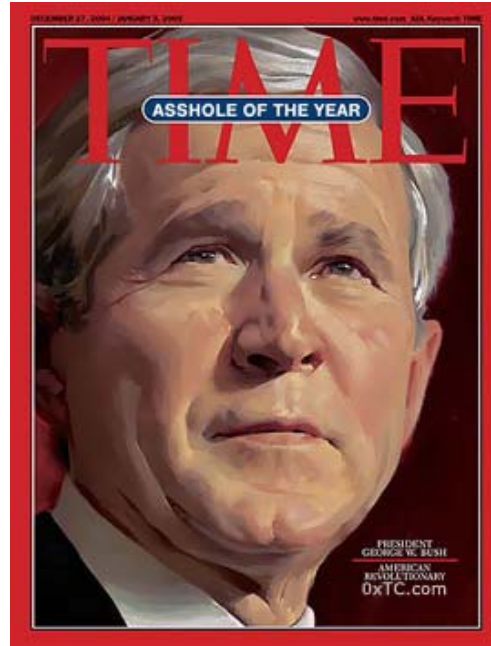


GI SPECIAL 3C72:



[Thanks to Mark Sharpiro]

**“Now Troops Just Want
To Go Home,” Sabin
Said.**

**“I Don't Feel Like There's
A Cause. I Don't
Personally Think There's
A Reason For This”**

"The reason why they're fighting us is not Osama bin Laden. They're fighting us because we're here. . . . They don't want us here. They just want us to leave. I guess that would be a victory for them," he said. "As far as I can see there's not going to be any victory for us."

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in. And special respect to these troops, who have decided it's time to say how it is. And to this reporter, who reports how it is.]

Oct. 02, 2005 By Tom Lasseter, Knight Ridder

AL-MUQDADIYAH, Iraq -- Sgt. Antonio Molina sat on a rooftop in the black of night, scanning the road before him with a high-powered sniper scope, hoping an insurgent would scramble out of a car to lay a bomb and give him a reason to squeeze the trigger.

He and three other 3rd Infantry Division snipers were dropped off two weeks ago at a house on the outskirts of Al-Muqdadiah, in an Iraqi province that military officials frequently claim is largely pacified.

Dozens of infantry soldiers stormed the abandoned structure in a staged raid and left the four men behind. Alone with their rifles, they moved quietly, fearing that an insurgent ambush might catch and kill them before Bradley Fighting Vehicles could respond.

"Some people don't get the gravity of the situation here; people in the 'green zone' are always trying to paint a rosy picture," said Molina, a 27-year-old sniper from Clearwater, Fla. He was referring to the fortified compound in Baghdad where U.S. officials work.

"These politicians are all about sending people to war but they don't know what it's all about, being over here and getting shot at, walking through swamps, having bombs go off, hearing bullets fly by. They have no idea what that's like."

Military commanders in Baghdad and Washington say four Iraqi provinces are home to 85 percent of the daily attacks. They claim that a relatively low attack rate in Iraq's 14 other provinces is proof that the insurgency is on its knees.

Al-Muqdadiah is in one of those 14 provinces, Diyala. Yet five days in the field with a 3rd Infantry Division sniper team suggests that, to those on the ground here, the insurgency is anything but defeated.

Many American troops on the ground in Al-Muqdadiah expect the violence to continue long after they are gone. They worry that Sunni Muslim insurgents -- from a Sunni population that makes up 40 percent of Diyala -- will simply move from targeting U.S. forces to increasing attacks against Shiite Muslims, who compose 35 percent of the province. Shiites are a majority in Iraq, and they dominate the Baghdad government.

Al-Muqdadiah is a relative backwater of some 100,000 people. But the guerrilla war there, while gaining little attention, indicates wider instability than military leaders have acknowledged and could plague efforts to put the Iraqi government on its feet.

"As soon as we leave this place they're all going to kill each other," Molina said in his barracks recently.

His sniper team commander, Staff Sgt. Donnie Hendricks, agreed: "It's going to be a civil war."

Hendricks was quiet for a few moments.

"We go out and kill the bad guys one at a time," said Hendricks, 32, who speaks with the soft accent of his native Claremore, Okla., where his high school graduating class had 55 students. "But we're just whittling down one group so it's easier for the other groups to kill them."

Maj. Dean Wollan, the top U.S. intelligence officer in Diyala, said his men had made tremendous gains against the insurgency, but he worries that the fight will grind on for years.

"I think it's going to be a while," said Wollan, 38, of Missoula, Mont.

Commanders for the 3rd Infantry Division in Diyala said the number of attacks there had dropped from about a dozen a day last year to seven. Roadside bombs, they said, have decreased by a third. The latter trend, though, hasn't held up. In September 2004 there were 72 roadside bombs detonated or found, but 106 in September 2005.

"They say attacks are down. Well . . . we're not patrolling where the bad guys are," Hendricks said.

In September, the Army began using bulldozers in Al-Muqdadiyah to discourage roadside bombs, tearing apart palm groves, fields and roadside stands in the areas near explosions that had targeted American convoys.

On Route Vanessa, the main supply route to the base on the edge of Al-Muqdadiyah, explosives hit the military's bomb-detecting truck every day for 11 straight days in August. Commanders routinely call in F-16 fighters to provide close support for the vehicle.

The U.S. military in Al-Muqdadiyah has reduced patrols from 24-hour cycles to two daily five-hour rotations. And instead of canvassing the entire area, the patrols now concentrate almost exclusively on Route Vanessa. The insurgents shifted their attacks and now regularly place bombs along that road.

"The bad guys watch our gates. They know when we're out in sector. They just wait for us to leave and then they plant" the bombs, Hendricks said. "They plant them with impunity."

A roadside bomb hit Hendricks' vehicle in June. He has scars on his face and neck and a piece of shrapnel in his jaw.

Beyond U.S. patrols on the main supply route in Al-Muqdadiyah, Iraqi police and army units are responsible for much of the city.

Sgt. Hunter Sabin has spent a fair amount of time near the Iraqi troops, and said that although they are getting better, they are still far from ready.

"I was up in a guard tower," and Iraqi police "came up and offered us hash and whiskey," said Sabin, a 26-year-old sniper from Richmond, Va., who was in a Ranger special-operations unit during the 2003 invasion. "That's who's protecting the people."

Hendricks taught a sniper's training course to a select group of Iraqi soldiers, but stuck to marksmanship.

"I haven't taught them tactics because they're infiltrated," Hendricks said. "It's like going to a party where you don't know anybody, but somebody in the room -- you don't know who -- wants to kill you."

Hendricks and his men are career military. Four of the seven are sergeants, the backbone of the enlisted ranks.

Hendricks has spent eight of nine years in the military as a sniper, including five with the Army Rangers. Including his first deployment to Iraq in 2003, he has had nine confirmed kills and nine wounded.

"It takes nothing," he said with a half-grin. "I don't care about these people."

The snipers have formed their impressions of the war on enemy ground.

The team steals out of trucks on the back roads of Al-Muqdadiyah late at night and dashes into the cover of palm groves, scrambling over fences, jumping across canals and flattening against the ground when car headlights sweep by.

They often sit in the same clearings that guerrilla fighters used days earlier to detonate roadside bombs. During a mission in a palm grove, the men pointed to empty cigarette cartons, water bottles and flattened stretches of grass as telltale signs that guerrillas were there recently.

"Haji will use a position. We go find it, stay there overnight, and we know they're watching us," Hendricks said, using the pejorative slang for Iraqis. "We have them in the palm groves with us. . . . We hear them talking but we can't find them."

Sitting in the darkness, near the edge of a palm grove, Molina looked at the street in front of him.

"The reason why they're fighting us is not Osama bin Laden. They're fighting us because we're here. . . . They don't want us here. They just want us to leave. I guess that would be a victory for them," he said. "As far as I can see there's not going to be any victory for us."

Sabin, sitting next to him, nodded.

“In past situations you've had a good guy and a bad guy and the troops were impassioned, but now troops just want to go home,” Sabin said. “I don't feel like there's a cause. I don't personally think there's a reason for this.”

The two fell silent. Slowly, they went back to peering through their scopes, out at the darkness.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

TASK FORCE BAGHDAD SOLDIER KILLED BY IED

October 3, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 05-10-02C

BAGHDAD, Iraq – A Task Force Baghdad Soldier was killed when a patrol struck an improvised explosive device at 8 a.m. Oct. 1 in central Baghdad.

TASK FORCE LIBERTY SOLDIER KILLED BY BAYJI MINE

October 3, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 05-10-03C

TIKRIT, Iraq -- A Task Force Liberty Soldier died of injuries sustained when a combat patrol struck a mine near Bayji at about 12:00 p.m. Oct. 1.

U.S. Soldier Dies Of Wounds

10.3.05 (CNN)

A U.S. soldier has died from wounds suffered in an explosion in Iraq's vast Anbar province, the same region where U.S. troops have launched their latest offensive to drive out insurgents, the military said Monday.

The soldier was wounded Sunday in Ramadi, about 70 miles (113 kilometers) west of Baghdad, the military said.

Sgt. Ryan Coffield Injured



October 3, 2005 By GEOFF FRANK, NewsBanner

A former Bluffton resident, Ryan Coffield was injured Sunday morning while in U.S. Army service in Iraq.

Coffield, who recently was promoted to sergeant, was shot in the neck while on foot patrol by a sniper.

The bullet went in through the right side of his neck and exited through the left side, damaging a carotid artery, according to his mother, Debra Coffield, who now resides in Fayetteville, Ga.

He reportedly lost a lot of blood at the scene. The injury could have been fatal had he not been airlifted quickly for treatment, according to information received by his family.

Sgt. Coffield's condition was upgraded overnight from gravely ill to seriously ill.

Debra Coffield said she talked with his nurse this morning and learned that her son was stable and alert.

He is expected to make a full recovery, she was told. If he continues to make good progress, he could be flown to the Walter Reed hospital in Washington D.C. by Friday.

Coffield, who attended Bluffton schools through his eighth grade year, had moved with his family to Fayetteville, where he graduated from high school in 2002. He joined the service three days after graduating from high school.

Sgt. Coffield is a son of Rod Coffield of Hallsville, Texas. He is a grandson of Ron and Roberta Coffield and Herman and Mary Jo Satterfield, all of Bluffton.

Same Old: Marines Arrive, Resistance Gone

[Thanks to Din Bacon, Smedley Butler Society, who sent this in.]

The U.S. operation in the Syrian border region is the fourth since May, but U.S. troops are too scattered and Iraqi forces too few to impose permanent control in the area the size of West Virginia. Militants have fled past assaults only to move back in once the bulk of U.S. forces leave.

Oct. 3, 2005 By MOHAMMED BARAKAT, The Associated Press & By Jackie Spinner, Washington Post Staff Writer

In Karabilah, Marines clashed with insurgents who opened fire from a building on Sunday in a firefight that killed eight militants, the military said.

The move into Karabilah widened the sweep launched a day earlier by 1,000 Marines, soldiers and sailors, starting with nearby Sadah a tiny village about eight miles from the Syrian border.

Most of the militants appeared to have slipped out of Sadah before the force moved in, and hundreds of the village's residents fled into Syria ahead of the assault.

There was "virtually no opposition" in Sadah, the Marine commander in western Anbar province, Col. Stephen W. Davis, told The Associated Press.

The U.S. operation in the Syrian border region is the fourth since May, but U.S. troops are too scattered and Iraqi forces too few to impose permanent control in the area the size of West Virginia.

Militants have fled past assaults only to move back in once the bulk of U.S. forces leave.

An Iraqi army captain said security forces had conducted house-to-house searches in about 80 percent of Sadah by Sunday evening before taking control of most of the city. He said the searches yielded weapons but few foreign fighters from al Qaeda in Iraq, an insurgent network led by Abu Musab Zarqawi, a Jordanian.

Ramadi:

“Tomorrow Night, They’ll Have To Do It All Again”

October 03, 2005 By John Carlson, The Des Moines Register

RAMADI, Iraq — The soldiers, an hour away from their late-night trip into Ramadi, are told it might be a wild night.

“We have tips from town that three major areas are bad,” says 2nd Lt. Nick Jones, in a 10-minute pre-mission briefing. “Four IEDs may already be there. These are tips from locals, so you never know. Let’s go see what we can find, folks.”

Jones, 24, of Altoona, Iowa, is about to lead 25 other soldiers from the Iowa National Guard’s 224th Engineer Battalion into what may be the most dangerous territory in all of Iraq.

Their job is to move seven armored vehicles through the streets of Ramadi, locating improvised explosive devices — the homemade bombs planted by insurgents — that kill anybody who gets close. It is the insurgents’ most effective weapon. The bombs have killed or maimed hundreds of Americans and Iraqi civilians. The battalion, nearly 500 men and women stationed in Iraq since January, is assigned to find the devices. They’re the only ones in Ramadi who do it.

Nobody needs to explain the danger. Four soldiers from the battalion have been killed in action and another 21 have been awarded Purple Hearts.

The battalion is surrounded this night by patrols of Marines, moving through the city in Humvees and on foot in total darkness. The Marines job is to protect the battalion from attack, and to seek out and kill insurgents.

The mission might last two hours. Or six. It depends on how many IEDs are located and dealt with. And on how much resistance the soldiers from the Bravo Company’s First Platoon and the Marines meet.

Jones was correct in his pre-mission briefing. It would, indeed, be a wild night in Ramadi, involving gun battles, explosions and rattled nerves. Fairly typical.

Jones is in the “Buffalo,” a giant truck with an extendable arm that digs and attempts to remove IEDs from their holes. First Sgt. Scott Lewis, 30, is in the RG31 vehicle, an armored personnel carrier that’s more of a rolling bank vault. He communicates, sometimes frantically, with the other vehicles in the slow-moving convoy and the roving Marines.

With Lewis in the RG31, are Spc. Brian Schaer, 22, the vehicle driver; Spc. Stephen Troxel, 24, right front passenger seat, spotter and turret gunner; Spc. Jennifer Black, 30, the medic; and a civilian passenger.

The convoy is ordered to leave the camp at 10:15 p.m.

“We do this three days on, two days off,” Lewis says as the vehicles pull onto a Ramadi street. “It never gets routine. It’s dangerous if you think that way. I still get nervous.”

The radio cuts Lewis off. The Marines, already in the city, tell him they’re in a firefight.

“Three of our people are engaged,” the Marines tell Lewis. “Small arms fire. Two RPGs.”

Everybody groans. It’s horrible news. Small arms fire — including the most powerful machine guns — barely scratch the armor on these vehicles. Those inside can survive an IED hit. But a direct hit from an RPG can be deadly.

More radio chatter on the Marines’ firefight. Marines have more engaged insurgents. The battalion is told to hold position.

“God Almighty,” Lewis shouts. Seven vehicles from the 224th are stopped on the street, vulnerable to attack, not yet close to the Marines.

“Troxel, gun,” Lewis yells into the front seat.

Troxel jumps into the turret behind the 240-Bravo machine gun and scans the streets through the green glow of night-vision goggles. The streets are supposed to be empty — Ramadi has a 10 p.m. curfew — so anybody the troops see is a potential enemy.

Schaer watches the street, waiting for the order to go. It’s a tense 15 minutes.

Finally, The 224th was moving. Ramadi’s streets are full of holes and concrete chunks, there from earlier IED explosions. The craters make perfect hiding places for new IEDs. Spotlights are shined into them and on trash where explosives could be hidden. Problem is, trash is everywhere. Bottles, boxes, bags, old shoes, junk of every kind. The soldiers look hard for wires or detonating cord.

IEDs are typically set off by remote control. Often it’s a remote telephone base unit that initiates the blast. The insurgent waits until a target is over or near the hole where the explosive is buried. He then hits the paging button on the phone, detonating the bomb.

“It’s knowing what you’re looking for,” Lewis tells a guest riding in the RG31. “Knowing and being lucky.”

“Buffalo arm is out” says a voice over the radio. It’s Jones in the Buffalo. The soldiers have spotted a possible IED hiding place — a crater hole filled with dirt. Lewis called the Marines to tell them the arm is working, digging. They need to be aware that an explosion is possible.

“Buffalo’s sitting right where that one blew up across from us,” Troxel says, back in his spotter position in the front seat, mentioning an explosion here the other day.

Nothing found. They move down the street. Same thing. Buffalo arm, Lewis tells the Marines, some of whom are shadowing the battalion, some still engaging insurgents.

There's word that the earlier RPG sighting might have been wrong. Good news, if it's true.

There's nothing to do but wait and watch while the Buffalo digs. Troxel looks through his night-vision goggles and spots a Marine sniper at a nearby building. Schaer watches a parked car and scans nearby buildings.

Black talks to a visitor about her little girls back in Iowa. Laney is 4 and Madison is 5. Madison just started kindergarten. Her mother was riding in an RG31 in Ramadi when Madison went to her first day of school.

It's quiet again on the street. No movement. Absolutely dark, except for the Buffalo lights shining on the arm claw that's starting to dig.

There's a massive explosion, then a shower of sparks and shrapnel. "Is everybody all right?" Lewis yells on the radio to Jones in the Buffalo.

"Yeah," Jones answers from the Buffalo. "All OK."

There's no way to know if it was a contact explosion or set by remote from an insurgent watching the Buffalo work.

"They want to hurt the Buffalo," Lewis says. "(If) it's out of commission, we're done for the night."

Not this time. The Buffalo sustains no damage. The search moves on down the street. Marines are moving on foot and in Humvees. The radio reports more small arms fire a couple blocks away. The Buffalo finds an old blast crater filled with dirt. More digging.

"Two men walking south on Cinema (a Ramadi street designation) moving a push cart to the west," the Marines tell Lewis. Then there's more talk of another firefight.

"God," Lewis says. "We haven't even reached the bad places yet."

The column of vehicles is stopped for probably the fourth time, waiting at 11:20 p.m., while the Buffalo arm came out and started down.

Another huge explosion, the shock felt through the 3-inch thick armor of the RG31, maybe 75 yards away, a half-second flash-roar.

"Are you OK?" Lewis yells into the radio.

No answer.

"Green chem light," Troxel says, watching a flowing green stick fly out of the Buffalo.

It's a way to communicate "all soldiers OK." Somebody in the Buffalo tossed out a glowing green chemical stick to get the word to Black, the medic, telling her there were no injuries.

The Buffalo arm is damaged by the blast, described by soldiers who had done this nearly a year as “more impressive than most.” But no Buffalo, no more mission. The vehicles turn around and head back toward Camp Ramadi.

They move maybe a block and the Marines shout over the radio they’re in a gunfight with insurgents.

“Everybody sit tight,” Lewis tells the platoon over the radio. “Troxel gun. We’re in a hornet’s nest. We’re right in the middle of it. Everybody stay put.”

The Marines send an ominous message. They’ve lost contact with a “dismounted” squad, meaning the men were on foot and couldn’t be reached by radio. More chatter from the Marines.

Then it was over. The Marines recover their men. The insurgents were either killed or they ran for it.

“Clear to roll,” they tell Lewis.

“Let’s boogie,” Lewis tells the Ironhawk soldiers over his radio.

“You know, every time we find one of those IEDs I feel like we saved somebody’s life,” Black says on the ride back.

They reach their base at the camp at midnight.

“That first one that blew,” Jones says, “was buried in a hole with some dirt over it. It made like a 4-foot deep crater. The second one was in like a box. I said to move the arm just a little bit and, bang. That was it. I’m thinking it was probably three artillery shells. Oh, well. It happens. We’re done for the night.”

“I’m going to bed,” Troxel says. “Tired, you know?”

All these young soldiers need the rest.

Tomorrow night, they’ll have to do it all again.

TROOP NEWS

Unrest Over Iraq War Spreading Inside The Armed Forces

[Thanks to Don Bacon, Smedley Butler Society, who sent this in.]

Most surprising to me is that no American political leader today has tried to unmask the absurdity of the administration's case that to question the strategic wisdom of the war is unpatriotic and a failure to support our troops. Most officers and probably most troops don't see it that way.

October 3, 2005 by Gen. (ret.) William E. Odom, antiwar.com/orig. [Excerpt]

Many U.S. officers in Iraq, especially at company and field grade levels, know that while they are winning every tactical battle, they are losing strategically.

And according to the New York Times, they are beginning to voice complaints about Americans at home bearing none of the pains of the war.

One can only guess about the enlisted ranks, but those on a second tour – probably the majority today – are probably anxious for an early pullout.

It is also noteworthy that U.S. generals in Iraq are not bubbling over with optimistic reports the way they were during the first few years of the war in Vietnam.

Their careful statements and caution probably reflect serious doubts that they do not, and should not, express publicly.

The more important question is whether or not the repressive and vindictive behavior by the secretary of defense and his deputy against the senior military – especially the Army leadership, which is the critical component in the war – has made it impossible for field commanders to make the political leaders see the facts.

Most surprising to me is that no American political leader today has tried to unmask the absurdity of the administration's case that to question the strategic wisdom of the war is unpatriotic and a failure to support our troops.

Most officers and probably most troops don't see it that way.

The Army, some of the Air Force, the National Guard, and the reserves are now the victims of this gross mismatch between military missions and force structure. Neither the Bush nor the Clinton administration has properly "supported the troops."

The media could ask the president why he fails to support our troops by not firing his secretary of defense.

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.

“Lets Get Bush And Blair Out, Now, Niver Give Up”

[This is a message to Americans from Rose Gentle in Scotland. Her son was killed in Iraq. She leads a campaign to bring all the Scots and other troops home from Iraq, now. She came to Washington DC for the 9/24 rally. A truly great lady.]

From: Rose Gentle
To: GI Special
Sent: October 03, 2005
Subject: we are not agenst the troops

we are for the troops

yous are not the bad ones its blair we cant stand

we are proud of yous, all yous are going by orders

**we want yous home, blair has killied 95 british troops , by his lies. greed
and just a dog to bush, how meny troops are mently ill when they are
home, how meny cant go back and kill them self, , and are not the person
that left home, he is a hartles basterd, i get phone calls from mums that
there boys are of to iraq this munth, how can i tell a mum, your
boy will not be next, no one should be next, well if blair and bush
go over thats ok with me, i didnt think i had so much anger in me
but i have, we have to get the troops home. when i was in DC one
girl had a phone call to tell hur she had a new niece, but the little one's
dad will niver see hur, or she will niver see hur dad, so so sad,

lets get bush and blair out, now, niver give up.**

Big Surprise!

BYO Still Rules



Some soldiers and their families are buying the vests on their own before leaving for deployment in Iraq. Nearly a year after Congress demanded action, the Pentagon has still failed to figure out a way to reimburse soldiers for body armor and equipment they purchased to better protect themselves while serving in Iraq. Armored vest shown at Reliance Armor Systems, Inc. in Cincinnati, where the vest is made. March 17, 2004 file photo. (AP Photo/AI Behrman)

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

October 3, 2005 By JOHN FILES, NY Times

Some troops in Iraq have complained that equipment is either lacking or worn, and that they sometimes do not have the necessary gear to protect them from roadside bombs and snipers.

Michael P. Kline, a retired master sergeant who is executive director of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, said families and charities, and soldiers themselves, had had to fulfill the military obligation to provide proper combat equipment.

MORE:

***All Heart:*
Political Rats At Work:
Bill In Congress Would Help Military
Families Mail Supplies For The**

Troops That Pentagon Refuses To Provide!

October 03, 2005 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer

A bill that would give military families free mail privileges for is slowly advancing through the House of Representatives.

Sponsored by Rep. Vito Fossella Jr., R-N.Y., the bill approved by the House Government Reform Committee Sept. 30 would allow military families to send letters and packages weighing up to 15 pounds to service members deployed overseas for operations Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom or who are hospitalized for war-related injuries or diseases.

Under the bill, families would receive a voucher allowing them to ship one package per month.

Fossella said he drafted the bill after hearing complaints from military families about the cost of sending packages.

A typical family can easily spend \$1,500 a year shipping shampoo, baby powder, bedding, phone cards, toothpaste and similar items, he said.

[Billions for Halliburton and the other Bush Buddies, and these assholes won't appropriate the money so troops can have bedding and toothpaste? Their solution is to keep on making military families buy what the troops need, just help them out with the postage? But then why be surprised? The lice that infest the Capitol are, on average, some of the richest people in America, and their campaign money comes from the corporate elite. To them, the troops are just a bunch of Wall-Mart workers, disposable units, and the less spent on them, the better for the people with the real money. They get to keep more of it. At least until enough people get fed up with them and their Imperial bullshit and decide to wipe them off the face of the earth.]

General Admits National Guard Rescue Effort Plagued By Antique Equipment: The Best Is In Iraq

September 29, 2005 By Lolita C. Baldor, Associated Press

With most of its best equipment in Iraq, the National Guard has only about one-third of the helicopters, trucks, radios and other supplies it needs for homeland security, the Guard's top commander said Thursday.

Gen. Steven Blum said Guard members had to convey messages in person, by helicopter and boat, so units could communicate with each other after Hurricane Katrina. The Guard's older radios do not work with the more sophisticated active duty equipment, he said.

"I'm dealing with radios of the type that were used the last time you were wearing battle fatigues," Blum told the House Appropriations subcommittee on defense.

Blum said the Guard made it a priority to send the best equipment to those units serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Attacks Collaborators In Ramadi: Citizens Celebrate As Fighters Control The City

Oct. 3, 2005 By MOHAMMED BARAKAT, The Associated Press

Roadside bombs and fighting between insurgents and Iraqi forces wounded at least seven Iraqis in Ramadi, police and hospital officials said.

Insurgents in black hoods were seen carrying machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades in the streets, and Iraqi civilians gathered around two burning Iraqi army pickup trucks.

Some of the civilians celebrated the destruction by carrying Iraqi military helmets and a uniform that appeared to have been pulled from the burning Iraqi vehicles.

Assorted Resistance Action

3 Oct. (AKI) & Aljazeera & CNN & Reuters & By MOHAMMED BARAKAT, The Associated Press

The Iraqi oil minister, Ibrahim Bahr-Uloum, survived a roadside bomb attack Monday on his seven car convoy on the northern outskirts of Baghdad, police said. Three of his bodyguards were killed in the attack.

Armed fighters ambushed the convoy the minister was travelling in at around 9.30am local time in western Baghdad, firing on the vehicles.

The attack, which left Bahr al-Uloum with no injuries, occurred as he was traveling north for a ceremony to open a rebuilt oil refinery in the city of Beiji.

On Sunday, police said the director-general of Iraq's Municipalities and Public Works Ministry, Safaa Muhammed, was killed by armed fighters who opened fire on his car as he drove through the up-market Mansour neighbourhood of Baghdad.

In the northern city of Mosul, a drive-by shooting killed Nafi'a Aziz, a female member of Ninevah's provincial council, and her son, said police spokesman Brig. Saeed Ahmed. Aziz was in charge of the council's human rights committee and a member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the party of Iraqi President Jalal Talabani.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“What Else Did They Die For?”

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

October 3, 2005 By BOB HERBERT, NY Times. [Excerpt]

The American death toll in Iraq is fast approaching 2,000. If the public could see the carnage close up, the way it saw the horror of New Orleans, the outrage would be beyond belief.

You never want to say that brave troops died for the mindless fantasies spun by a gang of dissembling, inept politicians. But what else did they die for?

And what about all those men and women, some of them barely out of childhood, who are lying awake nights, hardly able to move their broken, burned and paralyzed bodies?

What do we tell them as they lie there, unable to curb the pain or fight off the depression, or even begin to understand the terrible thing that has happened to them?

What do we tell them about this war that their country inflicted on them for no good reason whatsoever?

INTRODUCTION TO PLAYS AGAINST THE WAR

July 2005, By Alan Stolzer, New York City

As U.S. Imperialism conducts its latest adventure in Iraq-Afghanistan it reminds us all – whatever our political bent – that horror, pillage and destruction are not relics of the past but continuance of darkness into foreseeable future.

What shall we do – those of us in understandable distress? Yes, we demonstrate against war, yes, we stand witness and vigil against horror and yes, we organize our facilities and those of others to combat yet another stain on humanity's well stained history.

I wish it were needless to say that the U.S. population was as motivated as many others are in stopping this war and bringing its sacrifice (troops) home immediately. But since radicalization comes hard to those who don't think they need it, special pain must be attached. In these plays I try to understand my compatriots in that vein. Often people have to be dragged into conflict greater than their own, the aesthetic process serving as that implement.

It's also easy to note that "some day" poets will depict our era in appropriate language since time and memory serve well as comfort zones to inglorious experience. But, in the meantime, those of us who call ourselves artists must wade through our period's "mess" as others, some overly talented, some not, have done.

There may be, some day, large and vibrant anti-war theatre of international proportion but to my knowledge, none yet exists.

Therefore I submit these plays as offerings to the present theatre and its future in hope that proportions reminiscent of the Vietnam era may emerge in recall of that fury's size and intent.

May we cover the planet with our distress, our rage and our purpose, understanding that theatre truly has no bounds but to mirror humanity's trial and error.

Me & Walt

My transcript also included the notation, "Performs required duties in an acceptable manner. Shows extreme hostility to military requirements."

I was more proud of that comment than I would have been if they had called me "a good soldier." I guess I can understand Walt.

From: David Honish, Veterans For Peace
To: GI Special
Sent: October 03, 2005
Subject: Me & Walt

I don't know it for a fact, but I've heard that the late Walt Disney was proud of his dishonorable discharge from the Army to the point that his framed discharge certificate hung on the wall in his office. Depends upon the circumstances I suppose?

I wasn't quite that extreme. I just thought of myself more as being WITH the Army, rather than IN the Army.

Had a couple of reminders of it pop up this weekend while in the process of moving.

The first item was finally tossing after 32 years my old red plastic book bag embossed with the MTC logo. It had been doing service as the storage for my collection of city and state highway maps under the seat of my truck(s) all these years. The zipper finally gave out, and so it was time for a replacement.

Basic medic training was no longer being conducted by Medical Training Command when I was at Ft Sam. It had long since been redesignated Academy of Health Sciences.

I guess they still had a gazillion of the old MTC logo book bags to use up at the small branch PX near the training battalions?

Somebody must have ordered too many because they thought we would never pull out of Viet Nam, and the demand for new medics would remain brisk? They were were half right.

I never went to Viet Nam. Kissinger's "peace with honor" treaty was signed in JAN 73, ten months before I arrived at Ft Sam on Thanksgiving morning. Officially the USA no longer had ground combat forces in Viet Nam by then.

There were still military advisors to the ARVN, helicopter crews, and Air Force flight crewmen in combat to provide myself and my fellow students with "interesting patients" as we moved beyond the classrooms to on the job training in the hospitals.

No US ground combat role meant that the NVA could openly challenge the ARVN and their US advisors with armored forces. Both fixed and rotary wing air crews faced ever increasing numbers of radar guided AA cannon now that the NVA were at liberty to move such weapons further south.

Their bad luck was our "excellent training opportunity." Finding a way to spin getting your ass kicked into something positive is nothing new for the Defense Department.

The second reminder was finding my transcript from my second training school, the 91C program. We got a new school Commandant halfway thru my 91C class. The old Commandant retired and was replaced by a lady who was not laid back like he was. In fact, we all thought she was a real bitch.

Maybe she was cranky because it would be a few years before women were accepted at West Point yet? I did not know the background of LTC Joan T. Standlee, but she was the worst sort of regular army lifer from our view. She tried to change us from what we were.

What we were was a bunch of 19 year old kids doing our clinical rotations in an Army Medical Center in time of war. We tried to forget the "interesting patients" provided for us in abundance with the usual sorts of off duty diversions that 19 year olds enjoy. We did not appreciate LTC Standlee's efforts to instill discipline that we found excessive.

When she decreed daily haircut & shoeshine formations before our hospital shifts, it irritated the instructors who had to come in earlier to inspect us almost as much as it irritated us.

The first day we noted the inspections conflicted with the opening of the hospital dining facility to feed us. They HAD to feed us, that was the regs. We went as a group to the IG to complain after our shifts ended.

On day 2 of inspections EVERYBODY lined up for chow before inspection, even the students who lived off post! It was the slowest breakfast chow line we ever saw.

The IG inspectors we complained to the day before saw the chow line, and the inability to both eat and make inspection before the ward shifts started at 0645. The inspections ended because LTC Standlee could not control the opening time of our mess facility. Lifer 0, students 1.

She hated us for beating her at the regs, and did her best to make us pay for it.

In my own case, I also went out of my way to test the limits of the haircut regs. That included further visits to the IG, and JAG. JAG informed her and the school NCOIC that the haircut regs meant what was written, and were not subject to their personal interpretations. Lifers 0, students 2.

I paid for that victory in cash. I was crossed off the graduation promotion list in clear retaliation. I may have been the only person in the history of the Army to graduate 91C30 school as a Pfc?

They also falsified my transcript to knock ten points off my final exam grade.

When I complained, the school NCOIC just sneered at me and asked if my long hair was worth it now?

They guessed right that I would let it drop so as not to delay my PCS to Letterman Army Medical Center.

What 20 year old wouldn't rather go to California than stick around in Texas to follow up on an IG complaint?

My transcript also included the notation, "Performs required duties in an acceptable manner. Shows extreme hostility to military requirements."

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**David Honish
Chapter 106, North TX VFP**

“Where Did Those Stripes Come From?”

From: ZC
To: GI Special
Sent: October 03, 2005
Subject: where did those stripes come from?

Must confess I'd never wondered about the origin of the stripes on the US flag, but it seems to be the ensign of the old British colonial enterprise, the East India Company.

A somewhat unsavory link, but Sir Charles Fawcett reassures us:

"And as the Company's flag had a long and honourable history, no discredit can attach to the American flag from a connexion between the two colours."

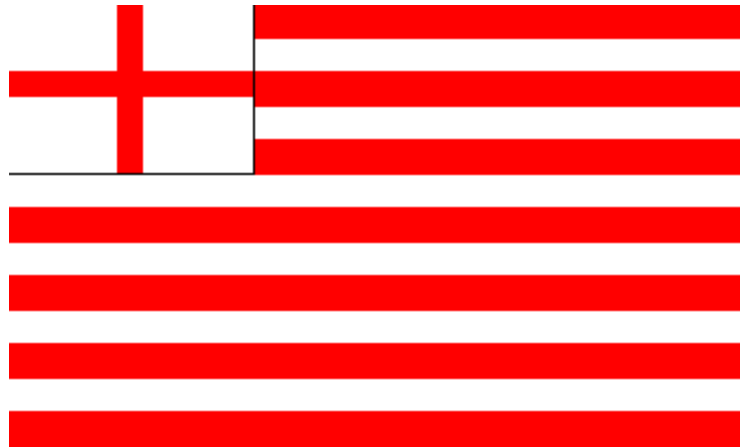
Millions of Asians might gasp at the "honourable." (The word "predatory" would be much more accurate).

At any rate, and even if coincidental, it's an interesting and thought-provoking nexus.

Solidarity,
Z

PS Thank you for yet another excellent issue of the GI Special! As you know, this powerful and informative newsletter is being read worldwide. It most certainly deserves

to be. [If so, it's a credit to all the troops, veterans, military family members and civilian activists who send in the articles used, and often write them. Like Z. T]



Wilson in *Flags at Sea* (1999) shows several ensigns of the Honourable East India Company with proportions that are roughly 3:5 and varying numbers of stripes. The first of these is the East India Company ensign until 1707. **This is a thirteen-stripe version with the St George's Cross in the canton.** [crwflags.com]

OCCUPATION REPORT

WINNING MORE HEARTS AND MINDS, FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



U.S. Army soldiers with Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Division search a house in the western Iraqi town of Anah September 28, 2005 REUTERS/USAF/Tech. Sgt. Andy Dunaway/Handout

[Nothing quite like invading somebody else's country for a President who pretends he's liberating it, hanging around for another couple years when the people who live there want you gone, kicking in their doors, busting into their houses without their consent, rummaging through their personal belongings, and arresting them if they object. Guaranteed to make the self-respecting, patriotic citizens who think it's supposed to be their country arm themselves and do their best to kill you. It's what you'd do if there were 140,000 Iraqi troops occupying the USA, isn't it?

[But the officers who order you to do this know that, don't they?

[Don't they?]

Why Won't Our Iraqis Fight?

This phenomenon -- two sides that seem to come from different planets: our natives who just don't or can't or won't fight, who need years and vast sums of money and equipment, and then hardly stand up without an American "backbone" nearby; and theirs, who fight willingly, eagerly, fiercely, bravely, and with initiative -- was also a phenomenon of the Vietnam War era.

October 2, 2005 By Tom Engelhardt, Tomdispatch.com. [Excerpt]

When it comes to the rest of the Iraqi military: The Iraqi Air Force essentially doesn't exist -- or rather, the assumption clearly is that, for the foreseeable future, the Iraqi "Air Force" will be the U.S. Air Force.

As for the Iraqi Navy, New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman recently visited the port of Umm Qasr in "safe" southern Iraq. He had to be "outfitted in body armor" for the crossing of the Kuwaiti border, because IEDs have begun to be planted along the road to the port.

With a kind of perverse admiration, he adds, "The enemy just keeps getting smarter. After the coalition forces introduced jamming devices to block roadside bombs detonated with cell phones, the insurgents started using infrared devices from garage door openers. So much ingenuity for so much malevolence."

His visit to the exceedingly modest 1,000-man Iraqi Navy, being trained at the port by the Brits, led to the observation (regularly made by Americans about every aspect of the Iraqi military) that "progress is slow.

One day last week a boatload of Iraqi sailors decided to take a long lunch break and blew off the afternoon training. Too hot." The problem is that "middle-management Iraqis" won't "take the initiative."

To correct this, it seems, would require "a huge cultural shift. Saddam's tyrannical rule over nearly three decades conditioned people here never to assume responsibility."

That certainly explains it; and it's pretty typical of American explanations, all of which might make sense, if those fiendishly clever insurgents weren't just down that road, exercising their ingenuity, taking the initiative like mad, upgrading their skills constantly, and fighting fiercely without the help of American trainers.

I guess they just underwent a huge cultural shift that our reporters and pundits have somehow missed.

The question, of course, is: How come we can't find that switch the general spoke of, and "they" can?

Or to propose a novel theory, what if the "huge cultural shift" Friedman mentions was us?

What if we turned out the lights and smashed the switch.

What if we invaded a country under false pretenses; occupied it; began building huge, permanent military bases on its territory; let its capital and provincial cities be looted; disbanded its military; provided no services essential to modern life; couldn't even produce oil for gas tanks in an oil-rich land; bombed some of its cities, destroyed parts or all of others; put tens of thousands of its inhabitants in U.S. military-controlled jails (where prisoners would be subjected to barbaric tortures and humiliations); provided next to no jobs; opened the economy to every kind of depredation; set foreign corporations to loot the country; invited in tens of thousands of private "security contractors," heavily armed and under no legal constraints; and then asked large numbers of Iraqis, desperate for jobs that could be found nowhere else, to join a new "Iraqi" military force meant to defend a "government" that could hardly leave an American fortified enclave in its own capital.

After that, our military trainers, our generals, our politicians, our reporters, and our pundits all began fretting about this force for not fighting fiercely, being independent, taking the initiative, or "standing up."

The question should be, but isn't: Standing up for what?

This phenomenon -- two sides that seem to come from different planets: our natives who just don't or can't or won't fight, who need years and vast sums of money and equipment, and then hardly stand up without an American "backbone" nearby; and theirs, who fight willingly, eagerly, fiercely, bravely, and with initiative -- was also a phenomenon of the Vietnam War era.

Then, American officers regularly spoke admiringly of the other side, the Vietcong, the NVA, "Charlie," as brave, resourceful fighters and had scorn for "our" Vietnamese. But generally, even when, as in Friedman's piece, the descriptions of Iraqis who fight and those who don't can be found side by side, no

comparisons are made, and the farce of attempting to "stand up" an Iraqi Army simply goes on.

If you set aside, for a moment, what is believed in, it obviously helps to believe in something if you plan to "stand up" and fight.

At the most basic level in our age, it helps if you feel your country has been violated and occupied by foreigners. In the last two centuries, no emotion has mobilized more people in arms than the one we call "nationalism" when other people take up arms and "patriotism" when we do so.

Call it love of country.

Add religion to that -- or the belief that your country or region has been taken over by unbelievers -- and you have a powerful combination.

The issue here is not years of training, it's motivation.

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.

Collaborator Leaders Fighting Each Other; President Wants Prime Minister To Quit

October 2, 2005 Associated Press

President Jalal Talabani has accused the Shiite-led United Iraqi Alliance, which holds the majority in parliament, of monopolizing power in the government and refusing to move ahead on a key issue for Kurds, the resettlement of Kurds in the northern city of Kirkuk.

"The time has come for the United Iraqi Alliance and the Kurdistan coalition to study Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari's stepping aside from his post," said Azad Jundiyan, a spokesman for Mr. Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

"It Is A Clear Forgery"

Method Of Voting On Occupation Constitution Changed To Make Sure It Passes

October 03, 2005 By Luke Baker (Reuters) & By MOHAMMED BARAKAT, The Associated Press

Sunni officials and independent Iraqi politicians reacted with dismay on Monday at a move by the Shi'ite and Kurdish majority to make it harder to defeat an October 15 referendum on a new constitution.

Analysts also questioned the fairness of the move by Iraq's parliament, which set electoral rules making it far simpler for the draft constitution to pass -- as Shi'ites and Kurds want -- than for it to be defeated by Sunni opponents.

"It is a clear forgery," said Saleh al-Mutlaq, spokesman for the Iraqi National Dialogue, a leading Sunni Arab group, and one of those who helped draw up the new draft constitution.

"They want this constitution to pass despite the will of the people."

"The fraud has begun right from now," said Saleh al-Mutlaq, a leading Sunni politician.

In a session on Sunday, Shi'ites and Kurds, who hold more than three quarters of parliament's 275 seats, decided the existing interim constitution should be interpreted in such a way as to create two different thresholds for the referendum.

For it to pass, a majority of those who turn out to vote have to say "Yes," while for it to be defeated, two-thirds of registered voters in three or more provinces have to say "No."

What the interim constitution actually says is: "The general referendum will be successful and the draft constitution ratified if a majority of the voters in Iraq approve and if two-thirds of the voters in three or more governorates do not reject it."

"It's unfair and I didn't vote for it," Mahmoud Othman, an independent Kurdish member of parliament, told Reuters. "It's a double standard and it shouldn't have happened."

The parliament's move could undermine U.S. efforts to garner Sunni Arab support for the constitution. It could further alienate moderate Sunnis who say they want to participate in the political process but reject the draft constitution, which they contend will fragment Iraq among majority Shiites, the Kurds and Sunni Arabs.

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

Received:

The Stampede: A Tactic For Counter-Recruiters

From: AH
Sent: Oct 3, 2005
To: GI Special

I have a new technique for university protests that is sure to reduce the amount of students being abused by cops, or kicked out of school, or both. I am not advocating this tactic, as it might be against the law - and I am a law abiding citizen. This is just a raw idea, that should be reworked to conform to all local, state, and federal guidelines.

This technique is a subcategory of the "mob" tactic, called the "stampede". The stampede technique is a method of guerrilla style engagement that relies heavily on the high-minded values of academia.

Instead of peace protesters using up resources and precious time to make up signs, posters, and pins, the stampede uses up none of that.

Producing large numbers of people during a normal protest is usually the best too but, the stampede really doesn't require large numbers to be effective either. Secrecy is needed for a successful stampede, but after that is achieved, the chips should just fall into place. If someone can pull it off a stampede with a greater number of people, more power to them but again, secrecy is really the key element. I would say that a successful stampede really only requires about 20 people but, I would feel comfortable with up to 50 people; provided that there are no tattle-tales among the group.

So, here is how it works: Protesters must still show up near campus recruiters at a scheduled time, like always. Instead of massing at in a stagnant gathering near the recruiters, that is sure to get broken up after a while, the stampeders should meet up in some innocuous place; like a lunch room or in the school gym. The protesters should not have anything with them, or on them, that would associate them with ant-war activities though.

The protesters should be very covert with their intentions, and it might be good to wear disposable cloths. Places like libraries and main hallways are not good meeting places either because, these are unusual places for substantial groups to form. A place must be found, relatively close to the recruiters, where protesters can inconspicuously gather to full size, over the course of ten or fifteen minutes; preferably, near the top of the hour, where protesters can complete the mission right as classes are starting.

Once the gathering has reached its planned size, then the fun begins. Once the crowd of protesters has reached optimal size, the time has come for those who wish, to obscure their identities. Ordinary winter clothing can be very obscuring however, some may wish to go the extra distance with the classic ski mask, or mujahadeen style head wrap.

Once identities have been obscured or concealed, the horses are out of the gate. As the mob of protesters work their way down the hall, in a semi-permeable clump formation, they should quickly move toward their target; which is the recruiting table.

Finally reaching their target, the protesters should then engage the enemy, by flipping over their tables; dousing them and their literature with a good exterior paint or decking stain; lighting off fire crackers and smoke bombs; all the while, hurling vulgar insults.

The direct confrontation should be started and ended within five or ten 'seconds'; with students quickly dispersing; ditching their throw-away jackets and face coverings; and then retreating to their classes that are just beginning, or out of the building; as the recruiters stumble around in a cloud of smoke, trying to figure out what just happened.

Somebody might think they recognized a fleeing protester, and the police might catch someone with a little paint on their cloths but, those people who the police question, will have just been in the wrong place at the wrong time, of course - and not really have had anything to do with the protest. Those who hit and run the best, on the other hand, should never be questioned.

I say, if you're going to get kicked out of school, you should do it on your terms; not with cops beating on you and spraying you down in the hall with mace.

Actually, if the stampede is done right, it should carry less of a risk than the standard Gandhi style, let's be pacifists while we're getting the shit kicked out of us, type of tactics. At the very worst, they might nab someone and tag them with vandalism but, if protesters don't use much more paint than it takes to color up the recruiters and their cheap fold-up tables, then there shouldn't be much damage there for serious vandalism charges in the first place.

We had a right to peaceful speech, and the enemy has attacked us for it. Now we don't have to be peaceful anymore!

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