

GI SPECIAL 5G22:



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**Pentagon Traitors
Turned Their Backs On
Pleas From Officers In
Field For Safer Vehicles:
“Not Until Two Months Ago Did The
Pentagon Champion The MRAP For
All U.S. Forces”**

"I Have Colleagues Who Say People Need To Go To Jail Over This, And In My Mind They Do"



U.S. military vehicles rendered useless by improvised explosive devices litter a military scrap yard at Camp Al Asad in Iraq's Anbar province. By M. Scott Mahaskey, Army Times Publishing Co.



A U.S. soldier slouches from the gunner's turret of his Humvee holding his head after an improvised explosive device hit the vehicle in March during a patrol in southern Baghdad. By David Furst, AFP/Getty Images

"It is simply beyond my comprehension why we're having to go through such (an ordeal) to order confounded hard vehicles. I sure hope no one gets wasted before the powers-that-be get off their collective fat asses."

7.15.07 By Peter Eisler, Blake Morrison and Tom Vanden Brook, USA TODAY
[Excerpts]

Pfc. Aaron Kincaid, 25, had been joking with buddies just before their Humvee rolled over the bomb. His wife, Rachel, later learned that the blast blew Kincaid, a father of two from outside Atlanta, through the Humvee's metal roof.

Army investigators who reviewed the Sept. 23 attack near Riyadh, Iraq, wrote in their report that only providence could have saved Kincaid from dying that day: "There was no way short of not going on that route at that time (that) this tragedy could have been diverted."

A USA TODAY investigation of the Pentagon's efforts to protect troops in Iraq suggests otherwise.

Years before the war began, Pentagon officials knew of the effectiveness of another type of vehicle that better shielded troops from bombs like those that have killed Kincaid and 1,500 other soldiers and Marines.

But military officials repeatedly balked at appeals — from commanders on the battlefield and from the Pentagon's own staff — to provide the life-saving Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle, or MRAP, for patrols and combat missions, USA TODAY found.

In a letter to Defense Secretary Robert Gates late last month, two U.S. senators said the delays cost the lives of an estimated "621 to 742 Americans" who would have survived explosions had they been in MRAPs, rather than Humvees.

The letter, from Sens. Joseph Biden, D-Del., and Kit Bond, R-Mo., assumed the initial calls for MRAPs came in February 2005, when Marines in Iraq asked the Pentagon for almost 1,200 of the vehicles.

USA TODAY found that the first appeals for the MRAP came much earlier.

As early as December 2003, when the Marines requested their first 27 MRAPs for explosive disposal teams, Pentagon analysts sent detailed information about the superiority of the vehicles to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, e-mails obtained by USA TODAY show.

Later pleas came from Iraq, where commanders saw that the approach the Joint Chiefs embraced — adding armor to the sides of Humvees, the standard vehicles in the war zone — did little to protect against blasts beneath the vehicles.

Despite the efforts, the general who chaired the Joint Chiefs until Oct. 1, 2005, says buying MRAPs "was not on the radar screen when I was chairman." Air Force general Richard Myers, now retired, says top military officials dealt with a number of vehicle issues, including armoring Humvees.

The MRAP, however, was "not one of them." Something related to MRAPs "might have crossed my desk," Myers says, "but I don't recall it."

Why the issue never received more of a hearing from top officials early in the war remains a mystery, given the chorus of concern.

One Pentagon analyst complained in an April 29, 2004, e-mail to colleagues, for instance, that it was "frustrating to see the pictures of burning Humvees while knowing that there are other vehicles out there that would provide more protection."

The analyst was referring to the MRAP, whose V-shaped hull puts the crew more than 3 feet off the ground and deflects explosions. It was designed to withstand the underbelly bombs that cripple the lower-riding Humvees. Pentagon officials, civilians and military alike, had been searching for technologies to guard against improvised explosive devices, or IEDs. The makeshift bombs are the No. 1 killer of U.S. forces.

The MRAP was not new to the Pentagon.

The technology had been developed in South Africa and Rhodesia in the 1970s, making it older than Kincaid and most of the other troops killed by homemade bombs.

The Pentagon had tested MRAPs in 2000, purchased fewer than two dozen and sent some to Iraq. They were used primarily to protect explosive ordnance disposal teams, not to transport troops or to chase Iraqi insurgents.

The Goal: Iraqis 'Stand Up' So U.S. Can 'Stand Down'

Even as the Pentagon balked at buying MRAPs for U.S. troops, USA TODAY found that the military pushed to buy them for a different fighting force: the Iraqi army.

On Dec. 22, 2004 — two weeks after President Bush told families of servicemembers that "we're doing everything we possibly can to protect your loved ones" — a U.S. Army general solicited ideas for an armored vehicle for the Iraqis. The Army had an "extreme interest" in getting troops better armor, then-brigadier general Roger Nadeau told a subordinate looking at foreign technology, in an e-mail obtained by USA TODAY.

In a follow-up message, Nadeau clarified his request: "What I failed to point out in my first message to you folks is that the US Govt is interested not for US use, but for possible use in fielding assets to the Iraqi military forces."

In response, Lt. Col. Clay Brown, based in Australia, sent information on two types of MRAPs manufactured overseas. "By all accounts, these are some of the best in the world," he wrote.

"If I were fitting out the Iraqi Army, this is where I'd look (wish we had some!)"

The first contract for what would become the Iraqi Light Armored Vehicle — virtually identical to the MRAPs sought by U.S. forces then and now, and made in the United States by BAE Systems — was issued in May 2006. The vehicles, called Badgers, began arriving in Iraq 90 days later, according to BAE.

In September 2006, the Pentagon said it would provide up to 600 more to Iraqi forces. As of this spring, 400 had been delivered.

The rush to equip the Iraqis stood in stark contrast to the Pentagon's efforts to protect U.S. troops.

In February 2005, two months after Nadeau solicited ideas for better armor for the Iraqis and was told MRAPs were an answer, an urgent-need request for the same type of vehicle came from embattled Marines in Anbar province.

The request, signed by then-brigadier general Dennis Hejlik, said the Marines "cannot continue to lose ... serious and grave casualties to IEDs ... at current rates when a commercial off-the-shelf capability exists to mitigate" them.

Officials at Marine headquarters in Quantico, Va., shelved the request for 1,169 vehicles.

Fifteen months passed before a second request reached the Joint Chiefs and was approved.

Those vehicles finally began trickling into Anbar in February, two years after the original request.

Because of the delay, the Marines are investigating how its urgent-need requests are handled.

The long delay infuriates some members of Congress.

"Every day, our troops are being maimed or killed needlessly because we haven't fielded this soon enough," says Rep. Gene Taylor, D-Miss.

"The costs are in human lives, in kids who will never have their legs again, people blind, crippled. That's the real tragedy."

Not until two months ago did the Pentagon champion the MRAP for all U.S. forces.

One reason officials put off buying MRAPs in significant quantities: They never expected the war to last this long.

Gen. George Casey, the top commander in Iraq from June 2004 until February this year, repeatedly said that troop levels in Iraq would be cut just as soon as Iraqi troops took more responsibility for security. In March 2005, he predicted "very substantial reductions" in U.S. troops by early 2006. He said virtually the same thing a year later.

Casey wasn't the only optimist. In May 2005, Vice President Cheney declared that the insurgency was "in its last throes."

Nadeau, who wrote the e-mail that led to MRAPs for the Iraqis, explains why he did so: "The U.S. government knows that eventually we're going to get out" of Iraq. The United States wants "to help get (the Iraqis) in a position to take care of themselves." For U.S. forces, however, the answer was something else: adding armor to Humvees.

Nadeau and others say the choice made sense because Humvees were already in Iraq and the improvements — adding steel to the sides, upgrading the windows and replacing the canvas doors — could be made quickly, and far more cheaply.

Adding armor to a Humvee cost only \$14,000; a Humvee armored at the factory cost \$191,000; today, an MRAP costs between \$600,000 and \$1 million, though some foreign models cost only about \$200,000 in 2004.

The solution to the IED problem in 2003 had to be "immediate," says retired vice admiral Gordon Holder, director for logistics for the Joint Chiefs until mid-2004.

"We had to stop the bleeding." Holder says MRAPs seemed impractical for the immediate need: "We shouldn't take four years to field something the kids needed yesterday."

Would it actually have taken four years?

That depends upon how much urgency the Pentagon and Congress attached to speeding production. Force Protection Inc., the small South Carolina company that landed the first significant MRAP contracts, was criticized this month by the Pentagon's inspector general for failing to deliver its vehicles on time.

But bigger defense contractors were available then — and have secured MRAP contracts in recent weeks that call for deliveries in as little as four months.

A bigger obstacle might have been philosophical: The MRAP didn't fit the Pentagon's long-term vision of how the military should be equipped.

Then-Defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld regarded the Iraq war "as a means to change" the military, "make it lighter, make it more responsive, make it more agile," Holder says. The MRAP, heavier and slower than the Humvee, wouldn't have measured up, he says.

The Commander 'My No. 1 Threat'

By June 2004, the military had lost almost 200 U.S. troops to the homemade bombs. Gen. John Abizaid, then head of U.S. Central Command, told the Joint Chiefs that "IEDs are my No. 1 threat."

He called for a "mini-Manhattan Project" against IEDs, akin to the task force that developed the atomic bomb during World War II.

The Pentagon organized a small task force that, two years later, morphed into a full-fledged agency — the Joint IED Defeat Organization, or JIEDDO. Its leader, Montgomery Meigs, is a retired four-star general.

Its annual budget totals \$4.3 billion. Its mission: to stop IEDs from killing U.S. troops.

In one of its PowerPoint presentations, JIEDDO made its priorities clear.

First, prevent IEDs from being planted by attacking the insurgency. Then, if a device is planted, prevent it from exploding. "When all Else Fails," reads another slide, "Survive the blast."

That put solutions such as the MRAP into the category of last resorts.

JIEDDO did spend its own money for 122 MRAPs, but it primarily focused on electronic jammers to prevent bombs from being remotely detonated, unmanned surveillance aircraft to catch insurgents putting bombs along roads and better intelligence on who was building and planting bombs.

The agency has claimed some successes. Insurgents in 2007 had to plant six times as many bombs as they did in 2004 to inflict the same number of U.S. casualties, Meigs said in an interview.

But the insurgents often managed to stay one step ahead of JIEDDO. They changed the kind of explosives they planted and varied the locations of the devices and the way they detonated them.

When the Pentagon added armor to the sides of Humvees to guard against bombs planted along roadsides, the insurgents responded by burying bombs in the roads. The bombs could blast through the vulnerable underbelly of the Humvees. The insurgents also moved to larger, more sophisticated bombs, some packed with as much as 100 pounds of explosives.

Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England, the No. 2 official at the Pentagon, testified on Capitol Hill in June that "as the threat has evolved, we have evolved. We work very, very hard to be responsible to our troops."

Taylor, the Democratic congressman from Mississippi, pressed England about why the Pentagon waited until May to request substantial numbers of MRAPs.

"Are you telling me no one could see that (need) coming, no one could recognize that the bottom of the Humvee" didn't protect troops, and "that's why the kids inside are losing their legs and their lives?" Taylor asked.

"That is too simplistic a description," England replied. "People have not died needlessly, and we have not left our people without equipment." **[He said, avoiding an honest answer to the question he was asked, and lying in his teeth the whole way. Troops did die needlessly, and this rat helped murder them.]**

HERE COMES THE PENTAGON LIARS CORPS WITH THE CUSTOMARY STUPID LIES

To Pentagon decision-makers, the Humvee seemed able to handle the threat early in the war — roadside bombs, rather than those buried in the roads.

"If anybody could have guessed in 2003 that we would be looking at these kind of (high-powered, buried) IEDs that we're seeing now in 2007, then we would have been looking at something much longer" term as a solution, Holder says.

"But who had the crystal ball back then?"

Nadeau, now a major general in charge of the Army's Test and Evaluation Command in Alexandria, Va., also defends the Pentagon's choices.

He says buried IEDs did not become a serious threat to the armored Humvees until 2006.

Critics might say, " 'Why didn't you guys buy 16,000 MRAPs a decade ago?' " Nadeau says today. "You know, I didn't need them."

AND NOW FOR THE TRUTH FROM VETERANS OF COMBAT:

Six officers interviewed by USA TODAY say the threat to the Humvees surfaced sooner. Lt. Col. Dallas Eubanks, chief of operations for the Army's 4th Infantry Division in 2003-04, says IEDs became more menacing before he left Iraq.

"We were certainly seeing underground IEDs by early 2004," he says.

In mid-2005, two top Marines — Gen. William Nyland, assistant Marine commandant, and Maj. Gen. William Catto, head of Marine Corps Systems Command — testified before Congress that they were seeing an "evolving" threat from underbelly blasts.

They said at the time that armored Humvees remained their best defense.

The Congressman MRAP's 'Simple' Advantage

Just after lunch on June 27, 2004, a group of enlisted men parked a handful of armored vehicles near a cinderblock building at Marine headquarters in Fallujah, Iraq.

The day had turned sweltering, like every summer afternoon in central Iraq. But this day was special. A congressional delegation had arrived, and among the dignitaries was Rep. Duncan Hunter, then the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. Hunter wasn't just a powerful congressman. He was a Vietnam War veteran, and his son, then a 27-year-old Marine lieutenant also named Duncan, was stationed at the base.

More important to most of the Marines, the California Republican had been instrumental in pushing the Pentagon to get better armor for them. Humvees with cloth doors — canvas, like the crusher hat that Hunter wore that day — had been standard issue when the war began. The fabric worked well to shield the sun; it offered no protection against explosives.

Then, as now, Hunter was impatient with the pace of procurement in Iraq. That winter, he had dispatched his staff to steel mills, where they persuaded managers and union leaders to set aside commercial orders to expedite steel needed to armor the Humvees. He also worked with the Army and its contractors to expand production.

In Fallujah, Hunter recognized the Humvees. He couldn't identify the two vehicles next to them. One was called a Cougar, the other a Buffalo.

Both were MRAPs, made by Force Protection Inc., and both, he was told, were coveted. They were used by explosives disposal teams, but combat units "looked at them and said, 'We want those,' " Hunter recalls.

Throughout most of Iraq, they still haven't arrived.

Despite requests from the field, Pentagon officials decided to ration the vehicle.

In 2003 and 2004, they bought about 55, and only for explosives disposal units.

But they chose a different approach for protecting the rest of the troops: adding armor to Humvees.

The choice was problematic. The Humvee's flat bottom channels an explosion through the center of the vehicle, toward the occupants.

Memos and e-mails obtained by USA TODAY show a stream of concerns about the decision to armor the Humvee.

Most went up the chain of command and withered:

- December 2003: At the direction of then-deputy Defense secretary Paul Wolfowitz, who was troubled by the mounting death toll from IEDs, the Joint Chiefs began to explore options for giving troops better armor. Detailed information on the Wer'Wolf, an MRAP made in the African country of Namibia, was passed from analysts in the Pentagon to Lt. Col. Steven Ware, an aide collecting information for the Joint Chiefs.

- March 30, 2004: Gen. Larry Ellis, in charge of U.S. Forces Command in Atlanta, sent a memo to the Army's chief of staff, Gen. Peter Schoomaker. He complained that "some Army members and agencies are still in a peacetime posture." U.S. commanders in Iraq told him that the armored Humvee "is not providing the solution the Army hoped to achieve."

He didn't recommend MRAPs but rather suggested accelerating production of a combat vehicle called the Stryker. In response, the military said new Humvee armor kits would suffice.

- April 28-29, 2004: Duncan Lang, a Pentagon analyst who worked in acquisition and technology, suggested purchasing the Wer'Wolf, the MRAP put before the Joint Chiefs in December 2003.

In an e-mail to colleagues and supervisors, Lang said "a number could be sent to Iraq "as quickly as, or even more quickly than, additional armored Humvees."

He called it "frustrating to see the pictures of burning Humvees while knowing that there are other vehicles out there that would provide more protection."

•April 30, 2004: Another Pentagon analyst, Air Force Lt. Col. Bob Harris, forwarded details about MRAP options to a member of the IED task force. The list included a variety of MRAPs, among them the Wer'Wolf and Force Protection's Cougar.

"There was no great clarity as to why they didn't pursue these options," Harris says. "I saw it as my job to educate." Harris is now an acquisition officer at Hanscom Air Force Base in Massachusetts.

Hunter says the advantages the MRAP had on the Humvee were clear. "It's a simple formula," Hunter says. "A vehicle that's 1 foot off the ground gets 16 times that (blast) impact that you get in a vehicle that's 4 feet off the ground," like the MRAP.

Although Hunter favored adding armor to Humvees, he now calls the military's devotion to that approach a costly mistake. "It's true that they saved more lives by moving first on up-armorings the Humvees," he says.

"The flaw is that they did nothing on MRAPs. The up-armorings of Humvees didn't have to be an exclusive operation."

Holder dismisses the idea that the Pentagon could have moved on a dual track: armoring Humvees while ordering up MRAPs. He doubts Congress would have funded both at the time. But that's exactly what Congress is doing now — buying both vehicles.

"We probably should've had the foresight" to start buying MRAPs earlier, says Ware, the Joint Chiefs aide (now retired) who passed the information to superiors and counterparts in the Army and Marines. But "we just couldn't get them there fast enough." Adding armor to the Humvee, Ware says, "was better than nothing."

The Lieutenant Colonel 'Hope No One Gets Wasted'

A PowerPoint presentation, dated Aug. 25, 2004, shows wounded troops lying in hospital beds. Most are bandaged. One is bloody. His left eye is barely open, his injured right is covered by a patch. Each was maimed by an IED. Each, save one, was in a Humvee.

On another slide: "Numerous vehicles on the market provide far superior ballistic protection" than the Humvee, wrote then-lieutenant colonel Jim Hampton, the man who prepared the presentation for the operations staff of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Baghdad.

Safety is a passion for Hampton. He's so concerned with security that he asks his wife, Kate, to take her pistol when she goes for walks on their 80 acres in rural Mississippi. When he got to Iraq in early 2004, he was tasked with looking at armor options to protect the Corps of Engineers, the agency sent to help with rebuilding efforts.

For weeks, he studied armor options. His conclusion: The corps should get MRAPs to protect its people, specifically Wer'Wolves. Hampton says he asked for 53 Wer'Wolves. The corps got four.

Hampton couldn't have been more opposed to up-arming the Humvees and warned his superiors.

He even e-mailed his wife from Iraq. "Hey Babe," his e-mail read. "Just a little aggravated with the bureaucracy.

"It is simply beyond my comprehension why we're having to go through such (an ordeal) to order confounded hard vehicles. I sure hope no one gets wasted before the powers-that-be get off their collective fat asses."

Finally, he wrote his congressman, Rep. Chip Pickering, R-Miss., urging him to investigate deaths involving the Humvee.

"We would never consider sending troops" in Humvees "up against armor or artillery," Hampton wrote, "but this is tantamount to what we're doing because these vehicles are being engaged with the very ordnance delivered by artillery in the form of improvised explosive devices."

By November 2004, Pentagon analyst Lang had grown discouraged, an e-mail shows. "I have found that you can never put the word out too many times," he wrote on Nov. 17.

"I send it on to (the Secretary of Defense's office), Army and (Marine Corps) contacts I have. Some of it is getting to the rapid fielding folks and force protection folks that are looking at Iraq issues. I do not see much action."

Lang closed the message with a variation on his earlier plea: "For the life of me, I cannot figure out why we have not taken better advantage of the sources of such vehicles," he wrote.

"We should be buying 200, not 2, at a time. These things work, they save lives and they don't cost much, if any, more than what we are using now." At the time, a basic Wer'Wolf cost about the same as a factory-made armored Humvee: around \$200,000.

In December 2004, at a town hall meeting with troops in Kuwait, a soldier asked Rumsfeld about the lack of armor on military vehicles. Rumsfeld explained the situation this way: "You go to war with the Army you have. They're not the Army you might want or wish to have at a later time."

The concerns troops voiced at the meeting might have had an impact. Within a week, the Marine Corps Systems Command in Quantico posted its first notice seeking information on MRAPs from potential contractors.

Back in Fallujah, the desire for the Cougar had grown. By February 2005, the Marines were formally asking for more. Field commanders sent their first large-scale request for MRAPs, seeking 1,169 vehicles with specifications that closely mirrored those of the Cougar.

They no longer envisioned the vehicle as limited to explosives disposal teams; they wanted MRAPs for combat troops, too.

Roy McGriff III, then a major, drafted the request signed by Brig. Gen. Hejlik. "MRAP vehicles will protect Marines, reduce casualties, increase mobility and enhance mission success," the request read. "Without MRAP, personnel loss rates are likely to continue at their current rate." In spring 2005, he would have a chance to argue his case before top generals.

The Marine Major 'Unnecessary' Casualties

They convened March 29-30, 2005, at the Marine Corps Air Station in Miramar, Calif. The occasion: a safety board meeting, a regular gathering to address safety issues across the Corps. In attendance: five three-star generals, four two-stars, seven one-stars and McGriff.

McGriff knew the MRAP's history and the Pentagon's reluctance to invest in the vehicle. He had learned about the vehicle from a fellow Marine, Wayne Sinclair.

Sinclair, then a captain, wrote in the July 1996 issue of the Marine Corps Gazette that "an affordable answer to the land mine was developed over 20 years ago. It's time that Marines at the sharp end shared in. .. this discovery."

Addressing the generals, McGriff recommended analyzing every incident involving Marine vehicles the same way investigators probe aircraft crashes. Look at the vehicle for flaws, McGriff recalls telling the officers, and examine the tactics used to defeat it.

Lt. Gen. Wallace Gregson, commander of Marine Corps Forces in the Pacific, and Lt. Gen. James Mattis, leader of the Marine Combat Development Command, listened and then conferred for a moment.

The room grew quiet. "Then they said, 'OK, what do you want to do?' " McGriff remembers.

He recited the very plan that the Pentagon, under a new Defense secretary, would embrace in 2007: "A phased transition. Continue to armor Humvees. At the same time, as quickly and as expeditiously as possible, purchase as many MRAPs as possible. Phase out Humvees."

According to McGriff, the room again grew silent. Then, Mattis finally spoke: "That's exactly what we're going to do."

Mattis' words failed to translate into action.

The urgent-need request McGriff drafted went unfulfilled at Marine headquarters in Quantico.

A June 10, 2005, status report on the request indicated the Marine Corps was holding out for a "future vehicle," presumably the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle — more mobile than the MRAP, more protective than the Humvee, and due in 2012. In practical terms, that meant no MRAPs immediately.

McGriff foresaw some of the turmoil over vehicles in a prophetic 2003 paper for the School for Advanced Warfighting in Quantico.

"Currently, our underprotected vehicles result in casualties that are politically untenable and militarily unnecessary," his paper read.

"Failure to build a MRAP vehicle fleet produces a deteriorating cascade of effects that will substantially increase" risks for the military while "rendering it tactically immobile."

Mines and IEDs will force U.S. troops off the roads, he wrote, and keep them from aggressively attacking insurgents.

The words were strong and the conclusions were damning. Rhodesia, a nation with nothing near the resources of the U.S. military, had built MRAPs more than a quarter-century earlier that remained "more survivable than any comparable vehicle produced by the U.S. today," McGriff wrote.

Despite his views then, McGriff, now a lieutenant colonel, says he understands the delays. MRAPs needed to be tested to ensure they could perform in combat. "Nothing happens fast enough when people are fighting and dying," he says today. "But amidst the chaos, you still have to make the right choices.

"In the end, I think the Marines got the MRAP capability as quickly and safely as possible."

Others Disagree.

Marine Maj. Franz Gayl, now retired, was science adviser to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force in Iraq.

He saw how Marines were still being killed or maimed in Anbar in the fall of 2006. If the Marine Corps had decided MRAPs were a top priority, he says, it could and should have pursued them with the same urgency the Pentagon is now showing.

"The ramp-up of industry capacity was delayed by over 1½ years," Gayl says, "until it became the dire emergency that it is today."

Bureaucrats didn't want the MRAP sooner "because it would compete against" armored Humvees and "many other favored programs" for funding, Gayl says.

Gayl, who works as a civilian for the Marines at the Pentagon, has filed for federal whistle-blower protection because he fears retaliation for speaking out about the failure to get MRAPs sooner.

After McGriff addressed the generals in March 2005, another 15 months passed. Then the Marines in Iraq reiterated the request for MRAPs. This time, they sent the request directly to the Joint Chiefs. This time they were successful.

In December 2006, after insurgent bombs had killed almost 1,200 U.S. troops in Iraq, the Joint Chiefs validated requests from Iraq for 4,060 MRAPs, and the formal MRAP program was launched.

By March 2007, Marine Corps Commandant James Conway called the vehicle his "No. 1 unfilled warfighting requirement."

In part, that's because he saw it save lives in Anbar province. Brig. Gen. John Allen, deputy commander of coalition forces there, says the Marines tracked attacks on MRAPs since January 2006. The finding: Marines in armored Humvees are twice as likely to be badly wounded in an IED attack as those in MRAPs.

Perhaps more convincing: No Marines have been killed in more than 300 attacks on MRAPs there.

The news, revealed in USA TODAY on April 19, drew the attention of Defense Secretary Gates, four months into his job at the Pentagon. He was traveling in Iraq and read about the MRAP's success in the Pentagon's daily news roundup. Weeks later, at a news conference, Gates said the Pentagon would rush MRAPs to Iraq "as best we can."

Late last month, top Pentagon officials approved an Army strategy for buying as many as 17,700 MRAPs, allowing a one-for-one swap for its armored Humvees. About 5,200 MRAPs had been approved for the other services. Now, Pentagon officials decline to say exactly how many MRAPs they need.

One official says they'll build MRAPs as fast as possible, then recalibrate the military's needs as they assess operations in Iraq, a tacit acknowledgment that they may need fewer MRAPs as U.S. troops are withdrawn.

During another news conference late last month, Gates worried that the companies building the MRAP — not only Force Protection but BAE Systems, General Dynamics, Oshkosh Truck, Armor Holdings, International Military and Government and Protected Vehicles — won't be able to get the vehicles to Iraq fast enough.

"I didn't think that was acceptable," Gates said. "Lives are at stake."

The Young Lieutenant 'Safest Vehicle Ever'

As the sun began to bake the Iraqi countryside last month, Marine 2nd Lt. George Saenz headed back to his base on the outskirts in Fallujah. He felt oddly joyful.

Saenz had just spent hours leading his platoon through one of the most excruciating battlefield jobs — inching a convoy along the crumbling streets of Fallujah, searching for homemade bombs planted in the asphalt or dirt.

The night before had proved dangerous. Two bombs had blown up underneath Saenz's convoy, including one beneath his vehicle.

As Saenz turned through the gray blast walls protecting the base, he says he couldn't help but think: If I had been riding a Humvee, I wouldn't be here right now.

Saenz knew why he was alive. His platoon in the 6th Marine Regiment Combat Team had replaced its Humvees with MRAPs. The two blasts produced just one injury, a Marine whose concussion put him on light duty for a week.

"We're probably in the safest vehicle ever designed for military use," Saenz says, recalling his platoon's record: Three months. Eleven bomb attacks. No one dead.

MRAPs have become legendary in Anbar since Marines began using them on dangerous missions clearing roadside bombs. Tank commanders, radio operators and others drop by Saenz's platoon every day to do what Rep. Hunter had done three years earlier — inspect the small fleet of MRAPs, knock on the armor, sometimes crawl inside.

Scores of MRAPs are scheduled to arrive in Anbar this summer. That means they'll be available for the first time to the Marines for tasks other than clearing IEDs, says Marine Col. Mike Rudolph, logistics officer for U.S. forces in western Iraq. No one has decided how MRAPs will be used, but "everybody wants one," Rudolph says.

To be sure, the vehicle isn't perfect. Saenz's team warns that MRAPs drive like trucks, plodding and heavy. Some models are so bulky that troops struggle to see over the boxy hood and so noisy a driver has to shout at someone 2 feet away.

"They're just so heavy," Sgt. Randall Miller says. "These are virtually designed off a semi-truck platform."

After substantial testing, the military also has concluded that MRAPs are vulnerable to explosively formed projectiles, the newest and most devastating variation of the IED. More armor has been developed for the MRAPs the Pentagon ordered this spring.

Miller isn't complaining. On his first tour in Iraq in 2004-05, Miller searched for land mines in a Humvee. His detection technique was simple: "Go real slow, cross your fingers." He still drives slowly but feels safer knowing the MRAP's V-shaped hull will deflect a bomb blast. "I've seen our guys get hit and walk away," Miller says. "They're awesome, awesome vehicles."

The Widow 'They Should've Done It' Sooner

Whom or what is to blame for the delay in getting safer vehicles for the 158,000 U.S. troops in Iraq?

Jim Hampton, now a retired colonel, questions why the Pentagon and Congress didn't do more to keep the troops safe.

"I have colleagues who say people need to go to jail over this, and in my mind they do," Hampton says.

Hunter, now running for President, blames the Pentagon bureaucracy, which he says "doesn't move fast enough to meet the needs of the war fighter. We have a system in which the warfighting requirements are requested from the field and the acquisition people say, 'We'll get to it on our schedule.' "

Other members of Congress blame Rumsfeld and his vision of transforming the military into a leaner, faster fighting force.

Rep. John Murtha, D-Pa., wonders if Rumsfeld's forceful personality silenced some of the generals. "Rumsfeld so intimidated the military that I've lost confidence in them telling us what they really need" in Iraq, Murtha says.

"They all knew the Rumsfeld rule: Your career is over if you say anything contrary" to his policies, Murtha says. "It's much better now that Rumsfeld is gone. The military is being much more honest."

If the Pentagon "had just listened to the guys in the field" who wanted MRAPs, Murtha says, "we'd have them in Iraq right now."

USA TODAY could not determine what role, if any, Rumsfeld played in MRAP deliberations. A spokesman for Rumsfeld, now running a foundation in Washington, said last week that the former Defense secretary would not comment.

Aaron Kincaid's widow, Rachel, doesn't know who should be held accountable. She is haunted by whether getting MRAPs to Iraq earlier might have saved her husband's life. The bomb that blew apart his Humvee lay along the path he and his unit took, and no one noticed.

Today, she wonders: Was his death really about the path that he took, or about the path the Pentagon spent years avoiding, the path that, in May, finally led them to the vehicle that might have saved her husband's life?

"You think there is always something that could've been done to prevent it," Rachel Kincaid says of her husband's death.

"If that's been around for that many years," she says of the MRAP, "why hasn't it been used?

"They should've done it at the beginning of the war. They should've done it three years ago, four years ago."

MORE:

Odious Odierno Fucks Up The MRAP Deployment: Demands Armor Be Added That Makes The Vehicle Impossible To Use

7.16.07 By Tom Vanden Brook and Peter Eisler, USA TODAY [Excerpt]

WASHINGTON — Armor intended to protect the Pentagon's new Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles against the most powerful roadside bombs is too heavy to use, says the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The add-on armor known as Frag Kit 6 could overwhelm all MRAPs unless they undergo "major redesigns," Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., says in a letter to Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

The newly disclosed June 19 letter reveals that the No. 2 U.S. commander in Iraq, Lt. Gen. Raymond Odierno, issued an urgent request in January to require MRAPs to withstand explosively formed penetrators (EFPs).

The Pentagon has approved an Army plan to buy as many as 17,700 MRAPs, whose raised, V-shaped hull withstands underbody blasts better than Humvees.

The Pentagon declined on Monday to comment on the letter.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

California Soldier Killed Near Owaset



Sgt. Shawn G. Adams was killed July 22, 2006, from wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle while on a mounted patrol near Owaset, Iraq. Adams, 21, of Dixon, California, was an Infantryman who joined the Army in August 2004 and was assigned to Fort Richardson in April 2005. (AP Photo/U.S. Army Alaska Deputy Public Affairs Office)

Another Arkansas Soldier Killed In Iraq



Sgt. John Massey

7/18/2007 Mike Duncan, Reporter, Weekend Anchor

The town of Higginson is quiet. The flag outside the volunteer fire department is flying at half-staff in honor of Sgt. John Massey.

He was home just last month on two weeks leave. He helped celebrate his son's birthday with a go-cart for a present.

But Wednesday, his daughter's Monica, Emily, and son Joseph are without a father.

Amanda Massey, John's wife, says, "When they pulled up, my son asked me, 'Mom is he dead?' I just looked at him, and we both started to break down. Everybody here that was waiting for the call just broke down."

Amanda says everyone was proud of John's graduation from basic training. But the memory she holds most dear was a simple walk with John and the children in a nearby park.

Amanda remembers, "That's what he wanted to do and we took off, we were racing, I was racing the kids. We walked the Searcy trail. I mean it took us most the day. But it was one of the most enjoyable days with him and my kids that I remember. And I've got that captured. I captured that day."

Over the Christmas holiday, Amanda says John re-dedicated his life to the Lord at a local church. That knowledge is providing his family with peace of mind during this difficult time.

British Occupation Base In Basra Attacked And Burning; Casualties Not Announced

July 24 (KUNA)

A big fire erupted on Tuesday in a presidential complex housing British military forces in downtown Basra, eyewitnesses said.

The fire broke out after the presidential complex has been attack by mortar shells by nationalist fighters.

The eyewitnesses from Al-Baradiya residence said armed men attacked the complex using mortar shells which resulted in a big cloud of smoke over it and fires inside the complex.

Sirens were heard inside the complex and it is still difficult to determine British human and material loses stationed there, eyewitnesses said. British forces have yet to make a statement about the incident.

MORE:

British Troops In Iraq Face 'Nightly Suicide Missions'

“Troops In Basra Told Them That The Only Reason They Were Staying In Southern Iraq Was ‘Because Of Our Relations With The U.S.’”

July 25, 2007 Richard Norton-Taylor, The Guardian [Excerpts]

British soldiers are going on "nightly suicide missions" in southern Iraq and they are there only at the behest of the US, Labour MPs on the Commons defence committee told the government yesterday.

In evidence that reflects deepening concern among army commanders, the MPs said they were told during a recent visit to British troops in Basra that the UK's military role in Iraq was over.

The view appeared to be shared yesterday by Bob Ainsworth, the new armed forces minister also just back from a visit to southern Iraq, and by Brigadier Chris Hughes, the Ministry of Defence's senior officer responsible for military commitments.

Kevan Jones, a Labour member of the committee, said British troops were going on "nightly suicide missions", attacked every night as they delivered supplies to the British garrison at the Basra Palace in the centre of the city. "We have a force surrounded like cowboys and Indians in the Basra Palace," he said.

He and other Labour MPs said British troops in Basra told them that the only reason they were staying in southern Iraq was "because of our relations with the US".

Mr Jones questioned whether that was "a price worth paying".

Washington wants Britain to maintain a substantial military presence in southern Iraq to try and limit domestic pressure for cuts in the number of American troops in Iraq, as well as to protect convoys taking supplies to US troops and help police the border with Iran.

Ninety per cent of attacks in Basra were against British troops, the committee heard.

Brig Hughes told the committee it was not appropriate to talk about a "victory" in Iraq.

He said: "I think it's been quite a long time since anyone has talked about victory in Iraq."

NEW GENERAL ORDER NO. 1: PACK UP GO HOME



A US soldier between patrols inside the Joint Security Site in Baghdad, 22 July 2007.
(AFP/File/Olivier Laban-Mattei)

GET THE MESSAGE?

“Protesters Raged Against Military Operations In Husseinayah” [And The Massacre Of More Civilians By The Occupation]



Iraqi citizens march in a demonstration in the Shaab neighborhood in north Baghdad, July 24, 2007. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

Protesters raged against military operations in Husseinayah, where U.S. forces blocked access to the town on the northeast outskirts of Baghdad.

The American military said Saturday that six militants were killed in an airstrike in the area, but Iraqi officials and relatives of the victims claimed that 18 civilians died in the attack and 21 were wounded.

The parliament said Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki should intervene to end the crackdown by U.S. and Iraqi forces on Husseinayah. [As if the U.S. military dictatorship than controls Iraq gives a shit what some silly parliament says.]

MORE:

Most Dishonorable Bottom-Feeding Scum-Sucking Piece Of Filth In Command In 2007, So Far:

Lt. Col. Michael Donnelly “Allowing” Iraqi Civilians In Medical Crisis To Walk To The Husseinayah Hospital

July 24, 2007 By Steven Hurst, The Associated Press

Lt. Col. Michael Donnelly, spokesman for U.S. forces north of Baghdad, said U.S. and Iraqi forces were now allowing “commercial vendors to bring food to the south of Husseinayah. Civilians are authorized to walk to these vendors to buy food. Donkey carts may be used, but no vehicle movement is authorized.

“We are also allowing civilians that need medical aid, to walk to the Hamid Shaub Hospital for free treatment.”

[OK, fair is fair. When and if this stinking piece of shit gets critically ill or wounded in battle, let him be forced to walk for medical assistance too. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life. That’s a good religion. That’s that old time religion. If there is any justice in this world, Rat Donnelly will get a taste of it, the sooner the better.

[He missed his chance: born too late. He would have been outstanding in charge of one of Hitler or Stalin’s death squads. More scope for his homicidal freak talents there. T]

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Soldier Killed In Small Arms Attack

7/18/07 Kansas State Collegian

U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Randy J. Gillespie, 44, died of wounds suffered from small arms fire July 9 in Afghanistan.

Originally from Coaldale, Colo., Gillespie was fatally wounded outside of Camp Stone, a forward operating base near Herat, Afghanistan, according to the Fort Riley Public Affairs Office. The camp is approximately 300 miles west of Bagram Airfield, which is 27 miles north of the capital, Kabul.

A straight-talking man who loved children and car engines, Gillespie wanted to make a difference in the world.

"Randy loved being in the Air Force and believed in what he was doing," his wife, Lisa, said in a July 11 Arizona Daily News report. "He could have retired from the Air Force but volunteered to deploy to Afghanistan because he wanted to protect people's freedom and spread democracy."

Gillespie was assigned to the 56th Logistics Readiness Squadron at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., where he had served for seven years. He was serving on a transition team that trained under and deployed from 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley.

Transition team training is a 60-day training cycle to prepare small teams of American soldiers, airmen and sailors to advise, teach, mentor and coach their Iraqi or Afghan counterparts, according to the Fort Riley Public Affairs Office.

Gillespie, who lived in Litchfield Park, Ariz., is survived by his wife and four children.

TROOP NEWS

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



The casket of Army Spc. Steven A. Davis, July 18, 2007, at Arlington National Cemetery. Davis, of Woodbridge, Va., died on the Fourth of July from injuries suffered in a grenade attack in Iraq. (AP Photo/Haraz N. Ghanbari)

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

24 Jul 2007 Reuters

Guerrillas assassinated Kamal Tahir, a Brigadier in the Iraqi army, in northern Baghdad's Kadhimiya district, police said.

A roadside bomb targeting an interior Ministry commando unit killed one policeman and wounded three others in the town of Madaen, 45 km (25 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas killed an intelligence officer in the Iraqi Army on his doorstep in the Shi'ite city of Diwaniya, 180 km (112 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Two Iraqi soldiers were wounded by a roadside bomb in the Yarmouk district of western Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas seriously wounded a police colonel and his son and blew up three houses in Dhuluiya, 70 km (45 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

At least three people were wounded, including a policeman, in a roadside bomb attack near a police patrol in southern Kirkuk, police said.

Guerrillas shot dead a civil servant in the town of Hawija, 70 km (45 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, police said.

Guerrillas killed two off-duty oil facility protection guards and wounded two others in the Waziriya district of northern Baghdad on Monday, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**Pretentious Posturing
Vs.
Effective Action:
Take Your Pick**

From: Leonard Shelton

To: GI Special
Sent: July 21, 2007
Subject: **GI Special 5G17: Paying For It**

Thank you.

I am the Marine you met in CT on the bus tour with the locked hair.

You are on it, and you with out a doubt get it!

REPLY:

The thanks go to you and other members of Iraq Veterans Against The War who are on it, and without a doubt get it, because you've been going to military bases on behalf of Iraq Veterans Against The War to reach out to active duty troops.

That is without a doubt the effective action required to stop Bush's evil Imperial wars.

The shame is that the so called leaders of the opposition to those wars would rather engage in pretentious posturing in Washington DC than spend their time reaching out to and helping organize the growing opposition to the war among the troops who can stop the war.

At this point, that foolish course of inaction is no longer possible to excuse as ignorance. It's common knowledge that the rebellion in the armed forces ended the war in Vietnam.

Their refusal to do this work is inexcusable, a betrayal that does nothing less than give aid and comfort to our enemies who keep these wars going.

You and your brothers and sisters who have made the commitment to reach out to the troops turning against the war can look back with pride years from now, when those who refuse to do so today will be remembered, if at all, as the curse of the movement, whose arrogance and endless promotion of their own fame was equaled only by their failure to do what had to be done to be effective and stop the slaughter.

Respect,
T

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Australia **DR HANEEF: BETWEEN KEYSTONE COPS AND DREYFUS FRAMEUP**

From: Max Watts, Australia
To: GI Special
Sent: July 23, 2007
Subject: DR HANEEF

By Max Watts, Annandale, Australia.

Max Watts is Co-Author of LEFT FACE, Soldier Unions and Resistance Movements in Modern Armies, with DAVID CORTRIGHT; Contributions in Military Studies, Number 107; GREENWOOD PRESS, New York • Westport, Connecticut • London

I am not quite sure how to report (for a non-Australian audience) the horribly humorous story of the Indian Doctor Haneef and his Sims/Keycard.

Is it a tragedy – a Dreyfus case, how a small would-be Nixon/Bush called Horrible Howard - is desperately trying to save his otherwise fried bacon – his Australian primeministership - by clutching at any straw to reverse looming electoral annihilation?

Or is it a laughable Keystone cops comedy – how this frame-up comes unstuck – because the Australian cops and the government can't keep their stories straight?

And how to report this without going back in time? Six years to the good ship Tampa, three years to the children overboard, and six weeks to the child-sex-Aboriginal horrors, another method of stealing what's left of the Aboriginal Land Rights?

2001: The Good Ship Tampa saves Howard's bacon: Howard, an Australian Bush/Nixon type, Prime Minister in Canberra, is about to lose the upcoming election.

Along comes the big Norwegian freighter Tampa and sees a small sinking ship with 500 people on board. The Norwegian Captain does his good deed and saves the passengers, puts them on his ship, and – he thinks – continues to the nearest land – the Australian Christmas Island.

But Prime Minister Howard soon puts a stop to that!

These passengers are refugees, and mostly brown. They will not be allowed to land. And Howard boasts how he is defending Australia, from the brown hordes!

That was the Tampa election.

2004 November: Another tight Federal election (Australians have them every three years).

Howard is really in luck: Two days before election day, another sinking ship is detected by the Australian Navy. Dramatically!

Photos show the passengers throwing their children into the sea. Apparently to drown them. Howard trumpets: “This kind of person, children-into-the-sea throwers, will never, as long as I am Prime Minister, be allowed into Australia!

“Vote for me, I’ll keep them out!”

The voters do. The conservative/reactionary Howard is again re-elected, is today still prime minister.

That was the Children-over-board election.

The day after that election, very upset Australian Navy sailors tell all: “Hell, the parents were throwing the children into the sea to save them, the boat was sinking under their feet, two women drowned, we did our best, saved almost all.”

The again defeated Labor Party ALP had had no idea how to counter Tampa nor the children-into-the-sea throwing propaganda. Their right-wing leaders do not want to confront Australian racism.

2007, June: A Black Tampa – Aboriginal Child-Sex this time: Again, a Federal Election: This time the polls show a 15% (enormous) lead for the ALP plus Greens – (We vote 1,2,3, n preferentially for the Lower House – Labor counts on almost all Greens giving the ALP their number 2 vote).

Howard finds a Black Tampa.

Aboriginal Child Sex!

A government report is released: In some of the 60 Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory (where the Federal Government is all-powerful, above the Darwin Territorial administration) little children are raped, abused, by.. not-quite-clear who .. (White men – coming into the villages for ? or ??).

That this has been discussed in many previous reports in the past decades, that the Howard government has cut welfare, social service budgets, anti-alcohol programs by \$500 millions since it came to power – and greatly increased the problems – and has destroyed the Aboriginal administrations attempting to control strangers coming into communities, sometimes for child-sex – not mentioned....

Not news.

Nor that the Howard plan is to remove the last vestiges of Aboriginal control over who can come onto their land, into their villages...

That is, also the mining companies who have sometimes complained about Aboriginal reluctance to allow them “in”, to dig up their land...

Nor: that the plan of the Howard government is to send in the Army to “control these child-sex abusers” – and Doctors to examine all children under 16... (without their parents permission) for sexual tampering.

Tampering... not Tampa..

2007, July: Doctors.. Doctors?! What, like Dr. Haneef ?

A Dr Mohammed Haneef, from Bangalore in India, was one of the foreign doctors (many from “Third World” countries) recruited to help with the doctor shortage (particularly in Queensland, the Northern Territory, in country practices). Dr. Haneef had qualified in Britain before coming to Australia.

He had, leaving Britain, left behind his “Sims Card” [phone card] – with some credit still on it - money lost otherwise.

He had given the card to a cousin in England. A very bad move!

A burning jeep had been driven into the Glasgow airport fence. A Terrorist attack.

Dr. Haneef, on his way back to India, is arrested at Brisbane airport. An Australian aspect to that terrorist attack!

His Sims card, so we are told by the police, the government, the media, was in that jeep !

Dr Haneef is questioned, many many days.

The previously limited interrogation time is prolonged, prolonged, prolonged.

This is not a simple murder, or child-sex, this is Terrorism. The Howard government has introduced new Terrorist Laws, accused bleeding heart liberals of excessive human-rightism. Leftism.

See how we catch them!

Eventually Dr Haneef is brought before a Brisbane Judge. Who, horrors, finds no good reason for keeping him in jail!

He was on his way to India to see his new-born daughter. The judge sets (low) bail. He could, run, terrorise some more ? Get another Sims card ?

But fortunately the Howard Government is not weak-kneed. Its immigration minister handles the problem, brilliantly. Overcomes any notion re “separation of powers, executive interference in a legal case.”

Howard’s minister revokes, on the spot, Dr Haneef’s visa.

He is, so Immigration Minister Andrews: “of bad character”.

That Dr. Haneef till that moment had been entrusted with patients in Queensland (does that require a good character ? – no one had complained) – irrelevant.

With his visa revoked Dr Haneef becomes – on the spot - an illegal immigrant. Jailed.

Why is Dr Haneef of bad character ? Secret. Will not be revealed.

What is revealed is – that the donated Sims card was not, repeat not, in the burning jeep in Glasgow.

It was in Liverpool, with another, non-terrorist, cousin of Dr Haneef. The information given to the court, the media, by the police, was simply false. Invented.

And the names found on Dr Haneef’s diary, about which he was questioned.... They had been written onto the diary cover by... the police.

Oh dear.

And the media beat-up, Haneef had photographed Queensland sky-scrapers, probably to bomb them ?

A tourist photo with his wife on the beach....

Oh dear !

And worse, these embarrassing details are leaking out, despite government efforts threatening lawyers, journos, revealing them, attempts to keep them secret.

Of course such details will not sway the Howard government, Haneef remains in a Brisbane jail. If he were found innocent of terrorism, he will still be instantly deported, for incautiously giving away his Sims card.

In the meantime the Indian government makes noises about Anti-Indian-Australian racism.

Aboriginal communities wonder if they will ever get any foreign doctors (who may become even more reluctant to work in Australia).

Some mention the Dreyfus case, others wonder about the intelligence of the Australian police..

The Australian Labor Party?

Their leaders support the (Howard) government.

Some of their members wonder why bother to vote for the ALP? = Another Liberal (i.e. here: Right-wing) Party.

Fortunately Australia has compulsory voting. You get fined if you abstain. But there may be more spoiled ballots. And maybe not all Greens will vote ALP as (essential for Labor) Second Choice.

Will the Black Tampa and the (non)-Terrorist Doctor Haneef – after the Norwegian Tampa and the children overboard, yet snatch another defeat out of the jaws of a Labor victory ?

To be followed ...

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.

Received:

Maryland Activists Need Local National Guard Info

From: S Lane atticlane@yahoo.com
To: GI Special
Sent: July 20, 2007
Subject: Maryland National Guard members?

Hi,

I'm an activist in Maryland. My friends and I would like to do CD at a National Guard armory as buses take Guardsmen and women off to Iraq.

We can't find out when they leave, is the problem.

Do you know anyone in the Maryland Guard who could give us a schedule?

Thanks,
Steve

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