

GI SPECIAL 5E27:

NO MORE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. soldiers carry a wounded soldier, following a blast on a road between Fallujah and Baghdad, at a military base in Abu Ghraib May 19, 2007. A U.S. soldier died following the roadside bomb attack south of Baghdad. Five other soldiers including two Iraqis were also wounded. REUTERS/Eduardo Munoz

The Traitor Bush Organizing “The Second Surge”

[Thanks to Frank M, who sent this in.]

May 22, 2007 Stewart Powell, Hearst Newspapers [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON -- The Bush administration is quietly on track to nearly double the number of combat troops in Iraq this year, an analysis of Pentagon deployment orders showed Monday.

This "second surge" of troops in Iraq, which is being executed by extending tours for brigades already there and by deploying more units, could boost the number of combat troops to as many as 98,000 by the end of this year.

When support troops are included, the total number of U.S. troops in Iraq could increase from 162,000 now to more than 200,000 -- the most ever -- by the end of the year.

The efforts to reinforce U.S. troops in Iraq are being carried out without the fanfare that accompanied President Bush's initial troop surge in January.

Retired Army Maj. Gen. William Nash, the U.S. commander who led NATO troops into Bosnia in late 1995, when asked to comment on the analysis of deployment orders, said: "It doesn't surprise me that they're not talking about it. I think they would be very happy not to have any more attention paid to this."

The troop escalation coincides with the time frame when Army Gen. David Petraeus, the overall U.S. commander, has promised his verdict on whether the initial troop surge is working, whether additional troops are needed or whether U.S. troops should begin phased withdrawal. In an unusual step, several of Petraeus' subordinate field commanders have publicly described their needs for additional combat troops.

**LIAR
TRAITOR
TROOP-KILLER
DOMESTIC ENEMY
UNFIT FOR COMMAND
UNWORTHY OF OBEDIENCE**



REUTERS/Kevin Lamarque

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Pennsylvania Soldier Killed In Baghdad



Spc. Robert Dembowski, Jr., 20, of Ivyland, Pa. died of injuries sustained from enemy small arms fire during combat operations in Baghdad May 24, 2007. Dembowski, was a company radio transmitter, with 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), 82nd Abn. Div. He joined the Army in January 2006. (AP Photo/82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs Office)

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

May 25, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070525-02

BAGHDAD – Two MND-B Soldiers were killed when their patrol was struck by an improvised explosive device in a western section of the Iraqi capital May 24. An Iraqi interpreter was also killed in the attack.

One other MND-B Soldier was wounded in the attack.

U.S. Soldier Killed, Another Wounded In Baghdad Province

May 25, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070525-13

A Task Force Lightning Soldier died of wounds sustained from small arms fire while conducting operations in Baghdad Province, Friday. One other Soldier, also wounded in the incident, was taken to a Coalition Forces' medical treatment facility.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Nineveh; Two Wounded

May 25, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070525-04

TIKRIT, Iraq – A Task Force Lightning Soldier was killed in Nineveh Province, Thursday when an explosion occurred near his vehicle.

Two other Soldiers were also wounded in the incident and were taken to a Coalition Forces medical treatment facility for further treatment.

Maqdadiyah IED Kills U.S. Soldier

May 25, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070525-19

BAGHDAD – One MNC-I Soldier was killed by an improvised explosive device at approximately 6:30 pm Friday in Maqdadiyah.

Marine Dies In Non-Combat Incident In Anbar

May 25, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070525-17

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Marine assigned to Multi National Force-West died May 25 in a non-combat related incident in Al Anbar Province.

Soldier From Penfield Dies In Iraq



May 25, 2007 Victoria Freile, Staff writer; The Rochester Democrat and Chronicle

An Army soldier from Penfield died during his third tour of duty in Iraq, U.S. Department of Defense officials confirmed today.

Staff Sgt. Steve Butcher Jr., 27, died Wednesday in Ramadi, Iraq, officials said. He and another soldier – Pfc. Daniel P. Cagle, 22, of Carson, Calif. – were fatally wounded when an improvised explosive device detonated near their unit in Ramadi military officials announced today. Both men were assigned to the Third Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, First Brigade Combat Team, Third Infantry Division based in Ft. Stewart, Ga.

Family and friends learned of Butcher's death on Wednesday, according to Steve Butcher Sr.'s law firm.

Butcher's sister Angela Butcher, 26, said her brother, lived in Penfield until he joined the Army about 5 years ago. After he joined he lived at the Ft. Stewart Army base, she said.

Steve Butcher Jr. graduated from Penfield High School in 1997, said Nancy Bradstreet, director of information for the Penfield Central School District.

He transferred to the school for his senior year from Charles B. Finney School in Penfield and had previously attended McQuaid Jesuit High School in Brighton.

School records showed Butcher participated in wrestling in ninth and 10th grades.

"Our sympathies go out to his family and to the families of all the young men and woman who have lost their lives in Iraq," Bradstreet said.

She said school counseling officers have been notified of the death so they're prepared to talk with students, if necessary.

Steve Butcher Jr. was survived by his 6-year-old daughter Molly Angela, his parents Steve Sr. and Dianna of Irondequoit and his sisters Angela, Liza and Mandy, according to Angela Butcher.

Family members will provide funeral information once it is available, she said. In lieu of flowers, family members are asking for folks to contribute to a trust fund for Molly.

Family Mourns Loss Of Soldier



U.S. Army Pfc. William Anthony Farrar Jr. age 20 of Palm Springs.

May 17, 2007 Mariecar Mendoza, The Desert Sun

He hated the Palm Springs heat, and probably didn't like the weather in Iraq, his mother said Wednesday, but Army Pfc. William A. "Tony" Farrar Jr. loved his country.

"He liked to really help people and he had a strong belief in helping his country," said his father, William "Tony" Farrar Sr., a Rialto Police Department captain.

Tony Jr., 20, was killed May 11 after a homemade explosive blew up near his vehicle as he was driving through the desert of Al Iskandariyah, about 30 miles south of Baghdad.

The 2005 Palm Springs High School graduate was assigned to the 127th Military Police Company, 709th Military Police Battalion, 18th Military Police Brigade, Darmstadt, Germany.

He joined the Army in September 2005 after graduation.

His parents, who are divorced, were notified of his death over the weekend by uniformed soldiers. Tony Sr., who lives in Redlands, got the first visit May 11.

Sally Bors, his mother, found out May 12 while at work at Bikes, the Palm Springs motorcycle shop on Montalvo Way, which she co-owns. "A gentleman in a uniform approached me," Bors said, as she cried. "I kept telling myself that he wasn't in an Army uniform - that he wasn't looking for me."

On Wednesday, Bors and Tony Sr. remembered the quiet, long-haired boy they raised as simple and determined. Even in e-mails about his time in Iraq, Tony Jr. seemed to have no regrets.

"He never complained he was always upbeat," Tony Sr. said. "And he really did like the Army food - go figure."

In his last e-mail to his mother, however, Tony Jr. talked about a new habit that helped him cope with what went on.

"He told me he started smoking," Bors said, "and that being bombed and shot at did that to you."

Care packages of snacks from his grandmother, Merry Stoddart, must have helped him, too.

Stoddart was on her way to send out one more package before she heard the news.

"I had it ready but I was thinking that I had a tiny bit of room and I was just trying to figure out what else he wanted. Pringles? Licorice?" Stoddart said.

Tony Sr. said condolences have been pouring in. "It's amazing the overwhelming support our family has gotten," he said, "and how many people Tony actually touched in his short life."

Now Tony Sr. and Bors will support their son Kenny, 18, who was inspired by his big brother to join the Marines.

"Spouses and children are wonderful," Bors said, "but your child is one of a kind."

N.J. Native Is Killed In Iraq



Anthony J. Sausto

May. 13, 2007 Associated Press

GALLOWAY TOWNSHIP, N.J. - A 22-year-old soldier who spent most of his life in Atlantic County before enlisting in the Army last year was killed in Iraq last week, just two months after being sent overseas.

Private Anthony J. Sausto, who was born in Somers Point and later moved to Hamilton Township, was killed Thursday by small-arms fire in Baghdad, relatives told the Press of Atlantic City on Friday.

Sausto completed basic training in May 2006. He was a member of the 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, and was stationed at Fort Lewis, Wash., before going to Iraq in March.

Relatives said Sausto was a shy, quiet youth who "came out of his shell" when he joined the Army 15 months ago. They said he was drawn to the service after years of playing military-theme video games, and had been looking forward to going to Iraq.

Sausto, known as A.J. to his friends, attended Oakcrest High School.

Three Mercenaries Blown Up In Basra



Iraqis gather near a burning sports utility vehicle after a roadside bomb exploded in central Basra, Iraq, Friday, May 25, 2007. The roadside bomb exploded, targeting a foreign security company, injuring 3 security men, Basra police said. (AP Photo/Nabil al-Jurani)

Resistance Takes Down Another Bridge

25 May 2007 (Reuters)

Insurgents bombed a bridge linking the districts of al-Khadra and al-Jamiaa in western Baghdad, police said. The bridge over a major road was still standing but was badly damaged. No casualties were reported.

Great Moments In U.S. Military History: **The Air Strike On The Sadr City Maternity Hospital**



(Kareem Raheem/Reuters)

5.26.07 Reuters

Men look at an Iraqi flag painted on a bullet-ridden wall of a maternity hospital after an air strike by the U.S. military in Baghdad's Sadr City May 26, 2007.

The U.S. airstrike hit a gas station causing widespread damage to 10 vehicles, killing three people and wounding eight civilians the police said.

Great Moments In U.S. Military History: **The Air Strike On The Sadr City Market**



Iraqis inspect the scene of devastation in a marketplace hit by an airstrike at Baghdad's Sadr City. (AFP/Wissam Al Okaili)

UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



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

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Canadian Soldier Killed Near Nalgham; Another Wounded

May 25, 2007 CND & CanWest

OTTAWA – Killed earlier today in Afghanistan was Corporal Matthew McCully, a Signals Operator, based at 2 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group Headquarters and Signals Squadron, Petawawa, Ontario. His next-of-kin have been notified.

Corporal McCully tragically lost his life after an improvised explosive device detonated in the proximity of where he was patrolling by foot, along with Afghan national security forces, close to the village of Nalgham, approximately 35 km west of Kandahar City. The incident occurred at approximately 8:00 a.m. Kandahar time.

One other Canadian soldier and an Afghan interpreter were also wounded in the incident.

The wounded soldier was evacuated by helicopter to the Canadian-led multinational hospital at Kandahar Airfield for treatment and is assessed as stable. The Afghan interpreter was slightly wounded and chose to remain in Nalgham and continue supporting the ongoing operations.

It appeared that McCully, a signals operator from 2 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group Headquarters and Signals Squadron, based at Petawawa, Ont., triggered the improvised explosive device (IED) himself, said Col. Mike Cessford.

TROOP NEWS

187 From Kentucky Guard & 150 From New Mexico Guard Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse

May 28, 2007 Army Times

A field artillery unit with the Kentucky National Guard has been called to Iraq, the Guard said May 16.

B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery, has received mobilization orders for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The unit's 187 soldiers are expected to leave Carlisle, Ky., on June 5 for predeployment training at Camp Shelby, Miss.

The New Mexico National Guard is revving up to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A Company, 1st Battalion, 200th Infantry, reported to Fort Dix, N.J., on May 17 for 30 to 45 days of training before going to Iraq for a year. The company has about 150 soldiers.

About 150 soldiers with C Company, 200th Infantry, will be mobilized in June for Iraq. A departure ceremony was scheduled for June 10 before the unit leaves for Fort Dix.

Twenty soldiers from the Santa Fe-based Combat Arms Training Company will be mobilized in September and will be sent to Afghanistan. Their predeployment training will take place at Fort Riley, Kan.

Nearly 4,000 members of the New Mexico Guard have been deployed in support of various operations since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

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



The cremated remains of Staff Sgt. Beardsley, during funeral services, at Arlington National Cemetery May, 23, 2007. Beardsley of Coon Rapids, Minn., died Feb. 26 in Diwaniyah, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. (AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

Texas Vets Say “Remind The Public That Memorial Day Means More Than Picnics”

May 25, 2007 By David Honish [Veteran]

Viet Nam Veterans Against The War and North Texas Veterans For Peace invite the public to join us on Memorial Day, Monday MAY 28 to remember the currently 3,431 American troops KIA in Iraq, as well as the over 655,000 Iraqi civilians killed as a result of the US invasion of Iraq.

We will hold a public vigil in Denton from 11am to 1pm on the North Texas Blvd overpass at IH-35E to raise public awareness of this issue.

Bring your protest signs, banners, flags, and yourselves to remind the public that Memorial Day means more than picnics.

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

The M249 Machine Gun And M9 Pistol:

“30 % Of Respondents Say They Experienced Stoppages With Each Weapon In Firefights”

“About 4 In 10 Soldiers Who Said They Experienced Jams During Combat With Their Pistols Or Machine Guns Claimed It Took Them Out Of The Fight”

[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in. He writes: **It is easy to see that this survey was rigged by the military to steer the answers towards more effective ammo, rather than just a reliable rifle, which the M-16 / M-4 definitely is NOT.**]

May 25, 2007 By Christian Lowe, Military.com [Excerpts]

Nearly 80 percent of Soldiers said in a recent survey they are satisfied with their weapons, though almost half recommended a replacement for the standard-issued M9 pistol or ammunition with more stopping power.

Additionally, nearly 30 percent of Soldiers in the December 2006 survey, conducted on behalf of the Army by the Center for Naval Analyses, said the M4 carbine should be replaced or more deadly ammunition fielded.

In April, Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Okla.) sent a letter to acting Army secretary Pete Geren taking issue with the service's sole-source contract to buy about 500,000 M4 carbines despite evidence that new rifle technologies could provide more reliable weapons.

The study found the most stoppage problems with the M249 machine gun and M9 pistol, with an average of about 30 percent of respondents saying they experienced stoppages with each weapon in firefights.

About four in ten Soldiers who said they experienced jams during combat with their pistols or machine guns claimed it took them out of the fight.

Though vocal critics of the M4 say it's prone to jamming in the talcum-like sand environments of Iraq and Afghanistan, only 19 percent of M4 users said they experienced stoppages in combat.

But of those with malfunctioning M4s, nearly 20 percent said they were "unable to engage the target with that weapon during a significant portion of or the entire firefight after performing immediate or remedial action to clear the stoppage," the report said.

Soldiers who attach accessories to their weapons experienced a disproportionate number of malfunctions, with M249 users nine times more likely to experience a stoppage "if accessories were attached via zip cord, four times more likely if attached with duct tape and three times more likely if attached with dummy cords or rails."

"Accessory attachments had a significant impact on reported stoppages," the report said.

"Those who attached accessories to their weapon were more likely to experience stoppages, regardless of how the accessories were attached."

Additionally, M16 users were "consistent and adamant" in asking to be re-issued the more compact M4.

Velcro Tabs: A Rip-Off That Rips Off

May 28, 2007
Letters To The Editor
Army Times

The troops have spoken concerning the Army Combat Uniform.

Let us sew on our name tapes and patches. Allow us to sew on our badges. Look around — troops don't wear them anymore. The Velcro is annoying and wears out on our pockets.

The current patches fray and look ratty.

They cost three times as much as the old patches. A 1st Cavalry patch costs almost \$12 now.

For that price, I can have all my patches sewn on at the local shop.

Our body armor always tears off the Velcro patches; I have found several Ranger and Airborne tabs on the ground because they were ripped off a soldier's uniform.

Maj. James P. Smith
Harker Heights, Texas

Soldier Die While CEOs Get Rich; “The Average Army Private Makes \$25,000 A Year. The Average Defense CEO Makes \$7.7 Million”

New York City Working Peoples Voice Winter 2007 [Excerpt]

Although this war has caused much pain to the U.S. & Iraqi people, a recent survey by the Institute for Policy Studies and the Boston-based United for a Fair Economy found that 34 defense CEOs have been paid nearly \$1 billion since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Before 9/11, the gap between CEOs of companies traded on the stock exchange and army privates was already a galling 190 to 1.

Today, it is 308 to 1.

The average army private makes \$25,000 a year. The average defense CEO makes \$7.7 million.

According to Betsy Leondar-Wright, communications director for United for a Fair Economy, “While the rest of us were worrying about terrorism and mourning the people

who died, the CEOs were maneuvering their companies to take advantage of fear and changing oil supply, not just for competition but for personal enrichment.”

The top profiteers after 9/11 were the CEOs of United Technologies (\$200 million), General Dynamics (\$65 million) Lockheed Martin (\$50 million) and Halliburton (\$49 million). Other firms where CEO pay the last four years added up to \$25 million to \$45 million were Textron, Engineered Support Systems, Computer Sciences, Alliant Tecsystems, Armor Holding, Boeing, Health Net, ITT Industries, Northrop Grumman, Oshkosh Truck, URS, and Raytheon.

While Army privates died overseas earning \$25,000 a year, David Brooks, the disgraced former CEO of body- armor maker DHB, made \$192 million in stock sales in 2004. He staged a reported \$10 million bat mitzvah for his daughter.

The 2005 pay package for Halliburton CEO David Lesar, head of the firm that most symbolizes the occupation’s waste, overcharges, and ghost charges on no-bid contracts, was \$26 million, according to the report’s analysis of federal Securities and Exchange Commission filings.

“Those examples take the cake, especially because it’s all related to their government contracts, which is money straight out of the taxpayer’s pocket,” Leondar-Wright said.

The pay gap between the average oil and gas CEO and the average oil worker is 518 to 1.

The general national CEO to worker gap is 411 to 1.

The report said that the typical oil construction laborer would have to work 4,279 years to match the \$95 million pay last year for Valero Energy CEO William Greehey.

This is so out of line that the authors of the Executive Excess report recommend wartime pay restraints for defense CEOs and a permanent congressional watchdog panel for contract fraud and waste. Companies that cannot adhere to restraints should be ineligible for contracts, they said.

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.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Collaborators House Blown Up In Falluja



The rubble of a house after a bomb attack in Falluja, May 25, 2007. Nine people were wounded after a bomb, which was planted in the house of an Iraqi police officer in Falluja, exploded, hospital sources said. REUTERS/Mohammed Faisal

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Re: 'I Miss My Yoghourt..'
**“The Resistance Learned What The
Romans Taught, Very Quickly,
Disrupt The Food Line;
An Army Marches On Its Belly”**

To: GI Special
From: Felicity Arbuthnot
Date: May 25, 2007 6:04 AM
Subject: Re: 'I miss my yoghourt..'

One has to wonder what is wrong with US army catering corps decision makers (apart from Halliburton.)

Reading the comment 'I miss my melon and yoghurt' re food shortages amongst the troops, I am sorry to say, I burst out laughing.

I note salad, apples, oranges are also in short supply.

It has apparently escaped the attention of culinary decision makers, in spite of the 120f temperature, that they are in a tropical country (where the Garden of Eden is believed to have flourished in the south.)

In the north, Nineveh governate has been a bread basket since pre-biblical times, with sophisticated irrigation, millennia before Egypt's famed system.

The melon harvest - as the date harvest - is of Iraq legend, celebrated, vendors thronged for the succulent, unique fruit Iraq produces, Citrus groves, oranges abound, as apricots, apple orchards - and nearly six hundred different kinds of dates.

Salads, take your pick of every ingredient on earth, grown without cancer causing pesticides (so far, wait for US agribusiness to move in.) As for yoghurt: fresh, superb, made from buffalo milk, it is what we would call a drinking yoghurt, the Iraqis drink it as a beverage with meals.

Importing unnecessary foods simply means more dead truck drivers and blown up trucks.

The resistance learned what the Romans taught, very quickly, disrupt the food line - an army marches on its belly.

We, I suspect are not hearing half this toll.

If the troops have not destroyed every fruit grove and orchard looking for the (legitimate) resistance and not rounded up every last farmer as a suspect, I have an idea.

Buy from the Iraqis, trade, make a few friends. The troops surely need them.

They also have wonderful lamb, chicken and red meats.

Fish was a legend but the biblical Tigris and Euphrates are now so polluted by the effects of the crusaders' war that may now consider it unsafe and unique species of fish found no where else, which have also survived for thousands of years, are now under threat.

**Best,
Felicity A.**

The Last True Story I'll Ever Tell:

An Accidental Soldier's Account Of The War In Iraq; “Nothing Was Gonna Work Out — Not For Him, Not For Any Of Us” “Our Lives Were Crumbling So That We Could Pretend To Help People Who Pretended To Appreciate It”

A little-known fact in the army is that a soldier's happiness is directly proportional to the proximity of his chain of command.

Our commander and first sergeant had tagged along in an attempt to get away from the battalion staff. It was a vacation for them, but for the rest of the company, sleeping right next door to them, it was pure torture.

By JOHN CRAWFORD, RIVERHEAD BOOKS, New York, 2005 [Excerpts]

It was in this tent that I heard the call for formation.

With a groan I sat up and grabbed my top, sliding the dirt-crusting sleeves over my sweaty arms.

I groaned under the weight of my weapon and slowly staggered out into the sunlight and toward a large field where we had been meeting for daily updates that usually amounted to long, drawn-out speeches that always ended the same: “I don't know what's going on, men.”

They were put on by the battalion commander.

He and the rest of Headquarters Company had finally arrived, albeit after the invasion was over.

The term in usage was “Better late than never,” although in their case I would have preferred never.

These meetings always ran on the same agenda. The company would line up, make a count, and then report to the battalion commander, who, in an unveiled attempt to prove he was one of us, would then have us “bring it in” to a large semicircle around him.

The length of these meetings changed, but as of yet, not the topic. “Sir, there are rumors of a follow-on mission. Is that true?”

“Men, I haven’t heard anything about that. You have all done a tremendous job; just keep up the work a little longer. We’ll be home soon.”

“Sir, now that the First Marine Expeditionary Force is going home, shouldn’t we be going as well? I mean, we were attached to them until end of mission.”

“I’m working on that, men. I’ll get back to you.”

This was how it went.

Vague answers and no one ever asked what we all were thinking. “Sir, are you fighting to get us a follow-on mission so that you and the rest of Headquarters Company can earn your combat infantry badges and you can get some leadership time in theater? Do you feel as though you missed the war and now you’re going to make up for it with our blood and sweat?”

“Are you upset because we came over, did our jobs, and are ready to go home while you did paperwork?”

No one asked, because we already knew the answer. It was as clear on his face as the disgust was on ours.

Today’s speech was different.

“We’re going up to the bank past Bravo One. I don’t know what the fuck for. I think the CO wants to know how much business they get or some shit.”

“Didn’t you guys go to the bank yesterday?”

“Yeah, we went, but someone wasn’t there or some shit.

“The guy we were supposed to talk to didn’t come in. He’s gonna be there today, I guess. It’s all stupid shit anyway.”

“Fucking officers want to hand up more reports, show how busy we’ve been.” I spit into the dust.

Progress here was marked by reports and reports and reports—how many teachers went to work yesterday, how long was the gas line in meters, and how many liters were sold. In this case, it was how much business does the bank do.

The reports were then passed on to what we imagined was a huge pile of unread papers that someone used as fuel for bonfires or shitpaper.

Pybus was already on Doc when they turned around. He had dragged him closer to the building and imaginary safety.

“Doc, you’re gonna be okay. No problem, right?” he sputtered out nervously as he applied pressure directly to the wound on his friend’s neck.

“Mears, get on the radio!” he yelled, but it was already being done.

“Raptor Main, this is Raptor Three-four. We’ve been hit at the bank! We need a medevac immediately Over.”

“Three-four, this is main. Calm down — what’s your grid? Over.”

“We’re at the fucking bank! You have the grid written on the wall right in front of you! We need a medevac fucking NOW! Doc is hit bad! Over.”

The company commander, his staff and his radio operators very rarely left the compound. They didn’t know the streets. If any of the regular soldiers had been in the CP, it would have been as simple as “We’re across from the furniture store” or “Go out the front gate and take a left,” but that wasn’t the case.

Paperwork had to be filed, grids had to be copied and sent to higher.

The Quick Reaction Force was immediately called up, and within moments word had spread throughout Third Platoon that one of our squads was in trouble.

At the compound, every soldier was downstairs in minutes, their gear and weapons ready for command, but none came.

They stood, shifting their weight from one foot to the other bitching about the delay.

Almost forty-five minutes would go by before any American soldiers left the compound as a rescue team.

Even when they did, some of the squads, piecemealed from different platoons, took longer routes or were on the wrong frequencies.

Back at the bank, Mears was still yelling into the radio but receiving only opposition from officers who couldn’t comprehend the situation.

One officer on battalion staff threatened to pursue disciplinary action against him for cursing on the radio.

Everything was black-and-white in the CP. They never seemed to realize that we weren’t there to write reports or to have soccer games with the locals.

It took Doc almost an hour to get on a Black Hawk helicopter and off to a mobile army hospital unit.

The company commander claimed Third Infantry Division had messed up copying the nine-line medevac request, but none of us believed that the mix-up had been on their side.

The bullet had missed Doc's jugular by millimeters and had traveled down, lodging itself in one of his lungs. He lost that one along with forty pounds, but ended up recovering pretty well.....

That night we had a company meeting, where the battalion commander and the chaplain tried to speak words of encouragement to worried and angry soldiers.

We were a team, they said. They told us to persevere and stay strong. Every soldier is important to the chain of command, and they were suffering right beside us.

It was a good speech, but when the time came, neither the chaplain nor the battalion commander could remember the names of either of our soldiers who were hit.

"You know my wife and I went to some army post near our house, right? We went to the PX there to see if they had cheaper refrigerators than in DC.

"They had active-duty soldiers stationed at the gates, and this really fat fuck comes up to me, leans in the window, and wants to see both our IDs, and he's not even polite about it.

"So I hand them to him, and he says that the decal station is closed and I have to come back the following Monday. So I tell him that I'm back from Iraq on leave and I won't be there long enough to come back.

"This fat fuck tells me, too bad, that I need to turn the car around and leave. And the whole time his weapon is slung across his back, no magazine in it, and his hands are in his pockets — fucking disgrace, right?

"They finally let me in, but I had to argue with the NCOIC.

"I couldn't help thinking that if I could manage to get that fat bastard in my trunk and deliver him hog-tied and duct-taped to the airport, that he should have to take my place here. I think it's a fair deal, like you don't have to come back if you can get someone to take your spot."

Sellers laughed at my story.

We all wanted to be heroes when we got back.

There was this illusion that none of us would ever have to buy a drink again, that everyone would treat us differently.

The only ones excited to see me get off the plane were the reporters. They swarmed in like angry bees. "Are you happy to be home? Did you miss your family?"

Of course I fucking did — now get out of the goddamned way. The families themselves — some were so desperate to greet their husbands, sons, and fathers that they would hurl themselves through the crowd of reporters.

Others hung back, unsure of how to react to a stranger who looked so familiar.

“When I was a kid, I went to camp, and I remember some of the other kids crying at night and bawling that they wanted to go home. I hated that pussy shit, but man, I wanna go home.

“I don’t know how much longer I can do this. That shit broke me, going home and then leaving again. It’s better just to stay here.” Sellers thought about my words for a second or two. “Man, fuck that, I don’t care. I’d give anything for leave.”

I knew that all over Iraq there were a hundred forty thousand other poor fuckers who were saying the same thing. I dug out another crumpled Iraqi cigarette, losing half the tobacco before I lit it. I hoped a sniper was watching.

“I just don’t fucking care anymore, and I don’t know what to do,” I said under my breath, more to myself than to my friend, but he heard and responded just the same.

“I heard that, man.

“All you can do is just keep on keeping on. I mean, I’m sure Kim and I will work things out, it’s just that things are weird right now.”

Hearing the confidence in his voice, I couldn’t help but feel disgust at how wrong it all was.

“Nothing was gonna work out — not for him, not for any of us.

“Our lives were crumbling so that we could pretend to help people who pretended to appreciate it.”

“Everything cool with your wife and shit?”

“Yeah, she’s great.”

I put out my cigarette and lit another one, sucking in a deep breath of poison, holding it, then letting it go.

I couldn’t and wouldn’t tell him what was really going on.

None of us talked about stuff like that.

And as Baghdad slept beneath me, I tried to believe my own lies.

A little-known fact in the army is that a soldier’s happiness is directly proportional to the proximity of his chain of command.

Our commander and first sergeant had tagged along in an attempt to get away from the battalion staff.

It was a vacation for them, but for the rest of the company, sleeping right next door to them, it was pure torture.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!

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



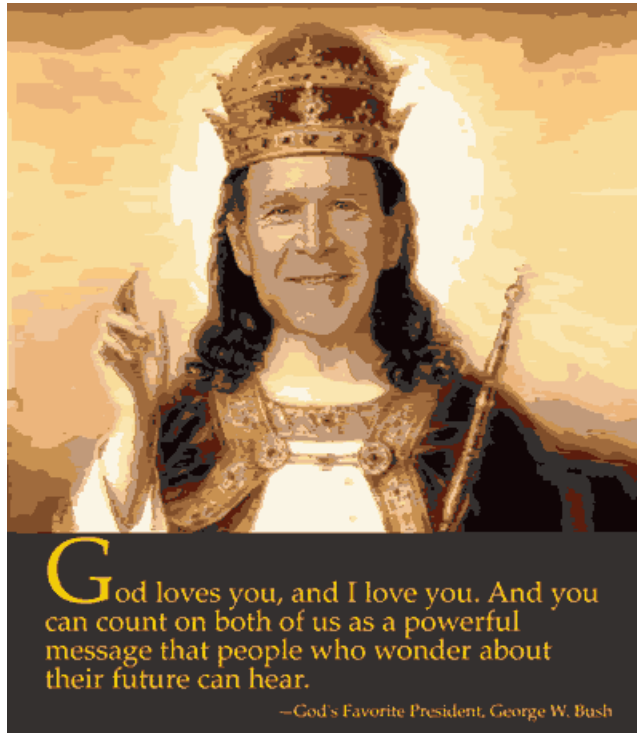
Iraqi children picking up the wreckage of their home after a raid by joint foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. in Baghdad's Sadr City May 23, 2007.
REUTERS/Kareem Raheem

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

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

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

CLASS WAR REPORTS

The Annual Washington DC Police Riot:

“Most Americans Blindly Believe That Cops Protect Us From Criminals” “In Reality, Cops Protect The State From Us”

Dead civilians might as well be roadkill. While cops drown their sorrows over their fallen fellows, let decent folk honor the fallen felons. It's easy enough: just understand who the real criminals are.

May 25, 2007 By Becky Akers, LewRockwell.com. Becky Akers writes primarily about the American Revolution.

Seems DC has survived another "National Police Week."

I'm trying to decide whether that's good or bad.

From Tuesday, May 8, through Wednesday, May 16, "tens of thousands" of cops from around the country partied in the nation's capitol.

Naturally, they drank. A lot. But that didn't stop them from climbing behind the wheel to cruise dark streets with sirens blaring.

They gunned motorcycles and skirled bagpipes till 3 AM, yelled, fought, and generally broke laws they force the rest of us to follow.

Their excuse for this annual rioting is that by annoying, inconveniencing, and even terrifying DC's civilians, they commemorate officers killed in the line of duty.

Well, why not? Those cops likely annoyed, inconvenienced and terrified folks while they were alive.

Alas, after several sleepless nights, some citizens ran short of sympathy for the grieving survivors. They naïvely complained to the District's police, who responded by joining the fun. One canny taxpayer finally videotaped the lawlessness for youtube.com. This embarrassed DC's police chief into taking stern measures: she posted fliers asking the drunks to play nice. No doubt that had 'em trembling in their jackboots.

National Police Week has plagued us since 1962, when a "Joint Resolution... authorize(d) the President to proclaim May 15 of each year as Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week of each year during which such May 15 occurs as Police Week."

We already pay these petty tyrants and bullies, but Leviathan wants us to kiss their butts, too:

"Whereas the police officers of America have worked devotedly and selflessly in behalf of the people of this Nation, regardless of the peril or hazard to themselves..."

Oh, right, and all those benefits, overtime pay, early retirement with lifelong pension, meals extorted from restaurateurs, and drugs swiped from the evidence lab have nothing to do with it.

"... Whereas these officers have safeguarded the lives and property of their fellow Americans..."

Poppycock.

By law, cops don't have to "safeguard" anything.

Attorney and author Richard Stevens emphasizes, "(Cops) don't even have to come when you call. In most states the government and police owe no legal duty to protect individual citizens from criminal attack. The District of Columbia's highest court spelled out plainly the 'fundamental principle that a government and its agents are under no general duty to provide public services, such as police protection, to any particular individual citizen.'"

But most Americans blindly believe that cops protect us from criminals.

In reality, cops protect the State from us.

That's been their purpose since the first police departments were organized in the early nineteenth century. Prior to that, kings relied on their armies to fight their enemies, foreign or domestic; witness the Redcoats patrolling colonial Boston.

Then in 1812, George III's Chief Secretary for Ireland created the "Peace Preservation Police" to subdue Irish peasants upset at the British government's stranglehold. Nor has that purpose shifted over the centuries.

Cops still keep muttering serfs from rising against Their Rulers:

"...Whereas by the enforcement of our laws, these same officers have given our country internal freedom from fear of the violence and civil disorder that is presently affecting other nations..."

Yeah, especially when they're liquored up.

"...Whereas these men and women by their patriotic service..."

I don't know about you, but subjugating one's fellow citizens isn't exactly my definition of "patriotic service."

"...and their dedicated efforts have earned the gratitude of the Republic..."

Or at least of its leaders.

And so cops annually invade DC. They raise many a bottle of Bud to those who "paid the ultimate sacrifice" during the preceding year – all 160 of them.

That small number is the nation's annual average of cops who die in the line of duty. Has been for years. About half are shot; the rest might arguably be excluded from this figure because they perish in car crashes.

We can only envy such low fatalities since cops kill many times that number of civilians each year.

And "justifiably," too: though it's "murder" when a citizen kills a cop, it's "justifiable homicide" when they kill us.

A report from the US Department of Justice contains this stunner: "the use of deadly force against a police officer is almost never justified, while the use of deadly force by police often is... (K)illings by police are referred to as 'justifiable homicides,' and the persons that police kill are referred to as 'felons.'"

What handy logic!

Cops kill felons who are felons because cops killed them. "Police justifiably kill on average nearly 400 felons each year."

That estimate is low.

It's also unreliable.

Despite a 1994 law ordering cops to report all shootings, precincts "voluntarily" report only "justified" killings to the FBI.

A neat trick, but you have to work for Leviathan to get away with it: when we murder, it's reported.

And "felons" are merely the beginning of the casualties.

What about the innocent bystanders these reckless drivers and poor marksmen slaughter?

Or their murderous "mistakes," like 92-year-old Kathryn Johnston of Atlanta or bridegroom Sean Bell of New York City?

Dead civilians might as well be roadkill.

Their deaths literally don't count.

While cops drown their sorrows over their fallen fellows, let decent folk honor the fallen felons.

It's easy enough: just understand who the real criminals are.

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:. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential. Same to unsubscribe.

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/)

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

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