

## GI SPECIAL 3A92:



### IRAQ WAR REPORTS

# “We Drove Into A Shooters’ Alley,” He Said.

## *What Command Didn't Tell The Press:*

## **Battle Of Balad Ruz A Set Up By Resistance**

Commanders said the patrol of about 25 U.S. troops and 200 Iraqi Army soldiers was searching for a suspected cache of weapons when it came under attack from insurgents hiding in canals and ditches. They attacked using small arms, rocket-propelled grenades and mortars, pinning down the patrol.

2005-04-06 The Associated Press

CHATTANOOGA -- A member of a Tennessee-based National Guard unit was killed in fighting that followed an ambush south of Balad Ruz, Iraq, military officials said.

The member of the 278th Regimental Combat Team and another U.S. soldier were killed Monday in fierce fighting that followed an attack on the mixed force of U.S. and Iraqi troops by hidden insurgents.

“The whole gunfight lasted a little more than four hours, and in the realm of gunfights that's an extremely long time,” 278th platoon leader Lt. Dave Tiedeman told an embedded reporter from the Chattanooga Times Free Press.

*“They knew we were coming.”*

Two other members of the 278th and 15 Iraqi Army soldiers were wounded, officials said. The wounded were airlifted to a military hospital in Baghdad.

Commanders said the patrol of about 25 U.S. troops and 200 Iraqi Army soldiers was searching for a suspected cache of weapons when it came under attack from insurgents hiding in canals and ditches. They attacked using small arms, rocket-propelled grenades and mortars, pinning down the patrol.

After about 20 minutes of fighting, the unit was joined by armored reinforcements and air support, officials said.

Sgt. Richard Stooksbury of the 278th, who was part of the patrol, said the insurgent attack was intense.

“We drove into a shooters' alley,” he said.

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## TASK FORCE BAGHDAD SOLDIER KILLED IN AMBUSH

April 6, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS  
RELEASE Number: 05-04-07C

BAGHDAD, Iraq – A Task Force Baghdad Soldier was killed when his patrol hit an improvised explosive device and took small arms fire from anti-Iraqi forces April 5.

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## “Oh, God, Why Stephen?” Oak Ridge Man Is Second 278th Soldier Killed

April 6, 2005 chattanooga & 2005-04-07 by Darren Dunlap, The Daily Times Staff

The officer killed Monday in fighting in Iraq was 35-year-old staff sergeant from Oak Ridge, Stephen Curtis Kennedy. Kennedy was the second member of the Knoxville-based 278th Regimental Combat Team to die in Iraq since the 3,200-man unit arrived in November.

**He died in fighting that followed an ambush south of Balad Ruz, Iraq.**

**A funeral was held last week for the first 278th casualty, Sgt. Paul W. Thomason III, 37, of Jefferson City.**

Kennedy's family mourned the fallen soldier's death Wednesday.

**A chaplain and military escort arrived at his family's doorstep Monday night to inform his wife, Tiffany, and their four children, some from a previous marriage.**

**"The only words that went through my mind were, 'Oh, God, why Stephen?'" she said Wednesday.**

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## **U.S. Marine From Salcha Killed; Two Other Marines Lose Legs**



Lance Cpl. Jeremiah Kinchen

April 7th, 2005 By MEGAN HOLLAND, Anchorage Daily News

Lance Cpl. Jeremiah Kinchen, a U.S. Marine Corps reservist from Salcha, died Monday in Iraq while on patrol with men from his unit. He is the first Alaskan killed in combat in Operation Iraqi Freedom, according to Department of Defense casualty reports.

Kinchen, 22, died in an explosion while on a reconnaissance mission in Anbar province in western Iraq.

**The Marines would not elaborate on Kinchen's mission at the time of his death, other than to say his battalion did "deep reconnaissance into enemy territory," a Marine spokesman said.**

**Close relatives said by telephone from Louisiana that military authorities told them Kinchen was on a routine patrol with six or seven others in a vehicle when the vehicle hit a land mine. Bobbette Larkey, a cousin of Kinchen's, said the family was told that shrapnel cut into Kinchen's spine and killed him. Two other men in the vehicle, Larkey said, lost legs.**

**"You hear about it on TV and you watch other people go through this," Larkey said, "but it doesn't sink in that it's somebody's, some mama's baby, that died. It doesn't hit you until it's one of your own."**

Kinchen joined the Marines shortly after graduating from high school in 2001, Larkey said.

He was in Marine reserve Company E from Elmendorf Air Force Base until several months ago, when he was called to active duty with the San Antonio, Texas-based Fourth Reconnaissance Battalion of the Fourth Marine Division, said Capt. Christopher Logan, spokesman for the Marine Forces Reserve.

Kinchen was stationed in San Antonio briefly before he went to Iraq. He shipped out in mid-March, Larkey said.

**"He was only in Iraq a couple of weeks" when he was killed, she said.**

**"This is the most devastating thing our family has had to go through," Larkey said. "We just expected him to go and come back."**

Kinchen's mother, father and brother in Salcha, about 30 miles southeast of Fairbanks, declined to talk about their loss.

Larkey said Kinchen always wanted to be a Marine. When he went to Louisiana for Christmas, family members urged him to try to get exempt from going to Iraq because of a sick grandfather. He wouldn't do it.

"He wanted to go fight for his country," Larkey said. "He wasn't afraid of anything."

"He was a very quiet, nice, easygoing kid," said Larry Martin, principal of Ben Eielson Junior Senior High School, where Kinchen went to school. "He wasn't one of these kids who got into trouble. He was very much an outdoorsy kind of kid, who loved to spend time on his four-wheeler."

"You know this kind of thing happens," Martin said. "But it was a real shock for a lot of our folks. A lot of our staff called their kids today."

An old friend from high school, William Westurland, said Kinchen "was a good guy to hang around with. He was pretty much a comedian half the time. He was a kind of trickster that would always try to lighten up the mood."

"If a spitball went across the room during a test, everyone would look to Jeremiah," he said. "He always wanted to see people on a happy note."

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# Knoxville Based Soldier Identified As Casualty

2005-04-07 by Darren Dunlap, The Daily Times Staff

Paul Betterton, an Oakland, Calif., resident, called The Daily Times Wednesday to report his brother, Sgt. R.W. Betterton Jr., 44, was one of the two 278th soldiers wounded in battle. The fighting took place at an insurgent base south of Balad Ruz, Iraq.

Paul Betterton said he had gotten an e-mail from his older brother, who was being flown to a military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany. He shared the e-mail with the newspaper. He said his brother lived near Memphis.

"I was medevaced here to Baghdad for initial treatment of gunshot wounds to the upper right thigh and right hand," Sgt. Betterton wrote.

Sgt. Betterton added that he took fire at close range, getting hit in the back and chest, but that his body armor stopped "those rounds."

"I am enduring much pain, but am expected to recover," Sgt. Betterton wrote.

**Paul Betterton said his brother was shot six times during the fighting.**

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## Fil-Am Marine Killed

04/08/2005 By Pia Lee-Brago, The Philippine Star

Another Filipino-American soldier was killed in Iraq after being hit by a bomb and attacked by gunfire from Iraqi insurgents, the US Embassy in Manila reported yesterday.

Reports said Cpl. Garry Wesley Rimes, a US marine born and raised in the Philippines, was killed while protecting another Marine during the attack.

**After a diesel truck drove into a building and exploded, an injured marine crawled from the rubble. Rimes was among the marines who responded to the scene but was fatally caught in a hail of gunfire from insurgents.**

Rimes, an anti-tank gunner, had been in Iraq less than a month when he was killed April 1 in Ramadi.

**Rimes immigrated to the United States in 1996 and joined the marines in 1997, hoping the military would help him become a US citizen.**

**"He told me he was going to leave, and I said, 'I better see you again,' and he told me 'I'll see you in seven months,'" Rimes' cousin, Michelle Felix, said.**

Rimes is among the five Filipino-Americans who have been killed during the war.

The other Filipino-American soldiers who were killed in action are Capt. Dennis Pintor, Sgt. Joselito Villanueva, Sgt. Niño Livaudais, Spc. Edgar Daclan Jr. and Spc. Rel Ravago IV.

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## **81st Brigade Soldier Killed: The Other 98% Went Home**

April 7th, 2005 Adam Lynn; The News Tribune

**A Washington National Guardsman who volunteered to extend his tour in Iraq died Tuesday when his Humvee was hit by a car bomb in Baghdad, military officials said.**

**The soldier, whose name was not released Thursday, had been scheduled to return home last month with the rest of the 81st Brigade Combat Team but chose to spend another six months in Iraq, said Lt. Col. Harry Gonzalez, brigade spokesman.**

He was manning the roof-mounted machine gun of a Humvee patrolling a sector of the Iraqi capital when the bomb exploded, Gonzalez said. At least four other soldiers were injured in the 9:30 a.m. explosion, the Department of Defense reported.

The dead soldier was a member of the brigade's 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment, but had been attached to another Army unit during his extended tour.

**He leaves behind a wife and children, Gonzalez said.**

**He became the 10th member of the brigade killed in action in Iraq.**

<p><b>More than 70 members of the 4,000-member 81st Brigade chose to stay behind when the unit ended its deployment last month, Gonzalez said. [The other 98.25% wisely decided to get the fuck out.]</b></p>
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## **Two Stryker Soldiers Wounded At Tal Afar**

April 6, 2005 By Steve Fainaru, Washington Post Foreign Service

**A roadside bomb exploded in Tall Afar near a convoy of Stryker attack vehicles carrying soldiers from the U.S. Army's 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment (Stryker Brigade Combat Team). Two soldiers were wounded, an officer from the unit said.**

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# Army Admits Strykers Have Deadly Defects: Resistance Has Trashed 28, So Far

**Slat armor cannot defeat the penetrator on the warhead of an anti-tank RPG in most cases, according to the report.**

**Soldiers operating out of the four hatches atop the Stryker are also vulnerable to anti-personnel RPGs, the report states.**

April 11, 2005 By Matthew Cox, Army Times staff writer

After serving more than a year in Iraq, the Army's Stryker vehicle is in need of upgrades, according to a report from the Center for Army Lessons Learned.

**The changes stem from soldier complaints** outlined in "Initial Impressions Report-Operations in Mosul, Iraq," which focused on the performance of the Army's first Stryker brigade during its maiden combat tour in Iraq.

The confidential report recommends a number of solutions to problems ranging from armor shortcomings to tire inflation problems.

**By 2007, according to the report, Stryker brigades will be able to shoot on the move with greater accuracy day and night. They'll also have armored shields protecting vulnerable hatches on several variants and an improved tire inflation system that can better.**

One of the major criticisms in the report deals with Slat armor, the cagelike system intended as an interim solution to protect against rocket-propelled grenade threats until the Army perfects the special add-on armor package designed for Stryker and slated for fielding to the fourth Stryker brigade.

In addition to being too heavy and interfering with certain Stryker features, the report said the Slat armor performance "is less than expected against certain types of rocket-propelled grenades."

**Slat armor cannot defeat the penetrator on the warhead of an anti-tank RPG in most cases, according to the report.**

**Soldiers operating out of the four hatches atop the Stryker are also vulnerable to anti-personnel RPGs, the report states.**

**Out of the 345 documented hostile acts against Stryker vehicles and their crews in Iraq to date, there have been 17 deaths,** said Lt. Col. Perry Caskey, a Stryker systems officer in the Army G-8.

Two of those deaths were caused from shrapnel hitting the soldiers out of the hatches and one from a 190-pound improvised explosive device exploding underneath a Stryker. **The details surrounding the other 14 combat-related deaths were not available, Caskey said.**

**Of the 345 attacks, 168 of them were from IEDs and 58 were from RPGs, Caskey said.**

**More than 90 other attacks included everything from mortars to grenades, he said.**

**These attacks have resulted in 28 “vehicle losses,” said Caskey, who explained that a loss is any vehicle that cannot be repaired in theater within 30 days.**

**Nineteen of the 28 are repairable, Caskey said.** Four are still being evaluated, and five have been labeled total losses.

### **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](http://www.ivaw.net))**

## **Three Guardsmen Wounded**

April 5, 2005 The Clarionledger.com

**COLUMBUS — Three members of a Columbus-based National Guard unit were wounded over the weekend when their vehicle struck an improvised explosive device in Iraq, a Guard spokesman says.**

The soldiers were identified today as Spc. Leondrae D. Rice of Columbus, 1st Lt. Dennis K. Daniels of Starkville and Sgt. Jason T. Morris of Pontotoc, Guard spokesman Lt. Col. Tim Powell said.

The three are members of Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery.



Powell said Daniels is expected to return to duty, while Rice and Morris were transported to the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany for further treatment. They were listed in stable condition.

Powell said the soldiers were on logistics resupply escort mission Saturday to a camp north of Baghdad when the lead vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device and caught fire.

**As soldiers got out of the vehicle, they were hit by a secondary improvised explosive device, Powell said.**

Battery A, along with other units subordinate to the 155th Brigade Combat Team, arrived in the Middle East in January, later deploying into Iraq for a scheduled one-year tour of duty.

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## **“Insurgents Have Come Back” (No Shit?)**

**[Thanks to PB, who sent this in.]**

April 7, 2005 Christian Science Monitor, BAGHDAD

**After the lowest monthly U.S. casualties in a year, insurgents have come back this week with widespread strikes, killing several [a lot more than “several”] Americans and pulling off a sophisticated attack on Abu Ghraib that showed an evolution in planning and tactics.**

**Saturday's well-organized attack on Abu Ghraib prison, in which 40 U.S. troops and 12 prisoners were injured, suggests that fighters may be shifting to fewer but better executed operations, including ones that directly engage U.S. forces.**

During the past few months, attacks on Iraqi forces and civilians have increased, the U.S. military says, although they don't keep exact figures.

The trend is something Iraqi special forces soldier Ali Jabbar al-Aibi has observed from behind his truck-mounted machine gun. During his frequent nighttime operations, he is attacked almost every time.

**Overall, analysts point to what seems like a classic insurgency, one that is expected to increase in sophistication by learning from past mistakes and less capable fighters are killed off.**

Another measure of the strength of the insurgency is how safe is it to be a Westerner on the street. Foreign women try to disguise themselves in Muslim head scarves, and foreign men grow beards. Walking the street isn't safe unless one blends in completely and foreigners cannot travel outside of Baghdad.

Even as Aibi revels in telling stories of big arrests he has made and how ferociously his fellow soldiers fight insurgents, he has to carry his uniform in a bag when he leaves his house so no one will know who he works for. His mother begs him to quit his job every day, he says, because she is afraid of the insurgents.

**MORE:**

## **“The Last Helicopter Departing The Green Zone”**

4.5.05 allspinzone.blogspot

Winter is over in Iraq.

**The activities of militants over the past few days signifies one of two things: an indication of a real shitstorm that's about to come, or truly the last gasp of an organized insurgency. The former is my opinion, the latter is the opinion you'll read in various corporate media reports.**

There's two things that are particularly concerning about last weekend's Battle of Abu Ghraib (Parts 1 and 2) and today's coordinated defensive position by militants (and subsequent firefight) in Baghdad.

**The first is the fact that the firefights in the past couple of days have not been the work of one or two people with a Kalashnikov or an RPG launcher, or the trunk of a car loaded with some of that 380 tons of missing RDX.**

**We're talking about coordinated attacks with literally dozens - platoon strength - of fairly well armed men. To me, this indicates a somewhat sophisticated command and control structure. These aren't angry mobs throwing rocks.**

The second is that it's just now starting to warm up in Iraq, meteorologically.

**The past few months have been, relatively speaking, somewhat quiet. This fact, coupled with the apparent ferocity of the latest attacks would seem to indicate that there's been some detailed planning and regrouping ongoing within the command structure of the militants.**

The insurgency seems to be, once again, changing tactics.

**Past statements by U.S. and coalition commanders have indicated that this is the most frustrating part of dealing with the mess. Once the "good guys" have figured out how to somewhat deal with one tactic (for example, IED's), the "bad guys" back off and morph their strategy into something else.**

I'm starting to feel like this summer is the end game in Iraq - either the entire place will be leveled like Fallujah, or the Bushies will be declaring victory, even as they latch onto the rails of the last helicopter departing the Green Zone.

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## AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

# 16 DEAD IN HELICOPTER CRASH



Afghans work through the wreckage of a crashed U.S. military helicopter in Ghazni province, 80 miles southwest of the capital of Kabul, April 6, 2005. Photo by Ghazni TV/Reuters

April 6, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS  
RELEASE Number: 05-04-09C & (Reuters)

**KABUL, Afghanistan – Sixteen people have now been confirmed dead in the crash of a Coalition CH-47 transport helicopter near Ghazni on Wednesday afternoon.**

Eighteen people, including crew members and passengers, were listed on the flight manifest; two remain unaccounted for. Recovery operations have ended for the night due to darkness and weather conditions.

**We were first to arrive at the scene," the province's governor, Assadullah Khalid, told Reuters, adding the helicopter crashed during a heavy dust storm.**

"We recovered two American soldiers' bodies and now American forces are in control of the situation. The chopper was burning when we were there," he said.

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## TROOP NEWS

# **“It Was All About Greed And The Dollar.” Mothers Of Slain Blackwater Guards Slam Company In ABC Report**

4.7.05 RALEIGH, N.C. (AP)

**North Carolina-based security contractor Blackwater USA refuses to share the results of the company's probe into the killings of four employees in Iraq a year ago, the mothers of two slain employees tell ABC News.**

**"At one point, we were actually told that if we wanted to see the paperwork of how my son and his co-workers were killed that we'd have to sue them," said Donna Zovko, mother of Jerry Zovko, said in an interview slated to air on "Primetime Live" on Thursday night.**

She is from Bratenahl, Ohio. The families filed a lawsuit in January charging Blackwater with fraud and wrongful death. That case is now pending in federal district court in Raleigh.

**Blackwater contends the families cannot sue the company due to the Defense Base Act, which established workers' compensation insurance for employees of overseas government contractors.** Zovko, Scott Helvenston, Wesley Batalona, and Michael Teague, all contract guards for Blackwater, were killed when they drove into an ambush March 31, 2004, along a main road in Fallujah.

After Iraqi insurgents riddled their vehicles with bullets, a mob mutilated and burned their bodies and hung two of them from a bridge over the Euphrates River.

In August, The News & Observer of Raleigh reported that the four-man detail violated Blackwater's own safety rules, which specified a six-man team in its contract to protect a company feeding U.S. troops.

Helvenston's mother, Katy Helvenston-Wettengel, told ABC her son was insufficiently trained and was sent on the mission in inadequately armored cars. The Blackwater

employees were riding in a pair of Mitsubishi Pajero sport utility vehicles, which had no armor on the sides but did have an armor plate in the rear.

**"You know what they had for armament on that vehicle? A reinforced back bumper. That was their armored vehicle," said Helvenston-Wettengel, of Leesburg, Fla. "I'm a very forgiving person, but I don't think I will ever forgive them for that, and I think it was all about greed and the dollar."**

**"I know Blackwater didn't pull the trigger but they put Scotty and these other three guys in that spot at that time with no way to protect themselves," Helvenston-Wettengel said.**

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## **Marshalls Soldier Evacuated For Medical Treatment**

06/04/2005 ABC: australia

**The first Marshall Islander to be seriously injured in Iraq has been evacuated for emergency treatment in Germany, and will later be sent to the US for further medical care.**

**Paul Lejjena, a staff sergeant with the US army, is in a serious condition with broken limbs, burns and internal injuries, after a roadside bomb exploded near his patrol last week.**

More than 100 Marshall Islanders are estimated to be serving in the US army, with about 20 of them currently in Iraq or Afghanistan.

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## **Army Admits Still Not Enough Armored Humvees To Protect Troops In Combat Areas**

**4/5/2005 PENTAGON (AP) - U.S. commanders in Iraq are again asking the Army for more armored Humvees.**

**It's the fifth time in a year that they've asked for more of the armored utility vehicles.**

Army officials say the latest request came last month, just as they were reaching the previous target of nearly 83-hundred factory-built armored Humvees.

Central Command now says it needs more than ten-thousand of them for use in Iraq and Afghanistan.

How many armored Humvees are needed -- and the pace of their delivery to troops -- has been one of the most controversial issues of the Iraq war.

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## Wounded Tahlequah Marine To Return Home Friday

April 07, 2005 By Kevin King, KTUL, LLC

Tahlequah - A Tahlequah Marine wounded in Iraq in November, will return home tomorrow.

**19-year-old Lance Corporal Jeffery D. Hudgens was severely wounded on November 18th when an improvised explosive device detonated, sending shrapnel scattering everywhere. Hudgens' Kevlar helmet was penetrated and the shrapnel fractured his skull.**

Hudgens was evacuated to a medical center in Germany, then later transferred to the United States, where he received care at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. He has been in Tampa, Florida recovering and is scheduled to return home to Tahlequah on Friday morning.

Hudgens is a member of the Broken Arrow TOW section, Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, First Marine Division.

Hudgens had been in Iraq for just a month when he was wounded. He was deployed in September.

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## Kentucky Guard Rocked By Spate Of Deaths

4.6.05 WKYT, and WYMT

**FRANKFORT, -- For the Kentucky National Guard, combat deaths during the first years of the Iraq war were few. But with an increasing role, and more deployed troops, the Kentucky Guard has seen three of its men die in less than a month.**

The latest casualty, Sgt. James A. Sherrill, was killed Sunday in Bayji, Iraq, when a bomb exploded near the military vehicle in which he rode. Sherrill, 27, of Ekron, was a member of the Kentucky Army National Guard's 2113th Transportation Company in Paducah.

Maj. Gen. Donald C. Storm, adjutant general for Kentucky, said "**We** are more in the thick of it." "And our numbers are greater. **It's just our turn** in the barrel." "Tragedies like these remind us that **we are engaged in a serious and dangerous business,**" Storm said. "But it is what **we** do." **[This blowhard asshole doesn't confront anything more dangerous than a local Kentucky traffic jam, and he's talking about "we" being in the "thick of it, what "we" do," "we" are engaged in a "dangerous business."** Fuck him. **Send his worthless scrawny ass and bullshitting mouth to Iraq and make it so. Then we'll see how "we" feel about this useless, hopeless Imperial catastrophe.]**

Spc. Eric L. Toth, a member of the Kentucky National Guard, was killed last week along a supply route in Iraq when the armored Humvee he was riding in was attacked by a car bomb. Two other guardsmen, including Toth's brother-in-law, were hurt in the attack.

Sgt. Jonathan A. Hughes of Lebanon died March 19.

Storm said the Kentucky Guard's three latest casualties each occurred along the same supply route.

Sherrill joined the Marines in 1996 after graduating from Meade County High School. He served in the Marines until July 2000, and enlisted in the Kentucky National Guard a week later.

At home, he was a student at Elizabethtown Community college. He was engaged to be married; his fiancée, Stephanie Bleavins, is expecting a child in September.

Sherrill's family accompanied Storm on Tuesday.

**B.J. Sherrill said he "respected" his brother's decision to join the military but didn't think "too much" was "really worth somebody's life."**

**Including the five members of the Kentucky National Guard members, 19 service members with homes of record in Kentucky have been killed in Iraq.**

**More than 60 soldiers from Fort Campbell also died in the war, most of them from the 101st Airborne Division.**

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## **ROSE GENTLE IS STANDING TO MAKE THE WAR AN ELECTION ISSUE**

**[Thanks to several people who sent this in.]**

9 April 2005 Socialist Worker (Britain)

**Rose Gentle, the mother of Gordon Gentle, a British soldier killed in Iraq in June last year, announced this week that she is standing against Adam Ingram, the armed forces minister, in the general election.**

Rose is standing in the East Kilbride constituency. The Scottish Socialist Party has stood down. Campaigners are asking other parties to stand down as well.

Rose told Socialist Worker, **"I am standing in this election because the government is not listening to us over Iraq. I still think that the war was based on lies and that British troops should be brought out of Iraq. Now is the time to do that. If Blair is so confident about the issues why doesn't he publish the attorney general's advice on going to war?"**

"I want to make Iraq an issue in this election. The government wants to try to put it under the carpet. I have chosen to stand in East Kilbride because Adam Ingram has not given a damn about anybody.

"He's still sending troops out to Iraq. He doesn't care. "They're should be a programme to help those who come back with mental and physical problems. The more of Adam Ingram's votes that I take away the better. We have to fling some of the responsibility for this war at British ministers and make them listen."

Rose adds, "Adam Ingram and all those MPs who voted for war in the House of Commons share the blame for the death of Gordon and all the other victims of Bush and Blair's war for oil."

**"I am asking the people of East Kilbride to support military families speaking out against this war. I call on all those who oppose this war to unite behind me in sending a clear message to Tony Blair - end the occupation of Iraq and bring the troops home now."**

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## **South Korea Begins Troop Withdrawal From Iraq; 270 Coming Home**

April 7 (KUNA)

**An official at the Joint Chiefs of Staff said that the office is planning to reduce the number of the Zaitun unit in Iraq by about 270, according to public broadcaster KBS.**

The report also said South Korea has already reported the planned decrease in its military presence to the headquarters of the Multinational Force in Iraq. **Seoul sent the largest foreign contingent in Iraq after the US and Britain.**

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# **Drill Sergeants Are Charged With Sadistic Abuse Of Recruits: Soldier Forced To Eat His Own Vomit; Lying Captain Also Caught**

**“That’s right, our new soldiers preparing to graduate had the courage to tell a battalion commander that they suspected abuse in the company next door. The battalion chain of command did a lot of checking, asked a lot of questions, and did what was right for the soldiers involved,” Tucker wrote.**

April 11, 2005 By Jane McHugh, Army Times Staff writer

Four drill sergeants and their company commander at Fort Knox, Ky., face courts-martial on charges they roughed up recruits, and in most cases impeded the investigation.

The emerging drill-sergeant scandal is the second the Army has suffered in the past several months. In January, two drill sergeants were sent to prison and two others at Fort Sill, Okla., received nonjudicial punishment for their roles in selling “PT insurance” and running a black market offering contraband items to recruits for exorbitant prices.

**The Army has criminally charged the Fort Knox drill sergeants with maltreatment and cruelty of recruits in a platoon of some two dozen new soldiers — Company E, 1st Battalion, 81st Armor Regiment.**

**And the unit commander, a captain, has been ordered to an Article 32 hearing to determine whether he should be sent to a general court-martial for failing to stop the alleged abuse, punching a trainee in the chest and making a false statement under oath to investigators.**

According to Army charging documents:

**•Sgt. 1st Class David H. Price tried to correct a trainee who supposedly committed an infraction by allegedly making the trainee drink water until he vomited, then forcing him to swallow his vomit.**

•Sgt. 1st Class Ricky Stauffer is accused of slamming a misbehaving recruit against a wall locker.

•Staff Sgt. Michael Rhoades allegedly threw water in at least one private’s face and threw a private to the floor.

•Staff Sgt. Brian Duncan allegedly dragged a recalcitrant recruit down a hallway by his ankles.

**•Capt. William C. Fulton is accused of punching a private in the chest and lying to investigators.**

The documents said the alleged offenses were committed between Feb. 3 and 8. Connie Shaffery, a spokeswoman for Fort Knox, said the alleged offenses were discovered Feb. 8 and immediately stopped.

**The alleged maltreatment was reported by recruits in another unit, whose battalion commander ran the matter up the chain of command, wrote Maj. Gen. Terry Tucker, Fort Knox commander, in a post newspaper column.**

“A battalion commander picked up on a problem during a regular sensing session where he sits with soldiers who are about to graduate from training,” Tucker wrote in an article that appeared March 30 in Fort Knox’s post newspaper, The Turret.

“Those soldiers didn’t have any complaints about their training and treatment. But they had concerns about some soldiers in the neighboring company,” Tucker wrote.

**“That’s right, our new soldiers preparing to graduate had the courage to tell a battalion commander that they suspected abuse in the company next door. The battalion chain of command did a lot of checking, asked a lot of questions, and did what was right for the soldiers involved,” Tucker wrote.**

Afterward, the recruits in Company E were assigned to a new company and new drill sergeants, and received medical examinations, he wrote. “The chain of command continues to check on them,” he added.

Fort Knox officials said the recruits are in basic training.

One of the Fort Knox drill sergeants faces numerous allegations — Price, with three counts, which include 13 specifications.

**Besides allegedly making a recruit swallow his vomit, Price is said to have choked, hit and dragged recruits; he also “wrongfully interfered” with trainees’ phone privileges by limiting calls to less than one minute and “wrongfully interfered” with their privilege to attend church, according to charge sheets.**

**Price could not be reached at press time. He, Stauffer and Rhoades are also accused of trying to impede the investigation.**

Reports of the Fort Knox and Fort Sill cases dismayed other drill sergeants contacted by Army Times, who said there was no excuse for the behavior described in the allegations.

**“The only time you need to touch a soldier is for safety or to make a correction on their uniform,”** stated Sgt. 1st Class Jennifer Fowler, 2004 Reserve Component Drill Sergeant of the Year.

Her active component counterpart, Staff Sgt. Jason Maynard, agreed: “I don’t know why (drill sergeants) would do that,” he said, **citing Training and Doctrine Command Regulation 350-6, which “says not to physically touch any soldier.”**

Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Hartwig, a drill sergeant who trains air defense artillery soldiers at Fort Bliss, Texas, favors one-on-one counseling sessions to straighten out recruits who are going wrong.

"The drill sergeant sits down with (the recruit) in a secluded area and says, 'This is what you've done wrong and this is what you can do to make yourself more proficient.'"

"You've also got to counsel a soldier who does good things," he noted. "And you've got to let everybody know that too. That you don't just do counseling for correction, it's also so soldiers can see who's doing something good."

Hartwig, who's served in the Army 10 years, said he learned about counseling in drill sergeant school. He's used it effectively enough to have won the title of Fort Bliss Drill Sergeant of the Year for 2005.

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## **Oakland City Council Candidate Calls For Cease-Fire, Immediate Withdrawal In Iraq**

[Thanks to Phil G. who sent this in.]

News Advisory, THE GREEN PARTY OF CALIFORNIA

**OAKLAND - Oakland City Council candidate Aimee Allison Thursday said she supports massive demonstrations planned in California and around the world calling for an immediate cease-fire and withdrawal from Iraq.**

"The Green Party has been calling for peace since the invasion and bombing began. Green candidates like myself have been pleading for an end to this war that has killed so many Americans and tens of thousands of civilians in Iraq," said Ms. Allison, a candidate for Oakland City Council in the May election.

**Ms. Allison made national news in 1991 when, as a medic in the Army Reserve, she took a public stand against the Persian Gulf War and received an honorable discharge as a conscientious objector. She has since supported many other veterans opposed to the war in Iraq.**

As a member of the Green Party, and in contrast to candidates from other major political parties, Ms. Allison has called for the U.S. to quickly end the occupation of Iraq to protect both U.S. personnel and the Iraqi people.

Greens note the nearly \$250 billion spent or soon to be spent on the war has cost the U.S. dearly in its social programs.

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## IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



(Graphic: London Financial Times)

# Large Blast Hits Bus Carrying Iraqi Collaborator Troops: Three Killed, At Least 44 Wounded

April 6, 2005 By Steve Fainaru, Washington Post Foreign Service

**TALL AFAR, Iraq, April 5 -- A huge bomb exploded near a bus filled with Iraqi soldiers returning from leave Tuesday, killing at least three and wounding at least 44 in an attack that showed how even a payroll issue in Iraq can turn deadly.**

The Iraqi soldiers were en route to a U.S. base here from the city of Sinjar, where they had dropped off their monthly pay. Because Iraq's banking system cannot accommodate direct deposits, recruits are given a week's leave each month to carry their money home -- a system that has created chronic security problems and hampered the U.S. military's efforts to develop Iraq's new army.

The bus, carrying nearly 50 soldiers, was surrounded by several trucks mounted with guns to fend off an attack by insurgents. But as the bus neared a checkpoint in the late afternoon on the west side of Tall Afar, a city of about 250,000 near the Syrian border, the bomb exploded close to its left side.

**"I think (the insurgents) knew that this was our day to come back," said Capt. Ismail Simmo, who said he was riding in one of the gun trucks when the bomb exploded. "We thought we were safe."**

Capt. Kevin Beagle, 33, of Sidney, Mont., who serves as liaison officer to an Iraqi battalion, said approximately 20 percent of the Iraqi soldiers rotate home at different times each month because of the pay issue.

Beagle called the system "very problematic" but unavoidable. In addition to the banking problems, there is no reliable method for the soldiers to wire money home, he said. The Iraqi Defense Ministry has yet to devise a system to release money to immediate families. The Iraqi recruits earn about \$200 to \$500 a month, according to Beagle.

**"These guys live paycheck to paycheck, like everybody else does," Beagle said.**  
"They've got families to support back home."

**U.S. military advisers say they try to stagger the departure times, but the soldiers often travel in conspicuously large convoys. Tuesday's involved about 135 soldiers in eight vehicles, including the bus and some additional cargo trucks that carried equipment.**

**Beagle said he feared the attack would devastate the battalion. "We were looking really good," he said. "Recruiting was up. Training was up. Operations were up. And I fear that this incident may cause us to take a dive."**

**Brad Younggren, the squadron surgeon, said six or seven seriously wounded soldiers arrived in the first group of casualties brought to the aid station, followed by 45 more.**

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## **11 U.S. Military Workers Killed**

4.7.05 AEST

The bodies of 11 Iraqis who were shot dead have been discovered near the western city of Ramadi.

**Police and a hospital official say the victims had worked at an American military base. It is believed they were killed yesterday.**

Their bodies have been found in the town of Muhammadiya, west of Ramadi.

<p><b>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</b></p>
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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

**“Strike!”**

[Thanks to John G who sent this in.]

**“Strike against war, for without you no battles can be fought! Strike against manufacturing shrapnel and gas bombs and all other tools of murder! Strike against preparedness that means death and misery to millions of human beings! Be not dumb, obedient slaves in an army of destruction! Be heroes in an army of construction!”** Helen Keller; Source: Told to an audience at Carnegie Hall one year before the United States entered World War I. From 'Declarations of Independence' by Howard Zinn page 75

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## "How Do They Smell To You, Soldier?"

April 5, 2005 By John R. MacArthur, Providence Journal (Rhode Island). John R. MacArthur, a monthly contributor, is publisher of Harper's Magazine.

So you've heard all the analogies between Iraq and Vietnam. I know I thought I had -- that is until the other night, when I watched Apocalypse Now Redux, the enhanced version of Francis Ford Coppola's classic Vietnam horror film.

**In the key restored segment, Marlon Brando (Colonel Kurtz) tortures Martin Sheen (Captain Willard), not with needles, cigarettes or branding irons, but with upbeat war propaganda manufactured by Time magazine on behalf of Lyndon Johnson's White House.**

Having turned the tables on Sheen, his would-be executioner, the crazed Brando seats himself in front of his nearly comatose captive and reads to him from a Sept. 22, 1967, article assembled in the never-never land created by Henry Luce, who had died the previous March, high above Sixth Avenue in Manhattan.

**Brando's dissociated voice relays the momentous news that "one of the most exhaustive inquiries into the status of the (Vietnam) conflict" offers "considerable evidence that the weight of U.S. power, two and a half years after the big build-up began, is beginning to make itself felt," and that "White House officials maintain [that] the impact of that strength may bring the enemy to the point where he could simply be unable to continue fighting."**

After another paragraph or so, Brando looks up from the dog-eared magazine and inquires of the dazed and sweating Sheen, "Is this familiar?"

I asked myself the very same question when I picked up The New York Times on March 24 and read the front-page headline "Backed by U.S., Iraqis Raid Camp and Report Killing 80 Insurgents." The accompanying "news" story -- which depicted a "fierce battle" on the shores of Lake Tharthar -- was based entirely on uncorroborated statements by Iraqi and American spokesmen that suggested two highly improbable developments: first, that the so-called Iraqi army had suddenly gotten its act together and was taking the initiative without U.S. prompting; and second, that the Iraqi rebels had just as suddenly abandoned their very successful hit-and-run tactics and started camping in big bunches out in the open, where anyone could see them.

Is this familiar?

**For anyone who was raised on the press-release war waged by the Johnson and Nixon administrations, this was very familiar indeed.**

**As a kid, I woke up almost daily to optimistic war headlines in the Chicago papers -- large numbers of "Reds" were constantly being wiped out in surprise "raids" by a highly competent South Vietnamese army, "backed" by the super-powerful U.S. war machine. Like The Times's narrative of the raid at Lake Tharthar, the U.S.-Vietnamese forces were frequently "responding to (tips) from villagers nearby" devoted to the cause of freedom.**

**We now know that many of those stories were fabricated, in part or whole, and that the enemy casualties -- a.k.a. "the body count" -- were vastly overstated for domestic political profit. We know that the South Vietnamese army was incompetent and demoralized, riddled with Viet Cong spies, and that it rarely took the initiative in battle. And we know that the American government was fully aware of the sorry state of its Vietnamese subsidiary, even as it publicly insisted that the war could be won with just a little more help from the Pentagon.**

But today's newspaper editors, mostly old enough to remember the government's lies during Vietnam, seem to have learned nothing from recent history.

President Bush, mindful of his brother Jeb's ambition to succeed him in the White House, needs to show military progress in Iraq, lest he face a rebellion within his own party. Borrowing from President Nixon's "Vietnamization" program (during which more than half of American war deaths occurred), he aims to invent an effective and successful Iraqi military where none exists.

Meanwhile, even pro-war pundits like Boris Johnson, the British Tory politician and Spectator editor, describe Iraq in rather less optimistic terms. "Life in Iraq is in some respects so bad that it gives the insurgents and recusants the perfect rallying cry for terror: look at what a world the Americans have brought you! . . . **Here in Baghdad I am writing next to a table sliced in two by a falling pane of glass, and am told by the seraphic ambassador that we could be shelled again at any time.**"

Back in the Heart of Darkness, Marlon Brando isn't quite finished torturing Martin Sheen.

**Tightening the screws, he reads from another Time-magazine bromide, dated Dec. 12, 1969: "Sir Robert Thompson, who led the victory over Communist guerrillas in Malaya and is now a Rand Corp. consultant, recently returned to Vietnam to sound out the situation for President Nixon. He told the president last week . . . 'that things felt much better, and smelled much better over there.' "**

**Of the half-dead Sheen, Brando asks, "How do they smell to you, soldier?"**

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# Original Axis Of Evil: Colonial Empires

4/6/2005 By Dag Herbjornsrud, AlJazeera

**Iraq, Kashmir, Palestine, Northern Ireland: The root causes of the world's hottest conflicts lie in the break-up of Europe's colonial empires. But who dares admit it?**

Do you want to know the real scandal of the year 2005?

According to The Sun in England and the world press, the scandal occurred when Prince Harry (son of British Crown Prince Charles) in January showed up at a party in Wiltshire, wearing a German Nazi uniform.

The picture of the 20-year-old wearing a swastika armband and a Wehrmacht badge with a cigarette and drink in hand, shocked the world.

Rightfully, the prince's flirting with Adolf Hitler's killing of six million Jews, Gypsies, and homosexuals was strongly condemned.

**But here's the real conundrum: Do you know what Harry's older brother Prince William wore at the same party celebrating their friend's 22nd birthday with 250 guests in attendance?**

**The answer is "native African" dress. Prince William proudly wore a Zulu outfit with black tights and a leopard skin robe.**

**The reason? The theme of this upper class birthday party was "native and colonial". The English prince was celebrating his country's brutal colonial rule by dressing in the traditional clothes of one of its conquered peoples - the Zulus of South-Africa.**

Not only did Prince William and the elite with their native-mocking costumes pay homage to the military atrocities of their ancestors, but so few in Europe today question the deaths of millions of Africans, Asians, and American Indians.

**The real scandal is that nobody views this celebration of colonial brutality as a scandal!**

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

**OCCUPATION REPORT**



# Occupation Clown Show Rolls On

April 7, 2005 Guardian Newspapers Limited

One of Iraq's leading Shia politicians, Ibrahim al-Jaafari, was today appointed as Iraq's next interim prime minister by the country's new presidential council.

The new prime minister was appointed by the new interim president, Jalal Talabani, a Kurdish leader, and his two vice presidents, shortly after they were sworn in during a ceremony in the new national assembly in Baghdad.

**But the event did not go smoothly. After his inaugural speech, Mr Talabani, a Kurdish leader, walked off the stage, returning after most television feeds of the event were cut off to say he had forgotten to name the new prime minister.**

## "It's Too Hard Now To Find The Bad Guys"

April 7, 2005 By James Glanz, The New York Times Aleze, Iraq

When soldiers of the new American-trained Iraqi Army began banging on doors earlier this week to search houses in this village north of Baghdad, a surprising thing happened.

After initial expressions of fear or resignation, most Iraqis addressed the soldiers with traditional Arab greetings - peace be with you, God save you, welcome - and calmly let them in.

**The tension was clearly lower than it would have been had the Americans been there alone. Still, two raids in three days netted only 2 of 14 suspects sought in connection with a fatal attack on the Iraqi Army on Saturday, and little else.**

**Whatever the advantages of having Arabic-speaking soldiers operating in a community they know intimately, the raid suggested the insurgents have adapted.**

**"It's too hard now to find the bad guys," First Lieutenant Muhammad Dhea Ahmed of the 205th Battalion said at 3 a.m., after hours of searching.**

**"It was very easy in the past. You have to work hard."**

**Ahmad Flamars Favas, a Kurdish resident of Aleze, gave a typical response when asked where he thought the people involved in the attack on the army unit could be found. "I don't know," Favas said. "I swear on my home I don't know."**

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# DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

## Hallibacon: Cheney's Trough Coffin



April 1, 2005 by One Citizen, A BUZZFLASH READER CONTRIBUTION

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

# OCCUPATION PALESTINE

# Israeli Occupation Soldier Wounded Near Jenin

YNetNews 4/6/2005

An Israeli soldier sustained light to moderate wounds Wednesday after Palestinian resistance fighters opened fire at troops operating in the Jenin area, in the West Bank.

The soldier was treated at the scene and later evacuated to Hillel Yaffe hospital in Hadera. The shooting occurred in the afternoon as Occupation units followed up an intelligence report that a local Palestinian cell was planning to launch attacks.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by a foreign power, go to: [www.rafahtoday.org](http://www.rafahtoday.org) The foreign army is Israeli; the occupied nation is Palestine.]

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