

GI SPECIAL 5C3:



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

The Best News Of The Year, So Far: Soldiers “In Loud Conversations Deriding Our Government”

Letters To The Editor
Army Times

3.5.07

I took leave over the holidays and passed through Chicago, Atlanta and Raleigh, N.C.

During my travels, I was struck by the lack of uniform and military bearing on the part of my fellow soldiers.

Marines, airmen and sailors looked crisp while traveling in uniform, maintained military bearing at all times and represented their services well.

Traveling soldiers, however, looked like third-world refugees.

I saw numerous examples of poor uniform discipline and poor conduct: drinking in uniform, whooping and hollering in a drunken manner at TVs tuned to football games, engaging in loud conversations deriding our government and the Army.

I joined the Army over 20 years ago and have had a few breaks in service, but I'm certain that an E-1 is not allowed to walk around O'Hare International Airport with his blouse open and his hands in his pockets, shuffling down the terminal with his iPod blaring ghetto rap or speed metal.

I was appalled at the lack of discipline and pride in uniform shown by E-1s and E-2s obviously going home for Christmas break.

Take a look at your brothers-in-arms in other services and listen to your drill sergeants, who I'm sure gave you all a class in how to conduct yourselves in uniform away from the flagpole.

To my fellow officers, if you're stationed in the continental U.S. and traveling on your own dime on leave, stay out of uniform.

It's an abuse of your uniform to wear it just to get free coffee or an upgrade to first class. Save those benefits for the soldiers coming home or going to combat.

Maj. Mike Doherty
Fort Bragg, N.C.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Patrol Ordered To Search For IEDs Finds One: Two U.S. Troops And Interpreter Dead, Soldier Wounded

02 March 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070302-10

On March 2, an MND-B unit was conducting a route clearance patrol in order to free commonly traveled route of improvised explosive devices northwest of the Iraqi capital when they were struck by a roadside bomb, killing two Soldiers and one interpreter. Another Soldier was injured in the incident.

Creede Mourns Fallen Marine



Clinton Ahlquist

February 23, 2007 By ERIN SMITH, THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

CREEDE - This community is mourning the loss of a young Marine who was killed Tuesday while fighting in Iraq.

Marine Sgt. Clinton Wayne Ahlquist, 23, a member of Creede High School's class of 2003, was killed in Ar Ramadi in the Iraqi province of Anbar when he stepped on an improvised explosive device.

His mother, Barbara Ahlquist of Scottsdale, Ariz., said she was at work when she was called back home about 10 a.m. Tuesday. Her husband, Rex, was waiting for her with two Marines.

Ahlquist died after tripping an IED while guarding a Medivac helicopter, Mrs. Ahlquist said from her Scottsdale home Thursday.

Mrs. Ahlquist said her son wanted a military life from the time he was 4.

"At Halloween, Clint would always dress up as GI Joe. He decided to join the Marines because they were the best of the best, he said," his mother recalled.

She said Ahlquist enlisted in the Marines on June 23, 2003, shortly after graduating from school in Creede. "He was tough. He ranked quite high in his class at boot camp at Camp Pendleton (near San Diego) even though he completed his final humps with a broken foot. He re-enlisted when he was in Iraq the last time," Mrs. Ahlquist said. "Clint was proud to be a Marine, to fight for his country, to protect us and freedom."

His mother noted that Ahlquist was among seven or eight Marines selected from 600 during his first tour of duty to train with the Army Special Forces and received a commendation from the Army for his outstanding work.

At the time of his death, he was in charge of a Marine infantry squad that would go out on night raids.

Mrs. Ahlquist said she and her husband spoke with their son on Sunday and he was upset because he had lost his master sergeant a couple of days before.

"He was a good kid, such a good kid," she said.

When Ahlquist was a sophomore in high school in the Scottsdale area, he told his parents, "I am just a number here. The kids are only interested in BMWs, Corvettes and the GQ (Gentlemen's Quarterly) look. I want to go to school where I can see what I can do," Mrs. Ahlquist recalled.

At the suggestion of her sister, Ahlquist came to live in Creede with a cousin, Liz Sawatzky, and her family, who operated Blessings Inn.

Almost immediately, the big, good-looking kid was the big man on campus. In his 10-member class, he was one of only three boys.

"He loved Creede. He blossomed there," Mrs. Ahlquist said.

The next year, the family bought a home in Creede, where Ahlquist lived until graduation.

Ahlquist and classmate Karly Kolish, a year his junior and daughter of Mineral County Commissioner Carl Kolish and school librarian Frances Kolish, became an item at the school.

Frances Kolish considered Ahlquist part of the family. Her daughter, now a political science major at University of California at San Diego, is devastated by Ahlquist's death although the two went their separate ways several years ago, she said.

Ahlquist spent three-fourths of the time with the Kolishes, Mrs. Kolish said.

When Ahlquist enlisted, he left his dog, Grinchy, a Queensland heeler, with the Kolishes. Mrs. Ahlquist said with a laugh that she and her husband have to visit Creede often to see their "granddog."

Creede schools Superintendent Buck Stroh recalled Ahlquist. "He was full of energy, very outgoing," Stroh recalled, looking over the 2003 yearbook and its 11-member boys' basketball team, with five of those young men in the service in some capacity.

Stroh noted that Ahlquist was in journalism all three years he was at the school and was editor of the yearbook and school paper his senior year. As a junior and senior, he was class vice president. He was active in Future Business Leaders of America, was prom king his junior year and was on the Arby's All-Star Basketball team his senior year.

His coach, Aaron Christensen, recalled, "Clint was very conscious of what was going on around him and of people's feelings. He was respectful, a model citizen; he was never one of those kids who gets in trouble and one of those young men the younger kids looked up to.

"He really thrived on a team. . . he wanted be part of the team and was happy to be around a group of guys. That might have been one of the reasons he went to the Marines. I am really sad to see him go," Christensen said.

"It's a small town. We all know everybody. This affects the whole community, not just the school," Stroh said, adding that there will be a memorial service for Ahlquist and the school will erect a plaque to the young Marine's memory.

Ahlquist was born Dec. 1, 1983, in Scottsdale. He was in the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force stationed out of Camp Pendleton.

Ahlquist did two tours of duty in Iraq and one in Okinawa.

The Ahlquists plan to bury their only child in the family plot in a Phoenix-area cemetery. He was the only grandson of both sets of grandparents, and family members said he will be missed greatly. State Rep. Rafael Gallegos, D-Antonito, said he will read a memorial to Ahlquist and call for a moment of silence in his honor in the House today.

Resistance Attack Burns British Basra Base Fuel Supplies; Six Hour Fire At Location That "Comes Under Regular Attack"

2 March 2007 BBC

An attack on a British military base in Basra caused a fire in fuel stores, a military spokesman has said.

The petrol and diesel storage area caught alight after "indirect fire" hit the Iraq base, which is near the Shatt al-Arab Hotel in the city centre.

No-one was injured and no structural damage was caused in the attack or in the blaze, the spokesman said.

The fire happened at the base, which comes under regular attack, at 1900 local time (1600 GMT) on Thursday.

"Commanders at the base decided, because no-one was at direct risk at the time, that they would let the fire burn out," a spokesman for the Ministry of Defence (MoD) said.

The fire died out at about 0100 local time (2200 GMT), the MoD said.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



Thanks to Kevin Ramirez, CCCO. He writes: Pics showing what happens when US bases get mortared/rocketed. Obviously taken by a GI. I found them online, and don't know who took them.

The Resistance Noose Tightens: Occupation Command Forced To Use Night Artillery Fire To Defend Baghdad

GAME OVER CARTOON

March 2, 2007 By BRIAN MURPHY, Associated Press Writer

The rumbling of artillery fire was heard throughout Baghdad.

In recent days, U.S. gunners have pummeled areas of south Baghdad used as suspected staging ground for car bombings and other attacks.

There was no immediate word from the military on the latest apparent barrage. Residents said the shelling was concentrated on the mostly Sunni area of Dora.

***Petraeus' Sitting Ducks:
Isolated, Alone
No Allies,
Nobody They Can Trust;
And The Lying Fool In Command
Calls Static Fortified Outpost
Defense "Counterinsurgency"
"As Far As Force Protection Measures
Go, This Place Needs Improvement,"
Said Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Chaney"***

[Incredible. This lying murderous asshole Petraeus has the face to call sitting around in little exposed forts "counterinsurgency." That's what the French did in Vietnam. It's what every stupid loser occupying a country for an Empire has done since the Roman Empire. It absolutely guarantees defeat. It's a sign of combined weakness and incompetence.

[And the reporter buys it. Talk about dying in vain: this plan goes for a world class record. T]

March 1, 2007 By Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service [excerpts]

BAGHDAD, Feb. 28 -- American soldiers are leaving their sprawling fortress-cities and establishing many small outposts in the capital's most violent neighborhoods in a major tactical shift under the two-week-old Baghdad security plan.

Informed by counterinsurgency theory that calls for placing units full-time among the people they want to sway, U.S. troops are using their new bases to work with their Iraqi counterparts, uncover more battlefield intelligence and reinforce, by their sustained presence, the message that they will not allow militants unfettered freedom of movement.

But along with these advantages, American soldiers say these outposts pose new risks to their own safety and require pulling soldiers off patrols to protect their lodgings.

The threats became apparent this month when a car bomb exploded at a U.S. outpost in Tarmiyah, north of Baghdad, killing two U.S. soldiers and wounding 29 others.

At a new U.S.-Iraqi base in the Jamiyah neighborhood of western Baghdad, a platoon of American soldiers guards the front gate and watches from the rooftop.

"These little combat outposts, they are more exposed: Your routes in here are very limited, and they're definitely watching us," Staff Sgt. Marcel Weaver, 35, said of the insurgents operating in the neighborhood around the base. A grenade "attack is coming, I can guarantee that."

U.S. soldiers have opened 15 of about 30 planned "joint security stations" in the capital. They have also set up an unspecified number of smaller "combat outposts."

U.S. military spokesmen did not respond to requests for information about how many such outposts are operating in Baghdad or how many times they have been attacked.

Early Sunday, the U.S. Army battalion commander for the Jamiyah base gathered his top staff inside the station's control room, in what used to be a wedding hall, and discussed the distressing trend of violence just outside their base.

The day before, a few hundred yards from the front gate, insurgents blasted rocket-propelled grenades at an Iraqi-guarded checkpoint, followed the barrage with small-arms fire, then detonated two car bombs when American troops rushed to respond.

"What is it about this checkpoint that makes it such a magnet?" asked Lt. Col. Dale Kuehl, the battalion commander, studying a large aerial map of western Baghdad. "Why does it always get attacked?" he asked again, prodding his staff.

His soldiers answered that the recent arrival of Iraqi and U.S. soldiers in the embattled neighborhood had created an enticing target for insurgents.

Kuehl agreed that the ambush may have been designed to draw out the Americans. "Yes, they probably have determined that we are here, and this would have been the route we would have taken to get out," he said.

Later that day, two mortar rounds landed about 50 yards outside another outpost the battalion had set up in a defunct shopping mall in the Adil neighborhood. The blasts struck a Humvee, deflating three tires. At a third new post, in a police station in the al-Khadraa neighborhood, soldiers have faced gunfire and a series of roadside bombs planted amid the trash along the one route to the base.

"I'm sure we're under surveillance, and I'm sure they're looking for our weak points, and that's for every one of these outposts," said Kuehl, who commands

the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, attached to the 1st Infantry Division. "We will never finish building the force protection around this place. It's got to be thought through every day and rehearsed."

The soldiers planned to erect new concrete blast walls on the northern and southern flanks of the two-story headquarters this week. Kuehl has instructed his soldiers to assume the perspective of the enemy and practice, or "red-team," ways to attack the compound. Up on the rooftop, soldiers are stationed at four sandbagged machine-gun turrets every hour of the day.

"I guess it is a little scary," said Pvt. Peter Lahoda, 22, as he gripped an M240 belt-fed machine gun in a turret that has been shot at three times from the street below. Positioned next to him was a life-size mannequin dressed in U.S. military fatigues, its middle fingers extended, that is used as a decoy for gunmen on the street.

He said the attacks are often drive-by shootings, fired from a car's back seat or from holes punched in the trunk. "Up here, you're definitely organic to what's going on. You see VBIEDs, you see explosions like 200 meters away," he said, using a military abbreviation for car bombs.

The concern over security at the station imposes limits on one of its central missions: cooperating with Iraqi security forces.

Iraqi soldiers at the station are prohibited from entering an operations room where U.S. soldiers discuss classified information. They are not allowed on the roof where Americans watch over the neighborhood. They live on the first floor while Americans inhabit the second.

While certain information is shared with the Iraqi army leadership, the lower-ranking soldiers are kept out of briefing sessions, largely because the Americans are suspicious that information will be passed on to insurgents.

"There's a potential for a leak," said Capt. Ramiro Roldan, 25. "We tell them we're going to set up our vehicles at this location to cordon and search an area, there's a potential that we might get a VBEID attack there."

In the first 10 days since soldiers moved in, drive-by shooters have taken potshots and at least four bombs have exploded on the road outside the entrance, said Lt. Brian Larsen, 23, the platoon leader.

"As far as force protection measures go, this place needs improvement," said Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Chaney.

The soldiers have stacked sandbags in their bedroom windows and draped green netting over their gun positions, and they are making plans to install light fixtures outside and raise the exterior walls by several feet to limit the risk from gunfire.

MORE:

Static Defense

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

The new technology did nothing to repair the existing gap between Vietnamese army units and peasants; indeed, helicopter delivery widened the intelligence gap by flying troops over villages and thus eliminating personal contact with the peasants—perhaps a good thing in the case of rapacious army units.

The new vehicles also proved expensive.

Helicopters and armored personnel carriers require large workshop and storage complexes, installations that in Vietnam demanded ground troops to provide security and nonetheless remained vulnerable to guerrilla attack, as did their lines of communication to major supply centers.

Troops so assigned inevitably assumed a static role, to the guerrilla's benefit.

Armor plate and motors did not erase poorly conceived plans.

Where good intelligence existed, Viet Cong intelligence frequently countered it. Helicopters and APCs are noisy, and a black-pajama-clad Viet Cong did not take long to ditch his weapon and either commence work in the field or hide along the reeded bank of a nearby canal.

Notes From A Lost War:

“The Soldiers Have Noticed An Increase In Small-Arms Fire Attacks”

“‘It’s Like Chasing Ghosts,’ He Said”

“They Seem Like They’re Going About Their Daily Activities, But They’re Always Watching Us”

"It seems like areas where U.S. forces are still struggling to get a foothold, that seems to be where they're pushing hard," Patterson said about the enemy.

March 05, 2007 By Michelle Tan, Army Times Staff writer

BAGHDAD — Sgt. Robinson Paulino stared intently through the thick windshield and at the camera mounted on the dashboard.

"We're looking for pressure plates," the 24-year-old said to the other soldiers in the vehicle.

As the vehicle, a heavily armored truck known as a Buffalo, inched forward on the dry, dusty road in southwest Baghdad, every soldier inside was on the lookout for an improvised explosive device.

"Watch out for those reeds," said Sgt. Jurgen Valdez, 34. "Were those branches there yesterday?"

When the soldiers were satisfied that there were no IEDs in the area, they relaxed a little.

"With IEDs, either we find them or they find us," said Spc. Jonathan Cadavero, 24, the platoon medic.

Recently, the soldiers have noticed an increase in small-arms fire attacks, [Staff Sgt. Ed] McElroy said. Every soldier in the platoon has either a Combat Infantry Badge or a Combat Action Badge, [First Lt. Edward] Patterson said.

"It seems like areas where U.S. forces are still struggling to get a foothold, that seems to be where they're pushing hard," Patterson said about the enemy. [Translation: the resistance is on the offensive and winning: "struggling to get a foothold" is not exactly a proclamation of military success.]

"They're constantly changing, and that's what makes it hard to figure out what's going on.

"Some of these cells are really active. They know what they're doing."

"It's kind of crazy," Cadavero said. "Yesterday we went to the power plant, nothing happened, but on the way back we had RPG fire, small arms. It's Iraq, so you've got to expect the unexpected. Every time you leave the base, anything could happen. Route clearance can be boring, but it's Iraq. It doesn't stay boring for long."

The enemy's preferred method of attacking soldiers with IEDs can be frustrating, Cadavero said.

"We rarely see the face of our enemy," he said. "This is the only way they can defeat us. Head on, we'd annihilate them." [Right. That's exactly how people defeat an invasion and occupation of their country by a hated foreign Imperial

army. That's how they win. How would you like to live under the military occupation of an army commanded by George W. Bush? Duh.]

Valdez agreed, saying that it's rare for the soldiers to see a triggerman or catch someone in the act of planting an IED.

"It's like chasing ghosts," he said.

But the soldiers know the enemy is always watching them. [Yes, there do tend to be a lot of Iraqis in Iraq. It's one of the things Iraq is noted for.]

"They seem like they're going about their daily activities, but they're always watching us," Cadavero said. [Unlike the Democrats and Republicans in DC who keep this war going, Cadavero lives in the real world.]

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Ultimate Sacrifice Of Poteau Son

26 Feb 07 By Danielle Gregory, News Reporter, Poteau Daily News [Excerpts]

There are heroes among us, some go unnoticed, and some receive the recognition they deserve for putting their lives on the line to help save another's.

Monday morning 25-year-old Buddy James Hughie, a Poteau High School graduate, was killed in action in Nuristan Province, Afghanistan while serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Hughie was a member of the class of 2000, and was serving his country as a member of the 180th Battalion out of Poteau. He leaves behind his wife Alexis and their three-month-old son Collin as well as several other family members. He and his family were living in Charleston, S.C.

As America citizens we have the constitutional right to voice opinions, positive or negative. The "War Against Terrorism" has sparked many diverse opinions.

However, no matter the opinion, loved ones have been lost and continue to die for the freedoms Americans put to use everyday.

Regardless, those who are serving in the military deserve the respect of the American people - those who can speak without fear of persecution as they please.

Putting a face with the mission sheds some realistic light on the people that sacrifice their lives and leave families behind everyday.

Hughie and his unit were part of a joint mission with the Afghan National Army and the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division. Information provided by the Oklahoma National Guard told the story behind the loss of the Poteau native.

The report stated that while returning from an undisclosed operation the joint force came under enemy small arms and RPG fire.

Hughie and his team members dismounted their vehicle and returned fire. During the fire fight two Afghan Army soldiers were wounded. Seeing that his Afghan comrades were wounded, Hughie left his covered position to provide medical assistance to them.

Shortly after leaving his covered position, Hughie was killed by small arms fire.

"Sgt. Buddy Hughie was a great American," said Lt. Col. Bobby Yandell, Commander of the 1st Battalion, 180th Infantry. "Hughie did not have to deploy with the 180th because he had deployed to Afghanistan in 2002-03 with an Engineer unit from South Carolina."

His PHS classmates had only the best, flattering and kindest comments to say about Hughie.

Matt Pollard stated, "Buddy was the type of person that would do anything for anyone. From grade school to Eagle Scouts and on, it seemed like he enjoyed wearing a uniform. I'm not surprised he was serving. He just had the personality of someone who always wanted to help out and I'm proud to be associated with him."

Pat Eischun, one of Hughie's Poteau teachers said, "He was the kind of kid you remember. He was such a nice young man and liked by all the kids."

Another fellow graduate Nic Guillet, who is also in the military forces, said, "Buddy was a superior soldier and an even greater individual. He served his country proudly and my deepest condolences go out to his wife, child as well as the rest of his family."

The 180th deployed to Afghanistan last summer as part of a multinational task force whose mission is to train and mentor soldiers in the new Afghan National Army.

Members of the Infantry are providing security for the international coalition of trainers and the Afghan trainees.

The morale of soldiers in overseas and in the states is constantly wavering.

The dedication and heart that is shown through those brave men and women should be acknowledged and appreciated.

Americans should show their local troops how much they are appreciated even if it's just a pat on the back.

Occupation Convoy Attacked; Foreign Troop Casualties Unknown

Mar 2, 2007 KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (Reuters)

A convoy carrying occupation troops was struck by at least three blasts on Friday as it passed through a province in southern Afghanistan, witnesses said.

Residents did not know whether there were any casualties, or what caused the blasts on a road in Tirin Kot, capital of Uruzgan province, where both NATO and U.S.-led troops operate.

"The convoy was passing through, and all of a sudden there was an explosion, followed by at least two more, then we had to flee," said Ahmad Shah, a local resident.

Villagers in Garmser district of Helmand said NATO troops clashed with guerrillas.

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Army Staff Sgt. Alan W. Shaw, 31, of Little Rock, Arkansas at Arlington National Cemetery. Shaw who was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas was killed on 09 February by an explosion during breaching operations in Baqubah. (AFP/Mannie Garcia)

**NOT ANOTHER DEATH!
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR!
NOT ANOTHER DAY!**



Joelen Mulvaney of Barre, Vt. holds her fallen husband's flag during a committee meeting at the Statehouse in Montpelier, Vt., Friday, March 2, 2007.

The Vermont Legislature's resolution calls for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. Mulvaney's husband, 1st Lt. Jay Jensen, was killed in Vietnam. She supports the resolution. (AP Photo/Toby Talbot)

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, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

Combat Veteran Demands Immediate Withdrawal From Iraq



Drew Cameron, 24, of Burlington, who served four years in the Army, including tours in Iraq, speaks at the Statehouse in Montpelier, Vt., March 2, 2007. Cameron endorsed the Vermont Legislature's resolution calling for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq in a hearing Friday. (AP Photo/Toby Talbot)

170 Swiss Soldiers Accidentally Invade Liechtenstein; Nobody Noticed

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

March 2, 2007 By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ZURICH, Switzerland -- What began as a routine training exercise almost ended in an embarrassing diplomatic incident after a company of Swiss soldiers got lost at night and marched into neighboring Liechtenstein.

According to Swiss daily Blick, the 170 infantry soldiers wandered 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) across an unmarked border into the tiny principality early Thursday before realizing their mistake and turning back.

A spokesman for the Swiss army confirmed the story but said that there were unlikely to be any serious repercussions for the mistaken invasion.

"We've spoken to the authorities in Liechtenstein and it's not a problem," Daniel Reist told The Associated Press.

Officials in Liechtenstein also played down the incident.

Interior ministry spokesman Markus Amman said nobody in Liechtenstein had even noticed the soldiers, who were carrying assault rifles but no ammunition. "It's not like they stormed over here with attack helicopters or something," he said.

Liechtenstein, which has about 34,000 inhabitants and is slightly smaller than Washington DC, doesn't have an army.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

U.S. Command Caught In Another Stupid Lie And 14 Collaborator Police Die Paying For It

02 March 2007 AFP, AP, BBC and Reuters & March 3, 2007 By Sudarsan Raghavan, Washington Post Foreign Service

Iraqi officials say they have found the bodies of 14 policemen who went missing shortly after leaving their base north of the capital, Baghdad.

"They were found in the streets of Baquba. Their throats had been cut and their hands were bound," said Uday al-Khadran, mayor of Khalis, the slain officers' hometown in Diyala province, north of Baghdad.

Interior ministry official Brig Gen Abdel Karim Khalaf said the 14 bodies were found close to where the policemen disappeared on Thursday, according to the Associated Press news agency.

Iraqi officials said the 14 policemen were from a rapid reaction force based in Diyala province.

An Internet statement says the men were seized in Diyala province to avenge the rape of a woman by policemen last month. The Web site shows pictures of the 18 men - some in uniforms and some in civilian clothes.

The statement by the Islamic State of Iraq, was posted on a number of Islamist websites on Friday.

The statement demanded that "officers that participated in the horrible act" be turned over to the insurgents

The group later said it killed the hostages in retaliation for the gang-rape by Iraqi police after the Iraqi government had ignored its demands to hand over officials accused of the rape and to release all Sunni women held in Iraqi prisons within 24 hours and warned that the hostages would otherwise be killed.

The government denies a rape occurred.

The woman has said in an emotional interview with al-Jazeera TV that she was raped and beaten by at least four officers after being seized in a sweep of suspected insurgent safe houses in southwest Baghdad on February 18.

Last week, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Maliki ordered an investigation into the allegations, but the three officers under suspicion were cleared.

She was later treated at a US military hospital in the fortified Green Zone.

Mr Maliki, also released a copy of a US medical report saying no rape had taken place.

But the New York Times reported that a nurse, speaking on condition of anonymity, said she had treated the woman at a clinic in her neighbourhood of Amil and had seen signs of sexual and physical assault.

Assorted Resistance Action

02 March 2007 VOA News, AFP, AP and Reuters

A roadside bomb exploded Thursday alongside the convoy of a prominent [collaborator] cleric whose high-level political ties have made him the target of past assassination attempts. The imam, Jalal Eddin al-Sagheer, who is also a prominent member of Iraq's parliament, was not injured, but several bodyguards were wounded.

Al-Sagheer, an ally of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, told The Associated Press his convoy was attacked in southwest Baghdad while en route from the airport.

"They targeted me again," he said, but declined to point the finger at any specific group. He said several bodyguards were wounded.

Al-Sagheer has had close calls in the past - which he said were linked to his denunciations of insurgents.

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

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

**Another Outstanding Success For
The U.S. Occupation Police Training
Program;
This Policeman Would Like To Meet
George W. Bush And Thank Him
Personally**



A photograph of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein is seen pinned on the shirt of a policeman at a checkpoint in Tikrit, March 2, 2007. REUTERS/Nuhad Hussin (IRAQ)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Connecticut Stands Up! "Endorsed By Iraq Veterans Against The War"

The SOUND FACTORY
PRESENTS
rap against the war in iraq

A Peaceful March down Main St. in Willimantic, Starting at the Frog Bridge/Jillson Square Green and ending at:

WRENCH IN THE WORKS
861 Main St. Willimantic, CT

20 LOCAL HIP-HOP ARTISTS AND SPEAKERS
SATURDAY MARCH 10TH
MARCH - 4PM
SHOW - 5PM-10PM

\$10 COVER
\$5 FOR MILITARY
FREE IF YOU MAKE A SIGN AND MARCH WITH US

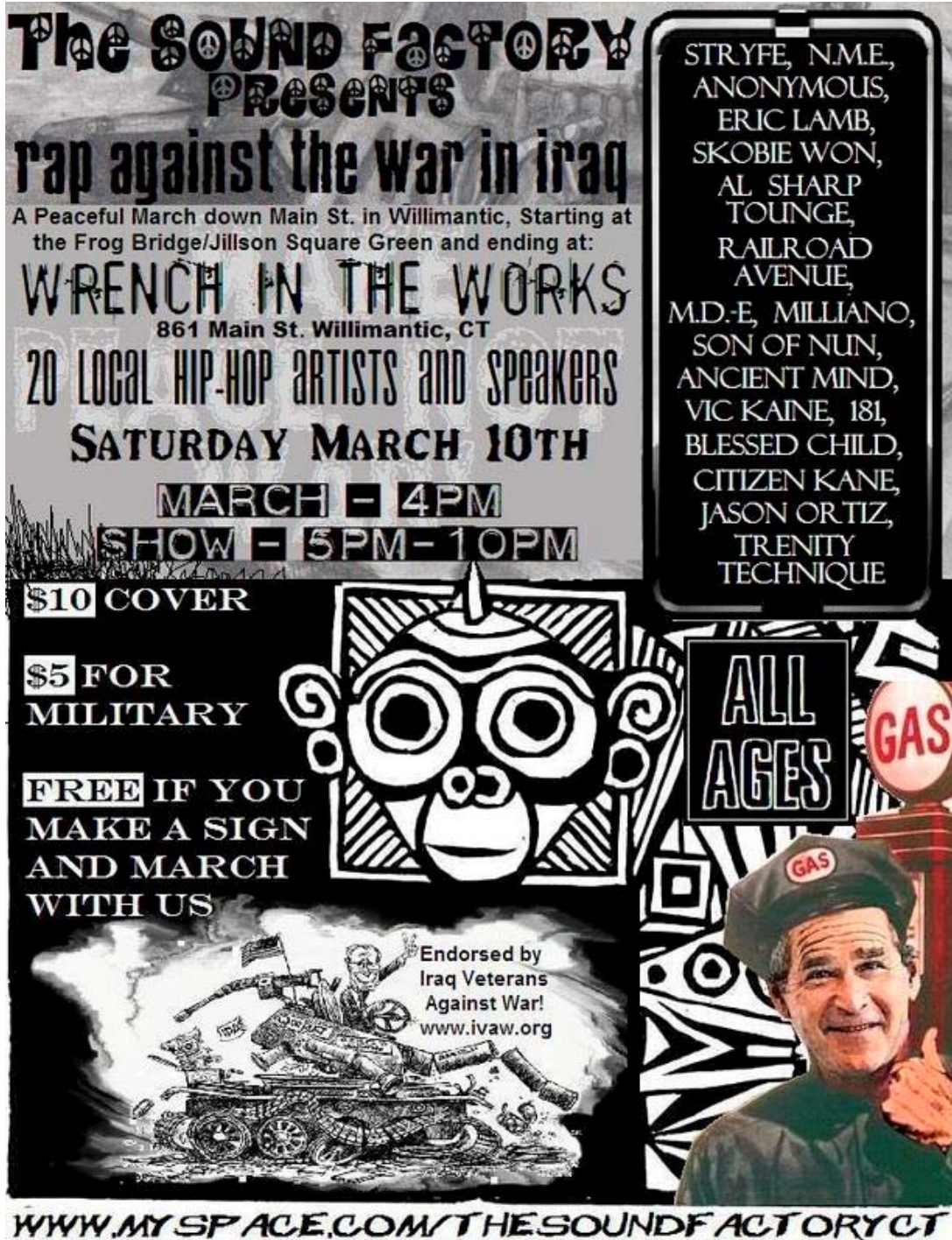
ALL AGES

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WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THE.SOUNDFACTORYCT



Viet Gone

From: Dennis Serdel
To: GI Special
Sent: March 03, 2007
Subject: Viet Gone 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

Viet Gone

Way too young grown up too fast
8-10 year old Vietnamese boys
with cigarettes in their mouths
stand next to the path
selling perfectly rolled joints
30 in plastic clear bags
for only a dollar
to the Vietnam Soldiers
walking in like a slow train
from the bush so ugly and nasty
with money because there was
nothing to buy in the boonies.
Hiking up the big hill
called landing zone Liz
and reaching the top
there she sat perched
like an angel on top
of a Christmas tree,
a quad 50 machine gun
on a turret.
Vietnam Soldiers gathering around
asking how long she'd been there,
saying that they just arrived.
Vietnam Soldiers telling the crew
that they needed to party
needed to get high,
needed to laugh, needed to relax
cause it has been a long time.
So the quad 50 roars
like an angel from hell,
shooting all over for a long time,
telling charly he'd best
leave them alone
because Vietnam Soldiers

are going to party tonight.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Civil War Bush Bullshit



Worshippers embrace each other after the joint Sunni-Shiite prayers in a mosque in central Baghdad, Iraq, March 2, 2007. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

**Experts Say Billions Of Dollars
Worth Of Iraqi Oil Profits Going To
The Resistance Movement
Because Of Absent Oil Meters;
“Our Young Soldiers There Would Ask
Me At The End Of The Mission, ‘What Did
You Get Done Today?’”**

Feb 8, 2007 Robert Riggs Reporting (CBS 11 News)

Heavily armed anti-terrorism forces stand guard atop Iraq's al Basrah Oil Terminal while the theft of the century may be occurring right under their noses.

Tankers berthed at the sprawling platform, located off Iraq's southern coast in the Persian Gulf, take on oil that is the lifeblood of Iraq's worn torn economy.

Millions of dollars worth of oil is stolen daily in Iraq because of the absence of oil meters, a basic tool for preventing corruption, according to estimates by classified CIA and State Department reports, the Iraq Study Group Report, a former consultant to a U.S. oil company, and a former State Department advisor to Iraq's Oil Ministry.

The annual thefts run into the billions of dollars and help fuel insurgents, sectarian militias, and corrupt officials as well as deprive the Iraqis of much needed money to run their struggling government according to the findings of a six-month CBS 11 News investigation.

"I would say probably between 200,000 and 500,000 barrels a day are probably unaccounted for in Iraq," says Mikel Morris who worked for the State Department's Iraq Reconstruction Management Organization (IRMO) in Baghdad.

Depending on fluctuations in the price of oil, the thefts could run between \$20-\$30 million per day.

The Houston-area petroleum engineer says Iraq's oil industry is wide open to corruption because there are no working meters anywhere in the system to keep count of how many millions of barrels of oil Iraq produces or exports.

Morris said, "It's like a supermarket without a cashier. There is no metering. And there's no metering at the well heads either. There's no metering at any of the major pipeline junctions."

The bulk of Iraq's crude oil exports, which provided 94 percent of Iraq's \$28 billion budget last year, are pumped into tankers at the terminal.

The ABOT's oil meters have been inoperable since the U.S. invasion nearly four years ago, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a former senior oil consultant for IRMO, statements by Iraqi officials and reports by a United Nations monitoring group.

Morris and other sources familiar with operations at the ABOT suspect that the inoperable meters allow corrupt officials to overload tankers with oil that is then sold on the black market.

Intelligence reports warn that the profits from smuggled oil and petroleum products help fuel the insurgency in Iraq, but the estimates of the losses vary widely.

In an interview with CBS 11 News, Samir Sumaidaie, Iraq's Ambassador to the United States, conceded there has been a massive theft of oil.

When asked where the half million barrels of oil estimated to be stolen daily is going, Sumaidaie confirmed it was reaching insurgents and corrupt government officials.

The ABOT is under the control of Iraq's state-owned South Oil Company in southern Iraq, and the sales are managed by the State Oil Marketing Organization (SOMO).

Morris says SOMO refused to divulge its export contracts, records of sales, or even the names of buyers in order for him to estimate how much oil is being stolen.

“There’s a certain secrecy behind that. So, that if you don’t know what’s being moved in country, then you don’t know what’s being lost, and you don’t know what’s being sold,” he said. “Also, you don’t know what political motivations are behind what political party wants to control the oil sales. So they can take their share of the crude sales for their own political contributions or aspirations. So there’s always that push to control SOMO and keep the oil sales secret.”

Parsons Iraq Joint Venture, a U.S. contractor based in Houston, is scheduled to complete installation of new meters on the ABOT by May.

The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) reported to Congress in its Jan. 30 report that work at the ABOT, “has suffered chronic schedule slippages.”

Morris says powerful people inside Iraq’s Oil Ministry repeatedly blocked installation of meters and fought against other measures that would help stop pervasive corruption.

“There were those people inside the ministry that didn’t want the sales to be known. They were the ones who probably had the most authority, most power inside the ministry.”

Morris says the honest Iraqi professionals in the Oil Ministry, who pushed for metering and transparency, put their lives at risk.

“Anytime you gave the impression that you were working with the U.S. and trying to clean up the corruption problems and the word got out, there were going to be people there to make sure you didn’t. One of your family members was going to disappear, or you would disappear.”

Morris also became a target. He says Oil Ministry insiders tipped off insurgents about his visits to oil facilities as well as to the ministry’s headquarters in Baghdad. In 2005, his Army convoys suffered deadly attacks by a bomber and another by a roadside bomb.

“You feel betrayed because someone inside the ministry has already helped get you attacked and tried to kill you. Our young soldiers there would ask me at the end of the mission, ‘What did you get done today? Were the meetings good? Are you getting something accomplished?’ I feel bad about the deaths we had from the U.S. Army soldiers that died protecting us. It still hurts me.”

Iraq holds the world’s second largest proven oil reserves of approximately 100 billion barrels, with the potential of as high as 200 billion barrels.

Control of that wealth is now up for grabs and is the major driving force behind the violence in Iraq, according to Amy Myers Jaffe, an energy advisor to the Iraq

Study Group, which was co-chaired by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton.

“Without oil meters and control systems, there is built up a whole black market. There are different groups that can control that flow. They can pay off politicians. They can pay off government officials and government inspectors.

“There are people inside the system now who are making personal, individual money, or their insurgency group or their political party is making money from corruption, from smuggling, from black market activities. So they are against instituting the kinds of procedures it would take to close all this down,” she said.

Jaffe says a cottage industry exists for re-documenting stolen oil cargo with phony bills of lading so that it can be sold into the market through corrupt brokers.

Despite the Iraq Study Group’s recommendation to install meters throughout Iraq’s oil infrastructure, there are no plans to put meters anywhere else, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Morris used an example of pipelines for Iraq’s refinery in Baiji, which is located north of Tikrit outside the apex of the Sunni Triangle, would be regularly blown up and parts of the refinery sabotaged in concert with insurgents to create fuel shortages in Baghdad.

The regular disruptions at the refinery, operated by the state-owned North Refining Company, were designed to drive up the price of fuel on the black market.

“They constantly work with insurgents to keep the fuel lines blown up and work with insurgents to keep fuel shortages in Baghdad.

“They also threaten the lives and families of refinery workers and fuel tank drivers. This refinery was corrupt during the Saddam days and needs to be seized by the Coalition Forces.”

Morris said he received an urgent plea for security assistance from a Director General in Iraq’s Oil Ministry in December 2005.

The Iraqi official warned that tanker truck drivers leaving the refinery were being threatened by insurgents.

Morris said State Department officials declined to provide guards and accused him of over reacting.

A few days later the ambushes of tanker trucks started and remain unabated. Morris said it became clear that intelligence about tanker truck schedules was being fed to insurgents from the Oil Ministry.

In mid-January of this year, Iraq’s Deputy Prime Minister Barham Saleh told a budget session of parliament that the country was annually losing one and half billion dollars to fuel smuggling from the Baiji refinery.

“Most of this money goes to the terrorists [translation: the resistance], who target us and target our security.”

Last March, Morris received what he believed to be was a forged U.S. Army document from an Iraqi Director General that accused specific officials in the Oil Ministry of corruption.

The document alleged that Iraqi officials were creating fake invoices for construction work and the sale of petroleum products to the U.S. Army. Morris suspected the allegations were true and recommended that the Iraqis seize the records so that the U.S. State Department could open an investigation.

The next day, Morris said a fire mysteriously broke out in the Oil Ministry’s financial documents office and destroyed all of the financial documents in question.

Morris said the U.S. was overwhelmed by corruption in Iraq’s state owned oil industry.

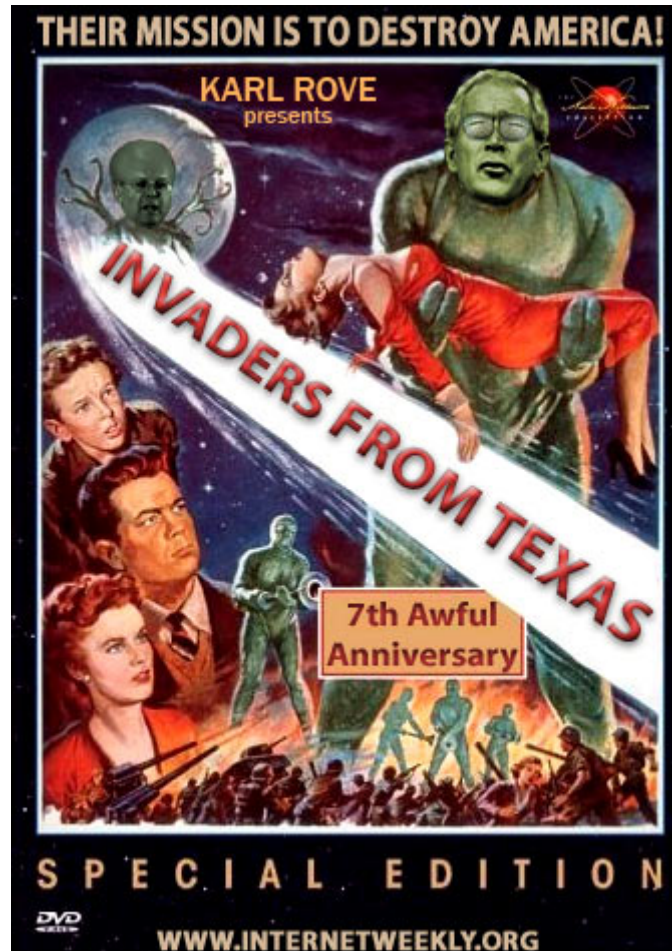
“I got the impression that it was such a problem like the insurgency that no one knew the extent of it. No one really had a plan to come up with procedures or processes that deal with the problem.”

Suspected Terrorist Baby Searched In Qargouli



An Iraqi baby is searched by a U.S. soldier before entering a secured area in Qargouli village, about 10 miles southeast of Baghdad, Iraq March 2, 2007. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

“The War On Drugs Has Conveniently Become A War On Immigrants, And There Is A Lot Of

Money To Be Made In Detaining Immigrants”

February 22, 2007 By Natalie Hudson, Utne.com

Border control these days looks more like traffic control. While one hand closes the borders to undocumented immigrants, the other funnels them through cell doors. And the prison industry is all too happy to accept them.

As reported on DemocracyNow!, the League of United Latino American Citizens (LULAC) says that a record number of more than 26,000 undocumented immigrants are now being detained in the United States.

According to Deepa Fernandes of CorpWatch, immigrants are the fastest growing prison population in the United States today, with courts processing 350,000 immigrants in fiscal year 2005.

Those numbers translate to dollar signs for a prison industry that only six years ago was wallowing in a \$1 billion debt. But that, Fernandes reports, was before a post-9/11 border crackdown, and before the “government began to target non-citizens with mass arrests during sweeps through immigrant communities.”

Now the increase in detainees is winning the prison industry contracts to build new prisons to house them.

And the influx of incarcerated immigrants has the added business value of providing prisons with a cheap labor force; since the Department of Homeland Security restricts non-citizen prisoners from earning more than a \$1 a day, the prisons get maintenance workers and janitors for a pittance.

“The war on drugs has conveniently become a war on immigrants,” Tucson attorney and human rights activist Isabel García told CorpWatch, “and there is a lot of money to be made in detaining immigrants.”

Beyond the staggering numbers of incarcerated immigrants are the equally alarming imprisonment conditions.

Take, for example, the “tent city” that has been constructed in Raymondville, Texas, to house 2,000 detained immigrants.

Within the confines of the windowless tents, detainees incur a 23-hour-a-day lock down, and, as CorpWatch notes (citing a recent Washington Post article), immigrants are “often with insufficient food, clothing, medical care, and access to telephones.” Immigrant detainees can be held for months, even years, and, as DemocracyNow! reports, many are denied legal assistance.

What’s worse is that many immigrants are being detained with their children, as is the case at the T. Don Hutto Correctional Center in Taylor, Texas. *In These Times* reports

that about half of the approximately 400 immigrants at the facility are children. Many of the “residents” are refugees seeking political asylum, who are being incarcerated while navigating deportation proceedings. (Mexicans, who fall under different procedures, are not kept at the facility.) Before the current crackdown, many of these people would have been able to go to work and school while their cases crept through the courts. And minors, if held at all, would have been able to attend school and receive other social services.

Instead, attorneys tell *In These Times*, the children spend most of their time within a contained “pod” and are permitted only an hour of schooling and an hour of playtime each day.

The correction center is now facing public outrage over the incarceration of noncriminal, nonviolent children, as well as a possible lawsuit from the University of Texas’ Immigration Law Clinic. Texans United for Families, “a coalition of attorneys, community organizations, and immigrants-rights groups,” is also lobbying to shut down the center.

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.

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