

## GI SPECIAL 4K18:



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

### **NOTICE:**

As activity by and for troops against the war increases, that takes time away from GI Special work. That means it's not possible to reply with thanks as often for the fine news and letters sent in by troops, military family members, veterans, and civilians who understand why nothing is more likely to shorten the war than reaching out to the troops person to person, face to face, including the National Guards and Reserves who live right next to you. It's very hard to fight a war without an armed force willing to do it.

1. Some issues, like this one, are delayed and
2. Respect for and solidarity with everybody who sends in all the good stuff. T.]

# **“We All Want To Get Out Of Here” Doubts About Mission Grow:**

# **“Inspiring Her Iraqi and American Charges Has Become Increasingly Difficult”**

## **“Captain Bagley Barred Her Troops From Foot Patrols In The Most Violent Neighborhoods And Eliminated All Nonessential Travel”**

November 19, 2006 By KIRK SEMPLE, New York Times, [Excerpt]

Capt. Stephanie A. Bagley and the military police company she commands arrived in Iraq in December 2005 brimming with optimism about taking on one of the most urgent tasks in Iraq: building a new police force.

Now, as the 21st Military Police Company approaches the end of a deployment marked by small victories and enormous disappointments, Captain Bagley is focused on a more modest goal.

**“I just want to get everyone home,” she said. In the past several weeks, Captain Bagley, 30, barred her troops from foot patrols in the most violent neighborhoods and eliminated all nonessential travel. “I’m just not willing to lose another soldier,” she said.**

The local police force in her region, as in much of Iraq, remains undertrained, poorly equipped and unable to stand up to the rigors of this conflict. Casualties are high, morale is low and many police officers do not show up for work.

Some of her soldiers had gone to the Baya Local Police Station, one of 18 local stations in the troubled southern outskirts of Baghdad where her unit has worked this year. They were picking up a contingent of Iraqi policemen for a daily patrol of Dora, an especially violent neighborhoods here in the capital.

On these patrols, the Americans, swaddled in Kevlar from head to hips, travel in Humvees and other armored vehicles. The Iraqis, wearing only bulletproof vests, ride in soft-skinned pickup trucks and S.U.V.’s, the only vehicles they have.

The Iraqi policemen begged the Americans not to make them go out.

**They peeled off their clothes to reveal shrapnel scars from past attacks. They tugged the armored plates from their Kevlar vests and told the Americans they were faulty. They said they had no fuel for their vehicles. They disappeared on indefinite errands elsewhere in the compound. They said they would not patrol if it meant passing a trash pile, a common hiding place for bombs.**

The Iraqis eventually gave up and climbed into two S.U.V.'s with shattered windshields and missing side windows, and the joint patrol moved out. One Iraqi officer draped his Kevlar vest from the window of his car door for lateral protection. During a lunch break, the officers tried to sneak away in their cars.

**Later in the day, back at her command center on a military base in southern Baghdad, Captain Bagley said the pleading and excuses were common. But she did not blame the Iraqis.**

**They are soft targets for the insurgency, and scores of officers have been wounded or killed in her area during the past year. The police stations' motor pools are so crowded with ravaged vehicles that they could be taken for salvage yards.**

"I'd never want to go out in an Iraqi police truck," the captain said. "But we still have to convince them. We've been given a job to train them."

**But she also points out that her orders were to help train and equip a local force to deal with common crime, like theft and murder, not teach infantry skills to wage a counterinsurgency campaign.**

The government's sclerotic supply chain, clogged by bureaucracy, corruption and lack of money, has failed to provide the stations with the necessary tools of policing, from office supplies to weapons, uniforms and police cruisers.

"Even something as simple as a pen, they have to get it for us," said Maj. Muhammad Hassan Aboud, the commander of the Belat Al Shuwayda station in southern Baghdad, pointing to Captain Bagley. "If we lose them, we're pretty much going nowhere."

The captain said, "We're holding their hands so much now." If the Americans were not involved, she said, some senior commanders would not have the fortitude to confront the militias. "A lot of times I'm just the motivator," she said.

**"I'm motivated because I'm going home soon. But what motivates them?"**

Days earlier, she recalled, a death squad had killed the family of another of her station commanders. "Yet," she continued, a tinge of exasperation in her voice, "you're given the mission to motivate these guys to protect Iraqi citizens."

She decided to focus on developing the top officers, particularly the station commanders. "We realized that if we didn't have a strong leader, the station won't work," she said.

But the Interior Ministry, which oversees the police force, has frequently changed commanders, often citing reasons of incompetence or death threats, sometimes offering no explanation at all. The Al Rashid station has had eight chiefs since it opened in late April. Absentee rates there have soared as high as 75 percent, though the rate had dropped to 25 percent by late last month, in large part because the latest chief was docking the pay of absent officers.

She has also had to confront the creep of militia influence, as militia loyalists within the force used their leverage to avoid punishment or intimidate senior leadership.

**The job of inspiring her Iraqi and American charges alike has become increasingly difficult as the violence has escalated in Baghdad in recent months.**

As part of the American military's push to wrest control of the capital's streets from insurgents and militias, she was ordered to move some of her soldiers out of the police stations and into the streets of Dora to conduct daily patrols.

**Following an effort by American and Iraqi troops to seal off and clear that neighborhood, violence there has risen sharply, and attacks on her joint patrols have become frequent.**

On Oct. 2, her soldiers were accompanying Iraqi police officers on a patrol through the Dora marketplace when a sniper shot and killed Sgt. Joseph Walter Perry, a 23-year-old turret gunner from San Diego. He was one of at least eight American soldiers killed in Iraq that day.

Numerous soldiers from Captain Bagley's company had been wounded over the year; in April, a bomb destroyed a Humvee and tore off the driver's left leg. But Sergeant Perry's death was the company's first here and it devastated Captain Bagley.

"People from other units will say, 'You've only lost one?' " she said, her face tensing in indignation. "Only? We haven't had it so bad as others, but I can't minimize Perry's death." She paused. "I'm the one who sends them into the market."

After the death, Captain Bagley started counting the days to the end of the tour and her company's return to Fort Bragg in North Carolina. She found herself lying awake at night, thinking about how to keep her company alive amid a worsening war. She started micromanaging her soldiers' movements. She tried to relax in the evenings by hanging out with her lieutenants or reading paperbacks that she describes as "trashy." But the relief was always fleeting. "I'm in no-sleep mode," she said.

**As the death toll among American troops has risen in Baghdad, and the security plan has faltered, Captain Bagley's soldiers say they have tried to resist the urge to question the larger American enterprise here, whether it was right or wrong to come to Iraq in the first place, whether and when American troops should leave. They are here to do a job, they say, and are duty-bound to complete it. [And what they have to say when this reporter isn't around, he will never know. But it goes far beyond "trying to resist the urge."]**

But Captain Bagley has asked herself those questions "all the time," she said. She ponders whether it has all been worth her soldier's leg or her soldier's life. She wonders what the American command will do to turn things around.

Her phone calls with her father sometimes touch on the faltering course of the war. "He asks, 'Why the heck doesn't it calm down?' " she said. She is at a loss to explain why.

Her discouragement is plain, but she keeps her deepest thoughts private, in part because she wants to protect her soldiers from doubt at this most critical time in their lives. She knows that their job is difficult enough without the suggestion that their sacrifices may have been in vain. "You can't pass it along to your soldiers," she said. "You can't question it. It would lead to the destruction of the company. You got to keep it together."

[Typical officer, thinks they're idiots, telling the reporter they're too stupid to figure it out for themselves. What silly delusions of grandeur, "trying to protect her soldiers from doubts." As if she's carrying their brains around in her pocket, as if they don't already know the whole fucking war is in vain. And it's too late to worry about the "destruction of the company." That's yesterday's news, as far as this evil, stupid, lost war is concerned. But respect to the Captain for trying to preserve their lives.]

The company has done everything it could to help rebuild Iraq, she said, but now they want to go home. " It's been a very frustrating year," she said.

"We all want to get out of here." [Truth at last.]

MORE:

## ***No Troop Training Problems For Them:*** **CIA Director Estimates The Number Of Insurgents In The "Low Tens Of Thousands"**

November 17, 2006 By Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpt]

Although the Bush administration continues to emphasize the role of al-Qaeda in Iraq, [the Defense Intelligence Agency, Gen. Michael D.] Maples described the current situation as "mostly an intra-Arab struggle to determine how power and authority will be distributed," with or without the U.S. presence. Al-Qaeda and foreign terrorist numbers were put at roughly 1,300, while [CIA director Gen. Michael V.] Hayden, pressed by senators, estimated the number of insurgents in the "low tens of thousands."

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## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

# N.J. Soldier Killed In Iraq

November 17 Courier-Post

A young Atlantic City man who hoped to make a career out of the Army instead gave his life for it when he was killed in Iraq.

The family of Spc. Eric Rivera, 21, said Army officials informed them of his death Tuesday.

As of Thursday, the Pentagon had not officially confirmed Rivera's death and the circumstances of his death were not immediately known. He had told family members that his platoon was operating in an area west of Ramadi.

Rivera was assigned to Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, based in Schweinfurt, Germany.

As relatives gathered at the Rivera family home Thursday, a letter the soldier wrote to his brother before his death arrived in the mail.

"It's funny to say but it feels like I have no life. I'm so brainwashed by the Army . . . but I love it," Rivera wrote to his 27-year-old brother, Jeff Rivera.

Eric Rivera graduated from Atlantic City High School in 2003 and joined the Army shortly after. He is the first Atlantic City resident to die in the Iraq war.

Jeff Rivera said his brother wanted to spend 20 years in the Army, retire, and then join the Atlantic City Police Department.

He said his brother surprised the family when he went into the Army, and that he re-enlisted in the same manner last June.

"He wasn't afraid," Jeff Rivera said. "When you have to go, you have to go. It's your destiny."

Their mother, Cayetana Palacios, 51, was so worried about her son that no one told her he was in Iraq, according to Jeff Rivera.

Palacios, an immigrant from El Salvador who works as a housekeeper at Caesars Atlantic City, learned her son was at war at the same time she found out the war had killed him.

She had visited her son last June in Germany while he was on leave.

"He call me a queen and I call him my king. And he was so sweet all the time," Palacios said.

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# Friendly Fire May Have Killed Tracy Soldier



Sgt. 1st Class Tung M. Nguyen

November 17, 2006 NBC 11

TRACY, Calif. An Army Special Forces soldier died of a gunshot wound during combat operations on Nov. 14 in Baghdad, Iraq, Army officials said Friday.

Sgt. 1st Class Tung M. Nguyen, 38, a Special Forces communications sergeant, was evacuated and pronounced dead at a combat support hospital in Baghdad.

According to the U.S. Army, he may have been hit by friendly fire. The Army is currently investigating Nguyen's death.

Nguyen was born in Cantho, Vietnam, became a U.S. citizen and was raised in Tracy, Calif. He was assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Bragg, N.C.

He entered military service in July 1986.

His awards and decorations include two Meritorious Service Medals, two Army Commendation Medals, four Army Achievement Medals, six Army Good Conduct Medals, two National Defense Service Medals, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, Overseas Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, Distinguished Pistol Shot Badge and the Special Forces Tab.

Nguyen was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Iraq Campaign Medal and Combat Infantryman Badge.

He also was the winner of the 2006 Small Arms Championship Sniper Class competition, and the 2006 Joint Special Operations Command Small Arms Championship Pistol Class competition.

Nguyen is survived by his wife, Marcia of Raeford, N.C. He is also survived by his parents, Nguyen Van Tuan and Phan Cong Duc of Alameda, Calif.

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## **Two U.S. Patrol Vehicles Destroyed In Baquba, Casualties Not Announced**

18 Nov 2006 Reuters

The U.S. military declined comment on Baquba residents' reports of two U.S. patrol vehicles being destroyed in separate attacks around the city.

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## **British Mercenary Killed, Another Wounded, 3 Taken Prisoner At Az Zubayr**

November 18, 2006 Press Association

A British security worker is feared dead and another injured in a shooting in Iraq, the Foreign Office said.

The private security workers came under fire as they passed through Az Zubayr in southern Iraq, south west of Basra.

A spokesman said: "The incident involved a civilian convoy and people who were from a private security company.

The Americans shot dead two policemen who pulled over their unmarked vehicle near Zubayr on Friday.

"We believe there is a British civilian who is recovering from a gun shot injury in the Shaibah military base.

"We understand that another British civilian may have been killed."

Iraqi Major General Ali al-Moussawi said police opened fire after the vehicle did not stop at a roadblock.

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## **Mercenary Convoy Attacked Near Safwan:**



# Four Americans, One Austrian Taken Prisoner

November 17, 2006 CNN & Viewlondon & By WILL WEISSERT (AP) & CBS & 11/17/06  
By LUIS MARTINEZ, ABC News

Five mercenaries have been taken prisoner after their convoy was stopped at a checkpoint. Four are American, and one Austrian.

**A convoy was traveling from Kuwait, where Crescent operates, to Tallil Airbase near Nasiriya in southern Iraq when it was ambushed, the Crescent spokesman said.**

The trucks were empty as they traveled north to an Italian base near Nasiriyah, where they were to pick up materials to be returned to Kuwait.

A spokesman for Crescent Security Group said some of their security personnel were "unaccounted for." Many of its managers and employees are American.

The contractors disappeared near Basra on Thursday afternoon. The incident occurred near the town of Safwan.

One of the Americans has been identified as Paul Reuben, a former police officer from the Minneapolis, Minnesota, suburb of St. Louis Park. The fifth contractor has been identified as a 25-year-old former soldier from Austria.

The attackers took 19 heavy trucks and one security vehicle, the embassy said, noting that the convoy had consisted of 43 such trucks and six security vehicles.

The attackers released nine truck drivers.

Crescent provides security for sites, individuals and convoys in Iraq, employing a mix of Western and local workers with military and law enforcement experience, according to the company's Web site.

A top Iraqi police official in Basra told The Associated Press that claims by the provincial governor announcing the release of two of the hostages had confused the two separate incidents in the same area involving private security forces.

Basra police Maj. Gen. Ali al-Moussawi said he believes this confusion led to previous speculation that some of the hostages had been freed.

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## ***Notes From A Lost War;***

# Reporter Gets A Few Minutes Of What Troops Face 24/7 Forever; Ignores The Betrayal Of The 172nd

**[How interesting that there is not one word about the real news of the 172nd Stryker Brigade: see the end of this story. It does convey the flavor of a besieged army of occupation, where not even the biggest bases, in this case Camp Taji, are exempt from constant attack. T]**

Nov 17 By Lauren Frayer, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

Associated Press writer Lauren Frayer is embedded with the Army's 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry, 172nd Stryker Brigade in Iraq. Below are reports of her experiences with the unit.

ABOARD A BLACK HAWK HELICOPTER over Balad, Iraq: I'm the sole passenger on a Black Hawk flight from Forward Operating Base Speicher, in Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit, back to Baghdad. It wasn't supposed to be this way, but a team from the Pentagon missed its connecting flight, so I'm alone with the pilot, co-pilot and two gunners.

They reminisce about flying over crystal blue bays in Hawaii, where the Army's 25th Infantry Division is based, and they place bets on whether they'll make it back to camp in time for "midnight chow" the hour-long window when the dining hall opens for night staffers.

Then a more serious voice crackles through: "Enemy activity below. Small arms fire. IA (Iraqi army) engaged." Since we've only got one passenger, can we divert mission and check out the firefight below? No problem, the pilot says.

I shudder: this isn't what I bargained for. I've got my story already and am just trying to get home. But it's too late.

Down we dive, in a spiraling flight pattern that makes me glad I haven't eaten in 8 hours. Flying 300 feet off the ground, we're nearly grazing the treetops. "Power lines on the right; look out!" a voice warns from the ether.

Gunfire erupts around a grove of trees, and I can't tell whether it's incoming. I look up at the gunner in front of me, so close our knees are touching. He's grasping his weapon with both hands. A moment ago, he had his helmet off and was chomping on a macadamia nut cookie.

All of a sudden the dark green patch below is illuminated by a search light on the belly of the helicopter, and there's some movement of shadowy figures. They look like Iraqi army uniforms, but I can't quite tell. You can buy the uniforms in the local bazaar, I'm told.

The spiral movement, we must have spun in a tight circle 50 times, creates a wind tunnel between the gunners' windows. Iraq is mostly desert with no humidity, and November is blustery cold. Blasts of brisk air strafe my face, and I try to wiggle down into my flak jacket to stay warm.

Panic is a funny thing; you have no idea how much time passes. But thankfully it does.

**The pilot radios down to base: "Sorry I have to peel off, sir. We're running low on fuel."**

And just as quickly as we entered the spiral, we break off and sail straight for Baghdad, a city I never thought I'd be so excited to see.

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Friday, Nov. 10, 1:30 a.m. local time

**CAMP TAJI, north of Baghdad: Last night, shadowy insurgents lobbed mortars into the empty air field several hours after I'd landed in a Black Hawk helicopter. No one was hurt.**

"Some sissies run for cover, but those of us who've been here long enough have learned to sleep through it," says a soldier giving me a lift to the mess hall.

**The door of the humvee we're riding in no longer has a latch, and I tie it shut with a shoelace.**

It's a small example of the adapting soldiers here have had to do. As Donald Rumsfeld famously said, "You go to war with the Army you have, not the Army you might want or wish to have." He submitted his resignation two days ago, but it's business as usual at Camp Taji.

**I'm embedded with the Army's 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry, 172nd Stryker Brigade, an infantry unit trained for combat. But every day, the soldiers in this unit find themselves in other roles they didn't train for: policeman, community service coordinator, engineer.**

**The Stryker vehicles we ride around in are designed to transport large numbers of soldiers to the battlefield quickly and safely. Instead they're being used on slow patrols through dense urban areas.**

One of the snipers on the squad has never fired a shot from his specialized rifle, after 15 months in Iraq.

**A fire support officer in charge of outgoing artillery was relegated to a job answering phones, because these troops have never launched an offensive artillery barrage. The phone has rung once in the past week, he said.**

Wednesday, Nov. 8, 5:30 p.m. local time

LZ Washington, Green Zone, Baghdad: We're all wearing earplugs to deaden the roar of the choppers, so we read lips and use hand gestures to communicate. "Sit there, strap yourself in," the airman motions to me. And then we're off, rising high above Baghdad on my first Black Hawk ride.

**We swerve from side to side and I see tiny plumes of smoke rising up toward us from two-story buildings in nondescript slums. I learn later that it was someone shooting at us from below and the pilot's back-and-forth swerving makes it difficult for snipers to hit us.**

**MORE:**

## **NEVER FORGET WHAT RUMSFELD DID TO THE 172<sup>nd</sup>**



[<http://www.bringhome172nd.org/stryker/>]

[Excerpts from: <http://www.bringhome172nd.org/stryker/>]

On July 26th, the men and women of the 172nd Stryker Combat Brigade prepared to end their unit's deployment to Iraq. This unit of 3,800 Americans had endured the fight for a year, distinguishing itself as an essential and effective factor in bringing stability to the North of Iraq. A small number of the brigade had taken the first steps back on U.S. soil, arriving to their base near Fairbanks, Alaska, while many others were already in Kuwait waiting to board homebound planes.

***With these successes behind them, their flak vests packed, personal items sent stateside, and their Stryker Armored Vehicles turned over to other newly-arrived units, this battle brigade was able to breathe a sigh of relief and prepare to Go Home.***

***The following day, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld gave his approval to extend the 172nd Brigade's deployment in Iraq. Instead of greeting their loved ones, the Strykers will help to fight the insurgency in Baghdad.***

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

**That is not a good enough reason.**



172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team soldiers stop traffic approaching central Baghdad's Karradah district, Oct. 24, 2006. U.S. and Iraqi forces threw a security cordon around Karradah on Monday night and continued door-to-door searches Tuesday. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

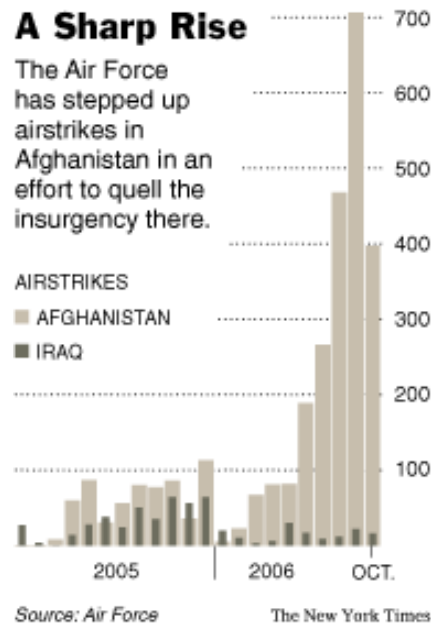
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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

**The Classic Marker Of A Defeated  
Counterinsurgency Operation:**

# U.S. Airstrikes Climb Sharply In Afghanistan

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



**NATO forces have established numerous small bases and sent out extended patrols in small formations and with little or no heavy armor and artillery. And NATO has also lacked a reserve force that can be shifted quickly to hot spots, though Poland has promised to send more troops to fulfill that role. [Welcome to Vietnamistan.]**

November 17, 2006 By DAVID S. CLOUD, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

The Air Force has conducted more than 2,000 airstrikes in Afghanistan over the past six months, a sharp increase in bombing that reflects the growing demand for American air cover since NATO has assumed a larger ground combat role, Air Force officials said.

The intensifying air campaign has focused on southern Afghanistan, where NATO units, primarily from Britain, Canada and the Netherlands, as well as American Special Forces have been engaging in the heaviest and most frequent ground combat with Taliban rebels since the invasion five years ago.

**The NATO forces are mostly operating without heavy armor or artillery support, and as Taliban resistance has continued, more air support has been used to compensate for the lightness of the units, Air Force officials said.**

Most of the strikes have come during “close air support” missions, where the bombers patrol the area and respond to calls from ground units in combat rather than performing planned strikes.

**One B-1 pilot, Lt. Col. Tim Schepper, said that when troops called for airstrikes, “There are times when you can hear the gunfire and R.P.G.’s over the radio in the background, and that’s when you know you have helped keep them alive.”**

**NATO forces have established numerous small bases and sent out extended patrols in small formations and with little or no heavy armor and artillery. And NATO has also lacked a reserve force that can be shifted quickly to hot spots, though Poland has promised to send more troops to fulfill that role.**

**The 2,095 attacks by American aircraft since June is many times greater than the number of airstrikes in Iraq, where the terrain and nature of the conflict are less susceptible to bombing campaigns.**

There have been only 88 attacks by American aircraft in Iraq since June, according to Air Force figures.

**Unlike in Afghanistan, insurgents in Iraq are largely in urban areas and do not often mass in groups large enough to warrant use of airstrikes, Air Force commanders said.**

The increase in total munitions dropped has also been substantial. This year in Afghanistan, American aircraft have dropped 987 bombs and fired more than 146,000 cannon rounds and bullets in strafing runs, more than was expended in both categories from the beginning of the American-led invasion in 2001 through 2004, the Air Force said. During those years, a total of 848 bombs and just over 119,000 bullets were used by aircraft, according to Air Force figures.

**On the B-1 flight last week that included a reporter, Colonel Schepper and his two-man crew received a radio call from a Canadian soldier at an isolated base near the town of Tarin Kowt, who asked the aircraft to stand by for potential attacks on insurgent forces.**

**A few hours later, the bomber crew received a similar radio message from an American Special Forces soldier, who warned that Taliban attacks on his position had been frequent. “We’ve had contact every day this week,” said the soldier, who could not be identified under military rules. “As sure as the day is long, we’ll have more.”**

In Afghanistan the increased use of air power has also come at a cost in casualties among allied forces and civilians. In September, an American A-10 attack jet mistakenly opened fire on Canadian troops southwest of Kandahar, killing one and wounding dozens more.

Later that month, a nighttime NATO air attack involving an AC-130 gunship killed 31 civilians, most of whom were shepherds, a joint NATO and Afghan investigation concluded recently. The civilians were killed as they fled their tents with their wives and children after a NATO bomb struck a nearby compound, killing 20 Taliban fighters.

There have also been increased reports of damage or destruction to mosques and other civilian buildings and property.

**While the B-1 has proven useful in Afghanistan because of its large fuel tanks and bomb-carrying capacity, the planes' 30-year-old electronics have sometimes been a liability.**

**On the recent 11-hour mission, the B-1 crew had to inform ground troops several times that the plane's radar could not deliver the detailed picture of ground activity they wanted and that many fighter jets and other aircraft equipped with more modern surveillance equipment could provide.**

During the mission, one American soldier called up to say that his unit was holding a memorial ceremony for a soldier who had been killed several days earlier in combat. Trying to detect any possible ambushes of the service, he asked whether the plane could see whether there were any "military-age males" with weapons nearby — a request beyond the capabilities of the B-1's electronics, the crew told him.

So he requested that the B-1 perform a "show of force," a low-level pass meant to frighten any fighters nearby.

Colonel Schepper dropped the jet steeply from 20,000 feet to around 8,000 feet and roared over the soldiers' position, releasing flares to heighten the effect of the fly-by. On the plane's radio, the soldier voiced a simple response: "Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful."

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## **TROOP NEWS**

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





The casket of Lance Cpl. Minhee Andy Kim of Ann Arbor, Mich. who died while serving in Iraq, during funeral service, Nov. 15, 2006 at Arlington National Cemetery. (AP Photo/Lawrence Jackson)

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## ***Three Is Not A Lucky Number: 3rd ID Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughter House For 3rd Time; Denied Scheduled Time Off Between Tours***

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

November 18, 2006 By ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer

**The Army's 3rd Infantry Division, which helped lead the charge to Baghdad at the outset of the war, will return next year and become the first Army division to serve three tours in Iraq.**

More than 3 years into the war, the Army and Marine Corps are straining to keep a steady flow of combat and support forces to Iraq while giving the troops sufficient time between deployments for rest and retraining.

**Both services are far short of their goal of providing two years between deployments; the 3rd Brigade of the 3rd Infantry, for example, will have spent barely more than 12 months at home when it returns next year.**

**The same is true for the division's 1st Brigade, which officials have said is scheduled to deploy again in January.**

The 3rd Infantry, based at Fort Stewart, Ga., is among several units, totaling 57,000 troops, identified by the Pentagon on Friday for deployment in a fresh rotation of forces starting in January.

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## **Hysterical Top General Babbles Silly Bullshit In Public**

11.18.06 MSNBC News Services

**The top U.S. general in the Middle East, John Abizaid, on Friday compared the rise of militant ideologies, such as the force driving al-Qaida, to the rise of fascism in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s before World War Two.**

“If we don’t have guts enough to confront this ideology today, we’ll go through World War Three tomorrow,” Abizaid said in a speech in Cambridge, outside Boston.

**[One of the reporters covering Abizaid's ravings for CNN remarked that Abizaid was making sure there is “no daylight” between himself and Bush. If that means between Abizaid’s nose and Bush’s asshole, he got that right. T]**

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## **Only 142,000 More To GO**



U.S. Army Reserve Amy Garza-Ezell, of Jonesboro, Ark., holds her son Christopher, 3, after she and about 25 other reservists returned to Little Rock, Ark., Nov. 17, 2006, from duty in Iraq. (AP Photo/Danny Johnston)

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# **20,000 More Troops To Iraq? Off The Record, “Military Officials” Call That Meaningless Bullshit; “Simply Having More Troops On The Ground, Or Repositioning Troops Already In Iraq To The Baghdad Area, Has Proven Deadly”**

He said a major surge would require shipping to Iraq soldiers who just recently returned. "Sending people back into the fight who were just there would seriously harm morale." [As in massive combat refusal and much, much more. Think Vietnam, when the whole armed force refused to keep on with that stupid, hopeless Imperial war.]

November 17, 2006 By Josh White, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

About 140,000 U.S. troops are in Iraq, many stationed in the areas around Baghdad where violence has been most severe.

**Military officials said yesterday that a boost of 20,000 infantry troops -- five or six brigades -- would do little to change the nature of the insurgency or the sectarian strife and that commanders are not considering such a move.**

"If you put 20,000 soldiers in Baghdad, they can provide a modicum of security where they have a physical presence," said a military officer familiar with discussions on the matter. "We could flex and bend, and we could do a spike. But we can't do a steady state with that many more troops.

**“Additional troops could do a particular job for a finite period of time, but that doesn't solve the long-term problem of holding those areas.”**

Military officials and experts said yesterday that they think such a plan could work only temporarily because the Army and Marine Corps are stretched thin by ongoing conflicts. They said a large number of troops sent into Iraq would be hard to sustain over time without dipping significantly into the National Guard and reserves.

**The argument for increasing troop numbers is that it might stop the cycle of violence and thus halt Iraq's drift toward civil war.**

**The problem is that military analysts say there are not enough forces available to do that.**

***Under the troop-to-population ratios used in historical counterinsurgency campaigns, some of which had aspects of civil wars, the United States and its allies in Iraq would need at least 500,000 and perhaps more than 1 million troops, military experts say.***

No one thinks those numbers will be available anytime soon, even if the training of Iraqis is greatly expanded and accelerated.

Michael Vickers, director of strategic studies at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, said a surge could have enormous costs down the road, when U.S. officials would need to rotate fresh troops into Iraq. He also doubts the value of having more troops even temporarily.

**"In the past year, we've had between 125,000 and 140,000 troops there, and the daily attacks have almost tripled," Vickers said.**

Americans have soured on the war in part because U.S. casualties have continued to mount, particularly in October and the first half of this month.

**Simply having more troops on the ground, or repositioning troops already in Iraq to the Baghdad area, has proven deadly.**

**"One of the ironies, of course, is that the more soldiers you have there, the more soldiers you have in harm's way," said Edwin Dorn, a professor at the University of Texas and a former undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness.**

**He said a major surge would require shipping to Iraq soldiers who just recently returned. "Sending people back into the fight who were just there would seriously harm morale." [As in massive combat refusal and much, much more. Think Vietnam, when the whole armed force refused to keep on with that stupid, hopeless Imperial war.]**

## **British Soldier Sues, Wins \$700,000 For PTSD From Defective British Weapon Incident**

Nov 17 (KUNA)

**A British soldier serving in Iraq has been awarded 375,000 pounds [\$708,750 U.S.] compensation for post-traumatic stress after witnessing the serious injury of a colleague, it was officially announced here Friday.**

The serviceman was with three other soldiers when an anti-tank missile went wrong and misfired, causing one of the soldiers to lose an arm.

The injured party is thought to have received substantial recompense while the other three claimed mental stress. A Ministry of Defence (MoD) spokesman said compensation was paid to the unnamed soldier because the incident in April 2003 did not take place while fighting the enemy. The outcome of the two other claims has yet to be decided.

The payout is thought to be the first trauma-related compensation for a soldier in Iraq, observers said.

The MoD spokesman added "The MoD can confirm that 375,000 pounds was paid to a soldier who witnessed a colleague being seriously injured when a 94mm light anti-tank rocket malfunctioned."

**"The Ministry of Defence is liable as the weapon was deficient and the accident occurred in a non-combat situation," he concluded.**

**Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward GI Special 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 or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657**

## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

# **Abadi Warns British Troops Not To Repeat Such Practices In The Future: "If They Do, The Masses Will Teach Them A Lesson This Time"**

November 5, 2006 By Abed Battat, Azzaman

The provincial council in Basra has lodged a strong protest against recent actions by British occupation troops in the southern city. The council's deputy chairman, Jassem al-Abadi, described British troops' conduct as "provocative and unjustified."

Abadi was particularly critical of British troops' treatment of Iraqi security forces in the city.

He said in on one occasion the troops forced Iraqi police officers to dismount their vehicles as they were on their way to check 'a suspicious item' under one of the bridges.

"The (British) troops compelled Iraqi forces to surrender their weapons, ordered them to lie down on the ground and put their boots over their heads. "This is a heinous practice that is insulting to all the citizens and not only to the police officers involved," Abadi said.

**Abadi warned the troops not to repeat such practices in the future. "If they do, the masses will teach them a lesson this time," he said.**

**Abadi said the people of Basra were angry and furious over the troops' practices.**

He mentioned an incident in which British troops stormed the residence of a notable Basra politician in a "provocative "manner. Abadi was referring to Hassan al-Qatrani, a notable tribal leader in the city.

"They (British troops) smashed the door and arrested his (Qatrani's) brothers and tortured them savagely before having them released," he said.

Abadi also accused British occupation troops of attacking the headquarters of al-Fadhila party, one of the most influential factions in the city.

Fadhila is powerful in Basra and its supporters and armed men are reported to be wielding immense influence in the city.

**"These provocations are unacceptable and we warn British troops not to repeat them otherwise the people's reaction will be beyond control," he said.**

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## **"They Look You In The Eye And Say, 'Go Home, Americans'" "They Hate Us Here"**

Nov 17, 2006 Aref Mohammed, Reuters

Anger at the U.S.-led occupation has grown among powerful Shi'ite groups, and attacks on British forces and private convoys bringing in supplies from Kuwait have increased.

Jennifer Reuben told the Minneapolis Star Tribune that before his kidnap her brother-in-law had told her he was planning to leave Iraq because of safety: "They hate us here," she quoted Paul Reuben as saying.

"They look you in the eye and say, 'Go home, Americans.'"

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## Assorted Resistance Action



Iraqi soldiers inspect damage following an attack at their base in Mosul Nov. 18, 2006. Seven Iraqi soldiers were injured when a attacker exploded his car as he was passing through the check point. (AP Photo/Mohammed Ibrahim)

17 Nov 2006 Reuters & 18 Nov 2006 Reuters & AP & By Thomas Wagner, ASSOCIATED PRESS & Gulf Daily News

Guerrillas shot dead Lieutenant Colonel Sattar Jabar, chief of police media in the town of Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas shot dead a leading member of Iraq's most powerful Shi'ite political party and his wife as they were driving through western Baghdad yesterday. Ali Al Adhadh had represented the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) [pro-occupation party] in Geneva for many years before returning to Iraq after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in 2003.

Adhadh was a member of SCIRI's Shura council, the central decision-making body of the party which was founded in Iran in the 1980s to oppose Saddam and which is now the biggest party in Prime Minister Nuri Al Maliki's coalition.

A car bomber wounded seven Iraqi soldiers when he attacked an army checkpoint on the northern outskirts of Mosul, an army major said.

In Baquaba. three Iraqi policemen were killed and three wounded, and one insurgent was killed and two suspected ones detained, the coalition said.

A roadside bomb exploded near a police patrol, killing one civilian and wounding two policemen near the town of Latifiya, 40 km (25 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents killed one guard and wounded another as they attacked the residence of Iraq's Science and Technology minister in eastern Baghdad's Zayouna district, police said. It was not clear if the minister was present during the attack.



Army vehicle destroyed in a car bomb attack in Mosul November 18, 2006.  
REUTERS/Khaled al-Mousuly

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

## **No Comment**

17 Nov 2006 Reuters

Guerrillas shot dead Lieutenant Colonel Sattar Jabar, chief police spokesman in the town of Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

**At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation's ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. Frederick Douglas, 1852**

## **The Sacrifice**



From: Dennis Serdel  
To: GI Special  
Sent: November 16, 2006  
Subject: The Sacrifice

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

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### **The Sacrifice**

**Tom is standing in the jungle and he didn't know how he got there  
except to say he trusted her, vividly remembering her  
standing there, waving a piece of paper, saying he is drafted  
almost laughing, certainly smiling  
He could see her sneering that she finally is rid of him  
like poetic justice because he tortured her with his drunkenness  
then went to work and after work got drunk again like he always did  
just to wake up in bed that day at two in the afternoon on Saturday  
as she stood at the foot of his bed telling Tom it's his turn  
this will straighten him out, this will fix him and Tom trusted his  
mother  
and now he is standing in the jungle while blood runs down his arms  
as he patches up this kid's shoulder standing there with a machine gun  
and he trusted her at 19 years old, his mother would never lie to him  
he had seen all the WWII movies on TV and he trusted them  
and his father was there shortly after Pearl Harbor  
never seeing combat in Hawaii making war sound so exotic  
and Tom trusted him and thought to himself  
this will straighten me out but now Tom is standing in the jungle  
with blood running off his elbows and the war is fucking him up  
except Tom thinks that he is so far away from his mother and father  
that he can't hurt them anymore and maybe he will never make it back  
because he is standing in the jungle with blood dripping on his boots.**

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## **“Let Your Sons And Daughters Die, You Worthless Peons: I Will Never Admit I Was Wrong”**

16 November 2006 Written by Chris Floyd (Guardian) [Excerpts]

This is Bush's answer to the American people's obvious, overwhelming desire for ending the war in Iraq.

He is going to spit in America's face.

He is going to tell the American people to go to hell, or perhaps borrowing the language that Dick Cheney used in the United States Senate, to go fuck themselves.

He is going to say: let your sons and daughters die, you worthless peons: I will never admit I was wrong.

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# **Americans Want Go Get Out Of Iraq: Democrat And Republican Politicians Want More Dead And Maimed U.S. Troops**

**The prospect of rapid withdrawal still scares the vast majority of what can loosely be referred to as "the political class." The great mass of voters are not fearful about exiting Iraq. They fear the funerals, and the wheelchairs, and the emotional trauma, and the unmet needs at home and the continued war profiteering that go with a "stay the course" strategy. And they are ready to get out.**

Nov. 14, 2006 By John Nichols, The Capital Times [Excerpts]

Political and media insiders were willing to admit, albeit cautiously, that last week's election results in which Democrats took control of Congress, with explicitly anti-war candidates posting frequently unexpected wins in districts across the country represented a repudiation of the Bush administration's invasion and continued occupation of Iraq.

Unfortunately, while the analysts finally acknowledged the deep and broad opposition to the war, they continued to question whether Americans really want to bring the troops home now.

**They were not willing to speak the truth that Siobhan Kolar, who helped organize an anti-war referendum campaign in Illinois, did when she declared: "The anti-war majority has spoken!"**

**The prospect of rapid withdrawal still scares the vast majority of what can loosely be referred to as "the political class" not because those who understand the seriousness of the troubles in Iraq think that withdrawal is a particularly bad option, but because they fear the American electorate might object to the abandonment of a mission that they have been told for more than three years is essential.**

As they have since before the war began, most pundits and pols are underestimating the awareness and the maturity of the American people with regard to exit strategies.

**If only they would travel this country and actually talk to voters, they would run into people like Regina Miller, the mother of an Army captain serving his second tour in Iraq, who spoke to a reporter while waiting in line to vote in Baltimore.**

**"I really don't think we're making a difference there, so we need a change. We need to pull out. That's their war," Miller said of the Iraqis. "That's a civil war."**

**That is not a naive or misinformed sentiment. That's realism a realism that accepts that Iraq is a mess and that it will probably remain a mess for quite some time. It asks only the most basic question: Why should American troops remain bogged down in the middle of the mess?**

Let's be clear: There will come a point at which the United States exits Iraq. That point will be preceded by chaos and followed by chaos.

**Keeping U.S. troops on the ground there only guarantees one thing: more funeral services for young U.S. soldiers in inner cities and small towns across America.**

**The great mass of voters are not fearful about exiting Iraq.**

**They fear the funerals, and the wheelchairs, and the emotional trauma, and the unmet needs at home and the continued war profiteering that go with a "stay the course" strategy.**

**And they are ready to get out.**

**National exit polling last Tuesday found a 55 percent to 37 percent landslide majority of Americans in favor of withdrawal.**

**What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send to [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org). Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential. Same to unsubscribe.**

## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

**“Hey, Let’s Try Starving Them To Death!”**

# Collaborators Close Food Warehouses In Areas Resisting Occupation

November 17, 2006 Khayoun Saleh, Azzaman

The Ministry of Trade has decided to cancel several major food warehouses in the country, citing security as a major reason.

The ministry blames mounting attacks on food convoys, insecurity on highways and administrative red tape for the problems in handing out food rations on time. The ministry's fleet of nearly 3,000 trucks had all but disappeared.

**The warehouse merger is taking place mainly in the most restive regions in the country such the Anbar Province, west of Baghdad, and the Sadr City in suburban Baghdad.**

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## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

### Don't Ask, Don't Tell: #1: Ready For Voguing



Bush with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Hu Jintao, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit November 19, 2006. REUTERS/Jim Young

## #2: An Intimate Moment



Bush and Putine undressing together at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit November 19, 2006. REUTERS/Jim Young (VIETNAM)

### **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](http://www.ivaw.net))

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

### **GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out**

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[http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi\\_special/](http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/);

<http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>; <http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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