

GI SPECIAL 4C1:

**THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



**Bush Approval Rating At
All-Time Low:
Drops 8% In One Month:
“The Worst Assessment Yet Of
Progress In Iraq”**

The latest CBS News poll finds President Bush's approval rating has fallen to an all-time low of 34 percent, while pessimism about the Iraq war has risen to a new high.

Just 30 percent approve of how Mr. Bush is handling the Iraq war, another all-time low.

In a separate poll, two out of three Americans said they do not think President Bush has responded adequately to the needs of Katrina victims.

Only 32 percent approve of the way President Bush is responding to those needs, a drop of 12 points from last September's poll, taken just two weeks after the storm made landfall.

Mr. Bush's overall job rating has fallen to 34 percent, down from 42 percent last month. Fifty-nine percent disapprove of the job the president is doing.

For the first time in this poll, most Americans say the president does not care much about people like themselves. Fifty-one percent now think he doesn't care, compared to 47 percent last fall.

By two to one, the poll finds Americans think U.S. efforts to bring stability to Iraq are going badly, the worst assessment yet of progress in Iraq.

Even on fighting terrorism, which has long been a strong suit for Mr. Bush, his ratings dropped lower than ever. Half of Americans say they disapprove of how he's handling the war on terror, while 43 percent approve.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Two [Or Four] British Soldiers Killed In Al Amarah

28 Feb 06 Ministry Of Defence & By DPA

It is with deep regret that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the deaths of two British soldiers from the Multi National Force following an incident in Al Amarah, Iraq.

'Unknown insurgents planted a bomb inside an old vehicle parked on the main road in Mualimeen neighbourhood near the city playground,' the sources told Deutsche Presse-Agentur dpa.

The sources said the bomb exploded when a British military patrol was passing by, destroying two vehicles and killing four soldiers.

A further soldier sustained non-life threatening injuries.

SOLDIER KILLED BY SMALL-ARMS FIRE

2/28/2006 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Release
Number: 06-02-02CP

BAGHDAD, Iraq: A Multi-National Division Baghdad Soldier was killed by small-arms fire west of Baghdad Feb. 27.

Oklahoman Killed When Explosive Device Hits His Army Vehicle

2.28.06 Associated Press

GUYMON, Okla. An Army vehicle rolled over an explosive device in Iraq, killing a 21-year-old Oklahoma soldier.

Heidi Barncastle confirms that Joshua Pearce died Sunday near Baghdad. Two other American soldiers also were killed.

Barncastle says her brother had an unbelievable personality, and would make everyone in a room laugh and smile.

Pearce's older brother, Sergeant Jeremy Pearce, also is in the Army serving in Iraq and will accompany his brother's body home.

The family will try to persuade Jeremy Pearce not to return to Iraq, but Barncastle says she doubts he will listen.

No funeral arrangements had been made, but Barncastle said Joshua Pearce wanted to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Pearce was a 2003 graduate of Guymon High School. He was a letterman as a pitcher on the baseball team and left for boot camp right after graduation.

2 Michigan Soldiers Die In Bombings: Curtis Howard II Leaves Behind Two Young Sons

February 25, 2006 BY MARYANNE GEORGE AND GINA DAMRON, FREE PRESS STAFF WRITERS, Detroit Free Press

A pair of Michigan soldiers lost their lives this week to roadside bombs in Iraq, the military and the men's family said Friday.

Army Sgt. Curtis T. Howard II, 32, a career soldier from Ann Arbor and the father of two young boys, and Army Pfc. Allan A. Morr, 21, an avid deer hunter from Byron who followed his older brother into the Army, were killed in explosions.

They are the 79th and 80th members of the armed forces with known Michigan ties to die in Iraq.

Howard had survived a New Year's Day explosion that destroyed his Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

But on Wednesday, he was one of three soldiers killed in an explosion near Balad, Iraq, said his father, Curtis Howard. Morr was one of four killed while on patrol Wednesday near Hawijah, 150 miles north of Baghdad, the Department of Defense said.

Sgt. Howard wrote in an e-mail to his family a few weeks ago that although it had been a rough year, "we're going to make it."

Sitting in the living room of his home in northeast Ann Arbor, his father tried to sum up the pride and concern he had for his son, a 1991 graduate of Ann Arbor's Huron High School. Although the Army had not released details of his death by late Friday, Curtis Howard said military officials notified him Thursday of his son's death.

Sgt. Howard had enlisted in the Army about two years after graduation and was with the 4th Infantry Division at Ft. Carson in Colorado Springs, Colo. He was on his second tour of duty in Iraq.

"He was a military guy," his father said. "When he was sent back to Iraq in December, he was not apprehensive. He was a sergeant in the military, and this was his job."

But Howard said he and his wife, Linda, were worried about their son's safety as the situation in Iraq grew more perilous in recent months. They kept in touch through frequent e-mails. When a friend was killed recently, Sgt. Howard asked his parents to pray for the fallen soldier's family.

"He was a wonderful son, father and brother," the family said in a prepared statement released Friday. "This was the career he chose. We certainly respect and honor his choice."

Patricia Manley, principal at Thurston Elementary School in Ann Arbor, was Howard's counselor when he was a student at Huron High School. She remembered him as a leader on the school's varsity basketball team.

"He was very caring about what was going on and conscientious about his academics so that he would be prepared for whatever he wanted to do after high school," Manley said

Friday. "He was a leader on the team who could hold it together. It's really sad that this would happen to him."

Edward Klum was the assistant basketball coach at Huron when Howard was on the team. Although Klum said he has guided hundreds of players during his 50 years as a coach, he never forgot Howard.

"He was a wonderful young man. ... He was the one who stood out," Klum said.

In addition to his parents, Howard is survived by his sons, Dominic, 10, and Christian, 6, and a sister, Marquita. Funeral arrangements were incomplete Friday.

Morr, a 2004 graduate of Byron High School in Shiawassee County, was with the 101st Airborne Division and was stationed at Ft. Campbell, Ky.

He'd been in Iraq since October and looked up to his older brother, Bryan Morr, 25, who served 16 months in Iraq.

To his fellow soldiers, Allan Morr was known as Mighty Mouse because of his short, strong stature and excitement about the work he was doing.

And to his family, he was always a comedian.

"He was the guy who could always make everybody laugh," his father, Tim Morr, said late Friday. "He was the entertainment for our family his whole life."

Allan Morr was poised to sign up for another tour in Iraq, Tim Morr said, adding that serving his country, "gave him a real sense of accomplishment."

Though he never discouraged his sons from enlisting, Tim Morr said he never expected one of them to die in combat, either.

"We were scared," he said, "but we never really thought that anything would happen to any of our kids."

He said his son's body is supposed to be brought back to the United States within the next few days and the Army is helping the family make funeral arrangements.

Until then, Tim Morr said the family has sought support from their church.

"He's in a better place," he said. "We know that for sure."

In addition to his father and brother, Allan Morr is survived by his mother, Mary Morr, and siblings Heather, 26, and Shane, 16.

Arlington Soldier Dies

February 22, 2006 By Scott Morris, Herald Writer

ARLINGTON: Army Sgt. Charles E. Matheny IV always thought of himself as someone people could count on in a pinch, his father said.

That's why, as a single man, he often offered to take on convoy missions in the slums of Baghdad in place of his fellow soldiers, who had wives and children, said Charles Matheny III.

Matheny, 23, an Arlington native, died Saturday in Baghdad when an explosive detonated near his vehicle, according to the Department of Defense.

"I think he decided he was in a stage in his life where he had to rise to the occasion and be the man," his father said.

The soldier grew up in Arlington and graduated from Arlington High School in 2000. His parents' only child, he enlisted in August 2001.

Shortly thereafter, he was sent to Iraq. During his first tour of duty he injured his knee and returned to Fort Hood, Texas. He re-enlisted and returned to Iraq about three months ago.

IRAQ: GF Marine Seriously Wounded

Feb. 28, 2006 By Susanne Nadeau, Herald Staff Writer

A Grand Forks man is in serious condition after the Humvee he manned drove over a roadside bomb in Ramadi, Iraq, over the weekend, according to his father.

Lance Cpl. Ben Lunak, 21, took shrapnel to his stomach and back and may lose part of his leg, his father, former City Council member Duane Lunak, said Monday.

The young man was bound and determined to head overseas, his father said. He traveled with his company, the Lima Company, part of the 3rd Battalion of the Marine Corps, to Iraq shortly after breaking three bones in his ankle, Duane Lunak said.

"He loved what he was doing," Lunak said.

Lunak and his ex-wife, Cindy, will head to Washington, D.C., with their 24-year-old daughter today to wait for their son, who is expected to be transferred there from Germany, where he is being treated for his wounds. Lunak said his son's condition must stabilize before he can be moved.

Although Lunak did not know the details surrounding the incident, he said he was told two other Marines were killed.

"They were patrolling on the Humvee. Ben was on top; he was blown out of there. The other two, his friends, they didn't make it," he said.

Ben Lunak has been active in Iraq for the past four months, according to his father. He's been stationed near Ramadi, west of Baghdad, his father said. The two have kept in good touch, speaking on the phone several times a week and sending e-mail.

Ben Lunak left two voice-mails at his father's home Thursday.

"He said not to worry, he was doing fine," Duane said, his voice breaking with worry. "He's my best friend."

A 2002 graduate of Red River High School, Lunak joined the Marines in 2004 and completed training in San Diego and Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Base, Calif., his father said.

He was promoted to lance corporal fairly quickly, his father said.

"He could take pretty good care of himself," Lunak said.

Lunak heard the news that his son was wounded on Sunday. He's flying out for Washington, D.C., this afternoon.

"I just hope he's there when I get there," he said.

Italian Patrol Attacked In Nassiriya

Feb 28 (AGI)

At approximately 0745 hours CET an Italian patrol was attacked in Nassiriya. According to the Army Chief of Staff's Office none were injured in the process.

The five vehicle Carabinieri convoy was heading towards Al Gharraf. 29 Italian military and one Iraqi interpreter were onboard the vehicles. The attack is thought to have been carried out using a roadside explosive device, which failed to damage either personnel or vehicles. Following the attack the convoy returned to base. No news as to whether civilians were caught in the explosion.

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)

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.



2.27.06: US soldiers from the 1-506 RCT Charlie Company 101st Airborne Division arrive to secure the scene of an Improvised Explosive Device found unexploded buried in the road in Ramadi. (AFP/David Furst)

TROOP NEWS

“Nobody Showed Up”

[Thanks to Z, who sent this in.]

01 March 2006 By Andrew Buncombe, Independent News and Media Limited

More than 2,290 US troops have been killed in Iraq. President George Bush has attended none of the funerals, for which he is often criticised by the families of those who have died.

Nadia McCaffrey's son Patrick, 34, a member of the Californian National Guard, was killed during an ambush in Iraq in June 2004.

She said she had not expected Mr Bush to attend her son's funeral in person but thought the government would send someone.

"It's not just me. Many, many people say the same thing," she said, speaking from her home near San Francisco.

"He was my only child, but it was not only that. Patrick did not want anything from the military. He joined up out of patriotism. I would have thought that... somebody could have come.

"Nobody showed up."

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



The flag draped casket of U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer Ruel Garcia during his funeral Feb. 7, 2006 at a cemetery in Obando town, north of Manila. Warrant Officer Garcia, a pilot of the U.S. Army 4th Aviation Regiment, Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division was killed in Iraq while on mission. (AP Photo/Pat Roque)

Pa. Candidate Berg Wants All U.S. Troops To Come Home

Feb. 26, 2006 By John Davidson, For The Inquirer

WILKES-BARRE: Antiwar activist and congressional candidate Michael Berg last night denounced the Iraq war as "the greatest immediate threat to human life on this planet" and President Bush as a "man possessed with vengeance."

Berg, 60, who spoke to the Pennsylvania Green Party's nominating convention here, is the father of Nicholas Berg of West Chester, who was taken hostage in Iraq and beheaded by Islamic insurgents in 2004.

The beheading, which was broadcast on the Internet, fueled Berg's outspoken views, including that his son "died for the sins of George Bush and Donald Rumsfeld."

A longtime pacifist, Michael Berg was endorsed last month by Delaware's Green Party as the nominee for that state's lone U.S. House seat.

The transition from antiwar activist to political candidate has not changed his views. "I'm an isolationist," he said yesterday before his speech.

"If I could, I would order every available American airliner to transport our troops out of Iraq, out of Haiti, out of every place in the world they don't belong and bring them home immediately."

A retired teacher from Pennsylvania, Berg said he moved to Delaware last spring with no intention of seeking elected office until Green Party leaders there persuaded him to run for the House seat of seven-term Republican incumbent Michael Castle.

He faces an immense challenge. Not only is Castle a former two-term governor and the longest-serving congressman in Delaware's history, only 621 of Delaware's 545,000 registered voters are members of the Green Party.

Nevertheless, Berg appeared undaunted last night before the convention held in the Best Western Genetti Hotel & Convention Center. "I am very definitely campaigning to win," he said. "There's going to be a lot of people that are going to win in 2006 that you might not expect, and I'm going to be one of them."

An antiwar candidate, Berg also used "family values" to lambaste White House policies.

"What are good family values? They don't include sending our kids overseas to be killed," he said to a cheering audience.

"Getting our troops out of the Middle East and paying restitution to the people of Iraq and the people of Palestine, that's consistent with my family values."

Judge Slaps Down Rumsfeld For Try At Union Busting:

“It Was Really To Strip Away Unions From DOD And To Take Away Any Semblance Of Due Process For Employees”

February 28, 2006 By Christopher Lee, Washington Post Staff Writer

A federal judge blocked the Defense Department from implementing much of its new personnel system yesterday, handing the Bush administration a major setback in its efforts to streamline work rules and install pay-for-performance systems in federal workplaces.

In a 77-page decision, U.S. District Judge Emmet G. Sullivan ruled that the Pentagon's National Security Personnel System (NSPS) fails to ensure collective bargaining rights, does not provide an independent third-party review of labor relations decisions and would leave employees without a fair process for appealing disciplinary actions.

"Taken as a whole, the design of these regulations appears to rest on the mistaken premise that Congress intended flexibility to trump collective bargaining rights," wrote Sullivan, who noted that the new regulations "entirely eviscerate collective bargaining."

Sullivan said the proposed workplace rules also would make it unfairly hard for employees to appeal unfavorable personnel decisions.

The two court decisions mean the new systems at Defense and the Department of Homeland Security, each more than two years in the making, and affecting nearly 800,000 civilian employees, appear destined either for lengthy court appeals or time-consuming revisions.

The American Federation of Government Employees and 12 other unions representing more than 350,000 defense employees sued in November challenging the new system.

The unions argued it would gut collective bargaining and that Pentagon officials did not meet their obligation, spelled out in the 2003 law that paved the way for the changes, to consult with employees' representatives in crafting a new labor management system.

"This is a big win," said AFGE President John Gage. "I think the judge very clearly showed in his decision that this was not collective bargaining by anybody's definition."

AFGE Assistant General Counsel Joseph Goldberg said the ruling "eviscerates the core of NSPS, leaving but a hollow shell of provisions that simply cannot stand on their own."

Unions have contended that the changes are about gutting the power of unions, not improving national security.

"We're not against change, but these changes were very transparent (in) what they were about," he said. "It was really to strip away unions from DOD and to take away any semblance of due process for employees."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Fighters Confident Of Victory

March 1, 2006 Doug Lorimer, Green Left Weekly [Excerpt]

In a new 30-page report, the Brussels-based International Crisis Group (ICG) reported that "the insurgency appears to have become more coordinated, confident, sensitive to its constituents' demands, and adept at learning from the enemy's successes and its own failures".

According to the ICG report, all of the Iraqi resistance groups have become more confident over the past year. The report notes that their optimism is not only noticeable in their official communiqués, but in more spontaneous expressions by guerrilla fighters and sympathisers on internet chat sites and elsewhere.

Initially, according to the report, the resistance groups perceived the US military presence in Iraq as extremely difficult to remove, but "that no longer is the case".

"Today, the prospect of an outright victory and a swift withdrawal of foreign forces has crystallised, bolstered by the US's perceived loss of legitimacy and apparent vacillation, its periodic announcement of troops redeployments, the precipitous decline in domestic support for the war, and heightened calls by prominent politicians for a rapid withdrawal."

Assorted Resistance Action

2.28.06: 940MONTREAL.COM & AP & CNN & Reuters

Guerrillas in Mosul, 360 kilometres northwest of Baghdad, killed four police, Dr. Bahaa al-Bakri of the city general hospital said. Fighters in two speeding cars sprayed four policemen with automatic rifles as they stood beside a road in a southern neighbourhood.

A roadside bomb targeting the convoy of a defense ministry adviser killed five soldiers and wounded seven others, ministry spokesman Mohammed al-Askari said. The adviser, Lt. Gen. Daham Radhi al-Assal, was not injured.

A roadside bomb in northern Baghdad hit an Iraqi police patrol, wounding four officers.

Guerrillas killed two policemen Tuesday in Baquba, authorities said.

Four policemen were killed when their patrol was ambushed by guerrillas near Khalis, 60 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Between 1 and 80, a man is like Iraq: ruled by a dick. Mikey™; Firebase, February 27, 2006

“An Effective Antiwar Movement Must Also Include Military People”

Examined Lives in the Shadow of Iraq, By Shari Stone-Mediatore, March - April 2006
The Humanist, posted by Veterans For Common Sense, 26 February 2006 [Excerpts]

“Those yellow ribbon magnets won't keep my son safe from sniper bullets nor will they keep him cool in 120 degree heat. If you want to do something to support the troops, write to your senator and tell him to send the troops home.”

Teresa Fowler Dawson, daughter of a marine and the mother of 2 citizen soldiers, defies stereotypes of both mothers and military people. Her maternal ties drive her efforts to expose the truth behind the United States' preemptive war in Iraq, while many Americans are content to leave political judgment to media pundits. Dawson, with a daughter in the coast guard and a National Guard son who was sent to Iraq, has “made it her business to know what this war was about.”

Upon studying multiple government reports and comparing newspapers from around the world, she found that the evidence for going to war simply “didn't add up” and determined that the administration was “inventing reasons as suited the occasion.”

Having done her homework, Dawson isn't afraid to speak out and has represented MFSO in educational forums throughout Ohio.

Dawson's son remains in Iraq but he is troubled by his role there.

Dawson told of a recent phone call that she had received from him as he was sitting poolside on a “rest and relaxation” break. “You’re always complaining about the heat,” Dawson told him. “Why don’t you go in the pool?” “Mom”, he responded, “There are kids on the other side of the fence drinking sewer water. I don’t feel right about going into a pool.”

Sensitive to the predicament of soldiers caught in the middle of an ill-defined war, Dawson is angered by people who turn “Support the Troops” into a feel-good slogan to stick on their car windows.

“Those yellow ribbon magnets won’t keep my son safe from sniper bullets nor will they keep him cool in 120 degree heat.

If you want to do something to support the troops, write to your senator and tell him to send the troops home.”

Bobby Hanafin, called “Army Dad” in reference to his son who recently served two combat tours in Iraq, also served himself as a grunt during Vietnam and as an intelligence officer in the first Gulf War. He entered the army in 1969 under Robert McNamara’s Project 100,000. “The army lowered entry standards to accept high school dropouts, people with low IQs bordering on the mentally ill, Puerto Ricans and Mexicans who couldn’t speak English,” he told the audience. “The first place the army marched us when we went to boot camp was to a GED office where they gave us a few classes and handed us a rubber stamped high school equivalency certificate in order to be able to tell Congress that its standards weren’t lowered.”

Having been shortchanged on education once, Hanafin later used GI education benefits to earn his college degree.

An effective antiwar movement, Hanafin added, must also include (career) military people.

He believes that too often “the peace movement is made up of the academic intelligentsia who can be easily discredited for not knowing about war.”

Furthermore, he points out, (military retirees) veterans can lend legitimacy to the peace movement as well as help focus criticism on the current war, as opposed to targeting the military per se.

Retaining respect for the military and military personnel is important to Hanafin, not only for broad appeal but also for ethical reasons. Thus, he takes care to distinguish his opposition to the current war from his feelings toward individual service members, many of whom have been pressured by what some call “the poverty draft.”

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.

“Not One Penny More For War!”

Call the Capitol Hill Switchboard toll free at 888-818-6641 and ask to speak to your Representative (or your Senators). Give them this message:

"I strongly oppose the war in Iraq. I want all our troops brought home safely, without delay. I urge Representative (or Senator) X to vote against the President's \$72.4 billion 'emergency' supplemental request for the war."

Please forward widely!

Not One Penny More for War!
National Call-In Day
Tuesday, February 28
Call Congress toll free: 888-818-6641

President Bush has asked Congress for another \$72 billion for his illegal war in Iraq. This will bring the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to almost \$120 billion for 2006; that's on top of the \$432 billion the military is already spending this year, and in addition to the more than \$250 billion already spent on the Iraq war!

Call your Representative and Senators at 888-818-6641 on Tuesday, Feb. 28th, and tell them: Not one penny more for war!

Members of Congress are afraid to vote against this money because they don't want to be accused of not supporting the troops.

It is time to stop using the troops as a shield for failed policy. It is time for the people of this country to speak up and show Congress how to stand up to the President.

Help us flood the Capitol Switchboard with calls for peace by forwarding this email to your friends and family. (If you received this email from a friend, please consider joining United for Peace and Justice's ongoing action network to keep receiving our alerts.)

Bush's inane "stay the course" rhetoric has lost all credibility. There is no course, no plan, no end in sight to this war.

The U.S. is not making progress, in fact, deadly attacks are increasing, and 2006 will be the most expensive year of the war so far.

Like an addicted gambler, Bush refuses to get up from the table, begging for more money to lay down in a game he can't win. But this gambler is playing with our money and the lives of our family members, friends and neighbors.

The only way to stop him is to cut off the money.

Some members of the House and the Senate are claiming that Iraq is not important to their constituents, that they are not hearing from people about the war. Make sure they hear from you, and everyone you know who, like the majority of this country, opposes the war.

Make at least one phone call to your Representative or to one of you Senators, but three phone calls are better than one!

**“Q. Why Are We In Iraq?”
“A. To Prevent The Failure Of The
Occupation Of Iraq. If We Pull Out
Now The Occupation Will Be A
Failure!”**

February 20, 2006 By Fafnir, Fafblog.blogspot.com

Q. Why are we in Iraq?

A. For freedom! Recent intelligence informs us it is on the march.

Q. Hooray! Where's it marching to?

A. To set up a government of the people, by the people, for the people, and held in check by strict adherence to the laws of Islam.

Q. Huh! Freedom sounds strangely like theocracy.

A. No it doesn't! It is representative godocracy, in which laws are written by the legislative branch, enforced by the executive branch, and interpreted by an all-powerful all-knowing deity which manifests its will through a panel of senior clerics.

Q. Whew! Is democracy on the march?

A. Democracy was on the march. Sadly, freedom and democracy were caught in a blizzard and freedom was forced to eat democracy to survive.

Q. It died as it lived: sautéed in garlic sauce with a side of scalloped potatoes?

A. Democracy is survived by sectarian violence and fanaticism. In lieu of flowers, please send a coherent exit strategy.

Q. Why are we in Iraq?

A. Terror! By occupying Iraq we get Iraqis to fight us there so they won't fight us at home.

Q. We've cleverly lured them to where they already were, only in terrorist form!

A. Now you're catching on!

Q. What if we can't kill all the terrorists in Iraq?

A. Then we'll invade somewhere else and trick 'em into attacking us there; only this time it'll be someplace really far away where they'll get stuck, like the ocean or the moon!

Q. I would totally watch Operation: Lunar Justice live on CNN!

A. Wolf Blitzer in a space helmet... it writes itself!

Q. There are more terrorists now than before the war. Is the occupation causing more terror?

A. Well, nobody can say for sure if that's a man-made terror increase. It may just be a periodic shift in the natural terror cycle.

Q. Tell me more about this "not our fault" theory: I find it oddly compelling.

A. Like weather, terror is affected by seasonal fluctuations. The jet stream carries hijackers from continent to continent; El Niño causes suicide bombers to condense in the upper atmosphere. Is this affected by human activity or just part of a natural warming trend for terror? We just don't know!

Q. Your ideas are boldly nonconformist, yet conveniently reaffirm my desire to do nothing. I like it!

Q. Why are we in Iraq?

A. To remove Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction.

Q. But he didn't have any weapons of mass destruction.

A. Maybe. But in a sense, Saddam Hussein was a weapon of mass destruction.

Q. Well, that's a pretty metaphorical.

A. And by that I mean his mustache was made of anthrax.

Q. Oh no!

A. His beret was stuffed full of yellowcake uranium! He detonated intercontinental ballistic missiles with the power of his brain! A half-kilo of Saddam Hussein could destroy ten city blocks when processed and rigged to a detonator the size of a baseball!

Q. I... I had no idea...

A. Now imagine if we'd let Saddam Hussein loose on the open market! Pakistani warehouses stockpiled with black market Saddam... North Korean Saddam reactors...

Q. Oh my god... Osama bin Laden would be putting together a suitcase Saddam bomb as we speak!

A: There but for the grace of war.

Q. Why are we in Iraq?

A. To prevent the failure of the occupation of Iraq. If we pull out now the occupation will be a failure!

Q. Would it have been easier to have never occupied it in the first place?

A. Ah, but if we never occupied Iraq, then the occupation certainly would have been a failure, now wouldn't it?

Q. (meditates for many years)

Q. Now I am enlightened.

Q. The reason we're in Iraq seems to change every time I ask about it.

A. It's always the same reason. It just mutates in response to different stimuli in different environments.

Q. Like the bird flu! Oh my god: is it the bird flu?

A. Are you scared of the bird flu?

Q. Yes! Thousands of diseased Chinese chickens could explode from my febrile lungs at any moment!

A. Then yes, the cause of the war is bird flu!

Q. Oh no! What can we do to stop it!

A. For today, we can occupy Iraq.

Q. But tomorrow it could mutate again: into another reason to occupy Iraq!

A. That's just a chance we'll have to take.

Iraq And The Democratic Empire

February 17, 2006 by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr., LewRockwell.com [Excerpts]

What will people do when you let them out of their cages? What will slaves do when you free them? What happens when you free those who are imprisoned unjustly? I don't know the answer to these questions, and no one does. I will observe that other countries count the day that the US soldiers left as the beginning of a bright future.

As all students today know, Iraq is the country that the US invaded with the attempt to convert the state and the people from enemy to friend.

On the face of it, this sounds rather implausible, of course. Good fences make good neighbors.

Friendship and peace are not usually the result of insults, sanctions, invasions, bombings, killings, puppet governments, censorship, economic controls, and occupations. If this generation learns anything from this period, that would be a good start.

Earlier students thought of Iraq as the country that was forever being denounced by the Clinton administration and by Bush's father when he was president. Why? Iraq, it seems, had some crazy notion that the US might attempt an invasion at some point in the future, and thus thought it had better prepare by spending money on its military.

Its weapons program, however, was quickly dismantled under pressure from the UN.

Doubtful that Iraq had really given up the idea of creating a viable national defense, the US cobbled together extreme sanctions against the country, preventing it from trading with the world. The standard of living plummeted. Middle class merchants suffered. The poor died without the essentials of life. The child mortality rate soared. The head of the US State Department told a reporter on national television that even if US sanctions had resulted in 500,000 child deaths, they were "worth it."

Jumping back earlier, the US had waged another war on Iraq. Bush Senior saw it as the war to end all aggressions, in this case an aggression of Iraq against its neighbor called Kuwait, a name that has been strangely absent from the news for the better part of ten years.

What was strange was how the US had given the green light to Saddam to aggress against its neighbor, with the US ambassador having told Saddam Hussein that the US took no position on its long-running border dispute with its former province.

Now, if we jump back still further and consider the Reagan years, students would remember a long and boring but truly bloody conflict between Iraq and Iran. It lasted eight years, between 1980 and 1988. The US favored Iraq in this war. Saddam was a friend of the US, a man on the payroll.

The weapons he used in this war on Iran were provided to him courtesy of the US taxpayer, as weapons inspectors in the 1990s were reminded when they went hunting for WMDs. There is a famous photo of one of Reagan's weapons emissaries, Donald Rumsfeld, smiling broadly as he shakes hands with Saddam.

The war did not fully wreck Iraq, though many of its sons died.

The country was secular and liberal by regional standards. There were private schools, symphonies, universities, and a complex and developing economy. Women had rights. They could drive and have bank accounts. They wore Western clothing. You could get a drink at a bar or buy liquor and have it at home. Christians were tolerated. They could worship as they pleased, and send their children to Christian schools. The electricity stayed on. You could buy gasoline. It was an old-fashioned dictatorship but it was, in regional terms, prosperous.

The war between Iran and Iraq was inconclusive. But today, we've come full circle. Iraq is a wreck. *The Wall Street Journal* ran a story the other day that documented how the prevailing political influence today in Iraq is Iran's ruling Shiite political party, which hopes to add another country to those ruled by Islamic law.

So, from the vantage point of twenty-five years, it appears that the winner has finally been decided in the great Iran-Iraq war. The side that the US favored lost.

This is increasingly the pattern in the post-Cold War world. The US spends money, invades countries, sheds blood, and becomes ever more powerful at home and unpopular abroad. In the end, no matter how powerful its weapons or how determined its leaders, it loses.

It loses because people resist empire.

Why did the US win wars in the past? Because it fought far poorer governments.

Today it loses because it fights populations: people acting on their own, forming their own associations, using their brains to outwit bureaucrats, and cobbling together resources from underground markets.

The US has already lost the war on Iraq.

It should pull out. When? Now.

What will happen? I don't know. No one knows.

What will people do when you let them out of their cages? What will slaves do when you free them? What happens when you free those who are imprisoned unjustly? I don't know the answer to these questions, and no one does. I will observe that other countries count the day that the US soldiers left as the beginning of a bright future.

Think of Somalia, which, after a Bush Senior invasion, Clinton wisely left in a lurch after violence against American soldiers. Today warlords still compete for control of the capital.

The CIA factbook contains a sentence that might have pleased Thomas Jefferson: Somalia has "no permanent national government." But the rest of the country has moved on. It has prospered.

Here is more from the latest CIA factbook:

"Despite the seeming anarchy, Somalia's service sector has managed to survive and grow. Telecommunication firms provide wireless services in most major cities and offer the lowest international call rates on the continent. In the absence of a formal banking sector, money exchange services have sprouted throughout the country, handling between \$500 million and \$1 billion in remittances annually. Mogadishu's main market offers a variety of goods from food to the newest electronic gadgets. Hotels continue to operate, and militias provide security."

The CIA chooses the word "despite" the seeming anarchy. I would like to replace that with "because" of the seeming anarchy.

Government is not God, nor are the men who run it impeccable or infallible, nor do they have a direct pipeline to the Almighty. Even if they were angels, they couldn't do it.

The method they have chosen to bring about security and order is destined toward failure. But they are not angels. Their power has corrupted them, and the more absolute the power they gain, the more damage they create.

Let me state plainly too that we should end the entire war on terrorism because it cannot work and it is killing us instead of them. The pool of potential terrorists is unlimited, and it has been unleashed by the very means the state has employed. Bin Laden is still on the loose, and everyone knows that there are hundreds or thousands of additional Bin Ladens out there.

But can't the state just kill more, employ ever more violence, perhaps even terrify the enemy into passivity?

A bracing comment from Israeli military historian Martin Van Creveld: "The Americans in Vietnam tried it. They killed between two-and-a-half and three million Vietnamese. I don't see that it helped them much." Without admitting defeat, the Americans finally pulled out of Vietnam, which today has a thriving stock market.

The War on Terror is impossible, not in the sense that it cannot cause immense amounts of bloodshed and destruction and loss of liberty, but in the sense that it cannot finally achieve what it is supposed to achieve, and will only end in creating more of the same conditions that led to its declaration in the first place.

You and I paid for those flags on the caskets of the soldiers. We paid for the war that cost them their lives. We paid for the cheaper coffins of the far more numerous Iraqi dead. We didn't do it voluntarily.

The state forced us to do so, just as it is forcing Iraq to endure a dreadful occupation.

What is in the past is gone, a cost that is sunk and never to be regained.

But we can control the future.

Now is the time to end this ghastly undertaking in Iraq.

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.

Should Cuba Bomb The United States?

2.27.06 PERIÓDICO 26

The United States appears to spare no effort in its "war against terrorism." It has even violated the territory of Pakistan, one of its most faithful allies, and killed its people.

On January 13, 2006, the CIA launched several missiles from a pilotless plane over the Pakistani town of Damadola, 50 kilometers from the Afghan border. The air strike caused a real slaughter: three houses were destroyed and 18 civilians lost their lives, including at least three children and five women, not to mention the numerous injured.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, defended the destructive strategies that are being used by the CIA and refused to present her apology for the "collateral damage." "It is not convenient to treat terrorists softly," said Rice. In her opinion, it is totally legitimate to bomb any place that shelters people involved in international terrorism.

If one follows the US logic, then what attitude should Cuba adopt, having been the first victim of international terrorism nearly a half century ago?

Should it bomb the "residence" where Luis Posada Carriles is currently living, in El Paso, Texas? Should it launch a missile against Orlando Bosch's house in Miami?

Both men are responsible, among other crimes of the killing of 73 people in the mid-air bombing of a Cuban airliner, on October 6 1976, and they are now enjoying total impunity.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!

U.S. Occupation Commands' Stupid Terror Tactics Recruit Even More Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops



US soldiers from Able Company 1-506 Infantry 101st Airborne Division kick down a door in order to search a house in Ramadi. (AFP/David Furst)

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqis over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it "sovereign," and "detain" anybody who doesn't like it in some prison without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.]

[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]

"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."

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

Collaborators Slapping Down Collaborators

BAGHDAD, Feb 28 (KUNA)

Outgoing Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim Al-Jaafari's visit to Turkey, at the invitation of his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday came under fire from Iraqi President Jalal Talabani's office which expressed surprise at the move.

"The Iraqi presidency was surprised at this visit by the prime minister, whose term in office has expired, without informing other members of the Iraqi cabinet," a statement by the presidency said.

The row over the visit brings back to mind other rows that erupted between Talabani and Al-Jaafari over other issues including the prerogatives of the chairman of the presidential council and the definition of the government.

"The visit (to Turkey) takes place without any regard to the fact that the current government was only a caretaker one and had no right to conduct official talks with another government leading to an eventual accord, an official communique or commitments that could not be met," the statement said.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

White House Warned About Insurgency Two Years Ago: Tried To Pretend It Wasn't So

[Thanks to Don Bacon, The Smedley Butler Society, who sent this in.]

"This was stuff the White House and the Pentagon did not want to hear," the former official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "They were constantly grumbling that the people who were writing these kind of downbeat assessments 'needed to get on the team,' 'were not team players' and were 'sitting up there (at CIA headquarters) in Langley sucking their thumbs.'"

Feb. 28, 2006 By WARREN P. STROBEL and JONATHAN S. LANDAY, Knight Ridder Newspapers

WASHINGTON: U.S. intelligence agencies repeatedly warned the White House beginning more than two years ago that the insurgency in Iraq had deep local roots, was likely to worsen and could lead to civil war, according to former senior intelligence officials who helped craft the reports.

Among the warnings, Knight Ridder has learned, was a major study, called a National Intelligence Estimate, completed in October 2003 that concluded that the insurgency was fueled by local conditions, not foreign terrorists, and drew strength from deep grievances, including the presence of U.S. troops.

The reports received a cool reception from Bush administration policymakers at the White House and the office of Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, according to the former officials, who discussed them publicly for the first time.

President Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Rumsfeld and others continued to describe the insurgency as a containable threat, posed mainly by former supporters of Saddam Hussein, criminals and non-Iraqi terrorists, even as the U.S. intelligence community was warning otherwise.

Robert Hutchings, the chairman of the National Intelligence Council from 2003 to 2005, said the October 2003 study was part of a "steady stream" of dozens of intelligence reports warning Bush and his top lieutenants that the insurgency was intensifying and expanding.

"Frankly, senior officials simply weren't ready to pay attention to analysis that didn't conform to their own optimistic scenarios," Hutchings said in a telephone interview.

"The mindset downtown was that people were willing to accept that things were pretty bad, but not that they were going to get worse, so our analyses tended to get dismissed as 'nay-saying and hand-wringing,' to quote the president's press spokesman," he said.

A former senior U.S. official who participated in the process said that analysts at the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency and the State Department's intelligence bureau all agreed that the insurgency posed a growing threat to stability in Iraq and to U.S. hopes for forming a new government and rebuilding the economy.

"This was stuff the White House and the Pentagon did not want to hear," the former official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"They were constantly grumbling that the people who were writing these kind of downbeat assessments 'needed to get on the team,' 'were not team players' and were 'sitting up there (at CIA headquarters) in Langley sucking their thumbs.'"

Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein, War Profiteer: "The Democratic Leadership In Washington Is Just As Crooked And Just As Callous"

Feb. 28, 2006 Antiwar.com

We constantly hear about Dick Cheney's ties to Halliburton and how his ex-company is making bundles off U.S. contracts in Iraq. But what we don't hear about is how Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein and her husband are also making tons of money off the "war on terror."

The wishy-washy senator now claims Bush misled her prior to the invasion of Iraq. I don't think she's being honest with us, though.

There may have been other reasons she helped sell Bush's lies. According to the Center for Public Integrity, Feinstein's husband Richard Blum has racked in millions of dollars from Perini, a civil infrastructure construction company, of which the billionaire investor wields a 75 percent voting share.

In April 2003, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers gave \$500 million to Perini to provide services for Iraq's Central Command. A month earlier in March 2003, Perini was awarded \$25 million to design and construct a facility to support the Afghan National Army near Kabul. And in March 2004, Perini was awarded a hefty

contract worth up to \$500 million for "electrical power distribution and transmission" in southern Iraq.

Feinstein, who sits on the Senate Appropriations Committee as well as the Select Committee on Intelligence, is reaping the benefits of her husband's investments.

The Democratic royal family recently purchased a \$16.5 million mansion in the flush Pacific Heights neighborhood of San Francisco. It's a disgusting display of war profiteering, and just like Cheney, the leading Democrat should be called out for her offense.

And that's exactly why the Bush administration is so darn bulletproof.

The Democratic leadership in Washington is just as crooked and just as callous.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

GET THE MESSAGE?



Karachi, Pakistan, Feb 26, 2006: Women take part in a rally to condemn the bombing on the Golden Mosque, one of Shiite Islam's holiest sites in the Iraqi city of Samarra. (AP Photo/Shakil Adil)



Kashmiri Muslims protest against the United States in Srinagar, February 27, 2006.
REUTERS/Fayaz Kabli

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.williambowles.info/gispecial/2006/index.html>

http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/, <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>,

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

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