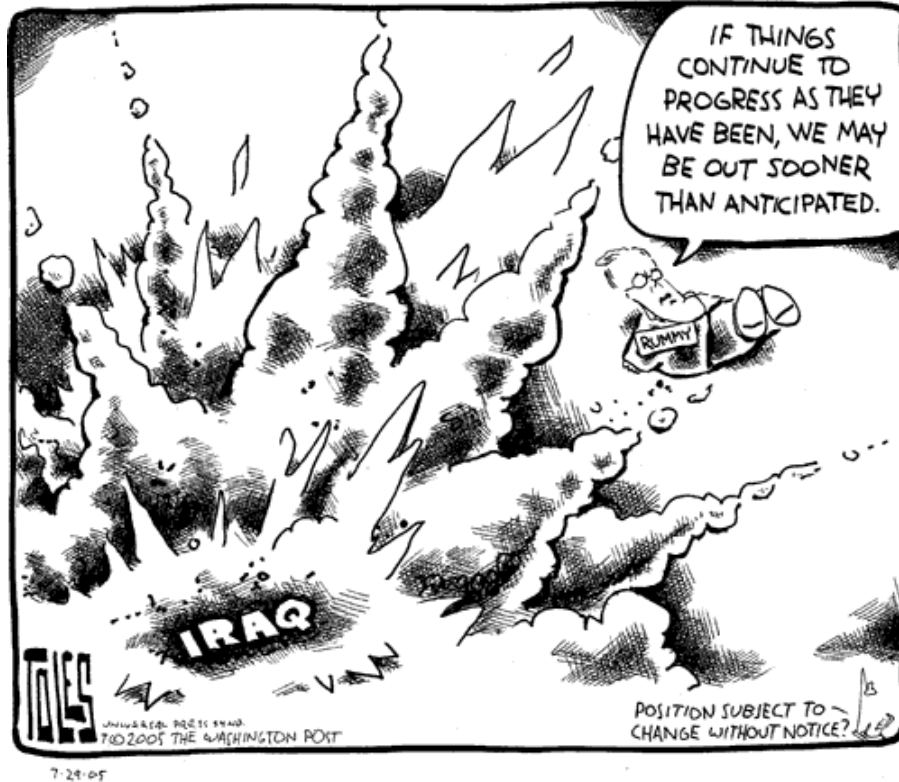


GI SPECIAL 3C7:



**“That's All You Want, Is
For It To Be Over”
“They've Done Their War
And They're Done”**

"I tell a lot of people: I wouldn't wish this on anyone," says Thurlow, 19. "It's very hard. It really is. You're just looking toward the end. That's all you want, is for it to be over."

RAMADI, Iraq - The day the Marines crossed into Iraq, Cpl. James Welter Jr. killed his first man. During his second combat tour, he earned a commendation for leadership skills and coolness under fire, but he brought a nightmare home.

Now, with six weeks left in his third fighting tour, his goal is simple. He hopes to survive.

Welter - Jimmy to his friends - is among about 150 veterans of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment here who have fought in Iraq three times since the war began in March 2003. Each trip, they have endured some of the harshest combat.

They were there for four months at the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, at the tip of the invasion spear. In the summer of 2004, during a second tour that lasted 4½ months, they fought in the streets of Fallujah.....

Now, for seven months this year, the Marines are here in Ramadi, the capital of the insurgency and a city thick with roadside bombs.

Snipers lie in wait, and at the exits of installations, huge warning signs, some inscribed with a skull and crossbones, read: "Complacency Kills!"

The battalion has lost more men in Ramadi than anywhere else: 12 Marines and a Navy corpsman killed in action. Their 13 portraits hang on a wall in battalion headquarters - a grim reminder of what awaits outside the gate.

The frequency with which troops are being sent back to combat is unprecedented in the all-volunteer U.S. military, which was created in 1973 after the draft ended.

"It's an open question as to how much we can ask of them," says James Hosek, a RAND Corp., specialist on military retention.

The Marines send troops to Iraq more frequently than the Army, but do so for shorter combat stints that don't last longer than seven months. Two battalions, including the one in which Welter serves, are now on their third hitch. The Army deploys units for longer periods - usually 12 months - but less often. Some Army units are starting a second tour in Iraq this year.

Studies about Vietnam veterans are of little use because the nation had a larger, conscript military then *and combat was typically limited to a single 12- or 13-month tour.*

Like Jimmy Welter, some Marines in this unit enlisted after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

But that patriotic fervor now seems spent.

And what the Marines have endured - Welter's story as much as any - speaks to the changes that come with war.

During their first tour, Welter and his unit were greeted as liberators. During the second, they fought a growing rebellion.

Now, on the third, many say they are angry to be back, shaken by the loss of more friends and feeling old beyond their years.

"I'm 22 years old. It really feels like I'm 30," Welter says. "I've seen more and done more things at 22 than most people have in 40 years."

Evidence of victory is scant, they say. Some are stunned that, after all the sacrifices they and others have made, so many Iraqis now seem to hate them.

[And a whole hell of a lot more aren't "stunned" at all because they understand perfectly that the war is a death-dealing betrayal of the troops, and that the Iraqis are right to resist the occupation.

[They say, over and over again, "If somebody came to the USA and did what we're doing here, we'd fight them too." Over and over and over. They are not stupid.

[The troops have the courage to tell the truth as they see it. Too many "peace movement" leaders in the USA won't back these troops up and are too cowardly to tell this simple truth: the Iraqis are right to resist.

[Combining cowardice with contempt for democracy, some "leaders" also try to shut people up who do tell it. Like the Imperial politicians, these vicious little cowards also betray the troops. Earlier this year, some anti-war "leaders" brought about the cancellation of a speaking tour by a U.S. Army reservist for telling just this truth: that the Iraqis have the right to resist.

[Let's try it one more time:

[Troops are saying, over and over again, "If somebody came to the USA and did what we're doing here, we'd fight them too." Over and over and over. They are not blind, or stupid. Get it?]

[The troops know this war is about grabbing somebody else's oil to further the ambitions of greedy politicians and the U.S. corporate elite, but of course they won't tell the reporter they know that. The reporter could rat them out.

[They will tell their closest brothers and sisters in arms, and sometimes their family members, and sometimes GI Special, and sometimes other veterans in organizations like Iraq Veterans Against The War.

[Neither the reporters not the DC traitors running this war have a clue how deep and widespread that understanding of reality is. One day, they'll find out, the hard way. Just like happened in Vietnam, the time will come when the troops decide to end the war by combat refusals, search and evade, and more unpleasant demonstrations of their opinions, and the politicians will piss themselves in fear and amazement.]

Their choice to serve has put them on the battlefield three times in the last two years. Now, many say they just want to go home.

The man working to re-enlist them explains the hardship.

"They've done their war and they're done," says Staff Sgt. William Beschman, the battalion retention officer.

Unlike the Marine Corps as a whole, the battle-scarred 1st Battalion, 5th Marines will not meet its re-enlistment goal this year. The largest bonuses in Marine Corps history - a year's salary, or about \$20,000 tax-free if they sign up while in Iraq - got few takers.

Of 287 first-term Marines in the battalion, just 50 are staying. The goal is 58.

And veterans of the battalion now have a look about them.

In Vietnam, it was called the "thousand-yard stare": a weariness devoid of emotion. Cpl. Mike Kelly, 23, wears it as officers award him a Navy commendation for valor at a battalion headquarters ceremony this month.

He's heading home to Boston to open a bar. His four-year enlistment - including three tours of duty in Iraq - is almost over.

"I just want to live an easy life," he says after the ceremony. "A normal job, nothing fancy. A working stiff. That's my dream."

So does Cpl. Richie Gunter.

"I just want to go back to the way things are," says Gunter, 30, who longs to trade Marine fatigues for a T-shirt and jeans and work on the family's tomato farm in Woodland, Calif.

Their loved ones suffer with them. Danielle "Dani" Thurlow of Coloma, Mich., has watched her fiance, Marine Cpl. Ryan Kling, 22, grow colder and angrier with each tour. "He's pushing his luck," she says.

"I tell a lot of people: I wouldn't wish this on anyone," says Thurlow, 19. "It's very hard. It really is. You're just looking toward the end. That's all you want, is for it to be over."

And Ken Frederking, 69, says he lives in fear that his oldest grandchild, Jimmy Welter, may never find his way home. "What this kid has gone through at his age, it's incredible," the grandfather says.

"It just seems like he can't escape."

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT THE NEW 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

Slaughterhouse Report: “The Overall Trend Of Casualties Continues To Inch Relentlessly Upwards”

"Operation Lightning," the first major active use of these forces, put 23,000 of them out on to the streets of Baghdad, but it failed to dent the level of insurgency at all.

On the contrary, attacks and casualties inflicted went on to peak in May and June, and have only dropped by relatively small amounts since then.

July 29, 2005 By Martin Sieff, UPI Senior News Analyst

The number of U.S. troops wounded in action from the beginning of hostilities on March 19, 2003 through Wednesday, July 27 was 13,657, an increase of 98 compared with the previous week.

Well over 100 U.S. troops are now being wounded per week, many of them grievously, losing limbs or suffering permanent brain damage. That amounts to well over 5,000 per year.

In all, 52 Iraqi police and troops were killed by the insurgents from July 20 to July 27, including the 16 killed in the attack on the buses. That brought the total number of Iraq military and police killed from June 1, 2003 to Wednesday of this week 2,717. Through the month of July up to July 27, 240 Iraqi police and soldiers were killed by the insurgents, the IIP said.

The total toll of Iraqi police killed during the month of July, therefore, looks likely to still be a little less than the 296 killed in June and the 270 killed in May. But that is really cold comfort because it is still far higher than any other month in the insurgency so far.

The total number of Iraqi police and military killed per month never came near to 200 per month until March this year, and has never been below it since. As Jeffrey

White, the respected military analyst of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, told UPI this week, **the overall trend of casualties inflicted by the insurgents continues to inch relentlessly upwards.**

U.S. strategic hopes in Iraq now more than ever are pinned on the hope that the 100 battalions of the new Iraqi army and security forces will be able to take up the burden of combat and defense increasingly in the coming months. But it has yet to be established that they will be able to do so.

"Operation Lightning," the first major active use of these forces, put 23,000 of them out on to the streets of Baghdad, but it failed to dent the level of insurgency at all.

On the contrary, attacks and casualties inflicted went on to peak in May and June, and have only dropped by relatively small amounts since then.

3rd ID Soldier Killed By IED; Two Wounded; 1787 Dead

7.30.05 CNN

In Baghdad, an American soldier and an Iraqi civilian were killed in a roadside bombing, authorities said.

A 3rd Infantry Division spokesman said the soldier died and two others were wounded in the southwestern neighborhood of Dora.

The U.S. military death toll in the war is 1,787.

Marine Never Got To Hold Infant Daughter

July 30, 2005 By Lou Whitmire, News Journal

MANSFIELD -- Bethany Lyons last hugged her husband Christopher Lyons in February, when she joined him in Las Vegas on a two-day leave.

She was seven months pregnant.

U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Christopher P. Lyons of Mansfield was killed Thursday in Iraq during an attack by insurgents with rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire.

He never got to hold his daughter Ella, now 3 months old, but he was able to see his baby and his wife on a Web cam once and in many photos the couple exchanged.

Wednesday, Bethany received an e-mail from her husband, along with 16 photos of himself in Iraq.

"I'm just thankful I'm living in this time with all the technology," Bethany said Friday night.

Her daughter will have many photographs and e-mails to treasure.

Two U.S. Marines came to Bethany's door Thursday in Ashland.

"It was just like in the movies," she said. "One of the gentlemen knelt down by my chair and let me put my head on his shoulder, because I was crying so hard. We called my dad at work. They wouldn't leave me here alone. They were both crying when they told me. Ella was sleeping on the couch. One of them picked her up and held her."

Lyons, 24, and Marine Cpl. Andre L. Williams, 23, of Galloway, Ohio, were killed in the fight. The two Marines were part of a joint U.S. Marine-Iraqi Army security patrol convoy near the Euphrates Valley town of Haditha.

Lyons was a sales representative in the advertising department at the News Journal.

The U.S. Marine Corps reservist was called to active duty with his Columbus-based unit and deployed to Iraq, training in California before arriving there in March.

He had served three years in the Reserves and had three more years to go, his wife said.

"He probably would have gotten to come home in a month and a half, September or October," she said. "He was really looking forward to coming home."

She said her husband told her that he could be killed. "But I know he wasn't thinking it would happen to him," she said. He told her the enemy would be the one to die.

A 1999 graduate of Shelby High School, Lyons attended Pioneer Career and Technology Center and was in the Tech Prep program.

Baghdad IED Wounds One U.S. Soldier

7.30.05 CNN

A U.S. soldier in a convoy in northern Baghdad was wounded by a roadside bomb Saturday, a U.S. military official said.

Four Marines Wounded In Hit

7.31.05 Reuters

A bomber attacked a U.S. convoy in the western city of Hit in Anbar, wounding four Marines, the U.S. military said in a statement.

Bomb Explosion Hits US Patrol; Casualties Not Announced

30.07.2005 (Itar-Tass)

A road bomb explosion hit a U.S. patrol in south Baghdad on Saturday. Among the explosion victims are U.S. servicemen, U.S. military sources said.

A Massacre In Rabiah: After Resistance Bomb Attack On Recruits: U.S. Troops Join In Killing Survivors

07/30/05 By SINBAD AHMED, AP, RABIAH, Iraq

Some survivors of a suicide bombing targeting Iraqi army recruits were shot and wounded immediately afterward when U.S. and Iraqi soldiers opened fire at the scene, police, doctors and witnesses said Saturday.

Rabiah's police chief, Col. Yahya al-Shammari, told The Associated Press some of the army recruits were killed by the gunfire, although it was unclear how many because dead and wounded were taken to several hospitals across a wide area of northern Iraq.

"Two of my relatives were wounded with bullets," said Akram Zeidan, who lives near the blast site. He pointed to the walls that showed hundreds of bullet holes.

The police chief said Iraqi soldiers fired Russian-made PKC automatic rifles mounted on top of their trucks. Dozens of empty shell casing could be seen scattered on the ground Saturday.

He said U.S. troops also took part in the shooting.

In the nearby village of Oweinat, where 14 of the wounded were being treated, a doctor showed a reporter four PKC bullets he had removed from some of the wounded. He refused to allow his name to be published, fearing government reprisal.

Two Mercenaries Dead In Basra British Consulate Convoy Attack



The blood-stained vehicle caught in a road side bomb is seen along the side of a road July 30, 2005, on the outskirts of the southern city of Basra, Two British security guards were killed. (AFP/Essam Al-Sudani)

7.31.05 Reuters & By SAMEER YACOUB (AP)

A British consulate vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb near the southern Iraqi city of Basra on Saturday, killing two Britons working for a private security firm, according to the UK consulate and the company.

A second device exploded five minutes after the convoy was targeted, police Capt. Mushtaq Kadim said.

Karen McLuskie with the consulate in Basra said the attack occurred at 9.30 a.m. (0530 GMT) as the convoy was passing on the southwestern edge of the port city.

The two killed were security contractors employed by Control Risks Group and both were British citizens, said Peter Stevenson, a spokesman for the London-based security company.

Control Risks Group describes itself on its website as an international business risk consultancy, specializing in helping clients operate in "complex or hostile environments."

Foreign Terrorist Ducks Swarm Stryker



U.S. army soldiers from the 42nd Infantry Division in a Stryker armored vehicle were ambushed by Syrian terrorist ducks while patrolling the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, July 29, 2005. Despite the Stykers' tinfoil armor, lack of maneuverability, and inability to open controlled fire while in motion, the attack was beaten off. "We caught a break, and didn't have to jump out and check the tire pressure right then," one soldier said.

Cpt. Richard Flack, press officer for the 42nd, told reporters one of the ducks who escaped has been tentatively identified as terrorist leader Abu Musab al Zarkawi. The disguise would explain why so few Zarkawi sightings have been reported recently.

"It's fiendishly clever," he said, "but one duck had a wooden leg, and that's the giveaway." Photo: REUTERS/HO/US Army/Spc. David J. Nunn

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

An Honor, And Then Tragedy For Soldier

July 28, 2005 Miami Herald

When Army Sgt. Michael Schafer called his folks in Spring Hill from Afghanistan last weekend, the 25-year-old soldier was thrilled that he had just been promoted to staff sergeant.

But the family's joy was short lived. Schafer, who had parachuted into combat early in the war in Iraq then went to Afghanistan for another tour of duty, was killed Monday by enemy gunfire.

Afghan Uprising Forces Occupation To Release Prisoners: “The Power Of The People Of Bagram Won Their Release”



A group of Afghan protestors on a truck chant slogans outside the main U.S. base in Bagram, north of Kabul, July 26, 2005. Nearly 2,000 Afghans staged a protest against U.S. forces outside the main U.S. base in Afghanistan on Tuesday over the arrest of three villagers, police said. REUTERS/Ahmad Masood

7/27/05 By AMIR SHAH, Associated Press Writer

U.S. military officials moved to defuse tension after a riot outside their main base by handing six villagers accused of being bombmakers over to local Afghan authorities, officials said Wednesday.

U.S. military spokesman Col. James Yonts confirmed the six were handed over to Afghan authorities after the provincial governor gave a guarantee to present the men for questioning at any time.

Local police chief Abdulrahman Mawlana said the six were transferred to police late Tuesday and spent the night in custody.

However, regional tribal leader Latifullah Rahimi said the men had been allowed to spend the night in their homes and had returned to the police station in the morning.

"The power of the people of Bagram won their release," he told the AP in a telephone interview.

TROOP NEWS

Liars Club Meets In Baghdad



Casey stands with Rumsfeld during a news conference in Baghdad July 27, 2005. **The United States hopes to sharply reduce its forces in Iraq by the middle of next year, its top commander on the ground said on Wednesday.** Photo by Pool/Reuters

Government To Increase Number Of U.S. Troops In Iraq

[Lots of bullshit flying about how the government plans to cut U.S. forces in Iraq. Lots of people bought into the lying bullshit. Sorry, the plan is for an increase in U.S. troop strength in Iraq.]

[Thanks to Phil G for sending this in.]

First, The Propaganda Offensive:

July 28 Ellen Knickmeyer and Naseer Nouri, The Washington Post & By Peter Graff, Reuters & The Associated Press

During a visit to Baghdad this week by Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, the commander of U.S. forces in Iraq, Gen. George W. Casey, said a partial troop withdrawal might begin in early spring.

"I do believe that if the political process continues to go positively, if the developments with the (Iraqi) security forces continue to go as it is going, I do believe we will still be able to make fairly substantial reductions after these elections -- in the spring and summer of next year," he said.

It appeared to be the first time since the insurgency worsened in April that top Pentagon officials have suggested a timeline for withdrawal.

The most specific estimate has come from Lt. Gen. John Vines, who runs day-to-day military operations in Iraq. He said in June that a reduction of "four or five brigades" — perhaps 20,000 troops out of the current 135,000 — was possible sometime next year.

MORE:

***And Now, Oops, For Reality:* “The U.S. Could Begin To Stem The Flow Of New U.S. Troops In The Early Spring”**

7.28.05 By Yochi J. Dreazen, The Wall St. Journal

Any troop reduction isn't likely to start soon; in fact, **overall troop numbers are likely to go up somewhat before they begin to head down.**

The U.S. probably will want its troop presence to peak in Iraq around the time of the national referendum on the Iraq constitution currently scheduled for October and national elections for a new government that are slated for December.

Along those lines several thousand U.S. troops are likely to rotate into Iraq in September and early October.

To provide greater security at election time, they could overlap with the units that they are replacing in October, giving the U.S. a temporary increase in boots on the ground.

Similar deployments are scheduled for November and early December. Assuming the elections happen as scheduled, **the U.S. could begin to stem the flow of new U.S. troops in the early spring**

But even with that prospect ahead, ***there are other tactical reasons to start talking about*** a shrinking presence afterward.

A partial withdrawal might weaken that portion of the insurgency that is driven by nationalism. **[Oh. Like withdrawing the additional troops being sent in this new buildup. Right.]**

Labor Resolution Urges Pullout Of Troops In Iraq

July 28, 2005 Philadelphia Inquirer & July 27, US Labor Against The War

Pushed by Philadelphia labor leaders, the traditionally hawkish labor movement called on the Bush administration "to level with the American people" on the Iraq war and to bring U.S. troops home quickly.

Rising to speak in favor of the resolution, Henry Nicholas, President of District 1199 of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) of Pennsylvania, told the delegates that his son had been deployed to Iraq four times and was about to be sent again.

He said, "In my forty-five years in the labor movement, this is my proudest moment in being a union member, because it is the first time we had the courage to say 'enough is enough.'"

MORE:

“Take Heart! We Can Win!”

<p>They'd have to bring the troops home pronto to control the American insurgency. And who's to say that the working class kids who enlisted in the military would shoot their fellow Americans just because GW Bush ordered them to?</p>
--

July 27, 2005 John Spritzler, Anti-Allawi-group

Dear Friends,

AFL-CIO convention delegates passed a resolution calling for the rapid return of U.S. troops from Iraq. Apparently this is the first time in the organization's 50 year history that it has ever opposed a major U.S. foreign war.

Given the tight grip Corporate America has on the top leadership of the AFL-CIO (exercised through the instrument of the Democratic Party, and manifestly evident from the AFL-CIO's systematic sabotage of, and even outright attacks on, every effort by its rank and file members to wage a serious struggle against the owners of the big corporations), the fact that the delegates felt obliged to pass this resolution can only mean that rank and file workers are strongly opposed to the Iraq war.

The significance of this is not that the AFL-CIO is going to do anything to stop the war.

The leadership would never even consider doing that, any more than they did anything to stop NAFTA which the rank and file forced them to at least pretend to oppose.

The significance is that we who oppose the Iraq war are not an isolated minority but part of a large majority; we include the American working class.

And since that is the case, we should start thinking like a majority.

We have the numbers (though not at present the organization) to do things like have a general strike to shut down the country until the warmongering stops.

They'd have to bring the troops home pronto to control the American insurgency. And who's to say that the working class kids who enlisted in the military would shoot their fellow Americans just because GW Bush ordered them to?

So let's keep in mind that it's organization we lack, not popular support.

Even on the related and perhaps even more controversial issue of U.S. support for Israel, my door-to-door work in working class Somerville confirms that despite all of the one-sided pro-Israel propaganda, people don't support Israeli discrimination against Palestinians and are willing to sign their name on our petition for the divestment referendum because of that conviction.

Take heart! We can win!

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.

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.

WW II Vet Takes On World Class Asshole Thomas Friedman

July 28, 2005 vvawnet

This is the response I made to Friedman. You may use it.
Regards,
W.D. Gray

Tom,

As a 1964 length of service military retiree who was BETRAYED along with 432,000 cohorts on retired pay after we had served this nation during and over three major engagements in combat I resent that you now call for blacklisting those that blame US Govt for insurgents in Iraq.

Medicare did not even exist when I retired but then this same fucking government decreed in the '70s that once we, retirees, attain age 65 and no longer subject to recall to active duty that, "If you want health care go to Social Security and apply for Medicare part B" along with the draft dodger or highly paid civilian.

So today together with my wife of over 56 years who served with General George S. Patton's Third Army Field Hospital as a captain nurse in France Germany and Austria we pay our own health care. The new TRICARE for life for those over age 65 is a 'lemon' in my region.

We've endure the pay discrimination for over 40 years and paid some, most or currently all of our health care for over 31 years.

What gratitude from an insensitive and ungenerous nation.

By being in Iraq we have created terrorists.

You have no business of telling me how to think about this corrupt and lying government. I could go on and on.

We have a mercenary military that has invaded a sovereign country. I hope they drive all the mercenaries out.

Read this pasted document two or three times and paste in on you door. I've had to live with this bullshit all these years.

Regards,

W.D. Gray
Route #2, Box 74
Sumner, IL, 62466

Uzbekistan Evicts U.S. Empire From Air Base

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in.]

7.30.05 By ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer

The Central Asian nation of Uzbekistan has ended its agreement allowing U.S. military aircraft and personnel to use an air base that has been an important hub for American military operations in Afghanistan, administration officials said Saturday.

The Washington Post, which first reported the eviction notice, said no reason was given by Uzbekistan and that U.S. forces would have six months to leave.

The Uzbek government in recent months had tightened restriction on use of the base, including banning night flights.

K2 has been a critical staging point for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan since the earliest days of the war, which began in October 2001. It also is a refueling point for transport planes.

Uzbekistan's ties with Washington have deteriorated after the Bush administration joined other Western nations in urging an international investigation into the suppression of a May uprising in the eastern Uzbek city of Andijan.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

7.30.05 By SAMEER YACOUB, AP & KUNA & By Abdel-Razzak Hameed, Reuters & CNN

A bomber wearing a belt of explosives blew himself up among Iraqi army volunteers in a town near the Syrian border Friday, killing as many as 44.

The bomber was "a portly young man carrying a bag in his hand and heading toward us," said Rashid Hamed, who went to volunteer for the army because "I didn't have a job and wanted to make some money."

"I don't remember anything else but waking up in the hospital," Hamed, who was wounded in the attack, said from a hospital bed.

The death toll from the attack increased overnight to 44, while the number of wounded was 57, said Rabiah police commander Col. Yahya al-Shammari Saturday.

Four of the bodies, one of whom was believed to be the attacker, were completely dismembered and remain unidentified, he said.

The bodies of three people who were blindfolded and shot were discovered in the Hay al-Amil area of Baghdad. Police said the three men were Baghdad Airport employees kidnapped by insurgents a few days earlier in the capital.

On Friday, a bomber strapped with explosives blew himself up among a group of Iraqi army recruits in the town of Rabia, in the far northwest of Iraq near the Syrian border, killing 52 and wounding 93, police said.

The most dramatic strike Saturday took place near the Iraqi National Theater, where people from the nation's civil community institutions were developing demands for the committee writing the constitution.

A car bomb has exploded near the theater. **The blast in Baghdad apparently was aimed at police. Officials say three policemen were killed and four wounded.**

A mother along with a boy and a girl who each appeared to be under ten years of age were among those hurt. But officials say their injuries did not appear to be serious.

Unknown militants on Saturday attacked with light weapons the Jordanian embassy using two civilian cars in Al-Mansour area, west of Baghdad. The official who requested anonymity indicated that the attack did not cause any property damages or human casualty.

Guerrillas in western Baghdad abducted Eman Naji Abdul Razaq, the Health Ministry's director general of the projects department. Four militants in two cars stormed Razaq's home in the Mansour neighborhood and took her during the early afternoon.

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

The Latest In Occupation Torture: Suffocation And Drilling

27 July, 2005 By Richard Galpin, BBC News, Baghdad

Iraq's new police force is facing mounting allegations of systematic abuse and torture of people in detention, as well as allegations of extra-judicial killings.

We tracked down another man in Baghdad who told us he had just survived a very similar ordeal at the hands of police commandos.

The man was too frightened to give his name.

As in the earlier case, he told us he was part of a large group of men who were rounded up following an insurgent attack on the security forces in their district.

He described how the police sealed off the neighbourhood and broke into their houses, arresting any men they could find even though the body of the insurgent was lying on the road along with his identity cards and mobile phone.

After interrogation overnight came the most terrifying part of their ordeal.

"We were told to get in the back of a strange vehicle," he said. "It had no air vents at all, no windows. The brigade commander came, insulted us and closed the door.

"We became hysterical, kicking the inside and shouting: 'Get us out or we'll die!' They allowed us to suffocate for a few minutes and then opened the door and asked us: 'Have you seen death?' They repeated this more than five times. We were very close to dying."

This particular technique of torture and killing is a new one to add to an already long list of other forms of torture of which the new Iraqi police force stands accused.

The list compiled by Human Rights Watch includes beating detainees with cables, hanging them from their wrists for long periods and giving electric shocks to sensitive parts of the body.

From a video given to the BBC by the Association of Muslim Scholars (a Sunni Muslim organisation), it seems another particularly brutal form of torture can also be added - drilling into the knees, elbows and shoulders of victims.

The video shows the body of a Sunni Muslim preacher being washed for burial.

His supporters say he had been picked up by police commandos for allegedly being linked to the insurgency.

The camera focuses on marks all over his body including what appear to be drill holes. According to Salman al-Faraji, a human rights activist and lawyer, the use of drills is common.

"Most cases are quite similar, the same methods are used," he said.

"They torture them, breaking hands and legs. They use electric drills to pierce their bodies and then the killing is carried out at close range."

We made repeated requests for an interview with the minister of the interior or his subordinates to respond to all these allegations.

But no-one would speak to us.

In a statement following the first suffocation case, the minister said he would not allow any members of the police involved in human rights violations to walk freely without being punished properly.

He also promised that investigations would be swift and comprehensive.

But a source inside the ministry dismissed this statement saying the promise of an investigation was "for the media only".

Iraqis Demonstrate Against Occupation Terrorism



Iraqi protesters dressed in army fatigues uses pliers to conduct a mock torture session during a demonstration in Baghdad July 29, 2005.

Thousands of Sunni Arab protesters attended the demonstration in central Baghdad, which was organized by the Islamic Party. The protesters called on the Iraqi government and coalition forces to immediately release all Iraqi prisoners and to stop the use of torture. REUTERS/Ali Jasim

Fallujah Fights On:

“They Are Killing One Or Two Of Us Everyday” Collaborator Says

I approach some of the Marines on a base inside the city, to try and find out what life is like for them. They say there is no one at the base who can speak on the record, but I pause for a minute and chat, not terribly excited about walking back outside into the thick dust and, potentially, a line of fire. They ask why I have come, I am the first journalist they have seen in four months.

"No one wants to talk about Falluja," says one of the Marines.

July 27, 2005 By David Enders, Mother Jones [Excerpts]

Eight months after the second invasion of Falluja, there is hardly a street that does not still feature a building pulverized during the assault.

As many as 80 percent of the city's 300,000-plus residents have returned, but the city has by no means returned to normal.

On Sunday, the police were hard at work adding razor wire and new concrete blast barriers to the already sprawling fortifications around their main station in the center of town while US and Iraqi army patrols traversed the main street, the Iraqis firing their rifles in the air to clear traffic.

Small arms chattered in the distance, followed by a response from a larger gun. The tension is palpable. Curfew begins at 10 p.m. but low-level fighting continues.

"They are killing one or two of us everyday," says an Iraqi soldier at one of the checkpoints into the city, a claim confirmed by local doctors.

I have heard Iraqis make comparisons between their occupation and the Israeli occupation of Palestine, but it wasn't until I saw families walking through the kilometer-long checkpoint, from a parking lot outside Falluja to one on the other side, that it seemed apt. Once inside, seeing the life continuing amidst the rubble, it was harder still to ignore the physical similarities.

Doctors Ahmed and Salam, who agreed to be interviewed on the condition that their names be changed, lamented the condition of the city and its people.

In the last week, they have received three civilian casualties of US fire, and say that this week has been below average — normally, says Ahmed, they see one or two dead civilians every day, and that hundreds have been killed by coalition forces since the city was taken over by the US.

"Just yesterday a middle-aged lady was brought here by coalition forces — she was killed by a single shot to the head," Ahmed says. "The coalition forces came to the hospital and took her name and all her information."

"The people of Falluja feel depressed because they can't move freely from place to place, because the coalition forces and the Iraqi national guard make new checkpoints every day, make new obstacles," says Salam. "They cannot move freely at night. There are medical cases at night that result in casualties because they cannot reach us."

"Shops are broken into at night," one of the men says. "Tell me, if there is a curfew and the army and the police control the streets, who is breaking into our shops?"

Back at the hospital, Ahmed says he expects the fighting to continue. "Even civilian people will change to be fighters," he says. "We regard Falluja as a large prison." (People in Falluja will not talk directly about fighting, though all indications are that the new attacks are homegrown.)

The Iraqi army in Falluja, who don't mind telling a journalist that they are all from cities in the south, don't seem particularly thrilled to be here.

"Falluja — death," says one of them, drawing a finger across his throat, a motion that I would like to go one day in Iraq without seeing someone make.

Most of the reconstruction that has taken place since the fighting has been the often partial rebuilding of houses. Iyad Allawi's government sent 20 percent of the promised compensation.

"It costs in Iraq right now at least 50 million dinars to build a house," Salam said. "What is someone supposed to do if he only gets three million dinars? And these people, they have had to spend time out of their houses, and there is not a single family in Falluja that does not have someone killed."

I approach some of the Marines on a base inside the city, to try and find out what life is like for them. They say there is no one at the base who can speak on the record, but I pause for a minute and chat, not terribly excited about walking back outside into the thick dust and, potentially, a line of fire. They ask why I have come, I am the first journalist they have seen in four months.

"No one wants to talk about Falluja," says one of the Marines.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Winning More Friends: For The Armed Resistance That Is



A U.S. soldier from the Stryker brigade inspects the interior of a refrigerator in front of an Iraqi family during a night raid in Mosul in northern Iraq July 25, 2005.
REUTERS/Andrea Comas

[There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country, busting into their house by force at night bearing lethal weapons, humiliating the parents in front of their scared kids, and even, get this, poking around in their refrigerator.

[It is guaranteed to arouse an intense desire to kill you in any patriotic, self-respecting civilian who lives there.

[But the officers ordering you to do this insane shit know that, don't they? Don't they?

[If it were an Iraqi soldier in your kitchen in front of your kids, what would you do down the road? Thank him for liberating you? Or go for payback?]

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bush Approval At 44%:

Lowest Measurement Of His Presidency

July 29, 2005 by Jeffrey M. Jones, GALLUP NEWS SERVICE

PRINCETON, NJ -- A new Gallup Poll finds a decline in George W. Bush's job approval rating. After standing at 49% approval in the prior two CNN/USA Today/Gallup polls conducted this month, now just 44% of Americans say they approve of Bush, a new low mark for the president.

The poll also shows a drop in Bush's favorable rating to 48%, which is the first time it has dropped below 50% since Gallup began tracking this opinion in 1999.

The July 25-28 Gallup Poll finds 44% of Americans approving and 51% disapproving of the job Bush is doing as president. Bush's prior low approval rating was 45%, which occurred once in March and once again in June of this year.

32% Say Bush Will Lose War For Sure; Another 21% Say Don't Believe U.S. Will Win

7.30.05 CNN

A USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll published in USA Today said 32 percent of respondents believed the United States could not win the war in Iraq. Another 21 percent said it was possible the United States could win but they did not believe it would.

Just 43 percent said they were confident of victory.

***Casting Aside Justice;* Bush Claims Right To Imprison Any American Forever Without A Trial**

August 8, 2005 by William Norman Grigg, American Opinion Publishing Incorporated
[Excerpt]

In defiance of centuries of Anglo-Saxon common law, the Bush administration claims that the president has the power to render any individual an "un-person" with respect to the protection of the law by designating him an "enemy combatant."

Those thus designated may be imprisoned, without legal recourse of any kind, for as long as the president sees fit, and be treated in any manner the president deems suitable.

One essential principle of Anglo-Saxon Common Law since the Magna Carta is that the government, as represented by a king or a president, cannot imprison an individual without due process.

Standing in direct opposition to that concept is the "leader principle," under which the executive — monarch, president, or dictator — answers to no one.

The Padilla Case

For three years, Jose Padilla, an American citizen, has been detained in military custody, without trial, at the Naval Consolidated Brig in Charleston, South Carolina. Padilla was arrested by federal agents on May 15, 2002, after he arrived from Pakistan at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport.

Then-Attorney General John Ashcroft claimed that Padilla, an ex-convict whose unsavory background includes participation in ethnic street gangs and other suspicious associations, had been involved in a plot to smuggle a radioactive "dirty bomb" into the country.

There is ample reason to believe that Padilla was involved in criminal activity, and some circumstantial evidence that he may have had contacts of some sort with Muslim radicals. He's poorly cast in the role of martyr for the cause of civil liberties — which is probably why he was chosen as the first test of the president's supposed power to incarcerate U.S. citizens at whim.

President Bush designated Padilla an "enemy combatant" by executive order on June 9, 2002. This was done on the basis of evidence compiled, after the fact, by Michael H. Mobbs, Special Adviser to the undersecretary of defense for policy. The administration insists that the so-called "Mobbs Declaration" satisfies the requirements of Due Process in Padilla's case.

From the administration's perspective, a document written by a third-tier executive branch functionary justifying the president's order to imprison a U.S. citizen nullifies the need for a trial — or judicial review of any kind.

The administration also claims that the presidential "enemy combatant" designation renders moot the habeas corpus guarantee, under which an

incarcerated individual must be brought before a judge and either formally charged with a crime or released.

Then-Deputy Solicitor General Paul D. Clement argued in a July 2003 brief submitted to the U.S. Court of Appeals that Padilla's imprisonment, as a "wartime" measure, falls entirely within the president's discretion and cannot be subject to the scrutiny of the courts.

Judicial review "of the Commander-in-Chief's wartime judgements would raise serious separation-of-powers concerns," insisted the administration's brief. Such review "could extend no further than assessing whether there is some evidence supporting that (presidential) determination. To that end, the government submitted the Mobbs Declaration setting forth the evidentiary basis for the President's determination."

The administration's reasoning, if that word applies, is perfectly circular: Padilla, as an enemy combatant, is not entitled to due process of law beyond the president's determination that he is an enemy combatant.

In a December 13, 2003 decision, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against this sweeping claim of presidential power, since even in wartime "presidential authority does not exist in a vacuum.

" While the Constitution does provide for the suspension of habeas corpus (which would permit emergency detention of suspects), that power is assigned exclusively to Congress.

Rather than enacting legislation to permit such summary detentions, Congress in 2000 had passed a law called the "Non-Detention Act" expressly forbidding the summary imprisonment of American citizens.

Since Padilla's detention was not authorized by Congress, the court observed, "the president does not have the power ... to detain as an enemy combatant an American citizen seized on American soil outside a zone of combat."

The Bush administration appealed the Appeals Court's ruling to the Supreme Court, which has declined thus far to rule on the substantive issues raised by the case.

In a similar case involving Yaser Essam Hamdi, a U.S. citizen captured on the battlefield in Afghanistan, the High Court upheld the detainee's right to mount a court challenge to his imprisonment.

Writing on behalf of the majority, retiring justice Sandra Day O'Connor explained: "A state of war is not a blank check for the president when it comes to the rights of the nation's citizens."

The administration continues to hold Padilla in military custody and will likely have a second opportunity to challenge the lower court's ruling in his case. Furthermore, the retirement of O'Connor may offer President Bush a chance to build what legal reporter Rick Montgomery calls "a wartime Supreme Court."

One essential principle of Anglo-Saxon Common Law since the Magna Carta is that the government, as represented by a king or a president, cannot imprison an individual without due process.

In December 2004, the Justice Department quietly released a legal memorandum entitled "The President's Constitutional Authority to Conduct Military Operations Against Terrorists and Nations Supporting Them."

The document, composed by former Deputy Assistant Attorney General John C. Yoo, had been circulated within the administration on September 25, 2001, but hadn't previously been made public.

By publicly releasing its contents when it did, the Bush administration ensured that there would be no discussion of its plainly totalitarian concept of presidential power during the 2004 campaign.

Significantly, once securely reelected, George W. Bush referred to the election as an "accountability moment" that bestowed the electorate's blessing on everything his administration had done in its first term. Presumably that "accountability moment" ratified the expansive claims of presidential power in the Yoo Memorandum, which had been kept from the public.

"We conclude that the Constitution vests the President with the plenary authority, as Commander in Chief and the sole organ of the Nation in its foreign relations, to use military force abroad," proclaims the Yoo Memorandum.

The document specifically claimed that Congress cannot "place any limits on the President's determinations as to any terrorist threat, the amount of military force to be used in response, or the method, timing, and nature of the response. These decisions, under our Constitution, are for the President alone to make."

One wonders which "Constitution" Yoo refers to, since nothing in the charter created at Philadelphia in 1787, and ratified by the original states, invested powers of that variety in the president.

In our constitutional system, no branch of the federal government has "plenary," or absolute, authority; this is particularly true of the president, whose powers as commander-in-chief are contingent and limited.

Congress controls all power to appropriate funds, including those for the military, and it has the sole authority to establish regulations governing the armed forces. Additionally, only Congress can declare war.

The Yoo Memorandum claims: "During the period leading up to the Constitution's ratification, the power to initiate hostilities and to control the escalation of conflict had long been understood to rest in the hands of the executive branch."

This is a bit like an adulterer justifying his infidelity by pointing out that "during the period leading up to" his marriage, he had been free to indulge his carnal whims.

Prior to adoption of the U.S. Constitution, the power to conduct war had been exercised by the British monarch. As Hamilton pointed out in The , No. 69, the war power delegated to the president through the Constitution was "in substance much inferior" to that of the British monarch, with the power to declare war and raise armies given exclusively to the legislature.

Rather than being rooted in the U.S. Constitution, the Bush administration's doctrine of executive power has more in common with the "Enabling Act" passed by the German Reichstag in 1933, which gave the German chief executive — Adolf Hitler — the legal basis for building the National Socialist dictatorship and conducting aggressive war against Germany's neighbors.

If we do not act soon to shackle our government in the metaphorical chains of the Constitution, we will in short order find ourselves bound by the very tangible chains of despotism.

**TRAITOR:
CRIMINAL:
UNFIT FOR COMMAND:
THIEF OF OUR LIBERTIES:
THE ENEMY DOMESTIC**



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