

## GI SPECIAL 6K16:



# Almost Home:

**“Good To Know That Things Are Just As Fucked Up At The End As They Were At The Beginning Of This Tour”**

November 20, 2008

By Joe; Fobbits Need Ice Cream Too; Kbrsecurity.blogspot.com/

Age: 23

Gender: Male

Industry: Military

Occupation: Ice Cream Man

Location: An Nasiriyah, Scania, BIAP, TQ, Taji, Balad, Mosul, Baqubah: Iraq

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Yesterday the new guys finally decided they were rested enough to ride with us.

The TC relieving our truck is a 1LT on IRR from Samoa, like the rest of his company. He was pretty chill once I got to know him; he's a DEA agent back home and taught us some Samoan. Tah-low-fah means hello and oooo-fah means fucker. Pretty much all I needed to know.

The trip up was pretty uneventful, so we got to show them how a smooth run goes. The trip down was the same and we got in around 0800.

Once all the red bulls wore off, I fell asleep around 1100 only to be woken up at 1200 to go layout the truck to inventory all the stuff for the new crew to sign for.

ShittyTC threw a hissy fit because no one woke him up to tell him and I had already downloaded my stuff from the truck and was on my way to drive it over to our connex's.

He's been fucking up something awful since RIPTOA started.

Right out of the gate he zeroized the radios because it was his first time loading the fill on them the entire deployment and he forgot to take them off the "zero" switch.

At the layout, he couldn't product half the equipment he was signed for and when the PA from the medic platoon came over to inspect the VLSK's, it was missing all the shit needed to actually save lives.

As I mentioned in the last post, the saline and hexend (blood volumizer) from the VLSK expired almost 2 years ago, but the bag was also missing tourniquets, and the materials needed to insert an IV.

I went with the PA to pack the bag and put about \$3000 worth of stuff into it while the PA reamed ShittyTC a new asshole. I felt vindicated for awhile.

The task at hand is clean and turn in our M4s, M240B's, night vision, ACOGs/CCOs (weapons optics).

I have all of these cleaned, the issue is now that our supply sergeant is taking day trips to the other FOBs in Kuwait to eat at the nicer fast food places and buy steaks to BBQ.

Our PL or PSG will storm into the tent yelling at us to turn our shit in and we race up there only to find the supply sergeant gone.

Good to know that things are just as fucked up at the end as they were at the beginning of this tour.

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## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

# Fallen Soldier Welcomed Home

November 21, 2008 ARMANDO RIOS, Bulletin Staff Writer, Baxter Bulletin

The chartered twin-engine jet taxied to the terminal; the sound of the engines died down. Family, friends and more than 100 other people present waited in the terminal and along the outside fence, watching as the jet's door opened Thursday morning at Ozark Regional Airport, bringing home the body of Sgt. James Clay, 25.

Clay was killed in a wreck Nov. 13 in Anbar Province, Iraq. He is the first member of the 224th Maintenance Company to die in Iraq.

As the flag-draped casket emerged from the jet Thursday morning, family, friends and those honoring Clay paused for a moment. The people waiting included members from various veterans' organizations, residents with family members in the military and others who just wanted to pay their respects.

Willa Mae Scott, a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5742 in Cotter, said she was there to honor Clay. That phrase was repeated over and over by those present.

"We should honor our veterans," she said. "I am here to recognize and honor the young man," said VFW Post 5742 Commander Randel Banning. "He died in a combat zone in an accident. People should always recognize and honor our veterans. It is very important we keep this tradition going for our young. He was from this area, with the Mountain Home National Guard unit. He went to school in Cotter."

Members of the 224th were assigned to the 39th Brigade Combat Team. The 39th Brigade is anticipated to begin returning home in mid-December, according to the U.S. Department of Defense.

The 224th was one of 11 Arkansas units called to deploy in August 2007 with the 39th Brigade, which mobilized in January for deployment to Iraq for a 10-month tour.

A few months before he was deployed, Clay married his high school sweetheart, Mellissa Dewey.

Billie Bayer knew Clay and attended school with Clay and Mellissa. Bayer said she was there to support Mellissa.

"I am not necessarily for the war, but I feel he went over there for all the right reasons, to fight for our country," Bayer said. "I honor him for what he did."

As the jet pulled up close to the terminal building upon landing, members of the Patriot Guard Riders lined up at the nose and tail of the craft, flags waving in the breeze. The Arkansas National Guard's honor guard from Fayetteville lined up by the hearse.

Family members were allowed to stand by the casket for a long moment, caressing the casket and American flag. The honor guard then carried it to the hearse.

People gathered along the fence on the outside of the terminal, and inside the terminal, trying to catch a glimpse. Veterans organizations had called for residents to come out and show their respect at the airport and at the funeral home. They included students from Cotter High School, where Clay graduated in 2002.

Bud Wallace said he never met Clay, but was there as a resident of the community to say "thank you".

"He represented us. Now it is our turn to represent him, and to say 'thank you' to him," Wallace said.

The hearse and family were escorted off the runway to the funeral home by Arkansas State Police and Baxter County Sheriff's Office patrol cars with lights flashing. The vehicles were followed by members of the Patriot Guard on motorcycles. People at the airport lined both sides of the road hoisting American flags of all sizes.

Alex Johnson, a member of the Civil Air Patrol, was there with his father, Barrett, also to honor Clay.

"It is a way for us to show our appreciation," the father said.

Daniel Grace is in the Army, currently attached to the 224th. "I am out here to support the Clay family and to show my respect for Jimmy," Grace said. "He served his country."

Grace said he knew Clay briefly through the unit.

Grace's wife, Joannie, knew Clay and Clay's widow.

"It really hits home having a spouse in the military," she said. "He (Daniel) was to have deployed with them but was injured in training. I was close to his wife so it really hits hard."

Others waited at the funeral home for Clay's casket to arrive. Along the route from the airport to the funeral home, families with flags stood on front lawns. Residents from a nursing home and staff came out of a nursing home to pay their respect.

Clay is survived by his wife, Mellissa; his mother, Jackie Clay of Fort Wayne, Ind.; five sisters, Melissa Quinn of Mountain Home and Ali Ojeda, Taylor Clay, Bailey Whitacre and Haley Whitacre, all of Fort Wayne; paternal grandfather, Jack Clay; maternal grandfather and stepgrandmother, Sam and Phyllis Quinn of Middlesboro, Ky.; maternal grandmother, Bonnie McDonald; and several aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

A funeral service is scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday at First Assembly of God Church. Visitation will be from noon to 9 p.m. today at Roller Funeral Home. Family will receive friends from 6-8 p.m. Burial will be at Kirby's Tucker Cemetery.

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

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



A foreign occupation soldier from the U.S. Army stops an Iraqi citizen walking on a public street at gunpoint and searches his body in Taharir neighborhood, northeastern Mosul, Nov. 21, 2008. Iraq citizens who resist this public humiliation may be detained, or shot. (AP Photo/Petros Giannakouris)

**[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqi troops over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, 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 live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You'd want that in your home town, right?]**

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## **ENOUGH OF THIS SHIT; ALL HOME NOW**



5.3.08: US soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, unload razor wire, as part of security materials delivered to set up checkpoints in Mahmudiyah, 18 miles south of Baghdad. (AFP/Mauricio Lima)

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **French Soldier Killed, Two Wounded Near Darulaman Camp**

Nov 22 PARIS (AFP)

A French soldier was killed and another seriously wounded Saturday in Afghanistan when a mine exploded some 10 kilometres (six miles) south of Kabul, an armed forces spokesman said in Paris.

“The explosion happened mid-morning, near the Darulaman camp south of Kabul during a reconnaissance on foot,” naval captain Christophe Prazuck told AFP.

Prazuck said the two soldiers were demining specialists making their way towards a firing range. The wounded man was evacuated by helicopter to a nearby military hospital.

“He was operated on and his life is not in danger,” he added.

The two soldiers were part of a team of French instructors attached to the Afghan army's 201st Corps.

The death brought to 25 the number of French troops killed serving with NATO forces in Afghanistan against Taliban insurgents.

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## **Eight Canadian Soldiers Wounded By IED In Arghandab District: "It's Everywhere"**

November 22, 2008 Ethan Baron, Canwest News Service

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Eight Canadian soldiers hurt in an improvised-bomb explosion were well enough to contact their families about the incident themselves, military authorities say.

The troops were riding in an armoured vehicle when it was hit by a blast in Arghandab District north of here Friday afternoon.

The soldiers were evacuated by helicopter to the Canadian-run NATO hospital at Kandahar Airfield, where they received treatment for their injuries.

The threat of road bombs in Kandahar Province, the primary area in which Canadian soldiers operate, is pervasive, Canadian Forces Maj. Jay Jantzen said.

"It's everywhere," Jantzen said.

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**"For Six Months, The Two-Seven Had More Members Killed And Wounded - - About 150 -- Than Did The 20,000 Marines Deployed In Iraq"**  
**"We're Just Starting Over Again. We're Going To Be At This A Long Time"**

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War, who sent this in.]

November 22, 2008 By Tony Perry, Los Angeles Times [Excerpts]

Reporting from Forward Operating Base Delaram, Afghanistan:

The Marines of the Two-Seven were not even supposed to deploy to Afghanistan. Their original destination was Iraq, and when they were sent here in April as a stopgap measure to help an overwhelmed NATO force, the plan had been to spend the time mentoring Afghan national police.

It didn't turn out that way.

Instead of training policemen, the lightly equipped 2nd Battalion, 7th Regiment of the 1st Marine Division found itself engaged in firefights with insurgent units of 100 or more fighters. They faced Taliban snipers and roadside bombs.

Twenty members of the 1,000-member battalion died in combat.

"It definitely was a lot worse than we expected," said Cpl. James Flores, 22, of Thousand Oaks. "A lot more active."

Based in part on the experiences of the Two-Seven and the grit of its individual members, Marine Corps officials are planning to greatly expand their numbers here -- an unexpected result of a deployment that wasn't even supposed to be.

A replacement task force will consist of about 2,300 troops, more than double the size of the Two-Seven's initial deployment.

It will include infantry from Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, an air wing from Miramar Marine Corps Air Station in San Diego and a headquarters unit from Hawaii -- a "special air-ground" task force with all the gear, air power and other assets the Two-Seven lacked when it arrived.

An unspecified number of Marine special operators are also in Afghanistan.

Lt. Gen. Samuel Helland, commander of the Marine Force Central Command, said he would like 15,000 Marines sent here soon "to crush the enemies of Afghanistan."

That was never part of the plan. When Commandant Gen. James T. Conway first suggested that Marines be shifted from Iraq to Afghanistan, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates rejected the idea.

Months later, under pressure to bolster North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies in Afghanistan's troubled south, Gates relented. He agreed to send the Two-Seven to Helmand province and deploy the much larger 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit from Camp Lejeune several hundred miles to the east.

The seven-month deployment, Gates said, was "one time" only.

**The last-minute move meant the Marines were not accompanied by their usual combat weaponry and gear: heavy artillery, tanks, aircraft, a full-scale supply system and a full reconnaissance unit.**



**Like the Army, the Marine Corps was already stretched thin on equipment and manpower.**

The Two-Seven's basic mission -- mentoring the Afghan national police in sprawling Helmand -- was not expected to involve continuous combat.

But the Marines were repeatedly attacked as they established forward bases in the region and began to make contact with local villagers.

**Before long, the fighting overshadowed the mentoring. Though they had expected to be tested by the Taliban in an area where much of the poppy crop that funds the insurgents is grown, they had not anticipated the intensity of the conflict.**

**For six months, the Two-Seven had more members killed and wounded -- about 150 -- than did the 20,000 Marines deployed in Iraq.**

Meanwhile, the efforts to recruit and train Afghan police officers were beset by corruption and narcotics. In one class of 100 recruits, 35 were dismissed because of drug use. Some recruits showed up for training with the red-rimmed eyes of chronic hashish users, Hall said.

Over the summer, Gates ordered the latest deployment lengthened by a month.

**Maj. Gen. Thomas Waldhauser, commander of the 1st Marine Division, said Marines, in effect, were starting over in Afghanistan after being the lead U.S. conventional force in toppling the Taliban regime in 2001.**

**"This is where it all started," Waldhauser told the troops at Delaram. "We're just starting over again. We're going to be at this a long time."**

Although [Col. Rick Hall, the battalion commander] is proud of his battalion's accomplishments, he says the victories have been incremental.

"We haven't won anything yet. We've got a long way to go," he said.

The deaths of 17 Marines, a soldier, a Navy corpsman and an interpreter continue to wear on Hall.

Some families of the slain Marines will be waiting in Twentynine Palms when the bulk of the battalion returns. A memorial service is planned for before Christmas.

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## **Resistance Action**

Nov. 21 2008 The Associated Press & 11-22-08 AFP & Quqnoos & 11.23.08 Reuters

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan -- A bomber drove his car into the gate of an army base in southern Afghanistan on Friday and detonated his explosives, killing three civilians, a provincial official said. The bombing in Shajoy district of Zabul province also seriously

wounded four Afghan army soldiers, Deputy Gov. Gulab Shah Alikhail said. The attacker died in the explosion, he added.

A bomb blew up a police vehicle in the central province of Ghazni and killed three policemen and wounded two, provincial government spokesman Ismail Jahangir said.

Authorities found the body of a man shot dead by the Taliban after being accused of spying for the government and its allies in the international military. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the man was killed Friday after being interrogated by the militia's leadership.

Taliban said they had killed a district governor in the border province of Kunar whose bullet-riddled body was also found on Saturday in Sirkanay, Kunar. The governor of Marawara district, Ghais Haqmal, had been abducted by Taliban three months ago and the militants had demanded the release of 50 of their jailed comrades in exchange for his life, authorities said. The demand could not be met, "so they killed the district governor and today is his funeral," Kunar government spokesman Adris Gharwal told AFP.

A roadside bomb killed two Afghan policemen and wounded three others in Andar district, some 200 km (125 miles) southwest of Kabul on Saturday, the governor's spokesman said.

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## **SOMALIA WAR REPORTS**

**Resistance Forces Close On  
Somalia Capitol:  
"President Ahmed Admitted Two  
Weeks Ago That Islamists Now  
Control Most Of Somalia, Raising The  
Prospect That His Government Could  
Completely Collapse"  
Resistance Spokesman Says "The Group  
Had Come To Secure The Region  
Against Foreigners And Criminals"**

November 23 2008 Peter Beaumont, Guardian News and Media Limited [Excerpts]

**[Armed resistance began after an invasion by Ethiopian troops, organized and backed by Bush, overthrew the Islamic government and captured the capital, Mogadishu. T]**

'The situation is very serious,' said a Mogadishu businessman who spoke to The Observer on Friday . . . .

A large proportion of its population - already jobless, hungry and surviving on aid - has fled the fighting in the city between the Shabab [resistance] and the forces of the country's weak and rapidly imploding government, backed by its Ethiopian allies [translation: backed by Ethiopian troops sent by Bush to occupy Somalia].

**'The military loyal to the government are looting. They are taking mobiles from people and committing other crimes.**

**Large areas of south-central Somalia that have fallen under the control of the country's reinvented militant Islamist movement.**

**In recent days its fighters have captured two more towns close to the capital, including Elasha, nine miles south of Mogadishu.**

Elsewhere, the Shabab [resistance] is already consolidating its victories, including in Marka, capital of the Lower Shabele region.

Speaking to a crowd in Marka, Muktar Robow - known as 'Abu Mansur' - a spokesman for the Shabab said the group had come to secure the region against foreigners and criminals.

According to the community-based station Radio Garowe, in the north of the country, he said that the Shabab intended to establish an Islamic court to administer justice, adding: 'We will not allow the citizens to be oppressed again.'

**Militarily, it is a situation so bleak for the forces of the TFG and its Ethiopian allies that President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed admitted two weeks ago that Islamists now control most of Somalia, raising the prospect that his government could completely collapse.**

**'We are only in Mogadishu and Baidoa, where there is daily war,' he said.**

**That leaves a fundamental question: will the Shabab press its advantage to attempt to take Mogadishu once again?**

**On Friday the indication was that it might be its intention, as the capital saw one of the fiercest gun battles in recent weeks when Islamist fighters attacked the house of a local government official, leaving 17 dead.**

The Islamist factions have also become increasingly bold in recent weeks, with their spokesmen in Mogadishu regularly holding news conferences and carrying out floggings

in the parts of the capital they control, whereas only a few months ago they were careful not to be seen in the open.

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## **TROOP NEWS**

# **2,700 From Illinois National Guard Off To Bush's Imperial Slaughterhouse**

November 19, 2008 By James Janega, Chicago Tribune reporter

FT. BRAGG, N.C. — A group of sweaty, tired Illinois National Guardsmen, a fraction of the 1,400 still training on a North Carolina military base standing-in for Afghanistan, hunched over rifles and stared downrange in the last days before deployment.

The Guard soldiers at Ft. Bragg are the main body of a 2,700-strong force of Illinois Guardsmen and are nearly done with a 57-day training cycle before heading to Afghanistan

Many states, including Illinois, have seen their largest Guard call-ups since World War II, and Afghanistan's spiraling security woes drove a national debate in the U.S. presidential campaign over how much emphasis should be placed there instead of Iraq.

Three Illinois soldiers already have died there.

The Illinois soldiers will be spread around the country. Trainers who advised Afghan forces in the past say the situation has only grown more complicated.

A host of new improvised explosive devices—roadside bombs and their cousins—has led to a 16-station “IED petting zoo” at the base.

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# **Walks Like A Duck Talks Like A Duck, And The Soldiers Get Sick: Toxic Burn Pit Smoke At Forward Operating Base Hammer “Likely To Affect The Health Of All Troops”**

# **Soldier “Found A Document Saying That The Level Of A Certain Type Of Metal In The Air Was Above Military Standards And To Expect Soldiers To Become Ill”**

Nov 22, 2008 By Kelly Kennedy, Staff writer, Army Times [Excerpts]

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

A soldier concerned about his tour at Forward Operating Base Hammer near Balad, Iraq, this year sent Military Times a report showing high levels of particulate matter and low levels of manganese, possibly due to materials destroyed in a burn pit.

“The high risk estimate is due to the average (particulate matter) level being at a concentration the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency considers ‘hazardous,’ and is likely to affect the health of all troops,” wrote Jeffrey Kirkpatrick, director of health risk assessment for the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine.

“Manganese was also detected above its one-year military exposure guidelines.”

It was sent to the command surgeon general’s office for U.S. Central Command.

**Particulate matter can lead to coughing, difficulty breathing, decreased lung function, aggravated asthma, chronic bronchitis, irregular heartbeat, nonfatal heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease, according to the EPA.**

**Long-term levels of high exposure to manganese can lead to problems in the central nervous system, such as slow visual reaction time, inability to keep the hands steady, and poor eye-hand coordination. It can also lead to feelings of weakness, tremors, a mask-like face and psychological effects. It can also lead to impotence and loss of libido, according to the EPA.**

**“I just returned from a 15-month deployment from Iraq with 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division to FOB Hammer, and some of us found a document saying that the level of a certain type of metal in the air was above military standards and to expect soldiers to become ill,” wrote the soldier, who asked not to be named for fear of repercussions.**

“There were burn pits there, and our base was located less than two miles from an Iraqi brick factory.”

The soldier is one of about 100 service members who have contacted Military Times because they are worried about their exposure to the burn pits in Iraq and Afghanistan.

**The report, dated August 2007, comes from Kirkpatrick’s office, and, thus far, distribution has been “limited to U.S. Government Agencies only.”**

It states that the risk for particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter and metals is high, and that the manganese levels are expected to not be “consistently above the (military exposure guidelines) for one year. Therefore, the (occupational and environmental health risk) estimate for manganese in the ambient air is considered low.”

“It was indicated that the winds are especially high at this location and that the dust in the air is so bad that it is said to be ‘overwhelming,’” the report states.

**“A conservative assumption is that personnel inhale the ambient air for 24 hours a day for 365 days. In addition, it is assumed that control measures and/or personal protective equipment are not used.”**

The report states that, in generally healthy troops, there will be more medical visits and respiratory infections because of the particulate matter, and that heavy aerobic activity may increase those effects.

The report called the hazard severity of the particulates “marginal.” However, one sample was six-and-a-half times higher than the recommended military standard, and the report states most people are equally exposed to the air at the base, and said the exposure to rates higher than those recommended would be considered “frequent.”

The report recommends taking samples at least every six days for the rest of the deployment, and informing preventive medicine and medical personnel of potential health effects of the particulate matter and heavy metals. It also recommends limiting outdoor physical activities when there are visibly high levels of particulate matters.

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**“Why Did It Take So Long To Listen To The Vets And Their Families?”**

**“Why Have They Denied Benefits And Hurt People And Let Families Fall Apart And Have Soldiers Go Bankrupt Seeking Help?”**

**[TRANSLATION:**

# **BUSH I, CLINTON, AND BUSH II TWIDDLED THEIR THUMBS WHILE VETERANS SUFFERED AND DIED]**

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd); Dennis Serdel, Vietnam Veteran; Pham Binh for the translation & Mark Shapiro, The Military Project who sent this in.]

11/16/08 ANNE USHER, Cox News Service & Nov 17, 2008 By Andy Sullivan, (Reuters) & November 18, 2008 Statesman & By Thomas H. Maugh II and Mary Engel, Los Angeles Times & 11/19/2008 By Jason Blevins and David Olinger, The Denver Post

**They were told they were crazy.**

**Statistical anomalies.**

**Whiners.**

**For years, the government has resisted persistent claims by thousands of Gulf War veterans that their service there had somehow sickened them.**

**This week — after enduring 17 years of baffling and incurable ailments they blamed on exposure to nasty chemicals and untested anti-nerve-gas agents— veterans of the Persian Gulf War were told they were right.**

**Contradicting nearly two decades of government denials, a congressionally mandated scientific panel has concluded that Gulf War syndrome is real.**

A report released on Monday concluded that Gulf War syndrome is a legitimate illness suffered by more than 175,000 U.S. war veterans who were exposed to chemical toxins in the 1991 Gulf War.

**The report cited two chemical exposures consistently associated with the disorder: the drug pyridostigmine bromide, given to troops to protect against nerve gas, and pesticides that were widely used – and often overused – to protect against sand flies and other pests.**

The congressionally mandated report could help veterans who have battled the government for treatment of a wide range of unexplained neurological illnesses, from brain cancer to multiple sclerosis.

The Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses concluded that Gulf War illness is a physical condition distinct from the mental "shell shock" suffered by veterans in other wars. Some earlier studies had concluded it was not a distinct illness.

"Scientific evidence leaves no question that Gulf War illness is a real condition with real causes and serious consequences for affected veterans," said the committee, which has been looking into the problem since 2002.

The committee, composed of independent scientists and veterans, said Congress should boost funding for research on Gulf War veterans' health to at least \$60 million per year.

"I feel vindicated, but I'm angry. This is so long overdue," said Denise Nichols, a 57-year-old nurse who served for six months during Operation Desert Storm and has spent the past 17 years traveling between Denver and Washington, D.C., to advocate for soldiers suffering from Gulf War illnesses.

**"Why did it take so long to listen to the vets and their families? . . . Why have they denied benefits and hurt people and let families fall apart and have soldiers go bankrupt seeking help?"**

**Randy Saubert, who had inexplicable numbness in his fingers when he returned from Iraq, heard from a few doctors that his medical troubles were not connected to the war.**

**"I always knew something over there caused this, and now they can't deny it anymore," Saubert said.**

Saubert isn't sure what he came into contact with in Iraq in 1991 that caused his body to develop amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS. Known as Lou Gehrig's disease, ALS is a progressive neurological disorder that kills nerve cells and leads to a loss of muscle control.

**According to the report released this week, Gulf War veterans suffer a much higher rate of ALS than other veterans.**

**The committee also found that Gulf War soldiers who were downwind of munitions demolitions in 1991 have died from brain cancer at twice the rate of other former Gulf War soldiers.**

Saubert drove 38,000 miles back and forth across the Iraq desert in 1991, delivering ammunition, water, gasoline and supplies. A decade after he returned from war, he could not grip anything and he was diagnosed with ALS. Today, Saubert, who turns 52 in December and lives in Colorado Springs, has lost almost all use of his arms and legs. The VA is handling his medical bills.

"I don't know where this will lead, because we have a whole other set of problems now," said Pueblo's Patricia Biernacki, a 38-year-old mother of two boys who spent years seeking help for neurological and digestive issues after her six-month tour as a Navy Reserve corpsman in Bahrain.

The VA also is helping Biernacki, who saw her troublesome headaches and stomach pains explode into tremors, seizures and emergency surgeries during her second pregnancy, five years after she returned from the Middle East.

Today, she takes daily medications and has gone a year without any trips to a hospital. "That's a good record for me," says the 38-year-old. "Last year, I went four times."



Like most veterans, she can't pinpoint what caused her maladies.

**She remembers taking anti-nerve-gas pills. She was told, she said, that if she refused, she would be sent to the military prison at Leavenworth, Kan.**

**"If I knew then what I know now, I would have gladly gone and sat in Leavenworth," she said.**

Anthony Hardie, a Gulf War veteran who serves on the Research Advisory Committee, said he and others in his unit took PB pills for weeks and combined "continual use of DEET and permethrin" with pest strips, spray trucks and other pesticide exposures.

"Many of us got sick from the pills," said Hardie, a Wisconsin native who was with a multinational unit that crossed from Saudi Arabia into Kuwait and then Iraq.

He said he was required to take them for several weeks and soon suffered from watery eyes and vision problems, diarrhea, muscle twitching and a runny nose. A fellow Special Forces officer, he said, lost about 20 pounds in short order. "All of us had concerns at the time."

To ward off swarms of sand flies in Kuwait City and the eastern Saudi province of Dhahran, Hardie said trucks would come through at 3 a.m. and spray "clouds" of pesticides.

Fly strips that smelled toxic hung "everywhere," especially near food. "The pesticide use was far and away (more) than what you'd see in daily life," he said.

**Several soldiers interviewed said they were ordered to dunk their uniforms in the pesticide DEET and to spray pesticide routinely on exposed skin and in their boots to ward off scorpions. Others wore pet flea collars around their ankles.**

"Like many of the guys in my unit, I became sick," he said, with respiratory ailments and the "typical roundup of fatigue, bowel symptoms, chronic widespread pain."

**Hardie, a panel member, is convinced that he was later exposed to the chemical warfare agent Lewisite in a freshly abandoned Iraqi bunker; he noted its signature strong geranium smell.**

**He said he and others in his unit who ran miles a day past burning oil wells later hacked up black chunks of mucus and what he says his doctors think were pieces of his lung tissue.**

He said civilian doctors have diagnosed him with fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, dizziness, confusion, acid reflux disease and chronic sinusitis.

He was not among the 100,000 U.S. troops who were potentially exposed to low-levels of Sarin gas, a nerve agent, as a result of large-scale U.S. demolitions of Iraqi munitions near Khamisiyah, Iraq, in 1991.

**Troops who were downwind from the demolitions have died from brain cancer at twice the rate of other Gulf War veterans, the report stated.**

The committee report is “a profound victory” in one sense, he said: “It’s government and science finally saying what Gulf War veterans have been saying all along.”

**Gulf War illness affects at least one-fourth of the 700,000 U.S. troops who served in the 1991 effort to drive Iraq out of Kuwait, or between 175,000 and 210,000 veterans in all, the report found.**

Few have seen their symptoms improve over the past 17 years, the report said.

Symptoms include persistent headaches, widespread pain, cognitive difficulties, unexplained fatigue, skin rashes, chronic diarrhea and digestive and respiratory problems.

Many Gulf War veterans suffering these symptoms say they were met with skepticism when seeking treatment.

“Today’s report brings to a close one of the darkest chapters of the 1991 Gulf War, and that is the legacy of Gulf War illness. For those who ever doubted that Gulf War veterans are ill, this report is definitive and exhaustive,” said Anthony Hardie, a Gulf War veteran from Madison, Wisconsin.

Hardie was a 23-year-old sergeant at the time of the conflict. Today he works in Wisconsin’s Veterans Affairs Department and suffers a host of ailments, including respiratory problems, fatigue and chronic widespread pain.

But the report “does not yet bring treatment of the illness, nothing getting at the underlying cause,” Hardie said.

And 17 years “is an awful long time for someone to wait to get health care.”

**MORE:**

## **Premeditated Murderers At Work: VA Criminals Deliberately Faked Studies So Suffering Gulf War Veterans Could Be Blamed And Ignored**

November 18, 2008 By Thomas H. Maugh II and Mary Engel, Los Angeles Times

Several reports had already been issued by the prestigious Institute of Medicine, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences, concluding that there was little evidence to support existence of the syndrome.

**Today's report, however, concludes that those studies were inappropriately constrained by the VA.**

**The bulk of the evidence about the neurotoxic effects of the chemicals to which the soldiers were exposed comes from animal research, but the VA ordered the institute to consider only the much more limited human studies, skewing the results, the panel said.**

"Everyone quotes the Institute of Medicine documents as meaning nothing's going on here," said Roberta F. White, associate dean of research at the Boston University School of Health and the panel's scientific director.

"Some people feel that the IOM reports have been permission to ignore these guys... . Veterans repeatedly find that their complaints are met with cynicism and a 'blame the victim' mentality that attributes their health problems to mental illness or non-physical factors."

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## **"For The Rest It's A Crap Shoot"**

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

Nov 20, 2008 By Michelle Tan, Army Times [excerpt]

The first military execution since 1961 is scheduled to take place Dec. 10 at the Federal Correctional Complex in Terre Haute, Ind., Army officials announced Thursday.

Pvt. Ronald A. Gray was convicted of multiple murders and rapes in the late 1980s in the Fayetteville, N.C., area. At the time, Gray was a specialist with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, N.C.

The court-martial panel that convicted Gray sentenced him to death in 1988.

**On July 28, 2008, President Bush approved the order to execute Gray, the longest-serving inmate on the military's death row.**

**It was the first time a president had approved a military death sentence since 1957.**

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

# **"No, No, No To The Occupiers!"**

**“We Are Against This Agreement  
And We Will Resist It In Any Way  
We Can”**

**Asked What Time Limit He Wanted  
For A U.S. Withdrawal, Hamoud  
Replied, “We Want Them To Leave  
Today”**

**“If They Wanted To Leave They  
Would Never Have Built Those Huge  
Bases”**



An effigy of Bush hangs in central Baghdad's Firdos Square. Ali Abbas / EPA

[Thanks to SSG N (ret'd) and Mark Shapiro & Pham Binh, Military Project, who sent this in.]

November 22, 2008 By Tina Susman and Caesar Ahmed, Los Angeles Times & Nov 21 By HAMZA HENDAWI, Associated Press Writer Hamza Hendawi, Associated Press Writer [Excerpts]

Reporting from Baghdad:

**At the spot where U.S. forces helped Iraqis topple a statue of Saddam Hussein in 2003, protesters Friday tore down an effigy of President Bush and set it afire during a demonstration over plans to keep American troops in Iraq through 2011.**

"They want to keep extending and extending," Bassim Hamoud, dressed in a lavender shirt and pressed beige trousers, said as he neared one of the Iraqi army checkpoints set up on the edge of the rally. "If there was a concrete time limit, we would go for it."

Asked what time limit he wanted for a U.S. withdrawal, Hamoud replied, "We want them to leave today."

"They will not leave," said Abed Sahib Mohammed Hadi, an elderly man in a beige suit. "If they wanted to leave they would never have built those huge bases."

"We don't even know what's in the pact," he added. "It's never been presented to the people."

On Friday, the crowd that swarmed central Baghdad was far different from the one that gathered around the Hussein statue in April 2003 and cheered as a U.S. tank helped yank down the structure.

Chants of "No, no, no to the occupiers!" rose from the protesters. Even after prayers had begun, men with colorful prayer mats under their arms streamed in from distant neighborhoods to join the gathering.

After the effigy was dragged to the ground, protesters began jumping on it, even stamping out flames that erupted after someone set it afire.

It is doubtful that opponents can muster enough votes in parliament to kill the pact.

But their vocal opposition and Friday's protest show that Maliki does not have the broad-based backing for the pact that he had sought.

Passing it by a thin margin would make it difficult to mend the political divisions that have hobbled Iraq's government.

It also could give hard-line members of Sadr's Mahdi Army militia an excuse for resuming attacks on U.S. and Iraqi security forces after months of relative quiet.

"This is a normal consequence: more fighting," said Mohammed Ismael, a 17-year-old student from Sadr City -- the sort of young man ripe for recruitment into the Mahdi Army.

“We are against this agreement and we will resist it in any way we can.”

Protesters waved Iraqi flags and green Shiite banners and chanted: “No, no to the agreement of humiliation!”

Hojatoleslam Sayyid Muqtada Al-Sadr criticized the government.

“The government must know that it is the people who help it through the good and the bad times.

“If it throws the occupier out, all the Iraqi people will stand by it,” al-Sadr said, using common rhetoric for the United States.

Naseer Al-Ani, the presidential spokesman, acknowledged al-Sadr’s group enjoys the sympathy of “not an insignificant segment” of the population.

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

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

## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

# **The Eve of Destruction**



From: Mike Hastie  
To: GI Special  
Sent: November 22, 2008  
Subject: The Eve of Destruction

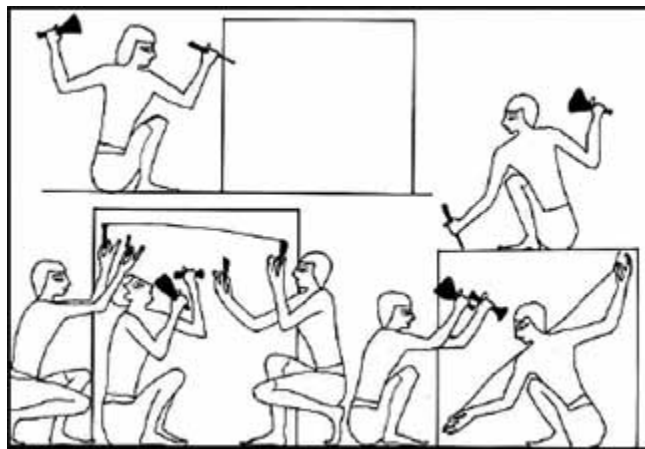
### The Eve of Destruction

**Millions of American manufacturing jobs have been lost to globalization. U.S. corporate greed to maximize profits will eventually lead to one conclusion: Chaos In America! Jails across this country will be filled not so much with criminals, but with the unemployed who are desperately trying to survive. Greed always reaps what it sows. America is about to explode into a New World of Disorder. The violence and greed of America's hegemony has finally come home.**

**Mike Hastie  
Vietnam Veteran  
November 22, 2008**

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

## November 23, 1170 BC: The First Recorded Strike



Carl Bunin Peace History November 19-25

The first recorded strike took place in Egypt when necropolis workers who had not been paid for their work in more than two months sat down and refused to work until they were paid and able to eat.

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# ***November 23, 1887:*** **Dishonorable Anniversary** **The Louisiana Militia Butchers** **Unarmed Sugar Plantation Strikers**

Carl Bunin Peace History November 19-25

Black Louisiana sugarcane workers, in cooperation with the racially integrated Knights of Labor, went on strike.

The Louisiana Militia, aided by bands of “prominent citizens,” shot and killed 35 unarmed black sugar workers striking to gain a dollar-per-day wage, and lynched two strike leaders.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **“Many Were Told To ‘Run For Their Lives’ Before Being Summarily Executed”**

By Stephen Kliebert, Dougriddle.com [Excerpts]

The Thibodaux Massacre of 1887 was the second most bloody labor dispute in U.S. history.

Although most of the blood letting occurred in the environs of Thibodaux, the strike encompassed a larger area. The strike affected sugar plantations in St. Mary, Terrebonne, and Lafourche parishes. These parishes make up an area known as the “sugar bowl.” Thibodaux is the parish seat of Lafourche.

**The plight of the sugar cane worker in 1887 was one of back-breaking labor and meager pay.**

Most field hands were paid approximately 13 dollars a month. They were also paid in script. Script was basically a coupon redeemable only at the company store owned by the planter. The store’s prices were normally marked up 100%.

**You can see that the worker usually wound up being indebted to the planter. Louisiana law stated that if a worker owed money to a planter he could not move**



**off the planters land until the debt was paid. This law essentially reduced the plantation laborer to the status of serf.**

In 1885 the Knights of Labor was successful in organizing railroad workers who worked for the Charles Morgan Railroad and Steamboat company. The company owned a stretch of tracks that ran from New Orleans to Texas. The railroad passes through the communities of Des Allemands, Raceland, Schriever, and Morgan City on its way to Texas.

The K. of L. felt that the sugar cane workers were fertile ground to expand their organization. In 1886 a L.A. (local assembly) of the K. of L. was established in Schriever, La. for sugar cane workers.

**It was the probably the first assembly of a labor union that allowed both black and white members to join. During a time when a strict caste system was imposed this was one hell of an achievement!**

In late October, 1887 LA 8404 (Schriever local) presented a list of demands to L.S.P.A. The L.S.P.A.'s (Louisiana Sugar Producer's Association), members included local sugar planters. The workers wanted elimination of script, a small increase in their daily wages, and payment every two weeks.. The planter's association rejected the demands

**The planter aristocracy ruled Louisiana at this point in time. They worked for many years to deny poor whites and blacks access to education, and better working conditions. They were not about to cede any of their power now.**

The Knights of Labor scheduled a strike to commence on the 1st of November 1887.

The strike began during the crucial harvest period known as "grinding." On November 1st workers in St. Mary, Lafourche, and Terrebonne parishes refused to work, and refused to vacate their cabins that were plantation-owned. Attempts to evict tenants by local sheriffs were unsuccessful.

The sugar planters were faced with the possibility of losing their crops to a freeze if the strike persisted.

On the same day the strike began, the planters association called on the governor to send them help in the form of the state militia.

Governor McEnery(1881-1888) who was himself a plantation owner had no problem in ordering the state militia to the embattled region. The first militia companies arrived in Schriever, Louisiana from New Orleans on the first of November. They made the short trip to Thibodaux where they intended to store their equipment which included horses, rifles, and a Gatling gun in front of the Lafourche parish courthouse.

The two militia companies that arrived in Thibodaux were not the only ones to take part in strike-breaking. Other companies were sent to Houma and Lockport.

**Some 10,000 plantation workers took part in the strike. Most of the strikers were black, but nearly 1000 were white.**

The militia companies sent to the region worked with local judges in evicting strikers from plantations, and provided protection for “scabs” sent in to replace the strikers.

When striking plantation workers were faced with soldiers armed with Springfield rifles they offered little to no resistance. They heeded the orders to leave the plantations. Many congregated in the black section of Thibodaux.

Problems arose when white scabs were fired upon in Terrebonne parish. Strikers, who were forced off plantations, were believed to be involved in firing into sugar mills in Lafourche parish.

Pickets were placed in around the city of Thibodaux. The “pickets” were composed of white civilians from Thibodaux, and neighboring parishes. They were no doubt horrified by the rumor spreading around town that black strikers intended to burn the city down.

The struggle came to a head when two white picketers were fired upon while at their posts in a black section of town. The two picketers survived, but the incident enraged the white population of Thibodaux. White vigilantes rode through the neighborhood firing their weapons and wreaking havoc.

**Strikers and their family members were rounded up by vigilantes. Many were told to “run for their lives”, before being summarily executed.**

**On the morning of November 23, 1887 anywhere between 30 to 300 black strikers were killed. A company of militiamen known as the Shreveport Guards is considered to have taken place in the massacre.**

#### **Troops Invited:**

**Comments, arguments, articles, and letters 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](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe. Phone: 917.677.8057**

#### **DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?**

**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 wars, 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 GI Special Mystery Photo



If you can correctly identify this photo, you will receive the thanks of a grateful nation.

- 1] A former advisor with the vice-presidential campaign of Governor Sarah Palin, now unemployed and homeless.
- 2] A member of the Committee To Impeach Richard M. Nixon. Their motto is "It's Never Too Late"
- 3] A member of the Multiple Don't Committee at work. Their motto is "Don't Attack Iran, Or Saipan, Or Bhutan, Or Surinam, Or Kazakhstan" They believe that if they inflict enough suffering on themselves, Imperial politicians will break into tears and stop their evil deeds; thus they expose themselves to bitter cold in Washington DC.
- 4] A member of the Military Project, mother of a Marine in Anbar Province.

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**DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

# Obama Names Angelina Jolie, Jennifer Aniston to 'Team of Rivals' Praises Actresses' Mutual Hatred



November 22, 2008 The Borowitz Report

Continuing in his quest to assemble a so-called "team of rivals," President-elect Barack Obama today announced that he would name Angelina Jolie and Jennifer Aniston to key Cabinet positions.

The two actresses, who have been perennial tabloid fodder as a result of their longstanding feud over actor Brad Pitt, were surprise choices for Mr. Obama's Cabinet, since neither of them has been a government official or even portrayed one in a movie.

But in his weekly Internet address, the President-elect explained his rationale for choosing the sworn enemies to his Cabinet: "I chose Jennifer and Angelina for the same reason I have chosen every other Cabinet member: they clearly despise each other with a passion."

While Mr. Obama was vague about which Cabinet positions the two actresses would ultimately hold, insiders said that Ms. Jolie was a shoo-in for Secretary of Labor.

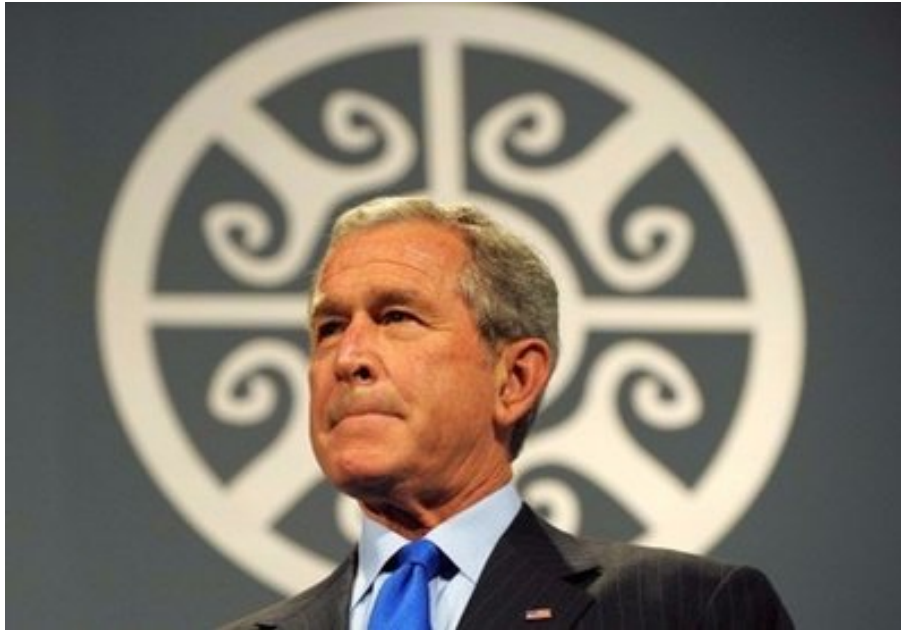
Doris Kearns Goodwin, historian and author of the book *Team of Rivals*, said that she was "thrilled" by the selection of the two actresses to Mr. Obama's Cabinet.

"Every time someone says 'team of rivals,' I sell another book on Amazon," she said. "Team of rivals, team of rivals, team of rivals."

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

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

**SATAN**



**“The marines that I have had wounded over the past five months have been attacked by a faceless enemy. But the enemy has got a face. He’s called Satan.”**  
**US Marine Colonel Gareth Brandl** [Photo: 11.22.08, Lima, Peru: AFP/Mandel Ngan]

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**RECEIVED**

**“There Will Usually Be An England”**

From: Frank M  
To: GI Special  
Sent: November 22, 2008  
Subject: There will usually be an England

I have just learned, to my great pleasure, that the British Defense Chief is named Air Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup. P.G. Wodehouse could not have done better.

For that matter, neither could Monty Python.

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