

GI SPECIAL 4L6:



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

“British Marines Attacked A Taliban-Held Valley In Southern Afghanistan On Tuesday But Withdrew After A Ferocious Counterattack”

“Taliban Fighters Launched A Ferocious, Organized Riposte With Heavy Weapons”

“Major Plewes Said He Considered The Assault A Success”

British Marines attacked a Taliban-held valley in southern Afghanistan on Tuesday but withdrew after a ferocious counterattack that withstood air strikes and artillery fire, witnesses said.

One Royal Marine was killed and a second wounded during the battle, the UK Helmand Task Force (UKTF) said.

Scores of soldiers ran across a bridge over the Helmand River under a full moon shortly before daybreak and began sweeping south through wheatfields in the south of the province, the opium center of the world's major producer.

A Reuters cameraman said the Marines initially faced only sporadic resistance but when they advanced, Taliban fighters launched a ferocious, organized riposte with heavy weapons and tried to outflank the British troops.

Major Andy Plewes, who led the Royal Marines of Zulu Company 45 Commando, on the assault, said the soldiers had expected resistance: "What we didn't know was how strong it was."

"We don't currently have enough forces in the area to hold ground completely and that has to be done by Afghan security forces," he told a Reuters reporter with the Marines.

British casualties have been mounting since ISAF took over command of operations in southern Afghanistan at the end of July. Britain has lost 41 soldiers since the Taliban government was toppled in 2001, the bulk of them this year.

The British forces, who make up the bulk of NATO forces in Helmand, opened fire from light armored vehicles and engaged small groups of guerrillas with mortars and machine guns.

Afghan police and soldiers have so far held just the bridgehead and the short road at the north end of the valley, criss-crossed by networks of ancient canals that make Helmand fertile enough to produce a third of the world's opium crop.

The Taliban withstood barrages of air strikes from Apache helicopters, 500 pound bombs dropped by B1 bombers and withering cannon fire from A-10 attack jets before the British finally withdrew after a 10-hour battle.

The Taliban fighters, who say they have the expertise to defeat the strongest army, had dug sophisticated networks of trenches often leading from compound to compound.

Tuesday's assault was the latest in a series of battles by British forces around the bridgehead.

Major Plewes said he considered the assault a success as they had cleared out areas near the "D.C.," a tiny strip of road and ruined buildings on the eastern side of the Helmand River.

But without more Afghan troops to hold the ground there was little hope of doing much more.

"In the mean time we have to try to provide as much as security to the D.C. as possible," said Plewes.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Insurgents Attack Baghdad Patrol Killing One Soldier; Five Wounded

05 December 2006 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory
RELEASE No. 20061205-09

Insurgents attacked a Multi-National Division Baghdad patrol Dec. 4, killing one Soldier and wounding five others.

The patrol was conducting operations to deny enemy movements and enforce curfew restrictions in a northeastern neighborhood of the city when it was attacked.

One Soldier Killed, One Wounded In Diyala Province

05 December 2006 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory
RELEASE No. 20061205-18

A Task Force Lightning Soldier assigned to 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, died of wounds Monday as a result of an explosion near his vehicle while conducting operations in Diyala Province.

A second Soldier from this unit was wounded and was transported to a Coalition Forces' medical treatment facility.

MIA Soldier Found Dead

December 05, 2006 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 1235-06

The Department of Defense announced today the death of a soldier previously listed as Duty Status Whereabouts Unknown while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Spc. Dustin M. Adkins, 22, of Finger, Tenn., was pronounced dead Dec. 4 of injuries suffered after the Chinook helicopter he was in made an emergency landing near

Haditha, Iraq, Dec. 3. He was assigned to the Group Support Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group, Fort Campbell, Ky.

Soldier Killed In Vehicle Accident North Of Logistics Support Area Adder

05 December 2006 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory
RELEASE No. 20061205-08

LSA Anaconda, Iraq: A 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Soldier was killed in an accident when his M-1117 Armored Security Vehicle rolled over North of Logistics Support Area Adder Dec. 4.

Family Of West Tennessee Soldier Says He's Been Killed In Iraq

December 5, 2006 JACKSON, Tenn. (AP)

Relatives of a West Tennessee soldier say he's been killed in Iraq.

There's no confirmation from the Pentagon, but relatives of 22 year old Dustin Adkins of Finger told The Jackson Sun newspaper Monday night that his body has been recovered after the soldier was listed as missing.

The Pentagon says the helicopter he was in made an emergency landing Sunday. It was not immediately clear from the Department of Defense whether it was the same incident that killed an Elizabethton Marine.

Adkins is assigned to a special forces group at Fort Campbell.

Family Grieves For Soldier Killed Days Before His Iraq Tour Ended

December 2, 2006 By John Christoffersen, Associated Press Writer

SALEM, Conn.: Sharon Hamill was home alone, sitting at the table eating lunch when she was startled by a noise around the garage. Then the doorbell rang.

She looked through the tinted window and spotted a green uniform. It must be her son Jason, an Army captain due home any day from Iraq who had a reputation for pulling pranks.

"I went to the door to let him in," Sharon Hamill said. "When I saw two men in uniform, I knew what it was. They looked at me and shook their head."

Jason was dead. He and two other soldiers were killed Nov. 26 in Baghdad by a roadside bomb while riding in an armored vehicle.

"In our eyes, he was a hero," his mother said Wednesday, fighting back tears.

Hamill, 31, had spent a year in Iraq clearing the type of bomb that killed him and many other American troops.

"The hard part is finding the bombs," he wrote in an e-mail to his family in January. "They're very creative at hiding them but we have tons of technology and techniques to find them."

Hamill, a triplet, grew up in Salem, a tiny rural town in eastern Connecticut still sprinkled with farms. He wrestled in high school and played the drums in the band.

That's when Jon Stadler met Hamill and quickly became friends. When Hamill was around, everyone knew something funny would happen.

On a dare Hamill jumped in a frigid lake on New Year's Eve. He and Stadler took the wheels off a friend's car and plastered it with bumper stickers. Another time Hamill's father caught him tipping cows.

"He said they do tip," said his father, Richard Hamill. "But one of them starting chasing them, so they decided to get the heck out of there."

After graduating from the University of Connecticut, Hamill followed in his father's footsteps and joined the military nearly a decade ago.

"I think that just fits his personality," his father said. "He's kind of a rugged guy, a little bit on the dangerous side of life."

But family and friends saw another side to the warrior when he met his wife, Karen, while stationed in Texas. When the couple married last year, Hamill brought tears to his wife's eyes as he gave a toast pledging his love and respect.

"You could just hear it in his voice and see it in his face when he talked about her," Stadler said.

Hamill served in Kosovo and Afghanistan before heading to Iraq a year ago. Hamill wrote lengthy e-mails home but was guarded in what he told his parents.

His family asked if he needed better body armor, but Hamill said he was well protected.

In January, his mother told him about a wicked ice storm in Connecticut and promised to send a package.

"If you slit the top open in the middle, the cookies may get slit open," she wrote.

As the violence escalated, Hamill's mother avoided the news. His father learned only recently that his son was in Baghdad, hoping he was in a safer outlying area.

Hamill's e-mails grew shorter. By the end of his tour, he admitted he was emotionally drained.

"We're all ready to get out of here," Hamill wrote in his final e-mail home a day before he died. "It's been a long year, but only a few more days!"

Hamill and his wife, who lived in Killeen, Texas, planned to start a family. Hamill was thinking of going back to college.

The couple had already bought plane tickets to travel home to Connecticut in January for Hamill's 32nd birthday with his siblings.

After his mother received the bad news, she called her husband at work.

"We have two Army men here to talk about Jason," she said.

Richard Hamill didn't understand. Jason wasn't home. Why are they there?

"Are you all right?" he asked his wife.

"No," she answered. "There's been an accident."

His wife grew silent.

"Is Jason alive?" he asked.

"No," she said.

Hamill rushed home.

Now a flag flies at half mast in the front yard of the family home. The phone and the doorbell ring constantly with flowers and condolences.

He will be buried Wednesday in Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery.

It hurts Richard Hamill to dwell too much. He knows his son believed in a mission that has grown increasingly unpopular back home.

He wrestles with why his son was out on another mission just days before his departure.

"They transferred responsibility to the new unit," his father said. "His unit was all packed up and ready to come home."

Baquba Car Bomb Hits U.S. Patrol:

Casualties Not Announced

12.4.06 By Mohammed al Awsy, McClatchy Newspapers

In Baquba a car bomb exploded aimed at an American patrol in al Gatoon area north west Baquba. The American casualties were not known because the American forces surrounded the area.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



A U.S. soldier holds a bag of ready to eat combat meal while walking on a road in Baghdad October 25, 2006. REUTERS/Namir Noor-Eldeen (IRAQ)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Two Canadians Wounded In Kandahar Attack

Dec. 5 2006 CTV.ca News Staff & AFP

Canadian soldiers travelling down Highway One in southern Afghanistan, west of Kandahar city, know they're moving targets.

But Tuesday, several Canadians on a convoy headed towards Kandahar Airfield told CTV's Steve Chao they had an especially bad feeling about this stretch of highway, nicknamed ambush alley.

They noticed a suspicious vehicle on the left side of the road as they were making their way back from one of Canada's forward operating bases.

Seconds later, a bomber sitting inside the van detonated his load. The force of the explosion damaged two convoy resupply trucks and a Nyala RG 31 armoured vehicle.

Two Canadian soldiers suffered cuts and bruises in the blast; two civilians are believed to have been killed, and six others were taken to Kandahar hospital -- two of them in critical condition.

Chao and CTV cameraman Tom Michalak, who were travelling in the convoy along with the troops, were just two vehicles back from one of the trucks that was hit. The blast sent pieces of shrapnel flying through the hatch of the vehicle Chao and Michalak were riding in.

Footage shot by Michalak shows an explosion through the vehicle's upper windshield.

The soldiers reacted instantly, the rear gunner ordering everyone off the road while others took up defensive positions and scanned for other bombers who may have been lurking in the area. Explosives experts found unexploded grenades on the bomber's body, carefully removing and later detonating them.

Meanwhile, the bomber's body smouldered as pieces of shrapnel and shattered glass littered the area. The military transport truck closest to the blast was disabled, its 90-kilogram blast shield inside the truck blown apart in the force of the blast.

The two soldiers who received minor injuries in the attack told Chao they were very lucky, and very happy, to be alive.

While the attack was the first Chao said he had directly experienced, he said many of the soldiers have lived through at least five similar incidents in the last few months, and they were "extremely calm" throughout the ordeal.

For others, it was their first experience with a suicide attack.

Cpl. Robert Chafe of St. John's, N.L., had driven a supply truck on the route 30 times before and never seen anything other than small-arms fire.

"I'd seen it go. I'd seen the little orange glow and then the windshield hit me in the face," Chafe told The Canadian Press.

"It landed right on top of me. The glass on the outside blew right out," said Chafe, who suffered a cut on the side of his mouth and on the little finger of his left hand.

Master Cpl. Greg Keeping was hurt in the leg when the blast shield blew in.

"I reached down to make sure my leg was still there," he said. "But I think the blast shield saved my life."

An AFP correspondent at the scene could see an ISAF-marked military vehicle overturned at the blast site, which was sealed off by foreign and Afghan security forces.

With Drums, Prayers, North Dakota Soldier Killed In Afghanistan Is Honored

11-30-2006 By JAMES MacPHERSON, Associated Press Writer

NEW TOWN: Hundreds packed an auditorium to honor a fallen warrior, joining in prayers in Nathan Goodiron's native Hidatsa language and smiling through tears at pictures of his high school basketball games and his time with his newborn son.

"He was proud to be an American soldier, an American Indian soldier. He knew the meaning of the word sacrifice," said Marcus Wells Jr., the chairman of the Three Affiliated Tribes. "He was a good son, a good husband and a proud father."

Goodiron, 25, of Mandaree, known on the Fort Berthold reservation as Young Eagle, was killed Thanksgiving Day in Afghanistan when a grenade struck his vehicle while he was on patrol. He was a corporal in the 1st Battalion of the North Dakota National Guard's 188th Air Defense Artillery.

Tribal officials said he was the first member of the Three Affiliated Tribes to be killed in the war on terror. The tribal memorial service was held Wednesday in the auditorium of the Four Bears Casino and Lodge west of New Town.

Friends and family members talked of Goodiron's love of sports and service to his country. A huge screen showed highlights of his life, as a member of Mandaree's 1999 state tournament basketball team, a soldier training for military duty and a father holding his newborn son.

The service featured drum songs and Hidatsa prayers. The Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara make up the Three Affiliated Tribes.

Among those attending were about 50 American Indian veterans.

Goodiron's father, Paul, asked people to remember the soldiers still on duty.

"For every one of them still there, putting their lives in harm's way, I wish I could shake their hands," he said.

Nathan Hale, of Mandaree, a Tribal Council member, remembered how Nathan Goodiron volunteered to dress up as Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny to entertain children.

"He was a funny, enjoyable person to be around," Hale said.

"He chose to defend his country. He gave his life for what he believed in," Hale said.

Tribal officials said Goodiron, who joined the Guard in 2001, enjoyed working with computers, and developed a PowerPoint program about the tribal constitution. He attended classes at Minot State University.

The commander of the North Dakota National Guard, Maj. Gen. Dave Sprynczynatyk, said Goodiron was a true hero who "made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of all of us." Harvey Peterson, of Beach, the commander-elect of the American Legion of North Dakota, called Goodiron "truly a noble servant to his nation and to his fellow man."

Survivors include his wife, his son, two stepchildren, his parents and his brother.

Tribal officials said Goodiron's body was expected to arrive today in Minot, and a wake was scheduled for 4 p.m. Friday at the Mandaree High School. Services will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday at Mandaree High School.

Militants Attack Chinese Workers

December 5, 2006 Xinhua News Agency

Chinese workers in a remote camp of China Railway Shisiju Group Corporation in Afghanistan had safely withdrawn to a major base 40 km away after it was attacked by unknown militants on Saturday. No one was injured in the attack, an official of the company told Xinhua Monday.

According to the official, the militants started the attack against the walled camp in the Duabi area of Badghis province at 9:23 PM local time on Saturday but Afghan policemen guarding the camp fought back.

After an intense gunfight lasting around 90 minutes, both two sides stopped firing, but the gunmen refused to retreat. At around 11:20 PM, the militants fled as reinforcements from a nearby police station arrived at the site.

When the clash occurred, around 30 Chinese workers, building a local road, were stationed in the camp which is surrounded by thorny wire netting and trenches.

After receiving aid-seeking information from the camp during the conflict, the Chinese embassy in Afghanistan immediately contacted NATO peace-keeping troops in the area, who agreed to send NATO helicopters to the site if needed.

The embassy also urgently met with officials of the Afghan Foreign Ministry, asking the Afghan government to ensure the safety of the attacked Chinese workers and to discover who was behind the assault.

This is the most severe attack against Chinese companies in Afghanistan since June, 2004.

TROOP NEWS

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



The hearse carrying Philippine-born U.S. Army staff sergeant Richwell Doria, during his funeral procession in Dagupan city, Philippines, Dec. 5, 2006. Doria was killed Nov. 7 near Kirkuk, Iraq, by small arms fire. (AP Photo)

Odious Odierno At It Again: LT. GEN. LOOKS INTO COLONIAL HELL FOR GUIDANCE

Having lost the conventional war in Iraq, one of the remaining bargaining chips for the United States continues to be the threat of possibly decades-long, low-intensity butchery.

By Nick Mottern, Director, Consumers for Peace [Excerpts]

Lt. Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, the Nov. 20 New York Times reports, is returning to Iraq in December “to take charge of the day-to-day fight as commander of the Multinational Corps-Iraq.”

The article says that the lieutenant general spent “several months preparing for his new command (in Iraq), assigning his staff several histories of counter-insurgency efforts in Malaya, Algeria and Viet Nam.”

Lt. Gen. Odierno appears to be taking an interest in three extremely brutal colonial campaigns against popular movements for self-determination.

As noted in a recent article on this website (see archives “Iraq Troop Withdrawal Looks Far Off”: consumersforpeace.org), Lt. Gen. Odierno has a sad history in Iraq in which troops under his command in the Fourth Infantry Division in 2003 and 2004 were involved in apparent war crimes.

This point is, remarkably, overlooked by the Times article which says that after he left Iraq in early 2004, he spent 18 months as an assistant to the Joint Chiefs, “most of that as an advisor to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.”

Lt. Gen. Odierno will be taking command at the same time that the Iraq Study Group, headed by James Baker III and Lee Hamilton will be making their recommendations on Iraq. A Pentagon group is also working on recommendations as is the staff of the National Security Council. The competition is on for the “winning” formula for Iraq, and it is highly likely that increased counter-insurgency action will be part of this formula.

WHAT HAPPENED IN MALAYA?

A good deal has been written in the U.S. about the atrocities of Algeria and Viet Nam compared to what has been publicized about British actions in Malaya.

The Malaya war began in 1948 when a communist guerrilla organization equipped by the British to fight the Japanese turned its attention to driving the British out of Malaya, a nation rich in rubber plantations and tin mining.

The popular base for the guerrilla movement was the Chinese population of about 500,000, people who had no land rights, no voting rights and who were relatively poor. Caroline Elkins, the Pulitzer Prize - winning author of a book on British suppression of the anti-colonial movement in Kenya, wrote in The New Republic of December 12, 2005 that the British campaign in Malaya involved widespread brutality:

“Employing local Chinese sympathizers in the ranks of pretend terrorist gangs, British forces tracked down (insurgent) forces in the jungles and rooted most of them out by 1958. This campaign was riddled with abuses. The corpses of guerillas were routinely put on display. Decapitation was also practiced. A photograph of a (British) Marine commando holding two insurgents’ heads caused an outcry in the spring or 1952. Privately, the British government noted that ‘there is no doubt that under international law a similar case in wartime would be a war crime...”

“It was, though, Britain’s creation of barbed-wire villages that took the heaviest toll. Nearly the entire Chinese population of 400,000 to 500,000 were forced from their homes and were resettled into some 400 heavily guarded barbed-wire villages. They were deprived of all civil rights, and they endured great physical and emotional abuse...As in other parts of Britain’s empire, it was the stick, not the carrot, that eventually broke civilian support for the insurgency.”

Ms. Elkins cites an eye witness account of a woman who reported that in 1948, Malay and British soldiers came to her village and “singled out scores of Chinese civilians, accusing them of supplying the communists with food. The women were loaded onto trucks and taken away, though not before they witnessed British troops leading off two dozen men and shooting them in the back.” When the woman returned to the village two days later, Ms. Elkins writes, “she found mutilated bodies with heads hacked off and genitals smashed. The surrounding village had been reduced to ashes.”

A report on the British air war in Malaya appearing in the summer 1999 edition of Joint Force Quarterly, published for the Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff by the National Defense University, acknowledged:

“Even with precise intelligence and the accuracy of bombing, collateral damage remained a serious concern. Two errors in 1950 resulted in a combined total of 12 civilians killed, 31 injured...Although many insurgents said they surrendered out of fear of air attack, the evidence suggests that air strikes were responsible for less than 10 percent of all enemy dead. (Total resistance deaths have been numbered at about 6,700.) Indeed, Number 1 (Bomber) Squadron dropped 17,500 short tons of bombs in eight years, over half the campaign total, yet received credit for only 16 confirmed kills. But air attacks did keep the enemy moving and unsettled and increased the number of successful ground contacts with ground forces.”

The resistance movement began to wither through the 1950s in part because it did not develop sufficient support outside its Chinese base and because of British efforts to isolate people from the movement in guarded villages.

And there was the morale-eroding pressure of brutality and repression. The British eventually moved to give Chinese the right to vote and promised independence for Malaya when the rebellion ended. In 1960, the Malayan government declared an end to the war. (Malaysia was formed in 1963 from the Malayan Federation, Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak; Singapore became an independent country in 1965.)

The Malaya war engaged over 350,000 troops from the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Fiji. Of this number 250,000 were Malayan Home Guard. Guerillas forces are estimated at about 50,000 at the peak of the struggle.

“To be sure,” Ms. Elkins says, “Britain’s counterinsurgency operations in Malaya were a short-term success. British forces reestablished order and disengaged from imperial occupation. But the hearts-and-minds campaign, the theoretical backbone of Britain’s counterinsurgency strategy, was more myth than reality. To seize civilian control, the British created a police state and invoked draconian powers ranging from movement-restriction and collective punishments to detention without trial. Winning against

insurgents came at a high price for the local civilian population and the independent state that picked up the mantle from its former colonizer.”

The vision of the future of Iraq that emerges is one in which the U.S., after an temporary increase in troops to attempt to secure certain areas, pulls out about half its troops in the coming year, changing the mix of troops toward counter-insurgency forces that will employ friendly Iraqis in all manner of attacks on resistance forces.

If the Malaya, Algeria, Viet Nam and El Salvador campaigns provide any guide, atrocities will be widespread and routine, and probably largely unreported.

Having lost the conventional war in Iraq, one of the remaining bargaining chips for the United States continues to be the threat of possibly decades-long, low-intensity butchery.

“Remember Me But Don’t Mourn Me, Celebrate What We Had”

[Thanks to J, who sent this in.]

December 2, 2006 The Guardian

The infantryman

Summer 2006: an injured soldier dictates a note to his wife, knowing he is not going to survive:

To my most beautiful,

I am sorry to say that I must break my promise and not come back to you.

Jaz is writing this for me and he will hand it to you in person.

We have only been married such a short time compared to most and I know you and the kids will miss me but please remember what I said about death.

I will always be there with you, always looking after you and smiling at you always.

Tell the kids to look after you and each other and to be brave and that daddy loves them so very much and a HUGE kiss for them both.

To you my sweet lady I thank you for each moment we had together, the laughter we had and the love we have always shared.

Remember me but don't mourn me, celebrate what we had.

Got to go, I'll be in the mountains where I belong.

Your man Billy

Broke Down Army: “The Supply System Can’t Keep Up With Us” “There’s Stuff, Stuff Everywhere”



The backlog of tanks and other broken-down armored vehicles are seen at the Anniston Army Depot in Anniston, Ala. Ann Scott Tyson, The Washington Post

[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in. He writes: They are running out of more than just willing troops to deploy.]

Across the military, scarce equipment is being shifted from unit to unit for training. For example, a brigade of 3,800 soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Division that will deploy to Iraq next month has been passing around a single training set of 44 Humvees, none of which has the added armor of the Humvees they will drive in Iraq.

Dec 5, 2006 By Ann Scott Tyson, The Washington Post Company [Excerpts]

ANNISTON, Ala. - Field upon field of more than 1,000 battered M1 tanks, howitzers and other armored vehicles sit amid weeds here at the 15,000-acre Anniston Army Depot -- the idle, hulking formations symbolic of an Army that is wearing out faster than it is being rebuilt.

The Army and Marine Corps have sunk more than 40 percent of their ground combat equipment into the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to government data.

An estimated \$17 billion-plus worth of military equipment is destroyed or worn out each year, blasted by bombs, ground down by desert sand and used up to nine times the rate in times of peace.

The gear is piling up at depots such as Anniston, waiting to be repaired.

The depletion of major equipment such as tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles, and especially helicopters and armored Humvees has left many military units in the United States without adequate training gear, officials say.

Partly as a result of the shortages, many U.S. units are rated "unready" to deploy, officials say, raising alarm in Congress and concern among military leaders at a time when Iraq strategy is under review by the White House and the bipartisan Iraq Study Group.

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At Anniston, the sprawling lots of tanks and other armored vehicles are just the start of a huge backlog in broken-down gear.

"There's stuff, stuff everywhere," Joan Gustafson, a depot official, said as she wheeled her brown Chevrolet van through a landscape of rolling hills lined with armadas of mobile guns.

"There's another field of M1s," she said, motioning toward a swath of M1A1 Abrams tanks next to the winding road. "We're just waiting for someone to tell us what to do with them."

Since the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the Army has left behind hundreds of thousands of pieces of equipment in Iraq and has relied heavily on field maintenance facilities in Kuwait.

But as the war has continued, Army leaders have recognized that they cannot afford to wait for a drawdown of troops before they begin overhauling equipment -- some of it 20 years old -- that is being used at extraordinary rates.

Helicopters are flying two or three times their planned usage rates. Tank crews are driving more than 4,000 miles a year -- five times the normal rate. Truck fleets

that convoy supplies down Iraq's bomb-laden roads are running at six times the planned mileage, according to Army data.

Equipment shipped back from Iraq is stacking up at all the Army depots: More than 530 M1 tanks, 220 M88 wreckers and 160 M113 armored personnel carriers are sitting at Anniston. The Red River Army Depot in Texas has 700 Bradley Fighting Vehicles and 450 heavy and medium-weight trucks, while more than 1,000 Humvees are awaiting repair at the Letterkenny Army Depot in Pennsylvania.

Despite the work piling up, the Army's depots have been operating at about half their capacity because of a lack of funding for repairs.

In the spring, a funding gap caused Anniston and other depots to lose about a month's worth of work, said Brig. Gen. Robert Radin, deputy chief of staff for operations at the Army Materiel Command at Fort Belvoir.

At Anniston, which will handle 1,800 combat vehicles in fiscal 2007, a cavernous 250,000-square-foot repair shop is humming as damaged tanks are rolled in one by one and disassembled with the help of giant cranes. Removing an M1 tank's turret alone takes a day and a half, and the entire overhaul requires 54 days and costs about \$1 million, said Ted A. Law, the depot's vehicle manager.

Earnest Linn, 58, a heavy-mobile-equipment mechanic who as of January will have worked at Anniston for 30 years, said that "it's never been like this" since the end of the Vietnam War.

"This one hit a triple-stacked land mine," he said, peering up into the underbelly of a Stryker ripped open by the blast. Some of the Strykers are coming in with 40,000 miles on their odometers, he said.

"The supply system can't keep up with us," said Rodney Brodeur, division chief for turbine engines, speaking over the clang and whir of his workshop.

Fine sand and heavy use erode the blades on the tank engine rotors, eventually leading the blades to snap off and stall the engines. Such erosion, which is invisible to the Army's field mechanics, can lead to catastrophic failure without timely maintenance.

"If your Cadillac stops by the side of the road, that's an inconvenience," Brodeur said. "If the tank quits in the middle of the fight, that's a hard target."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

04 Dec 2006 Reuters & 05 Dec 2006 Reuters & AFP & By Mohammed al Awsy, McClatchy Newspapers

Guerrillas killed a policeman on Sunday in the restive city of Ramadi, 110 km (70 miles) west of Baghdad, and killed four policemen in the northern city of Mosul.

Police found the body of a policeman, who was captured on Friday, buried in a house in Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad. Two people were arrested, police said.

In northern Baghdad, a car bomber plowed into a crowd of recruits at a national police academy, killing seven and wounding 12 as concealed gunmen also opened fire.

At 8:30 this morning an IED exploded in AL YARMOUK area ARBA'A SHAWAREE, it exploded at the Iraqi army checkpoint, 2 soldiers were killed and 2 others were injured .

At 4 o'clock this evening a car bomb exploded near the former security building were a police academy is located, 3 police were killed and 6 others were injured .

At 1 o'clock this afternoon an IED exploded at the national police patrol in AUQBA BIN NAFA'A square in KARADA area, 2 police were injured and 2 civilians were injured .

According to a security source in Diyala police, this evening 2 policemen were killed and 3 civilians were injured when a car bomb exploded near al Khalis hospital 15km north of Baqouba, it was aiming at an Iraqi police patrol who were transferring detainees to the hospital.

<p style="text-align: center;">IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**3,000th KIA;
“Let's See Everybody In The Streets”**

From: David Honish, Veteran, December 03, 2006
Subject: 2,898 KIA FOR A LIE

Sadly, we will probably see the 3,000th KIA about the second week of JAN at the current tempo of military operations in Iraq. It is not too early to plan your local street politix events to note this date and not let others forget. Let's see everybody in the streets demanding change on that day.

Wage peace,
David

Pacification And Iraqification: A War Washington Can't Win; “The Pretense Of Liberation Is Over”

From: Ron Jacobs
To: GI Special
Sent: December 05, 2006

As the US closes in on the opening day of its new Congress, the possibility of voters getting a withdrawal of US forces from Iraq grows dimmer and dimmer.

George Bush continues to insist that US forces will remain in country until their job is done. What that job is exactly seems to most to be a secret known only to certain members of the White House, but the key to it all is the desire for the US to reshape the world in order to, as this an excerpt from the Project for the New American Century (PNAC) statement of principles reminds us, "preserve and extend an international order friendly to US security, (and) prosperity."

Lest we forget, this is the primary force behind the policies of George Bush.

Of course, when these men and women talk about security and prosperity, they aren't necessarily thinking of yours and mine. They are, however, certainly thinking about theirs, especially when it comes to the prosperity part of the equation.

One need only look at the profits certain friends of Washington's power elites have made from the ongoing war in Iraq to get a mere hint of the prosperity these folks are talking about. (And that doesn't even begin to count the billions they want to make from controlling Iraq's oil.)

Then, just to see what they have in mind for those of us that don't matter to them, take a look at the situation of the poor in New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina.

In the past couple of weeks, the news has reported the deaths of several Iraqi women and children from US airborne bombs and missiles. This is no accident. As the use of US air support to support Iraqi government forces on the ground increases (and US ground forces pull back), there are bound to be more and more such casualties.

Like Israel and previous Pentagon leaders, the current US command refuses to accept blame for these deaths, choosing instead to blame them on the actions of the resistance forces.

Although these are usually called mistakes by the command, the harsh act is that they are not. As Howard Zinn wrote in his classic argument Vietnam: The Logic of

Withdrawal, "since the killing of civilians is inevitable...it cannot be called an accident." When a pilot drops his load of bombs or fires his deadly missiles on a street of houses, or when a gunner unleashes a barrage of bullets from his Vulcan Gatling gun at the rate of 6000 bullets per minute on a group of people running away from the helicopter he is in, this is not an accident.

It is part of the strategy of pacification, a policy that George Orwell pointed out goes something like this:

“Defenceless villages are bombarded from the air, the inhabitants driven out into the countryside, the cattle machine-gunned, the huts set on fire with incendiary bullets: this is called pacification.”

While the specifics of the battleground may change from Mr. Orwell's description, the essential facts do not.

In Afghanistan, US-led forces bombard villages and schools, calling the latter terrorist training grounds.

In Iraq, US forces provide air support for US and Iraqi ground forces that raid villages in house-to-house searches.

If the ground forces call in a strike, the pilots release their missiles, which may or may not even hit the house they are supposed to hit. As the number of these air support missions climbs, the chance of killing innocents likewise increases.

Let's go back to the phased withdrawal (or redeployment) scenario.

This scenario is based on the hope that the forces paid for by the US will be able to keep political and military power after the US military draws down its forces and pens them in the permanent bases Washington is building in Iraq.

It is not, as the "Stay the Course" adherents like to charge, an excuse to lose the war. What it is is a way for the US to keep its paws deeply immersed in Iraqi politics for the long term (without US soldiers doing the dying) until Washington can have exactly who they want running the country.

Of course, the way things are going, it could be a while before the CIA and Pentagon can even find such folks. As recent history has proven, even if they do find such individuals, the real struggle is convincing the Iraqis that these officials really have any power that isn't given them by Washington.

Given that the main thing the Iraqis want is the exit of all foreign militaries from their country and that this is the one thing the Green Zone Iraqis cannot provide, it is no mystery that these leaders appear impotent.

If they demand that the US forces leave, Washington will disperse with them. If they "ask" for them to stay, they reinforce the view of their fellow citizens that they are US stooges.

That's why it's nice to have US forces close by. They provide good backup. Also, if things get real hot, they can always airlift you out.

Now, I can hear people asking what's wrong with US forces staying nearby to help put in a government friendly to Washington in Iraq and Afghanistan? After all, don't we believe in democracy?

Well, let me give you a couple reasons why this isn't okay.

For one, the majority of Iraqis don't want us to. That in itself is more than enough reason.

For another, any government that must be backed up by a foreign military force is not going to last for the simple reason that it is not a truly national government.

The US tried to do exactly this in southern Vietnam and failed miserably. Sure, George Bush and others like him think the reason the US didn't succeed in Vietnam was because the US quit.

That is wrong. They didn't quit. They lost.

Their project to reshape southeast Asia was never popular with the people that lived there and it failed. Even after millions of deaths and inestimable destruction.

There have already been several hundred thousand deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan, with unknown numbers yet to come if US and NATO forces continue their murderous attempt to install governments subservient to Washington's interests -- which is what politicians, generals and media mouths really mean when they speak so eloquently about freedom and democracy.

Another reason -- and perhaps the most important reason of all -- is that these wars are wrong. Plain and simple. Wrong.

The pretense of liberation is over. The pretense that US Galahads were going to come in and save Iraqi and Afghani women from the more medieval practices of certain Islamic fundamentalists is over.

Now, those women and their children are being killed indiscriminately by US bombs and missiles. Some are even being raped by US soldiers. There is no moral right in arresting people without cause and then torturing them. Nor is there any moral right in denying a population electrical power and security while the occupiers live in air conditioned comfort with colonialist trappings.

In short, there is nothing moral about the US wars on the people of Iraq and Afghanistan.

And there never will be.

<p>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</p>

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 email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

Meaningless Lip Service Vs. Critical Support

[Comment: T]

12.4.06

UFPJ has officially recognized that there are people inside the armed services opposed to the war.

[See the UFPJ communication below this comment.]

However, there is still not one word about doing outreach to serving troops, National Guard, or Reserve members.

Even when they mention the Appeal For Redress, their words are directed to civilians: not one word about reaching out to get it into the hands of serving troops.

This mild shift is an accommodation to growing recognition of opposition to the war within the armed services, but still a pretense of activity rather than taking any sort of lead in doing the real work that needs to be done. They have other priorities.

Note that the individuals they push forward are those who take personal moralistic stands leading to their arrest and subsequent removal from any possibility of doing useful organizing against the war from below inside the armed forces.

Note that, like other opportunists out there, they also cover-up Watada's position of wholehearted support for killing U.S. troops and Afghan citizens resisting the occupation of their country, and critical of the war in Iraq because it diverts resources from that war.

The fact that Watada asked to be sent to fight in Afghanistan instead of Iraq, and believes other U.S. troops should be used in that war after removal from Iraq, is the dirty little secret that will, at some point down the road, explode in their faces. The sooner the better.

Finally, truly despicable, they do not ask for funds to be sent to the Appeal For Redress, the Watada defense, or the defense for Spc. Agustín Aguayo's case. Their letter closes with a request you send money to UFPJ.

While this comment is critical of the limitations of some of the resistance action mentioned above, each merits support for opposition to the war in Iraq: *above all they need financial support to help them fight back..*

Contributions to the Watada Defense:

<http://thankyoult.live.radicaldesigns.org/content/view/184/53/>

Contributions to the Aguyo Defense: <http://www.aguayodefense.org/Donate.html>

Contributions to the Appeal For Redress:

https://secure.democracyinaction.org/dia/organizations/vetsforpeace/shop/custom.jsp?donate_page_KEY=1987&t=appeal%20for%20redressdwt.dwt

From: UFPJ Action Alerts

Sent: November 29, 2006 2:11 PM

Subject: War Resisters -- Support the Troops Who Refuse to Fight



www.unitedforpeace.org | 212-868-5545 | [Click to subscribe](#)

Please forward widely!

Dear friends,

It takes courage to say that you will not fight -- especially if you are a soldier. As more members of the U.S. military step forward for peace, the peace movement must step forward to support them.

Large numbers are now refusing to serve: The Department of Defense estimates that there are about 8,000 AWOL service members. The GI Rights Hotline (800-394-9544) is currently receiving about 3,000 calls a month.

Most importantly, a growing number of soldiers are speaking out, against the illegality and immorality of the Iraq war and the orders they are being told to carry out. These brave men and women are risking jail time and their futures to stand up against the war.

Here are two of the growing number of resisters, click here for a fuller list:

Lt. Ehren Watada, the first commissioned officer to refuse to deploy to Iraq, had been facing more than seven years in prison for criticizing the president in a public speech, until the charge of "contempt toward the President" was rescinded following public outcry. He still faces up to four years in prison; his trial is set to begin on Feb. 5, 2007.

A federal appeals court is currently reviewing Army medic Spc. Agustín Aguayo's case and considering whether to overturn the Army's decision to deny him conscientious objector status. If Aguayo's appeal is successful, it will be a historic victory; if it fails, Aguayo could be sentenced to up to seven years in prison.

The stories of returning combat veterans helped turn the tide and end the war in Vietnam. Today's war resisters are providing critical first-hand knowledge of the horror and illegality of the Iraq war. Each servicemember who has spoken out against the war in Iraq has inspired more war resisters to come forward.

What You Can Do:

- **Keep war resisters' cases in the media:** Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper or call into radio talk shows and talk about their cases;
- **Organize a war resister solidarity event in your area:** Invite a war resister or someone working on a war resister's case to speak at a public event;
- **Keep pressure on the military to treat war resisters fairly:** Write letters to officials at the base where a resister is being held and/or his or her case is being tried;
- **Write letters of personal support:** See websites listed below for details;
- **Join the December 8-10 days of action,** organized by Courage to Resist, in support of Lt. Watada and all GI resisters.

Visit our website and those listed below for the latest news on war resisters' cases and more specific information on how best to help them:

www.girights.objector.org
www.couragetoresist.org
www.centeronconscience.org

P.S. In January, on Martin Luther King Day, a petition called "An Appeal for Redress," signed by more than 500 active duty troops, will be delivered to Congress. It reads: "As a patriotic American proud to serve the nation in uniform, I respectfully urge my political leaders in Congress to support the prompt withdrawal of all American military forces and bases from Iraq. Staying in Iraq will not work and is not worth the price. It is time for U.S. troops to come home."

To support this powerful effort, sponsored by UFPJ member groups Iraq Veterans Against the War, Veterans For Peace, and Military Families Speak Out, write letters to the editors of your local newspapers and to your congressional representatives bringing this campaign to their attention, and urging them to listen to these courageous soldiers.

**** BRING THE MANDATE FOR PEACE TO WASHINGTON DC -- JAN 27, 2007**

* *

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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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. Ambassador Calls Bush Regime “Murderers”

"The true enemies of all Iraqis are the murderers who carry out these senseless and cowardly attacks, regardless of sect, tribe or ethnicity." U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad: Alexandra Zavis, LOS ANGELES TIMES, 12.5.06

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Gates Says U.S. Is Not Winning Or Losing Iraq War

[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in. **He writes: "...Neither winning nor losing at this point?" Does he think there is a score keeper that allows tie scores?]**

Dec 5 By ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer

Robert Gates, the White House choice to be the next defense secretary, conceded Tuesday that the United States is not winning the war in Iraq and warned that if that country is not stabilized in the next year or two it could lead to a "regional conflagration."

Asked point-blank by Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., whether the U.S. is winning in Iraq, Gates replied, "No, sir."

He later said he believes the United States is neither winning nor losing, "at this point."

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

CLASS WAR REPORTS

***“One By One We Can’t Win, But
Together We Can”***

**NYC Police Are Out Of Control!
City-Wide Protest Demonstration
NYPD Headquarters:
One Police Plaza, Downtown NYC
Wednesday, December 6, 2006 at
4:30pm;**

From: [NYC-Justice] Justice@yahoogroups.com
Sent: December 03, 2006
Subject: City-Wide Protest at NYPD 12/6

New York: The November 25th NYPD 50 bullet fusillade, resulting in the murder of unarmed Sean Bell, underscores the urgent need for a fundamental change in the NYC police department.

The NYPD has escalated its aggression toward the Black community across the city. Community leaders are mobilizing a grassroots resistance movement to demand Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly rein in their rabid police force.

"Petty incidents like sitting on your front porch; or drinking an open beer or playing your music too loud in your yard at a family barbeque are treated like acts of terrorism. Swarms of police descend on the hapless victim and the situation quickly escalates to police brutality, false arrests and imprisonment," said Kamau Brown of Bedford Stuyvesant.

"It's happening all over the city. We have to back them up and the only way we can is to mobilize and organize against it together. One by one we can't win, but together we can."

The December 12th Movement, a human rights organization, will lead a protest rally to "Resist Fascism and the Rise of the American Police State," on Wednesday, December 6, 2006 at 4:30pm at NYPD Headquarters, One Police Plaza, Downtown NYC. Community activists, elected officials, and grassroots community residents will speak out about what is happening "on the ground" in the domestic war zone.

The issues on the agenda include the police profiling of Black youth; NYPD / Homeland Security occupation of the Black community; police aggression, harassment and overkill, as well as President Bush's assault on Habeas Corpus; the erosion of civil rights; and Iraq war for oil.

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)

Received:

“A Point You Missed”

[This letter refers to an article about conditions in Iraq written December 4, 2006 By Solomon Moore, L. A. Times Staff Writer. The quotes are from that article, carried in GI Special 4L5]

From: Adam Keller
To: GI Special
Sent: December 05, 2006
Subject: A point you missed

"Heckman said attrition and liberal leave policies meant that only 68% of the 9th division is even on duty at any given time. Another American advisor complained that the division had only 65% of the weapons and other equipment that it had been allocated by the U.S."

"And it's not just my guys," said the advisor, who spoke on condition of anonymity. 'As I look across the division MiTT teams, they all tell me the same thing. Some of them have 50% of their equipment, some have 75%, but it's the same thing all over Iraq."

Where did the missing 35% or 25% or 50% of the weapons provided by the US go?

I think at least part of it is in the hands of the "insurgents".

Adam Keller

[And who is Adam Keller? For starters, a role model for honorable soldiers:

[Excerpts from Wikipedia:] [See also The Other Israel, at www.gush-shalom.org]

As specified in the charge sheet, Keller was accused of Insubordination, under Article 48 of the Israeli Military Code, and of Spreading Propaganda Harmful to Military Discipline under Article 53 of the same, in that "(...) While being a soldier in the IDF the accused did on two occasions - on the night between 11 and 12 April, 1988 and on the night between 12 and 13 April, 1988 - write on a total of 117 parked military vehicles (tanks, armoured personnel carriers, trucks and lifting forks) the following text:

"Soldiers of the IDF! Refuse to be occupiers and oppressors, refuse to serve in the Occupied Territories!"

Further, the accused did place upon electricity pylons in the camp where he was stationed stickers bearing the text "Down with the Occupation!" and he also did place similar stickers on the inside doors of stalls in the Officers' Toilet at the same camp.

At court, Keller freely admitted to having performed all the acts enumerated in the charge sheet, but claimed that they constituted no criminal offence of any kind, but were rather praiseworthy acts which it had been his duty to undertake.

**"I Wonder If There Is Any Way For Me To Be
In Touch With Troops Who Have Been
Guarding Oil Pipelines In Iraq"**

From: Nick Mottern, Director, Consumers for Peace [nickmottern@earthlink.net]
To: GI Special
Sent: December 04, 2006

I wonder if there is any way for me to be in touch with troops who have been guarding oil pipelines in Iraq or other facilities as I would like to understand what specifically they are required to do, the hazards and what they observe in terms of who benefits from the oil.

Additionally, I would like to know what companies have come into Iraq to work in the oil fields.

Thank you again for your work.
With best wishes, Nick Mottern

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

GI Special issues are archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have posted issues; there may be others:

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

<http://imagineaworldof.blogspot.com/>; <http://qi-special.iraq-news.de>;

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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