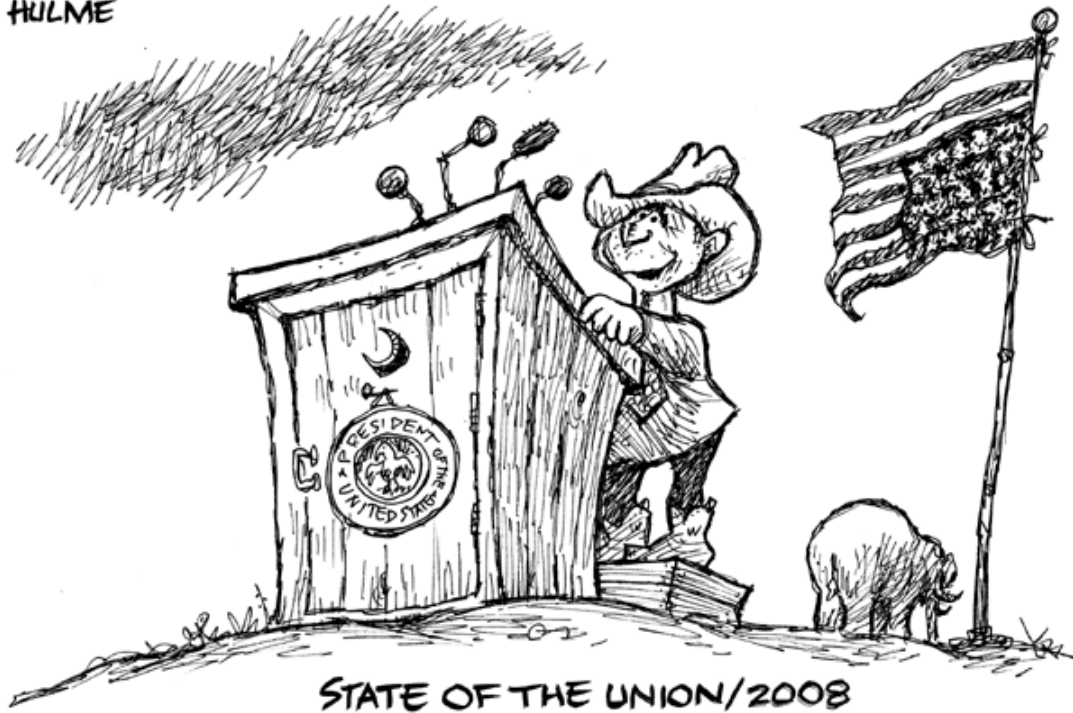


GI SPECIAL 6B6:

ETTA @2008 ETTATORIALS
HULME



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**“I Can’t See Why Men
Have To Go Three Times
In Iraq”**
**“We Need To Bring Our Soldiers
Home”**
**“Soldier Injured; Family Awaits
Word”**

02/02/08 WLEX-TV

Mason County native Sgt. First class Matt Tolle is recovering in an Iraqi hospital after being wounded in battle. But back home in Kentucky his father has yet to hear from him.

Bracken County E.M.T. Ronnie Tolle says he deals with injuries on a daily basis, but he feels paralyzed knowing he's not able to help his own son. "I'm very nervous and it's what I don't know that bothers me," said Tolle.

Ronnie tells LEX 18 News his son Matt suffered a concussion and a leg injury when his motorcade took a direct hit from a roadside bomb.

Ronnie says it's the second time his son has been wounded in Iraq, now on his third tour of duty.

"I can't see why men have to go three times in Iraq. We need to bring our soldiers home. Yes I'd like to see him home." said Tolle.

In Colorado, Matt's wife is keeping family and friends updated with her Myspace page. But for the moment there's little word about Matt's condition. "If I find that out than I can deal with what's going on." said Tolle.

Ronnie also says as far as he knows there were no other soldiers injured or killed by that roadside bomb.

“She’s Over There In A War We Shouldn’t Even Be Involved In, On Her Third Tour,” Griffith Said: Soldier From The Roanoke Area, A Mother Of 3, Is Killed

January 29, 2008 The Washington Post Company

Sgt. Tracy Renee Birkman, an Army mechanic and mother of three from the Roanoke area, died Friday after suffering injuries unrelated to combat in Owasat, Iraq, according to military officials. The incident is under investigation, they said.

In addition to her three sons, Birkman, 41, of New Castle, is survived by her parents, according to officials at Fort Campbell, Ky., where her division, the 101st Airborne, is based.

Birkman's father, Jerald Griffith, a Vietnam War veteran, said he was angry with military officials for releasing information about his daughter's death and with the news media for its portrayal of soldiers such as himself.

"I didn't want it released. I am so (furious) about all this I can just scream," said Griffith, also of New Castle. "I hate the media with just an unmitigated passion. You . . . lied about me when I was in Vietnam."

He said his daughter was on her third deployment. "She's over there in a war we shouldn't even be involved in, on her third tour," Griffith said.

Information about the circumstances of Birkman's death was not immediately available, said Cathy Gramling, a Fort Campbell spokeswoman. "I just know that it was non-combat-related injuries," she said.

Determining the cause of death will involve an autopsy, Gramling said.

The Defense Department has a long-standing policy of identifying fallen service members, she said. "The DOD puts out the information at least 24 hours after the final next of kin is notified," Gramling said.

Birkman was a light-wheel vehicle mechanic. She was assigned to the 626th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and had received several awards, including the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal and the Korea Defense Service Medal, according to the military.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

IED Kills Four U.S. Soldiers

2.8.08 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080209-01

BAGHDAD – Four Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers were killed when their vehicle struck an improvised explosive device while the Soldiers were conducting a combat patrol northwest of Baghdad Feb. 8

U.S. Soldier Killed In At Tamim; Three Wounded

February 9, 2008 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080209-07

TIKRIT, Iraq – A Multi-National Division - North Soldier was killed as a result of injuries sustained from an explosion near the Soldier's vehicle while conducting operations in At Tamim Province Feb. 8

Three Soldiers were also wounded and transported to a Coalition Forces medical facility for treatment.

Texas Soldier Killed In Muqdadiyah



U.S. Army 82nd Airborne Division Cpl. Christopher J. West, 26, of Arlington, Texas died of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated while on a dismounted patrol in Muqdadiyah, Iraq Feb. 3, 2008. West was a Combat Medic with 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 82nd Airborne Division. (AP Photo/82nd Airborne Division)

Service Held For Athenian Killed During Second Iraq Tour

January 31, 2008 By Adam Thompson, Athens Banner-Herald

Evan Marshall was a quiet guy with a quick sense of humor who really found himself when he joined the Army right out of high school, friends said Wednesday.

And he was a hero who served his country in a time of war, they said.

Marshall, 21, an Army specialist from Athens on his second tour of duty in Iraq, died Monday when his unit was ambushed in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.

“The last time I saw Evan was right before Christmas, and I was just amazed at the person he had become,” said Sara Oelke, a longtime friend of Marshall. “I do believe that probably had partly to do with his role in the military. He had just grown into such a man in that amount of time between high school and when I last saw (him).”

Oelke and Marshall knew each other from school in Athens and from a youth group at Athens First Presbyterian Church, she said.

During Marshall’s days at Cedar Shoals High School, where he graduated in 2004, the youth group took ski trips to West Virginia and North Carolina, or just hung out at the East Hancock Avenue church.

“He was really quiet, but you could always get a laugh out of him, or he always had a funny comment to make,” she said.

Wesley Reed and his younger brother, Michael, were close with Marshall before he joined the Army, often sharing intense battles on the video game “Halo” and hanging out on youth group and choir trips.

“Once he knew you and was comfortable around you, he was fun to hang out with - he would open up to you,” Reed said. Reed remembered a great trip the Marshall and Reed families took early in 2004 to see Georgia win in the Outback Bowl.

After returning in December 2006 from his first tour in Iraq, Marshall talked mostly about the “lighter moments” of his service, Reed said.

Other experiences Marshall kept to himself, but it was obvious the Army had done a lot for him, Reed said.

“We’re just extremely proud of (Evan),” he said. “It’s a great tragedy, but we’re glad that he was able to serve our country in such an honorable way.”

Michael Reed also is a soldier now serving his first tour in Iraq, his brother said. A few weeks ago, the two friends narrowly missed seeing each other in Kuwait - as Marshall was redeployed to Iraq shortly before Reed arrived in the country.

Wesley Reed said Marshall’s death has made him more concerned for his brother.

“I’m still supportive and hoping that everything works out, but it definitely is a reality check,” he said.

More than 200 people assembled Wednesday evening to pray in the sanctuary of Athens First Presbyterian Church. “We’re here because this is what Christians do,” the Rev. Glenn Doak said, candles lining the choir behind his pulpit. “When we feel grief, we go to God.” Doak offered prayers for Marshall’s family - his father and mother, Drew and Sheila, and his older sister, Alice. He also prayed for Marshall’s fellow soldiers in Iraq, asking that they be safe on patrol. Some mourners walked to the front of the sanctuary,

kneeled and prayed near Marshall's father's favorite photo of him. Others simply prayed where they sat.

Many came over to comfort the Marshalls, holding each other and praying. "We are completely devastated by our loss, but we are filled with pride over Evan's loyal service," Alice Marshall said Tuesday of her brother. "He is and always has been my hero."

The Pentagon confirmed Wednesday the names of the five soldiers, Evan Marshall among them, who died Monday when insurgents attacked their vehicle with a roadside bomb.

Others killed in the Mosul attack were Sgt. James E. Craig, 26, of Hollywood, Calif.; Staff Sgt. Gary W. Jeffries, 37, of Roscoe, Texas; Pfc. Brandon A. Meyer, 20, of Orange, Calif.; and Pvt. Joshua A. R. Young, 21, of Riddle, Ore., according to the statement. They were assigned to the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division of Fort Carson, Colo.

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO
COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS
EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS
TIME, EXCEPT THAT TRAITORS WHO LIVE
IN WASHINGTON DC WANT YOU THERE:
That Is Not A Good Enough Reason**



U.S. soldiers with 426 BSB C Brigade Support Battalion head for their armoured vehicles before escorting a convoy, in Brassfield Mora Camp, 50km (36 miles) south of Tikrit, November 21, 2007. REUTERS/Stefano Rellandini

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Polish Government Tells Occupation Command To Fuck Off: Won't Send Troops To Afghan South

8 February 2008 (AFP)

WARSAW - Poland will not send its 1,200 troops in Afghanistan to fight Taleban insurgents in the country's volatile south, Defence Minister Bogdan Klich said in an interview published Friday.

Klich told the newspaper Dziennik that Canada had asked the Poles to deploy in Kandahar province, a hotbed of fighting between the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Taleban and Al Qaeda fighters.

'I didn't accept the proposal. This province doesn't meet our base-line criteria, which hinge on reducing the risks to our contingent,' Klich said.

Resistance Action

08 Feb 2008 (AFP) & Feb 9, 2008 DPA

A car bomb in the town of Ghazni in eastern Afghanistan killed an Afghan. The bomb exploded just metres (yards) from the entrance of an Afghan National Army base in the town as an army vehicle passed, deputy police chief Mohammad Zaman said. Three soldiers were badly hurt and two civilians were also wounded. The car used in the attack was in pieces and blood and debris was flung several metres from the blast site, an AFP reporter at the scene said.

Kabul - Two Afghan national army soldiers were killed in a roadside bomb blast in southern Afghanistan. Another two soldiers were wounded when an army vehicle was stuck by a roadside bomb explosion in the Sangin district of southern Helmand province on Friday, the defence ministry said in a statement. The wounded soldiers were evacuated to a nearby hospital, where they were reported to be in stable condition, the statement said.

TROOP NEWS

“Bring All The Troops Home Now”

New Party For Immediate Withdrawal From Iraq: Iraq Veteran Their Vice-Presidential Candidate

[That we have to get this news via a solidarity campaign in London, England really says it all about the U.S. corporate media. If you come across other candidates for immediate withdrawal, please send in the information to GI Special.

[If you're pimping some organization that supports some candidate opposed to immediate withdrawal, and who therefore favors killing more U.S. troops and more Iraqis, "SHUT UP AND SHIP OUT," as one Iraq Veteran Against The War expressed it so well, or less politely, eat shit and die. T]

Another PSL candidate who is turning many heads has been Michael Prysner, a soldier turned anti-war activist who is taking his experiences as part of the illegal invasion to the US ballot box.

Having graduated high school in 2001, in 2003 Michael Prysner found himself based in Iraq for over a year and, horrified by what he saw happening, he decided to start informing the American public about the devastation which the invasion of Iraq has caused.

Feb 9, 2008 By Hussein Al-Alak, The London Progressive Journal, Via Al-Moharar. Hussein Al-Alak is Chairman of the Iraq Solidarity Campaign. [Excerpts]

Whilst watching the coverage of the US elections, it has been a breath of fresh air for many Iraqis, to receive the news that in America, there will now be an alternative to the Democrat vs Republican race to the White House and it's an alternative which many Iraqis will be able to support on the grounds of political agreement.

The breath of fresh air comes in the form of a newly-formed movement called the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), which is standing a slate of candidates in the upcoming American elections, who are going to be campaigning on a programme of radical issues which puts them in direct opposition to the belligerent policies of George W Bush.

The socialist candidate running for President is a woman called Gloria La Riva, who in her time as an activist has been involved with organising the US trade union movement, took a leading role in the US campaign to free Nelson Mandela during the 1980s and has also been heavily involved in anti-racism campaigns.

In the 1990-91 Gulf War, Gloria was also leading the anti-war movement against the first US bombardment, which introduced the Sanctions regime, and her activities helped secure the 200,000-strong presence on the San Francisco anti-war march on January 19th 1991.

In response to the genocide which followed the first Gulf War, which saw an estimated 1.5 million children under the age of five die in the silent Holocaust of Sanctions, Gloria La Riva campaigned against the blockade and her film "Genocide by Sanctions", went on to win her second prize for documentaries in the 1998 San Luis Obispo Film Festival. La Riva is also a voluntary organizer for the anti-war coalition ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) and a coordinator for the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five.

Having both traveled and written extensively on the Cuban revolution, Gloria La Riva's role in the US workers' movement saw her address the million-person May Day rallies in Havana, in the years 2000 and 2002. Immediately after Hurricane Katrina, she led a solidarity delegation to New Orleans and has since shown the survivors' heroism through the documentary "Heroes Not Looters."

Another PSL candidate who is turning many heads has been Michael Prysner, a soldier turned anti-war activist who is taking his experiences as part of the illegal invasion to the US ballot box.

Having graduated high school in 2001, in 2003 Michael Prysner found himself based in Iraq for over a year and, horrified by what he saw happening, he decided to start informing the American public about the devastation which the invasion of Iraq has caused.

On March 17th 2007, Prysner took part in the national anti-war march on the Pentagon, which brought together tens of thousand of protesters.

A few months later in September, he was arrested in Washington as part of a contingent of veterans who participated in a mass die-in.

Drawing on his experiences in Iraq to prove the criminality of the war, Prysner has become a powerful commentator on Iraq and will be sending a clear message to the American people, "Families in Iraq are not our enemies. The hungry and impoverished workers in Iraq are the same as workers who struggle to survive in the United States."

Speaking on the effects that the Iraq war has had on US soldiers, Mike recently attacked the Bush administration for its failures over soldier suicide and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and announced that like many others he too had experienced the bureaucracy of the Veterans Administration (VA) system.

“I have walked into the mental health office and been pointed in a hundred different directions, told to come back another time, and told to drive over an hour to another VA office. After several months of frustration, I ended up with a bag full of pills. This was the treatment I was offered.”

In his article, “U.S. war machine is the real enemy, not Iraqis”, the Iraq Veteran informed his audience, that “Real liberation will come when we - soldiers, workers, immigrants, students and families - no longer let the ruling class divide and create barriers between the exploited in the United States and the exploited abroad... Soldiers should refuse to fight and, instead, bring the struggle home. Real liberation will come when we struggle together against our common enemy, instead of being used against each other to profit the rich.”

[From the PSL website Platform:]

“U.S. OUT OF IRAQ NOW”

“End the wars in Iraq & Afghanistan”

“Bring all the troops home now”

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.

**Please, No Lame Bullshit About
“PTSD”
Rat Cowards Murder Unarmed Iraq
Vet**

February 8, 2008 by John McChesney, NPR [Excerpts]

A soldier who had survived two tours in Iraq and had been sent home after suffering traumatic brain injury was murdered in December in Colorado Springs near Fort Carson, Colo. Army Spc. Kevin Shields was killed, according to police, by three fellow soldiers who had served with him in Iraq.

Shields was out celebrating his 24th birthday the night he was shot. He had been sent home from Iraq with traumatic brain injury and was waiting for a medical discharge. His mother, Debra Pearson, lives in Roscoe, Ill., where Kevin grew up.

Pearson recalled the night she learned of her son's death. "I talked to my mom," she said, "and we had decided that at 12:30 I was going to call him with her and wish him a happy birthday. That didn't happen. At 11:15, I got the call that he'd been killed."

Shields had been shot in the face, the neck and the groin with a .38-caliber pistol.

The night before, he had been out drinking in downtown Colorado Springs with three Army acquaintances, Louis Bressler, Kenneth Eastridge and Bruce Bastien.

The suspects all have MySpace pages.

Tira Bressler's moniker is Devil's Angel, and buried in her dozens of online photos is a picture of a .38-caliber revolver with five shiny bullets in front of it. Police say Shields was killed with a revolver like that. Bressler was raised by his father in Charlotte, N.C., and did not graduate from high school.

Then there's Kenneth Eastridge, whose MySpace headline is "Killin is just what I do." There are plenty of pictures of his tattoos: the slogan "born to kill" and a Nazi SS insignia on one arm.

Michael De Yoanna reported on military affairs in Colorado Springs for a local paper, the Independent, and has looked at many military personnel Web pages. He says most are designed to convey reassurances to families.

"What I'm seeing here is a stark contrast," De Yoanna said. "I'm seeing violent statements and a tattoo that's hard to construe any way (but) as racist."

One photo shows Eastridge in uniform holding a cat with a gaping wound. The caption reads: "Killed another Iraqi pussy."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Poison Used In Attack On Baghdad Airforce Club:

“For Sure I And The Other Officers Were The Real Target”

February 9, 2008 Michael Howard in Baghdad, The Guardian [Excerpts]

Iraqi authorities are investigating a case of poisoning at a Baghdad sports club popular with the army in which two children have died and nine people have been taken to hospital. All were reported to have eaten cakes laced with thallium.

It causes a slow, painful death.

Police said they had traced the two cakes to a bakery in Baghdad's Adhamiya district.

“This is a disturbing incident,” said Mohammed Abbas, a police official. “We are urgently trying to discover how much thallium is out there and who would know how to utilise it.”

The Airforce club is owned by the defence ministry and runs one of Iraq's best-known football teams.

Interior ministry officials said they believed the cakes were intended to kill senior members of the club. No treatment for thallium poisoning is available in Iraq and doctors say they are desperately trying to get the antidote.

Mohammed al Askari, a defence ministry spokesman, said the incident occurred at the capital's Airforce club about 10 days ago, when a former employee, a combat sports coach, turned up with two cakes as gifts for officials at the club.

He had reportedly been fired several months earlier and had fled to Syria.

The Airforce club is owned by the defence ministry and runs one of Iraq's best-known football teams. Its manager, Samir Khadim, was a star of the Iraqi team throughout the 90s.

Khadim said the former employee, who he declined to name, “came to the club saying he wanted to have a reconciliation with a number of the officers and administrators here. He brought with him two handsome-looking cakes as a kind of peace offering.”

But Khadim, who was not at the gathering, said the cakes went uneaten and were taken home by two officers to share among their families.

Hours later the six-year-old daughter of one began to show signs of illness. The family took her to a hospital in Baghdad, where doctors pumped her stomach, but she died shortly afterwards.

Hours later the officer began to feel ill, as did three other members of his family. Again doctors pumped their stomachs. Blood tests were taken, and four days later they tested positive for thallium.

The other officer also soon fell ill; he too lost a daughter, and five close relatives were also affected. The two officers remain on the critical list.

Khadim said: "These poor children were poisoned by mistake. For sure I and the other officers were the real target."

Resistance Action

February 7, 2008 By Sahar Issa, McClatchy Newspapers & 08 Feb 2008 Reuters & (Xinhua) & By Tina Susman, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

Militants burned down 8 communications towers in the city of Mosul today. Al-Siddiq and al-Noor neighbourhoods were amongst the neighbourhoods whose towers were burnt down. The towers belonged to Asia Cell mobile telephone network company.

Attacks on U.S. funded Iraqi security recruits have doubled since October, the U.S. military said Thursday.

A U.S. military spokesman, Navy Lt. Michael Street, said the military had only recently begun tracking attacks on the groups and did not know how many members had been killed. But he said the frequency of such attacks had doubled since October.

[Huh? Either it's been tracked since October, which the man said, or it hasn't been tracked until "only recently," which the man said. Another stupid liar who can't keep his stupid occupation propaganda lies straight talking to one reporter one time.]

The statement came after six volunteers were killed in two separate incidents. In one attack, fighters killed three brothers, a year after their father, who had also allied himself with U.S. forces, was slain.

Three more security workers died and 7 were wounded southeast of Baghdad as they were collecting intelligence on possible insurgent activity in Madaen, Salman Pak area to the south east of Baghdad.

Police said they were killed when a Toyota Coaster bus blew up near them during a raid they were conducting on suspected houses.

[Houses "suspected" of what? Does this mean insurgents disguised as houses? What will the fiends think of next?]

A bus exploded targeting a group of [U.S. funded] Sahwa members during a raid they were conducting on suspected houses in al-Mada'in, Salman Pak area to the south east of Baghdad, killing 3 and injuring 7 al-Sahwa members.

Lieutenant Khalid Kwan killed and 1 other officer and 1 policeman injured as a roadside bomb went off targeting an Iraqi Police patrol in Siniyah district, 7 km to the west of Baiji city this afternoon.

4 civilians amongst whom was the brother of the Head of the Tikrit City Council and engineer Hameed Aziz al-Janabi who had a position in the Engineering Department in Tikrit University. The four were killed in an area called al-Dhiba'i to the south west of Tikrit City yesterday evening.

Suspicious abandoned carrier bag was reported near a girl's high school in Hay Dragh, Mansour district in central Baghdad. Security forces confirmed that it contained an IED and attempted to detonate it under control but were unsuccessful. It exploded and seriously injured 3 policemen at around 07:00 this morning.

A bomb in a parked car wounded two policemen in Hawija, 70 km (45 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, police said.

A bomb in a parked car wounded two policemen in Hawija, 70 km (45 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, police said.

A police personnel was captured and 10 others were injured when guerrillas attacked a checkpoint near the Fallujah city, 50 km west of Baghdad early Friday, an official said.

'Dozens of gunmen stormed a checkpoint outside the town of Saglawiyah, five km northeast of Fallujah, and clashed with policemen manning the post,' the official told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Fallujah, the capital of Anbar province, has been relatively calm after local people took U.S. funding to joined hands with the US forces to fight against insurgents.

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

**60% Of Iraqis Want U.S. Troops
Dead:**

Big Surprise



Relatives mourn inside the house where the U.S. military killed an Iraqi couple and their teenage son in the village of Adwar, 15 kilometers (10 miles) south of Tikrit Feb. 5, 2008, after American soldiers stormed their one-room house and opened fire. Couples two daughters were wounded, one of them died later on. (AP Photo/Hameed Rasheed)

February 8, 2008 By Tina Susman, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

U.S. officials say anyone who violates the truce remains subject to arrest.

They said Thursday that 16 suspected Shiite militants had been captured in a raid earlier in the day in Sadr City, the poor Shiite neighborhood in Baghdad from which Sadr draws much of his support.

A military statement said that U.S. and Iraqi forces were fired on as they entered a house during the raid and that they returned fire, slightly wounding a woman and injuring one of the suspects.

The wounded man died later.

[R]esidents denied that anyone had fired at the troops.

Abu Hussein, who lives near the targeted houses, said any shooting came from the security forces who burst into the homes as people were sleeping.

He accused troops of being overly rough with residents, including an elderly man who collapsed after being forced out of his house.

“There was no reason to open fire on the people,” Abu Hussein said.

Three times in the last week, the U.S. military has acknowledged that errors caused the deaths of civilians or security volunteers during its operations.

In the most recent incident, a civilian died Thursday during an airstrike south of Baghdad.

A U.S. military statement said American forces called for air support after coming under fire during a boat patrol.

It was later determined that the initial shots had been fired in error by security volunteers.

[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]

<p>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!</p>
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Basra: The Harbor Of Oil Smugglers; “Most Of The Iraqi Smugglers Are Related To Main Parties In The Government Sharing The Profits With Them” He Said

February 06, 2008 By Correspondent Hussein; washingtonbureau.typepad.com/iraq/

Last month I made a visit to Basra to see my relatives and to attend a wedding party for a cousin. I really long to go there once in a period due to the four years I spent at Basra University and before that the long years I used to spend in my holidays during my childhood with my cousins who live there.

I love Basra city, which lies in the far south of Iraq and in the north of the Arab gulf. So it has the sea and harbors which we don't have in all over the country in addition to its people who are well known for their generosity and hospitality. I am still in touch with my colleagues and friends there even after finishing my study besides my relatives who still there having some visits to see them just like this one or some phone calls in case I wouldn't .

But the very thing made me write this blog in this visit is the negligence that the governorate still suffers in all fields though that the Iraqi budget largely depends on Basra oil and ports.

More than 75 % of the budget comes from Basra. I don't understand how do the government deal with the budget and on what bases do they depend to distribute the federal budget among the provinces and ministries.

I was surprised to see the governorate, after the sufferings it had with its people whether during Saddam's regime or for the last four years in the new democratic Iraq, in the same conditions or may be worse than before.

The strange thing is that all Iraqi ports lie in Basra which means that all imported stuff from Asia and some European countries and exported oil to them should be through the Arab gulf and Basra!

If Basra depends only on taxes which come from harbors, it should have skyscrapers everywhere.

On contrary, the road from the main Harbor of Umm Qasr, which is one of five commercial ports besides the two other ports for oil in Basra, to Basra city is unsafe for driving as the pavement is not good and bumpy due to the careless it has.

This is a simple thing, while hospitals, factories and infrastructures are neglected or broken in this city.

If people want to be appointed as governmental employees, they have to join either police or army.

As if the government and the whole country is police and army and even these things not to be easy to get without bribes!

We don't have any kind of investments or indicators refer to any improvement in the infrastructure, society or the standard of living.

The other disaster is Shatt AlArab, which is a river of about 200 km long formed by meeting the two great rivers Tigris and Euphrates, which flows in the Arab gulf.

There is no cleaning for its water nor its banks for the last four years.

Also oil smugglers started using Shatt AlArab water having oil products taken out of the country by small ships waiting for bigger ones on the deep sea.

The result is our oil sold illegally and cheaply leaving huge spots of oil on water during the delivery.

So oil is sold in the area and polluted water is here, too.

I went to Umm Filous harbor (about 30 km south of Basra), which is used to be a commercial one, but it becomes the harbor of oil smugglers, to see what is going on.

I saw two small ships (they call them launches) side by side with a big ship has some sailors whose faces tell that they are from Eastern Asia.

When I asked my companion about the matter, who is from Basra city, he said “We have smugglers from Iran, Thailand, Malaysia, UAE, India and everywhere who deal with counterparts in Iraq with million dollars per day!”

I asked “Do the government know of this matter?” The answer shocked me.

“Most of the Iraqi smugglers are related to main parties in the government sharing the profits with them “he said.

My question is now for the government, if the government can't control a small piece in the far south of Basra, how it can rule the whole country?

MORE:

**“Many Parties Finance Their Militias
By Stealing Iraq’s Fortunes Every
Where In Iraq”**

**“Any Terrorist Can Join To Any Ministry
If He Has Amount Of Money And That
What Made The Ministries Moan Of
Corruption Aches”**

January 29, 2008 By Correspondent Jenan; washingtonbureau.typepad.com/iraq/

Corruption is the disease that corrodes Iraq’s body from the inside. I can say that corruption one of the passages to terrorism it is the mold of terrorism.

Any terrorist can join to any ministry if he has amount of money and that what made the ministries moan of corruption aches.

Many parties finance their militias by stealing Iraq’s fortunes every where in Iraq.

If we want to weaken the terrorism we should destroy its mold the corruption. May be you will say that I'm exaggerate of that, but if you live in Iraq you will see this fact.

Ten days ago we knew from newspapers that the integrity commission uncovered the deal of buying cars for the cabinet that amounted millions of Dollars. After week they deposed the head of the commission and declare to Iraqis that the deposition has no relation with the cars deal (I'm trying believe them).

MOI decided to prevent Iraqis from traveling without its knowledge to open a new gate for corruption by bribe the employees there (the citizens will be obliged to pay money in order to hurry their travel).

The evidence burned to hide the corruption proofs like what happened in the ministry before three years and like what happened yesterday when the corrupted burned the building of Central Bank with the office of inspector general (according to one MP's statement).

The corruption series has start but has no end in Iraq.

Yesterday my brother was telling me about a girl live in our neighborhood cash 800\$ to employ the jobless people.

This girl has very good relations with important officials in the government especially in MOD and MOI. They use this girl as a connected ring to gain bribe.

My brother told me that he doesn't want to study any more "am I study to give money to bad women to get a job?"

MORE:

Shortage of Electricity in Iraq
**“After March Of 2003, We Hoped That
The Situation Would Be Better, But
Soon We Realized That The Situation
Became The Worst In All Times”**
**“Corruption Snorting The Iraqi
Budget”**

<p>Of course, all of the Iraqi officials don't have such a problem as most of them live in the green zone with full time power on and those who are out of it, they have huge generators which can supply at least 1000 amperes for each one!</p>

We get rid of Ayhem Al-Samarai, the former minister of electricity, who fled to Washington with one billion in his bank account, to have dozens of Al-Samarai.

January 09, 2008 By [?];washingtonbureau.typepad.com/iraq/

This problem is really founded in the beginning of eighties of the last century during the Iraqi –Iran war (1980-1988) and it became bigger after the invasion of Kuwait having the second gulf war in (1990-1991).

But things became worst in the third war in 2003. In the past we have the shortage for hours or days then the problem would be solved to have the full power again .

In the nineties we had a schedule by the former regime as a kind of punishment to the south making the uprising against his government in 1991 having power supply at night only and that thing lasted for several years and the generators at that time were so expensive to be used in ordinary houses, shops, restaurants, factories and hotels, but the exception were those who are so rich or who had involved with the former regime.

After March of 2003 , we hoped that the situation would be better ,but soon we realized that the situation became the worst in all times.

The first problem is the lack of planning and the second one which is not less important than the first one is the corruption which snorting the Iraqi budget .

I had a relative who is an employee and a worker in one of the projects to have new supply power station in the south.

He said that he is at home since October 2005 while he has his salary coming to his house without going to work or even knows where it is and the same thing for all the workers in the project.

The point is that the manager of the project has the project money in his pocket and of course with few engineers and officials pretending that the project is going on having some obstacles of funds to get.

Those salaries are not part of the contract as the ministry of electricity has to pay for them. The project should supply the workers in the project with fees per day as extra work!

So all these fees with this amount of money for unreal equipments on the ground, to have a new power supply station, are going to those greedy selfish people.

The disaster is the next step made by the ministry of having limited amperes of power supply in some neighborhoods in Baghdad as a kind of test to be carried out in Baghdad and all Iraq.

Last week, they started with my neighborhood having 20 Amperes in our house (as we have three families) for six hours per day! They said that the house with one family in has ten amperes and for each extra family we add 5 amperes.

I am asking is the ten amperes enough for one family?

I just want to ask the expert who suggested that brilliant idea, can we use the iron (which needs 13 amperes) to iron our clothes in this amount of power supply or the iron is not needed in this time.

What about heating and air-conditioning?

Nowadays we have cold winter which leads to use heaters to make the houses warm as the kerosene heaters are not healthy (bad products) and we also don't have this kerosene to fill such kinds of heaters.

Also, we need the boiler which at least needs 15 to 20 amperes to start working . Are these things important in our daily life or not?

We know that lights, one fridge, one chest freezer, one T.V set with a decoder would be enough for the ten amperes, but are these the only things that are necessary in our daily life?

I think this plan is made by one official to have his interests by having a contract to buy cables and contactors with a company which paid lots of money to that one to have their products reach Iraq and to hell all Iraqis .

Of course, all of the Iraqi officials don't have such a problem as most of them live in the green zone with full time power on and those who are out of it, they have huge generators which can supply at least 1000 amperes for each one!

We get rid of Ayhem Al-Samarai, the former minister of electricity, who fled to Washington with one billion in his bank account, to have dozens of Al-Samarai.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

The Undemocratic Party

February 6, 2008 By Pham Binh, Prisonerofstarvation.blogspot.com

Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton are neck-and-neck in the delegate count after Super Tuesday. So much so that Clinton loaned her campaign \$5 million because while Obama raised \$32 million last month she was only able to get \$13.5 million.

The incredibly close race has put a spotlight on one of the Democratic Party's lesser-known features - namely, its completely undemocratic structure.

Nearly 40 percent of the delegate votes are controlled by 842 “super delegates” - people like Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and other past and present elected officials who collectively make up the party’s Establishment.

No one votes for them and yet they have a tremendous amount of control over who the party’s nominee will be.

Super delegates were created in the wake of George McGovern’s disastrous 1972 presidential run (he won only one state and the District of Columbia).

Party bosses exploited his defeat to throttle the left within the party and argue that the Democrats had to move to the right if they wanted to win elections.

This has been the party’s mantra for the last 30 years.

Every time the Republicans won an election, party bosses said Dems had to ape the Republicans if they wanted to have a shot at winning.

Every time a Democrat won, they said that proved that aping the Republicans was a winning strategy.

Nevermind the fact that in 1992 people voted for Bill Clinton hoping that he would deliver on his promise of universal health care and a decisive break with Reagan’s all-out war-on-the-poor.

In 2006 they claimed that their victory at the polls showed they had a mandate to force Bush to execute a slow, steady, incomplete withdrawal from Iraq, even though a majority of Americans favor a total withdrawal.

And in 2008, Clinton or Obama will be elected because voters are desperate for a radical break with Bushism although the election of either will certainly begin an era of Bushism without Bush.

Without a clear front-runner, it seems that the Democratic Party could face a serious crisis.

If the Super Delegates and Democratic National Committee chair Howard Dean force either Obama or Clinton to bow out of the fight for the party’s nomination, their delegates are going to be (understandably) pissed that their votes didn’t count.

That’s especially true for Obama’s delegates, many of whom are black and who would feel disenfranchised as they did in Florida in 2000.

Either way, people are about to learn the hard way that the Democratic Party isn’t democratic at all.

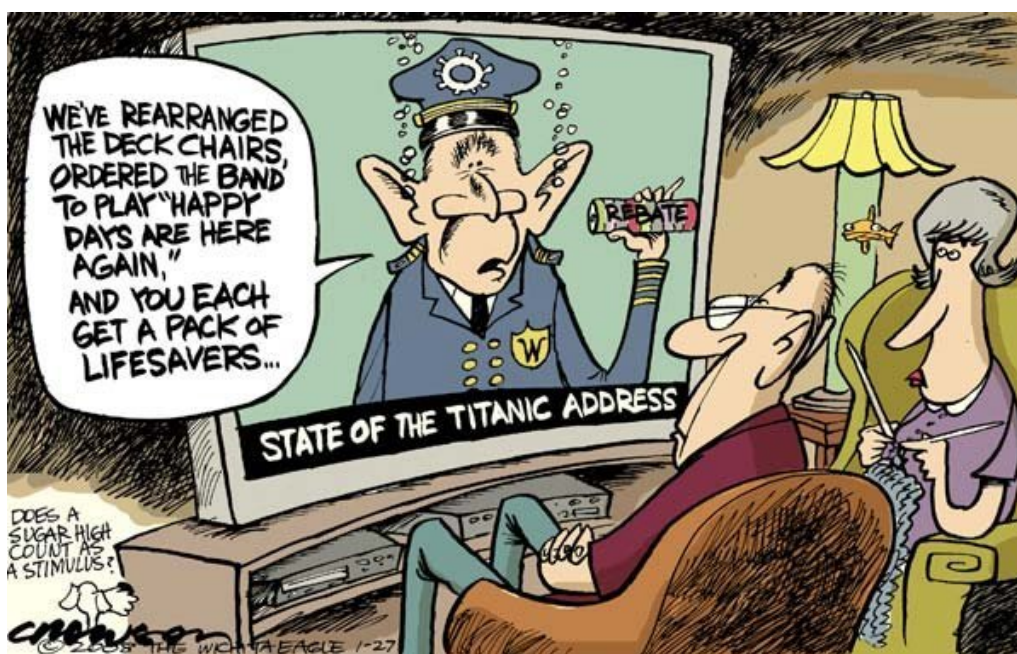
SATAN:

“The marines that I have had wounded over the past five months have been attacked by a faceless enemy. But the enemy has got a face. He’s called Satan.”

US Marine Colonel Gareth Brandl



2.7.08: Satan addresses the 35th Conservative Political Action Conference at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. (AFP/Tim Sloan)



[Thanks to Ward Reilly, Veterans for Peace]

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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

CLASS WAR REPORTS



Big Surprise: Police Chief Calls Cop Who Beat Up Woman And Shot Another Cop "An Outstanding Officer"

[Thanks to Pham Binh, The Military Project, who sent this in.]

Feb 2 AP

BUFORD, Ga. - Two off-duty officers from different police departments wounded each other in a gun fight in the middle of a road in an Atlanta suburb, authorities said.

Both officers suffered non-life-threatening wounds, police said. Their conditions were not immediately known on Saturday.

Officer Jay Daily, a five-year veteran of the Duluth Police Department, exchanged multiple gunshots with Fulton County officer Paul Phillips on Friday afternoon, police said.

Daily was in custody Saturday, charged with aggravated assault, Cpl. Illana Spellman of the Gwinnett County police said.

“It’s been confirmed that the Duluth police officer was the aggressor in this case,” Spellman said.

Phillips, 37, required surgery at Gwinnett Medical Center. A hospital spokesman said Saturday he could not release information about the two officers. He referred questions to Spellman, who did not immediately have an update on their injuries.

Phillips, who was wearing his uniform and in a marked police car, was driving to his home in Gwinnett County, police said.

He was flagged down by someone who had seen Daily involved in a physical altercation with a woman in a sport-utility vehicle.

Daily, who lives in the area, was off duty and in civilian clothing but was wearing a bulletproof vest, police said.

Police did not know what relationship Daily had with the woman or what started the confrontation.

The woman, who was not identified, later was hospitalized for minor injuries she suffered before the shooting started, police said.

Belcher described Daily as “an outstanding officer” and said he was suspended while the investigation is under way.

MORE:

Ohio Cops Shoot Mother & Her Baby:

**“There Is An Evil In This Town”
“The Police Harass Me. They Harass
My Family. But They Know That If**

Something Happens To Me, People Will Burn Down This Town”



Tarika Wilson

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

“The cops in Lima, they is racist like no tomorrow,” said Mr. Cook, 56. “Why else would you shoot a mother with a baby in her arms?”

January 30, 2008 By CHRISTOPHER MAAG, The New York Times Company [Excerpts]

LIMA, Ohio — The air of Southside is foul-smelling and thick, filled with fumes from an oil refinery and diesel smoke from a train yard, with talk of riot and recrimination, and with angry questions: Why is Tarika Wilson dead? Why did the police shoot her baby?

“This thing just stinks to high heaven, and the police know it,” said Jason Upthegrove, president of the Lima chapter of the N.A.A.C.P.

“We’re not asking for answers anymore. We’re demanding them.”

Some facts are known. A SWAT team arrived at Ms. Wilson’s rented house in the Southside neighborhood early in the evening of Jan. 4 to arrest her companion, Anthony Terry, on suspicion of drug dealing, said Greg Garlock, Lima’s police chief. Officers bashed in the front door and entered with guns drawn, said neighbors who saw the raid.

Moments later, the police opened fire, killing Ms. Wilson, 26, and wounding her 14-month-old son, Sincere, Chief Garlock said. One officer involved in the raid, Sgt. Joseph Chavalia, a 31-year veteran, has been placed on paid administrative leave.

The police refuse to give any account of the raid, pending an investigation by the Ohio attorney general.

Black people in Lima, from the poorest citizens to religious and business leaders, complain that rogue police officers regularly stop them without cause, point guns in their faces, curse them and physically abuse them.

They say the shooting of Ms. Wilson is only the latest example of a long-running pattern of a few white police officers treating African-Americans as people to be feared.

“There is an evil in this town,” said C. M. Manley, 68, pastor of New Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church.

“The police harass me. They harass my family. But they know that if something happens to me, people will burn down this town.”

“The situation is very tense,” Mayor David J. Berger said. “Serious threats have been made. People are starting to carry weapons to protect themselves.”

Surrounded by farm country known for its German Catholic roots and conservative politics, Lima is the only city in the immediate area with a significant African-American population. Black families, including Mr. Manley’s, came to Lima in the 1940s and ‘50s for jobs at what is now the Husky Energy Lima Refinery and other factories along the city’s southern border. Blacks make up 27 percent of the city’s 38,000 people, Mr. Berger said.

Many blacks still live downwind from the refinery. Many whites on the police force commute from nearby farm towns, where a black face is about as common as a twisty road.

Of Lima’s 77 police officers, two are African-American.

Tarika Wilson had six children, ages 8 to 1. They were fathered by five men, all of whom dealt drugs, said Darla Jennings, Ms. Wilson’s mother. But Ms. Wilson never took drugs nor allowed them to be sold from her house, said Tania Wilson, her sister.

“She took great care of those kids, without much help from the fathers, and the community respected her for that,” said Ms. Wilson’s uncle, John Austin.

Tarika Wilson’s companion, Mr. Terry, was the subject of a long-term drug investigation, Chief Garlock said, but Ms. Wilson was never a suspect.

During the raid, Ms. Wilson’s youngest son, Sincere, was shot in the left shoulder and hand. Three weeks after the shooting, he remains in fair condition, said a spokeswoman at Nationwide Children’s Hospital in Columbus.

Within minutes of the shooting, at around 8 p.m., 50 people gathered outside Ms. Wilson’s home and shouted obscenities at the police, neighbors said. The next day, 300 people gathered at the house and marched two miles to City Hall.

“The police can say whatever they want,” Tania Wilson said. “Even before they shot my sister, I didn’t trust them.”

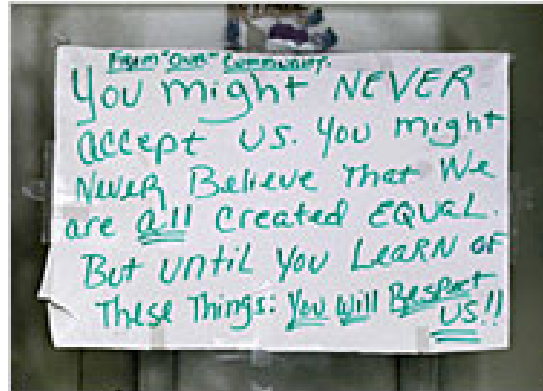
Smaller marches have continued every week since the shooting. The N.A.A.C.P. will hold a public meeting on Saturday to air complaints about police brutality. The group will soon request that the Department of Justice investigate the police department and the Allen County prosecutor’s office, Mr. Uptegrove said.

Junior Cook was a neighbor of Tarika Wilson.

He says that he watched from his front porch as the SWAT team raced across his front yard, and that seconds later he watched a police officer run from Ms. Wilson's house carrying a bleeding baby in a blanket.

“The cops in Lima, they is racist like no tomorrow,” said Mr. Cook, 56.

“Why else would you shoot a mother with a baby in her arms?”



Residents of Lima, Ohio, posted a sign at the house where Ms. Wilson, 26, was killed and her 14-month-old son was injured. J. D. Pooley for The New York Times

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