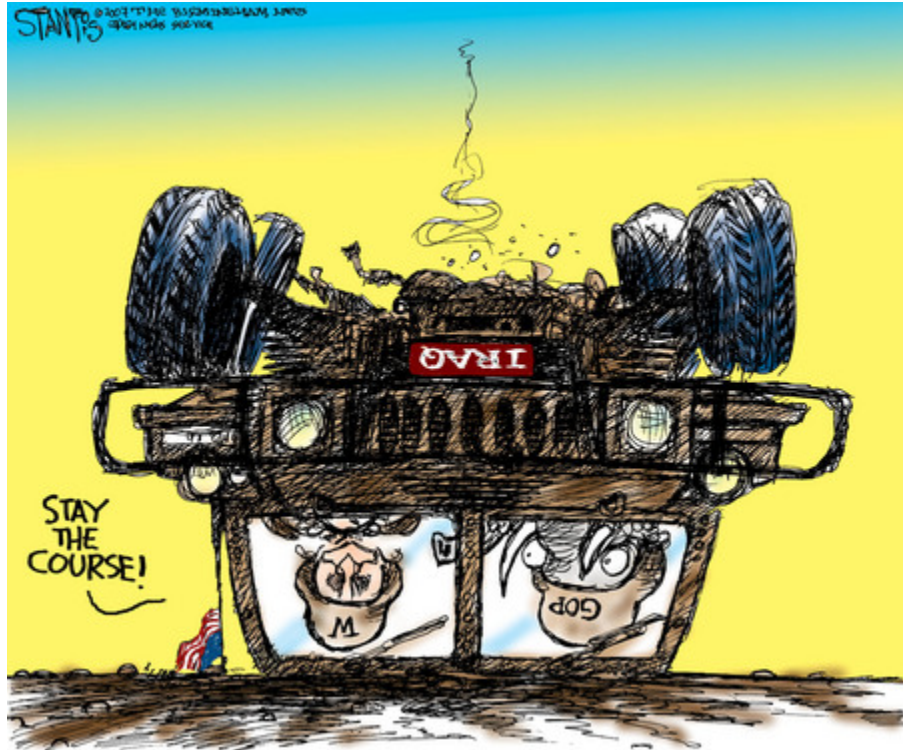


## GI SPECIAL 5G16:



# **Rats In Command Hinting Second Surge Still Alive And Well: “Cannot Guarantee Soldiers Will Not Be Deployed Longer Than 15 Months At A Time”**

July 23, 2007 By Michelle Tan, Army Times [Excerpts]

Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey said he cannot guarantee soldiers will not be deployed longer than 15 months at a time, but said he is concerned about the impact of such long tours on soldiers.

"I can't guarantee that it won't go beyond 15 months," Casey said. "This is war, there are no guarantees, but frankly I will do everything in my power to ensure we don't put them at additional risk." **[When the assholes throw "frankly" and "everything in my power" in, run for your life. You know the decision has already been made. It's like somebody saying, "Frankly, I will do everything in my power to get you home from Iraq alive." Right. Not one to take to the bank. T]**

Col. Edge Gibbons, chief of plans at Forces Command, whose job it is to determine which brigades should deploy and when, agreed.

"I have not heard anything that would lead me to believe that it will be necessary (to extend deployments) in the near term, *but* I think it's important to set realistic expectations for our soldiers and families so that *if the needs of the war fight require it, they'll be ready to react accordingly,*" he said.

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## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

### **Four U.S. Soldiers & Interpreter Killed By Baghdad IED**

19 July 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070719-01

BAGHDAD — Four Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers and an Iraqi interpreter were killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near their patrol during combat operations in an eastern section of the Iraqi capital July 18.

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### **U.S. Soldier Killed Near Rushdi Mullah**

19 July 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory

A Task Force Marne Soldier was killed by small arms fire July 19 near Rushdi Mullah.

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### **Resistance Attacks Take Out Two More Bridges**

July 19, 2007 By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press Writer

Gunmen firing from a speeding car killed a bodyguard of a Sunni parliament member in Mosul, police said. A Kurdish political party member was ambushed and killed in eastern Mosul, police also said, speaking on condition of anonymity for the same reason.

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**THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR  
HEALTH;  
THEIR WARRIORS KNOW WHO YOU ARE, EVERY  
STEP YOU TAKE;  
YOU NEVER KNOW WHO THEY ARE UNTIL THEY  
ATTACK:  
IT'S THEIR COUNTRY:  
THEY CAN'T LOSE:  
COME HOME, NOW**



A U.S. soldier from the 2nd battalion, 32nd Field Artillery brigade passes by Iraqis during a joint patrol with the Iraqi police in Baghdad's Yarmuk neighborhood on July 5, 2007. REUTERS/Nikola Solic

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**TROOP NEWS**

# Senate Votes To Keep Stress Of Rapid Combat Deployments On Service Members; Longer Deployment, Shorter Dwell Time

July 23, 2007, By Rick Maze, Army Times [Excerpts]

**Three separate proposals aimed at cutting some of the stress of combat deployments for service members were rejected by the Senate during debate on the 2008 defense budget.**

On July 11, Senate Republicans twice used a parliamentary procedure to block amendments that had support from a majority of senators.

**One, sponsored by Sen. Jim Webb, D-Va., promised all service members deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan would spend as much time at home as they did in the war zone.**

**The second, sponsored by Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., would have restricted Iraq and Afghanistan deployments to 12 months for Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve troops and to seven months for the Marine Corps and Marine Corps Reserve.**

*In both cases, Republican leaders, trying to protect the administration's Iraq policy, refused to allow up-or-down votes and threatened endless debate that could only be cut off with at least 60 votes.*

Webb's amendment was shot down on a 56-41 vote, while Hagel's was defeated 52-45.

When Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., offered a nonbinding resolution that simply asked the Defense Department to try to keep deployments to no longer than 12 months, even that failed, 51-44, on a straight up-or-down vote.

**Webb and Hagel are decorated Vietnam combat veterans whose recommendations about combat-related matters affecting troops and their families normally would be given great deference in Congress, where lawmakers profess to put the troops first.**

**Hagel said he was a bit astounded that an amendment looking out for the troops did not get support, and said it was a sign of the difficulty facing Congress as it considers more sweeping legislation to change the Bush administration's Iraq strategy.**

But the efforts of the two combat veterans were derided as micromanagement and political gamesmanship. Kentucky Sen. Mitch McConnell, the Senate Republican leader, accused Webb of “wasting time” with an amendment that “we know the president will veto.”

Graham, who has served in Iraq and is the former chairman of the Senate Armed Services military personnel panel, called Webb’s amendment a “terrible idea.”

***“If you want to take care of the troops, let them win,” he said.***

The consequences of the amendment would be “devastating,” Graham said. “In the name of protecting the troops, we should not destroy a surge the troops are involved in that is beginning to defeat the most vicious enemy known to the planet — al-Qaida.”

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## **Sensitive Military Documents Found Unprotected On FTP Servers**

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in.]

July 11, 2007 Associated Press Writer

GREENSBORO, N.C. (AP) Detailed schematics of a military detainee holding facility in southern Iraq. Geographical surveys and aerial photographs of two military airfields outside Baghdad. Plans for a new fuel farm at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan.

The military calls it “need-to-know” information that would pose a direct threat to U.S. troops if it fell into the hands of terrorists. It’s material so sensitive that officials refused to release the documents when asked.

But it’s already out there, posted carelessly to file servers by government agencies and contractors, accessible to anyone with an Internet connection.

In a survey of servers run by agencies or companies involved with the military and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, The Associated Press found dozens of documents that officials refused to release when asked directly, citing troop security.

Such material goes online all the time, posted most often by mistake. It’s not in plain sight unlike the plans for the new American embassy in Baghdad that appeared recently on the Web site of an architectural firm but is almost as easy to find.

And experts said foreign intelligence agencies and terrorists working with al-Qaida likely know where to look.

File transfer protocol is a relatively old technology that makes files available on the Internet. It remains popular for its simplicity, efficiency and low cost. In fact, several agencies and contractors said the documents found by the AP were posted online so they could be easily shared among colleagues.

Internet users can't scour the sites with a typical search engine, but FTP servers routinely share a similar address as public Web sites. To log on, users often only need to replace "http" and "www" in a Web address with "ftp."

A spokeswoman for the U.S. Central Command, which oversees the war in Iraq, declined to say if material accidentally left on the Internet had led to a physical breach of security.

But among the documents the AP found were aerial photographs and detailed schematics of Camp Bucca, a U.S.-run facility for detainees in Iraq. One of the documents was password-protected, but the password was printed in an unsecure document stored on the same server. They showed where U.S. forces keep prisoners and fuel tanks, as well as the locations of security fences, guard towers and other security measures.

"It gets down to a level of detail that would assist insurgents in trying to free their members from the camp or overpower guards," said Loren Thompson, a military analyst with the Virginia-based Lexington Institute. "When you post ... the map of a high-security facility that houses insurgents, you're basically giving their allies on the outside information useful in freeing them."

"None of the drawings are classified and we believe they were all handled appropriately per the government's direction," said CH2M Hill spokesman John Corsi. But the company added password protection to its FTP site after the AP's inquiry and referred the direct request for the documents to the government.

Military officials said they could jeopardize troop security and refused to release them.

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **Assorted Resistance Action**

19 Jul (Reuters) & By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press Writer & (AFP)

Insurgents captured and then killed seven Iraqi policemen south of Baghdad near the town of Iskandiriyah, police and the US military said.

Late Wednesday, a team of Iraqi policemen headed by Lieutenant Colonel Salman Munshid was ambushed and captured by insurgents in an area called Mwailha, near Iskandiriyah, 60 kilometres (37 miles) south of Baghdad.

Their bodies were discovered in Mwailha on Thursday, he said, adding that all the policemen were shot dead.

The body of Lieutenant-Colonel Salam Shanoun, chief of police of Iskandariya, was found with the.

An Iraqi army officer was killed by guerrillas who stormed his home in Hawija, 70 km (43 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, police said.

Guerrillas firing from a speeding car killed a bodyguard of a Sunni parliament member in Mosul, police said. A Kurdish political party member was ambushed and killed in eastern Mosul, police also said, speaking on condition of anonymity for the same reason.

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## **No Win; Go Home They Live There, You Don't**



A nationalist soldier during fighting against British occupation forces in Basra, July 16, 2007. REUTERS/Atef Hassan (IRAQ)

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

## FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“I Just Brought Terror To  
Someone Else Under The  
American Flag, And That’s Just  
Not What I Joined The Army To  
Do”**

**“So You’ve Just Humiliated This  
Man In Front Of His Entire Family  
And Terrorized His Entire Family  
And You’ve Destroyed His Home”**

[Thanks to Elaine Brower, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

July 30, 2007 by CHRIS HEDGES & LAILA AL-ARIAN, THE NATION [Excerpts]

### **PART 1**

**[Continued in next GI Special]**

**Over the past several months The Nation has interviewed fifty combat veterans of the Iraq War from around the United States in an effort to investigate the effects of the four-year-old occupation on average Iraqi civilians.**

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While some veterans said civilian shootings were routinely investigated by the military, many more said such inquiries were rare.

“I mean, you physically could not do an investigation every time a civilian was wounded or killed because it just happens a lot and you’d spend all your time doing that,” said Marine Reserve Lieut. Jonathan Morgenstein, 35, of Arlington, Virginia. He served from August 2004 to March 2005 in Ramadi with a Marine Corps civil affairs unit supporting a combat team with the Second Marine Expeditionary Brigade.



**(All interviewees are identified by the rank they held during the period of service they recount here; some have since been promoted or demoted.)**

**Veterans said the culture of this counterinsurgency war, in which most Iraqi civilians were assumed to be hostile, made it difficult for soldiers to sympathize with their victims--at least until they returned home and had a chance to reflect.**

"I guess while I was there, the general attitude was, A dead Iraqi is just another dead Iraqi," said Spc. Jeff Englehart, 26, of Grand Junction, Colorado. Specialist Englehart served with the Third Brigade, First Infantry Division, in Baquba, about thirty-five miles northeast of Baghdad, for a year beginning in February 2004.

"You know, so what?... The soldiers honestly thought we were trying to help the people and they were mad because it was almost like a betrayal. Like here we are trying to help you, here I am, you know, thousands of miles away from home and my family, and I have to be here for a year and work every day on these missions. Well, we're trying to help you and you just turn around and try to kill us."

He said it was only "when they get home, in dealing with veteran issues and meeting other veterans, it seems like the guilt really takes place, takes root, then."

**Many of these veterans returned home deeply disturbed by the disparity between the reality of the war and the way it is portrayed by the US government and American media.**

**The war the vets described is a dark and even depraved enterprise, one that bears a powerful resemblance to other misguided and brutal colonial wars and occupations, from the French occupation of Algeria to the American war in Vietnam and the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory.**

"I'll tell you the point where I really turned," said Spc. Michael Harmon, 24, a medic from Brooklyn. He served a thirteen-month tour beginning in April 2003 with the 167th Armor Regiment, Fourth Infantry Division, in Al-Rashidiya, a small town near Baghdad.

"I go out to the scene and (there was) this little, you know, pudgy little 2-year-old child with the cute little pudgy legs, and I look and she has a bullet through her leg.... An IED went off, the gun-happy soldiers just started shooting anywhere and the baby got hit. And this baby looked at me, wasn't crying, wasn't anything, it just looked at me like--I know she couldn't speak. It might sound crazy, but she was like asking me why. You know, Why do I have a bullet in my leg?... I was just like, This is--this is it. This is ridiculous."

These attitudes reflect the limited contact occupation troops said they had with Iraqis.

They rarely saw their enemy. They lived bottled up in heavily fortified compounds that often came under mortar attack. They only ventured outside their compounds ready for combat. The mounting frustration of fighting an elusive enemy and the devastating effect of roadside bombs, with their steady toll of American dead and wounded, led many troops to declare an open war on all Iraqis.

Veterans described reckless firing once they left their compounds. Some shot holes into cans of gasoline being sold along the roadside and then tossed grenades into the pools of gas to set them ablaze.

Others opened fire on children.

These shootings often enraged Iraqi witnesses.

In June 2003 Staff Sgt. Camilo Mejía's unit was pressed by a furious crowd in Ramadi. Sergeant Mejía, 31, a National Guardsman from Miami, served for six months beginning in April 2003 with the 1-124 Infantry Battalion, Fifty-Third Infantry Brigade. His squad opened fire on an Iraqi youth holding a grenade, riddling his body with bullets. Sergeant Mejía checked his clip afterward and calculated that he had personally fired eleven rounds into the young man.

**“The frustration that resulted from our inability to get back at those who were attacking us led to tactics that seemed designed simply to punish the local population that was supporting them,” Sergeant Mejía said.**

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## **“So You’ve Just Humiliated This Man In Front Of His Entire Family And Terrorized His Entire Family And You’ve Destroyed His Home.**

According to interviews with twenty-four veterans who participated in such raids, they are a relentless reality for Iraqis under occupation.

The American forces, stymied by poor intelligence, invade neighborhoods where insurgents operate, bursting into homes in the hope of surprising fighters or finding weapons.

But such catches, they said, are rare.

**Far more common were stories in which soldiers assaulted a home, destroyed property in their futile search and left terrorized civilians struggling to repair the damage and begin the long torment of trying to find family members who were hauled away as suspects.**

Raids normally took place between midnight and 5 am, according to Sgt. John Bruhns, 29, of Philadelphia, who estimates that he took part in raids of nearly 1,000 Iraqi homes. He served in Baghdad and Abu Ghraib, a city infamous for its prison, located twenty miles west of the capital, with the Third Brigade, First Armor Division, First Battalion, for one year beginning in April 2003.

His descriptions of raid procedures closely echoed those of eight other veterans who served in locations as diverse as Kirkuk, Samarra, Baghdad, Mosul and Tikrit.

"You want to catch them off guard," Sergeant Bruhns explained. "You want to catch them in their sleep." About ten troops were involved in each raid, he said, with five stationed outside and the rest searching the home.

Once they were in front of the home, troops, some wearing Kevlar helmets and flak vests with grenade launchers mounted on their weapons, kicked the door in, according to Sergeant Bruhns, who dispassionately described the procedure:

"You run in. And if there's lights, you turn them on--if the lights are working. If not, you've got flashlights.... You leave one rifle team outside while one rifle team goes inside. Each rifle team leader has a headset on with an earpiece and a microphone where he can communicate with the other rifle team leader that's outside.

**"You go up the stairs. You grab the man of the house. You rip him out of bed in front of his wife. You put him up against the wall.**

**"You have junior-level troops, PFCs, specialists will run into the other rooms and grab the family, and you'll group them all together. Then you go into a room and you tear the room to shreds and you make sure there's no weapons or anything that they can use to attack us.**

**"You get the interpreter and you get the man of the home, and you have him at gunpoint, and you'll ask the interpreter to ask him: 'Do you have any weapons? Do you have any anti-US propaganda, anything at all--anything--anything in here that would lead us to believe that you are somehow involved in insurgent activity or anti-coalition forces activity?'**

**"Normally they'll say no, because that's normally the truth," Sergeant Bruhns said.**

**"So what you'll do is you'll take his sofa cushions and you'll dump them. If he has a couch, you'll turn the couch upside down.**

**"You'll go into the fridge, if he has a fridge, and you'll throw everything on the floor, and you'll take his drawers and you'll dump them.... You'll open up his closet and you'll throw all the clothes on the floor and basically leave his house looking like a hurricane just hit it.**

**"And if you find something, then you'll detain him. If not, you'll say, 'Sorry to disturb you. Have a nice evening.'**

**"So you've just humiliated this man in front of his entire family and terrorized his entire family and you've destroyed his home. And then you go right next door and you do the same thing in a hundred homes."**

Each raid, or "cordon and search" operation, as they are sometimes called, involved five to twenty homes, he said. Following a spate of attacks on soldiers in a particular area, commanders would normally order infantrymen on raids to look for weapons caches, ammunition or materials for making IEDs.

**Each Iraqi family was allowed to keep one AK-47 at home, but according to Bruhns, those found with extra weapons were arrested and detained and the operation classified a “success,” even if it was clear that no one in the home was an insurgent.**

Before a raid, according to descriptions by several veterans, soldiers typically “quarantined” the area by barring anyone from coming in or leaving. In pre-raid briefings, Sergeant Bruhns said, military commanders often told their troops the neighborhood they were ordered to raid was “a hostile area with a high level of insurgency” and that it had been taken over by former Baathists or Al Qaeda terrorists.

“So you have all these troops, and they’re all wound up,” said Sergeant Bruhns. “And a lot of these troops think once they kick down the door there’s going to be people on the inside waiting for them with weapons to start shooting at them.”

Sgt. Dustin Flatt, 33, of Denver, estimates he raided “thousands” of homes in Tikrit, Samarra and Mosul. He served with the Eighteenth Infantry Brigade, First Infantry Division, for one year beginning in February 2004.

**“We scared the living Jesus out of them every time we went through every house,” he said.**

Spc. Ali Aoun, 23, a National Guardsman from New York City, said he conducted perimeter security in nearly 100 raids while serving in Sadr City with the Eighty-Ninth Military Police Brigade for eleven months starting in April 2004.

When soldiers raided a home, he said, they first cordoned it off with Humvees. Soldiers guarded the entrance to make sure no one escaped.

If an entire town was being raided, in large-scale operations, it too was cordoned off, said Spc. Garrett Reppenhagen, 32, of Manitou Springs, Colorado, a cavalry scout and sniper with the 263rd Armor Battalion, First Infantry Division, who was deployed to Baquba for a year in February 2004.

Staff Sgt. Timothy John Westphal, 31, of Denver, recalled one summer night in 2004, the temperature an oppressive 110 degrees, when he and forty-four other US soldiers raided a sprawling farm on the outskirts of Tikrit.

**Sergeant Westphal, who served there for a yearlong tour with the Eighteenth Infantry Brigade, First Infantry Division, beginning in February 2004, said he was told some men on the farm were insurgents.**

**As a mechanized infantry squad leader, Sergeant Westphal led the mission to secure the main house, while fifteen men swept the property. Sergeant Westphal and his men hopped the wall surrounding the house, fully expecting to come face to face with armed insurgents.**

**“We had our flashlights and...I told my guys, ‘On the count of three, just hit them with your lights and let’s see what we’ve got here. Wake ‘em up!’“**

**Sergeant Westphal's flashlight was mounted on his M-4 carbine rifle, a smaller version of the M-16, so in pointing his light at the clump of sleepers on the floor he was also pointing his weapon at them. Sergeant Westphal first turned his light on a man who appeared to be in his mid-60s.**

**"The man screamed this gut-wrenching, blood-curdling, just horrified scream," Sergeant Westphal recalled. "I've never heard anything like that. I mean, the guy was absolutely terrified. I can imagine what he was thinking, having lived under Saddam."**

**The farm's inhabitants were not insurgents but a family sleeping outside for relief from the stifling heat, and the man Sergeant Westphal had frightened awake was the patriarch.**

**"Sure enough, as we started to peel back the layers of all these people sleeping, I mean, it was him, maybe two guys...either his sons or nephews or whatever, and the rest were all women and children," Sergeant Westphal said. "We didn't find anything."**

**"I can tell you hundreds of stories about things like that and they would all pretty much be like the one I just told you. Just a different family, a different time, a different circumstance."**

**For Sergeant Westphal, that night was a turning point.**

**"I just remember thinking to myself, I just brought terror to someone else under the American flag, and that's just not what I joined the Army to do," he said.**

Fifteen soldiers we spoke with told us the information that spurred these raids was typically gathered through human intelligence--and that it was usually incorrect.

Eight said it was common for Iraqis to use American troops to settle family disputes, tribal rivalries or personal vendettas.

Sgt. Jesus Bocanegra, 25, of Weslaco, Texas, was a scout in Tikrit with the Fourth Infantry Division during a yearlong tour that ended in March 2004. In late 2003, Sergeant Bocanegra raided a middle-aged man's home in Tikrit because his son had told the Army his father was an insurgent. After thoroughly searching the man's house, soldiers found nothing and later discovered that the son simply wanted money his father had buried at the farm.

After persistently acting on such false leads, Sergeant Bocanegra, who raided Iraqi homes in more than fifty operations, said soldiers began to anticipate the innocence of those they raided.

"People would make jokes about it, even before we'd go into a raid, like, Oh fucking we're gonna get the wrong house," he said. "Cause it would always happen. We always got the wrong house."

Specialist Chrystal said that he and his platoon leader shared a joke of their own: Every time he raided a house, he would radio in and say, "This is, you know, Thirty-One Lima. Yeah, I found the weapons of mass destruction in here."

**Sergeant Bruhns said he questioned the authenticity of the intelligence he received because Iraqi informants were paid by the US military for tips.**

On one occasion, an Iraqi tipped off Sergeant Bruhns's unit that a small Syrian resistance organization, responsible for killing a number of US troops, was holed up in a house. "They're waiting for us to show up and there will be a lot of shooting," Sergeant Bruhns recalled being told.

As the Alpha Company team leader, Sergeant Bruhns was supposed to be the first person in the door. Skeptical, he refused. "So I said, 'If you're so confident that there are a bunch of Syrian terrorists, insurgents...in there, why in the world are you going to send me and three guys in the front door, because chances are I'm not going to be able to squeeze the trigger before I get shot.'"

Sergeant Bruhns facetiously suggested they pull an M-2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle up to the house and shoot a missile through the front window to exterminate the enemy fighters his commanders claimed were inside. They instead diminished the aggressiveness of the raid. As Sergeant Bruhns ran security out front, his fellow soldiers smashed the windows and kicked down the doors to find "a few little kids, a woman and an old man."

In late summer 2005, in a village on the outskirts of Kirkuk, Specialist Chrystal searched a compound with two Iraqi police officers. A friendly man in his mid-30s escorted Specialist Chrystal and others in his unit around the property, where the man lived with his parents, wife and children, making jokes to lighten the mood.

As they finished searching--they found nothing--a lieutenant from his company approached Specialist Chrystal: "What the hell were you doing?" he asked. "Well, we just searched the house and it's clear," Specialist Chrystal said.

The lieutenant told Specialist Chrystal that his friendly guide was "one of the targets" of the raid. "Apparently he'd been dined out by somebody as being an insurgent," Specialist Chrystal said. "For that mission, they'd only handed out the target sheets to officers, and officers aren't there with the rest of the troops."

Specialist Chrystal said he felt "humiliated" because his assessment that the man posed no threat was deemed irrelevant and the man was arrested. Shortly afterward, he posted himself in a fighting vehicle for the rest of the mission.

Sgt. Larry Cannon, 27, of Salt Lake City, a Bradley gunner with the Eighteenth Infantry Brigade, First Infantry Division, served a yearlong tour in several cities in Iraq, including Tikrit, Samarra and Mosul, beginning in February 2004.

**He estimates that he searched more than a hundred homes in Tikrit and found the raids fruitless and maddening.**

**“We would go on one raid of a house and that guy would say, ‘No, it’s not me, but I know where that guy is.’ And...he’d take us to the next house where this target was supposedly at, and then that guy’s like, ‘No, it’s not me. I know where he is, though.’ And we’d drive around all night and go from raid to raid to raid.”**

“I can’t really fault military intelligence,” said Specialist Reppenhagen, who said he raided thirty homes in and around Baquba.

“It was always a guessing game. We’re in a country where we don’t speak the language. We’re light on interpreters. It’s just impossible to really get anything. All you’re going off is a pattern of what’s happened before and hoping that the pattern doesn’t change.”

Sgt. Geoffrey Millard, 26, of Buffalo, New York, served in Tikrit with the Rear Operations Center, Forty-Second Infantry Division, for one year beginning in October 2004. He said combat troops had neither the training nor the resources to investigate tips before acting on them.

“We’re not police,” he said. “We don’t go around like detectives and ask questions. We kick down doors, we go in, we grab people.”

**In the thousand or so raids he conducted during his time in Iraq, Sergeant Westphal said, he came into contact with only four “hard-core insurgents.”**

**Even with such slim pretexts for arrest, some soldiers said, any Iraqis arrested during a raid were treated with extreme suspicion.**

Several reported seeing military-age men detained without evidence or abused during questioning. Eight veterans said the men would typically be bound with plastic handcuffs, their heads covered with sandbags. While the Army officially banned the practice of hooding prisoners after the Abu Ghraib scandal broke, five soldiers indicated that it continued.

“You weren’t allowed to, but it was still done,” said Sergeant Cannon. “I remember in Mosul (in January 2005), we had guys in a raid and they threw them in the back of a Bradley,” shackled and hooded.

“These guys were really throwing up,” he continued. “They were so sick and nervous. And sometimes, they were peeing on themselves.”

**“Can you imagine if people could just come into your house and take you in front of your family screaming? And if you actually were innocent but had no way to prove that? It would be a scary, scary thing.”**

Specialist Reppenhagen said he had only a vague idea about what constituted contraband during a raid. “Sometimes we didn’t even have a translator, so we find some poster with Muqtada al-Sadr, Sistani or something, we don’t know what it says on it. We just apprehend them, document that thing as evidence and send it on down the road and let other people deal with it.”

**Sergeant Bruhns, Sergeant Bocanegra and others said physical abuse of Iraqis during raids was common.**

“It was just soldiers being soldiers,” Sergeant Bocanegra said. “You give them a lot of, too much, power that they never had before, and before you know it they’re the ones kicking these guys while they’re handcuffed. And then by you not catching (insurgents) when you do have someone say, ‘Oh, this is a guy planting a roadside bomb’--and you don’t even know if it’s him or not--you just go in there and kick the shit out of him and take him in the back of a five-ton--take him to jail.”

Tens of thousands of Iraqis--military officials estimate more than 60,000--have been arrested and detained since the beginning of the occupation, leaving their families to navigate a complex, chaotic prison system in order to find them.

**Veterans we interviewed said the majority of detainees they encountered were either innocent or guilty of only minor infractions.**

Sergeant Bocanegra said during the first two months of the war he was instructed to detain Iraqis based on their attire alone. “They were wearing Arab clothing and military-style boots, they were considered enemy combatants and you would cuff ‘em and take ‘em in,” he said. “When you put something like that so broad, you’re bound to have, out of a hundred, you’re going to have ten at least that were, you know what I mean, innocent.”

Sometime during the summer of 2003, Bocanegra said, the rules of engagement narrowed--somewhat. “I remember on some raids, anybody of military age would be taken,” he said. “Say, for example, we went to some house looking for a 25-year-old male. We would look at an age group. Anybody from 15 to 30 might be a suspect.” (Since returning from Iraq, Bocanegra has sought counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder and said his “mission” is to encourage others to do the same.)

Spc. Patrick Resta, 29, a National Guardsman from Philadelphia, served in Jalula, where there was a small prison camp at his base. He was with the 252nd Armor, First Infantry Division, for nine months beginning in March 2004.

**He recalled his supervisor telling his platoon point-blank, “The Geneva Conventions don’t exist at all in Iraq, and that’s in writing if you want to see it.”**

American troops in Iraq lacked the training and support to communicate with or even understand Iraqi civilians, according to nineteen interviewees. Few spoke or read Arabic. They were offered little or no cultural or historical education about the country they controlled.

Translators were either in short supply or unqualified. Any stereotypes about Islam and Arabs that soldiers and marines arrived with tended to solidify rapidly in the close confines of the military and the risky streets of Iraqi cities into a crude racism.

**[To be continued]**



**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**

***Against Imperial War:  
1915 Version;  
“The First Steps Towards Changing  
The Present Imperialist War Into Civil  
War”***

March 29, 1915 & May 1, 1915, V.I. Ulyanov, Sotsial-Demokrat [The writer used the pen name “Lenin” to keep the government from terrorizing his family. Excerpts]

That the “people,” i. e., the mass of petty bourgeois and a portion of the deceived workers, believe in the bourgeois fable of the “evil plottings” of the enemy, is beyond doubt.

It is, however, the task of Social Democracy to fight against this deception, and not to support it.

All Social Democrats in all countries said long before the war, and reiterated at Basle, that every great nation strives to strengthen and widen its domination over the colonies, to oppress small nations, etc.

The war is conducted for the division of colonies and for the plunder of foreign lands; thieves are fighting among themselves.

To refer to the fact that this or the other thief is at this particular moment suffering defeat, to do this in order to represent the interests of the thieves as the interests of the people or the fatherland, is a shameless bourgeois lie.

To the “people” which suffers from war we must tell the truth, namely, that the defence against war sufferings is impossible without overthrowing the governments and the bourgeoisie of every belligerent country.

**As the first steps towards changing the present imperialist war into civil war, we may indicate:**

- (1) Unconditional refusal to vote for military appropriations and resignation of posts in bourgeois cabinets;
- (2) Complete break with the policy of “civil peace.”
- (3) Creation of an illegal organisation wherever the governments and the bourgeoisie abolish constitutional liberties by introducing martial law;
- (4) Aid to fraternisation of the soldiers of the belligerent nations in the trenches and on the battlefields in general;
- (5) Support to every kind of revolutionary mass action of the proletariat in general.

**“The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops.” Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War**

**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](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org):. Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe.**

## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

# **More Marvelous News From The Great Iraqi Collaborator Troop Training Fiasco**

July 19, 2007 (AP)

A shortage of electricity and fuel at an Iraqi military base has led to deteriorating equipment, difficulties with medical care and spoiled food that sent Iraqi troops to the hospital, a U.S. report says.

The assessment, delivered by Stuart W. Bowen Jr., the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, said the Al Rasheed Brigade facility was not receiving enough electrical power from the city grid and was relying on generators.

But contractors were not supplying enough fuel to keep the five generators going, leading to failures in the wastewater processing and refrigeration systems.

In the most significant incident, the report said 300 Iraqis were hospitalized with intestinal illnesses after eating bad food. The report added that “emergency medical care is severely affected by insufficient power.”

To compensate for the lack of fuel, the report said, portable generators have been “jury-rigged” to individual buildings and created potential fire hazards.

The unused equipment will deteriorate, particularly if the Iraqis keep turning it on and off to save fuel.

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## 60% Of Iraqis Want U.S. Troops Dead: Big Surprise



A boy carries a broken chandelier and an air conditioner cover after a home invasion by foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S.A. wrecking his family's belongings in Baghdad's Sadr City June 30, 2007. (Kareem Raheem/Reuters)

**[61% of Iraqis say they approve of attacks on U.S.-led forces in their country, up from 47 percent in January. A solid majority of Shiite and Sunni Arabs approved of the attacks, according to the poll. 9/27/2006 By BARRY SCHWEID, AP & Program on International Policy Attitudes**

Iraqis feel about U.S. troops trampling them in the dirt the same way Americans felt about British troops trampling them in the dirt in 1776. They are right to resist.  
T]

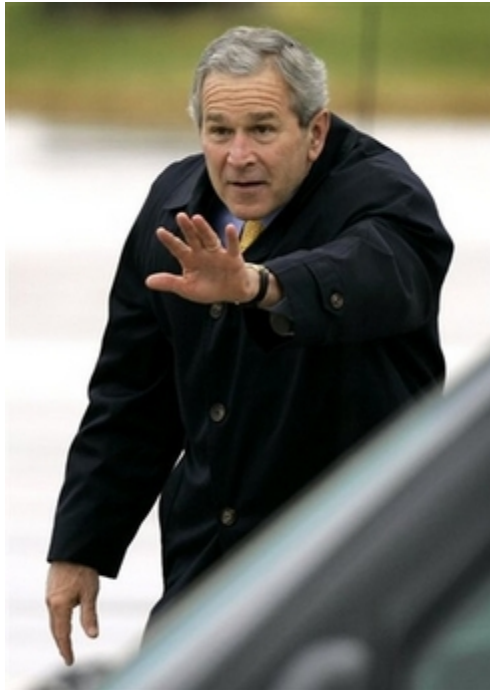
“So you’ve just humiliated this man in front of his entire family and terrorized his entire family and you’ve destroyed his home. And then you go right next door and you do the same thing in a hundred homes.”

Sgt. John Bruhns

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

**DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

**FIGHT HIM NOW, OR HE'LL FOLLOW  
YOU HOME**



(AP Photo/Charlie Neibergall)

# **The Traitor Bush Babbles About Al-Qaeda Because It's "Politically Salable" For Continuing The War**

July 18, 2007 By Michael Abramowitz, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpt]

**Al-Qaeda's participation in the Iraqi violence has figured particularly heavily in recent administration arguments for a continued U.S. troop presence there, because White House strategists regard it as a politically salable reason for staying and continuing to fight.**

**Some terrorism analysts say Bush has used inflated rhetoric to depict al-Qaeda in Iraq as part of the same group of extremists that attacked the United States on Sept. 11 -- noting that the group did not exist until after the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.**

These analysts say Bush also has overlooked the contribution that U.S. actions have made to the growth of al-Qaeda in Iraq, which has been described as kind of a franchise of the main al-Qaeda network headed by bin Laden.

Paul R. Pillar, a former CIA analyst who has been involved in previous intelligence estimates, said that the administration has correctly identified the danger posed by al-Qaeda in Iraq and that there are indeed links between the Iraq group and the larger international terrorist network. But he said the White House is drawing the wrong conclusion, and argued instead that it is the U.S. presence in Iraq that is fueling the terrorists' cause.

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## **Bush Proposes Sending Transformers™ To Iraq: Awards \$85B Defense Contract To Hasbro**

July 17, 2007 The Borowitz Report

Increasingly frustrated by the Iraqi government's failure to meet a series of defined benchmarks, President George W. Bush today proposed sending a group of giant robots known as the Transformers™ to Iraq.

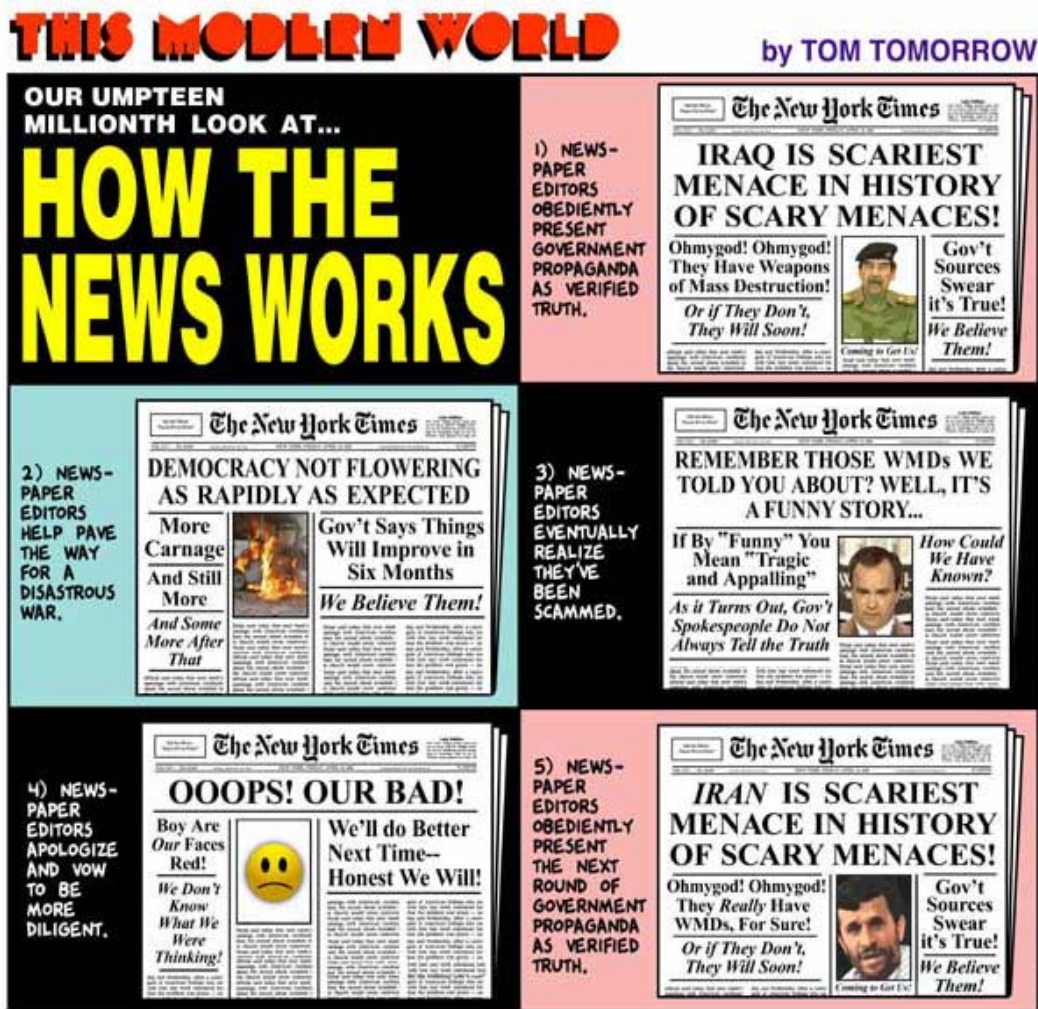
Aides to the president were vague as to when Mr. Bush arrived at his new Transformers™ strategy, but sources say that he devised the plan last week, shortly after a surprise visit to a multiplex in Bethesda, Maryland.

In announcing his new proposal, the president authorized an \$85 billion defense contract to Hasbro, believed to be the largest military contract of its kind ever awarded to a toy company. At a White House press conference, the president expressed his confidence that the Transformers™ would succeed where the Iraq government had failed.

“I’d like to see what would happen if al-Qaeda tried to attack one of our tanks, and instead the tank got up on its legs and turned out to be a robot and started shooting at them,” Mr. Bush said. “That would be so cool.”

But even as the president announced his new plan for victory in Iraq, congressional critics questioned the wisdom of dispatching Transformers™ to the war-torn nation. “A tank that can turn into a giant robot is awesome, but it’s not an exit strategy,” said Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV).

Responding to his critics, Mr. Bush said that he would announce an exit strategy later this week after consulting with his newest advisor, J.K. Rowling. “She has experience at ending things,” Mr. Bush said.



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

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## **CLASS WAR REPORTS**

**“For Thousands Of Evacuees Like Ms. Cole, Going Home To New Orleans Has Become A Vague And Receding Dream”**

**“Over The Two Years Since Hurricane Katrina Hit, The Shock Of Evacuation Has Hardened Into The Grim Limbo Of Exile”**

**“Hunger Is So Prevalent That Lines Form When The Truck From The Food Bank Appears”**

Hardly any of the 77,000 rental units destroyed in New Orleans have been rebuilt, in fact, and the local and federal governments have done almost nothing to make it possible for low-income renters like Ms. Cole, who has a ninth-grade education, to return.

July 12, 2007 By SHAILA DEWAN, The New York Times [Excerpts]

CONVENT, La. — This was not how Cindy Cole pictured her life at 26: living in a mobile home park called Sugar Hill, wedged amid the refineries and cane fields of tiny St. James Parish, 18 miles from the nearest supermarket.

Sustaining three small children on nothing but food stamps, with no playground, no security guards and nowhere to go.

No, Ms. Cole was supposed to be paying \$275 a month for a two-bedroom house in the Lower Ninth Ward — next door to her mother, across the street from her aunt, with a child care network that extended the length and breadth of her large New Orleans family.



Leslie Dorantes, a college dean's assistant who was four years away from a state pension when the hurricane hit, found work in Gonzales, La., only after a charity arranged transportation. Lee Celano for The New York Times

**With her house destroyed and no job or savings, however, her chances of recreating that old reality are slim.**

**For thousands of evacuees like Ms. Cole, going home to New Orleans has become a vague and receding dream.**

**Living in bleak circumstances, they cannot afford to go back, or have nothing to go back to.**

**Over the two years since Hurricane Katrina hit, the shock of evacuation has hardened into the grim limbo of exile.**

**"We in storage," said Ann Picard, 49, cocking her arm toward the blind white cracker box of a house she shares with Ms. Cole, her niece, and Ms. Cole's three children. "We just in storage."**

**Their options whittled away by government inaction, they represent a sharp contrast to the promise made by President Bush in Jackson Square on Sept. 15, 2005.**

**"Americans want the Gulf Coast not just to survive, but to thrive; not just to cope, but to overcome," Mr. Bush said.**



**“We want evacuees to come home, for the best of reasons — because they have a real chance at a better life in a place they love.”**

**As of late May, however, there were still more than 30,000 families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita spread across the country in apartments paid for by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and another 13,000 families, down from a peak of nearly 18,000, marooned in trailer or mobile home parks, where hunger is so prevalent that lines form when the truck from the food bank appears.**

Those still in trailers and FEMA apartments are the least equipped to start over. In Houston, according to a city-sponsored survey in February, a third of the people in those apartments were elderly or disabled, a third were employed in mostly low-wage jobs, and a third were still looking for work.

Hardly any of the 77,000 rental units destroyed in New Orleans have been rebuilt, in fact, and the local and federal governments have done almost nothing to make it possible for low-income renters like Ms. Cole, who has a ninth-grade education, to return.

**Because she was never a homeowner, she is not eligible for a federally financed Road Home grant to rebuild her house, destroyed in the hurricane’s floodwaters like the rest of her neighborhood.**

**With rents double or triple what they were before the storm, she could barely afford a studio apartment, much less anything like the little shotgun house she had, serenaded by brass band parades, on a street traditionally used by Mardi Gras Indians on carnival day.**

For those who do not plan to go back, or just want to sustain themselves until they can, government solutions like the trailer parks have turned out to be obstacles, especially for the many evacuees like Ms. Cole, who has no car and lost her job at Jack in the Box when she could no longer get a ride to work.

**At Sugar Hill, 18 miles from the nearest supermarket, the public bus stops only four times a week.**

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JoAnn Anderson needs a job.

She has filled out applications and taken drug tests. She has asked people who are already employed for help. A hotel housekeeper for 22 years in New Orleans, she has called every hotel and motel in the hotel and motel section of the Memphis Yellow Pages. They are not interested.

“I keep calling them back,” Ms. Anderson said. “Once I get started working, I know they would like me because I know I do my best and I do my job. I want to work. I don’t want to just sit around getting my bones all old and everything.”

**Ms. Anderson, 53, and her longtime companion, Jeffery Evans, 52, are in the category of people for whom recovery is furthest from reach. Near the end of their working lives, unappealing to employers, yet financially unable to retire, many are on the brink of ruin — or will be when their federal disaster assistance runs out.**

**“I was born poor; I’m probably going to die poor; and before the storm came through I was doing pretty good,” Ms. Anderson said.**

She and Mr. Evans paid \$325 a month for half a duplex in the Uptown section of New Orleans, with “a little porch watching the laundrymat,” she said, “and a backyard.”

The streetcar took her right to her job at the Columns, an elegant 1883 hotel in the Garden District.

Mr. Evans built cabinets and countertops.

Now they live in a monochrome apartment complex. An empty swimming pool bakes in the Memphis heat, and frayed ropes dangle where the swings should be. FEMA pays the rent. Their social life consists of church on Sundays. For the first time in their lives, they are on food stamps, and to make them stretch, Ms. Anderson shuns the nearby Kroger in favor of a distant Save-a-Lot.

Without a car, she trudges home from the bus stop with frozen turkey legs in a canvas bag over one shoulder.

For months, they searched the unfamiliar city for work — she at hotels, he at temporary agencies and, when that failed, at fast-food restaurants. But being an evacuee seemed to be enough to tip the scales against them, perhaps, the couple said, because the evacuees who took jobs right after the storm were not in their right minds.

**“I didn’t really ever think that I was going to get hired, for the simple reason that I have to show my Louisiana ID,” Mr. Evans said. “It was like, I give them an application, and from their hands to the garbage can.” At one business, he said, hurricane evacuees were required to take anger management tests.**

**Ms. Anderson said she applied at one hotel that never responded but, weeks later, was advertising for housekeepers again. She filled out another application.**

In May, Mr. Evans finally found a warehouse job near downtown. The bus ride takes so long that he leaves the house at 5 a.m. to get there by 7. He earns \$6 an hour.

But Mr. Evans is not complaining. “I’ve been trying to get a job forever,” he said, “so I’m very, very satisfied that I got a job like that.”

**What makes this couple’s situation all the more bitter is that New Orleans is desperate for workers like them. Luxury hotels are trying to recruit temporary employees from South America. Homeowners are desperate for craftsmen and builders.**

But Ms. Anderson says the city is doing nothing to bring them back, pointing out that Charity Hospital, where the poor received heavily subsidized medical care, has not reopened.

**“The places where poor people, poor black people lived at, they wasn’t trying to fix up any housing,” she said. “Everything was closed down.”**

**Only 21 percent of the 77,000 rental units in the five parishes in the New Orleans metropolitan area are slated to be rebuilt through government grants and tax credits, according to a recent study by PolicyLink, a nonprofit research institute, with a disproportionate number for families on teacher or police officer salaries, rather than much lower-paid home health aides or hotel clerks. Rents on the remaining units have doubled or even tripled.**

**Despite pitched opposition, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development is going forward with plans to demolish and redevelop the city’s four largest housing projects, knocking out 3,000 apartments that were occupied by low-income families before the storm and adding middle-income families to the mix.**

**So far, there is money in place to rebuild only about 1,000 units affordable enough for previous residents.**

**At the state level, officials have allocated \$6.3 billion for the Road Home’s assistance program for homeowners, dwarfing the \$869 million allocated to the Small Rental Property Program, which housing advocates say is the most likely to replace affordable units quickly.**

**Poor renters, though, are not the only ones who need a hand. Terry Coggins, the coordinator of a consortium of aid groups in Memphis, said many middle-class people were only now asking for help.**

“They’ve exhausted their savings,” Mr. Coggins said. “They’ve exhausted their insurance money. They’ve exhausted their ability to drive back and forth and check on their property.”

**In many ways, evacuees have become the region’s new pariahs, shunned by towns and parishes who have erected a number of legal barriers to keep them out.**

At least five jurisdictions in Louisiana and Mississippi — St. Bernard, St. John the Baptist, and Jefferson parishes in Louisiana and Pascagoula and Ocean Springs in Mississippi — have begun revoking permits for trailers or allowing their zoning exemptions to expire.

Those moves affect families still living in 7,400 trailers across the Gulf Coast, according to the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a group based in Washington that has sued to stop the evictions.

Joseph D. Rich, project director for fair housing and community development with the committee, said some jurisdictions have complained about crime in the trailer parks, prompting FEMA to provide extra security.

**Mr. Rich said he believed there was another motivation for banning trailers.**

**“There are severe racial overtones to these actions,” he said. “Because there’s all this concern that black and low-income people will be coming into your neighborhood.”**

**Some local jurisdictions are also fighting to prevent the construction or repair of rental units.**

In Jefferson Parish, the suburb just west of New Orleans, officials blocked a 200-unit complex for the elderly in Terrytown, citing concerns that it would increase crime, and they are fighting a second complex for the elderly in Marrero. Westwego, also in Jefferson Parish, has placed a moratorium on multifamily buildings.

***“You have some people that just lack any degree of civilization,” said Chris Roberts, a Jefferson Parish councilman who has fought to remove FEMA trailers and block subsidized housing developments.***

“I think low-income housing which is not properly run invites those people.”

Mr. Roberts complained that such residents were often idle, but many evacuees have burdens that prevent them from working.

Gwendolyn Marie Allen, 55, formerly of the Uptown section of New Orleans, now lives in Renaissance Village, a large FEMA trailer park near the Baton Rouge airport. Ms. Allen is the sole caretaker for a son, 20, who was given a diagnosis of schizophrenia after a violent episode in the park, and a severely retarded brother, who huddled on the bottom bunk of a bed in their travel trailer, clad only in adult diapers.

In an interview, Ms. Allen periodically shushed his wordless moans by waving a green flyswatter in his direction.

“I want to get out of here, baby, this is not no house,” she said. “I want something where he can move around.”

As proof of her resourcefulness, Ms. Allen opened the freezer of the trailer’s compact refrigerator where, to make room for bargain packs of meat from the supermarket, she had removed the shelves.

**“The renters aren’t asking that much, just give us a start,” she said.**

**“Put us there, and we could do what we have to do to survive. We could catch it from there.”**

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