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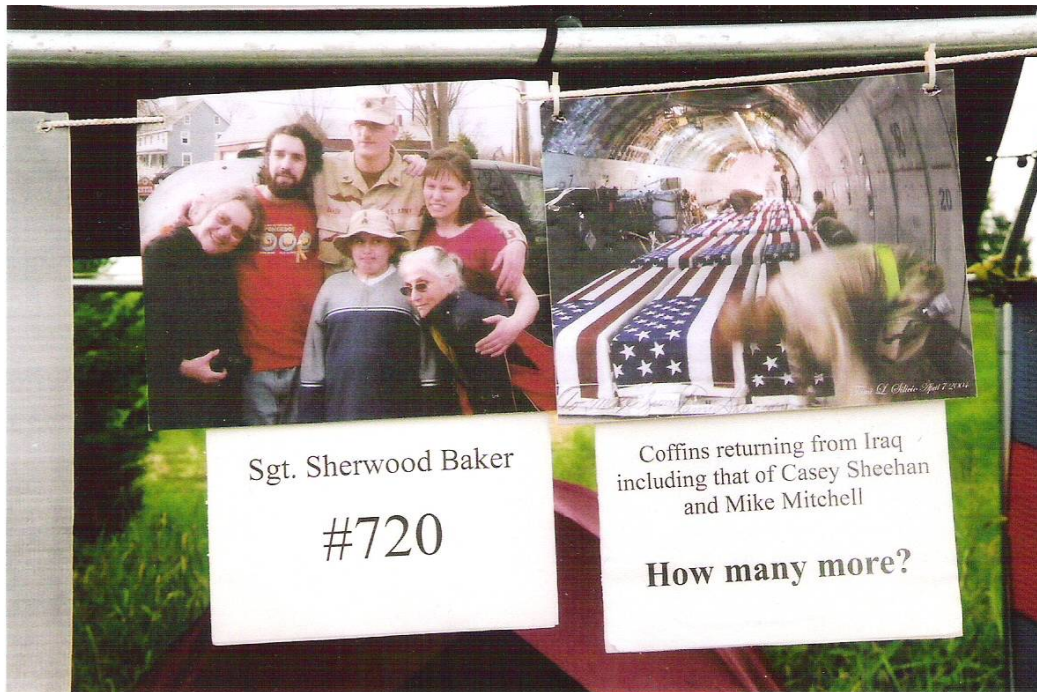


Photo from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) T

Political Prostitution: “That’s The Kicker”

Letters To The Editor
Army Times
10.3.05

Once again our country has been weakened by political prostitution in the form of so-called pork projects funded by the new highway bill; 6,371 pork projects in all stain the pages of this bill.

I am sure those who abused their power to get such projects will see no shame in their egregious actions.

I wonder if these same Republicans and Democrats are thinking about the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, who still today are fighting without the equipment needed to be fully combat effective.

Some questions to ask: Have all of the Humvees been armored up to add protection from improvised explosive devices or roadside bombs that have killed so many?

Are all service members in combat wearing up-to-date protective equipment?

Are they being paid commensurate to their selfless service to our country?

I think it would be safe to answer all of these questions with “probably not.”

However, grandiose, self-serving bridges, highway landscaping projects, dust-control mitigation projects and warehouse rehabilitation projects are being funded.

That’s the kicker.

**Staff Sgt. Tim Kane (ret.)
Glendale, Ariz.**

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Sgt. Dies Of “Non-Combat” Injuries

October 5, 2005 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 1010-05

Sgt. Larry W. Pankey Jr., 34, of Morrison, Colo., died at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 3, of non-combat related injuries sustained in Balad, Iraq, on Sept. 23. Pankey was assigned to the Army Reserve's 467th Engineer Battalion, Greenwood, Miss.

Bomb Kills Missoula Marine

October 5, 2005 (AP)

A young Marine from Missoula has been killed in Iraq, the 13th man with Montana ties to die in Iraq or Afghanistan since 2001.

Andrew Bedard, 19, died Monday when the Humvee he was driving hit a roadside bomb, a friend of the family said.

Bedard was a 2004 graduate of Hellgate High School. He joined the Marines after graduation and finished 12 weeks of basic training earlier this year at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego.

He had been in Iraq for about a month.

Bedard is the son of Denny and Michelle Bedard of Missoula.

"They're just trying to get their feet back under them right now," said Pete Deneault, who works with KGVO radio personality Denny Bedard at Clear Channel Radio in Missoula.

Friend and neighbor Brian Gaul described Andrew Bedard as a personable guy who missed his friends and family in Montana so much, he used to drive home from San Diego during basic training just to spend one day with them.

"We'd always say, man, that's a long way, but he'd always say it was worth it, even if it was just for a day," Gaul said.

Gaul said he spoke by phone with his friend in Iraq two weeks ago.

"He was just one of those guys who was pretty much friends with everybody," Gaul said. "He was rarely ever down and just a fun kid to be around."

No matter how much Gaul asked Bedard about the military and going off to war, Bedard always had a way of turning the conversation around.

"It always ended up with me talking about what's going on around here," Gaul said. "That's really what he cared about, his family and his friends."

Brunswick Marine Killed By Mine

Oct. 05, 2005 Associated Press

BRUNSWICK, Ga. - A Marine from Brunswick was killed in Iraq when the Humvee he was driving struck a mine, his father said.

Cpl. John R. Stalvey, 22, had been with the Marines for four years.

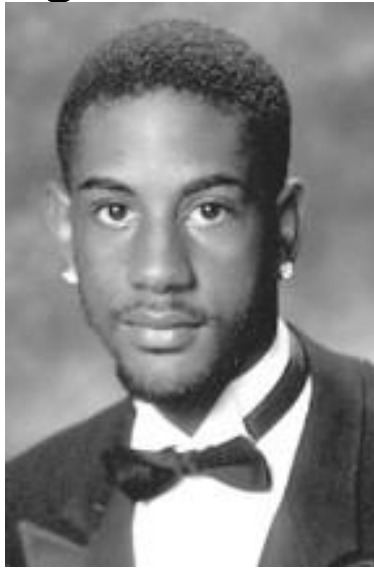
"He joined because of 9/11," his father, Billy Stalvey, said. "He wanted to serve his country and keep us free."

Stalvey said his son had planned to leave the military next summer.

"He had just met a young lady in Jacksonville, N.C.," Stalvey said. "They were getting pretty serious. He was looking forward to getting out and starting a life with her."

Three Marines who were in the same vehicle were also wounded in Monday's incident.

Hamburg Marine Wounded



Cedric Phippen

10/05/05 Ashley County Ledger

A 2002 Hamburg High School graduate is in a U.S. military hospital in Germany after he was injured in an explosion in Iraq over the weekend.

Cedric Phippen of Hamburg, a U. S. Marine security guard, was scheduled to undergo surgery Tuesday morning, October 4, according to his mother, Delois Phippen.

"He called me Sunday night after church," Mrs. Phippen said. "He said he was in an explosion, and that it blew a hole in his leg and he had a lot of lead in his body."

Phippen told his mother that some in his unit were killed but that he did not know how many. She said she did not know where the explosion occurred, had only scant details concerning the incident.

Phippen enlisted in the Marine Corps upon his graduation from high school.

Local Soldier Shot In Iraq; Family Lied To About "Secrecy"

10/05/05 Fayette Publishing, Inc.

A local soldier was seriously injured in Iraq when he was shot in the neck this weekend, but his family has not been provided details about the incident.

Sgt. Ryan Coffield of Fayetteville, a 2002 graduate of Fayette County High School, is recovering in a military hospital in Germany, his sister, Amanda Coffield, said Tuesday afternoon.

Sgt. Coffield was shot in the back of his neck, and his spinal cord was injured; he could not move his left arm and doctors are hopeful that will improve as swelling from the injury recedes, Amanda Coffield said.

It is possible he will never regain use of his left arm, she added.

None of the people who were with Sgt. Coffield at the time were injured, the Coffield family was told by military officials.

Sgt. Coffield was based at FOB MacKenzie in an unknown section of Iraq, because the base's location was classified, his sister said. He was stationed in Fort Benning in Columbus, Ga. **[She was lied to. FOB MacKenzie is at Samarra East AB. There's nothing secret about it.]**

Sgt. Coffield and his wife Sandra are expecting their first child, a boy, in December. Sgt. Coffield's mother, Deb, lives here in Fayetteville as does Sandra.

To help him recover from his injuries, doctors plan to install a "halo" device that will help keep his head immobile, Amanda Coffield said. His father, Rod Coffield, who lives in Texas, had a similar treatment years ago and is aware what his son is about to go through, she said.

Deb and Rod Coffield were visiting their son in Germany before he will be flown to Walter Reed Medical Center where his wife expects to greet him.

It is expected Coffield will stay at Walter Reed for an extended period of time because he will be in the halo brace for a couple of months, his sister said.

A sniper specialist, Sgt. Coffield teamed with Christopher Kitto to take eighth place in the world during a recent international sniper competition, Amanda Coffield said.

Sgt. Coffield enlisted in the Army during his senior year, and started basic training three days after graduation. He received his basic and airborne training at Fort Benning and received air assault training in South Korea while spending a year at Camp Casey on a volunteer assignment.

He was just promoted to sergeant in August.

BUSH REGIME TRAINS AFGHAN, IRAQI TROOPS: THEY DESERT WHOLESALE, STEAL WEAPONRY, AND JOIN THE RESISTANCE

Desertions in Iraq and Afghanistan are particularly worrying for US-led forces for two reasons. The first is that the lives of allied soldiers are placed directly on the line by disloyal forces.

The second reason is that some of these deserters are not simply leaving the army, they are changing sides and joining the resistance with their new-found skills.

Oct 6, 2005 By Ramtanu Maitra, Asia Times Online Ltd

In Iraq, the Americans and British are trying to build up an Iraqi army, but it is an uphill struggle.

An estimated 500,000 Iraqis have signed up for the new army and security forces, but more than half have been dismissed as untrainable or deserted. Among those who remain, their loyalty is frequently questioned. Many reports indicate that the army and police have been penetrated by insurgents.

Desertions in Iraq and Afghanistan are particularly worrying for US-led forces for two reasons. The first is that the lives of allied soldiers are placed directly on the line by disloyal forces.

The second reason is that some of these deserters are not simply leaving the army, they are changing sides and joining the resistance with their new-found skills.

From Iraq to Afghanistan to the Central Asian republics, Western militaries are finding it is one thing to train a local army, quite another to obtain its loyalty.

The US and British militaries have suspended their training programs for Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Georgia, Ukraine and Azerbaijan after more than 800 troops from these countries deserted, and many reportedly joined militant groups, such as al-Qaeda and Chechen rebel forces.

According to intelligence sources quoted in the media, the deserters escaped with weapons, including M-16s, rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), communications equipment, night vision goggles and other ordnance items.

In Afghanistan, meanwhile, IRIN News of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs earlier this year quoted an Afghan Ministry of Defense report saying that more than a quarter of the Afghan National Army (ANA) had deserted since its formation in mid-2002.

"Around two to three thousand soldiers have fled the ANA so far," General Zahir Azimi, a spokesperson for the ministry, told IRIN.

Last fall, news appeared for the first time that Afghan rebels were buying sophisticated Russian and Chinese-made SAMs.

The report quoted an unnamed rebel saying: "A general conduit of the weapons smuggling for Afghanistan is from Iraqi Kurdistan, from where the weapons are transported through Iran to Afghanistan.

The SAM missiles of Russian and Chinese origin are available at a cost of US\$2,500 each. The main market of these missiles is Afghanistan."

In a September 27 article, "The Taliban's new face", noted-Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir, who met with Afghan officials, was told that the Taliban were buying weapons from local warlords and also across the border from Pakistani tribes. **This official also confirmed the Asia Times Online story that the Taliban were in possession of SAM missiles of Russian and Chinese origin, which they were getting from Iraqi Kurdistan.**

While the US military remained silent about the existence of these missiles in resistance hands, on September 25 another US military helicopter crashed in southern Afghanistan, killing all five American crew members. The Pentagon summarily said, "There is no indication of hostile fire."

It is not difficult to understand why the Pentagon is cautious over what may turn out to be a bitter truth. Helicopters are the most effective vehicles in the moon-like terrain of much of Afghanistan. When choppers get shot down, it is really bad news.

It is widely acknowledged that the Soviet military was demoralized in the 1980s by the Stinger missiles supplied by Washington to the Afghan mujahideen fighters, who routinely shot down Russian Hind helicopter-gunships.

It is quite possible that the people now using the SAMs were trained by the US in the ANA, or in Iraq. In Afghanistan it is accepted that the resistance penetrated the recruitment process at the very outset, as in Iraq.

A part of the problem is that the Pentagon employs private contractors to train many of the foreign troops. This made it easier for the resistance to penetrate the recruitment process and get training. Since the private contractors are paid by the number of people they train, vetting of the trainees becomes somewhat less rigorous.

Most of these US-UK trainers are private outfits, often run by retired military officers, including three- and four-star generals. A few are familiar names, like Kellogg Brown & Root, a subsidiary of Halliburton. Other private trainers have more cryptic names, like DynCorp; Vinnell, a subsidiary of TRW; SAIC; ICI of Oregon; and Logicon, a unit of Northrop Grumman. One of the best known, Military Professional Resources Inc (MPRI), boasts of "more generals per square foot than in the Pentagon".

The growing number of helicopter crashes in almost picture-perfect Afghan weather in recent months cannot be explained away too easily.

The September 25 downing of a Chinook is one of many. A US helicopter crashed on July 29 during a routine training mission in Bagram, north of Kabul, injuring the two crewmen on board. That crash came a day after a Chinook CH-47 helicopter was destroyed in what the military called "a hard landing" during an operation to hunt down insurgents in the south. In April, a CH-47 crashed in Ghazni province, killing 15 American servicemen and three US civilian contractors.

In all these cases, the Pentagon cited the weather, "technical problems", or a "hard landing". On the other hand, the resistance has routinely claimed credit for shooting down these choppers.

However, now that the elections are over, the US military is not showing any sign of lessening its hardline approach. A senior US Army commander in Afghanistan, General Jason Kamiya, said recently that using airpower to eliminate militants continued to be an essential component of US military operations.

This despite a statement by Afghan President Hamid Karzai that he saw no more need for air strikes to be used in the "war on terror". Karzai also called for a halt to searches of Afghan houses by coalition troops and urged the US military not to enter homes without authorization from the Afghan government.

SAM missiles or not, the US is having to do some serious rethinking in Afghanistan.

No Flowers Today, But Rewards To Anyone Who Kills A U.S. Serviceman

October 05, 2005 By Antonio Castaneda, Associated Press

HADITHA, Iraq — **Marines leading an offensive in western Iraq patrolled the gravel and dirt streets of this riverside city Wednesday, catching the scent of Ramadan holiday meals wafting from homes and eyeing fliers taped to lampposts offering rewards to anyone who kills a U.S. serviceman.**

U.S. forces met little resistance when they stormed into Haditha late Monday or in the 48 hours since as they've fanned out house-to-house. But they found dozens of roadside bombs and mines buried under major streets — including one that killed three soldiers in nearby Haqlaniyah, also targeted in the offensive to try to retake three Euphrates River towns from al-Qaida insurgents.

American commanders say they aim to push out the militants and base an unspecified number of U.S. and Iraqi troops inside the towns.

The task is a tall one for thinly stretched U.S. forces and new Iraqi soldiers who have been largely based outside insurgency-plagued areas.

Together, Haditha and surrounding towns form a large population center — with more than 100,000 residents — where militants have been operating almost freely after driving out Iraqi security forces with a series of bloody attacks earlier this year.

The fliers taped up in Haditha's streets offering 1.5 million Iraqi dinars — about \$1,000 — to anyone who kills a U.S. soldier or Marine.

Marines said some residents asked if they were going to stay in the city, while other Iraqis said they feared the U.S. presence would increase attacks as the fight now moves downtown.

"It's affecting their lives without a police force or a hospital — people do not feel safe," Mustafa said, speaking through a military translator as Marines dug up several roadside bombs near his home.

However, the degree of local support for the insurgency in this Sunni Arab city remains unknown. Mustafa refused to say whether he thought most Haditha residents support insurgents or U.S. forces.

In late August, Marine commanders said they had not been in contact with Haditha's leaders since the spring, one indicator of the level of bitterness between Sunnis, who fear they are being marginalized in Iraq's new government, and the U.S. military.

Insurgents have filled the void, showing their strength with a number of heavy attacks.

One former soldier in Saddam Hussein's army said from his home's gated courtyard that the U.S. military presence would not guarantee safety. Instead, he said, it would attract insurgent strikes that often kill civilians. The area would be better off if both sides left, he said, adding that he was afraid to walk to the market to buy food with hundreds of Marines patrolling the streets.

The top Marine commander in the area, Col. Stephen W. Davis, also warned Haditha and neighboring towns would need to be a long-term focus for U.S. and Iraqi forces.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Welcome To Liberated Afghanistan: **U.S. Occupation Backs Religious Fanatic Collaborators: Editor of Afghan Women's Magazine Arrested**

05 October 2005 By Amir Shah, The Associated Press

Kabul, Afghanistan - The editor of an Afghan women's rights magazine was jailed after a presidential adviser accused him of publishing un-Islamic material - including an article critical of the practice of punishing adultery with 100 lashes, officials said Friday.

Minority Shiite Muslim clerics in Kabul objected to that article and another in the monthly Haqooq-i-Zan - or Women's Rights - that argued that giving up Islam was not a crime, Police arrested the magazine's editor, Ali Mohaqiq Nasab, on Saturday.

Late last week, the clerics approached Mohaiuddin Baluch, religious adviser to President Hamid Karzai, who said he forwarded the magazines to the Supreme Court.

"I took the two magazines and spoke to Supreme Court chief, who wrote to attorney general to investigate," Baluch told The Associated Press. **Baluch said the articles were directly against the principles of the Quran.**

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

TROOP NEWS

No End To Stop-Loss;

Collapse In Recruiting Blamed

10.4.05 By Matthew Cox, Army Times staff writer

Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Richard Cody conceded today that the Army's missed recruiting goal means there's no way to cut back on stop-loss anytime soon.

"It does have an impact," Cody said at the Association of the United States Army's annual meeting. "We are still an Army in stop-loss; I think if we had met this year's (goal) we could have taken a look at stop-loss and readjusted."

General Says Debating About Iraq War Is Good For The Troops

By the way the troops don't mind you debating the issue back here. I mean, I was in Vietnam. We - a lot of us wondered why there wasn't more debate. We wondered why mainstream people were not debating it.

10.4.05 Ret. Army General William Odom interviewed by Amy Goodman on Democracy Now. [Excerpt]

Odom:

But -- so the judgments out there are not good, and I have heard from many junior officers the view that, yes, we're winning tactically. Our unit wins every tactical battle. But the big picture, the strategic picture, we're losing.

If they kill one of us for every thousand we kill -- they have over 20 million people, we have 123,000. You know, the numbers are just against us. And once one begins to look at it objectively like that, it - you've got to ask what this is worth, what you gain by doing this.

Look, that's what happened in Vietnam. I mean, I, for different reasons, I had a similar view in Vietnam.

By the way the troops don't mind you debating the issue back here.

I mean, I was in Vietnam. We - a lot of us wondered why there wasn't more debate. We wondered why mainstream people were not debating it.

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.

Blackwater Fuckup Killed Afghan Troops

“The report confirms our findings that Blackwater is fully responsible for this crash and this needless loss of life,” Spohrer said. “Clearly it was not conducting its flight operations in compliance with safety standards and regulations set by the government.”

October 05, 2005 Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — A contractor bears full responsibility for a plane crash in Afghanistan that killed three soldiers, an attorney claims in an amended lawsuit.

Attorney Robert Spohrer filed the amended complaint seeking punitive damages Tuesday in federal court in Orlando on behalf of the soldiers' families.

Lt. Col. Mike McMahon of West Hartford, Conn.; Chief Warrant Officer Travis W. Grogan of Moore, Okla.; and Spc. Harley D. Miller of Spokane, Wash., died Nov. 27 when their plane crashed into a mountain near the Iran border. Three Blackwater USA employees were also killed.

The families initially filed their lawsuit in June targeting the Melbourne-based aviation subsidiaries of N.C.-based Blackwater USA, but they are now seeking punitive damages because a report from the Army's investigation of the crash has been completed, Spohrer said.

“The report confirms our findings that Blackwater is fully responsible for this crash and this needless loss of life,” Spohrer said. “Clearly it was not conducting its flight operations in compliance with safety standards and regulations set by the government.”

The amended complaint claims the contractor “committed numerous egregious violations” of federal air safety regulations for crew selection and instruction, communications and flight-locating equipment, pilot oxygen requirements and flight planning.

According to the original suit, the pilots were newly deployed to the region and unfamiliar with the route. The pilots failed to file a flight plan and strayed from the normal air route between two bases. Rescue efforts were delayed because the company failed to use the electronic location transmitter.

Miller survived the crash but died of internal injuries before rescuers arrived two days later.

Army Investigating Cherokee County Soldier's Death: Man Died In Surgery To Fix War Wound



Sgt. John "Bill" Smith

October 5, 2005 WYFF4

GAFFNEY, S.C. -- The Army is investigating the death of a Cherokee County soldier who died after getting injured in Iraq months ago.

Sgt. John "Bill" Smith was a member of the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Division.

Smith's mother and stepfather said he injured his shoulder last December when a car bomb exploded near his Humvee. "It blew him against the door and it pulled some ligaments and tore his shoulder up pretty bad," mother Cat Calvert said.

In early September, Smith had surgery at an Army hospital in Hawaii.

"The shoulder healed, but it was going to have to be fixed, so that's why they suggested he wait till he got to Hawaii which is where he was going to be stationed," Calvert said.

But afterward, his parents said a doctor told them there was a complication involving a blood pressure medication.

They said he went into cardiac arrest and died.

"(The doctor) thought what had happened was that it dropped his blood pressure so low that it caused him to have a cardiac arrest. He went into cardiac arrest and it just starved his brain, and they don't know for how long, but the damage was so severe he couldn't recoup from it," step father Roger Calvert said.

"He had five friends that were in Iraq with him, that flew in from the states to be with him until he passed. They stayed right there beside him," Calvert said.

Smith leaves behind a wife and two young children.

Ethnic Makeup Of Military Differs From U.S. Society As A Whole

September 23, 2005 By Rick Maze, Army Times staff writer

A new congressional report says the military is not a mirror of society.

There are proportionately more blacks and fewer Hispanics in the military than in the population as a whole, according to a report on demographics of the all-volunteer force, released Friday by the Government Accountability Office.

There are other differences, too. There are substantially fewer women in the military and proportionately fewer service members have attended college than in the population as a whole.

The report shows there are some significant differences in the makeup of the military and the civilian work force in the U.S.

Whites are underrepresented in the military. The U.S. work force is 71 percent Caucasian — or other ethnic groups included as whites — while the military is 67 percent white.

Blacks are overrepresented, comprising 17 percent of the military and 11 percent of the civilian work force

Hispanics are underrepresented, making up 9 percent of the military and 11 percent of the work force.

Women, not surprisingly, are also underrepresented, comprising just 16 percent of the military, although policies and laws restricting assignment possibilities for women are the chief reason, not other recruiting factors.

Deaths of U.S. troops in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom also have been disproportionate to ethnic makeup of the military, the report states.

Based on the 1,841 deaths and 12,658 wounded service members as of May 28, when the report was being prepared, 71 percent of the dead are classified as white, 9 percent as black and 10 percent as Hispanic.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Announces Consolidation Of Organizations, Election Of Field Commander

9.29.05 Salah Almkhtar, Chairman of the Friendship, Peace and Solidarity Organization In Iraq; Albasrah.net. [Excerpt]

About ten millions Iraqi citizens trained and prepared to start Guerilla warfare, if Iraq confronted any invasion, the leadership of Iraq has selected highly sophisticated elite, to start popular armed resistance immediately after invading Iraq.

That's why The Iraqi revolution has not started from small and limited attacks, by small units, but it has started with larger scale military operations, from the first days of the occupations.

This fact was the biggest shock and surprise for the American administration, which believed that the Iraqis will receive the American forces by flowers.

Before having one year past the Iraqi armed resistance has almost liberated the major cities in Iraq, by making it very hostile to the occupiers, and friendly to the armed resistance freedom fighters.

The best example Of that kind of full control of the resistance to Iraq, is the so called (the green zone), in which the American armed forces headquarter, the embassy of the united states, and the puppet government of Baghdad, are located.

Out of the green zone Americans, and their puppets, cannot move, the instructions for the American armed forces, forcing them to not stay more than ten minutes in any area in Iraq, because the intelligence service of the resistance will inform the central leadership of the resistance, and then the attack will be definite on the American troops.

In the light of the above mentioned facts, The Iraqi resistance has escalated, and expanded the military operations, against both American troops, and the puppet government, to shorten the time of the collapse of the occupation.

Within the context of this development, the armed resistance has declared the unity of the major resistance organizations, and established Unified's leadership to the major resistance movements, and elected comrade Ezzet Abraham as field commander of the Iraqi resistance.

Beside that The resistance has, repeatedly, said the government of Iraq after the liberation, will be coalition government, representing all organizations participating now in the armed revolution, in addition to national, religious and tribes leaders, supporting or participating in the armed resistance.

I would like to inform you that the armed resistance is the major power in Iraq, and there is no other major Iraqi power, all groups and political parties, old or new, have to support the political and strategic program, declared in September 2003. know Peaceful resistance in Iraq has no legitimacy a way from the armed resistance, all political organizations in Iraq should support that program, based on rejection of any compromise with the occupation, and the refusal of any participation in the so called (political process), such as the participation in the referendum on the draft constitution, imposed by American government on Iraq, to guarantee that Iraq will be dismantled into three tiny states, on sectarian and racists base.

The resistance believes that any participation in any election or referendum will be direct recognition of the occupation, and adding fabricated legitimacy on it.

From Mesopotamia (Iraq) The history has started, the first civilization appeared, and now we, the Iraqis, the grandsons of the Babylonians, repeat the making of the history, from Baghdad the capital of the armed revolution against the evil empire of the united states of America, the march of liberation of humanity has started, and it will never be stopped, because hundred thousands of Iraqis are prepared themselves to die for the noble principles of the free humanity.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

We Will Not Be Intimidated

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

October 03, 2005 by Elizabeth Wrigley-Field, ZNet

At three different colleges in the last week -- Holyoke Community College, George Mason University, and UW-Madison -- students engaging in peaceful counter-recruitment were met with police repression. At Holyoke and George Mason, students face ongoing charges from the school or the state. The ability of the student movement to grow, and to continue to challenge our schools' role in recruiting for the war, will depend on our defending our own right to dissent.

Holyoke Community College

On Thursday, September 29, 30 Holyoke Community College (HCC) students engaged in a peaceful picket of the Army National Guard recruiting table in the school's cafeteria, organized by the HCC Anti-War Coalition, a chapter of the Campus Antiwar Network.

The police assault began after Peter Mascaro, the head of campus security, snatched a homemade sign reading "Cops are hypocrites" from a student's hands, calling it "inappropriate."

Officer Scott Landry then grabbed the student and, joined by three other officers, lifted him off the ground and assaulted him. When other students came to his defense, Landry then grabbed another student, Charles Peterson -- who witnesses describe as playing a moderating role throughout the protest -- put him in a headlock, and sprayed mace in his face. Around 20 state police armed in riot gear and gas masks then arrived in the cafeteria.

When one student tried to leave, he found 10 to 15 police officers pointing their guns at him.

Only with difficulty were the protesters able to peaceably disperse.

The next day, Charles Peterson was visited at home by two members of the state police, who informed him that he is indefinitely banned from campus, and will be arrested for trespassing if he sets foot on HCC.

In violation of the school's own rules, Charles has been denied any due process, and has not even been given the ability to speak to administrators about the charges against him. Since Charles -- in addition to being a model student at HCC, holding the James Taylor Award for Excellence in Philosophy and serving as the Vice President for Academic Affairs on the Student Senate -- is also employed at the school, this creates a financial hardship for him as well.

George Mason University

On the same day as the assault on HCC's protesters -- Thursday, September 29 -- Tariq Khan was assaulted and arrested by police at his school, George Mason University (GMU) in Virginia. Tariq, a Pakistani-American who himself served in the U.S. Air Force, stood near a Marine recruiting table at his school wearing signs that said "Recruiters tell lies. Don't be fooled" and "U.S. out of Iraq, Israel out of Palestine, U.S. out of North America."

Three right-wing students quickly surrounded Tariq, yelling at him and ripping one of the signs from his shirt. One of them, who claimed to be a veteran of the Iraq war, said he could not wait to return and kill more Iraqis. School administrators then arrived to question Tariq, followed by officer T.L. Reynolds, who threw Tariq on the ground and put him in a choke-hold.

According to GMU student David Curtis, who witnessed the entire sequence of events, as Tariq's eyes were watering and his face turning red, he struggled to keep saying that he was not being violent and was being attacked for no reason.

Officer Reynolds picked him up from behind, slammed him into a stage (cutting his face), and threw him back on the ground, choking him once again. Two students (including one who had been harassing Tariq) and a non-security campus employee then assisted Reynolds in violently handcuffing Tariq.

Police dragged him to a police car and threatened him with pepper spray. Throughout this experience, Tariq Khan repeatedly stated his own non-violence and innocence.

Despite requests for medical treatment and a lawyer, Tariq received neither, and was taken to the Fairfax Adult Detention Center, where he was charged with trespassing (on his own campus), resisting arrest, and disorderly conduct.

His treatment throughout echoes the racism of the U.S. treatment of Arab prisoners in Guantanamo Bay and Iraq.

As Tariq relayed to me, Officer Reynolds justified handcuffing Tariq by telling him, "I didn't know who you were, and what with 9/11 and everything, there's no telling what you would do." Another officer chimed in, "You people are the most violent people in the world. You're passive aggressive!" Officer Reynolds then warned Tariq to keep his mouth shut and avoid looking at anyone, because if he so much as looked at an officer wrong, they would "hang you from the ceiling by your feet."

The day before the assaults at HCC and GMU, 25 students at the University of Wisconsin at Madison were threatened with arrest if they continued to peacefully protest military and CIA recruiters at their school's career fair -- even though no police officer or administrator was able to show them a campus rule they were violating.

It is clear that HCC and GMU are not anomalies. Campus administrators and right-wing forces on campus watched the counter-recruitment movement take off last spring, and they are determined not to allow their schools to become the sites of the new movement against military recruiters.

But no amount of repression can disguise a fundamental shift that has taken place in U.S. politics over the past few months.

Cindy Sheehan's stand in Crawford ignited a sense among the antiwar majority that something can be done -- and the callousness of the government's response to Hurricane Katrina helped show why it must be. As hundreds of thousands marched in DC, a Rasmussen Reports survey found that 23% of Americans consider themselves part of the antiwar movement. For the first time in years, it is supporters of the war, not its opponents, who are on the defensive.

Our movement needs to defend students whose academic status, financial security, and physical safety are threatened by campus administrators and police.

The HCC and GMU administrations were banking that no one would care what they did to their students.

The over 700 phone calls of complaint HCC has already received -- and the statements of support that have poured in, from people ranging from Cindy Sheehan to other students who have faced similar repression -- show how wrong they were.

This is the time to stand up for our freedom of dissent -- because we're right to oppose the war, right to oppose recruitment in our schools, and now, most people know it.

Call the HCC, GMU and UW-Madison administrations and let them know what you think:

HCC President William Messner: (413) 552-2222

HCC Campus Police Officer/College Republicans Advisor Scott Landry: (413) 552-2048

GMU President Alan Merton: (703) 993-8700

UW-Madison Chancellor John Wiley: (608) 262-9946

For more information or updates on the defense campaigns at all three schools, see <http://www.campusantiwar.net/>

Elizabeth Wrigley-Field is a student at NYU and a member of the Campus Antiwar Network who writes frequently on counter-recruitment. Email her at wrigleyfield@nyu.edu

Iraq Was Hell For Roman Imperial Soldiers Too

10.4.05 By GARY LEUPP, CounterPunch

The current empire is mired in Iraq, drawn there by an emperor using a pretext to win renown, producing by his invasion widespread outrage conditioned by religious fanaticism.

The empire's troops face what the Romans faced in Mesopotamia---in Gibbon's words, the legionnaires were "fainting with heat and thirst, could neither hope for victory if they preserved their ranks, nor break their ranks without exposing themselves to the most immanent danger. In this situation they were gradually encompassed by the encompassing numbers, harassed by the rapid evolutions, and destroyed by the arrows of the barbarian cavalry."

"I Think Everyone In Iraq Is About Two-Degrees From Zarqawi"

27 September 2005 blogenlust.typepad.com

Does Zarqawi have an infinite supply of lieutenants/deputies/aides/associates/second-in-commands/etc., or do we just arbitrarily declare that every 100th insurgent we capture or kill is "a top aide" to Zarqawi?

Discuss amongst yourselves.

Below is an almost comprehensive list (I'm sure I missed a few) of Zarqawi's "top lieutenants" we've captured, killed, or acknowledged over the last two and a half years. I count 33.

Abu Azzam (9/27/05)

"The No. 2 official in the al-Qaida in Iraq organization."

"The top deputy to Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi."

Mohammed Salah Sutton, aka Abu Zubair (8/14/05)

"A lieutenant of al-Qaida terror boss Abu Musab al Zarqawi."

Abu Abd al-Aziz (7/13/05)

"Zarqawi's 'main leader in Baghdad'"

Khalid Suleiman Darwish, aka Abu Alghadiya (6/26/05)

A Syrian dentist...was described by Arab media as the 'number two' in Iraq's al Qaeda network and tipped to succeed its leader Abu Musab Al Zarqawi."

Mohammed Khalaf Shakar, aka Abu Talha (6/17/05)

"A top lieutenant of terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi."

Mullah Mahdi, aka Abu Abdul Rahman (6/4/05)

"Suspected deputy of terrorist leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi"

Abu Karrar (5/27/05)

"The Washington Post quoted a Zarqawi lieutenant by the nom-de-guerre of Abu Karrar as saying the Jordanian militant was shot and wounded in fighting with US forces near the western city of Ramadi."

Mullah Kamel al-Assawadi (5/25/05)

"Described as one of al-Zarqawi's top lieutenants."

Agha Umar (5/25/05)

"A top aide to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi"

Amar Adnan Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi, aka Abu al-Abbas (5/9/05)

"A high-ranking aide to terrorist leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi."

Ghassan Muhammed Amin Husayn al-Rawi (4/26/05)

"A key associate of Iraq's most wanted militant, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi."

Hamza Ali Ahmed al-Wdimizyar, aka Abu Majid (beginning of April-05)

"Zarqawi associate"

Salman Aref Abulkadir Khwamurad al-Zardowe, aka Abu Sharif (beginning of April-05)

"Zarqawi associate"

Taifor Abulsattar Malallah (3/8/05)

"One of the 'princes' of Musab al-Zarqawi's terrorist group."

Talib Mikhlif Arsan Walman al-Dulaymi, aka Abu Qutaybah (2/25/05)

"Iraqi forces have captured a man described as a trusted aide to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi."

Mohammed Najm Ibrahim, aka Mohammed Najm (2/25/05)

"Zarqawi lieutenant"

Adel Mujtaba, aka Abu Rim (2/20/05)

"A propaganda chief of al-Qaeda's frontman in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi"

Anat Mohammed Hamat al-Kays, aka Abu Alid (1/28/05)

"High-level Zarqawi lieutenant"

Sami Mohammed Ali Said Jaaf, aka Abu Omar Kurdi (1/25/05)

"A senior aide to Abu Musab al Zarqawi"

"The 'most lethal' top lieutenant of Al Qaeda's leader in Iraq."

Ismael Jeddani (1/23/05)

"The raids also netted a man identified as Ismael Jeddani, an alleged associate of al-Zarqawi."

Ali Hamad Ardani Yasin Isawi (1/20/05)

"top lieutenant"

Inad Mohammed Qais (1/20/05)

"The deputy prime minister for national security affairs, Barham Salih, later told a news conference that authorities have arrested a third Zarqawi lieutenant."

Salah Salman Idaaj Matar Luhaybi, aka Abu Sayf (12/31/04)

"Zarqawi's chief of operations in Baghdad"

Fadil Hussain Ahmed al-Kurdi, aka Abu Ubaydah al-Kurdi, aka Ridha (12/30/04)

"A senior member of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's network."

Abdul Aziz Sa'dun Ahmed Hamduni, aka Abu Ahmed (12/22/04)

"Zarqawi-linked leader"

Hassan Ibrahim Farhan Zyda (12/14/04)

"An aide to Iraq's most-wanted man, Jordanian Islamist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi"

Abu Saeed (11/26/04)

"A lieutenant of Iraq's most feared terrorist leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi"

Nameless (10/23/04)

The US military has arrested a 'senior leader' in the network run by Jordanian mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi."

Omar Yusef Juma'a, aka Abu Anas al-Shami (9/25/04)

"A senior aide of the Jordanian al Qaeda mastermind, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi"

Umar Baziyani (6/4/04)

"A top aide of al-Qaeda suspect Abu Musab al-Zarqawi"

"His capture removes one of Zarqawi's most valuable officers from his network."

Abu Mohammed Hamza (2/24/04)

"A key lieutenant to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi."

Hassan Ghul (2/23/04)

"The letter was found on al-Zarqawi lieutenant Hassan Ghul, a Pakistani captured in Iraq." The letter in reference was a "17-page letter to senior al Qaeda leaders written by terror mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who asked for help starting a Muslim civil war between Iraqi Sunnis and Shiites."

Nameless (4/30/03)

"An associate of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi has been captured in the Baghdad area."

From the looks of it, I think everyone in Iraq is about two-degrees from Zarqawi.

Note also that after many of these announcements, we were told that it would be a "fatal blow" to the Iraqi insurgency or that we were oh-so close to capturing Zarqawi himself.

Interview With Cindy Sheehan: The Democrats Have Been "Very Cowardly And Spineless"

9.23.05 A Tomdispatch Interview with Cindy Sheehan. [Excerpt]

Cindy Sheehan: I've called George Bush a terrorist. He says a terrorist is somebody who kills innocent people. That's his own definition. So, by George Bush's own definition, he is a terrorist, because there are almost 100,000 innocent Iraqis that have been killed. And innocent Afghans that have been killed.

TD: You met with Hillary Clinton yesterday, didn't you? What do you think generally of the Democratic... well, whatever it is?

CS: They've been very weak.

I think Kerry lost because he didn't come out strong against the war.

He came out to be even more of a nightmare than George Bush. You know, we'll put more troops in; I'll hunt down terrorists; I'll kill them!

That wasn't the right thing to say. The right thing to say was: This war was wrong; George Bush lied to us; people are dead because of it; they shouldn't be dead; and if I'm elected, I'll do everything to get our troops home as soon as possible.

Then, instead of seeing the failure Kerry was with his middle-of-the-road, wishy-washy, cowardly policies, the rest of the Democrats have just kept saying the same things.

Howard Dean came out and said he hopes that the President is successful in Iraq. What's that mean? How can somebody be successful when we have no goals or defined mission or objectives to achieve there? They've been very cowardly and spineless.

OCCUPATION REPORT

So Much For That “Sovereignty” Bullshit: “We Are In Charge Here”

5.10.05 Christian Peacemaker Team Report. [Excerpt]

Wednesday, 21 September

The CPT delegation went in the morning to the al Dora electrical plant.

Although they had the required permission from the Ministry of Electricity, the U.S. soldier guarding the entrance said, "We are in charge here, and we decide whether you go in or not."

Iraqi Parliament Backs Off From Election Fraud

Oct. 05, 2005 QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press & United Press International

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Under U.S. and U.N. pressure, Iraq's Shiite-led parliament Wednesday reversed its last-minute electoral law changes, which would have ensured passage of a new constitution but which the United Nations [and everybody else not as crooked as a dog's hind leg] called unfair.

Sunni Arab leaders who had threatened a boycott because of the changes said they were satisfied with the reversal and were now mobilizing to defeat the charter at the polls. But some warned they could still call a boycott to protest major U.S. offensives launched over the past week in western Iraq, the Sunni heartland.

The altered rules announced Tuesday would have made it much harder for minority Sunni opponents of the draft constitution to reject it, the BBC said Wednesday.

NOTES FROM A LOST WAR:

“The Heavy Stuff Is A Ways Away.” “I Look At A Map. Three Miles”

Oct. 04, 2005 By Matthew Schofield, Knight Ridder Newspapers

Matthew Schofield, Knight Ridder Newspaper's Berlin-based Europe correspondent, is beginning a six-week assignment in Knight Ridder's Baghdad Bureau - his third reporting trip to the Iraqi capital since he accompanied U.S. Marines during the initial U.S. push into Iraq in March 2003. The following account was written as a memo on how he'd spent his second day back in the country.

BAGHDAD, Iraq - So, this was my Tuesday:

Woke up, 7 a.m., gunfire outside. Decided to read in the windowless bathroom, then take shower and brush teeth, using bottled water, of course.

9 a.m. - Kevin, a former British Royal Marine commando who's in charge of security for Knight Ridder, warns that things might be heating up, so be careful out there. He reads the daily reports of violence all over the country.

"Out where?" I ask. "I'm not leaving the building, am I?"

"Yes," I'm told, "You're on for the Green Zone" - the supposedly secure city center that is home to most of the Iraqi government and the U.S. Embassy.

10 a.m. - Go have breakfast. Kevin carries a blue backpack containing an AK-47. He says that I need some exercise and that he's willing to cover me if I go for a swim later. I think he's joking.

11 a.m. - We leave the 10-foot-high blast walls that surround the hotel complex in a two-car convoy. The rear car's job is to run interference in case "bad guys" try to intercept "the package" (that would be me).

Noon - Dropped off several blocks from the Green Zone and walk to Checkpoint 3 (the main entrance). Walking because on Monday Iraqi army soldiers pushed me

back inside the car, while pointing a machine gun at my head and shouting. They fired at reporters - warning shots, the reporters think - from National Public Radio and The Wall Street Journal. The three incidents prompted a U.S. Embassy spokeswoman to start a briefing with journalists by saying, "OK, raise your hand if you were shot at today."

As I'm walking, phone rings. I answer. My Iraqi colleague Mohammed, who reports full time for Knight Ridder, takes the phone from my hand, whispering fiercely, "No English here. Be very, very afraid here."

I get inside and call the number back, reaching a very nice U.S. Army major who says we need to meet to discuss how to make the entrance to the Green Zone safer for journalists. "Can you meet in about an hour?" he asks. I agree, and he says he'll pick me up at the National Assembly building at 12:50 p.m., and we'll walk together to Checkpoint 3.

12:10 p.m. - Get inside National Assembly building. Someone steals my watch at the final security check.

12:30 p.m. - Talking to Saddam Hussein's old translator. He explains that democracy in the new Iraq is a fiasco. Bush's fault, and Bush will have to face the judgment of history for his mistakes. (All times from here are approximate; see above.)

12:50 p.m. - The major is late so I decide to head down to the checkpoint and wait for him. Mohammed says, "No, you're not. You're waiting for his call."

1 p.m. - On phone with the major, who's apologizing for being late when a car bomb explodes at Checkpoint 3 entrance. Gunfire ensues.

1-3 p.m. - Locked down in National Assembly building with legislators while bomb debris and bodies are cleared from the street.

3:15 p.m. - The major calls back. Come on out, he says. I join him walking to Checkpoint 3.

3:25 p.m. - We step around football-sized chunks of bomber hanging like gruesome Christmas ornaments from the razor wire. I point out the journalists' security fears, being forced to walk through a dangerous area to get to Iraqi government and U.S. Embassy briefings. He is concerned. **"Wow, that's dangerous," he says, pushing aside a smoking piece of car interior with a booted toe. "I think the problem is, the guys here are nervous whenever cars come near, especially if they stop, like yours do, to drop you off."**

"No kidding," I say, just avoiding treading on an eyeball.

4 p.m. - We work out a system, as the major agrees that it's not safe for us to walk the route we have been. He says he'll contact the U.S. Army guards, the Iraqi army guards, the private guards, the Georgian army guards, the Iraqi police and the Iraqi traffic cops, all of whom are on duty within 50 yards. I thank him and tiptoe back toward the National Assembly building.

4:30 p.m. - Walk a razor-wired path under gunpoint for several blocks to find waiting driver. He was 100 yards away and watching the entrance during the explosion, then hiding as bullets started raining down. He's happy to leave.

5:30 p.m. - Arrive back inside hotel blast walls, go to room and write story about Iraqi politics.

8:30 p.m. - Order dinner - hamburger with an egg and cheese-ish stuff on it. Kevin notes that it may not be the healthiest meal on Earth.

9 p.m. - The booms are now pretty constant in southern part of town. Kev says it's no big deal. Last night he said the same thing, "It's a gun battle across the street. No big deal." Tonight he notes, "The heavy stuff is a ways away." I look at a map. Three miles.

10 p.m. - And so to bed.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Welcome To The Occupied USA: Wal-Mart Turns In Student's Anti- Bush Photo; Secret Service Investigates Him

October 4, 2005 Matthew Rothschild, The Progressive Magazine

Selina Jarvis is the chair of the social studies department at Currituck County High School in North Carolina, and she is not used to having the Secret Service question her or one of her students.

But that's what happened on September 20.

Jarvis had assigned her senior civics and economics class "to take photographs to illustrate their rights in the Bill of Rights," she says. One student "had taken a photo of George Bush out of a magazine and tacked the picture to a wall with a red thumb tack through his head. Then he made a thumb's down sign with his own hand next to the President's picture, and he had a photo taken of that, and he pasted it on a poster."

According to Jarvis, the student, who remains anonymous, was just doing his assignment, illustrating the right to dissent.

But over at the Kitty Hawk Wal-Mart, where the student took his film to be developed, this right is evidently suspect.

An employee in that Wal-Mart photo department called the Kitty Hawk police on the student. And the Kitty Hawk police turned the matter over to the Secret Service.

On Tuesday, September 20, the Secret Service came to Currituck High. “At 1:35, the student came to me and told me that the Secret Service had taken his poster,” Jarvis says. “I didn’t believe him at first. But they had come into my room when I wasn’t there and had taken his poster, which was in a stack with all the others.”

She says the student was upset.

“He was nervous, he was scared, and his parents were out of town on business,” says Jarvis.

She, too, had to talk to the Secret Service.

“Halfway through my afternoon class, the assistant principal got me out of class and took me to the office conference room,” she says. “Two men from the Secret Service were there. They asked me what I knew about the student. I told them he was a great kid, that he was in the homecoming court, and that he’d never been in any trouble.”

Then they got down to his poster.

“They asked me, didn’t I think that it was suspicious,” she recalls. “I said no, it was a Bill of Rights project!”

At the end of the meeting, they told her the incident “would be interpreted by the U.S. attorney, who would decide whether the student could be indicted,” she says.

The student was not indicted, and the Secret Service did not pursue the case further.

“I blame Wal-Mart more than anybody,” she says. “I was really disgusted with them. But everyone was using poor judgment, from Wal-Mart up to the Secret Service.”

A person in the photo department at the Wal-Mart in Kitty Hawk said, “You have to call either the home office or the authorities to get any information about that.”

Jacque Young, a spokesperson for Wal-Mart at company headquarters, did not provide comment within a 24-hour period.

Sharon Davenport of the Kitty Hawk Police Department said, “We just handed it over” to the Secret Service. “No investigative report was filed.”

Jonathan Scherry, spokesman for the Secret Service in Washington, D.C., said, “We certainly respect artistic freedom, but we also have the responsibility to look into incidents when necessary. In this case, it was brought to our attention from a private

citizen, a photo lab employee.” [Well, did they give the student his poster back or not? If not, by what lawful authority do they dare to keep it?]

Jarvis uses one word to describe the whole incident: “ridiculous.”

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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

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

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

www.williambowles.info/gispecial,

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

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