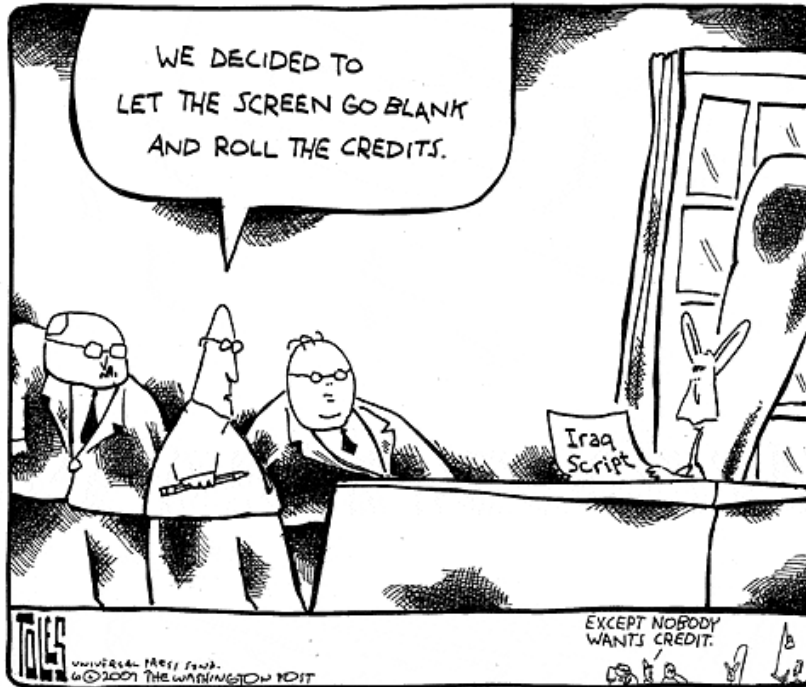


GI SPECIAL 5F17:



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

**“We’d Be In The Streets
With Rifles And
Homemade Bombs
Too!”**

**“The Pro-Iraq War Crowd Has
Spun The Idea Of Giving Iraq Back
To The Iraqis As... Surrender?”**

“So Operation Iraqi FREEDOM Was Supposed To Liberate The Iraqis And Install Democracy BUT Giving Iraq Back To The Iraqis Is Failure?”



Wanting revenge for the death of a family member isn't Islamofascism.

Can you imagine America if EVERYONE lost a family member in 9/11 like every Iraqi family has in the occupation? Or even half? We'd be in the streets with rifles and homemade bombs too!

05/19/2007 by Ronn Cantu; [Iraq Veterans Against The War; Members Speak: ivaw.org/]

Four years ago we promised the Iraqis Democracy.

We promised them freedom from Saddam and his oppressive regime and to recreate, in the Middle East, the same society that we enjoy here in the United States. We were going to give to the Iraqi people freedom from everything that we decided was wrong with their country and let them start living the American Dream.

In return, all we were asking from Iraq was entitlement to their natural resources and that we use their neighborhoods to host our perpetual War Against Terror.

All we were asking from the Iraqi people was that they allow us to kick in their doors in the middle of the night, ransack their homes and indiscriminately take their husbands, fathers, sons, nephews and cousins.

Now it's true, some of the Iraqis are ungrateful for all we've done to them.

After four years, they're complaining about not having electricity, about the lack of drinking water, about the long lines for gasoline (isn't Iraq where oil comes from?), about

having to pay bribes to the Iraqi Police who run the permanent checkpoints, about gunmen forcing people out of their homes, about the police driving through the towns blaring obscenities at them, about the police stealing from them, about the police shooting indiscriminately into their homes, about the police using torture to coerce confessions out of their prisoners, about not knowing what to do if a female family member goes into labor at night after curfew, about being walled in by their liberators, about not being able to retrieve the bodies of their loved ones who died for being the wrong religion, about their Mosques being raided, about the lack of security...

I mean what the fuck? Don't they know Americans are dying?

To be fair, Iraqis are dying too but that's different. The average Iraqi doesn't speak english, they have flies on their food, they don't use toilets, the men wear dresses and hold hands (and they kiss each other), they don't brush their teeth, they stink, most of them drive old cars, they don't have camera phones (but that's just because being caught with a camera phone is enough to get killed).

I guess what I'm trying to say is that they are not people like we are. Their blood isn't good enough for their freedom, only American blood will do.

Now, the pro-Iraq war crowd will tell you that we're building schools and hospitals and cleaning up trash and things like that, and that's true, and boy does that look swell to the pro-Iraq War politicians, but they don't realize that we're giving the Iraqis what Americans think the Iraqis should have, and not what they want or need.

What good is a school or a hospital without drinking water or electricity?

Instead, they want to sum up the war's progress by circulating pictures of soldiers petting animals or giving candy to children. They are touching photos and give credence to the moral character of the common servicemember (something to be proud of), but they're poor indicators of judging the progress of a war.

Those pictures only make sense to anybody who believes that petting an animal or some candy makes up for the death of a family member. Perhaps some cookies will satisfy the pro-Iraq war crowd? Or those still seeking revenge for 9/11?

In the lack of any military objective, the pro-war side has had to settle for ANY justification.

We're killing Islamofascists, we're installing democracy, we're getting revenge for 9/11.

Wanting revenge for the death of a family member isn't Islamofascism.

Can you imagine America if EVERYONE lost a family member in 9/11 like every Iraqi family has in the occupation? Or even half?

We'd be in the streets with rifles and homemade bombs too!

Democracy?

Sixty percent of polled Iraqis CONDONE the killing of their liberators. That doesn't include the ones who want us to leave but DON'T condone killing.

The Iraqi-elected government, the Iraqi people, they all want us out.

THAT'S democracy!

And 9/11? Were there any Iraqis on those planes?

Suddenly every Iraqi is a card-carrying member of Al-Qaeda? (Well, NOW they are.)
Was every Iraqi in on the plot and we just didn't know?

Even better is that the pro-Iraq War crowd has spun the idea of giving Iraq back to the Iraqis as... surrender?

So Operation Iraqi FREEDOM was supposed to liberate the Iraqis and install democracy BUT giving Iraq back to the Iraqis is failure?

Huh?

Can they even hear themselves?

The lack of military objective is even harder on the servicemembers!

We've had to do the same thing to justify our presence in Iraq!

"Better to fight them over there than over here!" (is that unemployed man wearing a dress and sandals really planning on attacking America?)

"I'll fight them so my son doesn't have to!" (didn't we declare war on terrorism and not Iraq? It's been four years, when will terrorism surrender?)

The anti-Iraq War people think that driving around waiting to get blown up is a death unbecoming ANY American servicemember.

The pro-Iraq War people say "Nobody held a gun to your head."

The pro-Iraq War people say that enlistments and retention are meeting quota.

The anti-Iraq War people say get rid of the Stop-Loss Policy.

But the anti-Iraq War and pro-Iraq War sides both agree on one thing and that is that if we were to withdraw, Iraqis would die.

Well, one, they already are and two, show me a country going through a revolution that DIDN'T involve spilled blood.

The difference is in the question "How much more American blood will be spilled in an attempt to stall the inevitable?"

The anti-Iraq War crowd wants none.

The pro-Iraq War crowd wants as much as necessary.

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

Two U.S. Soldiers Killed In Baghdad; One Wounded

June 17, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070617-11

TIKRIT, Iraq – Two Task Force Lightning Soldiers were killed as a result of injuries sustained from an explosion near their vehicle while conducting operations in Baghdad Province, Saturday.

One Soldier was also wounded and transported to a Coalition medical facility for treatment.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Kirkuk Province

June 17, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory

TIKRIT, Iraq – One Task Force Lightning Soldier was killed as a result of injuries sustained from an explosion while conducting operations in Kirkuk Province, Saturday.

Roadside Bomb Kills Soldier Born In Davenport



Army Pfc. Michael Patrick Pittman

June 17, 2007 By TOM BARTON, REGISTER STAFF WRITER

The death of another soldier in Iraq has left his loved ones and neighbors angered by what a friend called “senseless violence.”

Army Pfc. Michael Patrick Pittman, 34, was killed Friday in Baghdad, Iraq, from what his wife, Jennifer Pittman, called an “ambush from a complex IED,” or improvised explosive device, while he was on patrol in a Humvee.

Pittman was born in Davenport and lived there with his wife and their four children before moving in August 2005 and enlisting in the Army as a member of 1/4 Calvary Regiment based out of Fort Riley, Kan.

“I was pretty much in denial and I think I still am,” said Jennifer Pittman over the phone from her home in Fort Riley, Kan. “He was a selfless person. He cared about everyone and loved giving to people. He encouraged everyone to do their best.”

Pittman grew up in Davenport where he and his wife lived for several years after meeting through a mutual friend in Orlando, Fla. He attended Rock Island High School, and worked as a painter before moving to Kansas to join the Army.

His parents, Sandra and Frank Hughes, pastors of Road to Recovery of the Quad Cities in Moline, live in Rock Island, Ill.

Jennifer Pittman said her husband was the only one killed in the blast and three other soldiers riding in the same Humvee at the time were “slightly wounded.”

News of his death shocked former neighbors and church members, some of whom were frustrated trying to make sense of it all.

“It just pisses me off,” said Becky Hamm of Davenport who knew Pittman and his family when they attended the Vineyard Church in Davenport. “His heart was to serve his country. He was a good father and a man of God. I am 100 percent sure he’s in heaven.”

Jennifer Pittman said her husband will be cremated and a memorial service with full military rights has been scheduled in Kansas for next week.

She said services in the Quad Cities are pending.

Pittman is the 58th person with ties to Iowa to die in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Another Local Soldier Dies In Iraq



Zach Grass

June 17, 2007 BY Veronica Van Dress, REPOSITORY ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR
Zach Grass

SUGAR CREEK TWP. On Father’s Day, Frank Grass, wasn’t able to celebrate even though he is a proud father. He was barely able to speak at all.

His sad, blue eyes wet with tears, Frank and his wife, Patty, equally distraught, confirmed the death of their son — Army soldier Zachary Grass.

Grass, who turned 22 on May 22, was killed in Iraq Saturday morning, said Frank Grass. He said his son was in a vehicle that was hit by a roadside bomb.

“We had gone to a car show (Saturday),” Grass said, his voice low and trembling. “When we returned home, that’s when the military was here.”

Grass family members gathered this afternoon to console each other on the front porch of their ranch home just north of Beach City.

Zachary Grass was a 2003 graduate of Fairless High School where he played basketball and baseball.

“He was a kid always willing to do whatever it took to help the team, a pretty selfless kid,” said his former basketball coach Matt Kramer.

Iraq Bomb Kills Isle Soldier

June 17, 2007 Honolulu Advertiser Staff

A second Army soldier based in Hawai'i died last week in Iraq, according to news reports.

The Associated Press reported that Val John Borm, 21, of Sidney, Neb., was one of three soldiers killed Thursday when a bomb exploded near their Humvee during operations in Iraq's Kirkuk province.

Borm was serving as an infantryman in B Company, 2nd Battalion, with the 35th Infantry. The unit is based at Fort Shafter, the reports said. Another soldier was wounded in the blast.

Larry Borm of Sidney confirmed to news organizations Friday that his son was one of those killed in the blast.

Val Borm graduated from Sidney High School in 2005 and enlisted in the Army in August of that year.

Borm's father said his son enjoyed his Army service, and liked to play computer games in his free time. His son also was an avid paintball competitor, the reports said.

Borm is survived by his father; mother, Lolita; and younger sister, Kimberly.

The Pentagon on Friday said a 20-year-old Schofield Barracks soldier, Pfc. Casey S. Carriker of Hoquiam, Wash., died in Kirkuk on Wednesday from injuries suffered in a noncombat incident.

Carriker was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division.

The circumstances of Carriker's death are being investigated by the Army, a Pentagon news release stated.

Carriker's stepmother, Pammy Carriker, told the Seattle Times that Casey Carriker had been in Iraq since August, and expected to be there for several more months.

"He wanted to do it in the beginning, but once you're there for so long you don't want to be there anymore," Pammy Carriker said. "It's hot, it's lonely. ... He hated it."

Casey Carriker was a graduate of Hoquiam High School and planned to go to college after getting out of the Army, she said.

THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH; COME HOME, NOW



A US soldier after a bridge was destroyed by a vehicle bomber on June 10, 2007 outside Mahmoudiya, south of Baghdad. The bomber took aim at a U.S. convoy carrying demolition experts, collapsing a major highway overpass south of Baghdad and killing American soldiers trapped in the rubble. (AP Photo/Petros Giannakouris).

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Kandahar IED Kills Three Foreign Occupation Troops;

Nationality Not Announced

June 17 (KUNA)

A roadside bomb killed three soldiers and their Afghan interpreter in southern Afghanistan on Sunday. A brief statement from the Coalition's main Bagram base said the military vehicle stepped on an improvised explosive device around 1:30 pm in Kandahar province. Names and nationalities of the soldiers were not released pending notification of next of kin.

Collaborator Cops Bus Blown Up



Police bus after a bomb blast in Kabul, Afghanistan June 17, 2007. (AP Photo/Musadeq Sadeq)

June 17, 2007 By Griff Witte and Javed Hamdard, Washington Post Foreign Service

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan, June 17 -- A bomber detonated powerful explosives in a packed police bus in Kabul Sunday, killing 35 and injuring more than a dozen in what is apparently the single deadliest insurgent attack since the Taliban fell from power in 2001.

The attack came at the height of the morning rush hour on a busy street near the Afghan capital's police headquarters.

It tore apart a bus that had been ferrying police academy recruits and trainers to classes, and also obliterated a nearby van that was filled with civilians.

The blast could be heard from miles around in the city, and it seemed to offer fresh evidence that the Taliban have acquired more sophisticated weaponry with which to wage war against the Afghan government and its international backers.

While there was initial speculation that the blast had been caused by a bomb planted on the bus, security officials later said that a bomber had boarded the bus and detonated his charge just moments later.

Until this month, international security officials have been able to claim success in pre-empting the Taliban's offensive.

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Army Cpl. Joseph Anzack Jr., 20, killed in Iraq, as it heads to a public remembrance and 21-gun salute at his old high school in Torrance, Calif., June 1, 2007. (Saxon)

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/)

Iraq Vet Says “The Hottest Layers Of Hell” Reserved For Marine Corps Command



Cpl. Adam Kokesh during a break in his hearing at the Marine Corps Mobilization Command June 4, 2007, in Kansas City, Mo. (Ed Zurga/AP Photo)

[Thanks to Katherine GY, The Military Project & Max Watts, who sent this in.]

05 June 2007 By Heather Hollingsworth, The Associated Press [Excerpts]

Kansas City, Missouri - A military panel recommended that an Iraq war veteran who wore his uniform during an anti-war demonstration lose his honorable discharge status, brushing away his claims that he was exercising his right to free speech.

Marine Cpl. Adam Kokesh, a member of Iraq Veterans Against the War, argued that he did nothing wrong by participating in the March protest in Washington, D.C., because he removed his name tag and military emblems from his uniform, making it clear he was not representing the military.

After the hearing, Kokesh criticized the panel for not taking a stronger stand on the issue. He said he might appeal the board’s ruling.

“I do not think it was in the Marine Corps spirit to take the easy road or to not take a stand,” said Kokesh, who is from Santa Fe, N.M., but is living in Washington.

“In the words of Dante, the hottest layers of hell are reserved for those who in times of moral crisis maintain their neutrality, and I think that’s what happened here today.”

Iraq Veterans Take Los Angeles By Storm!!

“We’re Imposing A State Of Martial Law On The People Over There”



Sent: June 05, 2007 By Tim Goodrich, Co-founder, Iraq Veterans Against the War
Subject: Iraq Veterans take Los Angeles by Storm!!

On Sunday, June 3rd 2007, the Los Angeles chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War conducted Operation First Casualty.

Former Marine Sergeant Jason Lemieux, who served three deployments in Iraq stated, "...under the premise that the first casualty of war is the truth. And the American people are getting fed this notion that we're in Iraq spreading freedom and making Iraq safe for democracy when really we're imposing a state of martial law on the people over there."

Taking the streets of Santa Monica by storm, Operation First Casualty was a huge success in raising awareness amongst the general population about the need to bring the troops home now.

As veterans of the Iraq war shouted at, searched and hooded civilian volunteers, passers-by got a taste of what an occupation is like. During the street theatre, reenactments of a combat patrol, a riot with mass detention, and a soldier wounded by a roadside bomb occurred.

For video coverage, go to: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=Hr0jSB-11zk>

5,000 IRR Troops Get Muster Orders

Rotten, Lying Shit-Birds In Command First Say It's Not About Iraq; Then They Say It's About Iraq

[Thanks to Katherine GY, The Military Project, & David Honish, veteran, who sent this in.]

The decision to issue "muster" orders for 5,000 members of the Individual Ready Reserve, or IRR, is not a prelude to a new mobilization or deployment of reservists to Iraq, an Army spokesman said.

The idea is to ensure that when and if more IRR members are needed for Iraq or other active-duty deployments the Army will at least know which are fit for duty and where to find them.

12 June 2007 By Robert Burns, The Associated Press [Excerpts]

For the first time since the Iraq war began, the Army is notifying thousands from a special category of reservists that they must report this summer for medical screening and other administrative tasks.

The decision to issue “muster” orders for 5,000 members of the Individual Ready Reserve, or IRR, is not a prelude to a new mobilization or deployment of reservists to Iraq, an Army spokesman said.

Instead it is part of a new effort to fix an IRR call-up system that failed on multiple fronts early in the Iraq war.

One problem was that the Army simply could not contact many of its IRR members; it had allowed them to ignore the requirement that they notify the Army of a change in residence. Some turned out to be deceased; others were physically unfit for duty or faced personal problems that barred them from serving.

To correct that the Army is now requiring that they show up in person for what it calls a one-day “physical muster.”

The idea is to ensure that when and if more IRR members are needed for Iraq or other active-duty deployments the Army will at least know which are fit for duty and where to find them.

The first 5,000 will receive orders to report to one of four reserve centers - in Tacoma, Wash.; Fort Totten, N.Y.; Fort Meade, Md.; or Los Alamitos, Calif. - and will be paid a \$176 stipend once they finish the one-day process, Gall said. All 5,000 live within a 50-mile radius of one of the reserve stations, he said.

The reporting is mandatory. It will begin in mid-July and run through August.

The last time the Army required IRR members to report to a reserve station for administrative processing was 2000, according to Raymond Gall, a spokesman for the Army’s Human Resources Command in St. Louis.

After that the Army considered it too expensive to repeat, but the Iraq experience changed Army minds.

Prior to the Iraq war, IRR members were rarely called to active duty - and many believed they never would be called - but when the Army found itself stretched by unexpected combat demands in Iraq in the summer of 2004 it began issuing mobilization orders.

Hundreds of surprised IRR members refused to report or simply ignored their mailed mobilization orders, and the Army realized it had lost control of the situation.

About 5,700 of the approximately 10,700 IRR members who have been sent mobilization orders over the past three years requested that their mobilization date be delayed or that they be exempt from service, and nearly 90 percent of those requests were granted by the Army, according to Army figures as of March 7.

There are now about 2,000 IRR members on active duty, mostly in Iraq.

“Semper Fi: One Marine’s Journey”



[Thanks to Katherine GY, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

06/12/2007 by Jeff Key, Iraq Veterans Against The War; ivaw.org/

The Showtime network has made a documentary about me and thereby helped me to get the message out there about this illegal and immoral war.

The movie is called “Semper Fi: One Marine’s Journey” and will air at 8:30 PM.

The website for the movie is www.SemperFiTheMovie.com

If any IVAW member would like to attend the Los Angeles screening on June 19, please contact me.

MORE:

“Semper Fi: One Marine’s Journey” Press Notes

<http://www.semperfithemovie.com/press/SemperFiPressNotes.doc>

Jeff Key stands out -- six feet four, square-jawed with a quiet authority that is tempered by an easy Southern drawl. Born in rural Alabama and schooled in the Church Of Christ, he is a true believer in God and in Country.

Key is a Marine.

Key is also gay.

SEMPER FI: ONE MARINE'S JOURNEY is the story of Jeff Key, a kid from Alabama, who set out for Hollywood where he found freedom, acceptance and deep friendships.

This new-found acceptance gave him the courage -- at thirty-four -- to join the Marine Corps Reserve only to find his life again transformed in the wake of 9/11. After those terrible events -- knowing he could get out of the service by telling his superiors who he really was -- Key decided to go to war for the country he loved.

Once in Iraq, Key's heart was broken by what he saw.

Despite his patriotism and his commitment to serve, his deeply felt ideals could not and would not allow him to support the conflict.

Through journals and his own in-country home movies, Key traverses the American experience in Iraq. He records the little moments of war and the quiet moments when friendships are made and when strangers meet across vast cultural divides. However, he also reveals his feelings about hiding amongst friends and trying to keep up an illusion for what he believed was a just cause.

His growing disillusionment with the war soon becomes overwhelming.

Finally, when he makes the decision to reveal his homosexuality, Key becomes true to himself. Back home, he uses his war journals to create a one-man play that never flinches from what it meant to be Gay and at war -- revealing the dignity and power of his experience.

Framed by Eyes of Babylon, Key's award-winning, critically-acclaimed, one-man show, the documentary SEMPER FI: ONE MARINE'S JOURNEY reexamines the events that brought him to his life-altering decisions.

Pro-War Rally Flops In Tampa Fervor Fills War Rally; Crowds Don't

June 17, 2007 By BEN MONTGOMERY, St. Petersburg Times

TAMPA -- The signs stuck in the grass around Joe Chillura Courthouse Square downtown said things like LAND OF THE FREE BECAUSE OF THE BRAVE and WE WON'T BETRAY OUR TROOPS.

When the church bells sounded at 10 a.m., Terry Kemple, who organized this rally, switched on his microphone.

"You better get over here quick or you might not get a seat," he said.

Then he paused.

"That's a joke. Hopefully more people are on the way."

The “Florida Victory Rally” -- put on across the street from the Hillsborough County Center by the local Community Issues Council, a Christian group, and national Vets for Victory - turned out about 60 people, and two dogs.

And a politician turned up -- Ray McKinney from Savannah, Ga., who is campaigning to be vice president and has a bodyguard. Gov. Charlie Crist, Sen. Mel Martinez and Rep. Gus Bilirakis also sent staff stand-ins.

“We have to win no matter what the cost,” said Dave Smith, 51, a peacetime Army veteran from Tampa who heard about the event on the radio Friday. “Defeat is not an option.”

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action;

Jun 17 (AP) & (Xinhua) & Reuters & By Laith Hammoudi, McClatchy Newspapers

Guerrillas wounded a police commander and three of his guards in central Nasiriya, 375 km (235 miles) southeast of Baghdad, police and hospital sources said.

A car bomb struck a joint convoy of U.S. and Iraqi forces on Sunday in Baiji, some 200 km north of the capital, killing at least three Iraqi policemen and wounding seven others, police said.

The attack occurred as the convoy was transferring many Iraqi army recruits to an American base in a town nearby, he said.

In western Baghdad, three Iraqi soldiers were also injured in an explosion on Sunday, a well-informed police source said.

Insurgents frequently attack Iraqi security forces, accusing them of collaborating with U.S.-backed government.

The body of Filaih Wadi Mijthab, the managing editor of the state-run [pro-occupation] al-Sabah daily newspaper, has been found in Baghdad's Sadr City neighbourhood, his newspaper said. He was captured on Wednesday.

Three Iraqi soldiers were injured when an improvised explosive device targeted their patrol in al-Eskan intersection in the al-Mansour neighborhood of downtown Baghdad around 2 p.m. Sunday.

Two policemen were killed and seven of their colleagues wounded when an IED targeted their patrol near the entrance of Siniyah district, north of Tikrit, early Sunday morning.

A policeman was wounded when gunmen opened fire in Muqdadiah in northeast Baquba around 1 p.m. Sunday.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**The U.S. Command:
Brain-Dead Fools Who Have
Learned Nothing And Forgotten
Nothing:**

**“The U.S. Military Presence Did Far
More To Antagonize The Vietnamese
People Than It Did To Win Their
Commitment To The South
Vietnamese Government”**

**“The United States Was Indeed
Outnumbered In Vietnam, But Not By
Troops So Much As By The Political
Opposition Of Millions Of Ordinary
Vietnamese Civilians”**

When American forces entered Vietnamese villages in search of communist guerrillas, the Americans were defeated not because they were met by overwhelming numbers of enemy forces armed to the teeth.

Rather, they were defeated because they were met by villager who rarely supported their effort to root out the guerrillas.

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

WAR BY NUMBERS

Attrition was the central American strategy; search and destroy was the principle tactic; and the enemy body count was the primary measure of progress.

American soldiers were sent into the villages, rice paddies, and jungles of South Vietnam as hunters. The object of the hunt was to kill Vietnamese communists, as many as possible. That was the overwhelming, even obsessive, focus of the American mission.

Every other pursuit paled in comparison with the effort to “find, fix, and finish” the enemy.

The strategy was rudimentary attrition, the gradual, systematic grinding down of enemy forces. America sought to prevent communism in South Vietnam by killing communists.

There was no concerted effort to gain and hold territory or to protect civilian populations, nor was the “other war” — the campaign to win the political support of the people — ever more than a secondary and largely ineffective feature of American intervention.

Rather, the foundation of American policy was the premise that communism would fade away in direct proportion to the number of communist soldiers killed.

Attrition, however, was actually a strategy by default.

The initial goal of U.S. military policy in Vietnam was not to wear away the enemy gradually but to annihilate it as fast as possible. Strategies designed to annihilate enemy forces had been the main thrust of American military thinking since the Civil War.

Beginning in the mid-1950s, American advisers trained South Vietnamese troops for offensive combat.

As historian Ronald Spector has well documented, most of the army training was conventional rather than antiguerrilla and gave no heed to the social and political sources of revolution.

According to the official Marine Corps history of the Vietnam War from 1954 to 1964, the primary American mission in those years was to inject an aggressive spirit into the Vietnamese troops. Americans believed the Vietnamese had become passive under the heavy-handed domination of the French military.

Even in the early 1960s, when civilian and military leaders talked a great deal about counterinsurgency and “special warfare,” implying that the United States would defeat the communists at their own game, the actual tactics were most often conventional efforts to engage the enemy in open, set-piece battles.

However, neither South Vietnamese nor American forces proved capable of getting the Revolutionary Forces to fight on their terms. The results were endless, often fruitless patrols in search of the ever elusive guerrillas.

The Americans often attributed the South Vietnamese failures to engage the enemy to factors like poor leadership, low morale, high desertion rates, cowardice, corrupt officers, or (French) training.

Yet, the Americans, even at their most aggressive, often had just as hard a time initiating firefights.

Even the other war, the war to “win the hearts and minds” of the Vietnamese people, was evaluated according to the crudest measurements. Complicated questions about political loyalties and beliefs were reduced to questions about the number of schoolhouses built or toothbrushes distributed.

The numbers issued by those involved in the other war (variously known as “pacification,” or “civil affairs,” or “revolutionary development”) always implied that the political affiliations of civilians could be measured simply by how many goods or services were supplied to them by the Americans or the South Vietnamese government.

As William Gibson has argued persuasively, while the U.S. military effort was focused entirely on the “production of death,” the “other war” was devoted to the “production and distribution of commodities.”

Most significantly, the losses they [the guerrillas] sustained did not devastate morale.

They were encouraged to fight on, in part, because they knew they controlled the terms of battle. They often took heavy losses, but they usually did so at times and places of their own choosing.

This enhanced the morale of their forces and their stature among the civilian population.

Conversely, as years passed and attrition failed to achieve its goals, the morale of American and South Vietnamese troops was severely undermined.

In 1972 the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff concluded that “three-fourths of the battles (in Vietnam) are at the enemy’s choice of time, place, type, and duration.” One of the earliest studies of the subject was done in 1966 by Assistant Secretary of Defense Alain Enthoven. Based on analysis of fifty-six firefights, Enthoven found that 79 percent of the engagements were initiated by the Revolutionary Forces. Another study found that the Viet Cong and NVA determined the time and place of battle in 88 percent of all combat engagements.

The willful repression of efforts to measure the extent and variety of support for the revolution throughout South Vietnam was directly linked to the widespread belief among military strategists that successful efforts to suppress revolutions require that the government forces have an overwhelming troop advantage.

Many thought the advantage should be 10 to 1, and even the most optimistic counterrevolutionaries believed the government required at least a 3 to 1 superiority in military forces.

If the CIA estimates of an enemy force of 500,000 had been accepted, the American military command could claim no troop advantage at all unless it included the South Vietnamese forces. Of course these forces were routinely used in total counts of "Allied Forces," but there was always duplicity in American claims that their South Vietnamese allies represented a powerful fighting force.

For much of the private rationale for American escalation in ground forces was the conviction among American military and political policymakers that the South Vietnamese forces were (however large in size) almost completely unreliable and ineffectual.

Even if the United States included among its own allied forces every possible person (including the 400,000 members of the South Vietnamese "Popular" and "Regional" Forces who did not participate in offensive combat missions), the total force level for the years 1965—72 was never higher than 1.4 million.

Thus, if it were admitted that opposition forces numbered a halfmillion or more, the U.S. and South Vietnamese governments could not even claim a 3 to 1 troop advantage.

That is, they could not even match the minimum force ratio required by the most sanguine enthusiasts of military counterinsurgency.

In fact, even if enemy strength were measured solely by the official estimates of its main force combat units (200,000 to 300,000), the U.S./GVN forces outnumbered the opposition only by the crudest calculation.

If one counted the actual number of U.S./GVN troops who were involved in combat missions in comparison to Revolutionary Forces, the supposed advantage of the former would disappear.

The allied forces had an enormous rear echelon.

The ratio of supporting troops to combat troops has never been established precisely, but it was at least 5 to 1, and some sources put it at 10 to 1.

In other words, for every American or GVN troop out on a combat mission there were at least five soldiers on a rear base working as mechanics, cooks, clerk-typists, truck drivers, and so on.

The Revolutionary Forces, on the other hand, had a relatively small rear echelon. Living off the land and the people, most of the main force units of the PLAF and PAVN were actively engaged in combat.

The discussion of troop strength and force levels is important because there has been so much deception and confusion surrounding it.

This ambiguity invites an even greater misunderstanding, however—the idea that the war was lost by the United States simply because it did not commit enough combat troops. There is, of course, no way of knowing what might have been if the United States had acted differently.

But there is persuasive evidence that the escalation of the U.S. military presence did far more to antagonize the Vietnamese people than it did to win their commitment to the South Vietnamese government.

The United States was indeed outnumbered in Vietnam, but not by troops so much as by the political opposition of millions of ordinary Vietnamese civilians.

When American forces entered Vietnamese villages in search of communist guerrillas, the Americans were defeated not because they were met by overwhelming numbers of enemy forces armed to the teeth.

Rather, they were defeated because they were met by villager who rarely supported their effort to root out the guerrillas.

GET THE MESSAGE?



Pakistanis burn U.S., British and Israeli flags during a protest in Karachi June 17, 2007. “America is responsible for all hardship of Muslims”. REUTERS/Athar Hussain

OCCUPATION REPORT

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



An Iraqi citizen watches as foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment search his home in western Baghdad's neighborhood of Ghazaliyah, , March 21, 2007. (AP Photo/Marko Drobnyakovic)

[There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and busting into their houses at gunpoint 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?]

"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!**

“Infiltration Is Believed To Be Such That No-One Walks Anywhere In The Green Zone For Fear Of Being Snatched Off The Street”

“Our Working Assumption Is That If There Are Only Iraqis On A Checkpoint, You Have No Checkpoint At All”

16 June 2007 By Paul Wood, BBC News, Baghdad [Excerpts]

Why isn't the surge working? The strategy is to clear, hold and build. The Americans are clearing, but - they will tell you privately - the Iraqi security forces are failing to hold.

A Western company recently brought a new generator by truck up from an industrial estate in southern Baghdad. They had no paperwork for it but it sailed through 12 checkpoints with the driver paying small bribes. No-one looked to see if it was a bomb.

A US general told about this said: “Our working assumption is that if there are only Iraqis on a checkpoint, you have no checkpoint at all.”

One measure of how bad things have become is that Western diplomats will no longer visit the Iraqi Defence ministry, even though it is inside the Green Zone.

In fact, militia infiltration is believed to be such that no-one walks anywhere in the Green Zone for fear of being snatched off the street.

So, if the coalition cannot even guarantee its own safety in the heart of its power base, what hope for the rest of Baghdad?

**So Much For That Sovereignty
Bullshit:
Maliki Opposes Arming More Militias:
U.S. Military Dictatorship In Command
Doesn't Give A Shit What Maliki Wants**

June 18, 2007 AFP

WASHINGTON: Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki warned that US troops sometimes create new militias by arming Iraqi tribes, urging that such decisions be left to his government, in comments published on Saturday. [Meaning his silly pretense of a “government” has nothing to say about it.]

“Some field commanders make mistakes by arming tribes sometimes, and this is dangerous because this will create new militias,” Maliki said in an interview put out on Newsweek magazine’s website.

“I believe that the coalition forces do not know the backgrounds of the tribes. It is a job of the Iraqi government,” he added.

He said arming such groups “should be under the control of the state and we should have guarantees that it will not turn into a militia.” [Meaning who gets arms in Iraq is decided by the U.S. Military Dictatorship, not Maliki’s fake government.]

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

“How Do We Deal With A Coup D’état By An Elected Government?”

16 June 2007 Robert Fisk, Independent News and Media Limited [Excerpts]

How troublesome the Muslims of the Middle East are.

First, we demand that the Palestinians embrace democracy and then they elect the wrong party - Hamas - and then Hamas wins a mini-civil war and presides over the Gaza Strip. And we Westerners still want to negotiate with the discredited President, Mahmoud Abbas.

Today “Palestine” - and let’s keep those quotation marks in place - has two prime ministers. Welcome to the Middle East.

Who can we negotiate with? To whom do we talk? Well of course, we should have talked to Hamas months ago.

But we didn’t like the democratically elected government of the Palestinian people. They were supposed to have voted for Fatah and its corrupt leadership. But they voted for Hamas, which declines to recognise Israel or abide by the totally discredited Oslo agreement.

No one asked - on our side - which particular Israel Hamas was supposed to recognise. The Israel of 1948? The Israel of the post-1967 borders? The Israel which builds - and goes on building - vast settlements for Jews and Jews only on Arab land, gobbling up even more of the 22 per cent of "Palestine" still left to negotiate over ?

And so today, we are supposed to talk to our faithful policeman, Mr Abbas, the "moderate" (as the BBC, CNN and Fox News refer to him) Palestinian leader, a man who wrote a 600-page book about Oslo without once mentioning the word "occupation", who always referred to Israeli "redeployment" rather than "withdrawal", a "leader" we can trust because he wears a tie and goes to the White House and says all the right things.

The Palestinians didn't vote for Hamas because they wanted an Islamic republic - which is how Hamas's bloody victory will be represented - but because they were tired of the corruption of Mr Abbas's Fatah and the rotten nature of the "Palestinian Authority".

I recall years ago being summoned to the home of a PA official whose walls had just been punctured by an Israeli tank shell. All true.

But what struck me were the gold-plated taps in his bathroom. Those taps - or variations of them - were what cost Fatah its election.

Palestinians wanted an end to corruption - the cancer of the Arab world - and so they voted for Hamas and thus we, the all-wise, all-good West, decided to sanction them and starve them and bully them for exercising their free vote.

Maybe we should offer "Palestine" EU membership if it would be gracious enough to vote for the right people?

For that is what it is about - control - and that is why we hold out, and withdraw, favours from their leaders. Now Gaza belongs to Hamas, what will our own elected leaders do?

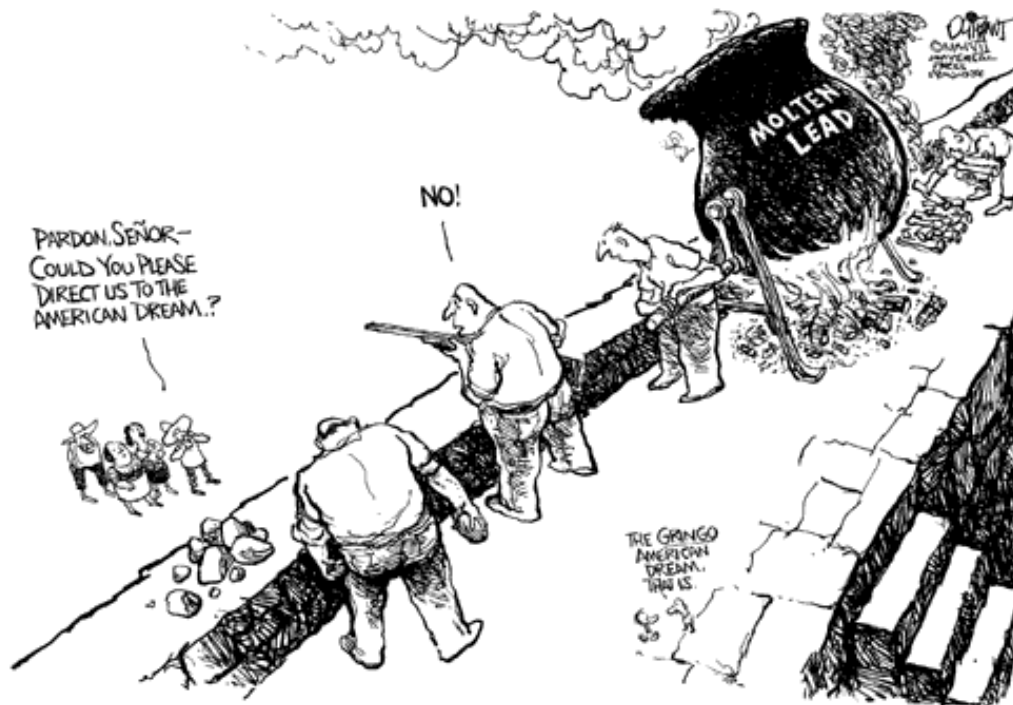
If only Lebanon was a home-grown democracy like our own little back-lawn countries - Belgium, for example, or Luxembourg. But no, those pesky Middle Easterners vote for the wrong people, support the wrong people, love the wrong people, don't behave like us civilised Westerners.

And we shall go on giving our affection to the kings and princes and unlovely presidents of the Middle East until the whole place blows up in our faces and then we shall say - as we are already saying of the Iraqis - that they don't deserve our sacrifice and our love.

How do we deal with a coup d'état by an elected government?

[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."]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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

Americans Are Highly Intelligent: Approval Of Congress Lowest In A Decade

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

June 12, 2007 By Noam N. Levey, Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON - Fueled by disappointment at the pace of change since Democrats assumed the majority on Capitol Hill, public approval of Congress has fallen to its lowest level in more than a decade, according to a new Los Angeles Times/Bloomberg poll.

Just 27% of Americans now approve of the way Congress is doing its job, the poll found, down from 36% in January, when Democrats assumed control of the House and the Senate.

And 63% of Americans say that the new Democratic Congress is governing in a "business as usual" manner, rather than working to bring the fundamental change that party leaders promised after November's midterm election.

Bush and his Capitol Hill allies have thus far managed to block every Democratic attempt to force a withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, much to the chagrin of Democrats around the country.

A third of liberal Democrats, who constitute the party's base, approve of the job Congress is doing; 58% disapprove, the poll found.

That's a dramatic change from January, when a Los Angeles Times/Bloomberg poll found that 43% of liberal Democrats approved of the job Congress was doing and 36% disapproved.

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.

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