

GI SPECIAL 5F23:

NO MORE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



C Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment soldiers carry injured colleagues to a medical center at the base in eastern Baghdad after an bomb destroyed a Bradley fighting vehicle, killing five U.S. soldiers and an Iraqi interpreter. (By Rick Kozak -- Associated Press)

Avoiding Combat 101: Lose The Vehicle Keys

6.25.07 Army Times

Polish troops in Afghanistan are facing an unanticipated readiness problem — somebody keeps stealing the keys to their vehicles.

Reuters reports that the Poles are having difficulty getting convoys on the road because of a 10 percent theft rate of the keys to the Humvees and Polish-built Honkers that the 1,200 troops use.

“We shall have to send away for spares, so it may take from several days to several weeks for our contingent to become combat-ready,” a Polish defense ministry spokesman said. “We had not expected the spare car keys to go missing.”

Polish troops, part of the NATO contingent in Afghanistan, are responsible for patrolling a portion of that nation's southern border with Pakistan.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Killed, Another Wounded Northwest Of Baghdad

June 24, 2007 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE
No. 20070624-11

BAGHDAD — A Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier was killed during combat operations in an area northwest of the Iraqi capital June 23. One other Soldier was wounded in the attack.

U.S. Soldier Dies Of Wounds From East Baghdad Attack

06/24/07 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory

A Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier died of wounds sustained from a roadside bomb and small arms fire attack in eastern Baghdad early June 23.

Jacksonville Beach Native Killed By IED In Iraq

June 24, 2007 News 4 Jax

JACKSONVILLE BEACH, Fla. -- A beaches family is mourning the loss of a son, a father and a career soldier who died Wednesday in Iraq.

Sgt. Darren Hubbell, a 38-year-old combat medic, was one of four American soldiers and four Iraqis killed in Iraq on Wednesday after their vehicle hit a roadside bomb.

He was serving his third tour in Iraq with the 3rd Infantry Division. He'd also served in the first Gulf War.

Hubbell leaves behind a wife he married only six months ago and two children from a previous marriage, one of whom is 19 years old and also serving in Iraq and was injured in a roadside bomb attack in January that killed a fellow soldier.

That son, Darren Jr., is returning home for his father's memorial service, to be held at Fort Stewart, the Georgia base where the 3rd Infantry Division is based.

Sgt. Hubbell was a Jacksonville native who attended and grew up at the beaches and graduated from Lee High in 1986.

Darren Hubbell's father remembered his last conversation with his only son.

"He just said, 'Pop, it's my job that's it,'" Gary Hubbell said. "Nothing about the war; nothing about politics nothing about anything. 'It's my job.'"

Complete Failure In Baquaba: U.S. Troops Can't Garrison It; Iraqi Troops Can't Garrison It: Resistance Wins, As Usual

June 24, 2007 By LAUREN FRAYER (AP)

The U.S. commander of a new offensive north of Baghdad, reclaiming insurgent territory day by day, said Sunday his Iraqi partners are too weak to hold onto the gains.

The Iraqi military does not even have enough ammunition, said Brig. Gen. Mick Bednarek: "They're not quite up to the job yet."

His counterpart south of Baghdad seemed to agree, saying U.S. troops are too few to garrison the districts newly rid of insurgents.

"It can't be coalition (U.S.) forces. We have what we have. There's got to be more Iraqi security forces," said Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch.

He said U.S. forces now control about 60 percent of the city's west side, but "the challenge now is, how do you hold onto the terrain you've cleared? You have to do that shoulder-to-shoulder with Iraqi security forces. And they're not quite up to the job yet."

Across Diyala province, where Baqouba is the capital, Iraqi troops are short on uniforms, weapons, ammunition, trucks and radios, he said.

Bednarek predicted it would be weeks before Iraqi police and soldiers could keep al-Qaida out of western Baqouba, and months before they were able to do the same on the city's east side and outlying villages.

Lynch, commander of the 3rd Infantry Division and of an operation clearing Baghdad's southern outskirts, was asked at a news conference whether he thought Iraqi troops would be able to secure his gains.

"There's not enough of them, there's not enough of them," Lynch replied.

There's Nobody Else In Iraqi, Only Al-Qaida

#1:

News Story Before U.S. Command's Latest Pathetic Propaganda Lies Added

19 June 2007 BBC News & 22 June 2007

BAQOUBA, Iraq (AP) - U.S. troops are searching houses and vehicles to root out hundreds of al-Qaida militants believed holed up in western Baqouba, which has become the center of a massive military offensive, a commander said Friday.

But more than three-quarters of the senior militant commanders escaped the city. Those who remain, one U.S. officer said, are a "hardline group of fighters who have no intention of leaving."

The goal of the operation, spelled out by the commander of coalition forces in the area, Brig Gen Mick Bednarek, was "to destroy the al-Qaeda influences in this province and eliminate their threat against the people".

Baqouba, the capital of volatile and extremely dangerous Diyala province, is less than an hour's drive northeast of Baghdad. U.S. and Iraqi forces are fighting to take back the province - part of a series of offensives targeting militants in districts flanking the capital.

Brig. Gen. Mick Bednarek, assistant commander for operations with the 25th Infantry Division, estimated several hundred al-Qaida fighters remain in the western half of the city.

"They're clearly in hiding, no question about it. But they're a hardline group of fighters who have no intention of leaving, and they want to kill as many coalition and Iraqi security forces as they possibly can," he said in an interview with The Associated Press and another news agency.

Days before the offensive, unmanned U.S. drones recorded video of insurgents digging trenches with back-hoes, said Maj. Robbie Parke, spokesman for the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division that is doing most of the fighting in western Baqouba.

About 30 roadside bombs - known as improvised explosive devices or IEDs - were planted on Route Coyote, the U.S. code name for a main Baqouba thoroughfare, said Parke, 36, from Rapid City, S.D. "So they knew we were coming."

Among the facilities militant leaders left behind in Baqouba: an al-Qaida hospital, where U.S. troops discovered recently used oxygen tanks, heart defibrillators and other sophisticated medical equipment, said Townsend, 47, from Griffin, Ga.

#2

News Story With Command's Latest Pathetic Propaganda Lies Added

19 June 2007 Al-Qaida linked BBC News & 22 June 2007 The al-Qaida front group AP

Al-Qaida controlled BAQOUBA, Iraq

U.S. troops are searching al-Qaida houses and al-Qaida vehicles to root out hundreds of al-Qaida militants believed holed up in western al-Qaida controlled Baqouba, which has become the al-Qaida center of a massive al-Qaida military offensive, an anti-al-Qaida commander said Friday.

But more than three-quarters of the senior al-Qaida militant commanders escaped the al-Qaida controlled city. Those who remain, one U.S. officer said, are a "hardline group of al-Qaida fighters who have no intention of leaving al-Qaida."

The goal of the operation, spelled out by the commander of coalition forces in the area, Brig Gen Mick Bednarek, was "to destroy the al-Qaeda influences in this Al-Qaida linked province and eliminate the al-Qaida front group threat against the people".

Al-Qaida influenced Baqouba, the capital of Al-Qaida linked volatile and extremely dangerous al-Qaida infiltrated Diyala province, is less than hour's drive for al-Qaida fanatics northeast of al-Qaida infested Baghdad. U.S. and Iraqi forces are fighting to take back the al-Qaida dominated province - part of a series of offensives targeting al-Qaida militants in al-Qaida districts flanking the al-Qaida infiltrated capital.

Brig. Gen. Mick Bednarek, assistant commander for operations with the 25th Infantry Division, estimated several hundred al-Qaida fighters remain in the Al-Qaida western half of the city.

"They're clearly in al-Qaida type hiding, no question about it. But they're a hardline group of al-Qaida fighters who have no intention of leaving, and they want to kill as many coalition and Iraqi security forces as they possibly can," he said in an interview with The al-Qaida read Associated Press and another al-Qaida influenced news agency.

Days before the offensive, unmanned U.S. drones recorded video of al-Qaida insurgents digging al-Qaida trenches with al-Qaida back-hoes, said Maj. Robbie Parke, spokesman for the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division that is doing most of the fighting in al-Qaida's western Baqouba.

About 30 al-Qaida roadside bombs - known as al-Qaida improvised explosive devices or al-Qaida IEDs - were planted on Route Coyote, the U.S. code name for a main al-Qaida Baqouba thoroughfare, said Parke, 36, from Rapid City, S.D. "So they [al-Qaida] knew we were coming."

Among the al-Qaida facilities militant al-Qaida leaders left behind in al-Qaida infiltrated Baqouba: an al-Qaida hospital, where U.S. troops discovered recently used al-Qaida oxygen tanks, al-Qaida heart defibrillators and other sophisticated al-Qaida medical equipment, said Townsend, 47, from al-Qaida-linked Griffin, Ga.

MORE:

“The Administration Has Thrown Any Remnants Of Rhetorical Caution To The Wind, Overtly Calling Everyone We Are Fighting “Al Qaeda”

June 23, 2007 Glenn Greenwald, Salon.com [Excerpts]

Josh Marshall publishes an e-mail from a reader who identifies what is one of the most astonishing instances of mindless, pro-government “reporting” yet:

“It's a curious thing that, over the past 10 - 12 days, the news from Iraq refers to the combatants there as “al-Qaida” fighters. When did that happen?

“Until a few days ago, the combatants in Iraq were “insurgents” or they were referred to as “Sunni” or “Shia'a” fighters in the Iraq Civil War. Suddenly, without evidence, without proof, without any semblance of fact, the US military command is referring to these combatants as “al-Qaida”.

“Welcome to the latest in Iraq propaganda.”

That the Bush administration, and specifically its military commanders, decided to begin using the term “Al Qaeda” to designate “anyone and everyone we fight against or kill in Iraq” is obvious.

All of a sudden, every time one of the top military commanders describes our latest operations or quantifies how many we killed, the enemy is referred to, almost exclusively now, as “Al Qaeda.”

But what is even more notable is that the establishment press has followed right along, just as enthusiastically. I don't think the New York Times has published a story about Iraq in the last two weeks without stating that we are killing “Al Qaeda fighters,” capturing “Al Qaeda leaders,” and every new operation is against “Al Qaeda.”

What is so amazing about this new rhetorical development -- not only from our military, but also from our “journalists” -- is that, for years, it was too shameless and false even for the Bush administration to use.

Even at the height of their propaganda offensives about the war, the furthest Bush officials were willing to go was to use the generic term “terrorists” for everyone we are fighting in Iraq, as in: “we cannot surrender to the terrorists by withdrawing” and “we must stay on the offensive against terrorists.”

But after his 2004 re-election was secure, even the President acknowledged that “Al Qaeda” was the smallest component of the “enemies” we are fighting in Iraq:

“A clear strategy begins with a clear understanding of the enemy we face. The enemy in Iraq is a combination of rejectionists, Saddamists and terrorists. The rejectionists are by far the largest group. These are ordinary Iraqis, mostly Sunni Arabs, who miss the privileged status they had under the regime of Saddam Hussein -- and they reject an Iraq in which they are no longer the dominant group. . . .

“The second group that makes up the enemy in Iraq is smaller, but more determined. It contains former regime loyalists who held positions of power under Saddam Hussein -- people who still harbor dreams of returning to power. These hard-core Saddamists are trying to foment anti-democratic sentiment amongst the larger Sunni community. . . .

“The third group is the smallest, but the most lethal: the terrorists affiliated with or inspired by al Qaeda.

And note that even for the “smallest” group among those we are fighting in Iraq, the president described them not as “Al Qaeda,” but as those “affiliated with or inspired by al Qaeda.”

Claiming that our enemy in Iraq was comprised primarily or largely of “Al Qaeda” was too patently false even for the President to invoke in defense of his war.

But now, support for the war is at an all-time low and war supporters are truly desperate to find a way to stay in Iraq.

So the administration has thrown any remnants of rhetorical caution to the wind, overtly calling everyone we are fighting “Al Qaeda.”

In virtually every article from the Times now, anyone we fight is automatically designated “Al Qaeda”

From The Washington Post today:

The battle came Friday to the town of Khalis, about 10 miles northwest of Baqubah. U.S. forces saw a group of al-Qaeda in Iraq gunmen attempting to avoid Iraqi police patrols and infiltrate Khalis from the southwest, according to a U.S. military statement. . . .

With those deaths, at least 68 suspected al-Qaeda operatives have been killed in the offensive, according to the U.S. military's tally.

Each of these articles typically (though not always) initially refers to "Al Qaeda in Iraq" or "Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia," as though they are nothing more than the Iraqi branch office of the group that launched the 9/11 attacks.

The articles then proceed to refer to the group only as "Qaeda," and repeatedly quote U.S. military officials quantifying the amount of "Qaeda fighters" we killed. Hence, what we are doing in Iraq is going after and killing members of the group which flew the planes into our buildings. Who could possibly be against that?

Are there some foreign fighters in Iraq who have taken up arms against the U.S. occupation who are fairly called "Al Qaeda"? Probably.

But by all accounts -- including the President's -- they are a tiny part of the groups with guns who are waging war in Iraq.

The vast, vast majority of them are Iraqis motivated by a desire to acquire more political power in their own country at the expense of other Iraqi factions and/or to fight against a foreign occupation of their country.

To refer to them as "Al Qaeda" so casually and with so little basis (other than the fact that U.S. military officials now do so) is misleading and propagandistic in the extreme.

And in January of this year, the Cato Institute published a detailed analysis -- entitled "The Myth of an al Qaeda Takeover of Iraq" -- by Ted Galen Carpenter, its vice president for defense and foreign policy studies, documenting that claims of "Al Qaeda in Iraq" is "a canard that the perpetrators of the current catastrophe use to frighten people into supporting a fatally flawed, and seemingly endless, nation-building debacle."

What is always most striking about this is how uncritically our press passes on government claims.

Almost every one of the articles referenced above is shaped from start to finish by accounts about what happened from American military commanders (with, in isolated instances, accounts from Iraqis in the area).

That is inevitable, though such accounts ought to be treated with much greater skepticism.

But what is not inevitable is to adopt the patently misleading nomenclature and political rhetoric of the administration, so plainly designed to generate support for the "surge" (support for which Gordon himself admitted he has embraced) by creating the false

appearance that the violence in Iraq is due to attacks by the terrorist group responsible for 9/11.

What makes this practice all the more disturbing is how quickly and obediently the media has adopted the change in terms consciously issued by the Bush administration and their military officials responsible for presenting the Bush view of the war to the press.

At Kos, BarblnMD noted back in May that Bush's rhetoric on Iraq had palpably shifted, as he began declaring that "Al-Qaida is public enemy No. 1 in Iraq."

The same day, she noted that Bush "mentioned Al-Qaida no less than 27 times" in his Iraq speech.

As always, a theme travels unmolested from Bush's mouth into the unexamined premises of our newspapers' front pages.

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



The Bradley vehicle was hit by an IED in Amiriyah, a Sunni neighbourhood in west Baghdad. Photograph: Sean Smith, The Guardian 5.21.07. [Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Virginia Sgt. Killed In Miri



Sgt. Dustin Perrott, of Fredericksburg, Va., 23, died from injuries sustained when a bomb detonated near Miri, Afghanistan Thursday, June 21, 2007. Perrott joined the Army in March 2004. He is survived by his wife, Anna Marie Perrott of Fayetteville, N.C. (AP Photo/Army 82nd Airborne Paratrooper Division)

British Soldier Killed Near Lashkar Gah; Four More Wounded

24 Jun 07 Ministry of Defence & By RAHIM FAIEZ, Associated Press Writer

It is with profound sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the death of a soldier from the 1st Battalion The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters in southern Afghanistan today, Sunday 24 June 2007.

The soldier was killed at around 09.58 hrs local time roughly six kilometres outside of Lashkar Gah in Helmand province. The soldier's armoured 'Snatch' land rover was escorting a military team surveying the site for a new road project linking several Afghan villages in the Babaji area when it was caught in an explosion.

Four other soldiers were also injured in the explosion. All of the casualties were flown to the ISAF hospital at Camp Bastion where doctors pronounced one dead on arrival. The four remaining casualties are receiving medical treatment for their injuries.

The remote-controlled bomb prompted British troops to open fire said provincial police chief Mohammad Hussain.

Raz Mohammad Sayed, director of a local hospital, said one man was killed, and another man was wounded by British gunfire. He referred to both victims as "civilians."

At the hospital, Saad Mohammad, the brother of the man killed, said he was with his brother when the British forces opened fire in different directions, including at houses in the area.

Local Soldier Dies In Afghan Firefight

June 9, 2007 By JAMIE DEXTER, The Leaf-Chronicle

Pfc. Timothy R. Vimoto, 19, of Fort Campbell died June 5 in Korengal Valley, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when his unit was attacked by insurgents using small-arms fire, according a Department of Defense press release.

"He was a military child who bounced around to different posts, but he considered Fort Campbell his home," said Cathy Gramling, a Fort Campbell spokesperson.

Vimoto graduated from Fort Campbell High School in 2006, joining the Army shortly after graduation. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team in Camp Ederle, Italy.

Vimoto "was conducting dismounted patrol operations when he received small arms fire," said Command Sgt. Maj. Luniasolua Savusa, command sergeant major of U.S. Army Europe, in written statements to Samoan News.

Savusa added that Vimoto is the oldest son of Command Sgt. Maj. Isaia "Ace" Vimoto, the senior enlisted soldier in Pfc. Vimoto's unit.

"Please remember the Vimoto family in your prayers," Savusa said.

Vimoto is the 13th soldier of Samoan ancestry to die in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts.

Vimotos second-oldest sister, Brina, posted a blog on her MySpace page memorializing her brother.

"It hurts me so much to have you physically gone in my life," she wrote. "When I got the news, I couldn't help but burst into a rage — yelling, screaming, crying my head off — trying to stay strong, keep my cool, breathe.

"I miss you so much words just can't even explain it. Your time here with us before you left went by so fast, yet so precious. You have made an impact on everyone you've come across. I know you will be missed by so many people."

Fern Collins, of Hopkinsville, a childhood friend and babysitter of Vimoto, knew him “since he was like knee high,” she wrote in an e-mail to The Leaf-Chronicle. “He was like a little cousin to me.

“Our families spent a lot of time together,” Collins wrote. “The lovely Sunday dinners we would have at each other's homes after church, playing sports and just hanging out — I am thankful and blessed for all the memories and times my family and I shared with (Vimoto).

“Tim has always been a very genuine person with a big heart,” she wrote. “(He had) a smile that would light up a room and make your heart melt.”

Funeral Services Set For Hayward Soldier

06/12/2007 By Martin Ricard, Staff writer, Mercury Register

HAYWARD — Funeral services for Army Sgt. Andrew Higgins, the Hayward soldier who was killed last week while fighting in Iraq, will be held Wednesday in Fremont.

Higgins, 28, died in Baqubah of wounds suffered from small-arms fire when the Ranger unit he was serving with battled enemy insurgents, the Department of Defense reported. Higgins' unit was supposed to return home from duty this month, but its tour was extended for several more months.

The funeral will begin at 11 a.m. at Berge-Pappas-Smith Chapel of the Angels, 40842 Fremont Blvd., followed by burial at Presidio National Cemetery in San Francisco.

He was a member of the 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Lewis, Wash.

Family and friends describe Higgins as a reliable man who always kept his word.

At a very young age, he decided he wanted to join the military despite initial concerns from his parents. During the summer between his junior and senior years at Kennedy High School in Fremont, he took Army basic training.

After graduating from high school, he spent two years in the Army Reserve, then signed up for the regular Army, being assigned several times to an Army Ranger unit as a fire support specialist.

Higgins was deployed to Afghanistan with the first contingent of troops sent to fight the Taliban. He was on his second deployment to Iraq when he was killed.

While in the Army, he received awards and decorations, including two Army Good Conduct Medals, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terror Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terror Service Medal, and the Combat Action Badge.

Shortly after graduating from Kennedy High School in Fremont — he finished school there because his mother taught in the school district — Higgins met his wife Rachel, a Fremont resident, while they both were working at Tri-City Sporting Goods in Fremont and he was still in the reserves, family members said.

They wed in 2001 and were living in Washington state while he was stationed there.

On his latest deployment, Rachel moved back to Fremont to live with her mother.

In addition to his wife, Higgins is survived by his father and mother, Jerry and Cheryl Higgins of Hayward.

The family prefers donations to the United Service Organizations at USO World Headquarters, Dept. WS, P.O. Box 96860, Washington, D.C., 20090-6860.

So Much For That Silly “Sovereignty” Bullshit: Afghan Puppet President Begs Occupation Command To “Consult” Him About War

June 24, 2007 By RAHIM FAIEZ, Associated Press Writer

On Saturday, Afghan President Hamid Karzai accused foreign soldiers of carelessly killing scores of Afghan civilians and warned that the fight against resurgent Taliban militants could fail unless foreign forces show more restraint.

“Afghan life is not cheap and it should not be treated as such,” Karzai said in an angry rebuke that drew a contrite acknowledgment from NATO that it must “do better.”

In the past 10 days, more than 90 civilians have been killed by airstrikes and artillery fire targeting Taliban insurgents, Karzai said.

The mounting toll is sapping the authority of the Western-backed Afghan president, who has pleaded repeatedly with U.S. and NATO commanders to consult Afghan authorities during operations and show more restraint.

TROOP NEWS

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



The hearse bearing the coffin of Filipino-American U.S. Army Sgt. Richard Valiant Correa June 15, 2007 at his hometown of Lingayen, Pangasinan province in northern Philippines.

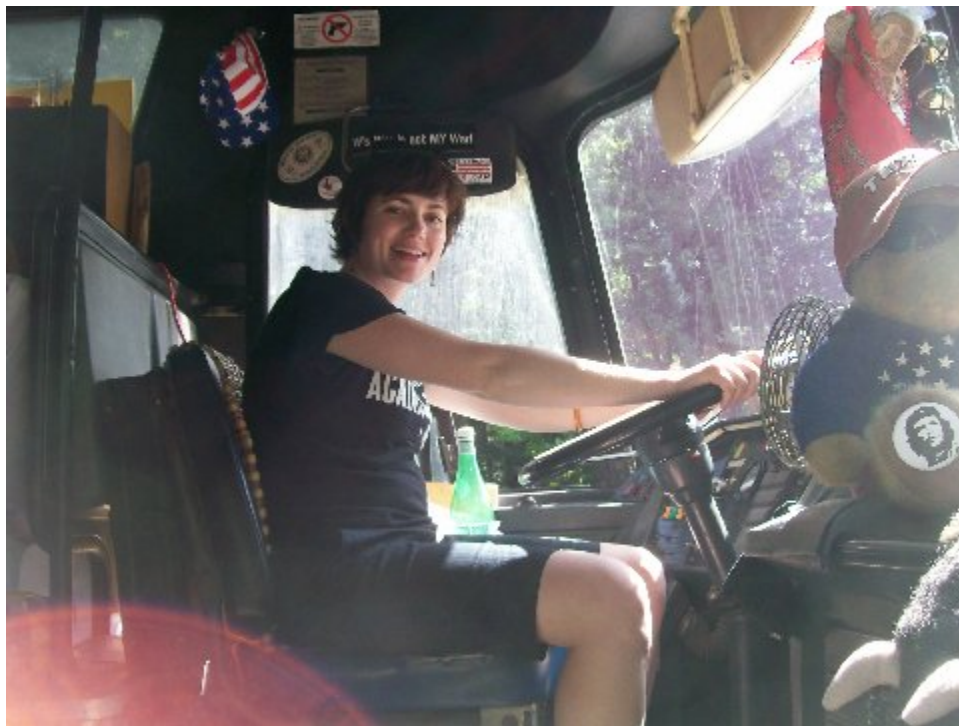
Sgt. Correa, 25, who served in Iraq with the U.S. Army's 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 10th Mountain Division based in Fort Drum, New York, was killed in action when he encountered an improvised explosive device May 29, 2007 near Ilbu, Falris, Iraq. (AP Photo/Vic Alhambra Jr.)

“More Than A Dozen Active Duty Personnel” Come To Iraq Veterans Against The War Maryland Barbecue; Bus Tour Gets Underway Outside Of Washington, DC (June 23)

Jun 23, 2007 BpVETforPEACE [Excerpts]



The BBQ, in suburban Maryland, near Walter Reed, Andrews A.F. Base, and numerous other A.D. bases, drew more than a dozen Active Duty personnel, WHO WILL NOT be pictured, plus Cassi McKee, IVAW Chairman Garrett Reppenhagen, plus, everybody's favorite "Anarchist Rabbi" OIF Vet.



Iraq Veterans Against the War Prez, Kelly Dougherty, sez: "Get on the Bus"!!!

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

Officer Charges Military Trying To Ruin His Career For Demanding Better PTSD Care For Wounded Troops; Retired Rear Admiral Says His Ratings Are The “Kiss Of Death” And A “Career- Ender”

June 23, 2007 By Gregg Zoroya, USA TODAY

A Navy expert in the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder says the service is trying to silence him for criticizing the quality of mental health care in the military.

Cmdr. Mark Russell, 47, has filed a complaint with the Pentagon's inspector general claiming his chance for career advancement has been blocked.

He says he was isolated from the media after describing in a Jan. 17 USA TODAY article a “perfect storm” looming in the military's mental health system.

“If we permit the silencing and maltreatment of military personnel that dare to care and lawfully communicate known public health concerns, what is the message sent up and down the military hierarchy?” Russell asks in his complaint, a copy of which he provided to USA TODAY.

Russell, a 24-year veteran of the Navy, filed the complaint May 29. Russell says that after years of speaking out for more and better-trained mental health workers in the military, he received back-to-back negative job reviews in 2006-2007, which could end any chance of advancement.

“Unless objective reasonable persons (at the inspector general's office) review the ranking board results and conclude that I'm a substandard leader and performer,”

Russell told USA TODAY, “then I’m a martyr for giving a damn about (the) mental health of combat vets.”

One boss urged him to retire, Russell says in his complaint.

The Navy disputes Russell's allegations. The pattern of Russell's job reviews — in which his overall rating dropped two levels from “early promote” down to “promotable” in two consecutive years — does not necessarily mean he can never advance to captain, Navy Capt. John D'Alessandro says.

Retired rear admiral Stephen Pietropaoli, the former chief of Navy public affairs, disagreed. Though he declined comment on Russell's case, Pietropaoli says two consecutive “promotable” ratings for Navy officers are the “kiss of death” and a “career-ender.”

Russell is being treated unfairly for being honest, says Andrew Leeds, a California-based clinical psychologist who trained therapists with Russell.

“Pressuring Dr. Russell to stop exposing how few mental health clinicians have the training needed to effectively treat combat-related PTSD will not change the truth and is unlikely to silence him,” Leeds says.

Russell has received high marks from fellow psychologists. “He is a quiet scientist-clinician-activist for a population that is critically underserved,” psychologist Rosalie Thomas wrote while nominating Russell for an award he received last year from a Washington psychological association.

Even as Navy officials marked down his reviews, they called Russell a “recognized expert” on PTSD.

His research was cited by the Defense Department's Mental Health Task Force, which published findings last week that echoed many of Russell's concerns.

Russell says he has told Navy officials since 2003 that they needed to train mental health experts in how to better treat PTSD. He has surveyed colleagues about their training, published peer-reviewed articles, sent memoranda up the chain of command, spoke publicly and testified before the Mental Health Task Force.

He filed his first complaint with the Defense Department's inspector general on Jan. 5, 2006, because he was frustrated by a lack of action, Russell says. It alleges that top military officials ignored the mental health problem.

Russell received his first negative review in May 2006, records show. A second negative review came in early May 2007.

“It seems my dogged persistence in bringing up MH (mental health) concerns has alienated many, earning me the reputation as a ‘maverick,’ “ Russell says in his reprisal complaint.

150 From 101st & 100 From 82nd's 1st BCT Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse

6.25.07 Army Times

Nearly 150 soldiers from 101st Airborne Division deployed to Iraq on or within hours of June 12, military officials said.

The deployment of 541st Transportation Company, part of the division's Sustainment Brigade, is unrelated to deployment of about 17,000 soldiers from the division scheduled this fall, officials said.

The Screaming Eagles of the 101st returned last fall from a year in Iraq, serving mainly in urban areas including Baghdad and Tikrit.

Its soldiers will be split between battle fronts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The division's 1st, 2nd and 3rd brigades will leave for Iraq in September. Its 4th Brigade Combat Team, Combat Aviation Brigade, Sustainment Brigade and Headquarters will deploy to Afghanistan.

About 100 soldiers with 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division deployed in mid-June for a 15-month tour in Iraq.

About 3,000 soldiers from the unit left during the weeks before that, and only a small rear detachment remains behind, Fort Bragg spokeswoman Staff Sgt. Shannon Wright said.

The 82nd's three other combat brigades and its supply brigade are deployed, as is its aviation brigade. One of those combat brigades and part of the aviation unit, along with the division's commanding general and his staff, are in Afghanistan. The rest are in Iraq.

No units are expected to begin returning home until late this year.

Wright said about 17,000 paratroopers are deployed and about 1,000 remain at the post in rear detachments.

Government Fucking Over National Guard And Reserve Troops As Usual:

Active Duty Troops Get A Six-Month Head Start On Their Guard And Reserve Counterparts For Receiving Benefits

“This is wrong,” Welch told the panel. “During this time period, veterans — particularly those in a state of mental distress — are most at risk for serious problems, including suicide, substance abuse, divorce, unemployment or even homelessness.”

June 22 EVAN LEHMANN, Banner Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The federal government is treating National Guard and Reserve veterans less fairly than active duty soldiers when returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, says Rep. Peter Welch, a Vermont Democrat.

Welch pressed a congressional panel Thursday to advance his plan for equal treatment — a move that would place Guard and Reserve veterans on a fast track to receive benefits after fighting abroad.

Active duty troops receive swifter treatment — giving them a six-month head start on their Guard and Reserve counterparts.

“This is wrong,” Welch told the panel. “During this time period, veterans — particularly those in a state of mental distress — are most at risk for serious problems, including suicide, substance abuse, divorce, unemployment or even homelessness.”

The discrepancy comes as the Guard and Reserve are being heavily leaned on for muscle in simultaneous wars, amounting to about 40 percent of the 1.5 million men and women deployed since 2001, Welch said.

Under Welch's plan, Guard and Reserve veterans' benefits would be processed six months before they are discharged, allowing them to receive care when they return to the United States.

Active duty soldiers already receive the head start under the Benefits Delivery at Discharge program, or BDD. Welch's legislation would make the program available to Guard and Reserve veterans.

Welch said the program's absence results in twice as many benefit denials for Guard and Reserve veterans compared to active duty veterans, citing the findings of Harvard University Professor Linda Bilmes.

“As this country has asked first class service from our Guard and Reservists, we must be sure they are not thanked with second class benefits,” Welch said before the Veterans Affairs subcommittee on Economic Opportunity.

The panel's chairwoman, Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin, D-S.D., said the bill could “close the gap” experienced by soldiers transitioning from the Defense Department to the Veterans Affairs Administration, a move that can slow down benefit processing.



6-19-07 THE PHOENIX NEWS-STAR. COURTESY: PRESS SYNDICATE.

Welcome To Occupied Teaneck, N.J. Rat Cops Torment Citizens Honking For Anti-War Demonstration Honoring Iraq War Dead

[Thanks to Elaine Brower, The Military Project, who sent this in. She writes: Received this from our friends in Teaneck]

June 05, 2007 Military Families Speak Out (Bergen County) & Teaneck Peace and Justice Coalition

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

What a spectacular showing of people at our May 30th vigil! With all of the discouraging events in Iraq and in Congress, it was a great joy to see so many people gathered at the Armory. Our banners stretched nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ mile! There were about 3450 names of U.S. troops who were killed and more than 1000 names of Iraqi people who were killed in this illegal and immoral war. Our banners showed the world that each person killed was a

real human being, not just a number, each, someone's son or daughter. On behalf of all of the sponsoring organizations I want to thank you for all the work each of you did to make the event so successful.

Our voices were heard. Now, we must continue our efforts to de-fund the war, bring the troops home now, and take care of them when they get here.

It was too bad that the Teaneck Police decided to ticket people (for \$50) who were honking to support the troops and to support the effort to end the war. The vigil was only 1 ½ hours.

Imagine ticketing people who honk at our 4th of July parade, weddings, people on strike, etc!!

That's a huge disappointment, as we have had a really good working relationship with the Teaneck Police over the last 2 ½ years.

You might want to write to the manager, Helene Fall (admin@teanecknjgov.org), or to the newspapers to express your dismay.

ONLY 160,000 MORE TO GO: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



New Jersey National Guard soldier Carlos Cabezas, right, lifts up his daughter, Kaira, 5, as he first sees his family including wife, Rosa, left, holding son, Kael, at the reunion site at Fort Dix Army base in New Jersey June 19, 2007. Cabezas was reunited with his family after returning from Iraq having been away from home for almost two years. (AP Photo/Mike Derer)

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

24 Jun 2007 Reuters & Deutsche Presse-Agentur & By RICHARD A. OPPEL Jr., New York Times & By LAUREN FRAYER (AP)

British army barracks in Basra were the target of indirect shelling during the past 24 hours, but no human or material loss occurred.

One Iraqi officer was captured Friday in Basra.

An off-duty Iraqi soldier was killed in a drive-by shooting near the city of Kut, 170 km (100 miles) southeast of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas killed an Iraqi translator in a drive-by shooting near his house in the town of Suwayra, 40 km (25 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Police found the body of a female non-government organisation worker in an orchard in the town of Balad, around 90 km (50 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. She had been shot.

A roadside bomb killed a police commando and wounded three others when it exploded near their checkpoint in Mansour district in western Baghdad, police said.

A bomb exploded north of Hilla, killing two policemen.

South of Baghdad, 65 Babel provincial policemen have been fired for collusion with militants, according to a police commander in the province.

West of Kirkuk, four Iraqi security officers were wounded in two attacks. Two suffered injuries when a bomb struck a police patrol.

Also, two police guards assigned to protect oil pipelines were wounded during an attack on their post 25 miles west of Kirkuk.

A roadside bomb exploded at noon in central Samarra, north of Baghdad, killing four Interior Ministry special forces personnel in a passing utility vehicle, police reported.

<p>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</p>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“No Nation That Oppresses Another Nation Can Be Free” “The Enemy Is Here At Home”

June 22, 2007 By Joel Geier, Socialist Worker, International Socialist Review.

THE EMPIRE tells us we're in a war on terrorism that's a generational conflict.

Some of that sounds a little loony. The loony part is the war on terrorism.

The rational part is the generational conflict. They can't really tell you what the war is about, but they have told you that we're involved in a generational conflict.

What it's really about, as we've said for some time, is oil. They made a rational, strategic decision some years back that we were at peak oil, or close to it, and facing the rise of what they call BRIC--Brazil, Russia, India, China, as well as others in the emerging world. That meant oil production had to double in the next 20 years, and instead of oil shocks, we would be involved in a permanent oil crisis.

What do you do about that--a country that's dependent on that oil?

They decided to take what was a weakness and turn it into an imperialist strategic advantage--to make the rest of the world dependent upon the United States and the American military as the guardians of the world oil supply and the channels of distribution for oil.

This has become the key strategic gain of American imperialism for this period--to use its military superpower for economic and political leverage, to gain the ability to turn off oil on potential rivals like China down the road, if necessary.

That's why this is a generational conflict, and why the United States will not walk away from the Middle East. It won't walk away from Iraq and from two-thirds of world oil supply.

This was a rational imperialist plan.

So far, it's led to disaster.

Because only a really sophisticated and refined American imperialist mentality could come with the idea that invasion, conquest, occupation and re-colonization would be greeted by Arabs as liberation and democracy.

The resistance of the Iraqi people has thrown the empire into crisis, and that crisis has destabilized the entire Middle East, opened up the possibility of deepening revolt throughout Latin America and drained the American army and its ability to intervene throughout the world.

And finally, it is opening up the political space in this country to organize a generational struggle against empire.

The right wing has been dominant in this country for over 30 years. They are being held responsible for this failure.

And this has opened up a political space here that gives us the possibility of attempting to convince people of certain ideas. One of them is that no nation that oppresses another nation can be free.

The war on terror isn't about only Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo and renditions and kidnapping people off the street and holding them without charges or legal rights. It's also about the Patriot Act and spying here on everyone they want to and attempting to hold down civil liberties in this country.

It is also about attempts to cut the standard of living in this country to be able to pay for a generation of empire building--cutting health benefits and pension benefits, making sure wages don't go up, and keeping taxes firmly fixed on the working class.

The war on terror is also about a revival of racism, here inside the United States--against Arab Americans, against immigrants, and also against New Orleans, a majority Black city that this government doesn't seem to have the money to be able to do anything for two years after Katrina. It can be abandoned as far as this empire is concerned.

There's also something else.

You have the election of a Congress in what was a referendum on the war--and that Congress then votes to fund the war.

What does that do?

It helps us explain to people that, really, imperialism and democracy are contradictions in terms.

Imperialism means you don't get to vote on the plans of the American ruling class to invade countries and occupy them.

They lie about it--because you are the people who are supposed to pay for it, your kids are supposed to be killed and maimed.

So this isn't just the lie about weapons of mass destruction. It's all the lies about the nature of their system, and what its invasions are about.

Defeat clarifies the mind.

There's an enormous shift going on among a lot of people in this country who were prepared to put up with the situation when the empire was winning. Defeat has opened them up to a different understanding, and they're looking for explanations.

One of the first things that we have to be able to say to them is that the enemy is here at home.

The Iraqi people are not our enemy, the Syrian people aren't, the Iranians aren't, the Venezuelans aren't, the Bolivians aren't.

We are allied with those people in building a resistance to empire, and this opening is an opportunity for us to build that resistance to empire here in the empire itself.

Some of the people here in this room are the first members of that resistance.

We have here people who were soldiers for the empire who have become soldiers against empire.

We have here people who will be playing a role in reviving an antiwar movement that stands on a principled basis of support for the resistance, for the right of every nation to self-determination, for immediate withdrawal and for no reliance on the two parties that support American imperialism.

We have the opportunity to start the process of building that resistance. But we shouldn't fool ourselves--we're a long way from a resistance that can bring down this empire.

We're at the start of a process, and that means we have to build a resistance that fights wherever it can--and ties the struggle against empire with the struggle of people here at home, because both are against the same enemy that controls the empire abroad and controls working people here at home.

We're a long way away right now, but this is what we've to set ourselves on doing--winning an antiwar movement to a conception that it is part of an international struggle against empire, and part of the class struggle here at home against the empire.

And we will be successful when this movement understands that we are allied with the Venezuelans and the Iraqis and the Iranians--and that it's prepared to raise on its banner the idea that animates us: Working people, of all countries, unite. You have only your chains to lose. You have a world to win.

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

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



Amiriyah: Foreign occupation soldiers from the US invade and search a house.
Photograph: Sean Smith, The Guardian 5.21.07. [Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

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

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

"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!**

Never Mind The Bullshit About “Success” Have Some Material Reality: Baghdad Electricity Down To One Hour A Day

June 24, 2007 By John Ward Anderson, Washington Post Foreign Service

BAGHDAD -- Sitting poolside under a gauzy green canopy in short pants and a T-shirt, munching fresh fruit and bite-size sweets, carpet salesman Amir Rahim tries to keep Iraq's war at bay.

But one byproduct of the four-year war is so pervasive that it is impossible to ignore. As the blast furnace of summer brought 115-plus-degree days, vast areas of Baghdad -- including Rahim's neighborhood -- still have as little as one hour of electricity a day, leaving the capital's 6 million residents to sweat and stew.

“We're getting about one hour every four days, and we don't have cold water or the refrigerator, so we're buying ice from the market,” said Rahim, 32, who lives in the Karada neighborhood.

A June 12 study by the National Security Network, a private advocacy group, found that while the United States has spent \$3.1 billion to improve electricity in Iraq, the power generated in May was 6 percent less than prewar levels. “Over the past three weeks, Baghdad has suffered severe power and water shortages of up to 23 hours a day,” the study said.

For Abeer Rahim, the situation is particularly maddening because after the Persian Gulf War in 1991, the government of Saddam Hussein restored power in 40 days, she said, even though the United States had severely damaged the country's electric grid.

“They go on TV now and say they spent billions for electricity and water projects in Baghdad, but where are they?” she asked.

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

“How Would Americans Feel?”

June 21, 2007 By Mona El-Farra, The Star-Tribune [Excerpt]

Hamas won free and fair elections in 2006, on a platform that promised clean and efficient government.

But Israel and the West meddled in our democratically elected choice by imposing devastating economic sanctions on us.

How would Americans feel if a foreign power expressed its dissatisfaction with your freely elected government in this way?

[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



6/14

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/)

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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

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

<http://www.williambowles.info/qispecial/2006/index.html>;

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

http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/; <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6&l=e>;

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