

GI SPECIAL 3C64:



<http://www.stanoly.com/>

9/24: The Combat Engineers' Wife

She tells me her husband, a combat engineer who joined the military in 2002, is back for his second tour of duty in Iraq. He was gone for his daughter's birth, home for nine months, returned in the winter and now is stop-lossed. They're not certain when he'll be back.

September 25, 2005 By Tom Engelhardt, motherjones.com. [Excerpt]

Grandfather and Daughter:

Only moments later, another man with a little girl on his shoulders catches my eye. I approach him, introduce myself, and mention that he's the second father I've seen this way in so many minutes.

Joe Stone promptly corrects me: "I'm her grandfather. Her father's in Iraq." He lifts MacKenzie down from his shoulders, tired and ready for her nap, and puts her in a stroller pushed by his actual daughter Cindy. Then he turns back to me. "I haven't done this in thirty years. I was here in 1970. I was tear-gassed at the University of Maryland. Same kind of war, different time."



Grandfather and Daughter: Photo by Tam Turse

From Virginia, he's the assistant controller at a dairy ("an accountant basically"). Like a lot of people at this demonstration, he speaks calmly, even quietly, but with a deep-seated disgust. "I'm just sick of it. I think Bush is immoral. You have to say something. We're proud to be here. I'd slam the door in George Bush's face if he came knocking."

His daughter, like most of the demonstrators, is dressed casually -- sweat shirt, blue jeans, sneakers.

She tells me her husband, a combat engineer who joined the military in 2002, is back for his second tour of duty in Iraq. He was gone for his daughter's birth, home for nine months, returned in the winter and now is stop-lossed. They're not certain when he'll be back.

I ask whether he knows she's at the demonstration -- her first, it turns out, other than a small "free Tibet" one.

"He wouldn't say not to," she replies in almost a whisper. "But I haven't had a chance to tell him yet.

Here's just a modest sample of those that caught my eye, reflecting as they did humor, determination, and more than anything else, outrage: "Yeעהa is not a foreign policy"; "Making a killing"; "Ex-Republican. Ask me why"; "Blind Faith in Bad Leadership is not Patriotism"; "Bush is a disaster!" (with the President's face in the eye of a hurricane); "He's a sick nut my Grandma says" (with a photo of an old woman in blue with halo-like rays emanating from her); "Osama bin Forgotten"; "Cindy speaks for me"; "Make levees not war"; "W's the Devil, One Degree of Separation"; "Dick Cheney Eats Kittens" (with a

photo of five kittens); "Bush busy creating business for morticians worldwide"; "Liar, born liar, born-again liar"; "Dude -- There's a War Criminal in My White House!!!"; "Motivated moderates against Bush"; "Bored with Empire"; "Pro Whose Life?"; "War is Terrorism with a Bigger Budget."



Photo by Tam Turse

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

TWO U.S. SOLDIERS KILLED IN BAGHDAD IED ATTACK

September 26, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
NEWS RELEASE Number: 05-09-25C

Baghdad, Iraq – Two U.S. Soldiers died when their vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device early Sept. 26 in western Baghdad.

42nd MILITARY POLICE BRIGADE SOLDIER KILLED BY IED

September 26, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND
NEWS RELEASE Number: 05-09-24C

BAGHDAD, Iraq – A 42nd Military Police Brigade Soldier was killed 50 miles southeast of Baghdad, Sept 26 when his vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device.

How The U.S. Command Got Suckered Into Taking On The Mahdi Army In Baghdad

[As if there weren't enough pissed off Iraqis fighting for their independence against the Bush dictatorship in Iraq, now the idiots in the U.S command get suckered into a picking a fight with the Mahdi Army in Sadr city by the asshole collaborators running the fake "Iraqi Government."

[The collaborators hate the fact that Sadr has come out for voting against their silly occupation constitution, and is allied with Sunni nationalists also opposed to the occupation.

[As it is, the only ground the occupation controls is wherever some U.S. troops happen to be standing at any given moment. Now the U.S. command appears to be willing to get the whole Mahdi Army to start taking on U.S. troops as well. There are only 10,000+ of them, well armed and organized.

[Once the collaborator forces went into Sadr territory and threw up a cordon, the citizens resisted. Being taken off for execution and subsequent disposal in a garbage dump by the U.S. sponsored Badr death squads isn't all that appealing. Then the collaborator cowards yell for the U.S. soldiers to save their ass.

[The old story: "Why don't you and him fight. I'll watch." T]

<p>Crowds gathered in front of the mosque cursed the occupation and the government. "If the government cares about us, they should not send others to kill us," said Mohammed Sabah, 23, a high school teacher and resident of Sadr City.</p>
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Aljazeera 25 September 2005 & By Bassam Sebti and Jackie Spinner, 26 September 2005, The Washington Post & 23 September 2005, By Alisha Ryu, VOA

Iraqi police said US forces entered the Shia district of Sadr City on Sunday, seeking to detain a group of militia members suspected of carrying out attacks. **[Bullshit lie. "Iraqi police" are trying to dump the whole blame on U.S. forces. See box below.]**

The Jaish al-Mahdi militia (al-Mahdi Army), are loyal to Muqtada al-Sadr, a young Shia leader whose followers have led two uprisings against US forces.

A US military spokesman confirmed "there were a series of engagements" in the east of the city, but added that no US forces were hurt.

The US spokesman said the clashes, in the east of the city, started shortly before 1am on Sunday (2100 GMT on Saturday) and lasted until about 2.30am.

"It appears we were going out to conduct an operation with the Iraqi army who had thrown a cordon around an area they wanted to search. It looks like they were attacked," the US spokesman said. [Note the "appears" and "looks like." Even the "spokesman" smells a rat and is being very, very careful.]

A spokesman for Sadr's office in Baghdad put the number of dead in the attack at four.

Shaikh Abd al-Hadi al-Darraji told Aljazeera the US attack was a provocation against Sadr City.

"People came out of their homes to see what was going on and four were killed and 10 injured - all of them civilians."

He also said he did not believe the people killed in the attack were al-Mahdi Army members.

"We're not confronting the enemy without orders from Najaf," he added, referring to the Shia city which is home to al-Sadr, who launched two uprisings last year against US forces in which hundreds of his fighters were killed.

"They want to provoke al-Sadr people to fight to stop them from taking part in the political process," al-Darraji said.

"We hold the Iraqi government responsible for what is going on in Sadr City and in all Iraq," he added.

"We call for an urgent session to discuss this situation. We also call on the Iraqi government to force these troops out of the country as they pose danger to the sons of Iraq," he added. [And the drooling idiots commanding them pose danger to the sons and daughters of the USA.]

Waleed Wadi Lafta, a resident who said he witnessed the exchange of gunfire, said "there were six pickups of the Interior Ministry commandos" and six American Humvees. "They came to arrest a man whom they did not find."

The U.S. and Iraqi forces then "started shooting randomly at the people who were in the street," he said. "They shot at the mosque and the nearby shops."

The gate of the mosque was riddled with bullet holes. The tall, spiraling minaret of the mosque was also pocked with bullet holes.

Crowds gathered in front of the mosque cursed what they called the "occupation" and the government.

"If the government cares about us, they should not send others to kill us," said Mohammed Sabah, 23, a high school teacher and resident of Sadr City.

Mr. Sadr gets most of his support from the 2.5 million poor and disgruntled Shi'ite residents of Sadr City, an impoverished Baghdad neighborhood. [So, U.S. command wants to pick a fight with an area of 2.5 million? Brilliant.]

Twenty-six-year-old Sadr City auto mechanic Hassan Shamal, says, the Mahdi Army is a trusted force, and now runs all security checkpoints inside Sadr City, not the Iraqi police.

Mr. Shamal says people in Sadr City feel safer with the Mahdi Army in charge. He says no one there trusts the Baghdad police, because people believe they have been infiltrated by members of the Badr Organization.

There have been numerous complaints from both Sunni Arabs and Shi'ites about what critics say is the Badr Organization's increasing influence throughout the Ministry of Interior, which controls Iraq's police force.

A group of Shi'ite men, who applied to the ministry for jobs as policemen, recently spoke to VOA, but refused to be identified by name, believe they were turned away because the current interior minister, Bayan Jabr, had already filled the positions with Badr fighters. Mr. Jabr is a former high-ranking Badr officer and a member of the SCIRI party.

Recently, there have been signs that the Mahdi Army may be gaining the upper hand over the Badr Organization in key Shi'ite areas, such as the southern city of Basra, where police sources say the Mahdi Army is effectively in charge of security.

Police sources there say a raid by the British Army earlier this week to free two of its men held captive took place in a building that houses Basra's secret internal affairs department. Until earlier this year, the department was under Badr control, but now, senior police sources say, it is in Mahdi Army hands.

TROOP NEWS

2,000 Turn Out 9.24 In Military Town; "Fight the Rich. Not Their Wars"

[Sent to Vietnam Veterans Against The War by Horance W. Coleman. He writes: **As conservative and military oriented as the San Diego area is, 2000 people is a very good turn out!**]

September 25, 2005 By Jeff McDonald, SAND DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

Daniece Moden had seen enough. A death toll marching steadily higher, no weapons of mass destruction, all the money that could be spent someplace else. So the 57-year-old Democrat from Mount Helix headed to Balboa Park yesterday for her first protest ever.

Moden found herself among more than 2,000 people who gathered at Sixth Avenue and Laurel Street to oppose the war in Iraq.

"It just keeps adding up and adding up and adding up," she said of the casualty count among U.S. armed forces. "There doesn't seem to be a plan to get us out."

Activists and demonstrators brought bullhorns, bongo drums, handmade signs and informational leaflets to spread their message that the war in Iraq is not working.

The crowd chanted, "Bring the Troops Home," over and over. Drivers motoring north along Sixth Avenue honked their horns.

On the south side of Laurel Street, a group of 10 or so counterdemonstrators calling themselves the San Diego Protest Warriors waved American flags and held signs supporting the war.

Craig Frey was one of the first to arrive at Balboa Park yesterday afternoon. He set up his folding chair 50 yards from the rally stage an hour before the protest and clutched a handmade placard that said, "Fight the Rich. Not Their Wars."

The software engineer from Mira Mesa said he attends as many war protests as he can. His brother is fighting in Iraq, he said, and Frey worries, for him and his country.

"I've been against this war – all wars – for a long time," Frey said. "Look at who our allies are over there. Kuwait, Saudi Arabia. How many of those are democracies?"

“Cindy Always Referred To The President As ‘The Lying Bastard’”

24 September 2005 David Swanson, Truthout [Excerpt]

The first place I heard Cindy give a speech was at the University of DC on June 3rd.

She said then that while 5 Republicans had voted for Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey's amendment calling for an exit strategy, 40 percent of the Democrats in the House had not. Woolsey asked one why they didn't vote with her, Cindy said, and they told her that they voted "No" out of respect for those (Americans) who had died.

"That's the talk of the bastards who got us into this war," Cindy said. Cindy spoke calmly and deliberately, but always referred to the president as "the lying bastard."

"The evidence is overwhelming," she said, "that the lying bastard lied about the justification for invading Iraq. Now that the smoking gun is burning in our hands, we need a vote for articles of impeachment."

MORE:

It Is Time To Bring Our Billions Of Dollars Home From Iraq Too!!!

September 24, 2005 Speech in Washington By Cindy Sheehan. A BUZZFLASH GUEST CONTRIBUTION [Excerpt]

We are out here in force today to take our country back and restore true democracy and sanity to our political process. The time is now and we are here because we love our country and we won't let the reckless maniacs destroy her any further.

We, as a young colony of Great Britain, broke from another tyrant, King George the Third. Well, I wish our George the Third were here today to see us out here in force protesting against his war and against his murderous policies.

George is not here, though, because he is out gallivanting around the country somewhere pretending that he cares about the people who are in the path of hurricane Rita.

The reason he is out today is that his handlers told him that he got a little flak for playing golf and eating birthday cake with Senator McCain while some of his employers were hanging off rooftops and treetops in New Orleans. He swaggers around arrogantly like he is a macho dictatorial tyrant who doesn't have to answer to his employers, the people of the United States of America.

Those days are over George, we are here today to tell you that we are a majority and we will never rest until you bring our young people home from the Middle East and until you start putting money into rebuilding OUR communities: the ones natural disasters destroy with your help, and the ones which your callous and racist war economy are decimating.

We won't allow you to take anymore money out of social programs to finance Halliburton to rebuild the Gulf States: there is no money. Our bank account is empty. George, this is our rainy day and you have failed us miserably.

Stop pouring money into the pockets of the war profiteers and into building permanent bases in Iraq. It is time to bring our billions of dollars home from Iraq too!!!

One thing the Camp Casey movement that hunkered down in Crawford, Texas this past August taught us is that we the people of America have the power and we can and should name our national policy and make sure it is carried out.

I constantly get asked if we are making a difference and if we think (like we're naïve boobs) that we will actually stop the war. Well, looking back at how Vietnam was ended and looking back in the history of our country, most notably in the suffragette, union, and civil rights movements, we the people are the only ones who have been able to transform history and affect true and lasting change here in America:

So to those people who question if we are making a difference: I tell them to go back to school and read their history books!!

And another thing these questioners overlook is that WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!!! And we are here to tell the media, Congress, and this criminal and criminally negligent administration: WE ARE NOT GOING AWAY!!!

We can't compromise, we can't say please, and we can't retreat.

If we do, our country is doomed. We have to honor the sacrifices of our loved ones by completing the mission of peace and justice.

It is time. Bring our troops home, NOW!

Soldiers's Mom Confirms Iraq Prisoner Abuse

From: D [Wounded Iraq Soldier's Mom]

To: GI Special

Sent: September 26, 2005

About the stories of abuse, I have heard a lot of stories soldiers told me about. The Captains abuse elderly Iraqi men like one pushing his eye out of his socket, but they don't get reported due to they know who was there and who seen it, and they would get in trouble when they got back to the states. Their families would pay too.

And a lot of Marines are coming forward about rapes, etc...

You never know if it really happened or what, but I am so tired of all this; makes me sick to even talk about it.

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

25% Of British Services' Helicopters Are Out Of Action; British Forces Can't Use Roads: Too Dangerous

The Army uses helicopters to ferry troops around in Iraq and avoid roadside bomb attacks. Flights run daily from the headquarters at Basra airport to the centre of the city, north into the dangerous Maysan province and a small number of Pumas risk ground fire while ferrying troops around Baghdad.

26/09/2005 By Thomas Harding, Defence Correspondent, The Telegraph

A quarter of the Armed Forces helicopter fleet is grounded for repairs with many needing lengthy overhauls after flying in Iraq.

With the possibility that attacks on troops could increase after the breakdown in relations with the Basra authorities, there will be increased pressure on helicopter flights to avoid violence.

Out of the Services' fleet of 569 helicopters the latest figures released by the Ministry of Defence show that 121 are under repair and a further 79 have been classified as "unrepairable".

More worryingly for defence chiefs is that a high number of new Merlins, which can carry 25 soldiers, are out of service with one in three under repair.

Half of the ageing Sea King helicopters, used for troop carrying and air-sea rescue, are either undergoing refits or have been written off.

The Army uses helicopters to ferry troops around in Iraq and avoid roadside bomb attacks.

Flights run daily from the headquarters at Basra airport to the centre of the city, north into the dangerous Maysan province and a small number of Pumas risk ground fire while ferrying troops around Baghdad.

Daily, flights that do not have a high operational priority are frequently cancelled as helicopters break down. There is also a concern that with a big British deployment to Afghanistan likely next spring, further pressure will be put on the fleet that will again be operating in a difficult environment.

Tim Ripley, an aviation expert for Jane's Defence Weekly, said the military did not have enough money or spares to carry out a high rate of maintenance.

FAMILY DEMANDS THE TRUTH ABOUT FRAUD AND CRIMES IN THE DEATH OF PAT TILLMAN: NOW WE LEARN HE WAS AGAINST THE WAR IN IRAQ

[This is long, but it manages to wrap in one disgusting package all the rot and dishonor that rules the Pentagon.

[It's all there: the lies about how Tillman died, the officers who covered up, the need to tell the American public a story of heroic death in combat that everybody knew was bullshit to help Bush make his political points, the cruel deception of a Gold Star Family about how their son died, the fake investigations designed to protect higher ranking officers and bury the truth forever – you name every kind of filth this government and the commanding officers of the Armed Forces are guilty of; it's all in this one story.

[His mother wants answers. OK. But there should also be justice, and payback for each and every one of the officer scum who constructed this web of lies. Abizaid “and other top commanders” knew how he died four days before the public memorial and wouldn't tell the family. Let the payback for these particular dishonorable scumbags come first.]

[Oh, guess what, Tillman was against Bush and the war in Iraq. How odd his personal journal mysteriously disappears. T]

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

“I can see it like a movie screen,” Baer said. “We were outside of (a city in southern Iraq) watching as bombs were dropping on the town. We were at an old air base, me, Kevin and Pat, we weren't in the fight right then. We were talking. And Pat said, ‘You know, this war is so f— illegal.’ And we all said, ‘Yeah.’ That's who he was. He totally was against Bush.”

“The administration clearly was using this case for its own political reasons,” said the father, Patrick Tillman. “This cover-up started within minutes of Pat's death,

and it started at high levels. This is not something that (lower-ranking) people in the field do," he said.

September 25, 2005 Robert Collier, Chronicle Staff Writer

The battle between a grieving family and the U.S. military justice system is on display in thousands of pages of documents strewn across Mary Tillman's dining room table in suburban San Jose.

As she pores through testimony from three previous Army investigations into the killing of her son, former football star Pat Tillman, by his fellow Army Rangers last year in Afghanistan, she hopes that a new inquiry launched in August by the Pentagon's inspector general finally will answer the family's questions:

Were witnesses allowed to change their testimony on key details, as alleged by one investigator? Why did internal documents on the case, such as the initial casualty report, include false information? When did top Pentagon officials know that Tillman's death was caused by friendly fire, and why did they delay for five weeks before informing his family?

The files the family received from the Army in March are heavily censored, with nearly every page containing blacked-out sections; most names have been deleted.

(Names for this story were provided by sources close to the investigation.) At least one volume was withheld altogether from the family, and even an Army press release given to the media has deletions. On her copies, Mary Tillman has added competing marks and scrawls — countless color-coded tabs and angry notes such as "Contradiction!" "Wrong!" and "?????"

A Chronicle review of more than 2,000 pages of testimony, as well as interviews with Pat Tillman's family members and soldiers who served with him, found contradictions, inaccuracies and what appears to be the military's attempt at self-protection.

For example, the documents contain testimony of the first investigating officer alleging that Army officials allowed witnesses to change key details in their sworn statements so his finding that certain soldiers committed "gross negligence" could be softened.

Interviews also show a side of Pat Tillman not widely known — a fiercely independent thinker who enlisted, fought and died in service to his country yet was critical of President Bush and opposed the war in Iraq, where he served a tour of duty. He was an avid reader whose interests ranged from history books on World War II and Winston Churchill to works of leftist Noam Chomsky, a favorite author.

A football star at Leland High School in San Jose and at Arizona State University, Tillman was chosen Pac-10 defensive player of the year in 1997 and selected by the Arizona Cardinals in the NFL draft the following spring.

Moved in part by the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Tillman decided to give up his career, saying he wanted to fight al Qaeda and help find Osama bin Laden. He spurned

the Cardinals' offer of a three year, \$3.6 million contract extension and joined the Army in June 2002 along with his brother Kevin, who was playing minor-league baseball for the Cleveland Indians organization.

Pat Tillman's enlistment grabbed the attention of the nation — and the highest levels of the Bush administration. A personal letter from Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, thanking him for serving his country, now resides in a storage box, put away by Pat's widow, Marie.

Instead of going to Afghanistan, as the brothers expected, their Ranger battalion was sent to participate in the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003. The Tillmans saw combat several times on their way to Baghdad. In early 2004, they finally were assigned to Afghanistan.

Although the Rangers are an elite combat group, the investigative documents reveal that the conduct of the Tillmans' detachment — A Company, 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment — appeared to be anything but expert as it advanced through a remote canyon in eastern Afghanistan on April 22, 2004, on a mission to search for Taliban and al Qaeda fighters in a village called Manah.

According to the files, when one of the humvees became disabled, thus stalling the mission, commanding officers split Tillman's platoon in two so one half could move on and the other could arrange transport for the disabled vehicle.

Platoon leader Lt. David Uthlaut protested the move as dangerous, but he was overruled.

The first group was ordered out in the late afternoon, with Pat Tillman in the forward unit. Kevin's unit followed 15 to 20 minutes later, hauling the humvee on an Afghan-owned flatbed truck. Both groups temporarily lost radio and visual contact with each other in the deep canyon, and the second group came under attack from suspected Taliban fighters on the surrounding ridges.

Pat Tillman, according to testimony, climbed a hill with another soldier and an Afghan militiaman, intending to attack the enemy. He offered to remove his 28-pound body armor so he could move more quickly, but was ordered not to. Meanwhile, the lead vehicle in the platoon's second group arrived near Tillman's position about 65 meters away and mistook the group as enemy.

The Afghan stood and fired above the second group at the suspected enemy on the opposite ridge. Although the driver of the second group's lead vehicle, according to his testimony, recognized Tillman's group as "friendlies" and tried to signal others in his vehicle not to shoot, they directed fire toward the Afghan and began shooting wildly, without first identifying their target, and also shot at a village on the ridgeline.

The Afghan was killed. According to testimony, Tillman, who along with others on the hill waved his arms and yelled "cease fire," set off a smoke grenade to identify his group as fellow soldiers. There was a momentary lull in the firing, and he and the soldier next to him, thinking themselves safe, relaxed, stood up and started talking. But the shooting resumed. Tillman was hit in the wrist with shrapnel and in his body armor with numerous bullets.

The soldier next to him testified: “I could hear the pain in his voice as he called out, ‘Cease fire, friendlies, I am Pat f—ing Tillman, dammit.” He said this over and over until he stopped,” having been hit by three bullets in the forehead, killing him. The soldier continued, “I then looked over at my side to see a river of blood coming down from where he was ... I saw his head was gone.”

Two other Rangers elsewhere on the mountainside were injured by shrapnel.

Tillman’s death came at a sensitive time for the Bush administration — just a week before the Army’s abuse of prisoners at Abu Ghraib in Iraq became public and sparked a huge scandal. The Pentagon immediately announced that Tillman had died heroically in combat with the enemy, and President Bush hailed him as “an inspiration on and off the football field, as with all who made the ultimate sacrifice in the war on terror.”

His killing was widely reported by the media, including conservative commentators such as Ann Coulter, who called him “an American original — virtuous, pure and masculine like only an American male can be.” His May 3, 2004, memorial in San Jose drew 3,500 people and was nationally televised.

Not until five weeks later, as Tillman’s battalion was returning home, did officials inform the public and the Tillman family that he had been killed by his fellow soldiers.

According to testimony, the first investigation was initiated less than 24 hours after Tillman’s death by an officer in the same Ranger battalion. His report, delivered May 4, 2004, determined that soldiers involved in the incident had committed “gross negligence” and should be appropriately disciplined.

The officer became a key witness in the subsequent investigation. For reasons that are not clear, the officer’s investigation was taken over by a higher ranking commander. [“Not clear?” What could be more clear? They had an honest officer in charge, and they needed to get rid of him and kick it upstairs to a stooge for Rumsfeld.]

That officer’s findings, delivered the next month, called for less severe discipline. [Wow! There’s a big fucking surprise.]

Over the coming weeks, Pentagon investigators are scheduled to carry out new interviews with many of the soldiers, officers and others involved in the incident. As they carry out their reassessment, potentially controversial points include:

Conflicting testimony. In his Nov. 14, 2004, interrogation, the first investigator expressed frustration with “watching some of these guys getting off, what I thought ... was a lesser of a punishment than what they should’ve received. And I will tell you, over a period of time ... the stories have changed. They have changed to, I think, help some individuals.” [That’s why they got you off the case. Duh.]

The investigator testified that after he submitted his report on May 3, higher-ranking officers permitted soldiers to change key details of their testimony in order to prevent any individual from being singled out for punishment.

“They had the entire chain of command (inaudible) that were involved, the [deleted], all sticking up for (deleted) ... And the reason the (deleted) called me in ... because the (deleted) ... changed their story in how things occurred and the timing and the distance in an attempt to stick up for their counterpart, implied, insinuated that the report wasn’t as accurate as I submitted it ...” the first investigator testified.

One soldier dismissed by the Rangers for his actions in the incident submitted a statement in the third investigation that suggests the probe was incomplete: “The investigation does not truly set to rest the events of the evening of 22 April 2004. There is critical information not included or misinterpreted in it that could shed some light on who is really at fault for this,” he wrote.

Commanders’ accountability. According to the documents and interviews, Capt. William Saunders, to whom platoon leader Uthlaut had protested splitting his troops, was allowed to change his testimony over a crucial detail — whether he had reported Uthlaut’s dissent to a higher ranking commander. In initial questioning, Saunders said he had done so, but when that apparently was contradicted by that commander’s testimony, Saunders was threatened with perjury charges. He was given immunity and allowed to change his prior testimony.

The regiment’s commander, Lt. Col. Jeffrey Bailey, was promoted to colonel two months after the incident, and Saunders, who a source said received a reprimand, later was given authority to determine the punishment of those below him. [Kiss, kiss, kiss.]

He gave administrative reprimands to six soldiers, including Uthlaut, who had been seriously wounded in the face by shrapnel in the incident. Uthlaut — who was first captain of his senior class at West Point, the academy’s highest honor — was dismissed from the Rangers and re-entered the regular Army.

“It seems grossly inappropriate that Saunders would determine punishment for the others when he shares responsibility for the debacle,” Mary Tillman said. [Wrong. That’s called a payoff.]

Baer told The Chronicle that commanding officers were to blame for the friendly fire because they split the platoon and ordered it to leave a secure location in favor of a region known as a Taliban stronghold.

“It was dumb to send us out during daylight,” said Baer, who was honorably discharged from the Rangers earlier this year and lives in the East Bay.

“It’s a well-known military doctrine that privates first learn going through basic training — if you are in enemy territory and you are stopped for a prolonged period of time, the best thing to do is to wait until nightfall. Why they thought that

moving us out in broad daylight from our position, dragging a busted humvee slowly through a known hotspot after we had been stranded there all day was a good idea will forever elude me. Who made that decision? Bailey? Saunders? That's what I want to know."

Inaccurate information. While the military code gives clear guidance for informing family members upon a soldier's death when cases are suspected of being a result of friendly fire, that procedure was not followed in the Tillman case. After Tillman's death, the Army gave conflicting and incorrect descriptions of the events.

On April 22, the family was told that Tillman was hit with enemy fire getting out of a vehicle and died an hour later at a field hospital.

Although there was ample testimony that Tillman died immediately, an Army report — dated April 22, 2004, from the field hospital in Salerno, Afghanistan, where his body was taken — suggested otherwise. While it stated that he had no blood pressure or pulse "on arrival," it stated that cardio pulmonary resuscitation had been conducted and that he was transferred to the intensive care unit for further CPR.

On April 23, all top Ranger commanders were told of the suspected fratricide. That same day, an Army press release said he was killed "when his patrol vehicle came under attack."

On April 29, four days before Tillman's memorial, Gen. John Abizaid, chief of U.S. Central Command, and other top commanders were told of the fratricide. It is not known if Abizaid reported the news to Washington.

Mary Tillman believes that with her son's high profile, and the fact that Rumsfeld sent him a personal letter, the word quickly reached the defense secretary. "If Pat was on Rumsfeld's radar, it's pretty likely that he would have been informed right away after he was killed," she said. White House, Pentagon and Army spokesmen all said they had no information on when Bush or Rumsfeld were informed.

On April 30, the Army awarded Tillman a Silver Star medal for bravery, saying that "through the firing Tillman's voice was heard issuing fire commands to take the fight to the enemy on the dominating high ground."

On May 2, the acting Army Secretary Les Brownlee was told of the fratricide.

On May 7, the Army's official casualty report stated incorrectly that Tillman was killed by "enemy forces" and "died in a medical treatment facility."

On May 28, the Army finally admitted to Tillman's family that he had been killed by friendly fire.

"The administration clearly was using this case for its own political reasons," said the father, Patrick Tillman. "This cover-up started within minutes of Pat's death,

and it started at high levels. This is not something that (lower-ranking) people in the field do,” he said.

The files show that many of the soldiers questioned in the inquiry said it was common knowledge that the incident involved friendly fire.

The officer who led the first investigation testified that when he was given responsibility for the probe the morning after Tillman’s death, he was informed that the cause was “potential fratricide.”

After they received the friendly-fire notification May 28, the Tillmans began a public campaign seeking more information. But it was only when the Tillmans began angrily accusing the Pentagon of a coverup, in June 2005, that the Army apologized for the delay, issuing a statement blaming “procedural misjudgments and mistakes.”

The Tillmans demand that all avenues of inquiry remain open.

“I want to know what kind of criminal intent there was,” Mary Tillman said. “There’s so much in the reports that is (deleted) that it’s hard to tell what we’re not seeing.”

Patrick Tillman drily called the new Army probe “the latest, greatest investigation.” He added, “In Washington, I don’t think any of them want it investigated. They (politicians and Army officials) just don’t want to see it ended with them, landing on their desk so they get blamed for the cover-up.” The January 2005 investigation concluded that there was no coverup.

Throughout the controversy, the Tillman family has been reluctant to cause a media stir. Yet other Tillman family members are less reluctant to show Tillman’s unique character, which was more complex than the public image of a gung-ho patriotic warrior.

He started keeping a journal at 16 and continued the practice on the battlefield, writing in it regularly. (His journal was lost immediately after his death.)

Mary Tillman said a friend of Pat’s even arranged a private meeting with Chomsky, the antiwar author, to take place after his return from Afghanistan — a meeting prevented by his death. She said that although he supported the Afghan war, believing it justified by the Sept. 11 attacks, “Pat was very critical of the whole Iraq war.”

Baer, who served with Tillman for more than a year in Iraq and Afghanistan, told one anecdote that took place during the March 2003 invasion as the Rangers moved up through southern Iraq.

“I can see it like a movie screen,” Baer said. “We were outside of (a city in southern Iraq) watching as bombs were dropping on the town. We were at an old air base, me, Kevin and Pat, we weren’t in the fight right then. We were talking. And Pat said, ‘You know, this war is so f— illegal.’ And we all said, ‘Yeah.’ That’s who he was. He totally was against Bush.”

Another soldier in the platoon, who asked not to be identified, said Pat urged him to vote for Bush's Democratic opponent in the 2004 election, Sen. John Kerry.

His former comrades and family recall Tillman as a born leader yet remarkably humble. White, the Navy SEAL, recalls one day when "some 19-year-old Ranger came and ordered him to cut an acre of grass.

And Pat just did it, he cut that grass, he didn't complain. He could have taken millions of dollars playing football, but instead he was just taking orders like that."

Mary Tillman says that's how Pat would have wanted to be remembered, as an individual, not as a stock figure or political prop. But she also believes "Pat was a real hero, not what they used him as."

For the moment, all that is left are the memories and the thick binders spread across Mary Tillman's dining room table in San Jose.

As she waits for the Pentagon investigators to finish their new probe, she wonders whether they will ask the hard questions. Like other family members, "I just want accountability," she said.

"I want answers."

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Oil Ministry Staff Attacked In Baghdad; Kirkuk Pipeline Blown Up

September 26, 2005 Reuters & Aljazeera & By Bassam Sebti and Jackie Spinner, The Washington Post

A bomber has rammed his car into a bus carrying employees of Iraq's oil ministry, killing at least 10 and wounding 30.

Police sources said most of those killed were policemen.

It is the deadliest attack on Iraq's energy industry since insurgents began blowing up pipelines and killing oil officials after US-led forces ousted Saddam Hussein in 2003.

"We heard the blast. They died," said a dazed survivor, who stood in a hospital as victims of the blast were wheeled in on stretchers.

He says the bus was carrying employees of a state oil exploration company.

"We hope security forces will take control of the situation," Oil Minister Ibrahim Bahr al-Uloum said.

The employees were just arriving for work at Iraq's Oil Ministry, Irrigation Ministry and National Police Academy, Abd al-Qadir said.

In Baghdad, the official work day generally begins at 8am.

An Iraqi journalist, speaking to Aljazeera said police sources confirmed that the bus was carrying more than 40 Iraqi Oil Ministry employees.

Armed fighters bombed a junction on Iraq's crude oil export pipeline to Turkey and briefly detained nine employees of the complex on Sunday, an oil official said on Monday.

The official said the blast near the northern oil centre of Kirkuk was likely to further delay efforts to resume oil exports through Turkey, which had been paralysed by sabotage bombings.

In Samarra, about 65 miles north of Baghdad, armed men shot and killed five Iraqi security guards employed by the Northern Oil Co., police Lt. Raed Mahdi said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Adam Rueter, Iraq War Veteran, Has Got It Right

September 24, 2005 by Lisa Lambert, Reuters

WASHINGTON - More than 100,000 protesters flooded Washington on Saturday to stage dual demonstrations against the U.S.-led war in Iraq and economic globalization, before coming together to demand President George W. Bush bring troops home.

"We'll be the checks and balances on this out-of-control criminal government," said Cindy Sheehan.

"People join the military to defend their country, not lies," said Adam Reuter, a 22-year-old Georgia resident who was given a medical discharge from the Army four months ago.

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.

British Exit Strategy: The Saigon Option?

26th September 2005 BRIAN BRADY AND IAN MATHER, The Scotsman

"I just don't think we can rule out the 'Saigon option', with people being airlifted off the roof of the British embassy by a helicopter," one bewildered former army officer said last night. "It's hardly the end Blair would want, but I honestly don't think we can rule it out."

OCCUPATION REPORT

British Have Lost Control In The South; Amara, Basra Patrols Cut Back

Faced with the imminent destruction of his vessel, a sailing ship captain would cut his anchor or sail ropes to allow his ship to move away from rocks or from being overwhelmed by the waves.

Cutting and running was often an eminently sensible thing to do. We're not going to cut and run. We're going to be blown on to the rocks.

By ROBERT FISK, The Independent [Sent in without publication date.] [Excerpt]

In Amara-British soldiers now operate just one heavily armed convoy patrol a day. That is the extent of our "control" over Amara. Now we are reducing our patrols in Basra. You bet we are.

And a familiar bleat is rising from the sheep pen.

"Outside powers" are interfering in southern Iraq. Thirty-five years ago, it was the Irish Republic that was assisting Britain's IRA enemies. Now it is Iran that is supposedly urging the Shia of Basra to revolt. In other words, it's not our fault--yet again, it's the bloody foreigners what's to blame.

Alas, it is not.

Iraqis do not need Iranian weapons or military expertise. Their country is afloat with weapons and they learned how to make bombs--in their millions--during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

Half the Iraqi cabinet are linked to Iran--have the British forgotten that their honourable Dawa party government officials in Baghdad worked for the very same Dawa party that blew up the US and French embassies in Kuwait, and tried to kill the emir in the late 1980s? That these same gentlemen belong to a party which was effectively controlling the western hostages in Beirut during this same period?

No. All this is forgotten. Blame Iran.

Later, no doubt, we'll blame those ungrateful Iraqis and then we'll declare victory and do what Defence Secretary John Reid claims we won't do: cut and run.

And there again, we're in danger of forgetting the origin of such things.

Faced with the imminent destruction of his vessel, a sailing ship captain would cut his anchor or sail ropes to allow his ship to move away from rocks or from being overwhelmed by the waves.

Cutting and running was often an eminently sensible thing to do. We're not going to cut and run. We're going to be blown on to the rocks.

***So Much For That "Sovereignty"
Bullshit:***

Iraqi Judge Orders Arrest Of British Soldiers: British Government Tells Him To Fuck Off

September 24, 2005 Abdel-Razzak Hameed, Reuters

BASRA, Iraq (Reuters) - An Iraqi judge has issued arrest warrants for two British soldiers accused of killing a policeman in Basra, an Iraqi lawyer said on Saturday.

Judge Raghieb Hassan issued the warrants on Thursday, accusing the two of wounding a second Iraqi policeman, carrying unlicensed weapons and holding false identification, Kassim al-Sabti, head of the lawyers' syndicate in Basra, told Reuters.

British Defense Secretary John Reid said the Ministry of Defense had not received any arrest warrant for British soldiers in Iraq, adding that in any case the warrants would have no legal basis.

"Under Iraqi law it is quite clear that British forces remain subject to British jurisdiction," he said in a statement.

Basra's governing council has suspended all cooperation with the British until they apologize, guarantee that similar actions do not recur and provide compensation for damage inflicted.



British soldier getting out of a tank in Basra Sept. 19, 2005. (AP Photo/Nabil al-Jurani)

U.S. Military Dictators In Iraq Keep CBS Photographer In Prison Without Charges

Once again we see that Iraqi authorities are sovereign only as long as they agree with the Americans actually in charge.

This time they didn't agree, so instead of releasing him, the military kept him in jail claiming it had access to classified information the Iraqi authorities didn't.

September 24, 2005 Arianna Huffington

The disturbing case of Abdul Amir Younes Hussein, the CBS cameraman who has been detained by U.S. forces in Iraq for over five months without a shred of evidence being publicly presented against him, has taken yet another bizarre turn.

As reported by the New York Times and Wall Street Journal last week, Hussein is a 25-year-old freelancer who has found himself trapped in a nightmare of secrecy, suspicion, and legal uncertainty since being wounded by U.S. forces while filming the aftermath of a car bombing in Mosul on April 5th.

At first the military expressed regret for Hussein's minor injuries. But three days later they arrested him, claiming he had been "engaged in anti-coalition activity."

Thus began his Kafka-esque legal odyssey, which has seen the reportedly timid reporter shuttled from prison to prison (including Abu Ghraib), while the military has changed its story multiple times, refused to release any evidence against him, refused to let Hussein be visited by friends or relatives, and rebuffed the efforts of CBS to have his case adjudicated in a conclusive manner.

The latest twist in the case came earlier this week.

Back in July -- already three months after his arrest -- Hussein was scheduled to have his case heard by the Combined Review and Release Board, a panel made up of American military officials and Iraqi government officials.

In preparation for the hearing, CBS News submitted evidence it had gathered supporting Hussein's innocence. But the hearing was abruptly cancelled and his case turned over to Iraqi criminal authorities. They in turn reviewed the case and, in late August, declined to prosecute him.

Once again we see that Iraqi authorities are sovereign only as long as they agree with the Americans actually in charge.

This time they didn't agree, so instead of releasing him, the military kept him in jail claiming it had access to classified information the Iraqi authorities didn't.

Another hearing with the CRRB was set for September 22. But on September 12, CBS News was informed that the hearing had already been held -- without Hussein, his lawyer, or anyone from CBS News in attendance.

Then, on Tuesday, came word that the CRRB had decided to keep Hussein in jail, with no review of his case for another six months.

At such a crucial time in the war, we need the most accurate accounting of what is actually happening on the ground as is possible -- and anything that closes down that flow of information (like the prolonged detention of those trying to report from the front) needs to be fought tooth and nail.

The American people deserve the truth. About the war and about Abdul Amir Younes Hussein.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

WHY HELP NEVER ARRIVED



[Thanks to Mary R, who sent this in]

**BUSH ORDERS EVACUATION OF
CINDY SHEEHAN:**

FEMA Dispatches Bus To Washington For Antiwar Mom

September 25, 2005 The Borowitz Report

Saying that "severe weather conditions could strike at any moment," President George W. Bush today ordered the immediate evacuation of antiwar protester Cindy Sheehan from the front lawn of the White House.

The president, who had been monitoring Hurricane Rita from the U.S. Northern Command headquarters in Colorado, said that he was flying back to Washington D.C. "immediately" to take a hands-on role in the evacuation of Ms. Sheehan.

"We have learned from Katrina and Rita that early evacuation is the best policy," Mr. Bush said. "Therefore, I want Cindy Sheehan on a bus out of Washington as soon as possible."

Following the president's directive, the Federal Emergency Management Agency dispatched a bus to Washington, D.C. for the sole purpose of evacuating Ms. Sheehan.

Elsewhere, recovering from aneurism surgery on his knees, Vice President Dick Cheney said that repair work on his knees would be done by the Halliburton Company at a cost of 12.8 billion dollars.

BREAKING NEWS! **Dog Bites Man!** **Water Freezes!** **Top Democrats Don't Attend Anti-War Rally In Washington!**

Sep. 22, 2005 By Steven Thomma, Knight Ridder Newspapers

WASHINGTON - As the anti-war movement arrives in Washington this weekend, many top Democrats are leaving.

Nationally known Democratic war critics, including Howard Dean, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, and Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York, Russell Feingold of Wisconsin and John Kerry of Massachusetts, won't attend what sponsors say will be a big anti-war rally Saturday in Washington.

Spokesmen for the Democrats who are skipping the anti-war event all said they had schedule conflicts. [Making speeches calling for more troops to Iraq, for instance.]

MORE:

Democrats Endorse The Same Imperial Horrors As Their Rivals

September 24, 2005 Mike Whitney, uruknet.info

I know the Democratic Party; I worked in the party for 3 years as program chairman.

The party system is as clogged, arthritic and unresponsive to change as their mirror-image the Republicans.

The party has been co-opted by elites who set the agenda and subvert any effort to upset the status quo. They endorse the same imperial horrors as their rivals, albeit with greater eloquence and diplomacy.

The conventional channels for transforming the political organism have all shut down; the system is broken.

The only avenue for political change is massive popular movements that disrupt "business as usual" and send tremors into the corporate towers.

We need foot-soldiers not politicians. [There are couple million of them in the active armed forces, guard and reserves. When was the last time you went down and talked to some, assuming these words are real, not just some rhetorical flourish?]

In 1 Year, Bush Buddy Halliburton's Stock Doubles As Troop Deaths Double

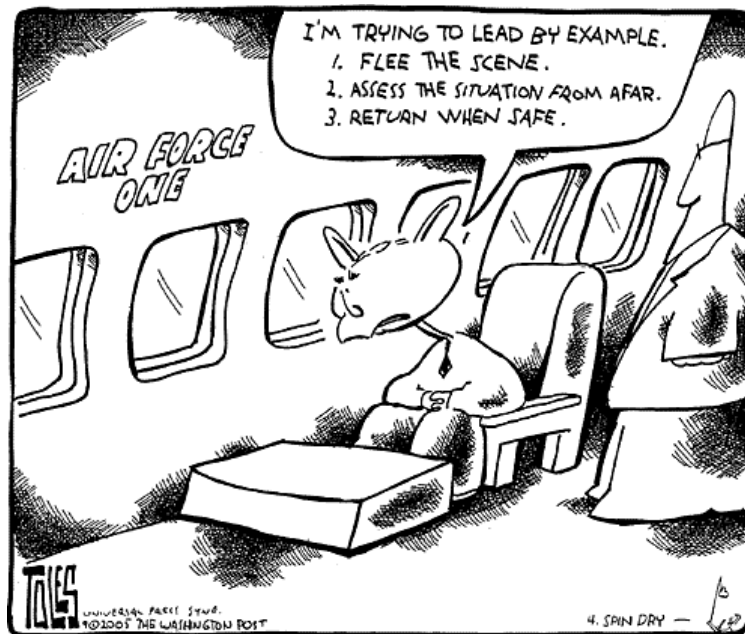
Sept. 20 Halliburton Watch

Since the beginning of the Iraq war, Halliburton, the Texas energy giant once headed by Vice President Dick Cheney, has seen its stock price more than triple in value. When the U.S invaded Iraq in March of 2003, Halliburton's stock was selling for \$20 per share. The stock price at the close of market activity on Monday was \$66.

In the last 12 months, the total number of U.S. service members killed in Iraq almost doubled as Halliburton's stock doubled. Halliburton's stock rose from \$33 per share in September 2004 to \$66 yesterday while U.S. deaths in Iraq increased from 1,061 to almost 1900.

Halliburton's CEO also enjoyed an incredible personal gain from Iraq and the commensurate rise in gasoline prices. A HalliburtonWatch analysis reveals that CEO David Lesar's stock holdings in Halliburton increased by a stunning \$78 million since the Iraq invasion.

Beaumont Texas: Same Old Same Old; FEMA REFUSES TO GIVE HURRICANE SURVIVORS FOOD



9-8-05

25 September 2005 Editor & Publisher [Excerpt]

New York - In Beaumont, Texas, claims that federal relief agencies learned their lessons from Hurricane Katrina and are on the ball in the aftermath of Hurricane Rita are apparently ringing hollow.

The Beaumont (Tex.) Enterprise reported tonight that disaster response coordinators in the area hard hit by Rita say they are seeing the same foot-dragging federal response this weekend witnessed two weeks ago in New Orleans and Mississippi.

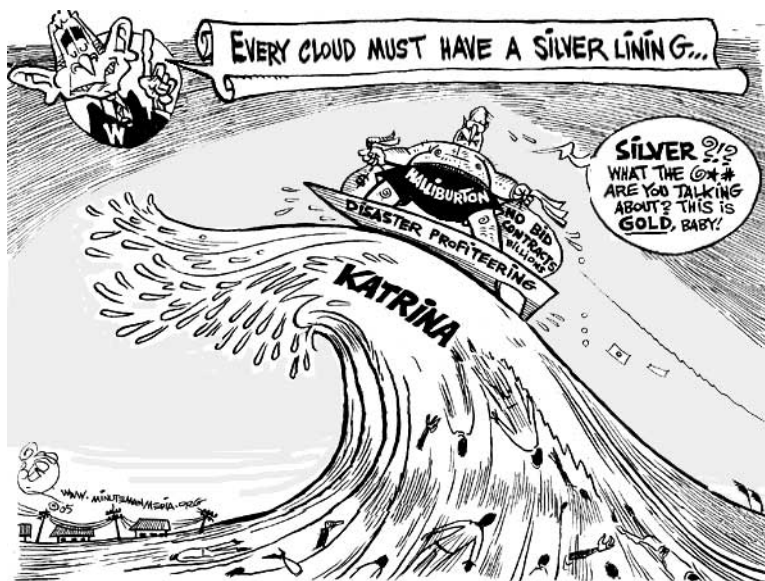
Jefferson County Judge Carl Griffith and other local leaders, "haggard after days of almost non-stop work with little sleep, pleaded with the federal government to get itself in

a higher gear," the paper said. Griffith said he wanted to return services to residents who remain but that "it seems like they can't figure out how to get it done."

"There's a drastic shortage of generators in Beaumont to provide emergency power," Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst said. "There are generators at Ford Park, and FEMA is withholding their release. They want to finish their damage assessment."

Jefferson County officials had a plan to distribute Meals-Ready-to-Eat from local fire stations, the paper said. However, Griffith said the MREs, like the generators, were being withheld by FEMA.

"They won't let us have them," Griffith said. "They said we had to go through the state - which we already did - to get them. I'm going over there (to Ford Park) now to figure this out."



GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

All GI Special issues achieved at website <http://www.militaryproject.org/>.

The following have also posted issues; there may be others:

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

www.williambowles.info/gispecial,

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

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