

GI SPECIAL 3B16:

Pentagon Report on Abu Ghraib Exonerates Top Officers



“The Troops Should Be Home. There’s No Need For This”
Wake Held For Fallen Nashua Soldier

[Thanks to Desmond, who sent this in.]

Tina, a specialist in the reserves, said she was angered that Lozada died fighting a “senseless” war. “Honestly, I’m speechless. The troops should be home. There’s no need for this,” she said.

Apr. 25, 2005 By MICHAEL BRINDLEY, Telegraph Staff

NASHUA – Gus Rodriguez was always looking out for his younger brother, Angelo Lozada Jr., as they grew up together in Brooklyn.

Last weekend, Lozada, a 36-year-old sergeant in the Army Reserves, was killed in combat in Ar Ramadi, Iraq.

Now grieving his brother's death, Rodriguez, a pastor in New York City, continues to look over Lozada and the rest of the family, leading the family in prayer at Lozada's wake Sunday at Davis Funeral Home in Nashua.

"We've always been a close-knit family. We've always been there for each other," Rodriguez said, adding that he spoke mostly of God and family in the prayer.

Lozada lived in Nashua before re-enlisting in the reserves in 2000. He was stationed with the 17th Field Artillery Regiment of the 2nd Infantry Division's 2nd Combat Brigade in Camp Hovey, South Korea.

While living in Nashua, Lozada worked in several different capacities, including taking care of handicapped people. Several members of Lozada's family still live in the city, including his parents, three of his fourth brothers, his two sisters and three children.

Lozada had just become a grandfather and was due home in two weeks.

Nearly everyone from the family was there Sunday and those who couldn't make it plan on coming today for the second wake, Rodriguez said. Family friends came to pay their respects, as did several local soldiers and veterans. Rodriguez said he shared many fond memories from childhood as he spoke in front of his family. He said many of his siblings were simply too emotional to speak. As a pastor, Rodriguez has helped hundreds of families cope with death. But now he must learn to cope with it.

"It's never easy. It's never something you can prepare for," Rodriguez said.

As they pulled in just after noon, Lozada's siblings expressed their thoughts with messages on their back windshields.

"R.I.P. my brother, Angelo," read the back of sister Angela Jiminez's car. "I love you and miss you," read brother Antonio Lozada's car.

Several employees of Delta Education Inc. in Nashua came to pay their respects. Angelo Lozada Sr. and brother Louis Lozada both work there.

Robert and Tina Pavlakos of Nashua both work at Delta Education and came Sunday.

Tina, a specialist in the reserves, said she was angered that Lozada died fighting a "senseless" war. "Honestly, I'm speechless. The troops should be home. There's no need for this," she said.

Three of Lozada's nieces, Nanetta Gonzalez and Christina Cruz of Nashua and Esther Rodriguez of Brooklyn, said they remembered their uncle's sense of humor. They also remembered his passion for family.

"No matter what, he'd always be there for us. He'd always take me for drives when he came to New York," Rodriguez said.

Five family friends from New York City talked outside the funeral home about their memories of Lozada. "We left as soon as we heard. There was no doubt we would be here for the family," said Fabricio Diaz of Queens, N.Y.

Diaz drove up with Ernie Arman, Jose Santos, Greg Villanueva and Ed Gudarrama, all of Brooklyn. They got into Nashua on Friday night. The group went to high school together in Brooklyn and played sports with Lozada.

Diaz said he was not surprised that Lozada decided to dedicate his life to serving his country.

"His character – he was a soldier. We're all very proud of him," Diaz said. "He was amazing," Villanueva said.

Diaz also questioned whether Lozada had to die, saying he has questions about the war in Iraq and whether the troops should still be there.

"As far as the war goes, I think a lot of us have questions about it," he said.

Evelyn Cruz of Nashua, a family friend, had a difficult time containing her emotions trying to describe what she remembers about Lozada.

"I just see his smile. He was always laughing and smiling. He was such a beautiful person. It's such a great loss. There's nothing bad you can say about the man. I just wanted to be there for the family and Angela," she said, referring to Lozada's sister.

Carlos Perez of Nashua, a close family friend for about 10 years, said he remembers Lozada as a "good father and a good man." "He always had good family values. I just want to be here today to comfort the family," he said.

Lozada will be buried in New Hampshire State Veterans Cemetery in Boscawen on Tuesday.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

FOUR TASK FORCE FREEDOM SOLDIERS KILLED, TWO INJURED BY TALL AFAR IED

April 30, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 05-04-33C

MOSUL, Iraq - Four Task Force Freedom Soldiers were killed, and two were injured by an improvised explosive device attack in Tal Afar Thursday, April 28. The injured Soldiers were taken to a combat hospital for treatment.

Marine Killed In Khaldiya

01 May 2005 Aljazeera.Net

In western Iraq, a soldier was killed on Saturday by gunfire in Khaldiya, 120km west of Baghdad. The soldier was assigned to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force.

Four U.S. Soldiers Hurt In Wreck

4/30/2005 By Bushra Juhi, Associated Press

Four U.S. soldiers in a convoy were wounded when their Humvee rolled into a ditch late Friday night near Abu Ghraib prison, west of Baghdad, the U.S. military said Saturday.

Big Car Bomb Hits Abu Ghraib Prison: Casualties Not Announced Yet

April 30 (KUNA)

A big explosion rocked the front gate of Abu Ghraib prison outside Baghdad Saturday morning as an American patrol passed nearby, according to Iraqi police.

A police spokesman told KUNA that a booby trapped car was detonated by a remote control device, but details of damage and casualties were not available yet.

Hawaii Marine Units KIA Rate Nearly 10%

Honolulu Advertiser, April 27, 2005

For 500 Hawaii Marines, the touchdown of their flights marked the official end to a 10-month deployment in which they faced intense house-to-house fighting in Fallujah **and the loss of 46 Marine brethren.**

Casualty-Hit Marines Used Dummies To Fool Rebels: Losses 1/3rd Of Company; Got Useless Maps, No Armor

April 27 2005 London Telegraph

US marines who suffered the highest casualty rate of any unit in Iraq have revealed that they were so short of soldiers that they used cardboard dummies to fool insurgents into believing that they faced more men.

Company E of the First Marine Division dressed the cutouts in camouflage shirts and placed them in observation posts to trick Iraqi rebels into thinking that they were manned.

More than one third of the unit's 185 troops were killed or wounded during its six-month tour last year in Ramadi, an insurgent stronghold west of Fallujah, during which it was targeted by 26 firefights, 90 mortar attacks and nearly 100 home-made bombs.

When the unit arrived, none was fully armoured and the unit's commanders had to find scrap metal to line the sides and bottom of their vehicles.

It was also issued with maps that were several years out of date and showed urbanised areas still to be farmland.

[Invasion forces moving on Najaf and Karbala reported exactly the same problem: hopelessly outdated maps showing open areas which turned out to be urban areas. Obviously nothing has changed in over two years.]

TROOP NEWS

Every Hand In The Room Says Get The Troops Out Of Iraq NOW!

The salient point that seems to be forgotten by those reporting on this travesty is that we are an occupying force and no one likes an occupier, particularly when the occupation has been bungled at great cost in lives, American and Iraqi. (Not to mention nearly \$165 billion in tax dollars.)

April 28, 2005 By Ed Garvey, The Capital Times

It was the last question at the first "Lincoln-La Follette" Democratic dinner in Amery, Wis. (I know what you are thinking. Hey, Abe and "Fighting Bob" were Republicans. The answer from Amery was, "True, but today they would be Democrats. So we are adopting them.")

The woman asked, "Why is no one outraged by this war?"

I asked for a show of hands: "How many of you want to bring the troops home now?" Every hand went skyward but her question hung over the audience.

Where is the voice of the Democrats in Washington?

Are liberals like Hillary Clinton playing coy because they are running for president in 2008 and fear a Swift Boat attack like the one on John Kerry if they "abandon" the troops in a time of war?

Are they afraid not to be as "macho" as W?

The Progressive magazine put it succinctly: "The invasion was illegal and foolish in the first place. And the occupation has failed."

Can there be any serious argument among serious people with that conclusion? I don't think so.

The salient point that seems to be forgotten by those reporting on this travesty is that we are an occupying force and no one likes an occupier, particularly when the occupation has been bungled at great cost in lives, American and Iraqi. (Not to mention nearly \$165 billion in tax dollars.)

Last week Milwaukee County found it would be \$3 million in the red. The immediate reaction from governor-wannabe Scott Walker? Cut social services. (Why not pick on these, the least of our brothers and sisters, when he knows they won't vote for him?)

Guess how much this Iraq invasion has cost the city of Milwaukee in tax dollars - \$282 million. It has cost Madison \$128 million. Our two major cities have lost nearly half a billion dollars that will never be recovered while we fret over a \$3 million shortfall. If Walker was thinking, he would join in demanding we end the invasion.

Apparently it is impossible for our president to admit a mistake but the facts are in. The invasion was based on cooked books. There were no WMDs, and there was no threat from Saddam to this country's security, and Iraq was not involved in 9/11.

The big news ignored by the media is that this administration does not have an exit strategy now nor has it ever. We need one and we must bring our troops home.

There will be no peace until we leave. Leaving does not guarantee peace but, to recall the song of another misadventure, our leaving "will give peace a chance." Remaining for five more years is not a policy, it is a shoulder shrug.

The American people are sick of this invasion and occupation. They want the National Guard troops home and they want to stop the killing.

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.

Shit-Brained Lying Weasels At Pentagon Say Troops Just Love Stop-Loss; So It Will Go On and On And On

April 25, 2005 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer

Under congressional questioning, Army active-duty and reserve leaders said stop-loss policies for active and reserve personnel will remain in place for the foreseeable future.

In testimony before House and Senate subcommittees the week of April 11, officials tried to put a positive spin on that news, describing it as a beneficial policy that most affected members — about 6,660 active, 3,020 Army Reserve and 2,680 Army National Guard soldiers in January — do not really mind.

In fact, officials told the House Appropriations defense subcommittee, some soldiers use the 90-day post-deployment period before they are allowed to separate as time to reconsider their decision to leave at all.

**NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT THE NEW 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)

Sgt. Benderman Coming To Atlanta: Kevin & Monica Benderman Speaking At Georgia Tech

[Thanks to Desmond, who sent this in.]

Army sergeant and Iraq War veteran turned conscientious objector Kevin Benderman currently faces a May 11 court martial for refusing a second deployment to Iraq. Kevin and his wife Monica will be speaking out in Atlanta on the last weekend preceding his court martial.

Time/Date: 3-5 PM, May 7, 2005

Location: Georgia Tech in the Clary Theater, located in the Moore Student Success Center

Public is invited.

See <http://www.georgiapeace.org> for more information.

**“We Can Confidently Say We
Did Not Learn A Thing At Fort
Hood” ---
“Incompetent Training” For War**

4.29.05 By William Petroski, Des Moines (Iowa) Register

An Iowa Army National Guard commander has complained that incompetent training and other problems at an Army base in Texas last year shortchanged his unit's preparations for combat in Iraq, according to a report obtained by The Des Moines Register.

Capt. Aaron Baugher, whose detachment was the first Iowa infantry unit trained at Fort Hood before being deployed to Iraq, wrote in an "after-action report" that the 2004 training "was of very little value and poorly instructed" by soldiers who typically had never served in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Baugher's unit of 58 soldiers, the 194th Long-Range Surveillance Detachment, returned to Iowa in late February after nearly a year in Iraq.

"Having been in Iraq . . . conducting combat operations on a wide spectrum, we can confidently say we did not learn a thing at Fort Hood," Baugher wrote.

"This is like getting your football team on the first of August and you have a game on the first of September, and you are working pretty damn hard to get people ready, except in this situation people can die," said Col. Luke Green, chief of staff of the 5th U.S. Army.

Baugher's report said that in some instances, instructors were so inept that veteran Iowa soldiers intervened to correct them, and much of the training was so elementary it was insulting.

Baugher's critical report gives an insight into an Army system where such complaints usually do not become public knowledge.

Lack of equipment: The Iowa unit did not receive some key equipment before being deployed, including modern military radios needed to call in medical evacuation helicopters and additional combat support, Baugher said.

Once in Iraq, the Iowans had to borrow satellite communications gear from other military units until they received their own high-tech radios midway through their tour, he said.

"All of these issues build to one point, and that is a clear picture to the soldier and the leadership that they are not a priority and they are simply here to check a block on required training and get pushed out the door to Iraq with as little hassle to Fort Hood as possible," Baugher wrote.

MORE:

Military Disciplines AWOL Soldier Who Protested Deficient Training

Los Angeles Times, April 28, 2005

An Army National Guard soldier who went AWOL for 28 days rather than deploy to Iraq after what he called incomplete and inadequate training has been busted to private and assigned 45 days of extra duty, the soldier and a military spokeswoman said. The soldier, Joseph Jacobo, eventually changed his mind and is stationed in southern Baghdad.

Gay Ban: SSgt. Says: “It Is Time To Put Your Petty Bigotry Aside”

Letter To The Editor
Army Times
4.25.05

I am not a Christian, but please allow me to express my opinion as a soldier with an open mind regarding the “Homosexuality is wrong” letters in the April 4 issue.

First, homosexuals are not barred from military service for moral reasons. They are excluded from service because of a misguided notion that they are more promiscuous or sexually aggressive than heterosexuals.

That is a completely ludicrous thought.

Consider all of the problems with sexual harassment and assault females soldiers have to deal with from males.

Homosexuals are no more likely to make unwanted advances to an individual than any other person. If they do, they can be dealt with in the same manner as any other soldier guilty of sexual harassment.

I have even read a letter in Army Times that said homosexuals should not be allowed into service because they are not as loyal to their country as heterosexuals.

This is all ridiculous. Homosexuals are people. If they would like to serve their country, they should be allowed to do so without fear of persecution.

Wake up everyone. It is time to put your petty bigotry aside.

Staff Sgt. Raymond Andrews
Fort Carson, Colo.

MORE:

Let Gay Soldiers Serve Openly [Editorial]

(USA Today, April 28, 2005, Pg. 11)

Gays should be able to serve openly in the U.S. military. If they engage in sexual harassment or misconduct, they should be punished—just as heterosexual soldiers are punished for harassment or misconduct.

The supply of soldiers didn't dry up when the British army dropped its gay ban. And there is no reason to believe that America's MTV generation would act any differently if Congress junked this archaic law.

***2005 Vietnam:
Veterans Return:
“We Believed Our Government.
That Was Our Only Sin.”
"A Heinous, Barbarous Assault”
[2015 Iraq Reunion Next?]***

[Thanks to PB who sent this in.]

"We're the ones who led reconciliation. It was the veterans who came back and extended their arms to the people they fought. That's what a soldier does," said Patrick Wiggins of Tallahassee, Fla., one of the 10 returnees.

4.30.05 By DENIS D. GRAY, Associated Press Writer

The returning Americans had fought and killed in the children's country, their forces sowing the land with explosives that still take lives. But now a thousand young Vietnamese faced the group of U.S. veterans, smiled and chorused, "Thank you."

The "thank you" were for the help given by some of the 10 U.S. veterans who had come back three decades after the conflict to end the killing and crippling, and find their own personal peace with a receding but still vivid past.

"I carry the war with me every day," said Christos Cotsakos, wounded while fighting not far from this central Vietnam village in some of the war's bloodiest battles. For the past 37 years, he's had a now yellowing newspaper story tucked in his wallet which reports the deaths of three close buddies in his squad.

It was Cotsakos, a multimillionaire pioneer of online financial services, who donated funds to start the effort to rid Quang Tri province, the most heavily

bombed and shelled area of Vietnam, of what he calls "a heinous, barbarous assault on innocent kids."

"I tell vets, `We didn't come here to kill Vietnamese people. We believed our government. That was our only sin. We came here to help the Vietnamese people, so let's come back and finish what we started," says Suel Jones, a twice-wounded Marine veteran from Houston who runs the Vietnam Friendship Village Project.

"We're the ones who led reconciliation. It was the veterans who came back and extended their arms to the people they fought. That's what a soldier does," said Patrick Wiggins of Tallahassee, Fla., one of the 10 returnees.

War Profiteers Get Light Slap

Washington Post, April 28, 2005, 2004, Pg. E5

Federal contractor Science Applications International has agreed to settle a lawsuit alleging the company defrauded the Air Force by padding its bills on \$24 million in contracts, the Justice Department said. Under the agreement, the company will pay the government \$2.5 million but will not acknowledge any wrongdoing.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

4/30/2005 By Bushra Juhi, Associated Press & Agence France Presse & 29 April 2005 Aljazeera.net

A car bomb exploded Saturday near the offices of the National Dialogue Council, a coalition of 10 Sunni Arab factions. One guard, sitting outside in a car, was killed, while 10 people, three of them guards, were wounded.

The council was one of a number of moderate Sunni groups that took part in negotiations for the new cabinet line-up unveiled Thursday, to the fury of insurgents.

Another car bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol exploded Saturday near the Mohammad Rasoul Allah Mosque in eastern Baghdad, killing two Iraqi women and a girl, and seriously wounding four soldiers, police Lt. Col. Ahmed Abboud Effait said.

Two Iraqis a policeman and a former official in Saddam Hussein's Baath Party also died in shootings Saturday in Baghdad, police said.

In Mosul, a car bomb exploded near a police patrol, killing a woman who was passing by and wounding four policemen, said Dr. Abdul Sattar Ramadhan al-Khalidi at Mosul's Jimhuri Hospital. Two of the four policemen were seriously wounded, said Izzaddin Mohammed, another doctor there.

"A suicide car bomb targeted a police convoy in Zanjeeli, western Mosul, around 10:30 am" police Major Mohammed Fathi told AFP.

Elsewhere in the city, guerrillas opened fire on a separate police patrol, wounding two officers, al-Khalidi said.

Also in Mosul, gunmen opened fire on a police patrol in the western district of Al Zuhur wounding two officers before making their escape, Lieutenant Mudar Mohammed told AFP.

A US oil tanker was set ablaze when fighters launched a rocket-propelled grenade attack targeting a US military convoy in al-Yusifiya south of Baghdad.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

"You're not supposed to be so blind with patriotism that you can't face reality. Wrong is wrong no matter who does it or who says it." Malcolm X.

In Iraq, An Echo Of Algiers

April 28, 2005 George F. Will, Washington Post,

A nagging question is whether, in Iraq as in Algeria, time is on the side of the insurgents. **In Algeria, French counterinsurgency measures were skillful, ruthless and, by late 1958, successful. Briefly. In 1962 France withdrew.**

A Soldiers' Revolution: Portugal 1974: Part 2

The soldiers of SUV no longer wanted to desert. Instead, one of their main demands was the right of soldiers to remain in their units in the army.

In this new stage many young soldiers now wanted to stay in their unit, their army. It was now the military establishment that wanted to get rid of troublemakers in the ranks and assure absolute, unquestioning discipline.

From: LEFT FACE, Soldier Unions and Resistance Movements in Modern Armies, By DAVID CORTRIGHT AND MAX WATTS; Contributions in Military Studies, Number 107; GREENWOOD PRESS, New York • Westport, Connecticut • London

The SUV: Soldiers United Will Win

Just when the revolution seemed lost for good, a quite unexpected development occurred. An independent rank-and-file movement arose among low-ranking soldiers. For three months in the latter half of 1975 a few thousand nineteen-year-old recruits, abandoned and reviled by their superiors kept the revolution alive.

Who were these soldiers who thought and acted as if they could change history? How and why did they challenge the power structure?

The facts are easy to summarize.

In early September 1975 some soldiers in the northern city of Porto issued manifestos and demonstrated in the streets. They called themselves Soldados Unidos Vencerao (SUV), Soldiers United Will Win.

Within days rank-and-file soldiers in Areman, Lisbon, Coimbra, Ambrantes, Beja, and towns all over Portugal also began meeting and organizing under the name SUV. Within weeks these soldiers were in the streets, blocking the efforts of the new counterrevolutionary government to restore and protect capitalism and the established order. When the government sent commandos to disperse demonstrating strikers and farmers, the SUV protected the people.

SUV is forgotten now, but for three months in 1975 this independent rank-and-file movement prevented an apparently already victorious counterrevolution from taking power. The story of the SUV shows what can happen when previously passive soldiers finally move and take matters into their own hands.

The Baffle Of The Driving School

Before the revolution of the carnations tens of thousands of young Portuguese youths refused the draft or deserted military service rather than perform two and sometimes four years of duty defending the Portuguese empire.

They realized, quite correctly, that it was not their army, nor their empire, and that they had no interest in protecting these institutions.

The common thread among low-ranking soldiers in the days before and immediately after the revolution was to avoid or get out of the army. But as the Armed Forces Movement developed and the revolution it spawned showed promise, anew feeling of belonging emerged.

In this new stage many young soldiers now wanted to stay in their unit, their army. It was now the military establishment that wanted to get rid of troublemakers in the ranks and assure absolute, unquestioning discipline.

This was the state of things in September 1975 as SUV began to exert influence.

The soldiers of SUV no longer wanted to desert. Instead, one of their main demands was the right of soldiers to remain in their units in the army.

This is well illustrated in the incident at the army driving school, the CICAP, in Porto.

As so often with soldier resistance, events started with a minor incident. On September 11, 1975, the soldiers had stood in silence for one minute during the morning formation. Silent standing, of course, is hardly unusual for morning assembly. It is what the soldiers are expected to do, while officers give them orders. But this minute of silence was different: It was to commemorate the second anniversary of the Pinochet putsch in Chile. **And also to demand better food.**

(Here again the linkage of the small and the great, the demand for food and opposition to military dictatorship. This is a constant hallmark of effective GI resistance.)

A month earlier, before the MFA turned right, this minute of silence might have passed unnoticed. But now, in September, the officers were out to reestablish discipline and order. Ringleaders were sought and found and were later expelled, sent home.

Instead of gladly accepting the return to civilian life, though, these soldiers wanted to stay in the army. They appealed their discharge, not to the commanding officer but to their peers, the other CICAP soldiers.

These troops voted 312 to 6 that the dismissed men be allowed to stay.

The issue escalated. The command gave everyone a three-day pass over a holiday weekend, but when the soldiers returned, they found the entire unit disbanded, the barracks closed.

Several hundred draftees now faced early discharges.

Instead of rejoicing and going home, the fired soldiers insisted on staying in the army.

They moved in with a neighboring artillery regiment, the RASP. Together the drivers and the artillerymen ran their barracks democratically. An "open-door festival" was organized. Civilians were invited in, films shown, and a good time had by all.

The local commanders, dominated by the now counterrevolutionary leadership of the MFA, went berserk. One general wanted to starve the soldiers out, while another, Fires Veloso, wanted to bomb the barracks. Right-wing demonstrators attempted to storm the barracks, but the soldiers easily dispersed them. After a series of dramatic confrontations the command backed off. It accepted the “volunteers” and reopened their unit.

Freedom Or Exile

While SUV soldiers fought to stay in their units, they did not want to stay inside the stockades. On September 26 over 3,000 Lisbon-area soldiers, followed by twice as many civilians, marched on the Caxix prison. They were peaceful but determined. They demanded that two GIs, jailed for participating in SUV, be freed. By 3 A.M. they were.

When the command could not disband a SUV-infected unit, they tried to transfer it away, out of Lisbon, and if possible out of Portugal.

This was the case of airmen at Beja, who were ordered to the Azores. The airmen and their civilian supporters responded by marching through the streets; four were arrested and jailed. As the situation escalated, the supposedly “unpoliticized” parachutists from Tancos were flown in to reestablish order. The airmen refused to be intimidated and staged a sit-in and occupation of their barracks, daring the parachutists to open fire.

In another incident the Lisbon military police regiment, a stronghold of the SUV, was to be transferred to Angola. The MP’s discussed the transfer, noting that other units, not yet “infected” by the SUV, were being brought back from Africa. They voted not to go. And they stayed in Lisbon.

Soldiers For The People, And For Themselves

In almost every army the soldiers swear to “protect the people.” In practice this sometimes means shooting them. In Portugal, as SUV grew in strength, this was no longer the case.

Consider the incident of the veterans’ march in September 1975. Thirty soldiers who had been maimed and permanently injured during the African wars precipitated a near-fatal confrontation.

Their pensions were miserably low, approximately \$80 per month. Since November 1974 the disabled veterans had been asking for more, but nothing had changed. In September the veterans took to the streets and marched near the parliament.

A commando unit was called in to disperse them, a unit where all leftist soldiers and officers had been replaced by “trusted” troops. When an armored car bore down on a crippled vet in a wheelchair, ready to run him over, SUV soldiers from another unit intervened, firing over the heads of the commandos.

The commandos withdrew, and the vets stayed. They took over the bridge on the Tagus River, abolished tolls, and then collected them one night in order to give the money to Republica, an independent newspaper run by its printers and journalists.

The government sent additional troops to chase the vets from the bridge, but again the soldiers intervened on the side of the vets. In the end the pensions were increased.

Another incident occurred at the Spanish embassy on September 27. The dying Franco dictatorship had murdered, through garroting, five political prisoners. Antifascist demonstrators stormed the Spanish embassy in Lisbon, setting it on fire. **Soldiers were called in and told to shoot to disperse the crowd. They refused. Instead they helped the firemen control the flames and then sang songs and picnicked with the crowd.**

On November 12, building workers went on strike and marched on the parliament. They wanted better pay and collective bargaining. The government said: "Later." The workers said, "We can wait," and on the spot they staged a giant sit-in. To help speed up the debate they blocked food vans delivering supper to the members of parliament.

Troops were called out to save the legislators from starvation. The soldiers laughed and sat down with the strikers to share the officials' dinner. Parliament quickly granted the workers' demands.

Of course the soldiers also had demands of their own. They marched in Porto, Lisbon, Coimbra, and elsewhere not only for "revolutionary unity between workers and soldiers", but also for free transport and more pay (they were getting only \$20 per month). They also wanted better food and insisted upon the revolutionary demand that soldiers, officers, and NCOs be fed alike.

Like soldiers elsewhere they also demanded freedom for their heads, to wear their beards and hair as long as they pleased.

They also wanted to speak out, not only in their own newspapers, but also on the radio.

The Beginning Of The End: Armed Intervention Groups And The Commandos

The right-wing officers who took control of the government in September were bent on stopping this revolution in the ranks.

But as long as the politicized soldiers of the SUV remained in their barracks, armed, the officers were hampered.

The only answer was to start a new army. Its core were the Armed Intervention Groups (AMI). At first these were to be formed from normal army units, with draftees commanded by right-wing officers. This did not work, because the soldiers organized SUV groups and refused to follow counterrevolutionary orders.

Then commandos were used to form entirely new groups. These commando units included exfascist NCOs and officers brought back from the previous year's early retirement, uncontaminated troops freshly returned from Africa and free of the revolutionary influences of the past year, and the reactivated GNR, the hated fascist police force from the period of the dictatorship.

The formation of these commando units posed a serious problem for the leftist officers, who had to make a choice between obeying their superiors and charting a new, independent political course.

In July 1975 one of the MFA commanders, Colonel Jaime Neves, began to convert his unit by bringing in right-wing commandos. Some of the other captains of the MFA opposed this trend and tried to stop the colonel. Together with a group of soldiers they barred the colonel from his unit.

Colonel Neves then appealed to General Otelo de Carvalho, leader of the radicals within MFA.

Officers Stick Together; Betray The Ranks.

In the name of discipline and hierarchy, Otelo ordered the leftist captains to obey the colonel, who, once back in command, quickly got rid of them and any other soldiers considered unreliable.

Four months later the purged commando units played a major role in defeating the SUV, and then in arresting Otelo and other radical officers.

[Lesson learned: "those who make half a revolution dig their own graves." And those who trust officers to lead their movement hang themselves by the neck until dead. T]

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.

As The Fall Of Rome Showed, Imperialism Never Pays

April 26, 2005 Robert Scheer, Los Angeles Times

Notice the price of gasoline lately? Isn't it great that we have secured Iraq's oil? And as Congress signs off on yet another huge supplementary grant to supposedly protect U.S. interests in the Mideast, our president pathetically begs his Saudi buddies for a price break. As the fall of Rome showed, imperialism never pays.

Of course, back in 2003, conquering Iraq looked like a great package deal, what with all that oil — second only to Saudi Arabia — and the manufactured photo ops of cheering Iraqis. So what if those pesky weapons of mass destruction weren't really there? So what if no solid links to Al Qaeda are ever found? This was a win-win, as the corporate guys like to say: Not only would we be able to conduct this operation for next to nothing, we would be welcomed with flowers.

"There is a lot of money to pay for this. It doesn't have to be U.S. taxpayer money," then-Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz told Congress days before the war, in testimony on the potential costs of invading Iraq. "We are talking about a country that can finance its own reconstruction and relatively soon."

In the real world, however, this turned out to be utter nonsense.

With approval of the latest spending bill, taxpayers will have been forced to cough up more than \$300 billion for the war to date — above and beyond the annual \$400-billion Pentagon budget — and tens of billions for a bungled reconstruction.

The emergency funding that the Senate passed 99 to 0 last week gives the military roughly \$80 billion and pays for the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan only through September. That is twice what President Bush insists he needs to cut from the federal support for Medicaid over the next decade.

Already the red state of Missouri is set to end its Medicaid program entirely within the next three years because of a lack of funds.

As the Los Angeles Times reported, that will save the state \$5 billion, but at the cost of ending healthcare for the more than 1 million Missourians enrolled in the program.

That sum is less than half of what Halliburton, Vice President Dick Cheney's old company, alone has been paid for reconstruction efforts in Iraq, without much to show for it in terms of improving the Iraqis' quality of life.

Abroad, we must "support our troops" at all costs — even if the cost is their lives — while at home, the nation's leaders are all about tough love.

Welcome to late-era Rome, where mindless militaristic expansion is considered patriotic and where demagogues who recklessly waste taxes and young lives in empire-building are deemed valorous.

Wolfowitz, for example, has been rewarded for his ignorance and arrogance with the top job at the World Bank.

It is not too late, however, for us to wake up and recall that, in the end, once militarism trumped republicanism, the glory that was Rome proved to be a hollow boast.

Venezuelan President Says He Will Not Return To U.S. Until Americans Liberate Their Nation

April 29, 2005 by Andrea Rodriguez, Associated Press

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez told an international gathering of activists here that before an earlier trip to Cuba, a U.S. State Department undersecretary he did not identify warned him not to go because he would no longer be received in Washington.

He said he went ahead with that trip anyway, and later traveled to the United States to visit U.S. President George W. Bush, who he said greeted him with a Coca-Cola in his hand.

"I have not returned, nor do I think about returning again, until the people of the United States liberate that nation," said Chavez, saying that Americans are "oppressed" by their government and U.S. media.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Welcome To "Liberated" Iraq: 11 Preachers Arrested For Criticizing New Occupation Government

4.30.05 AFP

Around Baghdad, Iraqi forces [**translation: Iraqi traitors**] arrested 11 Sunni clerics **on charges of abetting terrorism**, a defence ministry official said.

"We arrested 11 imams on charges of inciting terrorism, mainly in the Baghdad al-Jadida district," the official said.

"The men captured yesterday and today were, among other things, calling for a boycott of the new government," the official said, without providing the names of the arrested clerics.

[Surely a simple error. Arrested for “abetting terrorism”? Not possible. No, they clearly oppose Bush and the occupation. That makes them enemies of terrorism.]

Sovereignty Is:

April 23, 2005 abutamam.blogspot

Am not sure where exactly is the below sign carried, or where it might be posted.



It states: 'Please, A Very Serious Warning - We are authorized to fire on any vehicle that approaches the convoy less than 50 meters'

If placed on a moving Humvee, then you must be able to read it from 50 meters afar, assuming that the gunner on a fast moving Humvee can himself measure accurately the distance of objects moving towards him at a distance of 50 meters, and not being at 55 meters, for yet another easily discarded statistic in the horrifically ignored “collateral damage” carnage.

Sovereignty is: There is a 50 meters distance between you and death every time you leave your home in your own country.

Swindler On A Gusher

[Thanks to several people who sent this in.]

Mr. Bush wanted Iraq to have a democracy like ours. It's on its way, nearing an ethics-free zone where a corrupt official can hold sway and a theocracy can curb women's rights.

April 30, 2005 By Maureen Down, The New York Times

The Iraqis have thrown us another curveball.

Ahmad Chalabi - convicted embezzler in Jordan, suspected Iranian spy, double-crosser of America, purveyor of phony war-instigating intelligence - is the new acting Iraqi oil minister.

Is that why we went to war, to put the oily in charge of the oil, to set the swindler who pretended to be Spartacus atop the ultimate gusher?

Does anybody still think the path to war wasn't greased by oil?

Anthony Cordesman, a Middle East expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, told Reuters that many Iraqis would consider the plum oil job for Mr. Chalabi "putting a fox in charge of the henhouse." The choice, he added, "is going to make it extremely easy for people to make charges about corruption."

Oil isn't on the front burner only in Iraq. Mr. Bush and Dick Cheney know that time is running out to pay back the Texas buddies who sent them here with an energy bill. So those two oilmen are frantically pushing one loaded with giveaways to the oil industry at a time when it's already raking in huge profits because of high gasoline prices.

In Baghdad, we may wind up with a one-man Enron - never underestimate the snaky charmer. **And the draconian efforts of Mr. Chalabi and other Shiites in power to purge Baathists from the government will breathe fire into the insurgency.**

Mr. Bush wanted Iraq to have a democracy like ours. It's on its way, nearing an ethics-free zone where a corrupt official can hold sway and a theocracy can curb women's rights.

MORE:

April 29, 2005 "PA", Scotsman & April 28, 2005 Reuters

That would leave Chalabi, who has no expertise in oil, steering the oil industry of the country with the third largest reserves through a turbulent period of suicide bombings and frequent attacks on pipelines.

Unlike his predecessors Ghadhban and Ibrahim Bahr al-Uloum, Chalabi — scion of a Baghdad merchant family — has no experience in the state-owned oil sector that employs 80,000.

Some Iraqi oil officials expressed reservations over Chalabi's appointment in part due to his lack of energy expertise.

The outgoing government is bedeviled by allegations of corruption within its ranks.

With fresh elections slated before the end of the year, analysts warn some incoming officials could be tempted to use their short time in office for maximum financial gain.

Pissed Off Sunni MP Says “What Tourism?”

April 28, 2005 (IslamOnline.net & News Agencies)

“What did we get? The ministry of culture, but everyone knows there's no culture in this country torn by violence. The ministry of tourism. But what tourism?” asked Modhar Shawkat, a Sunni MP elected on the Shiite alliance list.

Mishan Al-Juburi, another Sunni MP, lashed out at Sunni leaders for agreeing to the government deal and even called Yawar “a traitor”.

Superlatively Stupid Occupation Command Questions: (With Obvious Answers)

April 29, 2005 Harry Browne

From time to time someone writes an essay that impresses enough people that the essay is circulated from hand to hand throughout the Internet.

I recently received such an essay. It consists of a series of "Did you know . . . " questions.

The purpose, obviously, is to make us realize that we don't know the whole story of what's happening in Iraq (thanks to the liberal media). And if we did know the whole story, we'd be getting down on our knees and thanking George Bush for being so much more far-sighted than we are.

Or something like that.

However, the questions indicate that the writer himself is a little confused about the war and especially uninformed about pre-war Iraq.

Did You Ever . . . ?

Here are the questions (grouped together to consolidate them), together with my observations.

Did you know there are more than 1,100 building projects going on in Iraq? They include 364 schools, 67 public clinics, 15 hospitals, 83 railroad stations, 22 oil facilities, 93 water facilities and 69 electrical facilities.

Did you know that none of that work would be necessary if the U.S. military hadn't destroyed so many buildings and public facilities?

Did you know that 3,100 schools have been renovated, 364 schools are under rehabilitation, 263 schools are now under construction and 38 new schools have been built in Iraq?

Did you know that 4.3 million Iraqi children were enrolled in primary school by mid October?

Did you know that Iraq's higher educational structure now consists of 20 Universities, 46 Institutes or colleges and 4 research centers?

Did you know that before the U.S. invaded, Iraq was generally considered to have the best educational system and best medical facilities in the Middle East?

Did you know that the Iraqi Police Service has over 55,000 fully trained and equipped police officers. And there are 5 Police Academies in Iraq that produce over 3500 new officers each 8 weeks.

Did you know that Iraq had all that and more before the U.S. invaded Iraq? Or did Saddam Hussein operate his fabled police state with only the help of his two sons?

Lest We Forget: 2004: A Visit To Abu G

July 8, 2004 By Janet Reitman, Rolling Stone Magazine

When I arrive in Baghdad in April, most American journalists are holed up in their rooms, reporting the war by remote: scanning the wires, working their cell phones, watching broadcasts of Al Jazeera. In many cases, they've been reduced to relying on sources available to anyone with an Internet connection.

Editorial writers might like to compare Iraq to Vietnam, but reporters on the ground say there's no comparison. In Vietnam, journalists rode Hondas to the front. In Iraq, they rarely venture into the streets. When they do, they hide behind the smoked windows of their armored vehicles, called "hard cars."

While Arabic and European media such as *The Guardian* and *Le Monde* manage to cover the war on the ground, American reporters seldom interview actual Iraqis. Instead, they talk to U.S. officials who are every bit as isolated as they are, or rely on

local stringers and fixers, several of whom have been killed while working for Americans. “We live in a bubble,” grumbles one AP reporter. “If we know one percent of what’s going on in Iraq we’re lucky.”

The Sheraton, the tallest building in Baghdad — has been struck so often, some journalists call it the Missile Magnet. “More rockets have hit this place than any other building in the city,” says Paul Roubicek, an Australian cameraman who has done segments for Fox News.

Roubicek is sitting in his room on the third floor of the Sheraton, drinking red wine and getting high on Afghan hash. You can buy excellent hash in Iraq. It’s one of the perks of reconstruction. Before the war, getting high was punishable by a long stint in one of Saddam Hussein’s jails. Now you can send an e-mail order and have hash delivered right to your hotel room. Roubicek’s dealer is a cigarette salesman in the compound.

At one briefing, Jim Chu of NBC News notes images of “ordinary Iraqis” cheering attacks on coalition forces. “How does this jive with what the coalition has been saying — that this is essentially a small minority that’s supporting these insurgents?” Chu asks.

Without skipping a beat, coalition spokesman Dan Senor assures Chu that those “select images” in no way reflect the majority of Iraqis. “If you look at the polling” — Senor often brings up polling in his briefings — “while there are some who cheer on violence, the silent majority of Iraqis express grateful appreciation for the liberation.”

Reluctantly, he concedes that quite a few Iraqis also expressed opposition to the occupation. “Which we understand,” Senor says. “It’s not nice to be occupied.”

A Visit To Abu G

Hoping to contain the damage, the Army offers the press a tour of the prison.

Then the bus arrives, the reporters file off and approach a massive expanse of tents, each housing twenty-five prisoners. A soldier screams, “No talking to the detainees!”

But as soon as the prisoners catch sight of the press corps, pandemonium erupts. Dressed in rags, the Iraqis press their bodies against double layers of barbed wire. There are hundreds of them: shouting, holding up crude signs or crutches. Several wave prosthetic legs.

“Where’s the freedom?” they shout in Arabic. “Is this the freedom?” A prisoner with a bullhorn denounces Americans in English: “They’ve taken away our freedom, our liberty, our rights!” The military’s staged press tour has devolved into unscripted chaos.

Farnaz Fassihi of the *Wall Street Journal* stands frozen. “I feel like I’m in a bad dream,” she whispers. “God, what have the Americans done?”

Trying to control the damage, the MPs quickly herd everyone back on the buses. “Get the hell on that bus!” an MP orders Anja Niedringhaus, an AP photographer trying to photograph the scene.

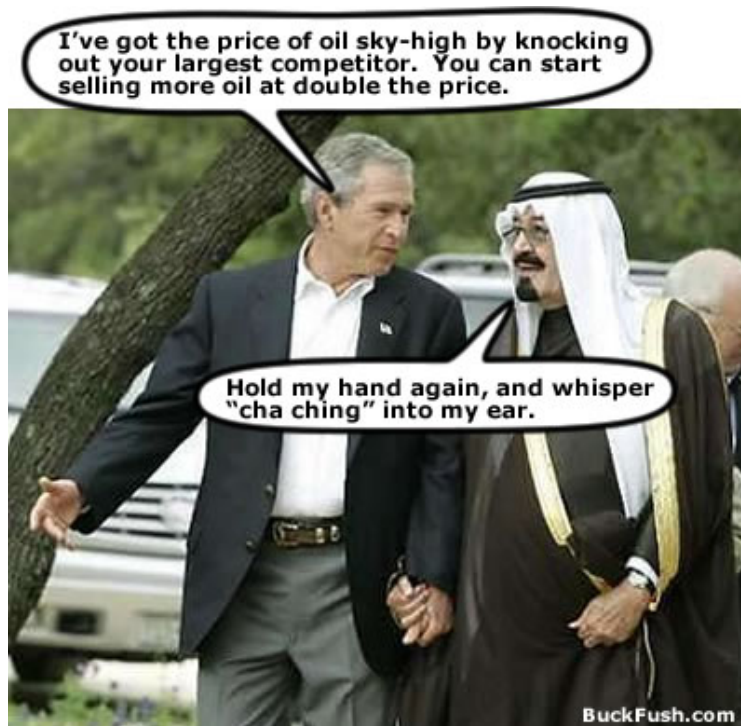
But when the tour reaches the “hard facility” where the infamous photos were taken, the screams are even more horrific. Female detainees, who, like most prisoners, have not yet been charged with any crimes, shout down to reporters from the second tier of the prison. “I’ve been here five months!” one woman yells from her cell. “Why?”

“This is a sin!” another cries, in Arabic. “I have five children, and they’re alone!” As the screams echo and bounce against the cement walls, the MPs push the reporters along. One soldier grabs a journalist’s camera.

A prisoner shouts that soldiers in the prison stripped her naked.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro for sending. He writes: This one came from a friend in Sweden]

GEORGE BUSH: POLITICAL GENIUS
The Commander-in-Chief Speaks

"It's in our country's interests to find those who would do harm to us and get them out of harm's way." —George W. Bush, Washington, D.C., April 28, 2005

[Thanks to David Honish, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in. He writes: Perhaps it is past time to require written examinations of presidential candidates?]

Incoming Cloud Causes White House Evacuation

[Thanks to Nigel Baldwin, who sent this in. He writes: Q. What's the difference between Napoleon and Bush? A. Napoleon led while on a horse's ass - Bush leads with his ass underground!]

April 29 2005 Julian Borger in Washington, The Guardian

President George Bush was bundled into an underground bunker, Dick Cheney was evacuated to an "undisclosed location" and heavily armed secret servicemen took up defensive positions when a fast-moving cloud scudded towards the White House, it was reported yesterday.

The cloud that materialised 30 miles south of Washington on Wednesday morning was so dense it triggered radar monitors on the Domestic Events Network, intended to prevent a repeat of the September 11 attacks.

As an anti-aircraft missile battery on the roof of a nearby building was raised to the fire position, a Black Hawk helicopter was scrambled to take a look, but saw nothing except some clouds, one of which turned out to be the suspected aggressor.

Such false alarms are common, triggered by clouds, flocks of birds or private aircraft wandering off course, but the White House confirmed yesterday that this was not the first time since September 11 2001 that the president has taken refuge in the hi-tech bunker beneath the building, the Presidential Emergency Operations Centre.

It was not clear yesterday what it was about Wednesday morning's cloud that created such havoc. It was moving at about the speed of a helicopter, disappearing and then appearing again on the radar screen, but the same could be said of many clouds.

The White House spokesman, Scott McClellan, said the president was in the bunker for only a short time - the all-clear was sounded about 20 minutes after the first alert. **US officials claimed that the incident showed how smoothly the alert system was functioning.**

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