

GI SPECIAL 3A94:



An Iraqi Shi'ite during a rally in Baghdad April 9, 2005 called on the second anniversary of the fall of Baghdad to demand an end to the U.S. military presence in Iraq. REUTERS/Akram Saleh

**"They Need To Stop
These Missions"
Guardman Says Lack Of Armor
Killed Kentucky Soldier**

Rogers said Sherrill's death inspired him to issue his warning, hoping to alert the media and lawmakers: "I know these things that happen in war. I was in Desert Storm. This didn't have to happen, and this shouldn't have happened."

[Remember how weeks ago command said everybody in Iraq who needed armor had it, and how nobody would ever again have to take unarmored vehicles over the border into Iraq, and how everything was just fine blah blah blah. Of course they all lied. It's what they do. Lie about armor, lie about the reasons for the war, lie about how the war's going, lie about how troops are for the war, lie about how it's not an occupation, lie about how it's not for oil and corporate profits, and on and on. The enemy isn't in Iraq, the enemy is in Washington DC in control of the government. They lie, soldiers die. Big surprise.]

07 April 2005 Editor & Publisher

New York - When a National Guardsman in Kuwait, with some encouragement from a Tennessee reporter, questioned Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld about lack of armor on vehicles in Iraq last December it drew national attention, and helped spark military efforts to upgrade the protection.

Now another guardsman has sent a letter to a local newspaper indicating that progress in this area still needs the Pentagon's attention.

Tom Loftus, reporter for the Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal, opened his story Thursday this way: "Kentucky Army National Guard soldiers in Iraq are being put at risk because their trucks are unreliable, poorly armored and lack protective glass, according to a guardsman stationed in Iraq."

He revealed that Staff Sgt. Brad Rogers, 33, had declared in e-mails to the paper on Wednesday that Kentucky National Guardsman Sgt. James A. Sherrill might have survived a bomb attack Sunday if his truck had protective glass.

"We have great people and great leadership. **I just want answers on why we can't get better equipment with full armor including ballistic windows,**" Rogers wrote.

"They need to stop these missions until we get these things."

The paper said that the Kentucky National Guard said Rogers' claims are being reviewed.

Sandra Rogers told Loftus that her husband had informed her recently that his unit's trucks are inferior to those used by regular active-duty military units. "He's not a rookie. He knows the difference between what regular active gets and what they're getting. He's a very reputable man," she said. The couple has two children and live in Hebron.

Rogers wrote in an email to the newspaper: "The only thing we have is what they call 'hillbilly armor,' which consists of one armor panel on the passenger side and one armor panel on the driver's side."

Rogers said Sherrill's death inspired him to issue his warning, hoping to alert the media and lawmakers: "I know these things that happen in war. I was in Desert Storm. This didn't have to happen, and this shouldn't have happened."

MORE:

Public Protest Wins! **Deadly Kentucky Guards** **Missions Cancelled!!**

April 08, 2005 By Bruce Schreiner, Associated Press

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — **Military officials in Iraq say they will make safety improvements before sending a Kentucky National Guard unit on more missions**, a decision that follows a guardsman's e-mail complaints about inadequate armor and windshields on trucks.

Maj. Gen. Donald Storm, Kentucky's adjutant general, said **"Can we get maybe some better equipment**, different equipment that is more suitable for the situation we're in — **maybe."**

As for Rogers' complaints to family and co-workers, Storm said, "I honor the fact that he stood up, but there was a different way to do that."

Storm didn't approve of the guardsman's decision to go outside the military to make his complaints, but said he would not face reprimand.

"If he had come to me, or if that commander had come to me, I'd have been on the horn with some battalion and brigade commander trying to convey to them our concerns about the equipment," Storm said. [Right. Storm would have been "conveying his concerns," and the missions and deaths and maimings of Kentucky troops would have gone right on for who knows how long while memos and more phone calls and all the rest of the bullshit that forms Storm's life went up and down the chain of command forever. The Staff Sgt. knew what to do to protect his soldiers and get action. Now that is a hero.]

Staff Sgt. Brad Rogers, a 16-year Guard veteran, wrote that Kentucky guardsmen are driving old trucks that are prone to break down and have inadequate armor.

"Most everyone, if not everyone, has the ballistic or bulletproof windows that are running our missions to the places we are going," Rogers wrote. "We don't have a single M915 (truck) with ballistic windows."

[Now check out the following textbook classic of complete babbling bullshit. Storm sounds like a Surface Maintenance Manager explaining why the potholes

haven't been fixed yet. Meanwhile, Kentucky military families bury their dead and try to nurse their wounded back to health and sanity.]

Storm appeared to allude to Rogers' accusations while speaking at a departure ceremony for about 35 members of a medical unit bound for Iraq, though he never named the soldier or mentioned his complaints.

"When you deploy soldiers in a combat zone, and into a theater of war, **you never, ever really have a 100 percent measure of the future of what you're going to be facing in combat — it's an impossibility,**" he said. "Oftentimes we arrive with certain equipment, certain supplies and we have to make adjustments." [Is he saying he had no idea vehicles in Iraq need armor and wow this a big surprise? Is that what he means by not having "a 100% measure of the future"? Does he really think anybody will fall for his lame, silly excuses. And who the fuck is this "we" he keeps talking about?]

"Nothing is predictable," he added later. "And we have to operate on lessons learned, what equipment works and what the right thing to do is on the spur. The world is full of armchair quarterbacks." [So, he's saying that when he sent the Kentucky Guard to Iraq, he couldn't predict they would die in unarmored vehicles. A betting pool will be formed, with the winner coming closest to estimating correctly how far Maj. Gen. Donald Storm's head is up his ass.]

[This is not the first time Storm has been heard from.

[*Two days ago, GI Special 3A92 noticed Storm's bullshit in the article **Kentucky Guard Rocked By Spate Of Deaths.***

[Here he is, quoted by 4.6.05 WKYT, and WYMT, along with the comment GI Special ran back then:]

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." [Whatever he did in Vietnam, this blowhard asshole doesn't confront anything more dangerous now 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.]

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

7 Miss. Guardsmen Injured In Iraq In Less Than 2 Weeks

April 9, 2005 By Holbrook Mohr, The Associated Press

At least seven Mississippians in the 155th Brigade Combat Team have been injured by improvised explosive devices in less than two weeks.

Two members of the 155th, which is made of 3,500 Mississippi Army National Guard soldiers and others from Vermont and Arkansas, have been killed by IEDs. Sgt. 1st Class Sean Michael Cooley, 35, was killed Feb. 3 by a roadside bomb and Sgt. Robert Shane Pugh, 25, was killed March 2, also by an IED.

Spcs. William E. Brooks of Southaven and David Yancy of Ripley were injured on March 29 when an IED ripped through their Humvee just outside Baghdad. Sgt. Leonard A. Casper Jr. of Myrtle and Sgt. 1st Class Wyman C. Floyd of Hattiesburg were injured in the same explosion but returned to duty in Iraq.

Brooks and Yancy are both receiving medical attention at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington.

Allen Yancy told The Associated Press on Thursday that his brother is conscious and able to speak, but his injuries are extensive.

The soldier suffered collapsed lungs, a broken leg, broken ribs, a severed artery in his arm and shrapnel wounds.

"He's kind of out of it, but he's doing a lot better than we thought he'd be doing," Allen Yancy said. "We're just thankful he's alive."

The Brooks and Yancy families, both from small towns in north Mississippi, were acquainted before the blast. Allen Yancy is a former member of the 155th and knows Brooks.

Brooks, 23, who lost both legs in the blast, remained in serious condition on Thursday, his mother Carolyn Brooks said.

"He's not out of the woods yet," she said. "It's going to be slow but William is going to be OK."

Carolyn Brooks said doctors have been giving her son blood and are keeping him in a state of unconsciousness due to severe pain and frequent medical procedures.

"Sometimes when we call his name, he'll open his eyes and when we ask him to squeeze our hand he'll squeeze," she said.

She said doctors discovered a broken femur and are concerned they might have to amputate more of the soldier's leg. Both legs were removed just above the knee. Doctors have said they expect Brooks and Yancy to recover, their families said.

"We just continue to covet the prayers said for our family," Carolyn Brooks said. "That is truly what is getting us through this."

Three other 155th soldiers were injured this week by an IED.

Spc. Leondrae D. Rice of Columbus, 1st Lt. Dennis K. Daniels of Starkville and Sgt. Jason T. Morris of Pontotoc were injured Tuesday when an IED detonated near their vehicle, Guard spokesman Lt. Col. Tim Powell said.

Powell said Rice is being treated at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany and Morris was transferred to Brooks Army Medical Center in Texas. Daniels returned to duty.

Resistance Back In Falluja

7 April, 2005 By Andrew North, BBC News, Falluja & AP

The US marines have set up a tight cordon around Falluja, checking everyone who wants to enter. But they admit security is still a concern.

They say some insurgents have got back into the city, and there have been several instances of roadside bombs and other explosive devices being laid for passing US patrols.

A military statement said that insurgents fired an unspecified number of rockets into Fallujah Thursday.

TROOP NEWS

**Soldier Says “It’s Actually A
War For Oil;”
“We’ve Trashed The Country, And
We’re There For Our Own
Interests.”**

“My son has given me permission to quote him, and he believes it’s actually a war for oil--that we’re not there to help the Iraqi people, that we’ve trashed the country, and we’re there for our own interests.”

March 18, 2005 By Alan Maass, Socialist Worker

“I CAN’T even describe in words how horrible it is--the feeling of helplessness about how far away they are, and the level of danger they’re in every day.”

That’s how Colleen McLaughlin talks about the tension she lived with every day while her son, a member of the Vermont National Guard, was deployed in Iraq. Her words speak for the feelings of people throughout the U.S.--the family and friends of those sent to Iraq to kill and be killed in the U.S. war and occupation.

The supporters of war in Washington said that an invasion of Iraq was necessary because of Saddam Hussein’s “weapons of mass destruction.” They accused Iraq of supporting al-Qaeda. They promised that U.S. soldiers would be welcomed by grateful Iraqis, thankful that their country had been “liberated.” And now, they say that the occupation of Iraq is promoting the spread of democracy across the Middle East.

These were lies from the beginning, says McLaughlin. “I see it as a war of policy,” she said. “This was a policy that they had argued for from the early 1990s. It was basically a shift from diplomacy and deterrence to a policy of pre-emptive military aggression--to spread democracy, they say, but as we see it, to spread American interests abroad through the use of military force.

“My son has given me permission to quote him, and he believes it’s actually a war for oil--that we’re not there to help the Iraqi people, that we’ve trashed the country, and we’re there for our own interests.”

In Burlington, Vt., McLaughlin and the local chapter of Military Families Speak Out were central to the campaign to win antiwar resolutions--which passed in nearly every community where they were voted on during Vermont’s annual town meeting day earlier this month.

McLaughlin also rejects the belief, voiced even by some in the antiwar movement, that the U.S. has a responsibility to maintain a military presence in Iraq, to prevent chaos.

“To adopt that attitude gives a green light for perpetual warfare,” she says. “If people in the antiwar movement adapt that attitude--if we broke it, then we have to fix it--then that what will happen in the next war that the Bush administration instigates. I think the American presence is the problem, not the solution.”

Emails And Blogs From Iraq Regularly Rail Against Their Officers And The War

March 19, 2005 Suzanne Goldenberg in Fort Stewart, Georgia, The Guardian

Between 40,000 and 50,000 military personnel are in Iraq despite serious medical conditions that should have ruled them out of combat, according to the National Gulf War Resource Centre.

The GI Rights Hotline, which counsels troops, says it fielded 32,000 calls last year from soldiers seeking an exit from the military, or suffering from post-combat stress.

Among those who serve, resentment is high, fuelled by "stop loss" orders by which the Pentagon hangs on to troops past their release date, and shortages of armoured vehicles and other protective gear.

Emails and blogs from Iraq regularly rail against their officers and the war.

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.

George And Dick: Please Read This.



April 09, 2005

Dear George and Dick,

I apologize (not really, you don't deserve my apologies) for the familiarity, but I don't call the people responsible for my son's death: Mr, or Sir, nor do I have any respect for the offices that you have defiled.

The only thing you both mean to me is pain and devastation.

George and Dick, you are both shameful cowards who are sending our brave young people to die to make yourselves and your buddies unbelievably and fabulously wealthy.

Neither of you have any idea of the true human, sorrowful cost of war nor do you care that you are ruining lives by the thousands and thousands.

You both disgust me beyond belief. You are not, never have been, and never will be my President or Vice President.

This is what your irresponsible and reckless policies took from me: One year and four days ago my son, Casey Sheehan, was one of the consequences of your lies and betrayals. One of the tens of thousands that your arrogant, pre-emptive, imperialistic policies have killed. I don't know how any of you can sleep at night...I know I can't.

I have wanted to write this letter for over a year.

We know the intelligence leading to the war was "dead" wrong and gleaned from a known liar (your administration likes liars...familiarity, and all), so I have a question for you...

WHY ARE AMERICANS AND IRAQI'S STILL DYING EVERYDAY?

Then, George and Dick...you both go around spewing the lying filth that "freedom is on the march in Iraq."

Well, I have a challenge for both of you: if you believe in freedom so much in Iraq..then send your own children over there to fight and perhaps die in the occupation without the proper training, equipment, food, water, supplies, armor, or protection.

If you aren't willing to send your own children to die for this most grievous bull-crap THEN BRING THE REST OF OUR CHILDREN HOME...NOW!!!

The definition of a just war is one that you are willing to have your own children die for. Apply the definition. Then send your own children if you believe this aggression is just...if not THEN BRING THE REST OF OUR CHILDREN HOME...NOW!!!

Do the right thing and BRING OUR TROOPS HOME, NOW!!

Not one more drop of blood, not one more penny for this travesty. Do not let our other children be killed for the ephemeral and ever changing "Mission." My son's death will have meaning and not be in vain if it is for peace: if our troops are withdrawn immediately from this abomination that is Iraq.

I dare both of you to do the honorable thing and read about my son...my first-born...my pride and joy...my love.. I wish you would read it and weep, but I know neither of you give one flying flip about me, my family or Casey.

I pray that either one of you, or both of you, grow a vestigial conscience and pray for forgiveness for the killing that your ignorance and arrogance have caused.

One time I ran over a kitten and killed it and I was devastated for days...how do either one of you look at yourselves in the mirror? How do you live with the fact that so many innocent people are dead because of your beliefs and actions? I know I couldn't. I know I would have a hard time living with myself if I was responsible for one death, let alone legions of deaths. I really hope someone grows some courage in the House of Representatives and you both are impeached soon.

Again, I reiterate. Celebrate the new found "Culture of Life" in your hypocritical administration. BRING OUR TROOPS HOME. NOW!!!

Do I sound angry? You better believe I am. My son's future was robbed from him. My future with my son is now gone. I never even got to say good bye to him.

If you have any questions, or would like to hear anymore of my ideas, please feel free to contact me.

Peace,
Cindy Sheehan

National Guards And Reservists Shafted Again; Senate "May" Do Something

4.11.05 Army Times

Reservists are seeking relief from an unintended benefit cut when they are mobilized for combat duty.

Rules for Individual Retirement Accounts allow tax-free contributions to be made only by those who have taxable income, which means military personnel deployed for a full tax year in a combat zone — where they don't have to pay income taxes — cannot make a tax-free contribution to an IRA.

Sen. Kent Conrad, D-N.D., has taken up the fight for National Guard and reserve members, introducing a bill that would change IRA rules to let those receiving combat pay to make tax-free contributions. The bill was referred to the Senate Finance Committee, which **may** put together a military-related tax bill this year. **[Or may not, but the Senate is busy, and these are just some expendables off fighting in Iraq. And**

how much money do they give to what's really important: campaign contributions? So why bother.]

40% Of Returning Oregon Guards Unemployed

4.11.05 Army Times

About 40 percent of the 700 Oregon National Guardsmen who just returned from Iraq and Afghanistan are unemployed, according to the U.S. Labor Department.

Some didn't have jobs before they were deployed. **Other members of the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, which arrived home in late March, lost their jobs while they were on active duty.**

The problem has prompted the Labor Department to offer Oregon a first-ever training program for returning soldiers.

Federal law requires employers to hold open jobs for guardsmen called up for active duty. But the law has a number of exemptions, including economic hardship. **[Meaning if the corporation has to hire you, it's an "economic hardship." And that's what's important, the corporate balance sheet, not the vets "economic hardship." They can always go sleep in the streets. A corporation can't do that. So fucking the vet is only fair, isn't it, if you love capitalism that is.]**

The Unknown Casualties

03/19/2005 Daniel J. Webster, The Salt Lake Tribune

The Wasatch Mountains of Utah are about as far away from a war zone as you can get. In the waning days of last summer, when the wildflowers were not yet gone, a casual hike turned into a horrible reminder.

Seeing a business acquaintance along the trail was a surprise. Usually, I see him behind a customer service counter. But I recognized him with his backpack passing on the trail.

He reminded me of his name. I asked how he was doing. Not so well, he said.

The trail we were on was a place he used to bring his favorite nephew. The uncle had come up to the tall pines, the stands of aspen and the unrestricted views of the peaks to remember. And to try to forget.

His nephew had enlisted in the Army. He and a buddy from a suburban Midwestern city had been to Iraq and back.

"We're not getting the whole story," the uncle told me as we stood in a sun-drenched meadow. His nephew had recounted the horrors of war to his uncle. He had told his uncle that they shot at anything that moved. He had bared his tormented soul to someone he trusted, someone who loved him, someone who had brought him to these mountains for peace and solitude and new experiences.

Their names will not appear on any war memorial of those killed in the Iraq war. But their lives were cut short by the horrors of war just as though they had been targeted by a roadside bomb in Baghdad.

One summer night, the two Iraq war veterans drank too much. The buddy had a new sports car, a "welcome home" gift from his father. These two young veterans sped down a highway careening and crashing the new sports car. Both died.

Their names were not seen on any national TV news program listing those who gave the ultimate price. Their names will not appear on any war memorial of those killed in the Iraq war. But their lives were cut short by the horrors of war just as though they had been targeted by a roadside bomb in Baghdad.

Apartheid Killer Says Iraq Is Hell For Mercenaries: "To Go There Is Crazy"

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

During apartheid, he worked for Vlakplaas, a secret entity known for its brutal methods, murders, tortures, and attacks. At the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Deon Gouws acknowledged having killed at least fifteen people and having blown up between 40 and 60 houses of anti-Apartheid militants. He obtained amnesty.

07 April 2005 By Fabienne Pompey, Le Monde

For Deon Gouws, a forty-three-year-old former policeman, it was supposed to be his last contract: four months in Iraq to act as bodyguard for major personalities. However, the mission ended in a nightmare. Deon Gouws lost his right arm, his left eye, and his toes.

Since he's been back in South Africa, he has only one objective: to dissuade South Africans from leaving for "that hell."

Like others, Deon Gouws had been recruited by word-of-mouth. Former colleagues, who, like him, had quit the ranks of the police after the end of Apartheid, had put him in

contact with Erynis, a private security company. He left with 17 compatriots on January 8, 2004. **He was, he says, responsible for an American general's security.**

He stayed only twenty days. January 28, at dawn, an ambulance filled with explosives blew up the Shaheen Hotel where he was lodged with five of his South African colleagues. The friend who shared his room died instantly. Seriously wounded, Deon Gouws was evacuated to Germany.

"It was a 250 kg bomb, a huge thing," he relates.

The former Pretoria police sergeant knows what he's talking about.

During apartheid, he worked for Vlakplaas, a secret entity known for its brutal methods, murders, tortures, and attacks. At the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Deon Gouws acknowledged having killed at least fifteen people and having blown up between 40 and 60 houses of anti-Apartheid militants. He obtained amnesty.

"This war is not ours," he says today with regard to Iraq: "Over there, you're a target every second. It's hell. To go there is crazy."

He gets phone calls every day from people who want to know how to go there, and he tries to dissuade them. But nobody listens to him. "They have only one motivation: that's money, money, always money," Deon continues.

He asserts that at least 4,000 South Africans have had a contract in Iraq, for several months, sometimes for a year. Some even make return trips. According to the South African Institute of Security Studies, there are 1,400, but these are only estimates. **Many are former Apartheid hatchet men: they've fought in Namibia or tracked African National Congress "terrorists."**

But there are also young men like 29-year-old Heinrich Visagie, killed April 7, 2004, in Falluja. He came from the Special Task Force, an elite police unit, many of the recruits of which, once trained, leave for Iraq. Companies like Erynis or Meteoric Tactical Solution (MTS) are suspected of widely recruiting in South Africa. "They know that we're good at this kind of work," explains Deon. "And less expensive than a Briton, who gets paid twice as much for the same work."

South Africa has forged an inexpugnable reputation for itself as a holding tank for mercenaries. After the end of Apartheid, many soldiers and police officers converted themselves into "war dogs," operating all over the continent from Angola to Sierra Leone.

The principal employer then was the South African company Executive Outcomes, which, after having dominated the mercenary market, closed in 1999.

Many of its men were recruited by the company, Sandline International, created by former British Colonel Timothy Spicer. Sandline, grown famous after many problems, notably in Sierra Leone, has officially ceased its activities, but has been recreated under the AEGIS appellation. **AEGIS obtained one of the biggest security contracts in**

Iraq from the Pentagon in 2004. Today, AEGIS is a mainstay of the "private military security" market in the world.

More discreet, Erynis has removed its coordinates in South Africa from its Internet site. According to the South African press, it won a 39.5-million-dollar contract to train 6,500 Iraqis in security and to assure the surveillance of oil wells and other strategic sites.

Since 1998, South Africa has an anti-mercenary law on the books, the Foreign Military Assistance Act, but its enforcement appears to be difficult. In seven years, only three people have been tried.

The law as it was written in 1999 includes enough loopholes to prevent its enforcement. In March, the defense minister declared Iraq "a theater of armed conflict" and announced that South Africans working there would be prosecuted. However no prosecution has ensued. According to National Police spokesperson Sally de Beer, an investigation is under way against one company and several individuals. Nothing has been completed.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



Photo by Stringer/Iraq/Reuters

Shi'ites March: "Force The Occupation To Leave From Our Country"

[Thanks to Justin Indignant, who sent in the photos below. He writes: Hey Thomas, thanks for all your work- heard your speech in fayettville- right on bro! thought you might like these photos. peace now.]

The square and side streets were quickly packed with crowds waving Iraqi flags and brandishing effigies of Saddam, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and President Bush. "No America! No Saddam! Yes to Islam!" many chanted. One group of demonstrators burned an American flag.

Apr 9, 2005 By ANTONIO CASTANEDA, Associated Press Writer, Mussab al-Khairalla (Reuters) & The Scotsman & By TRACI CARL, Associated Press Writer & "PA" & Aljazeera 4.8.05

Tens of thousands of followers Shiites marched in Baghdad on Saturday to denounce the U.S. presence in Iraq and demand a speedy trial of Saddam Hussein on the second anniversary of his overthrow.

"This huge gathering shows that the Iraqi people have the strength and faith to protect their country and liberate it from the occupiers," said Ahmed Abed, a 26-year-old who sells spare car parts.

The protesters filled Firdos Square and spilled onto nearby avenues, waving Iraqi flags.

Mimicking the famous images of U.S. soldiers and Iraqis pulling down a statue of Saddam as Baghdad fell, protesters toppled effigies of President Bush, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Saddam — all dressed like Iraqi prisoners in red jumpsuits.

Other effigies of Bush and Saddam were burned.

"Force the occupation to leave from our country," one banner read in English.

"I do not accept having occupation forces in my country," said protester Ali Feleih Hassan, 35. "No one accepts this. I want them out. They have been here for two years, and now they have to set a timetable for their withdrawal."

"Iraqis can protect themselves, and those who call on US forces to stay in Iraq contradict themselves," he said.



Reuters

Chanting "No, no to the occupiers," and shouting "No! No, to Satan!" men streamed from the poor Shi'ite district of Sadr City to Firdos Square in central Baghdad in a peaceful show of strength.

The square and side streets were quickly packed with crowds waving Iraqi flags and brandishing effigies of Saddam, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and President Bush. "No America! No Saddam! Yes to Islam!" many chanted. One group of demonstrators burned an American flag.

The Shiite protesters also called for the now-jailed Saddam to face justice, and they held up framed photos of al-Sadr's father, a prominent cleric executed by Saddam.

Mahdi Army militiamen searched people entering the demonstration area as Iraqi policemen stood to the side.

Demonstrators swung from a statue said to represent freedom and constructed on the pedestal where Saddam's statue once stood. **They also acted out examples of prison abuse widely reported after photos were released showing U.S. soldiers piling naked inmates in a pyramid at Abu Ghraib prison.**

Robed and turbaned Shiite clerics were seen among the crowd.

U.S. and Iraqi security forces kept a close eye on the march, with U.S. soldiers standing behind blast walls topped with barbed wire and armed soldiers watching

from rooftops. The protest was held in the shadow of the Sheraton and Palestine hotels, both of which have been home to foreign journalists and contractors.

Roads in central Baghdad were closed to traffic as streets filled with people.

"I came from Sadr City to demand a timetable for the withdrawal of the occupation," said Abbas, a young, bearded protester sitting on the grass in the square. **"Every Iraqi has a right to demand his freedom. The Americans wanted time and we gave them time, now we want to rule ourselves."**

Followers of Sadr from the southern Shi'ite cities of Basra, Amara and Nassiriya traveled hundreds of miles to join the protest, showing the appeal the young cleric, who has led two uprisings against U.S.-led forces, can command.

Sheikh Abdul-Hadi al-Daraji, a Sadr spokesman, said organizers hoped to attract a million people, but that goal did not look like it would be realized.

Still, the protest was the largest since the Jan. 30 election and the first since a new government began forming.

Saturday's protest taps into the growing frustration among large swathes of the Iraqi population against the U.S. presence in the country. Armed insurgents continue to target U.S. soldiers and Iraqi security forces they regard as collaborators.

Even many Iraqis who would not take up arms against the Americans still want U.S. and foreign troops, together numbering around 160,000, to leave as soon as possible.

After dark, al-Sadr supporters marched and chanted through the city, hanging anti-US banners on columns surrounding Firdos Square, where a jubilant crowd pulled down a statue of Saddam Hussein on April 9 2003.

Al-Sadr had urged his supporters to gather today at the square and a group was at the landmark along with police after yesterday's 11pm curfew. US and Iraqi officials said they were preparing for today's demonstration.

Sunni Muslim clerics also called on their followers to protest on the two year anniversary of the fall of Baghdad, but officials in the influential Association of Muslim Scholars refused to say Saturday where or when the protests would take place. Iraq's Sunni minority was dominant under Saddam and is believed to make up the backbone of the country's insurgency.

Another Sunni leader, Sheik Ahmad Hasan al-Taha, also called for the release of detained religious leaders, saying that at least 90 imams are in detention.

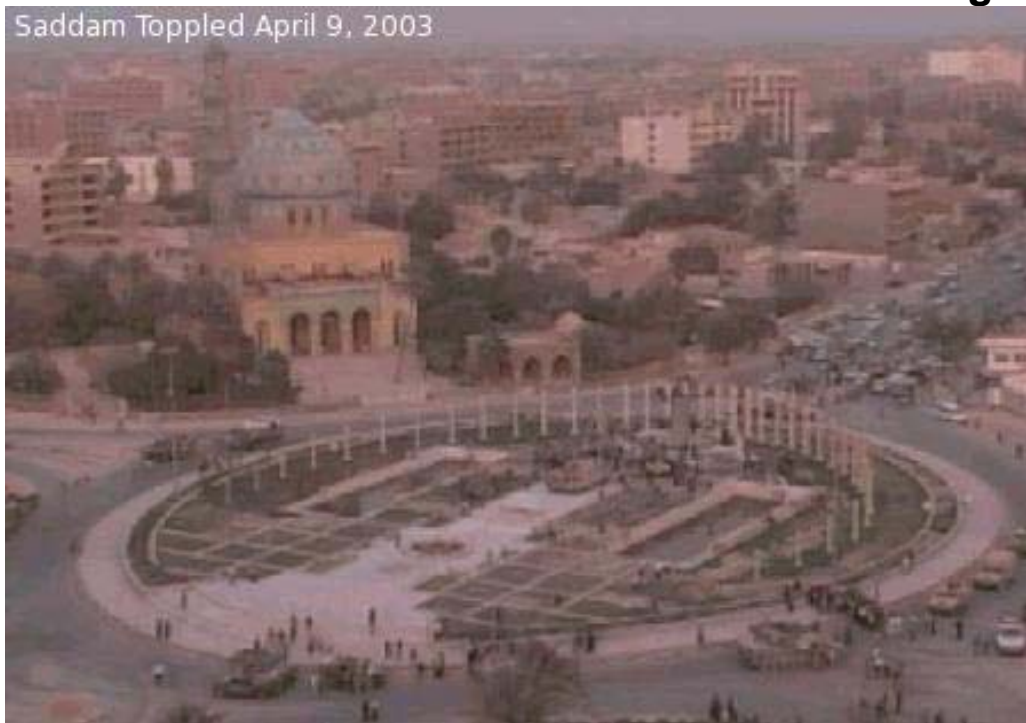
Other marches were held across the country to demand that the United States set a timetable for its withdrawal.

In the central city of Ramadi, 5000 protestors demonstrated in the al-Sufayaa neighborhood and at Anbar University, demanding that U.S.-led coalition forces set a withdrawal date.

Sheikh Harth Al-Dhari, the secretary general of the influential Association of Muslim Scholars, praised both the al-Sadr protest, as well as the Sunni demonstration, telling Al-Jazeera satellite television: **"We hail the demonstrations organized by the Iraqi people on the second black anniversary of their country's occupation."**

"Many of our brothers, including Sunnis, have welcomed the call and will take part," said Shaikh Abd al-Hadi al-Daraji, a spokesman for al-Sadr.

Remember The Lie? U.S. Media Did Close-Ups Of Microscopic "Crowd" To Make It Look Like Thousands Were Celebrating.



**Now There Really Are Tens Of
Thousands And They're Not
Celebrating**



Anti-occupation demonstration in Baghdad's Firdos Square April 9, 2005.
Reuters

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

Gunmen Kill Anti-Occupation Protestors In Southern Baghdad

April 9 (Xinhuanet)

Gunmen shot dead an aide of the radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in southern Baghdad, Sadr's spokesman said Saturday.

"Gunmen opened fire late Friday at the car of Fadhil al-Shawky, killing him and wounding two of his guards in Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad," said the spokesman. ["Gunmen"? How insulting. "Professional assassins acting on behalf of the U.S. occupation authority" would be more respectful.]

Shawky was heading to Baghdad from Karbala to take part in the Sunday morning protest against the US occupation of Iraq, according to the spokesman, without revealing further details.

15 Collaborator Soldiers Killed South Of Baghdad;

Other Assorted Resistance Actions

Apr 9, 2005 BAGHDAD, Iraq (Reuters) & By ANTONIO CASTANEDA, Associated Press Writer & By TRACI CARL, Associated Press Writer & afp

Militants shot and killed 15 Iraqi soldiers south of Baghdad, Iraqi police said Saturday.

The attack occurred near the town of Latifiya, about 30 miles southwest of Baghdad on Friday, police in the nearby town of Mahmudiya said.

The police said the soldiers were being transported in a truck which was pulled off the road by the gunmen, who then shot the troops.

Guerrillas shot dead the newly appointed police chief in the Iraqi town of Haditha as he left a meeting with U.S. troops on Saturday, Iraqi police said. They said Ziad al-Joghaithi had been appointed police chief in the town, in the volatile Anbar province west of Baghdad, earlier this month.

In the northern city of Mosul, a car bomber in an Opel killed a police officer and a civilian and wounded 14 others, including 11 policemen, medical sources and police said.

And an Iraqi soldier and a civilian were killed in a roadside bomb in Mashahda, 30 kilometres north of Baghdad, an army captain said.

In Mosul, a car bomb detonated near a police patrol, killing at least two policemen and injuring 13 civilians, Dr. Baha al-Deen al-Bakry of the Jumhuri hospital said.

Brig. Gen. Watheq Ali, deputy police chief of the Nineveh province, said the blast was an assassination attempt against him, although he was unhurt. He said a suicide car bomber rammed a car into the rear vehicle in his seven-car police convoy as it was stopped at a traffic light.

In a sign of the continuing battle to train the region's security forces, two traffic policemen in Fallujah got into a fistfight Saturday with Interior Ministry security forces, and one officer was fatally shot, Lt. Mohammed Odai said. It was unclear what caused the fight.

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

Convoy From Kut Hit



An Iraqi Police officer looks over the scene of an overnight attack on a rest area used by Turkish military truck drivers in Kirkuk, April 8, 2005. One driver was killed, six were injured, and several oil tankers were set ablaze. (AP Photo/Yahya Ahmed)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

The Crusaders Flag

April 2005 Felicity Arbuthnot, Global Research

On the day of the invasion a respected politician with deep love for and knowledge of the Middle East telephoned, appalled, 'Are you aware' he asked ' that the British tanks and vehicles have entered Iraq flying the St George's flag' - the Crusaders flag.

I drew breath in double horror - the invasion had begun and it WAS a crusade.

Just Say No ... to Empire

31 March 05 Karen Kwiatkowski, MilitaryWeek.com

It is a cliché these days to observe that the United States now possesses a global empire - different from Britain's and Rome's but an empire nonetheless.

The point of empire is control. Centralized control of commerce, resources, and people and their choices.

It isn't about what is good for the world – empires never are. It is about what is good for the emperors.

Americans need to "just say no" to empire - the sooner the better. When we do, we might just find that it is a house, or perhaps, empire of cards.

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

Falluja: The “Reconstruction” Farce Rolls On: 90 Out Of Tens Of Thousands Get Money, So Far

Doctor Hafid al-Dulaimi, director of the Commission for the Compensation of Fallujah Citizens (CCFC), established by the government, told IRIN that a study had been carried to assess the scale of destruction. **He reported 36,000 destroyed homes in all districts of Fallujah, along with 8,400 shops.**

Al-Dulaimi pointed out that 60 children’s nurseries, primary and secondary schools and colleges were destroyed and 65 mosques and religious sanctuaries were almost demolished by the attack, with 13 government buildings requiring new infrastructure.

Muhammad Abdul al-A'ani, deputy minister for industry, told IRIN that of the total number of houses damaged in the city, only 90 families had received compensation of around US \$1,500 each so far.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bush Standing With Public Dropping;

Congress Even More Disliked

08 April 2005 By Will Lester, The Associated Press

Washington - President Bush's standing with the public is slumping just three months into his final term, but Americans have an even lower regard for the job being done by Congress.

Bush's job approval is at 44 percent, with 54 percent disapproving. Only 37 percent have a favorable opinion of the work being done by the Republican-controlled Congress, according to an AP-Ipsos poll.

Bush's job approval was at 49 percent in January, while Congress was at 41 percent.

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

Israeli Terrorists Execute Soccer Playing Palestinian Kids

09 April 2005 Reuters

"I saw a group of youths playing soccer in a playground about 50 meters from the fence," said Wael Barhoum, 26. "Suddenly there was gunfire toward the youths from the Israeli side. I ran toward the playground and we saw two of the youths were dead and a third was wounded."

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas called the incident a deliberate violation of a ceasefire he and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon declared at a summit in Egypt in February.

"The Palestinian youths who were killed were unarmed children and did not pose a threat to Israel," Abbas was quoted as saying in a statement.



Doctors treat a wounded Palestinian teenager who later died, at the Najar hospital in the occupied Palestinian Gaza town of Rafah April 9, 2005. Zionist occupation troops fired at a group of Palestinian youths playing soccer in a refugee camp on Saturday, residents said, killing three teenagers in the deadliest incident in the Gaza Strip since Israel and the Palestinians declared a cease-fire two months ago. (AP Photo/Khalil Hamra)

[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.]

Received:

UPDATE ON THE CITY 4: STUDENTS REINSTATED!

From: Victor Paredes
Sent: Friday, April 08, 2005 9:16 AM

The City Defense Campaign is proud to announce that the three students who were arrested and suspended for protesting military recruiters are set to return to campus this Monday, April 11th!

The disciplinary hearing scheduled for the morning of Friday, April 8th has been cancelled. We will need to strategize about next steps in regards to our criminal charges

still pending, Carol Lang's suspension, and other matters which have been left unresolved.

THANK YOU to everyone who donated time, energy, and money to this effort. The countless letters, emails, faxes, phone calls, leafletting, protesting, speaking out, and even hunger-striking have been critical in building support for the right to protest on campus.

City Defense Campaign www.citydefensecampaign.org

Web Copies

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

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