

GI SPECIAL 3A44:



Operation Truth Newsletter

Iraq “Election” Boost In Public War Support Tanks *In Two Days*

Feb 12, 2005 By THOMAS HARGROVE and GUIDO H. STEMPEL III, Capitol Hill Blue

A new survey of 1,001 adults conducted by Scripps Howard News Service and Ohio University found that the recent elections, widely heralded by President Bush and other political leaders as a historic milestone for Iraq, produced only a temporary boost in America's public support for the U.S.-led occupation.

Sixty percent of people interviewed during the election and the two days after it said the military occupation was "a good thing." *But the support level dropped to about 49 percent in the next two days, then settled to the mid 40s thereafter.*

The decision to commit American troops to Iraq has never been especially popular, according to a series of six previous surveys taken during the past two years.

In the latest poll, people were asked, "Despite everything that has happened, do you think the United States has done a good thing or a bad thing by sending our military to occupy Iraq?"

Forty-seven percent said the United States has done "a good thing," 44 percent said it's "a bad thing" and 9 percent were undecided.

Forty percent of people in the poll gave the correct answer when asked, to the nearest 500, how many have died in the six-week war and the bloody military occupation that followed.

Participants in the poll were asked, "How often would you say you think about America's military occupation of Iraq?" About 5 percent said they think about it "almost every hour," 35 percent said "several times a day," 35 percent said "about once a day." *[A stunning total of 75% think about it every day.]*

The survey was conducted by telephone from Jan. 30 through Feb. 10 at the Scripps Survey Research Center at Ohio University. It has a margin of error of about 4 percentage points. It was funded through a grant from the Scripps Foundation.

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

U.S. Soldier Killed, 4 Injured In Baghdad

BAGHDAD, Feb. 12 (UPI)

An American soldier was killed and four others were injured Saturday in Baghdad when a booby-trapped car exploded near their patrol.

Iraqi security sources said the car blew up on a main street in the eastern district of the capital.

Eyewitnesses said the booby-trapped car, which may have been driven by an attacker, exploded as the U.S. military patrol passed, also injuring Iraqi military and civilian passers-by.

Fierce Fighting In Mosul; Stryker & Tank Severely Damaged

**UNWHOLESOME ENVIRONMENT:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**



A U.S. Army 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment soldier walks past a burning car in the middle of a four-hour running gun battle with insurgents in Mosul Feb. 12, 2005. **A U.S. Army tank and Stryker combat vehicle were disabled by RPG attacks.** (AP Photo/Jim MacMillan)

February 12, 2005 WorldNow & AP

MOSUL, Iraq Fierce fighting has raged between American troops and insurgents in the Iraqi city of Mosul.

The U-S military says the fighting began when U-S troops responding to a mortar strike on a base were hit by rifle fire and rocket-propelled grenades from a mosque.

A U-S tank and a Stryker armored vehicle have been severely damaged, and several cars and parts of buildings were left burning.

Meanwhile, police near Mosul said they've found the bodies of six men dressed in Iraqi National Guard uniforms. They said the men were shot in the chest and head and their bodies were dumped on a main highway near the city.

A hospital official in the Iraqi city of Mosul said officials have found the bodies of six Kurds who apparently worked as security guards.

U.S. Vehicle Hits Landmine In Anbar

12 February 2005 (AFP)

In the western province of Al-Anbar, the military also said one of its vehicles had been hit by a landmine Friday, but did not immediately say whether the blast had caused any casualties.

Progress -- Not!

Almost two years since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in April 2003, the resistance has partial or total control over all the main roads into Baghdad.
Feb11, 2005 PATRICK COCKBURN, Counterpunch

Winfield Marine Hurt

February 11, 2005 Jarrod Bartlett, KWCH 12 Eyewitness News

A Winfield family is in Maryland tonight seeing their son for the first time since he was hurt in Iraq last week.

Tim Horton is in the Marine Corps and was hit by shrapnel on Saturday. That's when his parents got a call from the military saying their son was in serious condition.

It was 15 agonizing hours before the next phone call came, telling John Horton his son was in surgery.

"He goes I have to tell you that Lance Corporal Timothy John Horton was seriously injured today."

It wasn't until Wednesday that John finally spoke to his son for the first time.

"He was still groggy but he said I love you dad."

Now that they know their middle son is expected to recover the Horton's are talking to their youngest, he leaves in August for boot camp.

TROOP NEWS

tony blair

[This is a message to Americans from Rose Gentle. Her son was killed in Iraq. She leads a campaign to bring all the Scots and other troops home from Iraq, now. Her words are poetry, and contain more truth than 5000 pages of bullshit from the politicians. T]

From: Rose Gentle
To: GI Special
Sent: February 09, 2005
Subject: Re: GI Special 3A40: Defend Sgt. Kevin Benderman

tony blair,

tony blair is ready to publish an exit strategy to get british troops out of iraq,

he announced yesterday, he said he was studying a draft military report.

on measures needed, before a withdrawal.

downing street hopes by publishing the report. probably be before the elections.

it will show voters the end is in sight for the iraq conflict,

but, will not put an exact date on when the troops will be home.

yes it has to be before the elections, well you should not have sent the troop

to iraq, he knows we will not stop, are his boys getting 6 mounth training to go to iran,

he can get all the troops out now,

well mr bush will you get your troops out too, or will you go and help them.

o sorry you never were a troop. he thinks iran is going to sit back. no way.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT THE NEW TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. 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)

It Ain't Right, What's Going On In Iraq: Defend Sgt. Kevin Benderman

January 18, 2004 LOS ANGELES By Carl Douglas Rogers, Iraq PeaceCentral. Carl Rogers is Co-founder, Vietnam Veterans Against The War and Co-founder/Editor, Iraq PeaceCentral

"I have learned from first hand experience that war is the destroyer of everything that is good in the world."--Sgt. Kevin Benderman, United States Army

I've just gotten off the phone with Sgt. Kevin Benderman, U.S. Army, who is facing possible court-martial for refusing to do a second tour in Iraq. The 40-year-old Benderman, sometimes critical of his younger GameBoy generation soldiers, says Iraq is not a video game. There are no restart buttons in reality.

This guy's the real deal and George Bush will only understand THIS WAR IS LOST when scores of other Kevin Benders from little towns in Georgia say, "I have learned from first hand experience that war is the destroyer of everything that is good in the world."

This man and his family need our support now. For sure, any public acts of support will be monitored and weighed by the Pentagon, so let's let Rumsfeld and Company know it's not a good idea to punish men and woman like Kevin Benderman who come to serious conclusions about war based on real life experiences.

For Kevin, like many of us in Viet Nam, seeing was disbelieving -- for all the good things you believed America stood for, which were being shattered before your eyes day in and day out.

John Kerry's powerful testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on April 22, 1971, wasn't the first time Senator J. William Fulbright encountered the Viet Nam Veterans Against the War. When we ran our first public ad in the New York Times on November 19, 1967,-- they refused to let us run the ad on Veteran's Day -- we got a check and a note in the mail the next day from Senator Ernest Gruening of Alaska, who along with Wayne Morse, stood up alone to Lyndon Johnson and voted against his unjustified Gulf of Tonkin Resolution.

Senator Gruening said, "If there's anything I can do to help, please let me know." We called him immediately and said, "As a matter of fact, there IS something you could do: get Senator Fulbright to hold hearings about atrocities being committed in Viet Nam by American GIs.

Shelly Ramsdell, a photograher, and I flew down to DC, met with Senator Gruening, a lovely man, and after hearing our stories, he picked up the phone and dialed Fulbright directly. "Bill, he said, "I've got a couple of Viet Nam veterans here with stories and pictures you won't believe." After explaining to the Arkansas senator some of what we'd reported, Gruening just nodded his head, and kept saying, "I understand, Bill, I understand." He hung up the phone, dejectedly and said, "He doesn't believe the American people are ready to hear that their boys are committing atrocities in Viet Nam." Fulbright did say he'd welcome receiving letters from us, documenting what we'd experienced.

Jan Barry, the "Father of VVAW," a poet and sensitive writer, and I were among many of the vets who spent hours crafting letters in the most articulate language we could employ. We were, after all, writing to the man for whom the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship was named.

I remember typing my letter several times to have it letter perfect. We asked that the other members of VVAW writing to Senator Fulbright send us a carbon copy of what they'd written to our New York headquarters.

Of the many letters we reviewed, the most powerful one of all was hand-written and began: "Senator, it ain't right what's going on in Viet Nam."

Sometimes it's not the articulation, but the conviction that comes through most powerfully. I heard it tonight in the serious voice of Kevin Benderman, and then later found it in the writings of both Kevin and his supportive wife, Monica.

I have promised him that if he is court-martialed I will assist in finding him the best legal team possible, and will rally a public support movement for him as well. For it is these men and women who, more than all our AlterNet debates about America's future foreign policy, signify that this war is lost.

It's just that George Bush and Donald Rumsfeld don't read the papers or watch the news, so it will have to come to them more slowly from their junior officers in the field.

It ain't right, what's going on in Iraq.

Sergeant Kevin Benderman, and his wife, Monica, may be reached at mdawnb@coastalnow.net. Please write them and offer your support. Let him know that this act of courage -- and sanity -- will not be punished, but praised, if we all have anything to say about it. And as we asked in the early days of VVAW, please send me an electronic "cc" or better, "bcc," at carldouglasrogers@topia.net. Thank you.



Carl Rogers

Wounded Billings Soldier Not Alone

February 12, 2005 By SUSAN OLP Of The Gazette Staff

Five weeks after a Billings soldier suffered serious injuries in Iraq, he continues his slow road to recovery in a Washington, D.C., military hospital.

Second Lt. Eivind O. Forseth was wounded Jan. 4 in an ambush by a bomber and remains at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Forseth, 31, a ranger with the 82nd Airborne, is a 1992 graduate of West High.

"Most of the days, he's doing pretty well," said his mother, Judith Forseth, a West High English teacher.

Forseth has remained by her son's side most of the time since he arrived at Walter Reed on Jan. 11 with a ravaged right arm and shrapnel-pierced eye. She and daughter Larissa Forseth both have spent more than a month in Washington, D.C.

Judith and her daughter share a room at Mologne House, guest housing located in the Walter Reed complex six minutes from the hospital. But Judith Forseth spends most of her nights sleeping in a small fold-out bed next to her son.

"Eivind is getting more mobile," Judith Forseth said, and his eye is improving, "but he has such a heavy wrap on his calf, he needs help with almost anything."

The calf wrap covers part of Eivind Forseth's left leg. On Jan. 28, surgeons removed a nerve running the length of his knee to his ankle to replace the severed median nerve of his damaged arm.

That's just one of many surgeries he already has undergone in hopes of regaining some use of his hand and arm. Every three days, he returns to surgery, under general anesthesia, so the site of his wounds can be debrided.

Until skin grafts can completely cover the wounded arm, the medical team will remain on guard against the possibility of infection, Judith Forseth said. He could get another skin graft in about two weeks.

Then, in three weeks to a month, "if everything goes well," Judith Forseth said, her son will move into Mologne House and begin months of outpatient therapy.

The pain in his arm has been greatly reduced, thanks to the use of a continuous peripheral nerve block that switches off the pain coming from the injured limb, she said. The nerve block also has allowed her son to reduce the level of narcotics he is on "so he's not so snowed that he can't enjoy life," Judith Forseth said.

She has learned a lot about medical procedures and equipment during her weeks at Walter Reed. She also has come in contact with a lot of the other wounded soldiers and their families.

Her son is on Ward 57 with other soldiers with injured or missing limbs.

"These kids are so brave and so wounded," she said. "It just breaks your heart."

Judith Forseth said she also "is doing pretty well."

"Some days I get tired but never discouraged," she said. "I love seeing his progress."

She also is grateful for this time that she can be at the hospital with her son.

"I'm where I want to be, and I would not want to be any other place," she said.

Marine Can't Breathe

11 February, 2005 By: Scott Benjamin, The Brookfield Journal

His grandparents who live in St. Augustine, Fla., said in a phone interview that he is suffering from lung injuries and is unable to breathe on his own as he is treated in the intensive care unit, where he is listed in serious condition.

Richard Backlund, his grandfather, said Mr. Schmidt and other members of his unit were awaiting orders in an agriculture building at the time of the explosion.

Mr. Backlund said the building had an ammonia tank that ruptured and caused all of the occupants to lose consciousness.

"He can't breathe, and he has damage to his lungs and esophagus," said Jean Backlund, his grandmother.

Mr. Schmidt, 21, was transported to Brooke Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, last Friday.

Mrs. Backlund said the lance corporal's mother, Barbara, and stepfather, Dr. Eric Jimenez, are at his bedside and that Mr. Schmidt is aware of their presence.

Mr. Backlund said Mr. Schmidt had lived in Mahopac, N.Y., and Danbury before graduating from high school in Florida. He had resided in Brookfield for roughly a year before he entered the Marines in November 2003.

He had been in Iraq for just two weeks before being injured. Previously, he had served a three-week assignment in Haiti.

"All of the people in the building lost consciousness," Mr. Backlund said.

Mr. Schmidt's grandmother said he "was looking for a goal in life when he joined the Marines, and he found it."

“I Have Cursed The Generals In Their Plush Palaces”

2005-02-02 Jason N. Thelen, Veterans for Common Sense -- Guest Column

Dear America,

I am a soldier, and I served in Iraq.

I spent the last year riding in an unarmored humvee with no doors, open to the whims of the enemy and the splashes of sewage from the wheels.

I have cursed the generals in their plush palaces and air conditioned SUV's.

I have shivered with Dengue Fever, sweated in the 130 degree heat, and gotten violently ill an average of twice a week courtesy of the mess hall.

I have cursed when an RPG was fired at me, only to laugh when it failed to explode because Hadji forgot to pull the pin. I am all too familiar with the buzz a bullet makes as it passes.

I will never be the same, and I want to scrub my mind with steel wool to remove the memories.

I have watched the light fade from the eyes of another human being and known that I could not save him. I have seen animals carrying body parts. I have been

told the words that cut directly to the center of an officer's heart: "Sergeant G's been hit, and it's bad." I have had to choose whether to kill a teenager for pointing a weapon at me. I have pulled the trigger when he turned his weapon toward one of my soldiers. I have drifted off to a fitful sleep with the smell of dead humans on my uniform.

The media will try to jolt you with narratives and images of increasing violence. In reply, pundits and talking heads will trumpet our successes, progress, and the enemy corpse count. Does it matter which side is right? Not really. The only thing that matters is that, right now, over one hundred and thirty thousand men and women in our armed forces are sweating, bleeding, and dying in the desert. They deserve the attention and respect that they have earned with their courage and purchased with their lives.

Jason N. Thelen
Dallas, Texas

Go Figure:

A.) Military Says Gay Troops Ruin Morale:

B.) Disciplinary Discharges Of Gay Troops Always Plummet In Wartime, Including Iraq

Military historians have recorded drops in the discharges of gays during war time dating to World War II, when the Pentagon officially adopted a ban on homosexual personnel.

Groups that advocate for the abolishment of "don't ask, don't tell" said the new figures point out the hypocrisy of the military's position that homosexuals are bad for morale, given that gay men and lesbians are less likely to be discharged in times of war, when troops are needed most.

February 12, 2005 By Evelyn Nieves and Ann Scott Tyson, Washington Post Staff Writers

The number of gay and lesbian service members discharged under the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy has dropped by almost half since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and is at its lowest level since the Defense Department began keeping such figures in 1997.

Significant declines have occurred in every branch of the armed forces, according to statistics released yesterday by the Pentagon. The Marine Corps, Air Force and Navy discharged fewer gay men and lesbians in 2004 than in any year since the Pentagon began tallying the number of its "homosexual separations" eight years ago. The Army's discharges represented the lowest number of discharges in five years.

Overall, the total number of service members discharged under the policy on gays in the military has dropped from a high of 1,227 in 2001 to 653 in 2004. Representatives for the services said they were hard pressed to single out a specific reason for the decline.

Gay rights organizations said the decline is easy to explain: Pressed for personnel since the battle against terrorism began, the military needs to keep its numbers up and is not discharging gays as it once did.

Charles Moskos, professor emeritus of military sociology at Northwestern University and an architect of the "don't ask, don't tell" concept said that **given the current stress on military services, individuals who say they are gay may not be immediately granted an honorable discharge.**

"It may be that if someone tells . . . they don't let them go now," Moskos said. Declaring one's homosexuality is still "the easiest way to get out with an honorable discharge," he said, adding that "being a conscientious objector is a big hassle."

Military historians have recorded drops in the discharges of gays during war time dating to World War II, when the Pentagon officially adopted a ban on homosexual personnel.

"What has traditionally happened is that there is a decline during a war and then a spike in discharges right after," said Sharon Alexander, a lawyer for the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, an advocacy group for gay men and lesbians in the military. "We noticed that during the Persian Gulf, the number of discharges was practically nonexistent and then it shot way up."

Groups that advocate for the abolishment of "don't ask, don't tell" said the new figures point out the hypocrisy of the military's position that homosexuals are bad for morale, given that gay men and lesbians are less likely to be discharged in times of war, when troops are needed most.

"Our general view is that these discharges show that we just don't need 'don't ask, don't tell,' " Alexander said. The numbers are down because, in a time of war, we need the best and the brightest that we can get. And the best and brightest include gay soldiers."

In December, the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network filed a lawsuit against the Defense Department, Cook v. Rumsfeld, in federal court in Massachusetts on behalf of 12 lesbian and gay veterans seeking reinstatement in the armed forces. Each of the plaintiffs was discharged under "don't ask, don't tell," and three served in direct support of operations in the Middle East.

One of the plaintiffs, Jen Kopfstein, 29, is a 1999 graduate of the Naval Academy. She said in an interview that she served openly as a lesbian officer for two years and four months before she was finally discharged. At her discharge hearing, she said, her commanding officer defended her service.

"He didn't want to have to discharge me," said Kopfstein, who was first based in San Diego, where she now works for a defense contractor. She was on a ship in the Arabian Sea when she notified her commanding officer of her homosexuality. "I didn't want to have to lie about myself," she said. "He thought I was trying to get out, which was definitely not the case. He requested that they do a substantial investigation. They didn't respond for a year."

Bridget J. Wilson, a San Diego lawyer whose practice is devoted in part to representing troops, said that the military has a habit of overlooking a service member's sexual orientation when it sees fit.

"The new policy is not significantly different than the old policy," Wilson said. "It was always that some soldiers would be discharged if it was found out that they were gay, and others were not. It depends on who you are and where you serve, who your commander is, how much someone needs you or likes you."

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.

DoD Deputy Sec. Caught Lying About Election Attacks

WASHINGTON, Feb. 9 UPI

There were between 200 and 300 attacks across Iraq on Election Day, a top U.S. Central Command general said Wednesday.

The number is higher than the U.S. military previously reported.

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz talked at length about the elections, and said the attacks were limited to just eight suicide bombers wearing explosive vests - seven in Baghdad, and one south of the capital. Fewer than 50 people were killed in election-day violence, according to Wolfowitz.

Local Soldier Recalls Near-Fatal Attack:

"We Were Always Scared To Go Outside"

February 11, 2005 By Steve Neavling, Bay City Times.

You wouldn't call Todd Domerese lucky if you saw his face.

Metal chunks are lodged in his lips, jaw, cheeks, ear and forehead. Scars on his skull resemble a thick spider web - "like how your windshield would look if it's cracked," the Bay City native said.

The 29-year-old has thumping headaches, dizzy spells and a dulled sense of smell.

Yet his smile - with one less tooth - speaks of something else.

"He is one lucky man to be alive," said his wife, Marti Marie Domerese, also a Bay City native. "His brain surgeon told me there's no medical reason for him to be alive."

Two roadside bombs tore through Domerese's Humvee in Iraq on Dec. 27. The soldiers were assigned to B Company of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment at Fort Hood, Texas.

Domerese, an Army sergeant, doesn't bemoan his injuries or the scars that plastic surgery will one day patch up. He can imagine a far worse fate.

His blond-haired boy, Benjamin, is about to turn 18 months old. And this Valentine's Day, he will celebrate the 10th anniversary of his first date with his wife.

Domerese and his then-girlfriend Marti Weiss joined the Army in 1998. The Western High School graduates had no job prospects, so the military seemed like a natural choice.

Two years after the United States invaded Iraq in March 2002, Domerese moved a world away from Fort Hood, where he and his wife were stationed and owned a house. Benjamin was 7 months old.

Every day, Domerese said, insurgents fired mortar rounds at the soldiers' camp. In August, rooftop gunmen with grenades ambushed Domerese and fellow troops in an alley.

"We were always scared to go outside," Domerese confessed. "It was crazy."

Domerese's brush with death came on an isolated stretch of road strewn with trash, tires, bricks and dirt piles. Domerese was in the front passenger seat of a Humvee when the bombs tore through the driver's side, killing Spc. Jose A. Rivera-Serrano, 26, of Puerto Rico, a passenger in the vehicle.

The bombs shattered the driver's arm and sent shrapnel into his face. A back-seat passenger suffered minor injuries.

Dime-size shrapnel tore through Domerese's helmet. He lost consciousness for about a minute. When he came to, he wiped the blood from his eyes with a gloved hand.

"My entire face was covered in blood," he said.

A helicopter rushed Domerese to a hospital in Baghdad. The blast fractured his skull. His brain swelled. With more than 40 stitches, and lying in intensive care, he called his wife from a cell phone.

"I told her I had some scratches on my head," he recalled. Scrambled from painkillers, Domerese didn't learn until later he was close to death.

After bouncing around hospitals in Iraq, Germany and the U.S., Domerese returned home Jan. 7.

He has since re-enlisted but hopes to land far from the war zone - as a water treatment specialist.

Fry The Big Fish Too

By David H. Hackworth [Defense Watch] 01-31-2005. Forwarded from networker Horace Coleman to all on VVAWNET

That sizzling sound you're hearing from U.S. Army posts across the nation is little fish frying. It reminds me of the battlefield, where it's almost always the grunts who get hung out to do the dying.

A squad of the enlisted perps who made their bones via the Abu Ghraib abomination are going down, and so they should. They've disgraced the American profession of arms by committing atrocities as high on the national shame scale as Vietnam's My Lai.

But while the accused - untrained, part-time soldiers ill-prepared for their prison-guard mission - most definitely deserve to be punished, where are the whales who disregarded the Geneva Convention in line with our president's ill-considered insistence that prisoners in the war on terror are "unlawful combatants"?

Unlike Nuremberg, which led with the trials of the top leadership of the Third Reich and only gradually worked its way down to the bottom of that evil ladder, our leaders are, so far, successfully ducking any responsibility for the crimes perpetrated on their watch.

In the duck-and-cover-up scheme, **Alberto R. Gonzales**, the president's legal adviser and his nominee for attorney general - who told the president in writing that the war on terror made the Geneva Convention obsolete - is now ferociously tap-dancing away from

his advice to his boss as fast as he can toward his probable new and totally inappropriate job as America's top law-enforcer.

Assistant Attorney General Jay S. Bybee, who said it was cool for the president to permit "cruel, inhuman or degrading" treatment of prisoners in the war on terror if he so desired, has been rewarded with a seat on the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

SecDef Donald Rumsfeld, whose approval of torture at Guantanamo set a sorry precedent that spread as quickly as the plague to Afghanistan and Iraq, has also been duly rewarded - with a second term in his sugarplum Cabinet power post.

Maj. Gen. Geoffrey Miller, Rummy's torture impresario at Gitmo, whom the SecDef dispatched to Abu Ghraib - where, soon after he marched into the prison to teach his dirty tricks, prisoners were humiliated and demeaned in horrific, SS-like human-rights violations - is now ensconced in a VIP office at the Pentagon.

Lt. Gen. Ricardo S. Sanchez, the former ground commander of the Iraqi counterinsurgency, who put out his own appalling guidance regarding the treatment of prisoners, has pretty much disappeared from the scene, along with his intelligence officer, Maj. Gen. Barbara Fast. **The Army has hidden the once-certain shoo-in for a fourth star in Germany, while Fast has become the two-star ghost that walks at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., where she makes occasional, quickie cameo appearances and the troopers in residence refer to her as the "invisible general."**

Let's face it - the reservists now on trial didn't just wake up one morning and say, "Hey, let's mail-order some dog leashes and play some photo-op games with these ragheads keeping us away from home."

I know U.S. soldiers, and my call is that an officer or officers - going all the way back to the Pentagon - told them how to break their prisoners down and to go and do it. So, in my book they're taking the rap for the brass as well as themselves, and that's not how it should be in our America.

Because in a democracy, the truth must come out, and **all the guilty - no matter what their rank or power - must be held accountable.**

Wounded Blairsville Soldier Sent To England: Mother Says "Officials Provided Only Sketchy Information"

February 11, 2005 The Tribune-Review Publishing Co.

BLAIRSVILLE--A Blairsville serviceman was reported in fair condition Thursday in a civilian burn center in Cambridge, England, after recently sustaining burns and cuts to his head while stationed with the Army in Iraq.

Mike and Sally Peightal of Blairsville received preliminary word of their son, David's, condition from military affairs officials last Friday.

Mrs. Peightal reported that her 21-year-old son initially was "comfortable" but sedated in a German medical facility after having suffered second degree burns, a concussion and head and shoulder lacerations in an unspecified incident in northern Iraq.

He was transferred to England on Tuesday and his condition was upgraded, she said.

She said officials provided only sketchy information and have not indicated the circumstances surrounding her son's injuries or the date when the incident occurred.

As of Thursday, the Blairsville couple had not spoken to their son, but were calling the Army's chaplain corps for daily updates on the soldier's condition.

"We really don't know what happened," Mrs. Peightal said. "They're not releasing any information on how he got hurt." But she added, "He's doing all right."

“How Stupid Can You Be?” Dept. -- Israeli Choppers To Fight Afghan Drugs

[Jerusalem Post, February 11, 2005]

The State Department plans to buy 14 used military helicopters from Israel to help support drug eradication in Afghanistan, **raising concerns in Congress of an outcry in the Islamic world. [Duh!]**

Officers Escorting Dead Soldier Home Caught With \$300,000 Stuffed In Their Pockets

Kiev, Feb 11, SPA

Four Ukrainian army officers escorting the remains of a soldier home from Iraq were caught at the Kiev airport with 300,000 dollars and accused of smuggling, the Ministry of Defense said Friday.

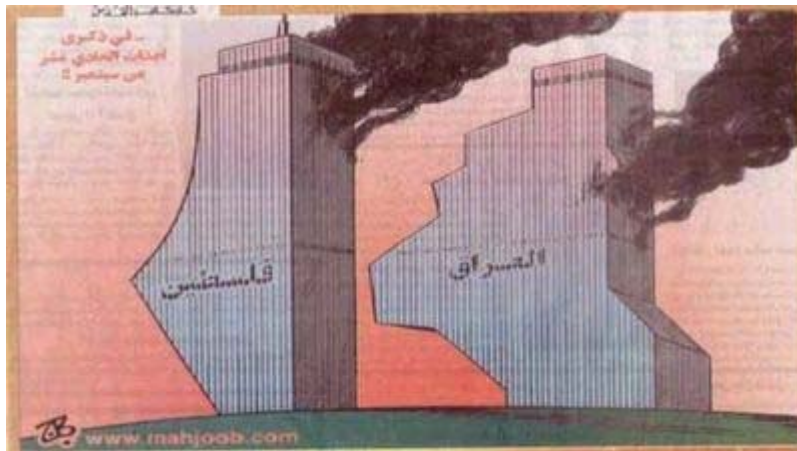
Customs authorities at Boryspil airport confiscated the undeclared cash from the four officers. **The officers had stashed the cash on their persons.**

A military court would hear the case, the statement said. **[Too bad they made it out alive. Somebody needs to teach the Ukrainian troops about fragging.]**

Ukraine maintains a 1,550-member infantry brigade in Iraq's Wasit province.

A smaller group of Ukrainians serving in Africa took advantage of a law allowing soldiers stationed abroad to bring a single automobile back home duty free, and imported vehicles worth more than one million dollars last year before police caught them.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



“PALESTINE, IRAQ: TERRORISTS ATTACKED OUR HOMELANDS”

The Resistance Has Ten-Thousand Eyes

"The one thing the Americans seem determined about is to retain control of the Iraqi army," said a foreign diplomat in Baghdad. The Americans also fear that one day the weapons they hand over now will be turned against them by Iraqis or will be sold to the resistance.

10 February 2005 By Patrick Cockburn The Independent U.K.

As the euphoria over the election dies away, the Iraqi resistance is seeking to eliminate anyone working with the US or the interim government.

The resistance has a well-informed intelligence service. It can identify the most effective personnel on the interim government side and eliminate them.

General Mudher, a burly middle-aged man, is the creator of the police commandos. Wearing camouflage uniform and black ski-masks, the commandos are a lot more warlike than the ordinary police with their elderly weapons and fragile blue and white police cars.

A veteran soldier famous in Iraq for bringing his tank safely from Kuwait back to Baghdad during the 1991 Gulf war, General Mudher recruited and trained this new force. **"He was careful about his own security and was always changing his address," said a colleague.**

It did not do him much good.

Somebody in the resistance decided he posed a real threat. Gunmen attacked his car two months ago and he was shot twice in the back, the bullets just missing his heart. He counts himself lucky to be alive - he counted 150 bullet holes in the remains of his vehicle. Largely recovered from his wounds, he still walks awkwardly and seems to wince with pain when he moves his arms.

It is not difficult to work out where the insurgents' intelligence comes from. The most effective members of the resistance belonged to the old Iraqi army and security services. Many of their former colleagues now serve in the security ministries of the interim government. Information leaks.

The American recipe for making the army and security forces more effective is to embed US training officers in Iraqi units. It is not a welcome move among Iraqi officers.

"They keep saying that they don't need more training but better weapons," says Sabah Khadim, a senior adviser in the Interior Ministry. **The presence of American soldiers makes the Iraqi soldiers feel that they will be viewed as traitors to their own country by other Iraqis.**

The lack of equipment and vehicles is still common, almost two years after the invasion. In the Qadassiya district of Baghdad yesterday police commandos were driving at great speed to an emergency. Their vehicles were elderly white pick-ups.

US officers told some Iraqi units that they would receive tanks. When they arrived, the Iraqi crews were angry to find that they were being given outdated, Soviet-made T-55s.

"The one thing the Americans seem determined about is to retain control of the Iraqi army," said a foreign diplomat in Baghdad. The Americans also fear that one day the weapons they hand over now will be turned against them by Iraqis or will be sold to the resistance.

Occupation Guards Ambushed At Balad Ruz

12 February 2005 By John Daniszewski and T. Christian Miller, The Los Angeles Times

A car bomb exploded outside a Shiite mosque just as Friday prayers were ending in Balad Ruz, a town northeast of Baghdad in an area with Shiite and Sunni villages.

Residents called authorities after becoming suspicious of a truck loaded with maize parked outside the mosque. The truck exploded just as a contingent of Iraqi national guard troops arrived to inspect the vehicle.

A police spokesman said the blast had killed nine civilians and four guardsmen, and wounded 23 civilians and four guardsmen.

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

Idiot Occupation Cops Provoked Salman Pak Attack

12 February 2005 By John Daniszewski and T. Christian Miller, The Los Angeles Times

In another incident with religious overtones, more details emerged about a battle with insurgents Thursday in Salman Pak that left at least 14 police officers dead and 65 wounded. Four insurgents were killed, according to the Interior Ministry. Footage on Arab television stations showed cars burning and bodies lying in the street.

One witness said the insurgents attacked after police officers began taunting Sunnis over loudspeakers during a search for weapons in the town 15 miles southeast of Baghdad.

The police, some of whom apparently were Shiites, "started calling the people Sunni cowards in addition to all kinds of names," said Mohammed Abdul Khaliq Shummari, a local resident and journalist.

"I was initially hopeful when I first saw the police entering the town, and so did many of the people," Shummari said. **"But then all hell broke loose when they started broadcasting ... with their loudspeakers."**

Iraqi Judge Killed In Basra

BASRA, Feb 12 (KUNA)

Member of the Court of Appeal in this southern Iraqi city Judge Taha Al-Ameer was killed Saturday.

Eyewitnesses told KUNA that they showered Al-Ameer's car with bullets on a crossroad in central Basra, killing Al-Ameer and his two bodyguards, then fled the site.

Al-Ameer was the former Head of Basra's Criminal Court and former Head of Thi Qar Governorate's Courts of Appeal in southern Iraq.

Army Propagandist Shot

BAGHDAD, Feb 12 (KUNA)

Media Coordinator in local television station in the Iraqi city of al Kut, Kheder Al-Omairi, was killed Saturday by guerrillas, said Iraqi Police source. The sources said they broke into Al-Omairi's house in Qalat Sukkar district, 110 Km south of Baghdad.

Al-Omairi, who is also a translator for the Multinational force in Waset Governorate, was a coordinator between US forces and the local TV station, part of the Iraqi Media Network financed by the US Army.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Blowin' In The Wind

[Thanks to AH who sent this in.]

By Bob Dylan, Special Rider Music

How many roads must a man walk down
Before you call him a man?
Yes, 'n' how many seas must a white dove sail
Before she sleeps in the sand?
Yes, 'n' how many times must the cannon balls fly
Before they're forever banned?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

How many times must a man look up
Before he can see the sky?

Yes, 'n' how many ears must one man have
Before he can hear people cry?
Yes, 'n' how many deaths will it take till he knows
That too many people have died?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

How many years can a mountain exist
Before it's washed to the sea?
Yes, 'n' how many years can some people exist
Before they're allowed to be free?
Yes, 'n' how many times can a man turn his head,
Pretending he just doesn't see?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

“Have You Tried Blowing A Balloon Full Of Holes?”

(This is a Comment posted on "The Secret is Out" of Feb. 7, 2005)

When you have deep thinkers who believe they have won a victory after the slaughter in Fallujah, you have to wonder how their minds work.

It's easy to dismiss the defenders of Fallujah as fanatical Muslims and terrorist, but difficult to consider that they chose to die for their freedom as they understood it.

I don't know whether Rumsfeld refuses to acknowledge the reality of the situation or whether he's oblivious to the reality. Iraqis will never know freedom while Americans occupy their soil. It's that simple.

My hope, as an American and a former combat veteran of Viet-Nam is that the freedom fighters in Iraq concentrate on killing Americans so that the suffering of Bush's senseless crusade is brought home to roost and Americans can taste the fruits their folly.

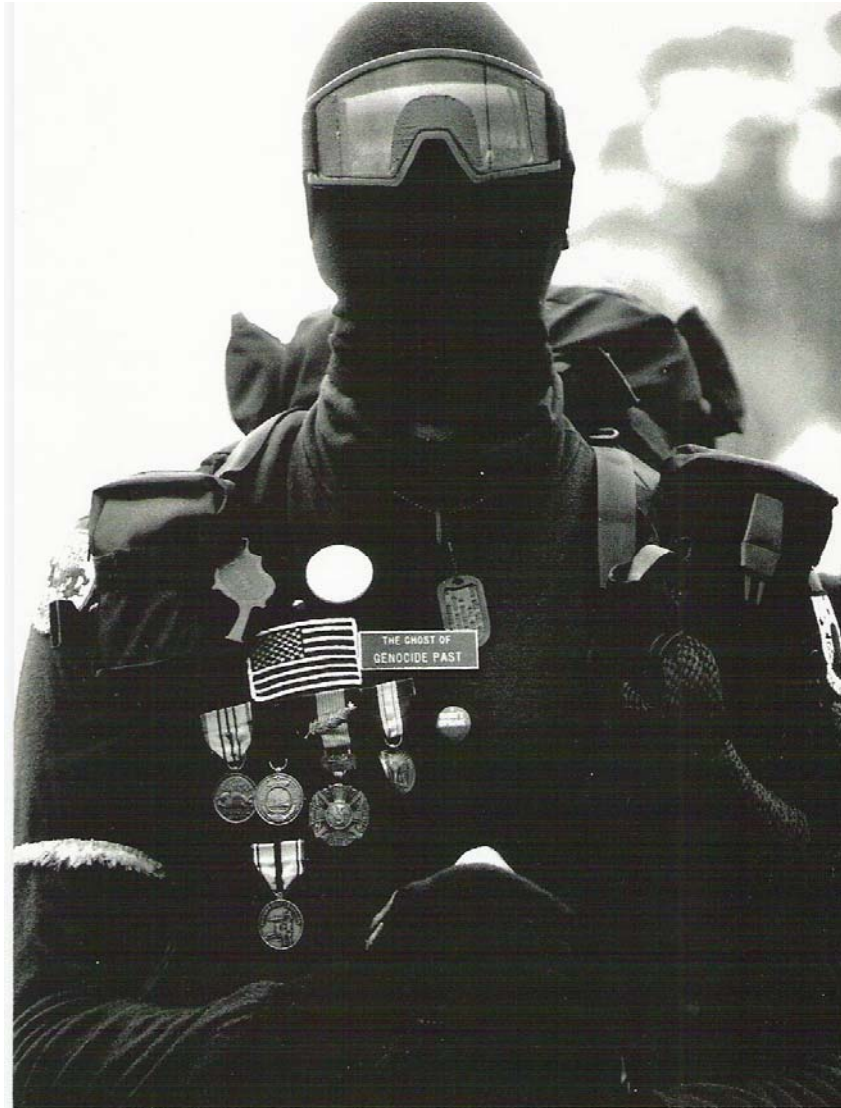
Maybe then they'll wake up and demand accountability from our government to stop this lying insanity.

It's sad to watch the Iraqis kill their own who have supported the American efforts only as a means of survival and not as an honest ideology."

In a desperate attempt to counter the dilapidating large numbers of army desertions and resignations due to the increasing level of attacks against the 'new' Iraqi Army soldiers, it was announced yesterday that the Iraqi Ministry of Defense has doubled the salary of an

enlisted soldier to be about \$350 monthly, one of the highest paid jobs in the government of Iraq.

Have you tried blowing a balloon full of holes?



A lone Vietnam Veteran walks in a Veterans Day parade in Albany, Oregon on November 11, 1993.

"It became clear to me that the free fire zone and the search-and-destroy tactics, where we systematically destroyed villages and routinely bombed the countryside, meant that we were waging war not against any abstract ideology, but waging war against the Vietnamese people."

**Capt. Robert Johnson
West Point 1965**

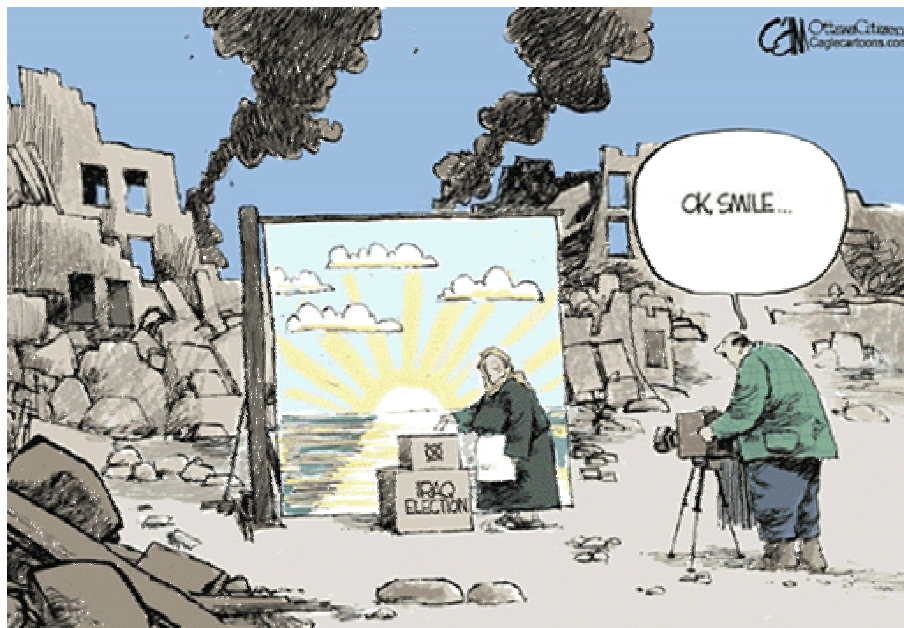
Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, U.S. Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (Please contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) for more of his outstanding work. T)

“The Morbid Figment Of George Bush's Imagination”

5 February 2005 By Imad Khadduri, an Iraqi nuclear scientist based in Canada, Occupation Watch Bulletin

“As for the legitimacy of this election, I believe this is the first time in modern times that 7500 candidates, scattered among 257 lists, with at least 6000 of them fearful to declare their names till election day, are offered to people living under armed occupation and a general state of infrastructure paralysis yet are asked to vote, simply to vindicate the morbid figment of George Bush's imagination on the legitimacy of this election.”

OCCUPATION REPORT



**Collaborator Politicians Pissing Pants:
They Rely On Foreign Forces To Survive;**

Fear Troops Going Home

[London Times, February 11, 2005]

Several key members of the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq plan to withdraw or substantially reduce their presence in the country now that the elections are over. *The move is causing concern among Iraqi leaders, who depend on foreign soldiers to remain in power.* [Most of the occupation stooges are citizens of other countries, a lot of them U.S. citizens, so they can just go back where they came from.]

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

Getting The Purple Finger; The Freedom To Be Occupied

February 10, 2005, Naomi Klein, The Nation

January 30, we are told, was not about what Iraqis were voting for--it was about the fact of their voting and, more important, how their plucky courage made Americans feel about their war.

Apparently, the elections' true purpose was to prove to Americans that, as George Bush put it, "the Iraqi people value their own liberty."

Stunningly, this appears to come as news. Chicago Sun-Times columnist Mark Brown said the vote was "the first clear sign that freedom really may mean something to the Iraqi people." On The Daily Show, CNN's Anderson Cooper described it as "the first time we've sort of had a gauge of whether or not they're willing to sort of step forward and do stuff."

This is some tough crowd.

The Shiite uprising against Saddam in 1991 was clearly not enough to convince them that Iraqis were willing to "do stuff" to be free. Nor was the demonstration of 100,000 people held one year ago demanding immediate elections, or the spontaneous local elections organized by Iraqis in the early months of the occupation--both summarily shot down by Bremer.

It turns out that on American TV, the entire occupation has been one long episode of Fear Factor, in which Iraqis overcome ever-more-challenging obstacles to demonstrate the depths of their desire to win their country back. Having their cities leveled, being tortured in Abu Ghraib, getting shot at checkpoints, having their journalists censored and their water and electricity cut off--all of it was just a prelude to the ultimate endurance test: dodging bombs and bullets to get to the

polling station. At last, Americans were persuaded that Iraqis really, really want to be free.

So what's the prize?

An end to occupation, as the voters demanded?

Don't be silly--the US government won't submit to any "artificial timetable." Jobs for everyone, as the UIA promised? You can't vote for socialist nonsense like that.

No, they get Geraldo Rivera's tears ("I felt like such a sap"), Laura Bush's motherly pride ("It was so moving for the President and me to watch people come out with purple fingers") and Betsy Hart's sincere apology for ever doubting them ("Wow--do I stand corrected").

And that should be enough.

Because if it weren't for the invasion, Iraqis would not even have the freedom to vote for their liberation, and then to have that vote completely ignored.

And that's the real prize: the freedom to be occupied.

Wow--do I stand corrected.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

CIA Interrogator's Defense To Cite Bush At Brutality Trial

[New York Times, February 11, 2005]

David A. Passaro, a contract interrogator for the CIA, is charged with beating an Afghan prisoner who subsequently died.

Passaro's defense is based on statements made by President Bush and other officials who called for tough action to prevent terrorist attacks and protect American lives.

Documents unsealed this week in federal court in Raleigh, N.C., show that the interrogator, David A. Passaro, 38, may cite top officials' written legal justifications for harsh interrogation techniques and a Congressional resolution passed after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on New York and the Pentagon calling on the president "to use all necessary and appropriate force" to thwart further terrorism.

TERRORIST MEET IN BAGHDAD; PROMISE TO INCREASE PRODUCTION



U.S. Terrorist chief Donald H. Rumsfeld stands next to his Iraqi division manager, Iyad Allawi, as they address a joint news conference in Baghdad, February 11, 2005.

They announced that in 2005 they hope to increase the production of dead Iraqis by 130%, with a special emphasis on using more modern approaches to the problem, including death through cold, hunger, untreated water leading to widespread disease, and other sophisticated methods of population elimination, rather than relying exclusively on bullets and bombs. Rumsfeld pointed out that the production of Iraqi oil for United States interests increases in direct proportion to the decrease in the population, "which is good news for all concerned."
(Pool/Reuters)

Received:

Priorities?

[Alex Ryabov (USMC ret'd) is active in the New York City area as an organizer for Iraq Veterans Against The War. **Join with Iraq War vets in their call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)**

From: Alex Ryabov
To: GI Special
Sent: Saturday, February 12, 2005
Subject: re: GI Special 3A43

Keep up the good work. Great piece by Jason Thelen, really hit the nail on the head. It's a shame that in today's media that article will never make it to the front page, where it rightfully belongs.

I'm not sure if you read the Post, but a couple of weeks ago there was something interesting.

On the front page was 'Brad and Jen's last kiss' (that is, of course, of utmost importance to the general public). But, if you were to flip to page 7, you would find an article about a homeless Iraq War Vet (Herold Noel).

I think that really sums up America's priorities at this point..(and makes me sick to my stomach).

Received:

The Death Of Joe Young

From: Rev. G
To: GI Special
Sent: February 09, 2005
Subject: Joe Young

I saw you web site and your report on Joe Young the vet who died under a bridge Christmas Eve...thanks for making his senseless death an issue...NO government leader came to the funeral...

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" and I said, Here am I: send me!

Dr. G, President
Evangelistic Ministry
KY USA

Web Copies

For back issues see: GI Special web site at <http://www.militaryproject.org/>
The following that we know of have also posted issues: www.gifightback.org,
<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/>, www.williambowles.info/qispecial,
<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>,

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