

GI SPECIAL 3B59:

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



(iraqwar.mirror-world.ru)

**“An Army Where You
Are Lied To, Mistreated,
Over Worked And Under
Paid Only To Be Told
That You Are Pieces Of
Crap”**

From: Dawn Marie Beals
To: GI Special

Sent: June 10, 2005

He told my husband that he was going to deploy that week if he had to go from the hospital to the plane in shackles and chains.

All I can do is ask you to help my Soldier and all other Soldiers in his situation. And I can just pray that someone will finally stand up and take responsibility before he becomes another statistic of an American suicide in Iraq.

June 9, 2005

Dear Congressman,

My name is Dawn Marie Beals. I am the wife of SPC. David Beals, Bravo Company, 3rd Forward Support Battalion, 1st Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, Ft. Stewart, Georgia.

Previously Fox Company, 2-7 Infantry, 3rd Infantry Division

I am writing this letter in concern for my Soldier as well as the thousand other Soldiers suffering the way my husband has and is currently suffering.

My husband is currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to Balad, Iraq.

My husband suffers from Combat Stress Disorder.

This is his second deployment with the 3rd Infantry Division to Iraq. He has suffered with this horrible disease since August 2003. On 7 January 2005 my husband tried to take his own life.

That night after having received treatment and stabilized at a local hospital his superiors had him transferred to Winn Army Medical Center and admitted him into the psychiatric ward. He was admitted to Winn under a suicide watch in fear he would try to take his life again. My husband has had many symptoms showing that he was suicidal and that he was suffering from CSD.

He had asked his superiors on numerous occasions for help and tried to speak with them about what he was feeling. To no avail he was never helped.

In the weeks leading up to this incident I had myself called and spoke to Chaplains regarding my husband and my fear that he was to the point of being verbally abused by his superiors and suffering from this disease that I thought he may try to take his own life and I was worried for his safety as well as the safety of others around him.

In the hospital his team chief openly admitted to CSM William Grant that my husband had shown signs and had asked for help.

He said that my husband was a great Soldier who never got into trouble and who had just passed the promotion board to be promoted to Sgt. Effective 1 February

2005. He admitted that Soldiers were being told things and treated very badly by the Platoon Leader whom we had already made numerous complaints against.

Yet, no one investigated them and still has not to this day.

When my husband was at Winn, before even being properly evaluated he was told by Dr. Capp, that he was just malingering like all of the rest to get out of the deployment and that he would be charged with malingering.

He told my husband that he was going to deploy that week if he had to go from the hospital to the plane in shackles and chains.

Now, tell me is this how we are now treating our Veterans? If, so we should be ashamed. He was not even properly evaluated or counseled before receiving such accusations and marks.

These Drs do not know my husband, they have not been in combat where he had been. Who are they to make the decision of if he is malingering before they even know who he is?

Another physician who evaluated my husband wrote that he suffered from Adjustment Disorder with Anxiety with the disturbance of mood, emotion, and conduct. On 11 January my husband was picked up by one of his Non Commissioned Officers to go home to pack his bags so that he could deploy. Yes, deploy only 4 days after attempting suicide.

My husband went AWOL that day. He stated that he felt like he wouldn't make it if he deployed with the people who wouldn't help him and didn't feel at this time he could do it. He stated he didn't have a problem with going back but felt he needed and as a Veteran deserved help first.

Now, he stayed gone 9 days, but from day 1 he stayed in continuous contact with his Commander D. Tavares, telling him that all he wanted was the help he needed before they threw him on a plane and this escalated more than it already had. He stated he felt numb, like he had no control and just felt like he couldn't take it anymore.

He made several statements he felt he wanted to crawl in a hole and die.

He stated to Cpt. Tavares that he was concerned with his mental well being and said he felt that he needed treatment and did not think that he could make it thru another deployment again without such. He then on his own returned himself to his Commander at Ft. Stewart. He was told he would receive treatment before being made to deploy. That he could stay as long as mental health felt he needed treatment.

Now, my husband went to his counselor Mrs. Barnett, she said that he suffered from CSD and needed to be in her treatment program which would run into April so he would have to stay at least thru then for the treatment. She also sent us home with pamphlets on ways to cope with CSD and Depression etc. She asked him what his Commander would need to keep him here. Cpt. Tavares said "a phone call will work".

Mrs. Barnett called Cpt. Tavares on 22 February 2005. My husband never heard a response from anyone regarding his mental health class, so I sent an email and asked Cpt. Tavares if she had contacted him. He said yes, she had called and he would deploy on 15 March 2005, that he could get his treatment for this disease in 2 weeks instead of the 5 weeks she had told him he would need.

My husband was given an Article 15, he lost his promotion to Sergeant and he has been tagged by his subordinates as someone who went AWOL. They punished him under UCMJ, AFTER he went AWOL for being threatened by Doctors, never helped by his NCOs, trying to commit suicide and STILL mistreated as if some common criminal.

Is this how you as a Congressman think our Veterans should be treated.

Because my husband is not the first and will not be the last Veteran to be treated this way by the 3rd Infantry Division.

My husband was deployed to the same individuals who would not help him in the beginning. Only 2 months after attempting to take his own life, put on a plane to deploy to these individuals and still VERY suicidal.

When he was received in country, he had comments made to him by 1SG D. McClinton, that Rear Detachment had lied to him (He was given written order when he deployed he would not have to go back to this company.)

Now, he was also ignored by the other Soldiers in country. Then when he confronted one of the Soldiers as to why he had no friends when just 2 months prior he had many. The Soldier stated that the Platoon Sgt. Had held a briefing before his arrival informing them that he had ran off and went AWOL and that he was a "loose" cannon and everyone was to stay away from him.

AGAIN, is this how we are now treating our Veterans?

Yet, he left out the suicide part that they had no idea about, or the CSD, or anything else that had happened in the last 2 months. Just that he had ran so he didn't have to deploy.

Then he was put in a talk, to sit because they didn't think he should be in the motor pool. **The 1SG would pop his head in and out regularly and ask if "he was ok, you aren't going to hurt yourself are you?" and laugh and leave the room. Did everyone forget?**

He wasn't running, he was asking for help and scared and no one would do as they should have and helped him? Since when is the Soldier the common criminal. He asked for help, no one would help, he got scared and ran? Why is this the Soldiers fault, This is the Commanders fault, the 1SG's fault, the NCOs fault. This Soldier was not a "bad" Soldier, he had not been in trouble, they were promoting him. HE JUST NEEDED HELP.

Finally after receiving emails from my husband stating he wanted to "crawl in a hole and die and the kids and I were the only thing that made him not want to die" I emailed numerous people and spoke with plenty, but no one eager to help.

So, finally after getting in contact with CSM Dixon of the 3rd FSB, I stated the situation to him and he sent out orders for the Command to pack my husband up and move him out. He was to be transferred to where the Division mental health would be. He could receive mental health treatment, be under a new Command etc. He said that it was deemed a “rehabilitative transfer”. My husband was transferred from Tikrit to Balad, Iraq, where he is currently still stationed.

After getting to Balad, he was finally able to see a mental health Dr. The Dr. prescribed him medications and asked how he was deployed to begin with. He also set up regularly scheduled visits.

Now, that’s a good question? How was he deployed? How was he punished when in the Dr’s own words he had disturbance of mood, emotion and CONDUCT? Should a Soldier be punished and lose promotions, face and the worth of his name because he was mentally unstable? And it is confirmed? Is this the way our Soldiers should be treated?

When my husband went AWOL he had a flag placed on his personnel file for adverse action, the day the punishment he received was imposed the flag should have been lifted.

Yet, the Command failed to do this as well.

The flag was not lifted until last week when I finally once again made a trip to visit Ft. Stewart.

My husband even appealed his Article 15, yet the Commander never forwarded this paperwork to the Major for his review and never gave my husband a final copy of such appeal or Article 15.

My husband has been told in the past few weeks that he was going to be sent back to the Company he came from, because the Command cannot find where his Article 15 went to show he actually was punished and that his old command will promote him to Sgt.

And just punish him again for the incident as a Sgt.

Once, again I believe I have gotten this cleared up as well, but how long is the administration going to allow for our Soldiers to be treated this way?

How many more Soldiers have to be mistreated and take there own lives in Iraq and raise the statistics before someone will say ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.

Help them, don’t hurt them? My husband will probably never receive a promotion to Sgt. while he remains at Ft. Stewart because he has been tagged not for his disease but for AWOL. That is all anyone sees. **Even though under Army Regulations my husbands incident nor his punishment should have ever went forward to his new company. It is to be left at the old company.**

If the Commanders had kept there mouths shut and did there jobs then at least he would have some peace in having a fair chance to get a “rehabilitative start”, but they took it upon themselves to gossip and “forewarn” the new Command. He is a good Soldier, with a good track record. So, why is he the criminal.

The DOD states that new guidelines mandate counseling for Soldiers immediately before and after deployment to a combat zone. A third counseling is required 3-5 months after deployment as well. My husband did not receive this treatment or we would not be where we are today. In this mess.

Maybe someone should spend there money on a poll of the Soldiers with the 3rd Infantry Division to find out just how many did receive this treatment. Being that there is already a inquiry into medical records being changed at the hands of the Command so that mentally unfit Soldiers can deploy.

No wonder the Army cannot recruit new Soldiers.

Why would anyone want to be in an Army where you are lied to, mistreated, over worked and under paid only to be told that you are pieces of crap.

To be told by your platoon leaders that “half of you will not return home from war and that they don’t want to have to deal with shipping your Sh back home to your families.”**

Why would anyone want to sign up for that I ask myself.

Yet, after everything my husband still wants to be a Soldier. He is the better man. So, I am asking you. When is enough enough and when is Congressman, Senators, Democrats, Republicans, The President and the American People going to start holding the true criminals accountable for their actions instead of the Soldiers with only good marks who need help and never receive it.

So, I am asking you today to inquire into the conduct in this case and situation at Ft. Stewart, Ga.

I am asking that you help the Soldiers who should not have to suffer anymore from something they have no control over.

Help this Soldier get the promotion he deserves, help him get the treatment for his illness that he deserves.

If nothing else, why not offer him a “suicidal compassionate re-assignment”. When his Commander knew he was being honest and was not lying about his emotions, why not give this Soldier that option instead of punishing him? And yes, it is an option, it works the same as a compassionate re-assignment, except it is just for Soldier who have attempted suicide.

All I can do is ask you to help my Soldier and all other Soldiers in his situation. And I can just pray that someone will finally stand up and take responsibility before he becomes another statistic of an American suicide in Iraq.

Very Sincerely,

Dawn Marie Beals

"In war there are no un-wounded Soldiers"

From: Dawn Marie Beals

To: GI Special

Sent: June 10, 2005

"I don't care what I have to do, I want to and will protect my husband" DM in Savannah Morning News.

I wish I could go and personally bring them all home! Thanks T.

60% Want U.S. To Withdraw Some Or All Troops From Iraq Now! "We Have Reached A Tipping Point"

[Thanks to PB, David Honish, D and Phil G who sent this in. PG writes: The numbers creep up. Bush would be history if there were a genuine opposition party in this country. I guess we'll have to build one.]

6.12.05 By Susan Page, USA TODAY

Six in 10 Americans say they think the United States should withdraw some or all of its troops from Iraq — the highest number who have said that in the Gallup poll, the most downbeat view of the war since it began in 2003.

About three in 10 want the U.S. to withdraw all troops *now*, and about three in 10 said some troops should be withdrawn *now*.

A majority, 56 percent, said they would be upset if more troops are sent to Iraq, according to the poll released Monday.

Support for staying in Iraq has also dropped in a Pew Research Center poll. People were about evenly split on whether the U.S. should keep troops in Iraq until the country is stabilized or bring them home as soon as possible.

Patience for the war has dropped sharply as optimism about the Iraqi elections in January has ebbed and violence against U.S. troops hasn't abated. For the first time, a majority would be "upset" if President Bush sent more troops.

A new low, 36%, say troop levels should be maintained or increased.

"We have reached a tipping point," says Ronald Spector, a military historian at George Washington University. "Even some of those who thought it was a great idea to get rid of Saddam (Hussein) are saying, 'I want our troops home.'"

Of those who say the war wasn't worth it, the top reasons cited are fraudulent claims and no weapons of mass destruction found; the number of people killed and wounded; and the belief that Iraq posed no threat to the United States.

On ABC's *This Week*, Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C., an ardent supporter of the invasion, called on Bush for a timetable for withdrawing troops. "I feel that we have done about as much as we can do," he said.

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

Two Iowa Guard Soldiers Murdered, Another Wounded By Donald Rumsfeld: UNARMORED Humvee Blown Up

[Remember Rumsfeld and the lying brass saying earlier this year that no soldier in Iraq had to use an unarmored Humvee?. Guess what. The Secretary Of Defense is a lying soldier-killing traitor. And what does that make the commanding General who said no soldier in Iraq ever could ever be ordered to use an unarmored Humvee outside the wire? The enemy isn't in Iraq. The enemy is in

Washington DC, in control of the government, and the armed forces. That has to be stopped.]

The two soldiers were killed when the insurgents detonated another explosive device directly underneath the unarmored Humvee in which Byers was the gunner and Prince was the driver.

June 13, 2005 By WILLIAM PETROSKI, REGISTER STAFF WRITER

One Iowa National Guard soldier was killed and another was seriously injured by a roadside bomb in Iraq, officials said today.

Spc. Casey Byers, 22, of Schleswig, died during route clearing operations south of Ar Ramadi at about 8 p.m. Saturday.

Receiving shrapnel wounds in the attack was Spc. James Miguez Jr., 28, of Ottumwa.

Both Byers and Miguez were assigned to Company B, 224th Engineer Battalion, based in Ottumwa.

The two soldiers were injured when the insurgents detonated another explosive device directly underneath the unarmored Humvee in which Byers was the gunner and Prince was the driver.

Miguez was wounded in the blast as he patrolled on foot in front of the Humvee.

Byers grew up in Vail, Iowa and graduated from Ar-We-Va High School in 2001. He was a member of a National Guard unit based in Denison and he volunteered for service in Iraq with the 224th Engineer Battalion.

His survivors include his mother and father, Ann and William Byers, brother Paul and sister Jennifer, all of Schleswig. He is also survived by an infant daughter, Haley.

Prior to his deployment, Byers had worked for Casey's General Stores at its Ankeny warehouse.

Miguez was flown to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, and Hapgood said he will likely be transported to a military hospital in Washington, D.C. for additional medical care.

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Two Marines From Camp Lejeune Killed

June 13, 2005 By The Associated Press

A pair of Marines stationed at Camp Lejeune have died from injuries they received while fighting in Iraq, the Department of Defense said.

Lance Cpl. John J. Mattek Jr., 24, of Stevens Point, Wis., was the latest casualty reported. He died Monday from injuries sustained in a June 8 explosion while conducting combat operations against enemy forces in Anbar province.

He was assigned to the 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, Regimental Combat Team-2, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force out of Camp Lejeune, N.C.

The department also reported that Lance Cpl. Andrew Kilpela, 22, of Fowlerville, Mich., died after a roadside explosive went off in Iraq, his father and brother said.

Kilpela was assigned to the 2nd Combat Engineering Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force at Lejeune, and had been in Iraq since March. He'd been a Marine since 2003.

Tom Weix, Mattek's wrestling coach when he was a high school senior, said Monday that Mattek "was a go-getter, definitely a leader."

Jill Mattek of Deerbrook said her brother graduated from Antigo High School and then attended the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. She said their parents had traveled to Maryland, where Mattek had been flown, but she declined to say anything else.

Antigo High School Principal Thomas Zamzow said Mattek played football and wrestled at the school, graduating in 1999. Zamzow coached Mattek when he was eighth-grade quarterback.

Weix said Mattek wrestled in one of the heavier weight classes, 160 to 171 pounds, as a senior and made it to the sectionals but didn't qualify for the state tournament. "He was one of our strongest kids," the coach recalled. "He was very competitive. He was a very hard worker. He loved the weight room."

Mattek's younger brother and a cousin now wrestle for the team, Weix said.

After high school, Mattek went to UW-Stevens Point and took just some general classes, Weix said. He made the Pointers football team and played on its special teams, Weix said.

Weix said he saw Mattek last Christmas but they never talked about why Mattek joined the Marines or about his future goals.

"He was a unique individual. He just lived life to the fullest," Weix said. "He would make a good Marine. If you gave him a job, he would complete it."

Kilpela's family learned of the Friday death that night, the Lansing State Journal reported Monday.

His father, Michael Kilpela, said he used to get frustrated because he thought his son didn't plan for the future, but his perspective has changed.

"I've come to the conclusion that he was a person who did not worry about tomorrow," Michael Kilpela said. "He did not regret yesterday, and he filled every moment of today with love and with joy and with passion for life."

His death came eight days before the wedding of his 25-year-old sister, Janice.

"We're going to throw a party so where he's at, he's going to hear it," his 27-year-old brother, David Kilpela of Grand Blanc Township said. "He would want us to rock the house."

The Marine shared a July birthday with his girlfriend from Redford.

"One of the last things he wanted my parents to do was send flowers in his name on her birthday," his brother said.

Plans for a memorial service are incomplete, but the family said it will take place in Fowlerville.

"We prayed and prayed that he would come home safe and the Lord answered our prayer," his brother said. "He is in the most safe place anybody could be."

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)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**“This Will Really Fuck Up The
Resistance!”
(As Soon As They Get Tanks)**



U.S. controlled Afghan National Army personnel fire a SPG-9, an anti-tank gun, during a live-fire exercise on the outskirts of Kabul June 7, 2005. (Ahmad Masood/Reuters)

TROOP NEWS

Key Military Base Town Split On War: Only Half Think It's Worth Fighting

The more money people earn, the more likely they are to feel the war has been worth it. Among those who earned more than \$40,000 a year, 58 percent said the war has been worth fighting. That number dips to 41 percent for people earning less than \$40,000.

[For some reason, this report leaves out another finding: 38% of active duty troops contacted during this poll do NOT think anti-war protests are against the troops! T]

2005-06-12 By Matt Leclercq, Staff writer, The Fayetteville Observer

Half of the people living in Cumberland County believe the war in Iraq has been worth fighting, according to a poll conducted for The Fayetteville Observer this spring.

The poll's findings suggest that nearly three years of heavy deployments have taken a toll - on attitudes about the war, on marriages and family finances, and on the desire of service members to stay in uniform.

Although people here are almost as divided as the rest of the country on the value of invading Iraq, support for soldiers is overwhelming.

The findings are based on phone interviews with 1,004 adults between March 31 and April 18.

One in four residents of Cumberland County, regardless of whether they had any connection to the military, personally knew someone killed in Iraq or Afghanistan. A larger portion of people - nearly 40 percent - know someone who was wounded. About 1,900 service members have died in the two conflicts; another 13,000 have been wounded.

Nearly half of people say the conflicts have had a negative effect on the local economy. Even more people - 64 percent - feel that military communities such as Fayetteville shoulder an "unfair" share of war's economic burdens.

Fifty percent of people think peace protests held in Fayetteville, such as the March 19 rally at Rowan Street Park, "insult" soldiers at war. Forty-percent of people don't believe that such protests are insulting.

[For some reason, this report leaves out another finding: 38% of active duty troops contacted during this poll do NOT think anti-war protests are against the troops!]

Among people who have been deployed - or have had a spouse or relative deploy - nearly a third say the deployments have decreased their desire to be in the military.

On whether war in Iraq has been worth fighting - considering the costs to the U.S. compared to the benefits - 50 percent say "yes." Forty-four percent say "no."

Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base are home to roughly 52,000 service members. Fayetteville takes pride in its military ties. Those who serve are the lifeblood of businesses, the parents of schoolchildren, friends from church and neighbors down the street.

The poll findings reinforce just how dominant the military is here. **About 70 percent of people in the county have direct ties to the military. They've either served, had a spouse or another relative serve, or worked for the military since the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq started.**

Interviews with some of those people show that concern about terrorism is a main reason many feel the war in Iraq has been worth fighting. Those who disagree often say the justification for war was unclear or has changed over time.

Supporters cite the principle of fighting for freedom, while many opposed are disturbed by the American lives lost.

The fact that Cumberland County - home to Fort Bragg - doesn't far exceed the rest of the nation in support for the war surprises Lou Plummer, who has helped organize anti-war demonstrations.

"If half the people in Fayetteville, North Carolina, don't think it's been worth it, I think that says a lot about the war," he said.

Plummer helped organize the March peace rally in Fayetteville. "On the other hand, that makes me sad that all these people on Fort Bragg are risking their lives and going to be scarred forever by something that so many people are going to discount."

When asked whether the Iraq war was worth the costs, 69 percent of whites say "yes," much higher than the overall 50 percent in the county. Among blacks, 19 percent feel the war was worth the costs.

The more money people earn, the more likely they are to feel the war has been worth it. Among those who earned more than \$40,000 a year, 58 percent said the war has been worth fighting. That number dips to 41 percent for people earning less than \$40,000.

Among whites with military ties, 71 percent believe the Iraq war was worth fighting. Only 21 percent of blacks agree.

That's understandable, said Ray Shipman, president of the NAACP chapter in Fayetteville. The U.S. government fought to establish democracy in Iraq, but many blacks don't feel like one exists at home, he said.

"A true democracy is where people are treated equally and they're given equal access to jobs, equal access to income, equal access to better ways of life," Shipman said. "We don't have that here in the United States."

Indeed, the poll shows that all factors aren't equal between blacks and whites. In the poll, blacks with military ties are more represented in the lowest income bracket - 41 percent of blacks polled earn less than \$30,000, compared with 24 percent of whites.

The War Comes Home To Bradford, Arkansas:

"Let's Trust The President— About As Far As We Can Throw Him," He Said Bitterly

"I'm not going to talk down the war," says the police chief, a staunch Republican, "but I don't understand why we're spending all this money there when we're having trouble here."

May. 31, 2005 By CATHY BOOTH THOMAS, Time Inc.

Mayor Paul Bunn paces the parking lot in front of Bradford's city hall, barking out orders on his cell phone while smoking a cigarette. The puffing and the posturing are habits honed by a year of leading troops through hellfire in Baghdad. "People do what I say, when I say, how I say, and no questions asked," says Bunn in his staff-sergeant mode, stubbing out the cigarette. The city staff—all two of them—ruin the effect, however, by peering out a city-hall window and smiling indulgently at the boss. It is his first day back at work. They're just glad to have him back in one piece.

A year and a half ago, the mayor, the police chief and eight other men from this Arkansas town of 819, an hour's drive north of Little Rock, were called up for duty in Iraq by the Arkansas National Guard; one more was called by the Air Force Reserve.

It was a blow not just to the weekend warriors—who were more accustomed to tornado cleanup than fighting—but to their families and Bradford's civic life as well. The town's big projects—to update the water system, jail the local methamphetamine dealers and make a clean sweep of the junk in people's yards—slowly stalled. Given fears for the town's soldiers, it was as if Bradford held its breath for the year they were in combat, hanging on every newscast, every e-mail and call home. "Nothing progressed," says Farrah Chambliss, 28, wife of police chief Josh Chambliss, also a staff sergeant in Iraq. "We ... just floated."

The "Gunslingers" of Arkansas' 39th Infantry Brigade are home now. All the Guardsmen from Bradford survived, their lives and limbs intact after a year of hunting insurgents on the streets of Baghdad's scariest neighborhoods, like Sadr City and Adhamiyah.

Wherever you go in Bradford these days—down to McCall's Family Restaurant for lunch or up to Edens Quick Check for some gossip—faces light up as the mayor and the police chief turn up, making their daily rounds.

But like the estimated 226,000 other weekend soldiers who have returned from service abroad since the 9/11 attacks, Bradford's men came home to new and jumbled emotions as well as huge celebrations.

The mayor, his own business near bankruptcy because of his absence, is edgy and angry. The police chief, his hands noticeably shaky, fears he is quicker on

the draw. Their wives, relieved, bemused and touched, notice that their men hug more. But it's not just their families the men are holding close. It's also their fears.

Here's how two men and a town are finding their way home, tentatively, from the horrors of Iraq.

What can you say about a man who shows you a picture of a human heart lying on the road after a bombing in Baghdad, then turns to his whiny 9-month-old daughter and calms her with a gentle "Hey, Toots"?

Bradford's boyish police chief, Josh Chambliss, 30, is sitting in his neat-as-a-pin living room with wife Farrah and baby Chloe, clicking through an electronic album on his computer of photos he took of life in Baghdad: the palace of Saddam Hussein's son Uday and his infamous rape bed.

Bloody, blown-up bodies on a street, a severed head, the heart blasted from an Iraqi's chest lying in the street. "It freaks Farrah out," Chambliss says with an apologetic look her way. He's not quite sure why he keeps those pictures or why he keeps looking at them.

Turning his cruiser into Perry Turner's tractor shop, Chambliss shifts gears and shares his dreams for Bradford, of the town's becoming a draw for the weekend arts-and-crafts crowd, its streets lined with majestic Bradford pear trees. But the \$500,000 annual town budget and a 50-year-old water system are holding back development. Bradford's patrol cars have 35-year-old radars, and Chambliss came home from Iraq to find a mere \$820 in the department kitty for new purchases.

"I'm not going to talk down the war," says the police chief, a staunch Republican, "but I don't understand why we're spending all this money there when we're having trouble here."

His idea is to raise \$10,000 for new police equipment by holding a tractor pull. The last one drew spectators from seven states.

The Mayor

At 37, Paul Bunn is an old hand at combat, an infantryman who served in Panama and the first Gulf War. This latest experience was the worst.

His unit in Baghdad, part of the military's quick-reaction force, which deployed for four-day stretches against insurgents, was hit by 37 improvised explosive devices while in Iraq, 13 in one day in Sadr City.

Bunn still has nightmares about a rocket attack on his unit in April 2004. He spent two hours, he says, picking up "pieces and pieces and pieces" of bodies of U.S. soldiers.

He remains agitated about the way the military treated the 56 Iraqi translators who worked closely with him on rebuilding projects near the end of his tour; they weren't allowed to use cafeteria facilities with American soldiers, he says.

Four were taken and executed by insurgents, one on Bunn's last day in Iraq. "I thought I was prepared for anything," he says, "because it wasn't my first war."

The mayor, who grew up one of 14 kids in the nearby city of Searcy, is taking the failure of his insulation business in Little Rock hard as well. "It's so embarrassing. When I left, it was netting about \$300,000 a year, and now it's \$500,000 in the hole," he says.

The tension is exacting a toll. "There's a disconnect there somewhere," Bunn says, tapping his head. "My highs are real high and my lows are real low. It's like a light switch, my mind." Hoping that other soldiers will seek help, he's open about taking Paxil, an antidepressant, for posttraumatic stress disorder. Loud noises—even test runs of the town's tornado siren—unnerve him. He has deactivated all the alarms in his home and even the seat-belt warnings in his cars. "Get into my car and there's no ding-ding," he says.

When he left for the war, Bunn gave an enthusiastic speech to Bradford's sixth-graders about the duty of "citizen soldiers" to help Iraq's "nation building."

No one realized how much the mayor had changed until April, when several hundred people gathered downtown to dedicate a patriotic wall, dreamed up by the soldiers' wives and families to honor all the townsfolk who had served in battle from World War I to Afghanistan and Iraq.

The list started with 25 names and grew to 400. Bunn, not yet officially released from active duty but out on a pass from Fort Sill that weekend, gave a graphic speech on the horrors of duty in Iraq and his struggle to survive, then launched into a tirade about the waste of U.S. resources he saw up close.

"Let's trust the President—about as far as we can throw him," he said bitterly.

His outburst was the talk of the town for days afterward. Some thought he had gone too far on the politics and gore, though even some of the town's most conservative citizens were sympathetic.

"Coming back from a place like that, everybody understands," says Tim Clark, music and outreach minister at the mayor's church, Bradford Baptist. Citizens State Bank officer Carol Cagle, whose grandson Richard Farmer served with Bunn in Iraq, says she had "mixed emotions" about the mayor's speech. "He was emotional, but Richard is having problems too," she says, reluctant to share more with an outsider.

"I probably said some things I shouldn't have," Bunn says now.

He blames his off-kilter speech on a second drug he's taking for his posttraumatic stress disorder, which, he says with a laugh, makes him "a slobbering idiot." Says Bunn: "There was no more hard-core Republican than me until I went to Iraq. I'm against abortion and gay rights, and don't mess with my guns, but I have grown

up a lot. When you have spent a year in hell and you have seen the waste of money I have seen ..." He lets the thought hang. Bottom line: "I'm neither party now."

Sitting in his office at city hall, his desk still bare, the mayor surveys a list of priorities. No. 1: the town's water system. The water, though drinkable, is often discolored because of iron content. Bunn thought he had set repairs in motion when he left, but he came home to find that not a spade of dirt had been turned.

While he fumes over the delays caused partly by the city council's hesitancy to start big projects with him gone, he's really incensed that Bradford finds itself in financial straits while Washington invests billions in Iraq. "What I don't understand is how we can rebuild everything we are rebuilding over there, but here in America our infrastructure is falling apart," he says. "I had to borrow \$776,000 for this city for water. They are spending it just like nothing over there. That's reckless, and that's wrong. As soon as we build something, they blow it up. That's a big problem with me, big problem."

The wives struggled. Farrah Chambliss, pregnant with the police chief's first child, moved in with her mother even as she continued working as a sales rep for a uniform company. Angela Bunn, the mayor's wife, found herself with four kids at home, trying to juggle her regular substitute-teaching job with her husband's insulation business. Handling mold complaints while worrying about his living or dying was tough. "I was taking Paxil and Prozac," she says. "People said, 'You're handling this well,' and I'd say, 'That's the purpose of the medicine.' But I still worried. I would have panic attacks at night, not in front of the kids. I'd go sit in the closet and cry."

Now that the mayor and the police chief are back, life in Bradford is settling into old patterns. The short-order cook at McCall's forgot the mayor's lunch order on Bunn's first day back. The men of the "round table," who gather to gossip every morning and night at Edens Quick Check, are talking trucking, not war or politics.

Back in the safe cocoon of Bradford, the police chief is having regrets about re-upping in the Guard, especially since his daughter took her first step. "I believe in God and country and making a sacrifice without crying about it," says Chambliss. "If I had to go back, I would. But I feel like a guy should only have to go once."

The mayor, meanwhile, is not due to get out of the Guard until 2009.

He has been ordered by his doctors to relax—not that he often succeeds. He finished his first day back at work by personally bushhogging the dense brush on a lot belonging to the town. He issued 46 condemnation notices against residents—six against one alderman—for having junk in their yards last week.

His wife reports with a smile that he sometimes forgets where he is and barks, "Do what I say, when I say, how I say" at home too. She just ignores him—one sign, anyway, that life is trying to return to normal in Bradford, Ark.

Students Got It Right: Say Recruiters Are “Predators”

A number of students used this predator and prey metaphor to describe recruitment experiences. Zusette wrote, "When I see them talking to high schoolers, they remind me of a pack of lions going in for the kill. They try to get them into a corner or up against a wall. They start to ask questions like, 'Have you ever thought about joining the army?' 'How old are you?' ' You know, the army can help pay for college.'"

Spring 2005 By Bill Bigelow, Rethinking Schools Online, Volume 19 No. 3 - Spring 2005

Franklin High School teacher Julie O'Neill began a short unit on military recruitment with her senior political science students. As I'm on leave from teaching this year, Julie invited me to collaborate on the unit.

We began by asking students to write about their experiences with military recruiters. I was astounded by students' stories.

One hundred percent of O'Neill's students—three untracked classes of almost 40 students each—had been recruited in some manner by one or another branch of the military. Julie's students were typical of the high school as a whole: largely white and working class, with a relatively small number of Asian Americans, Latinos, African Americans and Native Americans.

Recruiters had come into classes ranging from Foods ("You have to be in the military to cook for the President, ya know"), to Oceanography, to Band, to Weight Training. Recruiters had visited the Latino Club, played a key role in the annual Field Day activities, worked with the student program that links seniors and freshmen, and approached students in the halls.

They'd badgered students in malls, called them repeatedly, emailed them, visited them at home, bought them school supplies, drove them around town, mailed them videos and DVDs, and invited them to mini-boot camp weekends.

Even students whose parents had asked the school in writing not to share information with recruiters reported being contacted multiple times.

The recruiters' techniques were consistent: find out students' after-graduation aspirations and attempt to convince them that the military was the way to realize these. Channa's story was typical:

My 10th-grade year when I was weight lifting, they asked me, "You ever planned on joining the Marines?" I told them no. He was, like, "You ever thought about having the Marines put you through college?"

The Marines called my house at least twice a week. They asked me this year if I ever thought about wrestling for the Marines. I told him no, but he said, "The Marines can help put you through college and pay you to wrestle." One day I was waiting in line to get a bus pass. This Navy guy asked me what I had planned after high school. I told him I might kickbox. He said I could kickbox for the Navy. He handed me his card and walked away.

The Marines have extraordinary access to students in Weight Training, offering a "Marine Challenge" curriculum where students do 13 pull-ups and bench press half their weight 13 times. Recruiters yell at students and give them orders. One student described being in the weight room, "doing a normal workout and all of a sudden three recruiters were at my side counting my reps. I was like, 'WHOOAH!!'"

Cynthia's story showed how recruiters take advantage of the scarcity of college financial aid in their sales pitches:

A number of students used this predator and prey metaphor to describe recruitment experiences. Zusette wrote, "When I see them talking to high schoolers, they remind me of a pack of lions going in for the kill. They try to get them into a corner or up against a wall. They start to ask questions like, 'Have you ever thought about joining the army?' 'How old are you?' ' You know, the army can help pay for college.'"

The stories also generated grumbling from one or two students. Ben said: "These are so negative. Doesn't anyone have a good story about military recruiters?" But in his own story, Ben wrote about how annoyed he was by recruiters' pressure: "Recruiters are extremely pushy and opinionated. I was promised everything from tuition to guaranteed jobs to free housing."

I read all 100-plus recruitment stories. The more I read, the more overwhelmed I became by the sense that today's students live in a kind of parallel universe where they maneuver daily through a psychological minefield of quota-driven recruiters.

And there was another pattern: Recruiters lie.

Claire went with a friend to the recruitment office to take a math test. "When she was done with her test, he told us about how the government pays for you to go to college and after you served you still get money.

"I think that was the main reason she wanted to join-that and they told her that she wouldn't have to go to Iraq. How do they know?"

They don't; it was a lie.

One student remarked, "It seemed the recruiters were hunting their prey." And another: "One of the things I notice is that they target people who have low self-esteem."

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

To: GI Special
Sent: June 13, 2005

**The rich never go to war, they just
finance working class funerals.**

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
Working Class

When Death Comes Knocking On The Door: (Second Time Around)

[From Vietnam, Vietnam, By Felix Greene; Fulton; Palo Alto, Calif. 1966]

The militarily powerful have always looked with disdain at the militarily weak. It was true in the American War of Independence; it is still true today.

We have seen how (until Dien Bien Phu) the French colonial officers spoke with contempt of the "Vietminh," calling them *les jaunes*, the yellow ones—yellow in color, yellow in cowardice.

And true to form, this is what Under Secretary of State George W. Ball thinks of the liberation forces, published in a State Department publication in 1962 (*Vietnam Free-World Challenge in Southeast Asia*, page 15):

"The guerillas . . . are poorly trained and equipped and not motivated by deep conviction. Rather, they are merely unsophisticated villagers or peasants who have been conscripted by terror or treachery. In such a case they are likely to have had only rudimentary training in weapon handling and tactics. Their equipment may be makeshift, often just what they can capture or fabricate themselves."

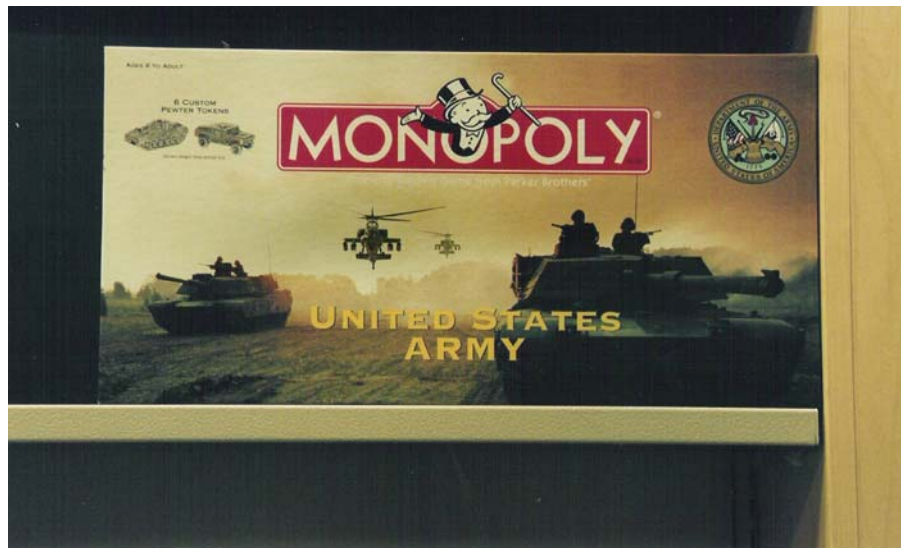
Neil Sheehan, a New York Times correspondent in Vietnam, reported that U.S. military men often dismiss the guerrilla fighters as "raggedy little bastards in black pajamas."

Several years and many thousands of lives later, these intimidated, unsophisticated, poorly trained, unmotivated, ill-equipped, raggedly little bastards are still successfully defying the greatest military power the world has ever seen.

“At some point, the President and his advisers are going to have to ask themselves why everything goes wrong. . . why over the years all our hopes have been dashed and one plan after another has failed. . . It is, I believe, that we have set ourselves a task, which, like squaring the circle or perpetual motion or living 200 years, is impossible to do.” Walter Lippmann, Newsweek, July 19, 1965

“Back in 1776 British ‘experts’ were sure they could beat the ragged colonists. . . . The British had the second best army in the world; the colonists only those ridiculous guerrillas. . . . The British lost because they didn’t understand the power of wars of national liberation.” Sidney Lens, Liberation, February 1966

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



“Think of Iraq as a military base with a very large oil reserve underneath; you can’t ask for better than that.”

***Fred Gheit
Wall Street oil analyst***

***What is our oil doing under their sand?
Bumper Sticker***

***“If there is one principle more deeply rooted than any other in the mind of every American, it is that we should have nothing to do with conquest.”
Thomas Jefferson 1791***

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

Oh, Those Cheating Natives

From "An Ordinary Person's Guide To Empire," Arundhati Roy, Penguin Books, 2005

"Iraq has shown spectacular courage and has even managed to put up what actually amounts to a defense: a defense which the Bush/Blair pair has immediately denounced as deceitful and cowardly. (But then deceit is an old tradition with us natives. When we're invaded/colonized/occupied and stripped of all dignity, we turn to guile and opportunism). "

"Clearly for the 'Allies ', the only morally acceptable strategy the Iraqi army can pursue is to march out into the desert and be bombed by B-52s or be mowed down by machine-gun fire.

"Anything short of that is cheating. "

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.

Disgusting: **“Peace Movement” Trash Sponsor U.S. Tour By Iraqi Officials Who Are Part Of Bush’s Occupation Dictatorship**

[Context: Jennifer Horan wrote a letter pointing out that people in the U.S. peace movement promoting a tour of the USA by members of the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) is peculiar, since the IFTU are traitors who love the occupation and kiss Bush’s ass endlessly. In polite language, excerpts from her letter follow.

[Next, Stan Goff, Master Sgt., U.S. Special Forces, ret’d, adds his comments on the issue.

[Horan's full letter can be found at: <http://stangoff.com/index.php?p=130>]

Jennifer Horan:

1. The IFTU is largely controlled by the Iraqi Communist Party and backed by Allawi's Iraqi National Accord; both parties collaborate with the American occupation regime at the highest political levels, and benefit, politically and financially, from that collaboration.

(Allawi's slate of candidates for the Jan 2005 elections, which included the ICP, was heavily funded by the US; the ICP and INA enjoyed tremendous media exposure on the US controlled television and radio; former proconsul Bremer appointed reps of both parties to the 25 member Iraqi Governing Council)

2. The IFTU says that US troops must not be withdrawn until US forces have restored order, via a US trained police and army. Their position is thus identical to that of Bush and Blair's. If US Labor Against The War is going to say that IFTU wants to end the occupation, then they should be fair and say that Bush and Blair do also.

(I realize this statement may sound sarcastic: what it underscores is that if USLAW is going to fundraise and promote the IFTU, then it should do so on grounds other than that IFTU is against the occupation, and it should state what those grounds are.)

3. In England they have championed Blair's Iraq policy, and lobbied delegates at a Labor party conference to drop a plank calling for immediate or one facilitated through a definite, internationally guaranteed timetable.

[6.13.05 Excerpts from comments by Stan Goff. [Goffs' full article can be found at: <http://stangoff.com/index.php?p=130>]

My comments: By Stan Goff:

Moral Imperialism

I cannot, for the life of me, figure out why it is more offensive for a national guerrilla resistance to send a suicide bomber on a mission to target a collaborator police station, where the attack kills two civilians in its execution, than for a \$500 billion a year imperial military warplane to reduce entire city blocks with uranium munitions and calls everyone who is killed or wounded "terrorists," or "insurgents."

And if anyone wants to know who is targeting mosques, and so on, the first place to look is at Rumsfeld's special P2OG outfit, and to the Badr militias - who are aiming to become Uncle Sam's surrogate death squads. The Badr militias, by the way, hang out with precisely the same people as the vaunted IFTU. [See article immediately following: an old story.]

Were this kind of hypocrisy not maddening enough, there is an equally twisted construction that determines the legitimacy of an attack by a series of ideological litmus tests. What is the resistance's position on burkhas? We should be asking what is the occupier's position on pornography? Talk about taking the beam out of one's own eye...

There is so much plain western racism tucked away in this bullshit - carefully concealed under expressions of deep concern, of course - but this is White Man's Burden, and there is no escaping it. WE are the enlightened ones who will teach civilization - even 'progressive' civilization - to those poor, dusky, benighted beings.

Workerism And Trade Unions

In Iraq, unions have been apparatuses of surveillance and control, and that has not changed. It has simply been distorted, as former Baathist overseers who have decided to become collaborators have penetrated the IFTU - a federation controlled from the top-down by the Iraqi Communist Party. See [http://www.workersliberty.org/files/Occupied Basra 19.pdf](http://www.workersliberty.org/files/OccupiedBasra_19.pdf)

I'm astonished that many of my own comrades are preparing to fete these people around the US - astonished for the same reasons as Jennifer - and no one is asking how they managed to get visas. Fucking Cat Stephens can't get a visa, but Iraqi "Communists" can?!

Semantic Affinity

This brings me to the subject of semantic affinity. Ever since it has become apparent that (1) the Iraqi resistance need only survive to win, and (2) that political Islam - not a more secular political form - has become its opposite, from its origins as a tool of imperialism against Arab nationalism, to its current and irrefutably anti-imperialist form, people on the western left have choked.

They want imperialism to die at the hands of Robin Hood... I suppose because that makes a better docu-drama. This is the same reason western leftists have been so enchanted by the utterly symbolic shenanigans of the Zapatistas (I'll get some hate mail on that one, I'm sure).

The Iraqi resistance now, and the growing political resistance throughout the region, will not sell flacid little dolls or organic coffee in your local anarcho-head-shop.

Western progressives have been so chagrined by this development that they have taken to calling the resistance Islamo-fascist and the like (just as some will criticize the IFTU as Stalinist - which is not my issue).

This kind of rhetorical shorthand is worse than meaningless; it substitutes purely symbolic thinking for criticism. Neither term has an ounce of validity. They are just impressionistic epithets, and in the case of “clerical fascism,” “Islamofascism,” and so on, they short-circuit the most important task the left may have in the western metropolises with regard to Southwest Asia, and that is studying and understanding the “political” content of political Islam.

And so they grab at outfits like the IFTU, precisely because it articulates a program that sounds secular, and they ignore the fact that the fucking IFTU (read the Iraqi Communist Party) supports the occupation and collaborates with it. But hey, they are called the Iraqi COMMUNIST Party, so they must be doing something right.

There are a couple of big problems with this.

One, the armed resistance enjoys popular support and even sympathy among many of the Shia, and the Iraqi Communist Party has opposed it from the beginning.

Two, they have no substantial popular base. Even the rank-and-file members of the ICP-controlled IFTU largely abandoned it in the last elections... for Islamist candidates.

A Word On Military Realities

One of the biggest expressions of outrage against the resistance from western leftists was when some component of it assassinated Hadi Salih of the IFTU last January.

There is no way to be delicate about this, and it goes to the heart of what I said about moral imperialism.

A guerilla movement that is trying to liberate its country from a brutal foreign military occupation by the most expensive and lethal conventional military in human history cannot confront that conventional military in conventional military terms. To do so in the name of some asinine sense of fair play would be suicidal and a betrayal of their own cause.

One of the premier tactical necessities for such a guerrilla movement is to deny the occupation military useful, timely intelligence. Given that the Anglo-American occupiers are clueless about most of what’s going on around them and thoroughly incapable of translating these activities into their own cognitive frameworks, they must rely on human intelligence in the form of collaborators.

Any and all Iraqis who work in any capacity with the occupation are sources of intelligence to the Americans.

There is one way, and only one way, to effectively “blind” the occupation forces in order to maintain the freedom of maneuver necessary to continue effective guerrilla actions: Target the collaborators.

Any call from any western ‘progressive’ for the resistance to do otherwise is a call for the resistance to stand down. it is tantamount to a demand of surrender, and is therefore synonymous with the very demand of the occupying forces themselves.

This is not advanced calculus.

Hadi Salih may have been a very nice guy, for all I know. But he was also a collaborator.

Wars, even wars of liberation, do not conform to the logic of your favorite television serial or bedtime story.

This is why, for the life of me, I can’t figure out why some of my dear comrades are among those who simultaneously demand immediate withdrawal, then promote an American tour by US-supported Iraqis - with their visas enthusiastically stamped - who are saying exactly the opposite.

MORE:

CIA Sponsored Atrocities

[From Vietnam, Vietnam, By Felix Greene; Fulton; Palo Alto, Calif. 1966]

On October 21, 1965, the New York Times reported that Senator Stephen M. Young, who had just returned from a fact-finding mission to Vietnam, said

....that he had learned that the Central Intelligence Agency hired persons to disguise as Vietcong and discredit Communists in Vietnam by committing atrocities. . .

Tonight, Senator Young. . said that he got the report from an American military officer...

“I confirmed through the C.I.A. today that it employed some South Vietnamese nationalists to pose as Vietcong—and I take a dim view of that,” Mr. Young said.

Received:

“I Would Like To Join And Go Very Public”

From: Deneise39@aol.com
To: GI Special
Sent: June 13, 2005 8:58 PM

Subject: Re: GI Special 3B57: 1700 Gone

If there is any group that really wants to go public about the IUD planted on the roadside bombs I would like to join and go very public on how this is affecting our young men and woman coming back wounded, or dying. This must stop.

Please keep your information coming to me. I am forwarding to a lot of people.

Thanks
Den

REPLY: You may wish to check out Veterans For Peace, they do some good work, and there may be a group near you. <http://www.veteransforpeace.org/> Certainly you are already doing good work. T

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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