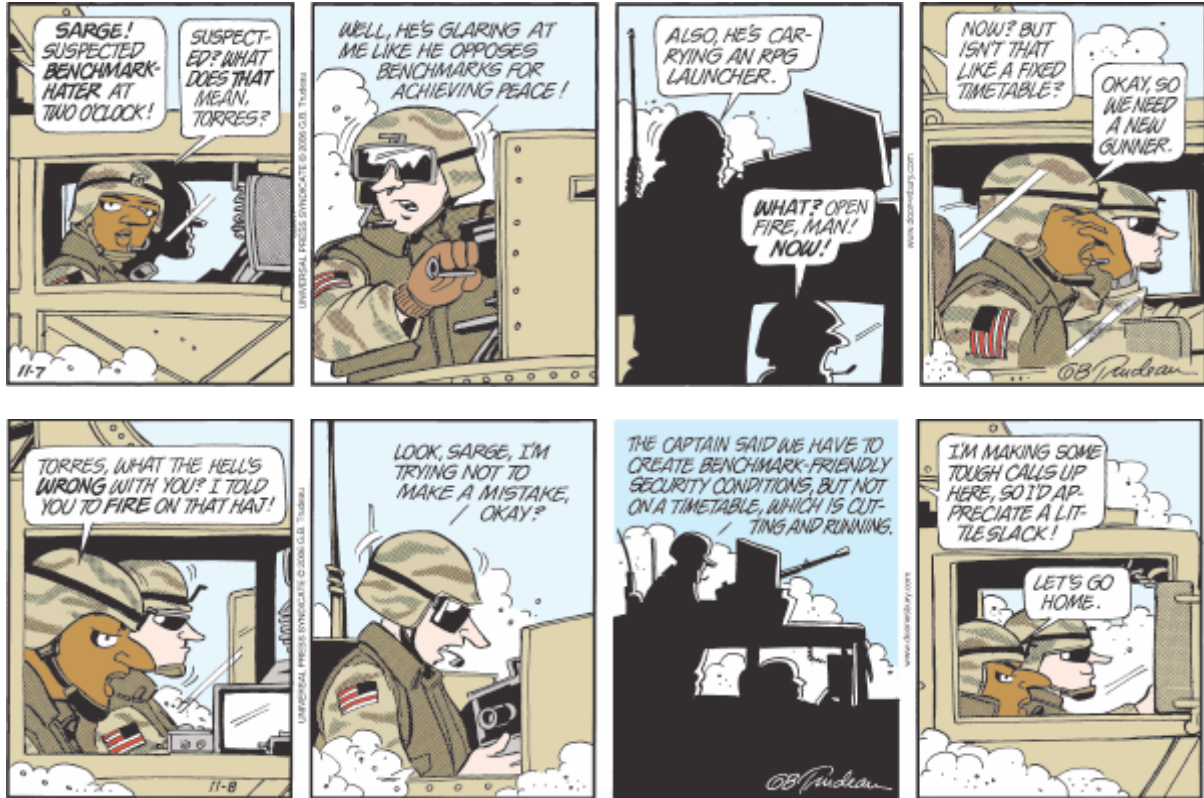


GI SPECIAL 4K9:



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

**“Osborne’s Soldiers
Lost Nine Comrades
“Just As The Battalion Was
Beginning To Make Preparations
For Coming Home Later This
Month”**

Memorial services honoring fallen soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment in Iraq used to require planning meetings of as long as 45 minutes. But at this point, they take barely five.



Chaplain John Hill, second from left, planning the memorial service for a member of the 1st Battalion who was killed while serving in Baghdad. (Shawn Baldwin for the New York Times)

November 9, 2006 By Michael Luo and Michael Wilson, The New York Times [Excerpts]

Memorial services honoring fallen soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment in Iraq used to require planning meetings of as long as 45 minutes.

But at this point, they take barely five.

"We're here again," said Chaplain John Hill.

A roadside bomb had killed another soldier from the battalion the day before.

He launched into the unit's "memorial ceremony execution matrix," a 40-item checklist of tasks that includes everything from collecting personal effects to finding a singer.

"Unfortunately, we've gotten, I won't say, good at this," said Lieutenant Colonel Craig Osborne, the battalion's commander, wrapping up the meeting almost as soon as it began. "It's become habitual."

In October, 105 American troops died in Iraq, the most since January 2005.

Osborne's soldiers lost nine comrades, just as the battalion was beginning to make preparations for coming home later this month.

"When something like this happens, all you do is think about it," said Sergeant First Class Robert Warman, who watched a Humvee carrying four soldiers get blown to bits in front of him from a massive bomb hidden in the road last month.

"You think about it when you go to the mess hall, when you go to take a shower, when you lay down to sleep. You think and you think and you think, and you cry."

The 800-strong battalion, part of the first brigade of the 4th Infantry Division based in Fort Hood, Texas, has been patrolling a vast swath of land west of Baghdad riven by insurgents.

The toll on the unit in October was the most of any battalion or squadron, according to a New York Times database of war casualties compiled from information provided by the Department of Defense.

Back home, among the soldiers' wives, fear spread in ever-widening circles.

News sped from a woman's living room in Killeen, outside of Fort Hood, to her friend across town, and across the country.

After hearing that a member of her husband's unit was killed, Debbie Borawski braced herself. She was so certain that an army officer was going to arrive at her home that she called a friend to come and wait with her. "I pretty much almost blacked out," she said.

Hour by hour from their home in Fort Hood, she filters the news of every roadside bomb, every sniper attack. "Until you hear that he's safe, it almost kills you," she said. "It eats you away."

The soldiers, who deployed last November, have less than a month left to go in Iraq.

In the battalion's first tour in Iraq, when it aided in the eventual capture of Saddam Hussein in Tikrit, it lost just a handful of soldiers. Until September, only four soldiers of the 800 in the battalion had been killed in combat during this tour.

On Oct. 1, a platoon of soldiers from A Company set out to establish an observation post near a road that had been plagued by concealed bombs.

Specialist Heriberto Hernandez, 20, was among a group of soldiers in a Humvee that rolled up toward a bridge near where they would set up. Specialist Hernandez and another soldier got out, while Corporal Chase Haag, 22, a soldier from Portland, Oregon, who was in the gunner's hatch, continued down the road with two others. The explosion that followed detonated right below Haag. Hernandez said he could tell right away after he rushed up that his friend was gone.

Still, he gave him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation until the medevac helicopter arrived. Specialist Zachary Mayhew, who was one of Haag's closest confidants in the platoon, splinted his mangled leg. "We got him out of there in 25 minutes," Hernandez said.

They learned later that their friend had died. That shook the younger soldiers in the platoon, who had protected themselves with an inflated sense of invincibility.

The soldier's death forced couples like Sergeant Joseph Wilson and his wife, Sara, to strip away denial from their conversations.

"He doesn't really like to talk about it," said Sara Wilson, 26, living in Arizona until her husband's return. "I've kind of forced him to talk about things, especially Haag's death. He gets upset and starts crying."

A few days later, Sergeant Brandon Asbury, 21, part of the battalion's forward support company, was shot and killed by a sniper.

Less than two weeks afterward, a roadside bomb killed 2nd Lieutenant Johnny Craver, 37, from the battalion's B Company.

On Oct. 18, four soldiers - Corporal Russell Culbertson 3rd, Specialist Joseph Dumas Jr., 2nd Lieutenant Christopher Loudon and Corporal David Unger - along with their Iraqi interpreter, were killed by a single giant bomb blast.

Sergeant Scott Borawski, 36, of C Company, was supposed to have been on that Humvee that day. But because he was busy with other duties, he was replaced by Unger, 21, of Headquarters Company, whom Borawski and his wife had befriended back home at Fort Hood. Debbie Borawski first thought he was among the dead, following a call from Unger's grieving wife.

"I knew Scott was with them," Debbie Borawski, 40, said later. "I didn't know he wasn't with his crew." She struggled to focus on the new widow, now forced to raise her young son alone, on the other end of the line. "I was so much more worried about my husband," she said. "I feel selfish saying this. But I ended up kind of shutting down."

After the blast, it took Borawski two days to gather himself enough to call his wife to tell her what had happened. He had hoped to avoid breaking down for his wife's sake, but halfway through he did.

"I didn't know if I should feel grateful for not being there, or remorseful," he said.

The bomb attack, coming so soon after Haag's death, shook Mayhew anew. Loudon, 23, was a high school friend of his. The pair came from the same small town in Pennsylvania of 2,100 people. They played on the same soccer team. Their mothers were friends. Somehow they had wound up in the same battalion in Iraq.

Back in Pennsylvania, Mayhew's mother, Beverly Fustine, attended the lieutenant's funeral.

"She said she was "pretty much O.K." before October but now needed medication to sleep at night.

"I'm scared to death," she said. "Sometimes I even fear answering the door. But it can't compare to the fear he must feel every day."

On Oct. 22, Osborne and his men were questioning a storeowner about reports of a Sunni checkpoint targeting Shiites, a shot rang out. Specialist Nathan Aguirre, 21, a

medic who had been making plans to enroll at Texas A&M University and sign up for ROTC after Iraq, lay motionless on the street. He was standing less than 6 meters, or 20 feet, from the battalion commander.

Sergeant. Kenneth England and Osborne dragged his body behind a parked car and tried to revive him. England shoved a tube down his nose to try to create an airway but after five minutes of work, he said Aguirre was dead.

Less than a half hour later, as they were still looking for the sniper, they heard the crack of another rifle shot. Word came over the radio that the gunner in one of the Humvees down the street, Specialist Matt Creed, 23, had been hit.

England again dashed out to try to save Creed, one of many soldiers in the battalion who was supposed to have left the army but is in Iraq because of the Department of Defense's stop-loss order.

He could not save him either.

That night, England called his wife, Vanessa, a pharmacy student in Oklahoma as he always does.

"Hey baby," he said and listened to her tell him about her day.

When it was his turn, he could only say that it had been bad. It was not until several days later that he shared a few details.

"I told her we lost two guys, and I was there," he said. "She really doesn't need to know there was a sniper 50 meters away from me."

Several wives said they took for granted the misinformation coming from their own husbands, well-intentioned little lies to ease fears. The women gather bits of news from each other, both within the longstanding Family Readiness Groups, or FRGs, or through the less formal channels of Myspace accounts and speed dials.

Hernandez made his fiancée, Kathleen Soliz, promise not to watch the news. In October, she broke the promise.

"I try not to, but it's just that forbidden fruit," said Soliz, 20, of Austin. "I can't help it. I want to see if things are getting progressively worse or better, what regions are in a bind, and how the forces are dealing with that. I don't even know what area exactly he's in, so I'm probably doing myself an injustice more than anything."

For the soldiers struggling to cope back in Iraq, it is the quiet moments in between missions and hanging out with buddies that are the most difficult.

On Nov. 1, they lost another soldier to yet another makeshift bomb.

Private First Class Shane Barrows, who was there when the four soldiers in the Humvee were killed last month, strums his guitar and sings to himself in his room. He and others spent hours afterward cleaning up the area, collecting remnants of their friends' bodies and placing them gently in body bags.

On a recent morning, he closed his eyes and sang: "When you are reading the paper, will you remember them? Will you see their faces like I did? I will see them forever in my head."

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Patrol Ambushed Near Dugmat; One U.S. Soldier Killed, 3 Wounded

09 Nov 2006 AP

The military said heavily armed insurgents ambushed a joint Iraqi-U.S. patrol on Tuesday near the northern town of Dugmat.

U.S. forces responded with ground troops and airstrikes, killing eight fighters, it said. One U.S. soldier was killed and three wounded in the action, it said, casualties already reported and included in the monthly tally.

Former Oregonian Killed In Iraq Blast

Nov. 9, 2006 POLSON, Mont. (AP)

Sgt. Lucas T. White, who grew up in Oregon and Washington, was killed in action in Iraq, his mother said Wednesday.

White lived in Pendleton, Ore., until he was 12 or 13, said his mother, Julie Brooks. The family then moved to White Swan, Wash., where White finished high school in 1998.

A member of the Montana National Guard visited Brooks and White's stepfather, Lyle Brooks, on Monday to inform them of their son's death.

White, 28, was leading a Stryker patrol in Baghdad when his unit was ambushed by small arms fire and an improvised explosive device, Brooks said.

White, a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Oregon, enlisted in the Army in 2001 and served in Afghanistan. He re-enlisted and had been in Iraq for five months. "He really enjoyed what he was doing," Brooks said. "We're so proud of him."

She said a service was held in Iraq. White's body was to be returned to White Swan on Thursday for a traditional American Indian ceremony.

At White's request, the family has arranged for his interment at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

Two Warrant Officers Down



Chief Warrant Officer Miles P. Henderson, 24, of Amarillo, Texas died Nov. 6 in Balad, Iraq, of injuries suffered when the Apache helicopter he was in crashed. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)



Chief Warrant Officer John R. Priestner, of Pennsylvania, 42, died when his AH-64D Apache helicopter crashed in Iraq Nov. 8, 2006. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

**THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR
HEALTH;
TIME TO COME HOME, NOW**



U.S. soldiers at a checkpoint in Baghdad October 24, 2006. REUTERS/Thaier al-Sudani

Marine Killed In Iraq Laid To Rest



October 31, 2006 WSMV-TV

NASHVILLE, Tenn.: A steady drizzle could not stop those who loved Lance Cpl. Richard Buerstetta from attending his funeral on Tuesday. Buerstetta, 20, and Tyler Overstreet, 22, were killed last week when a roadside bomb exploded near their Humvee in Iraq. One-by-one mourners made their way into St. Matthew Catholic Church on Tuesday. A collage in memory of Buerstetta rested in the entrance of the church.

"Lance Cpl. Richard Buerstetta was one of the finest men we've ever known," said Martin Hilber, who was to become Buerstetta's father-in-law. "Richard was an integral part of our family. The pain is immeasurable."

Buerstetta was laid to rest at the Middle Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery. "You can tell he's missed amongst his family, friends and comrades. It's just sad," said Buerstetta's former teacher Jerry Clark.

Overstreet To Be Laid To Rest On Thursday

Overstreet's visitation is Tuesday and Wednesday at the Alexander Funeral Home in Gallatin, Tenn. His funeral will be Thursday at the Hendersonville First Baptist Church. Both men were members of the third battalion of the 24th Marine Regiment.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Soldier Is Unit's First To Be Killed In Action Since Vietnam War

November 4, 2006 By Seth Robson, Stars and Stripes

HOHENFELS, Germany: A 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Division soldier killed in action Monday in Afghanistan was the first combat death suffered by the unit during a year in which groups of its soldiers have been continually downrange in Iraq and Afghanistan, 1-4 commander Lt. Col. Timothy Delass said.

Delass, who spoke Friday at a ceremony in honor of the dead soldier, Cpl. Isaiah Calloway, 23, of Jacksonville, Fla., in the Hohenfels theater, said he was also the first 1-4 soldier to die in battle since the Vietnam War.

Calloway deployed to Afghanistan in June with 1-4's Company C, which is working alongside Romanian troops fighting Taliban and al-Qaida insurgents in Zabul province, Delass said.

The soldier died when his combat patrol was ambushed by insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns, Delass said.

“As the platoon maneuvered, he returned fire and during the engagement he was struck by enemy fire. Medics tried to revive him ... but he passed away before the medevac could get there,” he said.

Calloway has been recommended for a Bronze Star Medal with a “V” device for his actions, he said.

“The battalion has been deployed for almost more than a year with four separate deployments and this was the first soldier KIA (killed in action) since Vietnam,” Delass said.

Other 1-4 troops who spoke at the ceremony remembered Calloway as a quiet soldier and a strong family man. He is survived by his wife, Alecia Denee; daughters, Alexius Michelle, 4; Aleiah Savannah, 3; and son Isaiah Jr., 2.

Staff Sgt. Eric Boyce, who was Calloway’s squad leader before he went to Afghanistan, said the young father seldom came on social trips with the unit because he preferred to spend time with his family.

He was a keen student of the military and hoped to become a noncommissioned officer, said Boyce, 26, of Colorado Springs, Colo.

“At lunch when we were watching television he’d always be outside studying (Army) manuals,” he said.

Physical training was another of Calloway’s strengths, Boyce added.

“He was over 300 (a perfect score) on the Army fitness test every time and he ran two miles in just over 12 minutes,” he said.

The 1-4 chaplain, Maj. Peter Johnson, said Calloway had plans to go to Fort Stewart, Ga., after his tour in Afghanistan and live with his family in nearby Jacksonville, Fla.

“He was going to buy houses, fix them up and sell them,” Johnson said.

Delass said Company C will return from Afghanistan early next year. Another of 1-4’s sub-units is training to deploy when the company gets home, he said.

**“Eighty Percent Of The People Out
In The Districts Support The
Taliban”**

“Every House Has A Fighter In It Supporting The Taliban”

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in. He writes: The Taliban are gaining support in spite of themselves. National liberation movements led by reactionary forces have a way of doing that.]

Nov 6 By JASON STRAZIUSO, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

Many in Kandahar say their confidence in the government is falling, and some say that is helping fuel support for the Taliban. Many in southern Afghanistan had high hopes after the election of their fellow Pashtun tribesman Karzai in 2004, but two years later remain mired in poverty and lamenting a lack of security and development in the south.

Heavy-handed NATO tactics, including recent airstrikes in Panjwayi that killed civilians — and hundreds of suspected militants — have only deepened suspicion of foreign forces attempting to crush a resurgent Taliban resistance five years after its hardline regime was ousted for hosting Osama bin Laden.

Mohammad Eisah Khan, a former judge and a tribal elder in Kandahar with a long, white beard, rattled off the reasons support for the government is slipping.

"There is no security, the people are not safe," he said. The government "is plagued by corruption. There is no education. There are very few schools. There are no good doctors in Kandahar province." The Afghan government is facing a "crisis of legitimacy" because many appointed administrators "are quite simply thugs," said Joanna Nathan, the Afghanistan analyst for the International Crisis Group think tank.

"Taliban sympathizers are increasing day by day," said Abdul Wadood, a jobless 55-year-old who last year moved his family out of the Panjwayi district, an hour's drive from Kandahar.

"Eighty percent of the people out in the districts support the Taliban. Every house has a fighter in it supporting the Taliban. If the government comes, they just put down their weapons," he said.

Kandahar's streets have more horses and buggies than the shiny SUVs so common in Kabul that signal the presence of foreign aid workers.

A local member of parliament, Khalid Pashtun, said Taliban fighters can also now walk the streets here, something they could not do two years ago.

It's a sign, he says, of the government's weakness.

He estimates that only 30 percent of the people in the Kandahar area support the government.

Assorted Resistance Action

07 November 2006 By VOA News & Nov 8, 2006 Deutsche Presse-Agentur & Nov 9, 2006 (RTTNews)

Taleban militants attacked a police checkpoint in the eastern province of Khost late Monday. Two militants and a police officer were killed.

A bomber blew himself up in front of a district police chief in Khost province, injuring the police chief and two policemen.

Two policemen were killed and five wounded in a Taliban ambush on a police convoy on the main Kandahar-Kabul highway in Shahjoy district of southern Zabul province said provincial police chief Loor Mohammed Paktil.

The provincial police of Khost said on Thursday in a battle with the police in the district one police man was reported to be killed.

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Captain Mark Paine at Arlington Cemetery November 3, 2006. Paine, from Rancho Cucamonga, California, was killed in Iraq on October 15, 2006. REUTERS/Kevin Lamarque

War Widows Fucked Over By DoD “The Paperwork Sat On Someone’s Desk For Months” “‘I Was Treated Like A Nuisance At Times,’ She Said”

11.3.06 WTOV [Excerpts]

It's the military's most solemn duty: caring for the families of soldiers killed in battle. But, as WTOV9 discovered, too many war widows feel like they've been wronged by the system that is supposed to protect them.

From the burial process to collecting money from the military and other agencies, Iraq war widow Holly Wren faced a challenge at every turn.

"There was no healing time. I wasn't able to grieve at all," she said. "It's hard to shuffle from office to office after you deal with something like this."

Wren's ordeal started at the sacred place where her beloved husband, Lt. Colonel Thomas Wren, was buried. She says the date on his headstone at Arlington National Cemetery is wrong, and she does not believe he was buried with all of the medals he earned.

Then she had to go to battle for her benefits. Her housing allowance was half of what she was owed. She waited longer than she was supposed to for her husband's retirement money and death benefit. She also had to hire a lawyer and go to court so their infant son, Tyler, could be a beneficiary.

She said, "The paperwork sat on someone's desk for months, the benefits were not explained properly."

Wren's assigned casualty officer tried to help untangle the bureaucracy, but he didn't know all of the benefits she should receive and the two of them felt like they were cobbling information together.

Other people she encountered in the system were downright rude.

"I was treated like a nuisance at times," she said, "We're just a job to them, and it's so much more than that."

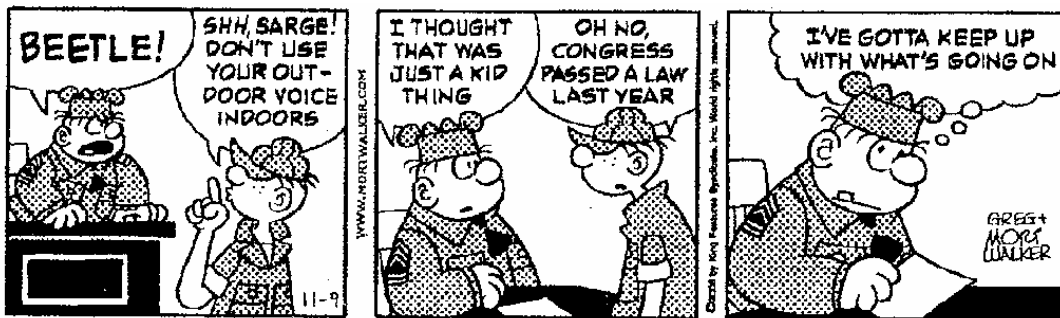
Members of Congress have been hearing similar complaints from widows like Holly Wren for years. California Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher is on the committee that recently ordered the Government Accountability Office to investigate. It found that while most survivors do get the benefits owed to them, there are system-wide problems that lead to confusion and frustration.

Tauscher said the country owes its troops and their families much more.

"That is a heinous bureaucratic tangle," she said. "I believe each of these families should have a benefits advocate cutting through the red tape and working this for them. That is the least we can do."

Holly Wren has now joined other widows lobbying for a centralized, one stop, casualty office to help survivors. She's hoping that by sharing her story, she'll inspire change, and other widows won't have to go through the same difficulty.

She said, "I just want them to make the process better, because unfortunately there are more of us to come."



IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Fallujah Returns To Resistance Control:

“We Just Don’t Have The Manpower To Maintain Surveillance On The Entire City,’ Teeples Said”

Many residents sympathize with the insurgents. At a clinic last week, word passed down a line of women who were waiting to see the doctor that a sniper had killed a U.S. soldier. "I wish I'd shot him," one woman said, to the approval of some others.

November 08, 2006 Jay Price and Mohammed Al Dulaimy, McClatchy News Service

FALLUJAH, IRAQ: When insurgents hid a bomb in front of his house a few days ago, intending to use it against U.S. or Iraqi troops, Majeed al-Rawi had only one option: Move out.

"If I report it to the Americans, I will be killed by the men who put it there, and if I don't, my family will be killed either by the explosion or the Americans," the car dealer said. "This is not a way to live; this is a way to hate life."

In recent months, insurgents have filtered back into the city, despite tight controls that limit access to only six checkpoints. Residents must submit to an extraordinary identification system that includes fingerprinting, retina scans and bar-coded identification cards.

An insurgent intimidation campaign has killed two City Council members and at least 30 police officers.

The campaign has been so effective that police patrols have all but stopped, as officers fear to walk the streets.

The number of shootings, bombings and bombs found and defused has doubled since last winter, to about four or five a day, U.S. officers say. There have been about half a dozen car bombings in recent weeks.

"Bush didn't give us democracy, he gave us more new ways to be killed," Al-Rawi said.

Because insurgents target them at home, many officers are living in the police stations. Others simply quit.

"What was I going to wait for that would keep me on the force?" said Muhammad Humadi, a captain who quit in August after one of his commanders was beheaded. "Nothing was going to get any better. I have children, and if I were to sacrifice myself it wouldn't change anything."

Until this August, Fallujah was relatively peaceful, at least by Iraqi standards. But then U.S. forces stepped up a campaign against insurgents in nearby Ramadi and added troops in Baghdad in an effort to quell growing violence there. Some military officers here think that pushed insurgents to Fallujah.

By mid-August, insurgent threats against and assassinations of police officers got so bad that half the police force stayed home for several days. Many quit or moved into their stations.

U.S. and Iraqi troops have nowhere near the manpower needed to take up the slack, said Lt. Col. James Teeple, the senior adviser to the Iraqi Army unit responsible for much of the city.

"We just don't have the manpower to maintain surveillance on the entire city," Teeple said.

Many residents sympathize with the insurgents. At a clinic last week, word passed down a line of women who were waiting to see the doctor that a sniper had killed a U.S. soldier.

"I wish I'd shot him," one woman said, to the approval of some others.

Assorted Resistance Action

09 Nov 2006 Reuters & AP

Iraqi security forces continue to be targeted by snipers, car bombs, and other attacks, with 39 policemen killed and 170 wounded from Nov. 3 to Nov. 9, Brig. Abdel-Karim Khalaf told reporters.

Guerrillas killed a police lieutenant colonel and his driver in Sadoun street in central Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police rapid reaction force wounded four of them on Wednesday in Kut, 170 km (105 miles) southeast of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeted a police patrol and killed a policeman and wounded three others on Wednesday in Baiji, 180 km (112 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas killed a police officer on Wednesday in Tikrit, 175 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad, police said

A car bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol killed a man and wounded four others, both soldiers and civilians, near the college of Fine Arts in north central Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.

A car bomb struck an Iraqi military convoy in northwestern Baghdad, killing two Iraqi soldiers.

A car bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol killed five soldiers in Palestine street in northeastern Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.

A car bomb blew up wounding two policemen while they were trying to dismantle it in the eastern Zayouna district of the capital, police said.

A roadside bomb struck an Iraqi police patrol near a market in Tal Afar, 260 miles northwest of Baghdad, killing one policeman and wounding another.

A rocket landed in a residential district and killed two policemen in the town of Tal Afar, 420 km (260 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

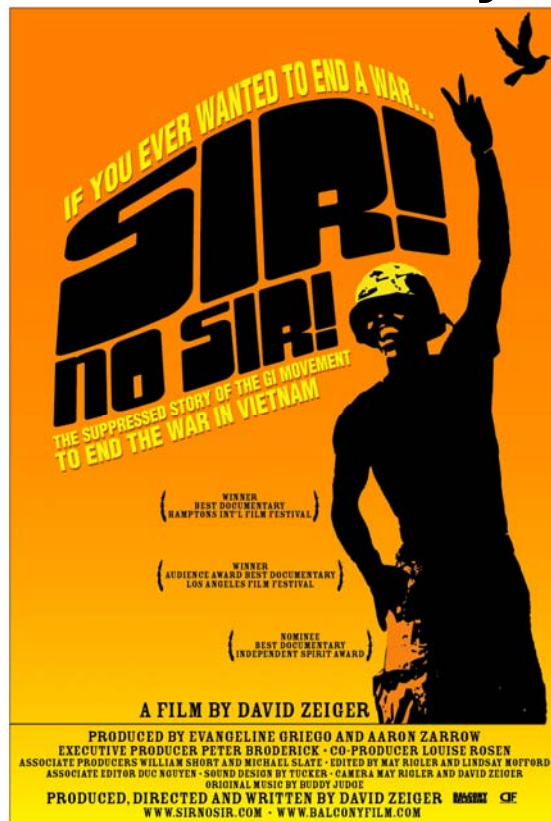
A police officer was shot dead in Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, a medical source said.

Gunmen killed an Iraqi army captain and his wife in the northern city of Mosul.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“The GI Antiwar Movement Started Small And Within A Few Years Had Exploded Into A Force That Altered History”



February 6, 2006 Tom, Current Era Blog

In the 1960's an anti-war movement emerged that altered the course of history.

This movement didn't take place on college campuses, but in barracks and on aircraft carriers.

It flourished in army stockades, navy brigs and in the dingy towns that surround military bases. It penetrated elite military colleges like West Point.

And it spread throughout the battlefields of Vietnam. It was a movement no one expected, least of all those in it.

Hundreds went to prison and thousands into exile.

And by 1971 it had, in the words of one colonel, infested the entire armed services. Yet today few people know about the GI movement against the war in Vietnam.

Like the Vietnam War itself, the GI Antiwar Movement started small and within a few years had exploded into a force that altered history.

And like the times from which it grew, the movement involved organized actions and spontaneous resistance, political groups and cultural upheaval.

The movement was never characterized by one organization or leader. Rather, between 1966 and 1975, groups of soldiers—some small and some numbering in the thousands—emerged to challenge the war and racism in the military.

Group action and individual defiance, from the 500,000 GIs who deserted over the course of the war to the untold numbers who wore peace signs, defied military discipline and avoided combat, created a "Fuck the Army" counter-culture that threatened the entire military culture of the time and changed the course of the war.

**Sir! No Sir!
At A Theatre Near You!
To find it: <http://www.sirnosir.com/>**

**The Sir! No Sir! DVD is on sale now, exclusively at
www.sirnosir.com.**

Also available will be a Soundtrack CD (which includes the entire song from the FTA Show, "Soldier We Love You"), theatrical posters, tee shirts, and the DVD of "A Night of Ferocious Joy," a film about the first hip-hop antiwar concert against the "War on Terror."

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

Last Words Before I Die



[Unknown combat photographer Vietnam]

From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: November 07, 2006
Subject: Last Words Before I Die

Last Words Before I Die

**When our government kills, it commits genocide by the inch.
Atrocities are chump change.
The U.S. Government had a destroyer parked in the middle of Vietnam,
and it never stopped firing until the helicopters left Saigon.
That's a lot of madness to cover up.**

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
November 7, 2006**

The truth was obscure, too profound and too pure.

To live it, you have to explode.
Bob Dylan

Photo and comments 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)

Beware Of Politicians Bearing Gifts

November 9, 2006 By Elaine Brower, OpEdNews.com. Elaine Brower is an anti-war Mother of a Marine Corps. Sgt.. She has appeared in the NY Daily News, NY Times, Good Morning America, and was interviewed by Pacifica Radio in Los Angeles. She is an outspoken anti-war, anti-Bush Military Mom; and a spokesperson for the "World Can't Wait, Drive Out the Bush Regime."

My son returned from Iraq last week, shaken and saddened by what he saw.

I thank God he returned home to our family in one physical piece. However, looming over our heads is the "back door draft," a policy that has been forced upon our military and their families without their consent.

Our troops return home to a hero's welcome, only to receive redeployment papers sometime in the near future disrupting their settled lives.

Oh, you say, Rumsfeld resigned and the Dems are in charge of Congress now.

But I say, BEWARE.

Nancy Pelosi is lurching with a criminal on Friday, no doubt about it.

I hope she keeps that in mind.

I do not put my faith in the newly elected democrats because they are the lesser of two evils. The DCC platform did not consider the immediate withdrawal of our troops from Iraq; did not address the "back door draft;" and did not address investigation and impeachment hearings, to name a few items.

As a matter of fact, the Dems took all of those issues "off the table."

Nancy Pelosi is known for keeping to her word, and her words were "impeachment would not be considered." We, the people, must make her eat those words.

However, watching Bush on the news today did make me smile, a lot.

I usually cannot stand the sight of him with his grimacing face, patronizing attitude and leaning stance. Today was the exception. He was nervous, jittery, but he still lied through his teeth.

He's advocating "working together" with the newly elected "democratic leaders." Liar, liar. He has over 800 signing statements ignoring every single law passed by HIS Congress. Let's imagine what the next two years will look like.

The Dems are spineless wimps who are also on the take from lobbyists and large corporate sponsors. We, the watchdogs of our democracy cannot fall asleep, again. We cannot get comfortable and go back to watching episodes of "Lost."

I hate to tell all of you activists out there, our work has just begun. We can bask in the glory of winning this day, but tomorrow it's back hitting the pavement.

This is the time when we must draw out a massive resistance to this Government, and demand not only impeachment proceedings be put "on the table," but an investigation into the war crimes committed by Bush & Company, as begun by Congressman John Conyers, become a reality.

It is our duty to make sure that this entire crew be brought to justice.

If Saddam can be convicted and sentenced to hanging, which I am sure will be aired on the nightly news, then we MUST and CAN demand that Rumsfeld, Cheney, Perle, Bush, Wolfowitz, and let us not forget Condi, be similarly tried, convicted and hung on the nightly news.

That I will be happy to view.

I refuse to have my son be redeployed to the hell hole we call the Iraq War or "War on Terrorism."

Ratcheting up our efforts to get this crew held accountable for the entire mess created over the last 5 years is IMPERATIVE.

Now that we have proof positive that the American people have spoken out against this criminal Regime and are wide awake, join me in the streets to demand justice and an end to this occupation NOW, before those redeployment papers arrive in my mailbox.

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:. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential. Same to unsubscribe.

“The Liberal Advocates Of Impeachment Don’t Dwell On Democrats’ Complicity With Bush’s Impeachable Offenses”

October 13, 2006 By Lance Selfa, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

THE REPUBLICAN disarray amid the scandal surrounding disgraced Rep. Mark Foley may prove the “tipping point” that pushes Congress the Democrats’ way in November.

But until the Foley scandal broke, a Democratic victory wasn’t clear.

Liberals--the most committed Democratic partisans--faced the prospect of mobilizing a Democratic “base” that hates Bush and the Republicans, but also feels dismay, and at times disgust, with Democratic “leaders” in Congress.

When the Democratic Party wants to campaign on being better able to fight the “war on terror” than the Republicans, what can a liberal antiwar activist do to motivate antiwar voters to the polls?

How about demanding the impeachment of Bush, Cheney and the rest of the Bush gang?

To be sure, the list of crimes for which Bush and Co. are responsible is enough to impeach a dozen presidents, not to mention landing them in the dock at the Hague, facing war crimes charges.

But when advocates demand impeachment today, it is because, in the words of David Swanson of Progressive Democrats of America, “never before has the system of government by the U.S. Constitution been as seriously threatened” as it is by the Bush regime.

Really?

Can Swanson seriously consider the Bush administration a bigger threat to the republic than, say, the Confederacy, which plunged the country into civil war?

Either the answer is yes, in which case Swanson has lost all historical perspective, or the answer is no, in which case the rhetoric about “saving the Constitution” and the rest is simply hyperbole to justify handing Congress over to that band of second-raters, the Democrats.

While there’s no doubt that impeachment is a constitutional remedy for abuses of executive authority like lying the country into a war, some advocates want to hold Bush accountable for a list of other right-wing policies.

For example, Dennis Loo and Peter Phillips, authors of *Impeach the President*, advocate Bush's impeachment because of his denial of global warming and "placing oil-industry profits over the long-term survival of the human race and the viability of the planet."

If Bush is to be impeached for this, so should all the members of the U.S. Senate-- including every Democrat, who, in 1999, voted unanimously to reject the Kyoto global warming accords.

And while we're impeaching Bush for supporting torture, secret prisons and denial of the right of habeas corpus even to naturalized U.S. citizens, perhaps we might want to add the names of Democratic senatorial candidate Rep. Harold Ford (D-Tenn.), considered a "rising star" in the party, or Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.) to the charge sheet.

They, along with 42 of their Democratic colleagues in the House and Senate, voted to legalize these atrocities as the U.S. Congress wrapped up its business last month.

Of course, the liberal advocates of impeachment don't dwell on Democrats' complicity with Bush's impeachable offenses.

Their strategy for impeachment depends on the election of a Democratic Congress that will have subpoena power to launch investigations of the Bush administration.

This may be the biggest leap of faith that the pro-impeachment liberals regularly take.

They hope that once Democrats run Congress, the same group of bumbler who would not mount a filibuster against the torture bill, for fear of facing Republican attack ads accusing them of being "soft on terrorism," will now become champions of the people.

They forget that if the Democrats win, they will set their sights on winning the White House in 2008. And their leaders will look on the impeachment of Bush as a "divisive" sideshow that will fire up Republicans and impede their ability to rake in corporate contributions.

Already, mainstream Democrats like prospective House Speaker Nancy Pelosi are running away from impeachment because they don't want to appear to embrace something that so-called "swing voters" might consider too radical.

One can already hear the Beltway pundits warning Democrats not to drag the country through the "trauma of impeachment" and to "look to the future, not to the past."

You can be sure that the Democrats will pay more attention to these warnings than the urgings of *Nation* columnists or the afterdowninstreet.org Web site.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Health Minister Says 150,000 Civilians Killed During Occupation; “The Army Of America Didn’t Do Its Job” “They Should Hand Us The Power”

11.9.06 BAGHDAD (AP)

A stunning new death count emerged Thursday, as Iraq’s health minister estimated at least 150,000 civilians have been killed in the war, about three times previously accepted estimates.

No official count has ever been available, and Health Minister Ali al-Shemari did not detail how he arrived at the new estimate of 150,000, which he provided to reporters during a visit to the Austrian capital.

Al-Shemari, while not explaining the death toll estimate, was more precise about the government’s increasingly public and insistent demands for a speedier U.S. transfer of authority to Iraqi forces and the withdrawal of American troops to their bases and from Iraq’s cities and towns.

“The army of America didn’t do its job. ... They tie the hands of my government,” said al-Shemari, a Shiite.

“They should hand us the power. We are a sovereign country,” he said, adding that the first step would be for American forces to leave population centres.

<p>OCCUPATION ISN’T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!</p>
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“The Efforts By American Politicians To Hide Their Failure Are No Longer Working”

09 Nov 2006 AP

"Rumsfeld's resignation shows the scale of the mess the U.S. has made in Iraq," 44-year-old Oil Ministry worker Ibrahim Ali said.

"The efforts by American politicians to hide their failure are no longer working."

Sunni politician Hamid al-Mutlaq said Rumsfeld's departure was evidence of the downfall of those who engineered the invasion and what he called their "evil project" in Iraq.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to Z, who sent this in.]

“Julius Caesar Was An Ambitious, Vainglorious, Would-Be Tyrant.”

George W Bush Is A Modest And Self-Deprecating One”

November 5, 2006 Terry Jones, The Observer

In 59BC, Julius Caesar declared he was so shocked by the incursions of the dangerous Helvetii tribe into Gaul, and the suffering of the Gaulish peoples, that he had himself appointed 'protector of the Gauls'.

By the time he'd finished protecting them, a million Gauls were dead, another million enslaved and Julius Caesar owned most of Gaul.

Now I'm not suggesting there is any similarity between George W Bush's protection of the Iraqi people and Caesar's protection of the Gauls.

For a start, Julius Caesar, as we all know, was bald, whereas George W Bush has a fine head of hair.

In any case, George W Bush is not personally making huge amounts of money out of it. The money-making is all left in the capable hands of companies like CACI International, Blackwater Security and Haliburton.

It's true that Vice-President Dick Cheney's stock options in his old company, Haliburton, went up from \$241,498 in 2004 to \$8m in 2005 - that's an increase of 3,281 per cent.

But then Dick Cheney is bald.

The point I'm trying to make is that there is absolutely no comparison to be made between Julius Caesar's invasion of Gaul in 58-50BC and George Bush's invasion of Iraq.

I mean, Julius Caesar had the nerve to pretend that the Roman state was being threatened by what was going on in Gaul. He claimed he had to carry out a pre-emptive strike against the Helvetii in the interests of homeland security. In reality, his motives were political. He desperately needed a military victory to boost his standing in Rome and give him the necessary popular base to seize power.

George W Bush, on the other hand, was already in power when he invaded Iraq and, in any case, he didn't need to boost his popularity, because the popular vote had nothing to do with his getting into power in the first place.

Julius Caesar was also a very adroit propagandist who made damn sure that his version of events prevailed. He even wrote eight books about his wars in Gaul to make sure it did. George W Bush doesn't need to go to such lengths. He has Fox News.

When Julius Caesar claimed his glorious victory over the Helvetii, he made it sound as if he had destroyed a vast army of 'wild and savage men'. Julius Caesar reckoned he had slaughtered more than 250,000 'insurgents'. In fact, documents found in the remains of

the Helvetii camp showed that out of 368,000 people, only 92,000 had been capable of bearing arms.

In other words, it wasn't an army that Julius Caesar massacred, but a whole population including women, children, old and sick, which, I suppose, is one thing that George W Bush and Julius Caesar do have in common: pretending civilians are armed insurgents.

But there the similarity ends.

One of the most fundamental differences between Julius Caesar and George W Bush is that Julius Caesar counted his dead, whereas George W Bush can't be bothered. It seems that, as commander-in-chief, George W Bush instructed his soldiers not to count the enemy dead.

So the fact that he still sticks to an estimate of only 30,000 dead Iraqis, even when a recently published study in the Lancet suggests he's slaughtered at least 655,000, can only be the result of his extraordinary modesty.

Why else would he dismiss the study as pure guesswork or claim it had used a 'methodology (that) is pretty well discredited', even though the US government has been spending millions of dollars a year to train NGOs in this exact same methodology?

Julius Caesar would have seized on the figures with alacrity.

And that is the biggest difference of all: Julius Caesar was an ambitious, vainglorious, would-be tyrant. George W Bush is a modest and self-deprecating one.

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)

Politicians Sweep Midterm Elections:

Resounding Victories In All States, Counties, Cities, Towns

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

November 7, 2006 The Onion

WASHINGTON, DC: After months of aggressive campaigning and with nearly 99 percent of ballots counted, politicians were the big winners in Tuesday's midterm election, taking all 435 seats in the House of Representatives, retaining a majority with 100 out of 100 seats in the Senate, and pushing political candidates to victory in each of the 36 gubernatorial races up for grabs.

While analysts had been predicting a possible sweep for months, and early exit-poll numbers seemed favorable, politicians reportedly exceeded even their own expectations, gaining an impressive 100 percent of the overall national vote.

"It's a good night to be a politician," said Todd Akin, an officeholder from Missouri. "The American people have spoken, and they have unanimously declared: 'We want elected officials to lead this nation.'"

Already confident they would have an easy time in the Midwest, a region long known for electing politicians, as well as with poll-going Americans in the deep South, politicians also picked up seats in each additional area of the country.

"We expected politicians to take Washington, Indiana, Oregon, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Michigan, North Carolina, Maryland, South Carolina, Georgia, North Dakota, Mississippi, Montana, Vermont, Maine, Kentucky, California, Iowa, Alaska, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Alabama, Virginia, Delaware, Wisconsin, and Arkansas," said Georgetown University political science professor Barbara Steward.

"But the fact that voters in the urban areas of Rhode Island and the farmlands of West Virginia, along with every other state, all put politicians into office is quite extraordinary."

"Even in the most hotly contested local races that went down to the wire, politicians still came out on top every time," she added.

This year's results are the most unanimous since the last election two years ago, in which politicians enjoyed widespread victories unrivaled since the election before that, and the one in 2000.

Politicians managed to appeal to all economic and ethnic backgrounds, genders, and age groups, enjoying equal success among both liberal voters and conservatives.

Issues advanced by politicians dominated not only the Senate and House races, but also all state, district council, county, and town-board elections.

"It looks like politicians are poised to dominate the political discourse of the country for years to come," said analyst Maria Lawson of the Free Enterprise Institute, who as long

ago as December of 2004 had picked congressmen to once again take over the House of Representatives. "This should allow them to pursue their own political agendas almost unimpeded, sign even more bills into law, and appoint fellow politicians to committee chairmanships, special interest commissions, and other posts of power."

Added Lawson: "While it's still too early to tell, after the success of this election, it might not be too long before we see another politician in the White House."

Despite fears that the dozens of campaign-finance violations, soft-money misappropriations, infidelity charges, hidden drunk-driving records, and protracted congressional cover-ups leaked just days before the election would hurt their chances, politicians were still elected over non-politicians in every single race.

"The fact that not a single non-politician even ran for office is just further proof that the American people tend to vote for politicians during times of war," Steward said. "Past data also suggests that the American people tend to vote for politicians during times of peace, as well as, generally speaking, every two years."

Some voters, however, such as Arkansas native Patrick Bunter, who first voted for a politician—Harry Truman—in 1948, are calling this latest victory "politics as usual."

"Over the years, I grew disappointed with the job the politicians were doing, yet I kept on voting for them out of loyalty," Bunter said. "This time around, I swore I'd go with someone else, but frankly, looking at the ballot, I didn't see any other choice."

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