

GI SPECIAL 4C22:



IVAW, Mobile, Alabama [Photo: John Grant]

Veterans and Survivors march from Mobile to New Orleans

[homepage.mac.com/union_county_labor/Veterans_for_Peace/PhotoAlbum126.html]

“My Husband Did Not Return From Iraq” “Somebody Else Came Back In His Body”

I told her that I was glad he deserted, because now they would not have to worry about him coming home all fucked up like my husband is. My husband did not return from Iraq, somebody else came back in his body. He is not the same person and our lives have been hell since his return. Because of what I have seen happen to my husband, I am glad Pat chose not to support President Bush.

[This is a Letter To The Editor, following a story about a combat veteran of Iraq who decided to go to Canada, rather than go back again. Thanks to Clancy Sigal, who sent this in.]

March 16, 2006, Artvoice, Buffalo, New York

Pat and Jill Hart are two of my dearest friends.

I, like Jill, was an Army wife. She was and is all you wrote her to be. She was almost military herself, she was so involved in her husband's career.

I met the Harts when my husband joined the Army in 2000.

We were stationed in Fort Riley, Kansas and were soon best friends. The Harts stayed in touch with us after we left in 2001 to deploy to Europe.

When I could not get in touch with them and did not hear from them, I knew something was wrong. I finally heard back from Jill. She wrote to me telling me to sit down and then informed me that Pat had gone AWOL. She also wrote that they would understand if we never spoke to them or wanted anything to do with them. She knew that I bleed red, white and blue and how strongly I feel about deserters.

I wrote back that I loved them and still do and that even though I am against deserters, I didn't feel that Pat deserted my country.

He deserted Iraq.

I told her that I was glad he deserted, because now they would not have to worry about him coming home all fucked up like my husband is.

My husband came back from Iraq after a year's deployment and would have returned there had he not decided against re-enlisting. I wanted him to stay in the Army but not at the expense of his livelihood and sanity, not to mention my own.

Had he stayed in the Army he would have gone right back to Iraq and/or Afghanistan.

I support his decision.

My husband did not return from Iraq, somebody else came back in his body. He is not the same person and our lives have been hell since his return. Because of what I have seen happen to my husband, I am glad Pat chose not to support President Bush.

I support Pat and Jill Hart fully.

I will be there for them if ever they need me.

I was a loyal Bush supporter until this mess in Iraq.

I feel we have no business there and the time my husband spent there ruined our lives.

Sure, it may have helped some Iraqis' lives, but why can't they take care of themselves?

If President Bush is so concerned about Iraq and its people, he needs to take his ass, his family and his children over there to ensure the Iraqi people's rights and freedoms.

I pray every night that the Canadians will allow Pat and his family as well as others in the same situation to stay in their country as Canadian citizens.

America keeps letting its people down due to the retard who is in charge.

I just hope the Canadians take mercy on those of us who choose not to support President Bush and cannot come home.

God bless Canada. God bless the Harts and all in their situation. And God bless President Bush and may God show him the right way to run our country.

Kim Runner

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Two U.S. Soldiers Killed In Anbar

3.25.06 Manar TV

The two U.S. soldiers were killed in combat in insurgent-ridden Anbar province, the American military reported Friday. The statement said the soldiers, assigned to the 2/28th Brigade Combat Team, were killed Thursday.

Kentucky Soldier Killed



Staff Sgt. Brock A. Beery, 30, of White House, Tenn., was killed on March 23, 2006, when his armored vehicle encountered an improvised explosive device near Al Habbaniyah, west of Fallujah. (AP Photo/Kentucky National Guard)

U.S. Military Convoy Attacked: Casualties Not Announced



The remains of a vehicle after a car bomber attacked a U.S. military convoy in Falluja, March 24, 2006. The car bomb exploded near a U.S. convoy damaging one military vehicle, witnesses said. There was no independent confirmation from the U.S. forces in Iraq, but witnesses said they believed there were casualties.

REUTERS/Mohanned Faisal

U.S. Supply Convoy Ambushed At Badush: Six Trucks Destroyed



3.25.06 Reuters: A convoy of trucks destroyed by insurgents near Mosul March 25, 2006. Guerrillas ambushed and set ablaze six Turkish trucks carrying goods to the U.S. military on a road to the west of Mosul. Police sources said the trucks were driving in the Badoush area while on their way to the U.S. military base in Tal Afar. They said that all of the six drivers of the trucks were safe and were taken by U.S. forces to the base.

REUTERS/Stringer

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

One U.S. Soldier Killed, Another Wounded

3.25.06 Manar TV

A US soldier was killed Saturday and another was wounded in a fierce clash with about 20 fighters in southern Afghanistan.

TROOP NEWS

“Over Time, The Soldiers Became More Reluctant To Go On Patrols” “It’s Like Our Government Is Selling These Soldiers To The United States”

Over time, the soldiers became more reluctant to go on patrols. The decline in morale was partly fueled by rumors of corruption among the battalion’s leadership, whom soldiers suspected of stealing new uniforms and boots. They were also humiliated to learn that troops from other developing nations were being paid up to seven times what they were getting.

March 25, 2006 By N.C. Aizenman, Washington Post [Excerpts]

The Salvadoran government’s willingness to keep sending troops to Iraq – after three other Latin American countries pulled out their forces – underscores the unusually strong political and economic bonds, as well as the unique military relationship, forged in the past two decades between this tiny country and the United States.

One reason El Salvador has agreed to stay, according to analysts, is that its three most recent elected presidents have been members of the rightist ARENA party, which has close ties with the Bush administration and shares its commitment to a proposed regional free-trade agreement.

Some Salvadorans feel it is unfair to send the troops to Iraq. One is Herminia Ramos, whose son Natividad died there in 2004.

“Yes, they have a duty to serve. But it’s a duty to protect their own country, not to take care of a country so far away that has nothing to do with us,” Ramos, 47, said bitterly on a recent morning as she shelled peas in the dirt yard of her village home. “It’s like our government is selling these soldiers to the United States.”

Ramos said Natividad dropped out of school at age 15 to join the army after his father died. Ramos, an illiterate laundress, needed money to raise her three younger children, and the army paid about \$240 a month.

Within two years, Natividad was deployed to Iraq. He was killed in the city of Najaf on April 4, 2004, when supporters of the Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr stormed a barracks defended by Salvadoran and Spanish troops. A second Salvadoran soldier died in a vehicle accident.

Ramos said she knew her son was dead the moment she saw a delegation of soldiers coming up the path to her mud-brick hut. "I had this horrible feeling in my stomach," she recalled, tears rolling down her cheeks. "All I felt was pain."

Her grief soon turned to anger. It took months of nagging to get the military to build the small cement house it had promised her, and Natividad's \$7,000 government life insurance payment soon ran out.

Salvadoran soldiers have faced plenty of danger in Iraq, including the ambush at Diwaniyah. On patrols, they said, bullets would strike their Humvees; at night, their barracks were frequently attacked with mortars.

One day, Gustavo's unit was called to guard the scene of a suicide bombing in a market. Picking his way past body parts, he said, he was flooded with gruesome memories of the civil war he had tried to forget: his brother, blinded after stepping on a mine; the corpse of a female social worker, cut open and left naked in the middle of a road.

Now, three weeks after returning home, Gustavo said he still has trouble sleeping. If his wife taps him even gently, he bounds out of bed and takes cover.

"You felt like you were taunting death every time you went out," Gustavo said.

Over time, the soldiers became more reluctant to go on patrols. The decline in morale was partly fueled by rumors of corruption among the battalion's leadership, whom soldiers suspected of stealing new uniforms and boots. They were also humiliated to learn that troops from other developing nations were being paid up to seven times what they were getting.

Pablo, 37, a corporal now on leave in his cinder-block home in a slum near the capital, said he was hoping for his first raise in 10 years. If it doesn't come through, he said, he will have no choice but to try to sneak into the United States. He has four young children and mounting school expenses.

Besides, he said with a hopeful smile, "if the border police catch me, then I'll just explain to them that I'm a Salvadoran who served in Iraq. Then maybe they'll let me stay."

Truth For Tillman Family: The Latest Investigation Must Go Further, Up The Chain Of Command

March 27, 2006 Army Times editorial

Next month marks the two-year anniversary of the death of Cpl. Pat Tillman. His memory lives on as an all-American tale of inspiration, a millionaire football player who quit the high life to serve his country as an Army foot soldier.

But his death leaves lingering questions the Army has yet to answer.

Tillman was shot and killed April 22, 2004, while on patrol with his 75th Ranger Regiment comrades in Afghanistan. Initial reports hailed him as a hero, and within three weeks of his death — and in time, miraculously, for his nationally televised memorial service — he was awarded a Silver Star for bravery in action.

Only later, after he had been buried, did the Army tell his family that Tillman had actually been shot by his own forces, not the enemy.

Now the Defense Department has ordered a new criminal investigation — the fifth inquiry into the tragic case — in an effort to get the answer his family wants: Was anyone criminally responsible for Tillman's death?

But the inquiry should not stop with the tragic shooting accident.

Just as important now is whether Army leaders intentionally lied and misled the public about the circumstances of Tillman's death.

Was the Silver Star merited, or was it part of the elaborate cover-up, misrepresenting the square-jawed Ranger as a hero, rather than a victim?

Seven soldiers in Tillman's unit already have received nonjudicial punishment for their actions on the day Tillman died.

The latest investigation must go further, to determine if others up the chain of command knew the truth about Cpl. Tillman's death and then told or tolerated lies.

The Army's sloppy handling of this case has damaged its credibility not only in the eyes of the Tillman family, but in the eyes of millions of Americans who have followed this case.

It's time to get to the bottom of the shenanigans.

With truth will come closure.

**War Leaves National Guard At
Home Sucking Wind For
Equipment;**

Units “Critically Wounded”

Mar. 22, 2006 BY KIRSTEN SCHARNBERG, Chicago Tribune

The conflict in Iraq, launched three years ago as bombs began lighting up Baghdad's midnight skies, has left America's National Guard as one of the most critically wounded casualties of the war.

Since the war began, the Guard has been badly stripped of equipment and resources even as it is tasked with one of the most important on-call jobs on American soil: to be the first line of homeland defense and security in the event of a catastrophic terror attack or a devastating national emergency such as Hurricane Katrina.

Statistics, compiled last year by the Government Accountability Office, are startling:

Non-deployed Guard units have just 5 percent of the lightweight rifles and 14 percent of the machine guns they are authorized to have.

Units nationwide have just 8 percent of the flatbed semi-trailers they are authorized to have and 10 percent of the Humvees.

And despite the fact the Guard likely would be the first force to respond to a terrorist attack, which many experts fear could involve the use of chemical or biological weapons, its units have only 14 percent of their authorized chemical decontamination equipment and virtually none of the chemical agent monitoring equipment they are supposed to have.

"How in the world can we help ourselves or our fellow governors in a natural disaster when we have none of the equipment to do it?" Washington Gov. Christine Gregoire asked.

The tug between the two increasingly conflicting duties of the Guard - fighting in Iraq and protecting the home front - was on display in the aftermath of Katrina.

Instead of being able to draw on the equipment stores of the units in the affected region, the Guard scrambled to get equipment brought to Louisiana and Mississippi from the farthest reaches of the United States. At one point, there was talk of flying troops and equipment from Hawaii.

All told, about 88,000 pieces of National Guard equipment - everything from tanks to Humvees, radios to rifles - have been left in Iraq.

Not only has the equipment, worth an estimated \$3 billion, been left for newly arriving troops, but much of it will never be returned to the United States because it has been worn out, destroyed in bombings or turned over to fledgling Iraqi units.

The end result is keenly felt inside National Guard armories across the United States.

In New York and New Jersey, where fears of another catastrophic terrorism attack may be the greatest and most plausible, equipment shortages are acute.

As of late last year, New Jersey's Guard left about 1,000 Humvees in Iraq and dispatched 16 of the state's 20 helicopters there. New York, which is authorized to have 900 Humvees, had just 266, and it had only 264 of its authorized 1,000 night-vision goggles.

The 81st Brigade, based in Washington state, left \$33 million worth of equipment in Iraq last year, including radios that would be needed in the event of a major emergency.

And inventory tallies for Illinois are far worse even than the national average.

According to statistics released by the office of Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., Illinois units have 4 percent of the medium-size trucks and 8 percent of the heavy trucks needed for full readiness. The GAO report pointed out that at least three Illinois Guard units were unable to conduct training or meet proficiency levels because of lack of equipment.

"The (Bush) administration refuses to acknowledge the real cost of this war: the real costs in terms of deaths and dollars and equipment," Durbin said.

Oklahoma National Guard Troops Deployed To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse



Members of the 1345th Transportation Company, Oklahoma Army National Guard, March 24, 2006, in Midwest City, Okla., as they prepare to deploy to Iraq. (AP Photo)

5-Inch Metal Pin Does \$6.7 Million Damage To Raptor

3.23.06 Norfolk Virginian-Pilot

An accident involving a five-inch metal pin, attached with a three-foot streamer, caused \$6.7 million worth of damage to a new F-22 Raptor.

U.S. Government Demands \$7.5 Billion Ransom For Getting Marines Out Of Japanese Territory

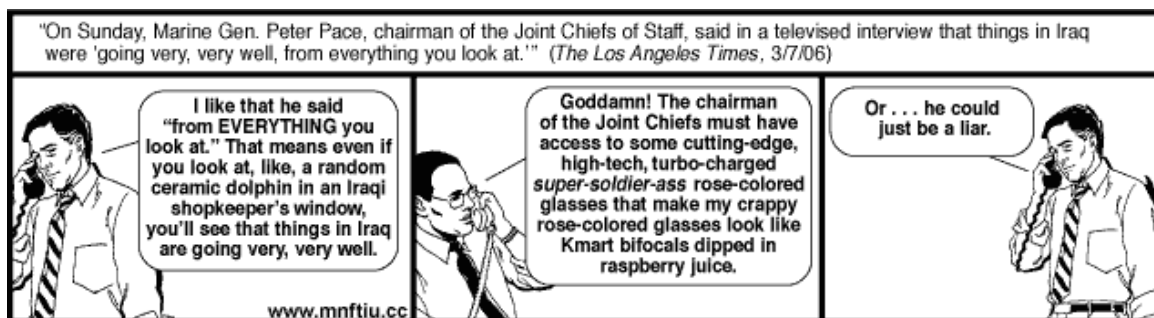
March 23, 2006 By Chisaki Watanabe, Associated Press

TOKYO: Japan and the United States held sweeping defense talks Thursday to discuss the realignment of U.S. troops in Japan, the war against terrorism and plans for a joint missile defense shield, officials said.

By the end of this month, the two sides hope to finalize the details of an agreement that includes a proposal to shift 7,000 Marines from the southern Japanese island of Okinawa to the U.S. Pacific island territory of Guam.

The Tokyo talks are expected to focus on a U.S. request for Japan to pay 75 percent of the \$10 billion cost to move the Marines to Guam, Japan's Kyodo News agency reported, citing unidentified government sources.

Okinawa hosts most of the 50,000 U.S. troops in Japan.



IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Armed Demonstration Against The Occupation In Baghdad



Iraqi citizens shout anti American slogans, after Friday prayers, in Baghdad, March 24, 2006. (AP Photo/ Karim Kadim)

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

Assorted Resistance Action

Mar 25, 2006 By Alastair Macdonald and Mariam Karouny (AP) & Reuters

Insurgents in Baghdad left a booby trap package that killed a policeman when he opened it.

Guerrillas killed a traffic policeman in central Baghdad.

Three police commandos and a civilian were wounded when a car bomb exploded near their patrol in Samarra, 100 km (62 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

In north Baghdad, gunmen opened fire on a police patrol in a drive-by shooting, wounding one officer, police said.

**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

**“The Bush Administration Is On A
Death March, And We Are The
Only Ones Who Can Stop It”**



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: March 21, 2006

I'm sending you a picture of a Marine standing in front of the White House.

The photo was taken in Washington, D.C. on September 26, 2005. The picture he is holding says it all.

The Bush Administration IS the "Scream Administration."

People need to take a good look at this photograph, because it is the beginning of the end for America, if citizens in this country do nothing.

The Bush Administration is on a death march, and we are the only ones who can stop it.

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
March 19, 2006**

Photo from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

“The Truth About The Iraqi Resistance Is: There Are No Terrorists: None”

March 21, 2006 Jack Random, www.dissidentvoice.org [Excerpt]

The truth about the Iraqi resistance is: There are no terrorists: none.

Even if we accept the neocon definition of terrorism (which conveniently exempts sovereign nations -- otherwise, Shock & Awe would be the operative model), an act of terrorism requires the intent to terrorize.

In Iraq, the intent of roadside or suicide bombs is not to terrorize the most powerful military force on earth but to exact a price on the enemy occupiers and their collaborators.

We may not favor the form and nature of any number of governments around the world but it is not for us to determine by military means which will stand and which will fall. We have embraced far too many despots to defend such a distinction as grounds for war.

As the Bush administration continues to promote its dark doctrine of military supremacy and preemptive strike, at this juncture of international affairs, there is not a single nation on earth less peaceful and more threatening than our own.

The truth about Iraq is: We were wrong at the inception of the war; we have been wrong for three years, and we continue to be wrong today.

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

Got That Right

March 21, 2006 Paul Craig Roberts www.uruknet.info?p=21789 [Excerpt]

The fantasy Iraq that Bush painted was only his warm-up.

He went on to tell his Cleveland audience that American could not be safe unless Iraq was a democracy.

What a weak, pitiful, vulnerable place Bush's America must be.

Unless a small, devastated Middle Eastern country is a democracy, America cannot be safe.

Who in the Cleveland audience could possibly have believed this utter nonsense.

“Here We Are, Stymied By Two Of The Smallest, Poorest Countries On Earth”

March 21, 2006 Tomdispatch Interview with Chalmers Johnson [Excerpts]

The military budget is starting to bankrupt the country. It's got so much in it that's well beyond any rational military purpose.

It equals just less than half of total global military spending.

And yet here we are, stymied by two of the smallest, poorest countries on Earth. Iraq before we invaded had a GDP the size of the state of Louisiana and Afghanistan was certainly one of the poorest places on the planet.

And yet these two places have stopped us.

These people have talked us into building a fantastic military apparatus, and then, there was that famous crack (Clinton Secretary of State) Madeleine Albright made to General

Colin Powell: "What's the point of having this superb military you're always talking about if we can't use it?"

Well, if you want to use it today, they charge you another \$120 billion dollars! (He laughs.)

But even the official budget makes no sense.

It's filled with weapons like Lockheed Martin's F-22 -- the biggest single contract ever written. It's a stealth airplane and it's absolutely useless.

They want to build another Virginia class nuclear submarine. These are just toys for the admirals.

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)

“Don't Impeach; Impale”

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

March 15, 2006 By Will Durst, AlterNet.

Impeachment just isn't proper punishment for the evil, cowardly, imperialistic slime buckets of the Bush administration.

I don't know about you guys, but I am so sick and tired of these lying, thieving, holier-than-thou, right-wing, cruel, crude, rude, gauche, coarse, crass, cocky, corrupt, dishonest, debauched, degenerate, dissolute, swaggering, lawyer shooting, bullhorn shouting, infrastructure destroying, hysterical, history defying, finger-pointing, puppy stomping, roommate appointing, pretzel choking, collateral damaging, aspersion casting, wedding party bombing, clear cutting, torturing, jobs outsourcing, torture outsourcing, "so-called" compassionate-conservative, women's rights eradicating, Medicare cutting, uncouth, spiteful, boorish, vengeful, noxious, homophobic, xenophobic, xylophonic, racist, sexist, ageist, fascist, cashist, audaciously stupid, brazenly selfish, lethally ignorant, journalist purchasing, genocide ignoring, corporation kissing, poverty inducing,

crooked, coercive, autocratic, primitive, uppity, high-handed, domineering, arrogant, inhuman, inhumane, insolent, know-it-all, snotty, pompous, contemptuous, supercilious, gutless, spineless, shameless, avaricious, poisonous, imperious, merciless, graceless, tactless, brutish, brutal, Karl Roving, backward thinking, persistent vegetative state grandstanding, nuclear option threatening, evolution denying, irony deprived, depraved, insincere, conceited, perverted, pre-emptory invading of a country that had absolutely nothing to do with 9/11, 35-day-vacation taking, bribe soliciting, incapable, inbred, hellish, proud for no apparent reason, smarty pants, loudmouth, bullying, swell-headed, ethnic cleansing, ethics-eluding, domestic spying, medical marijuana-busting, kick-backing, Halliburtoning, New Deal disintegrating, narcissistic, undiplomatic, blustering, malevolent, demonizing, baby seal-clubbing, Duke Cunninghaming, hectoring, verbally flatulent, pro-bad- anti-good, Moslem-baiting, photo-op arranging, hurricane disregarding, oil company hugging, judge packing, science disputing, faith based mathematics advocating, armament selling, nonsense spewing, education ravaging, whiny, unscrupulous, greedy exponential factor fifteen, fraudulent, CIA outing, redistricting, anybody who disagrees with them slandering, fact twisting, ally alienating, betraying, god and flag waving, scare mongering, Cindy Sheehan libeling, phony question asking, just won't get off the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge drilling, two- faced, inept, callous, menacing, your hand under a rock- the maggoty remains of a marsupial, oppressive, vulgar, antagonistic, brush clearing suck- up, showboating, tyrannizing, peace hating, water and air and ground and media polluting which is pretty much all the polluting you can get, deadly, illegal, pernicious, lethal, haughty, venomous, virulent, ineffectual, mephitic, egotistic, bloodthirsty, incompetent, hypocritical, did I say evil, I'm not sure if I said evil, because I want to make sure I say evil...

EVIL, cretinous, fool, toad, buttwipe, lizardstick, cowardly, lackey imperialistic tool slime buckets in the Bush Administration that I could just spit.

Impeachment?

Hell no.

Impalement.

Upon the sharp and righteous sword of the people's justice.

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.

“Bush Didn't Bungle Iraq”

“THE MISSION WAS INDEED ACCOMPLISHED”

March 20, 2006 by Greg Palast, The Guardian

Get off it. All the carping, belly-aching and complaining about George Bush's incompetence in Iraq, from both the Left and now the Right, is just dead wrong.

On the third anniversary of the tanks rolling over Iraq's border, most of the 59 million Homer Simpsons who voted for Bush are beginning to doubt if his mission was accomplished.

But don't kid yourself; Bush and his co-conspirator, Dick Cheney, accomplished exactly what they set out to do.

In case you've forgotten what their real mission was, let me remind you of White House spokesman Ari Fleisher's original announcement, three years ago, launching of what he called,

"Operation

Iraqi

Liberation."

O.I.L. How droll of them, how cute. Then, Karl Rove made the giggling boys in the White House change it to "OIF" -- Operation Iraqi Freedom. But the 101st Airborne wasn't sent to Basra to get its hands on Iraq's OIF.

"It's about oil," Robert Ebel told me.

Who is Ebel?

Formerly the CIA's top oil analyst, he was sent by the Pentagon, about a month before the invasion, to a secret confab in London with Saddam's former oil minister to finalize the plans for "liberating" Iraq's oil industry.

In London, Bush's emissary Ebel also instructed Ibrahim Bahr al-Ulum, the man the Pentagon would choose as post-OIF oil minister for Iraq, on the correct method of disposing Iraq's crude.

And what did the USA want Iraq to do with Iraq's oil?

The answer will surprise many of you: and it is uglier, more twisted, devilish and devious than anything imagined by the most conspiracy-addicted blogger.

The answer can be found in a 323-page plan for Iraq's oil secretly drafted by the State Department.

Our team got a hold of a copy; how, doesn't matter.

The key thing is what's inside this thick Bush diktat: a directive to Iraqis to maintain a state oil company that will "enhance its relationship with OPEC."

Enhance its relationship with OPEC??? How strange: the government of the United States ordering Iraq to support the very OPEC oil cartel which is strangling our nation with outrageously high prices for crude.

Specifically, the system ordered up by the Bush cabal would keep a lid on Iraq's oil production: limiting Iraq's oil pumping to the tight quota set by Saudi Arabia and the OPEC cartel.

There you have it. Yes, Bush went in for the oil: not to get more of Iraq's oil, but to prevent Iraq producing too much of it.

You must keep in mind who paid for George's ranch and Dick's bunker: Big Oil. And Big Oil, and their buck-buddies, the Saudis don't make money from pumping more oil, but from pumping less of it. The lower the supply, the higher the price.

It's Economics 101.

The oil industry is run by a cartel, OPEC, and what economists call an "oligopoly" -- a tiny handful of operators who make more money when there's less oil, not more of it.

So, every time the "insurgents" blow up a pipeline in Basra, every time Mad Mahmoud in Tehran threatens to cut supply, the price of oil leaps. And Dick and George just love it.

Dick and George didn't want more oil from Iraq, they wanted less.

I know some of you, no matter what I write, insist that our President and his Veep are on the hunt for more crude so you can cheaply fill your family Hummer; that somehow, these two oil-patch babies are concerned that the price of gas in the USA is bumping up to \$3 a gallon.

Not so, gentle souls.

Three bucks a gallon in the States (and a quid a litre in Britain) means colossal profits for Big Oil, and that makes Dick's ticker go pitty-pat with joy.

The top oily-gopologists, the five largest oil companies, pulled in \$113 billion in profit in 2005, compared to a piddly \$34 billion in 2002 before Operation Iraqi Liberation. In other words, it's been a good war for Big Oil.

As per Plan Bush, Bahr Al-Ulum became Iraq's occupation oil minister; the conquered nation "enhanced its relationship with OPEC;" and the price of oil, from Clinton peace-time to Bush war-time, shot up 317%.

In other words, on the third anniversary of invasion, we can say the attack and occupation is, indeed, a Mission Accomplished.

However, it wasn't America's mission, nor the Iraqis'.

It was a Mission Accomplished for OPEC and Big Oil.

“Dead Wrong” About Bin Laden

February 15, 2006 By Steve Perry, City Pages, Vol 27 Issue 1315 [Excerpts]

Most officials thought last month's Osama bin Laden tape was no big deal: maybe even a gesture of weakness. Author and ex-CIA analyst Michael Scheuer, who founded the Agency's bin Laden unit 10 years ago, thinks they're dead wrong.

When the latest Osama bin Laden tape aired on al Jazeera last month, Michael Scheuer's phone was one of the first to start ringing off the hook with calls from journalists seeking a quick soundbite for that day's news cycle.

Scheuer has credentials on the subject that few can match: By the time September 11 happened, he had been studying and trailing bin Laden for five years, as the creator and chief analyst of the CIA's bin Laden unit.

Later on, writing as “Anonymous,” Scheuer put out two books about bin Laden and his group, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam and the Future of America* (published in 2002, but largely written in 1999 as an unclassified manual for CIA personnel joining the bin Laden unit) and the bestseller *Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror*, which appeared in 2004 shortly before Scheuer resigned the CIA to go public about his views.

Appearing on CBS Evening News the day the tape surfaced, January 19, Scheuer told anchor Bob Schieffer that “it would be foolish not to take this very seriously as a threat to the United States.”

He discussed the Islamic custom of offering one's enemies an out before attacking them, and made reference to bin Laden's long-standing wish to obtain a nuclear weapon, and to the still-unsecured stockpile of nukes in the former Soviet Union. “It sounds pretty scary, what you're saying here,” Schieffer offered near the end of the two-minute segment.

“This is not a threat that should be defined as criminals, gangsters, and deviants,” Scheuer replied. “These are very serious people, they are our deadly enemies, and they are extraordinarily talented. We can worry about Saddam and we can worry about the Iranians,” Scheuer answered, “but the only people capable of attacking us inside the United States in the world today is al Qaeda.”

Scheuer's sense of alarm was soon forgotten, swallowed up by the official line about the bin Laden tape, which also became the conventional media wisdom: As ex-FBI terrorism hand Christopher Whitcomb put it to a different CBS anchor the next morning, "I don't think there's very much significance in this tape at all. And the reason is, we've seen so many of these in the past four-and-a-half years. Osama bin Laden is trying to show the world he's still relevant. I think he's not still relevant, and I think he is trying just to say, 'I'm out here, look at me.'"

I phoned Scheuer recently to ask him more about his views of the tape and the status of the U.S.'s anti-terror efforts.

City Pages: You've dissented strongly from the Bush administration line that says bin Laden and other Islamic radicals "hate us for our freedoms."

What's the real root of their opposition?

Michael Scheuer: The real root of their opposition is what we do in the Islamic world.

If they were hating us because we had elections, or gender equality, or liberty, they would be a lethal nuisance, but they wouldn't be a threat to our security. If you remember, the Ayatollah tried waging a jihad against Americans because we were degenerate; we had X-rated movies, we drank liquor, women were in workplaces. Very, very few people were willing to die for that kind of thing.

Bin Laden, I think, took a lesson from that and instead focused on the impact of our policies in the Islamic world, our support for the Arab tyrannies in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, our presence in the holy lands on the Arabian Peninsula, our invasion of Iraq, our support for countries like Russia that are deemed to repress Islamic people.

He's focused on things that are visible to the Islamic world every day, and quite frankly there's a direct correlation between what he says and what all the Western polling firms are finding, that there is a huge majority in Islamic countries that hate our foreign policy.

And yet generally, every one of the same countries has a majority, sometimes a large one, that admires the way Americans live, the basic equity of our society.

We should be so lucky as to have him hate us only for our freedoms. He's never even discussed that kind of thing.

CP: After the latest bin Laden tape aired, the official spin was to call it a political bluff, or even a call for truce out of weakness on his part. But you've written and spoken about seeing a different aim behind these bin Laden warnings, one that has more to do with meeting the expectations of a Muslim audience than a Western one.

Scheuer: I think that's very much the case. He's very conscious of the tradition from which he comes and how that history works. It's the tradition of the prophet that you warn your enemy and you offer a truce before the fighting starts. Saladin followed the

same tradition against the Crusaders in medieval times, and bin Laden has been very careful to follow that in his time.

He's offered us warnings numerous times, but this is the first time he's offered a truce in addition. In the early summer of 2004, he offered the Europeans an almost identical truce or cease-fire. They refused him much like we did, and he attacked them in July of '05 in London.

CP: Getting back to what you said a moment ago about the importance to bin Laden of offering the U.S. a warning, didn't he in fact get in trouble in a lot of Islamic circles after 9/11 for failing to provide a warning?

Scheuer: Yes, that is, for failing to provide enough of a warning. The prophet's guidance is that you go the extra mile to warn your enemy. Bin Laden was called on the carpet by his peers in the Islamic militant movement for three things.

One was that he didn't give us enough warning. He's now addressed the American people on five separate occasions since 2002. So he's taken care of that one.

He was also called on the carpet for not offering us a chance to convert to Islam. He's now done that three separate times, and Zawahiri has done it once. So they've covered that angle.

The other thing they were taken to task for was that they didn't have the religious authority to kill as many Americans as they did. In the summer of 2003, he got a religious judgment from a very reputable Saudi cleric that he could use weapons of mass destruction, specifically nuclear weapons, to kill up to 10 million Americans.

After 9/11, he had several very important loose ends to tie up, in religious terms, before he could attack us again. He's done all of those things. It's interesting, because he spoke on the eve of our presidential election, and he said, This is the last time I'm going to warn you. In his speech last week, he said, I was not going to talk to you again, but your president is lying to you. I wanted to give you one more opportunity to hear the truth. He again warned us about the impact of our policies, and then offered us the truce. But you were right at the beginning. He's very much speaking to an Islamic audience as much as to an American.

CP: How do you read the offer of truce, that being the unique element in this communiqué?

Scheuer: I think he's very serious about it.

I don't think for a second he believes we'll take him up on it. But he's kind of done as much as he can do to make sure there's no further bloodshed between us and the forces he represents. It was very common, you know, in the era of the prophet; truces came about fairly regularly.

There were truces between Saladin and Richard the Lionhearted in the Third Crusade. One of them was as specific as three years and some odd months before the fighting was to resume. From his culture, from his history, this is a very serious offer. I think he

expected the kind of curt response he got from Scott McClellan and then from the president and vice president.

This is a very difficult problem for a world that's run on the basis of nation-states. How do you respond to something like this?

CP: The competing popular images of bin Laden in the U.S. seem to run to opposite extremes: he's either the supreme commander of anti-U.S. forces or an isolated, mostly ceremonial figure. Can you describe his place in the firmament of radical Muslim forces aligning against the U.S.?

Scheuer: I think he is the hero and the leader in the Islamic world.

But that's not to say that he controls very much beyond his own group.

The two things I would point out are that, one, for a man of his stature in the world, he probably has as little ego as I've ever seen in a leader. He's a man who clearly wants to control his own organization, but outside of that he's never really shown much interest in controlling other groups.

The other thing people tend to forget, or to lose in the rhetoric, is that when he outlined his aims in 1996, the first one, and it still is the first one, was to incite jihad around the world.

He regarded al Qaeda and his role not as an instrument of American defeat, but as an instrument that would incite the jihad that would spur America's defeat. He saw his job as encouraging other groups to join in. Picking a number is kind of a mug's game, but now we have 40 or 50 groups around the world that fight, sometimes locally, but also have an intention of attacking the United States. So in his main goal, of incitement, he's been singularly successful.

CP: Can you talk about the role that the Iraq war has played in his recruiting successes?

Scheuer: I have to tell you, Sir, I'm not an expert on Iraq. I don't know what the threat was from Saddam. My own judgment is, as a nation-state (Saddam's Iraq) was probably containable.

But our invasion of Iraq broke the back of our counter-terrorism policy, because it validated in the Islamic mind so much of what bin Laden had said through the past decade. He said, Americans will do anything to defeat a strong Muslim government.

We took Saddam out. He said we would take on and defeat any Muslim state that threatened Israel.

I think Iraq is an indication of that being true, from their perspective.

He said we would occupy their sanctities and try to destroy their religion. From the Islamist's perspective, we occupy all three of their sanctities now, the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, and Jerusalem. The Israelis hold Jerusalem, but increasingly in the Islamic world, Americans and Israelis are viewed interchangeably. He said we

were going to try to take all the oil from the Muslim world. And certainly the view predominates that one of the reasons we went to Iraq was oil.

And so, in terms of perception, the Iraq war was a validation of what bin Laden had said.

In addition, bin Laden and Zawahiri are not trained Islamic clerics or jurists. The argument was always made that they had no authority, therefore, to declare a jihad. Well, when we invaded Iraq, it was kind of a textbook example of an event that necessitates jihad in the Islamic world.

Now, any number of well-credentialed clerics and jurists and scholars have authorized jihad against the United States around the world, because we invaded a Muslim land.

In my view, the invasion of Iraq accelerated the transformation of al Qaeda from a man and an organization into a philosophy and a movement.

We're at the point where it's still very important to kill, preferably to kill, or else to capture, Osama bin Laden and Zawahiri. But because of Iraq, our problem is far from over if that happens.

CP: From the standpoint of practical politics, do you think bin Laden and his associates feel obliged to make the next attack on U.S. soil more spectacular than the last?

Scheuer: That's certainly what they have promised. And one of the things I've tried to point out when I've been interviewed is that, objectively, if you examine bin Laden's rhetoric, the correlation between words and deeds is pretty much close to perfect. One of the things he always stressed from the very first days of al Qaeda was, I intend to incrementally ratchet up the severity of the pain I cause Americans until they begin to listen and change their policies.

So my answer would be yes. To keep true to his world, which seems to be a major concern for him, the next attack on America will have to be more damaging than 9/11.

CP: You spoke on 60 Minutes over a year ago about bin Laden's seeking and obtaining the fatwa to use nuclear weapons against the U.S. Do you think it's his wish to use nuclear weapons in his next attack?

Scheuer: Sure. If he has them, he'll use them. It's not like he's looking for a deterrent.

In old Cold War terms, he's looking for a first-strike weapon.

One of the problems we have in the West, and particularly in America, is we view him as kind of a person who wouldn't have anything else to do if he wasn't killing and fighting.

Clearly he would.

America is not their first target.

Their first targets are the Arab states like Saudi Arabia and Egypt, that are tyrannies, and Israel.

We're being attacked because bin Laden has argued that the other targets, the more important targets, are easy pickings if they can drive us out of the Middle East.

One of the ways they look to do that is to create a situation in the United States that is so destructive, in terms of the economic impact and casualties, that it would take the U.S. military to administer the after-effects of the attack. Clearly their preference is for a nuclear-type weapon.

CP: How feasible do you think it is for an organization of their profile and resources to obtain a nuclear weapon?

Scheuer: Well, you know, money is never a problem. We make a lot of noise about taking their money, but we've taken very little of their money.

To put it bluntly, they're not stupid enough to use the Western economic system. So that's one thing we shouldn't bank on.

In 1996, we acquired the information that since 1992 they'd been trying to get one of these weapons, and have developed a unit that features technicians and engineers and hard scientists, to prevent themselves from being scammed.

We know, well, I didn't know it until the election campaign, when Mr. Bush and Mr. Kerry were arguing about whether the Soviet nuclear arsenal should be under control by 2007 or 2010, but the Soviet nuclear arsenal is not all accounted for. When you add all these things up; the availability, the expertise available to them, and the virtually unlimited amounts of money they can bring to bear; I think we would be foolish not to think that they could do it.

There's a book called Nuclear Terrorism by a man named Graham Allison from Harvard, who is kind of the premier expert on the possibility of nuclear terrorism in the Western world.

In that book, he points out that the only really difficult part about constructing a nuclear weapon is acquiring the fissile material, the highly enriched uranium or the plutonium. After that, the machining of the trigger and the containers and all the rest is not very hard at all. It's college-level physics.

Certainly that kind of expertise is available to Osama bin Laden.

I sat in on an unclassified briefing from a couple of our national laboratories, Sandia and Los Alamos, and they basically mirrored what Graham Allison had said. That basically, if you can acquire the fissile materials, you've done the hardest part of the job. I think we would be silly to assume they can't do it.

CP: Could you comment briefly on the command-and-control structure of al Qaeda? I think most Americans have the notion of a paramilitary group with clear lines of top-down

control. Is that correct, or is it more akin to a consortium of venture capitalists pursuing different objectives in different locales?

Scheuer: I think it's both. Bin Laden has always been someone who welcomed ideas, which, if he liked them, he would help to fund or train for.

But in terms of attacks inside the United States, that is one part of his organization that he has always maintained personal command and control over.

We argue quite frequently that he can't communicate, and that he's isolated. The one thing I hope we learn from last week's statement is that that argument may not be correct. He dominated the international media for three days at a time of his choosing.

If you can expose your telecommunication system to a satellite, you can communicate from anywhere in the world. He has all the money he needs. It's a very dangerous thing to assume he can't communicate.

CP: Any additional thoughts regarding the latest communiqué?

Scheuer: The only thing I've tried to say to people is that this is a very serious man, and a very talented one.

He's a very terse man in many ways. He doesn't say things just for the sake of saying them.

He is a man well acquainted with the power of silence, I think.

When he says something, given the correlation between what he's said and what he's done in the past, I think he deserves a lot of respect and, I don't want to say fear, but respect as an enemy is something that we don't give him.

My own inclination is to say that the decks are pretty much cleared now. He would not have said what he said if he wasn't prepared to attack us.

OCCUPATION REPORT

How Bad Is It?

**“The Government Could End Up
Being Only A Few Buildings In The
Green Zone”**

25 March 2006 Patrick Cockburn in Arbil, Independent News and Media Limited
[Excerpt]

Mr [Fuad] Hussein, [the chief of staff of Massoud Barzani, the Kurdish leader] gave another reason why the army is weak. "Where you have 3,000 soldiers there will in fact be only 2,000 men (because of ghost soldiers who do not exist and whose salaries are taken by senior officers)," he said. "When it comes to fighting only 500 of those men will turn up."

Iraqi officials and ministers are increasingly in despair at the failure to put together an effective administration in Baghdad. A senior Arab minister, who asked not to be named, said: "The government could end up being only a few buildings in the Green Zone."

2003: Sowing The Wind 2006: Reaping The Whirlwind



A U.S. soldier stops an Iraqi driver at gunpoint at a busy junction in Baghdad June 3, 2003. Photo by Radu Sigheti/Reuters

[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?]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Senator Russell Feingold: Champion Lying Rat Of 2006, So Far

[This is disrespectfully dedicated to the fake anti-war opportunists in the U.S. who have been falling all over themselves to kiss Feingold's' ass all year, making him out to be some kind of hero for the movement against the Iraq war. Have a reality check.

[He's just one more Empire-loving piece of shit, and so are those who spend their time licking the dirt off his shoes. If his proclamation last month about how much he loves the Patriot Act (just needs a few changes) wasn't enough to expose him as the shameless rat he really is, this one should do it.]

3/25/2006 (AP)

As a gunbattle raged south of Baghdad, Sens. John McCain and Russell Feingold told Iraqi leaders Saturday that American patience was growing thin and they needed to urgently overcome their stalemate and form a national unity government.

Feingold, of Wisconsin and the ranking Democrat in the U.S. delegation joined McCain in pressing for the quick formation of a government, but he spoke bluntly of his concern that the continued presence of American forces was prolonging the conflict.

"It's the reality of a situation like this that when you have a large troop presence that it has the tendency to fuel the insurgency because they can make the incorrect and unfair claim that somehow the United States is here to occupy this country, which of course is not true," Feingold said.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

<http://www.williambowles.info/gispecial/2006/index.html>;

http://robinlea.com/GI_Special/; <http://gi-special.iraq-news.de>;

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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