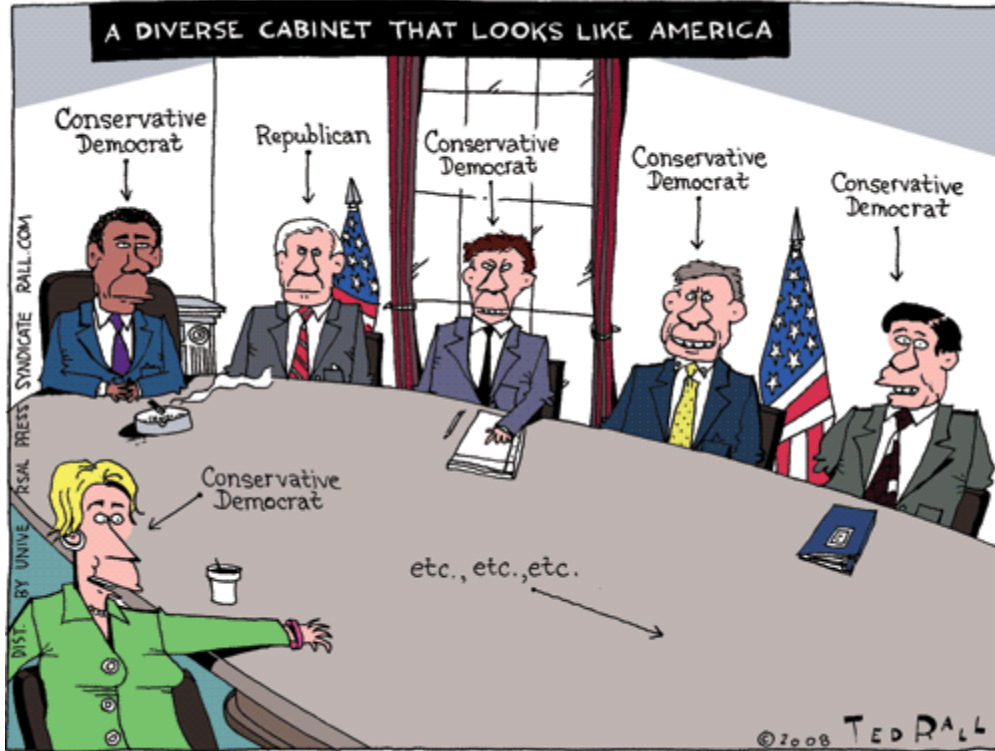


GI SPECIAL 7A3:



IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Schofield Soldier Killed By Sniper



Pfc. Christopher W. Lotter

January 7, 2009 by William Cole, Advertiser Military Writer, The Honolulu Advertiser

A Schofield Barracks soldier who was killed in Iraq last week was standing in the gunner's hatch of an armored vehicle when he was felled by a gunshot, Army officials said.

Pfc. Christopher W. Lotter, 20, was a gunner on a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle, or MRAP, during a patrol to the water department in Tikrit on Dec. 30, said Maj. Cathy Wilkinson, the public affairs officer for Schofield's 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team at Contingency Operating Base Speicher in Tikrit.

Other soldiers had left their vehicles and gone into the water department to talk to the director about upgrading the water plant at the Khadasia General Hospital.

Lotter was shot while helping secure the area, Wilkinson said. He was taken to a military hospital before being evacuated to the trauma center at Joint Base Balad, where he died of his wounds Dec. 31, Wilkinson said by e-mail.

MRAPs were shipped to Iraq in response to roadside bombs. They are tall and have a "V"-shaped bottom that deflects a blast. The gunner's rotating turret has side armor plating, but often is open on top.

Lotter was from Pennsylvania and had been in the Army just one year.

During a memorial service in Iraq, Capt. Jeff Rhodes, Lotter's company commander in Alpha Battery, 3rd Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, said the last act of Lotter's life was to help the people of Khadasia to have fresh, clean drinking water. To honor his sacrifice, the soldiers in his company will ensure the water treatment project gets completed, she said. More than 400 people attended a combat memorial service for Lotter.

Lotter enlisted in the U.S. Army in January 2008 and was trained as a cannon crew member at Fort Sill, Okla., Wilkinson said.

Lotter was one of more than 4,500 Schofield soldiers with the 25th Infantry Division's headquarters and 3rd Brigade to deploy to northern Iraq in October and November.

Correction: Schofield Barracks soldier Pfc. Christopher W. Lotter was fatally wounded while on guard in a Humvee that had extra armor added. In a previous version of this story, the Army misidentified the type of vehicle in which he was shot.

Texas Staff Sgt. Killed In Iraq

January 07, 2009 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 010-09

Staff Sgt. Anthony D. Davis, 29, of Daytona Beach, Fla., died Jan. 6 in Northern Iraq, of wounds suffered when he was shot by enemy forces. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia.

Ky. Marine Killed In Iraq

December 24, 2008 The Associated Press

LONDON, Ky. - A 19-year-old Marine from Kentucky was killed in a surprise attack in Anbar province, Iraq, his mother said.

Lance Cpl. Thomas "T.J." Reilly Jr., of London, died Dec. 21 during combat operations, according to the Department of Defense.

His mother, Gina Bray, said her son joined the military after graduating from South Laurel High School last year.

"I didn't want him to go. He wanted to go. But I didn't want to crush his dream," Bray told WKYT-TV in Lexington.

But on Sunday, Bray said Reilly's unit came under a surprise attack, and he was killed instantly.

"He was on a mission. There was a hostile situation, and they just hurt my baby. And they took him," Bray said.

Reilly was assigned to 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, 3rd Marine Division, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

Bray said Reilly had a knack for baking in home economics classes and he had wanted to enter culinary school after the military.

"They used to tell him how good he made cakes," Bray said.

One of Reilly's former teachers, Mary King, said she kept in contact with him after he was deployed to Iraq over the summer.

"Needless to say, we have been heartbroken," King told The Times Tribune in Corbin.

King said Bray was given the news of Reilly's death at a hospital in Harlan, where her daughter Regina had just given birth.

"She's had ups and downs over the past few days," King said.

"He was very, very close with her, very tight with his mother, and so she is really struggling."

King said Reilly was attracted to the opportunities in the military.

"He saw (the Marines) as a place he could excel and be a leader and be someone who could be in charge and move on up in the ranks," King said.

John P. Pryor, 42, Surgeon And Soldier



John P. Pryor died from enemy fire on Christmas in Iraq. File Photograph

Dec. 27, 2008 By Michael Matza, Philadelphia Inquirer Staff Writer

John P. Pryor, 42, of Moorestown, the dedicated leader of the University of Pennsylvania's trauma team and a decorated major in the Army Reserve who wrote eloquently about the painful parallels between battlefield deaths and urban homicides, was killed on Christmas by enemy fire in Iraq while serving as a combat surgeon.

Dr. Pryor deployed Dec. 6 and was with a risky frontline surgical unit when he was killed by shrapnel from a mortar round. It was his second tour of duty in Iraq.

Dr. Pryor, who was experienced and cool under pressure, was born in Mount Vernon, N.Y., and raised near Albany. He completed surgical training at the State University of New York in Buffalo, and came to the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in 1999. After a fellowship in trauma surgery and critical care, he joined Penn's surgical faculty and served as director of the hospital's nationally recognized trauma program.

"JP was a magical man, with boundless energy and goodness," said Dr. Pryor's mentor at Penn, Dr. C. William Schwab. "He was a devoted son, husband, father, colleague and friend. . . . At his core were many great values, but his passion for service to others" stood out.

In an undated document that Dr. Pryor wrote and left with family before he deployed, he recounted his early affinity for injured people, his passion to serve - specifically in wartime - and the difficulty of balancing his love of country and family, because he felt his decision to go to Iraq was not always supported by those closest to him.

"Since an early age, Dr. Pryor was involved in the care of the sick and injured," he wrote of himself in the third person. "He was certified in CPR when he was 14 years old, joined the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Ambulance Corps at 17, and became a N.Y. State Emergency Medical Technician at 18," adding that it was "emotionally very challenging"

to balance his dedication to family and country. "He hopes and prays," he wrote, "for forgiveness from his family and colleagues."

Friends said a favorite quote from Albert Schweitzer that hung on Dr. Pryor's Penn office wall captured his spirit.

"Seek always to do some good, somewhere," it reads. "Even if it's a little thing, do something for those who need help, something for which you get no pay but the privilege of doing it. For remember, you don't live in a world all your own. Your brothers are here, too."

A technically skilled surgeon with a fierce adventurous streak, Dr. Pryor dashed to the heart of Ground Zero on Sept. 11, 2001, to volunteer his services. He wound up deciphering and filling medical requests that crackled over rescue-team radios.

"I don't think about it every day, but I've had flashbacks," he said in 2002.

As chief medical adviser to the Red Cross of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Dr. Pryor conducted disaster-relief training for volunteers. In those lectures, he drew parallels between the injuries soldiers experience on the battlefield and the injuries to shooting victims brought to Philadelphia emergency rooms.

"He was a brilliant guy, but he didn't intimidate people when he spoke to them about these issues," said Red Cross chief executive officer Tom Foley. "It's a cliché to say, 'Every man's death diminishes me,' but his death diminishes us more than a little, because he was doing things on so many fronts while also raising a family."

A talented writer, Dr. Pryor contributed opinion articles to *The Inquirer* and the *Washington Post*, and often was interviewed by NPR and ABC News.

"In Iraq, ironically, I found myself drawing on my experience as a civilian trauma surgeon each time 'mascals,' or 'mass casualty situations,' would overrun the combat hospital," he told NPR last year. "As nine or 10 patients from a firefright rolled in, I sometimes caught myself saying, 'Just like another Friday night in West Philadelphia.'"

A hard worker who drove himself relentlessly, Dr. Pryor took it personally when he was unable to save someone on his operating table.

In a 2006 *Inquirer* opinion piece describing his service with the 344th Combat Support Hospital in Abu Ghraib, Dr. Pryor wrote of the "palpable grief" that comes over the staff when a U.S. soldier doesn't survive.

"Everyone is affected and everyone deals with it in a different way. For me," he wrote, "it is very, very personal. I was the surgeon who couldn't save him. . . . The staff people come and give me a hug. They ask me if I am OK; they pray for me. I appreciate it, and I hate it at the same time."

Dr. Pryor is survived by his wife, Carmela V. Calvo, a pediatrician at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children; a daughter, Danielle; sons Francis and John Jr.; a brother; and his parents, Richard C. and Victoria.

Arrangements were incomplete, although the family expects that a Funeral Mass will be said at Our Lady of Good Counsel Roman Catholic Church in Moorestown.

Three US Soldiers Wounded By S. Baghdad Attack

Jan 6 (KUNA)

Three American soldiers were injured when an Iraqi armed man tossed a hand grenade at a US army patrol unit in southern Baghdad on Tuesday, an Iraqi police source said.

The source, requesting anonymity, told KUNA the unknown Iraqi threw the hand grenade at the US vehicle causing injuries to three servicemen and damaging the vehicle. The US forces in the vehicle opened fire at the Iraqi gunmen and killed him, added the source.

And The Lame-Ass Stupid Lying Bullshit Award Goes To The Traitor Odierno, As Usual; “The Iraqis ‘Will Be In Charge’ Jan. 1, Odierno Said”

12/29/2008 By Andrea Stone, USA TODAY

BAGHDAD — When the calendar flips to 2009 on Thursday, Iraq's government will gain control over the Green Zone and its own airspace and some jurisdiction over security contractors under the terms of a deal that will fundamentally change how the United States operates here.

The changes, outlined in a landmark security agreement the Bush administration signed in November, are part of the broadest transfer of responsibilities to Iraqi hands since 2004, when the government regained sovereignty from the U.S.-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA).

The most visible changes will take place in the Green Zone, the fortified section of Baghdad that has been the U.S. headquarters since the invasion in 2003.

Last week, Gen. Ray Odierno, the top U.S. military commander in Iraq, called it the Iraqi Security Zone.

U.S. forces will continue to issue ID cards and act as advisers for months to come, but except for the sprawling U.S. Embassy complex along the Tigris River, the Iraqis "will be in charge" Jan. 1, Odierno said.

MORE:

The Ground Truth Odierno Can't Cover Up: "U.S. Soldiers Still Manned The Checkpoints In And Out Of The 5.6 Square Miles Of The Green Zone" "At The Entrance Of The Checkpoint U.S. Soldiers Stood Guard Deciding Who Could And Could Not Enter The Green Zone"

January 01, 2009 Baghdad Observer [Excerpts]

U.S. soldiers still manned the checkpoints in and out of the 5.6 square miles of the Green Zone in central Baghdad that houses foreign embassies, top Iraqi leaders' homes, the U.S. embassy and military installations.

Most had one Iraqi soldier looking at badges as U.S. soldiers looked over their shoulders.

Badges in the Green Zone are still issued by the U.S. military and the general logistics are handled by them.

The U.S. military ushered reporters to one checkpoint where a group of Iraqi soldiers from the Baghdad Brigade stood.

This was the picture they wanted the world to see -- Iraqis protecting the Green Zone.

At the entrance of the checkpoint U.S. soldiers stood guard deciding who could and could not enter the Green Zone.

The Soldiers Are No Fools:

“They Expect Americans To Remain In The Country In Some Capacity Past The Withdrawal Deadline”

January 4, 2009 By Adam Ashton, McClatchy Newspapers [Excerpts]

NINEVAH PROVINCE, Iraq — The violence of his past deployments in Iraq still haunts Daniel Clemons, a 32-year-old National Guard staff sergeant who's back for his third tour.

Clemons, who's from Sacramento, Calif., now is with the 1st Battalion of the 184th Infantry Regiment, based in Modesto, Calif. The battalion lost 17 of its roughly 700 Baghdad-deployed troops in 2005, its last Iraq tour.

This time, it's stationed at a former Iraqi airfield in a safe corner of northern Iraq. Empty desert surrounds the base for miles, protecting the battalion from surprises.

The troops face dangers that are familiar from past deployments, mainly homemade bombs, but they encounter them far less frequently. They drive heavily armored vehicles that give them protection they didn't have from those threats in previous tours.

Despite the progress they've seen, some of the soldiers are skeptical that the security plan is realistic.

They expect Americans to remain in the country in some capacity past the withdrawal deadline.

"I don't see it happening, but a lot has changed from my first deployment," said Sgt. Noel Huerta, 28, of Livingston, Calif., who served in Iraq three years ago. "It just seems too fast."

MORE:

Those Soldiers Got It Right: Despite Occupation Propaganda Bullshit, U.S. Combat Troops Won't Really Withdraw From Urban Bases

Jan 3, 2009 By Tim Cocks (Reuters)

The U.S. military took a step toward pulling combat troops from Iraqi cities on Saturday, moving out of a Baghdad base that Iraqi officials said would be dismantled and converted back into a shopping mall.

Similar Baghdad bases, like Loyalty and War Eagle, are to be reduced in size and turned into joint Iraq-U.S. security stations soon, he added.

"It's all a re-adjustment of our footprint," Swan said.

How many U.S. troops will remain at joint urban bases after June, and what their activities will be, remains unclear, especially as U.S. military commanders race to ensure Iraq's maturing army is ready to hold together a fragile calm.

U.S. officials have said combat troops may be retasked to support and advise Iraqi soldiers at joint urban bases.

U.S. Military Dictatorship Says Iraqis May Still Be Held Without Charge “Even Though U.S. Forces Lost The Authority To Hold Them At The Beginning Of This Year”

January 10, 2009 Reuters

BAGHDAD: Some prisoners held indefinitely without charge by US forces in Iraq may not be freed or given trials, even though US forces lost the authority to hold them at the beginning of this year, a US military spokesman said.

Iraqi legal experts said the plans-which would apply to prisoners US forces believe are dangerous or of intelligence value but have not been charged with a crime-might violate Iraqi law by placing detainees beyond the reach of the courts.

Under the terms of a bilateral pact which took effect on Jan 1, Washington agreed that all its prisoners would either be transferred to Iraqi custody under arrest warrants from Iraqi judges, or freed "in a safe and orderly manner".

The agreement does not mention any mechanism for continuing to hold prisoners without charge, and Iraqi legal experts say there is no such provision under Iraqi law.

Over the past year, as violence subsided, the US military has freed prisoners at a faster rate than it detained them, reducing the population from more than 26,000 to about 15,000.

It now says it is going through the remaining cases to determine who can be charged and who must be freed.

[US military spokesman Major Neal Fisher] said there was no firm deadline for how long that would take but it could last into 2010.

Leaders of Iraq's Sunni Arab minority, which includes most detainees, said that was too slow.

These statements do not reflect what has been agreed upon," said Abdul-Karim al-Sammaraie, member of parliament from the Sunni Iraqi Islamic Party.

More Iraqi Civilians Slaughtered; More Stupid Lies About It

Jan 3, 2009 By SINAN SALAHEDDIN (AP) & January 6 AFP

American troops opened fire and killed a passenger in a car in central Iraq after the vehicle failed to heed warnings to keep its distance from a military convoy, the US military said Tuesday.

"In Baquba, a passenger in a vehicle was mortally wounded after the driver of the vehicle failed to respond to repeated warning signals from a convoy," a statement said.

A soldier opened fire after the car drove towards the convoy at an intersection despite the warnings, the military said, adding the driver of the vehicle was unharmed.

The incident marked the second shooting of an Iraqi civilian by US forces in less than week after US soldiers opened fire and critically wounded a newly-wed Iraqi female television producer in Baghdad on January 1.

The US military said 25-year-old Hadeel Emad failed to heed warnings from American soldiers and was behaving "erratically."

Colleagues said the producer had failed to heed warning shots because she had impaired hearing.

The Biladi TV station, which is owned by former Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari, identified the woman as 25-year-old producer Hadeel Emad.

Station spokesman Muhsin Kadhum told The Associated Press that Emad had just left the station and was crossing the street to get a taxi when she was shot.

"She has hearing problems, and she didn't hear the warnings," Kadhum said. "She was wearing a long coat and carried nothing in her hands."

Emad was in critical condition in a Baghdad hospital, Kadhum said.

In a separate incident on Sunday, in the restive northern city of Mosul, US and Iraqi forces killed two people and wounded two others when the vehicle they were driving accelerated towards a checkpoint, the US military said.

"One terrorist was killed during the engagement. A woman in the vehicle was also killed, and another woman and man were injured," the US military said. **[Well, let's let the world know, instead of burying the story: a whole car-load of terrorist couples is really news -- or maybe just more pathetic lying shit that goes like this: anybody killed by the occupation just has to be a terrorist, right?]**

Oops #1

January 4 AFP

Iraqi officials insisted on Sunday that the fledgling security forces are ready to defend the country even as a bomber killed at least 35 people and injured dozens in northern Baghdad.

The blast at a checkpoint near the entrance to the Kadhimiyah district occurred as top government officials gathered in the Green Zone to mark Army Day.

Iraqi Defence Minister Abdel Qader Jassem Mohammed said Iraq was ready for that task.

"This day shows that we are going in the right direction and we have the abilities to take care of our security issues," he told AFP after the ceremony to commemorate the 88th anniversary of the Iraqi army.

Sunday's attack killed at least 35 people, including women and children, and wounded 65 others among them Iranian pilgrims who were taking part in a religious procession.

Oops #2



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (left) shakes hands with Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki on January 3. Maliki says he hopes Iran will help rebuild his conflict-torn country by boosting economic ties. (AFP/Behrouz Mehri)

01/05/2009 By Chelsea J. Carter, The Associated Press

BAGHDAD - The United States inaugurated its largest embassy ever on Monday, a fortress-like compound in the heart of the Green Zone - and the most visible sign of what U.S. officials call a new chapter in relations between America and a more sovereign Iraq.

U.S. Marines raised the American flag over the adobe-colored buildings, which sit on a 104-acre site and has space for 1,000 employees - more than 10 times the size of any other American Embassy in the world.

"Iraq is in a new era and so is the Iraqi-U.S. relationship," Ambassador Ryan Crocker proclaimed.

In perhaps an unintended sign of the new relationship, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki did not attend Monday's ceremony because he was traveling in Iran, a country the U.S. has accused of aiding and arming Iraqi militants.

HELL ON EARTH; ALL HOME NOW



A U.S. Army soldier runs to cover after hearing a shot fired close by, during a meeting with a local community leader, in Hay al Tinek neighborhood, northwestern Mosul, 360 kilometers (225 miles) northwest of Baghdad, Nov. 12, 2008. Two U.S. troops have been killed and six wounded Wednesday, in another shooting incident in Mosul, the U.S. army said. (AP Photo/Petros Giannakouris)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Bomb Kill 3 U.S. Troops In Tarnak Va Jaldak

Jan 9, 2009 By Sharafuddin Stanikzai, HERAT, Afghanistan (Reuters)

A bomb killed three U.S. soldiers in southern Afghanistan Friday. The attacks bring the toll of U.S. soldiers killed in southern Afghanistan to five in less than 24 hours.

The U.S. soldiers were killed when a home-made bomb exploded in the Tarnak va Jaldak district of Zabul province which borders Kandahar province, where two U.S. soldiers were killed Thursday, NATO said.

At Least 2 U.S. Soldiers Killed By Bomber In Maywand

January 8, 2009 The Associated Press

KABUL: A bomber struck U.S. troops patrolling on foot in southern Afghanistan on Thursday, killing at least two soldiers.

The vehicle-borne IED strike hit the U.S. patrol on a busy street lined with shops in Kandahar province's Maywand district, said district chief Naimatullah Khan. Helicopters took away American casualties, said Khan, but he could not provide any numbers.

A Taliban spokesman, Qari Yousuf Ahmadi, claimed responsibility for the blast in a phone call to an AP reporter in southern Afghanistan.

Two Foreign Occupation Soldiers Killed: One British, One Unidentified

Jan. 1, 2009 The Associated Press

Meanwhile, NATO said two of its soldiers were killed in southern Afghanistan on Wednesday. One of the troops was identified as British. The second soldier's nationality was not immediately released.

Canadian Soldier Killed And Three Wounded In Shah Wali Kowt

January 7, 2009 CEFCOM NR-09.001

OTTAWA – One Canadian soldier was killed and three others were injured when their armoured vehicle struck an improvised explosive device approximately 35 kilometres north of Kandahar City in the Shah Wali Kowt District. The incident occurred at approximately 8:00 a.m., Kandahar time, on January 7, 2009.

The fallen soldier is Trooper Brian Richard Good, from The Royal Canadian Dragoons based at Canadian Forces Base Petawawa. Trooper Good was serving with the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group.

The injured soldiers were evacuated by helicopter to the Multinational Medical Unit at Kandahar Airfield. All three soldiers are reported to be in good condition.

New York Marine Killed In Helmand

January 05, 2009 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 006-09

Lance Cpl. Alberto Francesconi, 21, of Bronx, N.Y., died Jan. 1 while supporting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed In Kandahar; Nationality Not Announced

January 8, 2009 The Associated Press

NATO said Thursday that a roadside bomb killed one of its soldiers in Kandahar province the previous day. It did not identify the soldier's nationality.

Foreign Occupation Soldier Killed; Nationality Not Announced

01/06/09 AFP

The international force in Afghanistan said one of its soldiers was killed in action Tuesday in the south of the country

Decatur Soldier Killed In Afghanistan

Jan 9, 2009 WSFA

An Alabama soldier dies in Afghanistan. Staff Sergeant Josh Rath, 22 years old of Decatur, died this week. Rath's family tells our sister station WAFF in Huntsville, their son died when a bomb went off at an open bazaar.

Local Soldier Killed In Afghanistan



January 9, 2009 State Gazette

Thursday evening, at approximately 9:30 p.m., Anita Essary received a knock at the door from two soldiers from Fort Campbell. They were casualty notification officers there to notify her of the death of her grandson, Spc. Keith Eric Essary.

Essary was the latest casualty in the United States Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, which has had 561 US military casualties since it began.

He was a member of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division, Charlie Company, 2nd Division stationed out of Fort Hood, Texas.

Essary was killed in the village of Maiwand, Afghanistan, which is 50 miles northeast of the city of Kandahar in the Kandahar province.

The incident occurred at approximately 4:17 p.m. (Afghanistan time), Thursday, Jan. 8. Afghanistan is 10.5 hours ahead of US Central Standard Time.

Details surrounding the incident have not been released, however the cause of death has been ruled as an impact from an improvised explosive device (IED) while on dismounted patrol.

International news agencies reported two unnamed American soldiers and three Afghan civilians were killed in a suicide bombing on Thursday in Maiwand. This occurred when the bomber detonated an explosive-packed car after driving it into a crowded bazaar. The blast also injured 21 Afghan civilians.

A man claiming to be a spokesman for the Taliban, Qari Yousef Ahmadi, said he was responsible for the bombing and that the bomber was an Afghan man.

Essary was a 2006 graduate of Dyer County High School. He enlisted into the Army the beginning of his senior year of high school.

On Friday, friends and family gathered at the house of his grandmother, Anita Essary, to remember their fallen loved one and share memories of him.

"He was the greatest kid you will ever meet," said SFC Robert Lipker. "He made the perfect soldier and had a big heart. He would give you the shirt off his back. He would rather be with the folks he loved than sleep or eat." Lipker is the recruiter that enlisted Essary and they remained friends afterwards.

"He wanted us to be proud of what he was doing," said Keith's uncle, Monty Essary.

Essary lived in Dyersburg all of his life and was raised in the home of his grandparent's Anita Essary and the late Monty Essary Sr. He had a close relationship with both his father, Chuck Hall, and his mother, Mary Beth Franks. His sister's are Bethany Willard, Taylor Clark and Brooke Hall and his brother is Randy Hall.

Essary had a fondness for motorcycles and liked to go riding with his father. "We enjoyed riding motorcycles together," said Chuck Hall. "Every time we talked, that's what we always talked about."

In May of 2008, Essary's family threw him a going away party when he was home on leave for two weeks. He deployed to Afghanistan the following month and was able to come back to Dyersburg on leave in September. It was believed that Essary's deployment would end in June 2009.

During Essary's deployment to Afghanistan, he along with other members in his unit took on the task of refurbishing their Forward Operating Base (FOB) Hotal, which translates into Hotel. Essary was mentioned in a military news publication as going "above and beyond" his duty in the repairs. The publication stated he "worked day and night to build brand new floors, walls and shelving in the buildings."

A couple of Spc. Essary's friends recounted their time spent together in Dyersburg. "He was my best friend," said Jonathan Pope. "If you saw him, you saw me and if you saw me, you saw him. He was bighearted and you could have called him anytime you needed something. He always kept the mood light."

"He was a good guy," said Terry Wilson. Both Pope and Wilson were in JROTC with Essary who was Capt. Of the Honor Guard and Cmdr. of the drill team and the rifle team.

"There were nine of us that were really tight and we all joined the military," said Pope. "That was our big thing, ROTC." Wilson and Pope are both in the Army Reserve.

"He wanted to go to OCS (Officer Candidate School) so I would have to salute him," said SFC Lipker, recalling a lighter moment.

"He was a very strong willed boy," said Anita Essary. "He pretty well always knew what he wanted to do and he loved Johnny Cash."

Essary is the second soldier from Dyer County to be killed in Afghanistan in the last 3 years. The last soldier was US Army PFC Kevin Edgin, who was killed in a firefight against Taliban insurgents in southern Afghanistan.

Funeral arrangements for Essary are still incomplete at this time.

Tucson Soldier Killed In Afghanistan

Jan. 2, 2009 Associated Press

TUCSON - The father of a Phoenix soldier who was killed in an enemy rocket attack on his Army outpost in Afghanistan on Christmas Eve said his son rejoined the Army several years ago because he wanted to protect "people's rights around the world."

Charles Gaffney Sr. said his son, Charles Jr., couldn't be dissuaded from rejoining the Army. He left after a tour in the mid-1980s. The 42-year-old father of two was on duty at a combat outpost in the remote Paktika province when he died.

A corporal with the 101st Airborne Division based at Fort Campbell, Ky., he moved with his family to Tucson in the late 1970s, his father said Wednesday. Gaffney had served about six years in the Army during the 1980s, mostly in Germany, and then returned to Tucson. He worked at several local auto shops and then moved to Las Vegas and worked for a Porsche dealership there.

Meanwhile, his parents moved to Phoenix and Gaffney joined them several years ago. That's when he decided he needed to serve his country again, his father said.

"I won't say I was upset he was going back, but I didn't want him to," his father said. "He told me it was for people's rights around the world, for them to say what they want to say without other people beating them down. And he said he never wanted anyone to come here to the United States and tell his daughters that they had to do things a certain way.

"And then I couldn't argue with him."

Gaffney went to Iraq in 2006-07 and was part of security forces outside Baghdad, his father said. He was sent to Afghanistan in October, and talked about it with family friend Hank Savko.

"He had said, 'I'm not doing it for myself. I'm doing it for the women of Afghanistan,'" Savko said. "We kind of looked at him and said, 'Why?' He said the women of

Afghanistan are so mistreated, they're not really people like we are in this country. He said, 'I'm doing it for them.' "

Gaffney raced motorcycles while he was stationed in Germany and continued riding in Phoenix. He had many friends in the motorcycle community, both in Phoenix and in Tucson, his father said.

Gaffney is survived by his wife, Latticia, and his twin daughters, Cara and Mia. He's also survived by his mother, Fina, two sisters and a brother.

Gaffney will be buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery, but his family will remember him first in Tucson on Sunday.

His youngest sister, Catherine, died several years ago and Gaffney had told his family he'd like to be buried next to her. They decided he should be buried in Arlington but will hold his local service at her Tucson gravesite.

Australian Soldier Killed By Rocket In Uruzgan

Jan 5, 2009 ABC

The Defence Department has confirmed that an Australian soldier has been killed in a rocket attack on a forward operating base in Afghanistan's Uruzgan Province.

In a press conference this morning, Defence Force Chief Angus Houston said the soldier was killed instantly in the attack, which took place early yesterday evening Australian time.

"Taliban insurgents engaged an Afghan forward operating base with rockets. An Australian element was deployed at the base during this attack," Air Chief Marshal Houston said.

"The soldier was killed instantly when a rocket exploded in the compound."

Air Chief Marshal Houston said troops at the base are regularly subjected to indirect fire.

"Over the last five years we've been extremely lucky," he said.

"We've had some people who've been wounded, but I regret that on this occasion our luck ran out and we had a rocket that sustained a direct hit in very close proximity to this brave soldier."

Occupation Worker Attacked In Afghanistan Dies From Burns

January 9, 2009 Associated Press

An anthropologist working with the U.S. Army in Afghanistan who was the victim of an attack has died.

A spokesman for military contractor BAE Systems says Paula Lloyd died Wednesday at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, more than two months after suffering severe burns.

The 36-year-old social scientist worked for BAE Systems as part of what the Army calls a Human Terrain Team. Her job was to help soldiers navigate local culture.

On November 4th, she was doused with lit fuel while speaking to Afghan civilians. She suffered burns over 60% of her body.

Going For A New Record? Occupation Slaughters 62 Civilians In One Day: “The Choppers Returned And Killed 10 People From An Adjacent Village Who Had Gone To Kafar To See What Had Happened”

Jan 7 KABUL (AFP)

Security forces said Wednesday they had killed 50 insurgents in new battles across Afghanistan, but allegations emerged that dozens of civilians had also been killed in military action.

In one confirmed incident, 11 civilians died when an artillery shell landed on them during a clash between security forces and militants in the southern province of Uruzgan on Monday, the Afghan interior ministry said.

Police earlier said eight of those killed were women.

The US military said meanwhile that its soldiers had killed 32 "armed insurgents" in an operation on Tuesday against a Taliban cell near the Afghan capital that allegedly carried out bomb attacks against security forces.

But a member of the elected provincial council, named only Rohullah, said reports delivered to him from the area indicated that 22 civilians had been killed and nine wounded.

Locals in the southern province of Helmand alleged meanwhile said that 19 villagers, including at least one woman, were killed in raids by international troops early Tuesday. The fighting took place in the northern Baghran district, which is under Taliban control.

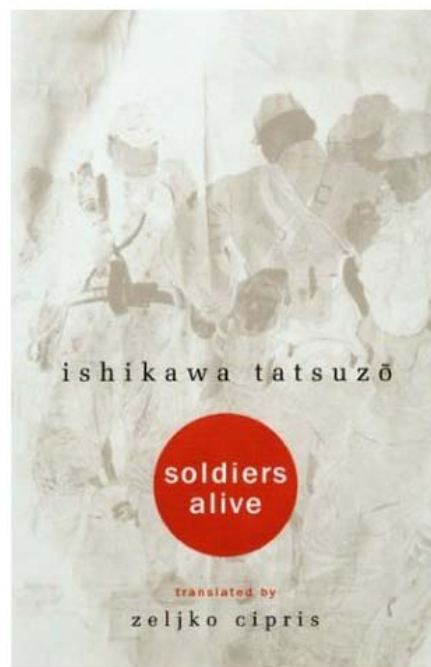
The troops had landed in helicopters around midnight and raided the adjacent homes of two brothers who were tribal elders in the village of Kafar, said a member of the Helmand provincial council, Mohammad Gul.

Nine people, including a woman, were killed in the raid, Gul said.

Hours later, the choppers returned and killed 10 people from an adjacent village who had gone to Kafar to see what had happened, Gul said.

Resident Ghulam Mohammad gave the same account, saying villagers were "angry and outraged."

Ishikawa and Kuroshima would understand: insert troops into a hell on earth and there's no way to prevent atrocities. Yet the real fiends in their capital suites are never spattered with a single drop of blood. Solidarity, Z



20 Afghan Police Killed By Resistance Ambush

Jan. 1, 2009 The Associated Press

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan - Taliban militants ambushed a group of Afghan police while they were eating lunch in a remote and dangerous part of southern Afghanistan, killing 20 officers.

A Taliban spokesman, Qari Yousef Ahmadi, said two Taliban were killed and four wounded during the ambush. Ahmadi claimed 32 police were killed, but that number had not been confirmed by Afghan officials.

The attack came Wednesday in the small village of Shaghzay in the district of Kajaki in Helmand province, said Daud Ahmadi, spokesman for Helmand's governor. He said 20 police — bodyguards for the district chief of nearby Musa Qala — were killed. Musa Qala for many months of 2007 had been held by Taliban fighters.

The region between Musa Qala and Kajaki is filled with Taliban militants, and the Afghan government has little control outside of main district centers.

Taliban fighters operate their own parallel government in the region, sometimes called a shadow government.

The Taliban's shadow police chief for Helmand province, Mullah Mohammad Qassim, claimed in a call to The Associated Press that one of the policemen in the group of bodyguards was a Taliban sympathizer and had helped set up the ambush.

Resistance Action

01-06-09 Dow Jones Newswires & Jan 9, 2009 By Sharafuddin Stanikzai, HERAT, Afghanistan (Reuters) & International Herald Tribune

A bomber killed two Afghan policemen. One senior policeman and his bodyguard were killed in a bomb attack in a market in Nimroz province, in south Afghanistan, the governor of Nimroz said. The bomber apparently targeted the police official who was buying produce at a shop. The Nimroz blast toll could rise further as casualties are pulled from the rubble of four shops destroyed by the explosion in Zaranj, the capital of Nimroz, Governor Ghulam Dastegir-Azad told Reuters. A Taliban spokesman said they had carried out the Nimroz attack, which he said killed eight policemen, including two police commanders.

Taliban militants raided a police post outside the southern city of Kandahar early Monday and killed three officers, said regional police commander Ghulam Ali Wahdat. Three others were missing after the attack and one was wounded, he said.

Late Monday, men on motorbikes shot dead a pro-government mullah, or religious leader, as he was praying in a Kandahar mosque, said provincial government spokesman Zalmay Ayoubi.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Attack On U.S.-Allied Militia Kills At Least 23; 110 Wounded

Jan. 2, 2009 The Associated Press & AFP

A bomber entered into a luncheon gathering at a tribal leader's home Friday and blew himself up after entering through a back door, killing at least 23 people and wounding dozens.

The attack in Youssifiyah, south of Baghdad, in the area once known as the Triangle of Death because of its extreme violence, came a day after the United States relinquished the lead on security to Iraqi forces.

Police officials who spoke on condition of anonymity placed the casualty toll at 30 dead and 110 wounded.

The bombing was at a reception hall adjacent to the residence of Sheik Mohammed Abdullah Salih, head of the Sunni al-Garaqul tribe.

Authorities said the sheik had invited senior tribal figures and other members to lunch.

The sheik also had invited members of the Sons of Iraq, a group who joined the U.S. military in the fight against insurgents. The sheik was slightly injured in the blast, according to local officials.

A witness said he and a friend were standing a few yards from the entrance to the meeting room when the bomber blew himself up.

"What an aftermath we saw — shattered glasses mixed with blood, everybody on the ground, a bad smell, blood, remains of bodies stuck to the wall," said Ismael Abu Ayab al-Qaraghuli.

Resistance Action

Jan 01 (Reuters) & Jan. 2, 2009 The Associated Press & Reuters & Jan 03 (Reuters) & January 4, 2009 By Mohammed Al Dulaimy and Hussein Kadhim, McClatchy Newspapers & Jan 05 (Reuters) & The Associated Press & Jan 06 (Reuters) & January 7, 2009 By Hamid Ahmed, Associated Press & January 8, 2009 By Timothy Williams, The International Herald Tribune & Reuters & 9 January 2009 By Sahar Issa, McClatchy Newspapers & (Reuters)

1.9: A roadside bomb targeted an Iraqi Army vehicle in Tuz district, to the south of Kirkuk city killing one Iraqi soldier, injuring two others.

A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol killed five Iraqi soldiers on Friday in the northern town of Baiji, 180 km (112 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Three rockets wounded two policemen when they landed in central Basra, 420 km (260 miles) southeast of Baghdad, police said.

1.8: In Diyala Province, two roadside bombs exploded simultaneously as an Iraqi Army convoy was on its way to help a local police station that had come under mortar fire, a security official said. The bombs killed six soldiers and wounded five in the convoy near the town of Jalawla, about 120 kilometers, or 75 miles, north of Baghdad.

The second attack Thursday on the Iraqi Army took place in Kirkuk Province, another volatile area north of Baghdad and a center of the country's oil industry. A roadside bomb detonated in the town of Rashad near the Hamrin Mountains not far from the Iranian border as an Iraqi Army convoy drove by, said Captain Salam Zengana of the police. Two soldiers were killed and two were wounded, he said.

A roadside bomb killed two soldiers and wounded two when it struck their convoy near Hawija, 210 km (130 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents shot dead the head of the Badr [collaborator] organisation, in Amerli district near Tuz Khurmato, 170 km (105 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

1.7: An Iraqi soldier was killed in a drive-by shooting as he walked to his home in Riyad, north of Baghdad.

Insurgents killed a member of Iraqi President Jalal Talabani's political party in a drive-by shooting in the northern city of Kirkuk. Subhi Hassan, who handles political relations for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, and a bodyguard were killed Monday when unidentified gunmen chased down their car after it passed through a checkpoint, Police Brig. Ahmed Hawandi said. A third person in the car was wounded.

1.6: A bomb planted in a parked car wounded three soldiers, when it exploded in the Saidiya area of southern Baghdad.

Four police commandos were killed and two wounded by a roadside bomb on Monday night in the Doura district of southern Baghdad, police said.

A car bomber wounded five policemen, striking their patrol in Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb wounded two policemen in the town of Tuz Khurmato, 170 km (105 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents in a speeding car opened fire and shot dead an off-duty Iraqi soldier on Monday night in the town of Sekhra, near Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents in a speeding car opened fire and seriously wounded an off-duty policeman on Monday night in central Kirkuk, police said.

1.5: A car bomb wounded two Iraqi soldiers when it struck an Iraqi army patrol in northern Mosul, police said.

A roadside bomb killed three policemen and wounded including three policemen, when it targeted a police patrol near central Baghdad's National al-Sha'ab stadium, police said.

A roadside bomb killed two police officers and wounded five in eastern Baghdad.

1.4: A bomb attached to a car of an Iraqi officer attached to facilities protection force exploded in Mosul on Saturday. The officer was injured.

Around 8 a.m. a roadside bomb detonated near an Iraqi army checkpoint in Saidiyah injuring one Iraqi soldier.

1.3: Insurgents killed a policeman in a drive-by shooting in central Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents in Kirkuk stormed the home of Anwar Mohedin Rasoul, a member of the Kurdistan Communist [collaborator] Party, and shot him dead, police said.

1.2: Insurgents killed two people when they opened fire on a checkpoint manned by U.S.-allied members of the Sons of Iraq in Jurf al-Sakhar, police said. Four others were reported wounded in the attack 40 miles south of Baghdad.

Insurgents stormed a local U.S.-allied neighbourhood patrol checkpoint, killing three of its guards and wounded six others in Mussayab, 60 km (40 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb wounded a policeman when it struck near his patrol in western Mosul, police said.

1.1: A truck bomber killed three policemen on Thursday in southern Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

Insurgents killed an off-duty policeman in a drive-by shooting in eastern Mosul, police said.

“I Ask The Iraqi Resistance To Engage In Revenge Operations Against The U.S., The Biggest Partner Of The Zionist Enemy”



Demonstrators burn the Israeli and U.S. flags in Sadr City in Baghdad, Jan. 9, 2009. In Iraq, Sunni and Shiite worshippers staged rallies following Friday prayer services, in which preachers condemned the U.S. and Israel for the Gaza attacks, but also Arab governments for failing to defend the Palestinians. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

10/1/2009 Gulf-Times

Angry followers of radical Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr [translation: anti-occupation nationalist Muqtada al-Sadr] torched US and Israeli flags in a mass rally in Baghdad yesterday in protest at the two-week-old conflict in the Gaza Strip.

About 2,000 Sadr supporters, many waving Iraqi and Palestinian flags, gathered in front of the cleric's headquarters in Sadr City to vent their anger at the Jewish [translation: Zionist] state and its chief ally after Friday prayers.

“We sympathise and understand the suffering of the people in Gaza, and the reason for their misery is the evil trinity of America, Israel and Britain,” prayer leader Sheikh Jassem al-Motairi told worshippers.

“We understand their pain because the innocent are being killed by occupiers.”

The crowds responded by chanting: “No, No, to the Occupier.”

Motairi read a statement issued by Sadr earlier this week urging Iraqis to take revenge against the US for supporting Israel's offensive in Gaza where at least 785 people have been killed since its launch on December 27.

"I ask the Iraqi resistance to engage in revenge operations against the US, the biggest partner of the Zionist enemy," Sadr said in the statement released on Wednesday.

Sadr's movement, which draws broad support from poorer Shias and dominates the vast and impoverished eastern Baghdad district of Sadr City, has long been a staunch opponent of the US-led military presence in Iraq.

Sheikh Salman al-Feraiji, manager of Sadr's office in the district, said the cleric's entreaty was aimed at all Iraqis.

"The call covers all Iraqi resistance groups and is not exclusive to Sadrist resistance. It is a general call," Feraiji said.

On the streets pamphlets of Sadr's newest edict were passed out and worshippers cheered as they carried Palestinian flags and banners, one of which read: "People of Gaza be patient, we are coming."

One of the worshippers, Kamel Saberi al-Sari, said the United States deserved to be punished.

"We want all nations to stop supporting the Zionist regime which is currently killing our people in Gaza," he said.

"It is our legitimate right to punish the Zionist regime's biggest supporter, the Great Satan, the US."

Waleed al-Hussein, a local shopkeeper, also railed against the campaign Israel has conducted against Hamas in Gaza with what he said was the help of the US.

"Any free-minded human being will call for stop of bloodshed once he sees the atrocities there," Hussein said sitting on a small prayer rug on the street.

"All divine religions have called for stopping the aggressor and the US that has been aiding the aggressor, so it shares the blame."

As prayers came to an end, a group of youths torched Israeli and US flags before people dispersed.

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE



1-9-09 THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER. UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE.

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

COMMENT UNNECESSARY



A wounded Palestinian girl is carried into al-Shifa hospital after an Israeli air strike in Gaza January 1, 2009. (Saleh Salem/Reuters)

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

RECEIVED

This Sgt. Needs Some Help

From: E
To: GI Special
Sent: January 08, 2009
Subject: Deploying Injured Troops

My name is E[XXXXX] and I am writing on behalf of my husband, Sgt [XXXXX].

Earlier this year he sustained a knee injury, was put on a health profile, and was told to come if it did not feel better. At the next appointment he was referred to a German radiologist who confirmed a meniscus tear and recommended arthroscopic surgery as soon as possible, definitely before the upcoming deployment.

He was referred again to German orthopedic surgeon who agreed with the previous diagnosis, with a possible ACL injury and [XXX] was scheduled for surgery.

An Army Physicians Assistant put him on a non-deployable profile based on his inability to wear body armor, carry a gun, and do other physical activities. He was also prescribed physical therapy immediately following the surgery. This non-deployable profile expires 11 Jan 09.

It is now days before surgery and he has been told that he cannot have surgery and will deploy.

There has been NO SRP. Yesterday the PA put him on a P3 but it seems she was pressured by other members of the military and changed her mind. This seems ludicrous and a bad way to do business. Also, to wait days before his surgery and deployment seems shady.

My husband will be in pain and sustaining additional injuries while in Iraq. His profile states that he cannot wear body armor but he has been told that he will get a knee brace.

This decision not only places my husband in danger, but also the men serving with him.

I appreciate your attention to and consideration of this matter.

Reply:

There are two excellent non-profit organizations. Both offer counseling and legal assistance to armed services members, and they have a staff of attorneys on call.

#1: The GI Rights Hotline: 1.800.394.9544

"We are a network of nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations who provide information to servicemembers about military discharges, grievance and complaint procedures, and other civil rights.

"Whether you are in the Army, Navy, Air Force or Marines, we can help.

"Calls to the GI Rights Hotline are always free and confidential..."

#2: MILITARY LAW TASK FORCE

318 Ortega Street, San Francisco, CA 94122

(415) 566-3732 (619) 233-1701

<http://www.nlgmltf.org/>

At the web site, go left and down. Click on Information For Military Service Members & Families.

ALSO:

#3: ALSO, TRY YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS AND/OR SENATOR

Some have intervened to help in situations like you write about. Some have not.

Respect,
T

NOTE TO READERS OF GI SPECIAL

If you have other suggestions on how to help the Sgt., please send to GI Special, email address upper left front page, and they will be forwarded on. T

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

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

**NEED SOME TRUTH?
CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

Telling the truth - about the occupations 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 to Imperial wars 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 Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)**



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