideological demands slowly are leading us to ethical and financial perdition while the “little guy” — the soldier, sailor, airman, Marine or Coast Guardsman — pays the piper as an out-of-touch Pentagon “limousine cabal” metaphorically dances the fiscal night away.

Taxpayers must raise the noise level and demand greater accountability from those in the Pentagon who thrust our troops into combat either ill-equipped or with second-rate or improper equipment.

January 17, 2005 By Fred Klinkenberger, Army Times. The writer is a retired Navy senior chief journalist.

When it comes to accountability, one must wonder how firm a grip on reality our civilian Pentagon leadership has.

Take Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld’s comment during a visit to Southwest Asia in December.

He said a nation goes to war with the Army it has, not with the Army it wishes it had. That raises the question: What kind of Army does Mr. Rumsfeld think we have, and what kind of an Army does he wish we had?

Did he tacitly admit that — whether or not America was ready — he and the administration had determined well before 2003 that the United States would topple Saddam Hussein, the existence of weapons of mass destruction be damned? What did that do for accountability?

Meanwhile, we have the ongoing Air Force tanker lease/purchase fiasco.

In that labyrinthine scandal, one person so far has been punished with a slap on the wrist — never mind that hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars may be wasted as the Air Force seeks to replace its aging tanker fleet. We owe Sen. John McCain a debt of gratitude for not letting special interest groups sweep this one under the rug.

There's the Pat Tillman tragedy, whereby top Army officials were too embarrassed to admit that poor on-the-scene decision-making resulted in the former NFL player being killed by friendly fire. Who will be held accountable?

There's the brewing scandal over North Carolina property the Navy wants to buy to build a new practice outlying landing field for its Hornet fleet at Cherry Point, N.C., and Oceana, Va. **The media recently acquired embarrassing internal Navy e-mails indicating that required environmental studies and justification were less than forthright. Naturally, no heads have rolled yet from this episode.**

The Pentagon tosses red herrings and enticing bon mots to the public to give the appearance of propriety. For instance, six soldiers recently were punished because they stripped what they thought were abandoned vehicles in Kuwait, taking parts for their own unit, which was experiencing equipment shortages. Two of those “dangerous” criminals were officers, each of whom got six months in the stockade and a dishonorable discharge. We all can sleep better since that “justice” has been served.

Meanwhile, the Byzantine world of Pentagon accountability continues to mesmerize and titillate us. How can chicanery be so successfully employed at the highest Defense Department levels, and those feeding from it seemingly are impervious to any consequences?

Sadly, many uniformed leaders have become mere vassals to implement the personal whims of a few hardheaded and aging bureaucrats.

Foolhardy ideological demands slowly are leading us to ethical and financial perdition while the “little guy” — the soldier, sailor, airman, Marine or Coast Guardsman — pays the piper as an out-of-touch Pentagon “limousine cabal” metaphorically dances the fiscal night away.

Here's the rub: The Defense Department's pinstriped leadership demands unquestioned obedience from the field, but with a “do-as-I-say, not-as-I-do” caveat.

The past few years have been rife with tales of catfights among Pentagon civilian leadership — most recently, the backpedaling and finger-pointing about homemade “hillbilly armor” our soldiers and Marines use to protect their vehicles from improvised explosive devices used by Iraqi insurgents.

Companies producing these vehicles say their production is well below 100 percent, while Defense Department spinmeisters say production is at peak.

When these Pentagon shenanigans are brought to the public’s attention, the media — as always — are accused of being anti-military and always looking for dirt to sully those in and out of uniform serving our country.

Fortunately, a more media-savvy — though cynical — public easily sees through such smoke screens. Yet no public outcry is heard, only an occasional whimper.

Taxpayers must raise the noise level and demand greater accountability from those in the Pentagon who thrust our troops into combat either ill-equipped or with second-rate or improper equipment.

Only second-rate leadership would allow that to happen. That can and must be changed.

MORE:

“What Has The Army Come To?”

Letter To The Editor
Army Times
1.17.05

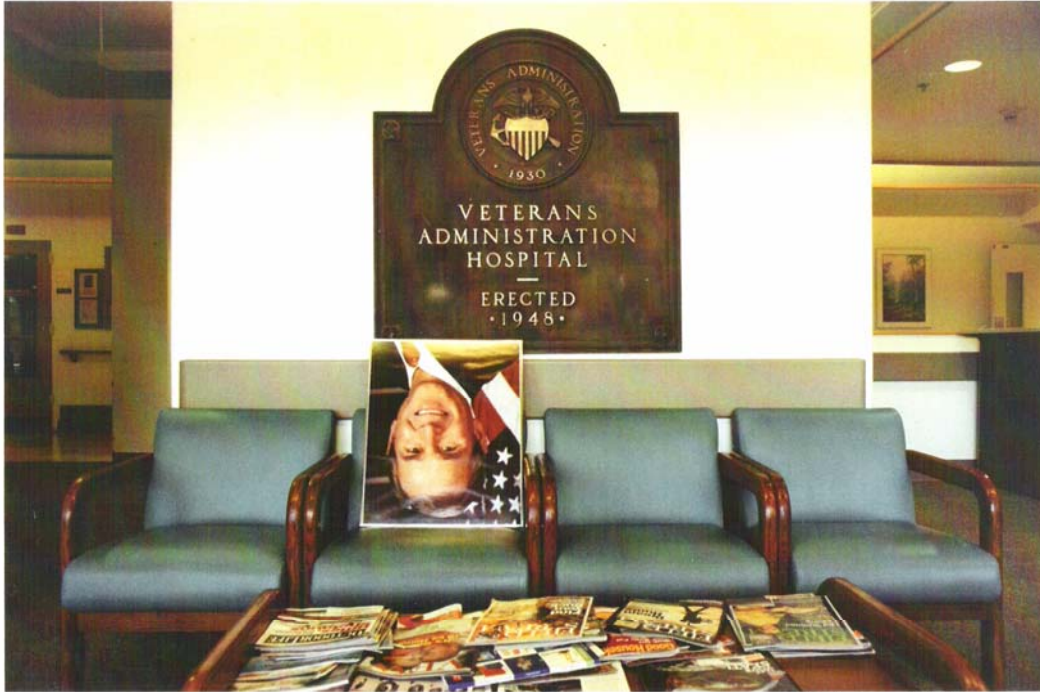
What has the Army come to when a chief warrant officer who received a Bronze Star for his bravery in Operation Iraqi Freedom is dishonorably discharged, sentenced to prison and stripped of his rank and military pay because he wanted to safeguard his unit by scrounging for spare parts in abandoned trunks at an Army camp?

The soldier showed imagination and was resourceful. **Our troops are in danger because they lack proper equipment. Thousands have been seriously wounded because our government has not given them the equipment they need.**

For justice’s sake, I hope the chief is cleared of felony charges and his military record cleared. He should be honored as a hero, not a crook.

Angelica Adams
Cambridge, Mass.

10,000 U.S. Wounded: Huge Increase In Last Year



Mike Hastie Army Medic Vietnam 1970-71

"Bring 'Em On"

George Bush

July 2, 2003

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

01/16/2005 By MICHAEL GANNON, Journal Register News Service, The Middletown Press

"I control aircraft," said the 19-year-old Clinton resident. "I was walking on the base on Nov. 29 when I got hit with shrapnel from a 60mm mortar."

The shrapnel tore into his leg, leaving a long, bloody gash. He was sent home shortly afterwards. Celotto has been going to the Veterans Affairs medical center in West Haven twice a week for physical therapy on his left leg since his return in December.

Celotto is one of more than 10,000 U.S. soldiers wounded in Iraq since combat operations began nearly two years ago. According to the U.S. Department of

Defense, as of Jan. 14 10,372 soldiers had been wounded. Of that number, 5,396 were wounded badly enough that they could not return to duty.

Those severely-wounded soldiers are being admitted into facilities like the Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C. and local VA medical centers.

In the last year, the number of wounded soldiers increased dramatically: In the first eight months of the war, 2,076 soldiers were injured. In the 14 months since, 8,296 were injured.

Newlyweds Work To Save Marriage After War Leaves Him Paralyzed

They fight over money. The Army didn't discharge Joe until Dec. 1, and he was still waiting for his first retirement check, they said.

Recently, Joe ran out of the methadone he takes for the pain in his right hand. It's taken weeks to arrive, and the two argue over who should make the follow-up call.

Jan. 16, 2005 JENNIFER C. YATES, Associated Press

SALTSBURG, Pa. - The attraction between the tall, lean Army sergeant and the petite blonde was instant. After a night of slow dancing at a bar, Joe - on a 10-day leave - just had to see Peggy the next day.

He offered her \$150 if she'd call in sick to her waitressing job and go out with him instead. Flattered, the single mother of three agreed to see him after her shift ended.

Before you know it, they were married and Joe was off to Iraq.

For two months, Joe Jenkins would be fine. But then he would find himself on one of the most dangerous battlefields of the war : In a rooftop firefight in Fallujah, a bullet would pierce his spine, leaving him without the use of his legs, paralyzed.

Now, Joe is back home and everything has slowed down.

As Joe, 36, learns to live in a wheelchair, both he and his wife are angry - angry at how the injury has begun to pull apart their marriage.

"It's not fair and who do you blame? You can't blame anybody," says Peggy, who is 40. "We didn't even have a chance to start a life together before it totally changed."

Sitting around their kitchen table in November, Joe is sullen, his head drawn down. To comfort Peggy, he strokes her right hand with his right thumb. At times, she squeezes his nerve-damaged right hand to ease bursts of pain.

"I don't want to be in here for the rest of my life," Joe says, talking about his wheelchair. "I want to be able to take a walk with my wife and hold her hand."

For Joe and Peggy, the challenges surface every day.

The couple live with her father because he has a handicapped-accessible home. They spend their days going to doctor's appointments, picking up prescriptions and haggling on the phone with bureaucrats.

"It's hard on us," Joe says in his military-like, matter-of-fact manner. "It's definitely caused some problems for us."

Two days after first meeting Peggy at Big Dogs, a bar outside Pittsburgh, Joe returned to his Army post in Germany. The romance would have to continue by phone, which it did, sometimes in calls twice a day.

Three months later, in June 2003, they decided to get married.

They wanted to marry on a beach in Jamaica, and Peggy even put money down on a Caribbean cruise. But when Joe got word that he was going to be transferred to Fort Drum, N.Y., they moved up the date so the couple and Peggy's children could move to the post together.

She planned the Aug. 16, 2003, wedding in three weeks. They rented a fire hall, and Peggy bought a straight, floor-length gown off the rack. About 40 friends and family members attended, watching them dance to Kid Rock and Sheryl Crow's duet "Picture," a song they had danced to the night they met.

Their honeymoon was a week together at the barracks in Germany.

Within months of moving to Fort Drum, Joe was shipped out to Iraq. Peggy, new to military life, tried to set up her home and adjust her family - children now ages 6, 15 and 18 - to their new schools and surroundings.

In April 2003, Joe's unit made its way into Fallujah. They were on the fourth day of what was supposed to have been a three-day mission to block the Iraqis from escaping the city as Marines swept in.

As a firefight erupted, Joe was with other soldiers on a rooftop firing his weapon when he ran out of ammunition.

"I went to get more and as I was moving, that's when I got shot in the neck. And it threw me backwards," Joe says. "I pretty much knew right there that I was paralyzed."

Peggy, watching TV at home in Fort Drum, got a call from Joe. The children were asleep. It was April 29, 10:41 p.m.

"Baby, I've been shot in the neck. I'm OK," he told her. Peggy began crying, screaming. She ran to a neighbor's house to seek solace.

Joe was taken to a Veterans Affairs hospital in Cleveland specializing in spinal cord injuries. A social worker encouraged Peggy to return home and take care of the family while her husband stayed at the hospital to learn to cope with his injuries.

But both Peggy and Joe thought he would do better at home. He left the hospital after a little more than a month, with a warning they didn't yet appreciate how difficult it would be on their own.

"We thought being together would help," Peggy says. "It was harder than being in the hospital."

In January, Peggy and Joe are back at their kitchen table talking about how he's been progressing. The body language is different this time, though. Joe holds his head higher as he talks. Peggy is more defiant.

Joe has gotten stronger and learned to be more mobile in his wheelchair. He no longer relies on Peggy to help him get in and out of the chair, or to bathe or dress. He's taking classes through the VA to learn how to drive a specially adapted car. He gets calls once a week or so from a VA liaison who is pushing him to get more active, maybe take some classes so that he can work again.

Baby steps, they agree. Baby steps.

Peggy pushes him, too, to exercise and be more aggressive about his rehabilitation. **She encourages Joe to practice at home what he's learned at physical therapy sessions, which he stopped going to because they both were dissatisfied with the care.** She also tells him he needs to learn to take his wheelchair apart himself; she saw a disabled man at a hockey game do that.

She goes to a friend's house every morning to drink tea and chat, the kind of break that is recommended for all caregivers.

For a couple that courted over the phone and then lived together only briefly before he was deployed, Peggy and Joe now spend all of their time together.

But Peggy says the more she tries to motivate him, the more it comes across as nagging.

"If I push, then I'm pushing him away," she says. "If I don't, then I sit here and see him suffer."

Joe sits quietly, listening to her talk about their relationship. It's hard for him to hear, he says, and hard to talk about himself.

They fight over money. The Army didn't discharge Joe until Dec. 1, and he was still waiting for his first retirement check, they said.

Recently, Joe ran out of the methadone he takes for the pain in his right hand. It's taken weeks to arrive, and the two argue over who should make the follow-up call.

They joke that they should have two phones in the bedroom - one on Peggy's side of the bed and one on Joe's side - so they can talk to each other. It worked so well when they were courting.

The couple - who took a real honeymoon, a cruise, in October - is seeing a marriage counselor. They have been to three sessions so far, and Joe expresses doubts that it's actually working. He says maybe they need to talk with a different person.

He says he's not real motivated to do anything. Sometimes, he blames himself for getting shot. Maybe he should have moved differently on that rooftop, he thinks.

"It's hard to talk about it. She's my wife. I just feel like she shouldn't have to hear it," Joe says. "It's not her fault I'm like this."

Despite the troubles, they say they want the same things: to buy a house, to get job training for Joe and to stay married.

And despite the daily fights, they still have tender moments. Going to the door with visitors to their home, Joe tells Peggy how pretty she is. She blushes, then smiles.

Congress Took Money For Up-Armored Humvees, Spent It On Pork Barrel Projects

2005-01-11 Veterans for Common Sense

In January 2005, the leadership of the 109th Congress removed Representative Chris Smith from his chairmanship of the Veterans Affairs Committee, replacing him with Indiana Representative Steve Buyer, a 1991 Gulf War veteran and Army Reserve Colonel known for supporting the anthrax vaccine and opposing Gulf War illness legislation.

Why did they do this? **Because Rep. Smith was too pro-veteran.**

According to a January 11 column by Bob Novak, "The leadership's problem with Smith has been his insatiable desire to make life better for veterans during 24 years on the Veterans Affairs committee (six years as vice chairman, four years as chairman). That fits the job description set by conservative Democrat Sonny Montgomery of Mississippi during his 12-year chairmanship."

In short, the House leadership has decided, during a time when soldiers are dying in Iraq in Afghanistan, that it's time to turn back the clock and cut spending on the Department of Veterans Affairs, just as demands on the VA system are reaching unprecedented levels.

Congress is rightly concerned about the huge deficits our government is incurring, with the combination of a war and tax-cuts rapidly bankrupting our country. **But the 2005 budget, passed by Congress and approved by Congress, managed to find \$9 billion to pay for pork-barrel projects in members' districts, including:**

- **\$7 million for a bus-maintenance facility in Tempe, Arizona**
- **\$430,000 to restore the Fox Tucson Theatre**
- **\$3 million for a grape research laboratory**
- **\$1.5 million for a demonstration project to transport naturally chilled water from Lake Ontario to Lake Onondaga**
- **\$75,000 for the Paper Industry International Hall of Fame in Appleton, Wis.**
- **\$200,000 for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame**
- **\$3 million for the First Tee Program in St. Augustine, Florida**
- **\$1 million dollars (ironically) for the Missouri Pork Producers Association**

How did they pay for all of this? Among other things, Congress cut the Pentagon account used to pay for up-armored humvees. A Scripps-Howard study of combat deaths in Iraq shows that 1 in 5 of the over 1,300 U.S. deaths in Iraq took place inside humvees.

The ouster came over a nearly unprecedented protest from the major veterans' groups: VFW Commander in Chief John Furgess said "Instead of a message of strength and continuity being sent, what's being communicated loud and clear across the country is that 'your job's in jeopardy if you put principles before politics.'"

Tell Congress today that supporting the troops isn't just a word game.

At a time when Iraq War veterans are coming home to find the rug yanked out from under them, with months long waits to see doctors for serious injuries, we won't stand for cuts to the VA in order to pay for tax-cuts and no-bid contracts. [Write your Congressman today.](#)

MORE:

Congress “Larding On The Pork” While Troops Die

2005-01-11 Jacksonville Daily News

The Bush administration and Pentagon have taken a lot of heat, some of it deserved, for an alleged shortage of armored Humvees in Iraq.

The issue came to a boil several weeks back, when Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was confronted on the issue during a widely seen press conference in Kuwait. It's been used by critics of the administration or the war to go on the offensive.

But much of the responsibility for the problem may actually lie with pork-barrel practitioners in Congress, who've thus-far proven to be Teflon-coated in the armor flap.

"Defense analysts say members of Congress might have inadvertently robbed the Army and Marines of resources to build up their stock of up-armored Humvees and other equipment needed to fight an increasingly violent Iraqi insurgency," according to a report posted last week on Govexec.com, an excellent source of information about the federal government's inner-workings.

"The fiscal 2005 Defense appropriations bill contains funding cuts for the Army and other programs that defense analysts say were made to cover the cost of nearly \$9 billion in congressional pork projects added to the bill."

While Congress was larding on the pork, "Defense appropriators trimmed \$300 million from the Pentagon's procurement accounts, including those that fund armor for Humvees and other vehicles in Iraq, and another \$411 million was taken from the Defense Department's operations and maintenance and research and development accounts," according to the report.

The article quotes Winslow Wheeler, a former Senate Budget Committee staff member: **"We know from the proportionate, across-the-board cuts (required to cover congressional pork spending) that body armor and armor kits for Humvees and trucks were affected."**

Wheeler has blown the whistle on wasteful defense spending in a new book, "The Wastrels of Defense," based on his experiences on Capitol Hill.

We would take issue with only one element of this report - use of the word "inadvertently" in the story's lead. This makes Congress' diversion of defense funds from higher priorities to personal pet projects seem innocent or unconscious. But it is neither.

Members of Congress understand that the funds they earmark for pork must come from somewhere, leaving less funding available for things the military professionals deem a higher priority. They know exactly what they're doing, but evidently prefer to live in a state of denial about the implications of their self-serving actions for soldiers on the ground.

And if taxpayers had the means to track the billions of dollars plundered in this manner, not just in fiscal 2005 but dating back decades, they'd likely find that armorless Humvees are just one of many ways troops in the field have been shortchanged due to the lack of fiscal discipline on Capitol Hill.

President Bush shares the blame - and the shame - not only because he serves as commander in chief, but because he has refused to use the veto pen even once during his presidency to punish Congress for its fiscally irresponsible ways.

V.A. Tortures Vets With Bullshit As Money For Medical Care Cut

2005-01-11 Paul Vitello, Newsday

Americans seem eager to "support our troops" these days. It says so on the bumper of every other car on the road, anyway.

But how our government treats the troops when they come home - as veterans - is no cause for bumper sticker pride.

Some older veterans wait more than a year for an appointment to see a doctor via the Byzantine bureaucracy of the Department of Veteran Affairs.

If you are not a recent returning soldier, you can spend a whole day seeking help and wind up so frustrated, so desperately unsupported, that you end up calling a local newspaper columnist. I get a call like that about twice a week.

"They're yanking us around," said one, John Welge of Lindenhurst, a 57-year-old disabled Vietnam veteran who happened to call yesterday. "There's so many cuts, everybody's doing the job of three people. I've been on the phone all day trying to get someone to help me with a simple medical form ..."

A trillion-dollar deficit, caused mainly by huge tax cuts during the past four years, has led the VA to impose many economies, small and large.

Seven VA hospitals are scheduled to be closed, for instance.

The VA is also reviewing the possibility of reneging on a landmark 1996 reform that more than tripled the number of veterans eligible for health-care coverage - from 2 million to 7 million.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Sit-In At Oil Ministry Starts

Jan 16, 2005 By JASON KEYSER, Associated Press Writer

About 300 followers of radical Shiite Muslim cleric Muqtada al-Sadr began a three-day sit-in in front of the Oil Ministry in Baghdad to protest gasoline shortages that have caused hours-long waits at gas stations.

About a dozen of them entered the ministry and complained to Minister Thamer Ghadban, asking why U.S. troops have fuel for their vehicles and Iraqis don't.

Various Local Anti-Iraqi Forces Dead

January 16, 2005 AFP & Jan 16, 2005 By JASON KEYSER, Associated Press Writer

Five Iraqi soldiers and a policeman were shot dead on Saturday in a string of insurgent attacks around the northern trouble spots of Samarra and Kirkuk.

Four Iraqi soldiers were killed when gunmen ambushed a checkpoint to the west of the Sunni Muslim bastion of Samarra, said Lieutenant Colonel Mahmud Mohammed. In northern Samarra, another soldier was killed when gunmen attacked an Iraqi army patrol, said a police source on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, near a US base outside Kirkuk, a policeman was killed and four others wounded when insurgents attacked a police checkpoint, said General Turhan Yusef, police chief in the tense city.

Insurgents attacked an Iraqi National Guard patrol south of Baghdad, injuring two guardsmen, one of them critically, police Lt. Adnan Abdul-Allah said.

“They Hang The Little Criminals And Let The Big Go Free” (From A Song By Ewenn McColl)

BBC 16.01.2005

Iraqis have reacted angrily to a 10-year sentence imposed on a US soldier for abusing inmates at Abu Ghraib jail near Baghdad. Many said Spc Charles Graner deserved a harsher punishment for his part in the prison abuse scandal.

One Iraqi who saw pictures of the abuse on the internet said Graner should be sent back to Abu Ghraib to serve his sentence among the prisoners still there, our correspondent says. [Excellent sense of justice! If only.]

Another said that many others of higher rank must have been involved in such systematic abuse and should be prosecuted too, our correspondent adds.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

The Name Game, Or Lies The Press Taught Me

Interestingly, when the United States refers to its appointed Arab and Kurdish allies, it invariably calls them, "Iraqis," as in "Iraqi foreign minister, etc.," notwithstanding the fact that those people are either Sunni or Shiite. This means one thing: Iraqis could keep their Iraqi identification, but only if they renounce armed opposition to the occupation. Oppose the occupation or join the uprising, and you instantly become, either a "Sunni insurgent," or a "Shiite rebel."

To demonstrate the absurdity of the American way of labeling Iraqis, imagine that a foreign power occupies New York City, and that New Yorkers rise against the occupation. The occupiers of NYC would then label the fighters of Bensonhurst, "Catholic insurgents"; the fighters of Borough Park, "Hassidic rebels"; the fighters of Harlem, "Evangelical insurgents"; the fighters of Brighton Beach, "Jewish rebels"; the fighters of Queens, "Catholic renegades"; and so on.

January 14, 2005 B. J. Sabri, Online Journal Contributing Writer, Online Journal. B. J. Sabri is an Iraqi-American anti-war activist

Invariably, while Cheney, Bush, and Powell routinely exaggerate the virtues of invasion, they consistently ignore the devastation they inflicted upon Iraq and its people, as well as the implacable Iraqi struggle against the occupation. Because of a fatuous mentality that indulges in spins but discards reality, and as the occupation regime settled in and resistance to it began, the U.S. was fast to claim that those who were fighting its order were remnants of the old regime.

In the meanwhile, as the resistance persisted, the list of labels kept growing to include Saddam's loyalists, foreign fighters, Baathists, terrorists, Arab Jihadists, Islamists, Qaeda-ists, Iranian infiltrators, Sunni insurgents, Shiite rebels, Shiite renegades, Sunni rebels, thugs, murders, and other labels.

As for labels given to Iraq and cities revolting against the occupation, the list is somewhat limited, but indicates the purposeful ideological manipulation of U.S. war managers: war-torn country, restive Fallujah, rebel city, volatile region, Sunni triangle, Sunni provinces, etc.

Two labels though, "Sunni rebels" and "Shiite insurgents" deserve some attention.

For one thing, 95 percent of Iraqis are either Sunni or Shiite. Hence, when the U.S. battles Sunnis and Shiites, who else remains in Iraq?

Most Arabs are either Sunni or Shiite; and some of Iraq's non-Arab larger minorities such as the Kurds and Turcomans are mostly Sunni Muslim, but sizable groups within them are Shiite. Knowing this, how do all these groups from all ethnic and confessional backgrounds fit into the U.S. classification of forces hostile to the occupation?

For example, take the large Kurdish minority that is acting (under the occupation) as if it were a large majority. The Kurds are the most enthusiastic backers of the occupation for nationalistic and separatist reasons; yet they are mostly Sunni and have nothing to do with the American-dubbed: "Sunni insurgency." **Equally, the term, "Shiite insurgency" is misleading. In fact, not all Shiites, whether Arab, Kurds, or Turcomans, are rising against the occupation; so why does the U.S. generalize the anti-occupation uprising as "Shiite insurgency?"**

Moreover, if the U.S. war in Iraq were a war of religions pitting occupied Muslims against mostly Christian occupiers, then the term, "Muslim insurgency" would be more in tune with that situation. But the war in Iraq is a war of colonialism; therefore, it was widely expected that the occupation would change the fundamental connotations of the conflict to achieve its goal of conquest.

Interestingly, when the United States refers to its appointed Arab and Kurdish allies, it invariably calls them, "Iraqis," as in "Iraqi foreign minister, etc.," notwithstanding the fact that those people are either Sunni or Shiite. This means one thing: Iraqis could keep their Iraqi identification, but only if they renounce armed opposition to the occupation. Oppose the occupation or join the uprising, and you instantly become, either a "Sunni insurgent," or a "Shiite rebel."

Consequently, by omitting the national quality from all those Iraqis who oppose the occupation and concentrate on a specific religious creed within Islam, the U.S. is exploiting the traditional internal Islamic confessional discord to reinforce the occupation regime.

To demonstrate the absurdity of the American way of labeling Iraqis, imagine that a foreign power occupies New York City, and that New Yorkers rise against the occupation. The occupiers of NYC would then label the fighters of Bensonhurst, "Catholic insurgents"; the fighters of Borough Park, "Hassidic rebels"; the fighters of Harlem, "Evangelical insurgents"; the fighters of Brighton Beach, "Jewish rebels"; the fighters of Queens, "Catholic renegades"; and so on.

Recently, the "brilliant minds" at the hyper-imperialist press agency, the "Associated Press," entered into the foray of how to nominate the Iraqis by proposing two new categories: (1) Shiite Muslim majority, and (2) Arab Sunni minority. According to trite colonialist categorizations, the AP immediately divided the Iraqis into two factions with the intention to spread ignorance and misinformation among its countless correspondents, world journalists who depend on its reporting, and among the ultimate target: the readers.

Many things are true about Iraq; just as the rest of the ancient world, Iraq has six millennia of history behind it where all races and creeds intermingled. But in modern Iraq, for instance, it is true that Iraqi Arab Shiite Muslims are a majority, but they are not an absolute majority.

Second, it is also true that Iraqi Arab Sunni Muslims are a minority, but they are a very large minority that is almost half of the Arab Shiite majority.

Regardless of this imperialistically motivated census imposed on Iraq by the United States, is the composition of the Iraqi people relevant to the rationales for the invasion and occupation of Iraq?

Of course not, but in its unlimited preposterous ways, the U.S. is still busy dividing the Iraqis in categories and assigning future nominal power as per the result of a bogus election, while its forces still occupy Iraq, and its embassy controls its decision-making and finances.

Conclusively, the rule of a majority or minority is not an important issue under occupation or prospected colonization. If the rule of the majority in Iraq is mandatory, then the U.S. occupation force, as a workforce living in Iraq, is an insignificant minority, thus, categorically, has no right to rule the country.

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.

When Soldiers Revolt: Vietnam: Fragging

If Iraq turns out to be a war that the U.S. can't win quickly or simply walk away from, then combat refusals, equipment sabotage and fraggings would become anything but abnormalities. I offer this speculation with no sense of anticipatory glee, but there it is.

By Steve Hesske, Alternative Press Review. **Steve Hesske is a Vietnam era vet** who teaches writing and works as a freelance writer in Montana.

When an American soldier killed or attempted to kill one of his superiors in Vietnam the act was called fragging because the weapon of choice, as is the case in Kuwait City, was a fragmentation grenade.

As the Vietnam conflict dragged on the Army rank and file, including many draftees, resorted to a variety of methods to endeavor to kill their superiors, so fragging became a comprehensive term that indicated any attempt on the life of an officer or non-commissioned officer (NCO) by one or more of their subordinates. These attempts, as you shall see, were often successful.

Despite strident denials of its existence that continue to this day, fragging is a significant part of America's involvement in the Vietnam war, especially the latter years of that involvement.

According to 27-year army vet and former Vietnam combat commander Lt. Col. Robert Heintz Jr. writing in 1971 in ARMED FORCES JOURNAL, "With extreme reluctance (after a young West Pointer from . . . Montana was fragged in his sleep) the Pentagon has now disclosed that fraggings in 1970 have more than doubled (to 109) from the previous year."

Texas A&M historian Terry Anderson adds, "During the years of '69 down to '73 we have incidents of fragging--that is shooting or hand grenading your NCO or officer who orders you out into the field.

The U.S. Army itself does not know exactly how many . . . officers were murdered, but they know of at least 600 cases, and they have another 1400 who died mysteriously." According to Anderson, in the latter stages of America's stay in Vietnam, the Army was not at war with a Vietnamese enemy but with itself.

Perhaps the most infamous fragging incident in Vietnam actually involved the 101st Airborne when that unit's Lt. Col. Wendell Honeycutt ordered and led a fruitless, costly charge on Hamburger Hill, high ground with no strategic value. The U.S. took horrible casualties but "won" the hill, only to abandon it a short time later. Hamburger Hill is often viewed as a key event in bringing home the idea for officer and enlisted man, for Green Beret and peace protestor, for young and old all across America, that the country's involvement in Vietnam was futile and pointless.

In the aftermath of Hamburger Hill, G.I. SAYS, one of many underground papers published by enlisted men in Vietnam at the time, offered a \$10,000 bounty for the killing of Lt. Col. Honeycutt who, despite the heavy losses incurred by the 101st, bragged that he had been successful in his mission which was to kill the enemy and destroy his equipment. The colonel, despite several attempts on his life, probably mostly done by his own men, completed his Nam tour and returned home safely.

Bounties on the heads of reckless, clueless field commanders who thought nothing of putting their troops in harm's way then became commonplace in Vietnam, but with much lower price tags, usually in the \$50 to \$1000 range.

Hamburger Hill was not the only mutinous incident involving the 101st Airborne in Vietnam. A couple of years after the bloody battle for the worthless hill, 13 black soldiers with the 101st became known as "the Phu Bai 13" after they refused combat orders, forcefully took over a barracks and issued a list of demands, some of which were met by the brass.

Congressional hearings held in 1973 estimated that less than 3% of all NCO and officer deaths in Vietnam between '61 and '72 were the result of fragging. But this percentage only took into account those killings done by actual fragmentation grenade. **The practice of fragging in Nam expanded to include handguns, automatic rifles, booby traps, knives and bare hands as weapons of choice for increasingly pissed off enlisted men. The Judge Advocate General's Corps (the Army's legal branch) estimated that only about 10% of all fraggings resulted in someone being charged.**

It should be noted that fraggings and other insubordination in the Army spiked at a time when, according to Col. Heintz, writing in '71, "The morale, discipline and battleworthiness of the U.S. Armed Forces are, with a few salient exceptions, lower and worse than at anytime in the century and possibly in the history of the United States. By every conceivable indicator, our Army that remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having . . . refused combat, murdering their own officers and NCOs, drug-ridden and dispirited when not mutinous."

Today's "All Volunteer Army of One" often seems to be the antithesis of the preceding description or so we are told, so it seems, every minute of every day.

But there are negative universals in all warfare. Lousy nutrition. Cramped, dirty, awful living conditions. Terrible weather. **Unreasonable often senseless demands made by supervisors.** And what Michael Herr describes in DISPATCHES his new journalism account of Vietnam, " . . . long periods of boredom punctuated by moments of stark terror."

It took years of bad policy, pointless bloodshed and half-witted cowboy field commanders in Nam for fragging to manifest itself.

Two years ago, in a piece about outbreaks of mutiny in America's military, Kevin Keating noted, "The crisis that racked American society during the Vietnam war . . . wasn't profound enough to create an irreparable rupture between the rulers and the ruled, or to give rise to a full-fledged revolutionary crisis. The U.S. was still coasting on the relative prosperity of the post WWII economic boom. Life wasn't as bad for as many people as it is now, and that's why U.S. involvement in a similar protracted ground war could have a much more explosive impact on American society."

A conscript or draftee Army is much more inclined to the type of sedition wrought and witnessed in Vietnam which is one of the main reasons America's military is now all-volunteer.

But with the U.S. now the moral arbiter for the world and a global policeman for capitalistic law and order, even an all-volunteer force will begin to feel the profound strain of such an undertaking, mostly because the American class distinction between the ruler/planner (the corporate elite) and the ruled/worker (lower to middle class) remains intact from the time of Vietnam.

If Iraq turns out to be a war that the U.S. can't win quickly or simply walk away from, then combat refusals, equipment sabotage and fraggings would become anything but abnormalities. I offer this speculation with no sense of anticipatory glee, but there it is.

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

**WONDERFUL NEWS FROM LIBERATED IRAQ:
SOME PRIMITIVE IRAQIS BECOME CIVILIZED & LEARN
TO WEAR SUITS:
FUNNY SQUIGGLE WRITING ABOLISHED;
THEY USE AMERICAN WORDS & LETTERS NOW!!**



This remarkable photo shows the great progress made in Iraq under the wise leadership of George W. Bush, Hero Of Democracy, Dear Leader In The March Of Science And Education.

Before he brought peace and freedom to Iraq, the Iraqis used a barbaric alphabet called “Arabic”, filled with incomprehensible wavy squiggly lines, and spoke an odd language even more impossible for civilized people to understand.

As this press conference photo shows, now they know how to wear proper clothes instead of wrapping themselves in sheets, and use the same alphabet and American words that are used in the White House. Soon they will be able to eat using knives, forks and spoons!

Glory To Bush, Wise Leader! Long Live The Friendship Of The Iraqi And American People!! Down With The Wreckers, Saboteurs, Anti-Iraqi Forces, And All Enemies Of The People!!! Long Live George W. Bush And His Close Comrade-In-Arms Iyad Allawi!!!!

From left to right:- Chief of Police for the Babylon region General Qais Hamza, Babil Governor Waleed Umran and Independent Electoral Commission (IECI) Director Assad Abdul Redha Ramadan in the city of Hilla, the capital of Babylon province, 100 kms south of Baghdad, Sunday, Jan. 16, 2005. (AP Photo/Hrvoje Polan, Pool)

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

Convoy Attacks Cutting Food Supplies

2005-01-16 By Abed-latif al-Mawsawi, Azzaman (Iraq)

Besides security concerns, Iraqis now have to grapple with a shortage of basic foods.

The quality and quantity of state-supplied food rations has worsened recently and many Iraqis say they now receive less food than during the days of former President Saddam Hussein.

Iraqis have depended on monthly rations since the Saddam Hussein era, under a system meant to lessen the impact of the 1990-2003 U.N.-imposed sanctions that helped destroy the economy.

The Trade Ministry has acknowledged that supplies of basic items are low but blames logistics and lack of security for the shortages.

Prices of bread, the mainstay for millions of families, have skyrocketed recently to levels unseen before.

A loaf of bread in Baghdad is now sold for 100 dinars from 25 a year ago.

To allay fears of further shortages, Trade Minister Mohammed al-Joubori re-affirmed government's commitment to continue supplying Iraqi families with subsidized food rations.

"We have no problem with tea and the contracts we have signed are sufficient for five months," he said in a statement faxed to the newspaper.

He said 14,000 tons of ghee were on their way to the country from neighboring Syria and Jordan.

"I do not think there will be a shortage of legumes with 5,000 tones expected to arrive by the end of the month," he said.

Joubori attributed the shortages to logistics, saying "long convoys" of trucks packed with food items were queuing on border posts.

Insurgents attack trucks plying Iraqi highways. As a result transport prices have surged at a time many drivers are reluctant to work for the government.

The climb in prices of bread is also partly due to acute fuel and power shortages as most bakeries in the country either rely on electricity or kerosene.

Many Iraqis did not get their monthly allocations of sugar rations of 2.5 kilograms per person.

"The Ministry (of Trade) will try to make up for the shortage of sugar this month," Joubori promised.

The monthly food rations are vital for millions of Iraqis. Without them many will starve in Iraq.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

GEORGE BUSH: POLITICAL GENIUS

The Commander-in-Chief Speaks

As for perhaps the most notorious terrorist, Osama bin Laden, the administration has so far been unsuccessful in its attempt to locate the mastermind of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. Asked why, Bush said, "Because he's hiding." (16 January 2005, Jim VandeHei and Michael A. Fletcher, The Washington Post)

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The following that we know of have also posted issues:

<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/> ; www.gifightback.org ;

<http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/gi-special.htm>,

www.williambowles.info/gispecial

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