

GI SPECIAL 5A21:



[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in.]

“We’re Being Betrayed”
“Staying In Iraq Will Not Work,
And It Is Not Worth The Price. It Is
Time For U.S. Troops To Come
Home”
“I’d Tell You That The Democrats Are
Talking A Good Game, But They're Not
Even Doing That,” Sgt. Madden Says



Sgt. Liam Madden

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, and Katherine GY, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

January 17th, 2007 New York Daily News [Excerpts] & January 15, 2007 by Cheryl Tan, WAVY & The Associated Press [Quotes at the end.]

Talk today about Sgt. Liam Madden, a kid from Vermont who joined the Marines after high school and ended up in Anbar Province, who says that you can be a good Marine and a good American and still want our war in Iraq to stop.

Talk proudly about Madden of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, who took a petition, signed by more than 1,000 just like him, to Congress yesterday, who just by walking up the steps of the Cannon House Office Building did more than big Democrats such as Sens. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) are doing these days.

Clinton would rather be photographed with soldiers than do anything for them.

The other day on "Face the Nation," Obama looked like he wanted to hide under the desk when Bob Schieffer asked him if he backed Sen. Edward Kennedy's bill that would require congressional approval to fund the troop increases that this President has planned. Obama started talking about a "phased withdrawal" and sounded like somebody trying to explain cricket.

They are the headliners of the party in power now, but all they do is talk and talk but say nothing meaningful about Iraq.

It tells you everything about how much both of them want to be President, no matter what kind of mess they would inherit in Baghdad.

This isn't about ideals with them as much as ambition.

Maybe they can explain to the people on the ground now how important it is for them to find a safe place in this debate.

"I'd tell you that the Democrats are talking a good game, but they're not even doing that," Madden says. "Everybody in Congress has to understand something: If they continue to fund this war, it's not just the President who owns it. They own it, too."

The Appeal for Redress, as yesterday's document is officially called, was signed by active military members and National Guardsmen and reservists.

There were 1,034 names on it yesterday when Madden and the others took it up the steps to the Cannon Terrace.

And this was not partisan dissent that came from the President's political opponents.

This came from soldiers brave enough to speak out, even at the possible cost of their careers, and makes them braver than the people who represent them.

Their Appeal for Redress ended this way: "The timing of the beginning of the war was a choice, and the timing of the ending will be a choice. If President Bush does not choose to end the war, then Congress must by cutting off funds."

At least Kennedy tries to do something.

The best the rest of them can do is talk about some kind of nonbinding resolution. That ought to scare off Bush and Vice President Cheney.

It is as if Clinton and Obama in particular are terrified of being Swift-boated by the Republicans all over again, made out to be weaklings and cowards if they don't want to continue sending U.S. soldiers over to Iraq to die in a civil war the United Nations now says killed more than 34,000 Iraqi civilians in the last year alone.

"This isn't us against the military," Madden says. "It's us against this policy."

Madden joined the Marines at 18 because, he says, he needed purpose in his life. He thought that in the last four years of his contract, he could get himself a college education. Now he is not so sure, even though he was told on his way into service for his country that he would be called back from inactive duty only for a "national emergency."

"They keep changing the rules," he says

So he puts his name on the Appeal for Redress. And then listens to Cheney, who goes on television Sunday and says that if we withdraw U.S. forces from Iraq, we "revalidate the strategy that Osama Bin Laden has been following from day one, that if you kill enough Americans, you can force them to quit, that we don't have the stomach for the fight."

This is the same Cheney who has only ever picked up a gun in his life to shoot birds or lawyers.

"It's the same old stuff," Madden says. "If we're not blind in our loyalty to their beliefs, then Osama wins. But that doesn't work anymore, and the election should have told everybody that. The American people aren't idiots."

Just treated that way by this administration.

On one hand, the President calls this the most important ideological battle of our time. Then, practically in the next breath, he says that this country's commitment in Iraq is not "open-ended."

So even with the most important ideological battle of our time, he has the meter running.

Some soldiers, ones who have put themselves on the line in Iraq, spoke out against this lunacy yesterday.

Madden said it's crucial that active-duty military members speak out about their concerns about the Iraq.

"We're not excluded from democracy because we signed up to serve," Madden said in a telephone interview.

"We're being betrayed, our effort is being exploited because our efforts are being used for actions that are illegal and immoral."

"Staying in Iraq will not work, and it is not worth the price. It is time for U.S. troops to come home."

Sgt. Jabbar Magruder with the Army National Guard joined him a few minutes later.

"One thing I want to ask for the citizens of this nation is to stand behind us. Show Congress that you support us, and our right to speak out," Magruder said.

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Four Soldiers, One Marine Killed In Separate Incidents In Al Anbar

21 January 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070121-13

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – Four Soldiers and One Marine assigned to Regimental Combat Team 5 died Saturday from wounds sustained due to enemy action while operating in Al Anbar Province.

Two More Marines Killed In Al Anbar

21 January 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070122-01

FALLUJAH, Iraq – Two Marines assigned to the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit were killed in separate incidents Jan. 21 from wounds sustained due to enemy action while operating in Al Anbar Province.

IED Kills Baghdad Soldier; Three Wounded

21 January 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070121-16

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldier died when an improvised explosive device detonated targeting a security patrol northeast of the Iraqi capital Jan. 20.

The unit was conducting combat operations in the area when the roadside bomb detonated, killing one Soldier and wounding three others.

IED Kills British Soldier In Basra; Four Wounded

January 21, 2007 Press Association

A British soldier has been killed after a roadside bomb struck his patrol vehicle in southern Iraq.

Four soldiers were also injured, one seriously, in the incident which took place in the northern part of Basra, said the Ministry of Defence.

They were travelling in a Warrior armoured personnel carrier patrol in the north of the city. It is unclear whether the casualties were dismounted at the time of the attack.

"One British soldier has been killed and four have been injured, one of them very seriously.

"The attack happened in the north of Basra city near the districts of Al Hadi and Al Jezaizah.

For Dead Airman's Family, Grief Blends With Pride



STAFF SGT. TIMOTHY COOK, U.S. AIR FORCE BOMB VICTIM:

Jan. 10, 2007 BY JENNIFER MOONEY PIEDRA, Miami Herald

Marcia and Pierre Fenster planned to spend Sunday afternoon preparing their house for repairs. A neighbor offered to come over at 3 p.m. to help the Lauderhill couple move furniture and do other heavy-lifting jobs.

But the knock on the door came two hours early.

Marcia Fenster thought it would be children selling candy or church recruiters.

Then she saw her husband standing in the doorway with tears running down his face. Beside him were two uniformed U.S. Air Force officers.

"I passed out because I knew," she said. "It's the worst fear you have as the mother of a soldier."

Marcia Fenster's youngest child, Tech Sgt. Timothy Weiner, 35, was killed Sunday when a car bomb exploded in Baghdad.

Two other airmen, also assigned to the 775th Civil Engineer Squadron from Hill Air Force Base, Utah, were killed in the same attack.

Weiner, an explosives expert who left last summer for his second tour of duty in Iraq, was expected to return home to Utah in two weeks to be reunited with his wife and 15-year-old son.

Now, his family is left with only memories.

Marcia Fenster, who raised her five children on her own, spent much of Tuesday reminiscing about Weiner's life.

Sitting on the front porch of the Lauderhill home Weiner grew up in, she broke down in tears at each mention of her son's name. Her husband, Weiner's stepfather, also cried as he sat beside his wife and held her hand.

"I have an incredible amount of pride for what he did," Marcia Fenster said. "But the pain is unbelievable."

The grief adds to the family's struggles over the past year.

The Fensters have spent months trying to find a contractor who can repair their home, which was damaged by Hurricane Wilma in 2005 and a subsequent flood caused by a broken water pipe.

For months, they have been living out of boxes.

Renovations, which were supposed to begin Monday, were put on hold by news of Weiner's death.

"We are living under such horrible circumstances," Marcia Fenster said. "This has been so difficult for us. Now, another tragedy has occurred."

Since childhood, Weiner dreamed of a life in the military, his family said. He often made model airplanes and talked about joining the Air Force.

That day came soon after he graduated from Piper High in Sunrise.

Weiner enlisted at 18, following in the footsteps of his three older brothers who also had careers in the armed forces -- two in the Army, one in the Coast Guard. They are now retired.

Weiner's mother tried persuading her youngest to enroll in college instead, but, she said, he had his mind made up.

"I have lived the last 20 years of my life afraid of seeing the news," she said. "When you hear someone died, you think, 'That could be my son.' Then you think, 'Dear God, don't let it be my son.' Then you think, 'It's somebody's son.'"

The last time Marcia Fenster spoke with Weiner was a few weeks ago, the day before Saddam Hussein was hanged.

"He was hoping they wouldn't kill Saddam until after he came home," she said. "He feared there would be an escalation in terrorism."

Weiner was looking forward to returning to the United States so he could be with his family. He hoped to retire in two years and settle down in Colorado, where two of his brothers live, his mother said.

Weiner's wife, Debbie, was his first -- and only -- love, family said.

The couple began dating when Weiner was in high school and they worked together at Albertsons supermarket.

Together, they had a son, Johnathan -- Weiner's pride and joy.

"He would kiss his son good night every night," Marcia Fenster said. "I don't know that I've ever seen a closer bond between a father and a son."

Though heartbroken, Weiner's family can't help but feel proud of his service. To them, he'll always be a hero.

"He was doing what he wanted to do," his brother Eric Weiner said. "It's a sad thing, but that's the nature of combat."

Del. Airman Killed In Iraq



Elizabeth A. Loncki, Courtesy of Christine Loncki

January 8, 2007 By ANDRE TAYLOR, The News Journal

A 2001 Padua High School graduate was one of three Air Force troops killed Sunday in a bomb blast near Baghdad, the Pentagon said today.

Senior Airman Elizabeth A. Loncki, 23, a New Castle native, was the first Delaware woman killed in the line of duty in Iraq and the 66th female American soldier there.

“She wanted to contribute to the country,” said Loncki’s aunt, Tina Masiello, adding that Loncki expressed no reservations about going to Iraq. “She was ready to go, it was a cause she deeply believed in. She told us not to worry.”

Loncki, who was deployed to Iraq in August, was scheduled to return home in two weeks, her family said. Her boyfriend, Sgt. Jayson Johnson, who was stationed with her at Fort Hill Air Force Base in Utah, had planned to visit the family’s New Castle home Thursday to ask her father’s permission to marry her, Masiello said.

Instead, Stephen Loncki got a visit Sunday afternoon from three men in uniform. He was taking down Christmas decorations at his New Castle home when they arrived.

“He knew right away what it was,” said his wife, Christine Loncki.

Loncki’s eldest daughter, they told him, died after her explosive ordnance disposal team was targeted by a car bomber near Al-Mahmudiyah.

Now, Johnson will serve as a military escort for Loncki’s body as it is transported to the mortuary at Dover Air Force Base and prepared for burial. Her body is to arrive early this morning at Dover Air Force Base and remain there for at least 48 hours, before she is turned over to her family in New Castle.

“She was a beautiful, beautiful child,” a tearful Stephen Loncki said of his eldest daughter. “She loved her family and her family loved her. We miss her so much.”

Loncki last spoke to her family on Christmas Eve, as she opened presents her father had sent.

“I sent her a DVD of a concert and some popcorn, and filled her stockings with a bunch of Christmas goodies,” said Loncki, adding that he also sent several news magazines after her daughter said she and her fellow soldiers didn’t get a lot of information.

“She sounded melancholy,” Loncki recalled. “She knew her family was together and you could tell she felt far away. ... She was happy to talk to us, but a little sad, too, because she was so far away.”

Elizabeth Loncki attended St. Peter the Apostle grade school and graduated from Padua Academy in Wilmington in 2001, where she played volleyball. She briefly attended the University of Arizona before enlisting in the Air Force.

Masiello described her niece as a faithful Catholic who enjoyed rock music and swimming, and whose beauty belied an athletic toughness evidenced by her success on Padua’s volleyball team and her ability to match boys push-up for push-up.

Her death brings the U.S. death toll in Iraq to 3,014, and comes during a week when President Bush is expected to announce plans to send more American troops into Iraq.

Killed in the same blast as Loncki were Tech. Sgt. Timothy R. Weiner, 35, of Tamarac, Fla., and Senior Airman Daniel B. Miller Jr., 24, Galesburg, Ill. The three were assigned to the 775th Civil Engineer Squadron at Hill Air Force Base.

“There was a car with a suspected bomb in it they were investigating when in exploded,” said Marilu Trainor, public affairs director at Hill Air Force Base.

Trainor said Loncki was a member of the bomb squad, the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron. Daily, she said, the unit would venture out into areas in and around Baghdad, investigating suspicious vehicles to see if there were bombs inside that had to be detonated.

The bomb inside the car they were working on exploded while they were trying to disarm it, she said.

“It’s part of their mission every day,” Trainor said. “It’s not unusual for them to do these missions. It takes nerves to do what they do.”

Bomb Kills South Gate Soldier In Iraq

Jan 3, 2007 CBS

SOUTH GATE, Calif. A 21-year-old Army soldier from South Gate died in Iraq when a homemade bomb exploded near his unit while on combat patrol, the Department of Defense reported Wednesday.

Spc. Luis G. Ayala died in Taji, Iraq, of wounds suffered on Thursday.

Ayala was assigned to the 2nd Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

Resistance Force That Attacked U.S. Meeting In Karbala Drove 50 Miles To Get There & Wore Military Uniforms; [Think They Had Intel On The Meeting? Duh.]

Jan. 21, 2007 By BUSHRA JUHI, Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — The gunmen who killed five U.S. troops in the Shiite holy city of Karbala wore military uniforms and used vehicles commonly driven by foreign dignitaries — an apparent attempt to impersonate Americans, Iraqi officials said today.

In Karbala, provincial Gov. Akeel al-Khazaali, who was not at the security meeting, said the SUVs were able to get through a checkpoint on the outskirts of the city, 50 miles

south of Baghdad, because police assumed it was a diplomatic convoy and informed headquarters that it was coming.

"The group used percussion bombs and broke into the building, killed five Americans and kidnapped two others, then fled," the governor said, adding that Iraqi troops later found one of the SUVs with three bodies dressed in military uniforms.

A security official in Karbala, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to disclose the information to the media, said the convoy of gunmen drove to Babil province after the attack. The Babil police commander confirmed that they entered the region before disappearing.

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO
COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS
EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS
TIME, EXCEPT THAT A TRAITOR WHO LIVES
IN THE WHITE HOUSE WANTS YOU THERE
That is not a good enough reason**



U.S. forces drive an armoured vehicle on a road in Baghdad October 31, 2006.
REUTERS/Namir Noor-Eldeen

And They Call This A “Success”

January 21, 2007 By Tony Perry, L.A. Times Staff Writer [Excerpts minus the happy talk.]

In a country studded with areas where the U.S. has either failed or made only limited progress toward stabilization, Husaybah and the surrounding Qaim region stand out as a success, officials said.

Despite the improvement, problems persist. The port-of-entry project, being built by an American company with Iraqi workers and British security guards, is behind schedule, in part because building materials were hijacked.

Insurgents routinely hijack gasoline trucks coming from Baghdad.

A City Council member was recently arrested on suspicion of insurgent activity, and bombers have tried to knock out the telephone system.

The mayor needs bodyguards around the clock.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Taliban To Open Schools In Afghanistan

Jan. 21 2007 Associated Press

The Taliban's governing body decided to open schools in the areas controlled by the militants in Afghanistan, the purported chief spokesman for the hardline militia told The Associated Press.

Abdul Hai Muthmahien said that Mullah Omar and other Taliban leaders decided that from March, Islamic education will be provided in at least six southern provinces -- first for boys and later for girls.

"The U.S. and its allies are doing propaganda against the Taliban," Muthmahien said in a phone call to an AP reporter from an undisclosed location late Saturday. "Taliban are not against education. The Taliban want Shariah (Islamic) education."

The Taliban's announcement appears aimed at undermining the standing of the democratically elected government of President Hamid Karzai and challenging its writ over southern regions where insurgents have a foothold. It's the first sign since the militia's ouster that it wants to provide social services.

TROOP NEWS

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME:

BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



The funeral of Army Spc. Eric Thomas Caldwell, in Arlington National Cemetery Jan. 17, 2007. Caldwell was killed while serving in Iraq. (AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

Navy Relieves Sub Commander After Deaths

[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in.]

Jan 19 By ANNE FLAHERTY, Associated Press Writer

The Navy announced Friday it relieved the commander of a nuclear submarine that was involved in an incident that killed two sailors.

On Dec. 29, rough seas swept four American sailors from the deck of the submarine off the coast of southwestern England. The USS-Minneapolis-St. Paul was leaving Plymouth harbor when the sailors were knocked into the water by surging waves. The four men were taken to a hospital in Plymouth, where two were pronounced dead.

According to officials, an initial review determined the incident was avoidable and due in part to a poor decision by the commander. A formal investigation is still under way. He was identified by a Navy statement as Cmdr. Edwin Ruff.

According to the Navy, Ruff was reassigned to a shore-based post in Norfolk, Va. The decision was made by Vice Adm. Chuck Munns, commander of the Navy's Submarine Force in Norfolk.

"Munns took this action due to a loss of confidence in Ruff's ability to command," according to the service statement.

Ruff and another officer on the submarine received a letter of reprimand this week.

The Minneapolis-St. Paul, assigned to the 6th Fleet, had just completed a weeklong layover in Plymouth, about 210 miles southwest of London.

Based in Norfolk, Va., the sub was heading to sea for routine duties when the accident happened.

Stupid Australian Government Caught Lying About Casualties

[Thanks to Max Watts, who sent this in.]

December 11, 2006 By Kelvin Bissett, News Limited

THE cost of the war on terror can be revealed, with documents showing at least 236 Australians who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan being granted disability pensions.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs has secretly accepted liability for a range of mental and physical injuries that have emerged after leaving the battlefield, including hearing loss, post-traumatic stress disorder, back problems and alcoholism.

The 236 disability pensioners dwarfs the "official" Australian Defence Force casualty count of just 20 in Iraq - plus two deaths - and 11 in Afghanistan.

An investigation by The Daily Telegraph can also reveal the Federal Government has accepted liability for two previously unknown deaths. The deaths would have occurred since their return home.

There have been only two official Australian deaths in the war on terror, including Private Jake Kovko, killed in mysterious circumstances in his Baghdad barracks in April.

Department documents show medical pensions have been granted for mental and physical injuries to 109 individuals who have seen service in the Iraq conflict. A further 171 people who served in Afghanistan as part of the international coalition have also received medical pensions. As 44 of these disability pensioners have served in both conflicts, the total comes to 236.

Golden Days For War Profiteers

1.17.07 Wall Street Journal

Defense contractors have enjoyed surging profits in recent years as the government spent heavily to fight wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and combat terrorism in other parts of the world.

Recently, some investors have worried that ballooning federal deficits could bring the flush times to an end. But with the makers of warplanes, tanks and battlefield technology expected to report strong fourth-quarter results beginning next week, the latest Pentagon plans suggest that the long-expected spending plateau is still another year away.

Pentagon Crooks Helped War Profiteer Grab \$100 Million; They Broke Law & Overpaid

1.17.07 USA Today

A Pentagon domestic intelligence agency overpaid and might have broken the law in awarding a \$100 million contract to lease office space, federal investigators say.

The Pentagon's Counterintelligence Field Activity awarded the no-bid deal in 2003 to TKC Communications. Federal auditors say the agency lacked the authority to sign the contract and overpaid by more than \$2 million.

Gonzalez Blames Guantanamo Prisoners' Lawyers For Slowing Down Their Trials By Defending Them

1.17.07 Philadelphia Inquirer

Trials for detainees at Guantanamo Bay have been delayed because of numerous challenges by their own lawyers, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales said in defending the Bush administration's treatment of terror suspects, who have been held for years without charges or trials.

The attorneys have won a number of challenges to the way the government has proceeded in the cases, including the denial of basic rights to a fair trial

Gonzales said that the trials of prisoners may begin as early as this summer and that rules for military commissions in carrying them out would be sent to Capitol Hill this week.

Iran Buys War Gear At Surplus Pentagon Sale

DoD Slogan: “Right Item, Right Time, Right Place, Right Price, Every Time”

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in.]

Jan 16 By SHARON THEIMER, Associated Press Writer

Fighter jet parts and other sensitive U.S. military gear seized from front companies for Iran and brokers for China have been traced in criminal cases to a surprising source: the Pentagon.

In one case, federal investigators said, contraband purchased in Defense Department surplus auctions was delivered to Iran, a country President Bush has branded part of an "axis of evil."

In that instance, a Pakistani arms broker convicted of exporting U.S. missile parts to Iran resumed business after his release from prison.

He purchased Chinook helicopter engine parts for Iran from a U.S. company that had bought them in a Pentagon surplus sale. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents say those parts did make it to Iran.

Sensitive military surplus items are supposed to be demilitarized or "de-milled" — rendered useless for military purposes — or, if auctioned, sold only to buyers who promise to obey U.S. arms embargoes, export controls and other laws.

Yet the surplus sales can operate like a supermarket for arms dealers.

"Right Item, Right Time, Right Place, Right Price, Every Time. Best Value Solutions for America's Warfighters," the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service says on its Web site, calling itself "the place to obtain original U.S. Government surplus property."

Federal investigators are increasingly anxious that Iran is within easy reach of a top priority on its shopping list: parts for the precious fleet of F-14 "Tomcat" fighter jets the United States let Iran buy in the 1970s when it was an ally.

In one case, convicted middlemen for Iran bought Tomcat parts from the Defense Department's surplus division. Customs agents confiscated them and returned them to the Pentagon, which sold them again — customs evidence tags still attached — to another buyer, a suspected broker for Iran.

"That would be evidence of a significant breakdown, in my view, in controls and processes," said Greg Kutz, the Government Accountability Office's head of special investigations. "It shouldn't happen the first time, let alone the second time."

The Pentagon recently retired its Tomcats and is shipping tens of thousands of spare parts to its surplus office — the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service — where they could be sold in public auctions.

Iran is the only other country flying F-14s.

The GAO, the investigative arm of Congress, found it alarmingly easy to acquire sensitive surplus.

Last year, its agents bought \$1.1 million worth — including rocket launchers, body armor and surveillance antennas — by driving onto a base and posing as defense contractors.

"They helped us load our van," Kutz said. Investigators used a fake identity to access a surplus Web site operated by a Pentagon contractor and bought still more, including a dozen microcircuits used on F-14 fighters.

The undercover buyers received phone calls from the Defense Department asking why they had no Social Security number or credit history, but they deflected the questions by presenting a phony utility bill and claiming to be an identity theft victim.

Items seized in December 2000 at a Bakersfield, Calif., warehouse that belonged to Multicore, described by U.S. prosecutors as a front company for Iran: among the weaponry it acquired were fighter jet and missile components, including F-14 parts from Pentagon surplus sales, customs agents said.

The surplus purchases were returned after two Multicore officers were sentenced to prison for weapons export violations. London-based Multicore is now out of business, but customs continues to investigate whether U.S. companies sold it military equipment illegally.

In 2005, customs agents came upon the same surplus F-14 parts with the evidence labels still attached while investigating a different company suspected of serving as an Iranian front. They seized the items again. They declined to provide details because the investigation is still under way.

Arif Ali Durrani, a Pakistani, was convicted last year in California in the illegal export of weapons components to the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia and Belgium in 2004 and 2005 and sentenced to just over 12 years in prison.

Customs investigators say the items included Chinook helicopter engine parts for Iran that he bought from a U.S. company that acquired them from a Pentagon surplus sale, and that those parts made it to Iran via Malaysia. Durrani is appealing his conviction.

It's no secret to defense experts that valuable technology can be found amid surplus scrap.

On a visit to a Defense Department surplus site about five years ago, defense consultant Randall Sweeney literally stumbled upon some that shouldn't have been up for sale.

"I was walking through a pile of supposedly de-milled electrical items and found a heat-seeking missile warhead intact," Sweeney said, declining to identify the surplus location for security reasons. "I carried it over and showed them. I said, 'This shouldn't be in here.'"

Asked why the Pentagon would sell any F-14 parts, given their value to Iran, Baillie said: "Our first priority truly is national security, and we take that very seriously. However, we have to balance that with our other requirement to be good stewards of the taxpayers' money."

Blair Slammed People Who Want Britain To Pull Out Of Iraq And Told Us To Stop Moaning: "If This Man Was Not So Much Of A Coward To See Me I Would Soon Let Him Know What Moaning Is!"



Mother Of Gordon Gentle, KIA, Iraq

[Thanks to NB who sent this in. He writes: In penning words that have power, Rose is getting better!]

15 January 2007 by Rose Gentle, Military Families Against The War (UK)

Yesterday Blair slammed people who want Britain to pull out of Iraq and told us to stop moaning.

I am insulted and angry at what he said.

Mr. Blair promised troops they would see an improvement in conditions but in return they must be prepared to fight and die in the battle against fundamentalists, the military need to accept conflict and casualties may be part of what they are called on to face.

So now he can call it a battle. When my boy was told he was to go to Iraq it was for peace keeping.

But we all know it was lies, how can we stop "moaning" - it's our boys that are getting killed for the lies of this government.

This is a war that is killing our troops, one which I do not see Mr. Blair's son going to, or the sons of the rest of our government.

We all know that our sons could be killed when they go to war, but if my boy was killed with WMD I still would have the hurt that I have when I go to bed and when I get up.

How can we stop "moaning" if our troops don't have the right equipment? Look at the accommodation for them and their families at home and abroad.

Some families have to post boots out to the boys.

And when they come home what help do they get then? Not a lot.

How can this man (well I don't think I should call him a man) tell us to stop moaning?

I think the minister of death should be his name.

He also targets the former head of the army general Sir Mike Jackson. That man is just telling Blair the same thing we have been telling him - our troops want to know what Tony Blair is going to do about the failure to deliver armoured vehicles to protect them from roadside bombs in Iraq.

They want to know when they will have enough helicopters in Afghanistan.

If this man was not so much of a coward to see me I would soon let him know what moaning is!

So lets keep moaning at him.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

“We Are Being Subjected To A Wave Of Attacks On Our Oil Installations”

1/22/2007 The Peninsula & January 15, 2007 Washington Times

Iraq’s oil ministry lost 289 workers who were killed in attacks in 2006, Oil Minister Hussein Al Shahrstani said yesterday.

“We are being subjected to a wave of attacks on our oil installations,” he said

“In 2006, 289 of our employees were killed and 179 were wounded in such attacks.”

Shahrstani added that in the six-day period alone between December 30 last year and January 5 during the feast of Eid Al Adha “oil pipelines were the target of 30 attacks and attempts at sabotage.”

Iraqi militants are taking most of the \$1.5 billion a year that is stolen from Iraq’s main oil refinery through smuggling and corruption, the government told parliament.

“We are losing \$1.5 billion at Baiji refinery alone, and most of this money is channeled to terrorists, who are using it to target us and target our nation,” Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih said.

Bush “Surge” A Big Help To Recruiters For Iraq’s Armed Resistance

1.15.07 Los Angeles Times

President Bush’s plan to send 21,500 more troops to Iraq has inflamed passions, bringing new recruits to insurgent cells and outpourings of popular anger toward the U.S.

| |
|--|
| <p>OCCUPATION ISN’T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!</p> |
|--|

Assorted Resistance Action

Jan. 21 (Xinhua) & Reuters

Gunmen attacked a police patrol and killed two policemen in a drive-by shooting in the Sunni stronghold of Falluja, 50 km (35 miles) west of Baghdad, police said.

"A suicide bomber drove his explosive-laden car into an Iraqi army patrol parking near the Abu Tammam communication center in Mosul City, and detonated at about 12:30 p.m. (0930 GMT)," Brigadier Abdul Kareem al-Juboury told Xinhua.

An Iraqi soldier sustained burning wounds after the Humvee carried him caught fire in the blast.

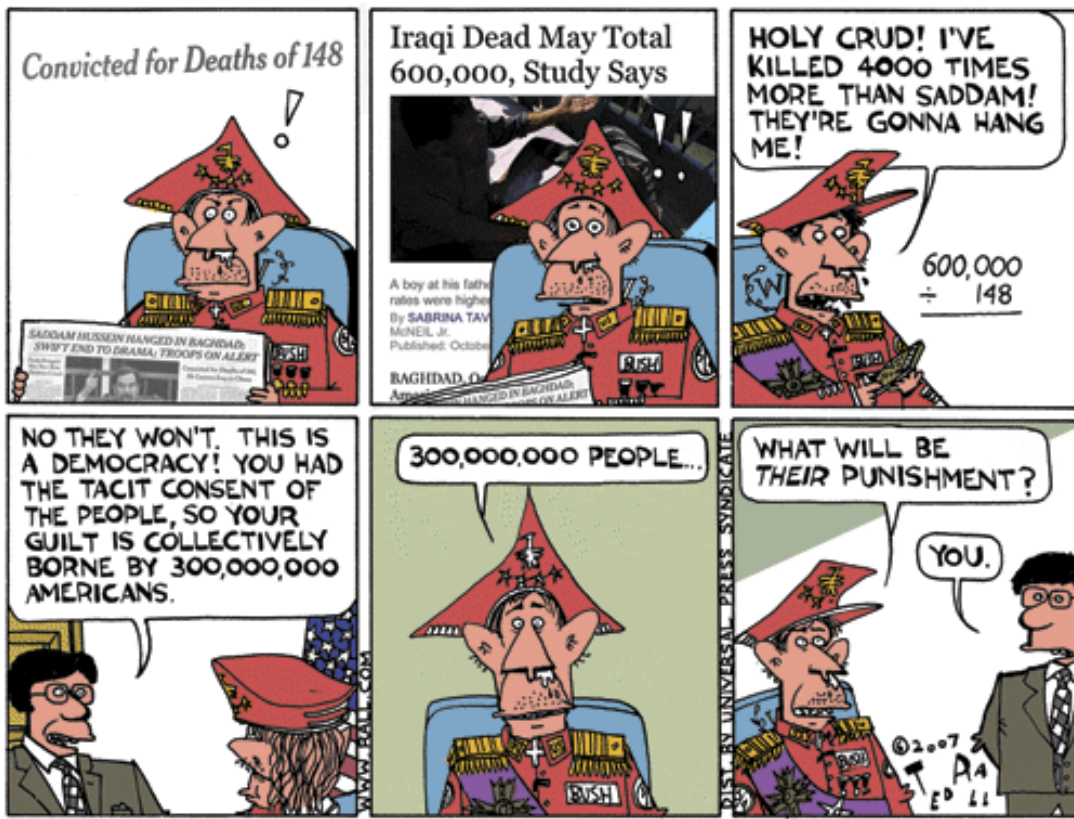
Guerrillas attacked guards protecting oil facilities, seized their weapons and vehicles and set an oil well on fire in the town of Dibis, police said.

Two Iraqi soldiers were killed on Friday in a roadside bomb blast on a bridge near Yusufiya south of the Iraqi capital, the U.S. military said in a statement.

Guerrillas shot the deputy head of a municipality in Dibis, northeast of Kirkuk, when they opened fire on his car, police said.

Guerrillas killed an army captain and captured his brother in the area of Abbasi, 80 km (50 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, police said.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in.]

“Soldiers Are Humans Too, And Can Only Take So Much Crap From Their Leaders Before They Decide To Rise Up Against Them”



From: Anonymous One
To: GI Special
Sent: January 16, 2007
Subject: An old photograph

It's an old photograph of a Soviet defector in Afghanistan (the only one without a beard).

The more I hear about the coalition soldiers occupying Iraq and Afghanistan expressing their disillusionment and frustration, the more I am reminded of what happened to the Soviets in Afghanistan.

Soldiers are humans too, and can only take so much crap from their leaders before they decide to rise up against them.

The Soviet troops in Afghanistan realized they were fighting for an unjust (not to mention futile) cause, and eventually sympathized with the natives; some even gained the audacity to start shooting at their old commanders and officers.

With the way Bush and his cronies are treating their troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, and with more and more troops wondering about what they're doing, is the possibility of their own soldiers starting to resist their commanders really that implausible?

It's happened before in Vietnam too, hasn't it?

A River In Egypt

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: January 21, 2007
Subject: A River In Egypt by Dennis

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan

A River In Egypt

Troy wants to go back to his Unit
back when it was like before
before being wounded in war
It's hard to accept that his leg is gone
so he tells them he is tired of this bed
he is tired of being poked and woke up
at all times of the day and night
Troy tells them to send him back with the guys
before his body was ruined
before the morphine shots that enter his brain
takes him away from here
His wife Pam knows he is lying to himself
that he'll never go back with the guys
what looks like gung-ho is actually a show
a can't accept his wounds in disguise
So she stokes his hair as he lays there
she looks at all the Soldiers in beds
the hardest part is accepting
that they will never do what they did before
She watches the president on TV
as he mumbles and scratches his head
she knows he will never visit Troy
he doesn't even care about the dead
So she lights a candle when she gets home
after the children are tucked in bed
trying to figure out what to say
because Troy wants to jump out of his bed

go back to the guys the war
denying he is wounded at all
instead of wanting to come home
to her and the children
and making the best of it all.

A Hero Who Got No Medals: Staff Sergeant Nolde, 1st Armored Division; “But I Have To Tell You, Sir, That If You Give Me An Order To Stop Them, I Just Won’t Do That”

From: Matthew C, The Military Project
To: GI Special
Sent: January 12, 2007
Subject: A few paragraphs from "The Great War for Civilization"

The following moving passage is about refugees of the first Gulf War fleeing the Republican Guard. The text occurs on 654-656 of The Great War for Civilization by Robert Fisk.

This was in the aftermath of the Basra uprising which the U.S. propagandists encouraged but that was left to twist in the wind when Baathist repression came down on them.

He was being ordered to send these people back to their deaths --- not because of "lack of facilities" or "Iraqi infiltration" but because the Kuwaitis didn't want them cluttering up their newly liberated treasure-house emirate.

And Nolde refused.

And all the while, the tide of sick and starving and frightened people shuffled past us. Some came in hand-pushed carts, old men and babies with filthy blankets thrown over them, and I thought of the medieval carts that went from house to house when the Great Plague struck Europe, collecting the dead. Some of the people in these carts were dead. There were two television crews pointing their lenses at close range into the faces of the refugees, and I noticed how, for once, the faces did not react to the cameras. It was as if every face was also dead.

Two U.S. embassy officials were standing besides a station wagon along with a senior American officer.

"We can't have them just all coming down here," one of the embassy men said to Staff Sergeant Nolde of the 1st Armored Division. "They can't cross the border. We have no facilities to handle this. They've got to go back."

I noticed Cuny (a journalist) standing beside the embassy men, listening in silence. "Look, you've got to stop them moving down this road," the embassy man was saying. "It's tragic, I know that, but we simply don't have the facilities for them." Cuny asked if extra first-aid tents couldn't be erected for the refugees, and the embassy man sighed.

It wasn't supposed to be like this. Liberation, a clean victory -- and now this mess. And on television. You could see his problem.

"You've got to stop them, Sergeant," the embassy man repeated. The officer joined in "Iraqi agents could infiltrate back into Kuwait among refugees."

But suddenly, there on this cold, damp, hellish road, all the bright sunlight of what was best about America -- all the hope and compassion and humanity that Americans like to believe they possess -- suddenly shone among us.

For the young, tired 1st Armored staff sergeant turned angrily on the man from the U.S. Embassy. "I'm sorry, sir, But if you're going to give me an order to stop these people, I can't do that. They are coming here begging, old women crying, sick children, boys begging for food. We're already giving them most of our rations.

"But I have to tell you, sir, that if you give me an order to stop them, I just won't do that."

You could see the embassy men wince. First was these pesky folk cluttering up the highway, then the television cameras, now a soldier who wouldn't obey orders.

But Sergeant Nolde just turned his back on the diplomat and walked over to a queue of refugee cars. "Tell these people to park at the side of the road over there," he yelled at the soldiers on his checkpoint. "Tell them to be patient but we'll try to look after them. Don't send them back."

Around Nolde, two famished Iraqi families, the women in filthy black chadors, the children barefooted, the men's faces dazed, were sitting in the dirt, tearing open the American military ration packs with their nails, scooping the cold lumps of stew, pouring the contents of sauce packets into their mouths.

Across the cold sand, Nolde's soldiers had already helped to house an Iraqi woman and five children. Their story was simple and terrible. Their father had been executed for refusing to join the Republican Guard, their mother raped afterwards. The children were taken by their aunt southwards towards the American lines and there they all were now, squatting in an abandoned electricity shed. The Americans were feeding them, and had

found four puppy dogs and a small gentle-faced donkey, which they had given to the grimy children.

Now a line of battered cars was driving steadily towards Nolde's position, packed with fearful civilians. Many had not eaten for days. The men were unshaven, the women in tears, the children had urinated in the car in the long journey across devastated Iraq. Whole families were crying for civilian relatives killed in the air assault. Their convoy stank. A little girl was held out of the window of an old black Mercedes by a screaming woman. The child's body was jerking grotesquely, the convulsions about to kill her.

This was not quite what the generals in Riyadh had been thinking about when they announced their days of "battlefield preparation" and "communications interdiction."

Nolde ordered one of his men to run down the line of cars.

"Where is the car with the sick child?" the soldier kept shouting in English, until someone translated the question into Arabic. There was a wail from the Mercedes. "Get a medic down here, fast," the soldier ordered. Two more Americans arrived, a big, black soldier who took the little girl into his arms and touched her brow. "'Oh, Jesus, she's having a fit," he said. "Tell the field hospital we're coming down with her."

The stricken child, together with her distraught mother, was taken from the car. Nolde arrived to order the vehicle out of the column. "Tell the rest of the family we need to search their vehicle then they can go wait by the Red Cross truck," he said.

Nolde and his twelve soldiers of the 1st Armored handed out more of their own rations. There would be no medals for performing these duties.

And with good reason.

For a conflict of interest was becoming apparent.

That is why the American officer and the U.S. diplomats had arrived to inspect Nolde's position.

The newly returned and "legitimate" government of Kuwait--on whose behalf the Americans had gone to war--had no desire to see these refugees given sanctuary in Kuwait.

The officer even muttered into Nolde's ear the following revealing sentence: "We had an Iraqi soldier give himself up near here the other day and a Kuwaiti soldier just took him to one side, shot him in the head and pushed his body into a ditch. If you let these people through Safwan, they could face the same danger."

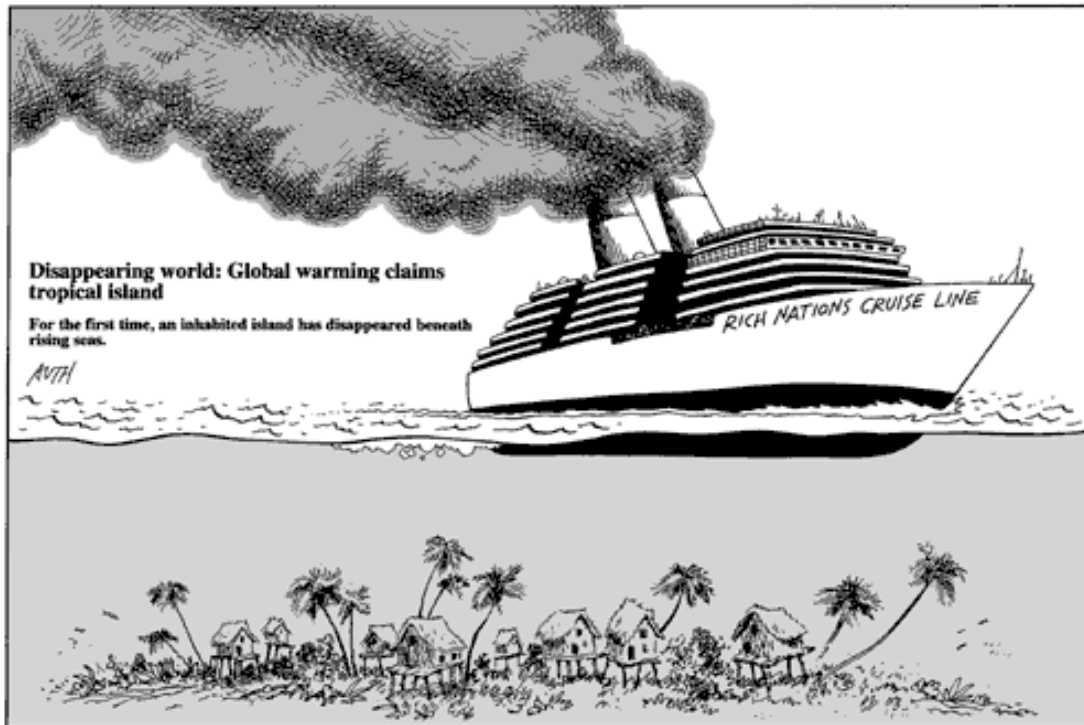
Nolde looked at the officer in contempt.

He must have known very well what was going on.

He was being ordered to send these people back to their deaths --- not because of "lack of facilities" or "Iraqi infiltration" but because the Kuwaitis didn't want them cluttering up their newly liberated treasure-house emirate.

And Nolde refused.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in.]

CONGRESSMAN WHO COMPLAINED ABOUT FIVE-DAY WORK WEEK TELLS POOR AMERICANS TO WORK LONGER HOURS

16 Jan 2007 American Progress Action Fund

Rep. Jack Kingston (R-GA) made headlines last month after complaining about Congress' new schedule that requires members to work five days a week: "Keeping us up here eats away at families," Kingston told the Washington Post. "Marriages suffer. The Democrats could care less about families -- that's what this says."

Yet on Wednesday, Kingston offered this advice to Americans living in poverty: work longer hours

During House debate over the minimum wage, Kingston said raising the minimum wage would do nothing for poor Americans. Instead, if people marry and work longer hours, "they would be out of poverty," he said. "It's an economic fact."

Kingston is wrong. The annual salary for full-time workers earning the federal minimum wage still leaves a family of three about \$6,000 short of the poverty threshold.

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.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

“A Shantytown In The Shadow Of The Biggest Construction Boom Miami Has Seen Since The 1920s”

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in.]

January 16, 2007 By LAURA RIVERA, New York Times

MIAMI, Jan. 15 — When an emaciated, gray-haired woman staggered into the ragtag encampment complaining of a toothache the other day, Eugene Simpkins fed her peanut butter sandwiches from the communal kitchen and fetched her aspirin from the makeshift medicine cabinet.

As night fell, the woman slept on a urine-stained couch, while Mr. Simpkins fried batches of cornmeal-dusted fish over a campfire. He pointed out four sick people he had been tending to since joining Umoja, a settlement of formerly homeless people in the Liberty City neighborhood of Miami, last month.

“I know someday I’ll be old like her,” said Mr. Simpkins, 43, who said he was an ordained Baptist minister and had lately been serving as Umoja’s unofficial cook. “I just hope that when that day comes, there will be someone to take care of me.”

With 16 huts cobbled together from plywood, discarded closet doors and cardboard, Umoja is a shantytown in the shadow of the biggest construction boom Miami has seen since the 1920s.

Started in October by an advocate for low-income housing, it is part social protest and part social experiment, with nightly meetings where decisions on whether to evict people or how to split up chores are determined by consensus.

Most of the 40 residents said they had been sleeping on the streets before moving into Umoja's colorful shacks. The eyesore has become a warm community, with a resident poet entertaining regularly, and has won over some neighbors, including those who now bring by homemade sweet potato pies, despite previous complaints about trash and noise.

The city commissioner who represents the area, Michelle Spence-Jones, had tried to shut the settlement down with an ordinance to require a permit for gatherings on public land. But after several visits to Umoja, she withdrew the ordinance and instead promised to arrange for trash pickup at the site three times a week.

Umoja, which means unity in Swahili, is the brainchild of Max Rameau, 37, a stay-at-home father who selected the site, at NW 62nd Street and NW 17th Avenue, because Miami-Dade County razed a 62-unit low-income apartment building there in 2001 and never replaced it. Mr. Rameau and others said the settlement was a symbol of Miami's growing housing crisis.

A 2006 study by Florida International University found that half the families in West Liberty City could not afford a studio apartment in the area.

Michael Stoop, executive director of the National Coalition for the Homeless, said shantytowns like Umoja were "indicative that shelters are not the solution, and that homeless folks want to have themselves treated in a more dignified way."

The shacks, many covered by blue tarps, are ringed by a row of earthen plots where residents grow cabbage, collard greens, kale and papaya. A portable toilet, stacks of firewood, and the kitchen and pantry are lined up along one side, and an improvised shower sits in the back.

Mr. Rameau dismissed the notion that Umoja was a publicity stunt. "There's a protest element to it, but this is fundamentally not a protest," he said. "At a protest, you go to a place, you make your demands heard and then you go home. Here, this is home."

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