

**GI SPECIAL 5D15:**



On The Bombing Of The Iraq Parliament  
[Thanks to Z, who sent this in.]

**“The Media Rarely, If  
Ever, Reports The  
Uncensored Opinions Of  
Us Soldiers”**

**“We Can Not Afford To Keep Our  
Mouths Shut For Fear Of  
Retribution”**

# **“If You’re A Civilian, You Have The Responsibility To Demand Honest, Uncensored Opinions From The Women And Men Risking Their Lives”**

**If a majority of Iraqis want us out of here, than what’s the problem?**

**It reminds me of another country where a majority of the people are opposed to the war and favor troop withdraw, but the government refuses to listen to the voice of the people.**

From: Justin Thompson  
To: GI Special  
Sent: April 14, 2007  
Subject: Dear GI Special

**Greetings everyone,**

**This is Justin C. Thompson again. Some regular readers might recall that I’m the active duty sergeant in Baghdad serving who’s been stop-lossed for my second involuntary tour in Iraq.**

As many of you well know, our tour here has just been extended for an additional three months.

**I’d like to share some of my thoughts and opinions about the Baghdad security plan, the Iraqi people and the extension.**

According to the media, the Baghdad security plan is working. Extrajudicial killings have decreased, there’s less sectarian violence and the Iraqi security forces are taking more responsibility in the area. It appears that the troop surge is going well.

But let’s look at some other cities in Iraq.

A suicide bomb in Tal Afar, the city which Washington lauded as the one place the US had brought peace, killed 152 people less than a month ago.

This is the single deadliest attack to date in this war. This event spurred Shiite militants and off duty police officers to go on a rampage, killing anywhere from 15 to 60 people.

A suicide truck bomb in Ramadi killed 27 people on the 6th, just after Coalition Forces conducted a “house to house sweep” a week earlier. Upwards of 10 thousand protesters in Najaf burned American and Israeli flags.

Since the “surge” 700 additional troops have moved to Baqouba and have met with some of the most intense fighting in Iraq.

It appears that as US forces flood Baghdad, other parts of Iraq are flaring up at an alarming rate. By the time you read this, there will have been another major attack on Iraqi civilians outside of Baghdad.

I noticed this during my last tour.

**As my unit moved from neighborhood to neighborhood, from city to city, the violence would decrease in our area of operation, only to erupt catastrophically in the areas with less boots on the ground.**

**In order to truly bring stability to Iraq, not only would we need millions of troops to flood the entire country, we’d have to rectify the ancient schism between the Sunnis and the Shiites.**

My concern is with the Iraqi people.

After getting to know many Iraqis and working with them for years, there’s a place in my heart for the citizens of Iraq. It breaks my heart to see all the violence and pain these people have to endure daily.

The Iraqis are stuck in the middle of a war zone, and I don’t mean that figuratively.

**As much as I’d like to stay here until Iraq is safe for it’s people, I have to ask myself, “are we helping Iraq, or hurting it by being here?”**

The American elite can theorize all day long about the situation in Iraq. The American people can give their opinions based on what little information they receive from our major media outlets.

We American soldiers can estimate our success or failures by reflecting on our experiences.

**But the success of our mission should not be decided by Americans.**

**Iraqis are better qualified to define success than anyone else. So, what do they think?**

The latest polls in Iraq show dwindling support for Coalition Forces. A majority believe that a surge of US troops will worsen security (49%) or have no effect (22%).

This might have to do with the fact that one in four Iraqi adults have had a relative murdered in the last three years- it’s kind of hard to have faith when death surrounds you.

Almost 66% of people in Baghdad, Anbar and Najaf believe that violence would decrease if US forces were to leave.

**71% of Iraqis view US forces as “occupiers,” and a solid majority support an immediate military pullout.**

**I was under the assumption that we were trying to establish a democratic government in Iraq.**

**I was also under the assumption that a democracy was a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people.**

**If a majority of Iraqis want us out of here, then what’s the problem?**

**It reminds me of another country where a majority of the people are opposed to the war and favor troop withdraw, but the government refuses to listen to the voice of the people.**

That country also refused to listen to a majority of dissonant voices throughout the entire world before it deployed it’s troops.

I’ve been searching through the news lately. I’ve been trying to find out how other soldiers across Iraq feel about this extension.

**Unfortunately, our thoughts and feelings are unrepresented in the media.**

I don’t think I have to say where I stand on the subject.

**It’s hard to find out what we soldiers honestly think and feel because we’ve been threatened repeatedly with judicial retribution if we speak our minds.**

Most soldiers I know are afraid to speak up and state what they truly feel.

**Before we deployed, we were instructed to give favorable opinions of the mission and our leaders when speaking to the media.**

**It seems to me that no one really cares about our opinions.**

There’s no public outcry demanding to let our voices be heard. The American people seem content hearing the opinions of the generals and government officials.

When the President says that the only troop morale problem is with the families of deployed soldiers, the American people seem to take that at face value.

**There’s no public demand for our voices.**

**That’s why we have to speak up.**

Americans are forced to listen to those who represent the military.

**The media rarely, if ever, reports the uncensored opinions of us soldiers.**

**The people hear what some general or politician has to say about where we stand, and they leave it at that.**

**Now is not the time to sit back and ride out your tour.**

**We can not afford to keep our mouths shut for fear of retribution.**

**You have a right to voice your opinion.**

***And if you're a civilian, you have the responsibility to demand honest, uncensored opinions from the women and men risking their lives.***

**In solidarity,  
Justin C. Thompson**

**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**

## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

# **IED South Of Baghdad Kills 1 U.S. Military Member Friday, Another Wounded**

April 14, 2007 The Associated Press

BAGHDAD: One U.S. service member was killed by a roadside bomb in southern Iraq, the U.S. military announced.

Another military member was wounded in the attack, which took place Friday morning, the military said in a statement.

The statement was e-mailed to reporters in Kuwait on Friday, but the death had yet to be announced by U.S. officials in Baghdad.

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## **Fort Rich Man Killed In Iraq Was “Always American”**

April 6, 2007 By MIKE PETERS, The (Greeley, Colo.) Tribune

Seven-year-old Cierra Becker looked out the window of her Anchorage home Tuesday and saw the men in uniform walking solemnly to the door.

Cierra knew.

“Not my daddy!” she cried. “Not my daddy!”

But it was her daddy. Staff Sgt. Shane Becker, 35, a paratrooper stationed at Fort Richardson and Cierra’s father, died in a firefight Tuesday morning south of Baghdad in Iraq. This is what the men who came to the door Tuesday told his wife, Crystal, Cierra and the new baby, Cheyenna, born in February.

Becker was a 1990 graduate of Greeley West High School in Greeley, Colo., and the stepson of Greeley firefighter Bob Jorgensen.

After high school, Becker worked for a while, said his stepfather, then joined the U.S. Army in 1993. He stayed for four years, then left the military and got a job in Texas. After Sept. 11, 2001, he re-enlisted and became a career soldier. He was on his second tour of duty in Iraq.

“He was 9 when I met him, and after his mom and I married, he became a son to me,” Jorgensen said

Jorgensen said Becker was athletic and played football and baseball at Greeley West. He was extremely loyal in all that he did, Jorgensen said.

“When Shane was home, he was family. When he was back on duty, he was Army. But he was always American.”

Jorgensen had been in the Navy and served in Vietnam. He and his stepson agreed that the war in Iraq must be successful.

“He’d always said about the soldiers who were getting killed in Iraq, ‘We don’t need a wall like Vietnam. We need a free and clear Iraq.’ “

Becker came home on leave to Alaska in February for the birth of his second daughter, then returned to duty in Iraq on March 12. He and Crystal were married 13 years. On the night before he was killed, he talked online with his wife and daughters on a webcam the family had set up.

“Then he said good night to his family and went on duty,” Jorgensen said. “The next morning he was dead.”

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## **Armored Vehicle Carrying Romanian Troops In Iraq Rolls Over; 4 Injured**

April 14, 2007 The Associated Press

BUCHAREST, Romania: An armored vehicle carrying Romanian troops in Iraq rolled over Saturday, seriously injuring four of them, the Defense Ministry said.

The incident happened in the southern Iraqi province of Dhi Qar, when the vehicle veered off the road and flipped over about 25 kilometers (15 miles) northwest of Tallil. Another two soldiers in the vehicle, an amphibious transporter, were not injured.

The injured soldiers were evacuated by U.S. troops and transported to a military hospital.

**The troops' presence in Iraq has become a contentious issue in domestic politics, with Prime Minister Calin Popescu Tariceanu calling for their return home, while President Traian Basescu, who is commander in chief, decided they should stay.**

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## **FUTILE EXERCISE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!**



U.S. Army soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment patrol in a street in eastern Baghdad Dec. 30, 2006. (AP Photo/Darko Vojinovic)

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **British Soldier Killed In Helmand, Two More Wounded**

**[Finally, someone knows how to report what takes place in battle. T]**

13 Apr 2007 Ministry Of Defense

It is with deep regret that the MOD must confirm the death of a British soldier from 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment in Afghanistan today, Friday 13 April 2007.

The soldier was killed by small arms fire during a routine patrol.

On Sunday 1 April 2007 A Company, 1st Battalion Royal Anglian Regiment, known as the Vikings, took over responsibility for the security of the town of Now Zad, in north-west Helmand Province in southern Afghanistan.

At 0430hours local time around 90 members of the company left their base to carry out a routine security reassurance patrol east of the town's centre. At around 0930 hrs local time they had just completed their sweep of the area and were returning to their base when the lead elements of the company came under small arms and mortar fire.

At the same time an element of the company which had been on the southern flank of the main body spotted a five-man Taliban team attempting to set-up an ambush. The Taliban were challenged and engaged by the troops.

During this firefight the patrol was then engaged by a larger Taliban force using mortars, 107mm rockets, Rocket Propelled Grenades, heavy machine guns and small arms from multiple firing positions. At the same time their base was hit by indirect attacks and received hits from Rocket Propelled Grenades in an effort to disrupt possible reinforcements leaving the base.

As Now Zad had large areas of agricultural fields and farmlands interspersed with small copses of woodland many of the Royal Anglian engagements were at ranges of 25 metres or less. This prevented them from calling in air support. During this firefight a member of the company received serious gunshot wounds and a Chinook helicopter from the Incident Response Team (IRT) rushed to the scene, supported by an Apache attack helicopter.

The Chinook landed at the scene under constant fire, while the Apache engaged the Taliban forces with its 30mm cannon. The IRT team collected the casualty and evacuated him to medical facilities at the main British base at Camp Bastion. Despite the best efforts of the medics onboard the casualty was pronounced dead-on-arrival by a doctor.

The IRT helicopter and its Apache were called back to the scene to collect two lightly wounded soldiers. Again the Chinook came under fire from the Taliban positions. Both of the soldiers were taken for treatment at Camp Bastion, their condition is not serious.

The company continued to battle the Taliban and was finally able to get into a position where they could call in an air strike. It was the combined firepower of two 500lb bombs, the Apache's 30mm cannon and mortar and heavy machine gun fire which finally drove off or killed the Taliban.



The entire engagement lasted approximately two hours with UK forces using around 16,000 rounds of ammunition. An initial estimate is that a significant number of the enemy were killed.

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## Ambush Catches Joint Forces By Surprise As They Patrol Taliban Heartland



Members of an Afghan squad and a Dutch platoon took fire from the Taliban insurgents in Uruzgan Province, an isolated area of Afghanistan. Tyler Hicks/The New York Times

April 10, 2007 By C. J. CHIVERS, New York Times

SURKH-MURGHAB, Afghanistan, April 4 — Capt. Abdul Rakhman peered over a chest-high mud wall as gunfire and shouts rose. Beside him were two Afghan Army soldiers and a Dutch marine. A few yards away another Afghan soldier knelt in the dirt, reloading a rocket-propelled grenade.

The patrol was stuck, enveloped in a poppy field in a Taliban ambush. Automatic rifle fire came toward them from a tree line about 175 yards to the west and from a row of mud-walled Afghan houses to the east and north.

The captain and Sergeant Leendert, a Dutch marine and the squad's senior adviser, had dashed here when the shooting began six minutes before, leading an Afghan squad to cover.

Now neither side of the wall was safe. Bullets smacked the dried mud beside them; the rest of the squad was lying exposed in the field. Taliban fighters were on both flanks. More bullets whirred by, but many missed, as the Taliban demonstrated remarkably poor marksmanship against an enemy they had surprised.

The marine turned toward a building. "O.K.," he said. "Go! Go! Go!"

The squad began to fall back.

This intense firefight, across poppy fields and against a fast-moving group of insurgents, began a 38-minute withdrawal under fire from a village out of the Afghan government's control, like many here in the overwhelmingly Pashtun provinces of central, southern and eastern Afghanistan.

The patrol, an Afghan squad supported by a Dutch mechanized infantry platoon, had set out about an hour earlier from a small forward base in Poentjak, in Uruzgan Province, an isolated region of arid mountains and cultivated valleys that is one of the areas where the Taliban originated.

On this day, the Afghan patrol planned to walk to the edge of Surkh-Murghab, a pro-Taliban village beside the base. Sergeant Leendert hoped that Captain Abdul Rakhman, an Afghan intelligence officer, could arrange a meeting between the village's elders and a reconstruction specialist. (Following Dutch military rules, Sergeant Leendert and other junior soldiers can be identified only by rank and first name.)

The Afghans stopped their three pickup trucks about 900 yards from the village and began to walk, crossing fields and groves of fruit and nut trees. Sergeant Leendert walked with the captain in the first fire team. Another marine, Sergeant John, trailed with the second fire team.

A Dutch machine-gun truck and an armored vehicle crawled forward, shadowing several Dutch engineers, who swept the road for mines. A forward observer watched from the base, prepared to provide mortar fire.

Captain Abdul Rakhman immediately sensed trouble. Usually, farmers and their livestock roam these fields. But the men and their animals had disappeared.

The patrol walked through the stillness toward a mud-walled compound. "Everybody follow me and watch closely," the captain said over his two-way radio.

As the Afghan soldiers approached, women flowed away from the compound. Their blue burqas seemed to float through the thigh-high green grass.

The day before, the captain had met an Afghan police commander who told him that the father of the Taliban chief in Surkh-Murghab was a lame old man. Now, an occupant of the compound stepped outside and tried to follow the women. He was a lame old man.

More women were fleeing. The captain suspected that men were hiding under the burqas, too.

The captain stopped the old man. He said he was scared, and told the captain the whole village was aligned with the Taliban.

The captain directed the patrol toward a dirt road, hoping to walk on the village's edge and avoid a trap between buildings.

They were crossing open ground when the Taliban attacked. The first shot was a 107-millimeter rocket, which flew overhead and exploded on the opposite side of the road. The captain and the marine bounded to the wall. The ambush began. Taliban fighters opened fire from the west, north and northeast.



Sergeant Leendert, right, a Dutch marine and the senior adviser to the Afghan Army squad, and Captain Abdul Rakhman took fire from both sides of the wall. Tyler Hicks/The New York Times

The Dutch engineers had advanced nearby, and were caught in the open, too. Together, the Afghans and Dutch returned fire. More Taliban fighters joined in, now from the east, firing from the compound where the old man had stood.

The patrol was exposed on three sides, caught in a kill zone. But burst after burst flew wide. Stray shots buzzed past or thudded in the mud.

About 300 yards back, the Dutch platoon commander, First Lt. Marcel, directed fire from the vehicles' machine guns and 25-millimeter cannons. The patrol began to make its escape.

Sergeant Leendert led the first team of the Afghan patrol over two walls toward a building. The second team broke for another, sprinting toward the road. A rocket-propelled grenade swooshed through the air toward them, struck and failed to detonate. The second team reached the wall, hopped it and returned fire.

The Afghans and Dutch were in view of one another, spread along 450 yards of road. Lieutenant Marcel gave the order to withdraw. A Dutch soldier near him fell, struck near the neck. Medics began treating him on the grass.

The 81-millimeter mortar section opened fire, trying to drop explosive rounds into a compound with several Taliban fighters. After finding the range, it began to fire shot after shot into the same place, 18 rounds in all.

With their heavier weapons, the Dutch had a firepower advantage. They suppressed the insurgents to the west. But the Taliban's fighters were local men; they knew the ground. They moved through vegetation and ditches along the eastern flank and opened another angle of fire, giving themselves clear shots across the only withdrawal route.

For a few minutes there was a lull in the Taliban's firing. But soon their shooting intensified, forcing the soldiers to run beside armored vehicles, using the armor as rolling shields.

A patrol that began as a slow and methodical walk had become a blur of sprinting, shooting, waiting, peeking around corners and catching breath. The soldiers shouted in four languages: Dutch, Dari, English and Pashto.

Captain Abdul Rakhman ran ahead, finding one firing position after another.

Another rocket-propelled grenade slammed near the armored vehicles and exploded, wounding two Afghan soldiers. Both continued on.

The platoon made a wall of vehicles around the downed Dutch soldier, Private First Class Rob, until medics bandaged him and loaded him into an armored ambulance.

Then the Dutch broke contact and reached a gully out of the line of fire.

Captain Abdul Rakhman shared news. "I shot one," he said. He swept his hand from his belly to his neck, indicating where the enemy had been struck. The gesture resembled zipping a coat. He shrugged. "I think he is dead," he said.

A Black Hawk helicopter landed, took on the wounded Dutch soldier and lifted away. The patrol was over.

The Dutch and Afghan soldiers drove back to their bunkers while smoke rose and drifted over Surkh-Murghab.

Word of the wounded Dutch soldier passed among the troops. He had been struck by the casing of a round fired from a Dutch 23-millimeter cannon, Lieutenant Marcel said. His wound was not severe.

Later, in a tent crowded with Afghan soldiers, Captain Abdul Rakhman spoke of the limits of their influence.

**Several villages south of Poentjak tolerate the Dutch and the Afghan Army, and tribes have assigned young men to join the Afghan police.**

**But in every other direction the Taliban is strong. These villages, the captain said, could never be won with such a small force.**

**Seeing the Afghan patrol approach, the local men had ushered their families away and coordinated an attack, striking from multiple directions and with several different types of weapons.**

They also maneuvered in the face of machine gun, rocket and mortar fire. And they used trickery, he said, to set up the attack. "Those people who walked under burqas, they were not all ladies," he said. "There were men. Taliban. They went to take their firing positions."

But the Taliban had also made mistakes, he said, including firing too soon. Had the Afghan patrol been allowed to walk farther into the ambush site it would have been encircled. Instead, the Taliban left a chance for escape, and fired with such poor aim that soldiers caught in the open were able to flee unharmed.

The captain still had questions he wanted answered.

Later, near darkness, he slipped off base in civilian clothes, to talk with shepherds passing through the fields. When he returned, he told his squad more news: two of the Taliban had been wounded, he said, and four had been killed.



Pvt. First Class Rob of the Dutch platoon was struck near the neck. Medics dragging him to safety had to duck for cover. Tyler Hicks/The New York Times

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## **Helicopter Shot Down: Mercenaries? CIA?**

# Take Your Pick

14 Apr 2007 VOI

American special forces and Afghan troops rescued five civilian contractors pinned down under insurgent gunfire after their helicopter made an emergency landing, the U.S.-led coalition said.

The contractors were evacuated to a nearby coalition base, where they were treated for minor injuries, the statement said.

**Neither the company nor the contractors were identified.**

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## Assorted Resistance Action

Apr 14, 2007 KABUL (Reuters)

A bomber blew himself up outside an Afghan police headquarters in the east of the country on Saturday, killing at least eight people, officials said.

Seven of those killed in the attack in Khost were border police and the eighth was a civilian, the Interior Ministry said in a statement. Six police officers were also wounded.

Taliban commander Mullah Hayatullah Khan told Reuters by phone his insurgents had carried out the attack.

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**“The Deeper Canada Has Gone Into  
The Afghan War, The More It Has  
Been Forced To Break Out The Heavy  
Equipment”**

**“There Is No One Tool Out There That  
Can Halt An Insurgency. They’ll Always  
Find Countermeasures”**

04/13/07 Pakistan Tribune

**OTTAWA: The government’s plan to re-equip the Canadian army in Afghanistan with modern Leopard 2 A6M tanks was greeted with skepticism by experts who**

**question whether the iron monsters will counter roadside explosives and suicide bombers.**

“In the short term, it may provide a measure of additional protection -- but no armour is impenetrable,” said Steve Staples of the Ottawa-based Rideau Institute, an international affairs think-tank.

The deeper Canada has gone into the Afghan war, the more it has been forced to break out the heavy equipment, he said.

The army replaced its aging Ilitis jeeps with G-Wagons, only to turn around and sideline them with blast-resistant RG-31 Nyalas as insurgent bombs grew more powerful.

Last fall, an older version of the Leopard tanks, which are tracked vehicles, were introduced as the wheeled LAV IIIs and Bison armoured personnel carriers became stuck in the deeply rutted grape fields of west of Kandahar.

**The powerful Easter Sunday explosion, which wrecked a LAV III and killed six soldiers, is proof that the Taliban are adapting and could very well build a powerful enough bomb to knock out a tank, said Staples.**

**“Israeli tanks in Lebanon and American battle tanks in Iraq, which are actually even heavier than the Leopard 2s, have been defeated by insurgent tactics,” he said.**

A U.S. expert in counter-insurgency warfare said the decision to swap out the older Leopard tanks with new ones was wise, but should not be portrayed as a solution to rising casualties.

**“You are fighting an adaptive enemy who learns as you learn,” said Anthony Cordesman, at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.**

**“There is no one tool out there that can halt an insurgency. They’ll always find countermeasures.**

Up to 20 Leopard 2 battle tanks will be borrowed from Germany, modified with extra floor plating and blast-resistant seats, then shipped to Kandahar this summer to replace Canada’s geriatric Leopard 1 vehicles.

At the same time, the Defence Department will purchase 100 slightly used Leopard 2 tanks, which have been carefully mothballed, from the Dutch.

The tanks Canada is purchasing can travel twice as fast in difficult terrain as the existing ones which, apart from being 30 years old, are ill-suited to operate in the stifling Afghan summer heat.

**None of 17 armoured vehicles currently fighting in NATO’s Operation Achilles have air conditioning, a source of worry for tank crews who were likely going to face summer temperatures of 60 degrees Celsius inside the tank compartment.**

The purchase is a change of direction for the army and in particular for Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier, who only a few years ago described the Leopard tanks as “millstone around the neck” of the forces.

The Defence Department toyed with the idea of replacing the heavily tracked tanks with a wheeled, unproven mobile gun system called a Stryker.

“Ideally, we wanted a smaller, lighter vehicle that had smaller crews,” Hillier told the Quebec news conference where the new tanks were announced.

“Something that could perhaps manoeuvre better on some of the smaller trails and some of the tinier villages where we were. The mobile gun system appeared to offer that, but it does not.’

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## **TROOP NEWS**

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



The casket of Army Spec. Justin A. Rollins at Arlington National Cemetery March 19, 2007. Rollins, of Newport, N.H., was killed with five other soldiers on March 5 in Samarra, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near their unit during combat operations. (AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

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## **250 From Fort Riley Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse**



4.16.07 Army Times

About 250 transportation soldiers from Fort Riley, Kan., are scheduled to deploy late April and early May for yearlong tours to Iraq, post officials said.

The 24th Transportation Company, 266th Movement Control Team and 2nd Platoon, 2nd Transportation Company, all will be on their third deployment supporting missions related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and counterterrorist operations.

The 266th will coordinate the movement of personnel and equipment while in theater. The 24th and 2nd, heavy equipment transporters, will be responsible for convoy operations.

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## **Fort Bragg: “I Was Surrounded By Soldiers Not Getting The Care They Desperately Needed”**

Letters To The Editor  
Army Times  
April 16, 2007

In all the reports of the deplorable housing conditions at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, I have never heard anything about the medical treatment being substandard.

I, for one, have to say I am envious and would have traded in a second to go to Walter Reed to receive some of the best medical care in the country versus going to a hospital that is not equipped to handle your condition.

I was medically evacuated out of Iraq and on my way to Walter Reed when I was informed that it was full. I was diverted to Womack Army Medical Center at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Though I believe the only neurologist there had good intentions, he was inexperienced and overworked.

**Weeks went by and I was undiagnosed and even discharged once only to be returned the next day, barely able to stand up or walk. I begged and pleaded to be sent elsewhere for a diagnosis.**

**Finally, three weeks into my ordeal, I was sent to a civilian hospital and diagnosed the next day with a cerebrospinal fluid leak. Tests were done immediately and treatment was fast behind that.**

**Womack officials later contacted me and informed me that they were a small community hospital and not equipped to handle my case, yet soldiers were continuing to be rerouted there and no one was stopping it.**

**The housing — Airborne Inn — was excellent on Fort Bragg, but the medical care left something to be desired.**

**I was surrounded by soldiers not getting the care they desperately needed.**

**All injured soldiers need to receive the best care and housing this country has to offer.**

**Don't we owe them that?**

**Master Sgt. Denise Slater  
Latham, N.Y.**

**MORE:**



Jose Ramos, a former Navy hospital corpsman who severely injured his arm during combat operations in Iraq forcing it to be amputated, speaks during a commission hearing on the treatment of wounded veterans April 14, 2007, in Washington.

Although praising the medical care at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Ramos described having to wait four hours after a scheduled appointment to get in, as well as rescheduling follow-up visits.

**“I constantly had to re-explain my symptoms and medical history. It was like starting all over again every time I had an appointment,” Ramos said. (AP Photo/Haraz N. Ghanbari)**

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# Thousands Of Postal Service Reservists Eligible For Back Pay

April 16, 2007 By Tim Kauffman - Staff writer, Army Times [Excerpts]

As many as 100,000 National Guard and reserve members who worked at the U.S. Postal Service between 1980 and 2000 could be eligible for thousands of dollars in compensation because they were improperly charged for military leave, under a new ruling.

The Merit Systems Protection Board decision greatly expands the scope of a larger back-pay issue that ultimately could cost the government half a billion dollars, said Matthew Tully, a New York attorney who is representing affected employees for free.

Previous rulings have held that between 150,000 and 200,000 Guard and reserve members who worked for executive branch agencies between 1980 and 2000 are eligible for back pay because of an erroneous leave policy.

In a March 7 ruling, *Miller v. U.S. Postal Service*, MSPB said reservists who worked at the Postal Service also are covered because that agency used the same policy.

Next to the Defense Department, the Postal Service is the largest single employer of Guard and reserve members, Tully said.

The Postal Service could appeal the ruling to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, although that court in 2003 issued the landmark decision that employees were entitled to back pay because federal agencies improperly charged reservists on military leave for days they were not scheduled to work at their federal jobs.

The policy, which was changed in 2000, had charged reservists for every calendar day they were on military leave, instead of charging them for the actual work days they missed.

Reservists who used their military leave because they were charged for weekends or other days they weren't scheduled to work had to use their own vacation days or take leave without pay to complete their annual military training.

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

# “They Threw Stones At The Governor’s Office And Set Fire To The Building”

04/14/07 By SINAN SALAHEDDIN (AP) [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD (AP) - A car bomb blasted through a busy bus station near one of Iraq’s holiest shrines Saturday and killed at least 56 people, police and hospital officials said.

The bus station bombing occurred about 200 yards from the Imam Hussein shrine in Karbala, where the grandson of Islam’s Prophet Muhammad is buried - one of the most important sites for Shiites.

A 72-year-old woman who called herself Um Hussein ran through the hospital corridors looking for her daughter and six-year-old grandson.

“They were near the bomb. They went to buy something for our lunch,” she said, pounding her head in grief. “What did they do to deserve this. To whom should I complain. There is no government to protect us,” she moaned.

Hundreds of people swarmed around ambulances, crying out and pounding their chests in grief.

**Police fired into the air to disperse crowds and clear roads for emergency vehicles, but angry crowds attacked them and set two police vehicles on fire.**

**Angry citizens surrounded the Karbala governor’s office and demanded his and provincial council members’ resignations - blaming them for lax security. They threw stones at the governor’s office and set fire to the building.**

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## Assorted Resistance Action

04/14/07 By SINAN SALAHEDDIN (AP) & (Reuters) & News Limited

In Baghdad, a bomber detonated his car next to a security checkpoint at the edge of the Jadriyah bridge, killing 10 people and leaving another 15 wounded, most of them civilians, a security official said, the second attack on a span over the Tigris river this week, police said.

Guerrillas killed a policeman heading to work in the town of Mussayab, about 60 km (40 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

A policeman was killed Saturday in a drive-by shooting in Hillah, about 60 miles south of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas wounded a police colonel and two of his bodyguards in a failed assassination attempt on Friday in the Shi'ite city of Kut, 170 km (105 miles) southeast of Baghdad, police said.

A mortar round killed three Iraqi soldiers and wounded four others when it landed at an Iraqi army post in the town of Suwayra on Friday, a police source said.

Guerrillas attacked the deputy industry minister's convoy and wounded three of his bodyguards in Baghdad's southwestern Jihad neighbourhood, police said. Deputy Minister Mohammed Abdullah was present but unhurt from the attack.

**A resistance organization has said overnight that it had captured 20 Iraqi soldiers and policemen and threatened to kill them in 48 hours if its demands were not met.**

**The Islamic State of Iraq posted still images showing the captives dressed in brown and blue uniforms, blindfolded and handcuffed.**

It demanded the release of "Muslim Sunni sisters who are in the prisons of the interior" ministry, in the statement posted on a website used by Islamist militant groups.

"The Islamic State of Iraq gives the government of (Prime Minister Nuri) al-Maliki 48 hours to meet its demands or it will execute the rule of God on them," it said.

It also demanded the "turning over of members of the interior ministry who took part in raping our sister 'Sabrin al-Jarabi'... and those who killed and displaced our people in (the northern town of) Tal Afar, and those who participated in raping our sisters there."

The rape of the woman known by the pseudonym of Janabi, who appeared in footage broadcast on Arab networks saying she had been raped by interior ministry officers, triggered a bitter row at the highest levels in Iraq.

Sunni leaders believed her accusations, but Shiite Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki dismissed them, alleging the rape was invented by politicians to tarnish the police at the launch of a Baghdad security crackdown.

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

## **A Very Different Point Of View: "Oh Baghdad They Killed You"**

[Thanks to Anonymous 911, who sent this in.]

'Oh Baghdad they killed you' - Iraqi Music Video about the 'Invaders' with English subtitles. [http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=bc9\\_1174782590](http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=bc9_1174782590) -

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

**My Turn:  
“It Is Time For Those In The Government  
To Do What Our Constitution So Plainly  
Requires Them To Do; The Will Of The  
American People”**



Sgt. Kevin Benderman [thewe.cc]

**As a soldier who served in the U.S. Army for ten years, including a combat tour in Iraq, and as a citizen who has defended the constitution by voting and speaking about the truth for many years, I am disgusted that this has been allowed to happen in our country.**

To: GI Special  
Sent: April 13, 2007

**By Sgt. Kevin Benderman**

**Kevin Benderman is a US Army veteran who served a combat tour in Iraq and returned home to file a Conscientious Objector application as his legal refusal to further participate in a war of choice which has proven to be unjust, immoral and unethical. Kevin was convicted of Missing Movement in July, 2005 and sentenced to a 15 month prison confinement for his stand against war.**

**To learn more please visit [www.BendermanDefense.org](http://www.BendermanDefense.org).**

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**“The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.” Benjamin Franklin**

**Isn't that exactly what is happening in Iraq and the war of choice?**

We now hear from many who say the troop surge is working but they present no facts to back their claim. On the other hand there are many facts being presented everyday to show that the level of violence is not going down in Iraq.

Yesterday in Iraq there was an explosion in the parliamentary building which killed 2-3 parliament members and injured up to 20 more people. A bridge was also partially destroyed in the so called “green zone” which killed 8 more people and wounded numerous others.

About 3 weeks ago during a news conference to show just how safe Iraq has become, the prime minister and the head of the U.N. came under a mortar attack in the building where they were giving the conference, which had the leader of the U.N. ducking for cover.

**Every day I hear of a new bombing that kills numerous Iraqi civilians and others that kill numerous American service members. Those are cold hard facts about the situation on the ground.**

**I hear a lot of talk about the effectiveness of the so called troop surge but I hear of no facts to verify this.**

**I want to know, just what is being effective about this action?**

**It seems to me that if it were being effective then the soldiers' and civilian deaths would be going down instead of staying the same or rising.**

I also hear a lot of talk about the congress trying to micro-manage the war with the deadlines they have included in the funding bill recently passed in the house and the senate.

**It is being said so as not to bind the generals' hands on the ground we should not be setting a deadline to bring them home.**

**But if we go back to the beginning of the war when General Shinseki said that we needed at least 350,000 service members to do this effectively, he was retired**

**(fired) by this administration for saying so.**

**The secretary of defense at the time told this much decorated general that he had no clue as to how to manage this war and that only 150,000 service members would be needed and the general was promptly sent home.**

**This comes from an administration whose members have never served in the military, much less in combat.**

**I am getting sick of hearing the lies told and the incompetence on all levels of how this war came to be and the conduct of it after it was so fool-heartedly started.**

**American service members are dying by the thousands, and tens of thousands more are being wounded in this war of choice started by an out of control administration intent only on fulfilling their own agenda.**

**Iraqi civilians are being slaughtered by the thousands because this administration fails to admit they did not know what the hell they were doing in the management of this war.**

**The people who back this war the most, and their children, will never be in combat because they will out-right tell you they want nothing to do with fighting in this war, but they have no problem sending everyone else to fight in this war that has been shown time and time again to have nothing to do with our national security.**

**As a soldier who served in the U.S. Army for ten years, including a combat tour in Iraq, and as a citizen who has defended the constitution by voting and speaking about the truth for many years, I am disgusted that this has been allowed to happen in our country.**

**Congress needs to find the intestinal fortitude to stand up and do what is right in this situation, regardless of their political fortunes.**

**The American people have spoken and it is time for those in the government to do what our constitution so plainly requires them to do; the will of the American people.**

**Troops Invited:**

**What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org):. Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe.**

**And Make It A Holiday**



From: Dennis Serdel  
To: GI Special  
Sent: April 14, 2007  
Subject: And Make It A Holiday

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

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### **And Make It A Holiday**

**Vice President hole in your heart,  
you are nothing but a mercenary  
you will kill both sides for money,  
you don't give a damn.  
Vice President hole in your heart,  
you feel nothing when another  
Soldier is dead,  
you feel nothing when another  
Iraqi child is dead,  
you feel nothing for the wives  
and mothers, you feel nothing,  
nothing at all.  
Vice President hole in your heart,  
do you think that your blood money  
will buy you respect,  
can you not feel the eyes,  
the eyes from all over the world,  
looking at you with hate ?  
Vice President hole in your heart,  
how many millions and billions  
will your mercenary money need  
for this endless war ?  
The answer is in the question,  
but let it all be known,  
every time you go to the hospital,  
for a blood clot or whatever,  
millions of people in the world,  
hope that you will die.  
They will be happy and laugh  
like the children in Iraq  
do when another mercenary dies.  
Vice President hole in your heart,  
you better have guards**

where they bury you,  
because good Americans  
will come from all over  
just to piss on your grave,  
paying you the respect  
you deserve.



you feel nothing when another  
Soldier is dead  
[REUTERS/Will Burgess]

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**“I Was In Nam In ‘66’ - I Would Have  
Been Pissed If They Had Extended  
My Tour By 3 Months”  
“They Push The Grunts Any More And  
They Are Going To Feel Some Cold Steel  
Up The Back-Side”**

From: Rogue  
To: GI Special  
Sent: April 13, 2007  
Subject: Re: GI Special 5D13: The Traitor Bush Defies America

Thanks for the great info.

**I was in Nam in '66' - I would have been pissed if they had extended my tour by 3 months.**

**I can not believe the bastard gets away with this. Were the people, who are supposed to have the power in the US of bloody A, asked if they wanted to occupy Iraq?**

**Was there a vote that gave these buggers the right to laugh at the US Constitution?**

**They push the grunts any more and they are going to feel some cold steel up the back-side.**

**I doubt you are for empire building for the rich and friends of the shrub.**

**I will meet you on the barricades.**

Regards,  
Rogue

**One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.**

**Mike Hastie  
U.S. Army Medic  
Vietnam 1970-71  
December 13, 2004**

## **The Traitor Bush Digs His Own Grave: LBJ Wasn't So Stupid**

From: WORKING CLASS WAR, by Christian G. Appy, U. Of North Carolina Press, 1984

**President Johnson rejected the military's frequent request for a major mobilization of the reserves and the National Guard. He feared that activating these units would draw unwanted attention to the war and exacerbate antiwar sentiment.**

**Since these men were drawn from specific towns and urban neighborhoods, their mobilization would have a dramatic impact on concentrated populations.**

Johnson also realized that reservists and guardsmen were generally older than regular army troops and were, as a group, socially and economically more prominent. .

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## OCCUPATION REPORT

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



An Iraqi citizen is forced to stand aside as a foreign occupation soldier from U.S. B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment searches her personal belongings in her own home in west Baghdad's Ghazaliyah neighborhood March 22, 2007. (AP Photo/Marko Drobnjakovic)

**[There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and busting into their houses by force 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!**

### **GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out**

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The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

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

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

[http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi\\_special/](http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/); <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>;

<http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/qi-special.htm>

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