

## **GI SPECIAL 5L24:**



U.S. Army soldiers from Aero Troop, 2-1 Cavalry, force entry into an Iraqi citizens home to search near Baquba December 15, 2007. REUTERS/Bob Strong



[images.google.com]

English soldiers search an American settler's house (1770's)

# **60% Of Iraqis Want Redcoats Dead:**

# Big Surprise

**[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]**

**Declared Bill Ehrhart, a Marine in Vietnam:**

**“In grade school we learned about the redcoats, the nasty British soldiers that tried to stifle our freedom....**

**“Subconsciously, but not very subconsciously, I began increasingly to have the feeling that I was a redcoat.**

**“I think it was one of the most staggering realizations of my life.”**

# **Finally, Some Good News!**

## **As DemoRats Whine, Bush Vetoes Money For Iraq & Afghanistan Wars**

28 December 2007 By Ben Feller, The Associated Press

Crawford, Texas -President Bush on Friday used a “pocket veto” to reject a sweeping defense bill...

**Overall, the bill authorizes \$696 billion in military spending, including \$189 billion for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, for the 2008 budget year.**

Democratic congressional leaders complained that Bush’s move was thrust upon them at the last minute.

House and Senate Democrats said Friday the first time they'd heard of any White House concerns with the legislation was after Congress sent the bill to Bush for his signature.

**[All the DemoRats have to do now is nothing whatever, and it stops. Fat chance. They're for the wars and the Empire. Another big surprise. T]**

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## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

**THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR  
HEALTH;  
COME HOME, NOW**



U.S. Army troops from Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division during an operation in the Amariyah neighborhood of west Baghdad Aug. 14, 2007. (AP Photo/Petr David Josek)

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## **U.S. Iraq Casualties Rise To About 83,000**

December 27, 2007 Michael Munk, michaelmunk.com

US military occupation forces in Iraq suffered at least 66 combat casualties as of Dec. 27, as the official total reached at least 62,857.

The total includes 31,950 killed or wounded by what the Pentagon classifies as "hostile" causes and 30,907 (as of Dec. 10) dead and injured from "non-hostile" causes.

**The actual total is almost 83,000 because the Pentagon chooses not to count as “Iraq casualties” the approximately 20,000 casualties discovered only after they returned from Iraq -mainly brain trauma from explosions.**

**US media divert attention from the actual cost in American life and limb by routinely reporting only the total killed (3,900 as of Dec. 27) and rarely mentioning the 28,773 wounded in combat.**

To further minimize public perception of the cost, they cover for the Pentagon by ignoring the 30,907 (as of Dec. 10) military victims of accidents and illness that caused death or were serious enough to require medical evacuation, although the 3,900 reported deaths include 723 (up one last week) who died from those same causes, including 132 suicides.

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## **And Now, A Message For The Happy Talkers Of U.S. Command....**

December 29, 2007 by Jay Deshmukh (AFP) [Excerpt]

**“During the war Adhamiyah was the last neighbourhood to be taken by the Americans. And even now the fight is not over.”**

**“We will win. One day, we will win,” Rima said before raising himself to his feet and walking out of the gate.**

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Blast West Of Kandahar Kills Canadian Soldier, Wounds 4 Riding In “Almost As Good” Vehicle**

December 30, 2007 CBC News

One Canadian soldier was killed and four others were wounded when their armoured vehicle struck a roadside bomb in southern Afghanistan on Sunday, military officials said.

The soldier who died has been identified as Gunner Jonathan Dion, 27, of Val-d'Or, Que., with the 5th Régiment d'artillerie légère du Canada, based in Valcartier, Que.

The incident occurred shortly after 9 a.m. local time as troops were on a routine patrol in Zhari district, about 20 kilometres west of Kandahar City.

After the explosion, all five soldiers were flown by helicopter to the Canadian-run hospital at Kandahar Air Field where Dion succumbed to his wounds, Brig.-Gen. Guy Laroche told reporters.

The soldiers were travelling in a Tracked Light Armoured Vehicle (TLAV), essentially a modified version of the old M113 tracked vehicle, Laroche said.

**He said these vehicles are “almost as good” as the newer LAVs (Light Armoured Vehicles).**

The incident could have happened to any vehicle and that choice of using the TLAV had nothing to do with the death and injuries on Sunday, Laroche added.

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## Resistance Action



The wreckage of a police vehicle, part of a convoy ambushed by Taliban on Saturday at Sayed Abad district of Maydon Shahr, Wardak province, about 30 kilometers (20 miles) southwest of Kabul, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Rahmatullah Naikzad)

Dec 30 (AP) & AFP

KABUL, Afghanistan — Taliban militants fired rocket-propelled grenades from their vehicles at a convoy of private security guards on Afghanistan’s main highway, killing six guards and two police officers, a police chief said Sunday.

The attack in a dangerous section of Wardak province occurred Saturday afternoon as the security contractors were guarding equipment being driven from Ghazni city to the capital Kabul, said Wardak police chief Gen. Zafaruddin, who goes by one name.

Taliban militants opened fire on the convoy near Maydon Shahr, about 20 miles southwest of Kabul, and six guards and two policemen were killed, he said.

“In total six guards and two policemen were killed. Our police officers were killed when they were sent to help the guards,” he added.

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## TROOP NEWS

**NOT ANOTHER DAY  
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR  
NOT ANOTHER LIFE**



Photo by Nahrawan [Thanks to Kevin Ramirez, CCCO, who sent this in.]

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**While Bush Regime Traitors  
Hand Out Endless Billions To  
War Profiteer Parasites,  
Families Of Wounded Face**

# **Financial Ruin Caring For Them:**

**“The Couple Tapped Their  
Retirement Savings For Months”**

**“They Quit Jobs, Give Up Health  
Insurance And Abandon Homes”**

**“These Kids Could Not Survive Without  
Their Women”**



Staff Sgt. Michael Lage with his mother Rose Lage, at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Dec. 7, 2007. (AP Photo/Eric Gay)

Dec 28 By MICHELLE ROBERTS, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

SAN ANTONIO (AP) -- Rose Lage swears it is true: Suddenly, in the midst of a fitful night of sleep last June, she knew that her son had been injured in Iraq.

"I heard my son's voice," she recalls. "It might sound weird, but I heard him holler 'Mama!'"

In fact, Staff Sgt. Michael Lage was the only survivor of a blast that killed four others. Lage suffered third-degree burns to nearly half his body; part of his nose and ears were missing, and his face, scalp, arms and torso were seared. His left hand had to be amputated.

Rose Lage, 54, understood her son's life would change. But she didn't understand how much her own quiet life - a life spent playing with grandkids, fishing and preparing for her husband's retirement - would change, as well.

She would exchange her two-story house in Atlanta for a hotel room on an Army post, watch her nest egg shrink and spend her days helping a 30-year-old son change bandages and wriggle into garments meant to reduce scarring.

The sacrifices of injured soldiers, airmen and Marines are recognized with medals and commendations. But the mothers and wives who arrive here wide-eyed and afraid make their own sacrifices - abandoning jobs and homes and delaying retirement to help their wounded children reclaim their lives.

"The women here are the heroes, every bit the heroes as their soldiers," said Judith Markelz, who runs a 4-year-old program to aid the families of injured soldiers sent here for treatment.

**"These kids could not survive without their women."**

When the injured arrive, fathers and siblings are often here for the immediate aftermath or early surgeries.

**But the wives and mothers most often stay, Markelz said. They quit jobs, give up health insurance and abandon homes.**

"None of us realized people were going to be here two years. That's not your normal hospital stay," Markelz said. "They didn't want to make San Antonio their home. Now, they can vote here."

Rose Lage and her husband, Larry, arrived in San Antonio to find Michael in intensive care in a medically induced coma. He was covered in bandages with tubes coming in and out of his body.

His mother recognized her son by his long dark eyelashes.

But she wasn't allowed to touch him, couldn't embrace him the way she longed to.

"It took everything I had to be strong," she said, her voice breaking.

Now, six months have passed since she arrived in San Antonio with one large suitcase.

**Her husband stayed as long as he could, but he had to return to work after the couple tapped their retirement savings for months.**



Her two daughters, too, have come to help, but they have their own homes and young children to care for.

Rose hasn't gone anywhere.

The Lages both finally left San Antonio on Dec. 15 for a Christmas trip to see Michael's kids and other family and friends.

But Michael will have to return in January to face a series of surgeries to reconstruct his elbow, and eventually his amputated arm and his nose and ears. It will probably take another year of treatment and rehabilitation.

That means Rose will be back, too.

"I will always be here for him no matter what. He can always depend on me. I will never leave him," she says, looking at Michael.

"I'll be here for my other kids, too. That's what a mom's for. I would give up my life for him, and if I could give him my other hand, I would."

At that, Michael quickly brushes away a tear, and his mother adds one last thing: "He's my baby."

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## **"I Wonder If It's Really Sinking In That This Time She's Not Coming Back"**



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

December 25, 2007 By David Zucchino, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer [Excerpts]

OSWEGO, N.Y. -- The three young sons of Staff Sgt. Carletta Davis did not get to say goodbye to her before she shipped off to Iraq in September. Two months later, Carletta was killed by a roadside bomb as her convoy returned from a mission near Kirkuk on Nov. 5.

“Those boys didn’t get that last hug and kiss, and that’s what they’ll crave the rest of their lives,” said Lavada Napier, Carletta’s mother.

For the Davis family -- forever on the move, never quite settled and never really home -- the death of Carletta was a particularly devastating blow. Three boys in a strange town have lost a loving mother who was gone for much of their lives. A father who had kept his family together while pursuing a medical career is left to raise his sons in a town where he has few friends.

“She’s been gone three-quarters of the time the last few years,” said Thomas Davis, Carletta’s husband. “I wonder if it’s really sinking in that this time she’s not coming back.”

Thomas and sons Treyton, 14; Theodore, 13; and Tyrique, 8, moved to Oswego because it’s near Ft. Drum, the base for Carletta’s unit. Thomas Davis, 35, took a job at an Oswego hospital in September and planned to settle down. His wife was to rejoin them in December 2008.

Carletta, 34, served in Korea, Iraq and Texas. The Iraq deployment was her third in the country. Because of her Army career and Thomas’ training as a physician’s assistant, the boys enrolled here in their third school in the last year.

Last month, the family flew across the country for a memorial service in Alaska, where Carletta grew up. In July, instead of a planned family vacation in Hawaii for Carletta’s home leave, Thomas and his sons will bury her in Fairbanks, Alaska, when the summer sun finally melts the frozen earth.

“I read about the deaths in Iraq every day, but it seems like just names and numbers,” Thomas said. “When it happens to you, it’s personal.

“Everybody’s sympathetic and offers to help, but I don’t know what to tell them,” he said. “I don’t know what I need.”

Delayed by his graduation from a medical program at the University of Washington, Thomas and his sons rushed by car from Washington state to Ft. Drum to try to see Carletta before she shipped out. The military put Carletta on one of the last planes, Thomas said, but the family missed her by less than a day.

Two months later, on Nov. 5, the boys were visited at home by a chaplain and sergeant. One of the boys called Thomas at work to say “the generals” had visited.

Thomas, an Army veteran, hoped it was ROTC cadets raising money. But deep down, he knew.

“It’s the knock on the door you never want to come,” Thomas said.

Carletta was awarded two air medals, a rare feat, and earned the prestigious combat medical badge. She also earned a Bronze Star and Purple Heart. She twice received awards for heroism -- for rescuing two soldiers who had fallen down a cliff near Ft. Lewis, Wash., and for rescuing a wounded Iraqi police officer.

Carletta was the 91st female U.S. service member to die in Iraq. Two more have died since.

“Carletta was the best medic in a company packed with medical professionals,” her commander, Lt. Col. Joseph Novak, wrote to her husband. Carletta was selected as the lead medic in the brigade commander’s personal security detachment -- an elite position that often took her away from her fortified base near Kirkuk.

The boys had not seen their mother since January, when she went to Texas for military training and their father went to Nome, Alaska, for physician’s assistant training. The boys went to live with their grandmother Napier in Fairbanks.

Being away from her family tore at Carletta, said Sgt. Erica Lopez-Brown, a close friend. A few days before she died, Davis spoke to her sons by phone. She asked them for Christmas gift suggestions.

“She said she’d send us some stuffed camels,” Theodore said.

Asked what they’d say to their mother now, Treyton said: “I love you, Mom.” Tyrique said: “I’ll miss you.” And Theodore said: “You’re the best mom in the world.”

Thomas said he had asked Tyrique whether he knew what had happened to his mother. “He didn’t answer, but he did say before that Mom had died,” he said.

Thomas added: “They’re having to learn to deal with it -- it shows up in the oddest ways.”

The other day, he said, Theodore decided to wear his mother’s Army fatigues to school.

Over dinner on a recent night, Tyrique blurted out: “Why did Mom have to go back to Iraq?”

His father answered: “In the military, you have to follow orders.”

Treyton cut in: “Or else you go to jail.”

Tyrique asked: “Did Mom go to the desert to fight?”

“Yes, she did,” his father said.

Treyton asked his father whether his mother had been selected for special duty because of her expertise and experience.

“That’s right,” Thomas said. “She really knew what she was doing.”

Treyton said he remembered his mother coming home tired from Army duty.

“Oh, yeah,” his father said, “she gave it her all, and it wore her out.”

After his wife’s death, Thomas said, he would not watch TV news or use the Internet, to avoid hearing or reading about Iraq.

"I didn't want to believe it," he said. "I didn't want to deal with it."

"He was the picture of grief," Napier said.

Thomas said his wife's previous tours in Iraq had given him a false sense of security. "We'd made it through twice, so I figured it was just another rotation, we'll get through it just fine."

The memorial service helped him come to terms with his grief, Thomas said. Police and firefighters lined up at the Fairbanks airport, where two flag-draped coffins were delivered -- the remains of Davis and another soldier killed by the same bomb, Sgt. Derek Stenroos, 24, of tiny North Pole, Alaska. Four Ft. Drum soldiers died in the explosion.

With his wife's burial still to come, and with mountains of military forms to fill out and boys to raise, Thomas feels overwhelmed. He broke the news to his sons that they weren't buying the house they'd all visited; the mortgage approval came the day Carletta died. They were living in a cramped two-bedroom apartment, sleeping on air mattresses.

"Oh, no, we should've got the house," Theodore said.

"Well, how long are you willing to live here?" his father asked. "It's hard to sell a house around here."

Tyrique asked: "Can we at least unpack our beds? I want my bed back."

His father didn't answer. He wasn't certain what they were going to do.

This month, Thomas bought a different house, one he thinks he can sell more easily if they decide to move. The boys unpacked their beds.

Thomas could find work as a physician's assistant in a lot of places.

"I guess the question is, where to now?" he said over dinner.

His three boys shrugged.

"We have nowhere to go, really," Thomas said.

What had kept them going was counting the days until Carletta came home next year, when they would be a family again, when they would be anchored in a home for more than just a few months.

"That date -- December '08 -- that date that was so important," the father told his sons. "That date doesn't matter anymore."

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**“They Order Their Soldiers To Kill,  
And Pakistani Soldiers Are Refusing  
To Open Fire”  
“Twenty Soldiers Surrender, Fifty  
Soldiers Surrender. And They Are  
Surrendering To Groups Of Four Or Five  
Armed Taliban”**

December 28, 2007 Democracy Now [Excerpt]

Tariq Ali, acclaimed British-Pakistani historian, activist, and commentator joins us now on the phone from London. He is one of the editors of the New Left Review and the author of a dozen books.

TARIQ ALI: Well, I think, you know, the significance of this is that the United States refuses to understand that there is a big political problem which cannot be dealt with militarily.

**And that political problem can be summed up as follows, that the people of Afghanistan — like it or dislike it — do not like being occupied by foreign powers.**

**They didn't like being occupied by the Russians, and they don't like being occupied by the United States and the NATO armies in their country.**

**And as long as this foreign occupation lasts, there will be, you know, forms of resistance against it.**

Now, this crisis and instability in Afghanistan is seeping across the border into northwestern Pakistan.

Pakistan is, you know, sending troops to fight some of the people who come over the border, some who belong to Pakistan, who are fighting against NATO.

**They order their soldiers to kill, and Pakistani soldiers are refusing to open fire.**

That is essentially what's going on.

And the reason they're refusing to open fire is because for the last twenty-five years this ideology implanted in their heads when they're being trained to be soldiers in the Pakistan army is that your enemy is the Hindu. Your enemy is India. Your enemy is the traditional enemy of Pakistan and of Muslims, and these are the people you'll be fighting. This is what they've been led to believe.

**Now they are being told that your enemies are other Muslims from a neighboring Muslim country, and so there's a massive crisis, a big psychological crisis, for lots of soldiers who are not fighting.**

**In fact, you often read in the Pakistani press reports — twenty soldiers surrender, fifty soldiers surrender.**

**And they are surrendering to groups of four or five armed Taliban or, you know, non-Taliban fighters from Afghanistan.**

**This is impossible to understand, except in political terms.**

So training more specialized troops isn't going to do the trick, if there's this basic problem, which is, as Juan was asking earlier, when you have some of these opinion polls, the reason people say that if there's a choice between Bush and bin Laden, they'll back bin Laden, or between — it's not because they're extremists in that sense, but they don't like the fact that Pakistan is totally on its knees as a state before Washington and the United States.

It doesn't argue with them. It doesn't resist them on any level at all. So the fact that it's independent is neither here nor there.

So sending in more US troops is actually going to make things much, much worse for pro-US politicians in that country. And they should be prepared for that.

**The real problem in Afghanistan is that they occupied it without having any understanding whatsoever what they were going to do.**

**They put Karzai in, and they couldn't do anything to transform the lives of ordinary people in that country.**

You have large-scale corruption with Karzai and his cronies getting rich, with Karzai's brother actually in charge of the heroin trade and arms smuggling. That's the problem, that the people they put in had — were feathering their own nests.

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## **Troop-Killing Pentagon Traitors Trying To Sabotage MRAP Deployments: “High-Ranking Officers Worry That The Price Tag Will Lead Congressional Budgeters To Cut Funding For Other Weapons Systems”**

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

December 27, 2007 By Julian E. Barnes and Peter Spiegel, Los Angeles Times Staff Writers [Excerpts]

**WASHINGTON -- It was just what American soldiers had been longing for -- a patrol vehicle designed to withstand the powerful roadside bombs that have killed more service members than any other insurgent weapon in the Iraq war.**

**Support for MRAPs within the Pentagon has weakened recently....**

**Earlier this month, Marine Corps officials announced they were cutting the number of MRAPs they intended to buy, to 2,300 from 3,600, citing the reduced violence in Iraq and the questionable utility of the vehicles in other missions.**

**Army officials, who were planning the largest purchases, are considering a similar move.**

Critics of defense budgeting believe the Pentagon and Congress rushed too quickly to embrace the MRAP as the best fix for the problem of roadside bombs. **[Right. More dead troops is cheaper.]**

**Congressional MRAP advocates have argued that the short-term need to protect soldiers from roadside bombs far outweighs any long-term concerns about being stuck with expensive vehicles with limited uses.**

"We might be stuck with a lot of these things that don't have a clear application in the next field of battle," said a [Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Joseph R.] Biden aide, who spoke on condition of anonymity, as is customary for congressional staffers.

**"But it doesn't matter. We're fighting the war we're in now, not the war we're going to fight in five or six years."**

The concerns over the MRAP's abilities have increased inside the Pentagon.

**Some high-ranking officers worry that the price tag will lead congressional budgeters to cut funding for other weapons systems the Army believes are more important for the future.**

**Those pressures have led the Army to reconsider earlier proposals to replace all Humvees with MRAPs.**

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# **“Prisoners Preparing For Army Life, Thanks To A New Course Being Run Behind Bars”**

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

Dec 27 2007 by Katie Norman, South Wales Echo

PRISONERS have been preparing for Army life, thanks to a new course being run behind bars.

Inmates at Parc Prison, Bridgend, have become the first in the UK to complete a programme preparing them for life in the armed forces while they serve time.

The 22-week training programme was devised by prison staff with assistance from Army recruiters.

Initially there were 10 participants, but only the five who completed the course were told they could join the Army.

The course graduates will be eligible to join six months after their release.

Colour Sergeant Marcus Davies, a Cardiff-based Army recruiter, said: “We’ve told them to keep their noses clean so that when they’re allowed to join the Army, they can do so.

“We’ve had to tread carefully because the army is not actively recruiting prisoners but we are trying to give the prison some guidance so we can give these guys a leg up.”

Only inmates serving their first sentence of less than two-and-a-half years were allowed to enroll on the course.

Successful applicants underwent a mix of intense physical training and English, Maths and IT lessons.

They also completed all the elements of the bronze Duke of Edinburgh’s Award except an expedition and even raised £1,000 for cancer charities.

The programme prepared them to join any of the forces, but all have chosen the Army.

Course founder Steve Williams, the jail’s physical education and integration manager, is a former Welsh Guards soldier.

He said: “A lot of prisoners get out and go straight back to their normal lifestyle because they think there are no prospects for them. “Having this course has given them a goal to work towards. It’s been really good for them and their attitude has been tremendous.”



While devising the course, Steve visited the Army Apprentice College, which works with young people who dropped out of school.

He said: "At the end of the day, these guys are coming from a similar background to those kids but they didn't have the advantage of going to the college."

Course graduate Nathan Morgan, 19, said: "I just went into this because it was something different. I wasn't sure about the Army but now I know I want to do it."

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **Resistance Action**

12.27.07 Reuters & By Mohammed Al Dulaimy, McClatchy Newspapers & 29 Dec 2007 Reuters & Dec. 30 (Xinhua) & Reuters

Three U.S. funded neighbourhood patrol members were killed and two wounded on Wednesday as they entered a booby-trapped house in the city of Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb in Jalawla targeted a police vehicle. It injured three police officers.

Nineveh police spokesman, Brigadier-General Saeed Ahmed, was wounded when guerrillas opened fire at them as he was conducting a television interview outdoors in the city of Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. One of his bodyguards was killed and a second was wounded in the attack.

Unknown persons attacked a convoy of trucks in the province of Salahudin north of Baghdad on Sunday, kidnapping 11 truck drivers, a provincial police source said. The attackers set up a faked checkpoint on the main road near the town of Sulaiman Bek, 90 km east of the provincial capital of Tikrit, and kidnapped the drivers of the trucks that were carrying food stuff to the northern city of Mosul, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Guerrillas attacked a police patrol killing three policemen and setting their vehicle ablaze on Saturday in the northern city of Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

<p><b>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</b></p>
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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

**“We Are The Troops And We  
Have Never Felt Support From  
This Administration”**

**“What Would You Do If Your  
Homeland Was Savagely Invaded  
And Occupied By Another  
Country?”**

**“End The Violence In Iraq? End The  
Occupation”**

**“The Iraqis Will Continue To Resist  
And Fight Until The Last American  
Has Left Their Homeland. Period”**



Nov 11, 2007 By MATT HOWARD, Rutland Herald [Excerpts]

**Matt Howard attained the rank of corporal in the United States Marine Corps. He is head of the Vermont chapter for Iraq Veterans Against the War.**

Matt Howard gave this statement at a recent protest at the Statehouse.

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In 2003 I illegally invaded the sovereign nation of Iraq with 1st Tank battalion 1st Marine Division. My commander in chief unleashed the world's fiercest fighting force upon the country and people of Iraq, and now those of us used and betrayed by him are demanding justice.

Four and a half years after our opening "shock and awe" Bush's lies are known throughout the world, and yet he continues to act with impunity. Four and a half years later the Bush regime has unleashed a hell upon the country of Iraq that only those who have been there can truly understand.

As a two-tour combat veteran of this brutal war, I have a responsibility to speak honestly and openly about what has been done and what continues to be done in our name.

We veterans know that this war is not the one being sanitized on the nightly news. It has nothing to do with the liberation of the people of Iraq; instead it has everything to do with the subjugation and domination of these people in the name of U.S. imperial economic and strategic interests.

We did not go to war with the country of Iraq, we went to war with the people of Iraq. During the initial invasion we killed women. We killed children. We senselessly killed farm animals. We were the United States Marine Corps, not the Peace Corps, and we left a swath of death and destruction in our wake all the way to Baghdad.

Let me say again so that there is no misunderstanding. I stand here today as a former U.S. Marine saying we are killing women and children in Iraq. This is the true nature of war. War lends itself to atrocities. Don't think you can use an organization designed to kill other human beings for anything humanitarian. That has never been our mission. That was crystal clear from the moment I was forced to bury the crate of humanitarian food given to me in Kuwait.

So Iraq Veterans Against the War is taking back our history – the history that has been robbed from us.

**We are dispelling the myth that the Vietnam war ended when the Democrats started voting against it. Instead we are spreading the truth about how the American War in Vietnam ended.**

**The Vietnam War ended when soldiers put down their weapons and refused to fight; when pilots dropped their bombs in the ocean.**

We are re-educating the public to let them know that the power ultimately lies with the people.

**Just take a look at the thousands of pages of internal documents from the Department of Defense explicitly detailing how at the end of the Vietnam war the military had collapsed. It was literally in a state of mutiny. And that movement is slowly starting again.**

George Bush is a war criminal who has violated international law, the Geneva convention and the Nuremburg standards and needs to be tried accordingly for crimes against humanity.

**I ask every red-blooded American today:**

**What would you do if your homeland was savagely invaded and occupied by another country?**

**The Iraqis will continue to resist and fight until the last American has left their homeland. Period.**

**End the violence in Iraq? End the occupation.**

We veterans are speaking out to stop the violence being perpetrated in our name. When we voted in the Democrats on an anti-war mandate, the Bush regime expanded the war.

And we will not continue to be silenced by the mainstream media. We know the truth about the slaughter of upwards of one million Iraqis.

**We ARE the troops and we have never felt support from this administration.**

**Troops Invited:**

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

**“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**

## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

# ***Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!***

## **U.S. Occupation Commands' Stupid Terror Tactics Recruit Even More Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops**



A foreign occupation soldier from the U.S. shoots the lock off a door near Baquba December 15, 2007. REUTERS/Bob Strong (IRAQ)

**[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqi troops over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, butcher their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it "sovereign," and "detain" anybody who doesn't like it in some prison without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.]**

**[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]**

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

# **“We Served The American Forces In Iraq” “So Why Don’t The Americans Care About Us?”**

Dec. 30, 2007 By GREGORY KATZ, Houston Chronicle Middle East Bureau

Riyadh Khalid, a 36-year-old computer programmer, said he cannot return with confidence because his old Baghdad neighborhood is controlled by militias linked to al-Qaida. He holds them responsible for murdering his brother who worked for U.S. companies.

Khalid fled with his wife and two daughters after receiving death threats because he worked for the Americans, and he does not want to put his family at risk by going back. But he fears they are slowly rotting in their drab apartment just one block from the Nile River in Cairo’s Maadi neighborhood.

“I think of going back because we are running out of money,” he said in a soft voice as his wife and daughters watched an Iraqi show on TV. “It’s so confusing. You can go back to Iraq and work and earn money and maybe be killed, or you can stay here without money and slowly die.”

Khalid feels defeated. He can no longer pay for the \$1-a-day prescription medicine needed to combat his daughter Danaya’s asthma. And he feels abandoned by the Americans.

U.S. officials, he said, have rebuffed his pleas to help his family resettle in Europe or the United States. He has registered with the United Nations refugee agency and underwent a preliminary interview about resettlement, but the process has stalled.

“The important point is we served the American forces in Iraq and tried to improve our country and help the Americans, so why don’t the Americans care about us?” he said.

“They used me and wiped their hands of me.”

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## **OCCUPATION PALESTINE**

### **Deer Hunters**

Dec 29, 2007 Gideon Levy, Haaretz

After a night of rain, the sun broke through the clouds. Two brothers and their brother-in-law decided to go for a hike in the wild, through the spectacular valley of olive trees, west of Ramallah in the West Bank. Around midday they suddenly noticed a herd of deer descending pell-mell into the valley. They stood and watched, certain that in the wake of the frantically fleeing animals, other people would appear.

And, in fact, a few minutes later they spotted a group of soldiers slowly making their way into the valley.

**The three young Palestinians stood on the ridge of the hills that overlook the valley, a few hundred meters from the soldiers as the crow flies.**

**Suddenly, according to the testimony of one of them, without any prior warning, the soldiers fired bursts of bullets at them.**

**Firas Kaskas, 32, an unemployed gardener from the village of Batir, near Bethlehem, who had come to visit his brother-in-law in his new apartment, fell to the ground. He died of his wounds the next day. He left a young wife and three daughters, of whom the eldest is four.**

This week the sun poured down again on the beautiful valley. We went there with Jamil Matur, the victim's brother-in-law, who was with him on that brilliantly bright, but grimly dark day.

We stood exactly where the three had been when Firas was shot and killed. Here, this is where Matur was standing; Kaskas was here, and his brother, Baha, was standing there.

A shepherd gathered his flock in the valley below, making strange groaning noises that carried a long way. In contrast, the tinkling of the sheeps' bells was sharp and pleasant to the ears. A great calm descended on the valley, on whose stepped terraces are a number of ancient ruins.

On the ridge across the way are the houses of the Mustaqbal neighborhood. The way to the valley also cuts through A-Tira, a prestigious neighborhood on the western slopes of Ramallah, a city which is today experiencing a building boom and economic prosperity.

A few weeks ago, the members of the Kaskas family - Firas, his wife Majida, and their three little girls - visited Majida's brother in A-Tira. He had just moved in, and the family went to see the new place and spend a peaceful weekend together.

On that Sunday morning the family had a late breakfast and lounged on the porch of their house. Firas suggested a walk. Majida wanted to visit another brother in nearby Bitunia; Jamil, Faris' brother-in-law, suggested that they go into town.

Finally, they decided that Majida and the girls would go to Bitunia and the three men - Jamil, Firas and Baha - would go for a little hike.

Leaving their neighborhood, they walked along the ridge above the wadi. Near one concentration of ruins they stopped to watch the deer. Ramallah residents like to come

here on weekends to spend some time in nature, to barbecue meat, smoke a nargileh and enjoy the view.

The three men were standing a few meters apart from each other when they noticed a group of soldiers descending into the wadi. They were about 300 meters away, as the crow flies, the valley separating them. The soldiers stopped next to the ruins on the slopes of the ridge opposite them. Jamil counted seven or eight soldiers.

Then, suddenly, without any prior warning, Jamil relates, the soldiers opened fire. It came in one or two bursts, he says. Jamil immediately took cover behind a boulder, Baha lay down supine behind him, while Firas stood out in front, exposed to the gunfire. Jamil managed to call to Firas to take shelter behind the boulder, Firas turned toward him - and then collapsed.

"Are you hit?" Jamil asked in a panic.

"It's nothing, just a rubber bullet," Firas replied.

Jamil and Baha moved cautiously toward Firas, who was able to stand up. They supported him for a few steps, and then he fell again. Foam gathered on his lips and he gasped for breath.

Jamil stripped off his brother-in-law's clothes and saw a few drops of blood on his underpants and small holes in his lower stomach and lower back. Leaving the wounded man with his brother, he ran to the nearest house to summon help. He also waved his hands toward the soldiers, so they would not shoot at him, too. They stood mute.

Employees from an ironworker's shop and a few neighbors rushed over. They carried Firas to a private car and called a Palestinian ambulance. They met the ambulance up on the road and transferred Firas to the vehicle.

"Firas, are you alive?" Jamil asked his brother-in-law.

"It's nothing," Firas replied.

In the emergency room of the government hospital in Ramallah, he was still able to resist having his pants removed, but finally agreed and was taken immediately to surgery.

From the medical report: "The above-named man was brought to the government hospital in Ramallah on December 2, 2007, after being hit by a bullet, which penetrated behind the stomach region and exited in front. The patient was operated on urgently and it emerged that the small intestine was torn. Part of it was removed and the other part was stitched. It also emerged that there was heavy bleeding as a result of a torn central artery in the hip region. The bleeding was stopped and the arteries were connected. After the operation the patient was placed in intensive care. After the surgery the stomach bleeding began anew. The patient was taken to the operating room. It turned out that there was bleeding of all the stomach tissues."

Firas died at five the next morning.



The Israel Defense Forces spokesman informed us that after a preliminary investigation, it transpired that soldiers at an army observation post had spotted three Palestinians who were behaving suspiciously.

“The three, who were identified as being busy on the ground for quite a few minutes, were suspected by the force of planting a bomb,” the statement said. “A force ... was rushed to the site and launched a pursuit of the suspects, during which they called on them to stop and also fired into the air. When the calls were ignored, the force opened fire at the suspects.”

According to the IDF, “the incident was investigated at all levels of command, and the lessons will be learned and applied. The findings of the investigation will be conveyed to the Military Advocate General's Office.”

**Antigona Ashkar, from the human rights organization B'Tselem, who also investigated the event, wrote to the chief military prosecutor, Colonel Liron Liebman, saying: “The soldiers opened fire at Jamil, Baha and Firas suddenly, with no prior warning.**

“The three were sitting on a boulder and looking at the view, and did not endanger anyone. They were surprised by the emergence of the soldiers from between the trees and remained where they were until the soldiers started shooting at them.” B'Tselem requested a Military Police investigation of the circumstances of the killing.

**The B'Tselem field-worker in the Ramallah region, Iyad Hadad, said this week at the site of the killing: “It was a hunt. Those soldiers went on a hunting expedition. They killed Firas the way you hunt a deer or a stag. They couldn't have had any other reason for shooting him.”**

**Jamil added: “What did the soldiers see in his hand? What did we do? Did they see a weapon in his hand? Was there a demonstration going on? Did we throw stones at anyone? They just shot us without batting an eyelash.”**

In the village of Batir, Firas' widow, Majida, in black mourning clothes, sits in her small, simple home. She is holding her infant daughter Sadil.

At three months, Sadil's father has been taken from her.

The other two girls - Latifa, four, and Naama, two and a half - wander restlessly about their meager living room, blowing soap bubbles, until the whole room is filled with them.

Majida waited and waited in her brother's home in Bitunia for Firas to arrive that day, as he had promised, after the hike.

But Firas did not arrive.

Not until the next day did her father come and tell her, “Firas is dead.”

Now Majida, her voice broken with crying, says: “I want to ask you and the whole world: What did he do?”

“What was his crime?

“What was he guilty of? The father of three little girls - I want to know, why was he killed? Because I don't know.”

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## “It Is The Revolutionaries Who Have The Right To Give Amnesty To The Occupation, And Not The Opposite”



**Ma'an Chief Editor Nasser Lahham with Muhammad Shahada [Ma'anImages]**

**28 / 12 / 2007 Maan News [Excerpts]**

Bethlehem – Ma'an – Nasser Lahham – In the same place where Muslim Caliph Umar Ibn Al-Khattab had stood and watched the Nativity Church, a “wanted” Palestinian activist from Bethlehem, Muhammad Shahada, stood calmly and watched the church on Christmas Eve.

I approached him and had a quick interview with him while he was participating in the celebrations with Christians:

*Nasser Lahham: You have been pursued by the Israelis for ten years; so where does your smile come from?*

Muhammad Shahada: From faith in God and in the Palestinian question and inalienable right of freedom and independence. The Palestinian people are capable of raising the flag of liberty and completing their mission. Israel has to realize that military occupation of Palestine does not solve its problems neither now nor in the future.

*NL: Do you think the Annapolis summit was the reason for the success of the Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem this year?*

MS: The Annapolis conference did not reach a brave level of addressing the Palestinian rights. It instead took us back to the Road Map plan trying to vision that the Palestinian problem was only one of security chaos, which every body knows is incorrect.

*NL: If you were offered to hand over your weapon and get amnesty from Israel, wouldn't that be better for you?*

MS: Israeli is trying to create disagreement between the Palestinian activists themselves when it pardons some of them and leaves the rest. They actually embarrassed the Palestinian authority.

I would like to explain something important in this regard; it is the revolutionaries who have the right to give amnesty to the occupation, and not the opposite.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: [www.rafahtoday.org](http://www.rafahtoday.org) The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

## **NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

<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/](http://www.ivaw.org/))

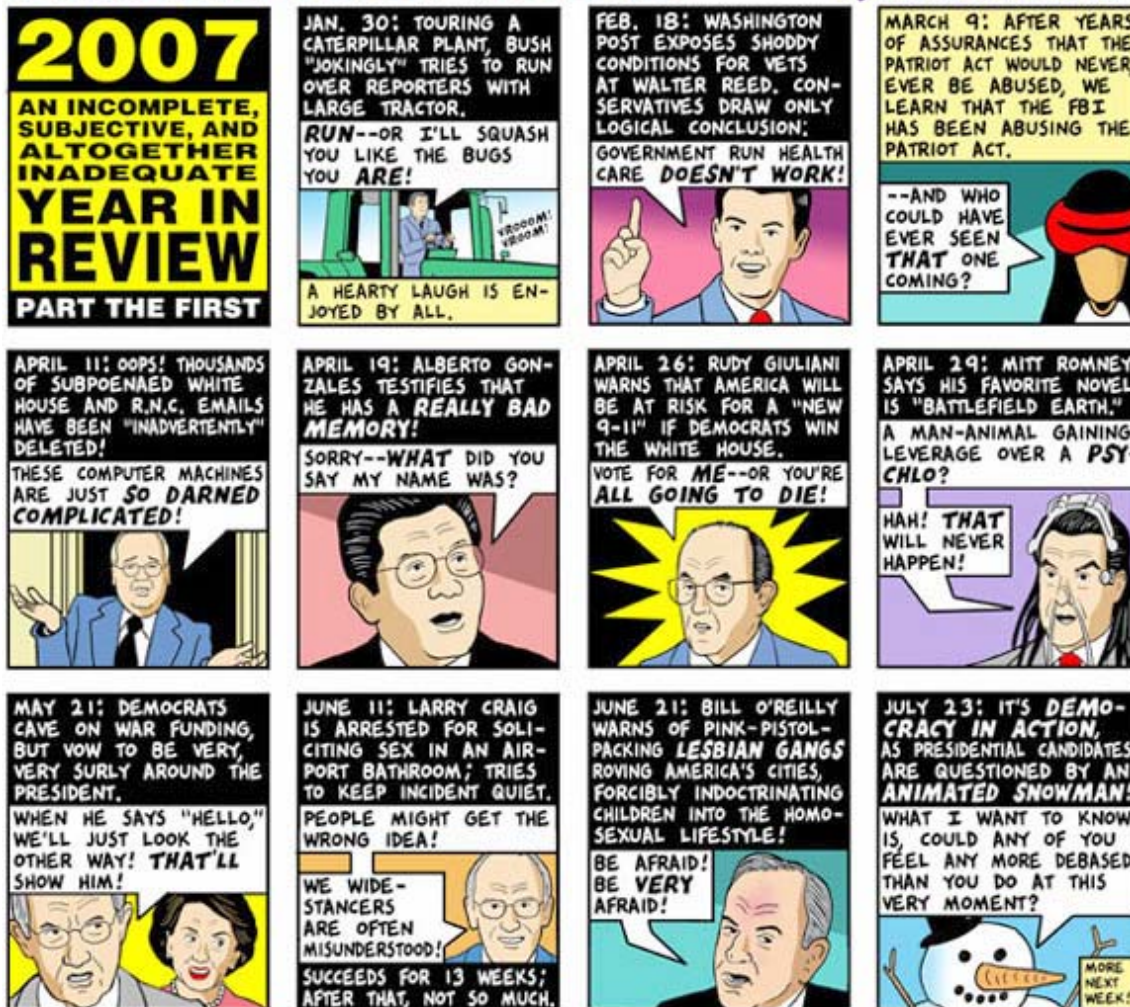
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## **DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

# THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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