GI SPECIAL 3A98:

IN FLAMES: A local resident watches as a US military truck burns in Baghdad on April 13. (REUTERS)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

SOLDIER KILLED DURING COMBAT OPERATIONS IN RAMADI

April 13, 2005 U.S. Department of Defense News Release Number: 05-04-14C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – **A U.S. Army Soldier serving with the 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), was killed April 12 by enemy small-arms fire while conducting combat operations in Ramadi.**

The name of the deceased is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

Several U.S. Army units are assigned to II Marine Expeditionary Force (Fwd) during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

National Guard Soldier Killed By Sniper

April 13, 2005 Associated Press & U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 360-05

An Iowa National Guard soldier has been killed by a sniper in Iraq.

Spc. John W. Miller, 21, of West Burlington, Iowa, died April 12 in Camp Ramadi, Iraq, of injuries received from enemy small arms fire while on route clearance operations in Ar Ramadi, Iraq.

He was a member of Company A 224th Battalion of Burlington.

Miller is survived by his father, two brothers and a sister. His mother died four years ago. Funeral arrangements are pending.

Fort Irwin Soldier Dies From Burns

April 13, 2005 By SCOTT SHACKFORD/Staff Writer, Daily Press

Pfc. Casey M. LaWare, 19, of Fort Irwin's 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, died in Germany on Friday of burns he received in a guard tower fire in Iraq.

LaWare, a resident of Redding since he was a child, joined the Army just out of high school, his uncle, Brian Telford, said. According to Telford, LaWare had planned to serve in the military for a few years and then go to college.

LaWare was evacuated to Germany to treat his burns, Telford said. LaWare's condition deteriorated, however, and he died before he could be flown to Texas for further treatment, Telford said.

Soldiers from the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment deployed to Iraq from Fort Irwin in January and February.

LaWare marks the second fatality from Fort Irwin during military duty in Iraq.

Iraq Attack Injures Local Soldiers

04/13/2005 By Patty Yauger, Herald-Standard

CONNELLSVILLE - An attack by Iraqi insurgents on a patrol unit returning to the Ash Sharqat camp, near Mosul, has left four local U.S. Army National Guard soldiers injured.

National Guard public affairs officer Capt. Cory P. Angell said Tuesday that Spec. Timothy Boots, Staff Sgt. Jason Leisey, Spec. Kevin Claycomb and Staff Sgt. Mark A. Bowman were injured April 7 when their patrol unit was returning to their base camp at the end of their mission and was attacked by an explosive device.

Claycomb of Scottdale and Boots of Connellsville are now at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., while Leisey, of Lancaster, is being treated at Fort Sam Houston in Texas.

Angell said the three have been listed in "very serious" condition.

Bowman, added Angell, sustained a non-serious injury. He is from Friedens.

The four soldiers are attached to Company B, 1st Battalion, 103rd Armor unit based in Connellsville. The unit was deployed to Iraq last year for a one year tour of duty.

The unit's commanding officer, Lt. Col. Philip J. Logan, said that five armored Humvees carrying the unit were about to enter the gate of the base camp when a car bomb exploded and caused severe damage to the Army vehicle.

"The (armored Humvee) protected the crew exactly as designed," said Logan. "However, four soldiers from the patrol were wounded during the attack.

"Other soldiers from the patrol, at great personal risk, immediately extracted the wounded personnel from the burning vehicle, saving their lives."

Logan said that the injured soldiers were stabilized at the scene and then evacuated to the Army Combat Support Hospital at Mosul, Iraq, where they were initially treated. Claycomb, Boots and Leisey were then taken to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany before being transported to the U.S.

Bowman remains in the Mosul facility, said Angell.

Unit Sgt. Arnold Perkins referred detailed questions to National Guard officials at Fort Indiantown Gap, but said that he was "very saddened" when he heard the news concerning the soldiers.

"I feel very bad for them and their families," he said.

The 63-member unit is part of approximately 1,000 Pennsylvania Army National Guardsmen now serving in Iraq.

The Connellsville-based unit was activated in 2002 and was assigned to U.S. military bases in Italy and Germany for a six-month tour of duty. Two soldiers from the unit took part in a NATO multinational peacekeeping force in Bosnia during the same time frame.

Nampa Soldier Injured For Fifth Time

April 12, 2005 By Associated Press, Nampa, Idaho

A decorated soldier from Nampa, Idaho, was injured for the fifth time in combat last week in Iraq.

Sergeant Larry Woodard was shot through the stomach and lost a portion of his liver.

He went through two rounds of surgery at a German hospital.

Larry Woodard joined the Army in 2002. His left arm has been injured three times since. He was struck by shrapnel and hit with debris from a falling wall. He also was struck by bullets in his chest and arm after being shot by enemy fire in Fallujah. Protective gear saved his life.

In another incident, Woodard and a handful of other soldiers rescued people after a building caught on fire. He eventually collapsed from inhaling too much smoke.

U.S. Forces Targeted In Mosul Attacks: Casualty Information Not Released

4.13.05 UPI

Explosive charges blew up in two different parts of Mosul, targeting U.S. forces and Iraqi police. There was no information on possible U.S. casualties.

DoD Convoy Hit, Four Mercenaries Wounded

4.13.05 BAGHDAD (Reuters) & TRACI CARL, Associated Press Writer

A car bomb exploded near a U.S. convoy outside Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone on the capital's infamous airport road on Wednesday, killing five Iraqis and wounding four American contractors, the U.S. military said.

The bomb exploded as a Defence Department convoy carrying civilian workers left the Green Zone, centre for U.S. operations in Iraq, at about 9:30 a.m., said military spokesman Chief Petty Officer James Drake.

Wednesday's deadly car bombing damaged two sport utility vehicles and five civilian cars. The explosion left charred and burning rubble strewn across the highway.

Resistance Hits U.S. Fuel Supply Convoy In Baghdad

4.13.05 Iraqis attempt to put out the flames as a US military tanker burns after it was hit in a roadside bombing in eastern Baghdad. (AFP/Sabah Arar)

April 13, 2005 Associated Press & (Reuters) & AFP

Insurgents hit an American fuel-supply convoy Wednesday in the Iraqi capital, witnesses said, leaving a tanker truck engulfed in flames that sent smoke rising high over the city as the second high-level American official visited in as many days.

Twin blasts from roadside bombs targeted the convoy of two U.S. Humvees and an American military fuel tanker as it made its way through an eastern Baghdad neighborhood, witnesses at the scene said, as the truck burned violently and sent up a large plume of black smoke visible across Baghdad.

The truck was hit at 8:45 am (0445 GMT) in a convoy on al-Kanat road which cuts through eastern Baghdad and borders the Shiite slum of Sadr City, an interior ministry source said.

It wasn't immediately clear if there were any casualties.

Two More U.S. Convoys Hit In Baghdad; Casualties Not Announced

4.13.05 (Reuters)

A car bomb blast near a U.S. military convoy on Wednesday seriously wounded four civilians.

The convoy, which included Iraqi National Guard troops, was hit near al-Amiriya, in western Baghdad, an Iraqi National Guard source said at the scene.

The blast destroyed a U.S. Army Humvee vehicle and civilian cars, according to a Reuters witness. The injured were evacuated by U.S. helicopter.

Another blasts struck U.S. convoys in other parts of the city.

An attack left an American vehicle in flames in southeast Baghdad in the area near several key ministries.

Massillon Native Wounded In Firefight; Tells Of Camp Gannon Battle

April 13, 2005 By CHRIS PUGH, The Independent

A Massillon native returned fire against insurgents Monday, defending a Marine barracks near the Syrian border.

Timothy Arnold, 25, a corporal with the Third Battalion, Second Marines, India company, was injured in the attack and told The Independent about the attack from his hospital bed.

He said he and his fellow Marines were able to hold off about 20 insurgents with his group by killing and driving back invaders until the attack was completed, he said.

“They were coming like ants on an anthill,” Arnold said from the hospital in Balad, located 20 miles north of Baghdad, where he lay injured from a concussion and hearing loss.

But he said it was pure adrenaline that kept him alive during the firefight between soldiers and insurgents near the Iraq-Syrian border.

Arnold's company is stationed near Husaybah in Camp Gannon, which is located near Qaim in northwest Iraq. The incident was reported through an Associated Press story in Tuesday's edition of The Independent.

In Iraq, Arnold is head of the unit, which is responsible for seeking out insurgents.

He suffered a concussion, partial hearing loss and minor bruises in the skirmish, which reportedly began Monday when insurgents tried unsuccessfully to ram two cars and a fire truck loaded with explosives into a Marine outpost there. The vehicles exploded.

Arnold said he was in the hallway of the barracks the Marines set up in former offices of the Iraqi National Guard.

"The first vehicle they drove rammed through a barricade and exploded 50 to 75 meters away from us," Arnold said. "The second was a fire truck that exploded 100 meters away."

The Marine said the second blast hurt his head, but he was able to wake up the 11 Marines in his unit and went to the roof. What followed was a 30-45 minute firefight with insurgents on the roof, Arnold said.

"So much was going on," he said. "Hundreds of rounds were fired and it didn't end until the insurgents were killed or drawn out."

Arnold added he was on the roof when the third blast hit.

"I was dizzy," he admitted. "But adrenaline kept me going."

The barracks sustained shrapnel damage, he said.

After the battle ended, the Marine said he was transported with two others to the hospital in Balad.

"We never wanted to leave," Arnold said, adding he hoped to be released from the hospital and reunited with his unit tonight. "I'm still a little dizzy today and feel like a truck hit me."

Monday night, doctors told the Marine he had lost 60 percent hearing in his right ear and a lesser amount in his left ear. Arnold hasn't been told if he'll regain his hearing, although he said it was better Tuesday.

Arnold attended St. Mary's School in Massillon through the eighth grade and graduated from Sandy Valley High in 1999.

He and his wife, Story, live in Camp LeJeune in North Carolina. They have two children.

This has been Arnold's fourth deployment – his second in Iraq. He also served two stints in Africa.

U.S. Troops Shoot Collaborator Colonel

April 13 (Xinhuanet)

In a separate incident, US soldiers on a checkpoint near Dowr opened fire at a civilian car, wounding Lie. Col. Hussein Ahmed and another policeman, the statement said.

Hassan Al-Basri Brigade Attack British Intelligence Officers In Basra

April 13, 2005 By SITE Institute

In a communiqué issued April 13, 2005, al-Hassan al-Basri Brigade detail a bombing operation aimed at British intelligence officers in Basra, Iraq, this morning.

A "package of explosives" was detonated on a car allegedly belonging to the "military British intelligence." According to the statement: "It's occupants were either killed or wounded."

TROOP NEWS

Marine Back Home And Healing: "He Didn't Think His Son Would Be Deployed"

April 13, 2005 By APRIL STONE, Press Staff Writer, OKOnline

Now that he's been home a few days, U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Jeff Hudgens has a suggestion. He thinks Tahlequah needs a Hooter's restaurant.

He'll keep that in mind when he starts back to college soon and earns a degree, possibly in business and management.

Jeff managed to squeeze in a semester at Northeastern State University a year ago before beginning his career in the Marines. After less than a year, that career took a fateful turn, and he's lucky to be alive today. When he returns to school this fall, the 19-year-old will stand out among his classmates as a decorated war veteran.

It was never Jeff's goal to go to war and face combat, but he always dreamed of being in the military. Since he was a young boy and watched the hit Tom Cruise film "Top Gun," he yearned to be a pilot. But with a retired Marine for an uncle, and two cousins who are Marines, he began leaning more toward that branch of the military.

Jeff's parents, Russell and Sandra Hudgens, did what they could to keep him out of harm's way for as long as possible. He was a senior in high school before his dad even let him play football.

"I was afraid he would hurt," said Russell, who moved his family to Tahlequah when Jeff was a fourth-grader. "Parents are always worried about their kids getting hurt, and then when you let them go, look what happens."

Jeff met with recruiters before he graduated from Tahlequah High School in 2003. But since he hadn't yet turned 18, and wouldn't for a few more months, he had to ask his parents for permission to enlist.

The war in Iraq was well under way by then, but Russell said he didn't think his son would be deployed when he gave his permission.

"I was obvious that Jeff was going to enlist, whether we let him or not. He would've waited to turn 18 and done it on his own, and then been mad at us," said Russell. "To be honest, I thought (the war) would be over by the time he got through with all of his training. But after three months of basic training and two months of specialty training, he was gone."

Jeff himself wasn't surprised to learn of his deployment date, because his company sergeant told him and the other troops it was not a question of "if" they would go, but "when." The day Jeff arrived in Iraq wasn't significant enough for him to remember, but the day he left the battlefield with life-threatening injuries is one he and his parents will never forget.

After spending the past 150 days or so in three different hospitals, Jeff is glad to finally be back home. Sitting on the couch in his parents' house Monday afternoon, he could recall everything about his stay in Iraq, up until the moment of the explosion that changed his future from the "average Marine" he dubbed himself.

"We were using the anti-tank missile; it's still infantry, but you don't do too much walking. We were riding around mostly," said Jeff, who served with the 1st Battalion 23rd Marines weapons company, stationed in Haditha in Northern Iraq. "We went out at night all the time, primarily doing patrols. Basically, I was a cop in camo; that's what it felt like."

The roads were laced with explosives, and Jeff's company had the job of rooting out any bombs they could find. **On Nov. 18, 2004, Jeff witnessed three vehicles explode as they passed over the hidden devices. Although no one died that day, he and his comrades felt the first tinges of fear when they had to turn back toward their base.**

"One guy thought he was deaf from one of the explosions, so we went back to have him checked out," said Jeff. "They said he could still hear, so they sent him back out with us."

Not long after the unit returned to patrol, Jeff remembers looking down over the side of the truck in which he was riding. What happened next he would hear about much later, once he regained consciousness.

"We were just out on regular patrol that day, and I remember looking over the side of the truck, and I saw dust fly up," said Jeff.

Behind the dust was shrapnel from the bomb they triggered, and it struck Jeff hard enough to knock the helmet off his head. Jeff was rushed to a nearby military hospital in Iraq, and then transported to Germany, where doctors weren't sure he would survive, much less recover.

That same day in Tahlequah, Russell's cell phone was ringing, and Sandra was contacted with news that her son was injured, but alive.

"We actually knew by the afternoon on (November) 18th; we were told he had head trauma, but we didn't hear much more. We knew he was still alive," said Russell, a science teacher at Tahlequah Junior High School. "They called us from Broken Arrow to keep us updated, but for a while, they had no bad news, and no new news."

Since he wasn't sure how to react, the only thing Russell knew to do was go to work.

"The very next day, I thought I'd go crazy, sitting around waiting and not knowing anything, so I went ahead and went to class," said Russell. "I don't remember a lot about that day, but I do recall that I didn't have trouble from anyone that day. The kids were so sweet. I probably looked freaked out, and they knew to behave."

His students were acquainted with Jeff from his occasional work as his dad's substitute teacher, and they often asked about the soldier's condition.

"We didn't talk about it all the time, just when it was appropriate, and when the kids had questions," said Russell. "A lot of the kids know Jeff from the classroom, so they were interested in how he was."

Sandra's co-workers in the NSU Business Office were just as sympathetic to her motherly need to be by her son's side. When the Marine Corps arranged their trip to Washington, D.C., no one needed any explanations from her or Russell. Jeff's younger brother, Grant, 17, and little sister Mallory, 13, are happy to have him back home. But Russell is afraid that Jeff's experience won't hinder Grant's desire to join the Marines after he graduates from high school.

"Grant has already said he is going to go into the Marine Corps. But you never know. When he finishes school, he will be 18, so he has time to change his mind," said Russell. "But our daughter has already promised that she will not be joining the military."

You're invited

Everyone is invited to join in the "Welcome Home" celebration for U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Jeff Hudgens at noon Saturday, April 23, at Cherokee Landing on Lake Tenkiller. Jeff's parents, Russell and Sandra Hudgens, will host the event in their son's honor, and will use the opportunity to thank the community for all the support they have received since their son was injured during a tour of duty in Iraq.

Marine's Twin Loses Leg In Iraq

(April 14, 2005) By Lance Cpl. Darhonda V. Hall, MCRD/ERR PARRIS ISLAND, S.C.

"I asked my senior drill instructor three questions before I made the phone call.

'Is there something wrong with my brother?'

'Yes.'

'Is he dead?'

'No.'

“I forced down tears and asked if his body was still intact ... he told me he didn't know and that we would find that out today."

Days before Pfc. Ryan Rice went through the Crucible, an essential training aspect of recruit training, he and his senior drill instructor, Staff Sgt. Jorge Melendez, received word that Rice's fraternal twin brother had been involved in a land mine explosion while in Iraq and was injured in the midst of the explosion.

His brother had his left leg amputated 9 inches below the knee and received pieces of shrapnel to his left eye and right arm.

"I cried," Ryan said with a choked voice. "I cried and I prayed."

Ryan's brother, Lance Cpl. Aaron Rice, a reserve artilleryman, had gone through recruit training a year earlier than him and graduated in April 2004. Aaron enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserves with the military occupational specialty of field artillery and was stationed in Mississippi with a reserve unit.

The unit was slated to deploy in January, the same month in which Ryan would be shipped off to recruit training.

"We didn't join together because we were in different states of mind," said Aaron. "I told him that if he wanted to go ... just go, and I would decide want I wanted to do later," agreed Ryan.

The twins were in college when Aaron chose to enlist in the Marine Corps.

"Before I left, I told (Ryan) that he would want to do the same thing as me," Aaron joked lightly.

Weeks after Aaron graduated from Marine Combat Training and his military occupational specialty school, his unit was slated to deploy to Iraq.

Aaron was sent to Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., for six weeks of training and from there, was shipped off to Iraq March 2. Sixteen days after his arrival in Iraq, Aaron experienced combat action from an enemy land mine.

"There was a lot of activity all morning," Aaron explained. "Kilo Company had gotten mortared early."

Ryan's eyes watered as he listened closely to his brother's story.

"Our unit went on a Personal Security Detail with the battalion sergeant major and the executive officer. We drove off the road and tried to stay in each vehicle's tracks. I was the driver of my vehicle, and somehow, we got slightly off of the tracks in front of us."

Aaron held his breath and shook nervously as he continued with his story.

"There was no warning ... we heard a giant 'boom!' and the next thing I remember was that I was on the ground. My first instinct was to check my legs."

"When I looked down, my left boot was in my lap and I thought, 'Oh Lord, please let me keep at least one of my legs.' I looked to my right and saw my right leg underneath the vehicle."

Aaron explained that the mine hit directly under the vehicle's front driver side tire. "I heard my platoon sergeant yell, 'Incoming!' and then another sergeant yelled, 'Rice is hit, Rice is hit.' As soon as the sergeant said I was hit, Lance Cpl. Corbin, I thank God for him everyday, reached under my arms and grabbed me. He pulled me from under the vehicle."

Aaron said that his fellow Marines had already cleared a building and provided security for it.

"I really appreciate how quickly the unit responded and radioed for a [Medical evacuation]."

Local Soldier Wounded; “He's Not Eager To Return”

04/12/05 WTVO Lanark, Illinois

Spc. Ryan Hubbard is spending a lot of time resting at home in Lanark. **He was injured three weeks ago in Iraq while serving as a security escort for a convoy headed into a war zone. [This has to be the reporters' opinion. The whole country is a war zone.]**

"It came over the radio that they were getting small arms fire along with it," Hubbard says. "So I moved up and got into position where we were trained to get into, and the gunner, he was firing back, everything was going good...and then somehow a bullet came through and hit me."

The bullet ended up damaging nerves in his right leg, but luckily missed internal organs. He was quickly rushed to Baghdad to undergo surgery.

"Before I went into surgery, there was somebody walking around in the hospital in Baghdad with a cell phone and I was laying there somewhat conscious and I called my dad on his cell phone and told him what happened," Hubbard says.

His father, Larry, remembers getting the early morning call: "I knew that mentally he was all right because he had to remember my cell phone number from his memory so that was a big boost for me that at least I got to talk to him."

The 24-year-old still strongly believes in the U.S's mission in Iraq, but after his experience, he's not eager to return. He will go back though if he's called for duty. For now, his mission is simply to heal.

Got That Right

April 13, 2005 Dani Barley Green Left Weekly

The US military makes a $72-million dollar profit through its GI Bill Fund, largely because of the difficult conditions placed on accessing the fund.

Big Rise In British Deserters 'Fuelled By Iraq War'

[Thanks to CZ, who sent this in.]

April 13, 2005 Richard Norton-Taylor and Audrey Gillan, The Guardian

The number of soldiers to desert the army or go absent without leave has more than doubled over the past year, the Ministry of Defence has revealed. There are now more than 500 soldiers whose whereabouts are unknown.

The rise coincided with the invasion of Iraq and its aftermath. Independent sources said yesterday that the war was clearly a factor. However, the rising trend over four years

suggests that other issues also played a part. The number of soldiers still illegally absent last year totalled 530, compared with 205 in 2003, 150 in 2002, and 100 in 2001.

The figures show that soldiers went Awol more than 3,000 times last year, with only a third of that figure accounting for returns to base within 21 days. The largest number of soldiers going Awol came from the infantry, followed by the Royal Logistic Corps and the Royal Artillery, according to the MoD.

The figures were released to Bob Russell, the Liberal Democrat MP for Colchester, a garrison town. **Though he first asked for the information in January, the MoD did not respond until it was too late for him to pursue the matter.**

The response to his original question came more than two months later in a letter from the armed forces minister, Adam Ingram. "The mere fact they took so long to answer the question is significant," Mr Russell said yesterday.

He asked for the information after being told by a source that a growing number of soldiers disapproved of the government's stand on Iraq.

Gilbert Blades, a lawyer representing Awol soldiers, said Iraq was "probably the biggest factor".

But he said a growing number of young soldiers were also not prepared to "suffer the indignities and discipline" of army life.

Justin Houston-Roberts, who also represents soldiers, said: "There's been a very noticeable increase of not only soldiers but airmen as well asking our advice on being absent without leave," he said.

"Some are subjected to horrific bullying and run away to save themselves ... There are huge amounts of reasons but the conflict in Iraq is significant."

He added: "When the conflict started we had a very noticeable increase in requests to assist soldiers who wanted to leave the services or had done so without permission.

Mark McGhee, another solicitor, said: "Certainly from my experience of dealing with soldiers returning from Iraq, I would be very concerned about the fact that there's been a doubling up of the numbers going Awol."

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.

THE PHOTO SAYS IT ALL:

NO FRIENDS
NO HOPE
NO WIN
TIME TO GET THE FUCK OUT

A U.S. Army soldier searches a hooded Iraqi soldier at a checkpoint in Baghdad on February 25, 2005. REUTERS/Ali Jasim

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)

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

12 Occupation Cops Blown Up Near Kirkuk, Including Officer In Charge Of Protecting Oil Fields

April 13. 2005 By TRACI CARL, Associated Press Writer & CNN & IRIB & Ned Parker, AFP

Near the northern city of Kirkuk, 12 policemen who had gathered to help dismantle an apparent decoy bomb were killed by an explosion Wednesday near a pipeline, police said, including Colonel Natham Abdullah, in charge of protecting the region's lucrative oil fields. Three others were wounded.

Police Brig. Sarhat Qadir said the explosion took place 10 miles northwest of Kirkuk as police were trying to cordon off the area. **He said officials believed the bomb being dismantled was a decoy to draw in more police before the second bomb exploded.**

The fatal bombing just north of Kirkuk struck security forces charged with guarding the infrastructure of that region's oil industry, which has been victimized by saboteurs.

Iraqi security forces and Northern Oil Co. officials said two of the 12 killed were officers in the Oil Guards unit.

Resistance Action

4.13.05 CNN & (Xinhuanet)

Wednesday, a high-ranking official with Iraq's Interior Ministry was critically wounded when gunmen attacked his car as he drove to work, Iraqi police said.

Col. Naji Hussein and his driver were wounded by small arms fire while driving through the al-Dora district of southeast Baghdad, police said.

Unidentified militants attacked a convoy of police vehicles southwest of Samarra, the northern Iraqi city, wounding three bodyguards of the interior minister, the US military and Iraqi police said.

"Gunmen opened fire at the convoy of the interior minister Falahal-Naqib, who was not in the vehicles, and wounded three of his bodyguards," the joint center of Iraqi-US forces said in a statement.

Captured American Capitalist Shown On Video

April 13. 2005 By TRACI CARL, Associated Press Writer & Michiana Telecasting Corp

An Indiana man was shown at gunpoint on a videotape aired by Al-Jazeera television Wednesday, two days after he was kidnapped from a water treatment plant near Baghdad. The station said he pleaded for his life and urged U.S. troops to withdraw from Iraq.

The U.S. Embassy said the man on the video appeared to be Jeffrey Ake, a contract worker who was kidnapped around noon Monday. **[Bullshit. He's not any kind of "worker." He's a corporate CEO that went to Iraq to make money off the Occupation. That's called a war profiteer. See next article below. Too fucking bad.]**

Ake - the 47-year-old president and CEO of Equipment Express, a company that manufacturers bottled water equipment - is the latest of more than 200 foreigners seized in Iraq in the past year.

The Al-Jazeera tape showed a man sitting behind a desk with at least three assailants - two hooded and one off-camera - pointing assault rifles at him. Ake, wearing an open-collar shirt with rolled-up shirt sleeves, was sitting or kneeling behind a wooden desk and holding what appeared to be a photo and a passport.

In 2003, Equipment Express built a machine that filled containers with cooking oil to be used by Iraqis. The company also built a system to provide water bottles to be sold in Baghdad. [As if Iraqis haven't been filling their own cooking oil containers and figuring out how to store water for about 3000 years.]

Ake is the current president and founder of Equipment Express of Rolling Prairie, Indiana.

Ake founded the company back in 1995.

Today, Equipment Express manufactures, installs, and services a complete line of liquid packaging equipment including a complete line of filling, capping, and labeling machinery.

The Michiana company serves a wide range of customer types ranging from start-ups to Fortune 500 companies like Procter and Gamble and Cola-Cola.

Since its inception, the company has seen extraordinary growth and has rapidly become an industry standout more than doubling in size each year in existence.

MORE:

Equipment Express Again Lends Hand In Iraq

Wednesday, November 19, 2003
The LaPorte Herald Argus

ROLLING PRAIRIE -Equipment Express is again helping with the rebuilding effort in Iraq.

A Western European country that company president Jeff Ake couldn't identify because of contractual reasons hired the Rolling Prairie company to construct an integrated system that will provide water bottles to be sold in Baghdad.

A second system for Iraq will be built in January.

Equipment Express began construction on the system Nov. 3, completed the work Tuesday and will ship it out today. It should arrive in Baghdad around Christmas.

"We're called Equipment Express because we are fast. ***It's exciting to be part of the rebuilding effort," Ake said.***

In April, Equipment Express constructed a machine that fills edible oil into containers to be used for Iraqi residents. Much of the Middle East needs the edible oil because it's used in so much of the people's cooking.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

One Way Of Looking At It…….

Beirut, Lebanon March 25, 2005 (Lefturn.org)

“Now I Am The Viet Cong.”
A Soldiers’ Story

Stan Goff: APISC Conference 2005

[Part 1]

After reflection on my two decades plus of service, I am convinced that I only served the richest one percent of my country.

December 22, 1999 By Stan Goff, Consortiumnews.com. Editor's Note: ***Stan Goff served in the U.S. military for two decades, much of the time with Special Forces training Third World armies.*** *He retired from the U.S. Army in February 1996, after serving in Vietnam, Guatemala, El Salvador, Grenada, Panama, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela, Honduras, Somalia and Haiti. He lives in Raleigh, N.C.*

Tolemaida is hot. The whole Sumapaz River Valley is hotter than hell.

Steep, semi-arid, plenty of thorns and mosquitoes, it's the perfect place for the Lancero School, where the Colombian military runs its toughest course of training and assessment.

About 70 miles south of Bogota, Tolemaida is also home of Colombian Special Forces, kind of like the Fort Bragg of Colombia.

I'd been married for the second time for only 10 days on Oct. 22, 1992, when 7th Special Forces sent me there.

Bill Clinton was campaigning for the presidency against George Bush, and I remember the Delta guys who were billeted alongside us shrieking and carrying on when the election results came through. "That faggot lovin' draft dodger! Shit!"

Delta was there training a select group of Colombian soldiers for "close-quarter battle," which means fighting inside buildings during hostage situations and the like. We were training two battalions of Colombian Special Forces in night helicopter operations and counterinsurgency tactics.

Of course, we were there helping the Colombian army to defend democracy against leftist guerrillas who were the foes of democracy. It mattered not that only a tiny fraction of the population had the means to recruit and promote candidates or that terror stalked the population.

I'm not being cynical. I'm just awake now. It took a couple of decades.

Growing up, I lived in a neighborhood where everyone worked in the same plant, McDonnell-Douglas, where F-4 Phantoms were built to provide close air support for the troops in Vietnam.

My dad and mom both riveted, working on the center fuselage assembly. I just understood that it was my duty to fight the godless collectivist menace of communism.

So, I joined the Army seven months after I squeaked through high school. In 1970, I volunteered for the airborne infantry and for Vietnam.

In the years that followed, I found out that I didn't know communism from cobblestones. All I saw in Vietnam was a race war being conducted by an invading army, and very poor people were taking the brunt of it.

I left the Army after my first hitch, but poverty coaxed me back in in 1977. Soon, I had stepped onto the slippery slope of a military career. But I didn't like garrison soldiering and I did like to travel.

So, it was inevitable that I ended up in Special Operations, first with the Rangers, later with Special Forces.

In 1980, I went to Panama. The fences there separated us from the “Zonies” -- the slum dwellers who lived in the Canal Zone. After that, I went to El Salvador, Guatemala and a host of other dirt-poor countries.

Over and over, the fact that we as a nation seemed to take sides with the rich against the poor started to penetrate -- first my preconceptions, then my rationalizations, and finally, my consciousness.

Now I am the Viet Cong.

1983:

The former Special Forces guy posing as a political officer didn't even try to hide his real job at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala.

"You with the political section?" I asked. I knew what he did. I was trying to be discreet.

"I'm a fuckin' CIA agent," he responded.

The CIA man had adopted me out of friendship for a mutual acquaintance, one of my work associates with whom he had served in Vietnam. The CIA man told me where to get the best steak, the best ceviche, the best music, the best martinis. He liked martinis.

We stopped off one afternoon at the El Jaguar Bar in the lobby of the El Camino Hotel, a mile up Avenida de la Reforma from the U.S. Embassy. He drank eight martinis in the first hour.

The CIA man began spontaneously relating how he had participated in the execution of a successful ambush "up north," two weeks earlier.

"North" was in the Indian areas: Quiche and Peten, where government troops were waging a scorched-earth campaign against Mayans considered sympathetic to leftist guerrillas.

He was elated. "Best fuckin' thing I got to do since Nam."

"You're talkin' kinda loud," I reminded him, thinking this must be pretty sensitive stuff.

"Fuck them!" he shot a circumferential glare. "We own this motherfucker!" The other patrons looked down at their table tops. The CIA man was big and manifestly drunk.

I should have known better, but I mentioned a Mayan schoolteacher who had just been assassinated by the esquadrones de muertos. It had been in the newspapers. The teacher had worked for the Agency for International Development.

My point was that it made the United States look bad, when these loose cannons pulled stunts like that. The impression was left that the U.S. government tacitly approved of assassinations by continuing to support Guatemala's government.

"He was a communist," stated the CIA man, without even pausing to toss down his dozenth martini. His eyes were getting that weird, stony, not-quite-synchronized look.

So that's how it was. I never thought to thank him for peeling that next layer of innocence off my eyes.

I had to take the CIA man’s car keys from him that night. He wanted to drive to some whorehouse in Zone 1.

When we left the bar, he couldn't find his car in the parking lot, so he pulled his pistol on the attendant and threatened to shoot him on the spot. He accused the attendant of being part of a car theft gang.

"I know these motherfuckers," he glared. The attendant was almost in tears, when I wrested the pistol from my colleague’s hand.

We proceeded to find his car in the lot one block away. That's when he started talking about driving to his favorite bordello.

"Gimme the keys!" he bellowed, as I danced away from him.

"I can't."

"I'll kick your ass," he said.

I reached into my pocket and grabbed three coins. When he lunged at me again, I tossed the coins into a street drain with a conspicuous jingle.

"There's the keys," I said.

He peered myopically into the drain for a moment, then tried to train his eyes on me. I dodged his staggering assault like he was a child. He almost fell, and I found myself wondering how I could possibly carry him.

He turned abruptly, like he'd just forgotten something, and tottered quietly away. I dropped his keys off at the political section the next day, with a note explaining where his car was.

Fred Chapin was the U.S. ambassador in Guatemala. He was famous for his ability to drink a bottle of Scotch and still give a lucid interview in fluent Spanish, before his bodyguards carried him up to his room at la residencia and poured him into bed.

Chapin was credited with a well-known quote in Foreign Service circles: "I only regret that I have but one liver to give for my country."

Embassies are collections of these idiosyncratic characters.

Mauricio, another one of these exotic individuals, was the chief Guatemalan investigator assigned to work with the Security Section at the embassy.

Dissipated to a fault, even the thugs on the bodyguard details gave him a wide berth. His reputation as a sadistic former death squad member was well known.

His history was on him, like an aura of impersonal decay. He made the hair stand up on the back of my neck. "If you need to find something out, just send Mauricio" was the provincial wisdom at Security.

Langhorn Motley, Reagan's special ambassador to Central America, came to Guatemala to see what was being done with U.S. money, other than aboriginal genocide and the elimination of Bolshevik school teachers, of course.

I was assigned as a member of his security for a trip to Nebaj, a tiny Indian hamlet near the Mexican border. We were going to inspect a hospital.

There were no roads into Nebaj, so a helicopter was coordinated. When we finally arrived in Nebaj, the pilot and crew chief were in an animated conversation, both referring again and again to the fuel gauge.

Out of the helicopter, we were escorted through the dirt streets to an open-bed 2 1/2-ton truck by a corpulent, European-looking Guatemalan lieutenant colonel. The villagers stood in silence as we passed.

Two small children, maybe three years old, burst into hysterical tears when I walked too near them with my CAR-15 assault rifle. I tried not to speculate about their reaction or its antecedents.

The truck took us to a dusty stone foundation. Nothing more. No rooms, no walls, no nothing. This was the hospital. Motley turned to me and said, "This is a fuckin' white elephant."

Later, the lieutenant colonel sat us in a room at his headquarters and trotted in two "former guerrillas." One was a skinny old man.

The other was a pregnant woman, around 25 years old.

They told us dutifully that they had been reformed by their new-found understanding of the duplicity of the communists and by the humanitarian treatment they had received at the hands of the soldiers.

It was a flat-eyed, canned recital, but it seemed to please the lieutenant colonel who sat there with a benevolent half-smile, glancing from them to us and back, judging their performance, assessing our reaction.

The skin of the two demonstration Indians almost moved from underneath with an arid, copper-tongued terror. The whole place smelled like murder to me.

Like murder.

1985:

Reporters in El Salvador tended to hang out at the pool in the Camino Real Hotel, with transistor radios pressed to their ears.

I was chatting up a member of the press corps one day, having lunch at the Camino. Around 30, she worked for the Chicago Tribune.

She was just terribly excited because she had been allowed aboard a helicopter the week before, that flew into Morazan, a stronghold of leftist guerrillas. She got to see some bang-bang and was eternally grateful to the Embassy for arranging it for her.

Would I mind, she asked, taking her out for coffee or a drink somewhere in the barrios sometime? She would never think of doing it alone.

I was disillusioned. With her anemic weariness, she annihilated my concept of reporters as eccentric fearless old salts, obsessed with getting at the real story.

Bruce Hazelwood was a member of the Milgroup at the U.S. Embassy, like me a former member of the counter-terrorist unit at Fort Bragg. Hazelwood oversaw training management in the Estado Mayor, army headquarters.

Over the past five years, he had earned an enviable reputation as a productive liaison with the Salvadoran military. He told me off the cuff once that his biggest problem was getting the officers to quit stealing.

Good-looking, strawberry blonde, freckled, charming, Hazelwood also was a favorite of the young women with the press corps.

I went with him and an Embassy entourage to visit an orphanage at Sonsonate. The women from the press pool absolutely doted on him. He rewarded them with tons of mischievous magnetism.

Billy Zumwalt, also with the Milgroup, a fellow with Elvis-like looks, did the same thing at a party. The women from the press would skin up alongside him, asking how he thought progress was coming with the human rights situation. He would ask them how it seemed to them.

Well, they'd say, there were only a few battlefield executions of prisoners still taking place, according to rumors, but they'd heard nothing else. We can't expect them to come around overnight, now, can we?

Would you like to go dancing at an all night club later? You know where one is? I know where they all are, he'd tell them.

Zumwalt told me at a bar once that he was training the finest right-wing death squads in the world.

The reporters at the Camino Real hired Salvadoran rich kids as informants and factotums. It was very important that they be educated, English-speaking kids, 20 to 25 years old, who could keep the reporters abreast of rumors and happenings in the capital.

But the rich kids were as far from the lives of average Salvadorans as were most of the reporters.

In the street, I saw an old woman dragging herself down the sidewalk with a gangrenous leg, a crazy man shriveled in a corner, bone-skinny kids who played music for coins with a pipe and a stick.

On the bus one day in downtown San Salvador, a blind man came begging, and people who could ill afford it gave him a coin.

These people were callused, very modestly dressed, with Indian still in their cheeks.

To the slick, manicured, round-eyed, well-to-do, the poor and the beggars were invisible, as invisible as the blackened carboneros, the worm-glutted market babies, the brooding teens with raggedy clothes, prominent ribs and red eyes glaring out of the spotty shade on street corners.

They have to be invisible so they can be ignored. They have to be sub-human so they can be killed.

I was reminded of the goats at the Special Forces Medical Lab. When I was training to be a medic, we used goats as "patient models."

The goats would be wounded for trauma training, shot for surgical training, and euthanized over time by the hundreds for each 14-week class.

Nearly every student upon arrival would begin expressing his antipathy for the caprine breed. "A goat is a dumb creature, hard-headed, homely," we'd say.

A few acknowledged what the program was actually doing without seeking these comfortable rationalizations. A few even became attached to the animals and grew more depressed with each day.

But most required the anti-caprine ideology to sustain their activity.

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

In Fallujah, U.S. Envoy Must Hide From The Resistance; Security Situation "Tenuous"

April 14, 2005 By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer & Edward Harris, & Liz Sidoti AP

FALLUJAH, Iraq, April 13

The most senior Bush administration official to venture into the city since Marines captured it last fall, Zoellick had expected to tour a water pumping station and a bread-making factory to observe signs of the city's progress. But Zoellick was confined to a caravan of armored transport vehicles.

Deputy Secretary of State Robert B. Zoellick paid a surprise visit Wednesday to this former insurgent stronghold to view the pace of reconstruction and meet with local officials. He was greeted with an earful of complaints.

His trip appeared intended to demonstrate that normality was returning to what was once a symbol of the Sunni Muslim resistance. Yet Zoellick, who wore body armor under his suit jacket, was told by military commanders that he could not leave his armored Humvee because of security concerns during the lightning tour of the shattered downtown.

His heavily armored motorcade briefly paused to gaze at a revived water-treatment plant.

Marines said the security situation in the city remained tenuous, although daily attacks were down.

The motorcade then moved so quickly past an open-air bakery reopened with a U.S.-provided micro-loan that workers tossing dough could be glanced only in a blink of an eye. Patrols moved carefully down streets looking for hidden explosive devices.

A one-hour session with the city's recently elected leaders was held downtown in a heavily guarded Marine enclave, in a sweltering room with windows covered with sandbags.

At first, Zoellick heard words of praise for the U.S. intervention. But as he prodded the officials to air their concerns, a torrent of complaints poured out, focusing on such issues as the slow pace of reconstruction aid, frequent intimidation of citizens by American soldiers and the inability to buy fresh produce because of military checkpoints.

Some officials said residents weren't being paid enough compensation for all that had been destroyed.

They also complained of unsafe drinking water, an inadequate sewer system **and little food aside from rationed goods.** Residents fretted about not having enough jobs.

State Department fact sheets on Fallujah claim that 95 percent of its residents have water available in their homes and that $40 million is being spent to overhaul water plants. But when Zoellick asked Khlaid Jumaly, chairman of the city council, if most people have safe drinking water, the answer suggested they did not.

"The drinking water is not really safe for health," Jumaly, who had a long salt-and-pepper beard and wore a white turban, replied though an interpreter. "The whole sewer system is in very bad shape."

Zoellick said he had just seen the rebuilt water treatment plant and wondered whether that would ease the problem. Jumaly said the repairs were insufficient and even damaging. "The people who are working on the sewer are not very clear about what they are doing," he said.

Zoellick acknowledged later that some of the images in Fallujah were troubling.

"When you travel the country, you look at the rubble and you look at the devastation, you know there is a long way to go," he told reporters traveling with him.

"And when you are putting on vests for security, you know that there is still danger out there."

After listening intently, Zoellick told Fallujah's leaders: "I know it won't be easy. There will be many days of frustration, even threats. We can help, but you have to make it happen." **[The Imperial envoy need not worry. It would appear from this account that the resistance is indeed "making it happen."]**

Zoellick and his entourage arrived in Baghdad early Wednesday and then boarded two Black Hawk helicopters for Fallujah, skimming the tops of palm trees and electrical wires to thwart possible snipers or surface-to-air missiles.

Then the officials moved into eight armored vehicles, mostly Humvees, for the tour of the city.

His trip, like Rumsfeld's, was kept secret for security reasons.

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

High-Tech Innovation Sets The Edge In War On Insurgents

April 13, 2005 Baghdad (FK) By Ahmed Al-Habbabi

A state-of-the-art fighting vehicle recently deployed in Iraq implements a breakthrough technology to minimize road resistance and tire wear.

In an exclusive interview with the inventor of what is unofficially dubbed the star-wars on wheels vehicle (SWOW), it was disclosed that the idea was originally stimulated by a statement made by Secretary Rumsfeld shortly before the war on Iraq.

In reference to the Iraqi facilities that were hard at work producing WMDs, the secretary declared emphatically that he knew exactly where they were; namely around Tikrit and Baghdad, and to the north and south of that area, as well as to the east and to the west of there.

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