

## **GI SPECIAL 5D23:**



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

# **To Our GI's: We Want You To Come Home**

**[This letter is to the soldiers who have been writing in to GI Special from Iraq and elsewhere to declare their opposition to Bush's wars. T]**

From: Darlene Bernard-Curl  
To: GI Special  
Sent: April 22, 2007 5:03 PM  
Subject: our GI's

**In looking for the old newspaper article on the death of my GI the day before he was coming home, I came across your page.**

**A friend of mine just lost her husband April 13, 2007 in Iraq.**

**I can't tell you how much I appreciate that you will be speaking out. You have my admiration and support.**

**During Vietnam, a large percent of my generation at home spoke out loudly against the war. Some students even got killed - but we didn't shut up until we brought our soldiers home!**

**I, along with many others want all of you home. I'm vocal about it, but I don't understand how we got to be a silent majority on the war.**

**My prayers are with you and all of our soldiers in this conflict**

**Please know that the people support our troops 100% and beyond - we want you to come home.**

**Sincerely,  
Darlene Bernard-Curl**

**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**

### **Nine U.S. Soldier Killed, 20 Wounded In Attack On Diyala Patrol Base**

April 24, 2007 John Garnaut, The Sydney Morning Herald

Nine US soldiers were killed and 20 wounded today in a car bombing against a patrol base north-east of Baghdad.

The bombing occurred in Diyala province, a volatile area that has been the site of fierce fighting.

The nine Task Force Lightning soldiers died of injuries sustained in the blast, which also left 20 soldiers and an Iraqi civilian wounded, the military said.

Of those wounded, 15 soldiers were treated and returned to duty while five others and the Iraqi civilian were evacuated to a medical facility for further care, it added.

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### **US Soldier Killed By IED In Muqdadiyah**

4.23.07 AP BAGHDAD:

A U.S. soldier was killed Monday when a roadside bomb exploded near him north of Baghdad, the military said.

The soldier died around 12:45 p.m. local time in Muqdadiyah, 95 kilometers (60 miles) north of Baghdad, the U.S. military said in a statement.

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## **Soldier From 2nd Battalion The Duke Of Lancaster's Regiment Killed In Iraq**

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

23 Apr 07 Ministry of Defence

It is with deep sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce the death of a British soldier from 2nd Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment in the Al Ashar district of central Basra today, Monday 23 April 2007.

The soldier was providing top cover protection for a Warrior armoured vehicle on a routine patrol when he was killed by small arms fire. He was evacuated to Basra Palace, but tragically died of his injuries.

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## **Lafayette Soldier Killed Thursday Leaves Behind Young Daughter, Stunned Family**

04/18/07 By Joey Marburger, Purdue Exponent

Through teary eyes, Mollie Putman watched her daughter run around the living room.

Her daughter's fiery red hair, which she shared with her father, bounced up and down as Madelyn, 3, looked for her green Bug Juice drink.

She played with her young relatives, giggling, while others were crying. Madelyn doesn't understand. She doesn't understand that her father is never coming home or why her mother and grandmother's eyes are so red.

She doesn't fully understand that her father was killed Thursday in Iraq.

Cpl. Cody Putman of Lafayette was killed Thursday in Baghdad when his patrol encountered an improvised explosive device, according to a Department of Defense press release. Cody was a member of the 40th Cavalry Regiment and assigned to the

4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division based at Fort Richardson, Alaska. He was 22.

"It's nice to have the kids around," said Pam Mow, Cody's mother and an administrative assistant in the department of botany and plant pathology at Purdue.

"It keeps us busy. It helps."

Mollie hugged Madelyn between Bug Juice breaks as Mow looked at the small corner room of her house. It's now filled with Cody's sports uniforms and trophies.

Multi-colored jerseys are draped over the couch and countless trophies cover the surface of a table.

"It's a very new wound that won't heal really fast," Mow said. "Our worst days have probably yet to come."

Mow and the rest of Cody's family are preparing themselves for his body's return home. Cody's body will be flown to the Purdue University Airport later this week.

They were all together only weeks ago. Cody had been home on leave and took his family to Florida for vacation. Ten days after his return to Iraq, Cody was killed. Mollie remembers when the Army came to tell her.

"I looked out the window and I knew it wasn't good," Mollie said. "I thought maybe he had been hurt until I saw their faces."

They then went to Mow's house to tell her. It's been almost a week.

"I was talking to my husband last night and looking up at the sky and I said, 'I can still see Cody walking in the surf on the beach (in Florida),'"

said Mow, wiping tears away with her thumbs.

"I still can't believe this has happened," Mow said. "I don't know if that will ever go away."

Funeral arrangements are scheduled for Monday and Tuesday at Soller-Baker Funeral Home, 400 Twyckenham Blvd., Lafayette. The viewing will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. Monday. The burial will take place on Tuesday at Riverview Cemetery in Monticello, Ind.

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## **State Loses 50th Soldier In Iraq; Sgt. Joshua Schmit Was 10 Days Away From End Of Tour; His Father Leaves For Iraq Next Month**

04/14/2007 BY DAVID HANNERS, Pioneer Press

Every time Army Sgt. Joshua "Oompa" Schmit would call his parents from Iraq, they would breathe a sigh of relief that he was OK. Since last May, his Humvee had struck roadside bombs three different times, but each time he'd escaped unscathed.

Saturday, his luck ended.

**Schmit, 26, of Willmar, became the 50th Minnesotan to die in combat in Iraq.**

His family said they didn't know many details, other than the Humvee he was commanding hit an improvised explosive device.

He died just 10 days before he was due to leave Iraq - 10 days before he planned to begin the rest of his life, rejoin his wife in Germany, move back to the U.S. and even enroll in cooking school in Boston.

"He's been through a hard, hard tour over there," said his father, Greg Schmit, a sergeant in the Minnesota National Guard who is due to leave for Iraq next month.

Schmit was assigned to the 3rd Platoon of the 1451st Transportation Company, based in Boone, N.C. The platoon had come up short in volunteers, so soldiers from various backgrounds were put into the unit, according to a February article written by a National Guard public affairs specialist.

In the article, Schmit talked about taking soldiers with disparate jobs and training them for an infantry mission, saying, "a lot of the guys initially had no clue about the weapons systems. It started off really, really slow and we're still working on it, but we're getting there ...."

He was quoted as saying the key to success was, "Be flexible. I guess that's the main message. You might be trained to be a cook, but one day (you're) kicking in doors in Baghdad."

Joshua was a fireplug of a kid, and in high school had the nickname "Oompa" bestowed upon him - short for Oompa-Loompa, after the diminutive characters in Roald Dahl's children's story, "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory."

"He was a short, stocky kid, very happy-go-lucky," his father said of the name. "He was OK with that. Even his buddies in Germany (where he'd been stationed) called him 'Oompa.' It just stuck."

Schmit joined the Minnesota National Guard right after graduating from Willmar High School in 1999. "He wanted to do his duty, his part," his father said. "He really loved the National Guard."

But the younger Schmit soon decided he wanted to jump from the Guard to the active-duty Army. He did, and his father still remembers with pride the day his son graduated from infantry school at Fort Benning, Ga.

At the end of their training, the soldiers have what is known as a "Turning Blue" ceremony, where they are given their blue infantry cords that they wear on the right shoulder of their uniforms. Schmit chose to have his father pin his cord on him.

"To have my son go in my footsteps and be able to hang that cord on his shoulder just meant the world," the elder Schmit said.

While stationed in Germany, Joshua Schmit met the woman he later would marry, Andrea. She was a Brazilian national going to college in Germany, but she had gotten a job at Schmit's base as a COB, short for "civilians on the battlefield."

The civilians are hired to act as rioters or large crowds so troops can get more realistic training. Schmit was one of the soldiers who led the training.

The elder Schmit said his son and daughter-in-law were hoping to move back to Willmar by the fall. They wanted to move to Boston, eventually, so both could take advantage of the educational opportunities there.

"He was looking at going to school in the culinary arts," his father said. "He loves to cook. When he moved to Germany, he'd always hang around the restaurants and learn how to cook the dishes. He just loved it."

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## **IED Blows Up British Army's Main Battle Tank; Two Soldiers Wounded**

23 April 2007 BBC NEWS

A British Challenger 2 tank has been penetrated by a roadside bomb in Iraq, leaving the driver seriously injured, the Ministry of Defence has confirmed.

A spokesman said the tank had been on routine duties in a western district of Basra when it was hit on 6 April.

It is believed to be the first incident where a Challenger tank has been breached by such an attack.

The driver of the Challenger has now been sent back to the UK for further medical treatment.

An MoD spokesman said the Challenger tank was "well armoured but in an operational theatre it's not the case that you can have absolute protection".

He said: "This was not in any way new technology - the device involved was the same type of shaped charge that we have seen used very regularly.

"No-one has ever said Challenger tanks are impenetrable.

"We have always said that a big enough bomb will defeat any armour and any vehicle, and the Americans have lost many tanks in Baghdad."

He added that the attack also left one of the other three tank crew with minor injuries.

BBC defence correspondent Paul Adams said the Challenger was generally used on the ground only in situations where the Army felt the need to make "a big statement".

The Challenger 2 is the UK's main battle tank, and its key function is to destroy enemy tanks.

It has a good reputation for reliability, although it has experienced significant problems during military exercises in desert conditions.

Professor Michael Clarke, from King's College's Defence Studies centre, said the Challenger 2 tank's armour was usually "invulnerable".

He said: "Most of the things on a battlefield are not much of a threat to a tank, usually.

"This is worrying, because if there are many of these sorts of very heavy penetrative improvised explosive devices around in the area then no vehicle is safe."

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## **Two Aussie Troops Wounded By Bomb**

April 24, 2007 John Garnaut, The Sydney Morning Herald

Two Australian soldiers have been wounded in a roadside bomb blast in southern Iraq, the Defence Department said today.

The injured Australians are from the Australian Overwatch Battle Group West and were on patrol on a road north of the town of An Nasariyah in Dhi Qar Province yesterday.

A departmental news release said their Australian Light Armoured Vehicle (ASLAV) was "extensively damaged and destroyed by a subsequent fire".

The soldiers were from the 2nd Cavalry Regiment based in Darwin.

One received lower leg injuries, while the other suffered less serious wounds. Their injuries were not believed to be life threatening.

They were evacuated to a US military hospital.

Officials in Canberra told smh.com.au that Australian troops were involved in three related security incidents in the area.

In the first incident, the Australians came under a rocket attack by insurgents, but there were no injuries.

The second incident was the blast by a roadside "improvised explosive device" in which two Australian vehicles were involved.

The first vehicle was badly damaged and two of its three occupants were wounded. The second vehicle was immobilised, but its occupants were uninjured.

Soon after the explosion, Australian soldiers fired at an approaching vehicle as they secured the blast site.

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## **FUTILE EXERCISE: ONLY MILLIONS MORE IRAQIS TO GO: BRING ALL OUR TROOPS HOME NOW!**



U.S. soldiers stand guard near blindfolded suspected insurgents who were taken prisoner during a raid in Baghdad, April 20, 2007. (Thaier al-Sudani/Reuters)

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Tennessee Soldier Killed In Afghanistan**

Apr 23, 2007 Cookeville, Tn. (AP)



Family members say a former Monterey resident was killed during a second tour to Afghanistan after he stepped on a mine.

The family of 21-year-old Sergeant Alex Van Aalten, with the 82nd Airborne Division of the US Army, was notified on Friday of the incident in the Kandahar region of Afghanistan where he was stationed.

Aalten's mother Susan said the family learned of what happened while they were at work.

She said her son had been in Afghanistan since January and was scheduled to be there for 15 months.

Van Aalten also served in Iraq in 2005 where he was a gunner on a Humvee.

Van Aalten was born in Orlando, Florida, but spent much of his life in Monterey, located about 95 miles east of Nashville.

His mother and father, Ed Van Aalten, now live in Cumberland Cove, and his wife Shana lives in Sparta. He and his wife had been married for about two years, his mother said.

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## Stop-Losses Soldier Dies On Combat Patrol In Afghanistan

April 16, 2007 Eric M. Weiss, Washington Post Staff Writer

**Sgt. Edelman L. Hernandez had fulfilled his four-year commitment to the U.S. Army last month, and he did it the hard way, pulling a one-year combat tour in Iraq and another in Afghanistan.**

**But because his unit was still deployed in a combat zone, he was prevented from leaving the service.**

Instead, he died in uniform, drowning in a river in Afghanistan's Korengal Valley on April 11. Hernandez was 23.

His mother, Norma, said her eldest of four sons had wanted to be in the military since growing up in Hyattsville. Yesterday, the Lanham woman was mourning two of her sons. A younger son, Edwin, died three years ago to the day, in a car crash.

Edelman Hernandez was a member of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, based in Fort Drum, N.Y. The Army said only that he died while on combat patrol and that the incident is under investigation.

The 10th Mountain Division is taking part in Operation Mountain Lion, an effort to push Taliban forces out of the valleys in Kunar province, northwest of Kabul.

**Norma Hernandez said Army officials told her when they came to her house to inform her of her son's death that his squad was crossing a deep river and that he never made it across.**

**But she wants more answers. "Why only him, if it was so deep?" she asked.**

Edelman Hernandez was kept in the Army through the Pentagon's "stop-loss" program, which prevents active-duty Army and Reserve soldiers from leaving the military, either because their skills are needed or because their units are going overseas or are there already.

Hernandez played soccer at Hyattsville High School, where he had plenty of friends.

"He's always laughing, never really had a hard time or upset about anything," said his close friend Emily, who wanted to be identified only by first name. "He was the kindest person I knew and would give whatever he had to you."

Emily said she was surprised when her friend decided to join the military. "It was hard because why would you put yourself at risk? It was a decision that he made," she said. "I respected it because they are fighting for you."

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## **Assorted Resistance Action**

April 23, 2007 AMIR SHAH, The Associated Press

A roadside blast hit an Afghan intelligence service vehicle and killed all four people inside in the provincial capital Mehtar Lam. The remote-controlled roadside bomb killed two intelligence service officers, a soldier and their driver, said Laghman provincial police chief Abdul Karim.

In Laghman province's Alingar district, an intelligence service vehicle driving from neighboring Nuristan province today was hit by a remote-controlled bomb, said provincial police chief Abdul Karim. He said six of the agency's workers were killed, while three others were wounded.

Separately, an intelligence service employee was kidnapped and beheaded by suspected Taliban fighters at a home in Ghazni province, southwest of Kabul, said deputy governor Mohammad Kazim Allayar.

In southern Zabul province, a roadside bomb hit police today as they were patrolling in Shamulzayi district, killing two policemen and wounding five others, said district chief Wazir Mohammad Khan.

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## **SOMALIA WAR REPORTS**

# **Somali Resistance Has “Regrouped To Rise Up” U.S. Backed Troops Under Fierce Attack In Mogadishu; Occupation Soldiers “Flee”**

Apr 21, 2007 By Sahal Abdulle & Aljazeera & Wall St. Journal 4.23.07

MOGADISHU (Reuters): Shells pounded Mogadishu on Saturday, killing at least 73 people to swell a death-toll already in the hundreds from this week's battles between militant Islamists and allied Somali and Ethiopian troops.

Fighters backing the Islamic Courts' Union group and some of Mogadishu's clan leaders have vowed to defeat the Ethiopians.

Ethiopian army units also fought battles in the northern Fagah district and areas near the main Bakarah market.

## **Some Ethiopian troops reportedly fled to Yemen.**

The Islamists ruled most of south Somalia for the second half of 2006, before being defeated in a brief war over the New Year.

But Islamist fighters -- backed by some disgruntled Hawiye clan elements -- have regrouped to rise up against President Abdullahi Yusuf's administration and his Ethiopian backers.

Mortars, apparently from Ethiopian positions, hit the offices of the private broadcaster HornAfrik on Saturday morning, wounding several journalists inside, witnesses said.

**Insurgents barricaded themselves behind makeshift sandbanks and raced through streets on the backs of pickups turned into battle-wagons, while Ethiopian and Somali troops made forays into rebel strongholds with armored cars.**

The United States, Ethiopia and Somali government say the rebels are linked to al Qaeda, but Islamist leaders deny that, saying they are being deprived of a say in Somalia's future.

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**TROOP NEWS**



# Generals Spurn the Position of War 'Czar'

Thanks to Alan Stolzer, The Military Project & Phil G, who sent this in. Their comments: "I think they're looking for a captain for the Titanic too." P & "Moreover, failure doesn't look good on a resume."]

April 11, 2007 By Peter Baker and Thomas E. Ricks, Washington Post Staff Writers  
[Excerpts]

The White House wants to appoint a high-powered czar to oversee the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan with authority to issue directions to the Pentagon, the State Department and other agencies, but it has had trouble finding anyone able and willing to take the job, according to people close to the situation.

At least three retired four-star generals approached by the White House in recent weeks have declined to be considered for the position, the sources said, underscoring the administration's difficulty in enlisting its top recruits to join the team after five years of warfare that have taxed the United States and its military.

**"The very fundamental issue is, they don't know where the hell they're going," said retired Marine Gen. John J. "Jack" Sheehan, a former top NATO commander who was among those rejecting the job.**

Sheehan said he believes that Vice President Cheney and his hawkish allies remain more powerful within the administration than pragmatists looking for a way out of Iraq. "So rather than go over there, develop an ulcer and eventually leave, I said, 'No, thanks,' " he said.

Besides Sheehan, sources said, the White House or intermediaries have sounded out retired Army Gen. Jack Keane and retired Air Force Gen. Joseph W. Ralston, who also said they are not interested. Ralston declined to comment; Keane confirmed he declined the offer, adding: "It was discussed weeks ago."

Kurt Campbell, a Clinton administration Pentagon official who heads the Center for a New American Security, said the difficulty in finding someone to take the job shows that Bush has exhausted his ability to sign up top people to help salvage a disastrous war.

**"Who's sitting on the bench?" he asked. "Who is there to turn to? And who would want to take the job?"**

In an interview yesterday, Sheehan said that Hadley contacted him and they discussed the job for two weeks but that he was dubious from the start. "I've never agreed on the basis of the war, and I'm still skeptical," Sheehan said.

"There's the residue of the Cheney view -- 'We're going to win, al-Qaeda's there' -- that justifies anything we did," he said.

"And then there's the pragmatist view -- how the hell do we get out of Dodge and survive? Unfortunately, the people with the former view are still in the positions of most influence." Sheehan said he wrote a note March 27 declining interest.

**Some administration critics said the ideas miss the point. "An individual can't fix a failed policy," said Carlos Pascual, former State Department coordinator of Iraq reconstruction, who is now a vice president at the Brookings Institution.**

**MORE:**

## **“The White House Actually Is, Unbelievably, Incredibly, Announcing To The World That It Doesn't Know What It Is Doing In Iraq And Hasn't A Clue What To Do Next”**

April 13, 2007 By ANN MCFEATTERS, GUEST COLUMNIST, Seattle Post-Intelligencer [Excerpts]

Never mind that the course of "czars" has never run smoothly in this country, or any other. (Drug czar? Anti-terrorism czar? Education czar? Russian czar?)

What is stunning is that the White House actually is, unbelievably, incredibly, announcing to the world that it doesn't know what it is doing in Iraq and hasn't a clue what to do next, let alone how to get out of the quagmire it created.

Although anyone would have to be certifiable to take the job of overseeing this war as long as President Bush insists nothing will change, we're assured by the White House staff that this is all under serious consideration.

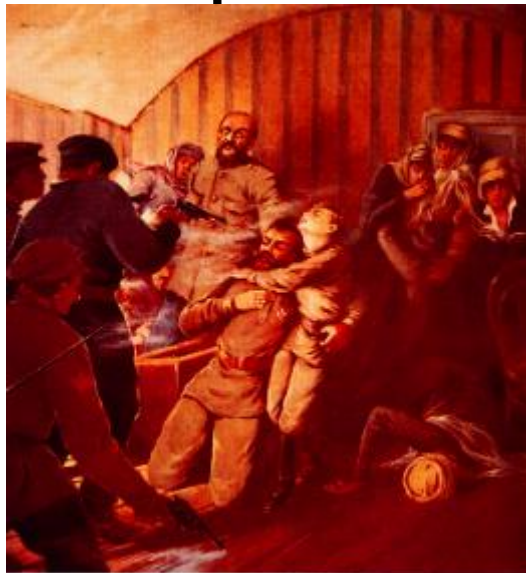
**This is amazingly surreal (yes, I know I'm blowing a year's worth of adjectives) for a democracy where we're not supposed to have "war czars" who have unspecified powers over life and death.**

While Bush gives speech after speech insisting the war is going OK, if not well, and paving the way toward democracy in the Middle East and giving terrorists everywhere nightmares (all evidence to the contrary), the pursuit of a war overseer is proof enough the White House policy is in total chaos.

**MORE:**

# ***WARNING TO JOB APPLICANTS:***

**There Are Some Risks In Being Czar;  
Here's The Termination From  
Employment Of The Last Office Holder,  
Executed By Members Of The Armed  
Forces For Slaughtering The Troops In  
An Imperial War**



Images.Google.com

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***Flying Coffins Headed For Iraq:  
Deadly, Useless Ospreys Won't Be  
Allowed To Go Anywhere  
Dangerous;***

# Iraqi Resistance Throwing Parties To Celebrate Arrival Of Useless Piece Of Shit Incapable Of Evasive Maneuvers

[Thanks to several people who sent this in.

**[David Honish, Veteran, writes: It must be a proud jarhead that can write home to Mom and tell her that he is a thunder chicken?**

**[Joshua Karpoff writes: Unbelievable!! Even Dick Cheney, the heartless delusional moron that he is, tried to cancel the funding for these flying coffins no less than four times! The Marine Corps has somehow decided that sending the V-22 Ospreys to Iraq will somehow make them less of a flying deathtrap.]**

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<p><b>The V-22 must land at speeds as slow as nine miles an hour and in a fairly straight line. A 2005 Pentagon report said these limitations “may prove insufficient” in protecting the V-22 from ground fire.</b></p>
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April 16, 2007 By Christian Lowe, Military.com

The Marine Corps announced the first operational deployment of the controversial MV-22 Osprey will be a combat tour to western Iraq.

Marine Commandant Gen. James Conway said the New River, N.C.-based “Thunder Chickens” of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 263 will deploy to al Asad air base Iraq in September.

Controversy swirled around the hybrid transport for years after two crashes in 2000 killed 23 Marines. The deadly incidents grounded the transport and sent the program back to the drawing board.

The Marine Corps announced the first operational deployment of the controversial MV-22 Osprey will be a combat tour to western Iraq.

***Marine Commandant Gen. James Conway said the New River, N.C.-based “Thunder Chickens” of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 263 will deploy to al Asad air base Iraq in September.***

But because of a checkered safety record in test flights, the V-22 will be kept on a short leash.

The Pentagon has placed so many restrictions on how it can be used in combat that the plane — which is able to drop troops into battle like a helicopter and then speed away from danger like an airplane — could have difficulty fulfilling the Marines’ longstanding mission for it.



**The limitations on the V-22, which cost \$80 million apiece, mean it cannot evade enemy fire with the same maneuvers and sharp turns used by helicopter pilots.**

**As a result, the craft could be more vulnerable to attack, and may result in the Marines keeping it out of the thick of battle, using it instead for less dangerous tasks.**

**“They will plan their missions in Iraq to avoid it getting into areas where there are serious threats,” said Thomas Christie, the Pentagon’s director of operations, test and evaluation from 2001 to 2005, who is now retired.**

The V-22’s debut in combat ends a remarkable 25-year struggle for the Marines to build a craft they could call their own.

**But the V-22 has also suffered some of the deadliest test crashes in Marine history.**

It has claimed 30 lives, 26 of them marines, in three test flight crashes. A fourth V-22 crashed, but there were no deaths then. Many more have been damaged in lesser incidents involving fires, stalled engines and software glitches.

**Critics say the V-22’s unusual design can create deadly problems that the Marines have minimized in their single-minded pursuit of the craft.**

**“It’s like a bad poker hand, and the Marines have been investing in it for 20 years,” said Philip Coyle, the Pentagon’s top weapons tester from 1994 to 2001. “They might have been better if they invested in brand new helicopters.”**

**The plane’s most widely cited design problem is that one of its propellers can get caught in its own turbulence as it comes in for a landing, and that can cause the V-22 to roll over and head into the ground.**

**For that reason, V-22 pilots are trained to steer clear of their own turbulence by rules prohibiting them from making the quick maneuvers used by helicopters to evade enemy fire.**

**Instead, the V-22 must land at speeds as slow as nine miles an hour and in a fairly straight line.**

**A 2005 Pentagon report said these limitations “may prove insufficient” in protecting the V-22 from ground fire.**

**As a result, that Pentagon evaluation said the V-22 was suited only for low- and medium-threat environments, and is not “operationally effective” in high-threat environments.**

Some critics say that in the heat of battle, V-22 pilots could forget these restrictions and move in ways that could bring the craft down.

**“The V-22 cannot do radical evasive maneuvers” said Lee Gaillard, author of a report critical of the V-22, “Wonder Weapon or Widow Maker” for the Center for Defense Information, which studies weapons programs. “But that’s what it will need for combat.”**

The program’s high cost and uncertain technology led Vice President Dick Cheney, when he was secretary of defense under President George H. W. Bush, to try four times to cancel the program. But, from 1989 to 1992, Mr. Cheney was beaten back by Congress.

**Work on the project — the Boeing Company and Bell Helicopter Textron are the main contractors — is spread across 40 states and 2,000 subcontractors, giving the V-22 broad support. More than 100 members of Congress even formed a Tiltrotor Technology Coalition to protect it.**

All new weapons have problems in testing. But critics say the V-22 is plagued with basic design problems.

Should the V-22 lose power, it can not “autorotate” like a helicopter and allow the updraft of air to rotate its propellers for a hard, but survivable, landing.

**Because of this, according to the 2005 Pentagon report, emergency V-22 landings without power at altitudes below 1,600 feet “are not likely to be survivable.”**

**“If you lose power on a V-22, you just burn and crash,” said one Pentagon official involved in testing the craft but who was not authorized to speak publicly. “There is no way to survive.”**

**The cabin is not pressurized, even though the craft can fly at altitudes of 10,000 feet and above, where breathing is difficult and it is not climate-controlled.**

**Pentagon reports also say the V-22 is too cramped for the 24 marines it can carry. The marines are so packed into the windowless cabin that they can become airsick, their legs can grow numb and leaving the plane quickly is difficult.**

**There is no bathroom on board and marines have criticized the “piddle packs” they are to use as insufficient.**

**And, there is no place on board to store them once they are full.**

**V-22 downdraft is so strong, and moves in so many directions that it can create “brownout” conditions, making it difficult for pilots to see and potentially knocking down marines on the ground.**

**As a result, when rope ladders are used, the V-22 must hover at higher altitudes, making marines more vulnerable to fire.**

“Safety is a big issue,” wrote one V-22 crew chief, in a questionnaire filled out for the Pentagon’s 2005 operational evaluation. “If we had went down in the water we would have most likely lost at least 24 troops because of restricted egress.

**“I felt like I was in a coffin.”**

These are more than theoretical concerns. On April 8, 2000, 19 marines were killed in a training exercise when a V-22 descended too fast and crashed near Tucson. It was the third V-22 to crash — seven people were killed in two previous crashes.

In December 2000, four more marines, including the program’s most experienced pilot, were killed in a crash caused by a burst hydraulic line and software problems.

These accidents led to program delays to make design changes. But as tests resumed, so have the problems.

**Three engine fires occurred recently because of problems related to hydraulic lines. In March 2006, a computer problem led an idling V-22 to suddenly take off on its own. It then slammed into the ground, breaking off its right wing. All 54 V-22’s were grounded for weeks in February because of a faulty computer chip.**

In preparation for deployment, the Pentagon ran tests last year in the New Mexico desert, similar to the climate of Iraq.

**In January, the Pentagon wrote about frequent failures with various parts and systems. The reason: “Extended exposure to the desert operating environment.”**

Because of these problems, Mr. Coyle, the former Pentagon weapons tester, predicted the Marines will use the V-22 to ferry troops from one relatively safe spot to another, like a flying truck.

**“They don’t want to have a ‘Black Hawk down,’ ” he said. “That would kill the program. Of course, it was not designed to be a truck. It was designed to be used in combat.”**

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## **Growing Numbers Of Suicides And Fratricides Shakes Indian Armed Forces**

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

17/04/2007 IANS

New Delhi: Expressing concern over growing incidents of suicides and fratricides in the armed forces, Defence Minister A.K. Antony yesterday called for steps to "urgently" address the issue.

"The number of suicide and fratricide cases continues to be a cause of concern and must be addressed urgently," he said while addressing the five-day Army Commanders' Conference in New Delhi.

The armed forces witnessed a staggering 146 suicides in 2006. There have been 21 cases this year alone.

"All possible steps must be taken to reduce the stress on jawans," Antony said, urging the top brass to lay adequate emphasis on humanitarian aspects through better and more humane man management.

Antony also called upon the Service Headquarters to constantly monitor statutory and non-statutory complaints to provide timely redressal.

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



The casket of Lance Cpl. Daniel Olsen after funeral service at Wooddale Church, April 11, 2007, in Eden Prairie, Minn. Olsen, 20, was shot and killed April 2 while conducting combat operations in the area of Fallujah, Iraq. (AP Photo/Jim Mone)

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## **General Schoomaker Still Not Dead**

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

April 13, 2007 Examiner.Com

Among the orders of business at Tuesday's retirement ceremony for Army Chief of Staff Peter Schoomaker: confirming that he isn't dead.

"I understand that when Pete came out of retirement (to take over the Army post) his status was changed somehow from retired to deceased," Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said.

“It took General Schoomaker, the highest-ranking officer in the Army, a full six months to iron out the paperwork. Leave it to the Pentagon bureaucracy to prove that you can in fact be brought back from the dead.”

That’s not all, added Schoomaker as he took the podium. He said, “You know, on that letter that I received from finance ... when I got called back, the interesting thing was they — it was a form letter, and they had my name in there three times, and each time it was misspelled.”

Gen. George Casey has now taken over for Schoomaker.

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **Assorted Resistance Action**

23 Apr 2007 Reuters & LVS & The Associated Press.

A car bomber attacked a gathering of senior police officials in the city of Baquba, killing 10 policemen and wounding 23, police said. Police chief Brigadier-General Safaa al-Timimi was killed in the blast.

Guerrillas killed traffic police Colonel Abdul Muhsin Hassan in the northern city of Mosul, police said.

The bodies of three police officers were found shot in the town of Shirqat, 80 km (50 miles) south of Mosul, police said. They were captured by insurgents on Sunday.

Freedom fighters attacked a police patrol, killing a policeman and wounded another in Iskandariya, 40 km (25 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

At about 11:30 a.m., drive-by shooters opened fire on guards outside the Tunisian Embassy in the mostly Sunni district of Mansour in western Baghdad, wounding two of them, police said.

<p><b>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</b></p>
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### **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

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



## To The Stop The War Brigade In Germany From A Veteran: “Let Me Know If I Can Help You....”

[This letter from Ward Reilly refers to an outstanding report in GI Special 5D21 written by Darnel Stephen Summers, “Stop The WAR Brigade,” about growing opposition to Bush’s Wars within the U.S. army in Anspach, Germany, where he did face to face contact work. His report is the first of it’s kind, and he distributed copies of Sir No Sir! too. See the photos below: T

From: Ward Reilly [Veterans For Peace]  
To: stopthewarbgde@hotmail.com  
Sent: April 22, 2007  
Subject: Read your stuff in the GI Special

Greetings from Ward Reilly, anti war activist.

I just read your stuff in the GI Special, and I wanted to thank you, and ask if I can be a part of the "Stop The War Brigade."

I’m an x-grunt...I did 3 years in the 1st ID from 71-74(C 1/16-Rangers), and I was at Sheridan Kaserne in Augsburg, and Panzer Kaserne in Stuttgart.

I am the SE national contact for VVAW [Vietnam Veterans Against The War], which I joined in 1972, and also in Veterans For Peace, and sometimes travel to Germany.

I have been VERY active in the anti war movement for about 7 years now (I started about the time of the 1999 presidential election, KNOWING the ME war was coming), and I have many contacts/friends in Germany, including several Deutsch military veterans.

I was very much a part of the GI Resistance during the VN War, and I deserted, along with 3 other members of my infantry platoon in 1972... and got 2 Special Court Martial’s.

If there is an organization, I would like to join and help...if not, I just want to tell you to keep up the great work, and let you know I am at your disposal. I have special feelings for Germany and GI's put into unjust wars.

I have been working with David Zeigler and the GIS to get copies of "Sir! No Sir!" to active duty troops in Iraq, about 25 so far.

Let me know if I can help you....

Peace from Ward  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

**MORE:**

***Just In From Stop The War  
Brigade:  
An Appeal For Some Help:  
“The U.S. Military Is Scared Shitless”  
“We Must Begin To Use Our Tactical  
Advantage”***



**Darnel Stephen Summers, “Stop The WAR Brigade,” chooses the perfect location for spreading the GI Resistance message to the troops in Anspach. Pictures blocked to protect identity of soldiers.**



Darnel Stephen Summers, "Stop The WAR Brigade," chooses another perfect location for spreading the GI Resistance message to the troops in Ansbach.

**At this very moment we're trying to get a large contingent of Iraq War veterans over here. There's a "Sending Off Party" scheduled for the 16th of May. We need to get people here a few days before that happens.**

**We want to go out to the troops in a big way and having those here would be a very good thing.**

From: Stop The War Brigade stopthewarbgde@hotmail.com  
To: GI Special  
Sent: April 22, 2007  
Subject: Ansbach Photos

**At this very moment we're trying to get a large contingent of Iraq War veterans over here.**

Originally a film company, which is doing a documentary about the STWB and the Soldier's movement, suggested that they would pay for the travel. That turned out to be a little too much for them to handle. Not enough time for them to get the finances together for what we propose to do.

We're not giving up.

**We're going out to Groups and individuals asking them to sponsor a vet coming over.**

**There's a "Sending Off Party" scheduled for the 16th of May. We need to get people here a few days before that happens.**

**We want to go out to the troops in a big way and having those here would be a very good thing.**

**I don't think I have to say more.**



**The US Military is scared shitless.**

**We must begin to use our tactical Advantage.**

Darnell S. Summers,  
"Stop The WAR Brigade"  
stopthewarbgde@hotmail.com

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## **“No War Is Worth Losing Your Country For”**

From: David Honish, Veteran  
To: GI Special  
Sent: April 14, 2007

"No war is worth losing you life for," a college acquaintance used to argue. "The issue isn't a moral one. It's a matter of efficiency: What's the most efficient way to stay alive when your nation is at war? That's the issue."

But others argued that no war is worth losing your country for, and when asked about the case when a country fights a wrong war, those people just shrugged.

Tim O'Brien from his book *If I Die In A Combat Zone*.

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## **Playlist For Pissed-Off Troops**

From: Katherine GY, The Military Project  
To: GI Special  
Sent: April 13, 2007 12:08 AM  
Subject: playlist

I thought that you might enjoy my anti-war play list, below.

Solidarity,  
K

Home of the Brave Mr. Lif  
Not Great Men Gang Of Four  
Viet Nam Minutemen  
These Boots Are Made For Walking Operation Ivy  
Career Opportunities The Clash  
USA-Holes NOFX  
Mali Huriye - I Don't Have Freedom Dam  
Fight Back Son Of Nun

Don't Feel Right The Roots  
Homeland and Hip Hop Immortal Technique  
Fite Dem Back Linton Kwesi Johnson  
Pull Up the People M.I.A.  
Sharp Shooters Talib Kweli and Dead Prez  
War (remix) Edwin Starr  
Letter from Iraq The Bouncing Souls  
Bomb The World Michael Franti & Spearhead  
We Can't Make It Here (acoustic) James McMurtry  
Vietnow Rage Against the Machine

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## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

### ***Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!***

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



All adult males are taken prisoner at gunpoint for interrogation during an operation by foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. 10th Mountain Division near Mahmudiya, south of Baghdad April 21, 2007. REUTERS/Bob Strong (IRAQ)



A foreign occupation soldier from U.S. B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment searches an Iraqi citizen's personal possessions in west Baghdad's Ghazaliyah neighborhood, March 25, 2007. (AP Photo/Marko Drobnjakovic)

Iraqi citizens have no right to resist home invasions by occupation soldiers from the USA. If they do, they may be arrested, wounded, or killed.

**[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!**

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 to [contact@militaryproject.org](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org):. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential. Same to unsubscribe.

## Silly Collaborator “Prime Minister” Orders Halt In Ghetto Wall Construction; U.S. Military Dictatorship Ignores Him

Apr 23 By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press Writer

Iraq’s prime minister said Sunday that he has ordered a halt to the U.S. military construction of a barrier separating a Sunni enclave from surrounding Shiite areas in Baghdad after fierce criticism over the project at home.

U.S. and Iraqi officials defended plans for the barrier as an effort to protect the neighborhood, but residents and Sunni leaders complained it was a form of discrimination that would isolate the community.

A large protest was scheduled for Monday in the area.

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### DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

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## Received:

# To War Resisting Soldier Marc Train

From: Peg Rap  
To: GI Special  
Sent: April 23, 2007  
Subject: Re: GI Special 5D22: GIs "Exhausted And We're Angry"

You can harass the resister, but you can't kill the resistance –

Go Marc!

## **NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! ([www.ivaw.org/](http://www.ivaw.org/))

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

GI Special issues are archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org> .

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

<http://www.williambowles.info/gispecial/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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