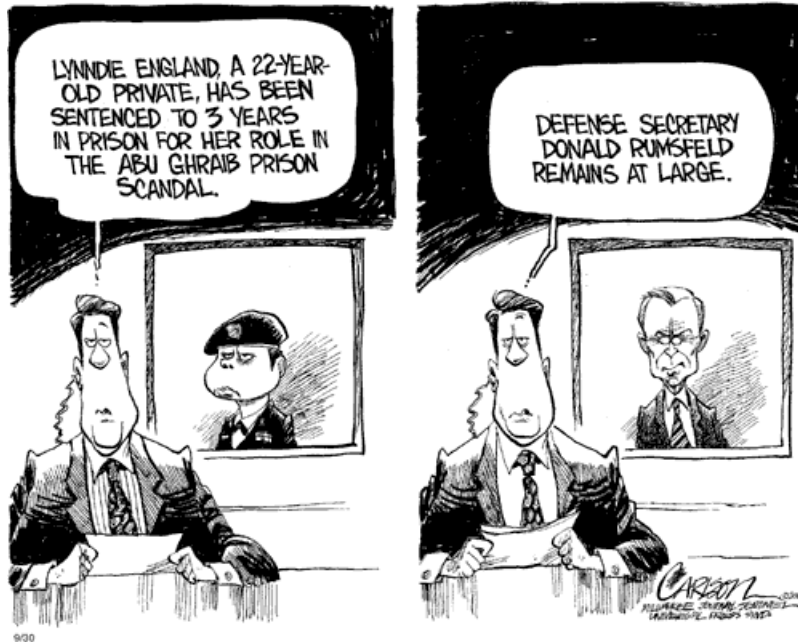


GI SPECIAL 3C83:



**“I Definitely Felt
Betrayed”**

**Severely Wounded Troops
Tormented By Rumsfeld’s Bill
Collectors:**

**“It Was Like I Was Being
Abandoned. I Was No Good To
The Military Anymore”**



At his home near Middletown, N.Y., Robert Loria plays a keyboard. He lost his left hand in a bombing in Iraq. (Dominick Fiorille - Middletown Times Herald Record)

"They call and they call and they call," he said. "They're nasty to me." Sometimes, he said, he feels outraged. "I don't know how much you want from me. I already gave you one arm and a part of a leg."

October 14, 2005 By Donna St. George, Washington Post Staff Writer. [Excerpt]

His hand had been blown off in Iraq, his body pierced by shrapnel. He could not walk. Robert Loria was flown home for a long recovery at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where he tried to bear up against intense physical pain and reimagine his life's possibilities.

The last thing on his mind, he said, was whether the Army had correctly adjusted his pay rate -- downgrading it because he was out of the war zone -- or whether his combat gear had been accounted for properly: his Kevlar helmet, his suspenders, his rucksack.

But nine months after Loria was wounded, the Army garnished his wages and then, as he prepared to leave the service, hit him with a \$6,200 debt. That was just before last Christmas, and several lawmakers scrambled to help. This spring, a collection agency started calling. He owed another \$646 for military housing.

"I was shocked," recalled Loria, now 28 and medically retired from the Army. "After everything that went on, they still had the nerve to ask me for money."

Although Loria's problems may be striking on their own, the Army has recently identified 331 other soldiers who have been hit with military debt after being wounded at war.

The House Government Reform Committee has for several years been looking at pay problems among service members.

Last spring, the committee asked the Government Accountability Office to investigate debt among the war's wounded and whether troops were being reported to collection and credit agencies. The findings are due early next year.

Although efforts are being made to correct such problems, Rep. Todd R. Platts (R-Pa.) said that for some troops, "we've so mismanaged their pay that . . . we've sent debt notices while they're still in combat, in harm's way." Hounding wounded troops is unfathomable, he said. "For even a single soldier, this is unacceptable," he said.

At the root of the problem is an outdated Defense Department computer system, which does not automatically link pay and personnel records. This creates numerous pay errors -- and overpayments become debts, said Gregory D. Kutz, the GAO's managing director for forensic audits and special investigations.

"They've been trying to modernize it since the mid-1990s," he said. "They have been unsuccessful."

No one can say how many troops have pay problems across the military, Kutz said, but the GAO has found that, in certain Army National Guard and Reserve units, more than 90 percent of soldiers have had at least one overpayment or underpayment during deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan.

Typically, troops get a boost in pay while in combat. When they come home, the system can take extra weeks to catch up with the change, and some people are overpaid. For wounded troops -- still adjusting to their injuries and changed futures -- a debt notice can be another bitter discovery.

"It was like I was being abandoned. I was no good to the military anymore," recalled Loria, who served more than five years. "They figured the pay glitch was my fault and I was going to pay for it."

Loria was a combat engineer in Iraq in February 2004 when he rushed out with other soldiers to rescue a comrade wounded by a roadside bomb near Baqubah. After helping load the soldier onto his Humvee, Loria started to drive away. A second bomb exploded.

"My whole body hurt," he said, "and I felt like I was on fire." He noticed that his hand and lower arm seemed to be hanging off to the side.

A week later, Loria awoke in a hospital bed at Walter Reed, his wife watching over him. He had to learn to walk again, and, worse, he had to accept that "I was never going to do something that required two hands." Still, he said, he tried to remember that others died in Iraq and that "so many people in Walter Reed were 10 times worse off than myself."

After he left the hospital, his financial trouble started.

First, his wages were garnished. "I was missing car payments and phone bill payments and everything else," he said.

Then, when he was leaving the military, shortly before Christmas, his debts were laid out: \$2,200 in travel related to follow-up hospital treatment, \$2,400 for combat-related pay he should not have collected and several hundred dollars more for military gear that went missing after his injury.

The full force of his debt hit as he was trying to get to his family in New York for the holidays. "I had a quarter-tank of gas, three cats in my vehicle and no money whatsoever," he said.

His outraged wife, Christine Loria, called the local newspaper in Middletown, N.Y., which published an article, and New York lawmakers became involved: Democratic Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton and Charles E. Schumer and Rep. Maurice D. Hinchey (D). Within a matter of days, the debts were cleared, and Yankees owner George Steinbrenner donated \$25,000 to Loria.

Months later, home with his wife and stepson, Loria was stunned to receive a call from a collection agency. He owed \$646 for housing: nine days of rent, damaged window blinds, a broken refrigerator tray.

"They call and they call and they call," he said. "They're nasty to me." Sometimes, he said, he feels outraged. "I don't know how much you want from me. I already gave you one arm and a part of a leg."

As Loria battled with bill collectors, Ryan Kelly, 25, took his problems to the GAO. He did this at the suggestion of a friend and fellow volunteer at the Wounded Warrior Project, a nonprofit program in Roanoke for injured troops.

Kelly had been wounded in Iraq in July 2003, when his Humvee was blasted by a roadside bomb. "It blew my leg pretty much clean off," he said.

Like Loria, Kelly spent months at Walter Reed, recovering and learning to walk again without his lower leg and foot. The Army staff sergeant struggled with questions about his future. Because he had been injured as a reservist, he was told, there was no guarantee he could deploy to Iraq again. "I didn't want to stay in the Army if I was just going to be a warm body, filling a slot," he said.

When Kelly left the military last year, he recalled, "it was an intense, emotional time." He thought little of the final two checks totaling \$2,700 because he was owed vacation and travel pay, he said. Later, he was bewildered as pay stubs continued to come in the mail, each blank except for a notation of a \$2,230 debt.

Frustrated, Kelly called the Disabled Soldier Support System, a unit where a counselor told him the Army had mistakenly paid him for an extra 22 days. But Kelly said he was told it would all work out well because the military owed him for his leave and travel. A few weeks later, he said, "I got a check, and I thought, 'Oh, that's nice.' "

But after he and his wife moved to Arizona, he received a bill for \$2,230 -- with the threat of a referral to a collection agency. "I was pretty speechless," he said.

When Kelly called the GAO, he learned that the debt was already listed on his credit history.

"What benefit is the Army getting, aggressively going after disabled service members for \$500 or \$1,000 or whatever? Why not give injured service members a little leeway?"

That sentiment is common.

Tyson Johnson, 24, of Prichard, Ala., was stunned after being struck by a mortar round in Iraq to find a bill waiting for him when he came home from the hospital. It was for \$2,700, the bonus he had been given when he enlisted.

"I definitely felt betrayed, because I went over there and almost lost my life," said Johnson, a corporal when he was injured. His debt was resolved after his story made news. "I really didn't need more stress."

Sgt. Gary Dowd, 28, was caught in an ambush 30 miles north of Tikrit, Iraq, in 2003 and suffered multiple injuries, losing his left hand and forearm.

After 13 months of treatment, he retired from the Army early this year. Shortly afterward, he received a letter at his home in Tampa asking him to repay \$600 for a survivor-benefit insurance plan he had opted out of when he signed his deployment papers.

There was no number on the bill to call -- no way to protest. "I was pretty irked that they thought I owed them something," he said. "I feel like I've given them enough."

Although Dowd feels there is no ill intent, he said, "I do wish that once they realized they had an injured service member, they would flag them and say: 'This guy has been in the hospital. He's going through enough already.' "

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

THREE U.S. SOLDIERS KILLED IN BAGHDAD WRECK

October 14, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 05-10-16C

ARIFJAN, Kuwait – Three U.S. soldiers were killed and one US soldier and one non-U.S. civilian contractor were injured in a traffic accident in Iraq today.

The accident occurred 21 kilometers south of the Baghdad International Airport, at approximately 5:06 a.m. today. The injured were taken to the 86th Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad for treatment.

Master Sgt. Dies Of Wounds



Master Sgt. Kenneth Hunt Jr. died Wednesday, Oct. 12, 2005, of a cardiac arrest stemming from burns he suffered during combat in Iraq. Hunt, 40, a machine-gunner, sustained burns over 60 percent of his body July 24 when the vehicle he was riding in struck an anti-tank mine. He died at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. (AP Photo/Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma)

Spc. Oliver J. Brown



Spc. Oliver J. Brown, 19, of Athens, Pa., was killed in Iraq on Wednesday, Sept. 28, 2005. (AP Photo/Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs)

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE:

BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



Tal Afar October 11, 2005 REUTERS/U.S. Navy/Alan D. Monyelle/Handout

RAMADI AMBUSH WOUNDS 3 U.S. SOLDIERS

October 14, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS RELEASE Number: 05-10-50 & ALJAZEERA

Insurgents attacked a convoy carrying detainees outside ar Ramadi the night of Oct. 11. Three U.S. Army Soldiers attached to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), were wounded in the attack. All the wounded were treated at a nearby coalition medical facility.

The convoy was attacked by two improvised explosive devices and small arms fire. The small arms fire ceased when additional coalition forces arrived on the scene.

Italian Army Patrol Attacked; Vehicle Burned

Oct 14 (KUNA)

An Italian army patrol came under a missile attack Friday in Nasiriyah, 350 kilometers south of the capital, said the Iraqi police. A patrol car caught fire when struck by RPG missiles, said the police.

However, the assault has not led to casualties, according to the police.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Explosion Destroys Fuel Tankers Outside U.S. Base

October 14, 2005 By Noor Khan [Posting did not give source] & Aljazeera

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — A blast destroyed eight fuel tankers Friday outside the U.S.-led coalition's main base in southern Afghanistan.

Two drivers were injured in the explosion, which sent thick black clouds billowing over Kandahar Airfield.

All the tankers were destroyed in Friday's blast and clouds of black smoke poured over the Kandahar airfield, the main base for the US-led forces in southern Afghanistan, before the fires were extinguished.

U.S. military spokeswoman Sgt. Marina Evans said the tankers belonged to the Afghan army and one hit a land mine as they were passing the base.

But Afghan army commander Gen. Mohammed Sarwar said the explosion was believed to have been caused by a bomb hidden in one of the tankers.

An Associated Press reporter saw the blackened remains of eight tankers in one of the base's parking lots, next to its outer walls.

There has been a string of attacks on tankers contracted by the coalition to haul fuel to its bases from neighboring Pakistan. Friday's was the biggest in months.

TROOP NEWS

Faking It &

Telling A Stupid Lie About Support For War At Home: Traitor Bush Gets Caught Putting On Lame Publicity Stunt From Iraq

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

"If he wants the real opinions of the troops, he can't do it in a nationally televised teleconference," Rieckhoff said. "He needs to be talking to the boots on the ground and that's not a bunch of captains."

Oct 14 By DEB RIECHMANN, Associated Press Writer

It was billed as a conversation with U.S. troops, but the questions President Bush asked on a teleconference call Thursday were choreographed to match his goals for the war in Iraq and Saturday's vote on a new Iraqi constitution.

"This is an important time," Allison Barber, deputy assistant defense secretary, said, coaching the soldiers before Bush arrived. "The president is looking forward to having just a conversation with you."

Barber said the president was interested in three topics: the overall security situation in Iraq, security preparations for the weekend vote and efforts to train Iraqi troops.

As she spoke in Washington, a live shot of 10 soldiers from the Army's 42nd Infantry Division and one Iraqi soldier was beamed into the Eisenhower Executive Office Building from Tikrit - the birthplace of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

"I'm going to ask somebody to grab those two water bottles against the wall and move them out of the camera shot for me," Barber said.

A brief rehearsal ensued.

"OK, so let's just walk through this," Barber said. "Captain Kennedy, you answer the first question and you hand the mike to whom?"

"Captain Smith," Kennedy said.

"Captain Kennedy," the soldier replied.

And so it went.

"If the question comes up about partnering - how often do we train with the Iraqi military - who does he go to?" Barber asked.

"That's going to go to Captain Pratt," one of the soldiers said.

"And then if we're going to talk a little bit about the folks in Tikrit - the hometown - and how they're handling the political process, who are we going to give that to?" she asked.

The president told them twice that the American people were behind them.

"You've got tremendous support here at home," Bush said.

Less than 40 percent in an AP-Ipsos poll taken in October said they approved of the way Bush was handling Iraq. Just over half of the public now say the Iraq war was a mistake.

The soldiers all gave Bush an upbeat view of the situation.

The president also got praise from the Iraqi soldier who was part of the chat.

"Thank you very much for everything," he gushed. "I like you."

On the training of Iraqi security forces, Master Sgt. Corine Lombardo from Scotia, N.Y., said to Bush: "I can tell you over the past 10 months, we've seen a tremendous increase in the capabilities and the confidences of our Iraqi security force partners. ... Over the next month, we anticipate seeing at least one-third of those Iraqi forces conducting independent operations." **[For more about this chairborne publicity agent dressed up in an Army uniform, see story below.]**

Paul Rieckhoff, director of the New York-based Operation Truth, an advocacy group for U.S. veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, denounced the event as a "carefully scripted publicity stunt." Five of the 10 U.S. troops involved were officers, he said.

"If he wants the real opinions of the troops, he can't do it in a nationally televised teleconference," Rieckhoff said. "He needs to be talking to the boots on the ground and that's not a bunch of captains."

MORE:

U.S. Public Shelled Today From Iraq By Weapon Of Mass Distraction



Bush talks to the troops this morning. **Arrow denotes Lombardo.**
(Village Voice)

What a shock that they were upbeat. David Axe, who's made several forays into Iraq for the Voice — read his latest, "Powerless," a dispatch from southern Iraq — knows Corine Lombardo from having spent time in Tikrit. He tells me: Her job when I was with the 42nd Infantry Division included taking reporters to lunch.

October 13, Bushbeat, The Village Voice. [Excerpt]

George W. Bush — what a newsmaker. In the true sense of the word. This morning, he made it up.

The videoconference his handlers set up with U.S. soldiers in Iraq was staged, as the AP's Deb Reichmann just pointed out.

But here's another part of the flack attack you may not know: The soldier on the left side of the front row was actually a flack herself, though she didn't reveal it during the regime's 24-minute infomercial.

Her name is Corine Lombardo, and I hope she stays safe in Iraq. It's a dangerous place even for flacks. But the fact is, as my sharp-eyed colleague David Axe tipped me, Lombardo probably sees more action watching CNN than action.

I'm glad Lombardo is safe, and I mean her no harm, and it's nothing personal, but I don't believe a fucking word she says, because her job is to make the Bush regime look good.

So what great insights did she have? Here's a portion of her conversation with the POTUS — who moronically stepped on her lines and couldn't even get her rank straight.

Bush started by asking her this:

Is it possible to give us a sense, kind of a calibration of what life was like when you first got there, and what it's like today?

Here's what ensued in this "conversation":

SERGEANT LOMBARDO: *I can tell you over the past 10 months we've seen a tremendous increase in the capabilities and the confidences of our Iraqi security force partners. We've been working side-by-side, training and equipping 18 Iraqi army battalions. Since we began our partnership, they have improved greatly, and they continue to develop and grow into sustainable forces. Over the next month, we anticipate seeing at least one-third of those Iraqi forces conducting independent operations.*

THE PRESIDENT: *That's important. The American people have got to know — and I appreciate you bringing that up, Sergeant Major, about how — what the progress is like. In other words, we've got a measurement system —*

SERGEANT LOMBARDO: *Well, together —*

THE PRESIDENT: *I'm sorry, go ahead.*

(Gee, Sergeant, tell me more! Sorry, I couldn't resist. Anyway, the phony bullshit continued:)

SERGEANT LOMBARDO: *I'm sorry, just, together with our coalition forces, we've captured over 50 terrorists, as well as detained thousands of others that have ties to the insurgency. And I believe it is these accomplishments and the numerous accomplishments from our task force that will provide a safe and secure environment for the referendum vote.*

THE PRESIDENT: *Well, I appreciate that. There's no question that we need to stay on the offense, and we need to stay on the offense with well-trained Iraqi forces, side-by-side the finest military ever — ever to exist, and that's the United States military.*

SERGEANT LOMBARDO: *That it is, Mr. President. Thank you.*

There's no reason to believe what she says. Axe, who has talked with hundreds and hundreds of U.S. and British soldiers, not to mention Iraqis, tells me: There are tens of thousands of training officers and NCOs in Iraq who work with Iraqi forces on a daily basis; Lombardo is not one of them.

<p>Bush could have told the American people that he had at least one public-affairs person flacking them this morning. I mean, a public-relations person spouting the regime's line back at us? Instead, he pretended that they were all combat soldiers, not spokespeople.</p>
--

It's bad enough that the videoconference itself was shamelessly an infomercial. The AP's Reichmann writes:

Reichmann covered all the bases by asking Bush's officially recognized flack about today's subterfuge:

White House press secretary Scott McClellan said Thursday's event was coordinated with the Defense Department but that the troops were expressing their own thoughts. With satellite feeds, coordination often is needed to overcome technological challenges, such as delays, he said.

"I think all they were doing was talking to the troops and letting them know what to expect," he said, adding that the president wanted to talk with troops on the ground who have firsthand knowledge about the situation.

The soldiers all gave Bush an upbeat view of the situation.

What a shock that they were upbeat. David Axe, who's made several forays into Iraq for the Voice — read his latest, "Powerless," a dispatch from southern Iraq — knows Corine Lombardo from having spent time in Tikrit. He tells me: Her job when I was with the 42nd Infantry Division included taking reporters to lunch.

She lives in a fortified compound in Tikrit and rarely leaves.

Many public-affairs types in Iraq never leave their bases, and they're speaking for those who do the fighting and dying.

That Bush. What an ooze-maker.

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)

Idiot Maj. General Lynch And State Department Fool Caught In Incredibly Stupid Lie

[It's not surprising they lie. Everything about the war has been a lie. What's surprising is the stupidity of the liars. With leadership like this on the other side, how can the resistance lose?]

10,14,05 Aljazeera

In Washington, US State Department deputy spokesman Adam Ereli said on Thursday that preparations for the vote were going "very well" and suggested the level of violence was lower than before the last elections in January.

Ereli was unable to give any figures to back up his assertion about the bloodshed, and under persistent questioning appeared to give ground.

"The number of attacks, in our view, is not the measure of the success or the strength of democracy in Iraq," he said.

And "I don't think anyone is under any illusion that the attacks are about to end or that we're turning an important corner", he added.

However, in Baghdad, Major General Rick Lynch, spokesman for the US-led forces in Iraq, emphasised that the number of attacks has dropped compared to the period leading up to the January polls which elected the current legislature.

One reason he gave: US and Iraqi forces have killed or captured 91 people said to be leaders of Al-Qaida in Iraq. "We believe that decimating their leadership has had a significant impact on the number of attacks," he said.

<p>In Washington, a quarterly Pentagon report showed that as of 16 September, the number of attacks by Iraqi fighters was averaging nearly 600 per week, compared with just over 500 around the country's landmark parliamentary elections in January.</p>

Army Says Your Skin Is Not Your Own

October 14, 2005 Associated Press

The Army has long prohibited tattoos that show when the soldier is in uniform.

Last spring, it also banned offensive markings "regardless of location on the body." [Now how are they going to inspect for that? Have nude shows?]

Kent State Counter-Recruiters Win One

[Thanks to D, who sent this in.]

14 Oct 2005 From: Nicole Robinson, CampusAntiwarNetwork@yahoogroups.com

BY Nikki Robinson KENT STATE

Thursday, Oct. 13th KENT STATE had a good day counter recruiting.

From 11-1:00 ten to twenty people, at any given time, surrounded the Army recruiter's table with signs reading: "Military Go Home Now!" "Troops out of Iraq, Military out of our schools" "College Not Combat".

Only three people ever went up to the Army's table, two were already enlisted and one just needed to borrow a pen.

There was a lot of political debate between the recruiter (and her one supporter) and ourselves.

People passing were thanking us, for the most part, and shaming the fact that any branch of the military would show their face at KENT STATE.

At one point the recruiter said out of frustration "ahh, I had to deal with people like you during Vietnam."

A few people stopped by, picked up a sign and joined us for a while.

As the recruiter packed up her things we began chanting "COLLEGE NOT COMBAT, RELIEF NOT WAR" (we were inside the student center, everything echoes--the 17 of us sounded like 170).

The administration came out of their offices (suits everywhere). Everyone, except us got very quiet and was looking to see what was happening and what we would do. What they saw was students following and chanting the Army recruiter on her way out the door.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Attacks Cut Of Baghdad And Basra Electricity

14 October 2005 Aljazeera & CNN

Electricity has gone out for hours across the greater Baghdad area and the southern city of Basra, plunging the two cities into darkness on the eve of the country's key vote on a new draft constitution.

The lights went out soon after sunset at a time when fasting ends during the holy month of Ramadan, at around 6pm. The power was still off more than two hours later, ahead of the start of the 10pm curfew.

Insurgents knocked out the power, blowing up a tower on the main power line bringing electricity into Baghdad from the north, cutting electricity and plunging about 70 percent of the capital into darkness, the ministry said. Water also was out in some areas because pumps would not work.

The Baghdad skyline was black except for pinpoints of light from private generators.

The blackout appeared to have affected much of the Baghdad governorate, an area of about 5600 square km.

"This has affected large areas of the central Iraq and other large surrounding regions," al-Saedi said.

"Our crews are working on fixing them and the problem could be solved soon and the power will be back gradually."

The southern Iraqi city of Basra was also plunged into darkness on Friday evening when saboteurs struck the electrical power network.

"The high-tension lines were sabotaged, which left Basra without electricity," said an engineer at the Hartha power station just north of Basra. The engineer, who asked not to be named, gave no further details, except to say that the outage began at 6:30pm (1530 GMT).

Both cities were still without power at 9:10 pm (1610 GMT).

Assorted Resistance Action

October 14, 2005 Guardian Newspapers & KUNA & Aljazeera & Reuters

A roadside bomb today exploded outside the office of the largest Sunni Arab party in Iraq, days after it dropped its opposition to the country's proposed constitution.

No one was wounded in the blast, but the attack on the Iraqi Islamic party office in Fadhal, central Baghdad, appeared intended to punish it for ending its campaign against tomorrow's referendum.

In the meantime, armed fighters had killed Hamed al Marsumi, a member of the Iraqi Islamic Party, who was in charge of the party's office in Azzaafaraniah, south of Baghdad, said the police.

A statement issued by the party said that Marsumi was killed as he was heading home across the Daiali Bridge when some armed fighters opened fire on his car.

Headquarters of the Iraqi Islamic Party, the major political and religious Sunni power in the country, had become under several attacks in various parts of the country after approving the Iraqi constitutional draft.

In Falluja, insurgents threw three hand grenades that damaged an office, the party spokesman said.

Party offices also were attacked in Tikrit, north of the capital.

Resistance troops throwing hand grenades attacked and destroyed the party's office in Baiji, north of Baghdad, police sources said.

RAMADI - Gunmen forced the family of the local Islamic Party chief, Omar Karbouli, from their home and blew it up, police said. No one was hurt.

Four members of the Iraqi police were killed and three others wounded when a locally made bomb exploded near their patrol on the way leading to Baqubah, 60 kilometers east of Baghdad, said sources of the police on Friday.

In Samerraa, north of the capital, armed fighters attacked another polling station injuring some soldiers who were guarding the station late last night, said sources of the police. They added that the armed fighters used RPGs and machineguns in the attack.

The attacks came a day after five police were killed and 13 wounded in strikes on four polling sites in Diyala province, north of the capital, the US military said.

A masked resistance soldier Friday opened fire on an Iraqi Police patrol in the Southern Governorate of Al-Muthanna, in the heart of Samawah City, using an automatic weapon.

A Police source said the attack left one of the officers on patrol duty injured and that he was taken to hospital for treatment.

A fire broke out at a petrochemical plant in Khor al-Zubair, 40km southeast of Basra, according to an official at the Southern Oil Co.

"The causes of the fire have not been determined, and specialised teams are working to control the blaze," the official added.

KIRKUK - Four guards from the Northern Oil Company. Five people were wounded when a car bomb detonated in Kirkuk.



Rebels attacked two offices of the Islamic Party, a Sunni Arab group that backs the draft occupation constitution, and burned a third in Fallujah. (AFP/Mohammed Khodor)

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Building Iraq Veterans Against The War: A Thank You From An Iraq War Vet

To: GI Special
Sent: October 14, 2005
Subject: msg for GI Spec.

I just wanted to write a quick thank you to all of those who have been pro-active in spreading the word about Iraq Veterans Against the War.

Your help has allowed us to continue to grow and become an integral part of the anti-war movement.

I also wanted to include an observation we've had while spreading the word. We've found that most times giving out the website is not enough for someone to

join. If you come across a potential member, we have a much higher success rate at getting new members when we get their contact info and keep in touch with them, as opposed to only giving them our website.

I suppose this has something to do with the culture of fear that this administration has tried to impose upon us.

So, if possible, it would increase the effectiveness if their email and/or phone number can be obtained and sent in to us with details about the encounter. From there, we can proceed to follow up with them.

Thank you all for the support and keep up the good work!

PS- IAWV flyers are available for download at www.ivaw.net

The Iraqi Occupation Constitution: Made In The USA

The U.S.-controlled political process violates the Geneva Convention's prohibitions on an occupying power imposing political or economic changes on the occupied country. At the end of the day, the constitution leaves the U.S. occupation intact and unchallenged.

10.13.05 By Phyllis Bennis, Democracy Rising. [Excerpt]

**** The constitutional process culminating in Saturday's referendum is not a sign of Iraqi sovereignty and democracy taking hold, but rather a consolidation of U.S. influence and control. Whether Iraq's draft constitution is approved or rejected, the decision is likely to make the current situation worse.**

**** The ratification process reflects U.S., not Iraqi urgency, and is resulting in a vote in which most Iraqis have not even seen the draft, and amendments are being reopened and negotiated by political parties and elites in Baghdad as late as four days before the planned referendum.**

**** The proposed constitution would strip Iraqis of future control over their nation's oil wealth by opening all new oil exploration and production to foreign oil companies.**

The existing process of ratifying the new constitution is far more important to the Bush administration than it is to the majority of people of Iraq.

Whether the proposed constitution is approved or rejected on Saturday, it is a process and a text largely crafted and imposed by U.S. occupation authorities and their Iraqi dependents, and thus lacking in legal or political legitimacy. The most important reality is that the draft does not even mention the U.S. occupation, and

neither ratification nor rejection of it will result in moving towards an end to occupation.

None of the broad human rights asserted in the draft include any call to abrogate the existing laws first imposed by Paul Bremer, the U.S. pro-consul, and still in effect.

From the vantage point of the peace movement, the key issue, like that during the elections, remains that of Iraq's sovereignty and self-determination.

Whatever we may think of this draft constitution, it has been essentially imposed on the Iraqi people by U.S. occupation authorities, and as such it is not legitimate.

We may like parts of this draft, we may disagree with some future Iraqi-led constitutional process - but our obligation must be to call for Iraqis to control their own country and their own destiny.

Once the U.S. occupation is over, and Iraqis reclaim their own nation, we will continue to build the kind of internationalist ties with women's, labor and other civil society organizations fighting for human rights in Iraq, as we have with partners in so many other countries.

But while the U.S. occupation is in control, our first obligation is to work to end it.

The Bush administration has invested a huge amount of political capital in insuring the "success" of the constitution process, sacrificing for the actual content of the draft document to insure that something, almost anything, that could be called a constitution will be endorsed by a majority of Iraqis.

The U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad, has played an active and coercive role in pushing Iraqi political forces to participate and make concessions, and in the actual drafting of the document.

The U.S. goal is to justify the claim that Iraq is "moving towards democracy" and that the post-invasion, occupied reality of Iraq in 2005 is somehow equivalent to the experience of the United States at the time of the drafting of the U.S. constitution.

While numerous politicians, pundits and mainstream journalists routinely refer to the constitution's approval as the "necessary step towards ending the U.S. occupation once and for all," it actually does nothing of the sort.

Despite asserting the rhetorical claim of "sovereignty" and "independence" for Iraq, the constitution as drafted makes no mention of the U.S. occupation.

Even the "transition" section, while insuring the continuation of the "de-Baathification" process, support for former political prisoners and victims of terrorist attacks, and other contemporary concerns, there is no mention of the presence of the 150,000 or so U.S. and coalition troops occupying the country, and certainly no call for them to go home.

The U.S.-controlled political process violates the Geneva Convention's prohibitions on an occupying power imposing political or economic changes on

the occupied country. At the end of the day, the constitution leaves the U.S. occupation intact and unchallenged.

CONTROL OF IRAQI OIL

The major debates between Iraq's ethnic and religious communities, as well as between secular and Islamic approaches, sidelined any debate over crucial economic, especially oil, policy decisions in the constitution.

The draft asserts that "Oil and gas is the property of all the Iraqi people in all the regions and provinces," and that the federal government will administer the oil and gas from "current fields" with the revenues to be "distributed fairly in a matter compatible with the demographic distribution all over the country."

But that guarantee refers only to oil fields already in use, leaving future exploitation of almost 2/3 of Iraq's known reserves (17 of 80 known fields, 40 billion of its 115 billion barrels of known reserves), for foreign companies - because the next section of the constitution demands "the most modern techniques of market principles and encouraging investment."

Further, Article 11 states explicitly that "All that is not written in the exclusive powers of the federal authorities is in the authority of the regions."

That means that future exploration and exploitation of Iraq's oil wealth will remain under the control of the regional authorities where the oil lies - the Kurdish-controlled North and the Shia-dominated South, insuring a future of impoverishment for the Sunni, secular and inter-mixed populations of Baghdad and Iraq's center, and sets the stage for a future of ethnic and religious strife.

While the specifics of oil privatization are not written into the text of the draft constitution, they are consistent with the proposed Iraqi laws announced in August 2004 by the U.S.-appointed interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi.

He called for private companies, including foreign oil corporations, to have exclusive rights to develop new oil fields, rather than the Iraqi National Oil Company, as well as at least partial privatization of the INOC itself, thus essentially selling off Iraq's national treasure to the highest foreign corporate bidder.

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.

Torture And Misery In Name Of Freedom

From: Z
To: GI Special
Sent: October 14, 2005
Subject: Harold Pinter

Harold Pinter's art and politics have always been on target. The Nobel committee couldn't have awarded the prize to a better person.

Here is a good brief essay by Pinter.

Solidarity,
Z

14 October 2005 **By Harold Pinter who yesterday won the Nobel Prize for Literature**, Independent News & Media (UK) Ltd.

The great poet Wilfred Owen articulated the tragedy, the horror - and indeed the pity - of war in a way no other poet has. Yet we have learnt nothing. Nearly 100 years after his death the world has become more savage, more brutal, more pitiless.

But the "free world" we are told, as embodied in the United States and Great Britain, is different to the rest of the world since our actions are dictated and sanctioned by a moral authority and a moral passion condoned by someone called God. Some people may find this difficult to comprehend but Osama Bin Laden finds it easy.

What would Wilfred Owen make of the invasion of Iraq?

A bandit act, an act of blatant state terrorism, demonstrating absolute contempt for the concept of International Law. An arbitrary military action inspired by a series of lies upon lies and gross manipulation of the media and therefore of the public.

An act intended to consolidate American military and economic control of the Middle East masquerading - as a last resort (all other justifications having failed to justify themselves) - as liberation.

A formidable assertion of military force responsible for the death and mutilation of thousands upon thousands of innocent people.

An independent and totally objective account of the Iraqi civilian dead in the medical magazine The Lancet estimates that the figure approaches 100,000. But neither the US or the UK bother to count the Iraqi dead. As General Tommy Franks of US Central Command memorably said: "We don't do body counts".

We have brought torture, cluster bombs, depleted uranium, innumerable acts of random murder, misery and degradation to the Iraqi people and call it "bringing freedom and democracy to the Middle East".

But, as we all know, we have not been welcomed with the predicted flowers. What we have unleashed is a ferocious and unremitting resistance, mayhem and chaos.

You may say at this point: what about the Iraqi elections?

Well, President Bush himself answered this question when he said: "We cannot accept that there can be free democratic elections in a country under foreign military occupation".

I had to read that statement twice before I realised that he was talking about Lebanon and Syria.

What do Bush and Blair actually see when they look at themselves in the mirror?

I believe Wilfred Owen would share our contempt, our revulsion, our nausea and our shame at both the language and the actions of the American and British governments.

Adapted by Harold Pinter from a speech he delivered on winning the Wilfred Owen Award earlier this year.

MORE:

Wilfred Owen (1893-1918)

Wilfred Edward Salter Owen was born on March 18, 1893. He was on the Continent teaching until he visited a hospital for the wounded and then decided, in September, 1915, to return to England and enlist. "I came out in order to help these boys-- directly by leading them as well as an officer can; indirectly, by watching their sufferings that I may speak of them as well as a pleader can. I have done the first" (October, 1918).

Owen was injured in March 1917 and sent home; he was fit for duty in August, 1918, and returned to the front.

November 4, just seven days before the Armistice, he was caught in a German machine gun attack and killed. He was twenty-five when he died.

The bells were ringing on November 11, 1918, in Shrewsbury to celebrate the Armistice when the doorbell rang at his parent's home, bringing them the telegram telling them their son was dead.

Dulce Et Decorum Est

By Wilfred Owen

**Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.**

Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of disappointed shells that dropped behind.

GAS! Gas! Quick, boys!-- An ecstasy of fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And floundering like a man in fire or lime.--
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,--
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.

[English.emory.edu/LostPoets/Owen2.html]



Wilfred Owen (1893-1918)

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

The Occupation Follies Role On: What New Constitution? 2 Days Left, Nobody Has Seen it

10.14.05 A Citizen Of Mosul, moslawi.blogspot.com

Two days left before the vote for the constitution, but till now no body in Mosul have seen a copy of it which supposed to be distributed to the population before the referendum.

In addition till now we and our neighbors don't know yet the place where to vote which is necessary to be known in advance since there is a curfew for all vehicles started from wednesday Oct 12 at 10 pm till monday Oct 17 at 5 am.

That mean no body can use a car for trnsportation from place to place inside the city, the schools, the University and all the governmental offices are closed for 4 days.

U.S. Occupation Fixes Election Results In Anbar Before Vote: Easy! No Polling Places!

[Thanks to D, who sent this in.]

"There are no voting centers in cities like Haditha, Hit, Rawa, Qaim, Ana, Baghdadi and the villages around them," Mahmoud Salman al-Ani, a human rights activist in Ramadi, said on Friday, listing locations across western Anbar province.

Oct 14, 2005 By Ammar al-Alwani, Reuters

Hours before a crucial referendum on a new constitution, voters in western Iraq, where many are expected to say "No", were asking themselves a troubling question: where are the polling stations?

"There are no voting centers in cities like Haditha, Hit, Rawa, Qaim, Ana, Baghdadi and the villages around them," Mahmoud Salman al-Ani, a human rights activist in Ramadi, said on Friday, listing locations across western Anbar province.

"There aren't actually any voting centers or even voting sheets in these cities ... Nobody knows how and where to vote if they decide to," he said of the predominantly Sunni Arab region.

Anbar, Iraq's largest province, runs from Baghdad to border Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia and is also the heartland of the Sunni-led insurgency. Much of the population is expected to vote against the U.S.-backed constitution on Saturday.

Hussein al-Hindawi, the head of Iraq's Electoral Commission, which is organizing the vote, said there were 77 polling centers in Ramadi and around 30 in Falluja, and said that if people couldn't find them, they should call the commission.

Despite those assurances, Anbar residents and officials were not convinced, saying the lack of easily identifiable polling centers meant discrimination against potential "No" voters.

"The Americans intended to isolate the cities in western Iraq to prevent the huge Sunni population from voting," said Thair al-Hadeethi, a human rights activist from Haditha.

In Ramadi, a group of residents said they had walked around their neighborhood looking for a voting center and not found one. Parts of Ramadi are essentially in rebel hands.

Anbar, where more than 90 percent of the population is Sunni Arab, is likely to be the province with the strongest "No" vote.

"This is a Crusaders' constitution," said Yassir al-Dulaimi, 40, an engineer from Ramadi. "Those who wrote it are people making a living and working for the favor of the occupier and for their own benefit, not for the favor of the country."

Clerics in mosques in Ramadi and Haditha urged people to reject the draft charter, and residents talked about leaflets circulated in the streets calling on voters to vote "No".

"The constitution is illegal," said Mohammed Hussein, 45, the owner of household appliances shop. "If the Americans want to make it legal then they should first release all the detainees held at U.S. prisons and stop killing innocents."

Mosques in Falluja urged people on Friday to cast "No" votes. Sunni religious groups, including the influential Muslim Clerics Association, have made similar calls.

They Can't Find Iraqis To Do This: What Does That Tell You?



U.S. Marine Cpl. Joseph Dudley of Los Gatos, California, right, and an unidentified Marine of the 3rd Battalion, 1st Regiment, nail a flier to a home that urges residents to vote in the upcoming constitution referendum in Haditha Oct. 12, 2005. Marines on patrols have distributed similar fliers and posted signs throughout the city since a U.S.-led offensive in the area last week. (AP Photo/Antonio Castaneda)

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

Breathtaking Success!

Collaborator Troops Almost Hold A Few Square Miles!!

October 14, 2005 By Liz Sidoti, Associated Press

The Pentagon says Iraqi forces now have the lead in one Iraqi province that's twice the size of Lebanon, about 87 square miles of Baghdad and more than 450 square miles elsewhere.

Overall, Iraq is about as big as California.

[In case you're wondering, according to the CIA, Lebanon is "about 0.7 times the size of Connecticut." And the idea that anybody but the armed resistance controls Baghdad is late night comedy show material.]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

George Bush Pretending To Be George Bush Pretending To Walk With Determination



Oct. 14, 2005. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

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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