

GI SPECIAL 5F16:



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

Attacks On Occupation Supply Convoys Up 300% Since 2005: “Nothing Moves Anywhere In Iraq Without Betting Your Life”

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, The Military Project, who sent this in]

“People get killed here trying to go home. People trying to come here get killed because they work here. People on convoy escort get killed because of the

materiel that we're shipping out of here. Truck drivers get killed because they get caught up in these ambushes.

June 16, 2007 By Steve Fainaru, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpts]

One in seven supply convoys protected by private forces has come under attack this year, according to previously unreleased statistics; one security company reported nearly 300 "hostile actions" in the first four months.

In an operational overview updated last month, the logistics directorate reported that 132 security contractors and truck drivers had been killed and 416 wounded since fall 2004.

Four security contractors and a truck driver remained missing, and 208 vehicles were destroyed. Only convoys registered with the logistics directorate are counted in the statistics, and the total number of casualties is believed to be higher.

According to the logistics directorate, attacks against registered supply convoys rose from 5.4 percent in 2005, to 9.1 percent in 2006, to 14.7 percent through May 10.

The directorate has tracked 12,860 convoys, a fraction of the total number of private supply convoys on Iraqi roads.

The U.S. Labor Department reported that ArmorGroup has lost 26 employees in Iraq, based on insurance claims. Sources close to the company said the figure is nearly 30.

Only three countries in the 25-nation coalition -- the United States, Britain and Italy -- have sustained more combat-related deaths.

"The only way anything gets to you here is if somebody bets their life on its delivery," said [Jack] Holly, a burly civilian with a trimmed gray beard who strikes a commanding presence even in khakis, multicolored checked shirts and tennis shoes.

"That's the fundamental issue: Nothing moves anywhere in Iraq without betting your life."

For security reasons, the convoys are limited to 10 tractor-trailers protected by at least four armored trucks filled with 20 guards: four Western vehicle commanders with M-21 assault rifles and 9mm Glock pistols, and 16 Iraqis with AK-47s.

ArmorGroup ran 1,184 convoys in Iraq in 2006; it reported 450 hostile actions, mostly roadside bombs, small-arms fire and mortar attacks. The company was attacked 293 times in the first four months of 2007, according to ArmorGroup statistics.

On the dangerous roads north of Baghdad, "you generally attract at least one incident every mission," Simpson said.

Allan Campion, 36, who joined ArmorGroup after 18 years in the British infantry, said one of his convoys was recently attacked three times on a two-mile stretch outside Baghdad. One bomb exploded near the team leader's vehicle, but the convoy managed to continue, he said. Within minutes, another bomb exploded, followed by small-arms fire.

A firefight ensued as the convoy continued through the "kill zone," Campion said.

"We were still moving, so whether you've hit anybody or not, it's very hard to say," he said.

Built on the site of a former Iraqi tank factory, the Abu Ghraib warehouse complex is known variously as Fort Apache, the Isle of Abu and Rocket City, a reference to when rockets and mortars frequently rained down on the compound.

The bleak, windswept facility consists of 64 buildings spread over a 1 1/2 -mile-long and half-mile-wide area; employees of Public Warehousing (now Agility) -- barricaded inside the fortress -- installed a driving range and a small fishing pond for entertainment.

The perimeter is protected by double blast walls, guard towers equipped with belt-fed Dushka machine guns and uniformed Kurdish guards who answer to a military-style rank structure and carry AK-47 assault rifles.

Over the past two years, warehouse personnel "probably average four to six KIA a month and six to eight wounded a month," said Leon Sharon, the Falcon Security representative, dressed in a khaki military uniform with a "Falcon 6" patch identifying him as a field commander for the company.

"It's not a game," Sharon said.

"People get killed here trying to go home. People trying to come here get killed because they work here. People on convoy escort get killed because of the materiel that we're shipping out of here. Truck drivers get killed because they get caught up in these ambushes.

"And you have security personnel who end up caught up in the mix. And the work has to go on as normal."

Attacks on Iraqi employees became so common that a trauma center was set up inside the main warehouse.

Dozens of Iraqis, fearful of going home after work, live in barracks-style housing in the compound.

MORE:

Notes From A Lost War:

“Because Road Convoys Are The Military’s Lifeblood, They Are Relentlessly Attacked Every Night”

DoD “Will Not Release The Precise Number Of Troops Killed On Convoy Duty”

“We Got Trucks. What We Don’t Have Is Drivers, And We Are Scraping Below The Bottom Of The Barrel”

Jun 05, 2007 By David Wood, The Baltimore Sun [Excerpts]

CAMP ANACONDA, Iraq -- The freight convoy known as Dagger Three Seven snakes around the huge concrete barriers, blast walls and razor wire at the north gate and lurches out into Iraq, onto a two-lane road curving southeast through country known for violence and death.

It’s just over 100 degrees, that time of dusk when the failing light and rising dust bathe the landscape in a deepening haze of gray, and the line of two dozen tractor-trailers and armored gun-trucks clanks and growls up toward 25 mph, headlights boring holes into a cloud of its own making.

“Pothole coming up on the right, road patches on the right.” The report comes crisply over the intercom from Spc. Francisco B. Fimbres, a 36-year-old from Tucson, Ariz., jumpy from a couple of cans of Monster energy drink, up in his .50-caliber machine gun turret.

“Pothole and patches right -- roger, stay left,” responds Sgt. 1st Class Ken Brockman.

He reaches across his gun-truck cockpit jammed with electronic gear and flicks a switch to pass word to the convoy he is leading. Behind him, several hundred tons of combat supplies on wheels drifts left and undulates back right, avoiding the potholes and patches that could hold deadly roadside bombs.

Convoys this night are crisscrossing Iraq.

They are the lifeblood of the U.S. military presence that daily consumes hundreds of tons of ammunition, water, rations, repair parts, mail, blood, lumber, razor wire, concrete barriers, computer paper, gun barrels, DVDs, toiletries, fuel, candy bars, instruction manuals, fresh lettuce and frozen chicken, all it takes to sustain an army at war.

And because road convoys are the military's lifeblood, they are relentlessly attacked every night, with rifle fire, rocket-propelled grenades, anti-tank pressure mines, anti-personnel mines, bombs made of stacked artillery shells detonated by C-4 explosive, explosive formed projectiles (EFPs), which burn through heavy armor with molten metal, and with "complex attacks" that combine several of these weapons.

The awful toll from this aspect of the war -- the Defense Department will not release the precise number of troops killed on convoy duty -- will continue as long as there is a U.S. military presence here, and as long as the Iraqi military cannot resupply itself.

So soldiers in Baghdad struggle to contain the violence and politicians in Washington debate war strategy, and the convoys go out each night largely unseen, one convoy after another, one night after another.

Military technicians feverishly work to devise new gizmos to find and defeat each new variant of attack, and much of the time they are successful. The rest of the time, the burden falls on the soldiers who run security for the convoys, on the military truck drivers and on the \$3,000-a-month civilian contract drivers who man the big rigs for KBR Inc.

Here is Army Sgt. Frank Vallejo, a long-haul convoy commander, swarthy and sweaty as he directs the unloading of new armored vehicles that will be used as convoy escorts.

Vallejo's convoy left the Army logistics base at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, crossed the border into Iraq and almost immediately was attacked with EFPs.

He got the line of trucks turned around and herded them back to Arifjan, swapping out the damaged trucks and wounded and frightened drivers, then set off north again into Iraq. Six days later, his convoy rolled into Anaconda, a trip on which he said he logged 1,600 miles.

This night they will load up again, and after a pause of only 12 hours, will set out on the return trip.

The hectic pace is a testament to the shortage of drivers, Vallejo said, squinting in the sun as his trucks are loaded.

"We got trucks. What we don't have is drivers, and we are scraping below the bottom of the barrel."

For short-haul convoys that leave at dusk and return at dawn, the pace is equally hectic.

Each afternoon, the intelligence analysts plot the clusters of roadside bomb detonations and ambushes on their crowded maps and commanders struggle to find safer routes,

and the gun-truck crews try to quiet the gut-wrenching fear with sleep during the day. As evening approaches, they strap on body armor and gather in a circle to pray for one more lucky run.

“Blessed be the Lord, our mighty fortress,” murmurs Sgt. Brent Robinson, a 25-year-old from Tucson, Ariz. “Blessed be the Lord our strength,” he says, as Fimbres sneaks a sip of Monster and Teresa Bovee, an Arizona National Guard sergeant who is the convoy medic, stifles a giggle and jams an elbow into a soldier snickering beside her.

War materiel arrives at this vast American base, the logistics hub for all of Iraq, by air from Europe and the United States, and by truck from Turkey, Jordan and Kuwait, and from here it’s sorted, repacked and trucked out to dozens of military outposts and forward operating bases.

Dagger Three Seven is one small spoke in the hub, trucking supplies to a U.S. military camp called Warhorse. Before mounting up, Brockman gathered his soldiers and KBR’s seasoned drivers, whose tastes run to beards and bellies. He settles them all with a long, doleful look.

Brockman’s father fought in Vietnam, which explains much of the son’s determined attention to detail in leading men in combat.

In a quick, businesslike briefing, Brockman runs down the mission: destination and route, recent enemy activity on the route, radio frequencies and call signs, ambush procedures and casualty evacuation procedures.

“If you see something, please don’t hesitate to call,” Brockman says. “If kids climb up on your trailer, call us and we’ll send a gun-truck up and clean ‘em off.”

Deep into the night, Fimbres is sweeping houses and the roadside with spotlights sent from Sun City, Ariz., by Maxine Duprey, Brockman’s grandmother. Her lights are mounted on the hood of Brockman’s gun-truck, a heavily armored Humvee loaded with electronic gadgets to help track the convoy and to jam or otherwise defeat remotely detonated improvised explosive devices, or IEDs.

Other IEDs are more difficult to defeat because they are set off by wire or the pressure of a truck wheel. And while the military has technological tricks to deal with these, there is no substitute for vigilance.

“Plastic bag, left side -- clear!” Fimbres has spotted a potential IED, scanned it for telltale protruding wires and found none. “Plastic bag clear,” Brockman echoes.

When the convoy approaches a long pontoon bridge, Brockman’s gun-truck leaps ahead into a blocking position to deter any oncoming traffic. Up in his turret, Fimbres scans the tree line while Brockman watches intently as one truck after another lumbers across.

This kind of experience, which brings Brockman’s convoy safely out and back, is gained through long, nerve-jangling nights and days spent studying convoys that were hit: was it bad luck or some small human error?

The more convoys they run, they say, the better they get at it. But there’s a catch.

“Our op-tempo is what bothers me now,” says Lt. Col. Matthew Parsley, who commands Brockman’s parent battalion, a National Guard unit out of Nebraska.

The risk that comes with experience, Parsley says, “is that people get complacent. People get sleepy.” Yet the pace, driven by the demand, is relentless.

“They are not machines,” Parsley says about his soldiers. “I wish we could get some relief.”

MORE:

“You Isolate Your Enemy And Cut Him Off From Resupply Or Make Resupply So Difficult That He Has To Use A Disproportionate Amount Of Troops To Guaranty His Supply Lines”

[The writer usually writes in Spanish. Some elitist snots, assuming that English must be the language someone named Glenn David Cox uses in writing, sneered at the content below because it was not formulated in perfect English. They can eat shit and die. T]

06/13/07 By Glenn David Cox, Information Clearing House [Excerpts]

The siege strategy was used during the crusades against the middle-aged castles of Acre the ultimate irony is the insurgencies battle plan was once used by Saladin the great, it was used by the Russians at Stalingrad and by McArthur in the South Pacific and by the Afghans against the Russians etc.

You isolate your enemy and cut him off from resupply or make resupply so difficult that he has to use a disproportionate amount of troops to guaranty his supply lines.

The American forces in Baghdad’s Green zone have no airstrip and are fourteen miles from the airport through Baghdad’s winding ancient narrow roads.

General Von Paulus in Stalingrad was promised the Luftwaffe would keep him supplied but it was an idle boast.

The Americans have a more powerful air force to be sure but also a greater dependence on fuel and commodities. The high tech war machine like all war

machines is only as good as it's supply and there is another possibility to consider.

Suspected Sunni insurgents bombed and badly damaged a span over the main north-south highway leading from Baghdad on Tuesday - the third bridge attack in as many days.

The attack occurred 35 miles south of Baghdad and just six miles south of a bridge brought down on Sunday by what was believed to be a suicide truck bomber.

On Monday, a parked truck bomb destroyed a bridge carrying traffic over the Diyala River in Baqouba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad. There were no casualties, but vehicles were being forced to detour to a road running through insurgent controlled territory to reach important nearby cities.

Earlier in the month a bomb attack heavily damaged the Sarhart Bridge, a key crossing 90 miles north of the Capital

In March and April, three of Baghdad's 13 bridges over the Tigris River were bombed. The attacks were blamed on Sunni insurgent or attempts to divide the city's predominantly Shiite east bank from the mostly Sunni western side of the river but far more likely it was an attempt to negate the American strength in armored vehicles

Is the campaign against the bridges an attempt to lay siege to Baghdad?

Or like Khe San a generation before an elaborate ruse to draw attention away prior to a larger coming Tet style offensive.

In either case the surge has begun but it has been the insurgents who have surged rather than the US.

At Stalingrad the German panzers became almost useless in the narrow streets, this army like the Americans had been designed for lighting war not for urban street fighting.

A thousand eyes kept the Russian army aware of every German move and allowed Russian snipers the choicest targets.

As the occupying power in Iraq the US is responsible for keeping the residents of Baghdad fed and watered. The millions of Baghdad will create just one more burden on US forces already overburdened.

Thus the American surge is already defeated without the ability to move freely the already over stretched forces will become unable to support it's outposts. They will fall one by one just like the firebases around Khe San and the crusaders castles in Lebanon.

At Khe San the US decided to use the massive force of B52 attacks but the focus had already shifted away from victory to self-defense. The enemy had captured something far more precious than a firebase they had taken away from the Americans the certainty of victory.

As the North Vietnamese army slipped away and the US forces emerged from their bunkers to claim a hollow victory, a sucker holding the bag on a snipe hunt slowly realizing he has been had.

To spend huge amounts of blood and treasure to defend a muddy hill top not for a victory but only to stave off defeat.

The greatest megalomaniac's of the 20th century had drawn up battle plans for the conquest of England and one of the cornerstones of operation sea lion was in avoiding London.

Even a madman knew a large metropolis would swallow an army, and as the tide turned at Stalingrad the mad man began to cashier his own generals.

For in his madness it could only be the generals who were not following his orders not the fatal flaw in his own tactics.

The mad man brooded over his scale model of the new Berlin much like the current mad man broods over his scale model of what the Iraqi's call Bush's palace, the Vatican city sized embassy in Baghdad which will probably never be occupied or at best be used a last redoubt.

Von Paulus pleaded for permission to withdraw and was advised that where a German foot stood a German foot stayed.

The politics of cut and run verses the personal pride of the leader, the madness of leadership who view military tactic's as personal affronts.

As Nathan Bedford Forrest succinctly observed "getting there firstest with the mostest." In regards to our own current surge without the firstest the mostest becomes a mute point the mostest with the latest is a pointless exercise.

As the siege continues the US forces will become more dependant on helicopters for re-supply and will begin to lose them in greater numbers like Von Paulus they will assume a defensive position more interested in holding positions rather than taking.

A new and perhaps last chapter has begun, new in the names and places but as old as war itself.

The military is well aware of the coming checkmate and are fired for their candor in saying so only the media and the madman soldier on.

Fighting on not to achieve victory or even to forestall defeat but to sacrifice the blood of innocents on all sides but to preserve protect and defend the fragile ego of the leader.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Nebraska Soldier Killed In Kirkuk



Val John Borm, of Sidney, Neb., 21, died June 7, 2007, in Iraq's Kirkuk province after the explosion. Borm was serving as an infantryman in B Company, 2nd Battalion with the 35th Infantry. The unit is based at Fort Shafter, Hawaii. (AP Photo/Family Photo)

Baghdad IED Kills U.S. Soldier; 3 Wounded

June 16, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070616-11

BAGHDAD — One Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier was killed when a roadside bomb detonated near a patrol during combat operations in a southern section of Baghdad June 15. Three other Soldiers were wounded in the attack.

Pilot Killed In F-16 Fighter Crash On Takeoff In Iraq

June 16, 2007 The Associated Press

BAGHDAD: An Ohio National Guard pilot was killed when his F-16 fighter crashed shortly after takeoff from Balad Air Base in central Iraq, an Air Force spokesman reported Saturday.

“They’re investigating the accident and we won’t know the exact cause until that’s completed. But it doesn’t appear to be hostile fire,” said Col. Thomas Deall, a spokesman in the region for the U.S. Central Command Air Forces.

In an initial statement late Friday, the Air Force said the jet went down at 12:27 a.m. Friday while on a mission to support a ground forces operation. Deall said it crashed 8 kilometers (5 miles) north of the Balad base, 80 kilometers (50 miles) north of Baghdad.

In Columbus, Ohio, a National Guard spokesman said the pilot was a member of the 180th Fighter Wing based in Toledo. Spokesman Mark Wayda said about 270 of the unit’s 1,000 members were deployed to Iraq last month, operating under the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing at Balad.

The loss of an F-16, a workhorse warplane in the Iraq war, is a rare event. One crashed last Nov. 27 in the western province of Anbar, killing the pilot.

Bozeman Army Sergeant Dies In Iraq

June 5, 2007 (AP)

A 31-year-old soldier from Bozeman was killed in Iraq Friday after a suicide bomber detonated an explosive near a mosque in Al Yusufiyah, military officials said Monday.

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Travis Atkins is the first soldier from Bozeman and the second from Gallatin County to die in Iraq since the war began there in 2003. He was on his second tour of duty in Iraq and oversaw a squad of 15 soldiers, said his parents, Jack and Elaine Atkins of Bozeman.

“He loved the Army. He did an excellent job,” Elaine Atkins said as she fought back tears. “He was well thought of by his subordinates and his superior officers.”

Atkins and several other U.S. soldiers were on patrol at about 11 a.m. on Friday, when they observed four suspicious Iraqi citizens, a U.S. Army incident report stated. The Iraqis tried to run away, but Atkins caught one of them and tackled him to the ground.

The Iraqi man detonated a suicide bomb attached to his vest, killing himself and Atkins, the report stated. One other Iraqi blew himself up, and the others fled.

No other soldiers were killed in the incident, said Maj. Garth Scott, the Montana National Guard’s public information officer.

Atkins attended Bozeman High School and Kemper Military School in Missouri, eventually earning his GED, his parents said. After high school, he worked as a painter, poured concrete and worked in a snowmobile shop. He enlisted in the Army in November 2000, his parents said.

“When he joined the Army, that’s when he found his niche,” Elaine Atkins said.

He was initially sent to Iraq for 10 months in March 2003, at the start of the war in Iraq.

After that stint, Atkins left the Army, attended the University of Montana and worked in the building trades, his parents said.

He re-enlisted in December 2005 and was sent back to Iraq last summer.

Atkins had already survived two roadside bombs, said his father, a Vietnam War veteran.

Atkins had an 11-year-old son, Trevor, who lives in Minnesota, his parents said.

He is also survived by a sister, Jennifer, 28, who lives in Washington.

Hill Airman's Death A Shock For Family

06/07/2007 By Matthew D. LaPlante, Salt Lake City Tribune

ROY - With a little more than a week to go before her husband's scheduled homecoming from Iraq, Danielle Balmer set to work making posters, buttons and banners and gathering flags to line the road leading to their house.

She even had a special shirt made for their infant daughter. "My daddy's finally home," it read. "It's about time."

There was no question in Balmer's mind that her husband would safely return. They had joked about the dangers in Iraq - "if you get killed, I won't talk to you when I get to Heaven," she had told him - 5 1/2 months into a 6-month tour of duty in a relatively peaceful stretch of the war-torn nation, Ryan Balmer had not experienced anything that would make him doubt he would be coming home.

And so it was that Tuesday, when Danielle Balmer saw a group of uniformed Air Force officers at the clinic where she works, she quickly guessed that her husband had surprised her by returning a week early.

"Then I saw his commanding officer," Balmer said. "And I could see, in his face, that he had been crying."

Ryan Balmer, 33, was killed alongside fellow Air Force Office of Special Investigations agent Matthew Kuglics on Tuesday in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk. The men had been assigned as liaisons to leaders in Kirkuk, taking reports from Iraqi police back to U.S. military officials for action.

But though their job in the elite and often-secretive OSI was unusual, their deaths came as nearly 1,500 others have in Iraq: In an explosion caused by an improvised bomb planted in the road. The attack comes following the worst month on record for fatal roadside bomb attacks in Iraq - 90 U.S. service members lost their lives in May in improvised bomb attacks, according to Department of Defense numbers. With 21 such deaths, including those of Balmer and Kuglics, June is on pace to be even worse.

Patricia Balmer learned of her son's death shortly after stepping off a plane at Salt Lake City International Airport on Tuesday evening. She had come to welcome him home. "Now, I guess, there are other things to do," she said.

Later this week, a cousin who recently arrived in Iraq will escort the fallen airman's remains to Indiana. Ryan Balmer, a native of Mishawaka, Ind., will be buried in that town, just east of South Bend.

Danielle Balmer, who had never contemplated life without her husband, figures she will now return to Montana, where she was raised and where her family still lives.

One day, she laments, she will have to explain all of this to her daughter, adopted just six months before her husband deployed to Iraq. "Anthony has promised to make sure Gabby knows who her dad was," she says of her 7-year-old son.

The boy, who recently finished second grade, already has assumed the role of man of the house. On Wednesday, he grilled visitors at the front door and answered questions when his mother and grandmother couldn't muster the words.

"He looks just like his father," Danielle Balmer said.

Ryan Balmer also is survived by an 11-year-old son from a former marriage.

Paul Johnson, a friend in Mishawaka, called Balmer "a great person."

"He would never turn anybody down," Johnson said. "Not for anything."

Balmer joined the military shortly after graduating from Mishawaka High School in 1993, serving 12 years as a payload specialist onboard the Air Force's fleet of C-5 Galaxy cargo planes. In that capacity, over the years, he had made several short stops to drop off cargo in Iraq.

He was accepted into the OSI program in 2005, was assigned to Hill Air Force Base after finishing the OSI academy and deployed for his first full tour of duty in Iraq in January of this year.

Balmer is the 40th Utahn to die in the nation's ongoing wars, according to a count by The Salt Lake Tribune of residents and former residents of the state. Thirty-seven of those deaths have come in Operation Iraqi Freedom, including 10 so far this year.

Hill airmen account for four of the fallen. Balmer's death follows by five months the killings of Hill airmen Elizabeth Loncki, Timothy Weiner and Daniel Miller in a Baghdad bomb explosion.

A memorial service will be at Hill on Friday in the same hangar where Loncki, Weiner and Miller were honored in January.

FUTILE EXERCISE:

BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



U.S. soldiers talk to a local Iraqi leader in a village near north Baghdad June 13, 2007.
REUTERS/Goran Tomasevic

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed In Uruzgan; Nationality Not Announced

June 16 (Xinhua)

A soldier of the U.S.-led coalition forces was killed by militants in Uruzgan province of southern Afghanistan Saturday afternoon, a coalition statement said.

The soldier was killed while conducting a combat operation at around 3 p.m. (1030 GMT), the statement said, adding a rocket-propelled grenade struck the vehicle carrying the soldier.

Three Afghan soldiers were injured in the attack and are being treated at a nearby coalition medical facility, according to the statement.

The nationality of the killed soldier is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

U.S. Convoy Attacked In Kabul: Civilians Killed And Wounded In Response

June 16, 2007 The Sydney Morning Herald & Reuters

A car bomber attacked a convoy of US contract workers and military personnel in Afghanistan's capital Kabul on Saturday, killing at least four civilians, officials said.

The attack in western Kabul also wounded four civilians and a foreigner, said General Ali Shah Paktiawal.

He said an international military vehicle and seven civilian vehicles were damaged in the attack. The bomber also died.

Zabiullah Mujahid, who claims to speak for the Taliban, said the group was responsible for the blast.

Major Sheldon Smith, a US spokesman for troops training Afghan police and army soldiers, said US contract workers and US military personnel were in the convoy.

A spokesman at the US base at Bagram said workers with DynCorp, who are helping train Afghan police, were attacked.

A soldier on a Humvee "mistakenly" opened fire on the crowd after the attack, killing one civilian and wounding three, said Zalmay Khan, deputy Kabul police chief.

He said Afghans were angered over the shooting and wanted to demonstrate, but that police calmed the situation down.

Khan did not say what nationality the soldier was, but an Associated Press reporter at the scene said Americans in Humvees had responded to the attack.

The bomb apparently targeted a three-vehicle convoy of SUVs, damaging one although it was able to continue driving a half kilometre down the road before coming to a halt with a punctured tire. US armoured jeeps arrived at the scene afterward suggesting the three SUVs were carrying American personnel. Paktiawal gave no details on the nationality of the wounded foreigner.

Taliban spokesmen have warned Afghan civilians to stay away from military convoys, saying militants do not intend to kill them.

On Friday, an Afghan teenager was shot and killed in crossfire between U.S.-led forces and Taliban fighters in the southern province of Zabul, the U.S. military said on Saturday. Another boy was also shot and taken to a military hospital.

TROOP NEWS

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



The coffin containing the body of U.S. Army Pfc. Junior Cedeno Sanchez during his funeral in La Romana, Dominican Republic, June 10, 2007. Sanchez was killed by a Baghdad bomb on May 28. His body returned to the Caribbean city where he was born for military honors and a heartbroken farewell. (AP Photo/Ramon Espinosa)

MUM CAN TAKE IRAQ CASE TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS

[This is a message to Americans from Rose Gentle. Her son Gordon was killed in Iraq. She leads a campaign to bring all the Scots and other troops home from Iraq, now. Her words carry more weight, and contain more truth, than 5000 pages of bullshit from the politicians. T]

From: Rose Gentle
To: GI Special
Sent: June 16, 2007
Subject: MUM CAN TAKE IRAQ CASE TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS

**to day i have wone the right to take a case challeging the legality of the war
to the house of lords**

i lost my 19 year old son gordon in basra in june 28, 04

i failed last december in a appel court move to force the government to hold a full public inquiry , now three law lords have ruled i can appeal agensst the earlier ruling to the house of lords

the case will raise the questin of where the iraq war was lawful under international law

the papers released by the law lords say that when the case is herd by them it will focus on whether the uk owed obligations under the human rights to life provisons to initiate an independent public investigation in to the death of my son

tony blair will leve office on the 27 of june and militry families here in the UK will be at number 10 with photos of our love ones to say by by to this murdering man,

this will be the last thing he will see when he comes out of number 10,

and to say to our new pm gordon brown bring the troops home

one day blair and bush will get there day and i hope it is behind bars,

love to all our troops. rip to the ones we have lost

come home soon

rose gentle co-founder of mf in GB,:UK.

Who Would Have Believed It? **“The Military’s Cadre Of Mental- Health Workers Is ‘Woefully Inadequate’”**

[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran & Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in.]

June 16, 2007 By Ann Scott Tyson, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

U.S. troops returning from combat in Iraq and Afghanistan suffer “daunting and growing” psychological problems -- with nearly 40 percent of soldiers, a third of Marines and half of the National Guard members reporting symptoms -- but the military’s cadre of mental-health workers is “woefully inadequate” to meet their needs, a Pentagon task force reported yesterday.

Not since Vietnam have we seen this level of combat,” said Vice Adm. Donald Arthur, co-chairman of the Department of Defense Mental Health Task Force. “With this

increase in . . . psychological need, we now find that we have not enough providers in our system,” he said at a Pentagon news conference yesterday unveiling the report.

“Clearly, we have a deficit in our availability of mental-health providers.”

“The current complement of mental health professionals is woefully inadequate” to prevent and treat members of the military and their families, the report said.

One More Fucking Outrage: Wounded Troops At Walter Reed Never Got Their Mail

[Thanks to James Starowicz, Veteran & Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in. He writes: That is A LOT of mail!]

Jun 16 By ROBERT BURNS, AP Military Writer

Turns out the trouble at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, the focus of a firestorm of criticism over poor treatment of wounded war veterans, reached into the mailroom.

The Army said Friday that it has opened an investigation into the recent discovery of 4,500 letters and parcels — some dating to May 2006 — at Walter Reed that were never delivered to soldiers.

And it fired the contract employee who ran the mailroom.

Maj. Gen. Eric Schoomaker, commander of Walter Reed, said he ordered a team of 20 to 40 soldiers and civilians to launch an around-the-clock operation to screen, survey and forward all the letters and parcels.

Items addressed to soldiers still at Walter Reed were being hand-delivered Friday night, he said.

Bill OKs Lowering Flags When Troops Die: “If They Were Sent To Fight, They Are Too Few. If They Were Sent To Die, They Are Too Many”

[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in. He writes:

[Gee, that's nice. Not quite as good as getting them the hell out of Iraq instead of sending them in insufficient numbers, with inadequate equipment, and with no clear military mission. If they were sent to fight, they are too few. If they were sent to die, they are too many.]

June 16, 2007 Associated Press

WASHINGTON - Legislation passed by Congress would require all federal agencies in a state to comply with a governor's request that they fly their flags at half-staff to honor a fallen service member.

Where's The Cold Beer?

[Thanks to David Honish, Veteran, who sent this in. He writes: Waving flags is one way to go I suppose? My recollection of time in the National Guard is such that I think they'd appreciate cold beer more.]

Jun 15 KOCO

Soldiers coming home are hoping for dry weather for one of the biggest Oklahoma homecomings seen in a long while.

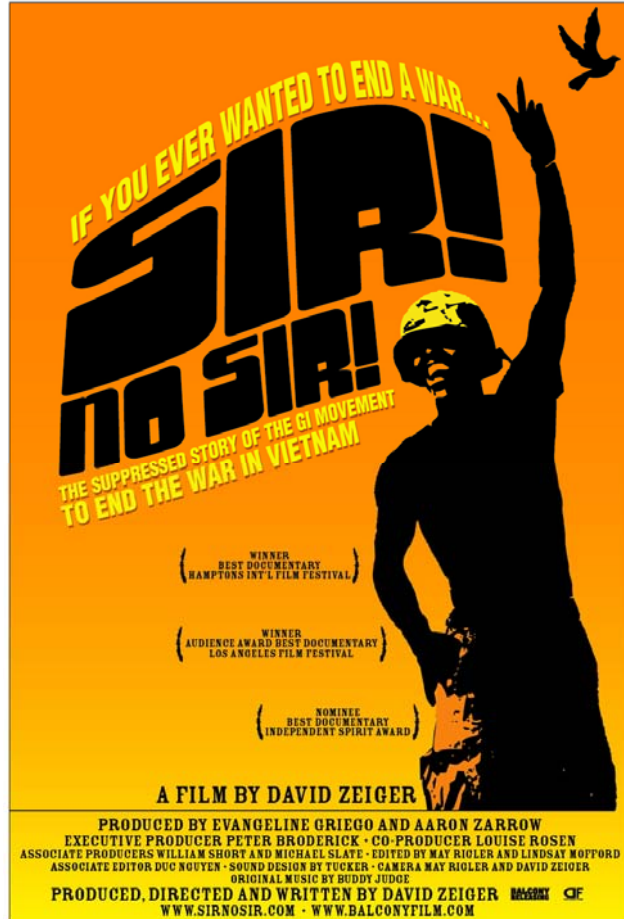
Officials said 150 Oklahoma National Guard members, who have spent a year in Iraq, are coming back to the Midwest City-Del City area on Friday.

Organizers encourage people to come out and wave American flags to welcome troops home.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

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 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

**"What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms."
Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.**



The Sir! No Sir! DVD is on sale now, exclusively at www.sirnosir.com.

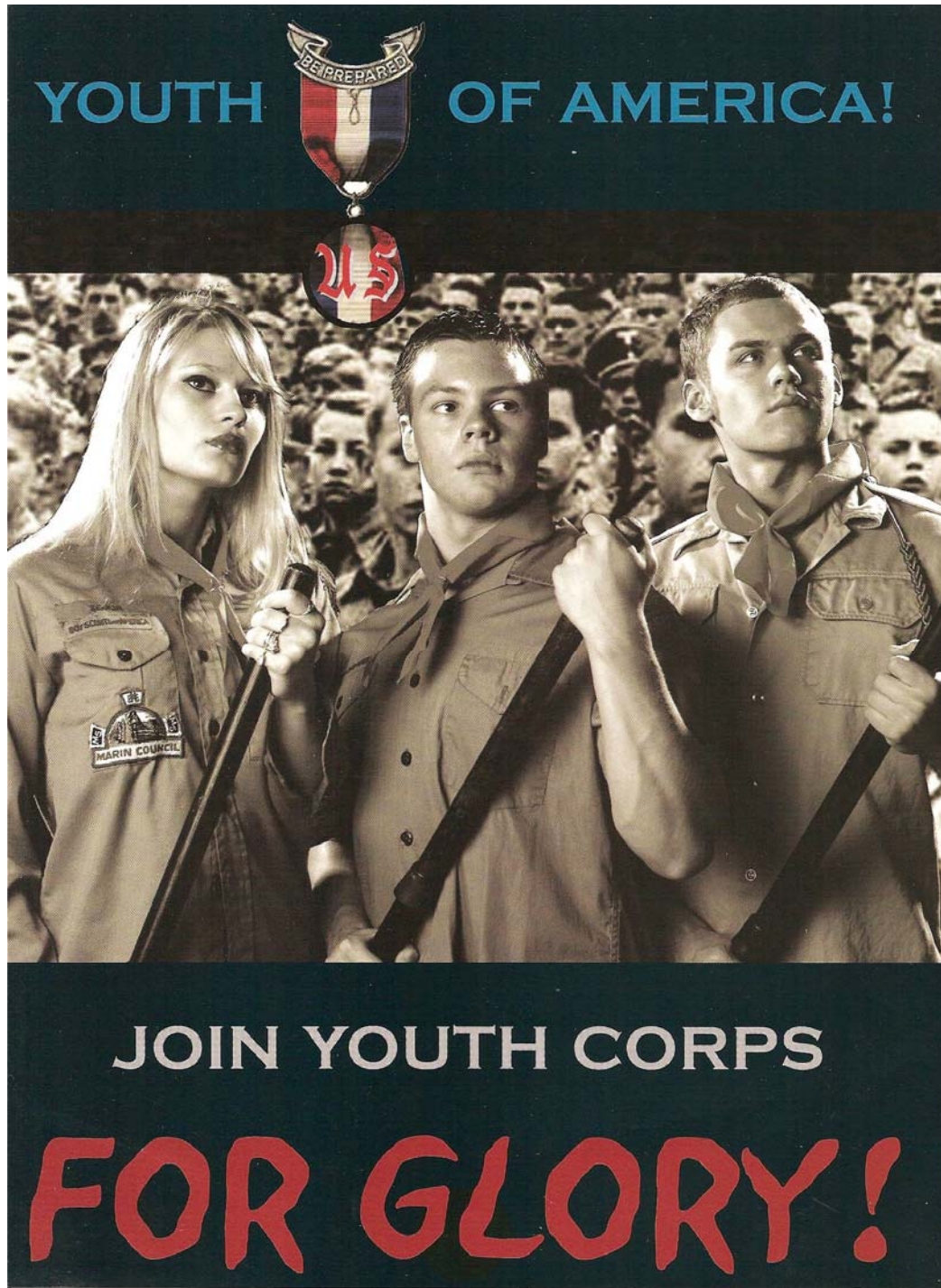
Also available is a Soundtrack CD (which includes the entire song from the FTA Show, "Soldier We Love You"), theatrical posters, tee shirts, and the DVD of "A Night of Ferocious Joy," a film about the first hip-hop antiwar concert against the "War on Terror."

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SOLDIERS NOW**

**HELP GET SIR! NO SIR!
INTO THE HANDS THAT NEED IT MOST**

Sir! No Sir!:

At A Theatre Near You!
To find it: <http://www.sirnosir.com/>



The poster features three characters in Boy Scout uniforms. The woman on the left has a patch on her shirt that reads "MARIN COUNCIL". Above them is a large Boy Scout emblem with the motto "BE PREPARED" and "U.S." below it. The background shows a large crowd of people.

YOUTH OF AMERICA!

JOIN YOUTH CORPS

FOR GLORY!

[By James Patrick Dawson, XY Magazine]

Outlaw

From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: June 15, 2007
Subject: Outlaw

There is more news in America about snot nose Paris Hilton, than about American soldiers dying in Iraq. This is where the American media are concerning this war.

If I was an American soldier in Iraq, I would be in a blind rage.

Nothing like dying for chump change.

When American soldiers return from Iraq, and they put all of this pathetic shit together, all hell is going to break loose.

When I returned from Vietnam on September 20, 1971, I was greeted with a dark cloud. We all got off the plane, and were ushered into a large room.

I felt like an outlaw, slithering back into country.

In looking back, my hatred for the U.S. government was hatched.

Thirty-six years later, and I still see the same snakes who sent us to Vietnam.

My balls weigh more than George Bush's entire body. Dick Cheney is probably the sickest chickenhawk ever born in this country.

I did not serve in Vietnam for the cause of freedom, I served Big Business in America for the cause of profit.

My God, I can't believe American history has repeated itself with such perfection.

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
June 15, 2007**

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

Vietnam GI: Reprints Available

Not available from anybody else, anywhere

Edited by Vietnam Veteran Jeff Sharlet from 1968 until his death, this newspaper rocked the world, attracting attention even from Time Magazine, and extremely hostile attention from the chain of command. The pages and pages of letters in the paper from troops in Vietnam condemning the war are lost to history, but you can find them here.

The Military Project has copied complete sets of Vietnam GI. The originals were a bit rough, but every page is there. Over 100 pages, full 11x17 size.

Cost: \$15 if picked up in New York City. For mailing inside USA or APO add \$5 for bubble bag and postage.

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All proceeds are used for projects giving aid and comfort to members of the armed forces opposed to today's Imperial wars.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Revolution In Gaza:
The Hamas Government
Overwhelmingly Elected To Power
By Palestinians Finally Takes
Power And Chases Out Bush's
Collaborators:

The Zionist Regime Promises Help To Traitors And Collaborators From Fatah



Hamas supporters: Photograph: Abid Katib/Getty Images

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

June 16, 2007 By SARAH EL DEEB, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) - Cheering Hamas supporters wearing green headbands and waving flags surged through Gaza's streets Friday....

Hamas offered amnesty to its defeated foes as violence tapered off from five days of bloodshed that claimed more than 90 lives.

But Fatah leader Abbas made the split complete by firing the Hamas prime minister...**[The reporter fails to explain how a corrupt thug like Abbas, bought and paid for by Israel, can “fire” the Prime Minister who won the election.]**

Safe in the West Bank, Abbas moved quickly to cement his rule there after losing control of Gaza to Hamas forces. He replaced Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, a Hamas member, with Finance Minister Salam Fayyad, a respected economist, to head a new moderate [translation: traitors loyal to Israel] government.

Hamas, overwhelmingly elected in a 2006 parliament vote, denounced Abbas' move as a coup.

Abbas received immediate pledges of support from Israel, the U.S., Egypt, Jordan, the U.N. and Saudi Arabia.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak by phone that he would take steps to bolster Abbas.

Officials in Olmert's office said he would consider releasing hundreds of millions of dollars in tax receipts frozen after Hamas came to power. **[This money was stolen**

from the Palestinians and now it will be given to Abbas so the West Bank can eat whilst Gaza starves. Will the West Bank citizens accept this type of blackmail? J.]

Several thousand Hamas supporters in Gaza cheered as a small armored personnel carrier seized from Abbas' forces rolled into the Palestinian legislature compound, where a victory march was held.

A jubilant crowd chanted slogans and waved green Hamas flags as gunmen fired in the air. Many wore green hats and headbands.

Excited children climbed over the vehicle, and armed men walked around the parliamentary building, grinning from ear to ear.

Hamas soldiers also entered the seaside compound used by Abbas on visits to Gaza, rifling through the president's belongings in his bedroom, next to his office. They lifted the mattress and searched drawers.

One soldier sat at the desk of the Fatah leader, who is also known as Abu Mazen, picked up the phone and pretended to call Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

"Hello, Rice?" the soldier said. "Here we are in Abu Mazen's office. Say hello to Abu Mazen for me."

Gaza's streets, deserted during the fighting, were crowded with cars, pedestrians and triumphant Hamas fighters, some driving in jeeps and firing in the air.

Haniyeh, the prime minister fired by Abbas, promised to restore security to the anarchic territory. He urged Gazans to display "self-restraint" and end the widespread looting of houses and other property of Fatah officials.

Looters [translation: former victims of Dahlan's looting and torture] stripped the home of Fatah strongman [translation: hired executioner] Mohammed Dahlan of everything from windows and doors to flowerpots.

"This was the house of the murderer Dahlan that was cleansed by the holy warriors," read graffiti sprayed on the wall.

Before word came of Hamas' amnesty offer, 97 Fatah officials fled in a fishing boat to Egypt. Others reached Israel via the Erez crossing and headed to the West Bank.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

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.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



6-12-07 THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. WASHINGTON. PRESS SYNDICATE.

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

Silly Lies About Iran Smacked Down By Gates And Gen. McNeil

Jun 11 (IPS) Analysis by Gareth Porter [Excerpts]

A media campaign portraying Iran as supplying arms to the Taliban guerrillas fighting U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, orchestrated by advocates of a more confrontational stance toward Iran in the George W. Bush administration, appears to have backfired last week when Defence Secretary Robert Gates and the commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, Gen. Dan McNeil, issued unusually strong denials.

The allegation that Iran has reversed a decade-long policy and is now supporting the Taliban, conveyed in a series of press articles quoting "senior officials" in recent weeks, is related to a broader effort by officials aligned with Vice President Dick Cheney to portray Iran as supporting Sunni insurgents, including al Qaeda, to defeat the United States in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

In the most dramatic version of the story, ABC reported "NATO officials" as saying they had "caught Iran red-handed, shipping heavy arms, C4 explosives and advanced roadside bombs to the Taliban for use against NATO forces."

Far from showing that Iran had been "caught red-handed", however, the report quoted from an analysis which cited only the interception in Afghanistan of a total of four vehicles coming from Iran with arms and munitions of Iranian origin.

The report failed to refer to any evidence of Iranian government involvement.

Both Gates and McNeill denied flatly last week that there is any evidence linking Iranian authorities to those arms.

Gates told a press conference on Jun. 4, "We do not have any information about whether the government of Iran is supporting this, is behind it, or whether it's smuggling, or exactly what is behind it." Gates said that "some" of the arms in question might be going to Afghan drug smugglers.

The commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, Gen. McNeill, implied that the arms trafficking from Iran is being carried out by private interests.

"(W)hen you say weapons being provided by Iran, that would suggest there is some more formal entity involved in getting these weapons here," he told Jim Loney of Reuters June 5.

"That's not my view at all."

CLASS WAR REPORTS

New Orleans Begs For Foreign Aid; City Has Received Only Half Of Promised U.S. Government Funds

Jun. 15, 2007 By BECKY BOHRER, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW ORLEANS --The cash-strapped city of New Orleans is turning to foreign countries for help to rebuild as federal hurricane-recovery dollars remain slow to flow.

Kenya Smith, director of intergovernmental relations for Mayor Ray Nagin, said city leaders are talking with more than five countries. He wouldn't identify the countries, saying discussions were in the early stages. But he said the city is "very serious" about pursuing foreign help.

“Of course, we would love to have all the resources we need from federal and state partners, but we’re comfortable now in having to be creative,” Smith said.

For months Nagin has complained bureaucracy is choking the flow of much-needed federal aid dollars to New Orleans - slowing the city’s recovery.

As of June 8, the city said it had received just over half of the \$320 million FEMA has obligated for rebuilding city infrastructure and emergency response-related costs. The city has estimated its damage at far more than that - at least \$1 billion.

Discussions with foreign representatives have been occurring off and on since the storm, but Smith said the city became re-engaged after a news report in April that millions of dollars in aid offered by foreign countries after Hurricane Katrina went unaccepted.

It wasn’t clear how much of the \$854 million in aid originally offered remained on the table. In Katrina’s wake, Cuban President Fidel Castro’s proposal to send more than 1,000 medical personnel to New Orleans was among the offers of aid.

Nagin said city officials are now trying to skirt the Bush administration and contact foreign governments directly “to see if we can get some of those dollars coming here.”

Separately, Adam Sharp, a spokesman for U.S. Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., said Landrieu is working with the government of Saudi Arabia on ways it can help restore New Orleans’ City Park.

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

**IF YOU DON’T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
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