

GI SPECIAL 3A75:

**SEE ANYBODY OUT THERE THROWING
FLOWERS?
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**



Ramadi (AFP/Patrick Baz)

“My Platoon Sergeant Screamed At Me For A Half Hour Straight”

**From: Ward Reilly, 81mm Mortar Gunner, Weapons Platoon, Co C 1st Bn 16th Inf.
First Infantry Division 1971-1974, Veterans For Peace, New Orleans**

To: GI Special

Sent: March 14, 2005

Subject: Another Conscientious Objector Sounds Off, needs help

To: Ward Reilly

I just notified my command today that I am a conscientious objector. My platoon sergeant screamed at me for a half hour straight calling me a coward and an idiot.

The two E5's in the orderly room refused to type up the 4187 personal action form until I explained that they had to since it had already been cleared by the chaplain etc.

Then they spent all day going all over the squadron trying to find out HOW to do it, and it never got done.

I'm in one of those moron infested Cav units too, so I'm in for the long haul.

I've already filled out the required questions from Appendix B of 600-43 and got the chaplain's memorandum and my own memorandum for the commander, all I need is the 4187 to get started. I don't know how you can help me but I assure I need it.

F (PFC, tanker, iraq veteran etc.)

PS If it will help somebody else then by all means use it [in GI Special], just please withhold my name on anything that is viewed publicly.

[NOTE FROM WARD REILLY: ...if anybody wants to contact F, then route them through me... wardpeace@hotmail.com] [F has been made aware of GI Rights Hotline.]

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

US Soldier Killed, Six Others Wounded By Car Bomb In Western Baghdad

March 15 (AFP) & By RAWYA RAGEH, Associated Press Writer & By Todd Pitman, Associated Press

A car bomb in western Baghdad on Tuesday killed a US soldier and wounded six others, a US military spokesman told AFP.

"A Taskforce Baghdad soldier died March 15th at around 10 am (0700 GMT) when a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device detonated, while the soldier was on patrol. Six other soldiers were wounded," the spokesman said.

The car bomb attack was one of two near a gas station in Hai Amel in western Baghdad.

The car bomb targeted a U.S. military convoy, exploding on a road about 500 yards from the main avenue leading to Baghdad's international airport, police Capt. Thamir Talib said.

The first car bomb wounded US soldiers who had been called to the scene to inspect a suspicious blue BMW that had been parked close by, the gas station's owner said.

Witnesses said some American troops also were wounded.

When U.S. forces arrived to evacuate them, another car bomb exploded, wounding more troops.

One Humvee was destroyed and two civilian cars were in flames, witnesses said.



A U.S. military medical evacuation helicopter lands at the scene of a car bomb explosion in Baghdad, March 15, 2005. **Police said that two U.S. soldiers were also wounded in the attack and were immediately evacuated from the site by a medical evacuation helicopter.** REUTERS/Ali Jasim

Marine Killed In Anbar

Mar 15, 2005 By RAWYA RAGEH, Associated Press Writer

A U.S. Marine with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force died Monday in Anbar March 14, a province that has been a hotbed of guerrilla activity and includes the cities of Fallujah, Ramadi and Qaim, officials said.

Italy Soldier Dies In Iraq Training Exercise

March 15, 2005 Union-Tribune Publishing Co

ROME – An Italian soldier in Iraq died on Tuesday in an accident during a target-shooting training exercise, military officials said.

They said the soldier, Salvatore Marracino, was first taken to a field hospital and then flown to a hospital in Kuwait City, where he died of injuries to the head.

Deputy Prime Minister Marco Follini told parliament that Marracino died when his rifle went off accidentally while he was trying to unblock it.

Iraqi General Shot Dead By US Troops At Checkpoint West Of Ramadi

3/15/2005 AFP and Turkish Press

RAMADI, Iraq - **The deputy commander of the Iraqi army in western Al-Anbar province was shot dead by US troops at a checkpoint** Tuesday night, a police officer said.

"The US forces opened fire at 8:00 pm (1700 GMT) on Brigadier General Ismail Swayed al-Obeid, who had left his base in Baghdadi to head home," police Captain Amin al-Hitti said.

"They spotted him on the road after the curfew, which goes into effect at 6 pm," the officer said in Baghdadi, 185 kilometres (142 miles) west of the capital. **[Use your imagination on this one.]**

TROOP NEWS

Rumsfeld Breaks Law & Defies Congress:

Refuses To Reimburse Military Families For Equipment They Were Forced To Buy For Loved Ones

Mar 9 By LOLITA C. BALDOR, Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON - The Defense Department hasn't developed a plan to reimburse soldiers for equipment they've bought to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan despite requirements in a law passed last year, a senator says.

"Very simply, this is either negligence on their part, because they were not happy with this when it passed, or it's incompetence," Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn. said. "It's pretty outrageous when you have all their rhetoric about how much we care about our people in uniform."

Soldiers serving in Iraq and their families have reported buying everything from higher-quality protective gear to armor for their Humvees, medical supplies and even global positioning devices.

In response to the complaints, Congress last year passed Dodd's amendment requiring the Pentagon to reimburse members of the Armed Services for the cost of any safety or health equipment that they bought or someone else bought on their behalf.

Under the law, the Defense Department had until Feb. 25 to develop regulations on the reimbursement, which is limited to \$1,100 per item. [So, Rumsfeld had a year to get this done. You can be sure he gets his paycheck and benefits on time. But his attitude towards military families is quite clear: fuck 'em. Instead of sitting on his scrawny ass in a plush Pentagon office, he belongs on trail for his life before a court-martial. He stalled the orders for new uparmored vehicles, got caught lying about it; refused for two years to get the new tourniquets that could have saved troops from bleeding to death; and did his bit to bring on this disgusting war for oil and Empire. He's up to his neck in blood. He's betrayed every troop wearing the uniform. He merits arrest, trial and condign punishment. Bring that on.]

"The Military," He Said, "Is A Bunch Of Lies."

1mar2005 By KATHY DOBIE / Harper's Magazine v.310, n.1858. Kathy Dobie is the author of The Only Girl in the Car, which originated as a memoir in this magazine. She lives in Brooklyn. [Excerpt]

AWOL and desertion are chronic problems; all any Army can hope for is to keep them at manageable levels, not to lose soldiers needlessly. The Army admits that youth, lack of a high-school diploma, coming from "broken homes," and having early scrapes with the law make a soldier only "relatively more likely" to go AWOL or to desert. In fact, the Army is careful to note, "the vast majority of soldiers who fit this profile are not going to desert."

Yet the Army used that very same profile to try to identify potential deserters and give them extra attention-and the desertion rate, mysteriously, rose.

It doesn't take a huge leap of the imagination to suppose that high-school dropouts and juvenile delinquents might have joined the military for a fresh start, a chance to succeed at something, and when they were instead tagged as potential failures and trouble-makers, they took off.

None of the Army data comes close to capturing the hearts and minds of soldiers.

What is any given person looking for when he or she joins the Army? Direction in life? A chance to belong to something? Father figures? An adventure with buddies or a test of manhood? Their parents' approval?

And when they entered the military, what did they find? That they'd been given false promises by the recruiter? That the people they turned to for help threatened them or made idiotic speeches about Bible-carrying Iraqis? No help for depression?

Or a lack of armor and ammunition on the battlefield?

According to the Army's own study, before soldiers went AWOL, more than half of them sought help within the military-they spoke to their COs, to military chaplains, military shrinks. Apparently, to little avail.

The Army has examined the soldier, but not itself.

It is tantamount to trying to understand the problem of teenage runaways without ever asking about their home life.

Failure to adapt, issues with chain of command – there's no sense that the military culture and environment, the commanders, themselves, also play a part in driving soldiers out and away.

The Georgia Marine who thought he would be stationed in Kentucky made it all the way to his MOS training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, before he took off. There, Jarred tried to get a foot injury treated and was told to take Tylenol.

His pay was less than the recruiter had promised him, and he even seemed to be missing money from what he was paid. When he complained to his CO, he was told to shut up and mind his own business. Then he learned that his company was going to be deployed to Fallujah. "I ain't goin' to war," he told his sister flatly.

His sister kept telling Jarred to go talk to somebody. "Ain't anybody to talk to," Jarred told her. "Ain't nobody here interested."

When he went home to Georgia on leave last March, he didn't return to his base. He made his mother and sister take down from the walls all their Marine paraphernalia, stripped the bumper stickers from their trucks, and refused to watch any movies or TV shows that featured the military.

"The military," he said, "is a bunch of lies."

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)

No Sale

February 28, 2005 Advertising Age

"The U.S. Army is adjusting its marketing pitch to minorities as the war in Iraq hurts recruiting efforts among Hispanics and, especially, African-Americans," reports Advertising Age.

Political science professor Peter Feaver expressed skepticism, saying, "If the problem is Iraq, there's not much in the short run that the Army recruiters can do."

“If Soldiers Had Invaded Us Then I Would Have Fought Back, Too” AWOL Iraq Vet Says

I'd been brutally honest with these people that, yes, this war is wrong, but if soldiers had come into our country and had invaded us and had come into our homes, then I would have fought back, too.

They're trying to keep this military intact, and if they let soldiers know that people do leave and they do manage to get out and get on with their lives, I think they're afraid that there's going to be droves of soldiers leaving at that point.

March 15th, 2005 Amy Goodman, Democracy Now

[Thanks to Desmond, who sent this in.]

AMY GOODMAN: **We're also joined on the phone right now by an anonymous soldier, AWOL, in the army for three years, June 2002 signed up, sent to Iraq in March 2003.** But let's let him tell his own story. Welcome to Democracy Now!

ANONYMOUS AWOL SOLDIER: I'm glad to be here.

AMY GOODMAN: Can you talk about when you enlisted and why? And what happened in Iraq?

ANONYMOUS AWOL SOLDIER: Well, I enlisted my junior year of high school, summer of 2002, before September 11th ever happened or the summer of 2001, before September 11th. I graduated May 2002, and in June I was gone to basic training, 18 years old. I then went to my active duty unit at Fort Hood in January of 2003 and then I was in Iraq by March 2003. I was in Iraq from March 2003 to March 2004. A military policeman, I did typical work. I did checkpoints, we raided homes, gate security, things like that.

AMY GOODMAN: Tell us what you saw in Iraq, what you experienced.

ANONYMOUS AWOL SOLDIER: **Well, when I first went to Iraq, I actually believed what the government was saying, that we were searching for weapons of mass destruction, we were making the country safe for democracy and things like that. But when we got there, I quickly found another story.**

I very quickly found that the Iraqis didn't want us there and that the image they're reporting in the news at home was that everything is -- everything is going well. And I really think the media tried to make a face on that at the beginning. But we got there, the Iraqis, they'd throw stones at us, unless you gave them money. If you gave them money or food, they liked you for a little bit. But public opinion was not very good over there at all.

One thing that I saw that very much bothered me was as a military policeman some of our jobs.

I was in Tikrit, Iraq. We would drive around town and our sergeants, our officers, would get bored so they'd tell us to go raid this whole block of homes, you know.

And so we'd go into every home, and if we found anything as small as a knife or a pistol in any home, which I think you could go in any home in America and find a knife or a pistol, but if we found anything like that, we'd arrest all the males in the house, ages eight to 80 and leave all the females behind crying their eyes out, and that was never very fun to watch.

Then what we'd go do is throw these men who maybe didn't do anything in the same jails as the ones that we knew had set off I.E.D.s and had set off -- and had tried to kill soldiers.

So, you're just throwing them all in with each other, and eventually it is going to change their minds. **You know, you are going to make the distant relatives bitter, and you are going to -- you are starting a whole new war with people who really don't deserve it.**

AMY GOODMAN: So, when did you come back?

ANONYMOUS AWOL SOLDIER: March 2004.

Once I came back, I realized very quickly that my whole opinion had changed about the idea of war and why the United States gets involved in it. So, I applied for conscientious objector at that point. I didn't know that civilian attorneys are supposed to help out with that. They can. But the military didn't give me any idea of what is supposed to be in this conscientious objector application. They didn't tell me there was an appendix for it, they didn't tell me what the rules or standards were.

So, that night I went home, and I typed up 10 pages of just complaints and rants and, you know, what I felt was wrong with the military and with our government, period. And I turned it in the very next day, and a week later I was in a chaplain's office getting yelled at, and then a military psychiatrist's office pretty much getting harassed.

AMY GOODMAN: Getting yelled at by the chaplain?

ANONYMOUS AWOL SOLDIER: Oh, I've been yelled at by chaplains many times, including basic training.

Chaplains are not what they pretend to be, men of God in the army. They're army all the way through. They are soldiers. They would bleed green before they would ever consider God, at least in -- at least in my experience.

But I didn't know the process at all. And so my application got denied very quickly. And at that point, I had realized what the truth was. I had realized that if I really want to do this the right way, I need to speak with civilian attorneys. So I got in touch with the Veterans for Peace, and I also got in contact with the G.I. Rights Hotline, and they got me in touch with a civilian attorney who helped me to write a rebuttal to the original application. And all this took nine months to have happen. And then when I turned in my rebuttal, I found out that my unit would be leaving for Iraq again in January of 2005.

So, I had never wanted to consider going AWOL.

It was always the last thing I wanted to do. I'd been brutally honest with these people that, yes, this war is wrong, but if soldiers had come into our country and had invaded us and had come into our homes, then I would have fought back, too.

So, I was more seeing how the war felt from a lot of the Iraqis' point of view.

So, they said that doesn't count as being a conscientious objector, that I'm not against the idea of war, that I would have fought in another war, and they just started lying, and that was part of what – when they had said no and turned in the paperwork for that, there was a lot of lies in it.

And we proved that when I did the rebuttal.

But army law says that while you are waiting for an application to be reviewed, and in this case it was my rebuttal being reviewed, it could take up to six months. So, that would have been June of this year. And my unit went back to Iraq in January. So when I went on leave at the end of December, I did the thing I never wanted to do, and I went AWOL.

AMY GOODMAN: Which is what you're doing right now.

ANONYMOUS AWOL SOLDIER: Yes. I've been AWOL since January.

AMY GOODMAN: Do you think the military knows where you are?

ANONYMOUS AWOL SOLDIER: Well, they contacted my home of record, which is in Colorado and my family, they don't know where I am. So, we're staying with some friends of mine, and initially we stayed in a hotel under another name, and then we've moved twice in the two months. So, we're just living here and there, just trying to give the slip. I am married. So, it is a little more difficult than if I was by myself. But my wife is working a job right now to try to support us right now.

I've been told not to get a job, not to apply for anything that requires a background check, not to even drive my motor vehicle. So, because I could be pulled over at any moment and arrested.

And the other soldier is right. You are supposed to be dropped off the rolls, that means you stop getting paid, and then they're supposed to put your name on the deserter list, which is -- there is a deserter hotline that I call twice a week to find out if my name is on the deserter rolls, and then as soon as my name is on that, I will be turning myself in at Fort Sill, which is what I've been advised.

But the problem is, however, in my case, for some reason I was dropped from the payroll, but my name hasn't been put on the deserter list yet. It has been almost two months, and my name is supposed to be on there after one month. So I'm kind of playing the waiting game right now.

I just want to get this all over with. I want to be able to turn myself in. I know at Fort Sill, I suppose in lieu of a court-martial, you ask for another dishonorable discharge, and that looks pretty attractive to me because the war in Iraq is wrong, and I want to be able to move on with my life.

AMY GOODMAN: And on this second anniversary of the invasion to the anonymous soldier on the phone, what will you be doing?

ANONYMOUS AWOL SOLDIER: I have spoken out twice before, once in Austin -- I went to a protest down there at the Capitol building -- and once in College Station.

So, right now I'm in a situation where I can't really do much. I'm kind of isolated from the world. **But as soon as this is all done, I plan on turning myself in as soon as I get a chance to. And all these veteran groups I'm working with, I plan on protesting very loudly.**

AMY GOODMAN: *Kathy Dobie has the cover story of Harper's magazine called "AWOL in America."*

We don't, Kathy Dobie, hear very much about this number. It may have surprised a lot of people listening and watching right now, 5,500, what, near 6,000 [AWOL].

The Pentagon doesn't talk about it very much. Why not? And we don't see a lot of people being rounded up.

KATHY DOBIE: Well, the military doesn't have the manpower to go after deserters. But I also think they do not want other soldiers to know that this number of people leave and that also when they leave that they -- it is often possible after going AWOL, once you drop from the rolls, to get out, to be processed out with an other than an honorable discharge.

They are trying the best they can. It's -- recruiting is down, that's why they put in stop-loss orders.

They're trying to keep this military intact, and if they let soldiers know that people do leave and they do manage to get out and get on with their lives, I think they're afraid that there's going to be droves of soldiers leaving at that point.

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.

Marine Faces Long Road: Wounded On His Fourth Wedding Anniversary

This was LeJeune's third tour of duty in Iraq. This time, he had been there only three weeks before being injured.

March 15, 2005 By Susan Morse, Seacoast Newspapers

SEABROOK - As Marine Staff Sgt. Ian C. LeJeune, 26, recovers in a Texas hospital from wounds received in Iraq, Seabrook Elementary School students spent last week creating get-well cards for him.

The Seabrook Legion Ladies Auxiliary asked the students to create cheerful cards to be included in a care package organized by the auxiliary to send to LeJeune, according to auxiliary organizer Peg Brown.

LeJeune, the son of Richard and Bernice LeJeune of Seabrook, was seriously wounded last month when a rocket hit his barracks.

Four were injured, with LeJeune the most seriously hurt, according to his sister-in-law Tarnya Cody, secretary to Seabrook Police Chief David Currier.

LeJeune suffered two broken legs, a broken left ankle and the loss of the Achilles tendon in his right foot, as well as second- and third-degree burns.

Cody recently returned from seeing LeJeune and her sister Vanessa.

Cody said, "He's got a long road. He had surgery for skin grafting, he's sitting up in a chair."

It will be at least six months before LeJeune will be walking on both legs again, said Cody. He'll be able to put pressure on his left leg within six weeks, she said.

This was LeJeune's third tour of duty in Iraq. This time, he had been there only three weeks before being injured.

Cody returned to Seabrook with the couple's two youngest children, ages 1 and 3. She and her husband, Seabrook Police Officer Edward Cody, have two teenagers.

He and Vanessa, 28, were married on Feb. 23, 2001. He was injured on their fourth wedding anniversary.

Another Johannesburg Soldier Injured

March 15, 2005 By Sheri McWhirter, Record-Eagle staff writer

JOHANNESBURG - A second soldier from this small Otsego County town is recovering from wounds suffered in Iraq.

Army Pfc. Josh Dipzinski, 19, of Johannesburg, was injured last month while serving as a gunner on a Humvee escort team in Iraq. A rocket-propelled grenade detonated nearby and hurt the five soldiers in the vehicle.

Dipzinski received injuries to both arms, his right leg and around his face and neck, said his uncle, David Dipzinski of Gaylord.

"He's doing fine, but he's not going to tell us everything until he's home," he said.

The initial soldier from Johannesburg injured in the war in Iraq was Army Pfc. Derrick Harden, also 19. He was injured in January while part of a building security team in Ramadi, a city west of Baghdad. A car explosion injured him and other members of his unit.

Harden, a 2003 graduate of Gaylord High School, underwent repeated surgeries to remove shrapnel from his face and his right leg was amputated below the knee. His pastor at Johannesburg Christian Church, the Rev. Don Cleveland, said Harden may be home by the end of the month from his stay at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

The church collected more than \$10,000 in donations to cover travel expenses for Harden's family, so they could afford to stay near him in Washington. [Of course. If it were up to the Pentagon, his family could stay home. No money? Tough shit. He's of no use anymore.]

Marine Recovering At Home

March 15, 2005 Nikki Young, The Times

A 19-year-old injured Marine has returned home to Oakwood after fighting pneumonia for a week at a local hospital.

Lance Cpl. Matthew Turner was admitted March 6 to Northeast Georgia Medical Center's Lanier Park campus for treatment of pneumonia, said Alton Edge, Turner's stepgrandfather.

Edge said Turner, who is feeling much better, was released Sunday.

Turner must be able to see better, Edge said, because he has been watching a lot of television while he recuperates.

Turner, the son of Ronnie and Crystal Edge of Oakwood, was wounded Jan. 30 when terrorists opened fire on a building near Fallujah, Iraq.

The explosion from a rocket-propelled grenade and fumes from a resulting fire severely burned Turner internally and also injured two other Marines. Turner now has vision trouble and difficulty breathing.

The 2003 West Hall High School graduate was treated at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. He came home March 1, but will return to Houston at the end of the month so doctors can monitor his progress.

The American Legion and Auxiliary set up a fund to help the family with expenses.

Checks can be sent to: Matthew Turner Fund, American Legion and Auxiliary, P.O. Box 552, Gainesville, GA 30503.

Injured Marine Gets Warm Welcome

Mar. 14, 2005 11:35 PM by News Channel 8's Bob Wilson (Hartford-WTNH)

A Connecticut Marine who fought for his country in Iraq is about to get a warm welcome.

Sergeant Jared Luce suffered major injuries in the war.

Fellow Marines are hoping to help Luce's transition home a smooth one.

Sgt. Jared Luce arrived at Bradley International this evening, and taken to his home in Coventry where he is recovering from his wounds.

"He's got three little boys, 6, 5, and 2."

Sgt. Jared Luce reported for duty on January fifth in New Haven. He packed his gear, kissed his wife and kids goodbye and went to serve his country in Iraq. One month later he lost his legs to a road side bomb.

His fellow Marines immediately rallied to help. They spent a week at his house in Connecticut building a new ramp for his wheelchair.

Drug Corporations Oppose Prescription Benefit For Vets; Hogs Fear It Will Cut Their Profits

March 15, 2005 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer

Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., thinks veterans would be willing to pay for the opportunity to have prescriptions filled at Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities.

Specter, former chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee proposes to allow Medicare-eligible veterans who are not otherwise eligible for VA health care and services to have prescriptions filled at VA pharmacies for a fee, the size of which is not yet determined.

Specter made a similar proposal two years ago, and it ended up being adopted in June 2004 by the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee on a 10-5 vote. The bill, however, never advanced to the Senate floor, in part because of opposition from drug manufacturers who could lose money under the plan. [Lie. Not lose money. Just slightly decrease the obscene amount of profits they grab now.]

Italy To Start Pulling Troops From Iraq In Sept

Mar 15, 2005 ROME (Reuters)

Italy will start to withdraw its troops from Iraq this September, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi said Tuesday.

"We will begin to reduce our contingent even before the end of the year, starting in September, in agreement with our allies," he said in an interview on state television RAI.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Military Convoys Ambushed



Iraqis look over a burning truck in Youssifiyah March 15, 2005. **Witnesses reported that the truck was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade while traveling with a U.S. military convoy, and that two casualties were evacuated.** (AP Photo/Haidar Fatehi)

March 15 (Xinhuanet)

Insurgents attacked a convoy of trucks carrying supplies to a US military base near the town of Dujail, some 60 km north of Baghdad, a source from the police of Dujail told Xinhua. Three trucks were hit and their drivers were wounded, the police said, adding they were evacuated to a nearby hospital.

Another Pipeline Blown

3.15.05 By RAWYA RAGEH, Associated Press Writer & Energy Security & (Xinhuanet) & Aljazeera

In northern Iraq, insurgents blew up an oil pipeline in Fatha connecting the Kirkuk fields with a refinery in Baiji, 155 miles north of Baghdad, an official in the Northern Oil Co. said.

The pipeline is used only for domestic deliveries, the official said on condition of anonymity. He did not have details on the extent of the damage.

"A bomb was planted under an oil pipeline causing huge fire, on the east side of Tigris river in Fatha area near Baiji," an official in Baiji refinery told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Black and thick smoke could be seen over the area, about 200 km north of the capital, as security forces and teams of firefighters raced to the scene to put out the fire, he said.

Abd Allah, part of a 3000 strong oil protection force, said firemen hoped to control the blaze by Wednesday and put it out in three days.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Whatever Happened To The “Jodhpurs And Pith Helmets” Crowd?

March 14, 2005 by Patrick J. Buchanan, The American Conservative

Did I miss something? Where did all the “not since Rome” bombast, talk of America’s “benevolent global hegemony,” “Pax Americana,” and the New World Order disappear to? Whatever happened to the “jodhpurs and pith helmets” crowd?

Just a year ago, in the Irving Kristol Lecture at the annual AEI dinner, columnist Charles Krauthammer rhapsodized about America’s “global dominion” and our having “acquired the largest seeming empire in the history of the world.”

We have “overwhelming global power,” said Krauthammer. We are history’s “designated custodians of the international system.” When the Soviet Union fell, “something new was born, something utterly new—a unipolar world dominated by a single superpower unchecked by any rival and with decisive reach in every corner of the globe. This is a staggering new development in history, not seen since the fall of Rome. ... Even Rome is no model for what America is today.”

Our NATO allies, Tony Blair included, are lifting their embargo on weapons sales to China over the protests of President Bush. Old Europe remains adamant in its refusal to send troops to Iraq, as the Ukrainians and Poles, following the Spanish, quietly depart the beleaguered nation.

Germany, France, and Britain are negotiating a deal by which Iran, if she will submit to regular IAEA inspections, will be permitted to enrich uranium for nuclear power, be granted security guarantees, and be brought into the WTO. America opposes the three allies’ concessions, but there is no NATO support for U.S. military action.

Should Bush exercise that option, America will be alone in fighting insurgents from the eastern border of Syria to the western border of Pakistan. U.S. generals are advising the president that his legions are already stretched thin.

“Unchecked by any rival,” is how Krauthammer described the new Rome.

Yet as one watches the Old Republic spend herself into bankruptcy, run up trade deficits that debauch her currency, decline to defend her own bleeding borders, permit rivals to loot her technology and cart off her manufacturing plants, America does in a way resemble Rome. But it is, unfortunately, the Rome of the late fourth century.

The Kipling of the late Victorian era was speaking of folks like us when he wrote in his poem “Recessional”: “For frantic boast and foolish word/Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord.

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

**AND IF TOMORROW HE’S OUT THERE
PLANTING AN IED, COULD YOU BLAME
HIM?**

**CHECK THE LOOKS.
TIME TO GET THE FUCK OUT AND
COME HOME.
IT'S THEIR COUNTRY.**



A man looks at his wife and baby as he is searched by U.S. Army soldiers at a traffic checkpoint in Baghdad, March 15, 2005. REUTERS/Bob Strong

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

Fallujah: Nothing Much Left

3.9.05 Eman Ahmed Khammas, BRussells Tribunal

Seeing Falluja, I realize why the American called the operation woe and shock.

It is not only the American earthquake ridden city, the completely destroyed houses, schools, hospitals, market places, shops, streets, vehicles, not only the burnt out walls, the hills of garbage, not the only the broken life, it is more the feelings read on the Fallujan's faces. I could not find any other description more expressive than woe and shock. It is the silence that hides anger, bewilderment, fatigue, helpless, suspicion of any thing and any body. It is the sadness.

"Are you from the committee?" An old man who was collecting some ruined materials from the rubbles, asked me when he saw my camera.

"What committee?" I asked. He exchanged glances with his young son.

"If you have something of benefit for us, say, if not, please go sister, and put your camera in your pocket"

Why?"

"Look behind me!"

Behind him there were four soldiers' nests, as an American friend called them, hiding on the houses' roofs.

"If you want to move around, just say that you are from the committee" he advised.

He was referring to a compensation committee which was visiting Falloja, estimating the damage and the compensations.

I did not say that.

I told the pharmacist, who was repairing the public clinic in Golan area, that I was looking for families, especially children and women, who are badly in need of help, trying to help them in whatever way I can. He asked one of the construction workers to help us around.

Dr. Najm, the director of Jolan health center, said that the center receives at least 1000 patient a day, because the nearest health center, in Hay Al-Jomhuria, is ruined in bombing. In his center, which works 24 hours a day, only 4-5 male doctors can attend work now, female doctors find it too difficult to come from Baghdad.

They have shortage in every thing, even stethoscopes and manometers. He gave my colleague, Dr. Intisar , a long list of the medicines they lack. It includes all the essential medicines, such as antibiotics and painkillers. They just got electricity generators a week ago, 3 months after the October attack on Falloja.

What about the children vaccines? Dr. Intisar asked

No vaccines, was Dr. Najm's answer.

Dr Thamir , the director of the Falloja area hospitals, complains that the Ministry of Health has no good understanding of problems he faces in his area. Lacking of medicines, supplies, medicines for chronic diseases, electricity...is not his only problem.

To come to the hospital daily is.

"Some times I have to wait at the check points queue for hours. This is our main problem. A road that normally takes 10 minutes, takes now 1.5 hours or more. We do not care any more about searching and humiliating us, but we need to pass through easily. Ambulances are attacked. Last time we had medicines, they were not allowed in, so we had to divide them into smaller packages and deliver them little by little. Now the way to Ramadi (the province capital) is cut. Ramadi is under siege for days."

Dr. Najm's family was not allowed to enter.

"But to go to the Falluja main hospital is even more difficult"

"We need to go there; do you think this is not possible now?" I asked

"You can try" He called Dr. Ayad, the director of the Falluja main hospital, who promised to wait for us, no matter how long it would take.

When we went to the main hospital, we had a better understanding of this situation. It is located across the Old Bridge, outside the city.

The American troops use the river as a natural barrier to enter Falloja. The bridge is closed. Patients have to go through three check points to reach the bridge. They have to go on foot. We had to leave the car in the destroyed market place (Sooq Al-Shohada'), far away from the first Iraqi check point, and walk. The Iraqi soldiers did not think that we can pass through because we were females, but they allowed us to try at the American check point.

"No madam, female patients have to go through the other bridge" confirmed the American soldier at the next check point, who had Asian features, pointing to the other bridge far away behind him. The other bridge is more than 2 kilometers away. We had to walk there, cross the New Bridge and come to the hospital all the way again on the other side of the river, and of course we had to make the same trip again back.

"But why females?" I asked.

"Do not know, madam"

"But we are not patients" said Dr. Intisar, "we want to meet Dr. Ayad for half an hour, that is all, he is waiting for us". The soldier called his officer, who came to see us. We explained the problem again, he allowed us to go through, if it is no more than 30 minutes.

We had to run on the bridge. "Why do not they allow women patients to come through this bridge? What if a woman has labor or bleeding" was my first question to Dr. Ayad.

"They do not have woman soldier to search women, that is all. This is a big problem for all patients, not only women. The Handicapped, the old, the emergencies, imagine how these people walk all the way to the hospital, especially in the middle of the night.

Women normally have labor at night, which makes it even more difficult and dangerous". There are no priorities, explained Dr. Ayad, not for ambulances, not for emergencies, not for doctors...

"But why do not they simply put the check point behind the hospital, so that patients do not have to go through all these difficulties?" I asked again

"We have been negotiating this for months with the American officers, some of whom are women. They understood and agreed to open the bridge, but did not open it yet"

Dr. Ayad was very grateful that we tried to meet him and ask about his needs. Again he gave Dr. Intisar a long list of medicines and supplies.

"Do you think you can provide wheel chairs, especially for children?"

"How many?" I asked

"Oh, as many as you can get?"

"Ten?"

"Hundred if you can"

I explained to him that there are international humanitarian organizations that are willing to help children injured in the bombing. He promised to give me these children's medical records.

We had to run again back, Dr Ayad was searched on his way out. "Do not they know you?"

"Of course they do, but these are the normal procedures. We are used to it".

The Angry Sheikh

Some men in the market place were very happy that we could enter the hospital." Do you want to see the graveyard? There are at least 2500 new graves" One of them volunteered enthusiastically to take us there.

"Not really, we are here trying to help the injured".

"Do you want to go to Fawzi's house?" another one said

"What about him?" I asked

"His three daughters, who are students in the medical college, are killed under the rubbles".

We had to leave Falloja before 4 pm, other wise we could not go back to Baghdad.

"You can stay with my family" he insisted.

"Thank you, may be next time" I said sincerely, "can you take us to Gebeil, and to some one who can help us around." I explained to him that we were looking for injured children.

He took us to a sheikh, who was hesitant to help.

"Many people come here and they ask for medical records of people in need of help, we do our best to provide all the medical papers, then they go and we never hear about them again, and I remain embarrassed, do not know what to tell these families" the sheikh explained.

I understood his situation perfectly. I did not insist. He was very angry about many things: the promises of compensations that never come, the absence of services, the tricks played by some political parties during the elections, the burning of libraries, his helplessness before families who come to him asking for help.

He took us to see two neighboring families. The first was of a widow and two girls. The widow, Wichriya Alwan, 50, lost her husband, 51, and son, 18, in the bombing. They were buried alive under the rubbles. Her house was totally destroyed. Her daughter Sheima', 12, is mentally retarded and paralyzed. The family lives on relatives donations.

"What are you going to do now?"

"Waiting for God's mercy, and the compensations" she replied.

The second family was of Khalaf Abid Khalaf , the ambulance driver who was killed during the fighting, when he was trying to help the injured. He left behind a widow and six children, the oldest of them is 12.

Schools!

"Yes, go to Gebeil, and then you understand what I am talking about" the sheikh suggested angrily.

On the way to Gebeil, I stopped the driver in front of a school. There were two girl schools in the same building according to the sign, Falloja and Sokeina. Part of the roof was flattened to the ground, a 10 meter wide hole was opened in the yard, windows and doors were broken.

I had some pictures and was leaving when a voice of a woman called me." Come in please, have some photos for the classrooms, see how the girls are studying"

"Are you saying that there are students here?"

"Of course" said Ikhlass, the assistant director, who saw me from the window and came to meet me. I did not imagine that there were people in.

The crowded classrooms were freezing. Big holes and broken windows were entering very cold wind. The director's office, the bathrooms, the yard, were all destroyed.

"Is not it dangerous for girls to be here?"

"Of course it is, what else we can do?" said Ikhlass. She suggested that I visit the neighboring boy's high school, Al-Jahidh.

There was no one in that school except the guard and his family. The school was more badly damaged. There was a huge opening in the biology laboratory with the iron and cement ceiling falling to the ground. The class rooms, the administration and teachers' rooms were burned.

"What are you guarding here?" I asked sarcastically.

"Where else would I go, this is my home" was the guard's answer. It was so bitter, I could hear all the Iraqis saying the same sentence.

Gebeil Was the Worst

"Are you sure you want to go to Gebeil?" The driver asked

"Yes, why not?" I was very childishly curious

"Nothing, lets go, only you have to hide your camera" he answered

It seems that the American "earthquake" hit Gebeil most badly. The majority of the houses were 100% damaged. Lakes of stagnant water, hills of garbage, dusty roads were all around. Few families were still there.

Queues of women were waiting near 3 big water tanks, trying to get some water for the families. Dr. Thamir had already explained to us that the water was not good for drinking. He tested six samples, 2 of them had bacteria, the other 4 had under minimum chlorine.

"I need to have some photos!" I told the driver

"Not now!" was his abrupt reply. He moved the car few meters back ward "now, and make it very quick"

He did not stop the car. I had two shots for a school and a mosque, and he drove quickly.

There were 4 or 5 American snipers around, as he explained later. Many American vehicles were driving along one of the roads. The driver decided to take a side road.

"You do not have to do that" I objected. "We are not doing anything wrong". He did not reply, just smiled.

In the side road, a red old Toyota stopped us. Four men came out of the car and approached. Who are you? What are you doing here? Why this sister was taking pictures...etc. were their questions. We introduced our selves, and explained what we were doing there. They were still suspicious. We were more suspicious.

"It is getting too late, you come with us now, and stay with our families, or you come tomorrow, we can give any help you need".

We thanked them and promised to return in few days. On the way back to Baghdad, three Iraqi National Guards check points stopped us. They were surprised that we were going on the high way that late. They searched the car, checked the papers, made some jokes, gave suspicious hints and let us go.

Pentagon Data On Iraq Forces “Unreliable”

The GAO report also said that members of the Interior Ministry's security forces "committed numerous, serious human rights abuses" including the killing of 10 members of the Baath Party and the killing of a mother and daughter accused of prostitution.

March 15, 2005 (AEDT) & Manorama Online & Radio Free Europe

A US government watchdog agency says Pentagon data on Iraqi security forces was "unreliable," with poor discipline, questionable loyalties and a rate of absenteeism possibly reaching into tens of thousands.

The report also showed there was an escalating insurgency.

The Pentagon had told Congress on Monday that there are 142,472 trained and equipped Iraqi security forces.

"Data on the status of Iraqi security forces is unreliable and provides limited information on their capabilities," Joseph Christoff, of the Government Accountability Office (GAO), told a House of Representatives Government Reform sub-committee.

Mr Christoff also said Pentagon intelligence data showed an escalating insurgency, as "each monthly peak in the number of violent incidents is followed by a higher average number of attacks in subsequent months".

Rear Admiral William Sullivan, who provided the Pentagon figures to the committee, acknowledged they included some Iraqi police who may have left their post or were absent without leave.

"This is like fantasy land. This is as fictive as the weapons of mass destruction," Dennis Kucinich, an Ohio Democrat Congressman, told Rear Admiral Sullivan of the Pentagon's figures.

"I'm embarrassed for you that you would come to a congressional committee with this kind of a phony report."

Rear Admiral Sullivan said the latest numbers were verified by General David Petraeus, who is in charge of developing Iraqi forces, and General George Casey, commander of

US forces in Iraq, **although he said they admit there are gaps in knowing how many are on duty on a given day. [Oh. Is that all..]**

The GAO report also said that members of the Interior Ministry's security forces "committed numerous, serious human rights abuses" including the killing of 10 members of the Baath Party and the killing of a mother and daughter accused of prostitution.

Citing unnamed US defense officials, congressional investigators said Iraqi soldiers absent from their units without leave number "probably in the tens of thousands."

As for the national police, the Iraqi Interior Ministry simply does not know how many police officers it has at any given moment because local police stations don't provide accurate reporting, the report stated.

The GAO report also said that the State Department stopped providing government auditors with information about the number of Iraqi troops who have been issued flak jackets, weapons, and communications equipment six months ago.

GAO Director of International Affairs and Trade Joseph A. Christoff told the House Government Reform subcommittee on international relations on 14 March that **unreliable data coming from Baghdad makes it difficult to accurately account for the billions of dollars being spent on the training of Iraqi security forces.**

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Enemy Combatant Surrenders



Terrorist chief George W. Bush surrenders to troops of the 82nd Airborne in Washington DC, March 19, 2006. Following interrogation at the US Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, guarded by U.S. Marine veterans of the Iraq War, Bush will be charged with premeditated murder in the deaths of over 3,500 U.S. troops and 150,000 Iraqi citizens, and with high treason for engaging the armed forces in acts of war under false pretenses. The jury in the Bush case will be composed of the nearest relatives of troops killed in Iraq, and disabled veterans who participated in Operation Iraqi Fuckup. It has not yet been decided whether detained general officers who tried to stop the 82nd troops from making the arrest will be court-martialed. After troops from the 3rd ID took the Pentagon, former SecDef Rumsfeld was found hiding in a spider hole on the grounds and also placed under arrest. (Mannie Garcia/Reuters)

Why Do We Let Them?

March 15, 2005 James Patton, Anti Allawi-Group

After 10 thousand years of human history of deceit and war-profiteering, how do they continue to get away with this stuff? And why do we let them?

A quick search on google "9 billion Pentagon Halliburton" turns up the following...

[Citizen Works - Halliburton, Dick Cheney, and wartime spoils](#)

... became CEO and **Halliburton** jumped from 73rd to 18th on the **Pentagon's** ... of **Halliburton** subsidiaries in offshore tax havens increased from **9** to 44. ...

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Wed, 9 Feb 2005 06:47:05 -0600. _NEWS IMAGE_. KBR eats. By **Halliburton** ... Despite \$1.8 **billion** in unsubstantiated bills, **Pentagon** praises **Halliburton** ...

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(By the way, there was no mention of 9/11 among the **Halliburton** propaganda, ...

[http://www.pww.org/past-weeks-](http://www.pww.org/past-weeks-2001/Halliburton,%20Raytheon%20and%20Bechtel%20get%20a%20$5%20billion%20Pentagon.htm)

[2001/Halliburton,%20Raytheon%20and%20Bechtel%20get%20a%20\\$5%20billion%20Pentagon.htm](http://www.pww.org/past-weeks-2001/Halliburton,%20Raytheon%20and%20Bechtel%20get%20a%20$5%20billion%20Pentagon.htm) - 5k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

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(Neil King, "**Pentagon** Auditor requests Probe of **Halliburton**," WSJ, 1/15/2004) ...
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Political Morons In Action

[Thanks to Phil G. who sent this in. He writes: It's apparently OK for community college students to sign up for the military and die in Iraq, but not to study in Spain. The narrow-minded, reactionary insularity of the US ruling class in all its splendor.]

Mar 6 AP

MISSION VIEJO, Calif. - Two community colleges have ended their study-abroad program in Spain, citing the country's troop withdrawal from Iraq.

Trustees of the South Orange County Community College District, comprising Irvine Valley College and Saddleback College, voted 5-2 last week to cancel the 14-year-old summer program.

"Spain has abandoned our fighting men and women, withdrawing their support," said trustee Tom Fuentes, a former head of the Republican Party in Orange County. "I see no reason to send students of our colleges to Spain at this moment in history."

Spain pulled its 1,300 troops last year.

Fuentes said the bombing also raised concerns about student safety, although students were allowed to visit Spain three months after the bombings.

"Bringing this up now is strange," said trustee Marcia Milchiker, who voted to keep the program. "I'm still in shock," said Professor Carmenmara Hernandez-Bravo, who runs the study abroad program. "I cannot believe a community college can put this much politics into academics."

Gun Control Advocate Found With Illegal Gun

3/7/2005 The Free Lance-Star Publishing Co

THE STATE-JOURNAL REGISTER in Springfield, Ill., reports that the head of the local chapter of the Million Mom March, an anti-gun-violence group, has been arrested for having an illegal firearm.

Annette "Flirty" Stevens got involved in the gun-control movement after her son was killed in 2002. Last week, police executing a search warrant at her home found a gun with an allegedly scratched-off serial number, which is against the law.

Web Copies

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The following that we know of have also posted issues: www.gifightback.org,
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