

GI SPECIAL 3D38:



Fall 2005, *The Veteran*, Vietnam Veterans Against The War

Building A Local Iraq Veterans Against The War Chapter

A friend from my unit joined, and then an active-duty soldier, who was fed up with the war and with the way that the supposed all-volunteer army was using threats to force soldiers to re-enlist.

Fall 2005, By Kelly Dougherty, *The Veteran*, Vietnam Veterans Against The War

Kelly Dougherty is a cofounder of Iraq Veterans Against the War. She served eight years in the Colorado Army National Guard as a medic and MP, including a year in Iraq and eight months in the Balkans.

A few months into my yearlong tour in Iraq, I wrote in my journal about how I saw my real commitment to my country not in the military contract I had signed, but in speaking out and becoming more politically involved.

By honoring my military duty, I seemed to be going against my moral duty. When I joined the military, I didn't expect to be in Iraq fighting an illegal war of aggression, yet I felt unable to resist it. I saw the apathy and ignorance of so many Americans during the lead-up to the war, but I felt powerless to do anything about it.

When I returned from Iraq, I wanted to become involved in the antiwar movement, but didn't know how. What changed everything for me was the Veterans for Peace (VFP) convention in Boston in July 2004, where I met other Iraq vets who were opposed to the war and who were starting a group called Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW). It was exciting and reassuring to see that there were other Iraq vets who felt the same way about the war; now there would be an organized voice of opposition from those of us who had witnessed the war firsthand.

After the VFP convention, I felt energized and excited; I wanted to focus all of my energy on stopping the war. But after a few days back home, I started to lose the energy I had felt in Boston, where I had been surrounded by other like-minded people and everyone had been so hopeful and encouraging. I felt isolated and unsure of what to do.

IVAW is a national organization, and we have members across the country. A year ago, concentrated groups of members were only on the coasts, and I didn't know how to reach out to local vets. I seemed to be the lone Colorado member of IVAW for several months.

Gradually, I started meeting more people who wanted to join or had already joined online. A friend from my unit joined, and then an active-duty soldier, who was fed up with the war and with the way that the supposed all-volunteer army was using threats to force soldiers to re-enlist.

I met another soldier who was returning home after serving a year in Iraq. Our numbers started to grow.



www.ivaw.net

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

II MEF SOLDIER KILLED NEAR HABBANIYAH

December 7, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 05-12-10C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq: A Soldier assigned to the 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), was killed in action while conducting a combat patrol against the enemy when his vehicle hit a mine in the vicinity of Habbaniyah, Dec. 6.

Iowa Guardsmen Injured In Explosives Attack

12/07/05 WOI

JOHNSTON, Iowa Three Iowa National Guardsmen were injured in an explosives attack Monday in Balad, Iraq. The Guard reports that all three received burns and two of them are back on duty.

Sergeant Joseph Kroll, of LeMars, remained hospitalized, though his condition was not available.

The other two guardsmen are Specialist Scott Krantz and Specialist Charles Lorinser, both from Sioux City.

The three are members of Troop C, First Squadron, 113th Cavalry based in LeMars. The unit, which arrived in the Iraq last month, performs reconnaissance, surveillance and security missions.

Georgia Guard Marks 27 Iraq Deaths:

State Leads U.S. In Citizen Soldier Fatalities

12.6.05 Atlanta Journal-Constitution

A vehicle accident in Iraq on Friday helped push Georgia into an unwanted position: first in the nation in the number of Army National Guard soldiers killed in Iraq, according to an analysis by The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Three Georgia Guard soldiers were killed in the rollover accident near Nasiriyah.

Resistance Controls Haifa Street: [Bush Caught In Another Stupid Lie]

December 9, 2005 Socialist Worker [Excerpt]

Bush claimed that Baghdad's Haifa Street--once notorious for attacks on coalition troops--had been pacified. "Iraqi forces took responsibility for this dangerous neighborhood--and attacks are now down," said Bush.

But according to CBS News correspondent Lara Logan, Haifa Street is quieter because U.S. and Iraqi forces have conceded it to the Iraqi resistance.

"It's widely acknowledged here and has even been reported publicly that a deal was made and that insurgents who were attacking on Haifa Street are now using that as a command base and attacking elsewhere in Baghdad," Logan reported November 29.

Notes From A Lost War:

**20,000 Resistance Soldiers:
2000 Resistance Attacks A
Month;**

And They Got Training Bases For New Recruits With Instructional Videos

Many insurgent groups have become more tactically sophisticated and more lethal, and around 2,000 attacks are launched each month. Training facilities are dotted across Iraq; videos obtained by TIME show classes in infantry techniques and handling weapons.

12.4.05 By MICHAEL WARE, BAGHDAD. Time Magazine [Excerpts]

"This insurgency has got roots, it's got money, and it's got motivation," says a U.S. intelligence official, in an assessment echoed by military officers and insurgent leaders alike. "And the life span of this insurgency could be years."

"Will we ever see Iraqi security forces capable of crushing this insurgency? Probably not. No," says a high-ranking military-intelligence officer in Iraq.

U.S. commanders believe that as many as 20,000 fighters are in the field on any given day, a figure that has remained constant for almost two years.

Many insurgent groups have become more tactically sophisticated and more lethal, and around 2,000 attacks are launched each month.

Training facilities are dotted across Iraq; videos obtained by TIME show classes in infantry techniques and handling weapons.

Abu Baqr, a former emir, or commander, of a nationalist militia in Baghdad who was recently released from a U.S. military prison and is rebuilding his team, tells TIME that "in the beginning, even I didn't know how to use most of the weapons, but I learned. We give out weapons from the old army, and the money that funds us comes from wealthy individuals."

Part of the insurgents' resilience comes from their fluidity. "The U.S. is not fighting an army," says Abu Mohammed, a strategist for a prominent Islamic nationalist group. "We hit and move. We're more like groups of gangs that can't be pinned down and can't be stamped out."

Many voted in the Oct. 15 constitutional referendum and have plans to participate in the Dec. 15 election.

Few see a contradiction between voting and continuing to battle U.S. forces. "I voted in the referendum, and I'm still fighting, and everybody in my organization did the same," says Abu Marwan, the Army of Mohammed commander. "This is two-track war--bullets and the ballot. They are not mutually exclusive."

And even if the U.S. can lure some guerrillas to the negotiating table, it still faces a seemingly inescapable quandary: so long as U.S. troops are involved in combat in Iraq, there's every reason to believe the insurgency will be able to recruit sufficient numbers of motivated new fighters to do battle with them.

Democratic Senator Jack Reed, a former Army paratrooper who was briefed privately by military officials during a visit to Iraq in October, says "One of the problems with an insurgency is that every time you turn a corner, there's another corner."

MORE:

Why Do The Collaborator Troops Need So Much Training? Why Is It All Useless? Why Don't The Resistance Troops Have This Problem?

12.7.05 Baltimore Sun

Although the United States has spent billions of dollars training Iraq's military and police forces, defense analysts and U.S. military officers say it could be at least 2007 before Iraqis can take the lead in fighting the insurgency because they lack the hardware, expertise and ethnic balance to be effective.

One senior U.S. official in Baghdad said it "doesn't take much to train an infantry soldier" but that training logistics and supply personnel is harder because Iraqi soldiers "don't have the technological background."

[Oh please. The resistance troops are doing just fine in the "technological background" department. Ever hear of IEDs? Guess that's something "senior U.S. officials" don't have to worry much about. They sit safely in the Green Zone while the troops die.]

[As for the billions pissed away on this useless "training" for the traitor troops, gee, could it possibly be that when you're fighting to free your country from a foreign Imperial occupation, you are motivated, but when you're recruited to be a traitor serving George Bush, things just don't work out so well? For 100 points and an immediate trip home from Iraq, answer the following question: How did that work in America in 1776 when a different George tried the same kind of Imperial occupation?]

MORE:

The U.S. Official Quoted Above Says Iraqi Soldiers “Don't Have The Technological Background” [As Resistance Escalates High Tech Publicity Campaign!]

As roadside bombs become more sophisticated, so do the methods to record them. Recently, insurgents synchronized a roadside bomb with a remote-controlled video camera to film the explosion, Zahner said. "It's a virtual jihadist experience," he said. "That's what gets them the money. That's what gets them the recruits."

12/7/2005 By Rick Jervis, USA TODAY

BAGHDAD — Insurgents in Iraq have launched a publicity blitz. They increased the number of Web postings to 825 last month from 145 in January, according to the U.S. military. Most postings detail insurgent bombings or attacks on Iraqi and U.S. forces.

The Web postings are also growing more sophisticated and frequently include video, soundtracks and professional editing, Army Maj. Gen. Richard Zahner, the top U.S. military intelligence officer in Iraq, said Tuesday.

Concerned that insurgents were gaining an advantage in the information war, the U.S. military has stepped up efforts to counter the publicity onslaught from the insurgents.

"The information environment has become a battlefield in a very real way," said Lt. Col. Barry Johnson, a military spokesman. "There was a decision early on that this was not something we could allow to go uncontested." He said efforts have accelerated to combat insurgents' media campaign.

Nearly all insurgent groups operating in Iraq have media teams responsible for posting statements on the Internet and creating videos for Web and television broadcasts, said Col. Pat McNiece, an intelligence officer.

Insurgent messages often target Iraq and the Arab world, McNiece said. The messages are used as a recruiting tool for militants and as a way to raise money for the insurgency, he said.

The U.S. government monitors websites but rarely makes an effort to shut them down because it's so easy for terrorists to set up new ones, said Ben Venzke of IntelCenter, a Washington-area think tank that monitors terrorist declarations and does work for U.S. intelligence.

"If you shut it down, it will be back in about five seconds in a million other locations," Venzke said.

For militants, it's important to publicize the attacks, widening the impact of a bombing or a kidnapping to help influence public opinion.

Insurgents sometimes rehearse missions with the group's cameraman to find the best angle to capture the attack on tape, Zahner said. Cameramen then join militants on missions. They film the attacks, then edit and post them on websites, sometimes within a matter of hours, he said.

As roadside bombs become more sophisticated, so do the methods to record them. Recently, insurgents synchronized a roadside bomb with a remote-controlled video camera to film the explosion, Zahner said. "It's a virtual jihadist experience," he said. "That's what gets them the money. That's what gets them the recruits."

Lethal Environment: Bring Them All Home Now



US soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment wait for their comrades to move forward into a street during a night raid in Baghdad early 26 November 2005. (AFP/File/Mauricio Lima)

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)

TROOP NEWS

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME



Norma Mendez, the mother of a U.S. Army soldier who was killed recently in Iraq, at her son's burial, in Rincon, Puerto Rico, Dec. 2, 2005. The soldier, Antonio Mendez, age 22, was killed in Kirkuk, Iraq, on Nov. 11. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)

South Korea Approves Iraq Troop Cuts

7 December CSS

A South Korean parliamentary committee has approved the government's plan to withdraw troops from Iraq, Al-Jazeera reported.

South Korea plans to withdraw 1,000 troops from its 3,200-strong contingent in Iraq in the first half of next year.

According to the report, the reduced contingent of troops would extend their stay in Iraq for another year, until December 2006.

Top Brass Knew Of Iraqi Prisoner Torture

December 07, 2005 By Robert Burns, Associated Press

Senior U.S. military commanders in Iraq have known since early this year of reports that Iraqi security forces had physically abused detainees, according to Pentagon documents.

The first widely reported abuse case came to light when U.S. and Iraqi forces discovered 173 malnourished Iraqi detainees at an Interior Ministry bunker in Baghdad on Nov. 13. Some inmates reportedly showed signs of torture, and a U.S. general was so concerned that he took immediate control of the facility.

More than five months earlier, Gen. George Casey, the top U.S. commander in Iraq, wrote a policy memorandum on the importance of Iraqi security forces being trained to respect the rule of law and basic human rights.

“Over the past several months I have received reports of serious physical abuse of detainees by ISF,” he wrote on June 22, using the acronym for the Iraqi security forces.

Nine days after the Casey memo, in a satellite video news conference from Iraq, Maj. Gen. David Rodriguez told reporters at the Pentagon that he had received about 40 reports of abuse by Iraqi security forces in the previous six or eight weeks in the northwest section of Iraq in which his troops operate.

MORE:

Torture 'Widespread' In Iraqi Collaborator Prisons

12.7.05 Christian Science Monitor

Prisoner abuse remains widespread in Iraqi-run jails and efforts to bring the problem under control during the past year have largely been frustrated by indifference from

senior Iraqi officials, according to U.S. officials, despite Iraqi protestations that torture will not be tolerated.

One U.S. Army physician, Maj. R. John Stuke, says he personally treated about a dozen men who had been tortured and observed an environment of overcrowding and neglect in Baghdad jails.

Asshole Of The Year Award Goes To Her Boss

Letters To The Editor
12.5.05
Army Times

My husband is an active-duty soldier and we have two beautiful children, an 8-year-old girl and a 4-year-old boy, who are both just old enough to understand about dad “going to work in Iraq.”

My husband is leaving for his third deployment, the second to Iraq.

My children and I have never missed saying goodbye, giving that last hug and kiss to my soldier as he ships out. These last few moments together to say goodbye are very important to my husband, our children and myself.

My employer has refused to allow me the requested time off (without pay), which I desire to take our children and myself to see my husband deploy.

I fear if I do take off to see him deploy — against my employer’s wishes — I will lose my job.

Nobody can guarantee my family that our soldier, a father and husband, is going to return home safely, if at all.

For my employer to not allow me to take our children to see our soldier deploy is incomprehensible, unpatriotic and a slap in the face to the military community.

Mary Poole
Fort Bragg, N.C.

“The Only Thing I Did Different Than Anybody Else That Went Is I Didn't Duck”

Dec 6 WJHL NewsChannel 11

"For a year and a half I thought about things I wanted to do at the house...things I wanted to finish up...things I got started and didn't get to finish," Jamey Smith of Church Hill said.

For Jamey, getting life back to normal starts in his garage -- starts with finishing a little white bookshelf. Three months ago, he could barely remember how he wound up in a hospital bed.

A massive car bomb exploded in north Baghdad. Tri-Cities 278th Regimental Combat Team troops were just feet away. The blast could have easily killed Jamey Smith.

Jamey says after the explosion, he could barely recall the moment that car bomb exploded five feet from the Hum-V he was in. His memory has returned. He remembers the explosion. He remembers Iraq.

"It doesn't bother me but you just don't talk about it, you know? You don't want to give other people them memories," he said.

He was on the bomb squad. He had seen a hundred car bombs detonated. This was the first time he felt one first-hand.

"Felt like getting hit playing football."

This hit left scars. They're on his neck, where doctors took out pieces of the car fender. He keeps a piece on his workbench.

"One's enough."

He has been called a hero.

"The only thing I did different than anybody else that went is I didn't duck," he said.

He's, technically, still on leave at home. He has to go back to Texas to be discharged from the Army. He recovered quickly after therapy for his leg and treatment for his burns.

His wife Tara is pregnant with their first baby, a boy.

"When they told me I couldn't come home if I was walking on a cane, I stuck my cane in the bed frame and broke it," he said.

And that's why normal life starts again with fixing a little white shelf in his garage. It's for the baby's room. He's coming in April. Things he will be able to finish -- preparing for a new life by getting back to his old one.

Troops Out Now:

Anti-War Demonstrators Heckle War Pimp Hillary Clinton

December 07 BEN BRADLEY, CHANNEL 7, CHICAGO

There were several loud calls to bring the troops home during a speech by Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton in Chicago Saturday.

She was in town to inspire young people to get involved in the political process. . .

The New York senator and Park Ridge native was only on the stage a few seconds before the first protests erupted. "Troops out now! Troops out now," they shouted.

Some tried to shout the former first lady down.

Others opened umbrellas that read "out of Iraq" and a third group dumped anti-war leaflets from a balcony.

All Messed Up on the Western Front: Kubrick's *Paths Of Glory* Shows How Much—And How Little—War Has Changed In A Century



Illustration by Christopher Sleboda (Photo credit: Courtesy of the Film Forum)

In Paths of Glory, General Broulard proclaims his patriotic motives to bray, “There are few things more fundamentally encouraging and stimulating than seeing someone else die.”

12.5.05 By Ken Tucker, *New York Magazine* Movie Review

We bring to old movies everything we know about their stars' and directors' careers and lives, and everything we know about movie history since the making of the one we're watching. In the case of the 1957 *Paths of Glory*, playing in a glistening new black-and-white print at Film Forum December 2 through 8, this context adds to the pleasure and stinging irony of this elegant yet blunt production.

Set primarily in the trenches of World War I's western front, *Paths of Glory* stars Kirk Douglas as the French Colonel Dax, a principled soldier faced with an impossible order.

Leading a small group of exhausted, underequipped soldiers, he is commanded to take “the Ant Hill,” a heavily fortified patch of land occupied by seemingly vast numbers of German soldiers. The goal is hopeless from the start; the French are quickly driven back in a bloody rout.

But the reaction of Dax's superiors seems even more cruel: Colonel Dax is ordered to pick three of his men to stand trial on grounds of cowardice; they are to be made examples of, and executed.

Why? Because, as the airily distanced General Broulard, played with superbly blithe insouciance by Adolphe Menjou, says, “These executions will be a perfect tonic for the entire division . . . One way to maintain discipline is to shoot a man now and then.” Dax is placed in a morally vexed position but carries out the order, and three luckless soldiers are selected.

Adapted by the potboiler king Calder Willingham and pulp-novelist supreme Jim Thompson from a best-selling novel, *Paths of Glory* could have taken an alternate title from Thompson's greatest hit, *The Killer Inside Me*: Nearly every character in *Paths of Glory*, from General Broulard to Colonel Dax to the hapless sacrificial soldiers, grapples with the implications of killing and dying, but never at the expense of cinematic hustle and flow.

Never again would director Stanley Kubrick—who'd succumb immediately afterward to auteur languor and excessive perfectionism—be so concise as he was in the editing of this stark 86-minute film. The long tracking shots of Douglas, his upper body an inverted triangle of muscle and forward-momentum energy, striding swiftly through the trenches of his troops' encampment, will give you goose bumps of anticipation. If bullets and shells explode around him, Douglas gives off an equally explosive power. Watching him, I thought, This is what his son Michael would look like with better posture and more charisma.

Paths of Glory is all about that greatest of all movie subjects: power.

Menjou's General Broulard and his even more arrogant cohort, General Mireau (the sneering George Macready), occupy impossibly ornate palaces as command headquarters—to them, soldiers are like the grains of salt they spill on silk tablecloths.

They think the anguish expressed by Douglas's Colonel Dax isn't genuine, that he seeks a promotion (i.e., more power) rather than a reversal of their absurdly maleficent execution order. (They are, of course, wrong: Douglas's famous clenched jaw, expressing enraged frustration, was never put to better use.)

The condemned men—played by Joe Turkel, Timothy Carey (the merciless murderer in Kubrick's previous thriller, *The Killing*), and Ralph Meeker (who'd already been Mike Hammer in *Kiss Me Deadly*)—are entirely powerless, pawns with varying degrees of dignity.

Kubrick is quoted in Norman Kagan's 1972 book *The Cinema of Stanley Kubrick* as saying that war is "one of the few remaining situations where men . . . speak up for what they believe to be their principles."

Recent war films ranging from *Three Kings* to the documentary *Gunner Palace*—as well as Kubrick's own final work in the war genre, 1987's *Full Metal Jacket*—suggest just the opposite: that men and women are systematically stripped of their principles by their government and are sent off to die without much in the way of moral, motivating inspiration.

In *Paths of Glory*, General Broulard proclaims his patriotic motives to bray, "There are few things more fundamentally encouraging and stimulating than seeing someone else die."

He was talking about reviving the bloodlust ardor of his warriors. Viewing *Paths of Glory* in this century, you may be jarred you into thinking about how little the "stimulation" of waging war has changed.

We and our leaders, like Broulard, rarely glimpse the thousands of troops who die serving their country. Yet while the distancing effect of long-range modern weaponry may cut down on the hand-to-hand combat World War I soldiers are shown engaging in here, there are still plenty of close-up, bloody confrontations endured by soldiers on the ground (shock and awe now seems a rather distant memory).

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

“This Is A Long-Term Struggle. We Will Fight For The Next 20 Years”

Dec 6, 2005 By Michael Georgy, (Reuters)

Election posters promising a stable Iraq cut no ice with men like Abu Mohammed, who runs a women's clothing boutique in Baghdad's Adhamiya district by day but is an insurgent fighter by night.

As an insurgent, Abu Mohammed attacks U.S. military convoys with rocket-propelled grenades and AK-47 assault rifles, fights Iraqi troops and hunts down "informers".

"Expect black days. Elections won't change anything. This is a long-term struggle. We will fight for the next 20 years," said Abu Mohammed, who used that name as an insurgent.

Abu Mohammed and his insurgent brother sitting beside him in his shop aim to dig in for a protracted battle.

They dismiss candidates like Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Chalabi, a former U.S. ally, and pro-Iranian Shi'ite leader Abdul Aziz al-Hakim and say they are exiles who rode into Iraq on American tanks.

Insurgent Abu Alaa, a former intelligence officer, says he wanted to join Iraq's new security forces but was discouraged by what he called Shi'ite discrimination and violence against Sunnis.

Unemployed, he spends most of his time fighting despite the slick election advertisements on television.

"These elections don't mean anything. There is no democracy in Iraq with our new leaders," he said.

Although Sunnis lost out by not voting in January elections, Abu Mohammed sees the elections as a U.S. plot to dominate Iraq.

Workers in his shop listen closely as he criticises Iraq's new government while women stroll through looking at clothes.

"How can we accept any new government when the Americans have arranged everything their way?," he asked.

Assorted Resistance Action

12.6.05 Aljazeera & 12.7 Aljazeera & AFP & Reuters

Early in the morning, 20 attackers stormed a hospital in the northern city of Kirkuk to free one of 12 detainees, killing three policeman in the process.

"They freed the detainee after opening fire on the policemen guarding his room. Three of them were killed and six wounded," said Captain Salam Abdel Qader, who is in charge of security at the hospital.

They burst into the hospital to free a man who was being treated for wounds sustained when he was captured while planting a roadside bomb a day earlier.

He had been in a room on the second floor of the hospital and guarded by the policemen who were killed on Wednesday's attack by automatic gunfire from the assailants, the doctor added.

In Salah al-Din, three members of the northern Iraqi oil company's security force were killed as they patrolled a pipeline near Sherqat.

MUSAIB - One Iraqi policeman was seriously wounded when a bomb planted on the side of the road exploded and struck a police patrol in Musaib, an area south of Baghdad, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“The Whole American Project In Iraq Is Effectively Dead”

3 December 2005 BBC [Excerpts]

The BBC News website spoke to Robert Fisk about Iraq

You've been critical of what you describe as "hotel reporting" from Iraq. What should news organisations be doing that they are not?

The first thing they should do is say to their readers or viewers that they are confined to their hotels and don't leave and don't do any street reporting.

By using a Baghdad dateline they give the impression they can check stories that they can't.

So for example, when the Americans claim they killed 142 "terrorists" in Tal Afar, the impression is given they can check the story out, but they can't because they can't go there.

The reality is they are merely being an echo chamber for various spokesmen, officials and generals - there is nothing wrong with that, but just tell the people at the other end of the story the circumstances of your own reporting.

Do you think that the passing of the constitution in Iraq in a referendum will have an impact on the level of violence there?

Not really.

Iraq is in a state of total anarchy from Mosul all the way down to Basra. There are armed insurgents on the streets within half a mile of the Green Zone in Baghdad, where the US and UK embassies are.

The whole American project in Iraq is effectively dead.

When you are there you realise it but when you emerge from this bubble of anarchy and watch television in Britain or America you can be persuaded it's going fine.

It's not going fine - it's a disaster.

What is the nature of the conflict between the West and the Muslim world? Is it a clash of civilisations or are we exaggerating the real appeal of a small number of extremists?

I've never come across this famous "clash of civilisations" and I think it's a myth.

I live in the Muslim world and among Muslims. My landlord is a Muslim, my grocer is a Muslim and I think the idea is nonsense.

You take a definite position in your reporting - something many correspondents say they don't do.

If you believe that victims should have more of a say than people who commit atrocities then yes I take a definite position. If reporters don't do that then they are out of their minds.

If you are covering the liberation of extermination camps at the end of WWII do you give equal time to the SS? No - you speak to the victims.

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.

“Dying On The Road”

Dale notes another parallel between gold rush prospectors and KBR’s truck drivers. “There was a great percentage that didn’t make it and died on the road.”

November 30, 2005 By Andrew Stelzer, Tampa, Fla.; In These Times

“What do you think my wife would rather have,” Ivil asks. “A hundred thousand dollars or me?”

It’s hard to tell if he’s kidding. In the space of 24 hours, Ivil saw four TV news reports about a Kellogg Brown and Root (KBR) job fair being held in Tampa and he thought of his son, who is only two years away from college. This graying African-American family man decided that \$75,000 to \$100,000 a year—with the first \$80,000 tax-free if he lasts the entire year—was too much to pass up.

So on August 18 he snuck out of the house and came to the Crowne Plaza Hotel to try and get hired as a truck driver in Iraq or Afghanistan.

KBR, a subsidiary of Dick Cheney’s infamous former company Halliburton, is in the third year of a 10-year contract with the U.S. military.

On November 4, U.N. auditors called on the United States to repay Iraq \$208 million that had been paid to KBR from Iraqi oil proceeds for services that the auditors found to be overpriced, lacking proper documentation and awarded non-competitively. While much of that money surely ended up in executive paychecks, it’s also helped KBR become an attractive employer with 200,000 job applications on file.

The cardboard display on the table outside the hotel conference room promotes benefits like “integrity,” “adventure” and “pride,” but “the money is the big draw,” says Dale, another of about 60 KBR hopefuls at this afternoon’s session, which consists of an hour-and-a-half long presentation by Peter Howatt, a recruiter with KBR’s special projects group.

Six other recruiters out in the hallway sift through resumes while Howatt lays out a far more realistic scenario than the military presents to army recruits. “We don’t pull any punches,” Howatt told In These Times. “People know exactly what they are getting themselves into.”

For the most part, the Vietnam veteran stays true to his word.

In the first 10 minutes of his talk, Howatt provides his audience with the official KBR contractor death toll in Iraq and Afghanistan (68 at the time). He tells the applicants that they’ll be working 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, with 10 days off every 4 months. After a short film showing construction of a tent city in the desert, he advises the room full of military veterans, former Halliburton/KBR employees and average Joes and Jills (complete with a crying baby in the back) that if they are killed in an NBC (nuclear

biological or chemical) attack and their remains are contaminated, they won't be flown home to their families. Instead, they will be cremated.

But heads perk up at the mention of salary, and Howatt's sales pitch to the group is tight: "If you owe back taxes, call the IRS, tell them you are gonna go overseas, make a ton of money, and they'll be glad to let you go. Same with child support."

David, a prematurely balding military vet who served in the Balkans, doesn't specify who he owes, but stresses, "I got a lot of bills to pay, and I can only make so much and do so much here."

As of January 1, starting pay in the U.S. army will range from \$15,282 to \$27,464 per year. Although Howatt was reluctant to acknowledge that the military isn't meeting their recruiting goals, he admits that a poor economy "add[s] to our ability to go out and attract the right people."

Hiring private contractors to perform what were formerly military tasks has several advantages. Employees can be terminated at any time, and the government doesn't have to include contractor casualties in the war's death toll (over 400 in Iraq, with injuries numbering about 4,000). Perhaps most importantly, Americans not eligible for military service—like Ivil, who couldn't fight in Vietnam because he was classified 4F—can still become part of the war effort.

Howatt informs the nervous applicants that many of them will be hired by the end of the afternoon, and others may receive calls in the next few weeks. His goal is to hire 75 to 100 people in the three days he's in Tampa, then move on to the next town and do it all over again

"We currently have between 50,000 and 60,000 people over there now," he says. "We're also getting orders to increase the number of hires that we make. We're still sending 200 to 300 a week. No end in sight."

Another benefit of working for KBR is that supporting the war is optional. Howatt told In These Times that even with the growing antiwar sentiment, he's seen no change in application numbers, and in fact, he doesn't care one way or another what KBR employees think, as long as they do their jobs. "Everyone has different feelings about the war," he says. "But your commitment to support the troops over there is to me a separate issue."

Gary, a fresh-faced Latino who was lucky enough to get hired for a food crafts position, says he doesn't really like Bush. "It's not really about him. I'm doing it for my family. Bush still hasn't really given us a good reason why we're in war."

Gary is not alone. Angie, who drove all night from Atlanta to the job fair, is hoping to get hired so she can pay her bills. She also wants to see her husband, who's been working for KBR in Iraq since April. Although she feels the U.S.-led invasion has "done enough damage," she doesn't think that working in Iraq would be tantamount in any way to supporting what she calls "a holy war."

"I believe a good part of this (war) is driven by security of our energy supply," says Dale, a grizzled loner who's worked on offshore rigs in the Caribbean and hopes to do the same in the Persian Gulf.

As for the danger posed by the snipers he hears about on the news, he looks on the bright side. "More than likely they're going to be shooting from a great distance so they're gonna probably miss."

He compares Iraq in 2005 to Alaska in the late 1800s. "We don't have gold mines to go to in the Klondike, but this is an opportunity that's very similar to that, and those that have the balls can go after it."

Dale notes another parallel between gold rush prospectors and KBR's truck drivers. "There was a great percentage that didn't make it and died on the road."

OCCUPATION REPORT

Thanks To U.S. Government Stupidity: Iraq Oil Production Completely Fucked; Oil Exports Fell To Their Lowest Level In Two Years In November 2005.

Michael T. Klare, a Professor of Peace and World Security at Hampshire College and author of the book "Blood and Oil", wrote that it is "an article of faith among America's senior policymakers – Democrats and Republicans alike – that military force is an effective tool for ensuring control over foreign sources of oil."

However, Klare concludes that "the growing Iraqi quagmire has demonstrated that the application of military force can have the very opposite effect; it can diminish – rather than enhance – America's access to foreign oil."

7/12/2005 By Heiko Flottau in Cairo for ISN Security Watch

Iraqi oil exports fell to their lowest level in two years in November 2005.

Bad management of the reconstruction effort, widespread corruption among government figures, and sabotage by insurgents are the reasons for the decline.

Experts say that the US strategy of military intervention in oil-rich regions can only diminish, rather than increase, the supply to world markets.

Two-and-a-half years after the US invasion of Iraq, the country's oil industry is still in disarray. An official of the Oil Ministry in Baghdad told ISN Security Watch, on condition of anonymity:

“We do not know the exact quantity of oil we are exporting, we do not exactly know the prices we are selling it for, and we do not know where the oil revenue is going to.”

According to Baghdad press reports, export revenues are still not sufficient to cover the Iraqi state budget. The government is forced to take loans from international banks to cover its running expenses.

The daily output of approximately 1.3 million barrels remains far below Iraq’s pre-war production level of 2.5 million barrels.

US officials apportion some of the blame for the delay in rehabilitating the oil industry to their own Army Corps of Engineers. During the first months after the war, the Corps was given responsibility for the first phase of repairs to oil pumps and pipelines.

Members of the Corps lacked experience in handling the complicated, outdated technology that was imported by Iraq from the former Soviet Union.

A member of the Corps later told a Congress hearing: "The Corps of Engineers had absolutely no abilities as far as oil production is concerned."

In Kurdistan, KBR signed a US\$70 million contract to rehabilitate part of the pipeline system. According to the Los Angeles Times, Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR) was only able to fulfill half of the contract. A couple of million barrels that had already been pumped could not be transported, and had to be re-injected into the ground – a practice that engineers regard as harmful to oilfields.

Analysts identify the constant attacks by insurgents on pipelines as a further obstacle to the recovery of the oil industry.

Between May 2003 and late October 2005, observers counted 282 attacks on Iraq's oil transportation system.

Although US forces try to protect the Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline and Iraq's offshore loading terminals in the northern Persian Gulf, oil exports are frequently interrupted.

ISN Security Watch spoke to a journalist from Baghdad's Al-Mada newspaper, who did not wish to be identified, on this topic: “The Iraqi government pays a lot of money to tribal chiefs, who say they will protect pipelines. But nobody can completely secure the thousands of kilometers of pipelines crossing the deserts.”

In another study, released in 2003, the Brookings Institution warned that the sabotage campaign against Iraqi pipelines could harm the US economy. "Without the Iraqi oil," the report argues, "the US taxpayer will have to carry a heavier than anticipated burden of the reconstruction cost."

Responding to questions from ISN Security Watch, Oil Ministry officials in Baghdad predicted that reconstruction efforts and the fight against corruption will not produce significant results in coming years.

Rather, they expect a continuous stagnation, and even a further downturn in production.

The seizure of the Iraqi oil fields and the raising of the country's oil production were two of the most important motives for the US invasion of Iraq.

When asked, in September 2002, whether the US could afford a costly military operation like the one planned in Iraq, White House economic adviser Larry Lindsay told the Wall Street Journal: "We can afford it."

Lindsay added that, after a regime change in Iraq, three to five million barrels per day could be added to the world oil supply and that Iraqi oil would bring in over US\$50 billion in coming years. Lindsay said that Iraq would easily be able to pay for the reconstruction effort.

Michael T. Klare, a Professor of Peace and World Security at Hampshire College and author of the book "Blood and Oil", wrote that it is "an article of faith among America's senior policymakers – Democrats and Republicans alike – that military force is an effective tool for ensuring control over foreign sources of oil."

However, Klare concludes that "the growing Iraqi quagmire has demonstrated that the application of military force can have the very opposite effect; it can diminish – rather than enhance – America's access to foreign oil."

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

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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

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

<http://qi-special.iraq-news.de>, <http://www.notinourname.net/qi-special/>,
www.williambowles.info/qispecial, http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/,
<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>

GI Special distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **GI Special has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is GI Special endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice** Go to:

www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.