

GI SPECIAL 3C81:

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



1-64 3rd infantry division lay concrete barriers at Iraqi polling sites in Baghdad.
(AFP/David Furst)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

TWO SOLDIERS KILLED BY VEHICLE ROLL-OVER IN BALAD

October 12, 2005 U.S. Department of Defense News Release 05-10-14C

LSA ANACONDA, BALAD, Iraq – Two 1st Corps Support Command Soldiers were killed and one Soldier was injured when their vehicle rolled over while conducting a combat logistics patrol near Balad about 7:00 a.m. Oct. 12.

2 Fort Benning Soldiers Killed Near Ramadi

Oct. 12, 2005 BY MICK WALSH, Staff Writer, Ledger-Enquirer

Two members of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, were killed Monday near Ramadi, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device was detonated near their Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

The deaths of the two soldiers brought to 20 the number of Fort Benning personnel killed in either Afghanistan or Iraq since February. Five of them have died in Ramadi, a hotbed of the insurgency, since Sept. 5. The first three were all members of the 2-69.

The recent deaths bring to five the number of 1/30 soldiers killed this year. Earlier, Spc. Jacob Palmatier died in an IED attack in Muqadiyah, while Pfc. Steven Sirko and Pfc. Jason Scheuerman died of noncombat-related injuries.

Soldier From Vacaville Dies

"They read it off a paper. It was really cold. Like they do it all the time," she said.

Oct. 12, 2005 Associated Press

VACAVILLE, Calif. - A 28-year-old soldier from Vacaville died this week in Iraq when a car bomb detonated near his checkpoint.

Army Staff Sgt. Jerry L. Bonifacio Jr. died Monday while protecting the Green Zone, a fortification in Baghdad designed to keep U.S. officials safe.

Bonifacio, who also worked at a Martinez refinery, had only three months remaining on his deployment to Iraq. He was engaged to Michelle Baptiste, who shared an apartment in Vacaville with Bonifacio.

Hearing the news was "numbing," Baptiste told The Reporter of Vacaville.

"They read it off a paper. It was really cold. Like they do it all the time," she said.

"Everyone just says they feel numb. It doesn't seem real."

Bonifacio was remembered for his love of comic books and heavy metal concerts, attending concerts of some of his favorite bands - Dio, Poison, Motley Crue and Iron Maiden - with Baptiste.

Bonifacio was originally scheduled to finish his enlistment with the National Guard's 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, in Dublin, last October. His

enlistment was extended so he could go to Iraq in December 2004, but he kept his feelings about the war to himself.

"He never really talked about it," said his mother, Anna Bonifacio. "Last time he was on leave he said he had enlisted for another five years."

Bonifacio, who was raised in Vacaville, is survived by his parents Jerry and Anna, younger sister, Esther, and younger brother, John.

Indiana Soldier Killed

October 12, 2005 AP

PAXTON, Ind. -- A special forces soldier from southwestern Indiana died during an attack in Iraq, the Department of Defense said Wednesday.

Staff Sgt. Matthew A. Kimmell, 30, was killed when an improvised explosive device exploded Tuesday near a military vehicle in which he was riding in the city of Muqdadiyah north of Baghdad, the DOD said.

Kimmell was assigned to the 5th Special Forces Group based at Fort Campbell, Ky.

Larry Kimmell of Paxton, the soldier's father, said Army personnel told him that two soldiers who were with his son were injured in the attack.

Kimmell was a career soldier and had been serving in Iraq since June, his father said.

The soldier's hometown of Paxton in Sullivan County is about 25 miles south of Terre Haute.

Kimmell is the 46th person from Indiana to have died after being sent to the Mideast since the buildup for the invasion of Iraq began in 2003.

Car Bomb Hits US Military Convoy In Baghdad: Casualties Not Yet Announced

Oct. 12 (Xinhuanet)

"A suicide bomber rammed his explosive-packed vehicle into a US military convoy in Ghazaliyah district, causing casualties, but casualties were not known as the US troops sealed off the area," the source told Xinhua.

A Iraqi police patrol was also attacked on its way to the scene when a roadside bomb went off, wounding three policemen aboard, the source added.

Al Mahawil IED Attack On Latvian Patrol Wounds One

2005-10-06 MNF-CS

On Thursday, 6th of October, about 10:00 (LT) Latvian patrol has been hit by improvised explosive device (IED). One Latvian soldier was slightly wounded. He was given an immediate first aid on the spot and than he was evacuated to a Coalition Forces medical treatment facility.

It happened on the road, 2 kilometers south of Al MAHAWIL. Injured soldier's next of kin have been notified about this incident.

“Remind me again, what the fuck is the mission supposed to be?”



U.S. soldiers from the 14th Cavalry Regiment search a haystack near Rawah, October 11, 2005. REUTERS/USAF/Tech. Sgt. Andy Dunaway/Handout

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Canadian Embassy Hit By Resistance Rocket Attack, Guard Wounded

12 October 2005 aljazeera & By DANIEL COONEY, Associated Press Writer

Rockets in Afghan capital Kabul and attacks elsewhere have marked the visit of US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to Afghanistan.

Aljazeera's correspondent reported four rockets being fired early on Wednesday morning in Kabul, a few hours before the arrival of the US secretary of state.

In the early Wednesday Kabul incident, at least four rockets exploded in the Afghan capital, one outside the Canadian ambassador's residence and another at the government's intelligence department.

The explosion outside the residence of the Canadian ambassador wounded two guards. One was rushed to hospital in serious condition, police at the scene said.

The second rocket landed inside an intelligence department office not far from the residence, police said, adding that no one was wounded in that attack but that it had caused some damage.

The Canadian ambassador's residence is tucked away behind a heavily fortified street of the diplomatic enclave, about 1km from the presidential palace, the US embassy and the headquarters for the Nato-led peacekeeping mission.

Two other rockets hit the outskirts of the city.

Mazin Aman Allah, Aljazeera's correspondent in Kabul, reported that unidentified fighters attacked two vehicles carrying medical workers on Wednesday about 35km away from Kandahar.

Two of the five dead were doctors. Three other medical workers in the vehicle were wounded, said doctor Abdul Qadir, director of UN and US-sponsored Afghan Help Development Services, a local aid group that employed the medical workers.

Iowan Injured In Humvee Accident

October 12, 2005 (AP)

A U.S. Army soldier from Iowa City is recovering from injuries suffered in a Humvee accident in Afghanistan.

Pfc. Eric Quiles was injured while serving as a machine gunner on a Humvee when it went out of control and rolled, his family said.

Quiles, 22, a paratrooper with the Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade and 503rd Infantry Division, severely injured a finger and suffered a mouth laceration and cuts and bruises on his head, said his father, Dan Quiles, of Iowa City.

"We're just grateful that he didn't get any more hurt than he did," Dan Quiles said.

“The War In Afghanistan Is Coming To A Tempo That Wasn't Expected”

October 6, 2005 by Jim Lobe, Inter Press Service

WASHINGTON - On the eve of the fourth anniversary of the launch of U.S. military operations against the Taliban regime, Afghanistan presents a mixed picture, according to experts here.

Training programmes for the national army and the police have lagged far behind schedule, leaving vast swathes of the countryside under the control of local warlords, while the death toll for both civilians and U.S. troops killed by Taliban forces and those of their chief ally, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, has mushroomed since last spring.

Indeed, 86 U.S. soldiers have been killed so far this year -- compared to 55 killed between Oct. 7, 2001, when Washington began operations to oust the Taliban, and the end of 2002. More than 1,200 people were killed in just the first six months of this year, according to the International Crisis Group (ICG).

"The war in Afghanistan is coming to a tempo that wasn't expected," said Michael Scheuer, a former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) official who led its efforts to track al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan from the late 1990s, and author of "Imperial Hubris".

Others have noted that insurgent attacks have become increasingly sophisticated in the past year, amid evidence that radical Islamists who have fought U.S. forces in Iraq have brought equipment, expertise and the knowledge they acquired there to Afghanistan.

Even the elections marked something of a disappointment to observers who had hoped for a turnout approaching the 70 percent of eligible voters who voted in last year's presidential elections.

In the event, only about 53 percent of the electorate cast ballots this time. [Other U.S. media have reported 18%.] Those who received the most votes in the most secure parts of the country, such as Ramyan Bachardost in Kabul, ran populist campaigns in which they mainly attacked corruption and waste in international aid and reconstruction, according to New York University analyst Barnett Rubin.

Another problem is its incoherence, according to Nazif Sharani, an Afghan-born anthropologist at Indiana University, who noted that the country has really "ended up with three or four governments", including the U.N. office in Kabul, the U.S. embassy there, international non-governmental organisations that administer most of the international aid, the Karzai government, "and now, the fifth, the parliament", which he described as a hodge-podge of conflicting ideologies and interests.

TROOP NEWS

U.S. Officer Kills Kentucky Soldier: "His Son's Death Has Soured Him On The Military"

Oct. 12, 2005 ASSOCIATED PRESS

WHITEHOUSE - An Eastern Kentucky soldier killed in Iraq was shot by an American officer who pleaded guilty to negligent homicide and was sentenced to 30 months at a military prison, according to the military.

Sgt. Joseph Tackett's death on June 23 was one of 10 homicides since Operation Iraqi Freedom began in March 2003.

The Pentagon hasn't released an official report on the death, but officials said the 22-year-old was killed by a lieutenant who pointed his M-16 rifle at Tackett in a "safe haven," a place where loaded weapons are forbidden.

"He was killed by a stupid, senseless, irresponsible act," said his mother, Kathy Tackett, 52, a food service manager.

At a court-martial, Lt. Willie Davis pleaded guilty Aug. 31 to negligent homicide and negligent dereliction to clear his weapon and maintain muzzle awareness, said Lt. Col. Clifford Kent, spokesman for the Army's 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Ga.

The maximum sentence for the crime is 45 months in prison. Davis, of Lithonia, Ga., was sentenced to 30 months at a military prison at Fort Knox and was discharged from the Army, Kent said.

The Tacketts, from Johnson County, said Davis should have received the maximum sentence.

"To me, that's not enough punishment," said Wendell Tackett, 53, a house builder. "But what I want most from him is an apology."

Wendell Tackett said he and wife only recently learned that Davis is being held in Kentucky and have been going through military channels to try to talk to him.

Tackett's shooting occurred in Baghdad's fortified Green Zone, a walled compound where soldiers can relax and let others protect them, Fort Stewart spokesman Rich Olson said. Pinnell said in his e-mail that Tackett was shot during a nightly briefing with his and Davis' platoon.

Kathy Tackett said military officials told her the shooting occurred in the basement of one of Saddam Hussein's former palaces, which was being used as living quarters.

"They said Lt. Davis came in carrying his weapon and willingly pulled the trigger on a gun he thought was empty," Kathy Tackett said.

Other soldiers asked Davis why he was bringing a weapon into the briefing, against the rules, Kathy Tackett said she was told. To prove the weapon was unloaded, Davis pointed it at Tackett and fired, she said.

The Army's casualty report on Tackett says he died of a gunshot wound to the head.

Wendell Tackett said he hopes the Army's official report provides more details, including why Davis' gun was loaded, why its safety was off, and why Davis didn't fire at the ceiling.

He said military officials told him the report would be completed by early next year.

"It's hard to know why these procedures weren't followed," Wendell Tackett said. "Not knowing exactly how this happened is the worst part."

Tackett, a 2000 graduate of Johnson County Central High School, felt a duty to enlist after 9/11, his mother said.

He was deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq in 2003. After more than a year at Fort Stewart, he was deployed again in January.

Wendell Tackett said his son's death has soured him on the military.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

“It's Overwhelming, To Hold Your Husband's Blood In Your Hands”

At home, Troy kept to himself. At night, he often got up and patrolled the house. He went from window to window, pushing back the curtains, peering out. He went into John's room and stood guard at his bed.

Oct. 12, 2005 BY CROCKER STEPHENSON, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Troy Tuschel, a Wisconsin National Guard sergeant injured by a car bomb in Baghdad on Oct. 27, 2003, was flown from Germany to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

It was early November. His plane landed at night at Andrews Air Force Base. Troy and his wounded companions were carried on stretchers from the plane to a bus, where a Marine in full dress uniform greeted them. The Marine went from soldier to soldier, kneeling at every stretcher, telling each man and woman: "I am here on behalf of the President of the United States."

The Marine said something else, but Troy no longer remembers what. He believes it was an expression of gratitude, but his memory was no longer reliable. He couldn't seem to think straight. He was having stunning headaches. Light hurt.

The blast had lacerated the left side of Troy's neck, face and head, broken his nose, his left maxillary sinus and the orbit of his left eye. Two pieces of glass, now removed, had pierced his left eye, around which small bits of shrapnel remained embedded. And, without piercing his skull, the force of the explosion had injured his brain.

Traumatic brain injuries, by their very nature, alter the way people think and behave.

The cognitive changes are distressing: memory loss, difficulties in problem solving, impaired speech. But behavioral changes - depression, panic disorder, phobia, mood disorders, impulsiveness - can be even more frightening to wounded soldiers and their families.

They are, at least for a while, and in some cases for the rest of their lives, not the same.

What's more, their wounds are as invisible as they are intimate. Unlike an amputee who has lost an arm or a leg, those who suffer traumatic brain injuries have been shattered in secret, the extent of their damage most apparent to those who love them and, to a lesser degree, themselves.

Cindy Tuschel was busy trying to track down her husband. Troy sounded surprised when, more than two weeks after he was wounded, Cindy found him at

the Mologne House, a hotel for injured soldiers and their families on the Walter Reed campus, and called his room.

Troy did not want Cindy to visit. He told her he didn't want her to see him banged up. He thought the sight of all the other wounded men and women would upset her. But Cindy insisted. The two went back and forth until Troy reluctantly agreed that Cindy, her teenage son, John, and Troy's parents could fly out.

But before Cindy could book tickets, the front doorbell rang.

It was Troy.

Troy, who had taken a cab to Hales Corners, Wis., from the airport, arrived in civilian clothes, carrying a reeking black duffel bag.

Cindy recognized the smell. A blouse Troy brought her from Somalia had the same smell, though much fainter. No matter how often Cindy washed the blouse, the smell never went away. It smelled like nothing else. It smelled foreign. Cindy thought of it as the smell of war.

Two days passed before Cindy worked up the courage to open the bag. She unzipped it on the bedroom floor.

She found a toothbrush and shaving kit. Some civilian clothes. And, amazingly, wadded in a ball, the unwashed desert fatigues Troy was wearing when he was wounded.

A patina of Baghdad dust covered his boots, spattered with blood. His pants were filthy and blood-crust. His shirt was bloodiest of all; the sight and the smell of it made her queasy.

It was here, in their bedroom, confronted with the residue of Troy's injury, that Cindy first sensed the degree to which her husband had been hurt. She didn't know what she should say or do.

"It's overwhelming, to hold your husband's blood in your hands," she would say later.

"They train soldiers to do this and that. But they don't train us, the wives, what to do, what to expect," she said. "They don't train us on how to pick up the pieces."

For more than a year and a half, Troy commuted from Milwaukee to Walter Reed.

At home, Troy kept to himself. At night, he often got up and patrolled the house. He went from window to window, pushing back the curtains, peering out. He went into John's room and stood guard at his bed.

It would have been better, Troy said, if he had been injured in a firefight, when he was alert to the possibility of being wounded. To be struck down by a car bomb while seated peacefully in an office, he said, was like having someone sneak up behind you and split a 2-by-4 over your head.

You can never again, he said, relax.

Troy could not sit at a table with his back exposed to the room. Sometimes he laughed for no reason at all. Sometimes a string of obscenities popped from his mouth. Sometimes in public, he suddenly cursed people and pushed them out of his way. He was ashamed, but he couldn't help it.

Troy's moods swung back and forth. He never hurt Cindy or John, but there were times when the two were afraid of him. When his behavior became particularly unmanageable, Cindy would call Troy's parents, Ed and Gloria, and they would come over. She knew Troy would be embarrassed if he knew why they were there, so she told him they were there just to share a meal.

Nightmares roiled Troy's sleep. Late one night, Troy grabbed Cindy by the shoulders, climbed on top of her and began pushing her into the bed.

"Troy," she said. "Troy. Look at me. It's Cindy. Look at me."

Troy's eyes were open, but they were focused elsewhere. Rather than struggle against him, Cindy kept saying: "Troy. Look at me. It's Cindy. Look at me."

After a few minutes, Troy looked into the face of his wife, saw it was her, and began to cry.

The panic attacks were the worst.

Troy's most memorable attack occurred in early December 2003, while he was back in Washington for treatment at Walter Reed.

He was among a group of injured soldiers invited to the White House for the annual Christmas Pageant of Peace and the lighting of the White House Christmas tree.

It was still light when they boarded the bus to the White House, dusk by the time they arrived. The bus sat for a while, awaiting security clearance.

There was noise in Troy's head. It sounded like a machine, its gears grinding louder and louder. Lights scraped against the windows of the bus. Troy's chest tightened. He couldn't breathe. His vision blurred. The people seated around him dropped into shadow.

Troy ran to the front of the bus and began kicking the door, yelling: "Let me out! Please! Let me out!"

Troy says there's a place in heaven for the sergeant major in command of the bus. He stood up and said, "Bus driver, let that soldier off this bus," then stood outside with his arm around Troy until Troy was calm.

Though shaken, Troy was able to sit through the ceremony. Near the beginning, President Bush said:

"Also with us this evening are military personnel (applause) including some who have recently returned from duty in Iraq and Afghanistan (applause).

"I know your families are glad to have you back. They're proud of your service and so is our country. On behalf of all Americans, welcome home, and job well done."

But Troy was not home.

The distance of his journey from Baghdad to his home in Hales Corners could not be measured in miles. It was as if the bomb that blew apart the police station in Baghdad had blown Troy off the map; it had blown him out of his life.

"I am not the same man," he told Cindy.

Cindy agreed. Of course. He was now wounded.

What was complicated, however, was figuring out - if it was even possible to figure out, if it was even appropriate to figure out - where Troy's injury ended and where Troy began.

Cindy had been unsure of their marriage before Troy left for Iraq. She had hoped that when he returned, they could make a fresh start. A fresh start seemed no longer possible.

Indeed, Troy's brain injury undermined the very faculties a fresh start required while, perversely, exacerbating the emotional issues that had troubled Cindy for years. Though Troy needed Cindy, perhaps more than at any other time in their marriage, she found him to be more distant, physically and emotionally, than ever.

She felt their marriage cracking beneath the stress.

Cindy started to have seizures again, much like the seizures she had when she and Troy were newly married, when she felt trapped with her young son at Fort Gordon, Ga., while Troy went off to war.

Was she again trapped? If their marriage now fell apart, where would she go? John was no longer a little boy; he was 18 and heading into his final year of high school. He could adjust. But what would she do for money? Where would she live?

Troy was wounded, but the nature of his injury wounded Cindy, too. Her damage was collateral.

Troy was not oblivious to Cindy's struggle. But every visit to Walter Reed convinced him that he had little to complain about. Compared with some people, Troy thought he got off lucky.

Unlike Tyler, for example, a soldier from Alaska whom Troy met at Fran O'Brien's, a Washington steakhouse co-owned by a Vietnam veteran who, on Friday nights, let wounded soldiers eat and drink for free.

Tyler - Troy doesn't remember his last name - was torn apart by a roadside bomb near Tikrit. He was mistaken for dead, put in a body bag and loaded on a truck, where he would have died had not someone seen his body bag stir.

Troy said Tyler, who was burned, suffered a head injury and lost a portion of his left leg, was so upbeat when they met that Troy went back to Walter Reed thinking, in a tellingly disconnected way: "If you feel sorry for yourself, you better not."

Troy remained on active duty, assigned to an armory in Milwaukee where his responsibility was, as he put it, "to do whatever the Army asks me to do."

What the Army wanted him to do was recover as fully as possible, and his tasks at the armory were flexible enough to allow him to keep his appointments with a constellation of ophthalmologists, audiologists, neurologists, psychologists, counselors and the like, in Milwaukee and in Washington, involved with his case.

In time, Troy's visible injuries healed and the scars faded. Outwardly, he looked like his old self. Inwardly, he struggled.

He was prescribed medications to help manage his mood, such as Zoloft, amitriptyline and mirtazapine, as well as his pain, such as Imitrex, ibuprofen and naproxen. Not wanting to raise any red flags, Troy refilled his prescriptions each month, but - to Cindy's frustration - took only the medicines that relieved his headaches. The rest, he said, made him feel strange.

One evening, the phone rang. It was an Army official of some sort. He told Cindy that there had been an incident in Baghdad involving her husband's company. The official assured Cindy that her husband was safe and uninjured.

Troy was standing just a few feet away. How could the Army not know this, she wondered. How could the Army not know that Troy was no longer in Baghdad?

Troy laughed when Cindy told him about the phone call. She laughed, too.

She laughed, but wondered if anyone was paying attention.

A few weeks ago, Cindy took off her wedding band, gave it to Troy and told him that their marriage was over.

They were out to dinner. Seated across from one another, Cindy placed a square packet of crackers in the center of the table and told Troy that the packet was their house.

She wanted to be as clear as possible. She placed a round creamer behind the crackers, and told Troy that the creamer was the door. She placed another creamer behind the first and told Troy that she was the creamer going out the door.

She told Troy she loved him but that she could no longer reach for him and not have him reach back. He had to reach back. Then she took off her ring.

Troy wouldn't take it. He told Cindy that he loved her. He told her he could change. He would take his medicine. He would attend support groups. She and John could come too, if they wanted. He could change. He could do better. He loved her. He would reach back. He would try.

One morning, several days later, after John had left for school, Cindy put the ring back on her finger and showed it to Troy.

"Please," Troy said, "don't ever take it off again."

It's Official: 2005 Regular Army, Army Reserves & National Guard Recruiting A Failure: "Biggest Shortfall In 26 Years"

October 12, 2005 By Robert Burns, Associated Press

Alone among the military services, the Army fell short of its 2005 recruiting goals — not just the active-duty Army but also the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard.

The Army met its monthly goals from June through September but ran up such large deficits last spring that it ended the 12-month counting period with 6,627 fewer recruits than its goal of 80,000.

It was the Army's first full-year deficit since 1999 and its biggest shortfall in 26 years.

The Army National Guard fared the worst in 2005. It signed up 50,219 for the year, which is only 80 percent of its goal.

The Army Reserve finished with 23,859 recruits, or 84 percent of its goal.

The Navy Reserve also fell short, at 88 percent of its goal; the Air National Guard finished with 86 percent of its goal; the Air Force Reserve met 113 percent of its goal; and the Marine Corps Reserve finished at 102 percent.

1507 More Reservists Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse

October 12, 2005 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 1038-05

This week, the Army, Navy and Air Force announced an increase in the number of reservists on active duty in support of the partial mobilization. The Marine Corps and Coast Guard had a decrease. **The net collective result is 1,507 more reservists mobilized than last week.**

“Our Bloated Military Establishment” “225,000 Officers. One Officer To Tell Every 5 Enlisted Soldier What To Do”

Oct. 2, 2005 by CBS News correspondent Andy Rooney

I'm not really clear how much a billion dollars is but the United States — our United States — is spending \$5.6 billion a month fighting this war in Iraq that we never should have gotten into.

We still have 139,000 soldiers in Iraq today.

Almost 2,000 Americans have died there. For what?

Now we have the hurricanes to pay for. One way our government pays for a lot of things is by borrowing from countries like China.

Another way the government is planning to pay for the war and the hurricane damage is by cutting spending for things like Medicare prescriptions, highway construction, farm payments, AMTRAK, National Public Radio and loans to graduate students. Do these sound like the things you'd like to cut back on to pay for Iraq?

I'll tell you where we ought to start saving: on our bloated military establishment.

We're paying for weapons we'll never use.

No other Country spends the kind of money we spend on our military. Last year Japan spent \$42 billion. Italy spent \$28 billion, Russia spent only \$19 billion. The United States spent \$455 billion.

We have 8,000 tanks for example. One Abrams tank costs 150 times as much as a Ford station wagon.

We have more than 10,000 nuclear weapons — enough to destroy all of mankind.

We're spending \$200 million a year on bullets alone. That's a lot of target practice.

We have 1,155,000 enlisted men and women and 225,000 officers. One officer to tell every five enlisted soldier what to do. We have 40,000 colonels alone and 870 generals.

We had a great commander in WWII, Dwight Eisenhower. He became President and on leaving the White House in 1961, he said this: "We must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. ..."

Well, Ike was right. That's just what's happened.

Asshole Punishes Student For Asking Soldier "Good Question"

10.10.05 Army Times

A ninth-grader in Fargo, N.D., was banned from his school's assemblies after asking a sensitive question to former Army pilot Michael Durant.

Phil Sannes also had to apologize to the helicopter pilot after asking Durant on Sept. 22 whether he had been raped during his capture by hostile forces in Somalia.

"I felt the question posed was inappropriate at that time and that place," said Peggy Stibbe, assistant principal at Sannes' school.

In 1993, Durant flew a Black Hawk in Mogadishu, Somalia. The Army pilot was shot down, captured and held for 11 days.

The pilot told students there were details he didn't want to share, Stibbe said.

When Durant opened the floor to student questions, Sannes asked his.

"I just wanted to know," the ninth-grader said. "It was a serious question."

Durant said it was a good question but he wouldn't answer it.

FCHS Grad Recuperating From Iraq Wound At Army Hospital In D.C.

Oct. 12, 2005 By JOHN MUNFORD, The Citizen

A local soldier is back stateside recovering from injuries he received when he was shot by a sniper while on patrol more than a week ago.

Sgt. Ryan Coffield of Fayetteville, a 2002 graduate of Fayette County High School, is now at Walter Reed Army Medical Hospital in Washington, D.C. This week he faces surgery to repair shattered vertebrae in his neck to keep the bone fragments from causing further damage to his spinal cord, said his mother, Dee Coffield of Fayetteville.

Those bone fragments could be causing pressure on the spinal cord, which might explain Sgt. Coffield's inability to move his left arm. Sometime after the surgery Sgt. Coffield will begin a rehabilitation program.

Sgt. Coffield's wife, Sandra, joined him Saturday. She is pregnant with the couple's first child, a boy due in late December.

While in intensive care, Sgt. Coffield shared a room with another soldier whose injuries were more extensive, and Coffield has tried to encourage him, Dee Coffield said.

She added that there are many other soldiers at the hospital who are in bad shape, and she is asking local residents to pray for all injured soldiers and their families.

Sgt. Coffield said he was able to "hang on" through the injury due to thoughts of "being able to see my son's eyes open for the first time," his mother related.

“Put The Money Where It Will Protect Us To Ensure We Can Make It Home”

10.10.05
Letters To The Editor
Army Times

Too true, Spc. Forman

Thank you to Spc. Joshua Forman for telling the truth ["Life at the palace," Sept. 12].

I served 3½ years in the active-duty Army until I was released on a medical discharge. I hear about issues through the Army Times or someone in my chain of command. But it never hits me the same way when I hear it from an NCO or an officer, as it does when I hear it from a fellow "lower enlisted."

I hear about bonuses and these so-called pros to re-enlisting out in the box, and I think what about the people already out there? What about the soldiers already struggling to make ends meet? Not only is being away from your family for long periods of time hard on your mental state, but being out of the loop on an everyday American level is damaging.

Uncle Sam is putting too much emphasis on making it better for only a handful of people and not putting more emphasis on every soldier.

If they are not going to pay soldiers so we can stop living paycheck to paycheck, then at least put the money where it will protect us to ensure we can make it home to make it better for our families.

Either way, let's not lose sight of what is important: getting our soldiers home safely and giving them what they deserve for putting their lives on the line.

From the Defense Finance and Accounting Service crying about money it messed up, to civilians trying to scam us, to the war veterans not getting money and proper medical care, when are we going to buckle down and give soldiers what they deserve?

Former Spc. Joya Myers
Fairbanks, Alaska

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

GET THE MESSAGE?



Demonstrators demand British military troops get out of Basra October 12, 2005.
REUTERS/Atef Hassan

“They Want Us To Participate As They Slaughter Our Sons And Brothers”

October 13, 2005 People's Daily Online

Many people in Fallujah, which used to be a main battlefield against US troops, share the same thoughts.

"Participation is aimed at driving back the cause of evil as this draft constitution is full of evil, we should stop the division of a unified country," Sheikh Abed Khalaf al-Zobaie, Imam of al-Ra'uof mosque in Fallujah, said in an interview with Xinhua.

However, there are still people like Abu Umar insisting that all what have happened in Iraq is just an American game and rejecting the referendum.

"Why I should participate in a funny American game, since the constitution will pass whether we participate or not," Abu Umar said.

"They want us to participate as they slaughter our sons and brothers in the western cities and towns," he added.

Rafie Sabbar al-Falahi, another Fallujah resident also, rejects the participation, accusing the Americans and the Shiite-dominated government of detaining thousands of Iraqis and turning Anbar people homeless by destroying their cities.

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

Assorted Resistance Action

October 12, 2005 By THOMAS WAGNER, AP & CNN & Aljeera

BAGHDAD, Iraq - A bomber killed 30 Iraqis at an army recruiting center Wednesday.

The attacker set off explosives hidden beneath his clothing at the first of two checkpoints outside the recruiting center in Tal Afar, where men were gathering to apply for jobs, said army Capt. Raad Ahmed and town police chief Brig. Najim Abdullah. They said at least 30 people were killed and 40 wounded.

In Baghdad, Saad Naif al-Hardan, Iraq's minister of provincial affairs, escaped an apparent assassination attempt when a convoy of cars preparing to pick him up at

his office was hit by a car bomb that wounded five bodyguards and five bystanders, police said.

BAQUBA - Seven Iraqi soldiers and two civilians were wounded when a car bomber attacked an Iraqi checkpoint in Baquba, northeast of Baghdad, police said.

The head of the Samarra tribal council, Hikmat Mumtaz, was killed by armed men in al-Muatasim neighbourhood of the Iraqi city of Samarra, a police source said.

The armed men opened fire at his car while he was on his way home, the source added.

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

Blast Shuts Northern Iraq Pipelines



Iraqi soldiers at burning pipeline, Baiji Oct. 12, 2005 (AP Photo/Bassim Daham)

October 12, 2005 (AP)

An explosion shut down an oil pipeline near the northern city of Baiji on Wednesday, a police official said.

"A mortar round landed at 6:00 a.m. (0300 GMT) on a group of pipelines in al-Fatha area near Baiji, causing a huge fire and damaging part of an export pipeline which conveys oil to the port of Ceyhan in Turkey," the source said.

The blast also damaged the pipelines which convey oil and gas from Kirkuk to one of Iraq's largest refineries in Baiji, some 200 km north of Baghdad, and to Dora refinery in southern Baghdad, he said.

Firefighters and Iraqi security forces reached the area where thick black smoke could be seen rising into the sky, he added.

The blast occurred early Wednesday at Fatiha, 10 miles northeast of the Baiji refinery, said Mattshar Abdullah, who works on a special Iraqi police force set up to guard oil pipelines and refineries.

The Kirkuk-Baiji pipeline is critical to Iraq's oil export operations.

That line is only intermittently open, however, since incessant insurgent sabotage has shuttered it regularly since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003.

Wednesday's explosion is the third suspected sabotage attack against a northern pipeline in the past week, Dow Jones Newswires reported. Similar blasts have damaged pipelines in Ishaqi, near Samarra, and Debbs, near Kirkuk.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“I'm So Sorry I've Been Silent For Such A Long Time”

Anna, a 72 year old woman sat in front of me. Her son was killed in Vietnam 32 years ago. Today, Anna would join Gold Star Families for Peace. For a brief moment we embraced, and Anna whispered to me as we wept. "I'm so sorry I've been silent for such a long time."

September 13th, 2005, Sherry Glover, MFSO Houston; Bringthemhomenowtour.org.
[Excerpt]

As I walked in that hot Crawford ditch August 6th, I sensed the cartilage rip in my left knee. By the time we reached Detroit I couldn't bear my weight on it. I had to leave the tour and return home. I'll need surgical repair of tear, scheduled for next week. I envisage myself temporarily 'in the stands' for a short time, and remain anxious to get back 'on the court'!

Secondly, my son in law, currently stationed just south of the Syrian-Iraq border checked in last week to say it would be a few weeks before he could call home again.

Now I understand why. The media reports some sort of insurgent movement into Iraq along that border. Communication shuts down when a soldier is killed until the family is officially notified by the DoD so I owe my daughter the support she needs right now, and hopefully it will be only a matter of time until we hear from him again. Meanwhile, Dakota, my only grandchild doesn't know her father's face.

I addressed a crowd at a short stop in Highland, Indiana at the war Veteran's memorial. It was here I realized the true importance of this tour.

Anna, a 72 year old woman sat in front of me. Her son was killed in Vietnam 32 years ago. Today, Anna would join Gold Star Families for Peace. For a brief moment we embraced, and Anna whispered to me as we wept.

"I'm so sorry I've been silent for such a long time."

"No regrets, Anna. We 'arrive' when we 'arrive' ", I told her, and met Anna's eyes through my tears. I then thanked her for the courage to finally speak the truth which I know for her, as for all of us, is very hard to do. I promised her I would keep speaking out if she would!

For now, I leave with this memorized quote from George Bernard Shaw. It forever echoes what remains in my heart.

"This is the true joy in life- the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one: The "being" a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy."

"I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can."

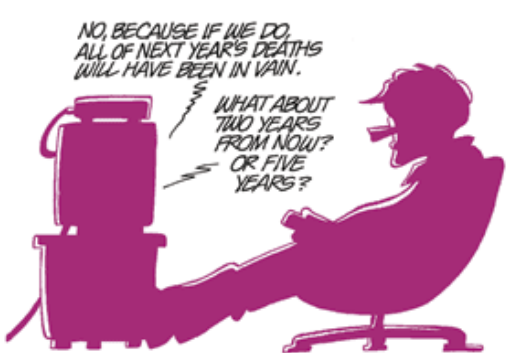
"I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. I rejoice in life for it's own sake."

"Life is no brief candle to me; it is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations."

Duty calls. Won't you join me and Anna?

In gratitude and service to humanity

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.



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

“TO ME, THE SEPT. 24 EVENT WAS A MARCH OF THE BETRAYED”

If I allow myself to be honest, I have to say that no one, save for the military itself, is more betrayed than parents. My fiancé is in Iraq for the second time, and I cannot fathom any stronger devotion to another human being. But I sense something different about the connection between parent and child.

By Wendy Chambers, Athens [Georgia] Banner-Herald Forum. [Posted without date.]

Tonight, when you look in on your sleeping son or daughter, ask yourself this: What cause would be noble enough for you to sacrifice your child? How much noble evidence would you need for your child to be an "acceptable loss?"

Take a moment and experience the luxury of being able to ask these questions. It's something you should think about, because you want to know very firmly how noble a cause needs to be in order for the death of your child to be acceptable, in order for you to put one foot in front of the other every day and live while the child you loved, nurtured, and cherished is gone.

Because if you don't decide what is a noble cause, what is an acceptable loss, your government will decide for you. Think of this when you son fills out his Selective Service form, a legal requirement within 30 days of his 18th birthday.

On Sept. 24, I marched against the Iraq war in our nation's capital with Military Families Speak Out, an organization that supports the troops and is against the war.

We're an organization composed solely of relatives of military members affiliated with the war. Parents are the most active, and likely most prevalent, members of this association - as well as the organization that evolved from it, the Gold Star Families for Peace, for those whose loved ones have died in Iraq.

To me, the Sept. 24 event was a March of the Betrayed.

We all feel profoundly betrayed by our own government, which would mislead the public about phantom weapons of mass destruction and illusory connections to 9/11, and would use our families for purposes they chose to not openly reveal.

We steeled ourselves as our loved ones left, bound to their duty, regardless of their personal sentiment about the war.

And we steel ourselves every day for more bad news from Iraq, for the next loss, for the next vigil, for the next march, for the next rally, and on and on. It's the least we can do for our loved ones who had no choice.

If I allow myself to be honest, I have to say that no one, save for the military itself, is more betrayed than parents.

My fiancé is in Iraq for the second time, and I cannot fathom any stronger devotion to another human being. But I sense something different about the connection between parent and child.

Anne Roesler's son is now on his third deployment to Iraq. She runs on little sleep because she is constantly studying innumerable news sources related to Iraq and her cell phone never leaves her side. She speaks of her son with measured fierceness, as if daring anything to harm him.

Phil and Linda Waste have three sons, as well as a grandson and a granddaughter, all returned from, currently in, or facing possible redeployment to Iraq. Linda is tearful when she holds out the pictures of these children and grandchildren; Phil is somber and protective of her.

Denise Thomas' daughter was sent to Iraq despite a serious medical condition she was told would make her undeployable. While she was gone, my friend worried so about her daughter that she hugged herself at night, pretending her daughter was safely in her arms, singing soothing hymns to let her spirituality carry her through one more day, just one more day.

Many parents have been catapulted into activism as a result of the death of their children in Iraq. The endless tears, they realized, would never bring their sons or daughters back, but their actions could help prevent others from losing their children. So Celeste and Al Zappala speak out relentlessly for their beloved son, Sherwood, killed as he searched for WMDs in Iraq. They don't want that to happen to your child. They don't want you to awaken to what they do every day, every hour, every minute.

If you quickly dismiss a protesting parent as a left-wing extremist, do you know where those beliefs originated? Do you realize that the last thing in the world any of us would want to be doing is protesting our government? How "extreme" is a peaceful march if your government asked for the life of your child under false pretenses?

Marching in Washington on Sept. 24 was the very least all of us could do for our loved ones caught or killed in this war. Thoughtfully and empathically asking why military families, Iraq veterans, Vietnam veterans and more than 100,000 others felt compelled to march is surely the very least that you can do.

Think of us when you look in on your sleeping child, safe and alive, and ask for what noble cause they are worth sacrificing.

Chambers is a psychology professor at the University of Georgia. She is engaged to an Army captain serving his second tour of duty in Iraq.

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.

Received:

Testing For D.U. In New York State

October 09, 2005 Via Ben Chitty, NY/VVAW

Concerning a Possible NYS DU Bill: Messages from People Working on It (Oct. 2005)
[Excerpt]

By Sheree Craigue

Message from Joan Walker-Waslyk, contact person for possible NYS legislation on DU testing

How about making New York the next state to take responsibility for the health of its National Guards members returning from the battlegrounds of today? The Federal VA is not doing this job and thus are breaking their contracts with the soldiers.

We need a NY Bill National Guard Vets/Testing/Registry and Care Law similar to the Connecticut one passed by both houses of their Legislature this summer. Anyone who wants to work on this project contact Joan Walker, DU Media Campaign, 845-679-6938 joanwalker@gmail.

The young nurse who cared for me in Kingston Hospital Rehab Unit in the winter of 2003 represented both the practicality and the patriotism of National Guard enlistees. She had worked her way through nursing school, still was actually-- going for a higher degree-- and she needed the extra money and limited time commitment of being a National Guardswoman. She served monthly and for two weeks in the summer, preparing herself to guard us. Her equally strong motive was patriotism. She was a noble person, and she felt strongly that she was guarding the nation.

She thought of the 'Guard' as the Minute Men from 1776. We talked about this because her Unit had just been "called up for active duty." In Iraq! We were both incredulous. But she was clear that if that was how one would "guard" our "nation," she was determined to do it.

I have never had the nerve to trace that young woman. I even forget her first name now. What I know is that she was making a sacrifice, and it was for us, her patients, all New Yorkers. To think that she might now be ill and even disabled from the toxins, heavy

metals and uranium particles she breathed over there is somehow worse for me than to think that she might have been shot.

The Federal Government is notoriously not keeping its promise to care for its soldiers for their whole lives. That would include the "best practice" testing demanded by the Connecticut National Guard Testing/Registry and Care Law. That would include keeping track and truly treating the returned National Guard soldiers who are ill. The National Guard is the Defense Force in this country under command of the States. Each state that has released them to the Administration's Iraq action must take responsibility for its own patriotic, practical Guardsmen and women when and if they return.

The Connecticut Bill (on DU) is an enormous step in that direction.

Message from Ulster County Legislator Sue Zimet, whose County Legislature unanimously passed a resolution calling on NYS to pass legislation on DU similar to that passed by Connecticut.

The Ulster County Legislature unanimously passed a resolution requesting that New York State "protect our veterans returning from their tour of duty in Iraq by passage of the Connecticut Bill No. 1245: An Act Concerning the Study of the Health Effects of Exposure to Hazardous Materials Including Depleted Uranium and Bill No. 6008: An Act Concerning Exposure to Depleted Uranium by Members of the Armed Forces." Ulster County Legislator Susan Zimet has sent the full resolution to every NYS County Legislature, Governor Pataki, NYS Legislators Bruno and Silver, and scores of other Senators and Assemblymen.

Zimet, cites the successful nationwide effort to phase in the labeling of DU weapons shipments in the US as radioactive, which will help first responders know what they are dealing with in case of a fiery accident. Notes Zimet, "If we keep educating, keep getting information out, keep the pressure on, we can affect change."

What I found interesting through this process is how when we sent the transportation resolution (calling for labeling DU shipments as radioactive) to all the counties (in NYS), it ended up catching the eyes of Sen. Schumer's people and than he ended up doing something on it. All the correspondence the US Dept. of Transportation got on the issue forced them to do the right thing. Also the Brotherhood of Train Engineers and Operators caught on and covered it since they were affected.

So this is a long way of saying that if we keep educating, keep getting info out, keep the pressure on, we can affect change.

Sheree Craigue, a cofounder of the "Depleted" Uranium Weapons Network (of the Hudson Mohawk Region) is willing to be contacted concerning DU at sheree@nycap.rr.com, 518-286-0359. Joan Walker-Waslyk, mentioned in the article, is also willing to be contacted concerning possible NYS legislation at Joanwalker@gmail.com or 845-679-6938.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out
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The following have also posted issues; there may be others:

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