

GI SPECIAL 4D10:

He Died In Iraq He Was Not A Criminal



April 9, 2006: Beatrice Saldivar holds a picture of her nephew, Daniel Tores, who was killed in Iraq, at a march to defend immigrants from proposed legislation that would make 11 million immigrants criminals. The march in downtown Dallas drew hundreds of thousands. (AP Photo/Erin Trieb)

Halliburton Negligence Linked To Iraq Troop Infections: Soldiers Told To Brush Teeth And Shower With Disease Carrying Water:

And The Assholes Have The Nerve To Say They're Not Sorry

April 7, 2006 By DAVID IVANOVICH, Houston Chronicle Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON: A U.S. Army doctor serving in Iraq has linked a small outbreak of bacterial infections among U.S. troops to allegedly contaminated water supplied by Houston-based Halliburton Co.

In the latest broadside against Halliburton and its performance in Iraq, Senate Democrats produced an e-mail Friday from Capt. A. Michelle Callahan, a family physician serving at Qayyarah Airfield West, recounting how she treated six infections over a two-week period in January, at the same time she was noticing the water in base showers was cloudy and foul-smelling.

Follow-up testing of the water soldiers were using to bathe, shave and even brush their teeth revealed evidence of coliform and E. coli bacteria, Callahan wrote in an e-mail to a staffer for the Democratic Policy Committee, led by Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D.

Halliburton subsidiary KBR was responsible for treating water at that base, under a contract to provide logistical support to U.S. troops.

Once Callahan raised the alarm, Halliburton chlorinated the water in the area where the infections had occurred.

But the water was still cloudy, Callahan said.

Further investigation revealed that the water the troops were using was actually wastewater from a purification unit, she wrote.

In response to the issues Callahan identified, KBR installed an additional water purification unit.

Concerns about possible water contamination first arose in March 2005, when a KBR employee at Camp Ar Ramadi reported spotting what looked like larvae in a toilet.

Wil Granger, then KBR's water quality manager, and colleague Steve Outain conducted what they called a "cursory investigation."

But the report they issued two months later was explosive, warning that troops could have been exposed to "potentially harmful water for an undetermined amount of time."

Halliburton officials have distanced themselves from Granger's report. Indeed, they told Dorgan that Granger's findings, titled KBR Report of Findings & Root Cause Water Mission B4 Ar Ramadi, constituted Granger's "personal conclusions."

Noted Dorgan: "That is almost unbelievable to me."

Dorgan's panel learned about the water quality issue and went public with Granger's concerns in January.

Then in February, Jerry Allen, KBR's senior manager/practice leader for the Environmental/Water Resources Department, issued a "final report" disputing many of Granger and Outain's findings.

Allen conceded the water for showers was not chlorinated, but said military regulations required water for such uses to be chlorinated only "if prescribed by the command surgeon."

Jeffrey Griffiths, a professor of public health and medicine at the Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston, scoffed at that assertion.

"You don't shower with water that's not chlorinated, at least," Griffiths said. "It's called common sense."

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Marine Killed In Action In Al Anbar Province

April 08, 2006 MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE WEST PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE Release A060408d

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq: A Marine assigned to Regimental Combat Team 5 died from wounds sustained due to enemy action while operating in al Anbar Province April 7.

Beavercreek Family Awaiting Wounded Soldier's True Return

04/09/06 By Margo Rutledge Kissell and Jessica Wehrman, Dayton Daily News

WASHINGTON: In a tiny and sweltering hospital room at an Army hospital, Ethan Biggers' family waits for him to come back from the war.

Physically, the 21-year-old Army specialist from Beavercreek has been back since he was medically evacuated from Baghdad in early March after he was shot through the head by a sniper.

Now, they wait and hope that he heals.

Until then, Ethan sleeps in a coma, occasionally grimacing, coughing and opening his eyes, a stuffed toy duck tucked under his long fingers.

His sister, Liza Biggers, 24, arrives each morning and keeps vigil by his bed. She stays until hospital staff tell her to go home.

"I think it's really important he knows he's not alone right now," she said.

Ethan's twin brother, Matt, who joined the Army with him and who also has served in Iraq, flew from Germany to the United States with Ethan, holding his hand the whole way.

In Beavercreek, Ethan's 20-year-old wife, Britni Fuller, will give birth to the couple's first child in early June. Experiencing a high-risk pregnancy, she was granted medical clearance to fly to Washington to visit Ethan three weeks ago.

As she stood by his bed, she pressed his hand against her swollen abdomen and told him to hang in there.

He's pale and thinner than he was mere months ago, but now he's breathing on his own.

"He's beat a lot of odds," said his father, Rand Biggers, a physicist at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base who has been with his son since he arrived back in the United States. "It's a miracle he's got this far.

"We keep asking for more miracles."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

“This Is The Only Language America Understands,” He Says.

April 8, 2006 David Enders, The Nation [Excerpt]

"On the bus people talk about the American soldiers losing the war," says Ghaith al-Tamimi, a member of the Sadriyyin press department. "Someone else must fight the terrorists."

But Tamimi does not hide his disdain for the United States.

Smiling broadly, he picks up a Kalashnikov from one of his guards and cradles it, squinting through the sight. He then raises it slightly and smiles again. "This is the only language America understands," he says.

Assorted Resistance Action



A police vehicle hit by a roadside bomb which injured two policemen April 9, 2006 in Baghdad, Iraq. (AP Photo/Assad Muhsin)

April 09, 2006 Associated Press & REUTERS & By Kirk Semple, The New York Times & (Reuters) & Deutsche Presse-Agentur

An attacks targeted police near a Sunni mosque in the western neighborhood of Ghazaliyah, wounding at least three people, police said.

One policemen was killed and two civilians were wounded when a roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol exploded in Baghdad's Mansour district, police said.

Four Iraqi contractors employed on an American military base near Tikrit, were found dead in the district of Hamreen, between Tikrit and Kirkuk.

Two Iraqi troops were killed and four others wounded when a roadside bomb exploded while their patrol was passing through Iskandariya, 40 kilometres south of Baghdad.

An Iraqi soldier was shot dead in an ambush in the eastern part of Duluiyah, 100 kilometres north of Baghdad, a security source said.

Two Iraqi troops were injured in a blast targeting a US army vehicle near Tikrit, an Iraqi police spokesman said. But it was unclear whether there were any US casualties in the blast.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION

“The United States Is Now Facing Two Robust Insurgencies”

April 6, 2006 By Robert Dreyfuss, Tomdispatch.com [Excerpt]

In fact, the United States is now facing two robust insurgencies in Iraq: a Sunniled resistance of Baathists and army veterans and a growing Shiite-led, Iranian-linked resistance.

The former is not weakening, blowing up and shooting down Americans at a steady pace, with 13 U.S. troops killed in the first three days of April.

The latter, however, is potentially more deadly, because it has the ability to mobilize so many among the country's 60% percent Shiite majority, and because it has the support of Iran.

Parts of the Shiite majority have already gravitated into outright resistance to the American occupation, including Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army.

By its assault in late March on a fortified building in Baghdad held by Muqtada's forces, in what may or may not have been a mosque, the United States formally launched its fight against the incipient second insurgency, the Shiite one.

If things spin further out of control, as it's likely they will, U.S. forces may soon find themselves fighting a Sunni insurgency to the north and west of Baghdad and an urban Shiite paramilitary army in the south.

AP Says Falluja Again “The Insurgent Stronghold”

4.9.06 Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq It's Freedom Day in Iraq, marking the third anniversary of the toppling of Saddam Hussein's statue in Baghdad, but there's been no holiday from insurgent violence.

As Iraqi troops beefed up security in the capital, many residents tried to relax and schools were closed.

Reports from the insurgent stronghold of Fallujah say classes there are in session in defiance and denial of the holiday.

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)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“My life not availeth me in comparison with the liberty of the truth”

Mary Barrett Dyer (1611 - 1660)

[Thanks to NB]

“The Case For Immediate Withdrawal”

March 21, 2006 By Sean Gonsalves, AlterNet [Excerpts]

Review of Anthony Arnove's latest book, Iraq: The Logic of Withdrawal.

It's not hard to see why the majority of Americans now think the war in Iraq was a colossal mistake, according to just about every major poll taken over the last few months. Every claim the Bush administration used to justify the illegal invasion has turned out to be flat wrong, as the anti-war movement publicly predicted before the war began.

Of course, we still have lots of true believers arguing that it would send "the wrong message" if the U.S. decides to "cut and run." (It's amazing how war supporters tacitly acknowledge that violence and military action speak for us and yet act surprised when

our enemies have something to "say" too, with both sides claiming the other only "understands force.")

It's the same ol' tired argument used by the ruling elite during the Vietnam War. In fact, when my father touched down at Marble Mountain as a 19-year-old Marine, it was the same year that Howard Zinn published *Vietnam: The Logic of Withdrawal*, which argued that getting out of Vietnam was the only realistic option. It was the first book to argue for immediate withdrawal from Vietnam.

Then, as now, historical amnesia seems to have reached epidemic proportions, blinding masses of people to the lessons of empire. Ask yourself: Did our occupations of the Philippines, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and countless other interventions in Southeast Asia and Latin America produce democracy in those places?

As history repeats itself, a new book hitting the shelves in May should be required reading for every American concerned not only about the security of the United States but future prospects for global peace. Anthony Arnove's *Iraq: The Logic of Withdrawal* makes a bulletproof case for why the U.S. should leave Iraq immediately.

Arnove begins by acknowledging that the parallels being drawn between Vietnam and Iraq are not exact, but still significantly similar. "In both cases, the greatest military power in human history has encountered the limits of its ability to impose its will on a people who do not welcome its intervention. In Iraq, like Vietnam, soldiers themselves have begun to question the rationale for the war given by politicians and daily echoed by the dominant media."

But, Arnove argues, the stakes are much higher in Iraq. "Politicians and planners in Washington know that their ability to intervene in other countries will be severely hampered if the United States is forced from Iraq," partly explains why the Democratic Party talks about "winning" the war -- "a position that ties it in knots and leaves it incapable of leading any antiwar opposition."

The first chapter lays out in considerable detail how the war in Iraq was/is a "war of choice." He then goes to provide a realistic picture of the occupation on the ground, as opposed to the lofty rhetoric coming out of the White House.

What distinguishes Arnove's analysis from the wishful thinking you hear from war apologists is he actually provides some historical context by looking at the history of all occupations of Iraq; the U.S. was not the first to conquer Iraq, claiming to be its liberator.

Those who thought we would be greeted as liberators apparently weren't aware that Iraq "has a long tradition of secular nationalism and anti-colonialism that means Iraqis will not quietly accept occupation by a foreign power."

The last two chapters make the case for immediate withdrawal by essentially observing that is the presence of U.S. troops that is fueling the insurgency.

Arnove's book is a wake-up call to reality and a call to action -- before it's too late - - to stop the expansion of the war into other countries.

Seeing And Confronting The Lie



From: Richard Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: Sunday, April 09, 2006

Seeing and confronting the lie, is the most powerful stage of experiencing Post-Traumatic-Stress.

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
April 9, 2006**

Photo and caption 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)

Democracy Hypocrisy

March 2006 by Ignacio Ramonet, Le Monde diplomatique [Excerpts]

[T]he US has no qualms about setting itself up as the global arbiter of democratic observance. The Bush administration is in the habit of branding opponents as undemocratic, or even as rogue states and outposts of tyranny. The only way to change is to organise free elections.

But with those free elections everything depends upon the outcome.

Hugo Chávez has been elected president of Venezuela several times since 1998, under democratic criteria guaranteed by international observers, and will submit again to the ballot in December 2006.

Much good may it do him.

The US, which sponsored a failed coup in April 2002, continues to attack him, calling him a danger to democracy.

Iran, Palestine and Haiti demonstrate that it is no longer enough to be democratically elected.

The Iranian election of June 2005 met with worldwide approval. A massive voter turnout was able to choose between candidates representing a wide range of different opinions within the framework of official Islamism.

The West's favoured candidate, Ali Akbar Rafsanjani, fought a brilliant campaign and was expected to win. Nobody mentioned a nuclear threat. But everything changed abruptly after the victory of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has made a series of unacceptable pronouncements about Israel.

Iran is being swiftly demonised. Although it has signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and denies any military nuclear ambitions, France's foreign minister, Philippe Douste-Blazy, recently accused it of pursuing a "secret military nuclear programme" The US secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice, has already forgotten last year's election and has asked Congress for \$75m to promote democracy in Iran.

Much the same has happened in Palestine. The US and the European Union insisted upon genuinely democratic elections monitored by an army of foreign observers, only to reject the result on the grounds that they don't like the winners, the Islamo-nationalist Hamas movement, which has been responsible in the past for attacks on Israeli civilians.

In Haiti the international community was desperate to prevent the election of René Préval because of his association with the former president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, democratically elected but overthrown in 2004. But despite their best efforts, Préval was elected president on 7 February.

Winston Churchill said that "democracy is the worst form of government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time".

What seems to upset people now is their inability to predetermine the result of an election. If only democracies could be made to measure and guaranteed to fit.

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.

“What You Have Therefore Caused Me To Understand, George, Is That Even Impeaching You Is Not Sufficient”

Apr 01, 2006 by Zbignew Zingh, Alternative Press.org [Excerpts]

I think, George, that quite frankly you scare a lot of people.

No, I'm not talking about little people like me. I think you scare the bejeezers out of the mucky-mucks who own and run you, the people who bankrolled your career and who pull your puppet strings.

In short, you, George, have the capacity to single-handedly rip the veil off the 200-plus year illusion of American exceptionalism, economic aggression and exclusionary politics that has sustained our national ego for all this time.

You, George, seem to have the innate ability to disillusion oh so many millions of people with our hollow economic, political and social orders so that, more than any progressive, more than any liberal, more than any revolutionary, you could actually kick out the psychic props that hold up the whole rotten edifice.

Thus are you most frightening to those who desperately want to paint the smiley face back on capitalism, who want to re-clothe the iron military fist in silken gloves of “diplomacy” and who want to restore the myth that America is somehow better than everyone else.

You, George, have not even bothered with the niceties of gloving your bloody hands in silk. You have not trifled with the diplomacy of manners or the perfume of noble causes. Yours is the face of raw, naked power.

You have dropped the mask, George, and the face you show us is not the one that our Owners and Leaders want us to see.

Equally frightening to the Leaders and Owners and String-Pullers of our world is how effectively you have discredited most of the major institutions they rely on to command respect and obedience from all of us.

By packing the Courts with right wing radicals you have denigrated the judiciary.

By cozying up with fanatical religious bigots, you have undermined the respectability of the religion you profess.

By claiming the power to eavesdrop, kidnap, torture, incarcerate and wage war, literally at will, you have debased the presidency and proved the need for a weaker, a more constrained Executive Branch of Government.

By manipulating world financial institutions, discarding treaties willy-nilly, and force-feeding your authoritarian brand of top-down "democracy" down the throats of the unwilling, you have caused disrepute for everything that you tout.

What you have therefore caused me to understand, George, is that even impeaching you is not sufficient. Replacing you with a prettier face or a nicer president or a Democratic Congress is not enough. Nostalgia for a better time is not enough. George, what you have taught me is that there really is nothing to be nostalgic for.

That doesn't mean that we shouldn't cherry-pick the best from whatever any culture or economic or political theory can offer.

It simply means that we have to look forward to creating new and better systems, rather than just dumping your kind and returning to a mistaken nostalgia for a past that never was.

This is a troubling understanding, but thanks to you, George, many people now think that way.

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.

“One Man’s Terrorist Is Another’s Freedom Fighter”

Film Review: V For Vendetta

Movie Review

April 03, 2006 By Chuck Vinch, Army Times staff writer

Set in the not-too-distant future, “V for Vendetta” features a fictional fascist autocracy laced with religious bigotry whose leaders, drunk with delusions of omnipotence, manipulate the threat of terrorism to cow the masses and perpetuate their iron grip on power and privilege.

And any resemblance to the government of a particular real-world global superpower is sheer coincidence.

No, really. Originally published both as a graphic novel and a 10-issue comic book series, the story is the work of British writer Alan Moore, who wrote it between 1981 and 1988 and set it in his homeland as a cautionary fable about the hard-right turn of the conservative government of Prime Minister Maggie “Iron Lady” Thatcher.

That some folks might hear echoes of present-day U.S. geopolitics in this film version, written by Larry and Andy Wachowski of “Matrix” fame, merely means that Moore may have been ahead of his time.

It’s 2020, and the U.S. has collapsed into a civil war whose seeds, it is hinted, sprouted from America’s increasingly hysterical response to the threat of terrorism.

Things are much calmer across the big pond, where British High Chancellor Sutler (John Hurt) has given security and order to an insecure and fearful citizenry. In return, Sutler — a cross between Hitler and Lenin who screams at his toadies from a giant video screen in classic Big Brother style — demands only that the masses cede to him every civil liberty imaginable.

Against this totalitarian regime stands one man — the enigmatic V (Hugo Weaving, Agent Smith of the “Matrix” films), who wears a mask fashioned in the grinning visage of Guy Fawkes, the Catholic extremist who tried — unsuccessfully — to blow up England’s Parliament on Nov. 5, 1605.

The story begins with young Evey (Natalie Portman), a gofer at the state-run propagandist television network, being caught out after curfew. Slimy government thugs are converging to rape her when V swoops out of the darkness and puts them down like rabid dogs. He then whisks Evey to a rooftop to see an amazing spectacle — the Old Bailey, London’s famed criminal court, going up in a fiery explosion that he has orchestrated.

This is just the opening act in V’s blitz on the power mongers, almost all of them venal hypocrites. (The one exception is Sutler’s chief police inspector, nicely played by Stephen Rea, who starts out intending to run V into the ground but finds his loyalties becoming conflicted as his investigation goes on.)

The Wachowskis, with their longtime cohort James McTeigue directing, slowly unpeel V’s back story — a horrific tale of state-sanctioned genetic experiments and genocide — while propelling Evey on a harrowing journey of political awakening.

The film has a great look and McTeigue rarely lets the pace flag, but not everything works. Among the things that don’t: The politics get muddled in the second hour;

Weaving, stuck behind an immobile mask, has an almost impossible task in forging any emotional bond with viewers; and Portman's Brit accent comes and goes like the breeze.

Hollywood convention also demands that V be a tragic and romanticized antihero; his true nature was far less defined — to better effect — in Moore's original story, which left open the distinct possibility that V wasn't a champion of the oppressed so much as an anarchist nut.

Finally, the ideas being flung about in "V for Vendetta" are not new.

Still, those ideas are big enough, important enough and relevant enough — especially in these unsettled times — to carry the film.

To wit: Governments should serve their people, not the other way around; one man's terrorist is another's freedom fighter; and, to paraphrase that sly old revolutionary Ben Franklin, those who are stupid enough to sacrifice liberty for security deserve neither.

Discuss. Please.

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. Government Report On Iraq Offers Bleak Assessment

A copy of the report, which is not classified, was provided to The New York Times by a government official in Washington who opposes the way the war is being conducted and said the confidential assessment provided a more realistic gauge of stability in Iraq than the recent portrayals by senior military officers.

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

April 9, 2006 By ERIC SCHMITT and EDWARD WONG. The New York Times [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON, April 8: An internal staff report by the United States Embassy and the military command in Baghdad provides a sobering province-by-province snapshot of Iraq's political, economic and security situation, rating the overall stability of 6 of the 18 provinces "serious" and one "critical."

The report is a counterpoint to some recent upbeat public statements by top American politicians and military officials.

The report, 10 pages of briefing points titled "Provincial Stability Assessment," underscores the shift in the nature of the Iraq war three years after the toppling of Saddam Hussein.

A copy of the report, which is not classified, was provided to The New York Times by a government official in Washington who opposes the way the war is being conducted and said the confidential assessment provided a more realistic gauge of stability in Iraq than the recent portrayals by senior military officers.

It is dated Jan. 31, 2006, three weeks before the bombing of a revered Shiite shrine in Samarra, which set off reprisals that killed hundreds of Iraqis.

Gen. Peter Pace, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said on the NBC News program "Meet the Press" on March 5 that the war in Iraq was "going very, very well," although a few days later, he acknowledged serious difficulties.

But the report's capsule summaries of each province offer some surprisingly gloomy news.

The report's formula for rating stability takes into account governing, security and economic issues. The oil-rich Basra Province, where British troops have patrolled in relative calm for most of the last three years, is now rated as "serious."

The report defines "serious" as having "a government that is not fully formed or cannot serve the needs of its residents; economic development that is stagnant with high unemployment, and a security situation marked by routine violence, assassinations and extremism."

In a color-coded map included in the report, the province of Anbar, the wide swath of western desert that is the heart of the Sunni Arab insurgency, is depicted in red, for "critical." The six provinces categorized as "serious" - Basra, Baghdad, Diyala and three others to the north - are orange. Eight provinces deemed "moderate" are in yellow, and the three Kurdish provinces are depicted in green, for "stable."

The "critical" security designation, the report says, means a province has "a government that is not functioning" or that is only "represented by a single strong leader"; "an economy that does not have the infrastructure or government leadership to develop and is a significant contributor to instability"; and "a security situation marked by high levels of AIF [anti-Iraq forces] activity, assassinations and extremism."

The most surprising assessments are perhaps those of the nine southern provinces, none of which are rated "stable."

The Bush administration often highlights the relative lack of violence in those regions.

2003: Sowing The Wind 2006: Reaping The Whirlwind



Fired Iraqi soldiers from the disbanded Iraqi army protest in front a U.S. soldier next to the headquarters of the U.S.-led administration in Baghdad, June 2, 2003. More than 3,000 angry soldiers shouted slogans and vowed to launch suicide attacks on U.S. troops unless they were given wages and compensation. Photo by Andrea Comas/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.]

"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!**

A U.S. Solider Had Shot And Killed Fadhil's 81-Year-Old Uncle: "I Cannot Blame Any Young Soldier. I Blame The Decision- Makers Who Put Us In This Situation"

[Z writes: Ishikawa and Kuroshima would understand: insert troops into a hell on earth and there's no way to prevent atrocities. Yet the real fiends in their capital suites are never spattered with a single drop of blood. Solidarity, Z]

March 16, 2006 By Cory Golden, Staff Writer, The Davis Enterprise

There had been close calls before for Fadhil Al-Kazily's family in Iraq.

A car bomb exploded near the home of the 70-year-old Davis civil engineer's brother, blowing out all its windows, the shrapnel slicing a rooftop water tank in two. But it hurt no one in the family.

Another relative survived a carjacking.

A rocket leveled a clinic in Baghdad, killing everyone inside. Fadhil's eldest brother, a doctor, happened to be away from the building.

But then, nine days ago, an e-mail message from a cousin in Australia:

A U.S. solider had shot and killed Fadhil's 81-year-old uncle, Saadi Al-Tahi, as he drove through an intersection in Mosul, Iraq.

"He was not a political person,"

Fadhil said Wednesday. "He was just an old man. He was very gentle, very kind and loving."

The news of his uncle's death devastated Fadhil, a private person by nature who nonetheless has worked up the courage to repeatedly speak out against the war. When he has, he often explains it as though one part of his body, America, his home since 1964, has attacked another, his homeland; yet he feels powerless to stop it.

Now, his worst fears have been realized.

“I am absolutely terrified to call my family,” he said. “I make five calls (to relatives in Iraq) every Sunday. Now every time I pick up the phone, my heart starts beating fast.”

On March 6, Saadi Al-Tahi posed for pictures with one of his two daughters, Arjwan. An obstetrician in Dubai, Arjwan hadn’t seen her father for 12 years, but she had decided to needed to visit home in spite of the danger.

A day later Saadi steered his car toward his mother-in-law’s home, to pick up his wife. He drove slowly, because of his age.

As his car crossed an intersection, an armored vehicle opened fire from a side street.

The coroner later ruled that the shooting had been intentional. He told Saadi’s family that the bullets pierced the elderly man’s arm, shoulder and neck, likely killing him instantly.

Others told the family that anyone driving through that intersection at that time of day surely would have been shot.

But Saadi was not anyone.

For decades he had been both Fadhil’s favorite uncle and a friend.

A botched kidney surgery ended Saadi’s military career with the Iraqi Royal Army when he was a young major. He lost his first wife to cancer.

Then, though it’s unusual in Iraq, he raised two daughters and a son as a single dad. Saadi refused to bow to family pressure to remarry, until his children were grown and graduated from college.

He taught himself to play the violin and the oud, a pear-shaped stringed instrument popular in Islamic music, and liked to entertain others.

“He could not read music, yet he could make an instrument talk (like a person),” Fadhil said. “He would say, ‘Guess what I’m playing?’ and we could say it in words.”

When Fadhil earned a scholarship to Liverpool University, he wrote home from England only to his parents and to his uncle. They stayed close as both men grew older.

After speaking to his family in Iraq, Fadhil typed up a few lines telling his friends of his uncle’s death.

Among those who received Fadhil’s short e-mail message that night were Laurie and Russell Loving of Davis. Their son is a 21-year-old corporal serving in the U.S. Army — in Mosul.

“My heart stopped,” said Laurie, who will also speak Sunday as a representative of Military Families Speak Out. “I thought, ‘Oh my God, what if my son killed him?’ Then I decided it was unlikely. But I still felt terrible and responsible somehow.”

The next morning, Laurie spoke on the phone to her son, whose name she prefers not to use for fear of reprisals against him because she is an anti-war activist. Her son said he didn't know about the shooting.

When next Laurie saw Fadhil, she hugged him. They cried together.

“She’s a good person,” he said. “I hope her son comes home unscathed, both mentally and physically. My family has no choice but to be where they are, and her son has his orders. He has to defend himself to survive.

“I cannot blame any young soldier. I blame the decision-makers who put us in this situation.”

Fadhil holds close a favorite memory of his uncle.

It comes from after Saadi at last remarried. Fadhil wrote to him, asking for a photo of him and his new wife, Muma.

Time passed. No photo turned up in the mail.

It seemed so out of character for his uncle that Fadhil asked his brother about it.

He explained that Saadi, though he cared for Muma, felt a deep sense of loyalty to his first wife. Out of respect for her, he'd decided against being photographed with his new bride.

Then, in 2000, Fadhil visited his family in Mosul. He asked his uncle, “May I take your picture with your wife?”

Saadi's eyes filled with tears. He said, “It will be the first one. But, yes, you can do it.”

“I took their picture,” Fadhil remembered. “Then I had my brother take another, with me and him and his wife together. I still have that picture. And that, of course, can never be forgotten.”

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bush Admits He Is Using Saddam Hussein's Terror Tactics In Iraq



Bush at Freedom House March 29, 2006 REUTERS/Jim Young

“The enemies of a free Iraq are employing the same tactics Saddam used, killing and terrorizing the Iraqi people in an effort to foment sectarian division.” Bush said 3.29.06 at Freedom House.

As Bush Visits, Mayan Priests In Mexico Perform Ceremony To Decontaminate The Area

March 30 By Matt Spetalnick and Adriana Barrera (Reuters)

U.S. President George W. Bush reassured Mexican President Vicente Fox on Thursday he was committed to getting the U.S. Congress to approve broad immigration reforms, including a guest-worker program.

Speaking after talks with Fox in the Mexican resort of Cancun, Bush told reporters, "I'm confident we can get a bill done."

He made no prediction on the timing of such legislation, which the U.S. Senate started debating on Wednesday.

Four priests of the ancient Mayan religion held a purification ceremony to rid Bush of "demons and evil" in a square in downtown Cancun, some 10 miles (16 km) from the plush hotel strip where the leaders met.

"We do not agree with the visit of this person. We see on television how many people he has killed," said priest Romualdo May, dipping herbs into water and sprinkling it into the air.

Bush's Iraq Fiasco Sets A World Record For Stupid Waste

March 26, 2006 Shibley Telhami, The Baltimore Sun

Iraq has been the top priority for the world's only superpower for the past three years, and a central one for many regional and international powers.

The United States, intent on keeping Iraq together, has spent more resources in that country than any state ever has spent on another in the history of the world.

[How about the dead and maimed U.S. troops? Or are they included in "resources?"]

"The Only People Benefiting In This War Are Bush's Friends In The Oil Industry"

April 6, 2006 Frank Hornig and Georg Mascolo, Der Spiegel

Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz:

The only people benefiting in this war are Bush's friends in the oil industry.

He has done the American economy and the global economy an enormous disfavor, but his Texan friends couldn't be happier. The price of oil is up, and they make money when the price of oil goes up. Their profits are at record levels.

AT&T Helping The Bush Rats Spy On Americans: Forwards ALL Internet Traffic Into NSA

April 06 2006 Linuxelectrons.com & 07 April 2006 By Ryan Singel, Wired News

San Francisco: The Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) on Wednesday filed the legal briefs and evidence supporting its motion for a preliminary injunction in its class-action lawsuit against AT&T.

After asking EFF to hold back the documents so that it could review them, the Department of Justice consented to EFF's filing them under seal, a well-established procedure that prohibits public access and permits only the judge and the litigants to see the evidence. While not a party to the case, the government was concerned that even this procedure would not provide sufficient security and has represented to the Court that it is "presently considering whether and, if so, how it will participate in this case."

"The evidence that we are filing supports our claim that AT&T is diverting Internet traffic into the hands of the NSA wholesale, in violation of federal wiretapping laws and the Fourth Amendment," said EFF Staff Attorney Kevin Bankston.

"More than just threatening individuals' privacy, AT&T's apparent choice to give the government secret, direct access to millions of ordinary Americans' Internet communications is a threat to the Constitution itself. We are asking the Court to put a stop to it now."

EFF's evidence regarding AT&T's dragnet surveillance of its networks includes a declaration by Mark Klein, a retired AT&T telecommunications technician, and several internal AT&T documents. This evidence was bolstered and explained by the expert opinion of J. Scott Marcus, who served as Senior Technical Advisor for Internet Technology to the Federal Communications Commission from July 2001 until July 2005.

The NSA program came to light in December, when the New York Times reported that the President had authorized the agency to intercept telephone and Internet communications inside the United States without the authorization of any court.

Over the ensuing weeks, it became clear that the NSA program has been intercepting and analyzing millions of Americans' communications, with the help of the country's largest phone and Internet companies, including AT&T.

According to a statement released by Klein's attorney, an NSA agent showed up at the San Francisco switching center in 2002 to interview a management-level technician for a special job. In January 2003, Klein observed a new room being built adjacent to the room housing AT&T's #4ESS switching equipment, which is responsible for routing long distance and international calls.

"I learned that the person whom the NSA interviewed for the secret job was the person working to install equipment in this room," Klein wrote. "The regular technician work force was not allowed in the room."

Klein's job eventually included connecting internet circuits to a splitting cabinet that led to the secret room. During the course of that work, he learned from a co-worker that similar cabinets were being installed in other cities, including Seattle, San Jose, Los Angeles and San Diego.

"While doing my job, I learned that fiber optic cables from the secret room were tapping into the Worldnet (AT&T's internet service) circuits by splitting off a portion of the light signal," Klein wrote.

The split circuits included traffic from peering links connecting to other internet backbone providers, meaning that AT&T was also diverting traffic routed from its network to or from other domestic and international providers, according to Klein's statement.

The secret room also included data-mining equipment called a Narus STA 6400, "known to be used particularly by government intelligence agencies because of its ability to sift through large amounts of data looking for preprogrammed targets," according to Klein's statement.

"Despite what we are hearing, and considering the public track record of this administration, I simply do not believe their claims that the NSA's spying program is really limited to foreign communications or is otherwise consistent with the NSA's charter or with FISA," Klein's wrote.

"And unlike the controversy over targeted wiretaps of individuals' phone calls, this potential spying appears to be applied wholesale to all sorts of internet communications of countless citizens."

"Mark Klein is a true American hero," said EFF Staff Attorney Kurt Opsahl. "He has bravely come forward with information critical for proving AT&T's involvement with the government's invasive surveillance program."

“The Immaculate Declassification”

April 08, 2006 by Maureen Dowd, NY Times

So the aide turns out to have been loyally following his leader's dictates, rather than going around the boss's back to peddle secret information.

Scooter is a "good Judas," as it turns out, just as Judas himself was, according to a 1,700-year-old Christian manuscript found in the Egyptian desert that asserts that Jesus wanted Judas to betray him, so he entrusted his disciple with special intelligence.

"You can see how early Christians could say, if Jesus' death was all part of God's plan, then Judas's betrayal was part of God's plan," Dr. Karen King, a professor of the history of early Christianity at Harvard Divinity School, told The Times.

Since President Bush seems to see his mission in Iraq as part of God's plan, he must have assumed that getting Scooter Libby to leak parts of a classified document on Iraq to rebut Joe Wilson's charge about a juiced-up casus belli was part of God's plan.

When other officials leak top-secret stuff - even in cases where the whistle-blowers feel they are illuminating unlawful acts - they are portrayed by the White House as traitors who should be investigated and fired.

After The Times broke the story about the president allowing unauthorized snooping in America, W. was outraged. The F.B.I. and Justice Department were sicced on the leakers. "Revealing classified information," W. huffed, "is illegal, alerts our enemies and endangers our country."

Really, W. should fire himself. He swore to look high and low for the scurrilous leaker and, lo and behold, he has himself in custody. Since the Bush administration is basically a monarchy, he should pass the crown to Jenna. She couldn't do worse than this bunch of airheads and bullies.

Patrick Fitzgerald filed court papers indicating that Scooter testified that in 2003, when the White House was getting rattled by the failure to find W.M.D. and by criticism from a former diplomat on the margins of the war scheme, the president authorized Dick Cheney to authorize Scooter to make a one-sided dump of classified information about Saddam's arsenal to The Times's Judy Miller.

Scooter was so concerned about the propriety of the deal that he checked with the vice president's lawyer, David Addington, before he spilled. Addington, whose politics are to the right of Louis XVI, said, go right ahead. Now Black Adder has Scooter's job. Coincidence?

The Bushies once more showed incompetence by creating this elaborate daisy-chain leak and giving it to the one person in journalism who had been roped off from writing about the prewar intelligence, while her editors sorted out problems with her past W.M.D. coverage. Judy never authored an article about what Scooter gave her, either that intelligence or the identity of the woman whom she wrote down in her notebook as "Valerie Flame." (Stripper or spy?)

W. subscribes to the Nixonian theory that when a president does it, it's not illegal - or maybe it's the divine right of kings. God has been pretty active in Republican politics lately: Tom DeLay said God told him to drop out of his re-election race.

If the administration were seriously trying to declassify something in the national interest, wouldn't it have President Bush explain his decision or have his Scottish terrier yip it out from the podium, rather than having Scooter whisper it in Judy's ear?

Instead, sounding very Lewis Carroll, the White House claims that when the president leaks something secret, it's not secret anymore.

It's the Immaculate Declassification: intelligence is declassified by passing it on to a friendly reporter.

"The president believes the leaking of classified information is a very serious matter," Scott McClellan said. "And I think that's why it's important to draw a distinction here. Declassifying information and providing it to the public, when it is in the public interest, is one thing. But leaking classified information that could compromise our national security is something that is very serious. And there is a distinction." And thank goodness we have a White House that gets that distinction. Democrats who don't, he sniffed, are guilty of "crass politics."

If W. wants the information out, it's good for the country to make it public. If W. doesn't want the information out, it's bad for the country to make it public. L'état, c'est moi.

That's how we got mired in the Iraq war in the first place. The administration ruthlessly held back classified information that contradicted its bogus case for war, and leaked classified information that supported it.

The Bushies keep trying to manipulate reality, but reality bites back.

That's not only crass politics. It's lethal politics. L'état, c'est mess.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

A Killer Is Walking Around Loose: Bring Him To Justice By Any Means Necessary: 14 Year Old Immigration Rights Organizer Dead After California Assistant Principal Threatens To Send Him To Prison “For Three Years” And Make His Mother Pay Money

[After reading this, if you would care express a view, the phone number for the school is 909. 986.8577.]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 9, 2006 Via LOUIS WOLF

Louise Corales, whose 14 year-old son, Anthony Soltero, died on April 1 after committing suicide, will speak to the community and ask for a prayer for her son this Sunday, following the 11:00 a.m. mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Ontario, California.

Eighth grader Anthony Soltero shot himself through the head on Thursday, March 30, after the assistant principal at De Anza Middle School told him that he was going to prison for three years because of his involvement as an organizer of the April 28 school walk-outs to protest the anti-immigrant legislation in Washington.

The vice principal also forbade Anthony from attending graduation activities and threatened to fine his mother for Anthony's truancy and participation in the student protests.

"Anthony was learning about the importance of civic duties and rights in his eighth grade class.

"Ironically, he died because the vice principal at his school threatened him for speaking out and exercising those rights," Ms. Corales said today.

"I want to speak out to other parents, whose children are attending the continuing protests this week. We have to let the schools know that they can't punish our children for exercising their rights."

Anthony's death is likely the first fatality arising from the protests against the immigration legislation being considered in Washington, D.C.

Anthony, who was a very good student at De Anza Middle School in the Ontario-Montclair School District, believed in justice and was passionate about the immigration issue.

He is survived by his mother, Louise Corales, his father, a younger sister, and a baby brother.

Ms. Corales will speak to the community after mass on Sunday, April 9, 2006 at 12:00 p.m. at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. She will ask for a prayer for Anthony, whose funeral and burial are scheduled for Monday, April 10 in Long Beach, where he was born.

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[Bendib Cartoon]

Huge Crowd Marches In Dallas In Support Of Immigrants

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in.]

4.9.06 By LAURA GRIFFIN, The New York Times [Excerpt]

Hundreds of thousands of people, many waving American flags, marched through downtown Dallas today to protest tougher immigration restrictions proposed in Congress and to support legalizing undocumented workers.

The sea of people, who chanted "Si se puede" (yes, we can) and "U.S.A., all the way," wound through downtown streets for at least a mile, surpassing all estimates of how many would show up.

"We never anticipated it getting this big," said Lt. Rick Watson, a spokesman for the Dallas Police Department. **"The estimates were anywhere from 20,000 to 200,000, but all of a sudden they started coming, and they kept coming and kept coming."**

“We estimate that we have 350,000 to 500,000 people down here today.”

They were young and old; some pushing strollers, some in wheelchairs or walking with canes. Many made their own placards that read "Fair legislation for all immigrants," "If I am illegal so are my taxes," "Latinos Unidos" and "Today we march. Tomorrow we vote."

"It's a good feeling that we are finally standing up for ourselves," said Robert Martinez, who is now an American citizen but said he crossed the Rio Grande illegally 22 years ago. "For years we never say nothing, we just work hard, follow the rules and pay taxes. And they try to make these laws. It's time people knew how we felt."

The police said there were only a handful of counterprotesters at today's march.

At the Dallas march today on a warm afternoon, the Trevino family wheeled a 10-foot by 8-foot oil painting that 22-year-old Alejandro Trevino had created depicting a mass of people trying to get into the United States, titled *Estamos Unidos*. Painted in black were the words "Give me your tired your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

"My grandparents came from Mexico, like all these people here," Mr. Trevino said. "I would hate to be in their position — to be scared they're going to send you back."

His mother, Francisca Trevino, also emigrated from Mexico.

"I crossed the river and everything when I was 8 years old," said the 58-year-old kindergarten teacher. "My father was a farm laborer. I've come a long way in this country. I want to show support for immigrants."

Johnny Carillo, 35, wearing his military combat cap and an American flag draped over his shoulder, came to support the immigrant soldiers he fought alongside in Iraq.

"We've got soldiers in Iraq from Mexico, South America, Africa, Russia," he said. "I'm marching for their families. I'm of Hispanic descent, but I've never even been to Mexico, but I think these people have a right to be here. But let's do it the right way."

Some immigrants from other countries and some African-Americans also marched in support.

"I'm from Iran but this is not just for them," said Saeed Tavakkol, a 48-year-old with a moving company that employees both legal and illegal immigrants.

"I'm here for my employees," he said. "I told them to come to. This is a cause for humanity. You can't say 'go back.' They are here, part of the society. Their children are citizens. They are very valuable to us."

An hour and a half after the parade started, people at the back of the line were still marching and people were still arriving by train to join the crowd.

There were 774 officers working the route of the march and the police reported that it was a peaceful, family crowd and that they had made only one arrest so far, for public intoxication.

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>;

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