

GI SPECIAL 4B12:

SOWING THE WIND: 2003 REAPING THE WHIRLWIND: 2006



Former Iraqi Army soldiers shout anti-American slogans during a protest outside of the Republican Palace in Baghdad June 2, 2003. Hundreds of former Iraqi soldiers protested outside the office compound of Iraq's U.S. occupiers, demanding pay for all troops dismissed when the American civil administrator abolished the country's military. (AP Photo/Murad Sezer)

**“Let Your Conscience
Be Your Guide. You Did
Not Sign Up To Be Storm
Troopers”**

The Federal Eviction Management Agency (FEMA) & The Louisiana National Guard

It would likely be illegal for me to ask Louisiana National Guardsman to refuse to be the instruments of domination to subjugate their own neighbors as if they were unwanted livestock. It was also once illegal to harbor fugitive slaves.

So I will say instead, let your conscience be your guide. You did not sign up to be storm troopers.

**2.11.06 By Stan Goff, Master Sgt., U.S. Army Special Forces (ret'd),
Huffingtonpost.com**

We already know what class the federal government represents.

In any choice between profit and people in need, the people will lose every time.

Our government is big business writ large, and big business is Darwinian.

That's why the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), a federal bureaucracy allegedly organized to help people like the survivors of Hurricane Katrina, has terminated its "direct payment program for hotel rooms through Corporate Lodging Consultants (CLC)" triggering a mass eviction program of more than 4,500 hurricane survivors from hotels across the country.

Now that our attention deficit compassion fatigue has kicked in, these 'low-class dark people' hanging around the hotels, it seems, are not good for business.

The hotel bills were paid with FEMA money, after CLC, a giant "lodging management service" corporation, got its cut, of course.

So while thousands of FEMA housing trailers sit pristine and unused behind chain-link fences up and down the Gulf Coast, with many being used to house high-dollar government workers from Republican crony contractors, those numbered at the disaster trough range from AshBritt, a Florida-based contractor leviathan with close ties to neo-segregationist Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour (who served as Bush's fundraising chief) to morgues run by Kenyon (subsidiary of the Texas-based, friend-of-George, scandal-tarred Service Corporation International, implicated in the discarding of corpses).

Catastrophe is big business, and a humanitarian response to catastrophe is not profitable. We are now witnessing, in the most concrete way, how survivors of a storm can become victims of their own government, which counts them as disposable.

Just as Kenyon disposed of the dead, FEMA is now overseeing the disposal of the living. I once heard a hurricane insurance adjustor living on his houseboat in Galveston refer to his profession as "storm trooper." Get it? Storm... Seems an apt appellation for this case, no?

But there are actual troopers out there who didn't sign up to put on a pair of jackboots.

They are the National Guard of each state.

Together with the usual perfidious incentives like "money for school" in exchange for "one weekend a month" (This has become a grim joke now in Iraq), many people join the National Guard out of altruism.

They have grown up with the images of the National Guard rescuing people in distress, people from their own states and communities, like hurricane survivors in the Gulf Coast.

I spoke with one of these Louisiana National Guard troops (who has requested anonymity until he separates from service) on the phone two nights ago, and I've been seething ever since.

The National Guard is now being employed to assist the extremely sketchy New Orleans Police with these hotel evictions; and some of the troops don't like it a bit.

Said this distressed young man on the telephone, "This is f*ing unbelievable. We were given an operations order to herd our fellow New Orleanians onto buses like cattle or convicts in the middle of the night. They weren't even allowed to pick up their belongings. We (the National Guard) were responsible to inventory their stuff and bag it up."**

There is a really big New Orleans round-up scheduled, he advised me, on Monday night, February 13th.

Happy Valentine's Day.

The reason, according to this source, that these operations are being conducted at night is to evade press coverage and public outrage. The same people who were wiped out by Katrina are now being disappeared under the direction of FEMA and its adoptive parent, the union-busting Department of Fatherland Security.

When I was in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast two weeks ago to plan for the upcoming Veterans' and Survivors' March for Peace and Justice, this once bustling city had huge sections that looked like the third world. Ominously, many residents describe some areas as "Baghdad."

The National Guardsman with whom I spoke is an Iraq returnee, and he has plenty to say about that experience as well: nothing positive.

He said that he had returned from one cruel military occupation abroad to what seemed like another one at home. Indeed, one can drive around New Orleans

right now and see armed soldiers stationed on street corners just as I have seen as a soldier myself in the colonized peripheries of the third world.

It would likely be illegal for me to ask Louisiana National Guardsman to refuse to be the instruments of domination to subjugate their own neighbors as if they were unwanted livestock. It was also once illegal to harbor fugitive slaves.

So I will say instead, let your conscience be your guide.

You did not sign up to be storm troopers.

This administration wants to impose a one-party security state, but they can only do it if they can depend on you to suspend your critical judgment with the declaration that "I'm just doing my job."

As the old line went from Cool Hand Luke, "Callin' it your job don't make it right, boss."

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

One U.S. Soldier Wounded In Samarra

February 12, 2006 Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq - U.S. troops from the 101st Airborne Division detained five suspected insurgents Saturday and were targeted by two roadside bombs in Samarra, the military said.

The first blast shortly before 1 p.m. caused no U.S. casualties, the division said. Soldiers who spotted a vehicle fleeing the scene radioed ahead to another American patrol, which shot at the car and killed one suspected terrorist, the military said in a statement.

Several hours later, a second explosion hit a U.S. patrol, wounding one American Soldier and two Iraqi passers-by, who were all taken to a nearby military hospital for treatment.

Rumsfeld Says Syria Allowing Foreign Fighters To Enter Iraq

February 10, 2006 By ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer

Sicily -- Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld cautioned Iran and Syria against trying to undermine the newly elected government in Iraq, but he also said he understood their determination to resist U.S. efforts to stop them.

But he alluded to repeated U.S. government allegations that the Syrians are aiding the insurgency by allowing foreign fighters to cross their border into western Iraq.

MORE:

U.S. Officers In Iraq Say Rumsfeld Lying: His Bullshit About Syria “A Myth”

February 11, 2006 By Ann Scott Tyson, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

"It's much more than just a line in the sand right now," said Lt. Col. Gregory Reilly of Sacramento, Calif., commander of a U.S. cavalry squadron that oversees about 115 miles of Iraq's northwestern border with Syria, from the Tigris River to the Euphrates. "It's not like a vast open border, not at all. It's a very difficult border to cross."

Syrian border police are also aggressively patrolling their side, Reilly said, in contrast with official statements in Washington accusing Damascus of lax control.

"The Syrians are actually doing their job. They are more violent than we are. If they see someone, they will open up shooting," Reilly said as he walked along a dirt berm in view of Syrian guards several weeks ago.

"The myth is that foreign fighters are crossing a porous border," said Maj. Chris Kennedy, executive officer with the 3rd Armored Cavalry.

Instead, many of the incoming fighters can simply fly into Baghdad, using valid Iraqi passports made from "boxes and boxes" of blank passports shipped out of Iraq during Saddam Hussein's rule, Kennedy and other U.S. officers said.

**LIAR
TRAITOR
TROOP-KILLER
DOMESTIC ENEMY
UNFIT FOR COMMAND**



REUTERS/Jason Reed

TROOP NEWS

**Army Short 3,500 Officers:
Iraq Vets Getting Out;
“We All Joke That We Live In Iraq
And Were Deployed To Fort
Carson For Ten Months”**

February 12, 2006 By Ann Scott Tyson, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

The Army, forecasting a shortage of several thousand officers as wartime demands grow, is boosting the incentives it offers to try to hold on to experienced commanders.

By 2007, the Army projects it will be short 3,500 active-duty officers, primarily captains and majors: positions that are needed for new combat brigades and other units that are critical to plans for expanding and reorganizing the nation's ground forces.

The Army projects it will fall 7 percent short of the number of active-duty officers it needs with ranks from captain to colonel, with shortages rising to 15 to 50 percent for dozens of specific ranks and skills.

The shortfall could worsen if the number of officers leaving the force continues to grow. The percentage of officers, from lieutenants to colonels, who leave the Army each year has been rising since 2004.

Many junior officers, in particular, those who have served two tours in Iraq, now plan to get out, according to recent interviews with dozens of Army officers in Iraq and the United States.

"I want to have a normal life with my wife," said Capt. Adam M. Smith, an intelligence officer with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, which after two Iraq rotations since 2003 is having difficulty retaining experienced junior officers. "I have spent two years in Iraq with about ten months in between," Smith wrote in a recent e-mail from Iraq.

Deciding to leave the Army was hard, Smith said, but he estimated 40 percent of officers in his unit are making the same choice.

One new Army program increases from 400 to 600 the number of slots for junior officers to attend fully funded graduate school on the condition they serve three additional years for each year of study, Harvey said. Unlike in the past, infantry and other combat arms officers can participate, offering them a break from war zone rotations.

Since last fall, the Army has ordered hundreds of officers from the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) to report to U.S. bases to prepare for Iraq deployments, according to interviews with more than a dozen officers and Army officials with knowledge of the call-ups.

"It's a back-door draft," complained Capt. Melinda Thein, who said she earned a Bronze Star for her role in the invasion and early occupation of Iraq.

"Why don't they get us at the beginning of our IRR commitment? They are getting us at the very end," she said in a phone interview.

Thein's required time in the IRR will end in May. But under her new orders, which she received in a Western Union Mailgram on Christmas Eve, she will be extended for 18 months to return to Iraq.

"The sheer panic of maybe having to leave my family is more stressful than being in a war," said Thein, who completed active-duty service with a quartermaster unit

in September 2003 and now has an 11-month-old boy. She has written to her members of Congress and requested an exemption based on family hardship.

Another member of the officer class of 1998 is Matthew King, 30, of Madison, Miss. He had served on active duty for more than seven years, including 17 months deployed, 11 of them in Iraq, when he left his unit June 28 last year.

Required to stay in the IRR until in May, he is being called up for Iraq again.

"Why am I getting called up so soon after I got out?" asked King, especially given the Pentagon's desire to reduce troops in Iraq.

[Army Secretary Francis J.] Harvey said he would look into any complaints of unfairness in the mobilizations, and acknowledged problems in record-keeping.

Simply finding IRR members remains a problem, he said: "We don't know where the hell half of them are, or 40 percent of them are."

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT A CROOKED POLITICIAN WHO LIVES IN THE WHITE HOUSE WANTS YOU THERE, SO HE WILL LOOK GOOD.

That is not a good enough reason.



U.S. soldiers at the scene of bomb attack in Baghdad February 3, 2006. REUTERS/Ali Jasim

Japanese Government Getting Troops Out Of Iraq

2.6.06 London Financial Times

Japan will pull its troops out of Iraq "within several months," according to remarks attributed to a senior spokesman for Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. Japan has 550 non-combat troops in southern Iraq's Samawa region, a relatively peaceful district. The Tokyo government said in December it would keep them in Iraq for up to a year, but left its options open.

Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite, Stupid Liar

2.7.06 St. Petersburg Times

The Florida Republican, recalling the hostile public reception of some returning Vietnam war veterans, writes: "**As far as I can tell, when liberals say, "We support the troops," they mean this time around they aren't going to spit on our vets and they won't protest welcome-home celebrations.**"

[What this dumb piece of shit has no clue about is that there was no spitting on Vietnam troops by any anti-war demonstrators, ever, and nobody claimed there was any until many years after the war was over and all the Vietnam troops many years home.

[Some Vietnam veterans were indeed spit on during the Vietnam war. They were members of Vietnam Veterans Against The War, and they got spit on when demonstrating in New Jersey against the war during Operation RAW (Rapid American Withdrawal). They were spit on by "patriotic" dumbshits just like Rep. Ginny Brown. T]

The Government Fucking Over The Troops, As Usual: 811,000 Vets Stuck Waiting For V.A. To Act On Their Benefits

2/10/2006 U.S. Newswire

Organizations representing millions of America's veterans are urging Congress to increase the fiscal year 2007 Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) budget proposal by more than \$2 billion to meet the crucial health care needs of our nation's veterans and eliminate an administration plan to create new fees and double prescription co-payments for some veterans.

The organizations have also expressed concern about inadequate staffing levels at the VA's Veterans Benefits Administration, saying there are too few employees to properly decide disability compensation claims submitted to the VA.

The backlog exceeds 810,000 claims for compensation, pension and education benefits which are awaiting adjudication or are on appeal.

“The Asbestos Companies Poisoned Our Heroes”

<p>The bottom line is the day the bill passes the asbestos companies are relieved of all liability and handed a bailout worth billions. This comes at the expense of veterans who honorably served their country.</p>

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

**10 Feb 2006 From: Kristin Keckeisen
ActionNetwork@action.action.peopleoverprofits.org
Subject: Looking for Veterans**

First the asbestos companies poisoned our heroes; now they're pushing an asbestos bill that provides a billion dollar corporate bailout but leaves veterans with nothing.

Even worse, some of the largest asbestos companies, operating through a lobby group called the Asbestos Study Group (ASG), are running a fraudulent public relations campaign using veterans as a front to push an asbestos bill that provides them a corporate bailout of at least \$20 billion.

Our friends at Protecting America's Families are organizing veterans and their family members opposed to this outrageous corporate bailout. Sign the Petition <http://action.peopleoverprofits.org/ctt.asp?u=4061670&l=116724>

The bottom line is the day the bill passes the asbestos companies are relieved of all liability and handed a bailout worth billions. This comes at the expense of veterans who honorably served their country.

If you are not a veteran or family member of a veteran, please spread this message to others. The Senate is debating the bill right now, so time is critical.

<http://action.peopleoverprofits.org/ctt.asp?u=4061670&l=116729>

For updates on the Asbestos Bailout Bill go to www.peopleoverprofits.org.

Sincerely,
Kristin Keckeisen
Campaign Manager, People Over Profits

Robert N. Johnsen's Story



San Jose, California. Robert is 74 years old. As a young man he served on board a ship in the U.S. Navy. While on that ship he was exposed to asbestos. Later in life he was exposed to asbestos again when he worked in a building under construction. He was never adequately told of the dangers asbestos posed.

Robert was a successful consultant to the high-tech industry until he, a lifelong non-smoker, was diagnosed with lung cancer on February 3, 2005, and with mesothelioma, a terminal cancer caused only by asbestos, on March 25, 2005.

A formerly active man who raised four children, Robert now constantly suffers from extreme fatigue, sleeping nine hours each night and frequently throughout the day to fight his exhaustion. He has difficulty breathing. Fluid constantly collects in his abdomen, causing his weight to increase by about 25 pounds, until that fluid is drained from his body and the whole cycle repeats itself.

How would the asbestos bailout bill hurt Robert's family?

Robert filed his case with the Superior Court of the State of California on July 11, 2005. His case is set for trial in 2006. If the proposed asbestos bill is enacted, Robert's case will be eliminated and never heard in court. He would have to start the claims process under the proposed asbestos trust fund from the very beginning.

Bernard Roy's Story

Edgewater, Florida. Bernard had always been an active man. He competed in the New Smyrna Beach Senior Olympic Games, competing in track and field, basketball, and bicycling. He was an avid wood-worker. He liked to visit with friends and family and go on vacation. He never smoked and regularly donated blood. And he's the father of six children.

In September 2005, his life drastically changed. He was diagnosed with mesothelioma, a terminal cancer caused only by asbestos.

Bernard had no idea that his service in the U.S. Navy, and his related work afterwards, would lead to malignant cancer.

He served from 1956 to 1962, with four of those years spent on active duty. Following his service, he worked as a marine machinist for the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard from 1961 to 1991. At the shipyard, he was exposed to asbestos-containing products such as pumps, valves, purifiers, compressors, generators, and engine equipment. He was in close contact with this equipment on countless Navy vessels throughout his 30-year machinist career.

Since his diagnosis, Bernard's physical health has deteriorated, and he is unable to work. He endures pain, discomfort, and is often physically incapacitated. He is currently undergoing chemotherapy in an effort to prolong his life.

"I worry about the future care of my wife and children," said Bernard. In particular, he worries about his youngest son who is 16.

Now Bernard is completely dependent upon his wife, Sylvia. She is attending college in order to prepare for a future without Bernard.

How would the asbestos bailout bill hurt Bernard's family?

Bernard filed his case in Rhode Island in October 2005. The case is pending. If the proposed asbestos bill is enacted, Bernard's case would be wiped out and he would have to start the claims process again from the very beginning.

Fred Magee's Story

Bogalusa, Louisiana. Fred was a once-vibrant man who enjoyed his retirement years visiting with his grandchildren, taking care of his dogs, and taking pride in maintaining his home. Fred had no previous health problems when he was diagnosed with mesothelioma, a terminal cancer that is caused only by asbestos.

Fred was first exposed to asbestos in 1939, when he worked in a dry cleaning shop. His job required him to change asbestos-containing pads on the press machines. He then worked at Todd Shipyard, Bethlehem Steel, and the Brooklyn Navy Yard as a ship-fitter, welder, and iron worker from 1941 to 1966. While working on many U.S. Navy vessels, Fred was repeatedly exposed to a variety of asbestos containing products, not only in his own work, but also through the work of others maintaining ship machinery. He was never adequately made aware of potential risks to his health due to exposure to asbestos.

After he was diagnosed with mesothelioma, Fred's health deteriorated quickly. Due to the debilitating nature of his disease, he spent the last several months of his life in a nursing home.

Fred's son and family incurred great expense in caring for him, but they say that the financial impact could not compare to what they have endured emotionally, watching him die.

How would the asbestos bailout bill hurt Fred's family?

Fred's son, Frederick T. Magee, Sr., has filed a case which is pending in New York Supreme Court. If the proposed asbestos bill is enacted, his case would be wiped out and he would have to start the claims process again from the beginning under the proposed asbestos trust fund.

Democracyinaction.com:

The legal rights of American veterans are under attack in the United States Senate.

Many of those who have honorably served our country are sick from asbestos exposure. Many thousands who were exposed may not be aware that because of the long latency period they will become sick in the future.

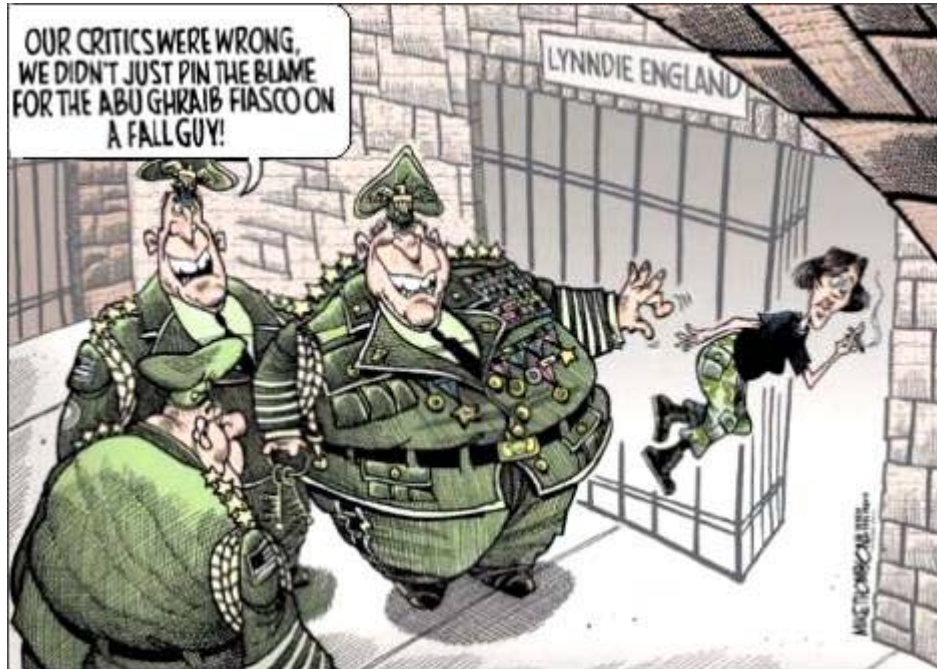
The worst asbestos-related disease is a fatal cancer called mesothelioma, and nearly 30% of all cases involve veterans who were exposed in military and shipyard construction.

Hundreds of thousands of other veterans went to work after their military service and were exposed to deadly asbestos fibers on the job.

Meanwhile, the Veterans Administration doesn't have any programs to help asbestos victims.

Veterans who were injured by this deadly product, like all Americans, now have the right to go to court so they can hold accountable the companies that knowingly exposed them. They have the right to seek compensation to cope with the devastating health and financial consequences of asbestos-related diseases.

We urge veterans and their families to join our organization to oppose S. 852, the proposed asbestos trust fund. It will delay and deny help for veterans while it takes away their legal rights to hold the asbestos companies accountable.



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

Adding Insult To Injury: Army Smears Wounded Lt. Who Had To Pay For His Battle-Damaged Body Armor: “Lies And Spin”

February 09, 2006 By Eric Eyre, The West Virginia Gazette [Excerpts]

The U.S. Army will reimburse former 1st Lt. William “Eddie” Rebrook IV of Charleston for the soldier’s bloodied body armor that was damaged by a roadside bomb in Iraq, an Army spokesman at Fort Hood, Texas, said Wednesday.

Rebrook said the Army made him pay for the body armor after he was medically discharged last week.

The Army concluded Wednesday that Rebrook failed to follow proper procedures and fill out necessary paperwork to exempt the body armor from a list of items Rebrook lost while on active duty, according to a four-page report.

“The Army did not make the decision that Lt. Rebrook should pay for the items that were documented as combat losses. He did,” the report says.

Rebrook, 25, disputed the Army’s findings Wednesday that he didn’t follow standard procedures.

He said senior officers told him that he had waited too long to report the damaged vest, which was stripped from him and burned as a biohazard after he was seriously injured in battle in January 2005. He said a supply officer should have documented the loss in Iraq.

“They said I was personally negligent for taking so much time to bring it to their attention,” Rebrook said. “They told me they wouldn’t back me up. They told me I would have to pay for those items if I ever wanted to leave Fort Hood.”

The Army’s report says Rebrook was anxious to leave Fort Hood and decided to pay for the body armor to “get it over with.”

Rebrook’s father, Ed Rebrook, denounced the report Wednesday, saying the Army was spreading “lies and spin.” Ed Rebrook went to Texas last week to pick up his son and repeatedly spoke to him about the ordeal over the body armor.

“Eddie did follow proper procedures,” said Rebrook, a Charleston lawyer. “They were running him from pillar to post, from office to office. He did everything he was supposed to do. They’re the ones at fault.”

Private: \$24,000 A Year; War Profiteer Average: \$11.1 Million A Year

February 8, 2006 DAVID SWANSON, CounterPunch [Excerpt]

While an Army private is paid \$24,000, a private military contractor \$100,000, and a General with over 20 years experience \$168,000, the average military contractor CEO is bringing in \$11.5 million.

Military contractors are leading the way in inequality and unaccountability. Their average CEO to worker pay ratio is over 400 to 1, and their top earners have made their bucks by selling the US military defective equipment.

Military contractors are also leading funders of Congress Members and Senators.

Twenty percent of Americans own 84 percent of the wealth in this country. Our country is far more unequal than any other developed nation. And it has become far less frequent for anyone born poor in America to die rich.

Disgusting Scum At Work

February 08, 2006 By REGINALD PATRICK, STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Three bronze plaques have been stolen from the Four Chaplains Memorial at the former Stapleton home port.

The memorial honors the Army clergymen who gave their life vests to others when the troop ship Dorchester was torpedoed in the North Atlantic during World War II.

Last Friday was the 63rd anniversary of the sinking of that ship, which sailed from Pier 11 on Staten Island's East Shore.

Eighty-year-old veteran John Byrnes of Eltingville, who routinely makes the rounds of war memorials to check up on them, learned that two plaques were missing on Monday as he showed the monument to several young people.

Byrnes immediately called Victor Prevosti, 82, of West Brighton, past American Legion Commander for Staten Island and Brooklyn. When Prevosti visited the site yesterday, he found a third likeness had been removed, leaving only one.

The missing 4-by-4-inch plaques, which cost \$600 each, were unscrewed from the memorial, which was dedicated on Jan. 2, 1993.

The monument has a special meaning for Prevosti, because he had a hand in its design. Staten Island veterans groups paid to have the plaques cast. The military supplied the concrete and marble, he said.

After a German submarine torpedoed the Dorchester near Greenland on Feb. 3, 1943, U.S. Army chaplains Lt. George L. Fox, Lt. John P. Washington, Lt. Alexander D. Goode and Lt. Clark V. Poling became legends.

They distributed life vests, directed men to lifeboats and gave their own vests to other soldiers. As survivors floated away from the sinking ship, they could hear and see the chaplains, arms linked, offering a prayer.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action



Policeman car that was hit in a roadside bomb in the northern city of Kirkuk. (AFP/Marwan Ibrahim)

Feb. 12, 2006 By ASSOCIATED PRESS & Reuters & Aljazeera

Insurgents fired a mortar into Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone, home to the U.S. Embassy and Iraqi government. The explosion that rocked Baghdad shortly before midday but caused no casualties, the U.S. military said.

A group of armed men in a speeding car killed Education Ministry official Karim Selman al-Zaidi in Baqouba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, Diyala police's Joint Coordination Center said.

Four policemen were wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in the northern city of Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas killed four policemen while they were driving in a civilian car in the main road between Kirkuk and Tikrit, 175 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

The corpse of a Kurdish contractor working with the U.S. army was found on Saturday in Kirkuk, police said.

Three police commandos and a civilian were killed and four commandos wounded when a suicide bomber wearing an explosive belt blew himself up near a check point in southern Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas captured three truck drivers who were carrying equipment to a U.S. military base on Saturday in Yathrib, a region near Balad, 90 km (55 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Two Iraqi police officers were killed and another nine wounded when armed fighters attacked a police convoy near Amiriyat al-Falluja in the city of Falluja, an Iraqi police source told Aljazeera.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE

END THE OCCUPATION

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

Gy Sgt Writes: “This Whole Article Is Misleading”

[The letter following refers to an article: Untrained Marines Sent to Their Deaths: No Weapons Practice; No Money For Ammunition; Combat Training Cut In Half, BY DAVID WOOD, NEWHOUSE NEWS SERVICE, August 24, 2004 carried in GI Special: 8.25.04 2#B41 T]

From: Porter GySgt Robert G
To: GI Special
Sent: February 07, 2006
Subject: Untrained Marines Sent To Their Deaths

To Whom it may concern,

**I just read your article "Untrained Marines Sent To Their Deaths" LINK:
<http://www.militaryproject.org/article.asp?id=304>**

This whole article is misleading, Marines are shifting from firing "Live" rounds to ISMT (Individual systems marksmanship Trainer) produced by the FATS. This system saves the Military money and ammunition.

The added benefit is that it is safer than live firing. After an individual has trained in the ISMT they then will get trained on the real weapon using "Live" rounds.

LINK for FATS: http://www.fatsinc.com/Military_Training_System.htm

If you don't think that is adequate, here is some training my guys got from the NRA before we deployed to Iraq.

<http://www.usmc.mil/marinelink/mcn2000.nsf/ac95bc775efc34c685256ab50049d458/f75bd69bb4dde526852570f9003f9a6b?OpenDocument&Highlight=2,nra>

Semper Fidelis
GySgt R.G. Porter
First Sergeant
Military Police Company, 1st FSSG
Camp Pendleton, CA 92055
DSN: 361-3021

Greek Mythology: We owe this word to the more heroic age of Homer, in whose Odyssey; he tells of a trusted counselor, Mentor who was an old friend of Odysseus's. To him (Mentor) Odysseus entrusted his household when he joined the coalition that sailed against Troy and the tens years of War. Mentor became the guide of Odysseus' son Telemachus, giving him prudent counsel. Since then, wise and trusted advisers have been called "Mentors".

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY The information transmitted is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged material or information. Any review, retransmission, dissemination or other use of, or taking of any action in reliance upon, this information or material by persons or entities other than the intended recipient is prohibited. If you received this in error, please contact the sender and delete the material or information from your machine. If this e-mail is marked "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" it may be exempt from mandatory disclosure under FOIA. DoD 5400.7R, "DoD Freedom of Information Act Program", DoD Directive 5230.9, "Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release", and DoD Instruction 5230.29, "Security and Policy Review of DoD Information for Public Release" apply.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to thomasfbarton@earthlink.net. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Mercenaries Slaughter More Civilians: “These Foreigners Do Not Care About The Lives Of Iraqis”

February 10, 2006 By Borzou Daragahi and Richard Boudreaux, LA Times Staff Writers
[Excerpt]

In the northern city of Kirkuk, tensions rose over the killing Tuesday of several civilians by contract security guards stationed at a U.S. army base. American and Iraqi officials said they were conducting a joint investigation into the deaths.

The guards, working for the State Department, opened fire from two GMC sport utility vehicles, killing two Kurdish men in separate cars and wounding a third at a traffic circle north of Kirkuk, said Maj. Gen. Shirko Shakir, the city's police chief.

The number and nationality of the guards involved and the name of their company were not disclosed. Lt. Col. James Johnson, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, said the guards were "under our control" while the investigation proceeded. In a written statement, he called the shooting "regrettable." The regiment is part of the Army's 101st Airborne Division, which is responsible for security in Kirkuk.

Angry relatives buried the two men and demanded that the killers be punished. Several Iraqi politicians demanded abolition of a law that grants immunity from prosecution to American and allied forces and private contractors working for them.

"There was nothing going on at the time of the shooting that could justify it," said Imad Hameed Ibrahim, whose uncle, Nizam Qadir, 25, was killed at the wheel of his taxi. "These foreigners do not care about the lives of Iraqis."

The Raid: Terrorists At Work In The New Iraq

They took at least a dozen men from my aunts area alone, their ages between 19 and 40.

The street behind us doesn't have a single house with a male under the age of 50- lawyers, engineers, students, ordinary laborers: all hauled away by the 'security forces' of the New Iraq. The only thing they share in common is the fact that they come from Sunni families (with the exception of two who I'm not sure about).

February 11, 2006 Riverbend, Baghdad Burning, riverbendblog.blogspot.com

We were collected at my aunts house for my cousins birthday party a few days ago. J. just turned 16 and my aunt invited us for a late lunch and some cake. It was a very small gathering, three cousins, including myself, my parents, and J.'s best friend, who also happened to be a neighbor.

The lunch was quite good: my aunt is possibly one of the best cooks in Baghdad. She makes traditional Iraqi food and for J.'s birthday she had prepared all our favorites- dolma (rice and meat wrapped in grape leaves, onions, peppers, etc.), beryani rice, stuffed chicken, and some salads. The cake was ready-made and it was in the shape of a friendly-looking fish, J.'s father having forgotten she was an Aquarius and not a Pisces

when he selected it, "I thought everyone born in February was a Pisces..." He explained when we pointed out his mistake.

When it was time to blow out the candles, the electricity was out and we stood around her in the dark and sang "Happy Birthday" in two different languages. She squeezed her eyes shut briefly to make a wish and then, with a single breath, she blew out the candles. She proceeded to open gifts: bear pajamas, boy band CDs, a sweater with some sparkly things on it, a red and beige book bag... Your typical gifts for a teenager.

The gift that made her happiest, however, was given by her father. After she'd opened up everything, he handed her a small, rather heavy, silvery package. She unwrapped it hastily and gasped with delight, "Baba, it's lovely!" She smiled as she held it up to the light of the gas lamp to show it off. It was a Swiss Army knife, complete with corkscrew, nail clippers, and a bottle opener.

"You can carry it around in your bag for protection when you go places!" He explained. She smiled and gingerly pulled out the blade, "And look: when the blade is clean, it works as a mirror!" We all oohed and aahed our admiration and T., another cousin, commented she'd get one when the Swiss Army began making them in pink.

I tried to remember what I got on my 16th birthday and I was sure it wasn't a knife of any sort.

By 8 pm, my parents and J.'s neighbor were gone. They had left me and T., our 24-year-old female cousin, to spend a night. It was 2 am and we had just gotten J.'s little brother into bed. He had eaten more than his share of cake and the sugar had made him wild for a couple of hours.

We were gathered in the living room and my aunt and her husband, Ammoo S. (Ammoo = uncle) were asleep. T., J. and I were speaking softly and looking for songs on the radio, having sworn not to sleep before the cake was all gone.

T. was playing idly with her mobile phone, trying to send a message to a friend. "Hey, there's no coverage here... is it just my phone?" She asked. J. and I both took out our phones and checked, "Mine isn't working either..." J. answered, shaking her head. They both turned to me and I told them that I couldn't get a signal either. J. suddenly looked alert and made a sort of "Uh-oh" sound as she remembered something. "R., will you check the telephone next to you?" I picked up the ordinary telephone next to me and held my breath, waiting for a dial tone. Nothing.

"There's no dial tone... but there was one earlier today, I was online..."

J. frowned and turned down the radio. "The last time this happened," she said, "the area was raided." The room was suddenly silent and we strained our ears. Nothing. I could hear a generator a couple of streets away, and I also heard the distant barking of a dog, but there was nothing out of the ordinary.

T. suddenly sat up straight, "Do you hear that?" She asked, wide-eyed. At first I couldn't hear anything and then I caught it; it was the sound of cars or vehicles, moving slowly. "I can hear it!" I called back to T., standing up and moving

towards the window. I looked out into the darkness and couldn't see anything beyond the dim glow of lamps behind windows here and there.

"You won't see anything from here; it's probably on the main road!" J. jumped up and went to shake her father awake, "Baba, baba, get up, I think the area is being raided." I heard J. call out as she approached her parents room. Ammoo S. was awake in moments and we heard him wandering around for his slippers and robe asking what time it was.

Meanwhile, the sound of cars had gotten louder and I remembered that one could see some of the neighborhood from a window on the second floor. T. and I crept upstairs quietly. We heard Ammoo S. unlocking 5 different locks on the kitchen door. "What's he doing?" T. asked, "Shouldn't he keep the doors locked?"

We were looking out the window and there was the glow of lights a few streets away. I couldn't see exactly where they came from, as several houses were blocking our view, but we could tell something extraordinary was going on in the neighborhood. The sound of vehicles was getting louder, and it was accompanied by the sound of clanging doors and lights that would flash every once in a while.

We clattered downstairs and found J. and the aunt bustling around in the dark. "What should we do?" T. asked, wringing her hands nervously. The only time I'd ever experienced a raid was back in 2003 at an uncle's house, and it was Americans. This was the first time I was to witness what we assumed would be an Iraqi raid.

My aunt was seething quietly, "This is the third time the bastards raid the area in 2 months... We'll never get any peace or quiet..."

I stood at their bedroom door and watched as she made the bed. They lived in a mixed neighborhood: Sunnis, Shia and Christians. It was a relatively new neighborhood that began growing in the late eighties. Most of the neighbors have known each other for years. "We don't know what they're looking for... La Ilaha Illa Allah..."

I stood awkwardly, watching them make preparations. J. was already in her room changing, she called out for us to do the same, "They'll come in the house, you don't want to be wearing pajamas..."

"Why, will they have camera crews with them?" T. smiled wanly, attempting some humor. No, J. replied, her voice muffled as she put on a sweater, "Last time they made us wait outside in the cold."

I listened for Ammoo S. and heard him outside, taking the big padlock off of the gate in the driveway. "Why are you unlocking everything J.?" I called out in the dark.

"The animals will break down the doors if they aren't open in three seconds and then they'll be all over the garden and house... last time they pushed the door open on poor Abu H. three houses down and broke his shoulder..."

J. was fully changed, and over her jeans and sweater she was wearing her robe. It was cold.

My aunt had dressed too and she was making her way upstairs to carry down my three-year-old cousin B. "I don't want him waking up with all the noise and finding those bastards around him in the dark."

Twenty minutes later, we were all assembled in the living room. The house was dark except for the warm glow of the kerosene heater and a small lamp in the corner. We were all dressed and waiting nervously, wrapped in blankets. T. and I sat on the ground while my aunt and her husband sat on the couch, B. wrapped in a blanket between them. J. was sitting in an armchair across from them. It was nearly 4 am.

Meanwhile, the noises outside had gotten louder as the raid got closer. Every once in a while, you could hear voices calling out for people to open a door or the sharp banging of a rifle against a door.

Last time they had raided my aunts area, they took away four men on their street alone. Two of them were students in their early twenties; one a law student, and the other an engineering student, and the third man was a grandfather in his early sixties.

There was no accusation, no problem, they were simply ordered outside, loaded up into a white pickup truck and driven away with a group of other men from the area. Their families haven't heard from them since and they visit the morgue almost daily in anticipation of finding them dead.

"There will be no problem," My aunt said sternly, looking at each of us, thin-lipped. "You will not say anything improper and they will come in, look around and go." Her eyes lingered on Ammoo S. He was silent. He had lit a cigarette and was inhaling deeply. J. said he'd begun smoking again a couple of months ago after having quit for ten years. "Are your papers ready?" She asked him, referring to his identification papers which would be requested. He didn't answer, but nodded his head silently.

We waited. And waited... I began nodding off and my dreams were interspersed with troops and cars and hooded men. I woke to the sound of T. saying, "They're almost here..." And lifted my head, groggy with what I thought was at least three hours of sleep. I squinted down at my watch and noted it was not yet 5 am. "Haven't they gotten to us yet?" I asked.

Ammoo S. was pacing in the kitchen. I could hear him coming and going in his slippers, pausing every now and then in front of the window. My aunt was still on the couch; she sat with B. in her arms, rocking him gently and murmuring prayers. J. was doing a last-minute check, hiding valuables and gathering our handbags into the living room, "They took baba's mobile phone during the last raid, make sure your mobile phones are with you."

I could feel my heart pounding in my ears and I got closer to the kerosene heater in an attempt to dispel the cold that seemed to have permanently taken over my

fingers and toes. T. was trembling, wrapped in her blanket. I waved her over to the heater but she shook her head and answered, "I.... mmmm... n-n-not... c-c-cold..."

It came ten minutes later. A big clanging sound on the garden gate and voices yelling "Ifta'u (OPEN UP)".

I heard my uncle outside, calling out, "We're opening the gate, we're opening..."

It was moments and they were inside the house. Suddenly, the house was filled with strange men, yelling out orders and stomping into rooms. It was chaotic. We could see flashing lights in the garden and lights coming from the hallways. I could hear Ammoo S. talking loudly outside, telling them his wife and the 'children' were the only ones in the house. What were they looking for? Was there something wrong? He asked.

Suddenly, two of them were in the living room.

We were all sitting on the sofa, near my aunt. My cousin B. was by then awake, eyes wide with fear. They were holding large lights or 'torches' and one of them pointed a Klashnikov at us. "Is there anyone here but you and them?" One of them barked at my aunt.

"No, it's only us and my husband outside with you, you can check the house." T.'s hands went up to block the glaring light of the torch and one of the men yelled at her to put her hands down, they fell limply in her lap. I squinted in the strong light and as my sight adjusted, I noticed they were wearing masks, only their eyes and mouths showing. I glanced at my cousins and noted that T. was barely breathing. J. was sitting perfectly still, eyes focused on nothing in particular, I vaguely noted that her sweater was on backwards.

One of them stood with the Klashnikov pointed at us, and the other one began opening cabinets and checking behind doors. We were silent. The only sounds came from my aunt, who was praying in a tremulous whisper and little B., who was sucking away at his thumb, eyes wide with fear. I could hear the rest of the troops walking around the house, opening closets, doors and cabinets.

I listened for Ammoo S., hoping to hear him outside but I could only distinguish the harsh voices of the troops. The minutes we sat in the living room seemed to last forever. I didn't know where to look exactly. My eyes kept wandering to the man with the weapon and yet I knew staring at him wasn't a good idea. I stared down at a newspaper at my feet and tried to read the upside-down headlines. I glanced at J. again- her heart was beating so hard, the small silver pendant that my mother had given her just that day was throbbing on her chest in time to her heartbeat.

Suddenly, someone called out something from outside and it was over. They began rushing to leave the house, almost as fast as they'd invaded it. Doors slamming, lights dimming. We were left in the dark once more, not daring to move from the sofa we were sitting on, listening as the men disappeared, leaving only a couple to stand at our gate.

"Where's baba?" J. asked, panicking for a moment before we heard his slipped feet in the driveway. "Did they take him?" Her voice was getting higher. Ammoo S. finally walked into the house, looking weary and drained. I could tell his face was pale even in the relative dark of the house. My aunt sat sobbing quietly in the living room, T. comforting her. "Houses are no longer sacred... We can't sleep... We can't live... If you can't be safe in your own house, where can you be safe? The animals... the bastards..."

We found out a few hours later that one of our neighbors, two houses down, had died.

Abu Salih was a man in his seventies and as the Iraqi mercenaries raided his house, he had a heart-attack.

His grandson couldn't get him to the hospital on time because the troops wouldn't let him leave the house until they'd finished with it. His grandson told us later that day that the Iraqis were checking the houses, but the American troops had the area surrounded and secured. It was a coordinated raid.

They took at least a dozen men from my aunts area alone, their ages between 19 and 40.

The street behind us doesn't have a single house with a male under the age of 50-lawyers, engineers, students, ordinary laborers: all hauled away by the 'security forces' of the New Iraq. The only thing they share in common is the fact that they come from Sunni families (with the exception of two who I'm not sure about).

We spent the day putting clothes back into closets, taking stock of anything missing (a watch, a brass letter opener, and a walkman), and cleaning dirt and mud off of carpets. My aunt was fanatic about cleansing and disinfecting everything saying it was all "Dirty, dirty, dirty..." J. has sworn never to celebrate her birthday again.

It's almost funny, only a month ago, we were watching a commercial on some Arabic satellite channel, Arabiya perhaps.

They were showing a commercial for Iraqi security forces and giving a list of numbers Iraqis were supposed to dial in the case of a terrorist attack... You call THIS number if you need the police to protect you from burglars or abductors... You call THAT number if you need the National Guard or special forces to protect you from terrorists... But...

Who do you call to protect you from the New Iraq's security forces?

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

***Good News For The Iraqi
Resistance!***
**U.S. Occupation Commands'
Stupid Tactics Recruit Even
More Fighters To Kill U.S.
Troops**



An American soldier searches a house during a raid in Ramadi, Feb. 4, 2006. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

"In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit," said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay's Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday's raid. "Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead."

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Cheney Finally Gets It Right: Shotguns A Texas Republican Millionaire Bush Buddy

[Thanks to Clancy Sigal, who sent this in.]

2.12.06 By NEDRA PICKLER, Associated Press Writer

Vice President Dick Cheney accidentally shot and wounded a companion during a weekend quail hunting trip in Texas, spraying the fellow hunter in the face and chest with shotgun pellets.

Harry Whittington, a millionaire attorney from Austin, was "alert and doing fine" in a Corpus Christi hospital Sunday after he was shot by Cheney on a ranch in south Texas, said Katharine Armstrong, the property's owner.

Armstrong in an interview with The Associated Press said Whittington, 78, was mostly injured on his right side, with the pellets hitting his cheek, neck and chest during the incident which occurred late afternoon on Saturday

The vice president's office did not disclose the accident until nearly 24 hours after it happened.

Whittington has been a private practice attorney in Austin since 1950 and has long been active in Texas Republican politics. He's been appointed to several state boards, including when then-Gov. George W. Bush named him to the Texas Funeral Service Commission.

Whittington owns property in Travis County worth at least \$11 million, the Austin American-Statesman reported last year, not counting a downtown block at the center of a long-running dispute with the city over a condemnation issue.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Government Faking The Numbers Of Unemployed

02/10/06 By Peter Rost, Information Clearing House [Excerpt]

The U.S. Department of Labor claims we have an unemployment rate of 4.9%. According to "the Economist, however, the true unemployment rate in the U.S. is over 8%, or 12.6 million Americans.

The difference is due to the fact that the U.S. Government doesn't count people as unemployed after six months without a job.

Jobs? Wipeout!

February 11/12, 2006 By PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS, CounterPunch. [Excerpts] Paul Craig Roberts was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in the Reagan administration.

Over the past five years the US economy experienced a net job loss in goods producing activities.

The entire job growth was in service-providing activities, primarily credit intermediation, health care and social assistance, waiters, waitresses and bartenders, and state and local government.

US manufacturing lost 2.9 million jobs, almost 17% of the manufacturing work force. The wipeout is across the board. Not a single manufacturing payroll classification created a single new job.

The declines in some manufacturing sectors have more in common with a country undergoing saturation bombing during war than with a super-economy that is "the envy of the world."

Communications equipment lost 43% of its workforce. Semiconductors and electronic components lost 37% of its workforce. The workforce in computers and electronic products declined 30%. Electrical equipment and appliances lost 25% of its employees. The workforce in motor vehicles and parts declined 12%. Furniture and related products lost 17% of its jobs. Apparel manufacturers lost almost half of the work force. Employment in textile mills declined 43%. Paper and paper products lost one-fifth of its jobs. The work force in plastics and rubber products declined by 15%. Even manufacturers of beverages and tobacco products experienced a 7% shrinkage in jobs.

The knowledge jobs that were supposed to take the place of lost manufacturing jobs in the globalized "new economy" never appeared.

The information sector lost 17% of its jobs, with the telecommunications work force declining by 25%.

Even wholesale and retail trade lost jobs. Despite massive new accounting burdens imposed by Sarbanes-Oxley, accounting and bookkeeping employment shrank by 4%.

Computer systems design and related lost 9% of its jobs. Today there are 209,000 fewer managerial and supervisory jobs than 5 years ago.



© The Commercial Appeal. Dist. by UFS, Inc.

[Thanks to David Honish, Veterans For Peace, who sent this in.]

Received:

American Bases: Personal Reflections

From: J
To: GI Special
Sent: February 12, 2006
Subject: American Bases. Personal reflections.

What I'm going to tell you may be a shock to the system, if you don't know it already.

American bases can breed hate just by existing.

England was an ally in W.W.2 and I lived reasonably near an American base. Being a bright child, with big ears, I knew what was happening.

We had food rationing; enough food to keep us fit and working but most people thought it inadequate and wanted more. The American base threw out large quantities of very desirable food. They were not allowed to give it to the locals and put guards on it to stop thieves.

Added to this a lot of local women, whose husbands were fighting overseas, acquired silk stockings and extra food. They weren't pros, just weak willed, when tempted by luxury items they craved.

As a result the Yanks were disliked. Canadian and Australian soldiers were invited into homes; Americans weren't.

I remember one young man who seemed to be a VERY nice person. He tried hard to make friends and was shunned. I remember him still because I thought the adults were wrong: he was a good man and was hurt by us.

Army rules and regulations can alienate people even when they are allies. How much worse the situation when the locals are starving and being brutalized. Civilians and soldiers are both victims.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

http://robinlea.com/GI_Special/, <http://gi-special.iraq-news.de>,
<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/>, www.williambowles.info/gispecial,
http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/, <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>,
<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/gi-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.