

GI SPECIAL 5B23:



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

In Case Your Forgot; 61% Of Iraqis Want U.S. Troops Dead

In fact an opinion poll cited by the bipartisan Baker-Hamilton report of senior Democrats and Republicans in Washington showed that 61 per cent of Iraqis favour armed attacks on US and British forces. 22 February 2007, Patrick Cockburn, Independent News and Media Limited

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Ft. Bragg Sgt. Killed In Iraq



U.S. Army Sgt. Richard L. Ford, 40, based at Fort Bragg died earlier this week of wounds suffered during combat operations in Iraq, the military said Feb. 22, 2007. Ford was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 325th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

One U.S. Soldier Killed, 3 Wounded By Ad Diwaniyah IED

02/22/07 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070222-15

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — One 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Soldier was killed and three were wounded in an improvised explosive device attack on their M-1114 HMMWV near Ad Diwaniyah at approximately 2 a.m. Feb 22.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Baghdad

2/21/2007 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND 07-01-03C

On Feb. 20, an MND B unit was searching a residential area in a northern urban district of the Iraqi capital when they received small arms fire, killing one Soldier.

Marine Killed In Anbar

Feb. 21, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070221-04

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Marine assigned to Multi-National Force-West was killed Feb. 20 while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar Province.

Kansas Guardsman Killed in Iraq; Seven Other Soldiers Wounded in Blast



2-22-07 KAKE

A Kansas National Guardsman was killed in Iraq this week. Sgt David Berry served with the 161 Field Artillery Unit out of Kingman and had been stationed in Iraq since March.

The 37-year-old Berry grew up in Anthony. KAKE News brought viewers his story in November, when he came home just before Thanksgiving for a surprise visit.

The military said he died when he was struck by an improvised explosive device

Family members say Sgt. Berry's unit was called to check out a mortar explosion Wednesday night. An explosive went off when they arrived and Sgt. Berry was killed.

Seven soldiers were injured, including Jared Hays, a good friend of Berry's. He is in critical condition. There were two other soldiers from Anthony in that unit, and their families are awaiting word of their conditions.

In April 1986, Berry enlisted in the Kansas Army National Guard with Detachment 1, Battery C, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, at Kingman, Kan., as an ammunition team chief. He graduated in 1987 from Advanced Individual Training as a Heavy Anti-armor Weapons Infantryman at Fort Benning, Ga. In 1997, he completed the Primary Leadership Development Course at Camp Ashland, Neb. In 2001, Berry completed his Basic Non-Commissioned Officer course for Field Artillery. In 2003, he completed the Multiple Launch Rocket System Crewmember course.

He had a total of more than 16 years of military service. In February 2005, Berry was awarded the Soldiers Medal, which is the highest peacetime honor that a soldier can receive.

Berry was serving on active duty at Fort Leavenworth during Operation Enduring Freedom and while at home on leave came upon a single vehicle accident in Kingman County. The driver had lost control of the vehicle and crashed off the highway and the vehicle was on fire. Berry, at great personal risk, pulled the driver from the burning vehicle, saving his life.

Maj. Gen. Bunting presented Berry with this medal while at his pre-mobilization station at Camp Shelby, Miss., prior to his deployment to Iraq.

His other awards include the Army Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Kansas National Guard Meritorious Service Ribbon, Kansas National Guard Commendation Ribbon, Kansas National Guard Emergency Duty Service Ribbon and the Kansas National Guard Service Medal.

Berry is survived by his wife, Kathleen, one stepdaughter, two stepgrandchildren, his mother, father, and sister.

Funeral arrangements are pending.

Berry is the third serviceman from Kansas to die in Iraq in the last 7 days. A Marine from Dodge City and a soldier from Wichita have also been killed in combat.

Moon Grad Killed In Iraq

02/20/2007 Allegheny Times

Lori Bowe had a standing rule for the past year and a half that no one was allowed to ring the doorbell at her home on Juniper Drive in Moon Township.

The rule had become so ingrained in the neighborhood, even the mail carrier and the Schwan's delivery man knew not to push the little white circle next to the door.

As long as she never heard the two-toned ring, she knew that her son, Pfc. Matthew Bowe, was alive.

"She would yell at you if you rang that doorbell, because her worst fear was that the Army would ring the doorbell to tell her Matt had died," said Branden Ryan, Bowe's best friend.

Lori Bowe was not home Monday morning when Army representatives arrived to inform the family her 19-year-old son was killed when his medic vehicle tripped a land mine while driving through Baghdad, the explosion killing another soldier in the five-man crew as well, the family said.

The tragic news arrived in the form of a telephone call from her husband, John.

"He was a good person," Lori Bowe said between sobs Tuesday in the living room of her home, surrounded by her husband and Matt's brother and three sisters. "He would help anybody. He wanted to be a doctor. He wanted to be a pediatrician."

Her son, a 2005 graduate of Moon Area High School, enlisted in the Army to help earn money for college. He got a head start in the profession he wanted to pursue by serving as a combat medic.

"That's one of the main reasons he joined, so that he could get the education to be a doctor," John Bowe said.

The Bowes have not seen their son since he deployed for Iraq last summer. He was based at Fort Drum, N.Y., home of the 10th Mountain Division, and assigned to the 2nd Brigade combat team.

His death is particularly hard for his parents to bear because they said he was supposed to be home this month on a 3½-week leave.

"Every time he had his leave, he got bumped for some reason or another," his mother said. "Somebody had a wedding anniversary that was more important or just outranked him or whatever. And he's been bumped and bumped. And he was looking forward to being home for Valentine's Day and everything."

The Bowes even kept Christmas lights hanging outside their home to give their son a taste of the holidays he did not get to celebrate with his family.

Matthew Bowe grew up in the Mooncrest neighborhood, in homes on Juniper and Oak drives. A devoted Pittsburgh Steelers fan, he played football since the first grade and although he never made it as a starter, Ryan said Bowe kept with the sport until his senior year at Moon, when he earned a spot on special teams.

Ryan said Bowe was a talented writer of fantasy stories who loved to draw and had recently started a rap group. He had enough talents to be anything he wanted, his friend said.

"That's not how he was supposed to die," Ryan, 20, said. "He was supposed to die taking a bullet for a kid or rescuing 16 people from a burning building. He could have done anything else, but he chose to help people."

Ryan said he enlisted in the Army with Bowe, but he was unable to serve with his friend because he was deaf in one ear. Ryan always expected the Army to change his friend, but when he spoke to him last month, Bowe was still the same person he knew, even continuing his interest in video games in the middle of war by asking for advice on how to beat the game "The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess."

"It didn't change him at all," Ryan said of Bowe's military service. "You couldn't make him a better person."

Bowe had a dream of one day having a family of his own. The two friends, at Bowe's insistence, took four years of child development in high school, classes mostly full of women because it involved dealing with small children. But Ryan said the kids warmed up to Bowe immediately, and vice versa.

When her son enlisted, Lori Bowe said he never expected to have to serve in Iraq because in spring 2005, he figured the war would be over by the time he completed his training. When he received his deployment orders, he was devastated, his mother said.

"Everybody was devastated," she said. "Nobody wanted - who wants their kid to go over and do something like that?"

She made him promise not to be a combat medic because she knew those soldiers often had to go into battle zones to tend the wounded. It is a promise Bowe was unable to keep.

In addition to his parents, Bowe is survived by one brother and three sisters: Amanda, 17; John, 15; Megan, 12; and Tiffany, 8.

Asked to share thoughts of their brother, the aspiring doctor turned hero, none said a word for a few moments until little Tiffany piped up, muttering something indecipherable as she leaned into her mother's shoulder for comfort.

The mother translated the girl's words: "She misses him, and she loves him very much."

Funeral arrangements have not been finalized. The military covers funeral expenses up to \$7,700, an Army spokeswoman said.

To help cover any additional expenses, the Matthew Bowe Memorial Fund has been established at the First National Bank, 825 Beaver Grade Road, Moon Township. Donations can be made in person or by calling (412) 264-7151.

Marine From Mich. On First Tour Killed In Iraq

2.20.07 The Associated Press

SHELBY, Mich. A 20-year-old Marine from western Michigan was killed by hostile action during his first tour of duty in Iraq.

Brett Witteveen of Shelby died Sunday, according to his Grand Rapids-based company. The unit said that the family didn't want to immediately comment.

Witteveen had been in Iraq since October.

Mesa Soldier Killed By Sniper Fire Weeks Into Deployment To Iraq

February 21, 2007 PHOENIX (AP)

A soldier from Mesa has been killed in Iraq less than three weeks into his deployment there, according to his family.

Pvt. Kelly Youngblood, 19, died Sunday after he was hit by sniper fire in Ramadi, his family said Tuesday.

"Ever since he was a little boy, he wanted to be in the military," said his mother, Kristen Chacon. "It was like he was answering a call."

Youngblood, who attended Tempe's McClintock High School and Rhodes Junior High and Alma Elementary School in Mesa, enlisted in the Army as soon as he turned 18. His grandmother, Jean Herrold, said he wouldn't give up on his dream of giving back to his country, despite her pleas.

"He just told me not to worry about him, that he loved everything about the military," Herrold said. "I think he was born to be a soldier."

Chacon said she tried to remain optimistic about her son's deployment to Iraq until he told her about a narrow escape in a bombing that killed four soldiers a few days after he arrived. She said shrapnel missed him by 8 feet.

"My first thought was that he was not going to make it," Chacon said. "It was just too dangerous."

Herrold said Youngblood was "was the funniest person I know."

By the fourth grade, he was already popular for his humor and always had a lot of friends, his mother said.

Youngblood also loved playing pranks on his roommates in the Army, Chacon said.

"Kelly would hide somewhere where his fellow soldiers could not see him," she said, "and then jump out and blow a horn to scare them."

Youngblood's family said he thought about continuing to serve in the Army, where he drove a tank, after returning from Iraq.

"He liked the service, the discipline and camaraderie between his colleagues," Herrold said.

Funeral services were not announced but his family said he would be buried in Arizona.

Black Hawk With Nine Abroad Shot Down North Of Baghdad

February 21, 2007 Reuters & By DAMIEN CAVE and AHMAD FADAM, The New York Times Company

A Black Hawk helicopter with nine people on board attacked on Wednesday was forced into a "hard landing" after taking fire from heavy machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades in Diyala Province, north of Baghdad, the United States military said.

Iraqi police captain Mahmoud al-Mashhadani said he saw some type of projectile hitting the aircraft before it came down on Wednesday in a rural area known as the Line, 30 kilometres north of Baghdad.

"I saw a ball of fire hitting the aircraft and smoke coming out of the helicopter as it came down," Mashhadani told Reuters. Another U.S. helicopter picked up those on board.

The witnesses to the helicopter crash said that three helicopters, including a double-rotor Chinook, were flying at tree level, when resistance fighters began firing anti-aircraft machine guns from an area near an oil pipeline.

A resident who would give his name only as Ali said the back of one helicopter burst into flame, leading the aircraft to turn sideways and plunge into the ground. Two other witnesses said they saw fire coming from the helicopter as it crashed around 1 p.m. local time.

U.S. Occupation Patrol Ambushed In Amriyah

Feb. 21 (Xinhua)

A car bomb went off near a U.S. patrol on an intersection in Baghdad's western neighborhood of Amriyah, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

"Apparently the attack caused casualties among the U.S. soldiers, but we don't know exactly how many of them were killed or wounded as the U.S. troops immediately cordoned off the scene," the source said.

Fierce Fighting At Ramadi & Buhriz

02/20/2007 Associated Press

Helicopter gunships were called in during fierce battles around Ramadi, about 70 miles west of Baghdad, police and witnesses said.

In areas around Buhriz, about 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, U.S. warplanes strafed a neighborhood and leveled a palm tree grove during a daylong battle with guerrillas firing mortars and rocket-propelled grenades, according to an Associated Press reporter traveling with the unit.

Basra British Bases Blasted

Feb 22 (VOI)

Basra- Two British bases came under attacks with Katyusha rockets and mortar rounds in the southern Iraqi city of Basra, media spokeswoman for British forces in Basra said

***Mission Ridiculous:* Bush's Stupid Surge Answered By More Whack-A-Mole**

February 21, 2007 By DAMIEN CAVE and AHMAD FADAM, The New York Times Company

Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV, a United States military spokesman in Baghdad, said that the "belt around Baghdad" had experienced an increase in attacks as Iraqi and American forces concentrate on neighborhoods within.

At a briefing in the Green Zone, he said that top commanders were considering assigning at least one brigade to the ring around the city, and perhaps another to Diyala Province, which has been the site of vicious battles between insurgents and American and Iraqi troops.

***Mission Ridiculous:* Bush's Stupid Surge Builds Support For Nationalist Mahdi Army**

February 21, 2007 By DAMIEN CAVE and AHMAD FADAM, The New York Times Company

Fatma al-Saiedi, 35, who was wounded in the explosion, said the attacks were a result of the new security plan, which has replaced the Mahdi Army, a Shiite militia, with what she and some other residents say are incompetent Iraqi policemen and soldiers.

“We trusted the Mahdi Army,” she said. “The Americans have arrested so many of them and now this happens — every day, another car bomb. We expect there to be more of them.”

FUTILE EXERCISE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



A U.S. Army soldier from Company B of the 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, patrols a street in New Baghdad, Dec. 24, 2006. (AP Photo/Darko Vojinovic)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

British And Spanish Soldiers Killed; Two Wounded

02/21/07 AFP

A British soldier was one of two NATO troops killed in Afghanistan on Wednesday, the Ministry of Defence in London said. "There were two NATO deaths today. One was British. He was a Royal Marine from 45 Commando, which is based in Arbroath."

NATO officials in Kabul said earlier Wednesday that the other fatality was a Spanish soldier. He was killed and two others were wounded in the western province of Herat when a mine hit a joint International Security Assistance Force.

TROOP NEWS

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



The funeral for U.S. Army Sgt. James Regan, in Manhasset, New York, February 16, 2007, who was killed by a roadside bomb with serving with the 3rd Battalion of the 75th Ranger Regiment in Baqubah, Iraq. REUTERS/Chip East

Mom Of KIA Soldier Says “This War Just Doesn’t Seem Right. Like The Vietnam One. It’s Not Right”

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

February 19, 2007 By KIMBERLY HEFLING, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts

Raised in the projects in an old steel town, Edward "Willie" Carman saw the Army as a chance to build a new life.

"I'm not doing it to you, I'm doing it for me," the then-18-year-old told his mother, Joanna Hawthorne, after coming home from high school one day and surprising her with the news.

When Carman died in Iraq three years ago at age 27, he had money saved for college, a fiancée and two kids — including a baby son he'd never met. Neighbors in Hawthorne's mobile home park collected \$400 and left it in an envelope in her door.

Hawthorne isn't waiting on history's verdict. She's bitter about a military she said enticed her son with promises of money, then sent him to a war based on a lie.

"When they came and told me he was gone, oh my God, it just crushed me," Hawthorne said. "There was actual pain in my heart.

It felt like someone was in there just ripping it apart."

When her son's first enlistment was nearing an end, before the Sept. 11 terrorists attacks, Hawthorne said he decided to re-enlist, partly because the signing bonus of more than \$10,000 would help pay his bills. At the time, he was facing \$600 in monthly child support payments from his failed first marriage.

When he deployed to Iraq, his sister said, he had money saved and planned to go to college when he got out of the military in 2005.

Instead, he died in Iraq in 2004 when his tank overturned.

Hawthorne said the military gave her \$4,000 for his funeral, but it wasn't enough to cover the \$14,000 expense. The funeral home forgave the rest, and neighbors collected \$400 to help her get by.

"You don't see anyone who has money putting their children into the military," she said.

"I'm all for our soldiers. Without them our country wouldn't be where we are today, but this war just doesn't seem right. Like the Vietnam one. It's not right."

For a year after her son's death, Hawthorne took a chair to the cemetery nearly every day, sat next to his grave and talked quietly.

Her vigil continues even now; the visits have slowed to once a week, but the pain sticks.

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

Denmark Getting Their Troops The Fuck Out Of Iraq

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, The Military Project; David Honish; Veteran, and Phil G, who sent this in.]

February 21, 2007 By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS & BBC

The prime minister said Wednesday that his country will withdraw its 460-member contingent from southern Iraq by August and transfer security responsibilities to Iraqi forces, and that the decision had been made in conjunction with the Iraqi government and Britain, under whose command the Danish forces are serving near Basra.

A recent poll showed 64% of Danes thought it completely or predominantly wrong for Denmark to continue to have troops in Iraq.

British Army Commanders Wanted Bigger And Faster Troop Pullout; “The Militias And Militant Groups In These Areas Only Fired Their Weapons At The Occupier And When They Go, All Of The Violence Here Will End”

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

February 22, 2007 Richard Norton-Taylor, Michael Howard in Baghdad, and Will Woodward, The Guardian

Military chiefs had been pushing for much bigger cuts in the number of British troops in Iraq than those announced yesterday by Tony Blair, defence officials made clear last night.

For months, army commanders have suggested that their presence on the streets of Basra was doing more harm than good, that it was time to lower expectations and let Iraqi forces take charge of security.

They were forced to agree to a more gradual reduction partly in deference to US sensitivities.

Mr Blair confirmed yesterday that the number of British troops in southern Iraq, currently 7,100, would be reduced by 1,600 over the next few months, and by a further 500 by late summer.

Basra's civic leaders and residents expressed relief at what they saw as the first step toward the end of the difficult British presence. Hakim al-Mayyahi, a member of Basra's provincial council, said Mr Blair's statement was overdue.

"Lately, they were not helping the stability of the security situation in Basra," he said. "On the contrary, their constant conflicts with the anti-British groups here was simply contributing to a negative impact among the public."

Salam al-Maliki, a senior official in the bloc loyal to the Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, which has long opposed a foreign presence, said: "The militias and militant groups in these areas only fired their weapons at the occupier and when they go, all of the violence here will end."

Though some expressed trepidation at the potential negative consequences of a drawdown in British forces before their Iraqi counterparts were fully ready to take responsibility for security, one senior provincial official in Basra said: "If after four years they can't withdraw 1,600 troops without destabilising the situation, then God help us."

63% Of Italians Got It Right; Get Our Troops The Fuck Out Of Afghanistan

February 22, 2007 By Tariq Ali, Guardian (UK)

62% of Italians and 73% of the government's supporters want to withdraw all Italian troops from Afghanistan.

Former Aid Chief At Walter Reed Faces Criminal Investigation: “Some Families Said Wagner Treated Them Callously And Made It Hard For Them To Obtain Assistance”

2.20.07 Washington Post, February 20, 2007

The Army has launched a criminal investigation of the former aid chief at Walter Reed Medical Center, who allegedly solicited donations for his own charity based in Texas.

Michael J. Wagner was being paid to match donors with thousands of wounded soldiers at Walter Reed who could not afford to feed their children, pay mortgages, buy plane tickets or put up visiting families in nearby hotels.

Some families said Wagner treated them callously and made it hard for them to obtain assistance.

“Another Sign Of How The Military Services Are Scouring For Every Last Trooper To Fight”

2.20.07 Washington Examiner

In a policy change, the Marine Corps will no longer automatically deactivate a reserve Marine who becomes pregnant on active duty. The switch would have only affected 16 Marines in 2006.

But it is another sign of how the military services are scouring for every last trooper to fight and support the war in Afghanistan and Iraq.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

February 21, 2007 By SINAN SALAHEDDIN, Associated Press Writer & Reuters & 22 Feb 2007 Reuters

The U.S. military said a policeman was killed, and two policemen wounded, on Monday when two booby-trapped houses detonated while police were searching homes in the northern town of Tal Afar, about 420 km (260 miles) northwest of Baghdad. Police had already reported the death of one policeman.

Four Iraqi soldiers were killed and nine wounded on Tuesday night as tried to dismantle a bomb planted inside their base in the town of Hawija, 70 km (40 miles) southwest of Baghdad, the Iraqi-U.S. Joint Coordination Centre said.

A car bomb killed four policemen at a police checkpoint near a busy market in Najaf, south of Baghdad,

The bodies of three policemen, were found shot dead on Tuesday in different parts of Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police commando patrol killed one policeman and wounded three in southern Baghdad, police said.

Baiji: Guerrilla fighters staged on Thursday an attack against a police station in Baiji district killing two police officers and wounding six policemen.

Police said in Mosul on Thursday a dead police captain had been shot in the head.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

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

Lessons Unlearned: "The Seeds Of Important Failure"

From: GI SPECIAL 3B94:

"As elsewhere in South Vietnam, search-and-destroy tactics continued to antagonize people who had to be won over. "Marines were operating in a vast sea of fear that could easily turn to hatred, and frequent fire fights, no matter how carefully conducted, could not but exacerbate the situation; moving bullets are promiscuous."

From: WAR IN THE SHADOWS: THE GUERRILLA IN HISTORY, BY Robert B. Asprey; William Morrow And Company; New York, 1994

A second blur centered on the ground war and Westmoreland's choice of attrition strategy and search-and-destroy tactics.

The problem faced by allied forces was essentially pacification that demanded a qualitative and selective approach. The tactical task was to clear an area of Viet Cong so that civil teams could move in to build a viable and secure community.

The military tactic thus required was clear-and-hold. The first task was to free an area from main-force guerrilla control. This called for fragmenting, dispersing, and destroying main-force units.

But that was only the beginning.

Having cleared an area, military units had to “hold” it—that is, they had to provide area security while helping police forces to root out the all-important Viet Cong infrastructure, while, simultaneously, other specialized government forces undertook area rehabilitation and established viable government.

Military strength was insufficient to clear and hold all enemy-infested, or even challenged, areas simultaneously. This meant that priority areas of operation had to be established, along with “economy of force” areas, which received only limited military pressure. Some challenged areas would perforce have had to be ignored until later in the pacification process.

The real target was the peasant, not the guerrilla, and the only way the peasant’s support could be gained was by establishing secure and viable local-area government—a slow and difficult task amply demonstrated throughout history.

American strategy and tactics did not respect this essential requirement.

Large “sweeps” through an area, though uncovering supply dumps and killing a few enemy, essentially answered nothing. Neither did search-and-destroy tactics respect the essential military task.

On rare occasions, enemy concentrations, such as those in certain areas of the DMZ, could be countered by conventional warfare methods.

As a rule, such methods inflicted grievous damage on people whose co-operation was necessary if the over-all mission was to be accomplished.

Instead of clearing and holding small areas as first essential steps in Winning peasant support, marine and army units pushed out in all directions in huge, awkward attempts to “kill” the enemy.

The results were several, and each contained the seeds of important failure.

The second result of promiscuous search-and destroy tactics was frequent damage to either person or property or both of peasants who remained and whose strength was necessary to effectively counter the insurgency.

The third result was frequently to tire the troops with “Yorkish” operations that produced no real benefits:

*The noble Duke of York,
He had ten thousand men,
He marched them up to the top of the hill,
and he marched them down again.*

The fourth result was to flood the country with foreign troops.

The fifth result was to increase the troop commitment and eventually relieve ARVN of combat duties, which, in turn, called for a larger American military investment that merely compounded incipient failures.

By end of 1966, then, it was becoming clear that American troops had undertaken a task for which they were neither organized nor trained, a task that they did not understand ---- indeed a task that could only have been accomplished by the South Vietnamese themselves.

It is a great pity that the innate ineptness of Westmoreland's strategy and tactics was not more obvious.

Unfortunately, the "indicators," or criteria selected by the military, to judge progress in Vietnam seemed reasonable to many Americans, who at first trusted their government and armed forces.

But, as any number of experts had earlier pointed out and as Bernard Fall once again emphasized in 1966, MACV and the JCS continued to judge progress by such military measurements as troop increases, expended ammunition, enemy dead, structures destroyed, rice confiscated, and weapons captured—conventional criteria meaningless in a counterinsurgency.

"Our mission was not to win terrain or seize positions," Lieutenant Philip Caputo later wrote,

"but simply to kill. ... Victory was a high body-count, defeat a low kill-ratio, war a matter of arithmetic. The pressure on unit commanders to produce enemy corpses was routine, and they in turn committed it to their troops. This led to such practices as counting civilians as Viet Cong. 'If it's dead and Vietnamese, it's VC,' was a rule of thumb in the bush."

Despite the barrage of statistics fired by MACV and III MAF at all visitors, pacification was not going well anywhere.

The marines in I Corps area erred in several respects.

As elsewhere in South Vietnam, search-and-destroy tactics continued to antagonize people who had to be won over.

Marines were operating in a vast sea of fear that could easily turn to hatred, and frequent fire fights, no matter how carefully conducted, could not but exacerbate the situation—moving bullets are promiscuous.

Marine bands could play, and marines could distribute food and clothing, and doctors could help villagers, but these advantages paled when one, two, or more villagers were killed in a fire fight or by bombs, rockets, naval shells, or napalm.

Troops Invited:

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 email contact@militaryproject.org:. Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe.

“Lobbying Undermines The Potential Power Of Angry Protest” “Anger, Not Diplomacy, Points The Way Forward For The Antiwar Movement”

February 9, 2007 By Sharon Smith, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

HUNDREDS OF thousands of antiwar protesters amassed on the streets of Washington, D.C., on January 27, emboldened by the optimism of an antiwar majority that has finally found its voice.

Democratic Rep. Henry Waxman discovered this combative mood while addressing a meeting of the Palisades Democratic Club in Los Angeles on January 28.

Protesters confronted him with a banner reading “Liberals do not fund occupation” and heckled him while he explained that, despite his alleged opposition to the U.S. occupation of Iraq, he would not commit to de-funding it.

The hecklers appeared dissatisfied with Waxman’s recital of Democratic Party talking points, shouting angrily, “What about the U.S. Constitution?” when he announced his opposition to impeachment proceedings against Bush.

BUT MOVEMENTS are also based on strategies, and antiwar activists must now decide the most effective strategy for coalescing renewed grassroots opposition into a sustained protest movement.

This must include an honest assessment of the very strategies that contributed to the antiwar movement’s malaise for the better part of the last four years.

Author Liza Featherstone commented in The Nation on February 2 that “much of the antiwar movement now agrees that there is no contradiction, or conflict, between chanting in the streets and lobbying in the halls of Congress,” adding, “protests would be meaningless without additional pressure on politicians.”

Featherstone’s argument sounds like the conventional wisdom.

Certainly, movements must seek to pressure politicians. The question is how most effectively to do so. United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), which has helmed U.S. the antiwar movement since 2003, has routinely coupled antiwar protest with lobbying.

It can reasonably be argued, however, that lobbying undermines the potential power of angry protest.

Lobbying involves an arduous effort to engage politicians in polite conversation. Protest, while no less arduous, is decidedly less friendly.

Occupying a representative’s office is not lobbying.

In a typical memo, UFPJ instructed its 800-strong citizen-lobbyists who swarmed the Capitol during its September 26, 2005, lobby day, “Please take the time to fax (or e-mail) a thank you note to the staff person or Congressperson you met with...You have begun to build a relationship with the office of your Representative and/or Senators--keep it up!”

UFPJ’s strategy is best described as lobbying interrupted by periodic outpourings of mass protest.

Eighteen months later and no closer to ending the war, a similar number of activists joined in UFPJ’s lobby day on January 29, as a follow-up to the January 27 protest, in the hopes that Democratic Party majority in Congress would yield more substantial results.

But as Aaron Glantz reported for the Inter Press Service on February 2, “Senior Congressional Democrats are brushing off questions about cutting off funding for the Iraq war, and indicate they will do little to forcefully stop President George W. Bush from sending 21,500 additional U.S. troops to Iraq.”

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called Bush’s troop surge “the one last chance” that the U.S. will “succeed” in Iraq, while Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid indicated his opposition would be limited to symbolic, bipartisan legislation, rather than de-funding the war.

Presidential frontrunner Hillary Clinton did not grace the nation’s Capitol with her presence from January 27-29. She ridiculed de-funding the war as a “soundbite”--from Iowa, where she was busy honing her 2008 campaign machinery.

It is also worth noting that, as Democrats have softened their support for the war on Iraq, they have hardened their stance against Iran--the next likely military target for both the U.S. and Israel.

Presidential hopeful John Edwards--who has scathingly criticized Congress for inaction on the Iraq war from his perch safely outside the Beltway--traveled to Israel on January 22 to rattle his saber at Iran. With fist-thumping emphasis, Edwards declared his commitment "to ensure that Iran never gets nuclear weapons, we need to keep all options on the table, let me reiterate--all options must remain on the table."

On February 1, Clinton worked the crowd for donations at an American Israel Public Affairs Committee's dinner, assuring attendees, "Israel and the United States have shared values and an unbreakable bond. Qualities that will be necessary as they stand up to terrorism and Iran."

At best, UFPJ's allies in Congress must be described as fair-weather friends. Rep. Jerrold Nadler spoke at UFPJ's January 27 protest, but quickly turned on the organization, saying he was "very upset" upon learning that UFPJ plans to co-sponsor the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation's call for a June 10-11 Washington mobilization against the "ongoing Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories"--a tepid call, given the scale of Israel's atrocities.

THE AGE-old saying "You attract more flies with honey than with vinegar" does not apply to Washington's entrenched political class, whose campaign coffers depend on a steady influx of corporate dollars.

A Chicago antiwar listserv report described a 20-minute meeting on January 22 between 20 local antiwar activists and Democratic Party powerbroker Rahm Emanuel: "Emanuel refused to take any position on any effort to cut off funding for continuation of the war past the current fiscal year." The meeting ended abruptly when Emanuel left to catch a flight.

While Democrats have kept antiwar lobbyists at arms' length since November, they have given a warmer reception to corporate lobbyists. The Los Angeles Times observed on January 22, "Surprising as it might seem in view of the Democrats' public rhetoric, business groups are getting their telephone calls returned. And they're getting plenty of face time with the new House and Senate leaders."

Back in November, when Pelosi unveiled the Democratic majority's plans for its first 100 hours, she promised to "roll back the multibillion-dollar subsidies for Big Oil."

When the bill left the House in mid-January, however, it sliced only \$5.5 billion from the \$32 billion in subsidies and tax breaks oil conglomerates will receive over the next five years--a small price to pay for the profit-soaked industry.

Grassroots activists must decide whether the antiwar movement will seek polite engagement for "face time" with Washington powerbrokers or embark on an admittedly less diplomatic strategy to get in their faces.

The potential clearly exists for the latter. In a little-reported protest on January 27, 2,500 demonstrators shut down a military recruiting center in Seattle, led by the local chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War.

One observer described, "Community members emerged from houses and joined the march as it snaked through the neighborhood. As the march drew near to the recruiting center the demonstrators began chanting, "Occupation is a crime, Ehren Watada should do no time!" and "You gotta resist, don't enlist!"

Anger, not diplomacy, points the way forward for the antiwar movement.

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR; RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS



A U.S. occupation soldier enters a store belonging to an Iraqi citizen to search for suspects in the southeast of Baghdad February 17, 2007. Iraqi citizens have no right to refuse these searches. If they resist, they can be arrested, wounded or killed by the foreigners. REUTERS/Carlos Barria

[There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and searching their shops and houses at gunpoint to arouse an intense desire to kill you in the patriotic, self-respecting civilians who live there.

[But your commanders know that, don't they? Don't they?]

OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION

BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!

***Nobody Loves A Traitor:* Disabled Interpreters For The Occupation Get Kicked To The Curb:**

**“‘I Risked My Life With The Marines,’ He
Says. ‘How Can They Refuse Me?’”**

“The interpreters are on no one’s side,” the retired U.S. soldier says. “The Shi’a hate them, the Sunnis hate them. The Americans don’t trust them because they could be infiltrators. As soon as they lose our protection they’ll be hunted down.”

January 18, 2007 By Joel Millman and Gina Chon, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

AMMAN, Jordan -- Cocky, cheerful Ali Adil thought he found his calling as an interpreter with the Third Marines, patrolling Iraq’s most dangerous ground. The pay was good and he loved bantering about women and rock ‘n’ roll with young Americans. By helping Marines root out insurgents, he believed he was building a peaceful and just Iraq.

But since July -- when a suicide bomber drove an explosives-filled tanker into a building his unit was guarding -- the 20-year-old Mr. Adil has faced a different future.

After suffering severe burns, he has undergone nine skin grafts at a hospital in Amman and lives in a dormitory with a dozen other wounded Iraqi interpreters -- “Terps” as the Americans call them.

Looking to avoid adding refugees, Jordan wants the Iraqis to leave the country when they are released from the hospital and no longer need postoperative treatment.

The interpreters look at a return to Iraq as a death sentence.

Their absence from home already may have endangered their families. “When someone is gone for a while, and nobody knows if he’s really dead, the militias start asking, ‘Is he with the Americans?’ “ says Mr. Adil, who says his family routinely receives death threats from Shiite militias in his old Basra neighborhood.

Since the start of the war, 257 Iraqi interpreters have been killed, says Titan Corp. of San Diego, which just completed a five-year, \$4.6 billion Pentagon contract to provide linguists to U.S. forces. Most of those killed were assassinated while on home leave, the company says.

Hobbling on crutches or rolling through their days in wheelchairs, the Terps see themselves as combat veterans of America's war, which should entitle them to medical care, pensions and safety. Most want to emigrate to the U.S.

After lobbying by the U.S. Marine Corps, Congress approved a special immigration program for translators in 2005. But just 50 slots a year were granted, which must be shared between Iraqi and Afghan applicants with at least a year's service with U.S. combat troops.

More than 5,000 locals have served in Iraq as interpreters.

Some lawmakers and U.S. officials have argued that if the U.S. made it too easy for skilled Iraqis to leave, fewer would remain to help build Iraq.

And if special benefits are carved out for interpreters, thousands more Iraqis who have worked with Americans -- from drivers to nurses to soldiers -- would also demand similar help.

Swapping Stories

Mr. Adil, a Shiite, is "Milan" because he liked to play as the AC Milan soccer team in PlayStation soccer games. Moghera al-Gaylany, a wealthy Sunni who learned English from a Welsh nanny, is "M2." He suffered eye and arm injuries from shrapnel. Abdul al-Basit, a Kurd who was hit by sniper fire in his arms and abdomen, is "Alan." Between therapy sessions, the interpreters swap stories and sometimes view video of the attacks that sent them to Amman. Such videos were usually taken by intelligence officers on the scene.

The wounded Terps sent here for treatment -- about 100 last year -- stay weeks or months. The hospital's management asked that the facility's name not be published for fear of attack. Amputees are the norm.

Diyer Hassan arrived in November, still in a coma after leaving Iraq, where he had been on a predawn Baghdad patrol with the U.S. Army's 26th Infantry. The 20-year-old awoke in a hospital room to discover his legs amputated just below the pelvis. He had been working to raise cash to finish at Baghdad University and earn an accounting degree.

Cooks' Jobs

When U.S. and British forces swept through Iraq in 2003, Mr. Adil was hopeful about the future. He says his father, an elderly Shiite shopkeeper, and his Christian mother did their best to steer their eight sons from trouble. When two were drafted during the Iran-Iraq war, the family bribed a base commander to assign them cooks' jobs far from the front.

When other Shiites rebelled against Saddam Hussein after the 1991 war, “we hid under our beds,” he says. The family longed for the dictator’s demise, and joined neighbors greeting the first troops entering Basra.

Fresh out of a two-year technical high school, the slim teenager was eager to test his rudimentary English, learned mostly from listening to an older brother’s Pink Floyd records and by surfing the Internet.

He says he landed a job paying \$200 a month as an interpreter for a company of the British army’s Royal Engineers.

Mr. Adil, the second-youngest child, suddenly became the family’s principal breadwinner. While one brother lined up work as a policeman, most of the others held day laborer jobs. One brother, Amjad Adil, now 29, drove his own cab until carjackers took it. He, too, then went to work for the British, and was quickly dubbed “Tommy Gun” for his admiration of automatic weapons.

Although the Adil brothers say their work was routine -- translating for British officers meeting local dignitaries -- insurgents slipped at least three threatening letters under the family’s front door warning them to quit. Letters tacked to nearby lampposts listed neighbors already killed for collaborating.

Worried about his safety, Ali left for Baghdad in January 2005 and found work with Titan, the main contractor supplying U.S. forces with interpreters. Titan paid him \$1,050 a month -- three times the salary of Iraqi police -- which included a small bonus for working in the dangerous Sunni Triangle.

(The few U.S. citizens who work as interpreters, and have high security clearances, make 10 times as much as bilingual Iraqis.)

In October, Amjad fled to Baghdad to work for Titan too, after he and another interpreter were fired on by four men in Basra. Amjad Adil escaped injury; his friend was shot in the face.

Tours With the Marines

The two brothers remember their tours with the Marines starting in late 2005 as the most gratifying part of the war. “Motivation! Mobilization!” Ali Adil shouted when asked what he loved about the Marines, nearly jumping from a chair as he assumed his battlefield stance.

In al Anbar province, he joined raids on suspected terrorists’ safe houses, often discovering weapons, cash and computer files whose data led Marines to other targets.

Night raids were an adrenaline rush.

After a fusilier launched a concussion grenade through an open window, Mr. Adil would dash into the building with other troops as an explosion shook the building and filled its

entrance with blinding light. "It's something you never forget, not for the rest of your life," he says. Nothing terrified him as much as hearing a patrol leader bark the order, "Take cover, sniper!" and hitting the ground.

"He was the best interpreter we had," says Sgt. Nate Royster, a squad leader with the Third Marines.

The chatty Mr. Adil would strike up friendships with Iraqi families passing through Marine checkpoints and over time would persuade them to identify Iraqis who were shooting at the Marines or planting bombs. He was also great at picking out Iraqis who were lying, Sgt. Royster says.

Mr. Adil and his brother swapped emails regularly from bases three hours apart. After six months, they had a week off together at the main Marine base in Haditha, where they shopped and played videogames. "We would call home together, both of us talking to our mother and father," Amjad Adil recalls. "It was like a family reunion."

News from home often was grim. During some calls, the brothers could hear mortar rounds landing near the family's home, which is close to a British base.

One day in July, Ali Adil walked downstairs from a Marine rooftop post near Haditha to join Iraqi troops making morning tea. At the same moment, a stolen tanker, filled with at least 400 pounds of explosives, rammed into the building.

Families of translators killed on the job receive a death benefit. Spouses receive 50% of the interpreter's weekly salary until they remarry or die. If there is no spouse, the benefit goes to a parent.

Because of Iraq's chaotic situation, it's often difficult to obtain reports and witness statements necessary to prove a claim. It can take several months to a year to settle a claim.

During his three years working for the U.S. military, one Iraqi translator received numerous threats. On Sept. 15, 2006, he was killed in a drive-by shooting as he drove home after a day of working with the Army Reserve's 412th Civil Affairs Battalion.

"If I tell (doctors in Iraq) how I am wounded, I am killed in one day," said a 27-year-old translator from Karbala, who requested that only his first name, Haider, appear in print. "The militias rule the hospitals in Iraq," he added, as fellow exiles in the Amman dormitory nodded in agreement.

What, no "adrenaline rush" about that?]

Under the 2005 special immigration program for translators, about 200 visas have been approved so far.

Of the more than 5,000 locals who have served in Iraq as interpreters, many are desperate to leave.

Few qualify because they need a letter of recommendation from a military “flag” officer, either a four-star general or a Navy admiral.

“The highest rank we meet are lieutenants, maybe a captain,” says Abdul al-Basit, the Kurdish translator who has been trying to emigrate since being wounded by a sniper last year in al Hawijah. “How are we going to meet a general?”

Last month, Mike and Joy visited their wounded counterparts in Amman. “You were in al Anbar, dude? That’s awesome,” said a young Terp who calls himself “Opie,” reaching up to slap Mike’s hand with the stub of his own. A few Terps asked them for ideas on how to get to the U.S.

But other interpreters found the visit dispiriting. Noticing the couple’s sleek clothing, their digital camera and, most of all, their incredible good fortune, only deepened their sense of isolation.

By the end of the evening, Mike was bummed out too, as he realized few of the Terps had a chance of winning a visa. “I have citations, like a hundred of them,” he said, sounding more defensive than proud. “Some of these guys have, like, two.”

Terps are especially vulnerable, says Enrique Kelly, casualty manager for U.S. defense contractor Titan.

“The interpreters are on no one’s side,” the retired U.S. soldier says. “The Shi’a hate them, the Sunnis hate them. The Americans don’t trust them because they could be infiltrators. As soon as they lose our protection they’ll be hunted down.”

Mr. Adil and his brother figure they’ll never qualify for visas. Neither knows any senior military officials, and Amjad doesn’t plan to stay in Iraq long enough to apply.

He wants to move to Syria where several Terps already have found haven. “I told my mother this was the end for me,” he said as he prepared to return to his Marine base after a vacation in December. “She cried. She doesn’t want any of us to do this anymore.”

For his part, Ali expects to leave Amman by the end of this month. Rather than return to a translator job in Iraq, he plans to wait for his settlement, which he figures will be about \$20,000. He thinks that ought to be enough to hire a smuggler who will lead him to a path other Iraqis have followed to Tijuana, Mexico, then on to San Diego.

There he’s confident he’ll be allowed to petition U.S. authorities for asylum, or at least find someone in Southern California’s growing Iraqi community to put up bond if he’s jailed. He’s also counting on help from former Marine mates, many of whom live in San Diego County.

“I risked my life with the Marines,” he says. “How can they refuse me?”

OCCUPATION PALESTINE/LEBANON

The Resistance Goes On

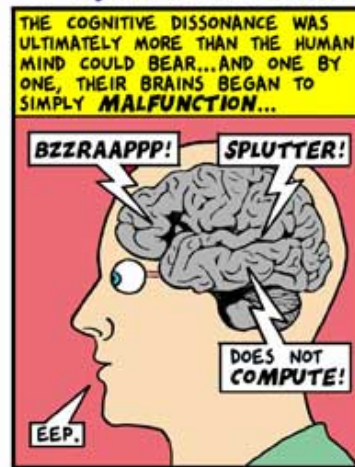
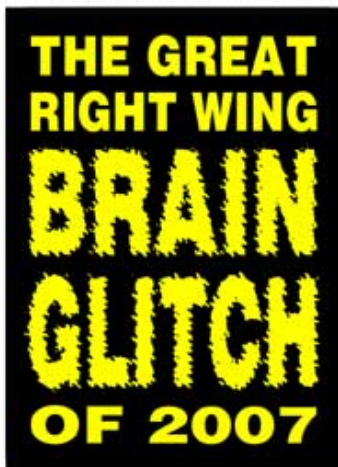
February 21, 2007 By Robert Fisk, The Independent (UK)

Spanish troops were stoned by youths in a Lebanese village last week. French soldiers who arrived at Maroun al-Ras with their weekly medical convoy for local Lebanese civilians were told in no uncertain terms that they were not welcome.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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

The Traitor Bush Compares Himself To George Washington

2.20.07 New York Times

On Monday, Presidents' Day, Bush wrapped himself in history's embrace, invoking another war, the American Revolution, and another George W. — George Washington — as his guide. "With the advantage of hindsight, it is easy to take George Washington's successes for granted," Bush said at a wreath-laying ceremony at Washington's home in Mt. Vernon, Va. But "America's path to freedom was long and it was hard, and the outcome was never really certain."

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)

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