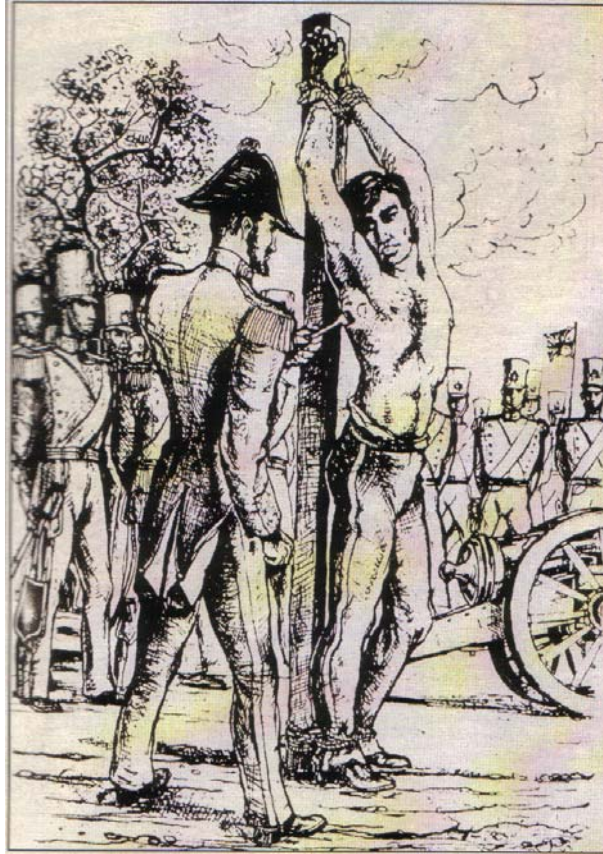


GI SPECIAL 3B47:



FROM SOLDIER X

“We Will Never Forget”

You can see it on those kids faces that they hate that fucking place and being treated like some dress up dolls so a four star can thump his chest.

"Look at my boys Duba." "I can make them dance, sing, march and die."

They actually said that it was a successful mission. We were more scared to leave the wire the day we left than the day we arrived.

From: Soldier X

To: GI Specia

Sent: May 23, 2005

Subject: Xtra Duty Days

This picture is of a deserter in the British Army being branded with the letter 'D'. A soldier could also be branded with a 'C' for cowardice, 'T' for thief, or a 'W' for worthless.

Extra duty continues.

I may as well be breaking rocks. I swept an entire parking lot in the middle of a rain storm. That was fucking productive. Surprisingly they didn't have me mop it also.

I cut the grass of acres of parade fields and mediums. I also shoveled leaves out of a 100 meter ditch. I cleaned over twenty nasty ass latrines (bathrooms I mean, latrine is what the Army calls them). I waxed and buffed the floors by hand. FUN!

They turned me into their little peasant worker. War hero to ugly step child. All over walking home from the [XXXX] down the [xxxx]. I am a fucking criminal. Thank god for the Uniformed Code of Military Justice. It keeps hoods like me off the streets and off the tracks.

You figure after the bill of sniper school and basic, after all the training, the housing and the shit ass food they have given me over the four years in the service, the Army has a damn expensive lawn mower.

They better fucking enjoy it because I got a few precious days in this fucked up outfit. The only thing left to tell I was here will be a pair of boots dangling from the barbed wire fence.

I did receive a beautiful plaque today by the Scout platoon. It has a lil' silvery humvee on it and a old German bayonet that I can actually remove from the scabbard. What a fancy letter opener.

It was presented to me at closing formation and the LT said a few words and asked if I had anything to say.

I preceded to explain how much the Army was a crock and we are all abused victims, but in the entire miserable experience the one good thing I can pull from it is meeting some great friends.

Without the service I would have never met any of them and probably wouldn't have made time to get to know them if we never had to share a 24 hour guard tower on the perimeter of the third world or a fox hole full of camel spiders.

But I did find some lifetime friends.

I guess no matter how much I explain the war and this life to people, even to other soldiers who had a different experience in Iraq, the only ones who will know exactly what I am talking about are the men that were right there with me.

I will never have to tell a two hour story to make them understand the horrible circumstances.

I will just look them in the eye and we will both know.

We will remember the ones that never made it back. We will order an extra pint and place it at the empty bar stool at the pub where he used to sit before the war. When we went out all together.

And when we make a toast, we won't have to say his name because every toast we make for the rest of our lives we will know in the back of our minds it is for him also.

I certainly don't need a trophy to remember these years. I will never forget.

This fire burning in my soul won't even be extinguished when my body is cold and dead. I will spread the inferno to my friends and family.

To people with reason and understanding in their hearts. People with open minds and compassionate spirits.

To my children and to theirs.

We will grow in strength and numbers and eventually there will be enough people that starve for peace. And, hungry men don't stay hungry for long.

We will never forget,

Soldier X

PS where did you find those photos of 2-63? [See photo below.]

Those were taken at the big command ceremony. I didn't go because I was clearing and too short timed to bother with that awful dog and pony show.

It just screams "look how happy we are to have done a great job down range in Iraq."

What a bunch of shit.

You can see it on those kids faces that they hate that fucking place and being treated like some dress up dolls so a four star can thump his chest.

"Look at my boys Duba." "I can make them dance, sing, march and die."

They actually said that it was a successful mission.

WHAT THE FUCK! What made it successful?

We accomplish zero goals the entire fucking year.

We were more scared to leave the wire the day we left than the day we arrived.

Success?



2-63

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Death Toll In Iraq Surges

"The reality is we have discovered, despite all our propaganda, that we are facing a very tough, resilient and smart adversary," defense analyst Daniel Gouré of the Lexington Institute said.

31 May 2005 By Will Dunham (Reuters)

The death toll for American troops in Iraq rose in May to the highest level since January, with the U.S. military saying on Tuesday insurgents have doubled their number of daily attacks since April.

At least 77 U.S. troops were killed in May, according to a count of deaths announced by the military. That is the highest toll since 107 Americans were killed in January. It marked the second straight monthly increase since 36 U.S. troops died in March, among the lowest tolls of the war.

[He doesn't tell you that this month is the second highest death toll since April 2004.]

Lt. Col. Steve Boylan, a U.S. military spokesman in Baghdad, said insurgents are staging about 70 attacks nationwide per day.

The latest Pentagon figures listed 1,658 U.S. military deaths since the war began, with another 12,630 wounded in combat.

Asked if the insurgents, a mix of indigenous Sunni Muslim Arabs and foreign radical Islamic fighters, could sustain the current level of violence, Boylan said, "Don't know yet."

"Those who believed that the elections would be a decisive turning point undermining the insurgency are disappointed yet again," Cato Institute defense analyst Ted Carpenter said. **"The insurgency seems as capable as ever."**

"The reality is we have discovered, despite all our propaganda, that we are facing a very tough, resilient and smart adversary," defense analyst Daniel Goure of the Lexington Institute said.

Goure said rebels have continuously changed, updated and modified tactics, dumping those that no longer worked.

Soldier Killed In Mosul

May 31, 2005 Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A soldier was killed on May 28 in an attack in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, the military reported on Monday.

Spc. Phillip Sayles, a soldier with the 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, "was killed during a terrorist attack on Saturday," the military said. **It gave no further details about the attack, the soldier's age or hometown.**

Sgt. Dies of "Non-Combat" Injuries In Baghdad

May 31, 2005 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 539-05

Staff Sgt. Victor M. Cortes III, 29, of Erie, Pa., died May 29 in Baghdad, Iraq of non-combat-related injuries. Cortes was assigned to the 703rd Forward Support Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga.

MARINE KILLED BY SMALL ARMS FIRE NEAR RAMADI

May 31, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Release
Number: 05-05-39C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Marine assigned to 5th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) was killed in action May 30 by enemy small-arms fire while conducting combat operations near Ramadi, Iraq.

Italian Military Helicopter Down, 4 Dead

6.1.05 AP & By Antonella Cinelli (Reuters)

An Italian military helicopter has crashed in Iraq, killing the four people aboard, the Italian military said Tuesday.

The AB-412 helicopter crashed overnight about 13 kilometers (8 miles) southeast of Nasiriyah, the southern Iraqi city where Italy's 3,000 troops are based, the military said in a statement. The cause was not immediately clear.

The helicopter was coming back from the Kuwaiti international airport and had stopped to refuel at Camp Buehring, also in Kuwait. Radio contact was lost soon after take off from the camp, the statement said.

A rescue team found the wreckage at dawn in the desert close to the Tallil air base in Iraq near Nasiriyah.

The military command said an investigation had begun into the deaths of the two machinegunners and two pilots, all between the ages of 29 and 39.

"The aircraft was returning (to base) after having transported to Kuwait City a member of the contingent," the statement said.

Mac Marine Hit: “Sir, Are You A Religious Man? If You Are, You Better Start Praying”

May 31, 2005 By PAUL DAQUILANTE, News-Register Publishing Co.

Marine Reservist Joe Crabtree of McMinnville, 21-year-old son of Yamhill County Sheriff Jack Crabtree, is being treated today in Germany's Landstuhl Regional Medical Center for shrapnel wounds to the head and body suffered in a bomb blast in Western Iraq.

Crabtree was riding with four other Marines when a roadside bomb planted by insurgents destroyed their Humvee, killing one and inflicting injuries of varying severity on the rest of them.

His injuries were initially considered life-threatening. Now showing some improvement following weekend surgery at Landstuhl, he is scheduled for transfer to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., later this week.

Crabtree is a 2002 graduate of McMinnville High School, where he starred in two sports while working on the side as a teller for Wells Fargo and helping manage Action Corner, the student store. His senior year, he won second-team all-conference honors as a linebacker in football. He also enjoyed success as a sprinter on the track team.

He went on to enroll as a business major at the University of Oregon in Eugene, but ended up putting school on hold to do a tour in Iraq with the Marine Reserves.

He returned to the university for a time, but was called up earlier this year for duty in Iraq.

When Jack and his wife, Sherri, got a phone call at 4 a.m. Saturday, he figured it was Joe calling. He said Joe would call every couple of weeks between midnight and 4 a.m. to let his parents and younger brother, 16-year-old Kenny, know how he was doing.

However, this time it was Sgt. Maj. Sean Riddell, Joe's commanding officer, calling to relay the bad news.

"This is something I'll never forget," Jack Crabtree said. "He said, 'Mr. Crabtree.' I knew then it wasn't Joe, and I knew it wasn't a YCOM dispatcher, because they don't refer to me as 'Mr. Crabtree.'

"He said, 'Sir, the first thing I want to tell you is that your son is alive. But our Humvee was struck by a roadside bomb.'"

Riddell, who survived the blast himself, would not go into details. But he made it clear Joe had been badly hurt.

The sheriff recalled, "He said, 'Sir, are you a religious man? If you are, you better start praying.'

"This is what really got me. When someone puts it like that, they're sending a pretty serious message."

The elder Crabtree said Saturday turned into the longest day of his life. He wasn't able to get much information about Joe's injuries, and he felt helpless.

He knows a lot more now, and is looking forward with great relief to Joe's return to the United States.

"I never felt for a second that anything would happen to him," the sheriff said. It would surely be someone else, not Joe.

"One of our sergeants has a son in Iraq, and I worry about him all the time," Crabtree said.

"I felt confident he was going to make it. I certainly did not expect the phone call we got Saturday."

Insurgent Bomb-Makers Target Intelligence Teams Targeting Insurgent Bomb Makers: "I Would Say The Skill Level Is Very Good," Sgt. Says

May 31, 2005 By Steven Komarow, USA Today

U.S. forces have yet to fully counter roadside bombs. **[Wow! Amazing discovery!]**

Insurgents try to stay one step ahead of U.S. forces.

"They're getting better," says Spc. Pavel Palanker, 24, who along with Tyson, 32, and Sgt. Charles Runolfson, 29, make up the team for eastern Baghdad.

Before arriving in Iraq in December, Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Tyson says he figured the insurgents were "uneducated thugs." Now, he views them as cunning adversaries.

"I would say the skill level is very good," he says, including their ability to quickly adjust to U.S. countermeasures.

More sophisticated examples include "shaped" charges, bombs designed to focus the blast in one direction and thus concentrate power. A shaped charge on the roadside aimed at passing vehicles is more likely to penetrate the armor on Humvees or even heavier protection.

Sometimes, working with the military's technical bomb experts, the Weapons Intelligence Team can determine that a single maker is behind a series of attacks, even if they haven't identified the person.

The intelligence gathering is not a one-way affair. The insurgents watch carefully and sometimes videotape when U.S. service members arrive to gather evidence or to defuse an unexploded bomb, the team members say. They think insurgents are

trying to pick up clues about the team's investigative techniques by watching them.

"That's why we try to change how we operate. They're gunning for us," says Sgt. Duane Poslusny, 24, an explosives disposal expert who works closely with the intelligence team.

On this day, the 6:45 a.m. Opel bomb is just one of at least three along a short stretch of highway. One just to the north hit a bus at about the same time, setting it on fire. The third detonated near a U.S. convoy, but this time damage was light - just blown tires.

The team also uncovered what looks like a fourth bomb, but turns out to be just a heavy steel tube with a fake trip-wire device. It apparently was a lure planted within range of one of the other bombs, designed to attract troops to come for a closer look.

If This Brilliant Plan Doesn't Stop IEDs, Rabbits Feet Will Be Issued

Mideast Stars and Stripes, May 25, 2005

American military officials have kicked off a new awareness campaign they hope will reduce deaths and injuries caused by the No. 1 killer of U.S. troops in Iraq: homemade bombs.

Dubbed "5-and-25," the slogan refers to perimeters that should be secured when moving in a vehicle (a 5-meter radius) or stopped (25 meters).

Notes From A Lost War:

Welcome To Liberated Baghdad: "It Has Basically Come To This"

Until three months ago, the only safe ways to move diplomats, contractors and others working for the government between the airport and the Green Zone was by Rhino or helicopter. Now, the helicopters are being used elsewhere, and the only remaining safe ride is on the Rhino.

May 30, 2005 By Robert Hodierne. Army Times staff writer

They call it "riding the Rhino."

It has basically come to this: Two years after U.S. forces toppled Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, the only safe way to move troops and diplomats from Baghdad International Airport to the fortified city compound called the Green Zone is in convoys of custom-made \$275,000 armored buses.

The buses, called "Rhinos," look like something out of "The Road Warrior," Mel Gibson's 1981 post-apocalyptic adventure film. They roll in the dead of night escorted by armored Humvees, with the road sealed to all other traffic and AH-64 Apache gunships loitering overhead.

The six-mile road — Route Irish to the U.S. military — is often called the world's most dangerous stretch of highway. A report released to the public April 30 that accidentally included classified information said there were 135 attacks along that road in the 4½ months from Nov. 1 to March 12.

The Rhino is all flat slabs of gray or off-white steel (there are two models in service) with passenger windows angled in streamlined fashion, like an old-time Greyhound bus, as the only concession to aesthetics.

The beauty of these buses is not in their graceful line — they are as graceful as a refrigerator. Rather, their beauty lies in the armor, which covers the sides, tops and bottoms of the five buses in service in Baghdad. Twenty-six passengers ride in relative comfort on functional — if not attractive — vinyl seats.

The buses, each weighing about 13 tons and featuring bullet-resistant glass and 12 gun ports along with all that armor, are manufactured by Weston, Fla.-based Labock Technologies at the company's plant in Ashdod, Israel.

Until three months ago, the only safe ways to move diplomats, contractors and others working for the government between the airport and the Green Zone was by Rhino or helicopter. Now, the helicopters are being used elsewhere, and the only remaining safe ride is on the Rhino.

But it's not as simple as that.

The buses run on an irregular schedule to make it harder for suicide bombers to get a fix on them. Before they started running at night, one bomber, in a BMW loaded with anywhere from 250 pounds to 1,000 pounds of explosives — depending on whose account is to be believed — pulled between two Rhinos last December and set off his bomb.

He died. No one on the buses did.

About three months ago, a Rhino took a direct hit from a rocket-propelled grenade.

"Nobody was hurt except for some minor bumps and bruises," said Army Maj. Sharon Smith, of the Joint Area Support Group, who books the Rhino convoys.

Smith, 48, of Richmond, Va., said the convoys can run day or night. But they run mostly at night. Late at night. A recent two-bus run, for example, left the airport at 1 a.m.

And the buses don't travel alone; they are accompanied by four armored Humvees, while armored personnel carriers and other Humvees block the side streets and two Apaches provide air cover.

A recent run took 14 minutes — 14 uneventful minutes, but 14 minutes in which the passengers, who had just flown in from Kuwait City in a wisecracking, jovial mood, turned earnestly silent, as if collectively holding their breath until safely inside the Green Zone.

The soldiers in the Humvees might be thought to have a horrible job — running every night on the most dangerous highway in the world.

“Naw,” insisted Pfc. Ralph Holley, 25, of Selma, Ala. “This is the best job going.”

Holley is from B Battery, 1st Battalion, 76th Field Artillery, part of the 3rd Infantry Division. His unit takes turns providing Rhino security — one week on, one week doing other duty.

“This is a good job because we're not busting doors,” said Staff Sgt. Marcus Martin, 33, of Alto, Texas, referring to the job many infantry troops have in Iraq of entering Iraqi dwellings, often forcibly, to look for insurgents — never knowing for sure what will be waiting for them on the inside.

To Martin's way of thinking, Route Irish is a lot safer.

Martin and the others in his team, standing around their Humvees waiting to make a run from the airport, ticked off the reasons this job is so good: the gunships overhead, the side roads blocked, it's done in the cool of night instead of the heat of day.

And, Martin said, with the road closed to all other traffic, if they see another car, the decision on what to do is simple:

“You kill it.”

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Six Insurgents Reported Killed In Afghan Fighting

May 31, 2005 Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Rebels launched three near-simultaneous assaults against Afghan and U.S.-led coalition forces along the border with Pakistan and at least six

insurgents were killed in the ensuing fighting, the U.S. military said in a statement Tuesday.

It said the insurgents attacked the three adjacent posts near the border with small-arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire on Monday. The Afghan and coalition forces fought back, and in conjunction with attack aircraft, killed six to nine rebels, the military said.

It did not provide an exact location for the fighting.

Comment:

[A. How odd that there is no mention of occupation casualties, or the clear statement that there were none. Why not?

[B. How odd that there is no mention of the fact, reported 5.31.05 by the Wall St. Journal, that the occupation headquarters in Kabul was hit by a resistance rocket.]

NATO Sends F-16s To Disperse Afghan Protesters

May 30, 2005 By Sayed Salahuddin, REUTERS

KABUL – NATO peacekeepers sent F-16 fighter jets to a northeastern Afghanistan province on Monday in a show of force to disperse thousands of protesters, police said.

At least six people were injured when supporters and opponents of a provincial official in Takhar province clashed with stones and clubs, police said. NATO sent its jets after local officials failed to disperse the 6,000-strong crowd.

One group demanded the removal of the education chief in the province's Rustaq district, while the other opposed the move, provincial police chief Akram Khan told Reuters.

'The jets came and managed to scatter the protesters,' Khan told Reuters. 'Six of the protesters, I know, were injured.'

A spokeswoman for NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) confirmed that two NATO F-16 jets had been sent from the capital Kabul at the government's request 'as a form of deterrent'.

TROOP NEWS

U.S. Opposition To War Huge And Growing: Reaching The “Tipping Point”?

There is more opposition to this war than there was in 1968 with regard to Vietnam, yet far less public and editorial protest.

(May 29, 2005) By Greg Mitchell, Editor And Publisher [Excerpts]

You may be surprised to learn that nearly 6 in 10 Americans feel the Iraq war is "not worth it," according to a recent Gallup poll.

Exactly 50% feel that President Bush "deliberately misled" them on the issue of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and virtually the same number call the war an out-and-out "mistake."

More than 56% now say the war is going badly for the United States.

Gallup also recently found that 46% of those polled say we should start withdrawing troops.

After the Iraqi elections in January, public opinion briefly shifted in a more positive direction, but that was quickly reversed with a return of wide violence and a rising American death toll this spring. Most of the time, in our work and play, you'd hardly know a war was going on.

There is more opposition to this war than there was in 1968 with regard to Vietnam, yet far less public and editorial protest. That 57% of Americans say the war is "not worth it" is haunting: such clarity, and such acceptance.

But still, the media continue to look at opinion on the war in a black-or-white, red state/blue state way, when it is much more complicated than that.

With so little exploration of this public ambivalence or ambiguity in the press, I turned to an expert, Dr. Frank Newport, editor in chief of the Gallup Poll. **Americans "are essentially doing a cost/ benefit analysis," Newport said, weighing what the United States may gain versus what we will certainly lose (many more casualties, world prestige, and so on). The verdict: The war is not "worth it."**

"I believe it's more important in people's minds than many think it is. It's incredibly important to people, a sleeper issue, perhaps on the verge of a tipping point." He pointed out that Iraq shows up as the No. 1 issue in every poll.

In a recent survey, people were asked what subject they would bring up if they got to spend 15 minutes with the president, and Iraq easily ranked at the top.

Disrespected Gold Star Mother Gets Another Snotty Putdown

“I’m not saying at this present time that I’m going to do that,” said Young, who becomes president of the national nonprofit next month. “We have a lot on the agenda, things we have to get done.” [Like shitting all over Ligaya Lagman. Truly important work. What sneering, condescending crap.]

May 31, 2005 By Hannan Adely and Len Maniace, The (Westchester, N.Y.) Journal News

WESTCHESTER, N.Y. — Ligaya Lagman has dropped her bid to become a Gold Star Mother, but still wants rules changed so that women who lose sons or daughters in war will be able to receive the honor — even if the mother is not a citizen.

“She’s kind of shaken up and wants to stay on the sidelines, but she wants to see this fight continue and she doesn’t want other mothers turned down like she was,” said Bob Foster, vice commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Eastchester, N.Y., where Lagman received help applying for the Gold Star recognition.

Lagman, who came to this country from the Philippines in 1983, is a permanent resident of the United States but not a citizen, as is required by the bylaws of the American Gold Star Mothers Inc.

Lagman’s son, Anthony, was killed in a firefight in Afghanistan last year at age 26.

Also Saturday, the incoming American Gold Star Mothers president clarified remarks she made Friday about a possible change in rules.

Judith Young said that although any member may propose a change to the organization’s bylaws for a vote in 2006, she personally had no plans to initiate such a change.

“I’m not saying at this present time that I’m going to do that,” said Young, who becomes president of the national nonprofit next month. “We have a lot on the agenda, things we have to get done.” [Like shitting all over Ligaya Lagman. Truly important work. What sneering, condescending crap.]

Young Saturday reiterated that American Gold Star Mothers did not deny membership to Lagman. She said the application was still pending because it was incomplete, lacking a signature and a death certificate. That assertion has been disputed by Ben Spadaro, a past president of the Eastchester VFW Post, who helped Lagman prepare the application.

“These mothers become our mothers no matter where they are from, whether they are citizens, or whatever their color,” Foster said. “That is how we feel about them. It is a pretty emotional issue among veterans.”

Young said any of the group's 1,000 members could propose an amendment to change the bylaws or constitution. The 12-member executive board would have to move the amendment to a full vote, which would happen at the organization's annual convention in late June.

It is too late to introduce a new amendment for this year's convention, Young said.

[Contemtable bullshit. The one it's too late for is Anthony Lagman, dead in Afghanistan last year at age 26. Everybody else has plenty of time, if they aren't too blind, vicious, and arrogant to do the right thing. But, obviously, doing the right thing is the last thing on Young's mind.]

Fallen Latino Soldiers Who Were Against The War

[Thanks to Phil G who sent this in.]

May 31, 2005 by Diego Cevallos, Inter Press Service

"I have received a lot of letters from the families of fallen soldiers who were against the war but who went over anyway, because they were afraid, or because they didn't feel strong enough to stand up to their superiors and say that they didn't want to take part," Carlos Mejia recounted.

Mejía is a Nicaraguan-born former staff sergeant in the U.S. army who refused to return to his unit in Iraq after spending five months stationed there in 2003.

“An Insult To Those Who Gave Their Lives For Their Country”

May 22, 2005 Military Families Against the War, United Kingdom

Sixteen families of British servicemen killed in Iraq have called on the Prime Minister to open a full investigation into the background and legality to the war. The families consider that there are serious questions for the government to answer. They believe that their husbands and sons were sent to war on the basis of lies and deception.

Moreover in the rejection of their legitimate request for an inquiry the Prime Minister has added insult to injury.

The Prime Minister's lawyers have written the following to the families:

'the decision to take military action in Iraq was in no sense the immediate and direct operative cause of the deaths of the claimants' relatives. Those servicemen regrettably lost their lives due to a variety of circumstances – a road traffic accident in Kuwait and a US helicopter crash to a gun attack and improvised explosive device attack. The legality of the decision to take military action in Iraq has no bearing on the circumstances which led to their deaths'.

These weasel words drew the following comments from the families today:

Ann Lawrence, whose son Marc was killed when two helicopters collided at sea, said **'I'm sure that Tom Keys and Marc Lawrence wouldn't have been in a million miles of Iraq had Mr Blair not sent them there. They had a Queen's commission and were duty bound to take orders.'**

Peter Brierley whose son Shaun was killed in a road traffic accident said ' My son often went out on Sunday afternoon drives and Kuwait was one of the destinations he used to go to which is as ridiculous as suggesting the decision to go to war and the accident were not connected. All the wriggling that Tony Blair is doing to try and get out of this has probably been the cause of his slipped disc. We will pursue the case for a public inquiry through all avenues.'

<p>Rose Gentle whose son Gordon was killed by a roadside bomb in Basra said: 'The question of the legality of the war is very important to me and my family. We all need to know whether the army was sent to Iraq on a proper basis. This letter is an insult to those who gave their lives for their country.'</p>

The families are now determined to pursue their demand for a full public inquiry and have launched a national petition: <http://www.petitiononline.com/mfaw/petition.html> and are calling on MPs and others to join with them in a campaign to reverse this dishonourable decision.

Any military family that would like more information about the legal action against Tony Blair please contact Military Families Against the War by email: contact@mfaw.org.uk or call Chris on: 07930536519 or Andrew on: 07939 242229

FROM ROSE GENTLE:

LOOK OUT TWO KILLERS IN SCOTLAND

[This is a message from Rose Gentle. She leads a campaign to bring all the Scots and other troops home from Iraq, now. T]

From: Rose Gentle

To: GI Special

Sent: May 31, 2005

Subject: Re: GI Special 3B45: Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Says Bush, Rumsfeld Are Traitors

LOOK OUT TWO KILLERS IN SCOTLAND.
LOCK UP YOUR BOYS, BUSH, BLAIR KILL THEM
2000/ US MARINES LAND IN SCOTLAND TO GARD BUSH AT THE
G8, THE ARMY OF US MARINNES, WILL MARCH INTO SCOTLAND
FOR THE G8 SUMMIT, ARMD TO THE TEETH,
WITH ASSAULT RIFIES, MACHINE GUNS, AND GRENADE
LAUNCHERS,
MILITARY EXPERT, ROD CRAIG. A FORMER ROYAL. NAVY
COMMANDER. SAID AUTHORITIES ARE ALWAYS HAPPIERE
WITH THEIR OWN PEOPLE. EVERY WHERE THEY GO.

THE TWO KILLERS ARE HATED, WE DONT WANT BUSH
IN SCOTLAND. IT WILL BE HELL. . WE ALL NO HIM AND BLAIR
LIED, TO US. WE CANT GET OFF WITH KILLING PEOPLE
SO HOW SHOULD THESE TWO MURDIRING, B,,,,,,/ GET OFF WITH
IT. FOR THE COST OF SECURITY ITS ESTIMATED, £50 MILLION
OF TAXPAYERS MONAY, I WILL HAVE MY TOP ON.
JUSTICE FOR GORDON GENTLE . WILL BLAIR, BUSH

THINK HOW CAN WE HIT NEX, I AM NOT A BAD PERSON BUT I WOULD
LOVE THE TWO KILLIERS, TO DROP DED,

Report Implicates Top Brass In Bagram Scandal

May 21, 2005 Julian Borger in Washington, Guardian

A leaked report on a military investigation into two killings of detainees at a US prison in Afghanistan has produced new evidence of connivance of senior officers in systematic prisoner abuse.

The investigation shows the military intelligence officers in charge of the detention centre at Bagram airport were redeployed to Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq in 2003, while still under investigation for the deaths of two detainees months earlier. **Despite military prosecutors' recommendations, the officers involved have yet to be charged.**

The Bagram case also suggests that some of the prison guards were given little if any training in handling detainees, and were influenced by a White House directive that "terrorist" suspects did not deserve the rights given to prisoners of war under the Geneva convention.

Drill Sgt. Found Guilty Of Abuse, Discharged; Other Drill Sgt. Scum Threaten Witnesses And Get Away With It

May 30, 2005 By Joseph R. Chenelly, Army Times staff writer

The second drill sergeant court-martialed for abusing recruits in basic training at Fort Knox, Ky., has been kicked out of the Army.

Staff Sgt. Michael G. Rhoades was found guilty May 17 of five counts of maltreatment and cruelty toward recruits, and on a charge of trying to impede an investigation into the case.

Rhoades was sentenced to 30 days in jail and given a bad conduct discharge. He was granted time served and will not be confined.

Rhoades was found to have punched his trainees in the chest, stomach and chin, and thrown at least one to the floor, according to Shaffery. He also was convicted of threatening trainees before they were to be questioned by investigators.

Sgt. 1st Class Ricky L. Stauffer's court-martial was recently rescheduled to begin June 7. Stauffer allegedly slammed a trainee into a wall locker and choked and punched others.

After Price's court-martial concluded, some trainees and drill sergeants who testified claimed they were harassed, and in some cases felt threatened, by drill sergeants for taking the stand.

Shaffery said that drill sergeants who made those inappropriate comments were "corrected" and dealt with "administratively." She said that may mean anything from an Article 15 to a verbal warning. [Obviously sending a message: go ahead,

threaten witnesses, no big deal. At least no big deal if you're a drill Sgt. protecting other drill Sgt's.]

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Fallujah: The Hate Is Still Very Alive

30 May 2005 Joe Carr, Electronic Iraq

Today, I did what few internationals have dared to do, I went to Fallujah.

US troops, Iraqi military, and Iraqi police have an overwhelming presence in the city. I've never seen such dirty looks directed at the passing forces; I guess in most places people get used to the occupier, but in Fallujah, the hate is still very alive.

“Between 12,000 And 20,000 Hardcore Insurgents”

[Thanks to Phil G who sent this in.]

25 May 2005 By Richard Norton-Taylor and Michael Howard, The Guardian UK

It could take at least five years before Iraqi forces are strong enough to impose law and order on the country, the International Institute of Strategic Studies warned yesterday. **[Try never, unless the Institute is referring to the resistance. Which doesn't seem likely somehow.]**

The thinktank report points to US estimates that there are between 12,000 and 20,000 hardcore insurgents in Iraq. [Do the math. Standard estimate: the occupier needs 10 combat effectives for every resistance soldier. That means to have any hope of keeping Iraq occupied, the U.S. government needs 120,000 to 200,00 combat effectives, excluding support troops. Not a chance. Game over. Time to come home.]

<p>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.</p>
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Assorted Resistance Action

5/31/2005 (AP) & (KUNA) & By Luke Baker (Reuters) & Anatolia.com Inc.

In Baghdad, a convoy of interior ministry commandos came under brief attack from gunmen armed with light weapons in Baghdad's Ghazaliya neighborhood who left three dead and seven wounded in their wake, police and medical sources said.

Guerrillas killed Jerges Mohammed Sultan, an Iraqi journalist working for Iraqi state TV channel Al-Iraqiya, in the northern city of Mosul, said Dr. Baha-al-din al-Bakri of al-Jumhuri hospital. Insurgents have targeted both the station and its employees.

A policeman was shot dead in another part of the city.

A car bomber killed two Iraqi soldiers in an early-morning attack on an army checkpoint near Buhriz, about 35 miles north of Baghdad, said Diyala provincial police spokesman Ali Fadhil.

Five gunmen fired from a speeding car on a police patrol in eastern Baghdad's Doura district, wounding four policemen, said police Capt. Firas Qaiti.

Iraqi Police on Tuesday found the dead bodies of four Iraqi policemen in the town of Heit in Western Iraq. An Iraqi Police source told reporters that the Iraqi Police found the four bodies this morning on a street in Heit in Anbar Province.

The source, who requested anonymity, added that the four policemen were handcuffed and executed by shooting, noting that a lieutenant colonel was among them.

North of Baghdad an Asian truck driver whose nationality was unknown, was killed, police sources said.

Two Iraqi soldiers were killed and nine others wounded in an early morning attack on their convoy north of Baghdad, an Iraqi army officer said.

"The convoy was going to pick up a unit manning a checkpoint 20 kilometers (12 miles) south of Baquba when a pick-up truck carrying a small boat exploded as the column passed by," Colonel Ismail Ibrahim said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“This Is Just So Off The Wall On So Many Levels”

May 26, 2005 Oilwars Blogspot

We've heard some pretty bizarre things out of Iraq over the past couple of years but this one has to rank right up there.

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Iraq announced plans Thursday to deploy 40,000 police and soldiers in the capital and ring the city with hundreds of checkpoints "like a bracelet" in the largest show of Iraqi force since the fall of Saddam Hussein .

This is just so off the wall on so many levels.

First, even if they did seal off Baghdad how exactly does that help them? There are just as many insurgents inside Baghdad as there are outside. So what is this going to accomplish – insurgent Ali in Baghdad won't be able to visit his cousin, insurgent Omar, over in Ramadi?

Secondly, given that the U.S couldn't even cordon off Fallujah properly and most of the insurgents there got out what makes anyone think that 40,000 Iraqi government troops can effectively cordon off Baghdad? Lets keep in mind out of any given 40,000 Iraqi troops probably at least 20,000 of them are working for the insurgents.

Not to mention, if you have all these troops spread out to make a circle around Baghdad they will have to be in small isolated groups that will make easy pickings for the insurgents.

Lets see how long the 40,000 saps who get assigned to this detail agree to put up with that.

Quite frankly, this shows that things in Iraq are in even worse shape than I had thought.

Its been clear for some time that the U.S. military is clueless in how to deal with the insurgency. But there was always the hope for them that an indigenous Iraqi force would be more adept at dealing with it. Based on this, it appears not.

SURROUNDED

Our soldiers are surrounded by thousands of people who hate the American uniform and flag. The daily, grinding uncertainty has led some of them to degenerate into bundles of nerves, frustration and anger and to strike out against any and all Iraqis. May 30, 2005 News Hounds

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)

Vietnam Days: BURY THAT TANK!

From: Max Watts, May 22, 2005

A VERY COMMON STORY DURING MY DAYS AS JOURNO FOR OVERSEX WEEKLY (OVERSEAS):

SOME QUARTERMASTER HAD TOO MANY (NOT TOO FEW, TOO MANY) OF SOME ITEMS - IN ONE CASE - SCHWEINFURTH - TANKS.

THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN TROUBLE, IF INSPECTED.

THEY DUG A BIG HOLE, AND BURIED THE TANK (OTHER ITEMS THROWN INTO RHINE, ETC. ON OTHER SIMILAR OCCASIONS)

I WAS CALLED BY A SCHWEINFURTH SGT, A LIFER,. BUT BY THEN WORKING HIS WAY TO RESISTING THE WAR.

WE CAME, WITH CBS TV CREW, AND DUG TANK UP.

HELL TO PAY.

SGT GREEN ??? WAS IDENTIFIED, VIA MY TEL BEING TAPPED AND GOT KICKED OUT OF ARMY, 7 YEARS SHORT OF 20 YEAR PENSION.

WE FOUGHT CASE, BUT LOST... HE LOST HIS PENSION...

How It Is:

SPEC/5 JIM GOODMAN, BAUMHOLDER, Anti-War Soldier1968..

"DRAFTEES EXPECT SHIT, GET SHIT, BUT VOLUNTEERS EXPECT SOMETHING BETTER, GET SAME SHIT, AND HAVE A YEAR (OR MORE) LONGER TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT" (FROM MEMORY)

HE GOT TRAPPED INTO VOLUNTEERING FOR 4 YEARS

OCCUPATION REPORT

Welcome To Liberated Iraq! **“Journalists Held By US Forces For Doing Their Job”**

"We were living without press freedom during Saddam Hussein's regime and today there is not much difference. Journalists are being held by US forces for doing their job when they write about opposing views," Kamal Aidan, a senior official from the IAJ, told IRIN in Baghdad.

May 30, 2005 Assyrian International News Agency

Iraqi journalists say they are being censored by the US-led Coalition forces and the Iraqi government because of the topics covered by them in newspapers and on television.

The Iraqi Association of Journalists (IAJ) said they have been accused of collaborating with insurgents after trying to report on both sides of the ongoing conflict.

Based on the IAJ information, eight journalists have been detained since March 2005 by US forces, accused of being a security risk to the Iraqi people and the military.

Two of the journalists detained by US forces had written articles on the lives of insurgents, after having spent days shadowing them.

"We were living without press freedom during Saddam Hussein's regime and today there is not much difference. Journalists are being held by US forces for doing their job when they write about opposing views," Kamal Aidan, a senior official from the IAJ, told IRIN in Baghdad.

Lt. Col. Steve Boylan, a spokesperson for US forces, told IRIN that journalists arrested were considered a security risk and that security forces did not retain people without a reason.

The IFJ is also demanding that US forces and Iraqi authorities free the eight Iraqi journalists, most of whom are working for Western media.

"These arrests were without formal charges and they do not have the right to do that. Journalism in Iraq is in a very deep crisis and these people should be released immediately as it has been considered an injustice against the freedom of journalists around the world," Aidan White, IFJ's general secretary, told IRIN. **[Wrong. A military dictatorship occupying another nation has no limits on what it can do, other than the limits imposed by national resistance force of arms. "Formal charges" are no more necessary for the U.S. occupation of Iraq than they were for the German occupation of France or the Russian occupation of Eastern Europe.]**

"We cannot write with freedom anymore because if you write against them (US forces and Iraqi government) you are going to be considered automatically against them and face the possibility of being closed down. **[Right. Come on. Get the point. It's a military occupation. What the fuck do you expect?]**

Welcome To Liberated Iraq: Students Non-Violently Protesting U.S. Occupation Raids On Their Campus Get A Quick Response: More Raids

Last month, students and teachers staged a sit-in to protest the encroachment of American forces.

The result, they said, was just more U.S. raids in retaliation.

"I was going downstairs, whistling to myself, and then I saw a soldier pointing his gun at me," said Thafir Fakhri, an education professor briefly detained in a recent raid. "They took me into a bathroom and started to interrogate me. They humiliated me. ..."

May. 30, 2005 BY MOHAMMED AL DULAIMY AND HANNAH ALLAM, Knight Ridder Newspapers

Eighteen students were missing from Wissam Samarraie's engineering class one recent day. Furious that college seniors would skip lessons right before finals, the professor demanded to know where they were.

"Sir," one student volunteered in a soft voice, "fifteen have been detained and the other three were killed."

Samarraie was devastated, but not surprised. He teaches at Anbar University, where heading to class means passing through a gauntlet of checkpoints, dodging bullets flying between Iraqi insurgents and American troops, ignoring masked insurgents who roam the halls and sometimes arriving to find class canceled because the professor was hauled away by U.S. forces for interrogation.

"Students leave their families in the morning as if they're going to a battlefield," Samarraie said by phone.

Fighting shut down the campus for most of last year and delayed this term's final exams. The area is so dangerous that reporters do not travel there. Students and faculty quoted in this story were interviewed by phone from Baghdad. The information was confirmed with officials from the Ministry of Higher Education in Baghdad.

The College of Agriculture is occupied by U.S. troops, who have raided campus four times in the past two weeks. One of the dormitories was blown up; two others sit empty after U.S. searches and insurgent gun battles drove students to camp out in a nearby mosque.

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The result, they said, was just more U.S. raids in retaliation.

"I was going downstairs, whistling to myself, and then I saw a soldier pointing his gun at me," said Thafir Fakhri, an education professor briefly detained in a recent raid. "They took me into a bathroom and started to interrogate me. They humiliated me. ... They asked about the posters calling for a demonstration, and I told them I didn't know anything."

Abdul Hadi al Hitti, the president of Anbar University who was kidnapped by rebels, said up to 30 students remain in U.S. custody.

He said several professors are also in American detention centers, including the head of the law department who was seized eight months ago.

The university received some compensation for battle damage to the campus, al Hitti added, but much-anticipated computer equipment donated by American officials sits in a locked room because the Iraqi contractor hired to wire the campus fled the country after receiving threats.

"I saw gunmen in the university twice last week," said Ahmed Lafi, a biology professor. "No one can even whisper and if you address them, asking them why they're here, you're dead."

Iraqi education officials are at a loss as to how to deal with the violence. Al Hussein, of the higher education ministry, said "helpless" Iraqi educators have reached out to the prime minister and to the U.S. embassy in Baghdad with a proposal to move American troops further from campus.

Until then, he said, there's no choice but to keep the university open to students so desperate for an education that they'll risk death in hopes of a future that lifts them from Iraq's vast unemployment problem, which is blamed for fueling the insurgency.

"The only other choice we have is to totally shut down Anbar University," al Hussein said. "In that case, instead of 8,000 students, we'd have 8,000 terrorists."

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

May Deadliest Month For U.S. Military Since January: Bush "Pleased"

[Thanks to D, who sent this in.]

Bush says pleased with progress in Iraq
May 31, 2005, Reuters

"I'm pleased with the progress," Bush told a news conference in the White House Rose Garden.

More than 1,600 Americans have been killed since April 2003.

Seventy U.S. troops have been killed in May, making it the deadliest month for the U.S. military since January.

National (Economic) Bankruptcy

5.31.05 Via Vietnam Veterans Against The War

The interest on that government debt now exceeds all the personal income tax collected by that government.

That means that the government isn't keeping up with the interest on the debt, let alone able to pay down the principle.

Even before the wars started with lies, the US Government was sinking deeper into debt by one third of a trillion dollars every year. With Bush's war, the debt is increasing at another half trillion every year just at the Federal level.

And because the federal Government, struggling with payments on past debts, is sending less money back to the states, the states are sinking deeper into debt as well.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

“The People Take La Paz” “Barricades In The Plaza De Héroes”

May 31st, 2005 By Luis Gomez, The Narco News Bulletin

In a march even bigger than yesterday's, the residents of El Alto and the Aymara peasant farmers returned to La Paz this morning.

More than 50,000 people covered an area of nearly 100 square kilometers: this time they didn't just limit themselves to surrounding the Plaza Murillo, where the president makes his speeches and congressmen decide Bolivia's fate without taking the people's desires into account.

Now they have spread out to the neighborhoods bordering the city center, where the middle class, exclusive merchants, and several embassies are located. The pressure on Congress and the administration, though not looking for confrontation, is now coming from dozens of vital intersections.

And once again, the division between the social movements was obvious: while some demanded hydrocarbon nationalization, others are simply asking for the organization of a new constitutional assembly.

For several hours the streets were only rivers of people, flowing in all directions. In some cases, as in that of the students of the Autonomous Public University of El Alto, the people endured gas grenades the police launched to disperse them.

But they're still there: there is no order, no coordination, but the urban space is theirs for the moment: the rural Aymara, the people of El Alto (urban Aymara), the farming communities from south of La Paz, the miners and the public school teachers, who decided to march to the rich neighborhoods and are now several kilometers south of downtown.

The university students and the Movement of Unemployed Workers have installed barricades in the Plaza de Héroes.

The people of a few El Alto neighborhoods, together with the Aymara peasant farmers of the Omasuyos province, have managed to shut down Plaza Isabel la Católica (fifty meters from the United States embassy!).

The demands of this group, which is in no way homogenous, are all the same: that the political class leave the country (President Mesa as well as the Bolivian members of congress)... and the government, which accuses them of sedition and has militarized the central Plaza Murillo, is so far unable to get out of its bunker. However, Government Minister Saúl Lara ruled the use of force or the declaration of a state of siege for the coming hours.

What comes next, kind readers, amid all this chaos? It's difficult to say; the people of El Alto and the Aymara peasants will not be leaving for the rest of the day (and the number of demonstrators has now reached something like 100,000)...

For now, more out of weakness than prudence, Mesa's government is not leaving the small plaza where the military defends a few buildings adorned with doves.

Web Copies:

For back issues see GI Special web site at <http://www.militaryproject.org/> .

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

<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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