

GI SPECIAL 3A74:



"There is no flag large enough to cover the shame of needless death."

**Grant Remington,
Vietnam Veteran**

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

"I Feel Like We - The Guys Who Went In To Do The Job - Were Lied To."

"I was there, and I'm proud of my service," he said. "But I really questioned the war once I was in the hospital. . . . I feel like we - the guys who went in to do the job - were lied to."

Several months ago Acosta joined the fledgling group Iraq Veterans Against the War.

March 13, 2005 By NORMAN SOLOMON, Newsday, Inc.

This month the Defense Department released data showing that the official number of U.S. troops "wounded in action" in Iraq has gone over the 11,000 mark. Notably, 95 percent of those Americans were wounded after May 1, 2003.

In a bizarre echo of President George W. Bush's top-gun aircraft-carrier speech on that day, the Pentagon still asserts that the U.S. casualties since then have occurred "after the end of major combat operations."

The upsurge of newly wounded veterans would not be so potentially explosive in political terms if the public had confidence in the rightness of the Iraq invasion and ongoing war.

When so many Americans perceive that the war was built on a foundation of falsehoods, the war's architects are liable to find themselves on thinner and thinner domestic ice as time goes on. The wounded among us will be widely seen as victims whose suffering was avoidable.

Even at this early stage, Iraq war veterans are gradually becoming more outspoken.

Robert Acosta, for example, is a 21-year-old former U.S. Army specialist who re-entered civilian life in early 2004 - just six months after losing his right hand when a grenade landed next to him in a vehicle on a Baghdad street.

"I was there, and I'm proud of my service," he said. "But I really questioned the war once I was in the hospital. . . . I feel like we - the guys who went in to do the job - were lied to."

Several months ago Acosta joined the fledgling group Iraq Veterans Against the War. He speaks with clear authenticity. "A lot of people don't really see how the war can mess people up until they know someone with firsthand experience," he says. "I think people coming back wounded - or even just mentally injured after seeing what no human being should have to see - is going to open a lot of eyes."

Founded in midsummer 2004, Iraq Veterans Against the War has expanded from eight to 150 members while organizing forums and teach-ins around the country and attracting some appreciable media coverage. The group's national coordinator, Michael Hoffman, joined the Marines in 1999 and participated in the invasion of Iraq.

"War is dirty, always wrong, but sometimes unavoidable," he says. "That is why all these horrible things must rest on the shoulders of those leaders who supported a war that did not have to be fought."

America's physical wounds from the current war cannot be tucked under the national rug. And in the long run, neither can any of the psychological pain that afflicts many combat veterans.

President Bush is likely to face a growing backlash that will further reduce his credibility - and strengthen the healthy skepticism that Americans should utilize when the president insists it's time to go to war.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT 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)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

“Several” Wounded By Ramadi IED

March 14, 2005 Al-Jazeera & AFP

A US armored personnel carrier was destroyed in Al-Ramadi by a roadside bomb. The attack on the Hummer resulted in injuring several US soldiers.

Guerrillas fired mortars at US patrols in the city on Sunday.

Fighting In Al-Qaem

March 14, 2005 (KUNA)

Four Iraqis were killed in an armed clash that erupted on Monday in the Iraqi town of Al-Qaem in Al-Anbar in the west of the country, witnesses said.

They said the four were killed in a firefight that pitted American troops against a group of guerrillas. The fighting started when the Americans were attacked.

Several vehicles were damaged and knocked out during the combat.

Sofia Admits To More Friendly Fire

14 March 2005 Novinite Ltd

For the first time on Monday Sofia published information about two more friendly-fire accidents involving its troops in Iraq.

The Bulgarian Army chief did not specify the exact time of those shootings, but said they took place before the March 4 accident.

In the beginning of this month, Bulgarian machine gunner Gurdi Gurdev died of friendly fire in Diwaniya. After claiming responsibility for the killing, the American military in Iraq carried out an investigation into the accident but have not published the results yet.

General Nikola Kolev told Sofia-based bTV channel that the US had not apologised for the killing yet.

Britain's Troops Stuck As Dutch Pull Out

[London Daily Telegraph, March 14, 2005]

British troops have moved west of Basra to take over responsibility for the neighboring province, which doubles the area under direct British military control. The move comes as Dutch soldiers pull out of Iraq.

TROOP NEWS

The Other Casualties

March 21 issue Newsweek. This story was written by Jerry Adler with reporting from Debra Rosenberg, T. Trent Gegax, Pat Wingert, Daren Briscoe, Hilary Shenfeld, Kiyoshi Martinez, Dirk Johnson, Jamie Reno and Andrew Horesh

They were prepared to die, even the truck drivers and supply clerks; any American who sets foot in Iraq must be. They made out wills, as the military requires, and left behind letters and videos for their families. The families in turn prepared for the day when they might open the door to find a chaplain on the other side. In military families the notion of duty is not confined to the battlefield.

On the morning that 14-year-old Rohan Osbourne learned that his mother, Pamela, had been killed in a mortar attack on her Army base, his father dropped him off as usual at

Robert M. Shoemaker High School, where three quarters of the students are the children of soldiers from nearby Fort Hood, Texas.

"I might not get a lot of work done today, ma'am," Rohan politely explained to his teacher. "My mommy died yesterday in Iraq."

Compared with the 20,000 American children who lost a father in Vietnam, the families of Iraqi war casualties have the advantage that almost all of them are getting a body back. Many men back then were lost in the jungle or the air and were—or still are—listed as "missing," leaving their families to wonder, "Is he going to be coming around the corner one day?" says Cordero.

It was with that in mind that Tina Cline, whose husband, Marine Lance Cpl. Donald Cline, was killed in an explosion on the fourth day of the invasion, decided to let 2-year-old Dakota look inside the flag-draped coffin at the uniformed body inside.

The body had no head.

"Daddy's not coming home," she whispered to her son, who was dressed in a tiny dark suit and tie. "He's got a bigger job to do, helping God in heaven."

Parents have always said that, to little boys who stood at attention and promised their moms they would be brave. They wore their father's dog tags to school, and, in the way of things, eventually went off to fight in their own wars.

On the same day that Cline's vehicle was hit by a shell, Marine Sgt. Phillip Jordan was killed in Nasiriya, leaving behind a 6-year-old son, Tyler, whom he called "Lavabug." For a week after, Tyler sulked around the house in his 6-foot-3-inch father's camouflage shirt, refusing to eat or to talk to his mother, Amanda.

"God needed Daddy in heaven," she explained recently.

"Well," he replied, "I needed him, too."

Terrell Dawes Regrets That He Ever Followed His Dream To Go Into The Army

Mar. 14, 2005 azcentral.com

Terrell Dawes regrets that he ever followed his dream to go into the Army. He only wanted to follow in his grandfather's footsteps.

The scars from his burns and recurring nightmares are constant reminders that his life changed Sept. 8 when the Humvee he was riding in was ripped by a roadside bomb near Baghdad, flipped, split and pinned him underneath.

Dawes, a 22-year-old Army sergeant from the town of Fort Defiance, on the Arizona portion of the Navajo Reservation, is still fighting to recover from the physical and emotional injuries. When his fellow soldiers pulled him out of the wreckage, his upper body was badly burned, his skin beginning to peel. His femur had been shattered and he was missing toes on his left foot.

Dawes has no memory of that day and has pieced together what happened only after talking with friends who were there.

"They said I was conscious, that I was yelling and telling them, 'Get this off me. It hurts,' " he says. "I don't remember anything."

He wonders if anyone should have told him the truth. At night, when he dreams, the pieces come together and he sees himself in the Humvee, he feels the weight of the vehicle. He feels himself burning.

Dawes says he has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. He is often anxious about his future. He's anxious about just getting through the day.

Every day he rubs in creams to smooth out his burned skin. He suffered second- and third-degree burns on his upper chest, abdomen, right arm, lower back and the right side of his face.

He initially was treated at Brook Army Medical Center in San Antonio but left in October to return to Fort Defiance. He said he needed a break from the hospital and was released into his mother's care.

Dawes returned to the San Antonio hospital for more treatment in February.

Pain is with him every day. He has a rod and pins in his right leg. He can barely lift 10 pounds of weights with the leg.

He feels wrung through emotionally and doesn't like to dwell on the fact that he can't do the things he used to do, like play basketball.

These days, what he wants most is to play with his 5-month-old son, Cadin.

Pentagon Murderers Refused To Issue Modern Tourniquets While Troops Bled To Death

March 14, 2005 Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Under pressure from Congress, the Army has decided to quickly dispatch modern tourniquets to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

That's more than two years after military doctors recommended that every soldier carry one.

A committee of military doctors urged in February 2003 that every soldier carry one of the \$20 medical devices, a nylon and plastic version of the simple cloth-and-stick device armies have used to stop bleeding for centuries.

But many don't, and some have bled to death from wounds on which a tourniquet might have been effective, according to more than a dozen military doctors and medical specialists interviewed by The Sun.

Fired For Reporting For Duty

[New York Daily News, March 14, 2005]

Michael Warren is suing IBM for firing him because since the Sept. 11 attacks he has been called up too often by the Army Reserves.

CALIFORNIA CRIMINAL SCUM HARASS COUNTER- RECRUITMENT STUDENTS: *Marine Iraq Vet Says They're His Friends*

Sean O'Neill, a veteran who returned from Iraq last year after serving with the Marines, spoke out in defense of the students who helped organize the counter-recruitment protest, saying, "Do students have the right to protest? Of course they do! Are you saying that people can't protest anything now? Anyone who's taken even a cursory glance at the Constitution will tell you that we have the right to protest whatever we want..."

"As a vet, I don't take any offense! Anyone who doesn't want me over there is a friend in my book."

March 14, 2005 Via Phil G.

On Wednesday, March 9th, students from New York to San Francisco rallied to protest military recruiters on their campuses. The students were expressing their outrage at the military's anti-gay "don't ask, don't tell" policy, the diversion of federal funding away from education into military spending, and the war in Iraq.

University administrations in both cities responded with disciplinary threats and police action.

At SFSU over 150 students joined Students Against War -- the school's Campus Antiwar Network chapter -- and other groups to protest Air Force recruiters and Army Corps of Engineers attending a school sponsored career fair. The crowd flooded the fair, surrounding their tables and chanting. When Air Force recruiters tried to wait out the protest, students staged a peaceful anti-war sit-in and teach-in.

POLICE INTIMIDATION AND UNIVERSITY THREATS

The following day, recruiters returned to the SFSU career fair.

As soon as two activists entered the career fair, eight police officers forcibly removed them from their own student center, pushing them and twisting one activists arm. When the other activist asked why she was being forced to leave, she was pushed into a doorway, told she was causing a fire hazard by standing there, and then kicked out of the building.

An SFSU spokesperson informed reporters that student groups involved in the protest will be suspended, and that some of the individual students who participated will also face disciplinary action. Such actions would be blatant violations of students' right to free speech and assembly.

Sean O'Neill, a veteran who returned from Iraq last year after serving with the Marines, spoke out in defense of the students who helped organize the counter-recruitment protest, saying, "Do students have the right to protest? Of course they do! Are you saying that people can't protest anything now? Anyone who's taken even a cursory glance at the Constitution will tell you that we have the right to protest whatever we want..."

"As a vet, I don't take any offense! Anyone who doesn't want me over there is a friend in my book."

WHAT YOU CAN DO We ask the public to speak-out against the administration's plans to limit free speech rights, and demand that no sanctions be placed on students or organizations that helped to plan the March 9th protest. Please contact:

Robert A. Corrigan, SFSU President Phone: (415) 338-1381, Fax: (415) 338-6210
Email: corrigan@sfsu.edu please CC your email to: cansfsu@hotmail.com

Penny Saffold, SFSU Vice President/Dean of Students Phone: (415) 338-2032, Fax: (415) 338-0900 Email: psaffold@sfsu.edu please CC your email to: cansfsu@hotmail.com

For more information please contact: wcaudy@stars.sfsu.edu

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.

Montana Governor Wants To Bring The Guard Home

13 March 2005 Reuters

Sula, Mont. - Gov. Brian Schweitzer has touched off a political fight with Montana Republicans after calling for the return of National Guard troops serving in Iraq to help out in what many fear will be a record-setting wildfire season.

"Everything right now is pointing to the possibility of a large and damaging fire season," said Bruce Thoricht, meteorologist with the federal Northern Rockies Coordination Center in Missoula.

As fire season approaches, about 1,500 of Montana's 3,500 National Guard troops have been deployed on federal active duty, said a Montana Guard spokesman, Maj. Scott Smith.

A Pentagon spokesman, Lt. Col. Mike Milord, said in an e-mail message that deals with neighboring states would provide for more troops during emergencies this summer.

The bulk of the Guard's helicopters - critical in shuttling fire crews and equipment to blazes - are unavailable, either because they are in Iraq or their aviation officers are absent.

Army Short Of Recruiting Goal: Monthly Shortfall First Since 2000; Genius Says War Has An Effect

3.14.05 By Jane McHugh, Army Times staff writer

The Regular Army missed its recruiting goal for February, the first time the service missed a monthly recruiting goal since May 2000.

“The simple answer to the recruiting problem is Iraq,” said Charles Pena, director of defense policy for the Cato Institute, a Washington think tank. “People now know that going into the Army means an extended tour of duty in Iraq, and that affects their desire to enlist.”

And, Pena said, the problem could be even more severe. “The numbers are masked by stop-loss,” he said. “The actual shortfalls in recruiting would be greater if we weren’t using stop loss.

“Stop-loss is the only thing that keeps the difference between the recruiting missions that were set and the actual missions that were achieved from getting even wider.”

Lamest Bullshit Of 2005, So Far: General Says Marine Recruiting Failure Due To Bad Weather

[Thanks to PG, who sent this in.]

March 11, 2005 By Sandra Jontz, Stars and Stripes, European edition

WASHINGTON - While neither rain, nor snow, nor dark of night keeps the postman away, bad weather apparently kept Marine Corps recruiters from their appointments and routes, said a Marine general Thursday.

A harsh winter kept potential recruits indoors, and thus recruiters from signing them up.

The Corps has missed recruiting goals two months running. "It's easy to say it's the war in Iraq, but I'm not so sure," Lt. Gen. Jan. C. Huly, deputy commandant for plans, policies and operations, told a gathering of defense writers.

The Army also missed its February recruiting goals.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Iraqi Cameraman Working For Occupation TV Killed

March 14 (AFP)

An Iraqi cameraman working for a Kurdish-language television station was gunned down in Mosul on Monday, hospital sources in the restive northern city said.

Husam Hilal Sarsam was killed at about 9:00 am (0600 GMT) on the northern side of the city, said Mohammed Fathi, the head of security at Mosul's Medical City hospital.

Both Al-Iraqiyah and Kurdish television have been involved in recent months in broadcasting televised confessions of alleged insurgents in the Mosul area.

Many in this ethnically diverse city have charged that Al-Iraqiyah was spearheading a propaganda campaign to tarnish the image of the resistance against the occupation.

Sarsam, who worked for the satellite station of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Masoud Barzani, was kidnapped two weeks ago, a member of his family told AFP on condition of anonymity.

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

Assorted Resistance Action

March 14 (Xinhuanet) & AFP & Al Jazeera Publishing Limited & By Khaled Yacoub Oweis BAGHDAD (Reuters) -

Saad al-Amili, the director general of the Iraqi health ministry, survived a roadside bomb explosion which wounded four of his bodyguards as they were driving back to Amili's home in Baghdad, the police said. The attack happened in Baghdad's western Al-Ghazaliyah district

A car bomb exploded at an Iraqi police and army checkpoint in the town of Yusufiya south of Baghdad on Monday, killing two police officers and two civilians, police said.

Unknown attackers killed an Iraqi army captain while he was driving his car in the Abu Gharib district, west of Baghdad, said 1st Lt. Akram al-Zobaei.

In the north, a truck driver in a Turkish convoy escorted by US troops was killed when his vehicle hit a roadside bomb near the village of Al-Hajaj around the refinery town of Baiji, 220 kilometres (140 miles) from Baghdad, said Major Ali al-Qaisi of the Iraqi police.

He said the convoy was travelling south from the Turkish border and that the driver died shortly after being rescued from the burning truck by US soldiers.

Except for the die-hard few, most Turkish drivers have stopped venturing unescorted on the treacherous roads linking Baghdad to the northern city of Mosul after a string of kidnappings and gruesome murders in the area over the past year.

Most transport supplies and goods for the US military.

Four bodies, three Iraqi soldiers and one policeman, were found on a farm in Latafiya, some 70 km (40 miles) south of the capital. An army officer said they had been shot in the head and chest two days ago. Their hands had been tied.

In Tikrit, two Iraqis were killed by the resistance, a third was killed and thrown in the Tigris River.

Three more Iraqi soldiers were injured during an exchange of fire with the Iraqi resistance in Al-Naba'i area, south of Balad.

Iraqis Find Irony In Bush's Stance On Lebanon, Syria; "He Is Condemning Himself."

14.03.2005 Susannah A. Nesmith, Iraqwar.mirror. Knight Ridder special correspondent Shatha al Awsy and a special correspondent who cannot be named for security reasons contributed to this report.

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Many Iraqis found bitter irony in President Bush's insistence last week that Syria must withdraw from Lebanon before it holds elections, for Iraqis have lived with foreign tanks in their streets for two years and voted barely a month ago under the watchful eye of the U.S. Army.

"He must have forgotten that his army is occupying Iraq," said Sa'ad Abdul Aziz, 21, an engineering student at Baghdad University. "What about the Republican Palace that they are using as a U.S. embassy?"

While many here were glad to see Saddam Hussein driven from power by the U.S.-led invasion, almost two years later they bristle at the sight of American soldiers patrolling their streets and are deeply embarrassed that the U.S. embassy occupies Iraq's version of the White House.

As Bush harped all week on the theme that democracy could not be free in Lebanon under the occupation of Syria's troops, jokes made the rounds at Iraqi universities, and some who have demanded the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops found themselves quoting Bush, a man they never thought they'd agree with.

"America should get out of Iraq immediately and without conditions, just like it is asking neighboring Syria to withdraw from the Lebanese Republic," said Sheikh Nasir Al-Saidi, imam of a mosque in the restive Shiite neighborhood of Sadr City, in a front-page article Saturday in the newspaper Azzaman.

In Iraq's Sunni-dominated Anbar province, only a tiny percentage of the people voted in January's elections, which Bush hails as a triumph of democracy. Some boycotted at the urging of Sunni leaders who said the elections couldn't be fair as long as American troops were here.

When Bush offered the same argument in a different context last week - arguing that Lebanese democracy could not function properly until Syria's forces leave - he sparked anger in some quarters.

"For us it is a joke said by the U.S. president," Ahmed Mushref, 25 an English literature student in Al-Mustansyria University in Baghdad. "I am not defending Syria, but this is the truth."

"What Bush said is an insult and a joke at the same time," said Wissam Hashim, an engineering professor at Al-Anbar University. "He is condemning himself."

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“A Liberal Will Tell You The System Isn’t Working Properly. I Will Tell You That The System Is Working Exactly The Way It’s Supposed To.”

March 14, 2005 Posted by James Patton, Anti Allawi-Group

Stan Goff:

“A liberal will tell you the system isn’t working properly. I will tell you that the system is working exactly the way it’s supposed to.

"As an insider on active duty in the armed forces, I saw the deep dissonance between the official explanations for our policies and our actual practices: the murder of schoolteachers and nuns by our surrogates; decimations; systematic rape; the cultivation of terror.

"I have concluded that the billions in profit and interest to be made in Colombia and neighboring nations has much more to do with the itch for stability than any concern about democracy or cocaine.

"After reflection on my two decades plus of service, I am convinced that I only served the richest one percent of my country."

"I am finally really serving my country, right now, telling you this. You do not want some things done in your name."

Stan Goff served in the U.S. military for two decades, much of the time with Special Forces training Third World armies. He retired from the U.S. Army in February 1996, after serving in Vietnam, Guatemala, El Salvador, Grenada, Panama, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela, Honduras, Somalia and Haiti.

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.

A Breeding Ground For Tyrants: Conscience And Morals Will Never Take You Past Colonel

March 10, 2005 Michael Gaddy. **Michael Gaddy, an Army veteran of Vietnam, Grenada, and Beirut,** lives in the Four Corners area of the American Southwest.

The irritating sound of a ringing phone brought me roughly back to reality. I had been lost in the serenity of the snow-covered peaks of the La Plata and San Juan Mountains of Southern Colorado.

At first, there was no immediate response to my hello. I thought it a call from a telemarketer, but after the pause, was delighted to hear the voice of a damn good soldier I have known for over two decades, who is on his second tour in Iraq. His response to my question of what was going on over there now, still assaults my conscience: "Well, this morning our unit went out and shot up a bunch of civilians and our commander is writing it up as a great military victory."

This is not the first report of unacceptable military and civilian leadership as it pertains to the war in Iraq I have received from this soldier.

He continued telling me of the insane actions of his commander: "He has a whole new definition of 'recon-by-fire;' he picks out a building in our area of operations, then tells his soldiers to 'fire it up.' It makes no difference we have no Intel of

enemy activity, nor have we received any enemy fire from that building. His purpose is to continue to shoot into buildings until someone shoots back."

Since our nation and its civilian leaders have lost their ability to judge right from wrong, why should we expect anything different from our military?

Many military officers see this war as the open door of opportunity to the stars of a general and all the attendant trappings: power, money and prestige. Like the perfumed princes of the Vietnam War, they believe, "it may not be a good war, but it is the only war we have."

Success in war is a simple equation: how many people can you put in a body bag?

An immoral leadership cares little if they are combatants or civilians. Military leadership follows the lead of its civilian leadership; if they lie, it is an acceptable practice, if they condone illegal war, they do the same, if killing and torturing innocents is ordered and then covered-up, then it must be OK. Why should we even question this when it comes to our military leaders seeking to move up the career ladder?

Most of the military officers, who excel at unconstitutional, aggressive war, will move into positions of higher authority once this war is over and will dictate military policy in the future. They will remember the path they took to attain the lofty status of general and so will those who are younger and seek to emulate them.

They will have learned that to follow the lies of unprincipled civilian leadership is indispensable to success, and conscience and morals will never take you past colonel – if that far.

None of these officers will consider their oath of enlistment and its mandate of obeying the Constitution over unconstitutional, illegal orders.

After all, following the Constitution is not a step on the career path to the inner ring at the Pentagon.

They will never allow the thought to enter their minds that anyone issuing an unconstitutional order, military or civilian, is, in fact, the domestic enemy referred to in the enlistment oath.

Betrayal

March 16, 2005 Green Left Weekly

Stan Goff, a US special forces veteran, whose son is in Iraq, is now a campaigner with the Bring Them Home Now! movement against the US occupation of Iraq. Here, he speaks to Green Left Weekly's Pip Hinman about the US deserters.

Why do you think there are so many deserters?

I am hesitant to speculate, however my best educated guess is that it's a combination of the extremely high operational tempo and the sense of horror over the real nature of this war.

Many young soldiers enter military service having bought the whole story about the US military as some liberatory force, and the discovery of its true nature creates a traumatic sense of dislocation and betrayal.

How does this phenomenon compare to the early period of the Vietnam War?

The list of dissimilarities is nearly infinite, and I am hesitant to look for comparisons between apples and oranges. **Nonetheless, I think the existence of a globally networked and often militant anti-war movement, even before the March 2003 ground offensive, is reflected in the military by a much higher degree of resistance at a much earlier phase of the war.**

“Why Stay?”

Interview with Giulietto Chiesa, By Alessandro Cardulli, Aprile - Zabriskypoint.org

“If in Iraq the US soldiers shoot any time something that, according to them, could blow up – Giulietto stresses -, “if they live in terror that a car bomb might blown them up at any time, if the terror is spread, if people die not during a conventional battle but at any street corner, if you patrol behind a bend and from the other side a car is coming and you blast away, it means the war never ended.

“It is a terrible, endless war.

“What are our soldiers doing out there, what is their role?

“The situation has lost any sign of reasoning: this is a carnage where it is not easy to recognize your friends.

“After the elections euphoria, why do we stay in Iraq, what for? When journalists can't do their job, when they are told not to go, when all the civilians and the troops are constantly in danger, I repeat, why stay?”

OCCUPATION REPORT

How To Recruit For The Resistance: An Easy Four Step Program



HUMILIATE



MOTIVATE



TRAIN



EQUIP

There Is No Fallujah To Update.

13 March 2005 Al-Zaman/ AFP

The Iraqi government has yet to pay out any compensation to the inhabitants of Fallujah from the funds dedicated to the rebuilding of the city, which was assaulted by the US Marines and Iraqi forces beginning last November 8 in order to root out guerrillas who were thought to dominate it.

Most of its buildings and homes were damaged, such that most of its former residents still live in the hills southwest of the city in tents erected hastily in the wilderness. The Iraqi government had established committees to identify damaged buildings and to survey the damage in preparation for the payment of monetary compensation that would allow rebuilding.

Liqa' Fahd (25), cradling her two-month-old as she gazed at what was left of her home, said, "I lost my husband, my house, and everything beautiful in my life. I have nothing left but this little plot of land and this humble tent."

She explained that her husband had not escaped with her because he was the treasurer of an Islamic endowment in the city and responsible for its funds. "Since that time I have lost contact with him, and have not found his name either on the list of the dead or on that of the missing."

Muhammad Fahd al-Hitawi, 38, has erected a tent above the ruins of his house, and lives there with his ten children. He said he was waiting for compensation so that he could rebuild. His house, which had measured 671 square meters (yards), was mere rubble.

Hamid Fahd Su'ud, 40, the father of 7 daughters, said, "We now live off charity, since most of the shops and factories in the city are closed."

Su'ud lost his son, Omar, while attempting to flee the battles, but has never recovered a body. "I praise God that we have this tent, and all I want is for my son Omar to be alive and being fed."

Iraqi authorities have increased security measures and patrols of the city to prevent the return of the guerrillas and a repeat of what happened in Fallujah.

Comment By Juan Cole:

Readers often write in for an update on Fallujah.

I am sorry to say that there is no Fallujah to update.

The city appears to be in ruins and perhaps uninhabitable in the near future.

Of 300,000 residents, only about 9,000 seem to have returned, and apparently some of those are living in tents above the ruins of their homes.

The rest of the Fallujans are scattered in refugee camps of hastily erected tents at several sites, including one near Habbaniyyah, or are staying with relatives in other cities, including Baghdad.

The scale of this human tragedy-- the dispossession and displacement of 300,000 persons-- is hard to imagine. Unlike the victims of the tsunami who were left homeless, moreover, the Fallujans have witnessed no outpouring of world sympathy.

Rumsfeld hoped to convince Ramadi and Mosul to fall quiet lest the same thing happen to them.

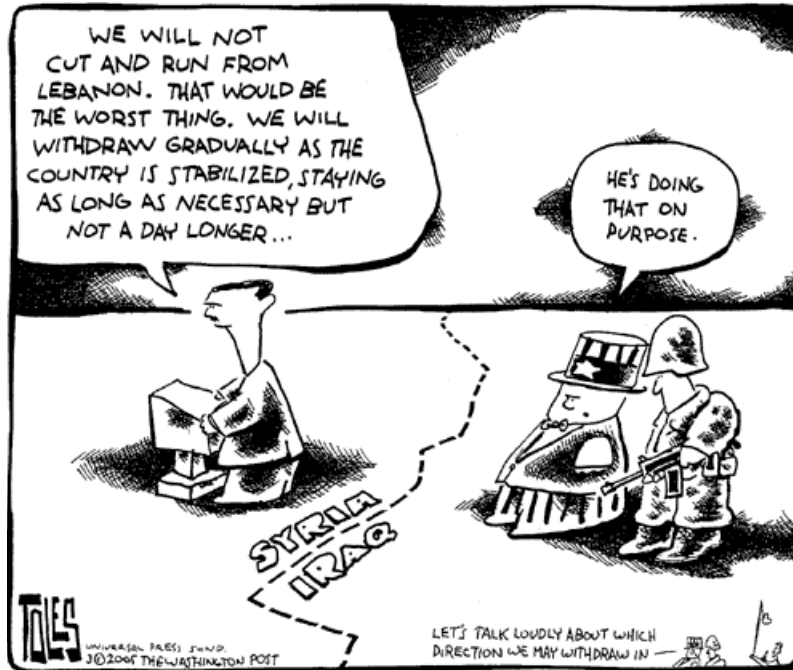
He failed, since the second Fallujah campaign threw the Sunni Arab heartland into much more chaos than ever before.

People forget how quiet Mosul had been. And, the campaign was the death knell for proper Sunni participation in the Jan. 30 elections

However much a cliché it might be to say it, the US military really did destroy Fallujah to save it.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



3-8-06

Thieving Bush Buddies At Halliburton Charged \$27 Million To Deliver \$82,000 Worth Of Propane

Mar 14 By MATT KELLEY, Associated Press Writer & By Sue Fleming, (Reuters)

Pentagon auditors questioned more than \$108 million in costs claimed by Halliburton on its \$875 million contract to provide fuel in Iraq in 2003 and 2004, according to records released Monday.

The charges auditors questioned included a payment of \$27.5 million to transport \$82,000 worth of propane.

Halliburton spokeswoman Wendy Hall said Monday the company gave the auditors all of its necessary records. She repeated the company's position that it did not overcharge for fuel delivered to Iraq.

"The facts show that KBR delivered fuel crucial to the Iraqi people when failure was not an option," Hall said in a statement. **[So what? The question is about war-**

profiteering pigs loved by the White House making a profit of \$27,416,000 on one lousy delivery of propane, worth \$82,000. And how much more they ripped off besides that.]

Halliburton, which was run by Vice President Dick Cheney until he joined the 2000 race for the White House, is the U.S. military's biggest contractor in Iraq and has the potential to earn up to \$18 billion in business there, according to government estimates.

KBR also has a separate, giant logistics contract with the Army which has so far clocked up more than \$7 billion and has another deal to rebuild parts of Iraq's oil sector.

When a draft audit was released in December 2003, Bush said if Halliburton overcharged the U.S. government, the money would have to be repaid.

"Contrary to your assertions, however, the administration has withheld these audits from Congress for months and Halliburton has repaid nothing under this contract," wrote the Democratic lawmakers to the president.

They complained to the president that the administration had ignored more than a dozen requests for copies of KBR oil contract audits.

Politicians Building A Police State At Home While Soldiers Off In Iraq: Spying On Melbourne Protesters Is Tip Of Frightening Iceberg

2005-03-09 By John Glisch, FLORIDA TODAY

Say hello to Big Brother, right here in good old Brevard County. **By now, you've probably heard about the Melbourne police surveillance of 36 demonstrators who turned out at City Hall to peacefully protest the start of President Bush's second term.**

How the cops videotaped them, took close-ups of their faces and at least one license plate, and placed the tape "in evidence." And how officers shadowed a protester as she walked home and where, upon her arrival, she found a police car parked nearby.

The protesters included moms with kids in strollers, senior citizens, young people, middle-class working folks and a woman in a wheelchair, all doing the most constitutionally protected of things:

Giving their government a piece of their mind.

The police's infringement on the Bill of Rights left me angry and concerned. But my dismay has grown worse since I did some legwork and learned that what went down in Melbourne has been happening around the nation.

Since Sept. 11, the Justice Department has been using the cover of "fighting terrorism" to spy on anti-war groups, environmental groups, religious groups, labor-rights groups and other law-abiding organizations that have policy differences with the White House.

And it's using the FBI and local law-enforcement agencies to do it.

The situation is so widespread that the American Civil Liberties Union -- which came to the defense of the Melbourne protesters -- has filed Freedom of Information requests in 10 states and the District of Columbia to find out the details.

They want to learn how the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Forces are working with local police to engage in what the evidence shows has absolutely nothing to do with fighting terrorists, but everything to do with illegal political surveillance.

"This is a very important issue of public concern," says Ben Wizner, an ACLU staff attorney in its New York City office. "We want to know what the policies and procedures are. And we want to know what they've found.

"Police shouldn't be doing these kinds of fishing expeditions. They should be investigating crimes, not investigating ideas. Things have really gone way too far."

The ACLU has extensive documentation of the abuses, and has posted the information online at www.aclu.org/spyfiles.

Take a look yourself, and you will be as aghast as I am:

Pacifist Quakers labeled "criminal extremists;" a former Catholic priest turned peace activist falsely called a "member of a terrorist organization;" student groups infiltrated and their parents tracked down; undercover agents sent to National Lawyers Guild meetings.

There's page after page of it, including the same things that happened in Melbourne -- local police departments being alerted about protests, and then eagerly doing their part to trample on citizens' right to peacefully assemble and say what they want.

And do it without fear of winding up in a secret database with God knows what kind of Orwellian enemy-of-the-state label attached to their heads.

America has been down this witch-hunt road before, most recently during the Vietnam War when Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon gladly let J. Edgar Hoover's FBI run wild and compile illegal dossiers on thousands of Americans who didn't agree with their government.

Now, with an administration famous for its intolerance of dissent using the fear of terrorism as an excuse, history is repeating itself.

To those who say it can't happen here, I say this: It is.

[Which is the best reason of all the Bring The Troops Home now. They've sworn to defend the constitution from all enemies foreign and domestic, and the domestic species have taken over the government. We need some armed forces to act to protect us, chase these assholes off, and get our liberties back. That's what soldiers are for.]

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Two Marines Wounded In Afghan Ambush

March 14, 2005 Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Militants armed with rockets and machine-guns ambushed Marines patrolling in eastern Afghanistan, wounding two of the American troops, the military said Sunday.

The patrol came under attack on Saturday in an area north of the city of Jalalabad and close to the Pakistani border, the U.S. military said. The assailants quickly retreated, it said.

The two injured Marines continued with their mission after treatment at the scene for shrapnel wounds.

CLASS WAR NEWS

Capitalism At Work: Your Money Or Your Life

<p>Rose Shaffer, for one, is still reeling. She works two nursing jobs, seven days a week for nearly sixty hours, so she can make the monthly \$2,088 in Chapter 13 payments she still owes. Advocate has yet to claim its portion, but Shaffer's</p>

credit is severely damaged and will be for the next decade. She's praying her eleven-year-old car will make it through the Chicago winter.

"Sometimes I would start crying. I wished I was dead, but I was too big a coward to kill myself," Shaffer says. "I never thought my life would end up like this."

February 3, 2005 by Dan Frosch, The Nation

Five long years ago, Rose Shaffer's life seemed sweet. A nurse since the early 1970s, Shaffer had spent most of her sixty years working at various Chicago hospitals, rising through the caregiver ranks and raising three kids.

Now in the twilight of her career, she'd been hired as director of nursing at a home health agency in the suburb of Lombard. The position made Shaffer proud--she knew her salary could pay off the mortgage on her house a little sooner. At the time, her cousin Barack Obama was fast becoming a rising star in the Illinois State Senate.

Seven months into her new job, Shaffer suffered a heart attack, and an ambulance rushed her to Advocate South Suburban Hospital.

Shaffer assumed she was automatically covered--health insurance was a given at her previous nursing jobs. She thought she'd filled out the proper forms. But she hadn't.

A week later, Shaffer received a bill from Advocate for the three days she'd been hospitalized. It was for \$18,000. Shortly thereafter, Advocate began sending letters to Shaffer demanding payment. Then, a summons to appear in court was tossed on her porch. Advocate was suing her.

Shaffer was terrified and didn't show at her court date. She says she even received a letter from the Cook County Sheriff's Department, threatening arrest unless she appeared. Under pressure from Advocate and now behind on her mortgage payments, Shaffer filed for Chapter 13 bankruptcy in December 2002, which meant her debtors would garner a reduced portion of the money she owed.

"The hospital saved my life, but now they were trying to kill me," Shaffer says.

Rose Shaffer's experience has become disquietingly common.

Since 2000, Harvard associate medical professors Steffie Woolhandler and David Himmelstein, along with Harvard law professor Elizabeth Warren and Ohio University sociology and anthropology professor Deborah Thorne, have been compiling data on bankruptcies in the United States.

Their study, published on February 2 by the medical policy journal Health Affairs, found that between 1981 and 2001, medical-related bankruptcies increased by 2,200 percent, an astonishing explosion in a relatively short period of time. This spike far outpaced the 360 percent growth in all personal bankruptcies during roughly the same period.

In addition, the study uncovered surprising information about the affected population. While poor, uninsured Americans have long been the most obvious victims of a defective healthcare system, it's the middle class that suffers most in this case, accounting for about 90 percent of all medical bankruptcies, says Warren.

"The people we found to be profoundly affected are not some distant underclass. They're the very heart of the middle class," Warren says. "These are educated Americans with decent jobs, homes and families. But one stumble, and they end up in complete financial collapse, wiped out by medical bills."

Medical-related debt is the second leading cause of personal bankruptcies, topped only by job loss. Edward Janger, a professor at Brooklyn Law School, gives two reasons for the change:

First, there's been a dramatic rise in healthcare costs. In 2002 Americans paid an average of \$5,440 in medical expenditures, up \$419 from the previous year. A September 2004 study by Families USA found that 14.3 million Americans now hemorrhage more than a quarter of their earnings into healthcare costs.

Second, the past fifteen years have seen a tremendous spike in the number of Americans who either don't have health insurance or have such skeletal coverage they might as well have none--there are currently some 45 million uninsured Americans, a jump of 10 million since 1990.

The Health Affairs study, which looked specifically at a cross section of 1,771 bankruptcies filed in 2001, concluded that the average medical debtor was a 41-year-old homeowning woman, with children and at least some education.

The study also found that a majority of middle-class debtors had health insurance both when they first grew sick and at the actual time they filed, another surprise. Insurance alone, it turns out, doesn't prevent medical bankruptcy, because it is often too porous to provide a real buffer against the financial burden of a serious illness.

"A lot of people were bankrupted because of co-payments, deductibles or uncovered services, which added up to thousands of dollars in bills," says Steffie Woolhandler.

In 2001 the Spechts were living comfortably in Albuquerque, New Mexico, having worked at solid jobs there for years--Judy at a Philips semiconductor factory and Phil as a maintenance man at a retirement community. Together, the Spechts were bringing in around \$40,000, which in New Mexico was enough to make the \$787 monthly mortgage payment on their new home and still have a little left. Lately, Phil hadn't been feeling great--his body ached more than usual--but the Spechts both had health coverage through their jobs. In their late 50s, they were near enough retirement to taste it.

By 2002, though, Phil had grown worse, and after a series of tests, doctors diagnosed myelodysplastic syndrome, a bone-marrow disease that can cause leukemia. Phil retired and began collecting \$1,080 a month in Social Security disability payments.

"I still had a good paying job with insurance that could cover us both, so I thought we'd be OK," Judy says.

But when Philips started shuttering some of its New Mexico factories three months later, Judy was laid off. She quickly found a job working at another semiconductor company, but after five months she was axed again. Now desperate, Judy took a housecleaning job at near-minimum wage. It was all she could find.

Fortunately, the Spechts only paid \$50 a month for Phil's visits to University of New Mexico Hospital oncologists, thanks to UNM's charity care.

But they had trouble affording the regular blood work Phil needed and the monthly \$507 in prescription drug payments for both of them, climbing quickly because Judy developed high blood pressure, high cholesterol, acid reflux and an underactive thyroid--"stuff I hadn't experienced before this."

To save money, Judy chopped her blood pressure and thyroid tablets in half, took the acid-reflux medication less often than prescribed and quit her cholesterol pills altogether. "I was left with a choice of my medication or a roof over our heads."

To afford Phil's medicine, the Spechts sold their furniture, some jewelry and a camera. But by the end of 2003, \$4,000 deep in medical debt and with \$90,000 still left on their mortgage, the Spechts knew they couldn't hold on to their house any longer.

They hired a bankruptcy lawyer and filed for Chapter 7, freeing them from debt but eviscerating their credit for seven to ten years. The bank foreclosed on their mortgage, and the Spechts moved twice before settling in a cheap apartment for people over 55.

Although they now participate in a new state program that offers drug discounts to elderly New Mexicans, the Spechts still owe \$1,000 in medical bills; even after filing for bankruptcy, the couple continued to rack up bills until Judy finally landed a state job that gave her health coverage.

The stress of the past three years has changed the Spechts forever. Judy describes the whole process as "frightening and humiliating."

"We'd wanted to retire in that house. We were heartbroken," she says.

In the two years before filing, 22 percent of families in the study went without food, 30 percent had a utility shut off, 61 percent went without important medical care and half failed to fill a doctor's prescription.

A study by the Center for Studying Health System Change shows that 20 million families struggled with medical debt in 2003. Federal projections suggest that out-of-pocket health expenses will rise at least until 2013. **Elizabeth Warren and Steffie Woolhandler foresee medical bankruptcies continuing to climb as the uninsured population swells, overburdened hospitals aggressively collect to meet the**

bottom line, prescription drug prices increase and employers shift medical costs to employees.

Even modest measures to protect medical debtors face an increasingly unforgiving environment. Although the recent litigation will likely force some hospitals to rethink collection practices, there's evidence they are finding other ways to reclaim money, like pushing debtors toward lenders and hospital-sponsored credit cards. And the bankruptcy reform pending in Congress could hurl many more middle-class Americans into lifelong debt.

Rose Shaffer, for one, is still reeling. She works two nursing jobs, seven days a week for nearly sixty hours, so she can make the monthly \$2,088 in Chapter 13 payments she still owes. Advocate has yet to claim its portion, but Shaffer's credit is severely damaged and will be for the next decade. She's praying her eleven-year-old car will make it through the Chicago winter.

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