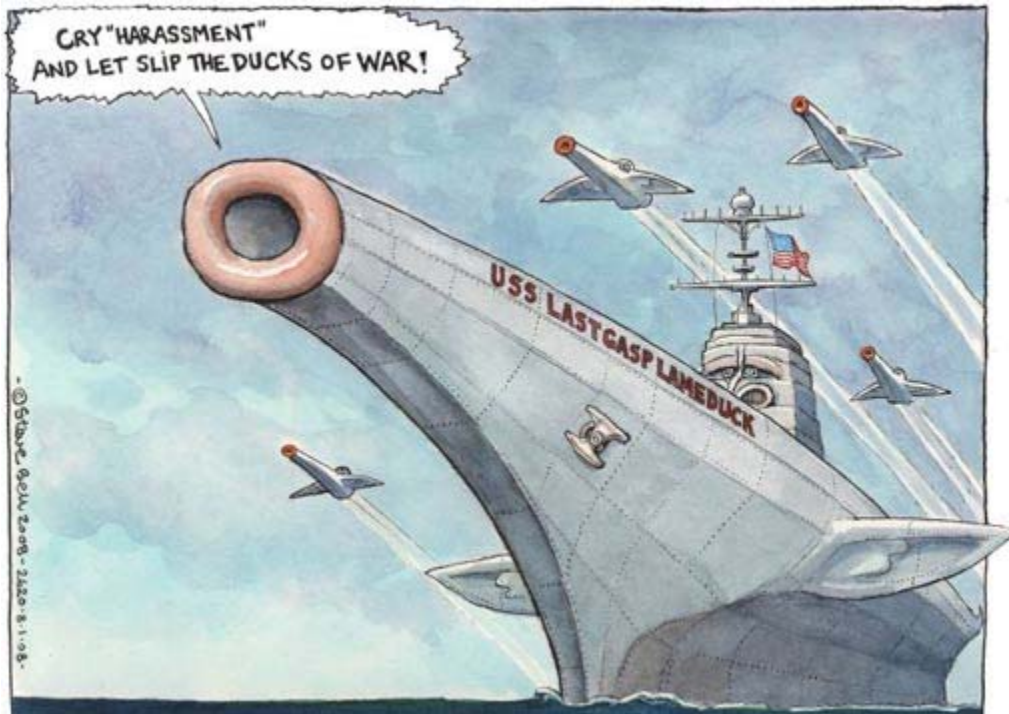


GI SPECIAL 6A7:



[Thanks to Z, who sent this in.]

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

6 U.S. Soldiers Killed, Four Wounded By House Bomb In Diyala

January 9, 2008 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080109-10

TIKRIT, Iraq – Six Multi-National Division – North Soldiers were killed by a house born improvised explosive device while conducting operations in Diyala Jan. 9.

Additionally, four MND-N Soldiers were injured in the explosion and evacuated to a Coalition Forces' hospital.

U.S. Troops Raid Diyala River Valley In Search Of Insurgents; Insurgents Find U.S. Troops; Two Vehicles Blown Up



U.S. army soldiers from 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, inspect the damage on an armored vehicle after it was hit by a roadside bomb during the initial phase of Operation Raider Harvest in the village of Sinsil on the northern outskirts of Muqdadiyah, in Diyala province Jan. 8, 2008. (AP Photo/Marko Drobnjakovic)

January 8, 2008 By Alexandra Zavis, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer [Excerpts]

SENSIL, Iraq -- Under cover of darkness early today, U.S. soldiers crept across a bridge where just days before insurgents had left a chilling warning: a severed human head with a message identifying the victim as a U.S. collaborator scrawled across the forehead with a black marker.

Each time U.S. and Iraqi forces reclaim a sanctuary, the insurgents drop their weapons and blend into the civilian population to fight elsewhere.

The insurgents had prepared their defenses in advance of the raid.

Bombs ripped through at least two U.S. vehicles, injuring three soldiers in one of them.

U.S. soldiers had to bring in a bridge to get their vehicles across a large cut in the road.

And there were brief exchanges of gunfire.

**Brain-Dead U.S. Commanders
Flunk Counterinsurgency 101:
They Mount Huge, Noisy, Clunky
Armored Offensive With A Cast Of
Thousands In Diyala And –
Surprise Surprise – Resistance
Forces Know It’s Coming;
“They Encountered Little Or No
Direct Contact With Insurgent
Fighters”
“Residents Of Esaiwid Said Tuesday
That The Insurgent Fighters Left The
Village Days Ago”**

In any case, it is hard to conceal thousands of American soldiers and scores of armored vehicles, Iraqi military units, interpreters and support workers moving into place through highways and towns in central Diyala, even though their movements were staggered and mainly at night.

January 9, 2008 By STEPHEN FARRELL, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

ESAIWID, Iraq — With extraordinary secrecy, and even an information blackout aimed at most of their Iraqi Army comrades, American troops began a major offensive on Tuesday to drive Sunni insurgents from strongholds in Diyala Province.

But many insurgents still managed to flee the first villages the Americans went into, showing just how difficult it is to trap the elusive militants.

Because at least half the insurgents escaped before an offensive last June, American planners deliberately kept most Iraqi units in the dark before this one, a tactic that

suggests they cannot fully trust the allies who are supposed to pick up more of the fighting as American troops scale back their presence this year.

The militants may have been tipped by leaks or by the visible movements of troops and machinery that precede any operation. [No shit? Do you suppose?]

Although the commander of the Iraqi Fifth Army Division in Diyala was aware of the intended target, American units in recent days and weeks carried out smaller decoy operations in other towns farther south, like Baquba and Wajihiya, to mislead extremists about where the actual operation would take place.

Nevertheless, some advance units noticed an unusual number of women and children fleeing south in cars in recent days, and residents of Esaiwid said Tuesday that the insurgent fighters left the village days ago, although some appear to have remained behind or returned to plant car bombs.

In any case, it is hard to conceal thousands of American soldiers and scores of armored vehicles, Iraqi military units, interpreters and support workers moving into place through highways and towns in central Diyala, even though their movements were staggered and mainly at night.

The current operation is being led by the Fourth Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Second Infantry Division, with support from other units in the area around a town, Muqdadia, to catch what American Special Forces term "squirters," insurgents trying to slip out of the area.

Although American units ran into many concealed bombs, they encountered little or no direct contact with insurgent fighters.

The hazards are numerous, even outside the immediate area of the Breadbasket. During one Jan. 4 patrol with Third Squadron, Second Stryker Cavalry Regiment, in the buildup to the offensive, a photographer working for The New York Times snagged his foot on a copper filament hidden in undergrowth, which led to a bomb buried in a hole. The filament was not a trip wire, but a command wire, the sort used to set off an explosive with an electrical current. The bomb did not explode and was safely disposed of.

Some American units have had to adapt quickly to the rural terrain, including Lieutenant Ferguson's unit, which spent two months in the urban environment of Dora, in southern Baghdad, during the American troop increase last year.

In Baghdad they had to deal with bombs set off by metal pressure plates or buried cables that leave only a small bump in a road surface. Now they encounter bombs buried so deep beneath the orchards that they are almost impossible to spot in advance.

After one recent explosion, said Lieutenant Ferguson, it took his men half an hour to find the wire leading to the device, even though they knew exactly where the bomb had gone off.

Three U.S. Soldiers Killed, Two Wounded In Salah Ad Din

January 9, 2008 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080109-06

TIKRIT, Iraq: Three Multi-National Division – North Soldiers died from injuries sustained during an attack while conducting operations in Salah ad Din province Jan. 8.

Additionally, two more Soldiers were injured and evacuated to a Coalition hospital.

Prunedale Soldier Killed In Iraq

12/27/2007 By JIM JOHNSON, Herald Salinas Bureau

Pfc. George Howell's voice echoes from his sister's answering machine.

"Doing fine out here," he says, leaving a message during a phone call from Iraq a couple of weeks ago.

His sister, Chardell Howell, said she may never erase the message, even though she got to talk to her brother during another phone call later that night.

That's because George Howell was killed by a roadside bomb in northern Iraq on Friday, just four days before Christmas. The 24-year-old from Prunedale was driving a Humvee on a particularly dangerous stretch of roadway in Riyadh when the vehicle struck an improvised explosive device, killing Howell and injuring several fellow soldiers.

Howell was serving with the 10th Mountain Division, based in Fort Drum, N.Y., and had been in Iraq since September. He was working with a combat team responsible for providing security in the Kirkuk region.

Chardell Howell said her brother joined the army in April in an effort to provide for his own fledgling family — his wife, Kristen, 5-year-old daughter, Niya, and 2-year-old son, Raiden, with another baby on the way — and to follow a family tradition. His father, Frank Howell, served in Vietnam as an Army Ranger with the 101st Airborne, and several other family members also served in the military.

"He wanted to do the right thing," Chardell Howell said. "We were just hoping everything would go well and he would be all right."

Uncle Doyle Howell said his nephew "Georgie" had been laid off from his job as a hardwood floor installer when he decided to join the military.

"He went into the service, and he was real proud of that," Doyle Howell said. "He had to go into the military to support his family. The military was his only source of work. It's just unfortunate he got sent to Iraq."

Howell completed basic and advanced individual training at Fort Benning, Ga. In addition to security responsibilities in the Kirkuk region, his unit assisted in training Iraqi security forces. He earned a Purple Heart and the Army Service Ribbon.

Howell spent much of his childhood on Strawberry Canyon Road in Prunedale, attending Elkhorn Elementary and Moss Landing Middle School. He also attended North Monterey County and Seaside high schools, but left before graduating to find work, according to his sister, who said Howell later earned his GED.

Chardell Howell described her brother as “outgoing” and a “family man.” When he wasn’t spending time with his family, she said, he was with friends 4-wheeling at Hollister Hills or playing PlayStation video games.

Her brother’s body is scheduled to be flown back from Germany next week, she said. Funeral services are pending, although Howell’s wife is considering burial at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

Doyle Howell said he hopes his nephew’s wife will allow him to be buried next to his father in Santa Nella.

In addition to his wife and children, George Howell is survived by his mother, who lives in Watsonville. His father died in 2001.

Well, So Much For Petraeus’ Brilliant Invention: U.S. Funded “Awakening Council” Opens Fire On U.S. Troops

January 8, 2008 By Sudarsan Raghavan, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpts]

Riyadh Hadi is the field commander of the Lions of Adhamiyah, the Awakening force in a middle-class Sunni neighborhood in Baghdad. Tall with a long, goateed face, the 37-year-old Hadi said he commands 1,400 fighters, 700 of whom receive a \$300 monthly salary from the U.S. military.

He described himself only as a metalworker and “a son of Adhamiyah” who rose up against al-Qaeda in Iraq after the group killed his brother. Residents and insurgents said he is a former Baathist who was a member of several militant groups, including the 1920 Revolution Brigades....

The Lions emerged on the streets of Adhamiyah on Nov. 10. Their forces quickly engaged in two clashes against mostly Shiite policemen, who were stunned to see the Sunni fighters now taking over the enclave.

One day last month, Hadi's men were stationed at nearly every intersection. They checked vehicles at the entrances to the neighborhood, which was protected by tall blast walls. Elsewhere the fighters were much less visible. "Under Saddam Hussein, there was no army in the streets. He used intelligence men, his Baathists, he was controlling everything, like what we are doing now," Hadi said.

Last week, Hadi's men attempted to stop Iraqi army troops from conducting house raids with U.S. troops, prompting a firefight.

Great Moments In U.S. Military History: **U.S. Force Raids Kindergarten, Smashes Toys; No Terrorist Tots Found**



Jan. 8, 2008: An Iraqi child stands in a classroom at Canary school in Sadr City, Baghdad wrecked in a raid by U.S. troops on the kindergarten. (AP Photo/ Karim Kadim)

January 08 2008 DPA

Baghdad - A US force has stormed a kindergarten in a Shi'a-dominated district in Baghdad, smashed toys, doors and windows and arrested three of its guards, the Iraqi government said on Tuesday.

US troops raided Kanari kindergarten in the Jamila area of Sadr City in Baghdad where they smashed children's toys, doors, windows and roofs, according to a statement by the media centre of the Iraqi cabinet.

"No evidence was found during the raid on the kindergarten that proves the school's involvement in terrorist acts or that it is used for storing weapons," the statement said.

The reason for the operation was not immediately known.

Sadr City is located in east Baghdad.

NEW GENERAL ORDER NO. 1: IT'S FUCKED PACK UP GO HOME



U.S. soldiers with 2nd Platoon, G Company, 3rd Squadron 2nd Striker Cavalry Regiment rest during a patrol in Baghdad November 10, 2007. REUTERS/Stefano Rellandini

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Soldier From Pascagoula Killed In Afghanistan;

“How Many More People Have To Die Before It Stops”

January 09, 2008 By VETO F. ROLEY, The Mississippi Press

PASCAGOULA -- Family members confirmed Tuesday that one of two soldiers killed Monday in Afghanistan was Pascagoula native Maj. Michael Green.

Green, a member of the Army Special Forces command, was killed by a roadside bomb said his twin sister, Michelle Green LeBatard of Gautier, Miss.

She said Green, 36, was in Afghanistan to train militia recruits on detecting and disarming roadside bombs, which are also referred to as improvised explosive devices. Roadside bombs are often homemade devices that are buried underground and then exploded when American or other coalition forces come into the area.

Although the Army has not officially identified Green as a casualty, an Associated Press report from Afghanistan says that two Coalition soldiers died Monday when a roadside bomb exploded near their vehicle in the Kot district of the Nangarhar province.

In addition to the two deaths, a third soldier was injured in the attack.

According to the AP story, the soldiers were responding to a call from local police who had discovered another bomb nearby. As the soldiers responded to the first bomb, the second bomb exploded, the story says.

“He loved the Mississippi Gulf Coast,” LeBatard said. “He lived all over the world, Egypt, Germany, Kansas, but the Coast was his home.”

She said one of his favorite pastimes was to bring friends he met during his military service to the Gulf Coast. She said he looked for soldiers who didn't have family or friends to go home to over the holidays.

“He would always bring a stranger to our house for the holidays to eat Thanksgiving dinner,” she said. “He was full of life. He never met a stranger.”

Green would take his guests to local restaurants or load them in his boat to take them fishing at Horn Island, LeBatard said.

She said her brother was a fan of Pascagoula native Jimmy Buffett and would fly across the nation to catch one of Buffett's shows.

LeBatard said her brother wanted to be in the military from an early age.

“He wanted to help other people and serve his country. It was his goal in life,” she said.

Green graduated from Pascagoula High School and from Fairmont State in West Virginia. He was a member of the school's ROTC unit. He was commissioned into the army upon graduation.

Although a member of the Special Forces, also known as the Green Berets, Green had not previously seen duty in either Afghanistan or Iraq, LeBatard said. Instead, he had been assigned to training troops at Camp Shelby in Hattiesburg, Miss., to prepare them to go overseas.

“He felt like he was being slighted,” she said. “He did not want to just send men out, but wanted to serve beside them. He felt there was something that needed to be done. He was trained to do what he did and he wanted to do it.”

Her brother was a hero in her eyes, she said.

But, she said she wondered “how many more people have to die before it stops.”

In addition to his sister, Green is survived by his parents, Hacy Green Sr. and Jane Green; and two brothers, Hacy Green Jr. and Scott Green.

Green was not married and did not have children, LeBatard said.

According to the Web site icasualties.org, Green is the second American and fifth coalition soldier to die in Afghanistan this year.

Upstate Soldier Killed In Afghanistan Remembered



Shawn Hill

1/4/2008 Spartanburg (WLTX)-

Fred Coan is coping with the death of his former star athlete. “He was just a great kid, he was just one you remember.”

37-year-old Army National Guard Sergeant Shawn Hill died this week in Afghanistan after his 218th Infantry Brigade unit struck a roadside bomb.

"It's just sadness, cause I know how Shawn enjoyed life and his family, enjoyed his kids," says Coan.

The husband and father of three played football for the J.F. Byrnes High School Rebels until he graduated in 1990. Coan says number 81 left his mark on the field. "He had one speed, full speed from the time he started practices until he ended practices and in ball games he was the same way," says Coan.

It's a work ethic that he believes served Hill well during his more than 12 years in the military. While on leave last fall, Hill stopped by, just to say hello.

Coan says he never imagined it would be for the last time. "He had come by just to see me to tell me what he was doing and how his family was doing," says Coan.

And while his football family continues to grieve his death, Coan says he knows what number 81 would want most of all.

"I think he would like to be remembered as a person who cared about his family," says Coan.

Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed By Mine, Another Wounded

01-09-08 AFP

KABUL -- A soldier serving with the NATO-led force in Afghanistan was killed and another wounded Wednesday when their vehicle was hit by a mine, the alliance said.

In its statement, the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force didn't give further details on where the incident occurred or the nationalities of the victims, which by custom is left to the respective countries to announce.

With the latest death, six foreign soldiers have been killed in combat or in accidents since the start of 2008, according to a toll compiled by AFP.

TROOP NEWS

"A Former Marine Testified Tuesday That He Thinks Afghans Were Killed Needlessly"

“What Are We Fighting This War For?”

1.8.08 AP

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. - A former Marine testified Tuesday that he thinks Afghans were killed needlessly by his special operations unit after its convoy was attacked by a car bomb.

“I really felt there were a lot of people who died who didn’t need to,” said Nathaniel Travers, a former intelligence sergeant who left the Marines last year. “They were just driving their cars.”

But Travers, the first witness called at a rarely used administrative fact-finding proceeding that is investigating the conduct of two officers involved, later acknowledged he was unhappy in the Marine Corps and didn’t think America should be fighting in Afghanistan.

“My sentiment started to grow more towards, ‘What are we fighting this war for?’” Travers said.

Afghanistan’s Independent Human Rights Commission concluded that the Marines fired indiscriminately at pedestrians and people in cars, buses and taxis at six locations along a 10-mile stretch of road.

After the car bombing, Travers said, he heard gunfire and saw bodies in at least two vehicles as the convoy sped from the area. Some, but not all, of the gunners in the convoy began to return fire, Travers said. After a few minutes, he said, Noble issued a convoy-wide command to stop firing.

“It was a pretty quiet ride back,” he said.

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE SERVICE?

Forward GI Special along, or send us the address if you wish and we’ll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

As War Profiteers Rake In The Billions:

Government Cuts Active Duty Troops Pay For 2008

[Pay up 3.5%. Prices up 4.6%. That's a pay cut. Duh.]

12.31.07 Army Times

The 3.5 percent military pay raise set for Jan. 1 may not feel so big to some service members. The Bureau of Labor Statistics announced Dec. 14 — the same day Congress gave final approval to the raise — that consumer prices were 4.6 percent higher in November than in the same month in 2006.

Energy and transportation costs were the main factors behind the increase.

Energy costs alone rose 21 percent over prices in November 2006.

More:

DoD Civilians Will Get Their Full Pay Raise Now, Troops Won't

And for now, federal employees are getting a larger pay raise than military service members. Military service members will receive an average 3.0 percent pay raise until the bill can be repassed and signed. Federal civilians' average pay raise is 3.5 percent for 2008.

[Thanks to Matthew C who sent this in. He writes: it's pretty obvious that the civilians are getting the raise discussed in this article sooner than military folks because they are unionized.]

January 04, 2008 By STEPHEN LOSEY, Federaltimes.com [Excerpts]

Defense Department civilians paid under a new personnel system will still receive the more favorable pay raise promised by a vetoed authorization bill.

Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England decided Dec. 31 to go ahead with a 60-40 split of the base pay raise — three days after President Bush pocket-vetoed the Defense authorization bill over a provision opening up the Iraqi government to lawsuits.

Under the National Security Personnel System, the Pentagon had originally planned to pay half of the General Schedule's 2.5 percent base pay raise to employees performing above the unacceptable level, plus their full locality raise. The other half of the base pay raise would have gone into a pay pool to be redistributed based on how well employees met their performance standards.

The authorization bill ordered the Pentagon to pay 60 percent of the base pay raise to those employees, and put the remaining 40 percent in the pay pool.

And for now, federal employees are getting a larger pay raise than military service members.

Military service members will receive an average 3.0 percent pay raise until the bill can be repassed and signed. Federal civilians' average pay raise is 3.5 percent for 2008.

Troops will receive their missing half-percentage point, as well as all the pay they missed out on in the interim, after Congress and the White House resolve their dispute.

But troops won't get the retroactive raise until February at the earliest. Congress is not due to return to work until Jan. 15, and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service needs about 10 days to make military payroll changes.

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



Photo by Nahrawan 2007:05:19 [Thanks to Kevin Ramirez, CCCO, who sent this in.]

From Don't Ask, Don't Tell To Don't Ask, Don't Care, And Don't Get Out Before We Send You To Iraq

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier & Military Project, who sent this in with the headline.]

Jan 9 By SUZANNE GAMBOA, Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON - Even if no one is asking, Army Sgt. Darren Manzella has been telling anyone who'll listen that he's gay — without serious retribution so far from the military. Manzella, a medic who served in Iraq and Kuwait, has acknowledged his sexual orientation in national media interviews and again on Tuesday in a Washington news conference.

"This is who I am. This is my life," said Manzella, who received a combat medical badge for his service in Iraq. "It has never affected my job performance before. I don't think it will make a difference now. And to be honest since then, I don't see a difference because of my homosexuality."

Aubrey Sarvis, executive director of Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, said Manzella's case demonstrates the military is arbitrarily enforcing its "don't ask, don't tell" policy now that the country is at war.

The "don't ask, don't tell" policy prohibits active-duty service members from openly acknowledging whether they are gay or lesbian.

Manzella still could be investigated now that he has left the battlefield. Every time he has said he is gay publicly can be counted as a violation of the policy, one of his attorneys said.

Manzella first told a military supervisor about his sexual orientation in August 2006 while he was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, and working in division headquarters. Three weeks after Manzella made the revelation, his battalion commander told him an investigation had been closed without finding "proof of homosexuality."

A month later, Manzella was redeployed for the war in Iraq.

Paul Boyce Jr., an Army spokesman, said he was unaware of an investigation of Manzella being opened or closed. He said the investigation would have been done by Manzella's Fort Hood unit, and officials there are on leave and unavailable to discuss the case.

"This particular soldier's unit only recently returned from the war to Fort Hood, Texas, so it's premature to speculate on any future actions until the young man's situation can be considered by his chain of command," Boyce said in a statement.

Manzella, originally from Portland, N.Y., returned from the Middle East last month and went on leave shortly before Christmas. He will return to the 1st Cavalry Division at Ford Hood at the end of the month.

A bill to eliminate the military's sexual orientation policy, filed by Rep. Ellen Tauscher, D-Calif., is pending in Congress. Sarvis said the bill is unlikely to get out of committee during this election year, but hearings could be held.

Elaine Donnelly, president of the Center for Military Readiness, said Manzella's commanders should have discharged him when they learned he was gay. Her group opposes allowing gays to join the military.

Vietnam: NSA Confirms What Everybody's Known For +40 Years: "U.S. Officials Faked An Incident To Escalate The War"

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier & Military Project, who sent this in.]

Jan 8 WASHINGTON (AFP)

North Vietnamese made hoax calls to get the US military to bomb its own units during the Vietnam War, according to declassified information that also confirmed US officials faked an incident to escalate the war.

The report was released by the National Security Agency, responsible for much of the United States' codebreaking and eavesdropping work, in response to a "mandatory declassification" request, the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) said Monday.

From the first intercepted cable -- a 1945 message from Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh to his Russian counterpart Joseph Stalin -- to the final evacuation of US spies from Saigon, the 500-page report retold Vietnam War history from the perspective of "signals intelligence," the group said in a statement.

During the war, North Vietnamese intelligence units sometimes succeeded in penetrating US communications systems, and they could monitor American message traffic from within, according to the report "Spartans in Darkness."

On several occasions "the communists were able, by communicating on Allied radio nets, to call in Allied artillery or air strikes on American units," it said.

“That’s something I have never heard before,” Steven Aftergood, director of the FAS project on government secrecy, told AFP.

But he said that probably the “most historically significant feature” of the declassified report was the retelling of the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident.

That was a reported North Vietnamese attack on American destroyers that helped lead to president Lyndon Johnson’s sharp escalation of American forces in Vietnam.

The author of the report “demonstrates that not only is it not true, as (then US) secretary of defense Robert McNamara told Congress, that the evidence of an attack was ‘unimpeachable,’ but that to the contrary, a review of the classified signals intelligence proves that ‘no attack happened that night,’” FAS said in a statement.

“What this study demonstrated is that the available intelligence shows that there was no attack. It’s a dramatic reversal of the historical record,” Aftergood said.

“There were previous indications of this but this is the first time we have seen the complete study,” he said.

MORE:

Vietnam: Westmoreland Knew The Tet Offensive Was Coming And “Pretended Not To Know Of The Impending Attacks”

January 09, 2008

From: Lee P.

To: Vietnam Veterans Against the War

Sent: January 09, 2008

While I cannot speak on the Tonkin Gulf incident, I can address my recollection of events leading up to the Tet Offensive of 1968.

I was a detachment NCOIC of an Army Security Agency unit operating in support of the 2nd Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division stationed near Pleiku from March of 1967 till mid February 1968.

It has always been my understanding that Westmoreland was given the full picture of the developing offensive and in order to sucker the USs’ adversaries in, to get them to stand

at last in conventional set-piece battles, we pretended not to know of the impending attacks.

I was personally involved in forwarding information concerning the developing storm to the military units we supported.

Westmoreland was especially concerned that ARVIN units not be alerted by halting holiday furloughs since they were so heavily infiltrated by VC and NVA agents. Likewise with US units.

No special alerts were issued prior to Tet, fearing the scuttlebutt in mess halls, laundries, bars and bordellos would instantly be transmitted to US adversaries.

I can frankly state that I, a radio operator for the Army Security Agency, was able to watch the Tet offensive develop over much of the year 1967.

My analogy would be that of the US government and public observing the unfoldment of Hurricane Katrina over the Gulf of Mexico while failing to anticipate the extent of the damage it would cause.

I will allow that Westy was somewhat taken aback by the ferocity and widespread nature of the offensive.

Particularly, he was bothered by the symbolism of the assaults on the US embassy and Ton Son Nuht air base and takeover of the Imperial Capital at Hue.

Most importantly, he could not have foreseen the impact that the assault would have on US public opinion.

This, I believe, stemmed more from a failure of Pentagon and Johnson Administrations appreciation of the depth and power of the American public's hostility toward the war.

My read of the history leaves me with the impression that the Westmoreland plan worked very well, with the VC ceasing to be any sort of major opponent from that time until the end of hostilities in 1975.

Lee P,
Springfield, Or

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action

08 Jan 2008 Reuters & Jan 7, 2008 By Lennox Samuels, Newsweek

In the last two weeks 10 severed heads have been found in the Muqdadiyah area, some by the U.S. military, some by residents and others by U.S.-funded CLC members themselves. In a show of defiance, the killers even left a couple of heads on a bridge just down the road from U.S. K-Wal combat outpost.

A roadside bomb exploded in the centre of the city of Tikrit, 175 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad, striking a police car and wounding 3 policemen, police said.

Guerrillas killed a police colonel in his car in the Zaafaraniya district of southern Baghdad, police said.

A bomber wearing an explosives vest attacked a police checkpoint, killing one policeman and wounding another in Madaen, 45 km (25 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents killed the deputy manager of the Mansour district tax office in western Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb killed the chief of Yarmouk District Council, Salih Mansour Hussein, and wounded two of his bodyguards in Yarmouk in western Baghdad, police said.

A police officer and his driver were captured in their car at a checkpoint while travelling from Baghdad to Baquba in Diyala province, police 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.**

**"When someone says my son died fighting for his country, I say, "No, the suicide bomber who killed my son died fighting for his country."
-- Father of American Soldier Chase Beattie, KIA in Iraq**

No Boundaries



From: Mike Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: January 09, 2008
Subject: No Boundaries

No Boundaries

**This barbaric war criminal has no boundaries.
Two steps forward,
One step back.
Two steps forward,
One step back.
Nothing changes until America
stops being a Global Empire.
Nothing changes until America
stops wanting everything.**

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
Jan. 9, 2008**

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) T

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**

January 10, 1776: Magnificent Anniversary



Thomas Paine

Carl Bunin Peace History January 7-13

Thomas Paine anonymously published his influential pamphlet, "Common Sense."

In it Paine questioned the fundamental legitimacy of the rule of kings, and advocated the doctrine of independence for Americans, and the rights of mankind.

“When The War Is Over, And Youth Stone Dead...”

From: Felicity Arbuthnot
To: GI Special
Sent: January 08, 2008
Subject: 'When the war is over, and youth stone dead...' Sassoon

Re GI Special 6A5.

Army of Dude writes:

'Sometime this year, an eighteen year old soldier will die in a war that started when he was thirteen.'

As you know, this is an obsession of mine, our governments send our youth, to destroy others' youth, for oil and strategic interests.

Sometime this year, numerous of Iraq's youth too, will die, who were three when the embargo and bombing was rained on them and curtailed their childhood in 1990.

They lived hearing the bombs dropped illegally, by the US and UK., in their terror, throughout their childhood.

They lived watching siblings die for want of medicine embargoed under US., UK., pressure on the UN.

They too are now eighteen.

The fruit of youth killing each other for lies by their government (in the case of US and UK soldiers) and fear by Iraqi youth who have known nothing but deprivation and killing in the name of 'freedom and democracy'.

Let us all start the New Year by saying 'mea culpa' and determining our governments threaten no other country and apologise and withdraw to and from those they have. It is US election year, time to make feelings known.

May you and your readers have all you wish for yourselves and those you care for in 2008.

Warmest,
felicity a.

**“Democrat Or Republican. It Doesn't
Really Make A Difference If You Have
The Money”
“We Don't Have A Democracy, We Have
An Auction”**

From: Ward Reilly [Veterans For Peace]
Sent: January 09, 2008
[From my friend Gerald O in Maine]

It all came brilliantly clear to me last night while I was watching “Big Sugar”, a documentary on the sugar industry broadcast by the Canadian Broadcasting Company.

This documentary surely would not be shown in the United States.

Two Cuban brothers, Alfonso and Pepe Fanjul, run over 70% of the sugar industry in the US. They have a 250,000 acre sugar plantation in the Dominican Republic.

The workers there have to cut at least a ton of sugar cane daily in order to earn two dollars which they use to buy a small bag of rice for their families to eat. They have one meal a day and the children mainly eat sugar cane as their daily diet. No meat, no vegetables, no milk, no bread, no eggs.

Basically this is slavery...yes...right here in 2008.

But THIS is the interesting part!!

One brother, Alfonso, is the token family Republican. He is best buddies with Jeb and George Bush.

Pepe is the token family Democrat. He is best friends with Bill Clinton.

For their investment of \$465,000 in politics, the brothers get back over \$50,000,000 in subsidies from the United States government.

As a result we in the US pay three times as much for sugar as folks do in Canada or Europe.

You may have noticed that Life Savers are now made in Canada because Canadian companies buy their sugar from Cuba which charges less for the sugar.

When Al Gore was Vice President he gave a speech in Florida suggesting a one cent tax on sugar in order to pay for the cleanup of the Everglades, which the sugar folks use as their industrial toilet, Pepe called straight to the White House and talked to the Democratic President Bill Clinton. And Clinton told Gore to forget about the one cent tax on sugar.

Democrat or Republican. It doesn't really make a difference if you have the money.

We don't have a democracy, we have an auction. The highest bidder wins.

MORE:

**“It Seems That The Majority Of
Americans Think That It Does Not
Matter Which Party Wins, That The**

Elite And Corporations Control Both Parties”

January 09, 2008 By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam Veteran

It is a sham that all the news organizations use percentage points rather than the real votes.

The percentage game makes it appear in the nominations and the actual elections, that the whole state or whole country, voted for such and such. When the actual truth is that very few Americans even vote.

All this just boosts the idea that we live in a democracy.

It seems that the majority of Americans think that it does not matter which party wins, that the elite and corporations control both parties.

The percentage game is a mirage, the actual votes are reality.

That's all, vote for who you want.

Peace, Dennis Serdel, Veterans For Peace Chapter 50

MORE:

“It Is A Sham”

[Thanks to Dennis Serdel, Vietnam Veteran, who also sent this in. He writes: Another response from a person on my list on the NH primaries.]

From: Richard R
Date: January 9, 2008
To: Dennis Serdel
Subject: It is a sham

It's a part of our own brain washing, it's something we want to believe. We don't live in a democratic nation; we live in a delegated republic.

You are correct, only about 4% of our people actually participate.

The people at the local party level choose a delegate to the next level and they in turn choose a delegate to another level which choose a candidate to be placed on a ballot from which the rest can then choose from those on the ballot.

That's not a democracy, but that is how almost all elected governments are selected no matter what they call themselves.

It's the majority of the minority that participate that controls any country which makes it much easier for a small group to gain control.

Our job is to force the politicians to do what we want them to do and so far we have not succeeded.

R

OCCUPATION REPORT

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



Foreign occupation soldiers from the U.S. army bring democracy to an Iraqi citizen who was walking down the street near one of their vehicles on the outskirts of Baqouba, 60 kilometers (35 miles) northeast of Baghdad, Jan. 2, 2008. (AP Photo/Marko Drobnjakovic)

[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!**

Alhamdu Lillah Assalama

January 08, 2008 Posted by Sahar IIS <http://washingtonbureau.typepad.com/iraq/>
[Baghdad]

After I made sure that my daughter was only shocked and dazed, but unhurt, I leaned back to take a breath.

Her transport had to take his car to the fitter for some minor repairs and I was giving her a lift to school.

One checkpoint after another all the way to a central main road where we could relax a little from the bumper-to-bumper lines of cars.

As we sped along (50km/hr) feeling the freedom, suddenly an American convoy emerged from a side street at full speed.

Terrified of getting too close, the first car braked so hard it swirved; the second slammed into it; I was the third ... and there were two more.

There we stood, each driver with a look of frustration on his face - who to blame??

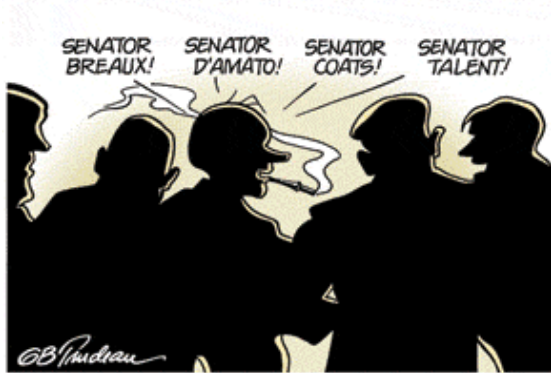
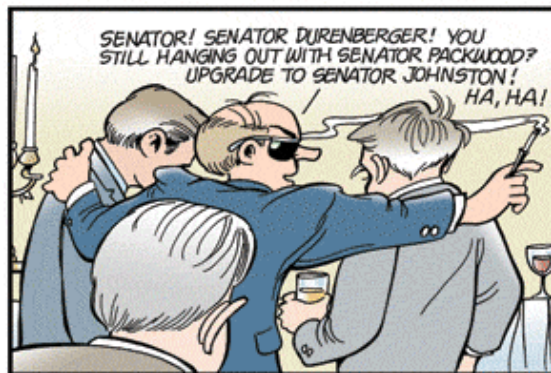
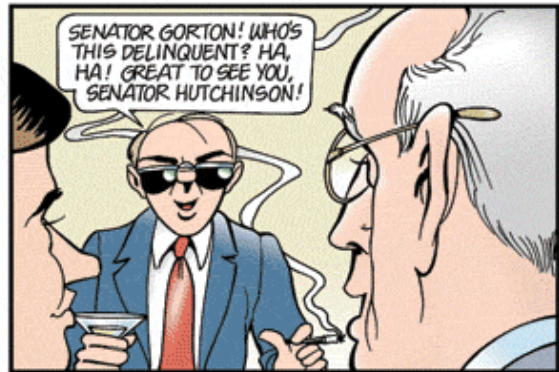
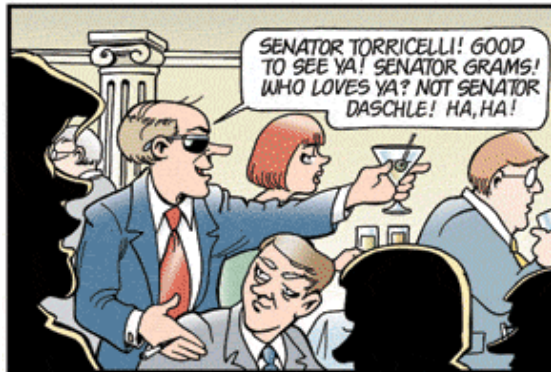
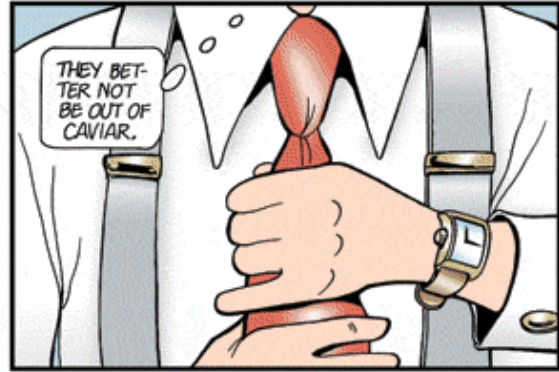
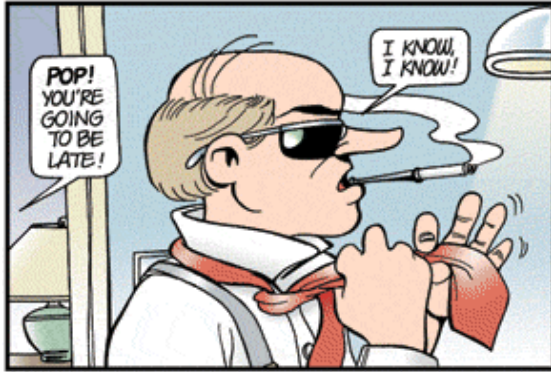
Who to shout at to relieve the tension??

Who to haggle with for repair money?

We looked at each other, and at our smashed cars - and started laughing uncontrollably until the tears started to flow, "Alhamdu lillah assalama (thank God for your safety)" was all we could manage to say.

By that time the convoy was long gone.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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.

“The State Department May Be Facing A Far More Serious Revolt Over Iraq Among Its Ranks Than Previously Thought”

Jan 8 By MATTHEW LEE, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

WASHINGTON - Nearly half of U.S. diplomats unwilling to volunteer to work in Iraq say one reason for their refusal is they don't agree with Bush administration's policies in the country, according to a survey released Tuesday.

48 percent cited “disagreement” with administration policy as a factor in their opposition, said the survey conducted by the American Foreign Service Association, the union that represents U.S. diplomats.

In addition, nearly 70 percent of U.S. diplomats who responded to the survey oppose forced assignments to Iraq, a prospect that sparked a storm of controversy last year when the State Department announced it might have to require such tours under penalty of dismissal in the largest diplomatic call-up to a war zone since Vietnam

The results suggest the State Department may be facing a far more serious revolt over Iraq among its ranks than previously thought, and call into question its ability to fully staff diplomatic missions in Iraq, as well as those in Afghanistan and other dangerous posts deemed critical to the administration's foreign policy goals.

Of the respondents, 68 percent, or 2,778, said they would either “oppose” or “strongly oppose” mandatory assignments to Iraq. Only 34 percent said they would “support” or “strongly support” such a move.

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/)

CLASS WAR REPORTS

CALL TO ACTIONS: SAVE BLACK AND WORKING-CLASS NEW ORLEANS

Friday, January 11----Sunday, January 13

January 08, 2008 NOLA

Subject: Public Housing actions for this weekend

STOP THE DEMOLITIONS OF BEAUTIFUL HOUSING

**OUR ACTIONS WILL INVOLVE:
SOLIDARITY WITH THE HOMELESS-----
A COMMUNAL BREAKFAST-----
RECOVERY OF BELONGINGS AT HOUSING SITES-----**

**A RALLY, MUSIC, MARCHING AND DANCING THROUGH THE
FRENCH QUARTER**

SCHEDULE:

FRIDAY, JANUARY 11

5:00 p.m.

GATHERING IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT UNDER
INTERSTATE 10 ("THE BRIDGE") AT CANAL STREET AND CLAIBORNE AVENUE

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12

10:00 a.m.

BREAKFAST AT THE WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ON JACKSON AT
MAGNOLIA STREET ("CENTRAL CITY")

1PM

RECOVERY OF RESIDENTS' BELONGINGS AT ONE OR MORE PUBLIC-HOUSING SITES-- Meet AT ST. BERNARD. Development on 4000 Block of St Bernard Avenue

4:30 p.m.

RALLY WITH MUSIC AND SPEECHES (PERFORMERS AND SPEAKERS TO BE ANNOUNCED) AT WASHINGTON PARK, ROYAL ST. AND ELYSIAN FIELDS AVE.

7:00 p.m. or thereabouts

SECOND-LINE MARCH THROUGH FRENCH QUARTER AND BEYOND TO HAND OUT FLYERS AND OTHERWISE INFORM PUBLIC

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13

3:00 p.m.

ANTI-DEMOLITION AT B.W. COOPER (CALLIOPE), S. GALVEZ AND ERATO STS.

On December 20, 2007 the seven-member New Orleans' City Council voted unanimously to demolish 4534 apartments on four of the city's Public Housing Developments: B. W. Cooper (Calliope), C. J. Peete (Magnolia), Lafitte, and St. Bernard.

These apartments had been home to more than 15,000 mostly working-class residents before levees failed and New Orleans was flooded after Hurricane Katrina.

Since then, over the past two years of shameful neglect and criminal priorities, as tens of thousands have been kept out or forced out of New Orleans, rents have risen in this city by more than 60%.

Agencies' and developers plans state that less than 800 low-income apartments will replace the 4534 that are to be destroyed.

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