

GI SPECIAL 5K18:

THE PENTAGON GIVES AN OCCASION FOR THANKS



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

Head Fake:
**While Iraq Gets The News
Coverage, Resistance "Closing In
On Kabul"**
**"A Permanent Presence In 54% Of The
Country And Finding It Easy To Recruit
New Followers"**

[Thanks to JM & Z, who sent this in.]

Nov 21 By Luke Baker, LONDON (Reuters) & November 22, 2007, Richard Norton-Taylor, The Guardian & November 23, 2007 Richard Norton-Taylor, The Sydney Morning Herald &

The conflict in Afghanistan has reached “crisis proportions,” with the resurgent Taliban present in more than half the country and closing in on Kabul, a report said on Wednesday.

“The Taliban has shown itself to be a truly resurgent force,” the Senlis Council, an independent think-tank with a permanent presence in Afghanistan, wrote in a study entitled “Stumbling into Chaos: Afghanistan on the brink.”

“Its ability to establish a presence throughout the country is now proven beyond doubt,” it said.

Despite tens of thousands of troops and billions of dollars in aid poured into the country, the insurgents, driven out by the American invasion in 2001, now control "vast swaths of unchallenged territory, including rural areas, some district centres, and important road arteries", the Senlis Council says in a report released yesterday.

Senlis said its research had established that the Taliban, driven out of Afghanistan by the U.S. invasion in late 2001, had rebuilt a permanent presence in 54 percent of the country and was finding it easy to recruit new followers.

It was also increasingly using Iraq-style tactics, such as roadside and suicide bombs, to powerful effect, and had built a stable network of financial support, funding its operations with the proceeds from Afghanistan’s booming opium trade.

“It is a sad indictment of the current state of Afghanistan that the question now appears to be not if the Taliban will return to Kabul, but when,” the report said.

The front line is getting closer to Kabul, a warning echoed by the UN, which says more and more of the country is becoming a “no go” area for Western aid and development workers.

“Their oft-stated aim of reaching the city in 2008 appears more viable than ever.”

Senlis said: “It is a sad indictment of the current state of Afghanistan that the question now appears to be not if the Taliban will return to Kabul, but when ... and in what form.”

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

IED Kills U.S. Soldier In Baghdad; Three More Wounded

November 21, 2007 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20071121-05

BAGHDAD – An explosively-formed penetrator detonated near a combat patrol in eastern Baghdad, killing one Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldier and wounding three others Nov. 20. An Iraqi interpreter was also killed.

The patrol was returning to base after conducting an escort mission at the time of the attack.

Two UK Military Personnel Killed In Puma Helicopter Crash

11/21/07 Ministry of Defence & Mark Tran and agencies, Guardian Unlimited

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the deaths of two military personnel near Baghdad, Iraq last night, Tuesday 20 November 2007.

The British military personnel who died when their RAF Puma helicopter crashed in Iraq were members of the SAS, it was reported today.

Another two British military personnel were seriously injured when the aircraft came down near Baghdad last night, but were recovering in hospital.

There have been a number of fatal crashes involving the aircraft - the oldest helicopter operated by the RAF - in recent years.

Soldier Dies From Iraq Injuries



November 16, 2007 By MATTHEW STURDEVANT, Daily Press

Sgt. Derek R. "Bam" Banks was voted "most popular" during his senior year in 2001 at Bethel High School, where he played on the football and basketball teams.

"He's one of those guys that you notice," said Ernest Bethel, who was in Banks' class in high school and managed the basketball team. "He was a people person. He wanted to get people involved in what he was doing. I'm devastated for the family. I'll keep them in my prayers."

Banks, 24, died Wednesday as a result of injuries from a roadside bomb on Oct. 25 in Baghdad, Iraq. He was flown to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany and later to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas.

Banks was a combat engineer of the Virginia Army National Guard's 237th Engineer Company. The roadside explosive also killed Spc. David E. Lambert of Cedar Bluff in western Virginia and injured three other soldiers from Hampton Roads: Sgt. James "Andy" Corbett of Poquoson; and Pfc. Eric T. Holt and Spc. Joshua G. Primm, both of Williamsburg.

Jacinda Garabito, who graduated a year after Banks at Bethel High School, said the two were like brother and sister. Banks lived with Garabito's family for about a year in high school and he was a role model for her two younger brothers. He was also the male figure around the house because Garabito said her mom was a single parent.

"All Derek ever wanted was to be loved," Garabito said, adding that he found love when he married his wife, Sheena.

Banks was a small forward on Bethel's basketball team, said his coach, Craig A. Brehon, who is dean of boys at Bethel High School.

Banks was 6 feet 2 inches tall when he was playing in high school, and had "a tremendous vertical leap," Brehon said, adding that Banks was an easygoing kid with an infectious smile. He was a "strong, solid athlete."

"He had an incredible first step, and he loved to dunk the ball," said Bethel.

Banks was a bigger football star than a basketball star, said Philip Ward, who knew Banks since middle school and played on both teams with him. Banks was a wide receiver who helped Bethel tie up the Peninsula District game against Phoebus in 2000 by coming through with a two-point conversion. Phoebus came back to win the game, but that's when Phoebus was on top, Ward said.

Banks and Ward kept up a friendship when Ward was attending college in Richmond and Banks was at Virginia State University in Petersburg. They'd get together on weekends, and also to watch the TV show "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation." Banks liked the show so much he majored in criminal justice in college, Ward said.

One of the reasons Banks joined the Guard was to help pay for college.

Ward described Banks as a positive guy with a talent for freestyle rapping, especially if he had help from someone doing beat box. Ward drove Banks to Richmond about three months ago when Banks flew to Wisconsin for more military training before doing his second tour of duty. Brehon said he learned of Banks' death from Banks' younger sister. Banks has two sisters at Bethel High School, he said.

He also has a 2-year-old son, Derek Jr., or "D.J."

Banks had served in the Guard for five years and seven months. He is the third member of the Virginia Army National Guard to die in war this year, and the seventh since the start of the global war on terror began following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Banks was posthumously promoted from the third enlisted rank of specialist to the fifth rank of sergeant.

Reporter Fucks Up:
Doesn't Write Happy Talk About
Baghdad;
“Al-Hadar, Formerly One Of The
Baghdad's Most Prosperous Areas,
Has Become - Quite Literally - A
Waste Land”
“The Streets Are Strewn With Sewage,
Rubbish And Rubble”



The once well-to-do Baghdad neighbourhood of al-Hadar. Photograph: David Smith

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

November 21, 2007 David Smith, Guardian Unlimited [Excerpts]

I had followed a patrol into a house and a sergeant was interviewing the owner about his recent movements when we were all ordered back to our armoured Stryker vehicle immediately.

Another patrol a few streets away had come under attack from an insurgent throwing a hand grenade. The troops returned fire but the man had melted into the shadows. There were no casualties.

We set off and offered to help join the search for the insurgent. As we hurtled along in the growling vehicle, I could watch our progress on screen. The dusty street passed beneath us at speed, then we paused at a wide cesspool, a common sight in Baghdad.

The Stryker's camera, ever watchful for roadside bombs, zoomed in on a stick-like object rising above the water's surface, then jerked to a man who seemed to be foraging nearby. On closer inspection the man was ageing, dishevelled and lame, walking by the curb with a shambling gait.

The Stryker reversed to seek another route. Then another image appeared on the monitor. Before another cesspool was a pile of rubbish strewn in the middle of the street - again, nothing unusual.

A woman in a long, black robe approached it, turned a household bin upside down and poured its contents on to the pile. Then she took a second bin and repeated the action. The US soldier sitting at the monitor shook his head in despair.

So did I.

Somehow there was something more shocking to me, in Baghdad at least, about this act of throwing litter than the throwing of a grenade.

The middle-aged woman had performed it without a hint of the social embarrassment that might nag a litterlout in Britain. More than that, there was something habitual about her action that suggested her mind was otherwise occupied, as if pouring household garbage into the middle of the road was now casual routine, now second nature.

And so al-Hadar, formerly one of the Baghdad's most prosperous areas, has become - quite literally - a waste land.

The spacious houses with gardens, walls and front drives are still there, but the streets are strewn with sewage, rubbish and rubble.

Stepping outside, it is often the smell that hits you first. You might also suddenly be taken aback, in this modern city, by the sight of a flock of goats or sheep, or a woman riding a donkey trap.

Among the most poignant discoveries are the empty buildings. I looked around an old gym which until recently had been used by insurgent gunmen as a vantage point. All the equipment had gone, but there were still posters of western musclemen on the walls, now watching over debris and stillness.

I visited a school that is trying to reopen, the rows of empty desks and chairs speaking volumes, the chalk writing of a teacher still on a blackboard but no one to read it.

Earlier this week I attended a memorial service for 2nd Lieutenant Peter Burks, a member of the regiment killed last week when a roadside bomb hit his Stryker vehicle. He was 26 and left behind a fiancée. It would be a mistake to think that, because soldiers face death every day, they feel grief and loss any less acutely than other people. In a large white room, rows of uniformed soldiers waited for the service to begin with sorrow etched on their young faces, the silence punctuated only by sniffs of choked emotion.

At the front of the room was the symbolic helmet balanced on the end of an upright rifle, and a framed picture of Lt Burks under the words "In memoriam". Everyone stood as the Star Spangled Banner was played through loudspeakers.

There was a moment of silence, when all heads bowed, then a sergeant, Kevin Muhlenbeck, shouted the name of a regiment member as if on the parade ground. "Sir!" came back the reply. He shouted another name. "Sir!" came the reply. "Burks!" No reply. "Peter Haskell Burks!" No reply. A voice outside gave an order to fire, and three times gunfire cracked in the night air.

More than 3,850 US troops have died during the Iraq war.

UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. soldiers of Demon Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division come under fire in western Mosul Nov. 8, 2007. The battalion was investigating a blast site. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

TROOP NEWS

NOT ANOTHER DAY NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR NOT ANOTHER LIFE



The casket carrying the remains of 12 service members killed in a helicopter crash in Baghdad, Iraq, Friday, Oct. 12, 2007, during a group funeral at Arlington National Cemetery. Killed in the crash were Army Col. Paul M. Kelly; Army Col. Brian Duane Allgood; Army Lt. Col. David C. Canegata; Army Capt. Michael V. Taylor; Army Capt. Sean Edward Lyerly; Army Command Sgt. Maj. Marilyn L. Gabbard; Army Sgt. Maj. William T. Warren; Army Sgt. 1st Class John G. Brown; Army Sgt. 1st Class Floyd E. Lake, Jr.; Army Staff Sgt. Darryl D. Booker; Army Cpl. Victor Manuel L. Langarcia, and Command Sgt. Maj. Roger W. Haller. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

Wounded In Iraq, Combat Vet Gets Letter “Demanding Nearly \$3,000 Of His Signing Bonus Back”

[Thanks to Dave R & Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]

Nov 19, 2007 PITTSBURGH (KDKA)

The U.S. Military is demanding that thousands of wounded service personnel give back signing bonuses because they are unable to serve out their commitments.

To get people to sign up, the military gives enlistment bonuses up to \$30,000 in some cases.

Now men and women who have lost arms, legs, eyesight, hearing and can no longer serve are being ordered to pay some of that money back.

One of them is Jordan Fox, a young soldier from the South Hills.

He finds solace in the hundreds of boxes he loads onto a truck in Carnegie. In each box is a care package that will be sent to a man or woman serving in Iraq. It was in his name Operation Pittsburgh Pride was started.

Fox was seriously injured when a roadside bomb blew up his vehicle. He was knocked unconscious. His back was injured and lost all vision in his right eye.

A few months later Fox was sent home.

His injuries prohibited him from fulfilling three months of his commitment.

A few days ago, he received a letter from the military demanding nearly \$3,000 of his signing bonus back.

"I tried to do my best and serve my country. I was unfortunately hurt in the process. Now they're telling me they want their money back," he explained.

It's a slap for Fox's mother, Susan Wardezak, who met with President Bush in Pittsburgh last May. He thanked her for starting Operation Pittsburgh Pride which has sent approximately 4,000 care packages.

He then sent her a letter expressing his concern over her son's injuries, so she cannot understand the U.S. Government's apparent lack of concern over injuries to countless U.S. Soldiers and demands that they return their bonuses.

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 RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action



A police car damaged in a car bomb attack in front of a courthouse in Ramadi Nov. 21, 2007. The car bomb exploded Wednesday at an Iraqi police checkpoint guarding the courthouse in Ramadi, in the largest attack in Anbar province's capital in months, police said. (AP Photo)

19 Nov 2007 Reuters & 20 Nov 2007 Reuters & By Hussein Kadhim, McClatchy Newspapers & (CBS/AP) & Nov. 21 (Xinhua) & Reuters

In an attack in Tikrit, Ansar al-Sunnah said it had used a “unique and unparalleled” technique when it bombed a police station Sunday by using a roadside bomb buried in a fake device. It gave no further details, but police in the city said a policeman was killed and two others, including a lieutenant colonel, when they tried to defuse a roadside bomb they took inside the city’s police forensic laboratory after retrieving it from the street outside.

Two rockets or mortars were fired at the heavily fortified Green Zone in Baghdad, where the U.S. embassy and Iraqi government headquarters are located, police said.

Three policemen were injured in a roadside bomb attack in western the capital on Wednesday, an Interior Ministry source said. “A roadside bomb struck in the afternoon a passing police patrol in the 14th Ramadhan Street of the al-Mansour district, wounding three policemen,” the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

A truck bomb exploded near the house of a tribal leader, killing one person and wounding three others in Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. The leader, a member of a local tribal council cooperating with the U.S. military, was not at his home at the time.

The blast also caused damages to one of the patrol’s vehicles and nearby shops, the source said, adding that all the wounded have been ferried to the nearby al-Yarmouk hospital.

Earlier in the day, an anonymous local police source told Xinhua that six people, including two policemen, were killed and six others injured when two bombers blew up their minivan outside a courthouse guarded by policemen in central Ramadi city, some 110 km west of Baghdad.

One policeman was killed and two wounded in a drive-by shooting at a police checkpoint in Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Guerrillas attacked a police station, killing three policemen in a village north of Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

The body of police major Saad Jumaa was found near Samarra after he was captured on Monday, the Joint Iraqi-U.S. Coordination Centre said.

Monday night, a roadside bomb targeted an Iraqi army patrol at Sifra village on the Kirkuk – Biji route (west Kirkuk) killing one soldier and injuring three others.

The bodies of four Iraqi soldiers who had been shot in the head were received by a hospital in the city of Samarra, 100 km (60 miles) north of Baghdad, on Monday, the Joint Iraqi-U.S. Coordination Centre said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

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. Frederick Douglas, 1852

**"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.**

**"The mighty are only mighty because we are on our knees. Let us rise!"
--Camille Desmoulins**

November 22, 1909

Heroic Anniversary: The First General Strike By Women In The U.S.



Carl Bunin Peace History November 19-25

In New York City, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union went on strike against sweatshop conditions in what became known as the "Uprising of the 20,000" and the "Girl's Revolt."

The strikers won the support of other workers and the women's suffrage movement for their persistence and unity in the face of police brutality and biased courts.

A judge told arrested pickets: "You are on strike against God."

This was the first mass strike by women in the U.S.

**"I Am Tired Of Listening To Speakers Who Talk In
Generalities"**

**"I Offer A Resolution That A General Strike Be
Declared – Now!"**

Excerpt from *Forged in Freedom: Shaping the Jewish-American Experience*, by Norman H. Finkelstein. (JPS, 2002)

In September 1909, Clara and other women could no longer tolerate their harsh working conditions. They walked out of the Leiserson factory and went on strike.

Within a few days the strike spread to the workers at the nearby Triangle Shirtwaist Company. Day after day the young women strikers picketed the factories to let the

public know they were on strike and to prevent replacement workers from entering the factories. They walked up and down the sidewalk in front of the buildings; some carried signs while others chanted and sang.

The factory owners hired gangs of tough men to frighten the pickets. As the mostly Jewish and Italian teenage girls peacefully walked the picket lines they were threatened and pushed by the ruffians. Women were beaten, punched and thrown to the ground. Many were badly hurt. The police did little to prevent the violence ... During one attack in mid-November Clara and two other young women were so badly beaten the police had to rush them to a hospital.

Eleven weeks after walking out of the Leiserson and Triangle companies, the women workers saw no end to the bloody strike. While they were on strike they earned no money, and the poor women faced a harsh, hungry and cold winter.

Union leaders realized that the only quick way to improve working conditions and wages was to shut down every shirtwaist factory in New York.

On November 22, 1909, thousands of shirtwaist workers gathered in the Cooper Union Auditorium. It was time to make a decision ...

The audience cheered a succession of speakers, finally focusing their attention on Samuel Gompers, the best-known speaker of the evening. He was the founder and president of America's most powerful union, the American Federation of Labor ...

After two hours of cautious speeches with no end in site, "a thin wisp of a girl" asked to speak.

As she stepped onto the platform, the crowd quieted. Everyone knew Clara Lemlich, the brave union worker who had just been released from the hospital. She still showed signs of the violent beating she received on the picket line. Her words, spoken in clear and passionate Yiddish, echoed through the hall.

It was a clarion call to action.

"I have listened to all the speakers, and I have no further patience for talk.

"I am a working girl, one of those striking against intolerable conditions.

"I am tired of listening to speakers who talk in generalities.

"What we are here for is to decide whether or not to strike.

"I offer a resolution that a general strike be declared – now!"

The audience erupted into wild applause. People jumped from their seats, cheered and waved handkerchiefs. This was the moment they had waited for ...

Within two days the entire shirtwaist industry in New York City was shut down.

No one had predicted the resolve of the strikers. Twenty thousand workers, mainly Jewish and Italian teenage girls and young women, marched in picket lines before factories throughout lower Manhattan ...

Newspapers widely reported on the brutality against the strikers. Other women, wealthy and educated, decided to prevent the brutality and unfair arrests. With great publicity, they joined the poorly dressed and ill-fed immigrant women workers on the picket lines

The brave struggle of Clara Lemlich and the other women workers is known as the "Uprising of the Twenty Thousand."

By February 15, 1910, it was over. The strikers won a shorter workweek of fifty-two hours, higher wages and the end of unfair deductions for supplies, chairs and lockers.

***Seduced By Nationalism:* Yone Noguchi's 'Terrible Mistake': Debating the China-Japan War With Tagore**

"Do you seriously believe that the mountain of bleeding corpses and the wilderness of bombed and burnt cities that is every day widening between your two countries, is making it easier for your two peoples to stretch your hands in a clasp of ever-lasting good will?"

November 17, 2007 By Zeljko Cipris, Japan Focus

Zeljko Cipris teaches Asian Studies and Japanese at the University of the Pacific in California and is a Japan Focus associate.

He is co-author with Shoko Hamano of *Making Sense of Japanese Grammar*, and translator of Ishikawa Tatsuzo's *Soldiers Alive* and of *A Flock of Swirling Crows and Other Proletarian Writings*, a collection of works by Kuroshima Denji.

Zeljko is currently translating Japanese proletarian writer Kobayashi Takiji, and completing work on a book called *Greetings to the Continents: An Anthology of Asian Revolutionary Literature*.

This Japan Focus article is dedicated to Shane Satori and Ljubomir Ryu.

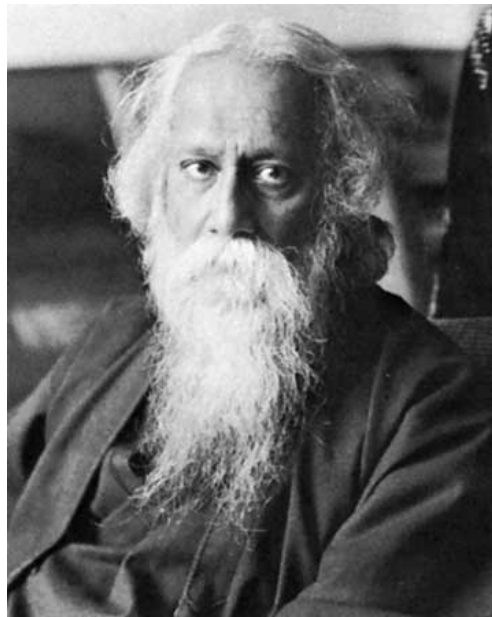


Yone Noguchi

Believe me that I am never a eulogist of Japanese militarism, because I have many differences with it. But I can not help accepting as a Japanese what Japan is doing now under the circumstances, because I see no other way to show our minds to China.

Of course when China stops fighting, and we receive her friendly hands, neither grudge nor ill feeling will remain in our minds. Perhaps with some sense of repentance, we will then proceed together on the great work of reconstructing the new world in Asia.

Yone Noguchi



Rabindranath Tagore

If you can convince the Chinese that your armies are bombing ... that they are only being subjected to a benevolent treatment which will in the end "save" their nation, it will no longer be necessary for you to convince us of your country's noble intentions. ...

Do you seriously believe that the mountain of bleeding corpses and the wilderness of bombed and burnt cities that is every day widening between your two countries, is making it easier for your two peoples to stretch your hands in a clasp of ever-lasting good will?

Rabindranath Tagore

In the summer and autumn of 1938 a brief and impassioned exchange of letters took place between two old friends, Japanese poet and academic Noguchi Yonejiro (a.k.a. Yone Noguchi, 1875-1947) and Bengali poet, novelist, composer and painter Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941).

The two men had known each other for more than twenty years, since May 1916 when Tagore, who had won Asia's first Nobel Prize in literature three years earlier, arrived in Japan on a three-month visit and was received with warm and tumultuous enthusiasm.

One of the members of the welcoming committee that greeted Tagore was Yone Noguchi, an internationally known poet and professor of English literature at the Keio University in Tokyo.

As a young man, Noguchi had lived and worked for eleven years in San Francisco, New York, and London, becoming the first Japanese author to publish poetry and novels in English, and forming friendships with such literary luminaries as William Butler Yeats and Ezra Pound. He returned to Japan in 1904 (having fathered a son with an American woman), resumed his literary activities and gained a considerable reputation as an interpreter of Japan to the world and of the world to Japan.

During the liberal 1920s Noguchi published some of his poetry in left-leaning journals such as Kaizo, but as the political atmosphere shifted to the right, Noguchi followed suit and by the 1930s his work exhibited prominent nationalistic overtones.

This was not unusual: many Japanese scholars, artists, and intellectuals made similar adjustments, trying to accommodate themselves to the steadily increasing domestic repression and overseas aggression.

In addition, Noguchi, with his well known cosmopolitan past may have felt it especially prudent to demonstrate that he was just as patriotic as anyone else. He succeeded in winning the government's trust to such an extent that he was sent on a tour of India between 1935 and 1936 to explain Japan's international conduct to the citizens of this major Asian nation.

Rabindranath Tagore – who visited Japan two more times, in 1924 and 1929 – greatly admired the Japanese people.

What deeply impressed him was not only the widespread courtesy, serenity, and aesthetic sensitivity that he encountered during his visits, but also the fact that Japan had been the first Asian nation to industrialize, and to shake off the yoke of Western imperialism.

As a citizen of a country still colonized by Britain, Tagore, like many other Asians, felt inspired and invigorated by Japan's successful assertion of independence which had helped the people of Asia to regain self-confidence, and made Japan an object of respect and emulation.

However, an aspect of Japan that Tagore found worrisome was its tendency toward aggressive nationalism, traces of which he detected and criticized as early as 1916.

In the succeeding decades this trend only grew worse, gradually transforming Japan into just another imperialist power, and changing it from a positive example into a fearsome menace.

Indeed, Tagore viewed Japan's aggression in China as removing it from the ranks of Asia and placing it in the same camp as the imperialist west. In criticizing Japan, Tagore elevates Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang to great heights as China's savior.

It is hardly surprising that the nationalist Noguchi and the essentially internationalist Tagore found themselves in sharp disagreement concerning the nature of the Sino-Japanese War that erupted on a limited scale in September 1931 and burst into full-fledged warfare in July 1937.

When Noguchi initiated their correspondence about the war in July 1938 it was in an evident attempt to enlist his world-famous friend into supporting Japan's cause.

His effort showed how little he understood his fellow poet: it had no chance of success because Tagore, a consistent anti-imperialist, never condoned imperial adventures of any nation, no matter how lofty or plausible the justifications.

The content of Noguchi's letters displays little independent thought, faithfully echoing his nation's officially sanctioned narratives as formulated by the government and transmitted by the dominant print and broadcast media.

He insists that the war is not an act of aggression against the Chinese people but a selfless mission to liberate them from the tyranny of Chiang Kai-shek and from foreign oppression as well as from the threat of communism.

He stresses how united and self-sacrificing his compatriots are in supporting the heroic troops whose ultimate aim is to bring peace, freedom, and prosperity to all of Asia.

Conceding that the war has its tragic aspects, he considers them a sad but unavoidable part of an overall constructive and benevolent enterprise.

Tagore accepts none of this, and is palpably pained by the apparent ease with which his gifted and cultured friend has been taken in by government propaganda.

Tagore sees nothing nobly motivated about the war whatsoever, only the massive devastation, massacres and misery of an imperial onslaught rationalized with dishonest and hypocritical pretexts.

Beneath their mostly polite and friendly surface, the two men's letters seethe with anger, frustration, mutual disappointment, and sadness.

The four letters – two from each writer – make it abundantly clear that their views are utterly irreconcilable.

[For the text of the letters & footnotes: www.japanfocus.org/products/details/2577]

The exchange of letters seems to have brought the two poets' friendship to an unhappy end: there appears to have been no further correspondence between them. Tagore died in August 1941, at the age of eighty. In 1942, following the outbreak of a wider war,

Noguchi – like some other Japanese poets – went on to write hysterically belligerent verses calling for the slaughter of British and Americans.

After the war, not long before his own death, Noguchi sadly admitted that he had “made a terrible mistake in supporting his country during the war.”

The confession was made to his long-neglected Japanese-American son, the great sculptor Isamu Noguchi.

“A terrible mistake” – the words deserve pondering in a time when the siren song of nationalism is once again being broadcast at rather loud volume in many quarters in Japan and elsewhere.

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



Residents wake up as foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. break into and search their personal belongings during a night home invasion in the rural town of Nahrawan southeast of Baghdad November 8, 2007. REUTERS/Erik de Castro

[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!**

***Hitler Or Stalin Would Be So Proud
Of The Dishonorable Filth Running
U.S. Command:***

Bush's Military Dictators In Iraq Says They Can Hold AP Photographer Forever, Even If Iraq Court Finds Him Innocent

The military can indefinitely hold suspects considered security risks in Iraq. "Even if he comes out the other side with an acquittal — as we certainly hope and trust that he will — there is no guarantee that he won't go right back into detention as a security risk."

Nov 21, 2007 By Brian Murphy Associated Press

NEW YORK – The U.S. military says it will turn over an award-winning Associated Press photographer to an Iraqi court, accusing him of having links to terrorist groups.

The military is refusing to disclose what evidence or accusations would be presented, and an AP attorney on Monday strongly protested the decision, calling the U.S. military plans a "sham of due process."

The journalist, Bilal Hussein, has already been imprisoned without charges for more than 19 months.

In Washington, Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell explained the decision to bring charges now by saying "new evidence has come to light" about Hussein, but said the information would remain in government hands until the formal complaint is filed with Iraqi authorities.

Morrell asserted the military has "convincing and irrefutable evidence that Bilal Hussein is a threat to stability and security in Iraq as a link to insurgent activity" and called Hussein "a terrorist operative who infiltrated the AP."

AP Associate General Counsel Dave Tomlin rejected the claim: "That's what the military has been saying for 19 months, but whenever we ask to see what's so convincing we get back something that isn't convincing at all."

A public affairs officer notified the AP on Sunday that the military intends to submit a written complaint against Hussein that would bring the case into the Iraqi justice system as early as Nov. 29. Under Iraqi codes, an investigative magistrate will decide whether there are grounds to try Hussein, 36, who was seized in the western Iraqi city of Ramadi on April 12, 2006.

Tomlin said the defense for Hussein is being forced to work "totally in the dark."

The AP also contends it has been blocked by the military from mounting a comprehensive defense for Hussein, who was part of the AP's Pulitzer Prize-winning photo team in 2005.

Soon after Hussein was taken into custody, the AP appealed to the U.S. military either to release him or bring the case to trial — saying there was no evidence to support his detention.

However, Tomlin said that the military is now attempting to build a case based on "stale" evidence and discredited testimony. He also noted that the U.S. military investigators who initially handled the case have left the country.

The AP says various accusations were floated unofficially against Hussein and then apparently withdrawn with little explanation.

Tomlin said the AP has faced chronic difficulties in meeting Hussein at the Camp Cropper detention facility in Baghdad and that its own intensive investigations of the case — conducted by a former federal prosecutor, Paul Gardephe — have found no support for allegations he was anything other than a working journalist in a war zone.

"While we are hopeful that there could be some resolution to Bilal Hussein's long detention, we have grave concerns that his rights under the law continue to be ignored and even abused," said AP President and CEO Tom Curley.

Hussein, a native of Fallujah and a member of a prominent clan in the western province of Anbar, began work for the AP in the summer of 2004 as the anti-U.S. insurgency was gaining ground.

On the morning of April 12, 2006, Hussein was out buying bread for breakfast when he heard a blast on a nearby street in Ramadi, according to the AP investigation. He dashed home and allowed several strangers to follow — as was customary to offer shelter during unrest in the city. Marines later arrived and used Bilal's apartment as a temporary observation post.

Hussein told the AP he was later taken into custody by the Marines who also confiscated equipment including a laptop and satellite phone. The guests he invited into his apartment amid the chaos were also detained.

On Monday, Morrell said two guests in the apartment that day were "suspected insurgents" and that one of them later was convicted in a court of having a phony ID. It was unclear whether he remained in custody or was released.

Calls for Hussein's freedom have been backed by groups such as the Committee to Protect Journalists.

Tomlin said it remains unclear what accusations, evidence and possible witnesses will be presented by military prosecutors in Baghdad.

"They are telling us nothing. ... We are operating totally in the dark," said Tomlin, who added that the military's unfair handling of the case is "playing with a man's future and maybe his life."

Although it's unclear what specific allegations may be presented against Hussein, convictions linked to aiding militants in Iraq could bring the death penalty, said Tomlin.

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said Tuesday there was a "possibility" that Hussein could continue to be held if the Iraqi court decides not to try him or if he is found not guilty.

"Provisions allow for somebody to be held as a security detainee if it's determined that they continue to be a threat to coalition forces or to the Iraqi people," Whitman said.

Previously, the military has outlined a host of possible lines of investigation, including claims that Hussein offered to provide false identification to a sniper seeking to evade U.S.-led forces and that Hussein took photographs that were synchronized with insurgent blasts.

The AP inquiry found no support for either of those claims.

The bulk of the photographs Hussein provided the AP were not about insurgent activity; he detailed both the aftermath of attacks and the daily lives of Iraqis in the war zone. There was no evidence that any images were coordinated with the insurgents or showed the instant of an attack.

Tomlin also questioned the U.S. military claims that Hussein's fate rests solely with Iraqi justice.

Noting that Hussein has been in the sole custody and control of the U.S. military, he said it's up to military prosecutors to lay out the allegations and "it's impossible that they don't have a specific set of charges drawn up."

Gardephe, now a New York-based attorney, said the AP has offered evidence to counter the allegations so far raised by the military. But, he noted, it's possible the military could introduce new charges at the hearing that could include classified material.

"This makes it impossible to put together a defense," said Gardephe, who is leading the defense team and plans to arrive in Baghdad next week. "At the moment, it looks like we can do little more than show up ... and try to put together a defense during the proceedings."

Tomlin, however, said that freedom for Bilal Hussein, who is not related to the cameraman working for CBS, isn't guaranteed even if the judge rejects the eventual U.S. charges.

The military can indefinitely hold suspects considered security risks in Iraq. "Even if he comes out the other side with an acquittal — as we certainly hope and trust that he will — there is no guarantee that he won't go right back into detention as a security risk."

Shihab al-Tamimi, the head of the Iraqi Journalists Union, told the AP: "We reject making accusations by any group against journalists who are trying to convey the truth, especially if it is the occupation forces."

Falah al-Khatib, a journalist working for the state-run Al-Sabah newspaper, said it was not the first time that U.S. forces "have suspected and accused journalists who were only carrying a camera in a hot area or trying to cover the war."

***Hitler Or Stalin Would Be So Proud
Of This One Too:
[Lying Pro-Occupation
Propaganda Award For 2007 Goes
To:]
“Thousands” Of Happy Iraqis
Return Home From Syria;
[See See! The Surge Is A Success!!]***

[You have to read half way through this long, long report from BBC to get even a hint of what was reported on CNN yesterday: All these “Happy Iraqis” are going back to Iraq because the Syrian government has cancelled their visas and kicked them out. And BBC doesn’t make that clear here either. But why spoil Bush propaganda with reality? T]

21 November 2007 BBC NEWS [Excerpts]

An estimated 1,000 people a day are returning across Iraq’s borders having previously moving abroad to escape the violence, Iraqi authorities say.

Most of the returnees are coming from Syria - and very few from Jordan, where better-off refugees tended to go. [Huh? **If everything is just peachy keen and wonderful back in Iraq, why wouldn’t those with the cash to make the move more easily just rush back to claim their abandoned property? Get the stench coming off this fake good news report?**]

An improving security situation - but also the lack of job opportunities for Iraqis in Syria - may account for the move, correspondents say.

One factor in their return is likely to be a sharp and sustained drop in all kinds of violence, particularly in parts of the capital Baghdad, following a US-Iraqi military "surge".

But the stream of returnees from Syria is not being matched by return traffic from Jordan, where there may be as many as a million Iraqi refugees.

Syrian authorities, who have seen the country's population swollen by up to 10% by the flood of Iraqi refugees, have begun imposing visa requirements. [Nice little spin job: the "requirement" is: get the fuck out and go back to Iraq. Now.]

November 22, 1937 Pravda, Moscow

An estimated 1,000 people a day are volunteering to go to new camps in Siberia to serve Comrade Stalin. They are so eager to go that they are willing to crowd into railroad boxcars without heat, food, or water, in order to arrive more quickly in the vast, underdeveloped areas of the Motherland, where they will cut down trees, build their own cabins to live in, and engage in various mining and other productive labor operations.

The organs of internal state security and police are sparing no effort to find more happy volunteers and help start them on their way.

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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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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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

“300 Million Americans Announced Tuesday That They Will Be Leaving The Presidential Race Behind”

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

November 14, 2007 The Onion

WASHINGTON—Citing exhaustion, an overcrowded field of candidates, and little hope of making a difference in 2008, roughly 300 million Americans announced Tuesday that they will be leaving the presidential race behind.

The U.S. populace, which has participated in every national election since 1789, said that while the decision to abandon next year's race was difficult, recent events, such as disappointing victories by both Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY) and former New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani in regional straw polls, left them with no real choice.

"We gave it our best shot, and for a while it seemed like the American people actually had a chance of coming out on top," Weare, NH resident Mark Simmons said at a press conference in front of his suburban home.

"Unfortunately, as much as we'd like to remain optimistic, it's become clear that this just isn't our year."

Added Simmons: "Maybe you'll see us again in 2012."

Though initially excited about making universal health care a reality and putting an end to the Iraq war, the American people appeared visibly worn down after only three months of campaigning.

According to Beltway observers, idealism among Americans began to fade after the first series of major televised debates in August, during which every citizen in every state realized they would have to compromise their core values in order to remain in the race.

Factors including intense media coverage of seemingly trivial issues, destructive partisan bickering, and the relentless exploitation of 9/11 only seemed to further discourage Americans from making it to Election Day.

"As the obvious underdogs, we knew that the chance of Americans winning in 2008 was slim to none," said Seattle native Paul Waverchuck, who claimed he was looking forward to spending more time with his family after giving up politics. "I guess there's just no room at the table for the vast majority of this country's citizens."

Some pundits predicted months ago that U.S. citizens would lose steam before the first round of primaries in January. Unable to endure the breakneck pace of morning talk-show interviews and the constant coverage and scrutiny of Hillary Clinton's laugh, Americans reportedly began to lose focus as early as mid-September.

A strong October surge in several states by Republican candidate and Mormon Mitt Romney made it clear to thousands that it was time to throw in the towel.

"Once Law & Order star Fred Thompson declared his candidacy and Barack Obama started using religion to win votes, you could tell America's heart wasn't in it anymore," Washington Post correspondent Dan Balz said. "They knew it was over for them."

While not necessarily shocked by the news, some political observers have lamented the recent departure of the nation's citizens from the 2008 elections.

"American men and women were the only real opposition to frontrunners like Clinton and Giuliani," New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd said. "They were the only ones who seemed to have the public's best interest truly in mind. Without them, it's not going to be much of a contest."

While admitting to being disappointed by the results, Americans said they would continue to pursue lasting social change, whether by working overtime shifts in order to make education more affordable for their children, or by selling some of their belongings in order to provide medical coverage for aging family members.

"Politics are all well and good, but sometimes you have to look for solutions outside of Washington if you want to get things done," said Henrietta Tanner, a single mother of three from Boise, ID.

"Like standing in line at the food bank down on Cavendish Avenue, for instance."



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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

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

“The military are the final, essential weak point of Bush and Cheney.” David McReynolds 9.29.07

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

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