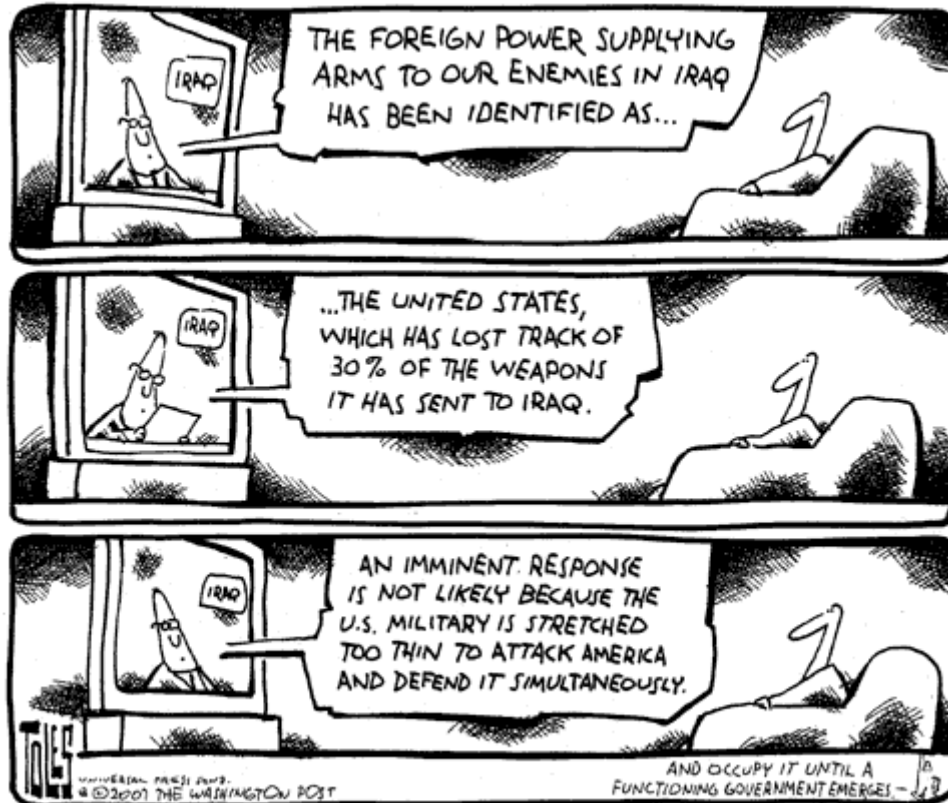


GI SPECIAL 5H12:



“The Army Is Worn Out”
“We Should Just Be Allowed To
Tell The Media What Is
Happening Here”
“Why Don’t You Tell The Truth?
Why Don’t You Journalists Write
That This Army Is Exhausted?”

“Let Them Know That People Are Worn Out. So That Their Families Know Back Home. But It’s Like We’ve Become No More Than Numbers Now.”

“An Officer Talks Privately. ‘We’re Plodding Through This,’ He Says After Another Patrol And Another Ambush. ‘I Don’t Know How Much More Plodding We’ve Got Left In Us’”



A U.S. Army soldier from Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division during an operation in the Amariyah neighborhood of west Baghdad, Iraq, Aug. 13, 2007. (AP Photo/Petr David Josek)

Thanks to Elaine Brower, The Military Project; Dennis Serdel, Vietnam Veteran; Phil G & Clancy Sigal, who sent this in.]

August 12, 2007 Peter Beaumont in Baghdad, The Observer [Excerpts]

Lieutenant Clay Hanna looks sick and white.

Like his colleagues he does not seem to sleep.

Hanna says he catches up by napping on a cot between operations in the command centre, amid the noise of radio. He is up at 6am and tries to go to sleep by 2am or 3am. But there are operations to go on, planning to be done and after-action reports that need to be written. And war interposes its own deadly agenda that requires his attention and wakes him up.

When he emerges from his naps there is something old and paper-thin about his skin, something sketchy about his movements as the days go by.

The Americans he commands, like the other men at Sullivan - a combat outpost in Zafraniya, south east Baghdad - hit their cots when they get in from operations.

But even when they wake up there is something tired and groggy about them.

They are on duty for five days at a time and off for two days. When they get back to the forward operating base, they do their laundry and sleep and count the days until they will get home.

It is an exhaustion that accumulates over the patrols and the rotations, over the multiple deployments, until it all joins up, wiping out any memory of leave or time at home.

Until life is nothing but Iraq.

Hanna and his men are not alone in being tired most of the time.

A whole army is exhausted and worn out.

You see the young soldiers washed up like driftwood at Baghdad's international airport, waiting to go on leave or returning to their units, sleeping on their body armour on floors and in the dust.

Where once the war in Iraq was defined in conversations with these men by untenable ideas - bringing democracy or defeating al-Qaeda - these days the war in Iraq is defined by different ways of expressing the idea of being weary.

It is a theme that is endlessly reiterated as you travel around Iraq.

'The army is worn out. We are just keeping people in theatre who are exhausted,' says a soldier working for the US army public affairs office who is supposed to be telling me how well things have been going since the 'surge' in Baghdad began.

They are not supposed to talk like this.

We are driving and another of the public affairs team adds bitterly: 'We should just be allowed to tell the media what is happening here.

"Let them know that people are worn out. So that their families know back home. But it's like we've become no more than numbers now."

The first soldier starts in again. 'My husband was injured here. He hit an improvised explosive device. He already had a spinal injury. The blast shook out the plates. He's home now and has serious issues adapting. But I'm not allowed to go back home to see him. If I wanted to see him I'd have to take leave time (two weeks). And the army counts it.'

A week later, in the northern city of Mosul, an officer talks privately. 'We're plodding through this,' he says after another patrol and another ambush in the city centre.

'I don't know how much more plodding we've got left in us.'

When the soldiers talk like this there is resignation.

There is a corrosive anger, too, that bubbles out, like the words pouring unbidden from a chaplain's assistant who has come to bless a patrol.

'Why don't you tell the truth? Why don't you journalists write that this army is exhausted?'

It is a weariness that has created its own culture of superstition. There are vehicle commanders who will not let the infantrymen in the back fall asleep on long operations - not because they want the men alert, but because, they say, bad things happen when people fall asleep. So the soldiers drink multiple cans of Rip It and Red Bull to stay alert and wired.

But the exhaustion of the US army emerges most powerfully in the details of these soldiers' frayed and worn-out lives. Everywhere you go you hear the same complaints: soldiers talk about divorces, or problems with the girlfriends that they don't see, or about the children who have been born and who are growing up largely without them.

'I counted it the other day,' says a major whose partner is also a soldier. 'We have been married for five years. We added up the days. Because of Iraq and Afghanistan we have been together for just seven months. Seven months ... We are in a bad place. I don't know whether this marriage can survive it.'

And it is not only the soldiers that are worn out. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have led to the destruction, or wearing out, of 40 per cent of the US army's equipment, totalling at a recent count \$212bn.

'Modern war is exhausting,' says Major Stacie Caswell, an occupational therapist with a combat stress unit attached to the military hospital in Mosul.

'This is a different kind of war,' says Caswell. 'In World War II it was clear who the good guys and the bad guys were. You knew what you would go through on the battlefield.' Now she says the threat is all around. And soldiering has changed. 'Now we have so many things to do...'

'Not only that,' says Caswell, 'but because of the nature of what we do now, the number of tasks in comparison with previous generations - even as you are

finishing your 15 months here you are immediately planning and training for your next tour.' Valentine adds: 'There is no decompression.'

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Texas Soldier Killed In Arab Jabour



Pfc. William L. Edwards, 23, of Houston, died Aug. 11, 2007, in Arab Jabour, Iraq, of wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked his unit with small arms fire. Edwards was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga. He had joined the Army in February 2006 and was deployed to Iraq in May 2007. (AP Photo/U.S. Army photo released by the Edwards family)

CH-47 Down Near Taqaddum;

5 U.S. Troops Killed

8.14.07 By KIM GAMEL, Associated Press Writer

In western Iraq, a U.S. transport helicopter crashed near an air base, killing five troopers, the military said. The CH-47 Chinook helicopter was conducting a routine post-maintenance test flight when it went down near Taqaddum air base, the U.S. military said.

The air base is about 70 kilometers (45 miles) west of Baghdad in Anbar province,

Five U.S. Soldiers Killed, Four More Wounded In Carefully Planned, Complex Ambush

Aug. 13 2007 Associated Press

Five American soldiers were killed Saturday in Arab Jabour, a district just south of Baghdad

Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, the task force commander, said a sniper killed one soldier, then lured his comrades to a booby-trapped house where four died in an explosion when one of them stepped on a hidden bomb.

Four others were wounded in the blast, Lynch told the AP.

Three U.S. Soldiers Killed, One Wounded By Ninewah IED

August 14, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070814-05

TIKRIT, Iraq – Three Task Force Lightning Soldiers died as a result of injuries sustained from an explosion near their vehicle while conducting operations in Ninewah Province, Monday.

One other Soldier was injured during the incident and was transported to a Coalition medical facility for treatment.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Baghdad;

Three Wounded

August 14, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20070814-17

BAGHDAD — One Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier was killed and three others wounded during combat operations in a western section of the Iraqi capital Aug. 14.

Another U.S. Soldier Killed In Baghdad

8.13.07 AFP

BAGHDAD — A Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier was killed dead during combat operations in a western section of the Iraqi capital Aug. 13.

Fallen Houston Soldier Was Almost Home



Aug. 7, 2007 By DANE SCHILLER, Houston Chronicle

A Houston soldier who was killed by a roadside bomb in Baghdad was to return to a welcome-home celebration next month.

The plan was for Spc. Eric D. Salinas, 25, to catch up with his friends and family, including his 4-year-old son, Anthony, whom he liked to take out for pizza and trips to the park.

Salinas and two other soldiers died Thursday afternoon after a homemade bomb detonated near their eight-wheeled Stryker vehicle, the Army said Monday.

Wanting to make his family proud and perhaps find a career, Salinas enlisted in 2004, two days before his September birthday.

Prior to joining the service, Salinas attended Northbrook High School and worked at a home-appliance warehouse.

Salinas was last home in March, when he was given temporary leave from combat duty, where he'd already earned recognition, including the Army Commendation Medal.

"I am watching my back, and I am coming back," longtime friend Oscar Ordonez recalled Salinas saying at the time.

"He said he would be fine and that they are always thinking of what they are doing and trying their best to keep themselves safe," said Ordonez, who grew up with Salinas, who he considered a brother.

In anticipation of coming home, Salinas recently shipped a box of personal items to his mother.

The box has not yet been opened, said Ordonez, who spoke on behalf of the family.

Aside from his expected vacation in Houston, Salinas was to be discharged from active duty in January.

"He was coming back. Everybody was happy — his mom was excited," Ordonez said.

Salinas knew well the danger he faced.

A Washington state newspaper photographed Salinas last October in Iraq as he shed a tear during the memorial service for Cpl. Carl Johnson II, who was also killed when a homemade bomb struck his Stryker.

Ordonez said he'll make sure young Anthony knows what his father was like. "I guess with time, I will tell him the kind of father he was; he died for his country and serving us," Ordonez said.

In addition to his mother and son, Salinas has a half sister in Houston and a half brother who is a Marine expected to deploy to Iraq soon.

Although a wake will be held in Houston, Salinas' funeral and burial will be in the Rio Grande Valley, where he was born and still has relatives.

Killed in the same attack as Salinas were Staff Sgt. Fernando Santos, 29, of San Antonio and Spc. Cristian Rojas-Gallego, 24, of Loganville, Ga.

The men's unit, which is based at Fort Lewis, Wash., was deployed in June 2006.

Fort Lewis is home to about 28,000 soldiers, of which about 10,000 are currently in Iraq, said Joe Hitt, a civilian spokesman for the base.

Explosion Kills Danville Native In Iraq

August 14, 2007 BY BARBARA GREENBERG, Associated Press

DANVILLE — Justin Penrod, a 24-year-old Danville native serving with the U.S. Army in Iraq, died Saturday doing what he believed was his duty as an American. He died in an explosion from an improvised explosive device.

Some might think Army Spec. Penrod fulfilled his obligation to his country after his first tour of duty in the war zone, but that wasn't enough to satisfy this patriot.

Penrod enlisted in the full-time Army a year after he completed the first tour, which he served with the Illinois Army National Guard.

"Justin loved what he did," Christina, his 24-year-old widow, said during a telephone interview Monday from Fort Stewart, Ga. "Once he came back from Iraq, he knew he wanted to go back there again."

After a year of civilian life, Penrod joined the full-time Army. During that brief year, he made a different kind of contribution by working as a drill instructor for Lincoln's Challenge.

Diane Penrod, Justin's stepmother, recalled Justin's decision to go to the military school instead of continuing at Danville High School.

"The classroom wasn't a good fit for him," she said. "But Lincoln's Challenge was tough for him at first. I encouraged him to stick it out. I told him he'd be a better person for making it through the program, and he was. Out of his class of 40, he was one of two who graduated from there with a diploma.

"After Justin finished his National Guard service, he got a job with Lincoln's Challenge. He understood what the kids were going through. He made it, and it made him stronger.

"He believed in giving back. He didn't just say that — he lived it.

"That boy was something else," she said.

Tina Tuttle, Justin's mother, said she's always been proud of her youngest child. "I'm proud of all my kids, Jimmy and Listia, as well as Justin. I'm proud of them for who they are, not just for what they've done. The glory is to God for giving me these children."

Listia Lyons, Justin's sister, described her younger brother as "a loving person and my best friend. I talked to him just before he went to Iraq this last time. I started crying, and he said, 'I've done this before. I can do it again.'

"I know he's in a better place. He doesn't have to worry now," she said.

Christina and the couple's 8-month-old son Colin joined Justin in early June at Fort Stewart. The couple felt blessed to have their son, born three months premature.

“Colin’s birth was a great ordeal for us,” she said. “It’s where I’m getting my strength now. That and from my folks, who surprised me by coming here Saturday. That was an incredible coincidence.”

She described her husband as a proud husband and father.

“He was full of life,” she said. “He made anybody he met smile.”

But Justin took his military duty seriously.

“He was part of a task force that cleared out houses. He was doing dangerous work. All he could say about it when I asked him was, “I make sure that things are safe,”” his wife said.

Plans for Penrod’s funeral are still tentative, according to his wife. A visitation in Champaign and a funeral service followed by burial at Danville’s National Cemetery are being considered

Big Spring Family Mourns Soldier’s Death 08/10/07

August 10, 2007 Catherine Collins, CBS 7 News

Big Spring, TX - The fight for freedom hits home for yet another family from the Permian Basin and one Big Spring family is coping with the devastating news.

He was scheduled to return home to Texas tomorrow... but now his wife Teresa, and her parents Robert and marry Ford aren’t preparing for a celebration. Instead, they remember his legacy... and morn the loss of the man they call their hero.

Teresa Long, Braden’s husband said “He impacted a lot of people in a good way, anybody that ever met him, they loved him.”

US Army Specialist Braden Long joined the army after high school to pursue a lifelong dream, and a duty he felt called to do.

Long’s wife told us “After 911 he wanted to go even more to support his county, he wanted to do what was right.”

And Long, a few days shy of his twentieth birthday, did more than that. He gave his life.

Long’s wife said, “It’s still kinda hard to believe.”

The Sherman native was killed Saturday in Baghdad.

Long’s wife said “His humvee came under attack by enemy grenades, and that’s all they told me.”

And like many army wives, she dreaded the knock at the door... but it came at her home in Big Spring.

Long's wife told us, "They came in and they're like, we have to tell you something, as soon as I knew what was going on I said no...no."

A tragic and heartbreaking price, her parents say, to lose someone so young.

Mary Ford, Teresa Long's mother said "It breaks for my daughter, it breaks for Braden and his family, just so much life ahead of them."

Funeral services for Long will be held in Sherman, Texas on August nineteenth.

Mother Gets Dreaded Visit: GI Killed In Iraq

August 8, 2007 By David Montero, Rocky Mountain News

She thought it was the 5- year-old neighbor coming to play with the cat, so Kei Torres didn't think much of the doorbell ring.

Her friend had flown up from Houston to Torres' home in Washington state and they were going to see the Seattle Mariners game that night. Torres had one shoe on and was holding the other.

Ring.

"I was looking down, expecting to see this young boy. When I opened the door, I was still looking down and I saw four knees in green pants," Torres said. "And it's like you know immediately something is wrong.

"I brought my eyes up and the two soldiers are standing there and I know they're only there to tell me he's gone, but you can't wrap your hands or your mind around it. It just seemed surreal. I kept telling myself, 'I know I'm going to hear from him.' "

But she wasn't. Instead, she was told her son, Cpl. Jason LeFleur, 28, had been killed Saturday by a roadside bomb near Hawr Rajab in Iraq, according to Army officials at his home base of Fort Richardson in Alaska.

Torres said LeFleur, who enlisted in the Army in 2005 while living in Colorado, decided to join a year before signing up. She said he wanted to get in shape first.

"He made a decision, spent a whole year in pursuit of that dream and then he acted on it," Torres said. "I was very proud of that."

LeFleur was born in Houston and was reared in Lockhart in central Texas. He showed an aptitude for math and picked up playing the drums while in high school.

Torres said he eventually decided to go to college at Ole Miss and studied math there for two years before moving to Durango in 2000 - drawn there mostly for the skiing, his mother said. His father, Chuck LeFleur, already was living there.

He worked for the city of Durango in the recycling department and also held a job at Home Depot before deciding in 2004 to join the Army.

She said her son would have liked to have stayed in Durango, but between the desire to join the Army and the high cost of living there, five years would be all he could do.

Torres said she figured he eventually would work his way back to Texas. "We're all proud Texans," she said.

And proud Longhorns fans, too. She said LeFleur was fanatical about the University of Texas teams - which fed -into his love of sports. He also liked bluegrass music, Cajun food and could dominate trivia games involving sports and music.

But Torres said he was also a very private and serious person.

"I always used to say he was born a 40-year-old Republican," Torres said. "He wasn't afraid to tell you what he thought. And if you asked him what he thought, you'd have to prepare for the answer because he would tell you exactly what he thought, not what you wanted to hear."

LeFleur is survived by his parents and sister Megan LeFleur of Austin, Texas.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made in his name to Operation Homefront, or to the Spartan Heroes.

Operation Homefront is a nonprofit that supports families of deployed troops - operationhomefront.net/donate.htm. Spartan Heroes is part of the Spartan Memorial Foundation honoring fallen soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division at Fort Richardson: spartanheroes.org.

Mercenary Killed In Convoy Ambush; Three Wounded

August 13, 2007 Fiji Times Limited

Update: 2.26pm A FIJIAN national working as a security guard in Iraq is believed to be dead and three of his colleagues are seriously injured following an attack on the convoy they were escorting from Baghdad to Mosul at the weekend.

One of the three injured is an American national. The guards are all employees of the American security firm, CSS Global Iraq.

According to a Fijian guard with the same company, the deceased is from Namuka in Lau while one of the injured is from Kadavu and the other from Koro, Lomaiviti.

Two U.S. Convoys Attacked; Casualties Not Reported

August 13, 2007 Hussein Kadhim, McClatchy Newspapers

Around 4 p.m., a roadside bomb targeted an American convoy on Qanat street at Rusafa bank (east Baghdad) . No casualties reported.

Around 5 p.m., a roadside bomb targeted an American convoy at Saidiyah neighborhood (south Baghdad) . No casualties reported.

**FUTILE EXERCISE:
ONLY 15 MILLION MORE TO GO:
COME ON HOME NOW!**



A U.S. soldier from the 2nd battalion, 32nd Field Artillery brigade during a chase for a "high priority target" in Baghdad August 11, 2007. REUTERS/Damir Sagolj

**U.S. Lt. Colonel Says Dead 5 Year Old
Girl Was Firing On U.S. Troops
[German SS Officer Says Jews Attacked
His Soldiers With Gas Ovens]**

August 14, 2007 The Sydney Morning Herald

Imam Ali Hospital in Sadr City said it had received three bodies, including a five-year-old girl and her father, shot dead during the US raid in the Shi'ite stronghold. Angry mourners marched through the slum with flag-draped coffins.

Blood stained the mattress where the family said the girl was killed as they slept on the roof of the house to keep cool.

US military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Garver said troops fired only "at people who fired at them".

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Roadside Bomb In Afghanistan Kills Soldier From K'zoo

8.13.07 COREY WILLIAMS, Associated Press

DETROIT — A soldier from Kalamazoo was killed over the weekend in Afghanistan after a roadside bomb exploded beneath the truck he was driving, his mother said today.

Pfc. Jordan Goode, 21, a member of the 82nd Airborne Division in Fort Bragg, N.C., was in the first of a five-truck convoy when the explosion occurred Saturday, his mother told The Associated Press.

"He was a great kid and he loved his family," Sheri Goode said. "He believed in what he was doing and he was doing the right thing."

Jordan Goode graduated in 2004 from Kalamazoo's New City High School. He enlisted in the U.S. Army shortly after graduating and was shipped to Afghanistan in January.

He and his family spoke often through a Web cam they bought him, his mother said. "I talked to him (last) today for about 15 minutes online," Sheri Goode said. "I asked if he was ready to come home and he said, 'Yeah.'"

"He wanted to be out of his boots. Jordan said he was so tired of being in his boots."

His passion was extreme sports like skateboarding and snowboarding, his mother said.

"He loved the thrill. That's why he went Airborne," she said. "Once when Jordan snowboarded, he went down the end of a slope and there was no snow at the bottom. He had a concussion."

He was due to come home on leave in October and was planning to take his wife, Aubrey, to Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Sheri Goode said her son was concerned after his unit in Afghanistan recently was moved to a new camp.

"This past week, he said something to his wife that he might not come back. That was something he had never said before," Sheri Goode said.

Jordan Goode and Aubrey met in junior high school and were married nearly two years ago when she was expecting their daughter, Amirah.

He joined the Army to support his new family.

"He decided to step up to the plate, do he right thing and provide for his family," Sheri Goode said.

No funeral services have been planned.

Survivors also include his father, Tony, and two brothers.

Roanoke County Soldier Killed In Afghanistan

Aug 13, 2007 By Lindsey Henley, WSLN NewsChannel 10

Another local soldier makes the ultimate sacrifice fighting for freedom in the War on Terror.

The sister of Jesse Clowers Jr. tells us the Army notified the family Sunday, that Jesse was killed in Afghanistan. He was 27 years old.

Clowers served in the Army Special Forces, and was based out of North Carolina. He had recently told his family that he would be home by the end of September or the beginning of October.

He leaves behind a wife, Kaytie, and two children. The couple's son is named after his father and is just 2 1/2 years old. The couple also had a daughter born in May. Jesse had not met her yet.

Clowers Jr. graduated from Cave Spring High School back in 1998 and played football for the Knights. He then went on to Virginia Tech, where he was a member of the cheer squad, and graduated in 2003.

1st Polish Soldier Killed In Afghanistan

August 14, 2007 The Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland: A Polish officer was killed during an attack on a military convoy in eastern Afghanistan on Tuesday, making him the first soldier from Poland to be killed in the Afghan mission, the defense minister said.

2nd Lt. Lukasz Kurowski, 28, was killed in an exchange of fire some 20 kilometers (12 miles) southeast of a base in the city of Gardez, Aleksander Szczyglo said on TVN24 television.

Kurowski was immediately taken to a hospital, but died on the way, Szczyglo said.

He is the first fatality among the 1,200 troops that Poland has stationed in Afghanistan as part of a NATO mission. In Iraq, Poland has reported the deaths of 21 soldiers.

Four British Soldiers Wounded In Well-Planned Ambush [Finally, A War Correspondent Who Knows How To Write A Battle Report] [And The Newspaper Didn't Give Him Credit By Name]

14/08/2007 Echo Publications

British forces were caught up in a ferocious gun battle in southern Afghanistan today after a Taliban ambush in a cornfield.

Two soldiers were helicoptered to hospital for emergency surgery – one with very serious injuries – when insurgents opened fire with machine guns and Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs) just metres away.

Minutes beforehand, the troops from the 1st Battalion the Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment (1WFR) had been standing in a suspected Taliban compound in no-man's-land deep inside Helmand Province's notorious "Green Zone".

Its occupants had apparently left, leaving behind only a few daily provisions, a cache of rocket flares and a framed photograph of a Jihadist fighter posing with an AK47.

But as a platoon from the regiment's B Company made their way into the adjoining field – creeping along a perimeter ditch, out of sight behind ripening corn, the Taliban were lying in wait.

It was to be their 28th “contact” and fourth ambush in four months.

They were among British forces taking part in a fresh push against the Taliban front line codenamed Operation “Naiza” – meaning spike – inside the Green Zone, a lush streak of land cutting through the desert where the insurgents have taken refuge. The operation began late last night with scores of soldiers patrolling across the Green Zone in darkness to a fortress-like outpost held by 1WFR troops throughout the summer.

Setting out after first light today, the troops had stormed a maze of mud-walled compounds suspected of harbouring Taliban before entering the field to search for a better vantage point.

Suddenly pinned down in a ditch as gunfire cracked overhead, the soldiers’ training immediately kicked in, coolly returning fire with the first of hundreds of rounds before taking cover from incoming RPGs.

Troops behind the ditch immediately began shouting out each other’s names to account for their comrades but within less than a minute the call was repeated down the line: “We’ve got one casualty, we’ve got one casualty.”

Crawling on their stomachs, they escaped along the shallow ditch towards a deeper trench as others returned fire.

But as they entered the second ditch Taliban fighters had made their way along behind a hedge into the first compound, threatening to outflank and surround them.

Mortar specialists put down a smoke blanket as an RPG smashed into a tree just feet away from one of them.

Meanwhile the infantrymen crawled down a thorn-filled trench, taking refuge behind a mud wall 100m from the Taliban and opened fire with machine guns.

With reinforcements from another platoon providing covering fire the casualties were safely evacuated.

Worst hit was a private who had been at the front of a line moving through the field when he was shot by a Taliban fighter in a brown “dish-dash” trouser suit and turban.

Corporal Clint Buchanan, 25, from Ilkeston, Derbyshire, was next to him in the line.

He said afterwards: “The guy was in the corner as he attacked him, he was in cover, he waited for him to get all the way up.

“My friend got hit, the bloke went back from there towards the others and obviously heard him moaning in pain because he had been shot.

“Then a couple of minutes later he just came back, casual as fuck and went to finish him off.”

But the insurgent was shot by the British troops before he could get any further. The private is described as in a serious but stable condition in hospital. Another soldier was

airlifted with him to Camp Bastion with a shrapnel wound to his arm and is expected to make a full recovery.

The Platoon's acting Second in Command, Corporal Andy Geering, 36, was hit by a small piece of shrapnel in his arm but did not need hospital treatment and was able to fight on.

He had been due to go home on leave within hours when the battle broke out.

TROOP NEWS

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



The body of Marine Cpl. Matthew Zindars after his funeral service Aug. 3, 2007 at the Lutheran Preparatory School in Watertown Wis. Zindars was killed by a roadside bomb July 24, 2007, during his second tour of duty in Iraq. (AP Photo/Darren Hauck)

Soldiers And Families Confront General Over Endless Extensions:

He “Sought To Reassure” Them But Says No End In Sight To 15 Month Tours



Casey, Jr. Aug. 14, 2007. (AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

[When a general has to “reassure” the troops, you know the pressure is building. The explosion will come. T]

Aug. 14, 2007 By MICHELLE ROBERTS Associated Press Writer

FORT HOOD, Texas — Soldiers deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan will be facing the extended 15-month deployments until at least next June, even under a best-case scenario, a top Army commander said Tuesday.

Commanders are assessing the situation on the ground now, but Gen. Richard Cody, the Army Vice Chief of Staff, said it will take until at least June to shrink average deployments back to a year while maintaining the 158,000 troops deployed in Iraq now.

"It's going to take a while to get off the 15 months," he said in an interview with The Associated Press on Tuesday.

A decision on when to begin scaling back the longer deployments will depend on when President Bush and military commanders believe they can begin to pull back troops, he said. But once a decision is made, he cautioned, "We cannot automatically revert to 12 months. This is a river that's flowing."

During a day of meetings with troops, commanders and Army spouses at Fort Hood, he faced questions at every rank about the extended deployments and sought to reassure soldiers that the extension was a temporary measure designed to get enough soldiers in Iraq while giving them at least a year to rest and train between deployments.

"We will not extend you past 15 months.

"I guarantee you that — unless something really bad happens in the world," Cody told a group of 4th Infantry Division soldiers getting ready to deploy.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Destroys Another Key Bridge

14 August 2007 By KIM GAMEL, Associated Press Writer

A truck bomber struck a strategic bridge outside Baghdad on Tuesday, sending cars plunging into the river and killing at least 10 people in the second attack on the span in three months, police said.

The Thiraa Dijla bridge in Taji, a town near a U.S. air base some 12 miles north of the capital, came under attack around noon, police said, giving the casualty toll.

The bridge, which stretched across a canal on the main highway that links Baghdad with the northern city of Mosul, was bombed three months ago and only one lane had reopened, according to the police officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to release the information.

The attacker detonated his payload after going through an Iraqi army checkpoint about 40 yards away from the span, which was devastated, according to the officials.

A number of cars plunged into the canal, which links the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers, and rescue efforts were under way, the officials said.

U.S. and Iraqi troops cordoned off the area to evacuate the wounded, the military said, without providing a casualty toll.

Sweden Suspends Iraq Flights After Rocket Attack On Plane

Aug 14 By LOUISE NORDSTROM, Associated Press Writer

STOCKHOLM, Sweden - Sweden has suspended commercial flights to and from Iraq after an apparent rocket attack against a passenger jet as it took off from the northern city of Sulaimaniyah, the Nordic country's aviation authority said Tuesday.

In the incident last Wednesday, pilots of the Nordic Airways plane carrying 130 passengers noticed a trail of light arching over the aircraft just after takeoff, Civil Aviation Authority spokesman Anders Lundblad said.

The McDonnell Douglas MD83 plane was not hit, and arrived safely in Stockholm.

How's That Surge Going?

50 Insurgents Invade Oil Ministry Building And Capture Officials

8.14.07 AFP

Dozens of guerillas wearing security force uniforms stormed the compound and captured a deputy oil minister and four other officials who were spirited away in a convoy using 17 official vehicles.

The commando-like raid captured Abdel-Jabar al-Wagaa, a senior assistant to Oil Minister Hussain al-Shahristani, said Assem Jihad, the oil ministry spokesman.

Al-Wagaa and four other officials with the State Oil Marketing Organization were taken away by more than 50 fighters in military-style vehicles, said an Interior Minister official, speaking anonymously because he was not authorized to release the information.

The official said five bodyguards were wounded in the raid on the State Oil Marketing Organization complex on Palestine Street in eastern Baghdad.

Jihad said attackers took the deputy minister from his home in the compound. He said they stole a number of cars from the compound, most of them belonging to the marketing organization.

Assorted Resistance Action

13 Aug 2007 Reuters & AP & Hussein Kadhim, McClatchy Newspapers & 14 Aug 2007 Reuters

Sunday night, a roadside bomb targeted a border guards convoy at Nafit Khana (south of Khanaqeen, north east Baqouba) killing a major and four of his soldiers. All of them were former members of Peshmerga (Kurds fighters) .

Insurgents killed one Iraqi soldier in central Hilla 100 km (62 miles) south of Baghdad, police said and captured the mayor of the town of Dijla, near Tikrit.

Judge Abdul Sattar Bayrkdar, the spokesman for the Iraqi Higher Judicial Council, said 31 judges have been killed.

Around 1.10 p.m., Insurgents captured a truck driver on Gargcha bridge near Mamsha village of Laylan (south east Kirkuk). The attackers were riding two cars (white Toyota sedan and white pick up). The police has informed all check points of this incident to get them.

Insurgents stormed the house of police officer Aqil Radhi Idan, killing his family, in the town of Suwayra, 40 km (25 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents killed a guard and wounded two others in a drive-by attack on a police patrol in Hilla, 100 km (60 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents killed a policeman near his house in a drive-by shooting in Diwaniya, 180 km (110 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

4 policemen were wounded in an IED explosion that targeted a police patrol in Al Tayaran square downtown Kirkuk city around 1,00 pm.

4 policemen from one of the patrols of the emergencies battalion of Kirkuk police were wounded in an IED explosion in Wahid Huzairan neighborhood downtown Kirkuk city around 9,45 am.

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

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<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

OCCUPATION REPORT

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



A terrified Iraqi child covers his face as foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. 2nd battalion, 32nd Field Artillery brigade search his house during an armed home invasion in Baghdad August 11, 2007. REUTERS/Damir Sagolj



An Iraqi woman is forced to sit in the dirt so she can be body-searched by foreign occupation troops from the U.S. Army Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry

Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division at a checkpoint in the Amariyah neighborhood in west Baghdad, Iraq on Aug. 4, 2007. (AP Photo/Petr David Jousek)

[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]

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



“A Foreshadowing Of What’s In Store Big-Time This Fall When The

Propaganda Machinery Of The Warfare State Goes Into High Gear”

The media echo chamber will reverberate with endless claims that the military situation is improving, American casualties will be dropping and Iraqi forces will be shouldering more of the burden.

August 2, 2007 by Norman Solomon, CommonDreams. The new documentary film War Made Easy: How Presidents and Pundits Keep Spinning Us to Death is based on Norman Solomon’s book of the same title.

This week the U.S. media establishment is mainlining another fix for the Iraq war: It isn’t so bad after all, American military power could turn wrong into right, chronic misleaders now serve as truth-tellers.

The hit is that the war must go on.

When the White House chief of staff Andrew Card said five years ago that “you don’t introduce new products in August,” he was explaining the need to defer an all-out PR campaign for invading Iraq until early fall.

But this year, August isn’t a bad month to launch a sales pitch for a new and improved Iraq war. Bad products must be re-marketed to counteract buyers’ remorse.

“War critics” who have concentrated on decrying the lack of U.S. military progress in Iraq are now feeling the hoist from their own petards. But that’s to be expected.

Those who complain that the war machine is ineffective are asking for more effective warfare even when they think they’re demanding peace.

If Michael O’Hanlon and Kenneth Pollack didn’t exist, they’d have to be invented. The duo’s op-ed piece Monday in the New York Times, under the headline “A War We Just Might Win,” was boilerplate work from elite foreign-policy technicians packaging themselves as “two analysts who have harshly criticized the Bush administration’s miserable handling of Iraq.”

A recent eight-day officially guided tour led them to conclude that “we are finally getting somewhere in Iraq, at least in military terms.”

Both men have always been basic supporters of the Iraq war.

O’Hanlon is a prolific writer at the Brookings Institution. Pollack’s credits include working at the CIA and authoring the 2002 bestseller The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq.

In the years since the candy and flowers failed to materialize, their critiques of the Iraq war have been merely tactical.

The media maneuvers of recent days are eerily similar to scams that worked so well for the Bush administration during the agenda-setting for the invasion.

Vice President Cheney and his top underlings kept leaking disinformation about purported Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and links to Al Qaeda — while the New York Times and other key media outlets breathlessly reported the falsehoods as virtual facts.

Then Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Condoleezza Rice and other practitioners of warcraft quickly went in front of TV cameras and microphones to cite the “reporting” in the Times and elsewhere that they had rigged in the first place.

Last Monday, the ink was scarcely dry on the piece by O’Hanlon and Pollack before the savants were making the rounds of TV studios and other media outlets — doing their best to perpetuate a war that they’d helped to deceive the country into in the first place.

The next day, Cheney picked up the tag-team baton. Tuesday night, on CNN’s “Larry King Live,” he declared that the U.S. military “made significant progress now into the course of the summer. ...

Don’t take it from me. Look at the piece that appeared yesterday in the New York Times, not exactly a friendly publication — but a piece by Mr. O’Hanlon and Mr. Pollack on the situation in Iraq. They’re just back from visiting over there. They both have been strong critics of the war.”

On Wednesday, the U.S. News & World Report website noted: “The news that the U.S. death toll in Iraq for July, at 73, is the lowest in eight months spurred several news organizations to present a somewhat optimistic view of the situation in Iraq.

The consensus in the coverage appears to be that things are improving militarily, even as the political side of the equation remains troubling.”

Such media coverage is a foreshadowing of what’s in store big-time this fall when the propaganda machinery of the warfare state goes into high gear.

The media echo chamber will reverberate with endless claims that the military situation is improving, American casualties will be dropping and Iraqi forces will be shouldering more of the burden.

Arguments over whether U.S. forces can prevail in Iraq bypass a truth that no amount of media spin can change: The U.S. war effort in Iraq has always been illegitimate and fundamentally wrong. Whatever the prospects for America’s war there, it shouldn’t be fought.

During the Vietnam War, the U.S. news media were fond of disputes about whether light really existed at the end of the tunnel. Framed that way, the debate could — and did — go on for many years.

The most important point to be made was that the United States had no right to be in the tunnel in the first place.

For years now, many opponents of the Iraq war have assumed that the tides of history were shifting and would soon carry American troops home.

“President Bush may be the last person in the country to learn that for Americans, if not Iraqis, the war in Iraq is over,” New York Times columnist Frank Rich wrote in August 2005.

He concluded that the United States as a country “has already made the decision for Mr. Bush. We’re outta there.”

As I wrote at the time, Rich’s storyline was “a complacent message that stands in sharp contrast to the real situation we now face: a U.S. war on Iraq that may persist for a terribly long time.

“For the Americans still in Iraq, and for the Iraqis still caught in the crossfire of the occupation, the experiences ahead will hardly be compatible with reassuring forecasts made by pundits in the summer of 2005.”

Or in the summer of 2007.

Unfortunately, what I wrote two Augusts ago is still true: “We’re not ‘outta there’ — until an antiwar movement in the United States can grow strong enough to make the demand stick.”

The American media establishment continues to behave like a leviathan with a monkey on its back — hooked on militarism and largely hostile to the creative intervention that democracy requires.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

***Welcome To The Occupied USA:
Chicago Terrorists Execute
Another Black Teen;
“A Newspaper Photographer’s
Cameras Were Broken By Police”***

“The Boy Was Running Away From Them”



“No justice, no peace! No racist police!”

Police guard the police station at 3100 W. Harrison against protesters Monday night.
(Tom Cruze/Sun-Times)

August 7, 2007 BY NORM PARISH AND CINDY LOZA Staff Reporters, Chicago Sun-Times

Chicago Police on Monday evening shot and killed a teen on the West Side who police say pointed a gun at an officer.

The fatal shooting triggered a near-riot by neighborhood residents disputing the police version of the incident, which brought several hundred officers to the scene from police districts citywide.

Ericka Hale, 18, one of a crowd of hundreds who later marched to the Harrison and Kedzie police station for a protest and prayer vigil, had a different version of the shooting.

“The boy was running away from them. By the time he got to the garbage can, the police shot him,” Hale said.

Relatives identified the teen as Aaron Harrison, 18.

According to police, the incident occurred about 8 p.m., when Special Operations Section officers on patrol saw a group of young men standing in front of a grocery store.

Witnesses said Harrison and five friends were in front of the store when police pulled up, and they ran. Jason Hunley, 25, said police followed Harrison a block away, and one allegedly fired shots as Harrison ran.

This is the second time in a week a man has died at the hands of police. Gefrey Johnson, 42, died after police shot him with a Taser on Saturday.

As a crowd of hundreds gathered afterward and swelled, Lashunna Carter, 16, the teen's girlfriend, was hysterical, repeating: "The police just shot him! They just shot him!"

Some in the crowd said Harrison wasn't involved with gangs or drugs but belonged to a hip-hop dance group. "He was just a hip-hop kid. He wasn't doing anything wrong," said Brenda Blackman, 48.

The crowd grew increasingly volatile, as more police were summoned to line a four-block area.

Bottles were thrown at police, and police confirmed a newspaper photographer's cameras were broken by police, but reported no arrests.

At the station, the crowd chanted: "No justice, no peace! No racist police!"

Police cordoned them away from the building, and reporters observed some officers physically pushing some marchers.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

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

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

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