

GI SPECIAL 3A93:

**THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**



Lynsey Addario/Corbis The New York Times Company

“Well Guys, Here’s A WIN To Us!”

I know that some people meant well and others didn't in that BTN, but all in all they need to sit back and say "if I was David and Dawn-Marie was my wife what would I do?" Instead of passing judgment on me and calling me a nuisance for standing up for my husband.

From: Dwan Marie Beals
To: GI Special
Sent: Friday, April 08, 2005 7:14 PM
Subject: Update SPC Beals 4-8-05

To everyone who has gave their time and support for SPC Beals.

This is an update on David.

As most of you are aware, we have been struggling to get him moved to a new company within 2-7IN. He was promised this in writing prior to his deployment.

In the last update that I sent out, I said that he did not get moved and was being verbally mistreated.

Since that time I have been in contact with the Rear Detachment Division CSM who got the ball rolling on the way he was being treated.

In that time I was also contacted by the Rear Detachment Commander for the 2-7IN who informed me that he was working on finding out who was saying what and getting David moved to Alfa Co. **He had said that within a day or so from last week he would be at Alfa Co. However that did not happen.**

For whatever reason it was one more set back for us.

David was to have a mental health appointment last Saturday, but his Command failed to get him to that as well.

On 4 April 05, I sent an email to the CSM for the 3rd Forward Support Battalion. In this email I spewed out our story from start to finish in as least amount of room as possible, so that I could keep his attention.

I received a reply email that day from him stating that he had received another email regarding my husband and he would respond to me within 48-72 hours that he had to contact his Command and review all the facts to find out what is going on.

On 5 April 2005 I received that reply email from him stating that he felt David deserved a "rehabilitative transfer" based on past issues and his mental status.

He asked that transportation be made and he be packed up and sent to Bravo Co. 3d Forward Support Command, which means David is no longer in 2-7 IN.

HOORAH!!

I know that some people meant well and others didn't in that BTN, but all in all they need to sit back and say "if I was David and Dawn-Marie was my wife what would I do?" Instead of passing judgment on me and calling me a nuisance for standing up for my husband.

As of today 8 April 2005 David has called and said he is now at LSA Anaconda and he is working as a light wheeled mechanic. They are treating him like a Soldier once again and he is enjoying it.

He said that he feels lonely since he knows no one but at least now he said he can make new friends who will treat him with the dignity and respect that all Soldiers deserve.

He is getting mental health treatment as well.

He saw the Doctor yesterday and she has put him on medication to help as well as a treatment program and asked how he got deployed?

Isn't that funny!

Well guys, here's a WIN to us!

Thanks for all of your help and support. I have received numerous letters and emails and tremendous support from the press and this is just a BIG THANK YOU TO ALL....

Dawn-Marie and David Beals

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

TASK FORCE LIBERTY SOLDIER KILLED BY IED NEAR HAWIJAH

April 8, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 05-04-12C

TIKRIT, IRAQ -- One Task Force Liberty Soldier was killed when an IED detonated around 12:00 p.m. on April 8. The attack occurred near Hawijah in the Province of Kirkuk.

MARINE DIES IN FALLUJAH WRECK (APRIL 6)

April 8, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 05-04-11C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Marine assigned to Regimental Combat Team 8, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, was killed April 6 as the result of a motor vehicle accident which occurred during combat operations here.

The Death Of A Marine (April 7)

April 8, 2005 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 342-05

The Department of Defense announced today the death of a Marine.

Lance Cpl. Juan C. Venegas, 21, of Simi Valley, Calif., died April 7 as a result of a vehicle accident while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar Province, Iraq.

He was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twentynine Palms, Calif. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, Venegas was attached to Regimental Combat Team 8, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force.

Fort Stewart Soldier Is 18th To Die In Iraq This Year

April 8, 2005 AP

The Pentagon has identified another Fort Stewart soldier killed in Iraq, the 18th to die since the post's 3rd Infantry Division's second deployment to the Middle East earlier this year.

Sgt. Javier J. Garcia, 25, of Crawfordville, Fla., died Tuesday in Baghdad after an explosive detonated near his patrol.

He was assigned to the Army's 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment of the Third Infantry.

As of Thursday, at least 1,543 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

Four US Troops Injured In Tikrit Attack

BAGHDAD, April 8 (KUNA)

Four US forces were injured when an unknown person attacked them with a hand grenade in Tikrit north of the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, the multinational force (MNF) said Friday.

An MNF statement said the unknown man attacked, riding a fast-moving car, a force of the US army Liberty force while patrolling an area southwest of Sherqat in Tikrit late last night.

The US soldiers were injured, it added, and were rushed to hospital.

Falluja Under Attack

4.8.05 By ROBERT F. WORTH, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Insurgents fired rockets into Fallujah, the U.S. military said. It said Marines returned fire but did not immediately know if the rockets caused any damage.

TROOP NEWS

Gay U.S. Soldier Wants to Serve Openly; One Of 65,000 Now In Services



Courtesy of Robert Stout

In this undated photo provided by Army Sgt. Robert Stout, Stout shows his Purple Heart and Certificate. Stout, 23, is a decorated soldier who was wounded in Iraq and is campaigning for the chance to serve as an openly gay soldier in the military. Photo courtesy of Robert Stout via Associated Press

April 7, 2005 (AP)

Gary Gates, a statistician at the University of California at Los Angeles, estimates there are about 65,000 gays and lesbians currently serving in the military, accounting for about 2.8 percent of all personnel. He estimates that at least 25 gay soldiers have been killed in Iraq.

An Army sergeant who was wounded in Iraq wants a chance to remain in the military as an openly gay soldier, a desire that's bringing him into conflict with the Pentagon's "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

Sgt. Robert Stout, 23, says he has not encountered trouble from fellow soldiers and would like to stay if not for the policy that permits gay men and women to serve only if they keep their sexual orientation a secret.

"I know a ton of gay men that would be more than willing to stay in the Army if they could just be open," Stout said in an interview with The Associated Press. "But if we have to stay here and hide our lives all the time, it's just not worth it."

Stout, of Utica, Ohio, was awarded the Purple Heart after a grenade sent pieces of shrapnel into his arm, face and legs while he was operating a machine gun on an armored Humvee last May.

He is believed to be the first gay soldier wounded in Iraq to publicly discuss his sexuality, said Aaron Belkin, director of the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military at the University of California-Santa Barbara.

"We can't keep hiding the fact that there's gay people in the military and they aren't causing any harm," said Stout, who says he is openly gay among most of his 26-member platoon, which is part of the 9th Engineer Battalion based in Schweinfurt, Germany.

Stout, who served in Iraq for more than a year as a combat engineer, said by acknowledging he is gay, he could be jailed and probably will be discharged before his scheduled release date of May 31.

"The old armchair thought that gay people destroy unit camaraderie and cohesion is just wrong," Stout said. "They said the same things when they tried to integrate African-Americans and women into the military."

Before the "don't ask, don't tell" policy, enacted in 1993 under the Clinton administration, the Pentagon had explicitly barred gays from military service. At least 24 countries, including Great Britain, Germany, France, Australia, Canada and Israel, allow gays to serve openly.

In an e-mail following the AP interview, Stout said he had been ordered not to speak to the media. "I guess they found out somehow that I was talking to the press and now they are having a fit. I will try to get everything straightened out," Stout wrote.

Martha Rudd, a spokeswoman for the Army at the Pentagon, said soldiers who are discharged under "don't ask, don't tell" typically receive honorable discharges, although the timing would be up to the individual's commanding officer. She declined to comment about Stout, saying the Army doesn't comment on specific cases.

The issue of whether gays should be allowed to openly serve in the military has received increased attention in recent months as the Army has struggled to meet its recruiting goals. Twelve gays expelled from the military sued the government in December, citing a Supreme Court ruling that declared unconstitutional state laws against homosexual sex.

The Bush administration has asked a federal court to dismiss the lawsuit.

Army Secretary Francis J. Harvey has said he opposes changing the policy, although **Pentagon figures show a sharp decline in the number of U.S. military members discharged for making it known they are homosexual, falling from 1,227 in 2001 to 653 last year. [Old story when the Army is desperate and a war going badly. When the war ends, the lynch mob, led by the bigots in command, comes back and throws them out, or worse.]**

A recent congressional study on the impact of "don't ask, don't tell" said that hundreds of highly skilled troops, including many translators, have left the armed forces because of the rule, at a cost of nearly \$200 million, mostly for recruiting and training replacements for 9,500 troops discharged between 1994 and 2003.

Gary Gates, a statistician at the University of California at Los Angeles, estimates there are about 65,000 gays and lesbians currently serving in the military, accounting for about 2.8 percent of all personnel. He estimates that at least 25 gay soldiers have been killed in Iraq.

Stout said he suspected while in high school that he was gay but didn't acknowledge it until later. "Then I noticed that it wasn't a phase or anything. This is me," said Stout, who enlisted in the Army after graduating in 2000.

"The 'don't ask, don't tell' policy, when it first came out, was a good stepping stone, but it's outlived its usefulness," he said. "We've progressed past it both as a military and as a society."

Recent media polls indicate some increased public acceptance for allowing gays to serve openly in the military, with more than six in 10 Americans supporting the idea while about half supported it a decade ago. ["Some"? Obviously the reporter failed third grade math. 60% is more than "some."]

Annenberg poll taken last fall among members of the military showed a majority opposed to such service, **though half of junior enlisted personnel said gays should be allowed to serve openly. [Proving once again, if further proof were needed, that intelligence, common sense and common decency decrease sharply as one goes up the chain of command, until one reaches the elevated ranks of command, filled with idiots, fools, and blind, stupid assholes.]**



Courtesy of Robert Stout

In this undated photo provided by Army Sgt. Robert Stout, Stout's Humvee shows shrapnel damage from an attack last May that left him wounded. Photo courtesy of Robert Stout via Associated Press

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.

Court Refuses To Halt Stop-Loss: Soldier Sued After Having Discharge Postponed

Rather than rewarding Santiago for his service “the government now demands additional involuntary service abroad,” the lawyers added in seeking an injunction in order to prevent Santiago’s deployment.

April 8, 2005 Bob Egelko, Chronicle Staff Writer & AP

A federal appeals court has refused to interfere with the Army's "stop-loss" program, under which thousands of soldiers and National Guard members have been sent to Iraq or Afghanistan after their enlistments were scheduled to expire.

His lawyers told the court Santiago is the victim of a “backdoor draft.”

Hours after hearing arguments Wednesday, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco denied an emergency injunction sought by Sgt. Emiliano Santiago, 27, whose Oregon National Guard unit was ordered to

Afghanistan last October, four months after his eight-year enlistment was due to end.

The three-judge panel said it would file an opinion in the coming days explaining its reasons. Meanwhile, Santiago, who had been allowed to remain stateside to await the ruling, is to be sent to Afghanistan today, said his attorney, Steven Goldberg, who unsuccessfully sought a stay from the full appeals court Thursday.

Goldberg said the opinion, when issued, would be the first by a federal appeals court on the legality of stop-loss, under which the Army has extended enlistments and postponed discharges of at least 7,000 soldiers and deployed them to Iraq or Afghanistan

Two other cases are pending nationally, one of them filed by a California Army National Guard member whose one-year enlistment had been scheduled to expire at the end of this month before it was extended last September for another 18 months.

The soldier, a combat veteran identified only as John Doe, was sent to Kuwait in December for deployment in Iraq but has been returned to the United States for medical tests, said his attorney, Michael Sorgen. He said he planned to file an appeal with the Ninth Circuit, possibly today, of a ruling last month by a federal judge in Sacramento upholding stop-loss.

Santiago, now of Pasco, Wash., joined the National Guard at 18, as a junior in high school and served in a unit that refuels helicopters. **Less than three weeks before his enlistment was to expire last June, he was told that it was being prolonged by stop-loss. After the one-year deployment order to Afghanistan was issued in October, Santiago was told that his enlistment had been extended for 27 years, to 2031.**

His suit claimed that the order violated his enlistment contract, which provided for an extension in the event of a war or national emergency declared by Congress and did not mention presidential orders. But government lawyers argued, and a federal judge ruled, that the contract did not limit the Army's authority to extend enlistments under Bush's national emergency declaration.

Goldberg, part of a National Lawyers Guild team challenging stop-loss orders, said the government's position helped to explain current shortages in military enlistments. "Why would someone sign up," he asked, "when they're told that a specific (contract) term may mean nothing?"

Santiago "honorably performed his end of the bargain, completing his commitment to serve eight years in the nation's armed forces," his lawyers wrote in a filing with the Supreme Court.

Rather than rewarding Santiago for his service "the government now demands additional involuntary service abroad," the lawyers added in seeking an injunction in order to prevent Santiago's deployment.

Carl Webb Betrayed



Carl Webb

[Who is Carl Webb?]

"My name is Carl Webb and I'm a soldier protesting illegal orders (Stop Loss Program) to serve in Iraq beyond the length of my contract which ended in August 2004. I refused to report for training with the Texas National Guard at Fort Hood....." "The war is unethical and illegal U.S. aggression," he said. "It's all about oil and profits." [More at: <http://www.carlwebb.net/>]

From D.

To: Carl,

I wanted to tell you plainly why I didn't make it to your event last week in Philadelphia.

I'm sure you are already aware of this riff overall, but I thought it worthwhile to express to you personally.

You have several links on your site that advocate for and attempt to justify a violent Iraqi resistance to the American occupation. I find that position both morally and intellectually wrong.

I don't know your own opinion on this, but **finding the links on your site was enough for me to disassociate from your engagements.**

I simply wanted to give you the chance to clarify your own position on this particular issue or explain why you chose to post those links.

[So, the excuse for shunning Webb is: “You have several links on your site that advocate for and attempt to justify a violent Iraqi resistance to the American occupation. I find that position both morally and intellectually wrong.”

[Let’s keep the framework and see where it goes: “You have several links on your site that advocate for and attempt to justify a violent French resistance to the German occupation. I find that position both morally and intellectually wrong.” Or maybe, “justify a violent Jewish resistance to the German attack on the Warsaw ghetto. I find that position both morally and intellectually wrong.” Or how about “justify a violent Vietnamese resistance to the United States Occupation. I find that position both morally and intellectually wrong.”

[Now I get it. People who think it’s right to use force to resist invasion, occupation and mass murder should definitely not be allowed to speak at anti-war events. They’re immoral and dimwitted. That’s what “morally and intellectually wrong” means. And their speaking engagements should definitely be cancelled. See below. Wait. Maybe that’s not fair. Maybe it’s OK for French, or Jews, or Vietnamese to resist getting slaughtered, but not Iraqis? Of course! That makes perfect sense!]

From Carl Web,

Thanks for explaining your opposition to my speaking at Military Families Speak Out events. I will be adding more Iraqi links to my website so I guess I'm not welcome. *But can you explain to me why you think my position supporting Iraqi resistance to the American occupation is both morally and intellectually wrong?*

[From Carl Webb’s website at <http://www.carlwebb.net/>]

Carl Webb's Speaking Engagements on the West Coast

Wednesday, April 6th trip CANCELLED:

E.... of Military Families Speak Out told me "Today I was finally able to read over your website closer and I see why you thought there may be some concern. Unfortunately MFSO is not able to sponsor your trip here. I apologize for any inconvenience, but this is a total political decision. It was a hard decision for me to make. MFSO's only mission is to bring the Soldiers home from Iraq. We always have to watch out for our interest as a group for group members and the public. We would not want to marginalize some of our members who are not as pronounced as you with their other political views."

I was to be part of the Santiago Rally and then speak at the University of Washington that night. The next night I was to speak at Portland State University and the third day in Ashland.

[So, Carl Web, who risks prison for refusing Texas National Guard orders to go kill Iraqis, is unfit to speak and has to be publicly humiliated by a cancellation of his appearances with other speakers having other opinions because he thinks Iraqis have the right to defend themselves from Bush's Imperial invasion, a point of view expressed by many troops in Iraq many times. That is a betrayal of a courageous man, and, more to the point, a betrayal of every man and woman in the armed forces who shares his opinion.]

"I don't begrudge them. We'd do the same thing if some foreign dudes rolled into San Diego and set up shop." - Marine officer on the Fallujah resistance.

"It's the same as if someone came to the U.S. and started taking over. You'd do what you'd have to do." - Marine Lance Corporal Anthony Robert.

Australian Soldiers To Leave For Iraq; General Says Everything "Smooth" Despite "Controversy" & "Lockdown"

08/04/2005 ABC

The next contingent of Australian troops to head to the war in Iraq is being farewelled by family and friends in the northern city of Darwin.

The 450 men and women will leave in coming weeks.

Brigadier Cantwell says the group's preparation has been smooth despite being marked by media controversy over their support and claims of outdated equipment.

For the past week the troops have been in lock-down on barracks in preparation for their deployment.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

"The Enemy Is One Enemy, And That Enemy Is The Occupier." Mahdi Resistance Army Taking Control In South Iraq



THE WASHINGTON POST

The enemies of the Shiites are not their Sunni brothers, he insisted. The adversaries of Iraq are not fellow Arab countries.

"I am addressing my call to the honest Iraqi people who stand against the occupation, who reject the occupation and who demand freedom," he shouted, dressed as others in a funeral shawl. "The enemy is one enemy, and that enemy is the occupier.

"We stood up to the Americans for 21 days, day and night, and the spirit of resistance is still there," he said. "If we get an order to resist the occupation, we'll do it -- with more determination, more numbers, more experience and more skills."

April 8, 2005 By Anthony Shadid, Washington Post Foreign Service

GHARAF, Iraq -- Over the loudspeakers set up in this small town in a backwater of southern Iraq, the commands came in staccato bursts. "Forward!" a man clad in black shouted to the militiamen. "March!"

Column after column followed through the dusty, windswept square. Some of the marchers wore the funeral shawls of prospective martyrs. **Others were dressed in newly pressed camouflage. Together, their boots beat the pavement like a drum as they double-timed in place.**

Over their heads flew the Iraqi flag, banners of Shiite Muslim saints and a portrait of their leader, Moqtada Sadr -- symbols of their militia, the Mahdi Army, twice subdued by the U.S. military last year but now openly displaying its strength in parts of the south. ["Parts"? And where does an 800 pound tiger sit?]

"At your service, Sadr! At your service, Moqtada!" the men chanted in formation. "We hear a voice calling us!"

"The tanks do not terrify us," others joined in. "We're resisting! We're resisting!"

The military parade this week lasted an hour, long enough for 700 men brandishing swords, machetes and not a few guns to pass a viewing stand of turbaned clerics and townspeople gathered in front of low-slung brick buildings.

It was also long enough for the militiamen to deliver the message that has distinguished their organization from Iraq's other Shiite groups -- implacable hostility toward the U.S. occupation. They delivered it far beyond the purview of the U.S. military, in one of the many towns and cities in southern Iraq where the Mahdi Army has emerged

Beyond Baghdad, though, Iraqis see a new boldness in the militia in cities like Nasiriyah, Basra and Amarah, all south of the capital and all patrolled by foreign forces allied with the United States.

In Basra, the Mahdi Army is widely viewed as the force that can put more armed men in the street than any other. Amarah remains its stronghold. In Nasiriyah, it has struck an alliance with the secular police chief, who views the group as a counterweight to other militias.

"The silent majority is not with him, but the majority of active people are," said Ayatollah Mohammed Taqi Mudarrassi, a cleric in Karbala, referring to Sadr. "If you count the ballot boxes, the balance is with the moderates. If you count those in the streets, it's the opposite."

Time and again, after battles that left hundreds of Sadr's followers dead, the movement has managed to rewrite the notion of winning and losing: The very act of fighting is a victory. There is no defeat.

"We still have the weapons, we still have the army, and we still have the leader," said Sahib Amari, a spokesman for Sadr in Kufa, where the movement came of age in the weeks after the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003.



Mahdi Army Troops In Position

The Friday prayers at the Kufa mosque, the shrine a few miles from Najaf where Sadr's father preached in the 1990s and where his son built his movement after the U.S. invasion, are akin to street theater. Religion is less pronounced than politics, and politics helps to rally the thousands of men who gather each week in the open-air courtyard.

The prayers led by members of Sadr's movement have long drawn some of the largest crowds in post-invasion Iraq -- in Baghdad and Kufa. The numbers seem to have dwindled little, if at all, over the past year.

Just as constant is the message of protest, delivered in the sermon by Nasser Saadi, a rousing, swaggering cleric built like a wrestler.

The enemies of the Shiites are not their Sunni brothers, he insisted. The adversaries of Iraq are not fellow Arab countries.

"I am addressing my call to the honest Iraqi people who stand against the occupation, who reject the occupation and who demand freedom," he shouted, dressed as others in a funeral shawl. "The enemy is one enemy, and that enemy is the occupier."

The crowd erupted, fists in the air: "No to the occupier! No to terrorism! No to the devil!"

"Wherever America is present, then there is terrorism," Saadi said. "When they ask the terrorists why they're here, they say we came to fight America. If America leaves, there would be no terrorism. Terrorism would leave with it."

In the mosque, and the markets that spring up around it each Friday, what has changed during the past year is the emphasis of the appeal the movement makes to the poor and young.

In posters spread out on plastic mats, Moqtada Sadr's image hovered over portraits of Mahdi Army militiamen waving rocket-propelled grenades, heavy machine guns and rocket launchers.

"Victorious by force and faith, God willing," one read.

"Clerics are themselves fighters," said Musawi, a gaunt man with a wispy beard. "We defend our doctrine and our principles."

A 30-year-old from Kut with seven years in the Shiite seminary, he fought in both battles last year in Najaf. He was armed with an AK-47 assault rifle; his wife helped cook rice and lentils for his fighters posted along a famous street that leads to Najaf's gold-domed Imam Ali shrine. To his men, he was simply Sayyid Najah, an honorific bestowed on clerics descended from the prophet Muhammad.

Najaf still bears the scars of last year's fighting. Along main roads, rubble occasionally spills into the streets. With time, it has faded into the ramshackle brick construction of many of Najaf's houses. Some walls are still charred, and bullet holes puncture the facades of buildings and the colonnade in the street where Musawi and his men fought.

Stories of the fighting and death they encountered have become celebrated among the militiamen, another chapter in what they fashion as a legitimate uprising against the Americans. Musawi recalled how they faced tanks with their Kalashnikovs, how they recited the Koran over gunfire, how they fought on four hours' sleep, and how his six brothers served with him, one of them with shrapnel in his right leg.

"In those last days, 10 fighters would share one bottle of water," he recalled.

These days, Musawi said, he commands 500 fresh recruits in Nasiriyah. He heads one of 18 Sadr offices in the city, all of which have their own militia units. There are no ranks, he said, only platoon and company commanders. As in Amarah and Basra, rumors are rife of the militia gathering more arms and men.

"We stood up to the Americans for 21 days, day and night, and the spirit of resistance is still there," he said. "If we get an order to resist the occupation, we'll do it -- with more determination, more numbers, more experience and more skills."

Sheik Aws Khafaji is Sadr's representative in Nasiriyah and Musawi's boss. Khafaji, 32, joined the seminary in 1996, then spent more than two years in prison. Gen. Mohammed Hajami is the provincial police chief. At 47, he is a father of eight. He served 24 years in the Iraqi military, reaching the rank of colonel. He considers himself insistently secular.

On Feb. 10, their paths began to converge. Before long, the Mahdi Army and the Nasiriyah police would be staunch allies.

That night in February, Hajami said, 70 men attacked his office with machine guns, small arms and grenades. The gunmen belonged to the Badr Brigades, a militia loyal to one of Iraq's biggest Shiite parties **[and very loyal to Bush's Imperial occupation regime]** and a rival of the Mahdi Army; the gunmen were angry that the government had dismissed their leader and appointed Hajami. More than 30 of his policemen took part in what he called an attempted hit.

The next day, Khafaji denounced the attack in his Friday sermon. He said the gunmen weren't Badr Brigades, they were ghadr -- Arabic for betrayal.

"It's a matter of balance," Hajami explained.

"Without the presence of the Sadr current, the Badr forces would seize every government building in the province. From my point of view, their presence is useful to us," he said. **"We heard the Badr forces would like to do it again, so the Sadr people warned them, 'If you try it another time, we're going to throw your bodies into the streets.' "**

A billboard-size painting of Sadr's father stands at the entrance to the police station, protected by rows of sand-filled barricades.

On the wall of the reception room, in a glass case, was a copy of Saadi's sermon in Kufa, a call to gather for a Sadr-led protest in Baghdad this coming Saturday and a leaflet from the Sadr office titled, "The First Letter from Sayyid Moqtada Sadr to the Iraqi Police."

"You are from the people, and the people are from you as long as you detest the occupier and refuse the oppressor," it read.

Hajami says he is steadfastly pro-American but that survival is survival. His 5,500-man force is 2,500 short of what he said he needed to guarantee security. He suspects just 30 percent are loyal to him; the rest answer to the city's handful of Islamic parties. So, in a city where alliances are necessary, the Mahdi Army is his ally, he said.

"The Sadr trend has the biggest popular influence in the streets," Hajami said. "The relations are good, and there is cooperation. We keep in touch. Any problem that happens, I call them and see if they need help, or they call me."

Hajami was invited to the military parade this week in Gharaf, about 12 miles north of Nasiriyah. He didn't attend, but four of his police cars provided a high-speed escort, with sirens and loudspeakers, for Khafaji and other Sadr leaders. A few militiamen with bandoliers and heavy machine guns rode in the back, clad in the trademark black of the Mahdi Army.

At the parade, the Mahdi Army provided security. About 30 men in new uniforms, ammunition belts and assault rifles were posted on roofs and in the street. Another militiaman toted a rocket-propelled grenade launcher in the background.

In white turban and clerical robes, Khafaji took the podium.

In private, he can be measured and militant. In one sentence, he will denounce the U.S. presence, warning of calamity if American troops fail to depart. In another, he strikes a more mainstream, nationalist tone -- outreach to Sunnis, cooperation with police, even holding out the prospect of formal participation in the political process once the Americans leave.

At Gharaf, he spoke to the militia assembled before him but addressed his words to the Americans.

"There is no place in the land of Mahdi except for the people of Mahdi," he shouted. "There is no place for you on this ground. Our people exist to force you out by means that are peaceful and then by means that are military.

"We are able to do that," he said, "God willing."

**BAD PLACE TO BE THEN
WORSE PLACE TO BE NOW
TIME TO COME HOME.**



A U.S. Army soldier during battle with the Mahdi Army in Najaf Aug. 22, 2004. (AP Photo/Jim MacMillan)

Resistance Protest Planned 2 Years After Baghdad Fell

4.8.05 By MARIAM FAM, Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Images of jubilant Iraqis toppling a 40-foot statue of Saddam Hussein and pelting it with garbage and shoes in Firdos Square defined the moment Baghdad fell to U.S. troops two years ago, a prelude to what many hoped would be democracy and freedom in a new Iraq. Now radical Shiite Muslim cleric Muqtada al-Sadr is urging his supporters to mass at the square Saturday and mark the anniversary by directing anger at the U.S.-led coalition.

"The occupation forces started with this place, and now from this same place we want them to leave Iraq," said Sheik Abdul-Hadi al-Daraji, a spokesman for al-Sadr, who led uprisings against coalition forces last year.

"They have toppled Saddam and now we want them out. The situation in Iraq is going from bad to worse. The Iraqis saw no good during these two years of occupation."

Sheik Hareth al-Dhari, the leader of the Association of Muslim Scholars, an influential group of Sunni Muslim clerics suspected of having ties to the Iraqi insurgency, also urged people to take to the streets Saturday. ["Suspected" shit. Everybody in Iraq who isn't whoring for Bush or brain dead has ties to the resistance. Just like everybody in France who didn't have ties to Hitler had ties to the resistance, and everybody in America who didn't have ties to King George had ties to the American resistance in 1776.]

"We call on all Iraqis to demonstrate tomorrow in all of Iraq's cities against the occupation," al-Dhari told worshippers during his Friday sermon.

Al-Daraji said al-Sadr's supporters will demand that foreign troops leave or at least set a timetable for withdrawal. They will also call for putting Saddam on trial and freeing prisoners held in "occupation prisons," he said.

A year ago, U.S. soldiers tore down al-Sadr posters in an otherwise almost empty Firdos Square because of a curfew imposed to prevent any gatherings on the anniversary.

This year, news of the planned protest brought a Friday attack by gunmen on al-Sadr supporters in Baghdad, killing one official and wounding two, al-Daraji said. He said al-Sadr's office had asked Iraqi police and army to protect Saturday's gathering.

The planned protests are a sharp contrast from two years ago, **when Iraqis pulled down Saddam's statue** with the help of U.S. Marines and a small group from the Shiite majority, which was oppressed under Saddam's Sunni-dominated regime, triumphantly chanted "There is a burning in our hearts" and beat their chests with their fists. **[Planet earth to reporter: surely you must be aware, from the photograph taken at the time, that the statue was pulled down by the U.S. military, not by "Iraqis," and surely you must be aware, from the photograph, that there weren't enough Iraqis there to fill a couple Baghdad city buses. So where does this silly bullshit come from?]**

At Firdos Square, a green, abstract sculpture said to symbolize freedom sits where Saddam's statue once stood, but concrete barriers topped with barbed wire guard the nearby Palestine and Sheraton hotels, home to foreigners. U.S. Humvees and Bradley armored vehicles sit inside the hotel compound.

At night, only stray dogs venture out, barking at the rattle of gunfire or the thud of a distant explosion. The only traffic is police cars passing by with lights flashing. At times, floodlights are turned on at the square, creating one of the few oases of light in a darkened city. **[And this heavy-breathing atmospheric does not make up for the incredible whopper you told above.]**

Assorted Resistance Action:

Oil Tanker Convoy Hit, Burning

4.8.05 The Associated Press & Aljazeera & AFP & (CNN) & By ROBERT F. WORTH, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Friday, police in Kirkuk, about 180 miles north of Baghdad, said one driver was killed in an attack that set several Turkish oil tankers ablaze the previous night. Seven were wounded as their convoy travelled between Kirkuk and Arbil on Thursday, reported Turkish television, adding that six tankers were burnt.

In the northern city of Mosul, a bomb attack on an Iraqi army patrol killed three soldiers and wounded 20, said Iraqi Maj. Gen. Khalil Ahmed al-Obeidi.

Basra - Three masked men shot dead an officer in the new Iraqi army as he was having dinner in the southern city of Basra, an army spokesperson said on Friday.

The resistance fighters burst into a restaurant where Major Mahmoud Hassan al-Yasiri was eating on Thursday evening and shot him twice in the head and three times in the back, said Captain Firas al-Tamimi.

An Iraqi police officer was killed in Baghdad

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Declared Bill Ehrhart, a marine in Vietnam:

In grade school we learned about the redcoats, the nasty British soldiers that tried to stifle our freedom.... Subconsciously, but not very subconsciously, I began increasingly to have the feeling that I was a redcoat. I think it was one of the most staggering realizations of my life.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Silly, Stupid Command Liar Tries To Deny Hostages Were Hostages

Apr 8, 2005 By Michael Georgy BAGHDAD (Reuters)

The U.S. military said on Friday two Iraqi women detained for six days had been held on suspicion of complicity in insurgent attacks, not used as hostages to pressure fugitive male relatives to surrender. **[Also, the earth is flat, Woodrow Wilson is President, and the dog ate my homework.]**

The women, 60-year-old Salima al-Batawi and her daughter Aliya, were arrested by U.S. troops and Iraqi police last Saturday and were released by U.S. forces Thursday.

The women, 60-year-old Salima al-Batawi and her daughter Aliya, were arrested by U.S. troops and Iraqi police last Saturday and were released by U.S. forces Thursday.

The two women told Reuters Friday that soldiers had informed them they would be detained until they revealed the whereabouts of male relative suspected of insurgent attacks, **or until the wanted male relatives turned themselves in.**

Arkan Mukhlif al-Batawi, the son of Salima and brother of Aliya, told Reuters Tuesday that the women were being held to pressure him and his brothers Muhammad and Saddam to surrender.

A handwritten note in Arabic left at the Batawi house after the women were arrested and seen by Reuters reporters who went to the site read: "Be a man Muhammad Mukhlif and give yourself up and then we will release your sisters. Otherwise they will spend a long time in detention."

The note was signed "Bandit 6," apparently a U.S. military code, and included a mobile phone number. When Reuters called the number, it was answered by U.S. soldiers.

Neighbors of the Batawis also said soldiers had told them through an interpreter that the women would be freed once the brothers turned themselves in for questioning.

Salima said U.S. troops in 30 Humvee vehicles showed up at their house just north of Baghdad at dawn last Saturday. One of them asked her for the whereabouts of one of her sons.

"I told him I would not give him the information because my three sons had already been detained by the Americans for a year and they were innocent. **They said we would be detained until my son surrenders," she said.**

"I told the Americans they could shoot me and jail my son if there was evidence of his guilt. I told him to bring whoever was spreading these lies to stand before me and prove it."

Salima said she and her daughter were then blindfolded and handcuffed and driven to a U.S. base.

"I was very surprised. I did not expect the Americans to treat women in this way," Aliya said.

The women said they were treated well at the U.S. base.

"They carried out a professional investigation. They treated us with respect. We found beds with clean sheets and copies of the Koran and bottles of water in a big room," Salima said.

The detention of women -- like the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by U.S. troops -- causes widespread anger in Iraq.

Aliya said she hoped the inauguration of a new president and prime minister in Iraq this week would bring positive change.

"I really hope life will improve," she said. "But it can't while these types of arrests are taking place."

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)

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Deir Yassin Remembered; The Genocide Begins

deiryassin.org via Tom Condit

Early in the morning of Friday, April 9, 1948, commandos of the Irgun, headed by Menachem Begin, and the Stern Gang attacked Deir Yassin, a village with about 750 Palestinian residents.

It was several weeks before the end of the British Mandate. The village lay outside of the area that the United Nations recommended be included in a future Jewish State. Deir Yassin had a peaceful reputation and was even said by a Jewish newspaper to have driven out some Arab militants.

But it was located on high ground in the corridor between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem and one plan, kept secret until years afterwards, called for it to be destroyed and the residents evacuated to make way for a small airfield that would supply the beleaguered Jewish residents of Jerusalem.

By noon over 100 people, half of them women and children, had been systematically murdered.

Four commandos died at the hands of resisting Palestinians using old Mausers and muskets. **Twenty-five male villagers were loaded into trucks, paraded through the Zakhron Yosef quarter in Jerusalem, and then taken to a stone quarry along the road between Givat Shaul and Deir Yassin and shot to death.** The remaining residents were driven to Arab East Jerusalem.

That evening the Irgunists and the Sternists escorted a party of foreign correspondents to a house at Givat Shaul, a nearby Jewish settlement founded in 1906.

Over tea and cookies they amplified the details of the operation and justified it, saying Deir Yassin had become a concentration point for Arabs, including Syrians and Iraqis, planning to attack the western suburbs of Jerusalem. They said that 25 members of the Haganah militia had reinforced the attack and claimed that an Arabic-speaking Jew had warned the villagers over a loudspeaker from an armored car. This was duly reported in The New York Times on April 10.

A final body count of 254 was reported by The New York Times on April 13, a day after they were finally buried.

By then the leaders of the Haganah had distanced themselves from having participated in the attack and issued a statement denouncing the dissidents of Irgun and the Stern Gang, just as they had after the attack on the King David Hotel in July 1946. A 1987 study undertaken by Birzeit University's Center for Research and Documentation of Palestinian Society found "the numbers of those killed does not exceed 120".

The Haganah leaders admitted that the massacre "disgraced the cause of Jewish fighters and dishonored Jewish arms and the Jewish flag." They played down the fact that their militia had reinforced the terrorists' attack, even though they did not participate in the barbarism and looting during the subsequent "mopping up" operations.

They also played down the fact that, in Begin's words, "Deir Yassin was captured with the knowledge of the Haganah and with the approval of its commander" as a part of its "plan for establishing an airfield."

Ben Gurion even sent an apology to King Abdullah of Trans-Jordan.

But this horrific act served the future State of Israel well.

According to Begin: Arabs throughout the country, induced to believe wild tales of "Irgun butchery," were seized with limitless panic and started to flee for their lives. This mass flight soon developed into a maddened, uncontrollable stampede. The political and economic significance of this development can hardly be overestimated.

Of about 144 houses, 10 were dynamited.

The cemetery was later bulldozed and, like hundreds of other Palestinian villages to follow, Deir Yassin was wiped off the map.

By September, Orthodox Jewish immigrants from Poland, Rumania, and Slovakia were settled there over the objections of Martin Buber, Cecil Roth and other Jewish leaders, who believed that the site of the massacre should be left uninhabited. The center of the village was renamed Givat Shaul Bet. As Jerusalem expanded, the land of Deir Yassin became part of the city and is now known simply as the area between Givat Shaul and the settlement of Har Nof on the western slopes of the mountain.

The massacre of Palestinians at Deir Yassin is one of the most significant events in 20th-century Palestinian and Israeli history. This is not because of its size or its brutality, but because it stands as the starkest early warning of a calculated depopulation of over 400 Arab villages and cities and the expulsion of over 700,000 Palestinian inhabitants to make room for survivors of the Holocaust and other Jews from the rest of the world.

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

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