

GI SPECIAL 3A95:

There Is No Separation



Names Only I Can See

**Ghost images of family seen on the Wall.
Only veterans know the cost of it all.
Missing in action, precious loved ones gone astray.
Too bad America's war pimps get away.
Mike Hastie
Vietnam 'Veteran**

This photo was taken on the "Moving Vietnam Veterans M Memorial in Salem, Oregon in 1989. This two-third replica is taken around the western half of the United States.

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

There Is No Separation

From: Mike Hastie
Sent: Sunday, April 10, 2005 6:08 AM
Subject: There Is No Separation

To G.I. Special,

There is no separation between church and state.

There is no separation between Republicans and Democrats.

There is no separation between occupation and terrorism.

There is no separation between CIA misinformation and lying.

There is no separation between American Empire and oil in Iraq.

There is no separation between seeing an American soldier take his or her last breath and betrayal.

There is no separation between my anger and the truth.

As an infant child reaches out to touch its mother's breast, I just want to touch the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.-- for a chosen few, the " Wall " will become flesh.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71

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

U.S. Convoy Hit In Baaqouba

4.10.05 UPI

A booby-trapped car exploded in the industrial zone of Baaqouba city, 37 miles (60 kilometers) east of Baghdad, targeting a convoy of U.S. military personnel traveling in four Humvees. **There were no reported casualties in that attack, which damaged one of the vehicles.**

TROOP NEWS

"Problems Stem From People Just Being Tired Of Being Over Here"

April 10, 2005 By Ann Scott Tyson, Washington Post Staff Writer

"I don't really care for the desert, the flies, the dust storms, the trash on the side of the road with kids playing in it," he said as he sat on his bunk this week in the dank, 25-foot-wide room he shares with 13 other Marines. "I'm ready to get out. I'll have a taste of the freedom I've been fighting for."

Like many of his comrades, Cpl. Justin Soule is a 9/11 Marine, driven to join the corps by duty or outrage after the terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001.

Yet over the course of two years, fighting in Iraq has robbed these young Marines of buddies, left their bodies scarred and tired, and snatched away their innocence. Last week, the conflict stole another Marine from the 3rd Battalion, the 11th killed so far as fatalities among U.S. troops grew to 1,543.

Many Darkside Marines, feeling the pull of family and civilian life, say they don't plan to reenlist for what will inevitably mean more combat zone deployments. A far smaller number say they live for being at war and vow never to leave.

When the battalion received a second call to Iraq in late 2003, many of the troops felt ambivalent. "We'd already been to a war, we were just going to a combat zone," said Lance Cpl. Michael Hinson, 21, an M-249 machine gunner from Odessa, Tex.

In January, the battalion was called to Iraq again, ordered to deploy about a month earlier than anticipated to help provide security for Iraq's elections. The news was unwelcome but not entirely unexpected -- some of the Marines say they had kept their duffle bags packed.

U.S. policymakers "didn't have the foresight of seeing that it wouldn't be an easy war. They didn't think it out," said Soule, listening to Texas country music as he took a break one recent evening in his cramped room at the gutted Fallujah soda factory.

Conditions at the camp in downtown Fallujah are austere compared with many bases in Iraq today. With the staple food still packaged meals-ready-to-eat (MREs), Soule and his buddies say they prefer to survive on cheese puffs, PayDay bars, CornNuts and other junk food sent from home.

Infrequent showers are taken by filling a black plastic bag with water, letting it warm in the sun and suspending it for a brisk splash. Lacking even a portable toilet, the Marines dispose of human waste in "wag bags" and later burn them.

Soule and others said such conditions were actually a step up from past tours. "This is the best setup we've had. This is pretty good," he said.

Pinups, race-car photos and beer ads liven up the walls of an otherwise drab room, its windows blocked by sandbags. In brief breaks between 10- to 12-hour shifts patrolling Fallujah or pulling guard duty, the Marines watch movies, play Monopoly and smoke cigarettes.

The close quarters sometimes lead to arguments and shoving matches, and some Marines let off steam by hacking away at palm trees on the base with an ax.

"Problems stem from people just being tired of being over here," Soule said.

The Marines said few among them planned to reenlist. Those who did, such as Hinson, were signing up for so-called non-deployable jobs such as teaching or administration.

"I don't think there's a lot of Marines who want to come back to Iraq every six months," said Cpl. Scott Rolston, who plans to return to his native Anchorage to join the highway patrol or fire department.

Family pressures are mounting on many Marines -- especially those who, like Hinson, are married and have babies on the way.

Lance Cpl. Dan Despain, 26, of St. Louis, gazes at a handful of laminated photos of his infant daughter before he beds down each night. "I've missed seeing her crawl, hearing her start talking and saying 'Da Da.' I'm not going to be the type of parent who isn't there when she needs me," he said.

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)

Abu Ghraib Junior Officers Say Senior Officers Were Criminals Too

[Los Angeles Times, April 8, 2005]

Junior Army officers at Abu Ghraib when the scandal was becoming public knowledge formally protested that **they were being singled out for discipline for the actions of a few rogue soldiers.** They also complained that it was unfair for senior military leader to get away without a blemish on their records. [Oops. Can't have it both ways.]

Gunner Palace: A Much-Needed View Inside Today's Iraq

[Thanks for Des for sending this in.]

April 8, 2005 Review by Bob Quellos, Socialist Worker

Gunner Palace, directed by Petra Epperlein and Michael Tucker.

OUR KNOWLEDGE of the real conditions inside Iraq has been limited since the first bombs were dropped on Baghdad more than two years ago. The corporate media's "embedded" reporters have proven utterly unable to produce coverage that differs from the line put out by the Pentagon and the Bush administration.

And unfortunately, independent media inside Iraq are limited and often hard to get access to. The result is a virtual blackout of what is taking place inside the country.

Gunner Palace, the recently released documentary by Michael Tucker and Petra Epperlein, points the cameras inside Iraq to shed light where it is desperately needed.

By sewing together interviews with soldiers from the 2/3 Field Artillery, along with footage of house raids and street patrols through Baghdad, the film helps reveal the reality of the occupation--for both U.S. troops and Iraqi citizens.

The interviews were filmed mostly at a palace built by Saddam Hussein and previously inhabited by his son Uday, who used the premises to throw lavish parties.

The compound is still shredded from the damage--except for a putting green installed by the military to accompany the still-existing pool and stocked fishing pond of the old palace. **The luxuries led one soldier to call the compound “an adult paradise.” But under daily attacks by rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), it’s nothing of the sort.**

Still, while conditions at the palace aren’t ideal, patrols on the streets of Baghdad are a nightmare.

Soldiers ride on the edge of their seats, trying to avoid roadside bombs often hidden in bags or piles of garbage. Convoys stop traffic for long periods of time to dismantle suspected bombs that often prove to be nothing more than a plastic bag. Continuous gunfire and RPGs have become second nature to these soldiers, but roadside bombs are frying their nerves.

The film puts house raids carried out by U.S. forces front and center. Patrols are sent through Baghdad to find suspected resistance fighters. Front doors of homes are knocked in; a dozen troops enter with pointed rifles; and family members plead while arrests are made.

The detained are sent to Abu Ghraib prison, even when weapons are not found--and they rarely are.

This is the brutal and uncompromising face of U.S. occupation.

It is accompanied by an equally raw and gritty soundtrack, composed of hip-hop beats often overlaid with vocals from the soldiers stationed in the palace. Their lyrics reveal frustration with the occupation, alongside a sentiment that people at home are forgetting about the war. As one soldier rhymes, “For y’all, this is just a show, but we live in this movie.”

Interviews with officers are usually filled the message the Pentagon wants to send, but regular soldiers express sentiments that often resemble those heard during Vietnam.

As SPC Stuart Wilf says, “If you see any politicians, be sure to let them know that while they’re sitting around their dinner tables with their families, talking about how hard the war is on them, we’re here, under attack, nearly 24 hours a day, dodging RPGs, and fighting not for a better Iraq, but just to stay alive.”

Gunner Palace not only provides a much-needed view inside the occupation of Iraq, it also creates another solid argument for ending the occupation now.

OK For Troops To Refuse Anthrax Vaccinations

[Washington Post, April 8, 2005, Pg. 8]

A federal judge partly lifted his October ban on the military's mandatory anthrax inoculation program. **The Pentagon can resume giving the shots, but only to troops who volunteer for them.**

Some Reserve Hitches Cut To Three Years But Watch The Fine Print!

"It may or may not protect you from mobilization" because if a reservist doesn't get mobilized in his or her first three years, he or she still has five years remaining on the IRR list.

April 7, 2005 By Jane McHugh, Army Times staff writer

In an experiment to attract more soldiers, the Army Reserve is allowing some enlistees to join for three years instead of the six years they normally sign up for.

For now, the pilot program is open only to soldiers enlisting in Troop Program Units (TPUs) in the 1st Recruiting Brigade, which covers the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, Vermont, Connecticut, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, New Jersey, Virginia and the District of Columbia.

But shorter enlistments will not totally shorten a soldier's commitment to service. On entering any component of the Army, everyone incurs an eight-year obligation.. Soldiers who do not fulfill the entire eight-year period on active, Guard or Reserve duty, are afterward put into the Individual Ready Reserve . **The IRR is a pool of civilians, all former soldiers who can get called up in wartime to fill out vacancies in Regular Army units — as has happened with Operation Iraqi Freedom.**

Retired Maj. Gen. David Bockel, who heads the Army section of the Reserve Officers Association and numerous other Army leaders and recruiting experts feel Iraqi Freedom, whose soldiers are nearly half reservists, is scaring away potential recruits from the Army Reserve and National Guard as well as the active Army.

Cutting a six-year enlistment in half to three years is "kind of like saying, 'Do I buy a car or do I lease a car?'" Bockel mused.

"It may or may not protect you from mobilization" because if a reservist doesn't get mobilized in his or her first three years, he or she still has five years remaining on the IRR list.

Ariz. School District Restricts Recruiters

TUCSON, Ariz. — New restrictions have been placed on military recruiters by Tucson's largest school district.

Recently, the Tucson Unified School District adopted new rules that restrict visits by military recruiters to once a month per school.

The district adopted the rules after parents complained that their children felt pressured by military recruiters who were showing up four times a week at Tucson High Magnet School.

Missing Man's Family Files Suit Against KBR For “Fraud And Lies”

Apr 10, 2005 Associated Press

An attorney for the family of a Mobile contractor who disappeared in Iraq during an attack on a convoy a year ago has filed suit in Texas against Halliburton Company, accusing the firm of concealing the dangers of the job from the missing man.

Timothy Bell of Mobile vanished a year ago after Iraqi insurgents attacked the convoy that included Bell. He was driving a truck as an employee of Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg, Brown and Root. **The Bells' lawyer, Vincent Howard of Newport Beach, California, says the suit filed Friday in Houston seeks to recover damages for fraud and lies that led to the Bell's death, which has not been confirmed.**

STUNNING BREAKTHROUGH! GAO Warns Pentagon Not To Approve Planes Unless They Work

[Wall Street Journal, wsg.com, April 6, 2005]

The General Accountability Office said that new fighter planes should not be rushed ahead unless the Pentagon can prove that the planes work.

JCS Chair Says U.S. Will Lose To Enemies

[Newport News Daily Press, April 6, 2005]

JCS Chairman Gen. Richard Myers said U.S. security depends on improved communications among the ranks. He said the military branches need to work better together and with other arms of the government and other nations---or risk losing to wily and cutthroat enemies. [So kiss your ass goodbye. See next item.]

Iraq Lies Were Communicated Effectively

[Washington Post, April 7, 2005, Pg. 10]

Pentagon adviser Richard N. Perle caught hell from Rep. Walter B. Jones Jr., a conservative Republican who voted to authorize the use of force in Iraq. **Jones castigated Perle for convincing Congress to approve invading Iraq with information that turned out to be wrong.** The congressman said he has signed more than 900 condolence letters to the kin of fallen soldiers.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

**“We Should All Come Together
To Resist The Occupation.”
Iraq's Oilworkers Will Defend
The Country's Oil:
Interview With Hassan Juma'a Awad**



Hassan Juma'a Awad
(Photo: David Bacon)

[Thanks to JM who sent this in.]

Q: How do you see the armed resistance to the occupation?

A: We support all types of honorable struggle in Iraq, and we want the occupation to end immediately.

Q: How do the members of the oil workers union look at the occupation?

A: From all the meetings we've had with workers all over the industry, we've heard from almost everyone that they want the occupation to end immediately, and the immediate withdrawal of all occupying forces from Iraq.

Q: Are you concerned about your security if the occupation ends immediately?

A: No, we are not worried. We don't have any problem with that because we are able to look after ourselves and our own security.

05 April 2005 By David Bacon, t r u t h o u t

Q: How was the Southern Oil Company Union organized?

A: Two weeks after the occupying forces entered Basra on the 9th of April, 2003, Iraqi activists in the oil industry met to reestablish the union.

We organized the workers for two reasons. First, we had to deal with the administration put in place by the occupying forces. Second, we fear that the purpose of the occupation is to take control of the oil industry. Without organizing ourselves, we would be unable to protect our industry, which we have been looking after for generations.

It was our duty as Iraqi workers to protect the oil installations since they are the property of the Iraqi people, and we are sure that the US and the international companies came here to put their hands on the country's oil reserves.

Although we're under British occupation, we've been able to establish the first union in the oil industry in the Bergeseeya district since the time of Saddam's terror. We've gone on to form unions in other areas in Basra and the southern part of the country. Now we have workers' councils in 23 areas of southern Iraq, and organized a small conference in Basra. We represent over 23,000 workers, and the oil enterprises in the south have about 90% of Iraq's oil reserves.

It wasn't simple, or acceptable to the occupying forces, to organize a trade union for oil workers. They tried their best to stop us, because they saw this as a danger.

Q: Why didn't they want a union among oil workers?

A: Because they're aware that organized workers would have power, which they'd have to face. They'd have to recalculate the plans they made at the start of the occupation.

Q: What were the problems that the union had to overcome?

A: Workers haven't received what they should. The occupying forces issued Order #30 setting wages for workers in the public sector. According to this order, the salary of a worker would be 69,000 Iraqi dinars a month, the equivalent of about \$35. That salary was extremely low, while inflation and the cost of living are very high.

Iraqi oil reserves are the second largest in world. We asked ourselves, in a situation like that, how can it be that the workers in our industry would be getting a monthly salary of \$35?

We found that the American administration wasn't willing to cooperate with us about the scale, so we decided to go on strike on the 13th of August. **After a short strike, we managed to get the minimum salary up to 150,000 Iraqi dinars, or about \$100. This for us is the beginning of the struggle to improve the income of the oil workers.**

We were also able to get the American company KBR to withdraw its personnel from our installations completely.

Q: Did the authorities refuse to talk with the union because of the 1987 law, which prohibits unions in the public sector?

A: Yes. We had problems because they kept saying that according to the law we had no legitimacy - no right to represent workers in the oil sector.

As far as we were concerned, we didn't need them to give us legitimacy, since we were elected by the workers. That's the only kind of legitimacy we need.

Q: How did you get the government to talk with you then?

A: It was the pressure of the strike that got the American administration to change its mind. In the end, they had no alternative but to revise the salary scale. We managed to scrap the two bottom salary levels, which effectively doubled the wages of many workers.

The standard of living went up, even compared to Saddam Hussein's time. Now a worker with 20 years of experience, gets about 420,000 Iraqi dinars, or about 300 dollars. To give you an example, a chicken in the market would cost about 1500 dinars, or \$1.

Q: How do the members of the oil workers union look at the occupation?

A: From all the meetings we've had with workers all over the industry, we've heard from almost everyone that they want the occupation to end immediately, and the immediate withdrawal of all occupying forces from Iraq.

Q: Are you concerned about your security if the occupation ends immediately?

A: No, we are not worried. We don't have any problem with that because we are able to look after ourselves and our own security.

Q: If the occupation forces withdraw, isn't there a danger that there could be attacks on trade unionists by the insurgents, like those which have taken place in Baghdad?

A: That could happen, but we have to solve our problems ourselves.

Q: What kind of government do you want to see?

A: We want a government that will represent the national Iraqi movements. It should be friendly to all countries, especially those that stood against the war and occupation.

Q: What attitude did members have toward the January elections? Did many workers vote?

A: We didn't make any recommendation to them. It was up to each person whether they got involved or not. But there were large numbers of workers who did cast ballots. I believe about 80% of the workers voted. They voted for a number of different parties, sometimes depending on their level of education, or what each individual wanted.

Q: How might it be possible for a popularly-chosen government to come into power in Iraq?

A: I don't believe there will be any big developments in the next six months. Any government chosen in the elections will have a lot of problems to sort out. They'll have to write a new constitution, and the laws of Saddam Hussein will have to be abolished.

The next government should not only ensure the security of the Iraqi people, but also oppose the privatization of industry.

We oppose privatization very strongly, especially in the oil industry. It is our industry. We don't want a new colonization under the guise of privatization, with international companies taking control of the oil.

The day will come when the occupation forces leave. The US timetable foresees the formation of an Iraqi government after the elections. The US should then leave, but I don't have faith that they will leave so easily. We should all come together to resist the occupation.

Q: What kind of support do you want from unions in the US?

A: We have gone through 35 years of Saddam's terror, so we need lots of support from workers in the US. We especially need training in organizing our union, since we don't have much experience in doing that. We also need support from American union in opposing privatization. You are aware of what globalization brings to the workers of the third world. Our union is a young one, and we need training, especially from unions who are opposed to the war.

Q: How do you see the armed resistance to the occupation?

A: We support all types of honorable struggle in Iraq, and we want the occupation to end immediately. But we are against acts of terrorism against Iraqi civilians, from certain terrorist organizations in Iraq. We do not support that. We oppose it as much as we oppose the occupation. If the occupying forces are withdrawn, we are capable of building a new democracy, one that will represent the interests of the Iraqi people, and not the US.

Q: Tell us a little about your own history.

A: I've worked in the Southern Oil Company for 33 years, as a technician. I was one of many people opposed to Saddam Hussein. I helped to organize against the regime in secret, and was involved in the uprising of 1991. We wanted independence, and didn't belong any political party. I became president of the union after the occupation started. I had the support of other activists because I'd already been speaking out for workers' rights. I was elected President in the Basra area in a democratic and free election, and then elected president of the whole union in our first congress.

Q: Are there attacks on unions in the Basra area?

A: Yes, the attacks on trade unions in Basra are similar to those happening in the rest of Iraq. We recently had an attack on an electrical power worker by the administration of the plant.

I expect an attack on me will take place, but I'm not afraid. I expect the terrorists will strike everywhere. Several of our sections in Basra have already been targets. They target both workers and machinery, although no oil workers have been killed yet. There were 3 or 4 workers killed trying to put out the fires, though, which were started by the bombs. When Hadi Saleh (international secretary of the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions) was murdered in Baghdad, I thought the old Mukhabharat (Saddam's former secret police) could have been responsible. They seem to be able to operate freely.

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

**“A Promise Of Things To Come
Perhaps?”**

April 06, 2005 By Ahmed Al-Habbabi, anti-allawi-group

The resistance greets the new president of the Green Zone!

Two Blasts Heard In Central Baghdad

4/6/2005 Anatolia.com Inc

BAGHDAD - Two explosions were heard in central Baghdad Wednesday after the Iraqi parliament elected Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani president, an AFP reporter said.

The source of the blasts was not clear. Insurgents often lob mortars at the highly fortified Green Zone in central Baghdad where the Iraqi parliament was meeting although such attacks have rarely caused casualties.

Just a "greeting" I'd say... and a promise of things to come perhaps?

Resistance Action:

April 10 (Reuters) & (UPI)

One Iraqi soldier was killed and two seriously wounded when a roadside bomb exploded near an army checkpoint on the main road between the northern city of Kirkuk and Baghdad early on Sunday, the Iraqi army said.

Guerrillas killed a member of a SCIRI, a leading Shi'ite Muslim [collaborator] political party , and seriously wounded another in a drive-by shooting in the capital on Sunday.

Officials said the guerrillas opened fire with machine guns in al-Haditha, in the western section of Iraq, after Police Maj. Ziyad Khalaf Mekhlif and Cpl. Bahaa Ahmad stopped their car.

Mekhlif was killed and Ahmad was abducted

Extremely Unhealthy Environment: Time To Come Home.



Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr demanded US troops leave Iraq and called on God to cut off their necks in a fiery speech to tens of thousands in Baghdad on the two-year anniversary of the city's fall to the Americans. (AFP/Ali Al-Saadi Apr 09)

IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION

The Puppet Show

April 2005 by Herbert Docena, FOCUS ON TRADE Number 108. Excerpt from an interview with Sheik Jawad Khalisi of the Iraqi National Foundation Congress

HD: What about those who are saying there will be civil war when the troops leave?

JK: They are trying to legitimise a long occupation by the United States. They are puppets of the Americans.

HD: US officials always say that those who are fighting the occupation forces are "anti-Iraqi" forces" or "Baathist dead-enders" or...

JK: According to the US military, in Fallujah they captured 1,065 people. Among them, they found only 25 non-Iraqis. All the others were Iraqis.

The resistance is an Iraqi resistance - a popular resistance -- which is spreading now.

Among the resistance groups, there are former officers of the army who are using their expertise to help the resistance. But the main ideological current inside the resistance is a popular and moderate Islamic current - not a Baathist one. It is popular, patriotic, and Islamic.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Who's Better Off?

4.6.05 Ron Paul, before the US House of Representatives. *Dr. Ron Paul is a Republican member of Congress from Texas*

How much better off are the Iraqi people?

Hundreds of thousands of former inhabitants of Fallujah are not better off with their city flattened and their homes destroyed. Hundreds of thousands are not better off living with foreign soldiers patrolling their street, curfews, and the loss

of basic utilities. One hundred thousand dead Iraqis, as estimated by the Lancet Medical Journal, certainly are not better off.

Better to be alive under Saddam Hussein than lying in some cold grave.

Praise for the recent election in Iraq has silenced many critics of the war.

Yet the election was held under martial law implemented by a foreign power, mirroring conditions we rightfully condemned as a farce when carried out in the old Soviet system and more recently in Lebanon. Why is it that what is good for the goose isn't always good for the gander?

It just doesn't make sense to most Americans to see their tax dollars used to fight an unnecessary and unjustified war. First they see American bombs destroying a country, and then American taxpayers are required to rebuild it.

Today it's easier to get funding to rebuild infrastructure in Iraq than to build a bridge in the United States. Indeed, we cut the Army Corps of Engineers' budget and operate on the cheap with our veterans as the expenditures in Iraq skyrocket.

But there's another question that is equally important: "Are the American people better off because of the Iraq war?"

One thing for sure, the 1,500 plus dead American soldiers aren't better off. The nearly 20,000 severely injured or sickened American troops are not better off. The families, the wives, the husbands, children, parents, and friends of those who lost so much are not better off.

The families and the 40,000 troops who were forced to re-enlist against their will – a de facto draft – are not feeling better off. They believe they have been deceived by their enlistment agreements.

The American taxpayers are not better off having spent over 200 billion dollars to pursue this war, with billions yet to be spent. The victims of the inflation that always accompanies a guns-and-butter policy are already getting a dose of what will become much worse.

Oil was approximately \$27 a barrel before the war, now it's more than twice that.

I wonder who benefits from this?

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.

Been There, Done That:

A Slice Of History



British troops in Iraq 1917

[Excerpt from *"Iraq: Eye to Eye with the Occupation"* The Historical Roots of Resistance, Mohamed Hassan and David Pestieau, EPO publishing house, May 2004]

The cake was divided into five parts: Great Britain, France, the Netherlands and the United States each received 23.75% and the remaining 5% went to the oil baron Calouste Gulbenkian, also known as "Mister 5%", who had helped with the negotiations. 0% of Iraqi oil went to Iraq itself. And things remained that way until 1958.

In 1921, in the space of two days, Sir Percy Cox, the British High Commissioner, drew up the new map of the area. To the feudal chiefs he presented the new boundaries of the three countries, Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, as decided by a decree of the British Empire. "

Cox produced a red pencil and an empty map of what was known as Arabia. Telling the delegates 'gentlemen, there are your borders,' Cox drew the angular lines which are today's frontiers of Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. " wrote Trevor Royle.

The Key Question: Oil

In 1917, the United States entered the First World War at a moment when Britain and France were exhausted. The condition was the following: after the war, US economic and political aims would have to be taken into account.

One of these aims was access to new raw materials, in particular oil.

In February 1919, Sir Arthur Hirtzel, a high-ranking British colonial civil servant, warned: "Don't forget that the Standard Oil Company is ready to intervene to get Iraq back."

Faced with Franco-British domination of the region, the United States demanded an "Open Door" policy.

The oil companies had to have complete freedom to negotiate contracts with the new regime of King Faysal. The solution to the conflict between the allies was the sharing of Iraqi oil.

The cake was divided into five parts: Great Britain, France, the Netherlands and the United States each received 23.75% and the remaining 5% went to the oil baron Calouste Gulbenkian, also known as "Mister 5%", who had helped with the negotiations. 0% of Iraqi oil went to Iraq itself. And things remained that way until 1958.

In 1927, large-scale oil expeditions got under way. In the province of Mosul, two important oilfields were discovered. Two years later the Iraqi Petroleum Co. was founded, a joint-venture between the Anglo-Iranian Petroleum (today BP), Shell, Mobil and Standard Oil of New Jersey (today Exxon). **A few years later, this international company had a monopoly of oil production in Iraq.**

In 1932 – after fifteen years of occupation – British troops officially left Iraq. Despite formal independence and its own army, Iraq remained a neo-colony – due to British and American economic domination.

MORE:

Reality Strikes Again

7 - 13 April 2005 By Zaid Al-Ali, AL-AHRAM (Egypt)

In the period immediately preceding the war in 2003, production rates had stabilised at 2.5 million barrels.

In the first few months after the war, occupation and American officials issued optimistic forecasts, according to which production rates would surpass the pre-war levels within a short period of time. Their optimism has ebbed somewhat since then, after the results of chronic corruption, under-funding and sabotage became clear.

The country's 2004 budget indicated that production rates during that year were at an average of 1.5 million barrels per day, and that they were expected to reach 1.8 million in 2005.

However, shipping sources revealed that in the past two months Iraq exported an average of 1.46 million barrels per day.

Government and occupation officials are unhappy with these figures, which have prompted them to contradict them with their predictions. Indeed, on 22 December, 2004, the Iraqi finance minister claimed that "we expect to reach 3.5 million ([per day), maybe by the end of 2005."

OCCUPATION REPORT

RECRUITING FOR THE RESISTANCE IN FULL SWING



A US Marine soldier and an Iraqi child in Falluja (*photo: AP*)

Battered Fallujah Key To Iraq (!)

[The Hill, April 7, 2005, Pg. 1]

War-battered Fallujah is shaping up as the key to the success or failure of the Bush administration's effort in Iraq. U.S. officials in Iraq believe that if they can make Fallujah work, then it becomes a status symbol. ["War-battered Stalingrad is shaping up as the key to the success or failure of the Hitler administrations effort in Russia. German officials in Russia believe that if they can make Stalingrad work, then it becomes a status symbol. War-battered Pearl Harbor is shaping up as the key to the success or failure of the Tojo administration's effort in the Pacific. Japanese officials believe that if they can make Pearl Harbor work, then it becomes a status symbol." And Imperial delusions die hard. And so do the troops who pay for the politicians' greed for Empire.]

Daddy, Why Are Those Men Hiding Down On The Ground That Way?



Iraqis walk alongside Iraqi National Guards assisted by U.S. soldiers from the 10th Mountain 2nd Battalion patrolling the Haifa Street district in Baghdad, April 7, 2005. (AP Photo/Jerome Delay)

U.S. Troops Too Harsh, British Panel Alleges

[Chicago Tribune, April 6, 2005]

British lawmakers have prepared a report that claims U.S. troops in Iraq provoke civilians and hamper rebuilding with an excessive use of force. **[More disgusting bullshit. The troops get shit on for doing as ordered. Why don't these lawmakers**

nail commands' ass to the wall? Why do they talk about what "U.S. troops in Iraq" do without bothering to put the responsibility where it belongs: on the politicians in Washington DC who put them in an impossible war, and the commanders who tell them how to handle it.?)

Information And Disinformation

April 10, 2005 Excerpt From Kelebdooni, Anti-Allawi Group

"Abu Ghraib prison, built by Saddam Hussein, where torture was routine.etc"

Such a statement sounds quite logical, doesn't it?

We skim over it to the subsequent blah without a thought.

Actually, someone hasn't been doing his homework and is carelessly perpetuating a fallacy. Abu Ghraib was built in the 1950s (long before Saddam was heard of) as the central prison of Baghdad for ordinary criminals.

I doubt that much torture was carried out there during the Saddam era, because other facilities for holding political opponents were by no means lacking. My correction may not be very significant as such, but it goes to show that there is so much pure fantasy out there masquerading as factual knowledge.

The second and more important aspect of misinformation is due to the deeply entrenched effects of deliberate imperialist propaganda through 1990-2003 in preparation and justification for the invasion.

That Saddam was a ruthless dictator must not in any way be used to nullify the achievements of a people and a nation through a long journey of achievements and development. By the late 1970s, Iraq had practically eradicated illiteracy, and achieved levels of education, health, social services, women rights, and industrialization that were the highest in the region and close to international standards, by testimony of relevant UN organizations.

<p>I am stating all this because it is pitiful to hail the reconstruction work for painting a school building or fixing a water station. Iraq has the expertise and the resources to do all it takes.</p>
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It took the Iraqis a few months to restore electricity generation after 90% destruction in the 1991 war. It's now taking forever.

All that the occupation has managed to do is to destruct, continue the destruction on a daily basis, and continue to lie about what's happening to the world.

The occupation has managed more importantly to dismantle the state civil machinery serving society, and even fracture Iraq's social fabric.

The set of collaborators brought in on the invading tanks cannot be more meticulously selected for incompetence and corruption, and they call installing them a political process and democracy. There's a mountain of lies, and it sometimes feels practically hopeless to chisel at it.

Then again, we must.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Rafah Victims Appeals To You: Whatever The Leaders Are Saying, The Reality Here Is Terrible.

The ambulances cannot reach them. I think it is too dangerous to try to get to Khan Younis and investigate in person. People here are distraught. I can hear shelling quite close to the internet café and should leave.

From: Mohammed Al Moghayer

Sent: Sunday, April 10, 2005 4:07 AM

Subject: Rafah victims appeals to you: Are you there?!

Dear Friends:

Are you still there?

Here, Rafah children are getting killed, and the shelling is going on all over the Rafah Refugee Camp.

Please see more details about the recent massacre committed by the ISRAELI Occupation Forces targeted three boys from Rafah..

For more information, please visit www.rafahtoday.org or forward to your friends and let them know about what is going on here against humanity.

Thank you and regards!
Mohammed

Children's corpses in the hospital again, major shelling and the threat of death from the circling Apaches again—all the fear, all the horror—it is happening again and the people of Rafah are hiding in their houses.

The cease-fire, announced on March 17 by all the militant factions, was never absolutely respected by the Israeli army. But the level of shelling, the pace of gunfire, did slow to the point where people felt some cautious hope. Here in Rafah, people living in areas near the Israeli settlements found themselves under sporadic fire—from both the Israeli Army and the settlers themselves—with some frequency.

But things have taken a huge jump back today toward the horrors we hoped were over when three teenagers were killed by Israeli Army gunfire near the border in Tal-Al-Sultan. A group of boys in their mid-teens were playing soccer in a playground in the Block J area about 150 feet from the border fence.

Palestinian witnesses and medics say the ball was kicked out of bounds and some of the boys chased it into the border zone. The Israeli army snipers in the guard towers opened fire. Two boys were killed immediately. The ambulances were prevented from reaching the boys for some time and a third boy survived long enough to have surgery at Rafah's Al Najjar Hospital, but ultimately died of his wounds.

They are Khaled Ghanaam, 14, Ashraf Mussa, 14, and Hassan Abu Zaid, 15. Other boys in the soccer game fled to safety and explained what had happened to the Palestinian security forces.

Sources at the hospital said the boys had multiple gunshot wounds in the chest and neck. Initial reports from the Israeli Army called the boys "arms smugglers" and said they ignored warning shots. Palestinian witnesses said they were simply playing soccer and trying to retrieve a ball.

There are sketchy reports I can get by walki-talki that some of the militants have sworn revenge and are firing Qassams at the Israeli settlements, while higher-ranking militant leaders have said they will still try to preserve the cease-fire. President Abbas has said, "We cannot accept that our children are being killed."

People here have been worried and tense all week at reports that an extremist right-wing Israeli group is threatening to attack the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem tomorrow.

Whatever is happening in Jerusalem, whatever the leaders are saying, the reality here is terrible. Last night, a 30-year-old man was seriously injured by Israeli fire as he was on his way home in a border neighborhood. Last night, all of Rafah came under shelling, and the sky is full of Apaches as I write.

I just learned by phone from medical workers in Khan Younis that three children have been shot there in one of the areas near an Israeli settlement.

The ambulances cannot reach them. I think it is too dangerous to try to get to Khan Younis and investigate in person. People here are distraught. I can hear shelling quite close to the internet café and should leave.

"The world is a dangerous place to live;
not because of the people who are evil,
but because of the people who don't

do anything about it."

[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:

**“I Am Member Family Of MFSO And Actively
Speak Out In My Region.”**

From: L & R
To: GI Special
Sent: Thursday, April 07, 2005 5:44 PM
Subject: Subscribe me

Please subscribe me to GI Special. **Military family with 2 loved ones deployed in Iraq, served 15 months; both under orders for 2nd deployment + stop loss and will redeploy in a few short months. I am member family of MFSO and actively speak out in my region. Thank you.**

REPLY:

Thank you for writing in. Respect to you for making a commitment to stop the war. May your children be safe and hopefully not get sent over there again. T

Received:

**“No Amount Of Blood Is Too High Of A Price To
Pay”**

From: AH
To: GI Special
Sent: Wednesday, April 06, 2005 4:51 PM
Subject: Over 100,000 Dead

Bush Hails Vote in Iraqi Parliament
Wed Apr 6, 2:14 PM ET

WASHINGTON – President Bush congratulated the Iraqi parliament for selecting a president and two co-presidents, calling Wednesday's voting a "momentous step forward in Iraq's's transition to democracy."

H writes: No amount of blood is too high of a price to pay, I guess; as long as it isn't the rich and lazy people's blood.

Received:

Hostage Taking

From: JM
To: GI Special
Sent: Thursday, April 07, 2005 10:23 AM
Subject: GI Special 3A91 - The taking of hostages.

Taking hostages has been getting mentioned since the invasion. Reports said most of the women prisoners were relatives of wanted men. Below is a copy of a report on hostage taking. I haven't noted the year of publication but believe it was last year - 2004. Hope you can find a use for it.--- J

U.S. Using Some Iraqis As Bargaining Chips Iraqi Woman Says U.S. Imprisoned Her Husband - And Said He'd Go Free When Her Father Surrenders

Newsday – May 26

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- **U.S. troops wanted Jeanan Moayad's father. When they couldn't find him, they took her husband in his place.**

Dhafir Ibrahim has been in U.S. custody for nearly four months. Moayad insists he is being held as a bargaining chip, and military officials have told her he will be released when her father surrenders. Her father is a scientist and former Baath party member who fled to Jordan soon after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime

"My husband is a hostage," said Moayad, 35, an architect who carries a small portrait of Ibrahim in her purse. **"He didn't commit any crime."**

In a little-noticed development amid Iraq's prison abuse scandal, **the U.S. military is holding dozens of Iraqis as bargaining chips to put pressure on their wanted relatives to surrender, according to human rights groups.** These detainees are not accused of any crimes, and **experts say their detention violates the Geneva Conventions and other international laws.**

"It's clearly an abuse of the powers of arrest, to arrest one person and say that you're going to hold him until he gives information about somebody else, especially a close

relative," said John Quigley, an international law professor at Ohio State University. "Arrests are supposed to be based on suspicion that the person has committed some offense."

Iraqi human rights groups say they have documented dozens of cases similar to Moayad's, in which family members who are not accused of any crimes have been detained for weeks or even months and told that they would be released only when a wanted relative surrenders to U.S. forces.

"We have many cases of Americans going to a house looking for someone, and when they can't find him, they take another family member in his place," said Bassem al-Rubaie, director of the Council of Legal Defense Care, a group of Iraqi lawyers that has been campaigning for prisoner rights. "This has been going on since the early days of the American occupation."

Human rights groups first criticized the United States for detaining the relatives of wanted Iraqis in November, when U.S. forces arrested the wife and daughter of Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, one of Hussein's longtime deputies. After Hussein was captured last year, al-Douri became the most wanted man in Iraq, and Washington put a \$10 million bounty on his head.

Al-Douri's wife and daughter are still in U.S. custody, although rights monitors say they have not been charged with any crime.

"Taking hostages is a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions - in other words, a war crime," Manhattan-based Human Rights Watch wrote Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in January.

In the past, U.S. officials had likened the detentions to those of a material witness who is held for questioning.

But rights monitors say there is no basis under international law for holding family members as material witnesses.

Detaining a fugitive's relatives is a form of "moral coercion" forbidden under the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, according to Quigley. **The convention, which guarantees the rights of civilians under military occupation, also prohibits punishing someone for an offense that he has not personally committed.**

In the 1970s and '80s, Washington frequently criticized the former Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries for making arbitrary arrests and for using relatives to exert pressure on fugitives and political prisoners. In its latest report on human rights conditions around the world, the State Department singled out Uzbekistan, Pakistan and Syria for using such tactics.

International law leaves little recourse for civilians under occupation to challenge wrongful detentions, something Moayad has become painfully aware of.

Her plight began on Jan. 30 at 2:30 a.m., when **two U.S. Humvees pulled up to the door of her family's house as an Apache helicopter circled overhead. The soldiers**

asked for her father, Abdullah, 66, an American-educated geologist. Moayad insists that she does not know what U.S. forces wanted from her father.

Moayad told the soldiers that her father had gone to neighboring Jordan for prostate cancer surgery, and she showed them his medical records. They arrested the only other man in the house: Moayad's husband.

"My husband told them several times, 'I'm not a troublemaker, I just want to live in peace with my family,'" said **Moayad, who was born in Austin, Texas, where her father was working. She lived in the United States until she was 5 years old.**

Moayad has been married to Ibrahim, 45, for eight years. They have three children, ages 2 to 7. Like many Iraqis, they live with their extended family.

On Feb. 17, Moayad said, a group of soldiers delivered a handwritten letter from Ibrahim. It said he was being transferred from a U.S. base in Baghdad to Abu Ghraib prison "until the arrival of my father-in-law."

"Please tell him that **I will be released when he arrives here, since I am not the wanted person...**" Ibrahim wrote. "Please urge my father-in-law to surrender himself of his own free will. That will make things much easier for him. They will not mistreat someone who surrenders of his own free will. They only want to ask him some questions."

Since getting the letter, Moayad has made the 40-mile roundtrip journey from Baghdad to Abu Ghraib 18 times. On most visits, she has stood outside the gates with others waiting in vain for news about their relatives. **One soldier who felt sorry for her looked up Ibrahim's name in the computer system and told her he was marked as a detainee with "intel value."**

Moayad, whose patchwork English is the legacy of her Texas childhood, doesn't know what "intelligence value" means and how it might affect her husband. But **the Red Cross report documented a pattern of abuses - including humiliation, hooding and threats of execution - against Iraqi prisoners deemed to have an intelligence value.**

"The American soldiers kept on telling me, 'Bring your father, and you will get your husband back,'" said Moayad, her soft voice trailing off. "How can they say that he's not a hostage?"

On May 15, her 18th visit to Abu Ghraib, Moayad finally got to see her husband. Ibrahim told her he was being well treated, but he said that military officials had forced him to write the letter pleading for his father-in-law to surrender.

The tactic, Moayad said, reminded her of Hussein's regime. "The Americans promised us that they would bring democracy and freedom. They talked about the prisoners in Saddam's time, and we expected them to do something better," she said. "But now they're doing the same thing, or even worse."

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/gi-special/>, www.williambowles.info/qispecial,
<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/gi-special.htm>

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