

GI SPECIAL 5D17:

MARCHING PROUD AGAINST THE OCCUPATION A PATRIOT STANDS UP TO DEFEND HER NATION



UNCONQUERED UNCONQUERABLE

An Iraqi citizen holds an Iraqi flag aloft as she joins others marching during an anti-Occupation protest in Sha'ab district of Baghdad, Iraq, April 16, 2007. (AP Photo/Adil al-Khazali)

NOTICE:

Some nasty computer problems delayed the most recent two issues of GI Special. PDF still not back and running, so Word version sent to PDF subscribers. T

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Texas Soldier Killed In Baghdad



Spc. Ryan A. Bishop, 32, of Euless, Texas, died April 14, 2007 in Baghdad of wounds sustained when he was struck by a roadside bomb while on patrol. He was assigned to the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, fort Drum, N.Y. (AP Photo/Bishop family)

Illinois Marine Killed In Anbar



Marine Lance Cpl. Jesse De La Torre of Aurora, Ill., 29, died April 16, 2007, during combat operations in Al Anbar province in Iraq. (AP Photo/Courtesy Lt. Governor Pat Quinn's office)

IED Kills Pennsylvania Soldier



Pfc. Aaron M. Genevie, 22, of Chambersburg, Pa. died April 16, 2007, in Baghdad when his vehicle struck a bomb. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

Fallujah IED Kills Two U.S. Soldiers, Two More Wounded

16 April 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070416-12

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Two 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Soldiers were killed and two were wounded in an improvised explosive device attack against their M-1114 vehicle in Fallujah at 2:20 a.m. April 14.

One of the wounded Soldiers was evacuated to the Balad Airforce Theater Hospital for medical treatment. One Soldier was treated and returned to duty.

Baghdad IED Kills One U.S. Soldier, Another Wounded

16 April 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070416-08

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldier died and one other was wounded when their vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device in a southern section of Baghdad April 16. The unit was conducting a security patrol in the area when the attack occurred.

Marine Killed In Anbar

4/17/2007 U.S. Department of Defense News Release 07-01-03C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq - A Marine assigned to Multi National Force-West died April 16 while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar Province.

One U.S. Soldier Killed, One Wounded By Baghdad Small Arms Attack

16 April 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070416-09

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier died when a combat security patrol was attacked with small arms fire in a southwestern section of the Iraqi capital April 16. One other Soldier was wounded during the attack.

Baghdad IED Kills One U.S. Soldier, Two Wounded

16 April 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070416-16

BAGHDAD – An explosively formed projectile targeting an MND-B patrol killed one Soldier and wounded two others in a southern section of Baghdad April 16. The unit was conducting a combat security patrol at the time of the attack.

An Iraqi interpreter was also wounded in the attack.

Task Force Marne Soldier Dies Of Non- Battle Injuries

April 18, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070418-04

BAGHDAD, Iraq – A Task Force Marne Soldier died in Baghdad Tuesday of non-battle injuries. The Soldier's name has not been released, pending notification of next of kin.

Kokomo Soldier Killed Easter Sunday



David Neil Simmons

April 11, 2007 Mary Milz, Eyewitness News, WTHR

Kokomo - Another Indiana soldier has died fighting the war on terror. 20-year-old Private First Class David Neil Simmons from Kokomo died Easter Sunday in Iraq. Private First Class Simmons left for Iraq just last month and his family was preparing a care package for him when they got the news.

"You know old Saving Private Ryan movie. You don't want to see the truck with the star on the side."

David Simmons got the news Easter evening.

"I saw two officers standing there," he said, "and thought 'this can't be right. It's something else.'"

David was told his only son, 20-year-old David Neil Simmons was dead, killed in an ambush while on patrol in Iraq.

"It really hurt," said the elder Simmons, "even if you have ten kids, losing one kills you and with just one child, I can't imagine. I still can't."

Neil, part of the Army's 69th Armor Regiment, left Fort Benning in mid-March and had been in Baghdad just a few days.

"We were going to barrage him with snacks and stuff," said Jim Simmons, Neil's uncle.

But the care package Neil's Uncle Jim and dad planned to send still sits in the kitchen.

“We never had the chance to communicate,” Jim said. “He was there two weeks and died.”

Family members say Neil, who graduated from Kokomo’s Northwestern High, was an avid outdoorsman. His dad said he was outgoing and friendly.

“He had tons of friends and was very happy.”

The younger Simmons also longed to follow in the military footsteps of his uncle and father.

“All I’m comfortable with is that he enjoyed doing what he did and he wouldn’t want to do anything else,” Neil’s dad said. His family proud of his service and feeling his sacrifice. His father expressed it this way. “Freedom is very expensive. You don’t know how much until something like this happens.”

He continued, “My heart goes out to all the families that have to go through this.”

David Neil Simmon’s body is to arrive in Maryland later this week for an autopsy. His family is still in the process of planning funeral services.

Petty Officer Killed In Iraq’s Anbar Province



Petty Officer 2nd Class Joseph C. Schwedler

April 10, 2007 By LOUIS HANSEN, The Virginian-Pilot

VIRGINIA BEACH -- When his high school football coach asked the players to lift weights three times a week, Clark Schwedler pumped iron five days a week.

When his government teacher taught about public service, Schwedler spoke persuasively about the need to give back to the community.

Schwedler’s fitness and service were tested as a Navy SEAL during two deployments, the latest one to Iraq. On Thursday, Petty Officer 2nd Class Joseph Clark Schwedler was killed by enemy fire in Iraq’s Anbar province.

Two other East Coast-based SEALs were wounded in the attack, the Department of Defense announced.

Schwedler is the 37th service member with local ties to die in combat in Iraq or Afghanistan since war began in 2002.

Schwedler grew up in Crystal Falls, Mich., a town of about 1,700 residents where the major industries are logging and tourism. His father, Joseph Schwedler, is a judge on the Iron County Trial Court, friends said Monday.

Schwedler played football and basketball and ran track at Forest Park High School in a community devoted to its school sports teams.

Bill St. John, a retired teacher, said Schwedler was a bright student, focused and goal-oriented. He spoke about public service and giving back to the community during class, St. John said.

Jim Nocerini, a retired teacher and coach, said Schwedler was quiet but made the room shine. "Any time you met Clarkie," he said, calling him by his nickname, "he had a smile on his face."

Schwedler graduated from high school in 1998 and attended Michigan State University. A career in Navy special warfare attracted him.

"This was his dream - to be a Navy SEAL," Nocerini said.

According to the Navy, Schwedler enlisted in March 2002. Eight months later, he entered Basic Underwater Demolition/SEALs training at Coronado Naval Amphibious base in California and graduated from Class 246.

Schwedler was assigned to SEAL Team Four at Norfolk Little Creek Naval Amphibious base in July 2004. He was deployed twice, said Lt. David Lockett, spokesman for Naval Special Warfare Group Two at Little Creek.

Schwedler lived in a brick ranch home off Rosemont Road in Virginia Beach. Neighbor Howard Perry said Monday that the two would often help each other with yard work.

Perry, a retired Marine Corps master gunnery sergeant, said the two talked about military service and the common bond between Marines and SEALs.

The neighbors had a small going-away party before Schwedler was deployed in August. Perry said his neighbor was ready for the deployment. "You've got a job to do," Perry said, "you've got to do it."

Schwedler earned the Iraqi Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal and Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, the Navy said. The ribbons tell only part of the story of the work being done by SEALs overseas. Since the wars began, 11 locally based SEALs have been killed. Schwedler was the first to die in combat in Iraq, the Navy confirmed.

The SEALs were fighting in Anbar province that includes the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi. The region has been a focal point of insurgents against U.S. troops and the Iraqi government.

Schwedler is survived by his parents, Joseph and Susan Schwedler, a brother and a sister.

Crystal Falls will hold a public funeral Saturday in the Forest Park High School gymnasium. Workers polished the hardwood basketball floor and the 1,000 seats in preparation for the ceremony. Nocerini expects most of the town to crowd into the gymnasium and honor their fallen soldier.

“This is what he wanted to be,” he said. “And he gave his life for it.”

Maui Soldier Killed In Iraq

April 9, 2007 Star-Bulletin Staff

When Army Pfc. Jay Cajimat was on the mainland for basic training, he asked his family to send him his favorite foods — Maui onion chips, li hing mui and macadamia nuts.

His mother wanted to send him one of his absolute favorite dishes — chicken adobo — but she never had the chance to.

Cajimat, 20, who was born in Manila but grew up in Lahaina, died Friday in Baghdad when a car bomb exploded near his unit. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division of Fort Riley, Kan.

Cajimat joined the Army right after graduating from Lahainaluna High School in 2005. His mother, Lilibeth Cajimat, said it was something he always wanted to do after the Sept. 11 attacks. He was deployed to Iraq in February.

His family described him as a shy person who loved the outdoors and surrounded himself with friends.

“He wasn’t much of a talker when he didn’t know you,” his 18-year-old sister Kaya said. “But when it comes to his friends, he was so loud. He couldn’t stop talking.”

Kaya and her brother liked to watch movies together at home, usually whatever he wanted to see, which was action movies. Being only two years apart in age, she remembers going to church together and playing freeze tag when they were younger. Jay Cajimat was the oldest and had three younger sisters.

Lilibeth Cajimat said that after the Army, her son had planned to return home and enroll in college to become a mechanical engineer.

She could tell in his recent e-mails that he wasn’t enjoying Iraq. But he never wanted his family to worry about him, she said.

“He was always a very loving son, kind and supportive to us,” she said.

Besides his mother and sisters, Cajimat is survived by his father, two grandmothers, a grandfather and several uncles and aunts.

Funeral services are pending.

Army Soldier Killed In Iraq To Be Buried Thursday In Picayune

Apr. 10, 2007 By HOLBROOK MOHR, Associated Press Writer

JACKSON, Miss. -- Army Staff Sgt. Jerry Clark Burge Jr. will be buried Thursday in Picayune, the tiny South Mississippi town he called home before embarking on a military career that took him around the world and into Iraq.

Burge, 39, was a career soldier who had already received a Purple Heart for injuries sustained in a prior deployment when he was killed in Iraq on April 4, his family said.

Burge and Cpl. Joseph H. Cantrell IV, 23, of Ashland, Ky., both died when a roadside bomb exploded near their vehicle, the Department of Defense said.

“The world lost an excellent human being. He was a soldier and he knew the risks, but he was willing to take the risks,” said Burge’s aunt, Bobbie Kennedy. “I believe that this nation lost a great man. He was a hero. We just brought him (his body) from the plane a little while ago and a lot of our town turned out to receive him.”

Funeral services are set for 1 p.m. Thursday at McDonald Funeral Home in Picayune. Burial will follow at the New Palestine Cemetery.

Burge was a demolitions expert and engineer and had received a Purple Heart for injuries he sustained in an explosion when he was in Kosovo. He was on his second tour of duty in Iraq when he was killed, Kennedy said.

Kennedy described Burge as a tough soldier and leader, but a gentle father of three who loved to laugh and spend time with his family.

“He was just an all around good guy,” Kennedy said. “He had a lot of friends and he came from a big family. I’m just thankful to have been a part of his life. We loved him very much.”

Burge and Cantrell were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

Burge is the second soldier from Picayune, a town of about 10,800, to die in Iraq.

Army Staff Sgt. Clint D. Ferrin, 31, also of Picayune, was killed in March of 2004 with three other soldiers when their Humvee hit a roadside bomb in Baghdad.

At least 52 soldiers and Marines with strong Mississippi ties have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to an unofficial Associated Press Count.

As Soldier Dies In Iraq, Father Loses 'Best Friend'

April 11, 2007 By Martin Weil, Washington Post Staff Writer

When Forrest D. Cauthorn graduated from high school in Virginia, his dad gave him a motorcycle. The idea was for him to ride all summer, crisscrossing the country while he decided what to do with his life.

But what the father did not know was that his son had already made his decision. He had joined the Army.

On April 5, Sgt. Forrest D. Cauthorn, 22, an infantryman from Charles City, Va., was killed in Iraq, the Pentagon said.

He died in Hawijah of wounds suffered when his unit encountered enemy forces using small arms and grenades, according to the Pentagon.

"My best friend," his father, Forrest W. Cauthorn, called him last night. "The best thing I've ever done in my life."

The two had always been close, his father said. In 22 years, the elder Cauthorn said, his son "lived more than most people" do in a lifetime.

"We were always together," including time the son spent "riding with me on the back of my motorcycle," Cauthorn said.

The younger Forrest Cauthorn had a positive outlook, his father said. He was "a unique person" who made no enemies and fit in with people far older than he. "Even my old biker friends," the father said.

Rather than be content to complain about the country's problems, Cauthorn said, his son wanted to help solve them.

"He told me point-blank that he was not going to be one of those people" who express displeasure but refuse to act, the father said.

Telling his son's story was important, Cauthorn said, because it lets others know "what good kids do and what price they paid."

Forrest D. Cauthorn, who was known by his middle name, Dane, attended Manchester High School in Midlothian, Va., a suburb west of Richmond. He was a member of ROTC

throughout high school, said Sgt. Maj. William J. Wilderman, an instructor in the program. "He was a good, hardworking kid," Wilderman said last night. "He was one of our cadet leaders."

"He was the best kid anybody could ask for," a family friend said.

"His father loved him very much, and he loved his father very much," said the friend, who declined to be identified by name. "His father was proud of him every day of his life, and he is going to miss him tremendously."

Washington Post reporter Tamara Jones encountered the soldier in Afghanistan at the end of 2004, when Cauthorn, then 19, was a private first class. At the time, he had been there for nine months.

Cauthorn indicated to Jones that his Afghanistan assignment had lacked danger and was "great, if you like riding round in a damn Humvee all day."

He told her that he was cheered by letters sent by school classes that had adopted him on the AnySoldier.com Web site. To a student who asked about his favorite animal, he wrote: "I like penguins."

Cauthorn was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division based at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii.

His father said he intended to have his son's body cremated. Then, he said, he plans to make the cross-country ride his son never made "and take him with me."

"Who Would Have Thought I'd Be Planning My Husband's Funeral?"

April 12, 2007 By Susan Harrison Wolffis, Muskegon Chronicle

At 25, Stephanie Singleton of Muskegon is starting life over.

A war widow.

On Easter Sunday, her husband -- U.S. Army Sgt. Todd A. Singleton, 24 -- died of wounds suffered when his unit was ambushed outside Baghdad, Iraq, by enemy forces using explosives and small arms fire.

"Who would have thought I'd be planning my husband's funeral?" she asks, her voice almost a whisper.

She looks younger than her years, dressed in a T-shirt and blue jeans ripped at the knees, her hair pulled back behind her ears.

"I want people to know he was a good man, a straight-up guy," Stephanie says. "He was very proud to protect me and my family."

Besides his wife, Todd Singleton is survived by their 6-month-old daughter, Emma; his parents, Donna and Arthur Dykhouse and Douglas and Brenda Singleton, all of Muskegon, and numerous brothers and sisters.

As Stephanie Singleton speaks, her long brown hair falls into her face, making her look even more like a teenager -- not a woman who is a casualty of war.

"He was supposed to be coming home on (two weeks leave) in a couple weeks," she says. "This was supposed to be his last mission before coming home."

Her husband was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas. He was halfway through his second 14-month tour of duty in Iraq.

It was to be a glorious reunion. Todd was deployed with his unit to Iraq on Oct. 29, 2006 -- just three weeks after Stephanie gave birth to Emma.

"At least he got to see her," Stephanie says. "Some (soldiers) don't ever get to see their babies. At least he got to hold her and feed her before ... before ..."

Before he was killed in Iraq.

"We were going to get a family picture taken when he got home," she says.

She only has one snapshot of the three of them together, taken just before he shipped out to Iraq.

When Emma was 4 days old, Todd drove mother and baby home to Muskegon so they could be with family "you know, just in case something happened."

On Wednesday afternoon, Stephanie broke a silence she'd held since Sunday when she learned of her husband's death from military authorities.

"Life is never going to be the same," she says. "I don't know where to begin. Whenever I think about him, my heart stops."

Todd and Stephanie met at a school dance when they were both ninth-graders at Reeths-Puffer High School. Someone dared him to ask her to dance, which he did, and the story goes that he fell for her right away.

In 2001, after high school graduation, Todd enlisted in the Army. He was in basic training at Fort Benning, Ga., when terrorists struck New York City and Washington, D.C.

Stephanie remembers worrying that her fiancé would be sent into combat even though he hadn't finished training.

"He didn't join the Army to be in the newspapers or because the uniforms looked good," she says. "He wanted to serve his country."

On Sept. 24, 2001, after Todd graduated from basic training, the high school sweethearts married. In 2004, four months after being sent to Fort Hood, Todd was deployed to Iraq on a 14-month mission.

When he was at war the first time, he and Stephanie were in contact by e-mail almost every day and talked on the telephone every week. That was not the case during his second tour. Sometimes they'd go two weeks without contact.

Stephanie sent him pictures and videotapes of the baby, but her one regret is that Todd didn't have a camera with him in Iraq.

"I don't have a picture of him ... a recent one," she says. "I don't know what he looked like these last few months."

She looks at the pictures she's saved through the years. His official portrait from basic training. The night they went to a military ball. The day Emma was born, her daddy cuddling her in her swaddling clothes.

"It doesn't seem real," she confesses. "I was in total shock. The reality check will come when his body gets here."

Todd's body has not yet been returned to Muskegon. Arrangements with Sytsema Funeral Homes Inc. are pending.

Stephanie doesn't know when her husband will be buried. So she waits, clinging to her memories.

On Wednesday, she wrote these words for people to read:

"Todd Singleton was the love of my life. He was a great husband, son, friend and father. He loved his family very dearly. He took pride in serving our country. He will for always be remembered in our hearts. He was my hero, my friend and my first and only love. And I was proud to be his wife and the mother of his child."

Stephanie is making it through these first days and nights by staying busy, by not being alone. "She's a strong woman," says North Muskegon's Katie Heckman, 26, who is Stephanie's best friend. "I don't know how she does it. I don't think I could."

"I learned to be independent," Stephanie tells her. Half her married life, she's been alone while Todd was either at war or away on assignment.

"When he was in Iraq, it felt like I was a single parent," Stephanie says.

She looks at her friend, then looks away, tugging at her hair before speaking again.

"Fact is, now I am one," she whispers.

And for the first, and only time in the conversation, she cries.

"People ask when will the pain go away?" she says. "I don't know. I tell myself I have to move on. I have to do the things my husband would want me to do."

“Oh, my gosh,” she says. “He loved to sing. He was always singing.”

Todd’s taste in music ran primarily toward Motown, with a heavy emphasis on the Temptations. But the infantryman also had a private side to him that his buddies in the field didn’t know. Todd loved to decorate cakes. The guy who drew two tours in Iraq, assigned to areas where the action was the fiercest, was crazy about working alongside his wife in the kitchen.

“Neither of us liked to cook, but we both loved to bake,” Stephanie says, and even in her sorrow, she has to giggle. “Sometimes it was like: What do you want for dinner? A cake?”

She baked, and he decorated because “he was the creative one,” she insists. They dreamed of opening an in-home bake shop one day so Stephanie could be a stay-at-home mom and take care of Emma.

“I make myself get up in the morning for her. I am so thankful for her. I know I have to be strong for her,” Stephanie says. “I have to believe Todd is looking down on us, taking care of us.”

Humvee Blown Up Near Samarra; U.S. Casualties Reported



A U.S. military vehicle burns near Samarra, Iraq April 18, 2007. A roadside bomb went off next to an American military convoy, damaging one Humvee, local police said. Eyewitnesses reported casualties among U.S. troops. (AP Photo)

And Now, For A Blinding Flash Of The Obvious

April 13, 2006 By Sam Dagher, Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

The bridge and parliament bombings “are very calculated political messages that are meant to affect the morale of the government and its backers.

The claim that the security plan has sent insurgents scattering into the provinces has proven to be false,” says Mustafa al-Ani, director of the Security and Terrorism Studies program at the Dubai-based Gulf Research Center.

**GUESS WHO’S WORRIED
GUESS WHO ISN’T
GUESS WHY
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



Iraqis watch as members of the U.S. Army 2nd Brigade 82nd Airborne Division take defensive positions while on patrol in central Baghdad, Iraq, Feb. 17, 2007. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Swedish Soldier Wounded In Jowzjan

04/17/07 Sveriges Radio

The Swedish military says one of its soldiers has been injured after an explosive device blew up under vehicles carrying troops in Afghanistan.

The wounded man was on patrol in the northern province of Jowzjan when the bomb exploded on Sunday morning. He suffered injuries to his back and was airlifted to a German field hospital, but isn't thought to be seriously hurt.

Sweden has around 330 soldiers in Afghanistan

Assorted Resistance Action



The destroyed United Nation's armoured vehicle after it was hit by a road side bomb on April. 17, 2007 in the main city of Kandahar province, south of Kabul, on Tuesday, killing four Nepalese guards and an Afghan driver, officials said. (AP Photo/Allauddin Khan)

April 17, 2007 Times Online & RFE/RL & DPA

A bomber blew himself up among Afghan policemen doing their morning exercise in the northeastern city of Kunduz, killing nine and wounding 25, the government said.

The bomb attack in Kunduz, 250 km north of Kabul, was the worst in the relatively peaceful north since US-led forces overthrew the Taliban in 2001.

"It happened when the police were exercising next to the governor's building. Nine police are dead and 25 injured," an Interior Ministry official said.

The Taliban, fighting to oust foreign troops from Afghanistan, have launched a wave of suicide attacks in the south and east, but attacks in the north are rare.

Taliban commander Hayatullah Khan claimed responsibility and said more bombers were ready to strike. "They are present in all Afghan cities and waiting for orders," he said.

Dozens of Taliban fighters today reportedly raided police posts and a district government headquarters northeast of Kabul.

Provincial Governor Abdul Sattar Murad said up to five police officers wounded in the attacks in the Tagab district of Kapisa Province, 70 kilometers from the capital.

A roadside bomb in southern Afghanistan killed four United Nations police and their driver today.

The security guards working for the UN were Nepalese nationals travelling through Kandahar city in a marked grey vehicle with blue UN licence plates. The armoured vehicle was almost completely destroyed by the blast.

Esmatullah Alizai, Kandahar's provincial police chief, confirmed that the five dead were the Nepalese men and an Afghan driver. He blamed "a very powerful remote-controlled explosion".

UN spokesman Adrian Edwards confirmed the incident, saying, "it is a serious incident. We are taking it seriously."

TROOP NEWS

**Maimed Iraq Combat Vet
Betrayed By Government, As
Usual;
Denied 100% Disability
VA Says Medical Records Didn't
Document That "Shrapnel Wounds, All
Over Body" Were "Related To Your
Military Service"**

“You feel, you give everything you can, and then they turn around and slap you in the face,” said Anderson, who also suffered a shattered jaw, smashed eye socket, severed tongue and below-the-elbow amputation of his right arm after an explosion in Iraq. A VA spokesman declined to comment.

Apr. 12, 2007 By Judith Graham, Chicago Tribune [Excerpts]

CHICAGO - Sgt. Garrett Anderson never expected this feeling of betrayal. He loves his country. He supports this war. He believes in his president. He would fight again in Iraq, if he were able.

But coming home has been hell for this injured National Guardsman from Illinois, whose battle to secure medical care and government benefits has undermined his faith in his government.

The latest affront came in mid-March, when the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs sent a letter denying Anderson 100 percent disability, which confers extra pay and benefits, largely because his medical records didn't document that "shrapnel wounds, all over body" were "related to your military service."

"You feel, you give everything you can, and then they turn around and slap you in the face," said Anderson, who also suffered a shattered jaw, smashed eye socket, severed tongue and below-the-elbow amputation of his right arm after an explosion in Iraq. A VA spokesman declined to comment.

Applying for disability benefits is nightmarishly complex, and long administrative delays leave many injured veterans with little income during a crucial period.

Victor Rojas, a National Guardsman, is among hundreds of Illinois soldiers who have found themselves battling bureaucratic obstacles.

Rojas said he has "no complaints" about his care at Walter Reed, where he awoke from a five-week coma in early 2005 after suffering a traumatic brain injury during a rocket-propelled grenade attack in Iraq. The onslaught also shattered his right knee and severed the femoral artery in that leg.

But when he applied for VA disability benefits, the government's way of compensating retired soldiers for injuries, after returning to Illinois, "it took months and months and months," said Rojas, 22. "I felt, like, forgotten."

The agency lost his paperwork at least twice and required Rojas to show up at numerous appointments, even though his memory problems made it difficult, according to Eric Schuller, a senior adviser to Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn.

Rojas finally received a 100 percent disability rating in June 2006, a full year after applying.

"It gives you a bad feeling, but what I really worry about is people with bigger injuries than mine," he said.

Yuriy Zmysly, 22, is one of those people. Inspired by the Sept. 11 attacks, Zmysly enlisted in the Marines soon after graduating from high school in 2002. Zmysly later served almost two years in Afghanistan and Iraq.

He suffered a devastating brain injury not in the theater of combat but during an emergency appendix operation on a Marine base in January 2006. In fact, many war-related medical crises arise when personnel are training on base or undergoing demobilization.

When Zmysly awoke at a private hospital in Hinsdale, Ill., after lying in a coma for 2 1/2 months, he was unable to talk, walk or use his hands.

His wife, Aimee, 21, angrily dismissed the hospital staff's suggestion he go to a nursing home and arranged for him to be admitted to the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, where he received hours of therapy daily.

After 17 weeks, Zmysly was beginning to stand and try to walk. The military's health-care plan covered the stay.

But after Zmysly was discharged from the Marines in July, his case shifted to the VA, which provides care almost exclusively at its own enormous network of hospitals and medical clinics across the U.S.

Zmysly moved to Hines VA Hospital just outside Chicago, where therapists quickly concluded he had reached his maximum level of recovery. His wife thought their expectations were too low and their efforts to help him inadequate.

"It was so frustrating to see the gains Yuriy had made at the Rehab Institute being lost," she said.

Now home in Oak Lawn, Ill., Zmysly is getting five hours of physical and speech therapy at Hines weekly - barely enough to improve his state. His wife has tried to schedule more therapy, to no avail.

"They mean well, but they're overworked and underfunded," she said.

"It's obvious some of these men and women are not getting the care they need," said Kathleen Yosko, president of the American Rehabilitation Providers Association and Marianjoy Physical Rehabilitation Hospital in Wheaton.

Anderson, the National Guardsman, credits the Army with saving his life after an improvised explosive device detonated under his Humvee in Iraq in October 2005.

But he said he encountered extraordinary bureaucratic hassles and sheer nastiness after leaving Walter Reed's famed amputation ward and entering "medical hold," the period when the Army decides whether soldiers receiving outpatient care will return to active duty or be discharged.

The couple moved back to Champaign in June 2006, where they waited for the VA's disability determination.

The decision, when it finally came last month, was a shock.

Because Anderson's medical records from Iraq weren't available - like many soldiers, he returned to the U.S. without them - and the source of his shrapnel went undocumented at Walter Reed, the agency awarded him a disability rating of only 90 percent.

That meant Anderson would have to pay property taxes and would receive an income of about \$1,000 less each month.

"I'm really disappointed," said Anderson, 30.

He has filed an appeal and has a new appointment with VA medical reviewers later this month. But nationwide, appeals are currently taking close to two years.

Meanwhile, the family has been unable to find a local specialist, either at the nearest VA or in Champaign, to treat Anderson's amputated right arm.

As a result, Anderson hasn't received follow-up medical attention for constant nerve pain and potential bone spurs since returning to Illinois.

"You've got soldiers with a new breed of injury who, like Garrett, don't know where to turn," Sami Anderson said. "I don't think anyone was prepared for the issues they're bringing home."

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



The remains of U.S. Army soldier Jason Nunez, during his funeral, at the military cemetery in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, April 4, 2007. Of the 82nd Airborne Division, Nunez was killed last week along with three fellow soldiers in a bomb attack against his convoy near Baqubah, Iraq. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)

Bush Regime Sending U.S. Suicide Troops To Iraq; Air Force Members Get 5 Weeks Training For Ground Combat In Iraq [Lots Of Luck]

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

Apr. 15, 2007 By MICHELLE ROBERTS - Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

CAMP BULLIS, Texas --A row of rumbling flatbed trucks and Humvees outfitted with gun turrets lurches toward a mock village of cinderblock buildings where instructors posing as insurgents wait to test the trainees' convoy protection skills.

The training range is Army, as is the duty itself - one of the most dangerous in Iraq these days. But the young men and women clad in camouflage and helmets training to run and protect convoys are not Army; they're Air Force.

They are part of a small but steady stream of airmen being trained to do Army duty under the Army chain of command, a tangible sign the Pentagon was scouring the military to aid an Iraq force that was stretched long before President Bush ordered 21,500 additional U.S. troops there.

The 2,225 airmen who have been trained and sent to run convoys in Iraq and Afghanistan so far remain a relatively small part of the overall force that includes tens of thousands of soldiers, who are sent for longer stretches and more frequent deployments.

The Air Force is running a regular rotation of 5-week courses for airmen to work convoys between Kuwait and Iraq.

Most Air Force enlisted personnel haven't had ground combat training, and the Army has its own sets of weaponry, terminology and command chains - all of which have to be taught to the airmen.

The Camp Bullis training, in an area named for two airmen killed in Iraq convoys, includes courses on assault rifles, roadside bomb recognition, combat first aid and driving tactics. The airmen live in a camp designed like a forward operating base, sleeping on cots, eating MREs and scrambling to shelter when air raid sirens sound.

The training culminates with a 72-hour exercise that includes instructors dressed in long white shirts and tapestry caps, planting mock roadside bombs and shooting blanks at the convoy from open windows in an "urban warfare village."

Many airmen were surprised at the assignment.

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:. Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe.

“So, McDowell Fled To Canada, Part Of A Growing Group Of US Army Deserters”

April 15, 2007 David Edwards and Josh Catone, Rawstory.com

Phil McDowell joined the military because of patriotism he felt after 9/11, reports CNN. He then served a year in Iraq because he thought he was fighting for a just cause.

“I did believe it was a just cause at the time,” he says. “I thought that was something that, our country was under attack, and Saddam was facilitating these attacks, and he was a threat to us.”

But in light of evidence that Saddam had no weapons of mass destruction and there were no credible ties between Iraq and al Qaeda, McDowell changed his mind and became “disillusioned,” reports CNN.

McDowell finished his tour and tried to leave the military, but was “stunned to learn the rules had changed and he was being called for another tour.”

So, McDowell fled to Canada, part of a growing group of US army deserters.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

“An Angry Mob Pelted Iraqi And American Soldiers Who Scrambled To The Scene With Stones”

18/04/2007 (AFP)

An avalanche of car bomb attacks on Shiite districts of Baghdad slaughtered 160 people on Wednesday and delivered a savage blow to the credibility of two-month-old US security plan.

The series of blasts were the deadliest in Baghdad since the launch of the massive crackdown; the single deadliest blast alone killed 115 people, mainly commuters and shoppers.

Angry Iraqis who lost loved ones lashed out at Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, blaming his beleaguered government for failing to bring law and order to the streets of the capital, nearly a year after it took office.

“Down with Maliki! Where is the security plan? We are not protected by this plan,” they shouted as an angry mob pelted Iraqi and American soldiers who scrambled to the scene with stones. **[Iraqis against the occupation are, of course, a “mob,” which means a pack of violent, out of control savages. Like the citizens of Boston who organized that Tea Party a few hundred years ago against kind, loving King George III. Or who shot the British occupation soldiers at Lexington and Concord.]**

GET THE MESSAGE?



People march during an anti-Occupation protest in Sha'ab district of Baghdad, Iraq, Monday, April 16, 2007. Hundreds gathered to demand a release of an Iraqi police chief from the US custody. (AP Photo/Adil al-Khazali)

Assorted Resistance Action



Destroyed building at the collaborator Islamic Party's headquarters after a bomb attack in Baghdad April 18, 2007. The building was destroyed by explosives planted by insurgents on Tuesday, police said.

Apr 16 (AP) & By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press Writer & 17 Apr 2007 Reuters & (KUNA) & April 18, 2007 SINAN SALAHEDDIN, Associated Press Writer & Reuters

The command said 25 of the government troops were injured during military operations in Al-Karkh, Al-Taji, Al-A'thamiah, Al-Madaen and Al-Mahmoudiah.

At least 13 Iraqi soldiers were killed Monday when more than a dozen guerrillas hiding in the back of a truck ambushed their military checkpoint near the northern city of Mosul, police said.

Another four soldiers were wounded in the attack, said police Brig. Saeed Ahmed al-Jibouri, director of Ninevah police. The ambush occurred around 10 a.m. in the al-Abdaiyah area of Mosul.

When the driver approached the checkpoint and reduced speed, preparing to stop for a routine search, all of a sudden more than a dozen fighters ambushed the checkpoint members and showered them with gunfire.

32 mortar shells rained down on Iraqi army checkpoints in two neighborhoods of Mosul, 225 miles northwest of the capital, police said. Six soldiers, a policeman and a pedestrian were injured.

Elsewhere, two brothers were killed and a policeman was hurt in a gunbattle in downtown Baqouba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, police said.

A car bomber targeting a police directorate killed nine and wounded 10 others in Ishaqi, 100 km (60 miles) north of Baghdad. Ten cars were destroyed.

The body of a policeman, who had been shot was found in Mosul, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded three policemen in the southern Jadriya district of Baghdad on Sunday, police said.

Guerrillas killed police Brigadier Abdul Kareem al-Bijari with two of his guards in Mosul, 390 km north of Baghdad, police said.

Another army officer and a civilian were killed in a roadside bomb attack in Mosul's east, police said. Another three police were wounded.

The bodies of four men, including three policemen, were found shot in and near the city of Diwaniya, 180 km (110 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded a policeman and two civilians in the oil city of Kirkuk, 250 km north of

A car bomb targeting a police patrol killed one policeman, and wounded four others near a petrol station in the town of Hawija, north of Baghdad, police said.

A bomber driving a tanker targeting a police patrol east of Mosul killed one civilian and wounded four Iraqi soldiers, police said.

In the ethnically-mixed city of Kirkuk, 180 miles north of Baghdad, an investigative judge at the city's criminal court was injured in a drive-by shooting, police said.

Judge Ayad Ali Asaad, a Turkoman, was driving with his wife and a guard when militants blocked their way and opened fire, police said. All three were wounded.

In Baghdad, four policemen were killed Wednesday afternoon when gunmen ambushed their patrol south of the city center, police said.

A security official in the defence ministry says a bomber blew up his car, targeting a police patrol in Baghdad's western Uwairej area. The blast killed four policemen

Guerrillas killed the son of Iraq's deputy interior minister and his two bodyguards in an attack on a vehicle near Baiji.

Two police were killed and eight wounded in a car bomb attack at a police checkpoint in Baghdad's Sadiyah district, police said.

A car bomb targeting a police patrol killed two policemen and wounded four, including near Baghdad, police said.

Gunmen attacked Iraqi army and police checkpoints in two different districts, police said. A policeman and a soldier were wounded in Tal Afar, about 420 km (260 miles) northwest of Baghdad, police said.

An Iraqi army officer and two soldiers were also wounded at dawn in Tal Afar, 50 miles west of Mosul, when guerrillas attacked their checkpoint, police said.

Gunmen killed Ismail Kadhim, a police major who was also a security guard for the Speaker of the Iraqi parliament, in southern Baghdad on Tuesday, police said.

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!

U.S. Occupation Commands' Stupid Tactics Recruit Even More Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops



A U.S. Army soldier from the 3-2 Stryker Brigade kicks a door open during a raid in Baghdad April 10, 2007. (Bob Strong/Reuters)

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqi troops over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, butcher their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it "sovereign," and "detain" anybody who doesn't like it in some prison without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.]

[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]

"In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit," said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay's Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday's raid. "Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead."

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

Collaborator Parliament "Is Completely Disconnected From Reality Outside The Green Zone" "Many Of Them Have Amassed Personal Fortunes"

[Well, that's the American way right, amassing "personal fortunes." So if you're fighting in Iraq, never forget: your mission is to give your life so a pack of corrupt traitors can get rich. At home and abroad. T]

April 16, 2007 By Sam Dagher, Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

BAGHDAD - The stunning breach in security at Baghdad's heavily guarded Green Zone last week killed one Sunni lawmaker and, in the aftermath, revealed an increasingly disoriented and dysfunctional Iraqi government.

"A lot of Iraqis now are biting their fingers in regret because they voted these people in. Most have no real base of support and command little respect," says an Iraqi analyst who has been following the workings of parliament since its inception.

He says the institution has rendered itself irrelevant largely due to the "incompetence and inexperience" of its members.

It did, however, meet earlier this month in a session closed to the media to discuss a bill that would grant the speaker of parliament a salary equivalent to that of Iraq's president.

News of such meetings only adds to the common Iraqi sentiment that its parliament is completely disconnected from reality outside the Green Zone.

Already, says the Iraqi analyst, members of parliament (MPs) are paid between \$10,000 to \$15,000 a month, receive a generous allowance for any trip they make outside Iraq, as well as other perks and benefits such as fuel to operate their generators and an allowance for personal security.

He says many of them have amassed personal fortunes and have bought homes and started businesses in Arab and European capitals.

In comparison, an average Iraqi who may have served the state for 30 years struggles to make ends meet on a pension of \$100 to \$200 a month, he says.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Lt. Col. In Baghdad Condemns Bush Regime

April 7, 2007 COMBINED PRESS INFORMATION CENTER, MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE-IRAQ, BAGHDAD, Iraq

“These terrorists are indiscriminately killing innocent Iraqis,” said Lt. Col. Christopher Garver, Multi-National Force-Iraq spokesperson.



[politicalcool.com]

FIGHT HIM HERE, SO YOU WON'T HAVE TO FIGHT FOR HIM OVER THERE: BUSH DEMANDS MORE MONEY TO KILL MORE U.S. TROOPS



The traitor Bush demands Congress pass an Iraq War supplemental spending bill without restrictions on his ability to kill more U.S. troops in the White House April 16, 2007. At right are military families he used for window dressing. REUTERS/Jason Reed

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