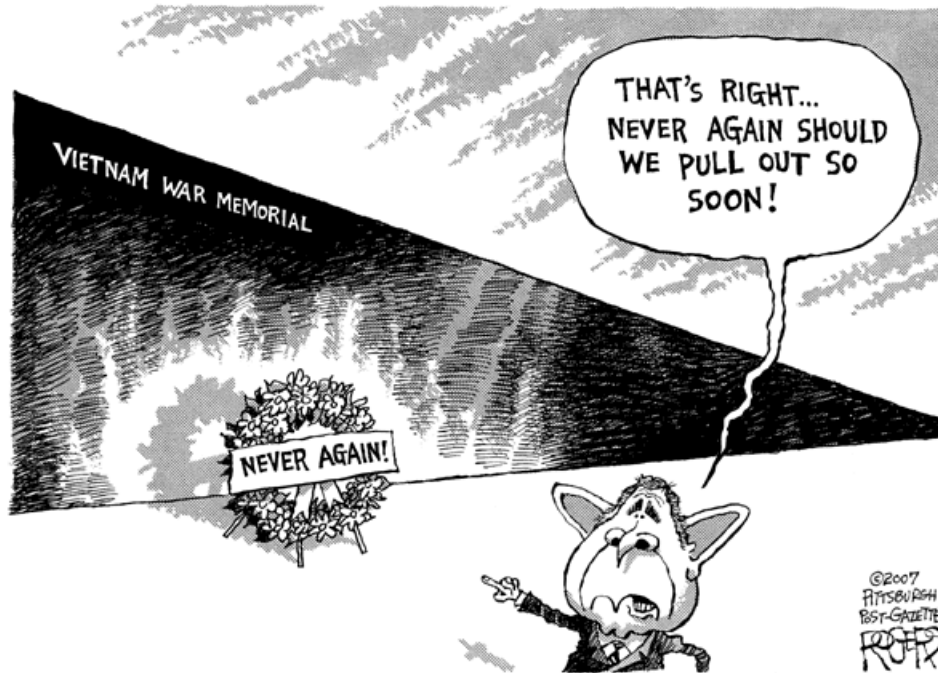


GI SPECIAL 513:



“The U.S. Time Here Has Come And Gone”

“Us And The Insurgents Have
Grown Together,” Sowers Said.
“It’s A Deadly Little Dance We’re
Doing, And They’re Improving”

August 30, 2007 By Chris Collins, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

SOUTHEAST OF SALMAN PAK, Iraq — Standing in a small room in the Iraqi home they’d raided an hour earlier, a dozen soldiers from the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat

Team of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division were trading jokes when 1st Sgt. Troy Moore, Company A's senior enlisted man, shouted out.

"We're bringing democracy to Iraq," he called, with obvious sarcasm, as a reporter entered the room.

Then Moore began loudly humming the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." Within seconds the rest of the troops had joined in, filling the small, barren home in the middle of Iraq with the patriotic chorus of a Civil War-era ballad.

Although the soldiers who since spring have walked and ridden through this volatile area mixed with Sunni and Shiite Muslims have seen some signs of progress, they still face the daily threat of roadside bombs, an unreliable Iraqi police force, the limitations of depending on Iraqis for tips and the ever-elusive enemy.

"Even though we've out-stayed our welcome, in the big picture of whether we've helped or not, I know we have," said Sgt. Christofer Kitto, a 23-year-old sniper from Altamont, N.Y.

"But now it's just in a state of quagmire.

"The U.S. time here has come and gone."

On this night, the troops had been ferried by helicopter to a rural enclave abutting the Tigris River. Their mission: Uproot a suspected nest of Sunni insurgents.

But the soldiers found only a small cache of weapons outside one of the 13 houses they searched. They detained one man who identified himself with a name that didn't match his government-issued ID, earning him a noisy, expletive-laden interrogation that was easily overheard in the next room.

"Keep your head down! Keep your (expletive) head down!" the interrogator yelled in English as an interpreter translated. "Why are you speaking if you're lying? You better think about what you're saying before you talk to me, son. I've got a real short temper tonight!"

Another Iraqi man who lived in the house also was questioned, though he wasn't detained. What did he know about Sunni insurgents living in the area, asked Staff Sgt. Kenneth Braxton, who's from Philadelphia. Nothing, the man said. Braxton said he knew the man was lying because of the way he moved his eyes. The sergeant tore an American flag Velcro patch from his sleeve and told the Iraqi to hold it to his chest. Then another soldier used a digital camera to take a picture of the man.

"So we've got a picture of you holding an American flag now," Braxton said. He told the man that if he didn't cooperate, the photo would be posted around the neighborhood.

It the end, it didn't appear that the soldiers gleaned any helpful information from the man. The military didn't say what happened to the detainee.

A few hours later, the soldiers returned to Command Outpost Cleary, weary and disappointed.

Sowers, a public affairs officer from Richmond, Ind., said that during his first tour in 2004, “there was no such thing” as EFPs, which the U.S. military says that the Iranian military supplies.

“Us and the insurgents have grown together,” [Maj. Joe] Sowers said. “It’s a deadly little dance we’re doing, and they’re improving.”

It’s not just the roadside bombs that kill.

Standing in FOB Hammer’s conference room, Sowers pointed to a wall with framed photos of 19 soldiers from the 3rd Brigade who’ve been killed in action. He ticked off the way they died: “I was on this patrol. It was an EFP,” Sowers said, pointing to one of the photos.

“This one was small-arms fire. This one was a crush-wire IED (improvised explosive device). This one was a rocket. This one was a sniper.”

MORE:

OK! You Can Go Home Now! Collaborator Prime Minister Says Civil War Is Over And His Government Won It

Sept 2, 2007 AP

BAGHDAD - Iraq’s beleaguered prime minister accused his American critics on Sunday of underestimating how hard it is to rebuild his country and failing to appreciate his government’s achievements “such as stopping the civil and sectarian war.”

He also said U.S. critics may not know “the size of the destruction that Iraq passed through” and do not appreciate “the big role of the Iraqi government and its achievements, such as stopping the civil and sectarian war.”

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Soldier Killed In Iraq Has Local Ties

Aug 26, 2007 By JOSE PATINO GIRONA, The Tampa Tribune

TAMPA - Sgt. 1st Class David A. Heringes, a graduate of Tampa's Leto High School, joined the U.S. Army 15 years ago because he had a passion for it.

"He was making a career of it and he had no problem where they sent him," said his father, Ron Heringes of Spring Hill. "That was part of his job."

On Friday, Heringes, 36, died when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit while he was on a mission in Bayji, Iraq, near Tikrit.

"Right now, it is still a shock," said his brother-in-law Bobby Rhone of Wesley Chapel. "Everyone here is still in disbelief."

David Heringes had served in Iraq for one year.

He had been scheduled to return to the United States this month, but four months ago he learned his tour was extended until November, Ron Heringes said.

Ron Heringes said he had been communicating with his son once a week by phone or e-mail and that his spirits had been positive. David Heringes never spoke about his missions.

He was born in Cleveland and his family moved to Tampa when he was 15. He graduated from Leto High in 1989.

After high school, he worked as an auto mechanic. At age 20, he enlisted in the military, Ron Heringes said, and he planned to stay 20 years or more.

David Heringes became a paratrooper with the 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C. He was also a mechanic for the Army.

He served six weeks in Afghanistan during elections and two years in South Korea, Ron Heringes said.

He described his son as fearless and a "fun-loving father." He enjoyed working on motorcycles and cars, Rhone said.

In addition to his father and brother-in-law, he is survived by his wife, Shannan Heringes of Fayetteville, N.C.; a son, 5-year-old Logan Heringes, and a stepdaughter, 9-year-old Cheyenne Ward, both of Fayetteville; his mother, Joyce Heringes of Spring Hill; and his sister, Melissa Rhone, 27, of Wesley Chapel.

Soldier With Local Ties Killed In Iraq; LEHT Man's Son Was A New Father-To- Be

August 25, 2007 By ROB SPAHR, Staff Writer, The Press of Atlantic City

LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP - Michael Hook was excited to become a father.

His first child, a son, is due at the end of September - just one week after his first tour in Iraq was scheduled to end.

But on Friday, what would have been Hook's 26th birthday, his body was scheduled to arrive at Dover Air Force Base in Dover, Del., along with the bodies of 13 other soldiers who were killed Wednesday when their Black Hawk helicopter crashed in northern Iraq.

Hook, an Army specialist, lived in Altoona, Pa., but spent summers in Little Egg Harbor Township, Ocean County, with his father and stepmother, Larry Hook and Belinda Sands, and he lived there for a year after graduating from high school.

"He was able to make friends pretty easily out here and he loved being around them," said Larry Hook, who has lived in Little Egg Harbor Township for 21 years. "They would all hang out together, go to the beach and all of the other typical things that young people do."

Hook also loved motorcycles and had one of his own at his home base in Hawaii, which Larry Hook said he had only just learned about recently.

"Knowing Michael, it was probably one of the high-performance bikes," he said.

Hook decided to enlist in the Army two years ago, and within a year he knew that he was bound for either Iraq or Afghanistan.

"There was a point in his life after he graduated from high school where he was trying to figure out what direction he wanted to go in his life," Larry Hook said. "That's when he began looking toward the military, and I didn't deter him at all."

When asked how Hook had adjusted to life on the front lines, Larry Hook said his son was "determined to do his job over there."

Last Christmas was the last time Larry Hook saw him.

"He came home on leave, so I went out to Altoona to spend the week with him," Larry Hook said. "We basically just buddied around the whole time."

But the two talked to each other last weekend.

"The conversation lasted about an hour," said Larry Hook, who said his son called to thank him for a care package he sent, which included birthday cards. "He was very tired because they had just returned back from a mission. It was the middle of the night out there, so he was looking forward to getting some rest."

Larry Hook first heard of his son's death Wednesday, when he sat down to have his morning cup of coffee and watch the news.

"I saw that a helicopter had gone down and instantly I got a bad feeling," he said. "No more than an hour later, there were two men at my front door."

Hook was scheduled to return from his first tour in Iraq on Sept. 24, a week before his fiancé Susan Fetterman, of Altoona, is due to have a baby boy.

"He needed to stay in Hawaii for about 30 days for debriefing or something along those lines, but he was anxious to get back to Altoona to see his child. He was extremely excited to be a father," said Larry Hook, who added the couple was planning a wedding but were unsure of a date, due to Hook's military requirements.

Hook's body was to arrive in Dover at 6:30 p.m. Friday. Larry Hook said funeral arrangements for his son had not been finalized as of Friday afternoon.

"Michael really enjoyed life," Larry Hook said. "How ironic is it that he is returning home on his 26th birthday?"

Fallen Hero Leaves Brand-New Wife

August 25, 2007 By Rosemarie Bernardo, Honolulu Star-Bulletin

Cpl. Joshua Harmon couldn't wait to return to Hawaii from Iraq to start his life with Kristin, his wife of several months.

Harmon and Kristin legally wed by proxy marriage in the spring when he found out that his yearlong tour in Iraq was extended by three months.

"He couldn't wait any longer," said friend Eric Lemr during a phone interview from Mentor, Ohio. Harmon had proposed to her earlier while he was on leave. The couple planned to start their married life together in Hawaii.

But Harmon, 20, of Mentor-on-the-Lake, Ohio, was one of 14 soldiers killed early Wednesday when their UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crashed in Iraq after it had experienced mechanical problems during a night mission.

Harmon served as a combat medic and was on his second tour of duty in Iraq.

His mother, Donna, counted the days when her younger son was due to return home in the first week of October. "He was my baby. He was 20 years old. He had 42 more days to come home," she said.

Harmon's wife was planning to return to Hawaii next month to prepare for his arrival with a new apartment and car. The couple met at a nightclub in Hawaii while Kristin was in the islands for her aunt's wedding.

"She was the love of his life," Harmon's mother said.

The couple planned to have their formal wedding among family and friends next summer in Norfolk, Va., Kristin's hometown. Both wanted to have children.

"It's just a crazy, living nightmare," Harmon's mother said as she cried. "He was the most fun-loving, honest, caring person you would ever meet. "It's not fair. He had so much to live for."

Kristin Harmon and her parents are due to arrive in Ohio today to be with Harmon's family. "She is having a rough time," Harmon's mother said. "We'll all get through this. Josh would've wanted us to carry on and not be sad," she added. "That's the type of person he was."

Harmon, a 2005 graduate of Mentor High School, received the Army Medal Commendation of Valor after he saved a fellow soldier who suffered a gunshot wound to the head. Harmon got the soldier to the hospital where doctors were impressed with Harmon's treatment.

The soldier is recovering in a Maryland hospital, said Lt. Tim Serazin, of the Willoughby Hills Fire Department, where Harmon's father, Richard, serves as fire chief.

"Josh was every bit a soldier. He had a lot of compassion. He's a truly genuine kid," Serazin said.

Harmon joined the Army in August 2005 and was transferred to Schofield Barracks in April 2006 after he completed his advanced individual training in Houston. He had planned to attend medical school when he returned from Iraq.

Loved ones remembered how he had a great sense of humor and smile and easily made friends. "He made friends everywhere," his mother said.

He was also fearless and lived life to the fullest, said Lemr, the Ohio friend.

Harmon enjoyed music from country to rap and played the drums and guitar. He also liked working on cars.

He grew up in a small town near Lake Erie. During his deployment, he regularly kept in contact with his family and friends. "He loved his family. He loved his friends," his mother said.

Lemr, who had known Harmon all his life, said they regarded each other as brothers. "That's what we called each other," he said. Lemr said he last spoke to Harmon on Monday when they talked about how he was to head back to Ohio for two weeks during the holiday season. Both had planned to celebrate their 21st birthdays together.

Harmon was to have turned 21 on Nov. 25.

U.S. Patrol Convoy Attacked, Humvee Destroyed In Baghdad; Casualties Not Yet Announced

Sept 2 (KUNA)

An Iraqi security source said an improvised bomb exploded on Al-Qanat street targeting a US patrol convoy which resulted in complete damage to one of the four military Humvee patrols.

Eyewitnesses close to the scene saw one US soldier laying on the ground, the source said.

BEEN ON THE JOB TOO LONG: COME ON HOME, NOW



US soldiers in the village of Sweb, south of Baquba, 01 August 2007. (AFP/File/Olivier Laban-Mattei)

British Troops Withdraw From Basra; Forces Concentrated At The Airport

September 2, 2007 Ian Black and Michael White. The Guardian

British troops began pulling out of Basra Palace in Iraq tonight, handing control of the base to Iraqi forces amid new Anglo-American recriminations about the aftermath of the war.

The UK battlegroup in Saddam Hussein's former compound comprises about 500 troops and their redeployment to the city's airbase is the penultimate stage of Britain's presence in the country.

The Ministry of Defence refused to give any detailed information about the timing of the move until the pullout is completed, but it was expected to take around four to five hours.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

THIS IS NOT A SATIRE: Resistance Says Copter Shot Down: Occupation Command Says That's A Lie: It Was "Targeted" And Made "Emergency Landing"

September 02, 2007 Pakistan Tribune

KABUL: Taliban militants have claimed downing a NATO helicopter.

NATO officials rejected the claim as baseless.

Taliban spokesman Zabeehullah Mujahid told Pajhwok Afghan News over the telephone that the chopper was shot down in Kamdesh district of the province the other day.

A NATO spokesman said a NATO helicopter was targeted; however, it did not crash. He said the chopper had made emergency landing and the people on board stayed unhurt.

“Over The Past Six Weeks, The Taliban Has Driven Government Forces Out Of Roughly Half Of A Strategic Area In Southern Afghanistan That American And

NATO Officials Declared A Success Story Last Fall” Silly Occupation General Says The Resistance Is In “Disarray”

[Thanks to Alan Stolzer, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

The rising number of attacks are taking a heavy toll. At least 2,500 to 3,000 people have died in insurgency-related violence so far this year, a quarter of them civilians, according to the U.N. tally, a 20 percent increase over 2006. [Do the math. That means 75% of those killed were *not civilians*. That means 1875 to 2250 were occupation troops or armed collaborators.]

09/02/2007 By David Rohde, New York Times

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan - Over the past six weeks, the Taliban has driven government forces out of roughly half of a strategic area in southern Afghanistan that American and NATO officials declared a success story last fall in their campaign to clear out insurgents and make way for development programs, Afghan officials say.

A year after Canadian and American forces drove hundreds of Taliban fighters from the area, the Panjwai and Zhare districts southwest of Kandahar, the rebels are back and have adopted new tactics. Carrying out guerrilla attacks after NATO troops partly withdrew in July, they overran isolated police posts and are now operating in areas where they can mount attacks on Kandahar, the south's largest city.

The setback is part of a bloody stalemate that has occurred between NATO troops and Taliban fighters across southern Afghanistan this summer. NATO and Afghan army soldiers can push the Taliban out of rural areas, but the Afghan police are too weak to hold the territory after they withdraw.

The Panjwai and Zhare districts, in particular, highlight the changing nature of the fight in the south. The military operation there in September 2006 was the largest conventional battle in the country since 2002. But this year, the Taliban is avoiding set battles with NATO and instead are attacking the police and stepping up their use of roadside bombs, known as improvised explosive devices or IEDs.

“It's very seldom that we have direct engagement with the Taliban,” said Brig. Gen. Guy Laroche, the commander of Canadian forces leading the NATO effort in Kandahar. “What they're going to use is IEDs.”

NATO and American military officials have declined to release exact Taliban attack statistics, and collecting accurate information is difficult, particularly in rural Afghanistan.

According to an internal U.N. tally, insurgents have set off 516 IEDs in 2007. Another 402 such devices have been discovered before detonation.

Reported security incidents, a broad category that includes bombings, firefights and intimidation, are up from roughly 500 a month last year to 600 a month this year, a 20 percent increase, according to the United Nations.

The rising number of attacks are taking a heavy toll. At least 2,500 to 3,000 people have died in insurgency-related violence so far this year, a quarter of them civilians, according to the U.N. tally, a 20 percent increase over 2006. [Do the math. That means 75% of those killed were *not civilians*. That means 1875 to 2250 were *occupation troops or armed collaborators!*]

NATO and American casualty rates are up by about 20 percent this year, to 161, according to Iraq Casualty Count, a Web site that tracks deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Maj. Gen. Bernard S. Champoux, deputy commander for security for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, said the Taliban's leadership was in "disarray" and had not been able to launch the attacks it had hoped this year and would be even weaker next year.

The trouble has come when the army and foreign troops withdraw, leaving lightly armed Afghan police forces struggling to hold rural areas. Corruption is rampant among the police, and some units have exaggerated casualty rates or abandoned checkpoints.

And in Oruzgan province, where Dutch NATO forces focus more on development programs than on combat, the government controls the provincial capital, several district centers and little of the countryside.

TROOP NEWS

“Use My Death As A Tool With The Media To End This Pointless War”

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

August 13, 2007 Gary Younge, The Guardian

On the day that Zach sent his email home, Republican frontrunner Mitt Romney addressed a town hall meeting 50 miles from his home town. Romney was asked why none of his children are serving in the military.

“One of the ways my sons are showing support for our nation is helping me get elected because they think I'd be a great president,” he said.

Mom, I had another friend die today from a massive ied and many more wounded with shattered bones and scrapes. We used to be in the same platoon. 1st platoon and the same squad when I first arrived at fort hood for a good 7 months or so. He was 17 then and barely a day over 19 now that he has passed away.

It's tearing me up so badly inside. I just can't stand it.

I can't get rid of the feeling that I probably won't make it home from this war. I have this horrible feeling that his fate will soon become my own.

I don't want to die here Mom. Don't tell Erin bc I know it will devastate her.

But if somehow I don't make it, I want you Mom and Dad and all the family and especially Erin to know I love you all so so much and appreciate everything you all have done for me in the thick and thin.

The most important thing I want you all to do, is to use all of your connections to do everything in your will to use my death as a tool with the media to end this pointless war.

Contact Michael Moore or whomever it may be to get the word out about how disgusted with our government I am about forcing us to come here to wait for death to claim us.

I want it to end.

How many more friends, sons, daughters, mothers, and dads must die here before they say it's enough?

And if you don't die, the worst part you have to live with is the guilt of surviving. Surviving this war and not dying like your buddies to your left and to your right in combat.

I love you all so so much.

love,
Zach

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

Military Survivors Fucked Over As Usual; “Money Was Taken Out Of Survivors’ Checks, To Be Repaid Later When Everything Was Worked Out” “Unhelpful And Occasionally Rude Feedback From Representatives”

September 03, 2007 Army Times

Because of complaints from surviving family members about financial problems caused by slow service from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, the Senate Armed Services Committee has ordered a comprehensive study.

“Some beneficiaries report their inquiries to DFAS have required extended wait times that led to unhelpful and occasionally rude feedback from representatives who could not answer their specific questions,” the committee says in its report on the 2008 defense authorization bill.

One of the biggest complaints from survivors is about long delays in getting benefits changed.

In some cases, people waiting for DFAS to process changes have received multiple notices from the government that they have been overpaid.

In a few instances, money was taken out of survivors’ checks, to be repaid later when everything was worked out.

The Defense Department has to survey survivors about problems and report back to the committee by March 1 on what changes it will make.

Dragunov’s Son Develops New Model Kalashnikov

Aug 9 by Dario ThuburnThu, AFP

Light, silent and regulation black: the AK-9 is the latest model of the famous Kalashnikov assault rifle to come off production lines at the Izhmash factory in Russia.

"It shoots virtually without a sound and it can go through a bullet-proof vest," said Alexei Dragunov, 52, one of the designers of the weapon, as he assembled the gun at a firing range in a Russian forest.

Russian special forces last year asked Izhmash, based in the city of Izhevsk, to make a rifle that combined the qualities of the Kalashnikov with the stealth required for secret missions, company officials said.

The AK-9 is fitted with a silencer and fires large 9.0-millimeter caliber bullets intended to pierce body armour. At 3.8 kilograms (8.4 pounds) it is also slightly lighter than previous models of the Kalashnikov.

"There's no one else making it," said Richard Jones, editor of British-based Jane's Infantry Weapons, a specialist journal, referring to other rifles combining such a large caliber with a silencer.

Other guns with the same caliber, which slows down the bullet in order to silence it but can still pierce body armour, are the Russian-made VSS and the VSK rifles used by special forces, Jones said.

"There's an increasing interest in suppressor weapons for... tactical reasons," said Jones, using the specialist term for guns fitted with silencers.

The AK-9 could be of interest to other special forces in the world -- "commando-like units who have been able to engage an enemy sentry or shoot their way out of trouble and not be heard," he added.

The weapon is still being tested and, pending approval from the Russian defence ministry, it is being kept under wraps. During a visit to a shooting range outside Izhevsk, the gun was shown but could not be demonstrated.

"We think it has big export potential. We hope we can get export permission as soon as possible, said Grodetzky, explaining that arms factories now had to be "flexible," providing for regular soldiers as well as special forces.

Izhmash is known above all for the Kalashnikov, a global brand and one of the most widely used small weapons in the world, valued by soldiers and guerrillas for its simplicity and reliability.

Izhmash makes roughly 100,000 Kalashnikov rifles every year and estimates that another 900,000 rifles similar to the Kalashnikov are being made in other countries such as Bulgaria, China and Poland as "counterfeits."

The Russia-made Kalashnikov sells for some 400 dollars (291 euros) a piece.

Celebrations are being held this week in Izhevsk for the 60th anniversary of the first AK-47 Kalashnikov rifle. The factory is also marking a 200-year history of gunmaking.

The earliest rifle models produced at the factory, some 1,300 kilometers (800 miles) east of Moscow, were used in the Russian Empire's battles against Napoleon at the beginning of the 19th century.

Dragunov, who started working at Izhmash 29 years ago, is part of that history.

His father developed a gun, the Dragunov sniper rifle, that is now used by the Russian army and exported throughout the world.

"It's the same as any kind of engineering except you get to see the final product more easily," said Dragunov, whose youngest son also works at the Izhmash arms design centre.



IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Collaborators Killed In Kut

Sept. 2 (Xinhua)

Militants shot dead an Iraqi contractor and wounded an interpreter, both working with the U.S. forces, in the city of Kut in central the country, a local police source said on Sunday.

The attack took place late on Saturday when unknown fighters in a car opened fire on a contractor and a translator in the al-Hourah neighborhood in Kut City, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

The two victims were attacked while they were on their way home in central the city, some 180 km south of Baghdad, the source said.

Assorted Resistance Action

02 Sep 2007 Reuters & (Xinhua)

A car bomb attack targeted an Iraqi Army base north of Baghdad on Sunday, killing two soldiers and wounding eight others, an Interior Ministry source said.

“A bomber rammed his explosive-laden car into the entrance of an Iraqi Army base in the Taji area, just north of Baghdad, and blew it up in the afternoon,” the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

At least two soldiers were killed and eight others wounded in the attack, the source said, adding that the explosion damaged several nearby military and civilian cars at the checkpoint of the entrance of the base.

A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded three policemen in Baghdad's western Yarmouk district, police said.

Guerrillas killed an off-duty policeman and a soldier in a drive-by shooting in a village near the town of Riyadh, 60 km (40 miles), southwest of the city of Kikruk, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**“What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.”
Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.**

**Liberation Anniversary;
September 3, 1838**

“It Is Not Light That Is Needed, But Fire”



Frederick Douglass

Carl Bunin Peace History September 3-9

Frederick Douglass made his escape from slavery in Baltimore and went on in life to become an Abolitionist, journalist, author, and human rights advocate.

[During the Civil War, he pressed relentlessly for the enlistments of former slaves into the U.S. army, and when this was permitted, he served with honor and played an important role in defeating the slave-owning traitors who formed the Confederacy. T]

Frederick Douglass:

“Find out just what people will submit to, and you have found out the exact amount of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them; and these will continue until they are resisted with either words or blows, or both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.”

“Power concedes nothing without demand. It never has and never will.”

“If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning.”

“The thing worse than rebellion is the thing that causes rebellion.”

“I have found that, to make a contented slave, it is necessary to make a thoughtless one.”

“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

Troops Invited:

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email contact@militaryproject.org:. Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Replies confidential. Same address to unsubscribe.

OCCUPATION REPORT

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



8.31.07: A US soldier from 3-509 Para-Infantry Regiment guards Iraqi citizens as other soldiers search their home south of Baghdad. (AFP/David Furst)



A U.S. soldier from the Delta 112 Cav. Battalion holds a group of women at gunpoint in their kitchen during a home invasion near the city of Baqouba, 60 kilometers (35 miles) northeast of Baghdad Aug. 31, 2007. (AP Photo/Karel Prinsloo)

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

Sgt. John Bruhns

[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 by any means necessary. T]

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

Pissed Off At Iraqi Cops, U.S. Command Tears Down Their Police Station

[So Much For That Stupid, Silly, Lying Bullshit About Iraqi “Sovereignty”]

Sept 2 (KUNA)

The US forces dismantled a police station in Baghdad under the charge of “leniency” and failure to track down criminal organizations, a US military statement said here Sunday.

Al-Khadhra police station, in west Baghdad, was dismantled on August 29 due to failure of its staffers to prevent insurgent activities in the area, according to the statement.

The staff of the police station will join other stations in downtown Baghdad after they received August salaries.

Explosive charges used to be found some 100 meters from police checkpoints in Al-Khadhra district, the statement pointed out.

The inability of Al-Khadhra police station staff to prevent crimes led to the conviction among local authorities and Multi-National Force in Iraq (MNF) that the policemen were apathetic to insurgent activities there.

Notes From A Lost War:

“Right Now The Mahdi Army Is The Only Iraqi Security Force With Any Legitimacy In Kadhimiya” [The Lonely, Precarious Life Of A Collaborator General]

August 30, 2007 By GREG JAFFE, Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD -- Early this month, Brig. Gen. Falah Hassan Kinbar barely escaped a kidnap attempt by the Mahdi Army, a radical [translation: anti-occupation] Shiite militia.

During the attack, more than a dozen of the moderate [translation: collaborator] Shiite general's own men betrayed him [translation: refused to betray their country], switching sides to aid the militia fighters, U.S. officials say. When it was over, Gen. Kinbar's superiors seemed to distance themselves from him, he says.

The day after the attack, as the clock in a dingy U.S. chow hall here approached midnight, Gen. Kinbar sat with the man who seemed to be his only friend -- a 39-year-old American officer from Long Island, N.Y. [Yes, traitors do lead a lonely life.]

"I am all alone on the battlefield," the general told Lt. Col. Steven Miska through an interpreter. "I want to do my duty. But I am very sure my own government will abandon me."

Gen. Kinbar pleaded with Col. Miska to help him relocate his wife and two children. "Any country, any country, any country," he said, breaking into English.

The two men talked for four hours amid the soft clatter of a rat foraging for food. Col. Miska promised he would try to help. The general "is one of the few military commanders up here who refuses to violate his principles and work with the Mahdi Army," said Col. Miska. "That's why they want to kill him."

U.S. commanders intent on building capable Iraqi security forces and a competent Iraqi government say their efforts are increasingly being stymied by the radical [translation: anti-occupation] Mahdi Army. [Which will be good news for patriotic Iraqis who hate foreign military dictatorship. Duh.]

Today, the Mahdi Army has infiltrated Iraq's government and society so deeply that the Americans are struggling to distinguish friend from foe.

To counter the Mahdi Army's influence over Iraq's army and police forces, U.S. commanders have focused on strengthening relationships with moderate [translation: collaborator] Shiites like Gen. Kinbar.

But for Iraqi officers, standing up to the Mahdi Army often means taking huge risks that isolate them from fellow officers and put their families in danger. "If we are not standing by Falah, he's got nobody," says Col. Miska, using Gen. Kinbar's first name. "He has cast his lot."

As Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's government has teetered in recent weeks, the Mahdi Army seems to have stepped up efforts to consolidate power, say U.S. military officials.

Today, few districts in Baghdad are more important to the Mahdi Army than Kadhimiya, the area where Col. Miska and Gen. Kinbar are charged with maintaining security. Kadhimiya, home to more than 200,000 Iraqis and the city's holiest Shiite shrine, has become a major center of Shiite political and economic power.

Col. Miska, a 39-year-old infantry officer, arrived in Kadhimiya in November for his second Iraq tour. The son of a Vietnam veteran, he grew up in a rural part of Long Island, N.Y., and attended the U.S. Military Academy at West Point at his father's urging.

He has a calm demeanor, rarely raising his voice. He worries deeply about what will happen to his Iraqi translators when U.S. forces leave.

So far, 22 of the 59 translators have applied for U.S. visas with his help. Two have received them.

Shortly after Col. Miska assumed command, the senior Iraqi commander in Kadhimiya was arrested by U.S. forces for cooperating with the Mahdi Army.

In January, he was replaced by Gen. Kinbar, who is also 39. Gen. Kinbar, who is trim with a neat, black mustache, grew up in Baghdad, and spent most of his adult life in the Iraqi Army Special Forces. He says he hated Saddam Hussein, but loved the discipline of army life.

Prior to the war, he says he got along well with fellow officers, both Sunni and Shiite. Although his wife and daughter both wear traditional Muslim head-covering, he isn't devoutly religious and often regales Col. Miska with stories of Baghdad's nightclubs from the late 1980s and early '90s.

In 2004, he rejoined the Iraqi army.

The officer helped lead operations against insurgents in northern and western Iraq.

In 2006, he accepted the job as the military commander in Kadhimiya. "In Kadhimiya, I knew there would be a lot of political interference in military operations," he says.

On April 29, Americans learned the Mahdi Army was holding an underground court to discipline renegade members near the shrine in Kadhimiya. Several key Mahdi Army leaders that the U.S. wanted to detain were there, Col. Miska says. As U.S. troops approached the shrine, they came under withering fire and called for Iraqi Army help. Gen. Kinbar told his battalion commanders to join the fight.

None came to help the Americans.

They did, however, help the Mahdi Army. Some of Gen. Kinbar's soldiers stripped off their uniforms and passed their weapons to the Mahdi fighters, according to U.S. officials.

That evening, with the battle still raging, Col. Miska, Gen. Kinbar and Baha al-Araji, leader of the parliamentary bloc loyal to Mr. Sadr, all met at Camp Justice, the joint U.S.-Iraqi base.

Gen. Kinbar brokered an agreement in which U.S. troops withdrew from around the shrine and his Iraqi troops took their place.

Although eight Mahdi Army fighters were killed in the fighting and the U.S. suffered no casualties, the battle was a defeat for U.S. forces, Col. Miska says.

In the days following the battle, mosque loudspeakers blared that U.S. forces had tried to destroy the shrine.

“Our relationship with the population was greatly damaged because of the gun battle,” he says.

Meanwhile, Gen. Kinbar’s close relationship with Col. Miska put him at risk. He says he began receiving threatening cellphone calls.

Throughout July and August, Gen. Kinbar and Col. Miska met regularly in the chow hall on the American side of the joint base. Col. Miska says he could see his friend was “walking a tightrope.”

On Aug. 4 -- five days before pilgrims descended on the Kadhimiya shrine -- Gen. Kinbar met with Col. Miska, and his boss, Col. J.B. Burton.

The Mahdi Army had painted murals of Iraqi flags on cement barriers in Kadhimiya. At the bottom of the barriers, they stenciled: “A gift to the Iraqi people from the Mahdi Army.”

Col. Burton didn’t want the Mahdi Army to get any credit for providing security during the pilgrimage and asked Gen. Kinbar to paint over the signs.

Gen. Kinbar politely refused.

“If I paint over the signs I will get calls from 25 or 30 politicians,” he said.

“Miska painted over some signs and nothing happened to him,” Col. Burton retorted.

“They cannot send him to jail,” Gen. Kinbar replied.

The following day, Gen. Kinbar was summoned by Mr. al-Araji, the lawmaker, to an 11 a.m. meeting to discuss plans for providing security for the massive Aug. 9 pilgrimage.

No U.S. officials were invited. The meeting was attended by more than 100 people -- including some militia leaders on the U.S. target list.

Gen. Kinbar gave an uneventful presentation.

After the meeting, one of Gen. Kinbar’s subordinates told him that a cleric affiliated with the Mahdi Army wanted to meet with him privately in his office. Gen. Kinbar, sensing a setup, refused.

“Just sit down for tea with him,” the subordinate urged.

Suddenly, about 100 Mahdi Army fighters moved in and leveled guns at Gen. Kinbar’s head, according to a U.S. military report and interviews with the Iraqi

troops. They stripped him and his soldiers of their radios and weapons. Iraqi military vehicles -- commandeered by militia fighters -- moved to block his exit.

In the chaos, Gen. Kinbar escaped after one of his bodyguards threw him into a car.

Col. Miska says he believes the Mahdi Army didn't want to kill the Iraqi general, which would have forced the U.S. to make an arrest, but just wanted to humiliate him. Five members of Gen. Kinbar's security detail were taken captive for about an hour. They told U.S. officials that they were questioned by Hazim al-Araji, a cleric and the aide to Mr. Sadr who announced yesterday's freeze on Mahdi operations. His brother is the lawmaker from the district. The Iraqi troops told U.S. officials they were then beaten and released.

All that afternoon, mosque loudspeakers throughout Kadhimiya blared that the only legitimate security forces in Iraq were the Mahdi Army. The speakers also announced that if Gen. Kinbar returned to the area he would be killed.

Back at his office at Camp Justice, Gen. Kinbar was furious. "There is no law in Iraq," he screamed. "There is only power. Power creates the law."

After about an hour, the Iraqi officer who had urged Gen. Kinbar to meet with the cleric stopped by his office, which is decorated with pictures of Gen. Kinbar with senior U.S. officers. Gen. Kinbar stared at his subordinate with fury. "You were involved in the kidnapping," he said. "You kept telling me to just go see him."

"I didn't know," the officer replied shifting in his chair. "I am sorry." Gen. Kinbar looked away in disgust.

Col. Miska then took Gen. Kinbar aside and told him that U.S. and Iraqi forces had to go back to the shrine that afternoon and demand that the militia fighters return the weapons and radios they had seized.

"From what I have seen, the Mahdi Army takes advantage of your soldiers," Col. Miska said. "Unless we do something about it, that will always be the perception."

Gen. Kinbar slumped over in a plastic lawn chair and said nothing.

The Iraqi general needed his superiors' approval before he could launch a raid. Around 4 p.m., Gen. Kinbar received word from the prime minister's office that Iraqi forces shouldn't confront the Mahdi Army. He says the mission was blocked because of fears it would lead to unrest in the run-up to the big pilgrimage.

The normally calm Col. Miska was frustrated. "Right now the Mahdi Army is the only Iraqi security force with any legitimacy in Kadhimiya," he said.

In the two days that followed the kidnapping, none of Gen. Kinbar's senior officers came by to check on him.

The general told Col. Miska that he was hearing rumors that he was going to be transferred. If he lost his job, he worried he would also lose his security detail, which consists of about a dozen officers he has known for years.

He worried that someone would try to kidnap his wife and children, who had gone into hiding. "I am in a very tight place," he told Col. Miska one evening in the U.S. chow hall. "Things are happening too fast. My mind is going 500 miles per hour. I don't sleep at night. It is beyond my control."

Col. Miska and Brig. Gen. John Campbell, the deputy commander of U.S. troops in Baghdad, worked to help Gen. Kinbar.

Col. Miska launched an investigation to determine which Iraqi troops had participated in the kidnapping. [So much for the sovereignty bullshit, as usual.]]

Gen. Campbell put pressure on Lt. Gen. Abboud Ghanbar, who commands all Iraqi army and police forces in Baghdad, to ensure Gen. Kinbar wasn't transferred or fired.

Three days after the kidnapping, he flew Gen. Ghanbar, a confidant of Prime Minister Maliki, to Kadhimiya to see Gen. Kinbar and tour the area.

After only a few minutes on the ground, Gen. Campbell -- a square-shouldered U.S. Special Forces soldier who doesn't walk so much as stomp -- spotted Iraqi soldiers sitting around without their helmets. "Get your helmet on and try to look like a goddamn soldier!" he barked. Although there was no one to translate, the men put on their helmets. [And thereby humiliating and destroying the authority of their Iraqi commanding officer.]

Because of concern about car bombs, no vehicles were supposed to pass into Kadhimiya in the lead up to the pilgrimage. But at several Iraqi checkpoints, soldiers were letting in cars with militia-supplied passes. Gen. Campbell summoned Gen. Kinbar, who yelled at the soldiers to stop it.

A few feet away, the U.S. general pulled aside the Iraqi Gen. Ghanbar. "The government has got to back (Gen. Kinbar) up," Gen. Campbell said, as they marched through the 120-degree heat. Gen. Ghanbar, brushing away sweat, said he understood.

Later in the day, Gen. Campbell draped an arm around Gen. Kinbar and leaned his stubble-covered face in close. "You need to know we are behind you here. You have got your battle buddy Col. Miska. He is going to be with you," he said.

Col. Miska and Gen. Kinbar now visit at least once a day. Gen. Kinbar says he had always been drawn to the "order and control" of military life. He often laments Iraq's army now has few of those qualities. "We are disorganized and dirty," he says.

Col. Miska says he is trying to get Gen. Kinbar's wife and two children out of the country. He's talked with representatives from the State Department, his own command and nonprofit groups that deal with refugee issues. His hope is that if Gen. Kinbar's family is beyond the Mahdi Army's reach, the Iraqi will be better able to stand up to them.

MORE:

“Most Bomb Attacks Against American Patrols In The Area This Spring Occurred Close To Police Checkpoints”

August 31, 2007 By DAVID S. CLOUD, New York Times [Excerpt]

American commanders on the ground in Shiite-controlled areas of Baghdad say that the local police actively subvert efforts to loosen the grip of militias, and in some cases, attack Americans directly. One commander in northwest Baghdad said most bomb attacks against American patrols in the area this spring occurred close to police checkpoints.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



CLASS WAR REPORTS

Police Say Man Threw His Dying Wife From Balcony; He Could Not Pay Bills For Medical Care

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

Aug 16, 2007 AP

KANSAS CITY, Mo. - A man threw his seriously ill wife four stories to her death because he could no longer afford to pay for her medical care, prosecutors said in charging him with second-degree murder.

According to court documents filed Wednesday in Jackson County Circuit Court, Stanley Reimer walked his wife to the balcony of their apartment and kissed her before throwing her over.

The body of Criste Reimer, 47, was found Tuesday night outside the apartment building, near the upscale Country Club Plaza shopping district.

Stanley Reimer, 51, was charged Wednesday. He remained jailed on \$250,000 bond and was scheduled to be arraigned Thursday.

In the probable cause statement filed with the charges, police said Reimer was desperate because he could not pay the bills for his wife's treatment for neurological problems and uterine cancer.

Investigators said that Reimer was in the apartment when they arrived. He told them, "She didn't jump," but did not elaborate, they said.

Her weight had fallen to 75 lbs.

Criste Reimer's caregiver told police she could barely walk and would not have been able to climb over the railing of the balcony, according to the probable cause statement.

Reimer's alleged motive emerged after several more hours of questioning, police said.

According to Jackson County Probate Court records, Criste Reimer had been in ill health for several years. Her weight had fallen to 75 pounds and she was partly blind.

According to the court records, she had no health insurance to pay for medical bills that ranged from \$700 to \$800 per week.

The Probate Court documents were filed in April, when Stanley Reimer petitioned to be allowed to sell personal property his wife owned in Wheeler County, Texas, for \$20,000.

The documents listed her assets at approximately \$6,700, with monthly income of \$725 from oil royalties and Supplemental Security Income.

It was not immediately known if Stanley Reimer had an attorney.

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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/)

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