

GI SPECIAL 6112:



CONTACT

“They Don’t Realize The Amount Of Contact That We Receive Out Here”

“It’s Been Crazy. We’ve Been Mortared, We’ve Had Fire Come At The Guard Towers, We’ve Had IEDs”

“It’s Getting To The Point Where People Are Leaving Their Boots On When They Sleep”

Sep 16 By PHILLIP ROBERTSON, For The Associated Press

The sign was ominous, the humor dark.

Iraqis who live in the neighborhood had suddenly vanished, often an indication that an attack is imminent.

“No way is anything going to happen,” joked Staff Sgt. Angel Perez, a Humvee commander, as he watched an Iraqi police convoy drive near the outpost of the platoon from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment.

“That convoy is definitely not going to get hit,” he said.

Seconds later, a roadside bomb detonated just ahead of the convoy. Nobody was hurt, but the explosion shook the walls of the barracks and sent the men running for weapons and roaring out of the gate in Humvees.

“Since the start of Ramadan, it’s been crazy. We’ve been mortared, we’ve had fire come at the guard towers, we’ve had IEDs,” said Spc. Erich Hellwig.

The 20 soldiers in Hellwig’s unit occupy Outpost Rabiya, a converted salvage yard in a western neighborhood shattered by fighting.

“It’s getting to the point where people are leaving their boots on when they sleep. You get worried that someone would come in and take out our gate,” said Hellwig, who survived an ambush of his convoy last week.

In that attack, a rocket-propelled grenade exploded near a U.S. military vehicle, kicking up a cloud of dust but inflicting no casualties.

Hellwig’s company recorded 15 attacks, including car bombs, roadside bombs and rocket-propelled grenades, in the week before Ramadan started on Sept. 1 in the large area of western Mosul that it patrols.

Attacks in the first six days of Ramadan nearly tripled to 42, the unit’s figures show.

The unit did not suffer any casualties during that time.

After the attack on the Iraqi police convoy, Perez and his comrades searched through ruined buildings for the bomb’s triggerman.

They found only civilians who claimed they did not see or hear anything unusual.

As the American vehicles departed, an insurgent in an abandoned building fired a grenade that hissed through the air and exploded behind the last Humvee. Turret gunners returned fire, but a search afterward turned up only bullet-pocked walls.

A day earlier, the unit responded to a truck bombing of an Iraqi army convoy near the outpost. That attack killed the driver of a truck carrying fuel drums and an Iraqi soldier, and wounded another five soldiers.

Assailants who had waited for the blast opened fire on the Americans before fleeing the area.

“Honestly, I don’t know who we are fighting,” said Staff Sgt. Tim Carter, who has survived six roadside bomb attacks.

[No big mystery. The Iraqi population as a whole are the “insurgents,” some of them active fighters, some of them their allies, friends and families, and that’s how it will always be until the last Occupation troop goes home. It’s just clearer in this report that the population hates the Occupation.

[Sure they have their share of traitors, who work for the U.S. Occupation, above all the translators who betray their own country for cash in hand, their Benedict Arnolds, but most Iraqis despise them for what they are. T]

“If I see them placing a roadside bomb or firing at us, then that’s who we are fighting, but otherwise there is no way to tell if he is a civilian or al-Qaida. Here, a kid can run up to shake your hand and then later throw a grenade at you.”

U.S. soldiers at the outpost said some of their attackers had been as young as 11, armed with grenades or firebombs. Carter said his unit had not killed any children.

Senior U.S. commanders see their small combat outposts scattered around Mosul as the centerpiece of a strategy designed to reduce insurgent violence by having troops live within the community and gather better intelligence. Platoons rotate into the outposts on stints of several days from a large base at the city’s airport.

Adrenaline flows during attacks, but life on the Rabiya outpost is also laden with unease and boredom.

The soldiers search for weapons caches, discovering one in the foundations of a half-built mosque a few blocks from the outpost.

They wait for nearby mosques to begin a call to prayer over loudspeakers after nightfall, often a prelude to volleys of gunfire aimed at the outpost or other targets in what U.S. soldiers euphemistically describe as “contact.”

“I think the (American) people think the war is over,” Carter said. “But they don’t realize the amount of contact that we receive out here.”

MORE:

CONTACT [WTF] Pakistani Troops Attack & Drive Off Invading U.S. Troops; “Two Chinook Helicopters Appeared Set To Land When Troops Began Shooting”

Sep 15, 2008 By Zeeshan Haider, (Reuters) [Excerpts]

Pakistani security officials said on Monday that troops had fired on U.S. military helicopters and forced them to turn back to Afghanistan, but both the Pakistani and American militaries denied the incident.

According to the security officials, the incident took place near Angor Adda, a village in the tribal region of South Waziristan where officials have said U.S. commandos in helicopters raided a suspected al Qaeda and Taliban camp earlier this month.

“The U.S. choppers came into Pakistan by just 100 to 150 meters at Angor Adda. Even then our troops did not spare them, opened fire on them and they turned away,” said one security official.

While Angor Adda villagers and officials supported that account,

Official denials of the helicopter incident were contradicted by Pakistani civilian officials and villagers in Angor Adda.

One official told Reuters by telephone that “the troops stationed at BP-27 post fired at the choppers and they turned away.”

Two Chinook helicopters appeared set to land when troops began shooting, alerting tribesmen who also opened fire on the intruders, said a senior government official in Peshawar, the capital of North West Frontier Province.

A resident described the tension in the village through the night. “We saw helicopters flying all over the area. We stayed awake the whole night after the incident,” he said.

The fiercely independent tribesmen of the region carry weapons regardless of whether they are militants.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Washington Soldier Killed In Sadr City



Carlo E. Alfonso, 23, of Spokane, Wash. Alfonso, died Aug. 26, 2008, of injuries he received when his vehicle struck an improvised explosive device in Sadr City. (AP Photo/The Spokesman Review)

Virginia Sgt. Killed In Tarmiyah



Sergeant Kenneth B. Gibson, 25, of Christiansburg, Va., died Aug. 11, 2008, in Tarmiyah, Iraq when an improvised explosive device detonated near him. (AP Photo/The Roanoke Times)

Slain Soldier Had Passion For Animals, Photography



Pfc. Bryan Thomas

September 11, 2008 By Ryan Holland, Special to the State Journal

BATTLE CREEK - Pfc. Bryan Thomas, the boy who silently rubbed down puppies in his lap as a toddler - and the man who joined Operation Iraqi Freedom to document new places through the steady lens of his camera - could not resist snapping a few pictures of a stray dog while overseas.

"He e-mailed one (picture) home of two soldiers and a dog that was just phenomenal," said Battle Creek's Patti Stetler, a family friend who described Thomas as her adopted grandson.

Stetler, along with other friends and family of Thomas, are reeling this week after learning the accomplished photographer and animal lover was one of two soldiers to die Sept. 4 when a roadside bomb detonated in Baghdad. He was 22.

Laura Stewart, another close family friend, said a liaison officer broke the news to Thomas' mother, Pam Sikora, last week. The blast occurred when Thomas and Sgt. Kenneth Mayne, of Fort Benning, Ga., were traveling in a vehicle, the Defense Department said.

The two were part of the 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division based at Fort Hood, Texas. Thomas is survived by his mother, his grandparents and his aunt.

He is the second Battle Creek resident to lose his life in Iraq.

A former photography student at Western Michigan University and Kellogg Community College, Thomas was home about a month ago before re-enlisting for a second tour of duty in Iraq, Stewart said.

"It just doesn't seem real," said Stewart, of Battle Creek. "I think any minute now he'll come in, open up the refrigerator and take a seat on the couch."

Friends and family friends described Thomas as an "old soul;" a thoughtful and introspective young man who took an interest in animals, sports, photography and Mountain Dew.

Thomas was the grappler who jumped up a weight class - sometimes only to get beat soundly - to save a couple points for the Lakeview High School wrestling team. "He was a dedicated kid who didn't seek the limelight," said Tony Evans, Lakeview's former varsity wrestling coach. "He would go out against tougher opponents and never give up a pin and six points. He knew his role as a team player and he accepted that role."

Thomas took the same workaday attitude into Iraq. Stewart said Thomas was attracted to enlisting in the Army because of the sense of duty and order it afforded him. And it offered a chance to travel and see the world.

Stetler said Thomas' death had not yet sunk in for Pam Sikora, and probably would not until his body makes the trip from Delaware's Dover Air Force Base to W.K. Kellogg Airport sometime later this week.

"It was just the two of them," Stetler said. "I know she'll survive because that's what moms do. But we'll have to be there when she falls."

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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

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

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

FUTILE EXERCISE: ALL HOME NOW!



A U.S. soldier from the Second Stryker Cavalry Regiment collects evidence at the site of a bomb attack in central Baquba, Diyala province August 11, 2008. REUTERS/Andrea Comas

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Bomb Kills 4 Occupation Troops In Afghanistan; Probably U.S.

Sep 17 (Reuters)

A roadside bomb killed four soldiers from the U.S.-led coalition force and an Afghan national in eastern Afghanistan on Wednesday, the U.S. military said.

The military did not identify the victims, but most foreign troops serving under coalition force in eastern Afghanistan are Americans.

Army Helicopter Pilot Killed In Afghanistan Lived Dream

September 13, 2008 WTAE-TV

RICHLAND TOWNSHIP, Pa. -- An Army helicopter pilot from Allegheny County was killed in Afghanistan on Wednesday.

Army Warrant Officer Michael Slebodnik, 39, grew up in Richland Township and most recently lived in Clarksville, Tenn. He was stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky.

His family said he served five tours in Iraq, on during Desert Storm, and had been in Afghanistan since January.

Michael Slebodnik was shot in a firefight during a mission on Wednesday.

WTAE Channel 4's Tara Edwards reported that the Slebodnik family has received e-mails and letters from those that knew the soldier. Relatives said it's makes them proud that their son and brother was so well liked, but what makes them even more proud is that he was a hero well before the day he gave the ultimate sacrifice.

"Everything was positive. He was growing with the military, it was really good," said Willie Slebodnik, the soldier's father. "I just wish he would've been a live hero."

Michael Slebodnik's childhood dream in Richland Township turned into a 21-year career as an Army helicopter pilot. He graduated from Pine-Richland High School and joined the Army in 1987.

Sleobodnik's sister, Jodie Deems, said her brother was fascinated with flying.

"Always since we were little kids; he always wanted to fly helicopters," she said.

The Slebodniks have focused on the many special moments they spent with a person that meant so much to them -- from his sense of humor, to his good work ethic, they have a long list of things they will miss about a man they affectionately call "Micky." However, they get some comfort in knowing "Micky" wanted to be overseas.

"He definitely felt what he was doing over there was important. I don't know if he knew the big scheme of the war but he felt what he was doing was important," Deems said.

Deems remembered what her brother told family before he headed to war.

"If anything should happen to me, it's OK. Don't be sad because if something happens to me and I died doing what I love," she said.

The family plans to hold a memorial ceremony at 11 a.m. on Saturday at St. Richard's Cathedral Church in Gibsonia. A burial will be planned at Arlington National Cemetery.

St. Louis Area Soldier Killed While Serving In Afghanistan

08 Sep 2008 By: Chris Regnier, KTVI

A young soldier with Saint Louis roots is dead, killed while serving in Afghanistan. Now, his family is calling him a hero and is wondering how they will go on without him.

The family of 22 year old Army Private Vince Winston, Junior says he will be buried at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery with full military honors when his body returns home later this week.

The military says Winston was killed last Thursday by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan. His family tells Fox 2 Vince had been in the Army for two years and that he was deployed to Afghanistan in July. He was based out of Fort Hood in Texas.

His mother says Vince signed up for the Job Corps in St. Louis after going to high school in Tennessee. Then, he went into the Army.

Vince's aunt tells us just days before he was killed, he told her that he feared he wouldn't make it home. His mother, Angie Little, is still in shock.

"He wanted to get off the streets and that's why he wanted to go- he wanted to make something of himself. And look what happened. God he was so young- just 22 years old. He was such a good kid," explained a tearful Little.

Vince's aunt, Betty Little, also with tears in her eyes, told us, "He said if anything happen to me take care of my brother. I said I will Vincent; I said but we're not going to think like that right now. He said make sure you take care of my brother. I said I will Vincent and we got the news Friday morning that he was dead."

Vince's family says he was supposed to be deployed to Afghanistan for a year and that it was his first deployment. Vince was the oldest of three boys.

His body is expected to arrive at Lambert Airport on Wednesday. Funeral arrangements are still pending.

Lance Corporal Nicky Mason Killed Near Kajaki

15 Sep 08 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must confirm the death of Lance Corporal Nicky Mason, from 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, in southern Afghanistan on Saturday 13 September 2008.

Lance Corporal Mason, aged 26, died as a result of an explosion whilst on a routine patrol near Kajaki, in Helmand province, the cause of which is being investigated.

This afternoon X Company was conducting a patrol North West of FOB ZEBRUGGE, and as the Patrols Platoon cleared a key piece of high ground Lance Corporal Nicky Mason was killed by an Explosive Device.

The Kajaki Dam has been in the news a great deal over the last few weeks, and the story has been of a major operation to move the third turbine up to the Dam, where in time it can provide much needed electricity for the rest of Helmand.

The hidden story of the Kajaki Dam is the Company that patrols North and South of it daily, to ensure that the Taliban cannot bring heavy weapons within accurate range, so that the power station can continue to function.

The ground X Company patrol is limited and predictable, and as a result the risk of attack from Improvised Explosive Devices is very high.

X Company's task was essential to the operation to move the turbine up to Kajaki, and it is now essential for the work to install the turbine to begin.

Nicky Mason knew these risks very well; X Company had already suffered the loss of Corporal Barnes and he and the rest of X Company have demonstrated a special kind of courage to face this threat each day.

“We Are Not Losing, But We Are Winning Slower In Some Places Than Others” 2008/1945

9.16.08 The Associated Press

Gen. David McKiernan, commander of NATO-led international forces in Afghanistan, told reporters traveling with Defense Secretary Robert Gates that the war is being fought with insufficient resources and that if more troops are not forthcoming, the fighting will last longer and take a higher toll.

“We are not losing, but we are winning slower in some places than others,” he said.

[January 1, 1945, Der Stürmer, Berlin:

[Gen. Heinz Guderian, German army chief of staff, told reporters today that despite appearances in Russia and France, “We are not losing, but we are winning slower in some places than others.”]

A Half-Million In Pakistan May Switch Sides To Join With Afghan Resistance Against U.S. Occupation: “If America Doesn’t Stop Attacks In Tribal Areas, We Will Prepare A Lashkar (Army) To Attack U.S. Forces In Afghanistan”

“Hatred Of America Would Far Surpass Any Dislike For Islamic Extremists”

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

September 15 2008 Saeed Shah in Islamabad, The Guardian

A controversial new US tactic to mount counter-terrorist operations inside Pakistan has met with fresh hostility, it emerged yesterday, as Pakistani tribesmen representing half a million people vowed to switch sides and join the Taliban if Washington does not stop cross-border attacks by its forces from Afghanistan.

Reacting to American missile attacks in north Waziristan last week, which followed an unprecedented cross-border ground assault earlier this month, tribal chiefs from the area called an emergency meeting on Saturday.

“If America doesn’t stop attacks in tribal areas, we will prepare a lashkar (army) to attack US forces in Afghanistan,” tribal chief Malik Nasrullah announced in Miran Shah, north Waziristan’s largest city.

“We will also seek support from the tribal elders in Afghanistan to fight jointly against America.”

The development threatens to widen the conflict, with previously moderate people from Pakistan’s tribal border region with Afghanistan in danger of joining Taliban militants based in the area.

They have reacted furiously to intensified American missile attacks on targets in the tribal territory in recent weeks.

During the past month, there have been seven US missile strikes in the tribal area, about the same number as in the whole of last year. A US ground assault in south Waziristan provoked a sharp rebuke from the Pakistan army.

But Ayaz Wazir, a retired Pakistani diplomat who is a tribal chief from south Waziristan, warned: "If the Americans are coming to sort it out with force, they would create more enemies. The Americans might have supersonic jets and we might have to fight with stones in our hands, but we will stand up."

Up to now, only a tiny minority of the tribesmen have joined the Pakistani or Afghan Taliban movements, but incursions by the US could ignite the area.

The heightened US activity comes just as some Pakistani tribes have risen against the Taliban in the border areas of Dir and Bajaur. But hatred of America would far surpass any dislike for Islamic extremists.

Afghanistan: "The Two U.S. Ruling Parties Came Together In August To Plan The Escalation Of That Sordid War"

September 11, 2008 By Sharon Smith, Socialist Worker [Excerpt]

DESPITE THE appalling conditions that seven years of U.S. occupation have produced for ordinary Afghans, the two U.S. ruling parties came together in August to plan the escalation of that sordid war with the goal of adding 10,000 more U.S. troops in the coming year.

Barack Obama chided his Republican rival during his acceptance speech at the Democratic Party convention on August 28, using a page from Bush's playbook: "John McCain likes to say that he'll follow bin Laden to the Gates of Hell--but he won't even go to the cave where he lives."

Obama did not utter a word of criticism about rising civilian casualties, rampant corruption, the flourishing drug trade or women's oppression in U.S.-occupied Afghanistan during that historic speech.

On the contrary, he continued, "I will end this war in Iraq responsibly, and finish the fight against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan."

Ending the war in Iraq "responsibly" will allow a long-term U.S. military presence there--and the redeployment of 10,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan to "finish" the job started by George W. Bush.

In one fell swoop, the candidate whose slogan is "change" laid out a strategy bearing striking similarity to that of the neocons who invaded Afghanistan in 2001.

This was not a surprise. Obama first expressed his willingness to bomb Iran and Pakistan in 2004, when he told the Chicago Tribune, “surgical missile strikes” on Iran may become necessary.

Obama represents the dissenting ruling class view since 2003, which regarded the Iraq war as a “distraction” from the real war the U.S. should pursue.

That war has little to do with al-Qaeda, but much more to do with Afghanistan’s strategic location in Central Asia, and its borders with Iran, Pakistan, Russia and China.

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

Resistance Action

Sep 13, 2008 KABUL (Reuters) & 09 Sep 2008 Reuters & Sep 14 (Reuters) & Sep 15 By AMIR SHAH, Associated Press Writer & Sept 16 (Reuters) & Sep 17 (Reuters)

About 720 police have been killed in attacks by Taliban-led insurgents since March across Afghanistan, the Interior Ministry said on Tuesday. In all, 1,119 policemen were killed the previous year.

Taliban ambushed a convoy carrying officials of Ghazni province in an area of neighbouring Maidan Wardak on Tuesday, an official said.

An intelligence officer, his wife and two of his sons, were killed in their house in an attack by Taliban fighters in Kunar province in the east, an official said on Tuesday.

Late on Friday, militants beheaded three men after accusing them of spying for the government in Ghazni province, southwest of Kabul, an official said.

Two rockets landed in a diplomatic part of Kabul city close to the U.S. embassy and the NATO headquarters in the early morning on Tuesday but caused no casualties, an Interior Ministry spokesman said.

Explosives planted on a motor-bike killed one Afghan soldier and wounded four others in the southern Kandahar province on Tuesday, a senior Afghan army official said.

A car bomber targeted a United Nations convoy on Sunday in southern Afghanistan, killing two of its local doctors in a rare attack on the international organization, an official

from the region said. The attack occurred on a road in the town of Spin Boldak. One police official was been wounded.

A roadside bomb killed two people in western Afghanistan on Monday in the same province where insurgents also attacked two Americans training the police force, officials said.

The target of the attack was the chief of Shindand district of the western Herat province, said Rauf Ahmadi, the region's police spokesman.

The bomb was placed on a motorbike and missed the district chief but killed two people, including his son, who was ridding in a separate vehicle. Ahmadi said. Seven other people were wounded.

Separately, gunmen fired on a vehicle carrying two Americans involved in training Afghan police, as they traveled from Islam Qala, the border point between Afghanistan and Iran also in Herat province, said the provincial border police chief Rahmatullah Safi.

The American's were not harmed in the Monday attack, but their bulletproof vehicle was damaged, Safi said.

Guerrillas freed a member of the upper house of the parliament who they had kidnapped more than two months ago from a province to the south of Kabul, the parliament said on Wednesday. It said the release was secured following the mediation of the area's tribal chiefs, but the Taliban said the government had freed three of their jailed militants in a deal.

TROOP NEWS

**“I Personally Feel That The War In
Afghanistan Is Wrong Because It's
Based On Lies Too”**

**[Iraq Veterans Against The War Annual
Convention: Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minn.,
August 27-31]**



September 8, 2008 By Eric Ruder and Ashley Smith, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

IVAW Member Patti Mccann:

“I personally feel that the war in Afghanistan is wrong because it’s based on lies too.

“It’s based on this idea that we can catch one terrorist organization with an entire occupation.

“That doesn’t make any sense. It’s only going to hurt more people than it’s going to help.”

IVAW Board Member Camilo Mejía:

“One of the main reasons that we have to tackle the question of Afghanistan is that the war in Iraq has become so blatantly unjustifiable that they need a new war as the centerpiece to legitimize the global war on terror.

“They need a ‘good war,’ and Afghanistan is going to provide that unless we counteract that.

“We don’t want them to be able to legitimize their continued preemptive policy of aggression.

“So not only is there the physical reshuffling of troops and machinery, but they are also trying to reconstruct ideologically their imperial agenda--and we shouldn’t let them get away with it.”

IVAW Regional Coordinator Martin Smith:

“We want to build on the legacy of exposing their lies and war crimes.

“We want to bring that back home at a regional and local level in order to strengthen the antiwar movement.

“We also want to do this before the election so that we can send a message to both parties that we stand for immediate withdrawal, reparations for Iraqis and full benefits for veterans.”

As the convention closed, convention participants also felt the bite of police harassment and repression, which swung into full gear during the Republican convention in St. Paul.

Near the conclusion of the antiwar conference, police tailed a carload of participants returning to the suburban hotel where the convention was held, surrounded their vehicle and released them without charges after 20 minutes.

After this incident, a hotel manager targeted another convention participant who had been at the hotel throughout the weekend. Kevin James, a black hip-hop activist and performer, known as Son of Nun, was singled out, asked for his ID and held by at least eight police officers for half an hour.

This harassment was an obvious case of racial profiling since many white guests who were also present were not asked for ID.

After other activists came to his defense and began organizing both a publicity campaign and legal defense, the officers let James go free.

IVAW executive director Kelly Dougherty expressed dismay at the harassment by police.

“The way that Kevin and other close allies of IVAW were harassed and singled out after the convention was disturbing and very insulting to IVAW,” said Dougherty.

“The suspicion and mistrust that Kevin experienced is a symptom of a climate of fear that is being stoked by our government and causing us to turn against one another instead of working together for change.”

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

“The NCO Just Never Believed The Victims Were Telling The Truth”

“He Felt That The Women Consistently Lied About The Assaults And I Should Not Believe Them”

Letters To The Editor
Army Times 9.15.08

In response to the article about “sexual assault in the Sept. 8 issue (GAO study: More sex assaults occur than are reported”): I am a retired sergeant major, and while my unit was deployed to Iraq, I was appointed as the unit sexual assault response coordinator.

I took the appointment seriously and strived to assist victims as required. The article was correct in that the program will not work if the SARC and commander don't work together.

My problem was not with the commander. I was required to notify the commanding general and the command sergeant major whenever an assault was reported to me. I was to coordinate assistance for the victim with the judge advocate general office, chaplain, mental health and medical services.

My biggest problems were with a legal officer and a senior noncommissioned officer.

The legal officer felt he should have total control and oversight, and the NCO just never believed the victims were telling the truth.

He felt that the women consistently lied about the assaults and I should not believe them.

While I could concede that some of the women did recant (recanting does not necessarily mean they were lying), there were also those who were telling the truth and never recanted.

It became very uncomfortable reporting any assaults to him, but I continued to do my job to the best of my abilities.

Sgt. Maj. Theresa Fillmore (ret.)
Raeford, N.C.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Mosul Attacks “Back Up To Between 60 And 70 A Week”



A truck burns the site of an attack on an Iraqi army convoy in Mosul, Iraq, Sept. 12, 2008. (AP Photo/Phillip Robertson)

14 September 2008 By Patrick Cockburn, .Independent.co.uk [Excerpt]

In Mosul, Iraq's northern capital and third largest city, with a population of 1.8 million, the government was trumpeting its success only a few months ago. It said it had succeeded in driving al-Qa'ida from the city, while the US said the number of attacks had fallen from 130 a week to 30 a week in July.

But today they are back up to between 60 and 70 a week.

Two weeks ago, insurgents came close to killing Major-General Riyadh Jalal Tawfiq in Nineveh province, of which Mosul is the capital, with a roadside bomb.

Resistance Action

Sept 15 (Reuters) & September 16, 2008 By Ernesto Londoño, Washington Post Foreign Service

A roadside bomb wounded two policemen and one civilian on Sunday in Mansour district, western Baghdad, police said.

In Baghdad, twin car bombings near the city's main passport office killed at least 12 people shortly before noon, officials said. The explosions targeted an Iraqi army convoy, according to a police official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. The blasts wounded nearly 40 people, including at least 22 soldiers, the official said.

The blasts occurred seconds apart, according to a Washington Post employee who was trying to renew his passport at the time. Shortly after the explosions, Iraqi soldiers began shooting in the air to dispel the crowd gathered at the site because they feared a third explosion might occur.

In Diyala province a female bomber attacked policemen gathered to celebrate the release of a fellow officer from a U.S. detention facility, Iraqi officials said. At least 20 were killed and 30 injured in the bombing, according to Lt. Gen. Abdel-Karim al-Rubaie, the commander of military operations in the province.

Abbas Salim Jaafar, 32, an employee with the Iraqi Red Crescent who was wounded in the attack, said the bomber detonated her explosives as food was being served in a garden. "Despite the fact that a lot of police officers were invited, I notice that there were no security procedures to search the guests," he said.

GET THE MESSAGE?



During a protest in Baghdad's Sadr City September 16, 2008, hundreds of people took to the streets of Sadr city to protest against the Iraq visit of U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates on Tuesday. REUTERS/Kareem Raheem

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation's ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. Frederick Douglas, 1852

"What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms."
Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787.

"The mighty are only mighty because we are on our knees. Let us rise!"
-- Camille Desmoulins

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

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

McCain's Brain

From: Dennis Serdel

To: GI Special
Sent: September 15, 2008
Subject: McCain's Brain by Dennis

**By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th
Brigade, purple heart, Veterans For Peace 50 Michigan, Vietnam Veterans Against
The War, United Auto Workers GM Retiree, in Perry, Michigan**

McCain's Brain

**How many bombs did you drop John McCain
did they all blow up military targets
or did you kill civilians with black pajamas
and yellow straw hats in North Vietnam
or didn't you care because they are just gooks
The grunts on the ground found it
many times too hard, not to say it didn't happen
to kill children women old papasons mamasons
who didn't have a weapon
standing in front of you
because it's easier to kill when you are 30,000 feet in the air
you don't have to see the people you killed
it's just another mission
who cares about that as you fly back to base
shower eat steak drink into the night
as the grunts on the ground eat out of cans
smoke a few cigarettes as they set up their perimeter
for another dark frightful night
How many people did you kill John McCain
the ones you don't have to look at
the rest of your life
like the grunts do forever
You would never see a mother running to a shelter
with her children behind her like shadows
you would never see a papason
with a cane fall and break his hip trying to crawl to where it's safe
or a 10 year old boy in a rice field stuck in the muck
that was too close to your bomb
Now you want to be President
when you have not seen ground war
as your bombs killed the ones who were out in the open
your ptsd kicks in when you think about the torture
the ragheads are gooks, is that what you think?
you're just a front man puppet for the money men
with a whore pig on a holy jesus bomb the russians leash**

because John at 72 you could grab your chest
feel your heart blow up like a B-52 bomb
what do you think about that

OCCUPATION REPORT

“The New Government Still Uses Army To Strike Poor People” “They Beat My Neighbor Violently To Give A Lesson To Others To Obey And Execute Only”

September 16, 2008 By Correspondent Jenan “Inside Iraq”

In any nation, the army is the protector of the people. During Saddam’s regime this principle was different. The Iraqi army used to be the hand of the regime to crush Iraqis and this principle was approved many times in different areas of Iraq like Kurdistan provinces, in Najaf province, in Basra province and many other provinces.

After the collapse we had a big hope that this principle would change especially after establishing the new army.

Unfortunately that dream didn’t happen that the new government still uses army to strike poor people.

Yesterday, a force from the Iraqi army came to my neighborhoods to evacuate the governmental flats where about 600 families live in.

One of my neighbors tried to inquire about the evacuation order. He asked the army force “why does the army implement the evacuation orders? This is not the duty of the army”.

The question developed into an argument and the soldiers lost their mind because they didn’t use to listen but they used to beat, fight and kill.

They beat my neighbor violently to give a lesson to others to obey and execute only

“Execute and then discusses” Although this rule belongs to Baath Party but it is still valid, effective and basic rule for the new democratic regime in new Iraqi state.

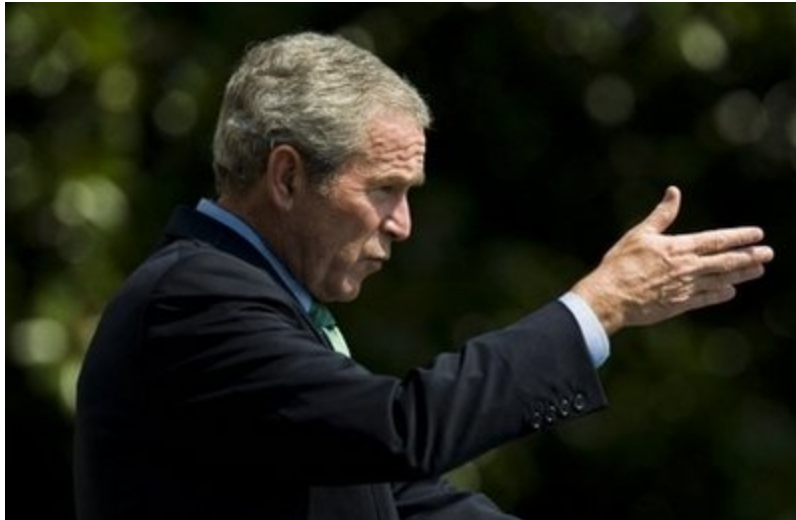
The army who attacked and killed Iraqis in north and south of Iraq during the nineties is still playing the same role in the new democratic Iraq.

It is still the hand of the regime not the people protector.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

**FIGHT HIM HERE, SO YOU WON'T HAVE
TO FIGHT FOR HIM OVER THERE**



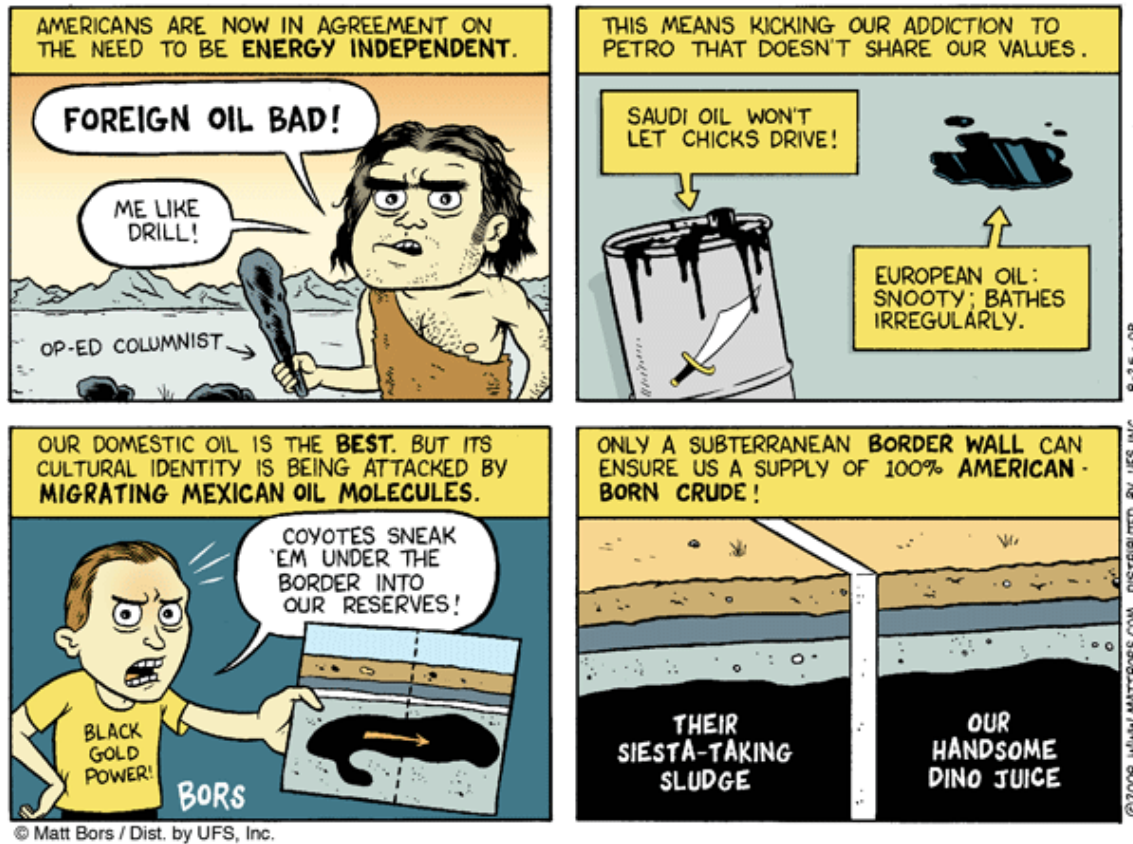
The traitor Bush announces he will send more U.S. troops to die for the Empire in Afghanistan during a visit to the National Defense University at Fort Lesley J. McNair in Washington, September 9, 2008. Photo: REUTERS/Larry Downing

**POLITICIANS CAN'T BE COUNTED ON TO HALT
THE BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WARS**

“The single largest failure of the anti-war movement at this point is the lack of outreach to the troops.” Tim Goodrich, Iraq Veterans Against The War

“The military are the final, essential weak point of Bush and Cheney.” David McReynolds 9.29.07



CLASS WAR REPORTS

Capitalism At Work:

**“The Richest 1 % Has Seen Its Share Of Annual Earnings Almost Double;
“The Top 0.1 % Did Far Better--Its Annual Earnings Increased 324 % From 1979 To 2006, To More Than \$2.2 Million”**

September 12, 2008 By Lee Sustar, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Some 26.4 percent of U.S. workers receive poverty wages, and--in the economic expansion just ended--workers' productivity grew by 11 percent, while real wage gains (after inflation is taken into account) amounted to nothing.

At the other end of the spectrum, the richest 1 percent has seen its share of annual earnings almost double from 7.3 percent in 1979 to 13.6 percent in 2006, the most recent year for which figures are available.

And the top 0.1 percent did far better--its annual earnings increased 324 percent from 1979 to 2006, to more than \$2.2 million.

The lack of jobs--particularly good-paying ones--has contributed to a rise in poverty compared to the 1990s. According to U.S. government statistics, 12.3 percent of the population, or 36 million people, were under the poverty line in 2006. But the State of Working America, relying on a more realistic measure, says that the real poverty rate was actually 17.7 percent--another 16 million persons.

Being poor doesn't necessarily mean being unemployed, as Greenhouse points out in *The Big Squeeze*, "The annual pay for Wal-Mart's full-time hourly employees averaged \$19,100 in 2007--some \$1,500 below the poverty line for a family of four."

Even better-paid workers find their lives precarious at best, forced to accept jobs that lack decent benefits. The number of workers covered by employer-provided health insurance declined from 69 percent in 1979 to just 55 percent in 2006.

Millions more workers--some 30.6 percent--are "nonstandard" employees, hired as day laborers, part-time or temporary workers, or so-called "independent contractors" who are employees in all but name.

GI Special www.militaryproject.org
This is how Bush brings the troops home,
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.

GI Special is a near-daily news bulletin for service members
www.militaryproject.org

The advertisement features a central photograph of soldiers in a field, with one soldier in the foreground carrying a wounded comrade on a stretcher. The text is arranged around the photo, with the title 'GI Special' and website URL at the top, a slogan in the middle, and a descriptive line at the bottom.

GI Special Looks Even Better Printed Out

GI Special issues are archived at website <http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

<http://williambowles.info/gispecial/2008/index.html>; <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=6&l=e>; http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/;
<http://www.albasrah.net/pages/mod.php?header=res1&mod=gis&rep=gis>

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