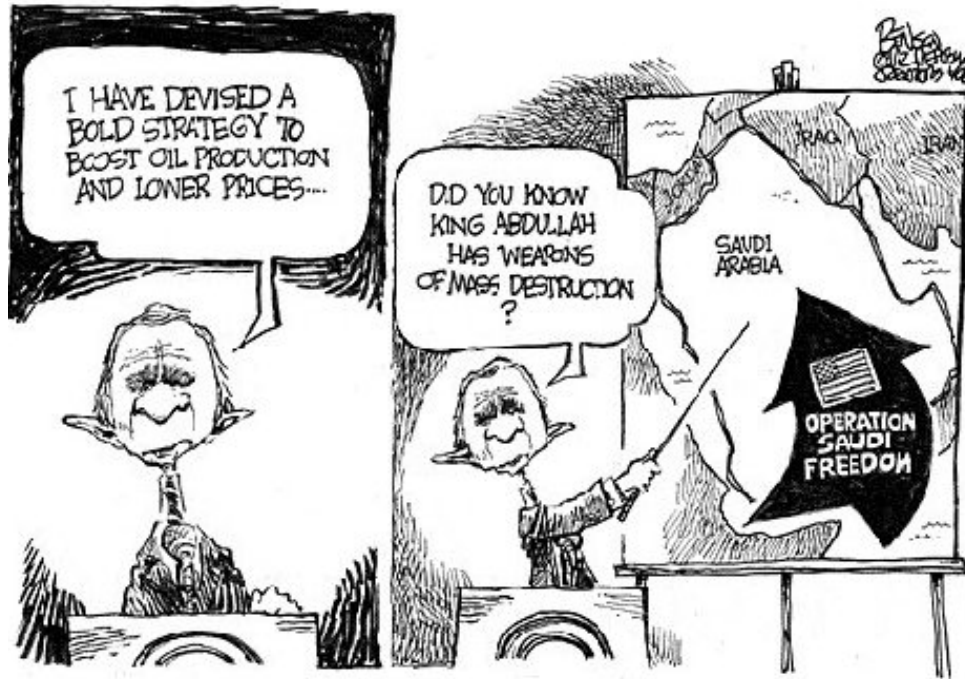


GI SPECIAL 6F12:



THERE IT IS!

The News Story Of The Year, So Far, Buried In A Thousand Words About Two Iraqi Collaborators

[Too Bad The Reporter Had His Head Up His Ass And Missed It]

June 17, 2008 By Sam Dagher, Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

[Three paragraphs from a long, long story that goes on and on and on about "Chris" and "Sarah."]

BAGHDAD - In war, love tends to blossom quickly. Just three months after Sarah and Chris met in Baghdad, they were married.

Chris and Sarah, nicknames they asked to use because of security concerns, are interpreters who work for a civil affairs unit of the United States Army. Like thousands of other Iraqi nationals working for the American military here, they have risked it all for their jobs.

Both describe the frequent arguments they have with US soldiers stationed in Iraq who do not believe they are fighting for a worthy cause and speak disparagingly of Bush.

BIG SURPRISE! 60% Of Americans Oppose Iraq War [Bigger Surprise: Imperial Politicians In DC Don't Give A Shit]

[Other news stories today report Congress is ready to vote more billions to keep the war going. That's the kind of democracy Obama and McCain intend to keep on bringing to Iraq, and the USA, unless and until our troops put a stop to them, and all the rest of the scum running the government. T]

June 17, 2008 CBS/ AP

Recent opinion surveys show that more than 60 percent of the American public opposes the Iraq war and believe it will end badly.

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Ohioan Killed In Iraq

June 19, 2008 ELYRIA, Ohio (AP)

A soldier due home next month on leave from Iraq was killed by an improvised explosive, his father said.

U.S. Army Pfc. Jason Cox, 21, of Elyria, died Monday, his father, Gregory Cox, told The (Elyria) Chronicle-Telegram.

Cox had been in Iraq for a year and was scheduled to return to Ohio in mid-July. After his leave, he was to serve another eight months.

Cox, a 2004 graduate of Lorain County Joint Vocational School, loved to work with his hands and had just finished rebuilding a Mitsubishi with his buddies before shipping out. That experience paid off in Iraq, where he helped fix Hummers and other heavy vehicles in his off-hours, his father said.

Former Bogalusan Dies In Iraq

June 04, 2008 By Jacob Brooks, The Daily News

U.S. Army Spc. Justin R. Mixon, an infantryman and former Bogalusa resident died in Baghdad, Iraq, Sunday from wounds suffered when his vehicle was struck with an improvised explosive device, according to the Department of Defense.

He was 22 and leaves behind a wife and son, who are living in Germany.

Mixon was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, based in Viseck, Germany.

Mixon moved to Bogalusa as a teenager when his father, the Rev. Walter Mixon, moved here with his family to be the pastor at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, family members confirmed. The Rev. Mixon was pastor at the church until about a year ago, and the family has since moved to Tangipahoa Parish, where they are originally from.

Mt. Pleasant church members still recall the family, and Justin, well.

"He was an energetic young man," H.L. Crain, a deacon from Mt. Pleasant, said on Tuesday. "It's real tragic."

During his time in Bogalusa, Mixon attended Louisiana Technical College Sullivan Campus and worked as a welder and other odd jobs, Crain added.

"He was a typical youngster - rambunctious, like most kids are," he said. "I remember well when he left to go into the military."

That was about three years ago, and Mixon went on to be stationed in Germany, where he met his wife, Tia Mixon, and had a son, Tony Ray Mixon.

The Daily News did speak with the Rev. Mixon, who said the family will be issuing a statement and photo of Mixon through the military.

That photo and statement had not been submitted to The Daily News by press time.

The Rev. Mixon did say his son's body was being flown back to Louisiana, and funeral arrangements have not yet been scheduled.

U.S. Military Humvee Blown Up In Baghdad; Casualties Not Announced

June 19 (Xinhua)

A roadside bomb went off near a U.S. patrol in Baghdad's eastern neighborhood of Waziriyah, setting a U.S. Humvee on fire, the source added.

It was unclear whether U.S. soldiers sustained any casualty as troops immediately cordoned off the area, preventing the Iraqi police from approaching the scene, he said.

Crowd Stones U.S. Troops After Huge Explosion

June 18, 2008 By RICHARD A. OPPEL Jr. and ALI HAMID, The New York Times Company

BAGHDAD — Explosives stowed in a minibus obliterated part of a bustling marketplace and set ablaze a crowded apartment building in the heavily Shiite Huriya district of northwest Baghdad, killing at least 51 people and wounding 75 late Tuesday afternoon, Iraqi security officials said.

According to one Iraqi policeman at the scene, the bomber struck as Iraqi and American troops attended a neighborhood meeting.

Afterward, the policeman said, some people surrounded Humvees and angrily started throwing rocks and other objects.

Bosniaks To The Rescue;

A New Surge For Iraq

June 19, 2008 The Associated Press

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina: Bosnia's army will send more troops to serve with the U.S.-led force in Iraq, Bosnian media reported Thursday.

In addition to the 36 ordnance experts already in Iraq, Bosnia's army will send an additional 49 soldiers from the 6th Infantry Division of the Bosnian Army in August, army commander Gen. Sifet Podzic said, according to Sarajevo daily Dnevni Avaz.

The contingent includes soldiers from all three Bosnian ethnic groups — Muslim Bosniaks, Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs, Podzic was quoted as saying.

He added they will provide security at the military base where the Bosnian soldiers are based, the report said.

BEEN ON THE JOB TOO LONG: COME ON HOME, NOW



U.S. Army soldiers from Third Armored Cavalry Regiment at Combat Outpost Rabiya in Mosul March 26, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Four British Soldiers Killed In Lashkar Gah On 17 June; Another Wounded

18 Jun 08 Ministry of Defence

It is with deep regret that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the deaths of one Intelligence Corps soldier and three other British soldiers in Afghanistan yesterday.

The soldiers were taking part in a deliberate operation east of Lashkar Gah when the vehicle in which they were travelling was caught in an explosion at approximately 1540hrs on Tuesday 17 June 2008.

Tragically three soldiers were killed in the incident and a further two wounded. The Medical Emergency Response Team were mobilised and evacuated all casualties to the ISAF medical facility at Camp Bastion. Sadly one of the two injured soldiers was pronounced dead on arrival.

The fifth soldier is receiving treatment for his wounds and is in a stable condition.

Two Foreign Occupation Soldiers Die, 10 Wounded In Paktika; Nationality Not Announced

06/18/08 NATO

KABUL, Afghanistan - Two ISAF soldiers died and 10 received wounds while on patrol in Paktika province of Afghanistan today.

In accordance with ISAF policy, ISAF does not release the casualty's nationality prior to the relevant national authority doing so.

Marine Dies In Afghanistan

June 17, 2008 BY MICHELLE MANCHIR, STAFF WRITER, Palladium-Item

A 22-year-old Richmond Marine described by friends as "outgoing" and "brave" was killed over the weekend while serving in Afghanistan.

Lance Cpl. Layton Bradly Crass, a 2005 Richmond High School graduate, was one of four Marines from a unit based at Twentynine Palms, Calif., who died Saturday in a roadside bomb attack in Afghanistan.

Brad Covert, family readiness officer for the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, confirmed Crass' death Monday.

The attack in Helmand Province in southwest Afghanistan was the worst single attack on U.S. or coalition forces in Afghanistan this year, The Associated Press reported.

Crass and the other Marines arrived in Afghanistan in April to help train and mentor struggling Afghan national police units in Farah and Helmand provinces.

Crass' friends and acquaintances remember him fondly.

Dustin Gibbs, a former classmate and close friend of the soldier, said Monday in an e-mail message that Crass was "a brother to me."

"I joined the Marine Corps partially because of him," Gibbs said in the message. "... He was a true friend and an extremely brave man. He had a huge heart and made quite an impact on my life and my future to come."

Both men appear in a photo in the Richmond High yearbook as members of the school Computer Club.

Rusty Hensley, career education director at Richmond High School, said Monday he remembers Crass attending machine tool technology classes at RHS in 2004.

"He was hardworking for us in that program," Hensley said, also describing the graduate as "outgoing."

Hensley said he spoke with Crass once since his graduation. "He was very proud and he loved what he was doing (for the military)," Hensley said, adding: "I'm proud of the fact that he was heading into the military for his career."

Crass' family did not respond Monday to requests for comment. His funeral services are pending at Doan & Mills Funeral Home in Richmond.

“There Are Fears Among Residents Of Kandahar City That The Taliban Move Into The Arghandab Is A Prelude To An Attack On The City”

6.15.08 Canwest & June 17, 2008 By THE CANADIAN PRESS & (Reuters) & AP

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan - Canadian troops and Afghan troops prepared for battle Tuesday against hundreds of Taliban rebels who have seized control of several villages outside Kandahar city and are threatening to kill anyone who collaborates with NATO or government forces.

“There are hundreds of them (Taliban) with sophisticated weapons. They have blown up several bridges and are planting mines everywhere,” Mohammad Usman, a taxi driver who evacuated a family on Tuesday from the district, told reporters in Kandahar.

Insurgents entered more than half a dozen towns near Kandahar, declared themselves in charge, planted mines and destroyed culverts to keep international forces at bay.

Across the Arghandab River from Kandahar, the Taliban control nine or 10 villages.

From there, militants can cross the countryside's flat plains on decent roads for probing attacks into Kandahar itself, in possible preparation for an assault on their former spiritual home.

Some employees of the international troops did not show up for work Monday, refusing to leave their homes out of concern for their safety. That situation was unclear Tuesday.

A Taliban commander, Mullah Ahmedullah, called an Associated Press reporter Tuesday and said that about 400 Taliban had moved into the Arghandab from Khakrez, one district to the north.

Ahmed Wali Karzai, head of the Kandahar provincial council and brother of President Hamid Karzai, has said there are fears among residents of Kandahar city that the Taliban move into the Arghandab is a prelude to an attack on the city.

Karzai downplayed that threat himself, saying the Taliban have set up positions in villages in the same area in the past.

“(But) There are also strong rumours that they will attack Kandahar city at strategic points - my house, the government's house, the police station,” he said.

Karzai said Afghan security forces had been sent in from the capital to help protect the volatile region: “Everyone in Kabul is very much concerned.”

In Kandahar City, authorities announced only about 20 of the almost 800 fugitives - half of them described as Taliban militants - had been recaptured in two days of military and police roadblocks, door-to-door searches and appeals to the public for help through radio, loudspeakers and leaflets.

Only one of those recaptured was a Taliban, and eight of the 20 actually weren't caught but turned themselves in to the authorities.

In the initial confusion, responding police and army units, rather than chase down the escapees, set up a cordon around Sarposa, the biggest prison in southern Afghanistan, only discovering later that it was nearly empty.

OOPS

4 U.S. Military Helicopter Engines Worth \$13 Million AWOL Near Border With Afghanistan

Jun 18, 2008 The Jerusalem Post

The US military says four helicopter engines worth \$13 million are missing in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region.

US spokeswoman Lt. Col. Rumi Nielson-Green says the helicopters were being shipped overland from the US base in Bagram to a seaport for shipment back to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. She says the parts went missing sometime before the 101st Airborne's arrival in Afghanistan in April.

Nielson-Green says the parts were being shipped by a Pakistani trucking company, but it is not clear where they disappeared.

The US is not disclosing what kind of engines they were.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action

June 17 (Reuters) & June 18 (AFP) & 19 Jun 2008 Reuters

A bomb hidden on a motorcycle exploded at a checkpoint in north Baghdad, killing four fighters of a group allied to U.S. forces. That attack took place at around 10:00 am (0700 GMT) at a checkpoint run by the fighters in Al-Sulek neighbourhood, security officials said. Four other members of the group were wounded.

A government official was killed and another wounded when the car they were travelling in was attacked by armed men in the west Baghdad district of Mansour, police said.

A roadside bomb killed a police colonel and his two guards and wounded four other policemen as they pursued guerrillas in a car chase just outside the town of Kut, 150 km (95 miles) southeast of Baghdad, police said.

A parked car bomb exploded outside police headquarters in central Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) northeast of Baghdad, killing a policeman and wounding 10 policemen, police said.

Insurgents shot dead an off-duty policeman near his house in central Mosul, police said.

A bomber riding a motorcycle killed four U.S.-backed neighbourhood security guards at a checkpoint in northern Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb targeted a police commando patrol, wounding three policemen in Ghadir district of eastern Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb struck a police vehicle in Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, killing a policeman and wounding two others, police said.

Insurgents shot dead an off-duty policeman in Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. The policeman fired back, killing one of his attackers.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Fox News Girl E.D. Hill Hints the Obamas May be Secret Terrorists!



“I Have A Neighbor Who Insists On Working On The Sabbath”

“Am I Morally Obligated To Kill Him Myself, Or Should I Ask The Police To Do It?”

[Thanks to Ward Reilly, Veterans For Peace, for passing this one along.]

Thank you for doing so much to educate people regarding God’s Law. I have learned a great deal from you and understand why you would be for banning same sex marriage.

As you said “in the eyes of God marriage is based between a man a woman.” I try to share that knowledge with as many people as I can.

When someone tries to defend the homosexual lifestyle, for example, I simply remind them that Leviticus 18:22 clearly states it to be an abomination... End of debate.

I do need some advice from you, however, regarding some other elements of God’s Laws and how to follow them.

1. Leviticus 25:44 states that I may possess slaves, both male and female, provided they are purchased from neighboring nations. A friend of mine claims that this applies to Mexicans, but not Canadians. Can you clarify?

Why can’t I own Canadians?

2. I would like to sell my daughter into slavery, as sanctioned in Exodus 21:7. In this day and age, what do you think would be a fair price for her?

3. I know that I am allowed no contact with a woman while she is in her period of menstrual uncleanness - Lev.15: 19-24. The problem is how do I tell? I have tried asking, but most women take offense.

4. When I burn a bull on the altar as a sacrifice, I know it creates a pleasing odor for the Lord - Lev.1:9. The problem is, my neighbors. They claim the odor is not pleasing to them. Should I smite them?

5. I have a neighbor who insists on working on the Sabbath. Exodus 35:2. clearly states he should be put to death. Am I morally obligated to kill him myself, or should I ask the police to do it?

6. A friend of mine feels that even though eating shellfish is an abomination - Lev. 11:10, it is a lesser abomination than homosexuality. I don't agree. Can you settle this? Are there 'degrees' of abomination? Oh, sorry. IS there degrees ...

7. Lev.21:20 states that I may ! not approach the altar of God if I have a defect in my sight. I have to admit that I wear reading glasses. Does my vision have to be 20/20, or is there some wiggle-room here?

8. Most of my male friends get their hair trimmed, including the hair around their temples, even though this is expressly forbidden by Lev.19:27. How should they die?

9. I know from Lev. 11:6-8 that touching the skin of a dead pig makes me unclean, but may I still play football if I wear gloves?

10. My uncle has a farm. He violates Lev.19:19 by planting two different crops in the same field, as does his wife by wearing garments made of two different kinds of thread (cotton/polyester blend). He also tends to curse and blaspheme a lot.

Is it really necessary that we go to all the trouble of getting the whole town together to stone them? Lev.24:10-16. Couldn't we just burn them to death at a private family affair, like we do with people who sleep with their in-laws? (Lev. 20:14)

11. And one of my real concerns is that gay lobsterman who wears clothes made of two or more fabrics and hauls lobsters on the Sabbath....Four abominations in one day....Wow.....

12. And one last question.....Why are Christian bigots so obsessed who people love? I think I know the answer.

I know you have studied these things extensively and thus enjoy considerable expertise in such matters, so I am confident you can help.

Thank you again for reminding us that God's word is eternal and unchanging.

Thanks,
Bible Readers of America

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

OCCUPATION REPORT

Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!

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



A foreign occupation soldier from the U.S. undertakes a foot patrol looking for militants, in Mosul June 13, 2008. REUTERS/Eduardo Munoz

[There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country and busting into their houses by force to arouse an intense desire to kill you in the patriotic, self-respecting civilians who live there.

[But your commanders know that, don't they? Don't they?]

"In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit," said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay's Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday's raid. "Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead."



[images.google.com]

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

Declared Bill Ehrhart, a marine in Vietnam:

In grade school we learned about the redcoats, the nasty British soldiers that tried to stifle our freedom. Subconsciously, but not very subconsciously, I began increasingly to have the feeling that I was a redcoat. I think it was one of the most staggering realizations of my life.

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

**“We Know That The Politicians Live
In Luxury Mansions, Houses With
Power Supplied Day And Night”**

June 17, 2008 By Correspondent Hussein, Inside Iraq

Summer in Iraq is terrible, with unbearable sandstorms. Mid-April was the beginning of these storms whose winds are filled with sand and dust. Fortunately, they were infrequent in those months.

But this month the weather became dreadful, as dust becomes an unwelcome guest with which to start our day. I can't remember a single day this month without having the air filled with grime. Heat and dust are irresistible--especially lacking other services which make them less harmful: water and a reliable electric power supply.

I consider myself and my colleagues lucky to spend our work time in the McClatchy office. We sometimes ought to spend the nights here as there are electricity and pure drinking water all the time. At home, we have our own small generators. But they need fuel and maintenance. And that costs a lot of money.

What about the ordinary people who don't have generators or who have them but can't afford the expense of operating them? What about people who don't have pure water pumped into their houses because the city pipes need repair?

This kind of weather reminds me of the dust that clouds some of our politicians' and officials' minds. It keeps them far away from the people and their simple needs. Though these politicians and officials need people to vote for them in the next provincial elections in October, they maintain a wide gap between the Iraqi people and themselves.

We know that the politicians live in luxury mansions, houses with power supplied day and night, whether from the national electricity grid or the generators they run for themselves and their followers.

If they have such essentials, and don't care about their people, the latter will never repeat their mistake and vote for such politicians.

I hope dust covers the air, land and the politicians' minds if it means we can have a healthy Iraq and Iraqis.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT THE NEW TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces.

Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>

And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Zionist Filth Attack Elderly Palestinian Couple With Baseball Bats: “They Don’t Want Us To Stay On Our Land”



“They don’t want us to stay on our land, but we won’t leave - we’ll die here”
Thamam al-Nawaja

12 June 2008 By Tim Franks, BBC News, Jerusalem

Footage from a video camera handed out by an Israeli human rights group shows Jewish settlers beating up Palestinians in the West Bank.

[WRONG: Calling these cowardly pieces of shit “Jewish” is a foul slander against millions of Jews all over the world who have nothing to do with the Zionists, or their 60 year reign of terror in Palestine. T]

An elderly shepherd, his wife and a nephew said they were attacked by four masked men for allowing their animals to graze near the settlement of Susia.

The rights group, B’Tselem, said the cameras were provided to enable Palestinians to get proof of attacks.

A spokesman for the Israeli police said that an investigation was under way.

So far, no-one has been arrested.

For the past year, B’Tselem has handed out video cameras to Palestinians as part of its “Shooting Back” project.

The BBC has been given exclusive access to the footage of this particular attack, which happened earlier this week. The date and time on the camera footage shows that it is Sunday afternoon.

Over the brow of the hill walk four masked men holding baseball bats. To the right of the screen, in the foreground, stands a 58-year-old Palestinian woman.

Thamam al-Nawaja has been herding her goats close to the Jewish settlement of Susia, near Hebron in the southern West Bank.

Within a few seconds, she, along with her 70-year-old husband and one of her nephews, will be beaten up.

As the first blows land, the woman filming - the daughter-in-law of the elderly couple - drops the camera and runs for help.

Mrs Nawaja spent three days in hospital after the attack.

Returning to the small Palestinian encampment close to the red-roofed houses of Susia, she stepped slowly and unsteadily out of the minibus.

A dark stain showed through the white gauze covering her broken right arm. Her veil was lifted gingerly away from her lined face. A bloodshot eye and intersection of scars revealed a fractured left cheek.

“The settlers gave us a 10-minute warning to clear off from the land,” she told me, her voice a tired, cracked whisper.

She and her husband had stood their ground. It is at this point that her voice grows louder.

“They don’t want us to stay on our land. But we won’t leave. We’ll die here. It’s ours,” she added.

Indeed, the rest of the world regards Jewish settlements in the West Bank such as Susia, as illegal, built on occupied territory.

Those settlements have been a large part of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis for the last 41 years. The daily confrontation is not often caught on camera. That, now, is beginning to change.

The attack near Susia was filmed with one of 100 video cameras that B’Tselem has handed out to Palestinians in the region.

The thinking behind the project is that when trouble flares, rather than just giving a statement to the Israeli police or army, video carries much more weight.

“The difference is amazing,” says Oren Yakobovich, who leads the Shooting Back project.

“When they have the camera, they have proof that something happened. They now have something they can work with, to use as a weapon.”

We asked a spokesman from the Susia settlement for a comment on Sunday’s incident. He declined.

Inside one of the tents belonging to the Palestinians living near Susia, we watched the footage of the aftermath of the attack - the victims slumped by the roadside, bloodied, waiting for an ambulance.

The bright, wide eyes of the children shone with the light of the small television screen.

[Palestinians are right to resist occupation of their land by all means necessary, including armed force.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorist occupiers call themselves “Israeli.” T]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

McCain: Sunnis, Shiites “Trying to Confuse Me” Troops Will Stay in Iraq Until He Can Tell Them Apart

June 17, 2008 The Borowitz Report

In a major speech on the war in Iraq today, presumptive GOP nominee John McCain said that the Iraqis have split into two factions, Shiites and Sunnis, with a sinister goal in mind.

“My friends, the Iraqis have divided themselves into these two groups for one reason and one reason only,” Sen. McCain told an audience in a retirement village in Scottsdale, Arizona.

“They are trying to confuse me.”

Sen. McCain said that although the two groups of Iraqis are “well-nigh impossible” to tell apart, he vowed to commit U.S. troops to Iraq “for as long as it takes for me to figure out just what the difference between Sunnis and Shiites is.”

"If it takes 100 years, 1,000 years, or a billion zillion years, we will stay there until I can tell Sunnis and Shiites apart," the Arizona senator said.

Sen. McCain reserved his harshest words for the Shiites, who he said were trying to confuse him by sometimes referring to themselves as "Shiites" and other times as "Shia."

"What's that all about, anyway?" he asked. "Stop clowning around and call yourself one thing."

Sen. McCain seemed alarmed when a reporter asked him whether he believed that the Kurds, the third major group in Iraq, were trying to confuse him as well.

"The Kruds?" he said. "Who the heck are they?"

**“Baghdad USA”
COPS SET UP “MILITARY-STYLE”
CHECK POINTS:
WANT TO SEARCH HOMES FOR
WEAPONS;
“I Knew Eventually We’d Be A Police
State”**

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) who sent this in.]

June 5, 2008 By Allison Klein, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

D.C. Police Chief Cathy L. Lanier announced a military-style checkpoint yesterday to stop cars this weekend in a Northeast Washington neighborhood inundated by gun violence, saying it will help keep criminals out of the area.

Starting on Saturday, officers will check drivers' identification and ask whether they have a "legitimate purpose" to be in the Trinidad area, such as going to a doctor or church or visiting friends or relatives. If not, the drivers will be turned away.

"In certain areas, we need to go beyond the normal methods of policing," [Mayor Adrian M.] Fenty said at a news conference announcing the action.

The checkpoint will stop vehicles approaching the 1400 block of Montello Avenue NE, a section of the Trinidad neighborhood that has been plagued with homicides and other violence. Police will search cars if they suspect the presence of guns or drugs, and will

arrest people who do not cooperate, under a charge of failure to obey a police officer, officials said.

The enforcement will take place at random hours and last for at least five days in Trinidad, with the option of extending it five more days.

Checkpoints could be set up in other neighborhoods if they are requested by patrol commanders and approved by Lanier.

“In certain areas, we need to go beyond the normal methods of policing,” Fenty (D) said at a news conference announcing the action.

The checkpoint will stop vehicles approaching the 1400 block of Montello Avenue NE, a section of the Trinidad neighborhood that has been plagued with homicides and other violence.

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Checkpoints could be set up in other neighborhoods if they are requested by patrol commanders and approved by Lanier.

There are many ways to get in and out of Trinidad, not just on the one-way Montello Avenue. And pedestrians will not be stopped, which is something critics say might render the program ineffective.

“I guess the plan is to hope criminals will not walk into neighborhoods,” said D.C. Council member Phil Mendelson (D-At Large).

“I also suppose the plan is to take the criminal’s word for it when he or she gives the police a reason for driving into a neighborhood.”

The program is aimed at the city’s most troubled areas.

Leaders of the American Civil Liberties Union said yesterday that they will be watching what happens closely and that legal action is likely.

“My reaction is, welcome to Baghdad, D.C.,” said Arthur Spitzer, legal director for the ACLU’s Washington office.

“I mean, this is craziness. In this country, you don’t have to show identification or explain to the police why you want to travel down a public street.”

“I knew eventually we’d be a police state,” said Wilhelmina Lawson, who has lived in the neighborhood for 20 years.

“They don’t talk to us, they’re not community minded.”

One of Lanier's plans, the Safe Homes initiative, has yet to get off the ground because of a community backlash.

The plan, announced by Lanier and Fenty at a news conference in March, called for police to go door-to-door in crime-ridden areas and ask residents whether they could go inside and search for guns.

Residents and some council members voiced concerns that homeowners would feel intimidated by police.

Another plan, to arm hundreds of patrol officers with semiautomatic rifles, starting this summer, also got mixed reviews from residents.

Kristopher Baumann, head of the D.C. police lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police, said he was concerned about public perception of the checkpoints and the potential that it could lead to more citizen complaints.

He questioned Lanier's overall approach, saying, "There is no strategy and no mid-term and long-term planning."

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Going Hungry In America

“Her \$1,100 Monthly Paycheck Is No Longer Enough To Support Her, Her Parents And Her Sick Child”

“She Now Looks For Milk, Fruit And Vegetables In Dumpsters Outside Of Her Local Supermarket Each Week”

“It's Not Dignified, But We Are Hungry, And Hunger Is Ugly”



It could be your neighbor. It could be someone in your family. It could be someone who sits next to you in church. In this economy, the face of hunger has changed.”

June 12, 2008 By Nicole Colson, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

CLIP COUPONS. Stop eating at restaurants. Grow a vegetable garden.

Learn to do without.

Everywhere you look, the mainstream media--finally waking up to the economic reality facing millions of poor and working-class Americans--are suddenly full of “helpful” suggestions for those feeling the squeeze of rising food prices.

But are platitudes about how best to tighten our belts the answer?

Food inflation is at its worst in more than 17 years today, with prices having risen nearly 5 percent in the past year. The price of staple products is climbing even faster--milk and dried beans are up more than 17 percent; cheese is up 15 percent; rice and pasta 13 percent, and bread 12 percent.

With the official unemployment rate jumping by a half percentage point in May--the biggest one-month increase in 22 years--gas prices climbing to more than \$4 a gallon nationally, and a growing number of families hit by skyrocketing mortgages, things are looking exceptionally bleak for many working and poor families across the U.S.

That includes their access to food.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 10 percent of U.S. households today are either at risk of, or experiencing, hunger.

One bleak sign: Hormel, the company that produces the canned pork product Spam, reported a 14 percent jump in profits for the last quarter, largely because of a spike in sales of their exceedingly cheap product.

ANITA RHODES, a single mother of three living in Oakland, Md., who makes \$374 every two weeks, recently told National Public Radio that she has been forced to begin shopping at a local grocery store selling expired food and damaged goods at discount prices.

“The things there are all way, way past their due date, but I tried it,” Rhodes said. “The first box (of cereal) I opened had bugs in it.”

She returned the box to the store to get her money--\$1--back, because she couldn't afford not to.

“I don't even look at roast right now, just because it's so expensive. I looked at a chuck roast, and it was \$15.”

According to Rhodes, if prices continue to rise, she may be forced to take more drastic action. “I can shoot a deer,” she says. “I can do that. I can shoot a turkey. So I will feed my kids one way or another.”

And it's not just people in rural areas who are being forced to make such choices.

High school senior Brighton Early, who lives in Los Angeles, told NPR that she has gotten used to “finding flexibility” in her weekly shopping trips with her mother.

When shopping at the regular grocery store became too expensive, Early and her mother started getting their food at the local Chevron gas station--where the cashier gives them a 40 percent discount on leftover apples and bananas.

As she wrote in an essay:

“To ensure the best selection possible, my mother and I pile into our 20-year-old car and pull up to the food mart at 5 p.m. on the dot, ready to get our share of slightly overripe fruits.

“Chevron shopping started like this: One day my mother suddenly realized that she had maxed out almost every credit card, and we needed groceries for the week. The only credit card she hadn't maxed out was the Chevron card, and the station on Eagle Rock Boulevard has a pretty big mart attached to it...

“Grocery shopping at Chevron has its drawbacks. The worst is when we have so many items that it takes the checker what seems like hours to ring up everything. A line of anxious customers forms behind us. It's that line that hurts the most--the way they look at us. My mother never notices--or maybe she pretends not to.

“I never need to be asked to help the checker bag all the items. No one wants to get out of there faster than I do. I'm embarrassed to shop there, and I'm deathly afraid of running into someone I know.

"I once expressed my fear of being seen shopping at Chevron to my mother, and her eyes shone with disappointment. I know that I hurt her feelings when I try to evade our weekly shopping trips."

AS FOOD prices rise, many families are being forced to ask for help in the form of government assistance and food stamps.

In some places, applications for food stamps have doubled in the last year. According to federal statistics, in March alone, some 27.9 million Americans received food stamps--up 1.5 million, or 5.7 percent, from a year earlier.

Nearly half of households receiving food stamp benefits have one or more working adults.

And with food stamp benefits averaging just \$1 per person per meal, many recipients who found the benefits pitifully small during the "boom" are now finding it nearly impossible to stretch what little they get.

Debby Missimi, director of food services for Family and Community Services, which offers hot meals and runs food pantries in Kent and Ravenna, Ohio, told the Akron Beacon Journal, "When people think about the hungry, they think of a homeless person walking down the street without food.

"With this economy, that's not the case. It could be your neighbor. It could be someone in your family. It could be someone who sits next to you in church. In this economy, the face of hunger has changed."

Laura Diaz, a mother of four, whose husband works as a machinist in Chicago, got \$332 in food stamps to feed her family--for the entire month of June.

Her husband's paycheck, she told NPR, goes almost entirely to pay for the family's mortgage. And while she would like to work, without a high school diploma, she fears there's no way she would be able to make enough to even pay for child care.

The money isn't enough to make it through to the end of the month, so Diaz volunteers at, and receives assistance from, Casa Catalina--a neighborhood food pantry that serves more than 300 families each day.

According to America's Second Harvest, the largest food bank in the U.S., demand across the U.S. is up 15 percent to 20 percent over last year, and many food banks are having difficulty coping.

CBS News recently reported that virtually all food banks in a recent survey said demand was growing--and more than 80 percent said they were unable to meet that rising demand.

“Having a job isn’t enough anymore,” Marcia Paulson, spokeswoman for Great Plains Food Bank in North Dakota, recently told Reuters. “Having two or three jobs isn’t enough anymore.”

“Milk is just as much as gas prices these days,” a tearful Stephanie Smith told CBS News as she waited to pick up food with her daughter at a mobile food pantry in Dover, Tenn.--where the number of families signing up has almost doubled since October.

Smith was forced to leave her minimum wage job when her salary could no longer cover the cost of child care and her commute to work.

“This is hard, to have your kids watch their parents go through this,” she added.

Unfortunately for Smith and the hundreds of others who have come to rely on the Dover food pantry, the state money that funded it is due to run out this month--and has not been renewed.

Olga Medina, who works full time providing home care for the elderly in Douglas, Ariz., told Reuters that her \$1,100 monthly paycheck is no longer enough to support her, her parents and her sick child.

To make ends meet, she now looks for milk, fruit and vegetables in dumpsters outside of her local supermarket each week.

One day last month, she waited in line with 147 others outside the Douglas Area Food Bank for a grocery handout because she had no bread.

“We have to put up with a lot of humiliation just to survive,” she said, putting on a pair of sunglasses to hide tears.

“It’s not dignified, but we are hungry, and hunger is ugly.”

MORE:

**“According To The UN’s Own
Figures, There Is Already Enough
Food To Feed Everyone On The
Planet”**

**“The Giant Agribusinesses Are Quite
Literally Profiting From The Increase
In Starving People”**

June 11, 2008 By Chris Williams, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

WITH SOARING food prices sparking riots in dozens of countries and threatening to plunge 100 million more people into poverty, according to the New York Times, you might expect world leaders to take some kind of action.

Yet at the recent United Nations (UN) food summit in Rome, the priorities of world leaders were on display for all to see--and they didn't include alleviating the suffering of the billions around the globe, whose very existence is threatened by rising food prices.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon stated that the world needs to "grow more food," and that governments placing restrictions on food exports and import tariffs in response to the protests of their starving populations must remove them.

But according to the UN's own figures, there is already enough food to feed everyone on the planet.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN reports that enough food was grown last year to give every single person on the planet 2,800 calories per day--enough to make them overweight.

By 2030, with population growth continuing to decline as agricultural output rises, the UN predicts an estimated population of 8.3 billion people could receive 3,050 calories a day.

ACCORDING TO Ban Ki-moon, however, the blame belongs, at least in part, with poor countries that have instituted measures designed to cushion their populations from the impact of rising prices. "Some countries have taken action by limiting exports or by imposing price controls," Ban said. "They only distort markets and force prices even higher."

This kind of "advice" is precisely what caused the food crisis in the first place.

Haiti, one of the countries hardest hit by the food crisis, used to grow its own rice, and Haitian farmers were protected by high tariff barriers. All that ended in 1986, when the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as a condition for more loans to pay off previous debt, forced Haiti to remove trade barriers.

Within two years, domestic rice growing was decimated by cheap U.S. imports, leaving Haiti open to the vagaries of the world market and unable to feed its own population when prices shot through the roof.

How can U.S. companies afford to sell rice so cheaply that they can undercut competition in a country where 80 percent of the population lives on less than \$2 a day?

U.S. agribusiness is subsidized to such an extent that it can sell rice at up to 20 percent below production cost--the very kind of support that Haitian farmers were barred from receiving.

The U.S. was at least criticized at the food summit for these extensive farming subsidies, which amount to massive corporate welfare handouts.

Of the \$165 billion in federal subsidies going to farmers from 1995-2005, more than 80 percent went to the largest 20 percent of growers.

In the same period, members of Congress and their relatives raked in \$9.2 million in farm subsidies, according to USA Today.

But the response of the Bush administration to the criticism was basically to tell the rest of the world to get lost. U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer bristled at the criticism: "I don't think the United States gets enough credit at all for providing over one half of all the food aid."

THE ESCALATION in human misery as a result of rising food prices is fabulous news for some, however.

The giant agribusinesses are quite literally profiting from the increase in starving people.

As Britain's Independent pointed out,

"Some of the world's richest food companies are making record profits.

"Monsanto last month reported that its net income for the three months up to the end of February this year had more than doubled over the same period in 2007, from \$543 million (£275 million) to \$1.12 billion. Its profits increased from \$1.44 billion to \$2.22 billion.

"Cargill's net earnings soared by 86 per cent from \$553 million to \$1.03 billion over the same three months.

"And Archer Daniels Midland, one of the world's largest agricultural processors of soy, corn and wheat, increased its net earnings by 42 percent in the first three months of this year from \$363 million to \$517 million. The operating profit of its grains merchandising and handling operations jumped 16-fold from \$21 million to \$341 million."

The food crisis, therefore, doesn't really have anything to do with "things," but with relationships.

Specifically, world hunger is about relationships among different sets of people--those who own and control the global economy in food and those who don't.

In the so-called "free market," it doesn't matter that people think food should be a human right, or that humans can't survive without it. Food is a commodity, the same as any other commodity--clothes, cars, pencils, books, etc. People aren't seen as having a right to purchase any particular commodity, and there is no distinction between necessities and luxuries.

Those who are rich can purchase anything they want, while those who are poor may not have enough to buy even the most basic foodstuffs.

Economists call this a lack of “effective demand.” In other words, there is certainly intense demand among the poor for food, but because they don’t have the money, that “demand” isn’t “effective,” in the sense that the market will provide for them.

As Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, told the New York Times last year, market liberalization and trade deregulation are “based on the idea that if you take away the government for the poorest of the poor, that somehow markets will solve the problems...But markets can’t step in and won’t step in when people have nothing.

“And if you take away help, you leave them to die.”

This is why simply growing more food isn’t the solution to the food crisis.

It’s not food that the world lacks. What the majority of the population of the world lacks--despite being the ones who actually grow all the food and manufacture all the goods--is the power to control how that food and those goods are distributed.

Ban Ki-moon’s declaration that \$20 billion a year is required to eradicate world hunger sounds like a lot of money--until you stack it up against the \$35 billion allocated to crop subsidies in the recent U.S. farm bill or the \$13 billion going to the oil and gas corporations, along with \$25 billion to a resurgent nuclear industry, in the recent energy bill.

That \$20 billion to fight world hunger is less than the Christmas bonuses paid to Wall Street executives last year, and less than 2 percent of the U.S. defense budget.

And such are the priorities of the system that far less than \$20 billion was pledged in aid at the food summit.

As the Independent commented:

“A sane world would at this point reverse course and do some of the worthy things that UN summits are so good at talking about--helping some of the 96 percent of African farms dependent on rainfall to build irrigation systems, for example.

“But the business-driven priority, as endorsed by the FAO summit, is to gouge open the world’s economies even faster, via a speedy conclusion of the Doha round of trade liberalization. That is likely to make it even harder for the poor to feed themselves.” Fortunately, the thousands of protesters at the Rome summit (as well as the rioters in poor countries whose actions have spurred many governments to institute price and export controls) point in a different direction.

What is required now is the rebirth of a global justice movement that brings together all these various protests and asserts that food is a fundamental human right--a movement that recognizes capitalism has created the problem of world hunger and is incapable of being part of the solution.

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