

GI SPECIAL 3B40:

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



Debbee Way holds the flag from the coffin of her son, Lt Brian Gienau, at a graveside service March 9, 2005, in Tripoli, Iowa. (AP Photo/ Dan Nierling)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Four U.S. Troops Killed In Baghdad Fighting

May 24, 2005 ABC & (Xinhuanet)

Three soldiers from the US Third Infantry Division died in central Baghdad when a car bomb exploded next to their convoy at about 1:30 p.m.

About a half-hour later, a U.S. soldier sitting in the back of a Bradley fighting vehicle at an observation post was shot to death by gunmen in a passing car.

FOUR 155TH BCT SOLDIERS KILLED IN HASWA

May 24, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
Release Number: 05-05-29C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq -- **Four Soldiers assigned to the 155th Brigade Combat Team, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), were killed yesterday when an improvised explosive device detonated near their vehicle.**

The incident took place during combat operations in Haswa, Iraq.

MARINE KILLED IN RAMADI

May 24, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
Release Number: 05-05-30C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – **A Marine assigned to 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), was killed May 23 during an indirect fire attack on Camp Blue Diamond, Ramadi, Iraq.**

Soldier Dies In Al Qaim

May 24, 2005 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 509-05

Spc. Joshua T. Brazee, 25, of Sand Creek, Mich., died May 23, in Al Qaim, Iraq, from non-combat related injuries. Brazee was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment, Fort Carson, Colo.

Another Ohio Soldier Dies: Seesan Killed When Bomb Struck Vehicle

May 23, 2005 AP

MASSILLON, Ohio -- **When the phone rang at 11 p.m. Saturday and Chiquita Seesan heard her son was hurt by a bomb in Iraq, she initially thought it was a prank call.**

She soon found out this was no joke. Her son, Army 1st Lt. Aaron Seesan, was being flown to Germany after suffering third-degree burns over 80 percent of his body. He died the next day in Germany.

Aaron Seesan, 24, was serving with the 73rd Engineering Company out of Ft. Lewis, Wash., his mother said. He was part of a unit in charge of diffusing mines and other bombs.

He died when a bomb struck the gas tank of the vehicle he was riding in, causing it to burst into flames.

That was around 6 p.m. Saturday night. Aaron had called home around 4 p.m.

"There was nothing unusual about his call," Chiquita Seesan said. "He joked and teased with his siblings as he always does."

Aaron Seesan joined the Army in 2003, the day he graduated from the Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, N.Y., his mother said. He was the only member of his graduating class to join the Army.

Chiquita Seesan said her son was a history buff who knew every battle fought in World War II. He graduated from Massillon Washington High School in 1999.

She said her son was always wearing camouflage clothes and wanted to go into the Army from a young age.

Pennsylvania National Guard Soldier Killed

May 24 /PRNewswire

A Pennsylvania Army National Guard soldier was killed in Khadasia, Iraq, by a suicide bomber, Sunday, May 22.

Sgt. Carl Morgain, 40, Butler, was providing security outside an Iraqi police station when a vehicle with taxi markings pulled near his HMMWV and exploded.

The 9:52 a.m. blast also injured three other Pennsylvania National Guard soldiers and four Iraqi police, none of them seriously.

Morgain was sitting in the turret when the vehicle detonated some 10 yards from his location. He was initially transported to Speicher Combat Support Hospital and then airlifted to a hospital in Balad, where he died of traumatic head wounds.

Morgain was with 11 unit members, part of a four HMMWV detail, providing security while the unit commander met with Iraqi police.

The unit, Company A (-), 1st Battalion, 112th Infantry, Butler, is part of Task Force Dragoon, a force of 750 Pennsylvania Army National Guard soldiers. Task Force Dragoon deployed to Iraq in December for a one-year assignment.

Morgain joined the Pennsylvania National Guard in June 2000 as a traditional Guard member. He served four years of duty in the active Army from 1982 to 1986. In his civilian career, Morgain was employed by T.W. Phillips Gas and Oil Co., Butler.

He is survived by his wife, the former Janice Elaine Sanky, 40; daughter, Madison Marie Morgain, 12; stepson, Zachary Taylor Macurak, 17; and his mother Carol Fay Morgain. Morgain's wife is head of "Support our Soldiers," a non-profit organization that has raised thousands of dollars from local merchants in the Butler area. In turn, the organization sent care packages to deployed soldiers. A trust for the Morgain family has been set up with the National City Bank of Pennsylvania.

Alaska Soldiers Hurt In Iraq: [Yesterday The Command Report Said “Minor Injuries” -- More Lies]

May 23, 2005 By Christine Nangle

Five Fort Wainwright soldiers are injured after their helicopter crashed in Iraq on Saturday. The Chinook Cargo helicopter lost power and the pilot was forced to make an emergency landing.

Army officials are being pretty tight lipped about what exactly happened, and haven't released the names of injured troops. But we do know that Five Fort Wainwright soldiers were hurt, after the chopper had to make an emergency landing.

"Two of the crew members were treated and released, one is in the hospital overnight for observation, **two others were evacuated to Germany for further treatment** none of them suffered life threatening injuries," says Linda Douglass, a public affairs officer at Fort Wainwright.

There were five soldiers on board when CH-47 Chinook Helicopter was forced to land after both engines lost engines... and now has significant damage. "Damage to the aircraft is significant and but again, we are just pleased that the pilot was able to bring the helicopter down with no fatalities," says Douglass.

All five of the injured soldiers have spoken with their families, who were immediately notified about the crash. **Fort Wainwright officials say families are always very relieved to hear from there loved ones whenever anything like this happens in war.**

Soldier From Nation Of Georgia Badly Wounded

May 24 (Itar-Tass) & UNA-Georgia

Tbilisi has released information about the Georgian serviceman, who was heavily wounded in Iraq on Tuesday.

Platoon commander Mikhail Kutateladze was sharing a car with American servicemen en route from Baghdad to Baquba, the Georgian Defense Ministry said. The car hit a handmade mine.

Three American servicemen died, and Kutateladze was taken to hospital with multiple injuries. His hand was amputated. It was reported earlier that the serviceman would receive a therapy in Germany, but Georgian sources said that was not necessary.

According to the Defense Ministry injuries sustained by the soldier required that his leg be amputated.

The Kutateladze family has been informed about the accident.

About 900 Georgian servicemen are currently on mission in Iraq. Three hundred of them are stationed in Baquba, and the rest are in Baghdad.

Resistance Increasing Warfighting Abilities: "Attacks Against Coalition Forces Have Never Stopped"

U.S. Central Command spokesman Lt. Col. Steve Boylan said **"Attacks against coalition forces have never stopped. We are averaging about 70 attacks against us per day."**

Charles Heyman, a senior defense analyst with Jane's Consultancy Group in Britain, said the rate of attacks against American forces are the same as any time during the conflict - but the key difference is the increasing capabilities of the insurgents.

"We would have hoped that the insurgency would have decreased in line with the ability of the Iraqi security forces to hold the ring and become more capable," Heyman said.

"But it doesn't appear to be panning out that way with the insurgents increasing in their abilities to kill, attack and strike when and where they want."

TROOP NEWS

Death Rate For Reservists In Iraq Rises

May. 24, 2005 ROBERT BURNS, Associated Press

U.S. troops remain in the firing line, targeted by insurgents that have shown increasing abilities to attack when and where they please.

The death rate in Iraq this month among members of the National Guard and Reserve is the highest since January and one of the highest of the entire war, Pentagon figures show.

At least 21 part-time soldiers and Marines have died in May, although the number may be higher since the Pentagon has not yet identified most of the 14 U.S. troops who have died since Sunday.

As of May 20, the Pentagon had identified 16 Guard and Reserve members among the month's dead.

The 21 deaths account for a little over one-third of the total of 58 U.S. troops who have died so far this month. That is about in line with the ratio of Guard and Reserve troops to regular active-duty troops deployed in Iraq - now about 40 percent Guard/Reserve and 60 percent regular troops.

In April, 11 members of the Guard and Reserve died in Iraq. In March, there were 13, and February's total was 16.

That means the May toll already is the highest since January, when there were 30 for the entire month. January was one of the bloodiest months of the war for U.S. forces, with a total of 107 deaths, including 30 Marines and one Navy corpsman who died in a single helicopter crash.

Since the war began in March 2003, at least 163 members of the National Guard, plus 45 in the Army Reserve and 45 in the Marine Reserves had died in Iraq, according to an unofficial count as of Friday. The Pentagon does not release an official death toll for the Guard and Reserve.

Wounded Mississippi Soldier Returns Home To Warm Welcome

May. 24, 2005 Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. - Family members friends joined military officials Tuesday to welcome home Sgt. 1st Class Ellis Martin of Summit, a member of the Army National Guard's 155th Brigade Combat Team who was critically wounded more than two months ago in Iraq.

Martin, in a motorized wheelchair, was escorted into the Jackson International Airport terminal by Maj. Gen. Harold Cross, adjutant general for the Mississippi National Guard. Other Guard personnel also accompanied Martin.

"We're so excited to have him back home," said Dolisa Simmons, Martin's sister and one of several family members who made the trip from Summit to welcome the soldier.

Martin and Sgt. Robert Shane Pugh, 25, were injured in March when an improvised explosive device detonated near their vehicle. Pugh died of his wounds.

Pugh, a combat medic with the 155th, was credited with helping his wounded comrade before dying.

Injured Miss. Soldiers Recount Explosion; "You Don't Know Who The Enemy Is"

May. 23, 2005 Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Miss. - A Mississippi soldier injured last month in Iraq says he remembers waking up after the explosion, hanging upside down and being held in place only by his seat belt.

"I remember blood coming from my nose and fire coming toward my face. I remember beating the fire with my hands because I didn't want my face to get burned," said Spc. Melvin Gatewood, a member of Columbus-based Battery A of the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery in Starkville.

Gatewood, who's been home recovering, was recalling the April 19 accident in which Staff Sgt. Tommy A. Little of Aliceville, Ala., was killed and four soldiers were injured.

Gatewood, 21, who suffered burns to his hands and back, was driving the soldiers' Humvee when the vehicle ran over and detonated an improvised explosive device, then flipped and caught fire.

"We got Little out of the vehicle, and I told him it would be all right, it would be good," Gatewood said. "He responded well and kept asking, 'How do I look?' I told him he looked good and would be all right. We had a memorial service for him in Iraq."

Gatewood said he plans to visit Little's grave site. Gatewood served with Little for three years.

"He was a nice man," Gatewood said. "He was quiet and kept to himself. He did everything he was asked to do. You just ask yourself, 'Why him?'"

One of Gatewood's cousins, Sgt. Terrence A. Elizenberry, also was injured in the April 19 explosion.

"I heard a loud explosion and the next thing I remember is waking up upside down," said Elizenberry, 31. "I heard the driver calling my name, and I helped him get his seat belt off. I tried to help the other guys. The guys helped put the fire out and got the last person out through the roof."

Elizenberry was flown to Baghdad and then to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, where he had surgery for second-degree burns on his ears, face and hands. He then was sent to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio.

"I had burns on either side of my face, but they've healed real fast," he said. "It has something to do with the blood flow in the face. Of course, they were not as bad as my hands."

Doctors said Elizenberry is expected to heal 100 percent but he must wear special gloves on his hands for a year. "It's to prevent swelling and scarring," he said. "But I've already seen improvements and coloration starting to come back."

Gatewood will go to Ft. Gordon in Georgia sometime in June.

Elizenberry, who has been in the military nearly 16 years, is working on his recovery. He wants people to pray for American soldiers in Iraq.

"The insurgents don't have military uniforms, they dress like citizens and it's hard to distinguish them," he said. "You don't know who the enemy is." [Which is why occupation armies lose wars. The occupation troops don't know who the enemy is. The occupied people fighting for their freedom who exactly who the enemy is, every minute of every day, and where they go, and what they do. Game over. Time to come home.]

Tillman's Kin Rap Army's 'Outright Lies'

[Thanks to PB and Phil G. for sending this in.]

5.23.05 BY BILL HUTCHINSON, DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER & By Josh White,
Washington Post Staff Writer

The parents of slain NFL star-turned-Army Ranger Pat Tillman are blasting military brass for the "outright lies" they told about their son's death.

"They purposely interfered with the investigation, they covered it up," Patrick Tillman Sr. told The Washington Post about his son's friendly-fire death in Afghanistan last year. "After it happened, all the people in positions of authority went out of their way to script this."

"I think they thought they could control it, and they realized that their recruiting efforts were going to go to hell in a handbasket if the truth about his death got out. They blew up their poster boy."

Mary Tillman said "The military let him down. The administration let him down. It was a sign of disrespect."

Tillman, 27, turned down a multimillion-dollar contract with the Arizona Cardinals to join the Army after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. He was killed April 22, 2004, while hunting Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan. The military initially claimed he was killed by the enemy, and even awarded him the Silver Star posthumously.

Army brass waited weeks after they knew the real cause of Tillman's death to tell his family.

"The fact that he was the ultimate team player and he watched his own men kill him is absolutely heartbreaking and tragic," his mother, Mary Tillman, said. "The fact that they lied about it afterward is disgusting."

Patrick Tillman Sr. ripped military officials for conducting a "botched homicide investigation" and said high-ranking Army officers told him and his family "outright lies."

"Maybe lying's not a big deal anymore," the father said. "Pat's dead, and this isn't going to bring him back. But these guys should have been held up to scrutiny ... and no one has."

Patrick Tillman Sr. believes he will never get the truth, and he says he is resigned to that now. But he wants everyone in the chain of command, from Tillman's direct supervisors to the one-star general who conducted the latest investigation, to face discipline for "dishonorable acts."

Mary Tillman said her son's death and the deception about it "keeps slapping me in the face."

"It makes you feel like you're losing your mind in a way," she said. "You imagine things. When you don't know the truth, certain details can be blown out of proportion. The truth may be painful, but it's the truth. You start to contrive all these scenarios that could have

taken place because they just kept lying. If you feel you're being lied to, you can never put it to rest."

"I think there's a lot more yet that we don't even know, or they wouldn't still be covering their tails," she said.

"If this is what happens when someone high profile dies, I can only imagine what happens with everyone else."

She said she was particularly offended when President Bush offered a taped memorial message to Tillman at a Cardinals football game shortly before the presidential election last fall. She again felt as though her son was being used, something he never would have wanted.

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

Assorted Resistance Action: Resistance Takes Tal Afar

24 May 2005 (AFP) & (CNN) & AP & Turks.US

In the northern city of Tal Afar, there were reports that militants were in control

Police Capt. Ahmed Hashem Taki said Tal Afar was experiencing "civil war." Journalists were blocked from entering the city of 200,000.

In northeastern Mosul on Tuesday, a member of Iraqi civil defense died after a bomb he was trying to defuse detonated, a spokesman for the region's Joint Coordination Center said. Four others were wounded in the blast.

Guerrillas Tuesday kidnapped Nassir Sa'ed Al-Sayfi, an employee of Oman's embassy in Baghdad, the Iraqi Interior Ministry said Tuesday. "He was kidnapped from his house by unknown gunmen in a black BMW," the ministry said.

Armed men opened fire on a convoy carrying conservative Shia legislator Salamah al-Khafaji, one of the most prominent women in Iraq's new parliament, critically injuring four of her bodyguards.

Al-Khafaji was driving from Baghdad to the Shia holy city of Najaf, south of the capital, when the attempt took place, according to her spokesman. She was not injured.

"It was a motorcade of four cars driving to Najaf. They were subjected to gunfire, four of guards were critically injured", said spokesman Bahaa Hassan Hamida.

A video posted on the Internet Tuesday shows three Arab truck drivers being shot to death, apparently for transferring goods to U.S. troops.

One victim was a Jordanian man shown apologizing for helping the U.S. military and advising others to stop cooperating with U.S. troops.

Two Iraqi drivers, reportedly seized outside the al-Asad base west of Baghdad, are shown making similar statements before all three were shot dead by a masked man.

Iraqi militant group Ansar al-Sunnah Army took responsibility for the executions in a statement warning "all those who assist the Crusaders." The group labeled them "partners in shedding the blood of innocent Muslims."

The Jordanian truck driver appeared on the video sitting in front of a black banner bearing the name of the group, identifying himself as Hammad Ismail al-Sanie.

"I'm extremely sorry. I advise all my Jordanian colleagues to immediately stop working" with U.S. forces, he said.

Ansar al-Sunnah also said that two Iraqi drivers, identified as Khairy Abdul Majeed Fattah and Furon Faiq Fadhil, were seized as they drove out of the al-Asad base in western Iraq.

Fattah appears on a video saying he's a Baghdad resident who works for a company called Seven Seas, and that he was transferring electrical equipment to the base, including television sets.

"I call on drivers from here not to work with such companies and not to work with the Americans," he said.

In a separate statement also posted Tuesday, Ansar al-Sunnah claimed responsibility for a car bombing in Kirkuk on Monday. The statement said the attack targeted a convoy of a senior official from President Jalal Talabani's party, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

The unnamed official escaped the attack, but the group vowed "not to miss the second time."

U.S. Military Contractor Captured

ANKARA - A Turkish businessman has been captured in Iraq by insurgents demanding that his transportation company stop working with US forces in the war-torn country, relatives were quoted as saying on Tuesday.

The 48-year-old Ali Musluoglu called his brother in Turkey on his mobile phone and told him he had been kidnapped, the brother, Ahmet Musluoglu, told Anatolia news agency.

“He was very anxious... One of the insurgents took the phone and said in Arabic that we should stop doing business with the Americans or otherwise we will never see our brother again,” Musluoglu said.

“I promised that we will not do business with the Americans again and that we are even ready to quit the transportation business,” he added.

The two brothers were among the partners of a company based in Reyhanli, in the province of Hatay on the border with Syria, which was carrying sand and pebble for construction work in Iraq, the NTV news channel reported.

Ali Musluoglu went to Baghdad on business 10 days ago and had been missing for four days when he telephoned, it said.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

Iraqis Write On Occupation And Resistance:

***The Story That Set Off Part Of This
Discussion:***

**“Oddity Of The Week:
Foreign Troops To Quit Iraq Mid-2006”**

To: The Anti-Allawi Group

Sent: Monday, May 02, 2005 6:05 AM

Foreign Troops To Quit Iraq Mid-2006

02 May 2005 Aljazeera

[Comments From: Ahmed Al-Habbabi]

Foreign troops in Iraq will probably start pulling out in large numbers by the middle of next year, Iraq's national security adviser has said.

In an interview on CNN's Late Edition, Muafaq al-Rubai said: "I will be very surprised if they (US and other foreign troops) don't think very seriously of starting [to] pull out probably by the end of the first half of next year."

Al-Rubai said the new Iraqi government was determined to quell violence in Iraq by the end of 2005.

"I think we are winning - on the winning course, there is no doubt about it. The level of violence is not measured only by the number of explosions every day, or the number of casualties," he said.

[It is also measured by rhetoric?]

He added: "There is no shadow of doubt in my mind, that by the end of the year, we would have achieved a lot, and probably the back of the insurgency has already been broken."

[I like optimism, don't you?]

[But of the course, he's only a week late behind similar tunes from his patrons.]

COMMENT FROM KELEBDOONI:

[All comments below originally circulated to the Anti-Allawi Group]

“One Way Of Getting Kicked Out Is By Reaching The Limits Of Hanging On”

From: Kelebdooni

To: Anti-Allawi Group

Sent: May 04, 2005 3:43 PM

Subject: Re: U.S. to withdraw troops from Iraq in December - Report

We can remain optimistic while avoiding being too credulous. A leak is usually a leak on purpose, yet may it still be indicative of something?

The official line is still: No timetable. We're staying as long as necessary. Or, as translated, until we've got what we're after or get kicked out.

Until Rummy stumbles on a variation for testing the acoustics, so later Bush can play a safe tune, the official line is still official to stand by and die for.

However, leaking assurances to appease the American public has only been going on recently.

I think the need to appease is indicative of rising dissent. It is a counter-measure to retain control lest dissent escalates to proportions that need to be addressed by relatively binding official declarations, with possibility of a forced change in course.

The Daily Telegraph leaks. And what is the Daily Telegraph, one may ask? As reactionary-conservative as they come. Next day, joins in the local insecurity adviser on strings. An orchestra is being born.

O when the Saints...

So-called leaks of talks with the resistance or Saddam are much in the same vein too.

There is no reason to believe that a decision on the need for serious negotiation has been made at this stage yet. At each leaked instance, with or without substance, they are psy-op attempts to split resistance ranks and to shape middle-of-the-road Iraqi opinion against the seemingly intransigent party.

Simultaneously, the leaks are messages of progress being supposedly made to solve the thorny issues, to reduce the costs of staying, or to allow for eventual withdrawal.

In other words, it's time for the morphine injections, folks.

Back to staying as long as necessary, getting what they're after in terms of regional hegemony and returns on investment will take a long time.

Can the local sand bags hold the fort, while the boys can sneak back home?

It is a precarious situation holding the status quo as it is by the big guys with all the high tech stuff as it is. Local forces cannot hope to do it alone without constant heavier backing or unless they're supplied with what gives them the tech edge. The latter is highly unlikely, as some of the equipment is bound to be used against the patrons, so they'll have to make do with AK47 tops for now.

The possibility of getting kicked out doesn't look conceivably close yet. Not militarily of course, but whenever has a resistance triumphed militarily? So, isn't it closer than we may imagine?

I find a lot of sense in T Barton's thesis that he voiced at Fayetteville. To paraphrase, local resistance is essential, and global (particularly US) resistance is crucial, but are both insufficient.

Dissent within the military ranks, instigated primarily by the former resistances, is the decisive factor that will end the war.

A second deployment to Iraq has encompassed almost all of the US forces, and we're beginning to have third deployments.

While a trickle of dissent accompanied the second, what will it be like with the third getting underway soon?

By the end of this year, there will be fourth deployments! What will it be like then?

Recruitment isn't working. A draft can well be the straw that broke the camel's back. One way of getting kicked out is by reaching the limits of hanging on.

MORE FROM KELEBDOONI:

“No Occupation Can Be For The Good”

May 04, 2005

All Iraqis share your sentiments on the need for unity. HOW is what they differ on.

The facts are clear, and it requires no degree in political science. The simplest village idiots know the role of oil in the equation. All realize instinctively that no occupation can be for the good.

However, people's opinions on how to deal with the occupation naturally varies.

Recall European resistance to Nazi occupation. Some are motivated to fight and even face death. Some collaborate for short-term benefits come what may later. The vast majority wants the occupation over right now, but they don't know how to go about it, and wish to carry on living in the meantime.

The puppets are specifically there to cloud the issue too. It's their job to sow the seeds of disunity.

MORE FROM KELEBDOONI:

“Baghdad Is Boiling Like Never Before”

May 05, 2005

Subject: Re: U.S. to withdraw troops from Iraq in December - Report

Dear Vicki,

But I can give you sure answers. Sure I can, in my usually humble way! I'll dodge the more difficult ones that's all.

Q- Do you expect the Americans to remain in Iraq much longer?

A- No. There, that was easy!

Q- How long do you give them?

A- All the time in the world to eventually come to the conclusion that they cannot hold on there forever. That was a dodgy answer, wasn't it?

No, I'll have to stick my neck out.

I think the next summer months will be decisive.

I wrote before the elections: Give the Iraqis two months after the elections are over. Formation of a new setup dragged on a bit. Yet for the past month now, the resistance is back in business better than ever.

Activity in Shiite and Kurd areas is more pronounced now than ever. Baghdad is boiling like never before. These are indications of popular opinion.

After a short lull, a let's wait and see spell, things become clearer to ordinary people. I think more people will gradually shed whatever straw hopes they had in getting a government that can speak out for them or improve things.

By the end of the year, the US re-deployments of units will aggravate as I wrote previously. By that time the Rummies will be frantically searching for solutions. Short of commitment to total withdrawal and a major revision of political changes, I don't believe the resistance holding what feels like the upper hand will then oblige.

So how about 2006 tops?

W. Churchill once said something like a great statesman is capable of foreseeing what will happen in a week, month, and year. And after a draw on his cigar, he continued with... and can explain why it didn't happen that week, month and year.

Anyway, I am not worried over the longer term at all. I know the dynamics of the place. I am worried however, over whether it can be done sooner to avoid further losses in all respects.

Q- Do you think the Americans will maintain bases in Iraq for years like they'd like, or do you think popular discontent will drive them completely out eventually?

A- If bases are somehow kept, not one kid will pass by without throwing a rock if he cannot manage something else. The US doesn't understand the land. The bases will never be accepted.

Q- What do you expect to happen when the Americans go? Civil war? If not, how do you think Iraq will pull through all of these militias formed?

A- One can draw on the precedent of what is happening right now with allawi's mob. All of those out of a job, including ALL-ALLAWI himself, have already left Iraq or are contemplating leaving shortly after checking out if there wasn't a bone left.

Civil war is out of the question. I am yet to find one Iraqi apart from the puppets that expects it. Nobody is that stupid. Nobody needs to or can unify the country by force. When the US withdraws, the local puppets will disappear, not with a bang but a whimper, except for a few with local bases of support.

I expect some militias may stay on for some time, and there will be localized forms of authority in an unofficially decentralized set of many small regions, while talks and arrangements go on in Baghdad.

It has happened before every time there was a vacuum of central authority, so I am not looking into a crystal ball.

Eventually in a few years, central government becomes stronger as the economic situation stabilizes and improves. Economics reunites, and central authority uses it to consolidate its tools and thus its status. A healthy state is bound to re-emerge. Life goes on. It always does.

MORE FROM KELEBDOONI:

“Arabs Do Not Accept Defeat. They Just Don't”

May 05, 2005

This brings up the second point, which makes a world of difference between the occupation of Germany and Japan compared to Iraq.

Arabs do not accept defeat. They just don't. This is the way ever since there was an Arab, so it's not likely to change soon.

For example, Iraq never lost the Mother of all battles in 1991. That was but one battle of a continuing war. That was how it was fathomed by the Iraqi psyche.

And in a sense, you really cannot lose this way. As long as you don't succumb to the recognition of defeat, as long as you consider the fight ongoing endlessly unless you win, then you cannot lose.

The US project in Iraq is a failure, precisely because it finds the above reasoning illogical. Nevertheless, it is the logic of the land.

People could have accepted the liberation, whether pro or anti Saddam.

Iraqis of all kinds would have been ready to overlook the destruction, if the US began to withdraw in April 2003.

They were prepared to talk to each other and work out an alternative. Without further interference in shaping a substitute government of Iraq, the US project could have had a margin of hope. The opportunity has been missed. Forever.

Even if the US manages to quash or contain the current resistance, as outlandish a probability as can be, that cannot be the end of story. The story never ends, remember? With Arabs, it is passed on through the generations.

What do you think the younger generation feels?

Perhaps a psychologist can fill in on this better, for I wonder how the young view the looks of humiliation and helplessness in the eyes of their parents that they look up to.

There are increasing reports recently that the active resistance is composed more of teenagers, with the elders relegated to backstage leadership and consultative capacities.

Girls have been recently taking part in active combat, while in a society that does not favor this.

From my lay perspective, the young have their lives stretched out before them to work their best at bettering their elders, and making it exactly where they couldn't. The future will be far more ominous.

MORE FROM KELEBDOONI:

“The Bulk Of Operations Are Still Direct Enough”

[The term “sandbags” in the comment below refers to local collaborator forces in Iraq, playing the role of sandbags heaped up to protect the foreign Occupation forces. T]

May 05, 2005

Subject: Re: 57% of U.S. public think Iraq War was not worth it

People wouldn't prefer to go for their own kind if they can avoid it. It's certainly more logical, and effective, to hit at the source and cause. But the sand bags simply get in the way from time to time, so the obstacle needs to be removed.

It must also be realized that the prospect of the occupation project succeeding in creating enough sand bags would be most detrimental to the effectiveness of the resistance, and thus to the anti-war cause in its entirety.

You wrote: "This is why I say Americans being killed by the resistance is paramount to a quicker success in getting the Americans out."

In fact, it is the initiating factor.

As you pointed out, if there were no US casualties, there would be no anti-war protests at home. The whole thing dies out. Therefore, the occupiers must be brought out into the open, so that more direct casualties can be inflicted, which builds up dissent at home, and thus more political pressure against the war and more dissent within the military ranks. Unfortunately, that's the only way at present to get anywhere.

Although the occupation force is the main and effective target to hit at, the sand bags project must not succeed in shielding them. So which comes first, the egg or the chicken?

However, short of thinking that the resistance has its hands full with the sand bags and contrary to the popular media picture, the bulk of operations are still direct enough.

"From 1 November 2004 to 12 March 2005 there were a total of 3306 attacks in the Baghdad area. Of these, 2400 were directed against Coalition Forces." - Source: GI SPECIAL 3B18 from Information Clearing House.org, Giuliana Sgrena Killing: The uncensored U.S. report.

That's 73% within Baghdad alone. The overall figure can only be much higher when considering resistance land outside the capital, where most resistance ops occur and where the sand bags are almost nonexistent.

From an approx distribution of ops, it can be estimated that direct attacks must be of the order of 90%+.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“Why Won’t Our Iraqis Fight?”
“The U.S. Military Does Not Control Baghdad. If The US Military Does Not Control The Capital Of A Country It Conquered, Then It Controls Nothing Of Importance.”

23 May 2005 By Tom Engelhardt, Tom Dispatch

In the case of those "trained" Iraqi military men, as things went from bad to worse, the metrics meant to measure training success did indeed multiply. As a Washington Post

piece (A Report Card on Iraqi Troops) indicated just recently, now that ten-man "transition" teams of American advisors have been assigned to Iraqi troops in the field (à la Vietnam), a whole new system of measurement has come into existence, the Transition Readiness Assessment.

Just now being tested out in the field, it's meant to determine the quality, not just quantity, of "our" Iraqis on the ground. As in Vietnam, the TRA has a plenitude of categories of "readiness" (or the lack thereof) -- six in all -- and has already been transformed into a set of nifty, color-coded visuals with, as it turns out, lots of "red squares."

According to reporter Bradley Graham, the initial TRA found the following:

"Of 81 Iraqi army battalions assessed, only three were rated green, able to conduct operations independently. Of 26 larger brigade headquarters formed so far, only one earned such a rating, according to officers familiar with the confidential assessment."

As happened with similar systems of measurement in Vietnam, the new ratings system is already being scammed by Iraqi commanders eager to rate their forces even lower than may be justified in order to get ever more U.S. military aid flowing in to their units.

Behind such measures lies a frustration that would have been deeply familiar to American military men in Vietnam: How come it's going to take us years, if ever, to get our forces up and fighting effectively, when the other side, without those ten-man advisory teams or special American training or much of anything else (except vast stores of munitions and weaponry left over from Saddam Hussein's day) are already fighting and dying with determination?

Even when it comes to foreign jihadis, why are theirs ready to die for nothing, while ours -- the thousands of hired guns, known as "security contractors," we've imported into the country from all over the globe -- cost a bloody fortune?

Numbers are a tricky thing. Counts of various sorts can themselves be interpreted various ways. Numbers, even when accurate, can lead to quite different conclusions. Sometimes you need a sharp interpretive brain just to grasp the nature of the figures coming your way. Sometimes you need just such a brain to step past the numbers.

Considering the recent Baghdad car bombings, Juan Cole, who may have the best interpretive brain around on the subject of Iraq, offered this succinct summary of the American position in that country at his Informed Comment website:

"Few commentators, when they mention such news (of car bombs targeting convoys in Baghdad), point out the obvious.

"The United States military does not control Baghdad. It doesn't control the major roads leading out of the capital. It does not control the downtown area except possibly the heavily barricaded "green zone." It does not control the capital.

“The guerrillas strike at will, even at Iraqi notables who can afford American security guards (many of them e.g. ex-Navy Seals). If the US military does not control the capital of a country it conquered, then it controls nothing of importance.”

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.

The Soldiers’ Rebellion In The Kitchen

[Thanks to Max Watts, who sent this in.]

*From: Adam Keller
To: Max Watts
Sent: May 21, 2005*

Dear Max

I thought it worthwhile to translate this from the weekend Ma'ariv. It is remarkable in several ways: it is a very detailed eye-witness description of an act which can be definitely classed as [Resistance In The Army], which happened some unspecified number of years ago. It is written with very much approval, in fact giving it as an example future soldiers to follow. And what is more remarkable, it is published quite prominently in a mainstream paper (and in fact Ma'ariv is the most right-wing of the mainstream Israeli papers) and most remarkable the writer Hanoch Daum is not at all left-wing, in fact he is a religious settler who lives in the West Bank settlement Efrat south of Jerusalem - though he is considered very much of "a moderate settler" (which puts him rather right-of-center in the overall political spectrum).

Anyway, I would like to hear what you think of this.

Adam

May 20, 2005 By Hanoch Daum, Ma'ariv,

1) Dear Oren, thanks for your moving letter.

You told me you are about to be drafted and that in my column you have read stories which made you feel worried about service life. You asked me to console you with some more positive stories, stories of happy moments in the army, times when a soldier feels strong and capable.

2) Well, it was one of these missions where you are not told in advance what is waiting for you. **You are just told to get on an Abir, an ugly military vehicle with a terrible smell of occupation, and it moves off. In this kind of travel I was always reminded of the turkeys from the Golan Heights who are put into boxes and loaded on trucks without knowing they are going to the slaughter-house.**

When the car stopped we realized that we were in another battalion of the brigade. You are going to the kitchen, the commander explained shortly, there are a lot of plates to be washed. Get it done and we will get back to base.

Then he volunteered some more info. The thing is, he said, they had here a graduation party for a company commanders course, and it was decided that there will be an intensified brigade effort re dirty plates. I will never forget this stupid expression: intensified brigade effort re dirty plates.

3) Well, dear Oren, if dirty plates have a paradise than that kitchen on that night was it. When the kitchen door was opened to us, we saw the corridor full of carriages full of dirty plates. It took us only a few seconds to understand that the dirty plates and dishes were not only in the sink and its environs.

Far from it: they had spread out and out and occupied the entire kitchen, and quite a big kitchen it was. Carriages upon carriages full of cups, and plates, and pots, and pans, and baking pans for cakes, and knives and forks and spoons, and water pitchers.

There fine new company commanders had had themselves a really swell graduation party, and the number of plates which this party left behind was just inconceivable. We looked around at this big kitchen full of dirty plates, and we felt totally helpless. It was a mountain, a real mountain. How could just four soldiers possibly get through this mountain in less than two weeks of constant work?

4) I took the pots outside to wash them in hot water and make the tough food remnants soft enough to be scraped off. Another friend took up the plates and cups. But the real hell was reserved to the two who got the baking pans. There were dozens of them, and the remnants of the army cakes were stuck as if made of concrete. Even in the Russian hard labor camps there is no labor quite that hard (much much later I got a chance to ask Sharansky, and he should know!).

Still, six hours of hard labor did produce an effect. We started out at 7.30 pm. By half past one the end was in sight. Six hours of scraping off this company commanders graduation party, six hours of a crazy orgy of water and soap.

At the end of these six hours we could hardly stand, but we were quite proud of ourselves. As ordered, we woke up our commander and the kitchen sergeant-major, to have them confirm that the intensified brigade effort had come to a victorious conclusion.

5) **Yes, we felt proud. We did not expect compliments (you don't expect compliments at this stage of your army life) but we did hope to see in the eyes of these two some hint of satisfaction, even if not expressed in words.**

But there was no satisfying them, no Sir! The sergeant-major, plainly irritated at being woken up, got as far the pile of drying plastic cups when he suddenly shouted: What is this? We looked and saw a bit of soap on one of the cups. My friend tried to take it and wash it again, but he pushed his hand away very roughly and shouted "And what is this!" and pointed to another cup where he saw a trace of soap quite invisible to us. "I ask you what is this!" this bastard shouted again and suddenly his hand shot out and the whole pyramid of cups which we had so carefully built up went crashing over the kitchen floor. A terrible noise, more than a hundred cups flying and rolling and crashing in all directions.

The sergeant-major became more and more exited, running around and shouting "This is not clean!" and "And this is also not clean!" and "This is very dirty!".

He did not even bother to look any more, just with every shout he was pushing another pile over the floor with more terrible noise. Ten big pots went crashing and rolling over everything else, crashing and smashing some of the smaller things. He was totally oblivious now, running amok through the kitchen for the whole of ten minutes, completely demolishing the handiwork of our six hours of hard labor, strewing everything in total confusion and chaos over the floor, with angry shouting, really throwing a tantrum. The next time you wake us, said the commander who had until this moment kept silent, the plates had better be REALLY clean.

6) At this moment, Oren, something broke.

The moment when our commander did not stand up for his soldiers but joined the teasing and bullying, I was very forcefully reminded of the turkeys on their way to the slaughter.

My eyes filled with tears. I could stand the brigade effort, and the being sent to another battalion to clean up after the company commanders. I could stand the six hours of hard labor and even the whim of the bastard sergeant major who threw completely clean plates on kitchen floors. What I could not stand was the betrayal of the commander.

The fact that he, the only familiar face in this alien battalion, had turned his back on us at 1.30 am and sent us off to additional hours of hard labor. That I just could not stomach.

7) After a few minutes of total silence one of my friends started picking up plates and carrying them to the sink, moving slowly like a dying man in the last moment of expiring. I looked at him, totally paralyzed and desperate. I could not move a single finger to help him. Suddenly I saw that one of the cups he was holding was broken, smashed in the sergeant major's rampage. I took it and threw it to the garbage. My friends looked at me silently.

For what we started doing then, we did not need to exchange a single word. Within two minutes, all the cups which the bastard has thrown to the floor were in the garbage. We found a big garbage nylon in a corner and filled it up with cups and tied it closed and went out to the big garbage container to destroy the evidence. Then a second nylon bag was filled with plates and we found for it

another garbage container far away, in an altogether different part of the strange camp. And then pots and pans and baking pans and trays, collected off the floor and filling four full enormous garbage nylons and gone forever away from that kitchen.

8) We worked with the efficiency of a machine of destruction. The garbage containers filled up with eating and cooking utensils of every possible kind, all carefully wrapped in garbage nylons to hide what they were. What was left in the kitchen we spread out to give the appearance of filling all the shelves. After destroying all the evidence, we caught a two hours' nap on the kitchen floor and then we called again on our commander and on the sergeant-major. The bastard just went on snoring.

The commander glanced around the kitchen in a very cursory way and said O.K. and took us back to our own base.

Some months later we heard by chance of the sergeant-major being court-martialled for the disappearance of army property worth thousands of shekels, for which he could not give a satisfactory account. We felt it better not to be too inquisitive, so we never found out how it ended for him. Badly, I hope.

9) We could have been punished, we might even have gone to prison. Still, I would have done it all over again, no question about it, whatever the price. The feeling of taking our fate in our own hands on that terrible night was worth everything, really everything.

It was one of the happiest moments of my life.

My dear Oren, if there is anything I can give you as an encouragement towards the day of your joining the army, it is this knowledge that army life also contains these moments of liberty, these rare moments of justice, the moments when you become a human being again. So, have a nice time in the army!

Hanoch Daum

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Northern Oil Exports Suspended:

Southern Gas Separation Stations Fail & Exports May Stop Also

May. 24, 2005 By HASSAN HAFIDH, The Associated Press

Iraq has suspended oil exports to the Turkish port of Ceyhan because of a production shortage in the northern fields of Kirkuk, an Iraqi official said Tuesday. The northern pipeline and facilities regularly are sabotaged by insurgents.

In the south, Iraq's oil output has fallen by nearly 190,000 barrels a day since Monday because of technical problems, said the Oil Ministry official, who asked not to be named for security reasons.

Production from the oil-rich south has fallen from 1.85 million barrels a day to 1.66 million barrels because the gas separation stations at the southern oil fields have failed, the official said.

"There has been no pumping from Kirkuk to Ceyhan since Saturday and the pipeline won't be pumping until probably Thursday," the official told Dow Jones Newswires, adding that there was not enough crude to pump.

Iraqi officials say the country's northern oil production has been averaging 500,000 barrels per day, of which about 380,000 barrels are being pumped to nearby refineries for domestic use. The remaining 120,000 barrels a day are kept in storage tanks at the pumping stations or at Beiji refinery.

Baghdad needs to fill its storage facilities in Ceyhan, whose capacity is estimated at 7.6 million barrels, before deciding how to sell the accumulated crude.

Persistent sabotage of the pipeline network and facilities has kept Kirkuk exports shut in for most of this year.

Oil exports from the south have been averaging 1.4 million-1.5 million barrels a day.

The technical problems are not expected to impact exports from the south immediately, because oil is held in storage near the offshore oil terminals. However, if the problems persist, exports will fall, the official said.

**Falluja:
Prison Camp Rebuilding Is Slow:
Only 15% Of People Come Back;
“Little Progress Has Been Made”**

"When they (US troops) decided to destroy Fallujah they were so fast but when you talk about rebuilding the city and paying for destruction they are very slow."

24 May 2005 (IRIN)

FALLUJAH: Reconstruction of Fallujah, the city which was the scene of fierce battles between US forces and insurgents between November 2004 and January 2005, has been slow according to local officials.

Little progress has been made.

Local people complain that there are still no basic facilities such as sewage systems, adequate electricity and water supplies and there are disputes over how much compensation has been distributed so far.

About 70 percent of buildings, many of them houses, were destroyed during the conflict.

According to Bassel Mahmoud, director of Fallujah's reconstruction project, less than \$50 million of the \$200 million for reconstruction had been released so far.

He said although the main hospital had been repaired, only three schools out of 40 and four government buildings out of 20 had been rebuilt.

Power, water treatment and sewage systems were badly damaged in the city. Some districts are still dependant on water tankers as the only way to access clean water and most houses with electricity are connected to private generators. The official said more funds need to be released in order to accelerate reconstruction.

Teachers, who are giving lessons inside tents on the outskirts of the city, said most schools in Fallujah are unsuitable for children to study in and that those some of those that remain intact are being used by US troops as military bases.

"We cannot teach without essential materials and a minimum of comfort for our students. We have been giving lessons using old and small blackboards and paper and notebooks collected by the families," Fadia al-Jumaili, a primary school teacher in Fallujah, told IRIN.

Local contractors complained that tight security restrictions had delayed their work and their movement around Fallujah.

The Iraqi Central Committee for the Compensation of the People of Fallujah (CCCPF) told IRIN that 200 families have been given payments spread over eight months. **Each person has received nearly \$2,000 but residents complained that the amount was not enough to rebuild their lives and homes again.**

Bill Taylor, director of the US-Iraqi reconstruction management office, told IRIN that insecurity and attacks elsewhere in the country had caused a general delay in contractors work.

Khalid Kubaissy, a senior official from the CCCPF, told IRIN that 30,000 houses were damaged in the battle and more than 5,000 had been totally destroyed. In addition, around 8,500 shops, 60 mosques and 20 government offices required massive repair work.

"When they (US troops) decided to destroy Fallujah they were so fast but when you talk about rebuilding the city and paying for destruction they are very slow. We lost our house, personal things and traditions but no one cares about that and even in the media, Fallujah has been forgotten," Abu Athir, a local resident, told IRIN standing next to the rubble where his home once stood.

Mazen Sallon, general secretary for the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) said only 15 percent of former residents had returned to the city and that the rest who were still camped on the outskirts should not be forgotten.

He said although the IRCS had been supporting these families, their work had been diverted to the western town of al-Qaim after the US offensive there last week.

In addition, local doctors fear that there could be an outbreak of disease in the summer caused by the open sewers and a lack of potable water in the camps populated by residents who have nowhere else to go.

As well as the curfew, still in the place for more than 10 hours a day, shopkeepers and business people complained that security measures were affecting their income.

Ibrahim Dawood, a shopkeeper in the city, told IRIN that he was stopped from bringing in supplies from the capital, because of heavy security and checkpoints at the entrance to the city. When he had sold all his stock he would have no choice but to shut down unless there was a drastic change in security.

"You cannot image how awful the checking at the entrance of the city is. You are looked at and checked as if you are a criminal because you are bringing something in from outside the city," Dawood added.

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

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The following that we know of have also posted issues:

<http://www.iraq-news.de/>, <http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/>,

www.williambowles.info/qispecial,

<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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