

GI SPECIAL 3B65:



“US Losing In Iraq,” Senator Says

19.06.2005 Aljazeera

REPUBLICAN Senator Chuck Hagel has slammed the Bush administration's Iraq policy as "disconnected from reality" in some of the harshest war comments to date from a member of the US president's party.

US News and World Report quoted Mr Hagel, a top Senate Republican said to have presidential aspirations, as saying US troops were "losing" the Iraq war.

He also said: "Things aren't getting better, they're getting worse.

"The White House is completely disconnected from reality.

"It's like they're just making it up as they go along. The reality is that we're losing in Iraq."

Mr Hagel said, increasingly, fellow Republicans were coming to share his view.

"More and more of my colleagues up here are concerned," he said.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Marine Killed Near Syrian Border

06/19/05 The Associated Press, BAGHDAD, Iraq

A U-S Marine has been killed while taking part in a counter-insurgency campaign near Iraq's border with Syria. The military says the Marine was killed yesterday by small-arms fire.

Moore Soldier Killed

06/19/05 BY JOHN CHAPPELL: Staff Writer, The Pilot LLC

A local soldier learned Friday that his twin brother, also in the Army, lost his life during combat operations in Iraq.

Mike McNulty, 36, was with Special Operations, deployed to Iraq. His brother, Sean McNulty, is a chief warrant officer 3 with the 82nd Aviation Brigade at Fort Bragg.

"We do not have many details," Sean McNulty said in a telephone interview Friday night. "We only know it happened sometime between last night (Thursday) and this morning (Friday), Iraq time. The family is making arrangements, and we think those will be completed Sunday afternoon or Monday."

McNulty spoke in a quiet, composed voice — the voice of a soldier — aware that his seemingly stoic calm might appear unusual to people not used to military life and the fortunes of war.

“It is the job,” he said. “Mike was a career soldier, and he devoted himself to his family when he wasn’t at work.”

The two were part of a close-knit military family. Mike McNulty lived with his wife and four children, ages 10 to 17, in Southern Pines. Sean McNulty and his family live in Vass. They went into uniform together, were eventually stationed at Fort Bragg, and made their homes in Moore County.

“We grew up in Illinois, joined up about the same time,” Sean McNulty said. “Mike was with U.S. Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg. I am in the 82nd. He was a sergeant first class and had been selected for master sergeant. Mike’s been in the Army 12 or 13 years.”

Mike McNulty was a warrior who had faced battle before. “He was deployed several times,” his brother said. “This last was for a couple of months.”

He had spent the day helping his brother’s family.

Ambush At Buhriz Employed Heavy Weapons

06/19/05 By Los Angeles Times

Two American troops, attached to the 42nd Infantry Division, were killed along with an Iraqi civilian and a detainee Friday night in a clash with insurgents near Buhriz, north of the capital, military officials said.

Insurgents fired mortars and heavy weapons, which left a U.S. military vehicle crossing a bridge burning in flames, according to provincial police. As a unit of Iraq's newly formed rapid-intervention police arrived to assist, a car bomb exploded, injuring five Iraqi officers.

CH-53 Down

06/19/05 By PATRICK QUINN, Associated Press Writer

Videotape from a freelance cameraman working for Associated Press Television News in western Iraq Saturday showed what appeared to be the fuselage of an American-made CH-53 military helicopter sitting in a field with its rotor blades missing.

Other damage was difficult to assess in the tape, made at a considerable distance. An unidentified group of people could be seen around the fuselage. The U.S. military had no comment.

Occupation Attacks Karabila: "It's Like Hunting Birds" "You Shoot A Few, The Rest Fly Away"

6.19.05 By Peter Graff, KARABILA, Iraq (Reuters)

U.S. troops, backed by Iraqi forces and U.S. and British aircraft, pushed into the northern section of a town near the Syrian border which they say has become a stronghold for foreign fighters.

Karabila, a near deserted town that was once home to 60,000 people, and other areas around the city of Qaim, are the focus of Operation Spear, one of two offensives launched in three days in the western desert.

A leading organization for Iraq's Sunni Arab minority, once dominant under Saddam Hussein, accused U.S. forces of killing women and children and destroying homes, schools and other civilian buildings around Karabila and Qaim.

"Operation Spear...will break on the rock of Iraqi solidarity," the Muslim Clerics Association said in a statement, reflecting anger at U.S. military tactics.

"It's like hunting birds," said Colonel Steve Davis of the U.S. Marines as he surveyed the ruins of what he said was an insurgent base in Karabila on Saturday. "You shoot a few, the rest fly away. You shoot a few again, the rest fly away again."

More Fighting In Falluja

06/19/05 By PATRICK QUINN, Associated Press Writer

In three separate incidents in Fallujah, insurgents trying to place a roadside bomb opened fire with small arms and rocket propelled grenades on a group of Marines. Other insurgents attacked Marines in the same area with machine gun fire. A car bomber failed in an attempted assault.

U.S. Commanders Confirm War Lost: 60,000 Combat Effectives Vs. 12-20,000 Resistance Troops

[It is an absolute of putting down guerrilla uprisings that 10 combat effectives are required, at the minimum, for each resistance fighter, in order to win. The numbers you read below write a simple message: game over. War lost. No hope. Every death is nothing but a betrayal to provide political cover for the Imperial politicians in Washington. T]

JUNE 20, 2005 By John F. Burns The New York Times

Commanders concerned for their careers have not thought it prudent to go further, and to say publicly what many say privately: that with U.S. troop levels - 139,000 now - they have been forced to play an infernal board game, constantly shuttling combat units from one war zone to another, leaving insurgent buildups unmet in some places while they deal with more urgent problems elsewhere.

U.S. commanders, their army bottom-heavy with support units, have at most 60,000 U.S. and allied combat soldiers available, and only a fraction as many Iraqi soldiers rated combat-ready. Recent U.S. intelligence estimates put the insurgents' strength from 12,000 to 20,000.

The scope of the problem can be taken from the garrison in the Baghdad area. Major General William Webster, commander of the 3rd Infantry Division, recently gave a rundown of the troops available to meet the surge of suicide bombings, buried roadside explosives and ambushes that have killed more than 600 people in the city since the new Shiite majority government took office in early May: 27,000 U.S. troops, 15,000 Iraqi policemen and 7,000 Iraqi soldiers.

Saddam Hussein, he said, had a regular garrison for the same area of 80,000 troops and 50,000 police.

The pattern of thin force levels seems to be replicated, in differing ways, almost everywhere Americans confront insurgents. The exceptions have been those occasions, like the battles that restored government control of Najaf last August and Falluja in November, when U.S. commanders concentrated thousands of troops to crush the rebels.

But high-intensity operations like the one at Falluja are like driving a stake into a hornets' nest, many U.S. officers say. They scatter the insurgents, who regroup and return as soon as U.S. troop concentrations are reduced. Seven months after Falluja was recaptured, in ruins, pockets of insurgents still operate in the city.

But whether there are too many U.S. soldiers or too few, a feeling is growing among senior officers in Baghdad and Washington that it is only a matter of time before the Pentagon sets a timetable of its own for withdrawal.

These officers point to the effect on American public opinion of the slow disintegration of the 30-nation, U.S.-led coalition, and to frustration on Capitol Hill with the faltering buildup of Iraqi forces.

These officers also cite the recruiting slump and fear that the risk is growing that the war, like Vietnam, will do lasting damage to the army and the marines.

"I think the drawdown will occur next year, whether the Iraqi security forces are ready or not," a senior marine officer in Washington said last week.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. soldiers take cover as they deploy after a roadside bomb, targeting a US military convoy, exploded June 18, 2005 (AP Photo/Hadi Mizban)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

**Convoy Ambushed;
Casualties Not Reported:
Taleban Fighters Kill District Police Chief**

06/19/05 The Associated Press & BBC 6.18 & 6.19

A U-S air strike has killed as many as 20 suspected rebels in southern Afghanistan. The U-S military says warplanes and attack helicopters opened fire on the group today, after the ambush of a coalition convoy.

Taleban rebels in Afghanistan say they have killed a district police chief and seven other policemen captured last week in Kandahar province.

Taleban spokesman Abdul Latif Hakimi said Nanai Khan and the others were shot on the order of religious leaders.

Mr Hakimi said "trials" of the other abducted officials were continuing.

There are conflicting reports about how many policemen were captured – the numbers range from 10 to 31.

The officials were taken in an attack on a convoy on the road from Kandahar to Miana Shien district, about 90km (60 miles) to the north-east.

The Taleban spokesman said one of those taken was the chief of the district.

In a separate incident on Sunday, three rockets were fired into Kandahar, one of which landed close to the former home of Taleban leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar, which now hosts US special forces. There were no casualties.

A senior police officer in Kandahar said the main government building in Mian Nishin, headquarters of the district by the same name, was under Taliban control after the Friday night attack.

"The Taliban surrounded the district headquarters and captured 18 officers," said the officer, who declined to be named. "Right now the district headquarters is under the control of the Taliban."

Mian Nishin in Kandahar province was the scene of joint operations by Afghan and US-led forces early this week in which government officials said nine guerrillas were killed.

On Thursday, the Taliban captured 11 police officers, the district police chief and the senior local government official in Mian Nishin and said their fate would be decided by the guerrilla leadership.

On Saturday, guerrillas attacked government posts in the Dai Chopan district of Zabul province, adjoining Kandahar, Gulab Shah Alikhail, a spokesman for the province said.

Taliban spokesman Abdul Latif Hakimi said the guerrillas killed three policemen in the attack, while one militant died.

On Friday, a roadside bomb exploded in neighbouring Helmand province, killing a soldier and wounding three policemen, including a district police chief.

TROOP NEWS

“My Son Died For A Lie.”

[Thanks to Phil G who sent this in.]

June 17, 2005 By Leo Shane III, Stars and Stripes

“I envy the parents who support this war, because if I did I’d sleep better,” said Dianne Davis Santorello, a Pennsylvania resident whose son was killed in August 2004. “But I don’t sleep well. My son died for a lie.”

“She Knew Three Young Marines” “All Have Doubts About Continuing The War”

[Thanks to Phil G who sent this in.]

<p>May is particularly anxious on this day, because her husband told her that insurgents had blown up his unit's communications hardware, forcing the Marines to travel by ground convoy rather than in aircraft. "I'm really worried about him today," she said.</p>
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June 19, 2005 By Paul Richter, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

JACKSONVILLE, N.C. - With its sprawling military bases and huge population of military retirees, eastern North Carolina has believed in the Iraq war, and sacrificed for it, like few other regions.

But as summer heat has settled over the piney lowlands in recent days, a debate has unexpectedly come to life about a U.S. mission that is two years old and counting.

New doubts and divisions have come into view.

The debate is occurring in a place where support for the military is apparent to the most casual visitor. The highways around Jacksonville, near the entrance to the Marines' huge Camp Lejeune, are lined with car dealerships, military surplus stores, barber shops

and other businesses festooned with American flags. Signs urge Americans: "Honk for the Troops" and "Pray for Our Heroes."

As tobacco farming has declined in recent decades, the military has become more important as a part of the local economy. About 60,000 retirees live in the 3rd District, which in addition to Camp Lejeune is home to the Marine Corps Air Station in Cherry Point, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, and New River Marine Corps Air Station.

But these days, residents' anxieties, as well as their pride, are near the surface.

In the steamy parking lot of Jacksonville's Wal-Mart, Christy May, the wife of a Marine serving in Iraq, loads plastic summertime toys for her kids into the trunk of her car. She said she thought it would be a mistake to set a fixed time for withdrawal.

"History shows that it wouldn't make sense for us to walk away all of a sudden," said May, 42, of Jacksonville.

But she also acknowledges that she and her husband, a supply and logistics specialist, are split over whether the United States should be there at all.

May is particularly anxious on this day, because her husband told her that insurgents had blown up his unit's communications hardware, forcing the Marines to travel by ground convoy rather than in aircraft. "I'm really worried about him today," she said.

Nearby, Kerri Hassell of Jacksonville, a 32-year-old single mother of three, said she was worried about the effect the war had on a number of close friends who were Marines, including one who was godfather to her children.

She said she knew three young Marines who were about to leave the service. All have doubts about continuing the war, she said.

"Every one wants it to end," said Hassell, a community college student with a hairdressing business. "They don't know why they're over there."

In her view, "the government uses the word 'terror' and it just sends us all into a frenzy."

The signs of anxiety in North Carolina's military heartland come at a time when national polls suggest that more Americans are turning against the war as the insurgency flares and costs to taxpayers show little sign of abating.

The debate is intensifying in North Carolina, as it is in other parts of the country.

"Members are hearing more from people who are patriotic and really want to see this thing turn out right, but are worried about how long it's going to go on," said Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Ariz.). "They don't see that light at the end of the tunnel."

Some congressional strategists said that while they still didn't expect large numbers of Republicans to break with the president over the war, there was a palpable nervousness as members looked to next year's midterm elections and worried that opinion might be shifting.

Andrew deGrandpré, city editor of the Daily News of Jacksonville, said that although the city's bonds with the military made it distinctive, the sentiments resembled the uneasy national conversation.

"I think deep down this place is a lot like any other in America, and people have been debating the war and the human cost that's being paid," DeGrandpré said. "Nobody wants to back out but these questions are out there."

Staff Sgt. Camilo Mejia's Long Journey Of Conscience: From Nicaragua, To Iraq, To Military Prison

An Interview with a Sandinista Son and Iraq War Veteran

May 10, 2005 By Ron Smith, Special to The Narco News Bulletin

On March 19 of this year, my wife, and associate producer, Cindy Sousa and I had the opportunity to travel to Fayetteville, North Carolina, home of Fort Bragg, one of the largest military bases in the United States. We came to capture some of the stories of the young veterans of the current US war in Iraq who had come together to oppose the war.

Of particular interest to Narco News readers was the interview we conducted with Camilo Mejia, the son of the great troubadour of the Sandinistas, Carlos Mejia Godoy. Camilo served in the US Army and the National Guard before claiming his opposition to the war and suffering severe consequences at the hands of the US military establishment. After 9 months of solitary confinement, Camilo was released early, and has since vowed his commitment to the anti-war movement.

Since his release from prison, Camilo has been catapulted to the forefront of the antiwar movement. He has appeared several times on Democracy Now!, and is a prominent participant in many rallies against the war.

What drew us particularly to Camilo was the sense of bewilderment we felt as to how the son of two Sandinistas could get himself involved with the illegal invasion of Iraq. This involvement, obviously, requires participation in, to quote Ché Guevara, "...el gran enemigo de la humanidad, los Estados Unidos de Norteamérica..." We understood that there was something not being discussed by the numerous interviews and reports on Mr. Mejia, and we were determined to understand the transition from Sandinista baby to

member of an occupying force, and his subsequent transformation into a voice of the U.S. resistance to the war.

Fayetteville underscored that there was a difference between being anti-war and anti-imperialist, a problem that the left has grappled with for years (see my article on Apocalypse Now and Abu Ghraib, activ8media.org). The many flaws in the invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq have caused a great number of people espousing otherwise racist or reactionary ideas to oppose this particular war.

Gaining a deeper understanding of the causes of war and the motivations of the United States is essential to the creation of an informed anti-war movement. Failing to acknowledge the imperialist nature of this country, and the racist ideology that fuels wars of imperial conquest, doom us to learning the same painful lessons in an infinite loop.

Camilo alludes to the fact that it is the same spirit of imperialism that motivated the United States involvement in Central America, and in its current occupation of Iraq and the ongoing US interventions in the Andes.

Camilo provided a refreshing departure from the “liberal” anti-war position.

When we approached him for the interview, we noticed that he was wearing a black Oscar Romero T-shirt. This set both my partner and I at ease, as we realized that this was someone who saw himself as part of the popular struggle.

Camilo Mejia: My name is Camilo Mejia.

I was a staff sergeant in the Florida National Guard. I deployed to Iraq early in 2003, and I participated in the war. I came back on a two-week leave, and I decided that I could no longer be part of the war in good conscience, so I decided not to return to the war, and I applied for Conscientious Objector status, which has initially been denied...

I was also tried by courts-martial, found guilty of desertion, and served close to nine months in confinement in a military prison, for refusing to go back to the war in Iraq.

I recently got out, just a little bit over a month ago... I am against the war, and I am here lending my voice to the movement for peace and justice.

Camilo speaks with a soft voice, he considers his answers carefully . What was most interesting to us was how he came to be in the military in first place.

Camilo Mejia: I have a long history with the military, I first joined after college, I graduated High School, and went to college for a couple of semesters.

I dropped out, went inside of the military, because I didn't feel that I was ready for college, and because I wanted some level of independence from home.

I come from a very political family in Nicaragua. My father was a Sandinista singer; he was the official singer for the Sandinista Revolution for a while. And my mother was also involved in politics, and I guess I wanted to escape all of that.

I wanted to find my own way, do my own things, and I found the military. I guess it's a combination of things. I wanted independence. It was a form of rebellion also, to do that which everyone expected me not to do.

I wasn't ready for college, and the army seemed like a good option, to go out and... (He shakes his head) I guess, grow up – which is not really the case, but to see the world and come back and maybe be ready for college. And they help you with tuition and things like that. So I went in the military, this was back in 1995.

Well, from 1995 to 1998, it was pretty usual; you know, I was an infantryman in a mechanized unit. I made many friends; I stayed pretty much the whole time in Texas. And I got out, you know, not much to say about that.

I went back to college. I joined the National Guard. Every military contract lasts 8 years, so when I got out after my active duty enlistment, I still had about four and a half years left on my contract, so I figured, I'll do my time, wearing my uniform once a month, while going to college and getting an education; maybe I'll go back into military active duty as a psychologist. My plan was to be a psychologist.

Just about a semester before I was supposed to graduate, and just a couple of months before the end of my eight-year contract, my unit was activated to go to Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

I had been pretty indifferent to the war situation at the time, at some level I disagreed with it, because... well, there was no war back then, but I disagreed with the tendency of the government to yell "war!" in spite of lack of evidence, evidence for weapons of mass destruction, and links between the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and Saddam Hussein. Just about everything that they said we were going to war for didn't seem to make a whole lot of sense.

So I disagreed with the reasons the government was giving, but it was all very political. It was a very political opposition to this war, to this particular war. I had really no problem being an infantryman, I had no problem being a combat soldier, or being a squad leader in an infantry unit. I just disagreed with this particular war on political grounds.

But after we deployed, once we went into Iraq, and we started getting into firefights, and we started getting ambushed, and attacked with RPG's and mortars and IED's on the road, and we started actually seeing the real face of war, you know, people dying, a place being occupied, and you know, the raids and everything...

The questioning of the war pretty much stopped, because we were being attacked pretty much every day, and it's really hard to do any real moral questioning of any war when you're in it. Because your life is in danger every second, and you're afraid, you're frustrated, and you respond to your fears and you respond to your frustrations.

And you basically want your men to get out of there alive, as a Squad Leader, and you want to get yourself out of there alive, back to your family, so you don't really question the war, you don't really question your role in the war. You just go along

with it, you know, and you pretty much just do what you're supposed to do, whether you agree with it or not.

And then I was given a two-week leave, and coming home gave me the peace of mind and the clarity to come face to face with my feelings about the war and everything that we did.

You know, people want to know, were you ambushed? Were you in a firefight? Did you kill people? Did you see people die? And for the first time you start talking about these things and reliving these experiences away from the danger, and you begin to ask yourself questions about the validity of the reasons given for the war, you try to find yourself justifications, for doing everything that you did, and you know, being a part of a war.

In the end you find that it's... it's an imperialist war, and it's a war for corporate profit, and you know, not a single person should die for that. So in good conscience, I could not go back. I could not be a part of it. So I decided not to go back.

I tried to make my case legally through the proper legal channels in the military. Things didn't work out, so I sought civilian counsel and went underground and wrote my Conscientious Objector application.

I resurfaced again in March of last year, and publicly expressed my opposition against the war, on moral, religious, spiritual, ethical, and political grounds.

I said that this is a war for oil, and that I'm not a mercenary, and that I wasn't going to participate in the war, and I proceeded to surrender myself to the military right after that. I was tried within 2 months, and found guilty of desertion with intent to avoid hazardous duty. I was given a sentence of twelve months of confinement, reduction from the grade of E6 to E1, forfeiture of two thirds of my pay, and a bad conduct discharge.

I served my time at the Fort Sill, Oklahoma confinement facility, did about eight months and three weeks, got out early on good conduct time and work abatement.

I've been out for a little over a month; I'm back and I'm here to say that I continue to disagree with not only this war but every war, and I continue to say that this is a war for oil and for imperialist domination, and that I continue to lend my voice and to speak out to say that we should not be there.

You go in there and you get in one firefight, and you see at the end of the firefight that most of the insurgents got away, if not all of them, most of the soldiers survived, if not all of them, and you look at the middle ground, and you see a bunch of dead civilians – you know, children included, women, elderly, you name it. And this is not just an isolated event, you know, this is a pattern.

It doesn't happen because soldiers are bad people, it doesn't happen because insurgents want to kill their own citizens, it happens because that is the nature of war.

You don't have to be there very long; you don't have to be very smart. It's there; it stares at you while you're there. It is that experience precisely that makes me against every war, being there and seeing it and staring at it in the face.

And you can have a moral opposition to it, and none of it matters, because you're a soldier and you have a duty. Because you're told to kill, you kill, and because you're told to raid, you raid. You're told to set up an ambush and you set up an ambush, you're told to set up a roadblock, you set up a roadblock, and feelings and emotions and moral principles play no role in this.

You see it in the news, you know – every time a soldier dies, we know about it. But what about civilians? It's a ratio of about ten to one, if not more.

Cindy Sousa: What about your experience as a Nicaraguan-American, did that influence your opinion?

Camilo Mejia: To some extent I guess it does, not just because of being a Nicaraguan, but having my parents be involved in the Sandinista revolution, and how the Reagan administration intervened in the civil war that took place in Nicaragua, and funded the contras. It was a mercenary war that choked the economy, and you know, it was a pretty fair society.

It was a society and a form of government with no official affiliation to anyone. I went to a private Catholic school when I was there, so you can't say it was a communist country. There was private enterprise, so you cannot really say that Nicaragua was communist, or even socialist. You know, it was just a country; it was just a form of government that was trying to make a fair society for everyone.

I remember that they were giving vaccines to all the children. They were teaching everyone how to read and write. Everyone was picking up the coffee beans, and it was a dream, it was a dream society for a while.

It's not a very good example if you are the sole superpower in the world, and the only way to feed your needs is through oppression.

And so you instill instability and you encourage and fund mercenary wars – and you know, I lived there. I was somewhat removed from that reality because I was very privileged. But it stuck to me; it stayed with me somewhere, in the back of my mind, you know, in my memory somehow.

That sense of injustice resurfaced in Iraq not while being oppressed, but while being an instrument of oppression. It came back from somewhere in my conscience, in my memory, in my life history, and just completely took over, so here I am.

Camilo spoke to us at length about his suggestions for youth considering the military. Camilo's interview has been included in the upcoming counter-recruitment video project from activ8media, "Army of None: What Military Recruiters Aren't Telling You." You can get more information about this project at activ8media.org.

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.

Claymore Used In Iraq Fragging; One Of Officers Killed Had “Disciplined” Sgt.

June 17, 2005 MSNBC

For the first time since Vietnam, the term "fragging" is in the news with military officials currently investigating whether revenge was a factor in the murder of two National Guard officers in Iraq

Sgt. Alberto Martinez of the New York National Guard is accused of killing his two superior officers after reportedly being disciplined by one of them and is believed to be the first soldier in Iraq to face such charges.

MSNBC military analyst and retired Army Col. Jack Jacobs joined MSNBC's Amy Robach on Friday to discuss the charges and whether there is a danger of fragging becoming a growing trend.

Amy Robach: There have been differing reports on how Martinez allegedly killed these two officers. First reports were that it was a grenade, now it might have been mines. What are your sources telling you?

Jack Jacobs: Well, people I talked to said it was a claymore mine that actually killed these two officers and it was set up on the windowsill of their quarters which is one of the palaces among the 58 or so palaces in this enormous compound in Tikrit which the 42nd Division is using for its headquarters.

It was command detonated. The claymore mine ... is used principally in defensive positions. It's got a pound or so of plastic explosives and embedded in that, a .33 caliber piece of buck shot and this was command detonated and killed both of those officers, commanders of Headquarters Companies; Esposito and the executive officer who was only in the country for four days.

Robach: Initially, investigators believed that the two men died from indirect fire but they were able to determine 'no they didn't believe that happened.' What was it about the evidence that made them change their minds. Was it an easy thing to spot?

Jacobs: Yes, it was relatively easy. Apparently, what I understand the perpetrator tried to cover it up by making it look like a mortar attack by throwing a few hand grenades after he had detonated this claymore mine. But when other people came to the quarters where the claymore had been detonated and officers killed, they could tell immediately by the blast pattern, by the type of shrapnel that was embedded all over the place. They could tell that it was a claymore mine and that it was command detonated.

I found out later on that the handheld generator, which is used to detonate the claymore, had been thrown in a nearby lake. The lake was drained and the detonator found

Robach: What do we know about Sgt. Martinez and the type of impact this will most likely have on his unit?

Jacobs: I don't know much about him. He was a staff sergeant in Headquarters Company and he was a supply specialist which would indicate that he is the supply sergeant so he worked directly with the commander and the deputy commander, executive officers, both of whom were killed.

This seems to be an isolated incident that was the result of some sort of discipline problem. But evidently, that occurred because it seemed that the company commander gave non-judicial punishment or reprimanded Sgt. Martinez.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

82 Iraqi MPs Demand Occupation Pullout

June 19, 2005 IslamOnline.net

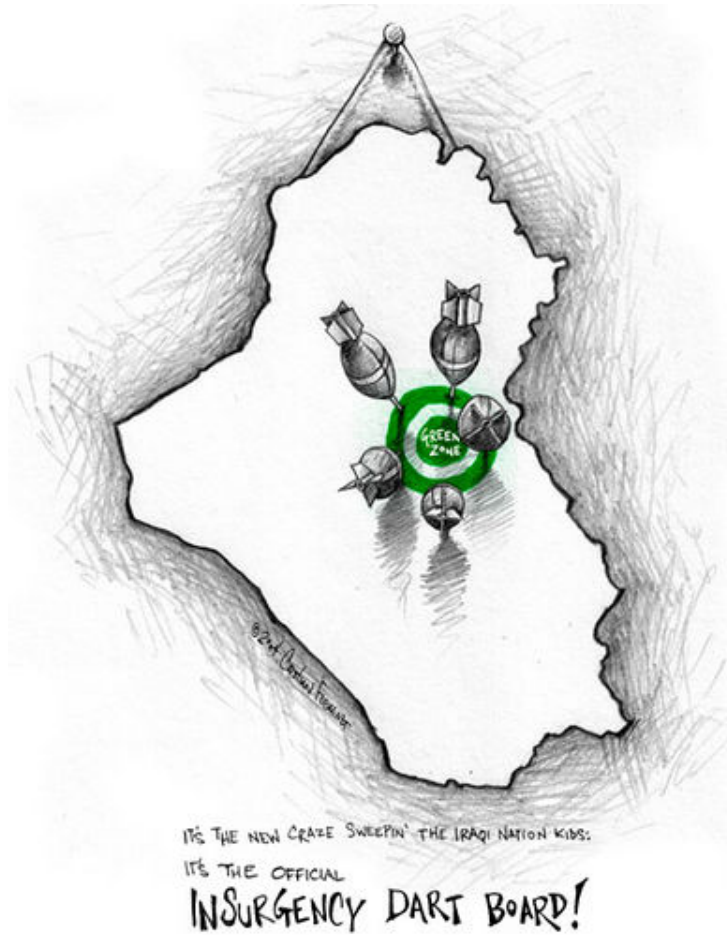
Eighty two Iraqi lawmakers from across the political spectrum have pressed for the withdrawal of the US-led occupation troops from their country.

The Shiite, Kurdish, Sunni Arab, Christian and communist legislators made the call in a letter sent by Falah Hassan Shanshal of the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA), the largest bloc in parliament, to speaker Hajem Al-Hassani, reported Agence France-Presse (AFP).

“We have asked in several sessions for occupation troops to withdraw. Our request was ignored,” read the latter, made public on Sunday, June 19.

“It is dangerous that the Iraqi government has asked the UN Security Council to prolong the stay of occupation forces without consulting representatives of the people who have the mandate for such a decision,” it said.

“Therefore we must reject the occupation's legitimacy and renew our demand for these forces to withdraw,” it added.



Assorted Resistance Action



An Iraqi soldier gestures to civilians as they stand among the wreckage of an Iraqi restaurant Baghdad. (AFP/Karim Sahib)

[Thanks to CS, who sent this in.]

06/19/05 By PATRICK QUINN, Associated Press Writer & By Peter Graff, Reuters & BBC

Iraqi police and soldiers are again the target of a bomb attack in Baghdad.

The Baghdad bomber detonated his explosives-laden vest at the Ibn Zanbour restaurant, 400 yards from the main gate of the heavily fortified Green Zone — U.S. and Iraqi government headquarters.

The cafe was popular with Iraqi police and soldiers. The dead included seven police officers and many plain-clothes security guards. The bodyguards of Iraqi Finance minister Ali Abdel-Amir Allawi and 20 other police were injured, police and hospital officials said. The minister was not in the restaurant.

Two people were killed in Baqouba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, when insurgents fired a rocket at the house of a local Shiite politician.

"I went to buy a sandwich when it happened," said Alaa Mahmud, 22, who works at a nearby tea house. "Everything came flying out."

Guerrillas killed a bodyguard for the deputy governor of Diyala province and injured a second, the governor's office said.

Near Tikrit, a bomber killed three Iraqi soldiers and wounded nine on Sunday when he drove his car at an army patrol, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**Vietnam:
They Spread The
Bullshit Then Too:**



**“The War Is A Mistake But We
Can’t Pull Out Now”
But “Each New Strategy, Each
New Hope, Has Proven Illusory”**

“Ah, say some, “we wish we could withdraw but if we left, those who have sided with us in Vietnam would all be slaughtered.”

The massacre is now. The slaughter is now. To continue to burn women and children with napalm, to poison rice fields, to devastate a whole nation to save those who have sided with the destroyers is an excuse that can appeal only to the insane.

From “Vietnam, Vietnam,” by Felix Greene, Fulton Publishing Co., Palo Alto, Calif. 1966

The war in Vietnam has been a moral disaster for the United States.

Many Americans, it appears, have been persuaded that there would be something shameful in withdrawing from Vietnam so as to allow the people there to settle their own affairs.

Even those who have come to see that entering the war was a huge and tragic blunder often add that “of course, we can’t pull out now.”

But many others disagree.

“I, for one (wrote Henry W. Edgerton, Senior Circuit Judge of the United States Court of Appeals, in a letter to the New York Times), see no remaining reason why our fighting men should not be brought home as fast as our ships and planes can carry them. If the

President were to bring them home, instead of sending still more of them to kill and be killed in Vietnam and devastate the country, he . . . would gain the esteem of almost all humanity, including most of the people of South Vietnam. . . .”

Prestige?

What prestige, we must ask, will America retain if the war goes on?

“Ah, say some, “we wish we could withdraw but if we left, those who have sided with us in Vietnam would all be slaughtered.”

We have heard this many times before. It was, for years, the standard pretext given by Great Britain for not giving her colonies their independence; but when she withdrew the “slaughters” didn’t happen.

“I think,” said André Denis to the French Parliament in 1950, “that withdrawal. . . would be more criminal than the war itself. . . the Vietnamese soldiers. . . would be exposed to a massacre. . . These people have placed confidence in us.”

But when, after Dien Bien Phu, the French had no choice but to withdraw, there was no massacre.

No. We can no longer accept such a pretext. The massacre is now. The slaughter is now. To continue to burn women and children with napalm, to poison rice fields, to devastate a whole nation to save those who have sided with the destroyers is an excuse that can appeal only to the insane.

The United States cannot win this war.

This, by now, should be clear.

“The harsh fact (said Major General Edward T. Lansdale), and one that given pause to every thoughtful American, is that, despite the use of overwhelming amounts of men, money and materiel, despite the quantity of well-meant American advice . . . the Communist subversive insurgents have grown steadily stronger in numbers and size of units. . . . The Communists have let loose a revolutionary idea in Vietnam and it will not die by being ignored, bombed or smothered by us. Ideas do not die in such ways.”

That was written in October 1964; it hasn’t changed much since.

The U.S. cannot win this war because it is for the first time directly confronting a war of liberation, a type of war whose politics and military technique the United States’ present culture simply cannot comprehend—though the United States itself began its national history with a war of liberation.

Not understanding the nature of this war, hopes for victory have been pinned first on this, then on that; but each new strategy, each new hope, has proven illusory.

It was, at first, the Vietnamese with help from U.S. “advisers” that were going to accomplish it; then the helicopters; then the strategic hamlet plan; then the amphibious

vehicles for flooded rice paddies; then the "Special Forces"; then defoliation; then napalm; then the bombing of north Vietnam; then the B52's from Guam.

And all the time the commitment grows, the huge vested interests that gain by the continuation of the war grow, the number of U.S. troops grows—and victory remains still somewhere beyond the horizon.

The United States can burn and devastate; it can annihilate the Vietnamese but it cannot conquer them.

The war itself has no legitimacy. The Vietnamese know it, the world knows it, and an increasing number of American citizens know it

The United States cannot win this war because (in the only sense that matters) it has already lost it.

The day may yet come when the people of the United States will call their leaders to account for having so grossly misled them

Sooner or later the real meaning of the Vietnam war will be understood.

Vietnamese will remember it as an epic of almost unbelievable human fortitude. In the United States it will be recalled as a huge tragedy —the darkest hour of the nation's history.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

The Resistance In Context

An Anatomy Of The Resistance To The American Occupation In Iraq

The occupation's significance has been audaciously negated within intellectual circles to an unbearable degree and much more rhetorical capital has been invested in the relations between "Sunni and Shi'a" or "Arab and Kurd."

The question we must ask ourselves is what happened to the illegitimacy of the occupation and the legitimate right to oppose it?

May 21 / 22, 2005 By LAITH AL-SAUD, CounterPunch. Laith Al-Saud is a college lecturer in the social sciences and a member of the People's Struggle Movement-an organization politically opposed to the occupation of Iraq.

The media's misrepresentation of the resistance in Iraq has been a central component to the Bush administrations ideology for occupation.

As an occupying power the US has ostensibly claimed a duty to protect the Iraqi people from the insecurity that the US presence ironically induces.

Notwithstanding the many criticisms we could make of the American media in this regard, what is most frustrating is that many on the so-called "left," self-proclaimed critics of the war, have invested in the ideology of occupation.

I was recently involved in a public event at one of the more prestigious universities here in the US where one of the guests-who has spent considerable time in occupied Iraq and who is also another self-proclaimed critic-denounced the Iraqi resistance as an extreme and terrible bid on behalf of "Wahhabists and former Baathists."

When I asked the guest how much time he had actually spent with members of the resistance he could not provide me any substantive experience. In other words his intelligence on violence in Iraq was being provided by the same source that initiated the occupation in the first place-the US administration.

It is both ironic and comical that little has been done to substantiate the claims being put forth by the American administration in this regard; but most notably there can be no serious hope of the Americans leaving Iraq so long as the majority of the country "fears" what might happen there next. And the administration's presentation of the resistance as a band of wide-eyed fanatics or desperate men "with nothing to lose" has been employed, quite tactfully, to keep up as much American support for the occupation as Iraqi.

What I wish to do here is provide a brief anatomy of the resistance-a description of what it is made of and what it hopes to accomplish.

First the Iraqi resistance is made up of both political and martial forces, thus all of the major resistance groups in the country are tied to a greater political framework that has been clear and consistent in its hopes for the country. What is more important, however, is that the methods and goals of the resistance have always been made public. There has been no major Iraqi resistance group that has condoned the targeting of innocents in the country, none.

Secondly, the Iraqi resistance has been vibrant in organizing itself politically not only inside Iraq but outside as well. I will mention two events in this regard: the meeting of the Higher Committee for National Forces Rejecting the Occupation and the 16th Arab National Congress held in Algiers.

With the former there was even greater consolidation amongst Iraqi resistance groups; the implication of course is that a national liberation front is beginning to emerge that possesses a mandate and doctrine. Few, if any journalists have concerned themselves with the ideas or political ambitions of such an alliance.

The Higher Committee is, however, dedicated to several major things:

- a) the right of the Iraqis to defend themselves against foreign aggression and imperialism,
- b) the right of Iraq to demand a political process untainted by occupation and that reflects the uninhibited will of the Iraqi people and
- c) a pluralistic and democratic Iraq.

Needless to say the Higher Committee is a variegated and diverse membership and emphasizes Iraq's diversity-which never was an issue in the country until the Americans arrived. There are several things to which the Committee is adamantly opposed to as well:

- a) the continued occupation of Iraq and the establishment of any permanent basis in the country,
- b) the privatization of the Iraqi economy and foreign corporations' unrestricted access to Iraq's resources and business community and
- c) the federation of Iraq.

This last point may strike some as contentious; however, it is crucial to what is felt to be the neo-colonial ambitions of the US in the Middle-East. Federalism in Iraq means an even deeper breakdown of the region into semi-disparate groups that will be encouraged to "arm themselves" against their neighbors; all the while the US presence in the region is perpetuated by the "need to maintain stability."

The reason I have laid out some of these more central features is not to convince anyone to adopt them, but rather to demonstrate the political context in which the resistance is thinking and to suggest that moral support from around the world should be more forthcoming.

Furthermore, unlike US evidence which refers to phantoms and their websites, individuals that no one has access to or ever see in Iraq, members of the Association of Muslim Scholars or the People's Struggle Movement, amongst others, are available for comment or elaboration and can provide definitive accounts of the Iraqi resistance, its nature and goals.

The administration's insistence that the Iraqis (or other "foreign" Arabs) are trying to start a civil war within their own country has never been supported by any logical analysis.

Unfortunately the American press has chosen to ignore the organized opposition forces in Iraq and has focused rather on the abundance of petty crime and faceless websites now conflagrating Baghdad and misidentified *that* as the resistance.

For a variety of reasons most of the Left has also invested too heavily in the myth that the resistance is an irrational menace-made up of "former Baathists and Wahhabists."

As political observers the strange conclusion we must draw from this characterization is that there is no resistance to the actual American occupation; there is rather an "insurgency" against a supposedly free and democratically elected government.

The occupation's significance has been audaciously negated within intellectual circles to an unbearable degree and much more rhetorical capital has been invested in the relations between "Sunni and Shi'a" or "Arab and Kurd."

The question we must ask ourselves is what happened to the illegitimacy of the occupation and the legitimate right to oppose it?

Reaching Out To The Troops, 1914 Style

From: The Tasks Of Revolutionary Social Democracy In The European War:
Resolution Of A Group Of Social-Democrats, 1914

The opportunists had long been preparing the collapse of the Second International by renouncing the Socialist revolution and substituting for it bourgeois reformism, by rejecting the class-struggle, which at certain moments necessarily turns into civil war, and preaching instead the collaboration of classes; by preaching bourgeois chauvinism and defence of the fatherland, under the cloak of patriotism, and rejecting the elementary truth of Socialism, expressed long ago in the Communist Manifesto, that the workers have no fatherland; by confining themselves in the struggle against militarism to a sentimental philistine point of view instead of recognizing the necessity of a revolutionary war of the proletarians of all countries against the bourgeois of all countries; by making a fetish of the necessity of utilizing bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois legality, forgetting that in times of crises illegal forms of organization and propaganda are imperative.

The slogans of Social-Democracy must now be:

First, an all embracing propaganda of the Socialist revolution, to be extended also to the army and the area of military activities; emphasis to be placed on the necessity of turning the weapons, not against the wage-slaves of other countries, but against the reaction of the bourgeois governments and parties in each country; recognition of the urgent necessity of organizing illegal nuclei and groups in the armies of all nations to conduct such propaganda in all languages; a merciless struggle against the chauvinism and patriotism of the philistines and bourgeoisie of all countries without exception.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Criminal Violation Of Law Of Land Warfare Confirmed Again: U.S. Officers Forced To Release Women Hostages

[The Instruction on the Law of Land Warfare is required in all Army's Initial Entry Training, including Basic Combat Training and the Officer Basic Course.

[The training guide stresses that "certain acts are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever."

[These included: "Taking of hostages."]

June 19, 2005 By Omar Salah Al-Din, Khalid Yassin El-Yassari, (IslamOnline.net), MOSUL

US occupation forces completed on Sunday, June 19, the release of twenty one Iraqi women held as a bargain chip in the northern city of Mosul.

"The release came after massive protests organized by the Islamic Party and the Islamic organization for human rights over the past three days," Nour Al-Din Al-Hayalli, the Islamic Party's media officer in Mosul, told IslamOnline.net.

The Islamic party championed a massive demonstration following the Friday prayers on June 17 to press for the immediate release of all Iraqi women in the US custody.

Assembling outside the Sedek Rashan mosque, protestors denounced the American occupation for dishonoring the Iraqi people by detaining women.

They carried photos of detained women, demanding the government of Ibrahim Jaafari to live up to its responsibilities toward the Iraqi people.

The demonstrators also issued a statement calling for an immediate release of all Iraqi women detainees across the occupied country.

Al-Hayalli said many Iraqi families have complained that the occupation forces were holding women as a bargain chip against relatives reportedly involved in resistance operations.

In a demonstration staged on Thursday, June 16, an Iraqi woman said her daughter-in-law was detained by US soldiers after they failed to find her husband.

"They stormed the house on May 24, searching for my son. When they failed to find him they detained his wife and threw his six-month-old child to the ground," she recalled.

Another Iraqi female detainee, who was released days earlier, recounted her own nightmare.

"The US forces attacked the house after midnight, blowing up the doors and killing my husband's brother and injuring me along with my husband and brother."

"They arrested me along with my husband and brother. We suffered horrible detention conditions."

Harith Adeb, the head of the Islamic organization for human rights, said his group registered 21 cases of Iraqi women detained by the American occupation forces across the city.

"Five women, all of the same family, were detained in western Mosul, two in Al-Nour district and another from Mosul University in addition to others released few days ago," he said.

Abdeb lambasted American abuses of Iraqi women including open-ended detention without charges.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Hysterical Racist Fools Torment Bush Allies

June 13, 2005 Washington Post

A U.S. Airways flight headed from Orlando, Fla., to Reagan National Airport outside Washington was diverted to Jacksonville, Fla., where more than a half-dozen passengers were removed because of what was characterized as suspicious behavior.

Those passengers turned out to be military personnel from the Middle East who were flying to Washington for a meeting at the Defense Department, authorities said. The men, who were in civilian clothes, were later cleared by authorities and were allowed onto another flight.

Received:

**Iraq Petroleum Conference Protest!
Corporate Pirates UK Action & Statement on the
G8**

From: Ewa Jasiewicz
To: GI Special
Sent: June 17, 2005 8:45 AM

From the Corporate Pirates - UK direct action campaigning group
dedicated to stopping the corporate plunder of Iraq.

See <http://corporatepirates.gzzzt.net/> and <http://www.radicalactivist.net/> for more details

STOP THE PLUNDER OF Iraq's OIL

A week before Bush and Blair meet in Gleneagles for the G8 summit the corporate pirates believe its "vital" that the ongoing illegal and violent occupation of Iraq is kept as a central issue for these corporate plunderers.

We cannot let the G8 leaders "move on" from the disaster they have unleashed in Iraq, a disaster which is now being embedded through the imposition of a neo-liberal economic agenda which only further lines the treasure chests of multinational corporations. The G8 countries through their instruments of mass destruction, the World Bank and IMF, have imposed odious debt on Iraq and are insisting that privatisation is one of the conditions on which the debt can be "forgiven".

It is at conferences like the Iraq Petroleum Conference in London on 29th June that the likes of Shell and Exxon-Mobil lobby on privatisation issues. Civil society groups in Iraq, such as the General Union of Oil Employees have already made calls to resist any privatisation and cancel the odious debt and we must do what we can to support them.

So we need you turn up on the day.

**STOP THE PLUNDER OF IRAQ'S OIL!
Protest outside 'Iraqi Petroleum Conference 2005'
10.30am, 29 June, The Hilton, Paddington.
Assemble 10.30am Edgware Rd tube**

This event is organised by corporate pirates and supported by Voices in the Wilderness and Iraq Occupation Focus. Rhythms of Resistance will be kicking off the protest on the day. contact stopthepillage@yahoo.co.uk/07931337890

For more information on the resistance to neo-liberalism in Iraq come along to this.

Eyewitness Report From Basra: Iraq's Oil Workers Resist Privatisation

Tuesday 21st June, 7.30pm
Room 3C, University of London Union
Malet Street, London WC1E 7HY
(nearest tube: Goodge St or Russell Sq)
See <http://www.iraqoccupationfocus.org.uk/> for more details

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,
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