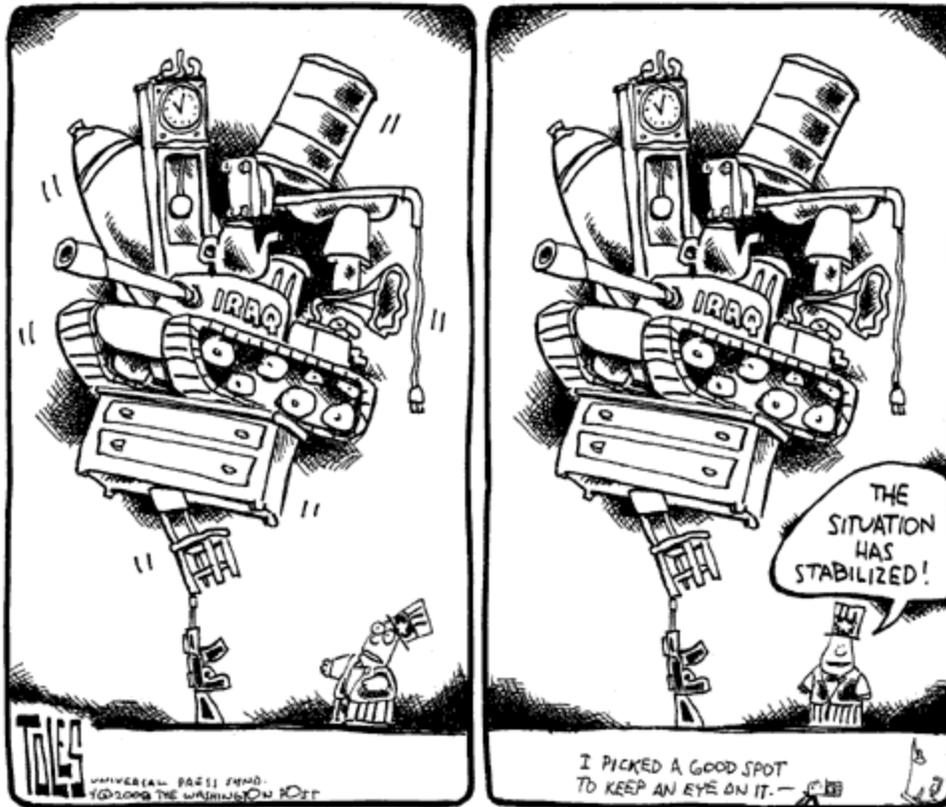


GI SPECIAL 6D21:



U.S. Troop Deaths Hit 7-Month High In Iraq

04-30-2008 AFP & CNN & By KIM GAMEL Associated Press Writer

The U.S. military death toll hit a seven-month high of 50 on Wednesday — with more than half the losses in Baghdad

The U.S. military said its highest death toll in seven months reflected an effort by Iraqi militants to reassert themselves after weeks of government crackdowns.

These deaths brought the number of US troops killed in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion to 4,061.

Of the 49 soldiers killed in April, 23 died in Baghdad where the military is engaged in fierce street battles with the nationalist Mahdi Army.

The lowest casualties so far in 2008 have been in February with 29 soldiers killed.

MORE:

**[From: GI SPECIAL 5K15: 11.19.07]
U.S. KIA In Iraq: Reality: #1
It's Not A Big Fucking Mystery;
It's Cause And Effect**

Comment: T

The 39th recent frantic attempt by a panicked, hysterical war opponent commentator to explain the huge drop in U.S. KIA last month has just been plastered on some anti-war web sites. It said the Pentagon is lying about the KIA numbers.

Another last week said U.S. troops aren't getting killed because they're being kept on base in Iraq to get ready to invade Iran. Blah blah blah.

It's not a big fucking mystery.

It's cause and effect.

Cause:

"The reality, officials said, is that starting around April the military will simply run out of troops to keep the current effort under way. By then, officials said, Bush would either have to withdraw roughly one brigade a month, or extend the tours of troops now in Iraq and shorten their time back home before redeployment." David E. Sanger and Thom Shanker, New York Times June 24, 2007"

Effect:

Not being idiots, the resistance command orders attacks cut way back, while continuing enough attacks to leave no doubt they're there and keep their forces sharp.

They know the U.S. Army has to start cutting force levels in the Spring. Hard as it is for some to grip, given all the stupid racist stereotypes [on the anti-war side too] resistance leadership can and do read the New York Times, and not being raving fanatics of some kind or other, can plan strategy:

Push hard, attack when the balance of forces is better, not worse. That's so pathetically obvious a commander who doesn't understand it belongs in the Pentagon.

This has been an iron rule of intelligent insurgent warfare against an occupying army for about 2000 years now. As so well described by Asprey in *The Guerrilla In History*.

Duh.

MORE:

U.S. KIA In Iraq: Reality: #2 “I Bet The Soldiers Are Catching On To This More And More Everyday” [Comment By J.D. Englehart; Iraq Veterans Against The War & Military Project]

What’s important to look at is how this “growing signs of success” line is used by both republicans AND democrats (aka: the one-party American capitalist regime) to justify asking for more money for the war, or forfeiting more money for the war, in a clever guise to keep funding the war and not ending the war.

From: J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War & The Military Project
To: Military Project
Sent: November 17, 2007 2:10 AM
Subject: **Re: U.S. KIA in Iraq**

I agree.

The media, even of the most liberal, is talking these quiet moments up as “the light at the end of the tunnel” and “sure signs of victory.”

It’s obvious the insurgency is regrouping.

They are not winning through shock and awe, but rather through slowly picking away at the imperialist enemy. Another 2000 year old guerrilla strategy.

What’s important to look at is how this “growing signs of success” line is used by both republicans AND democrats (aka: the one-party American capitalist regime) to justify asking for more money for the war, or forfeiting more money for the war, in a clever guise to keep funding the war and not ending the war.

I bet the soldiers are catching on to this more and more everyday.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

406 Mortar And Rocket Attacks On U.S. Bases & Green Zone In Less Than A Month! [The Numbers You Won't See In The Media Headlines]

4.28.08 By ERICA GOODE and STEPHEN FARRELL, New York Times [Excerpt]

The vast majority of rockets and mortar shells fall on American military bases and Iraqi targets. Of 697 rounds between March 23 and April 20 in Baghdad, 292 struck American bases, 291 hit Iraqi neighborhoods and 114 hit in the Green Zone, according to figures compiled by the American military.

Texas Soldier Killed In Iraq



U.S. Army. Spc. David P. McCormick, 26, of Fresno, Texas, died April 28, 2008, in Baghdad of wounds suffered when his forward operating base came under attack. The Fort Campbell, Ky. GI was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.
(AP Photo/US Army)

Three U.S. Soldiers Killed In Eastern Baghdad

04/28/08 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory & By ERICA GOODE and STEPHEN FARRELL, The New York Times

Three Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers were killed as the result of an indirect-fire attack in eastern Baghdad at approximately 1:05 p.m. April 28. The soldiers were killed in the southeastern neighborhood of New Baghdad, the American military said.

Two U.S. Soldier Killed By Southern Baghdad IED

4.30.08 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080430-17

BAGHDAD – Two Multi-National Division – Baghdad soldiers were killed when their patrol was struck by an improvised explosive device in southern Baghdad at approximately 4:15 p.m. April 30.

IED Kills U.S. Soldier In Northern Baghdad

4.30.08 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080430-13

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division – Baghdad soldier was killed from wounds sustained by an improvised explosive device during a dismounted patrol in northern Baghdad at approximately 1 a.m. April 30.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Northwestern Baghdad

April 30, 2008 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080430-03

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldier was killed from wounds sustained when he was attacked with small-arms fire by insurgents at approximately 8:50 p.m. April 29 in northwestern Baghdad.

Baghdad IED Kills U.S. Soldier

April 30, 2008 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldier was killed after the vehicle he was riding in was struck by an improvised explosive device at approximately 10:15 p.m. in northwestern Baghdad April 29.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Baghdad

04/28/08 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080428-15 & By ERICA GOODE and STEPHEN FARRELL, The New York Times

BAGHDAD – A Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldier was killed at approximately 4:15 p.m. April 28 after an indirect fire attack. The soldier died in Kadhimiya, in the northern part of the capital.

U.S. Soldier Killed In Ninewah

5.1.08 Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20080501-01

TIKRIT, Iraq – A Multi-National Division – North Soldier was killed as a result of an explosion occurring near the Soldier's patrol in Ninewah Province, April 30.

Zephyrhills Solider Killed In Iraq

April 30, 2008 The Associated Press

ZEPHYRHILLS, Fla. -- A Florida native was among three U.S. Army soldiers killed by rocket fire in Iraq, his family said.

Marcus Mathes, 26, an equipment truck driver, died near Baghdad on Monday, his family said. They were told by the Army that he was killed as he stood by his truck, which was parked in a camp motor pool.

Mathes grew up in Sebring in South Florida and Zephyrhills in the Tampa Bay area, according to his mother, Sue Sawyer of Sebring. Inspired by the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, he joined the Army in 2005 and served in Afghanistan before being deployed to Iraq in November. "He was proud of what he was doing," said Sawyer, who had communicated with her son by instant message the day before he was killed. "Strangers walked up to him and said, 'Thank you.'"

His mother said he had just passed his sergeant's exam and was promoted posthumously.

Mathes married his high-school sweetheart six years ago, and the couple was looking forward to starting a family.

Other survivors include two brothers, his father and stepfather.

He will be buried at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell.

Six U.S. Soldiers Wounded In Sadr City Ambush

04/29/08 By HAMID AHMED, Associated Press Writer & Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory

Militants ambushed a U.S. patrol in Baghdad's embattled Sadr City district on Tuesday and more than two dozen people were killed in the fighting, a U.S. military spokesman and Iraqi officials said.

Six U.S. soldiers were wounded during a four-hour firefight in Baghdad's militia stronghold of Sadr City, the U.S. military said Tuesday.

At approximately 9:30 a.m., a U.S. patrol received small-arms fire, wounding an MND-B Soldier. As the Soldier was being evacuated, a U.S. vehicle was struck by two improvised explosive devices, and received small-arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades.

One vehicle was damaged in the attack and two other Soldiers were injured. The three Soldiers and a fourth also injured in the heavy SAF and RPG attacks that followed were evacuated to a nearby combat outpost.

Another U.S. vehicle was damaged by a third IED in the attack, and two Soldiers suffered minor injuries in the fighting that followed. None of the U.S. injuries are life threatening.

Officials at the Imam Ali and al-Sadr general hospitals said about 25 people had died, with several dozen wounded.

Stover said U.S. forces targeted gunmen in the area with rockets fired from a guided multiple-launch rocket system, which fires high-explosive warheads weighing 200 pounds.

AP Television News footage from Sadr City showed men helping women cross the street and children running for cover behind blast walls amid gunshots.

Men helped carry several blood-soaked wounded onto stretchers to a local emergency hospital. Outside the hospital, the dead were placed inside plain wooden coffins.

Green Zone Hit By “A Hail Of Shells” Casualties Not Announced



Members of armed forces and mercenaries take cover in a bunker as a mortar alarm sounds in the Green Zone in Baghdad April 28, 2008. (AP Photo By Petr David Josek)

4.28.08 Associated Press & By Peter Graff (Reuters) & By Alexandra Zavis, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer & By ERICA GOODE and STEPHEN FARRELL, The New York Times

On Sunday afternoon, as a dense and gritty cloud of dust settled over Baghdad, grounding military helicopters, a hail of shells arced toward the Green Zone, with the barrage continuing into the early hours of Monday. Sporadic rocket and mortar fire continued throughout the day.

The assault on the Green Zone came a few days after American military officials contended that their operations in Sadr City had brought about a sharp decline in rocket and mortar attacks on the zone, which houses the United States Embassy and the central Iraqi government.

The shelling also caused some injuries inside the enclave, which houses the U.S. Embassy and Iraqi government offices, but embassy officials could not immediately provide the number.

Fools In Command Of U.S. Forces Sucked Into Ordering

Their Troops On Suicide Mission Of The Year: Fighting The Mahdi Army In Sadr City; “We Are Very Close To The Zero Hour,” Said Ala’a Abd, 30, A Mahdi Army Member. “Everyone Should Realize That”

U.S. troops, fighting at times Tuesday on foot and backed by air support, are now engaged in the kind of urban battle within Sadr’s stronghold reminiscent of the first years of the war.

“Eighty percent of the military operations are targeting innocents, because the Americans want to make people turn against the Mahdi Army so they can enter the city and control it.”

April 30, 2008 By Amit R. Paley, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD, April 29 -- A four-hour battle Tuesday between U.S. soldiers and Shiite militiamen left at least 28 Iraqis dead in the capital’s Sadr City neighborhood, making it one of the bloodiest days in a month of sustained street fighting.

The clashes underscored how deeply U.S. forces have been drawn into heavy combat in the huge Shiite district since Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki unexpectedly launched an offensive in southern Iraq last month against Shiite militias, primarily the Mahdi Army.

Until Maliki’s push into the southern city of Basra, U.S. troops were not intensely engaged in Sadr City, a Baghdad neighborhood of roughly 3 million people that was among the most treacherous areas for U.S. forces early in the war.

But the southern offensive set off a violent chain reaction that spread quickly to Shiite sectors of the capital and has severely strained the cease-fire Sadr imposed on his followers in August and recently reaffirmed.

U.S. troops, fighting at times Tuesday on foot and backed by air support, are now engaged in the kind of urban battle within Sadr’s stronghold reminiscent of the first years of the war.

Residents of Sadr City said Tuesday's death toll was at least 50. The U.S. military said it has killed more than 200 fighters in the past month in the area, where it says militiamen have fired 600 rockets and mortars at U.S. and Iraqi targets.

The conflict has pitted Sadr, who leads Iraq's largest militia and one of the most popular Shiite political organizations, against Shiite-led government forces and the U.S. troops backing them.

The impoverished Sadr City district has been sealed off by U.S. and Iraqi forces from the rest of the city.

"Sadr City right now is like a city of ghosts," said Abu Haider al-Bahadili, 43, a Mahdi Army fighter who spoke by telephone from Sadr City as spasms of gunfire rang out nearby. "It has turned from a city into a field of battle."

In the Sadr City clash, the U.S. soldiers responded by firing rockets armed with high-explosive, 200-pound warheads, killing 28 fighters, Stover said. In a separate incident in Sadr City, a fixed-wing aircraft dropped a bomb at 5:15 p.m. that killed two fighters firing mortars at a joint U.S.-Iraqi outpost, the U.S. military said.

But Sadr City residents gave a very different accounting of the fighting. They said at least 50 people were killed and 130 injured, many of them women and children.

Falah Hassan Shanshal, a Sadrist member of parliament, said at least five houses were demolished in the airstrike, killing 29 people and pinning entire families beneath piles of rubble.

When a bulldozer came to clear the rubble, the driver was shot by a sniper, Shanshal said.

"Sadr City is under the American hammer and nobody is monitoring it," said Leewa Smeisim, the head of the Sadr movement's political bureau.

"Eighty percent of the military operations are targeting innocents, because the Americans want to make people turn against the Mahdi Army so they can enter the city and control it. Nobody is safe in Sadr City, neither women nor children."

"We are very close to the Zero Hour," said Ala'a Abd, 30, a Mahdi Army member in the Shiite holy city of Najaf, using an Arabic expression meaning that time is up. "Everyone should realize that."

MORE:

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

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



Two-year-old Ali Hussein is pulled from the rubble of his family's home in Sadr City in Baghdad, Iraq, April 29, 2008. The child, who later died in hospital, was in one of four homes destroyed by U.S. missiles. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

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

[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it's bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country.]

[What a bunch of silly people.]

[How fortunate they are to be killed by a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]



Rescue workers and residents search for victims among the rubble after Tuesday's U.S. air strike in Baghdad's Sadr city April 30, 2008. Thirty-four bodies and 112 wounded victims were brought to the two Sadr City hospitals in the last 24 hours, according to hospital sources. REUTERS/Kareem Raheem

MORE:

Iraqis Accuse U.S. Forces Of Killing Civilians; “When Some People Rushed To Evacuate The People And The Families Who Were Killed Or Injured, They Were Attacked By Another Rocket”

04/30/2008 By Tina Susman, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

BAGHDAD, Iraq - The U.S. Army said they were militants. Sadr City residents said at least some were civilians, and photographs showed the dust-covered body of at least one child being pulled from a mountain of rubble after Tuesday's fighting.

Whatever the facts, at least 28 people were dead after the four-hour battle, the latest deadly showdown between U.S. and Iraqi forces and Shiite Muslim militiamen over recent weeks.

Based on the photographs, it appeared that at least one of the dead was a civilian. In its captions, the Associated Press identified the boy in the bloodied shorts being carried from the ruins of a house as 2-year-old Ali Hussein.

The brother-in-law of an Iraqi journalist who works with the Los Angeles Times also was reported killed. The victim recently had moved his immediate family out of the neighborhood because of the fighting.

The journalist, reached by phone Tuesday night, said he was at the funeral and could not speak.

With many of Sadr City's main roads peppered with roadside bombs and its side streets too narrow for U.S. tanks or other heavy vehicles to navigate, U.S. forces often call in airstrikes or use guided rockets to hit their targets.

Abu Ahmed, a resident of Sector 10 where the violence occurred, said two rockets hit the neighborhood, where many of the small homes are crowded with three or four families living together.

He said the first rocket demolished several homes in the middle of a block.

"When some people rushed to evacuate the people and the families who were killed or injured, they were attacked by another rocket," Ahmed said.

Local officials also reported a school in Sadr City was hit by a U.S. airstrike. AP Television News footage showed a collapsed girls' school, with desks hanging from the slanting floors.



Residents look at damaged school building after an U.S. airstrike in Sadr City in Baghdad, April 30, 2008. Health officials said two were killed and 16 wounded in the strike, which occurred Tuesday evening. (AP Photo/ Karim Kadim)

**“The Pace Of Operations Has
Left Some Of The Soldiers Worn
Out”**

**“We’re Just Tired. We Need Some
Rest,” He Said:**

**“Leaving The Safety Of Speicher
Every Day, Going Outside The Wire
And Coming Back Every Night Just
Wears Some Of Them Down,
Especially The Gunners”**

**[After Slaughtering Local Civilians, Idiot
Officer Thinks His Call In Radio-Show
Makes Friends For Deadly U.S. Military
Dictatorship]**

April 28, 2008 By Andrew Scutro, Army Times [Excerpts]

TIKRIT, Iraq — The second caller of the day sounded drunk. He demanded to know why the Americans had not built new schools or hospitals.

Turns out, he also was blind. He began losing his sight five years earlier and couldn't find a doctor.

“Now I can't see a camel,” he told Lt. Col. Rick Rhyne, who was sitting in a cramped radio studio along with an interpreter and the show's host, a gregarious fellow known only as Mr. Lebanon.

The blind caller blamed his failed eyesight on the U.S. presence. Rhyne, commander of the 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, told the caller about the new construction and other activities coalition forces had provided that were aimed at improving lives of the locals.

Rhyme and his personal security detail drive through downtown Tikrit, a predominantly Sunni city and birthplace of Saddam Hussein, to the Salah Ah Din province radio station. He uses his air time to explain recent operations, provide updates and take calls from local citizens. The program can be heard up and down the province, from near Balad to Baiji.

There's always a call about a loved one detained at Camp Bucca. But today, he has some explaining to do.

Four days prior, on March 26, a raid by an unnamed task force on a suspected car bomb maker in a neighborhood on the north end of town left several men, women and children dead and wounded.

An AC-130H Spectre warplane had been unleashed after the raiding team took casualties, leaving the two target houses destroyed and a third adjoining home damaged.

A local judge who ran to the sound of gunfire at his brother's house was cut down in the battle.

In the morning, STB troops sent in as a reaction force had to douse burning bodies with fire extinguishers. **[Well, that will certainly make everything just fine, won't it?]**

Rhyme spends the first part of the show explaining the raid and, sure enough, the guy who owns the third house, now missing a few rooms, calls in. [It would have been fascinating to know how Rhyme "explained the raid." Maybe he just doesn't like local judges?]

The two had already spoken in person about compensation and the colonel reassures him over the air for all to hear.

"Just have your cell phone on and we will come by your house and pay you," Rhyme says. "You don't have to do anything. It's a done deal."

To guard against sniper fire and RPG rounds, Rhyme had a high wall built around the studio. When the concrete blocks were used up and the wall still wasn't high enough, more blocks were ordered. [But how can the locals throw flowers and express their endless thanks to George W. Bush for occupying their country and killed them with that thing in the way? Tsk tsk.]

The battalion, also known as Task Force Spartan, operates out of Contingency Operating Base Speicher in an area where Saddam loyalists and other insurgents and criminal gangs operate, benefiting from sometimes complacent or complicit government officials and security forces.

This seemingly endless web of personalities can compromise missions, like a fizzled raid on Easter morning.

The target was a desert farmhouse said to be full of 40 al-Qaida fighters and their long-haired Saudi cell leader.

But not only was the “cell” absent, there were no tire tracks, no footprints, no gum wrappers — nothing. An interpreter from Syria said, “It doesn’t look like a cat has been there.”

The once-trusted informant who guided the force so far into the desert was told by the attached Iraqi police element he would be roasted like a kebab and forced to pay for all the gas burnt by the assault team vehicles. It’s a joke. Maybe.

“We need some good intel, because we went a long way for nothing,” Rhyne tells an Iraqi officer later that day.

Rhyne later tells his leaders to trust no one and start thinking and acting like detectives, to be smart about how they approach people in the street and always gather quality information.

As if to make his case about trust, the next morning his patrol is attacked en route to a meeting with a top police official. One Humvee is all but disabled, but no one is wounded.

Pfc. Rene Reyes, who was trained to fix generators, coaxes the limping truck into the police compound. It was his first mission. He’d been with PSD all of an hour.

The pace of operations has left some of the soldiers worn out.

While nearly all of them dread the idea of languishing on the base with nothing to do, **[Right. Having read the sentence above, and what follows, we all know that “the soldiers” who are “worn out” want more and more and more action; just can’t stand having “nothing to do.”]** they rarely get a day off and being back inside the wire means getting ready for the next day.

Following a series of short-notice assignments on top of regular patrols, the frustration boiled over and some of the troops in the PSD registered their complaints one night during an officer-free meeting.

A few days later, Pfc. Francis Magbag, from the Philippines and not yet a U.S. citizen, said morale was not the issue.

“We’re just tired. We need some rest,” he said. “We like what we’re doing but after a while it’s, ‘OK, I need a break.’ “

More soldiers on the ground would help.

“For this big a task,” he said, “we should have more guys.”

A gunner on his second deployment to Iraq, Spc. That Vo was born in Vietnam and recently became a U.S. citizen.

Leaving the safety of Speicher every day, going outside the wire and coming back every night just wears some of them down, especially the gunners.

“Basically, it’s sensory overload,” he said.

Some soldiers are worried about how they will adjust at home, but the veterans already have an idea.

When Vo and his brother got caught in Los Angeles traffic after his last deployment, he just hopped the median and straddled it to the exit. Vo had done it many times as a Humvee driver in Iraq.

With their car half off the road but passing stuck traffic, his brother freaked out.

Vo said, "What? We'll make it."

NEW GENERAL ORDER NO. 1: PACK UP GO HOME



Mar 24 2008: A US soldier from 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment in the desert. (AFP/David Furst)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Czech Soldier Killed In Logar; Four More Wounded

April 30 (Reuters)

An explosion killed one Czech soldier and wounded four others in the Afghan province of Logar on Wednesday, the Czech general staff said.

It said their four-wheel drive Humvee was hit by “an improvised explosive” while returning from a mission. One of the wounded has serious injuries, head of general staff Lieutenant-General Vladimir Picek said in a statement.

Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed In Tag Ab Valley, Another Wounded; Nationality Not Announced

29 Apr. 2008 ISAF Public Affairs Office

KABUL, Afghanistan – An ISAF soldier was killed and one was wounded today while on patrol in Tag Ab Valley, Kapisa province.

Aussie Soldier Killed In Uruzgan; Four More Wounded

Apr 27 AP & April 28, 2008 By Matthew Burgess, AAP & Coordination and Public Affairs, Department of Defence

An Australian special operations soldier has been killed and four others wounded during a firefight with the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The battle occurred Sunday in Uruzgan province about 16 miles southeast of the town of Tirin Kot, said Air Marshal Angus Houston, the chief of Australia’s defense forces.

Taliban gunmen opened fire on the elite Australian Special Forces troops without warning, Houston said.

“The commandos were involved in a deliberate assault. They were out in the open and, as they were doing their preparations, they were engaged by the Taliban,” Houston said. “There was a heavy exchange of fire.”

Father-of-two Lance Corporal Jason Marks, 27, of the Sydney-based 4RAR (Commando) unit, was named as the dead soldier by Defence Force chief Angus Houston at a media briefing this morning.

Lance Corporal Marks was in the lead platoon preparing for a “company-level” assault 25 kilometres to the south-east of Tarin Kowt when they were attacked by the Taliban, Air Chief Marshal Houston said.

There was a heavy exchange of small arms fire and rocket propelled grenades between the Australian troops and the Taliban, he said.

He said the four other soldiers were wounded by small arms fire in the same action that killed Lance Corporal Marks.

“The body of the deceased soldier and the other Australian casualties were moved by helicopter to a coalition medical facility at Tarin Kowt,” Air Chief Marshal Houston told reporters.

Four other soldiers were also seriously wounded during the contact. Their condition is assessed as not life threatening. Due to the nature of wounds, one or more of those hospitalised may need to be evacuated to other facilities for more advanced medical treatment.

Resistance Action

April 26, 2008 The Associated Press & (AFP) & Apr 29, 2008 By FISNIK ABRASHI
Associated Press Writer & REUTERS & 4.30.08 AFP

Afghan security forces raided the Kabul hideout of Taliban militants behind an attack on President Hamid Karzai, sparking a battle that left seven people dead including a woman and child. Two rebels and three government agents were also among the dead after fierce clashes involving rockets and machine-guns raged for 10 hours at a safe house in the west of the capital, said the country's spy chief. The Taliban confirmed the deaths of the two insurgents and the woman and the child, adding that both the dead men took part in an attack on a military parade at the weekend which was attended by Mr Karzai and foreign diplomats.

Roadside bombs killed four Afghan police officers Saturday in suspected Taliban militant attacks, officials and a witness said.

Two police officers were killed when a remote-controlled bomb destroyed a police vehicle in Waghaz district of central Ghazni province, said deputy provincial police chief Mohammed Zaman. Four other police were wounded and taken to hospital.

In western Farah province, a bomb blast hit a police vehicle in Bala Buluk district, killing one officer and wounding another, provincial police chief Khalil Rahmani said.

Militants meanwhile fired six rockets at a compound housing various UN agencies in the western city of Herat late Friday but they all landed outside the facility, regional police spokesman Abdul Rauf Ahmadi said.

An assault killed 11 police in an eastern province, officials said. The bomber targeted the district chief, tribal elders and police officers as they left the local government headquarters in Khogiani, a town south of the city of Jalalabad, close to the Pakistan border. Thirty-six people, including two Australian journalists, were wounded. Abdul Mohammed, chief of police criminal investigations in Nangahar, said the bomb went off in front of the office of the district chief who was among those hurt.

TROOP NEWS

STAHLER.
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH. 2008.



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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. Phone: 917.677.8057

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.
Phone: 917.677.8057

**(Purposely?) Unsung Heroes:
“Even After The Sand Is Blown Away
And The Dust Clears, We Will Always
Remember, And The Corrupt Officials
Responsible For The Maintenance Of
This Illegal Occupation Will Always
Be Unworthy Of The Blood Of Our
Heroes And Patriots On Their Hands”**



April 17, 2008 By Bryan Allen Hannah [Iraq Veterans Against The War]

Branch of service: United States Army (USA)

Unit: 1st Cav
Rank: SPC
Home: Munising, Michigan
Served in: Fort Hood, Kuwait, Iraq.

I was in front of the Operation Iraqi Freedom Memorial inspecting it, since that is my duty after all, and I was lost.

The wind was stilled, as if paying homage, in this sanctuary of hallowed walls embossed in the names of the fallen.

People burned in the memories of their comrades, in limbo forever to be remembered as youthfully burning souls even after the rememberers are old and withered.

I remember watching them sandblast the names on the walls and seeing how dirty the ground around the memorial was. As I approached the memorial today, I noticed four 5 gallon jugs of water, which I removed, as they were unsightly.

Then I noticed some black dust, coarse and dense. It was the fragments of the wall, which had been eroded from the memorial. As I tried to collect some I realized there wasn't much around, which is a good thing, and I gave up only to turn around.

I turned around to see windswept patterns of black dust all over the ground.

It reminded me of a sandstorm. Suiting enough, I guess.

It just goes to show, that even after the sand is blown away and the dust clears, we will always remember, and the corrupt officials responsible for the maintenance of this illegal occupation will always be unworthy of the blood of our heroes and patriots on their hands.

As I have already covered in one of my previous blogs, many of our nation's fallen are all too often ruled out of body counts due to semantic technicalities.

A specific citation is Specialist Marisol Heredia. I became suspicious when I saw a casualty list without her name on it.

I was assured that her name would make the memorial that was recently erected on Cooper Field in front of the 1st Cavalry Division Headquarters.

Here we are, a few weeks later, and the names from Operation Iraqi Freedom 06-08 have recently been unveiled on the 1st Cavalry Division Monument and guess who isn't there.

I should go through the normal channels to fix this, and I have access to them, but I believe the world should know, since (call me a conspiracy theorist) I believe certain regulations have been set in effect to establish ways of memorializing our fallen brothers and sisters which involve "seeing things on the bright side" if you will.

I am sure the people I work with will not like this, but if you want to throw the 7 army values at me, be prepared for some rhetoric.

I encourage you all to call the 1st Cavalry Division Honor Guard at (254)287-3283 and encourage them to guard the honor of our generations own unsung heroes by listing all the casualties of Operation Iraqi Freedom, even if they die outside of Iraq.

Active duty folks may want to use the active duty line, which is the same number preceded by *67, haha! I rock.



More Really Stupid Lying Bullshit From JCS Chair: Even Big Media Reporter See Mullen Has No Evidence For Silly Accusations Against Iran

April 29, 2008 By Tina Susman, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer [Excerpts]

The United States for more than a year has accused Iran of meddling in Iraq.

A U.S. military official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the political sensitivity of the issue, said the newest evidence included munitions with 2008 manufacture dates found in Basra during recent fighting between Iraqi and U.S. forces and Shiite militiamen. They bore the hallmarks of Iranian workmanship, including fuses only found on Iranian-made arms, he said.

But in a repeat of a scenario seen here for more than a year, neither the United States nor Iraq has unveiled the evidence, and nobody is saying when or if it will be made public.

On Friday, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Navy Adm. Michael G. Mullen, cited an “increasingly lethal and malign influence” of the Iranian government.

Mullen did not give specifics, and it is unclear what prompted the harsh allegations.

“I find it difficult to believe that Iranians would allow weapons to be traced back to them easily with manufacture dates on them,” said Vali Nasr, an expert on Shiite politics at Tufts University. He said nothing in the allegations was new.

What is new, he said, is the United States’ need to justify its expansion of its operations to southern Iraq in support of Maliki’s offensive.

The Iranian angle provides that justification, especially in the eyes of most Americans, Nasr said. “The threshold for demonization of Iran is fairly low.” he said.

Religious Cult Fanatics Harass Iraq Vet For Not Believing In God: Twisted Freak, Maj. Freddy J. Welborn, “Threatened To Bring Charges Against Him”



Chuck France, AP

Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier & Military Project, who sent this in. He writes:

Quote of the day:

It eventually came out in Iraq in 2007, when he was in a firefight. Hall was a gunner on a Humvee, which took several bullets in its protective shield.

Afterward, his commander asked whether he believed in God, Hall said.

“I said, ‘No, but I believe in Plexiglas,’” Hall said.

2008-04-28 The Associated Press

JUNCTION CITY, Kan. (April 26) -- Like hundreds of young men joining the Army in recent years, Jeremy Hall professes a desire to serve his country while it fights terrorism.

But the short and soft-spoken specialist is at the center of a legal controversy.

He has filed a lawsuit alleging he's been harassed and his constitutional rights have been violated because he doesn't believe in God. The suit names Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

“I'm not in it for cash,” Hall said. “I want no one else to go what I went through.”

Known as “the atheist guy,” Hall has been called immoral, a devil worshipper and — just as severe to some soldiers — gay, none of which, he says, is true. Hall even drove fellow soldiers to church in Iraq and paused while they prayed before meals.

“I see a name and rank and United States flag on their shoulder. That's what I believe everyone else should see,” he said.

Hall, 23, was raised in a Protestant family in North Carolina and dropped out of school before earning his GED. It wasn't until after he joined the Army that he began questioning religion, eventually deciding he couldn't follow any faith.

But he feared how that would look to other soldiers.

“I was ashamed to say that I was an atheist,” Hall said.

It eventually came out in Iraq in 2007, when he was in a firefight. Hall was a gunner on a Humvee, which took several bullets in its protective shield. Afterward, his commander asked whether he believed in God, Hall said.

“I said, ‘No, but I believe in Plexiglas,’” Hall said. “I've never believed I was going to a happy place. You get one life. When I die, I'm worm food.”

The issue came to a head when, according to Hall, a superior officer, Maj. Freddy J. Welborn, threatened to bring charges against him for trying to hold a meeting of atheists in Iraq. Welborn has denied Hall's allegations.

Hall said he had had enough but feared he wouldn't get support from Welborn's superiors. He turned to Mikey Weinstein and the Military Religious Freedom Foundation.

Weinstein is the foundation's president and a U.S. Air Force Academy graduate. He had previously sued the Air Force for acts he said illegally imposed Christianity on students at the academy, though that case was dismissed. He calls Hall a hero.

"The average American doesn't have enough intestinal fortitude to tell someone to shut up if they are talking in a movie theater," Weinstein said.

"You know how hard it is to take on your chain of command? This isn't the shift manager at KFC."

Hall was in Qatar when the lawsuit was filed on Sept. 18 in federal court in Kansas City, Kan. Other soldiers learned of it and he feared for his own safety. Once, Hall said, a group of soldiers followed him, harassing him, but no one did anything to make it stop.

The Army told him it couldn't protect him and sent him back to Fort Riley. He resumed duties with a military police battalion. He believes his promotion to sergeant has been blocked because of his lawsuit, but he is a team leader responsible for two junior enlisted soldiers.

Hall said he enjoys being a team leader but has been told that having faith would make him a better leader.

"I will take care of my soldiers. Nowhere does it say I have to pray with my soldiers, but I do have to make sure my soldiers' religious needs are met," he said.

"Religion brings comfort to a lot of people," he said. "Personally, I don't want it or need it. But I'm not going to get down on anybody else for it."

Hall leaves the Army in April 2009. He would like to find work with the National Park Service or Environmental Protection Agency, anything outdoors.

"I hope this doesn't define me," Hall said of his lawsuit. "It's just about time somebody said something."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

GET THE MESSAGE?



Iraqi nationalists hold a large Iraqi flag as they march during a protest against killing of Iraqi civilians by U.S. military air attacks in the Obeidi neighborhood of Baghdad April 30, 2008. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)

No Shit?



A Mahdi Army fighter passes a poster showing nationalist Muqtada al-Sadr and his father Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr, in Basra, March 28, 2008. (AP Photo/Nabil al-Jurani)

4.29.08 By Aref Mohammed, (Reuters) [Excerpt]

Blending religious fervor, anti-Americanism and a populist message, Sadr appeals to millions of dispossessed Shi'ites who have felt abandoned by successive Iraqi administrations.

“I defend the Sadr movement because they are nationalists who want to free Iraq from the occupier,” said Abu Firas, a Sadr supporter. “Who else has any interest in helping the poor?”

The movement is popular in the Shi'ite south and in the Sadr City slum in eastern Baghdad, named after Moqtada's father, a senior cleric killed under Saddam Hussein.

Resistance Action

April 28 (Reuters) & AP & April 29 (Reuters) & April 30 (Reuters) & (CNN) & By KIM GAMEL Associated Press Writer

Insurgents killed the nephew of police Maj. Gen. Abdul-Karim Khalaf, an Interior Ministry spokesman who has overseen operations in Basra, by hanging him from an electricity pole in Sadr City.

A member of the American-backed militia Sons of Iraq was killed Wednesday, and four others were wounded Wednesday when an improvised explosive device detonated near the town of Hawija, Iraq, the U.S. military said. The Sons of Iraq members were returning from a meeting when the explosion occurred, the military said. The wounded were taken to a hospital in Hawija, about 70 kilometers (43 miles) southwest of Kirkuk.

Two policemen moving in a privately-owned vehicle were killed in a drive-by shooting on Sunday in Tikrit, 175 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad, the U.S. military said in a statement.

Three mortar bombs landed on a police station in Jazair district, eastern Baghdad, wounding three policemen, police said.

One Iraqi soldier was killed on Sunday and four wounded when a parked car bomb struck the Jamiaa District in western Baghdad, police said.

One civilian was killed and seven other people wounded, including four policemen, when a car bomb exploded near a police checkpoint on Sunday in Harthia district, in western Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb wounded one policeman when it struck his patrol on Sunday in central Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A bomber killed one member of a U.S.-backed neighbourhood patrol and wounded five others in their station northeast of Baquba, 65 km (42 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb struck an Iraqi Army patrol, wounding three soldiers in southern Kirkuk, police said.

A roadside bomb wounded two policemen when it targeted their patrol in central Kirkuk on Monday, police said.

A roadside bomb blew up outside the house of Dhiyaa al-Judi, a civil servant in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, killing him and wounding two of his guards in the Utaifiya district of eastern Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents shot dead an off-duty policeman in central Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, and two policemen were wounded in an attack targeting their vehicle in eastern Mosul, police said.

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

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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