

GI SPECIAL 4D12:



Oakland March for Immigrant Justice

Photo by Jeff Paterson, Not in Our Name Apr. 10, 2006; jeff@paterson.net

THE HADITHA MASSACRE:

**“He Pointed At A Marine Patrol
As It Passed In Front Of His
Shop. ‘I Look At Each Of Them,
And I See Killers’”**

[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]

Apr. 08, 2006 By Nancy A. Youssef, Knight Ridder Newspapers. **Knight Ridder Newspapers special correspondent who can't be named for security reasons reported from Haditha.** Youssef wrote the story from Baghdad.

HADITHA, Iraq

In the middle of methodically recalling the day his brother's family was killed, Yaseen's monotone voice and stream of tears suddenly stopped.

He looked up, paused and pleaded: "Please don't let me say anything that will get me killed by the Americans. My family can't handle any more."

The story of what happened to Yaseen and his brother Younes' family has redefined Haditha's relationship with the Marines who patrol it.

On Nov. 19, a roadside bomb struck a Humvee on Haditha's main road, killing one Marine and injuring two others.

The Marines say they took heavy gunfire afterwards and thought it was coming from the area around Younes' house. They went to investigate, and 23 people were killed.

Eight were from Younes' family. The only survivor, Younes' 13-year-old daughter, said her family wasn't shooting at Marines or harboring extremists that morning. They were sleeping when the bomb exploded. And when the Marines entered their house, she said, they shot at everyone inside.

On Friday, the Marines relieved of duty three leaders of the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, which had responsibility for Haditha when the shooting occurred.

They are Lt. Col. Jeffrey R. Chessani, commander of the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, and two of his company commanders, Capt. James S. Kimber and Capt. Lucas M. McConnell. McConnell was commanding Kilo Company of the 3rd Battalion, the unit that struck the roadside bomb on Nov. 19 and led the subsequent search of the area.

The events of last November have clearly taken their toll on Yaseen and his niece, Safa, who trembles visibly as she listens to Yaseen recount what she told him of the attack. She cannot bring herself to tell the tale herself.

She fainted after the Marines burst through the door and began firing. When she regained consciousness, only her 3-year-old brother was still alive, but bleeding

heavily. She comforted him in a room filled with dead family members until he died, too. And then she went to her Uncle Yaseen's house next door.

Neither Yaseen nor Safa have returned home since.

Indeed, many in this town, whose residents are stuck in the battle between extremists and the Americans, said now it is the U.S. military they fear most.

"The mujahadeen (holy warriors) will kill you if you stand against them or say anything against them. And the Americans will kill you if the mujahadeen attack them several kilometers away," said Mohammed al-Hadithi, 32, a barber who lives in neighboring Haqlania.

With a cigarette between his fingers, he pointed at a Marine patrol as it passed in front of his shop. "I look at each of them, and I see killers."

Haditha, a town of about 100,000 people in Anbar province, undeniably is an insurgent bastion. Around the time of the attack, several storefronts were lined with posters and pictures supporting al-Qaida, although residents said they posted them to appease extremists.

Insurgents blend in with the residents, setting up their cells in homes next to those belonging to everyday citizens, some of them supportive.

There is no functioning police station and the government offices are largely vacant. The last man to call himself mayor relinquished the title earlier this year after scores of death threats from insurgents.

The military wouldn't release statistics, but attacks on U.S. troops are frequent.

Three years after the war began, the U.S. military concedes it hasn't figured out how to tell a terrorist from an ordinary citizen in places like Haditha.

A newly poured spot of asphalt now marks the spot where the IED, or improvised explosive device, exploded. It was 7:15 a.m. and the blast was the first IED of the day. Lance Cpl. Miguel Terrazas, 20, of El Paso, Texas, died instantly. The armed fire attack started immediately, according to the Marines.

Yaseen said he and his brother's family were asleep in their houses about 100 yards away when the explosion woke them. Minutes later, they heard the Marines blocking off the road.

Yaseen, citing Safa's account, said Younes started to prepare the family for the search they knew was coming, separating the men from the women and the children, as is custom during searches.

Younes moved his five children and sister-in-law into the bedroom, Yaseen said Safa told him. There, his wife was lying in bed, recovering from an appendectomy. They waited.

The Marines moved into another house first, according to U.S. officials. In that house, the Marines saw a line of closed doors and thought an ambush was coming. They shot, and seven people inside were killed, including one child. Two other children who stayed in the house survived. A woman who ran out with her baby also survived, military officials said.

Yaseen said Safa told him that her father heard something so he went to the front of the house. Seconds later, Safa said she heard several gunshots. She didn't know it at the time, but her father was dying. Four Marines then moved into the bedroom, where some of her sisters were standing at their mother's bedside, hugging her.

Yaseen said Safa told him that one Marine started yelling at them in English, but that they didn't understand what he was saying. The women and children started screaming in fear, which Yaseen could hear from next door. This went on for several minutes, he said.

He said he never heard gunshots, only a long sudden silence.

Desperate, he tried to get next door and find out what happened, but Marines wouldn't let him pass.

"The waiting was killing me," Yaseen said. "We didn't know what happened."

Three hours later, someone knocked at Yaseen's door. He could hear a young voice wheezing and sobbing on the other side. It was Safa, covered in blood and dirt. Yaseen said he couldn't remember what she was wearing; he only saw the blood.

The family was dead, Safa told Yaseen.

Yaseen's wife cleaned Safa up while Yaseen prepared a white flag. Marines were still blocking the area. Carrying the flag, Yaseen, his wife, and Safa ran 200 yards to another relative's house where they have stayed since.

Safa trembled as Yaseen told the story to a visitor. She tried to tell it herself, but she couldn't. "My father told us to gather in one room, so the Americans could search," she said. And then she started to cry.

Yaseen said that Safa told him that four soldiers came into the bedroom, but only one did the yelling. Her mother, who had heard the shooting asked: "What did you do to my husband?" Her sisters, mother and aunt were crying. And then the one soldier who had been yelling started shooting.

Frightened, Safa fainted. She thought she had died. When she awoke, she remembered seeing her mother still lying in bed. Her head was blown open. She looked around and heard her 3-year-old brother, Mohammed, moan in pain. The blood was pouring out of his right arm.

"Come on, Mohammed. Get up so we can go to uncle's house," she told her brother. But he couldn't.

In the same room where her mother, aunt and sisters lay dead, Safa grabbed the toddler, sat down and leaned his head against her shoulder. She put his arm against her chest and held it to try to stop the bleeding. She kept holding and talking to him until, like everyone else in the room, he too was silent. And then she ran next door.

Yaseen didn't see the rest of his brother's family until he went to Haditha Hospital the next day to pick up the bodies. Dr. Waleed Abdul Khaliq al-Obeidi, the director of Haditha Hospital, said they arrived around midnight, about 12 hours after Safa left her house.

According to the death certificates, Younes died of multiple gunshot wounds to the chest. His wife, who was lying in bed, died of multiple gunshot wounds to the head. The daughters were all shot in the chest. Mohammed bled to death.

Younes didn't have a weapon, military officials confirmed.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

3 U.S. Soldiers Killed North Of Baghdad

April 11, 2006 (AP)

Three American soldiers were killed Tuesday by a roadside bomb north of Baghdad, the U.S. military said.

The three who died Tuesday were assigned to Multinational Division Baghdad, but the precise location of the attack was not reported in the statement.

Glasgow Soldier Dies

April 11, 2006 By CONNIE PICKETT and BRAD DICKERSON, Glasgow Daily Times

GLASGOW: News spread quickly through Glasgow today that one of the community's own had been killed in Iraq.

A spokeswoman for the family confirmed this morning that 22-year-old Will Gardner, a member of the 101st Airborne based in Fort Campbell, had died.

As a teen, Gardner worked at Greer's Florist after school and on Saturdays. Co-owner Cathy Doty described Gardner as a "sweet person, who often baby-sat for her kids."

Gardner began working at the florist as a teen and worked there until graduation from high school.

Modesto-Area Marine Killed

Apr. 11, 2006 Associated Press, CERES, Calif.

A 24-year-old woman who was inspired to join the Marines after her younger twin brothers enlisted was fatally shot in the head in Iraq over the weekend.

Lance Cpl. Juana Navarro, of Ceres, was killed Saturday while guarding other soldiers during a mission in the Iraqi province of Anbar, said Marine Capt. Donn Puca.

"This was something she always wanted to do," said her older sister, Beatriz Lopez.

She left for duty in May, her family said.

Navarro was born in Michoacan, Mexico, and she and a twin sister became U.S. citizens at age 13. She graduated from Johansen High School in Modesto in 2000, where she volunteered with special education children.

She showered her three nephews with gifts, Lopez said.

"She was like a second mom to my oldest," Lopez said. "When I told him she died, his face, it just shattered into pieces."

U.S. Military Vehicle Hit By IED Near Khalidiyah: Casualties Reported But Not Announced

3.11.06 By DPA

There were reports of injuries among the US military Tuesday after an army vehicle struck a roadside bomb on the Ramadi-Khalidiyah highway, Iraqi security sources said.

A police officer from Khalidiyah said the attack took place 85 kilometres west of Baghdad and that smoke could be seen billowing from the US patrol vehicle.

**REALLY BAD IDEA:
NO MISSION;
HOPELESS WAR:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. soldiers in Sadr City, Baghdad, April 11, 2006. REUTERS/Kareem Raheem

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Assorted Resistance Action

April 11, 2006 By Amir Shah, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan: The US military said yesterday that increased militant violence in Afghanistan was proving "very hard to combat" as separate attacks killed two police officers and a truck driver delivering food to coalition forces in a former Taliban stronghold in the south.

Guerrillas also killed five medical workers before burning down their clinic late Sunday in a rare attack in the normally calm northwest.

Much of the violence has taken place in the southern and eastern regions where the Taliban are strongest.

But the killing of the medical workers in Badghis, 230 miles northwest of the capital, was unusual because it occurred in a province that has been largely peaceful.

Guerrillas stormed the workers' clinic and killed everyone inside, including a doctor and several nurses, before burning the building down, provincial Governor Hanayatullah Hanayat said.

Separately, a bomb blast killed two policemen and wounded two others yesterday during an opium eradication patrol in the southern Helmand province, the country's main poppy growing region, provincial police chief General Abdul Rahman Saber said.

And Now For The Good News

April 11, 2006 London Daily Telegraph

British forces in Afghanistan will be met by a tide of suicide bombers, roadside explosions and ambushes when they arrive in strength, according to the head of American troops there.

TROOP NEWS

150 More From Nebraska Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse

4.10.06 Army Times

Nebraska's adjutant general announced March 29 that about 150 soldiers will deploy in July as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Maj. Gen. Roger Lempke said the soldiers are part of the 1074th Transportation Company, which is responsible for moving dry and refrigerated cargo, water and petroleum products.

War Profiteers Tremble With Fear: Pentagon Stops Paying Bonuses For Shitty Work

April 11, 2006 Washington Post

The Pentagon is toughening up its policy of awarding bonuses to defense contractors. From now on, they will have to do at least a satisfactory job to qualify for the extra money.

The new policy is in response to a Government Accountability Office study last year found that the Defense Department paid out \$8 billion in special award and incentive fees, often without regard to performance. In many cases the projects were behind schedule, over budget and experiencing significant technical problems.

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



The remains of U.S. Marine Staff Sgt. Eric McIntosh at Arlington National Cemetery April 11, 2006. McIntosh, 29, who grew up in Indianapolis, died April 2 during combat operations in Anbar province. (AP Photo/Yuri Gripas)

Endless Deployments Trashing Military Families

April 10, 2006 By Karen Jowers, Army Times staff writer [Excerpt]

The “cycle” of deployment has become the “spiral” of deployment for many military families, the National Military Family Association has concluded after a recent survey.

Families are tired, stressed and worried, according to the results of the Cycles of Deployment survey conducted from April through September of last year.

And families often are just as worried about a service member's return home and readjustment as they are about the safety of their loved one in the war zone.

Unlike the traditional cyclical model of pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment, families these days "never come back to the same place they started," according to the report, released March 28.

"When entering a second or third deployment, they carry the unresolved anxieties and expectations from the last deployment(s) with them along with the skills they gained."

The survey is not a scientific sampling. It was posted on the Internet for anyone interested to fill out.

Thirty percent said the service member had been deployed or mobilized for a total of 13 to 18 months since January 2003.

This pace is taking a toll, NMFA officials said.

"The joy of the service member's return is often short-lived because of the high operational tempo," said Susan Evers, an NMFA research associate.

About 43 percent said their greatest challenge during the reunion process was worrying about whether their service member would deploy again.

Army National Guard and Reserve families reported their greatest stress is deployment length.

These families experience the longest deployments, typically 18 months from activation until the service member returns to the family.

"That's two sets of missed holidays for many of these families," Evers said.

Army Misses Recruiting Goal Again

Apr 11, 2006 By WILL DUNHAM, Capitol Hill Blue [Excerpts]

Halfway through the fiscal 2006 recruiting year, the U.S. Army has netted 737 fewer new soldiers than at this point last year, when it went on to miss its annual recruiting goal for the first time since 1999.

The Pentagon on Monday released its latest recruiting data showing that from last October through the end of March, the Army netted 31,369 recruits, compared to 32,106 at this time last year.

"The Iraq war has damaged the Army's relationship with its most important recruiting target, not the 18-year-old but their mother. That's been the real issue. And mothers are hard to convince," said defense analyst Daniel Gouré of the Lexington Institute think tank.

The Army has set a mission for fiscal 2006, which ends on September 30, of sending 80,000 recruits into boot camp, the same goal that it missed by more than 6,600 in fiscal 2005.

In March, the Army got 5,396 new recruits, topping its goal of 5,200, the 10th month in a row it has exceeded its monthly target.

But the Army partly owes its success in reaching those goals to the fact that it reduced its monthly targets for six of the first eight months of fiscal 2006. That means most of its recruiting must occur from June through September, when the monthly goals are all much higher than last year's.

The Marine Corps, Air Force and Navy made their March goals, as did the part-time Army National Guard.

But the part-time Army Reserve fell short of its quota and now trailed its year-to-date target.

Fiscal 2005 was one of the poorest recruiting years for the Army since the start of the all-volunteer military in 1973 during the tumult of the Vietnam War era.

***Here's a Big Surprise:* "Virtually All Of Those Prosecuted Have Been Lower-Ranking Military Personnel, Not Officers"**

April 5, 2006 Rohan Pearce, Green Left Weekly [Excerpt]

On March 22, US Army Sergeant Michael Smith was sentenced to six months' jail for his part in the torture of Iraq prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison. The real scandal, however, is not that his pathetic sentence is such a slap in the face for the Iraqi prisoners who have suffered torture at the hands of the US-led occupation forces and the (for the most part US-controlled) Iraqi security forces. It's that Smith was just the latest patsy to take the fall for Washington's torture policy, while those responsible for drawing it up and overseeing its implementation continue to walk free.

Although a few tough sentences have been handed down, most prosecutions have resulted in relatively light sentences; confinement for less than one year.

Virtually all of those prosecuted have been lower-ranking military personnel, not officers.

Welcome To The Pentagon: “Asinine Strategy” “Conformity And Careerism” “Unnecessary Loss Of Life”

April 11, 2006 Richard Cohen, Washington Post

"In several ways-some obvious, some not-the war in Iraq has been likened to Vietnam. Certainly, it has opened the same credibility gap, has been funded by deficit spending and has turned into a quagmire.

"Maybe, though, this sense of deja vu is felt most keenly at the Pentagon.

"Within that building, it must be Vietnam all over again another asinine strategy, another duplicitous civilian leadership, more conformity and careerism, and, of course, more unnecessary loss of life."

British Officer Says “The Actions Of The Armed Forces In Iraq Were In Fact Unlawful”

April 11, 2006 The Guardian

A Royal Air Force doctor who refused to be sent to Iraq after arguing that the conflict was illegal today pleaded not guilty to five charges of failing to comply with orders at a court martial.

Flight Lieutenant Malcolm Kendall-Smith, 37, said he had studied the judicial advice given to the prime minister, Tony Blair, ahead of the war and other reports about its legality before making his decision.

"As a commissioned officer I am required to consider each and every order that is given to me and I am required to consider the legality of each order in domestic and international law," Flt Lt Kendall-Smith said in a statement to police last year.

"I have satisfied myself that the actions of the armed forces in Iraq were in fact unlawful, as was the conflict," he said. "I believe that the current occupation of Iraq is an illegal act and for me to comply with an act which is illegal would put me in conflict with both domestic and international law.

"I have two great loves; medicine and the RAF. To take the decision I have taken saddens me greatly but I feel I have no choice."

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.

When The Bloody War Is Over **[A Soldier's Song From The UK]**

From: Adam Keller
To: GI Special
Sent: December 27, 2005
Subject: When the Bloody War is Over

Do you know this?

It comes from the British Army in WWI but still relevant. (Appears in Hugh De Witt, Bawdy Barrak-Room Ballads, London 1970)

When The Bloody War Is Over

(sung to "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" and "Take it to the lord in Prayer")

When the bloody war is over
Oh, how happy I shall be!
When I get my civvie clothes on,
No more soldiering for me

No more church parades on Sunday
No more asking for a pass
I will tell the Sergeant Major:
"Stick your passes up yer arse!"

When the bloody war is over
Oh, how happy I shall be!
When I get my civvie clothes on,
No more soldiering for me.

Then I'll sound my own reveille
Then I'll make my own tattoo
No more NCOs to curse me

No more bleedin' army stew.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

How It Is

04/11/2006 By John Ward Anderson of The Washington Post

On the day American troops entered Baghdad three years ago, Laith Abbas, a neighborhood fire chief, pulled up a chair outside his station house in the center of the city and sat down. The streets were deserted. No one knew what the Americans would do and a cloud of fear hung over the city. But Abbas figured that whatever happened, firefighters would be needed.

More recently, four firefighters and a chief were executed after dismantling a roadside bomb, Abbas said.

Militia leaders have visited his office, he said, threatening him and his men and demanding that they stop interfering with their bombs. "The terrorist said, 'We are planting bombs to kill coalition forces,' and I explained, we have to remove them to protect our people, because there are civilians in the street" Abbas said.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

Assorted Resistance Action

3.11.06 By Michael Georgy, Reuters & By SINAN SALAHEDDIN Associated Press Writer & (KUNA) & CNN & (IranMania)

The bodies of four Iraqi soldiers who had been beheaded were found in Jurf al-Sahkar, south of Baghdad, police said.

In the outskirts of Karbala, 50 miles south of Baghdad, guerrillas killed a policeman on his way to work.

Three roadside bombs wounded eight Iraqi police officers and one civilian in the Iraqi capital.

A policeman and a civilian were wounded when a roadside bomb went off near a police patrol in Zafaraniya, a suburb of Baghdad, police said.

Three Iraqi army recruits were killed Tuesday after coming under fire in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul. According to a police source, "the three recruits came under fire inside the city of Mosul. They died immediately."

An explosive charge targeted a multi-national force patrol near Kirkuk's industrial area opposite the Kirkuk Mill. There was no immediate report about the damage.

Three Iraqi soldiers died Tuesday during a firefight with insurgents in Ramadi that ended when US troops stepped in and imposed a curfew on the western Iraqi city.

A car bomb that exploded near a Baghdad restaurant frequented by police killed three policemen, Interior Ministry sources said.

The blast also wounded 13 people, including one policeman, the sources said.

In Bela Druz, southwest of Baquba, four policemen, including an officer, were wounded in a roadside bomb attack against their patrol Tuesday, police said, AFP noted.

WELCOME TO RAMADI: YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME



Resistance fighters patrol the streets of Ramadi, April 10, 2006. (Stringer/Reuters)

A Very Close Look Inside Sadr City

04/08/06 By Nir Rosen, Boston Review [Excerpts]

So I returned to Sadr City to see just who was still influential.

A few days before, an Irish journalist writing for the British newspaper the Guardian had been kidnapped there by members of Muqtada's Mahdi Army who hoped to trade him for their militiamen held in the south by the British.

Despite its truce with the Americans, the militia, it seemed, remained powerful and armed, assimilating into the police in many cases.

I arranged to meet Fatah abu Yaqin al Sheikh, the editor of the Sadrist newspaper Ishraqat al-Sadr and a representative of Sadr City in the National Assembly, in his office near the entrance to the Shia bastion.

Downstairs in the broken-down three-story building, men were hard at work welding immense signs for Muqtada's movement. One depicted the shrine of Imam Kadhim with Muqtada, his father and uncle (the first and second martyrs). Black-clad and masked soldiers of the Army of the Mahdi marched, looking eerily like Saddam's fedayeen, and Iraqis were shown screaming and crying. "God accept this sacrifice from us and protect Iraq and its people," it said.

Fatah showed up with two pickup trucks full of militiamen for protection. Some had little swords hanging from their guns, representing Dhulfiqar, the fabled sword of Ali.

Fatah was also widely rumored in Sadr City to be a former Baathist agent. He had owned a haberdashery before the war and remained fastidiously shaven and groomed.

After the war he had established a newspaper that spoke for Muqtada and by 2004 he had become the strongman for Sadr City, charging journalists entry fees and arranging for those who didn't pay to be intimidated.

Fatah had run as an unofficial candidate in the January elections that Muqtada refused to boycott or support, and the seat he won represented 30,000 Iraqis.

And since Muqtada had recently appointed him his representative for the Anbar Province, I teased Fatah that he would soon have to move to Falluja. The appointment was symbolic, meant to strengthen relations between Muqtada and the Sunni rejectionists of the Anbar. Fatah regarded Seyid Hassan with contempt, viewing him as overly obsessed with his appearance. "He cares for his religious fashion more than his knowledge."

Fatah agreed that there were signs of a civil war, but he blamed the Americans for it and added that "Sunnis and Shias are united in opposition to the Americans. The Americans kill Sunnis and put their bodies in Sadr city and kill Shias and put bodies in Sunni areas. The Americans want an excuse to stay, and it is in the interest of the Mossad and American intelligence to divide Sunnis and Shias. But it united Sunni and Shia."

“People expected Shias to welcome the Americans,” he said proudly. “People accused Shias of supporting the occupation,” but the Army of the Mahdi showed they reject the occupation.

Unlike other clerical Sadrists I had met, Fatah was not interested in a government run by the clergy.

“The government has to provide justice for the Iraqi people,” he said. “It doesn’t have to have men with beards or turbans. I am with the government that provides justice, even if it is secular, and against an unjust government, even if it is not Islamic. There is no Islamic government in the world today.”

Fatah’s newspaper, *Ishraqat*, whose name means “sunrises,” was now far more professional than when I had first started reading it 18 months before. But on the front page of nearly every copy he gave me, I found a news item with his picture on it.

“I’m like a new dictator,” he laughed.

One headline said, “Revenge . . . Revenge. Every nation’s blood is from the tears of the martyrs of the Mujahid Sadr city.” Other headlines quoted Muqtada saying, “America fights Islam and nothing else. I don’t believe the occupier will leave,” and “The American government hasn’t offered an apology.”

At Muqtada’s local office in Sadr City, which had taken over the Friday prayers from the Muhsin mosque, tens of thousands still filled the streets every day, an ocean of people rising and bowing in unison.

Outside the office I purchased more newspapers and posters. A Sadrist newspaper called “Friday” quoted Muqtada’s father, Muhamad Sadiq al-Sadr: “The Friday prayer is a needle in the eyes of occupiers generally and Israel in particular.”

Muqtada’s office had issued a special-edition newspaper called *Quds*, Arabic for “Jerusalem,” in honor of the “World Jerusalem Day” that Iran’s Ayatollah Khomeini had declared and which Iranian Prime Minister Ahmedanijad had recently made famous when he called for Israel to be wiped out.

Muqtada was still publishing his original newspaper, *Al Hawza*, and it warned of an American plan to split Iraq and printed a cartoon of British Prime Minister Tony Blair saying, “Hello, Bush, we succeeded in splitting Iraq.”

One article discussed the role of Islam in the Iraqi constitution and concluded that Islam could not be applied truly unless the Mahdi returned or his assistant appeared, suggesting the possibility that Muqtada was the Mahdi’s assistant. Another headline reported a study that showed that 25 percent of Europeans are insane.

I asked to purchase some Sadrist CDs, and Fatah took me to a shop nearby decorated with posters of the first and second martyrs, Muqtada, and Ayatollah Khomeini. One CD I bought was dedicated to Muqtada. “The candles are tall,” a man sang. “The Shias are greeting Muqtada . . . We are in your light our lord . . . All the young men are behind you . . . These are the people of the opposition.” It was sung to popular Iraqi music and

contained images from Sadr's uprisings as well as Iraqis dancing on the occasion of Muqtada's birthday, although his age is never revealed.

Voices sang "God help us win against the nation of unbelievers" as a rocket-propelled grenade hit an American tank.

Another CD opened with credits: "The Two Imams' Islamic Foundation and Studio introduces its new production 'The Knights: Part 2.'"

With a volcano and lava in the background, gunfire sounded and the young men who made the film ran into view. "The U.S. army came and we came to them," a singer wearing a bullet-proof vest recalled, "and we threw the 1920 revolution at them . . . They declared their enmity; we came to get them."

The editors spliced in scenes of rocket-propelled grenades being shot at American soldiers from the Hollywood movie *Black Hawk Down*. It looked real, and someone unfamiliar with the movie might have believed it so. "We resist with our rifles as Sadr said," men sang. They were shown inside a mosque, singing and dancing with their shoes off, but with guns and RPGs in hand and ammunition belts still on.

On the walls of the Sadr office I found announcements exhorting the people to support the Shias, plant trees, and preserve the grass. A nearby shop sold stickers for children's schoolbooks with space for the child's name, class, school, and address. Decorated with bright colors and flowers, they depicted Muqtada in a way I had not previously seen. He was smiling, friendly, even embracing children. Each sticker contained one of Muqtada's aphorisms, such as "If the teacher is good, then certainly the student will be good." Stickers for cars depicted Muqtada and his fighters in various settings—deserts of the American Southwest, lush jungle paradises, and even in an ocean with two crescent moons in the sky.

As I parted from Fatah he asked my driver if he wanted to take a pistol or Kalashnikov for my safety and offered to secure a weapons license for me. He was very concerned for my safety, but the only danger on the street that day was the little boys playing with large toy Kalashnikovs that shot small plastic pellets. Throughout my time in Baghdad I did not see a single Iraqi boy on the streets without one of these rifles.

Muqtada al-Sadr, once the most divisive figure in Iraqi politics, was becoming the only hope for halting the civil war.

Muqtada was the only Shia leader respected by Iraq's Sunnis.

Unlike the leadership of Dawa or SCIRI, Muqtada was not in exile, and like his father he has condemned foreign-born clerics based in Iraq and has made much of his nationalism.

Muqtada has been a fierce critic of Iran, warning of Iranian interference in Iraqi affairs. Muqtada's Army of the Mahdi fought the American occupiers, establishing street cred with the Sunni resistance.

Muqtada's movement had drawn many Shia former Baathists into its ranks, as well as Shias who had served in Saddam's dreaded security and intelligence services, rehabilitating them.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

"When I heard the Americans ripped down the statue of Saddam I was happy because I thought we were finished with his stupid wars," said traffic policeman Ali Jabar, 34. "But if I knew that I would lose my younger brother to a car bomb, I would have preferred to stay under Saddam's rule." April 10, 2006 Daily Star

"This Lie Never Changes"



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

While the Poor and Working Class die in Iraq, the "We Stand United" live in a gingerbread house.

This lie never changes.

It is the oldest sham in the art of war.

While "Taps" are being played at military funerals, the Corporate Elite are drinking champagne and planning the next Campaign.

This is why so many veterans drink themselves to death.

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
April 9, 2006

Photo and comment 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)

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.

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)

OCCUPATION REPORT

***Good News For The Iraqi
Resistance!!***

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



Iraqi women cry after U.S. occupation troops kicked down their door in the Shula section of Baghdad April 6, 2006. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

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

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

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

OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION

BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!

Iraq Stock Market In The Toilet

April 11, 2006 New York Times

If stock markets are any measure of a nation's confidence, then the numbers at the nascent Iraq Stock Exchange show that faith in the country may be at its lowest ebb.

The bear has dug its claws in deep: the market index has lost almost two-thirds of its value in the past year, closing these days below 30, from a high of 74 in March 2005.

OCCUPATION HAITI

Occupation Holds 4,000 In Prisons: No Charges, No Trials

06 Apr 2006 Reuters, By Joseph Guyler Delva, PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti

The head of the U.N. mission's human rights unit in Haiti accused judicial officials and the U.S.-backed interim government on Thursday of illegally detaining most of the 4,000 people behind bars in the country.

Thierry Fagart said most of the inmates had not been formally charged or put on trial by the interim authorities who replaced ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide two years ago.

"Most of the people in jail in Haiti are being detained illegally. The legal procedures have been systematically violated," said Fagart.

He said the decision by authorities in the impoverished Caribbean country to hold people "preventively" behind bars, for months or years, often without charges filed against them, was unacceptable.

"There are people who have in preventive detention more time than provided by the law if they were sentenced," Fagart told Reuters.

Hundreds of those jailed are widely believed to have been arrested for political reasons, although the interim government has repeatedly denied that.

Among them are former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune and former Interior Minister Jocelerme Privert, both of whom served under Aristide.

Haiti's prisons are overflowing and cannot accommodate new inmates. At the national penitentiary where more than 2,000 people are jailed, only about 4 percent have been sentenced.

Officials at the prison, built to house only a few hundred, have refused over the past week to take in new suspects sent by the Haitian police and other judicial authorities because of lack of space.

Preval, who won an election in February, has suggested he could issue a pardon to political prisoners.

Many of them say they have done nothing they need to be pardoned for.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Israeli Army Strikes Mighty Blow Against Terrorist Fiends: Attacks The Palestinian Football League Headquarters In Gaza

10 April 2006 Saed Bannoura-IMEMC & Agencies

Sunday at night, Israeli soldiers shelled with heavy artillery the headquarters of the Palestinian Football League in Beit Lahia, in the northern part of the Gaza Strip.

Eyewitnesses reported that Israeli tanks and artillery fired several shells at the building causing huge damage to the building and its different facilities.

The shelling started earlier on Sunday when the soldiers fired several several shells at the area surrounding the facility trapping the workers inside until evening hours. On Sunday at night soldiers fired their shells directly at the building.

The construction of the Palestinian League building started in 1999 and was completed in 2003. It was constructed through donations from the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the Saudi Football Federation and the Palestinian government.

The Arabs48 news website reported that FIFA President, Joseph Blatter, was supposed to attend the opening ceremony of the football association last January but could not attend due to the continuous Israeli operations and shelling in the Gaza Strip.

“Every Bomber You Will Ever Talk To Will Say ‘We Are Doing This In Defense. They Started The War’” New Research Debunks Myths About Palestine Bombers

Argo interviewed 15 pre-empted bombers, three would-be bombers, two senders and over 70 of their families between 2002 and 2005. Her findings suggest that many common perceptions of the recruitment and the ideology of suicide bombers are misleading. Suicide bombers, she says, are not: a) recruited by organizations and exploited or coerced into action, b) indoctrinated or brainwashed, c) psychopaths without regard for civilian life.

April 10, 2006 By Kristin Solberg, Special to The Daily Star

BEIRUT: "I don't intend to kill innocents, and I take precautions. I left the vegetable market and didn't detonate because of the presence of women and children." Those are the words of a 26-year-old Palestinian suicide bomber, captured by the Israelis as he left the market.

The 26-year-old's unwillingness to kill civilians is not uncommon among Palestinian suicide bombers, research by Nichole Argo, a doctoral candidate at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, suggests.

Argo interviewed 15 pre-empted bombers, three would-be bombers, two senders and over 70 of their families between 2002 and 2005. Her findings suggest that many common perceptions of the recruitment and the ideology of suicide bombers are misleading. Suicide bombers, she says, are not: a) recruited by organizations and exploited or coerced into action, b) indoctrinated or brainwashed, c) psychopaths without regard for civilian life.

"Every bomber you will ever talk to will say 'we are doing this in defense. They started the war.'

They are not willing to kill somebody outside the frame of defense," said Argo, who is soon to present her findings in a book for popular consumption entitled "The Human Bombs."

Curiously, however, many of her interviewees acknowledged that their actions often hurt Palestinians by bringing Israeli reprisal. Still, they claim it is worth it, for emotional effects as much as strategy.

Argo explained, "What the bombers say is, 'I did it to deter (the Israelis). They need to feel our pain. If they feel our pain, they won't hurt us again.'"

As well as acting as a pain equalizer, the suicide bombings also prove to the Israelis that the Palestinians are still up for a fight, and it "makes the (Palestinian) camp happy."

"I believe(d) the operation would hurt the enemy ... Also, successful mission greatly influences society. It raises the morale of the people; they are happy, they feel strong," a 19-year old bomber, interviewed by Argo, said.

Contrary to popular conception, many suicide bombers volunteer for their missions rather than being recruited by organizations. Half the bombers Argo interviewed had sought out an organization solely for assistance in carrying out their mission. Moreover, most of the bombers had not previously been actively involved in the intifada.

"I remember very well the moment I decided to execute an operation," a 26-year-old bomber said. "I was in the mosque reading the Koran and something inside of me pushed me to turn to one of the leaders - a prominent member of Islamic Jihad - and I told him that I gave my oath to God that he would help me in this decision."

Another bomber told of how he approached Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and asked permission to make an operation. The commander initially refused. "But in the end I convinced him," the 18-year-old bomber said.

Most bombers, Argo's study suggests, also carry out their mission within one month of deciding, and one third of the bombers interviewed even began their mission within 10 days, weakening claims that suicide bombers are indoctrinated or "brainwashed."

Another repeated claim about suicide bombers is that they are desperate psychopaths, with a complete disregard for civilian life. However, Argo found that all the bombers in her study had spent a lot of time choosing and justifying their targets. Seven of the bombers chose their own targets, with four of them choosing military sites to avoid killing civilians.

"Every single one I spoke to had spent a lot of time thinking about what is just and what is fair," Argo said. "Half said they wouldn't mind hitting civilians, using arguments like 'our civilians die more.'"

For them, the distinction between soldiers and civilians had ceased to have meaning since they were fighting an enemy that appeared not to see this distinction.

However, the other half of the bombers interviewed refused to kill civilians. A 37-year-old bomber said, "I could have done a much larger number if I executed the mission among citizens in the central bus station of Tel Aviv, but I didn't do it because I wanted to kill only soldiers."

Another, aged 24, said, "when a kid is being killed here or there, this is distressing. He is killed incidentally with no intent. I do not intend to kill children."

What, then, makes a suicide bomber?

Part of the answer, Argo's research suggest, lies in social networks. To prove this, Argo compared the second intifada communities of Nablus, home to 25 percent of Palestinian suicide bombers, and Ramallah, home to only two percent, to examine exactly what set the communities apart.

"I think it is the social networks. One thing that is different is the community structures," Argo said. Nablus is a much more densely knitted community than Ramallah. "There is more face-to-face contact in Nablus. When you see those you care about every single day, there might be more of an emotional burden to do something to help the situation and join the resistance."

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by a foreign power, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The foreign army is Israeli; the occupied nation is Palestine.]

CLASS WAR REPORTS



San Francisco March for Immigrant Justice

Photo by Jeff Paterson, Not in Our Name Apr. 10, 2006; jeff@paterson.net

Received:

Check Out BushWhacked

From: TomSongs
To: GI Special
Sent: April 11, 2006

I just hung up from a call with [the mother of an Iraq War veteran] and she shared some background about you and your selfless dedication to our mutual mission.

I'm a Vet and a Songwriter checking in for duty. I offer my songs. Please feel free to share my work in support of your work.

"BushWhacked"
http://www.tomsongs.com/images/Bushwhacked_0001.wmv

"BushWhacked"
(Song Only) MP3
<http://www.tomsongs.com/images/BushWhacked.MP3>

"Veteran"
<http://www.tomsongs.com/images/Veteran.wmv>

"Veteran" (Song only) MP3
<http://www.tomsongs.com/images/Veteran.MP3>

More Iraq and 9/11 advocacy music/commentary at my site.

Sincerely,
Tom Chelston
www.tomsongs.org
713.705.7899

REPLY: BushWhacked is terrific; people are encouraged to check it out. And the mission of people involved in GI Special is the opposite of selfless. It's in all of our immediate self-interest to put the predators running this society out of business once and for all. T

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/qi-special.htm>

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

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