

GI SPECIAL 2#B82

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME



Sandra Torres, center, and Maria Luisa Rangel, left, wife and mother respectively, of 22-year-old U.S. Marine Juan Lopez at the funeral in San Luis de la Paz, Mexico July 4, 2004. Lopez was killed in Iraq on June 21. .(AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

My Son Died For A Lie

September 29, 2004 Rose Gentle, The Guardian

Rose Gentle is the mother of Gordon Gentle, a British soldier killed in Iraq this year

Tony Blair says we are now fighting a "new war" in Iraq. That may suit him, to distract people from questions about the "old war" there. The one which killed my son Gordon at the age of 19. Sent to Iraq with just six months training at Catterick, with inadequate protection, he was killed by a bomb in Basra in June.

Gordon wanted to be a soldier to defend his country. Not to die in a war of aggression. My family is one of nearly 70 grieving for a lost son because of this war. Two more families joined the list yesterday. Many more of our soldiers are suffering from serious injuries.

Some people say that soldiers have to expect to die or be injured when they sign up for the armed services. Maybe so. But they also have the right to expect that they will only be sent to fight for a proper cause, by a government which tells the truth.

These poor boys are being sent to Iraq to die for this government's lies. Where are the chemical and nuclear weapons they were supposed to be looking for? And if the war was about upholding the UN, why has the UN secretary general now said it is unlawful? Blair hasn't answered that either.

He said our troops would be welcomed by the Iraqis. Instead, it is all endless bloodshed and chaos there. Yet he hasn't apologised. If my children had the same regard for honesty as the prime minister, I would be ashamed.

It seems to me that Blair cares more about George Bush than about British soldiers. He made secret promises to the president behind our backs, without a thought for people like Gordon, or like my daughter Maxine, deprived of her brother.

If he cares, why doesn't he bring our troops back home before more are killed?

After all, power is supposed to have been handed over to the Iraqi government. There are no more weapons of mass destruction to look for. The Iraqis should be allowed to sort out their own problems now.

Instead, I heard Geoff Hoon talking about sending more of our lads and lasses over to Iraq. That will mean more dead, more injured, to stop the government facing up to what it has done. **I am working with other service families to ensure that our voice can be heard too. Many have already got in touch.**

I grieve also for all the Iraqis who have died in this war. It all seems to have been completely unnecessary.

Blair may be let off the hook by Lord this and Justice that in their inquiries. The establishment will stick together. But I do not believe the ordinary people will forgive him so easily.

I want the government to be held to account. The prime minister says he wants a democracy for Iraq. If we had a proper democracy here, we would never have got into this war. And Gordon would be with us at Christmas.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

September The 2nd-Deadliest Month In 2004 For U.S. Troops

Oct. 04, 2004 ROBERT BURNS, Associated Press

WASHINGTON - September was the second-deadliest month of the year for U.S. forces in Iraq.

The month's death toll was 80, up from 65 in August and equal to the 80 who died in May.

Some had hoped the violence would decrease after an interim Iraqi government was given sovereignty June 28, but the death toll has risen steadily since then. Forty-two U.S. military deaths were recorded in June and 54 in July.

Sgt. Killed In Taji

October 4, 2004 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 989-04

Sgt. Russell L. Collier, 48, of Harrison, Ark., died October 3rd in Taji, Iraq. His unit was conducting traffic control operations when enemy forces attacked them using small arms fire. Collier was assigned to 1st Battalion, 206th Field Artillery Regiment, Arkansas National Guard, Russellville, Ark.

Rhode Island Guardsman Killed At Taji Checkpoint; Guards' Families Morale Bad

10/4/2004 By Richard C. Lewis, Associated Press

CRANSTON, R.I. (AP) A Rhode Island National Guardsman was killed during an attack by insurgents as he manned a traffic-control post in Iraq, the Guard announced Monday.

Sgt. Christopher Potts was killed Sunday, his 38th birthday, in a firefight sparked when an unknown number of insurgents attacked the traffic post in Taji, about 13 miles north of Baghdad in the so-called Sunni Triangle.

Potts was a member of the Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 103rd Field Artillery based in Providence. The Tiverton resident had been in the Guard for 14 years. In civilian life, he worked as a marine mechanic at New England Boatworks, a yacht builder and marina operator in Portsmouth.

Potts is survived by his wife, Terri, and two sons, Christopher Jr., 16, and Jackson, 2.

As seven wives of Potts' comrades looked on at Guard headquarters, officials alluded to increased anxiety among soldiers and their families with the continued deployments and deaths.

Centracchio said concerns about fraying morale was "undoubtedly a consideration." Carcieri said the only thing that can be done is to give grieving family members a hug.

Potts' death was the first in his unit, McNamara said.

Staff Sgt. Dies Of Road Wreck Injuries

October 3, 2004 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 983-04

Staff Sgt. Mike A. Dennie, 31, of Fayetteville, N.C., died Sept. 29 in Balad, Iraq, from injuries sustained on Sept. 22 in Baghdad, Iraq, when the driver of his military vehicle pulled off the road and lost control, causing it to roll over. Dennie was assigned to the 106th Finance Battalion from Kitzingen, Germany.

Spc. Dies Of IED Wounds

October 3, 2004 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 982-04

Spc. Allen Nolan, 38, of Marietta, Ohio, died Sept. 30 at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, of injuries sustained on Sept. 18 in Balad, Iraq, when his convoy vehicle struck an improvised explosive device and then came under small arms fire. Nolan was assigned to the Army Reserve's 660th Transportation Company, Zanesville, Ohio.

TWO SOLDIERS KILLED BY SMALL ARMS FIRE

October 4, 2004 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND Release Number: 04-10-03C & AP

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- Two Task Force Baghdad Soldiers were killed by small arms fire Oct. 3.

The Soldiers were engaged by small arms fire at a traffic control point jointly manned by Iraqi security forces Sunday afternoon.

MORE:

Naperville Soldier Killed At Baghdad Checkpoint

October 4, 2004 WLS Television, Inc.

October 4, 2004 — Family and friends are mourning the death of a young Naperville soldier who was killed in Iraq. Sergeant Jack Taft Hennessey was manning a checkpoint in Baghdad when he was attacked.

Hennessey enlisted in the Army three years ago and was nearing the end of his service. After that, he planned to go to college.

A popular athlete at Naperville Central High School, the flag is flying at half-staff as students and staff remember the 2001 graduate.

"The there is a big empty feeling and at first you are in shock. And, then we went to the Hennessey house and that is when reality set in that Jack wasn't going to be able to talk to them again," said Glen Reimers, gymnastics coach.

"It was tough to talk about it to the students. Something we hear all the time on tv and now something difficult for our students to hear," said Jeff Nudera, wrestling and gymnastics coach.

Friends and family describe Hennessey as a dynamic, outgoing guy who was always fun to be around.

"Well, you couldn't keep him still for one thing. He was, among other thing, besides a fun-loving guy, did a lot of pranks to other people. He was a prankster, a jokester. He loved to make people laugh," said Reimers.

According to Hennessey's family, a car went through a checkpoint on Friday and gunfire was exchanged. Hennessey was killed in that incident. **That same night, Naperville High School honored another soldier, Steve Begonia, who was wounded and sent home from Iraq, during the football game. By the time the game was over, word of Hennessey's death had spread.**

"When I heard about it, I was shocked," said Steve Begonia, wounded soldier.

"We're just very lucky to have him here. Few cuts and bruises isn't anything compared to what other people have to go through," said Megan Knopf, Begonia's friend

"I guess it was luck. God was on my side that day. Pretty lucky," said Begonia.

Mosul Car Bomb Gets Military Convoy: One U.S. Casualty

MOSUL, Iraq, Oct 4 (AFP)

"At 4:00 pm (1300 GMT) this afternoon a car bomb hit a military convoy, one soldier was wounded and has been evacuated to a military hospital," said an army spokeswoman, Angela Bowman, adding the injury was not life threatening.



Smoke billows after a car-bomb exploded in Mosul. (AFP/Mujahed Mohammed)

Occupation Army Recruiting Center And Hotel For Foreigners Bombed In Baghdad



US soldier following a car bomb at an army recruitment center in Baghdad. (AFP/Ahmad Al-Rubaye)

October 04, 2004 AFP & By: Luke Baker (Reuters)

BAGHDAD - Eleven people died when a car bomb ripped through the entrance of an Iraqi army recruitment centre in Baghdad today, while a second bomb exploded near a hotel used by foreigners killing at least one person.

At the army recruitment centre in Baghdad, hundreds of young men, some already signed up to join the army and others hoping to enlist, had been waiting inside when the car bomb detonated, witnesses said.

"It was a car bomb that went off at the entrance of the recruitment centre," said Iraqi army Lieutenant Mohamed Abdallah at the scene of the carnage.

Witnesses said a car blew up near one of the entrances to the heavily fortified Green Zone, home to the Iraqi interim government, exploding amid army recruits milling around the recruitment site.

Blood was splattered on the ground at the nearby Yarmuk hospital where cars and trucks sped in and out, ferrying the casualties from the blast site, which had been quickly cordoned off by Iraqi security forces.

Doctor Firas al-Amin said at least 15 people died and 80 were wounded but he warned the figures could rise significantly.

"Our wards are working at full capacity. We are trying to cope with the situation, but it is really horrible," he said.

Inside, young men, some with horrific wounds, were screaming in agony and grief.

"I came here with 109 of my colleagues from Najaf, we were told to bring relevant papers to sign up to a new special force in the army," said Wafi Mohamed, 32, slapping his head as he waited outside the emergency room.

"Oh my God where are my friends?" asked the young man from the holy city south of Baghdad, which had been the scene of heavy fighting in August between US troops and rebel fighters loyal to the radical Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr.

Another young man, Mohamed Jassem, 25, lay wailing, his legs fractured. "I was blown away by the impact of the blast," Jassem yelled as a group of friends tried to comfort him.

Raed Majid, 31, described how Monday had been his first day on the job and he had gone to the centre with about 400 new recruits and other people hoping to enlist.

A US army spokesman said the bomb had exploded just after 8:45 am (0545 GMT) outside the Green Zone in Baghdad that houses key Iraqi government buildings and the US embassy, but there had been no US casualties. The army recruitment centre is adjacent to the Green Zone.

A second car bomb rocked the centre of Baghdad at about 9:30 am (0630 GMT), sending a thick column of smoke into the sky.

"We have received one dead and 12 injured," said Salman Helu Salman, an official in the emergency department of the nearby Ibn Nafiss hospital.

The blast, which struck 100 metres away from the Baghdad Hotel - a place often used by Westerners - ripped through several nearby vehicles, including an all-terrain vehicle of the sort used by many mercenaries here, an AFP correspondent on the scene said.

The car bomb exploded about an hour later as a U.S. military convoy was passing along Baghdad's Sadoun Street, where several hotels used by foreign contractors are located, a major thoroughfare on the eastern side of the Tigris river.

The blast destroyed several cars, shattered dozens of shop windows and sprayed wreckage across the street, leaving a car door hanging from a street sign. At least six people were killed and a dozen wounded, Iraq's Interior Ministry said.

I saw a head in one place and a leg in another. This was a suicide bombing," said one bystander as thick clouds of black smoke billowed behind him and U.S. helicopters circled overhead.



Car Bomb (AFP)

Lying Pukes At U.S. Command & Puppet Gov't Say No Civilians Killed In Samarra: "I Saw Dogs Eating The Body Of A Woman"

10.4.04 By: Luke Baker (Reuters) & Independent News & Media & By Kim Sengupta in Baghdad, The Independent (UK)

Residents of Samarra tried to bury their dead on Monday -- the cemetery was off limits on Sunday -- progressing through the streets of the city waving white flags tied to sticks, family members weeping as they bore the coffins for burial.

Iraq's interior minister, who comes from Samarra, said he did not believe any civilians had been killed in the offensive, a statement which drew an angry response from residents. The U.S. military said it had tried to avoid civilian casualties.

Sunday's operation in Samarra, north of Baghdad, brought condemnation from residents about the cost in lives and suffering.

One man, who said he escaped the city yesterday, reported that civilians had been killed. He said he had seen dogs picking at corpses in the street.

"I swear I saw dogs eating the body of a woman," he said.

The Americans insisted that the estimated 125 people killed in the storming of the city were all insurgents. Doctors and local people reported women, children and the elderly among the dead, and that bodies were still being brought into hospitals.

There also appeared to have been discord over the military action between members of the US-sponsored Iraqi interim government.

The Interior Minister, Falah Naqib, echoed the American line that no civilians had been killed and only "bad guys and terrorists" had suffered. It was, he said, a "great day for Samarra".

But the Human Rights Ministry, in a letter to the Iraqi Red Crescent, described what happened in the city as a "tragedy" and called for urgent emergency assistance.

Local people in Samarra claimed that many of the 1,000 insurgents the Americans were targeting had escaped before the attack, and civilians had borne the brunt of the casualties.

Of 70 bodies brought into Samarra General Hospital, 23 were children and 18 women, said Abdul-Nasser Hamed Yassin, a hospital administrator. There were also 23 women among the 160 wounded.

Families trying to bury the dead found the road to the cemetery had been blocked by American soldiers.

Abdel Latif Hadi, 45, said: "The people who were hurt most are normal people who have nothing to do with anything."

Another resident, Mohammed Ali Amin, said: "There were American snipers on rooftops who were shooting people trying to get to their homes. Even at the hospital the Americans arrested injured boys of 15 saying they were insurgents."

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation, the cuts to veterans' benefits, or the dangers of depleted uranium - is the first reason Traveling Soldier is necessary. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

TROOP NEWS

Link Between Illness, Low Doses Of Sarin? Burden Of Proof Is Too High, Say Exposed Veterans

October 04, 2004 By Deborah Funk, Army Times staff writer

Even after revisiting the question, an expert medical committee has not changed its position on whether exposure to levels of sarin too low to cause immediate symptoms is linked to long-term health effects.

In a report issued Aug. 20, the Institute of Medicine found that there is not enough evidence to know whether low doses of the nerve agent are associated with long-term neurological illness.

Previous IOM reports also concluded there was insufficient evidence to address these issues.

And the earlier and current reports both conclude there is "limited" or "suggestive" evidence of a link between higher doses that cause immediate symptoms, and long-term health effects, such as fatigue, headache, blurred vision and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms.

Citing defense officials, the committee said immediate sarin poisoning symptoms weren't reported during sarin munitions demolitions at Khamisiyah, Iraq, in 1991.

Steve Robinson, executive director of the National Gulf War Resource Center, said that's not so. A defense database, he said, shows that troops who were near Khamisiyah reported those kinds of symptoms as well as chemical detection alarms sounding.

"You can't say there's no evidence of acute cholinergic syndrome unless you take DoD's word for it," Robinson said. "The veterans say otherwise."

Veterans "are being held to a standard that requires a burden of proof that we'll never be able to meet," Robinson said. "If the burden of proof rests on what data was collected, we'll never be able to win."

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and in Iraq, and information about other social protest movements here in the USA. Send requests to address up top.

Reserve Well Running Dry; Recruiting Goal Fails

October 04, 2004 By Vince Crawley, Army Times staff writer

The Government Accountability Office, the investigative arm of Congress, reported in mid-September "There are already indications that some portions of the force are being stressed."

"For example, the Army National Guard failed to meet its recruiting goal during 14 of 20 months from October 2002 to May 2004 and ended fiscal 2003 approximately 7,800 soldiers below its recruiting goal."

A Mother Recalls The Life Of Marine Who Died

Oct. 3, 2004 Ed Montini, Arizona Republic

Rhonda McCarthy was 20 years old when her son, Joe, was born. He was early. Problems developed two months before her due date and she was rushed to the hospital for an emergency C-section. It all happened so quickly.

"The doctor said something about a baby boy," she says. "I remember nothing after that."

When Joe was 6 weeks old, Rhonda tried to open a door while wedging the baby carrier with Joe in it against the wall. It slipped, fracturing her boy's skull. At 8 months he had a seizure and nearly died. She remembers asking herself why God seemed to want her son back so quickly.

They lived in Concho, near St. Johns. The athletic, mischievous boy that Joe grew into idolized Jim Carey and Michael Jordan. "He set off the fire extinguisher in the garage and nearly gave his uncle a heart attack," Rhonda says. "He helped to fix my car by putting transmission fluid . . . in the brake reservoir."

But he also could prepare homemade lasagna and once set up an alternative school's sports program. Before his high school prom, Joe and his girlfriend, Amanda Salazar, dressed as clowns and entertained kids at a day-care center. **He had been diagnosed with attention deficit disorder. This made classroom learning difficult, and by the time he was 16 Joe told Rhonda that he wanted to become a Marine.**

"I will never forget the day he had me sign the pre-enlistment papers," she says. "It turned my stomach, but I did it because it meant so much to him. I was worried but I figured, what were the chances of war?"

Joe's family drove him to Phoenix the day that he was supposed to enter the service. **It was Sept. 10, 2001.**

He suffered some shrapnel wounds and earned a Purple Heart, promising to tell his mother all about it - someday. "I thought I could relax after that," Rhonda says. "What were the chances of anything else happening to him? I let my guard down."

Joe's wife showed Rhonda an e-mail he had sent her that read in part: **"Other than wishing my Nana and Poppy were still alive, I would not trade in my life for anything. To me, I have the perfect life; perfect parents, perfect friends, perfect you, perfect job, perfect everything."**

On Labor Day, a car bomb detonated near a group of soldiers outside of Fallujah. Joe and six others were killed. He was 21.

"Maybe one day I'll understand it all," Rhonda says. "Until then I will cry. Every day. Not just out of anger but out of loss. Not only mine but this world's."

PHOTO PROVING POLAND A DICTATORSHIP PUBLISHED



A Polish soldier stands in the turret of an armored vehicle in the Iraqi town of Samawa. **"According to the latest poll, more than 70 percent of Poles are opposed to the presence of their country's troops in Iraq. (AFP)"**

[So, over 70% of Polish population want troops out of Iraq, but here they are. The people who make up the Polish government keep them there, ignoring what the overwhelming majority want. That's called a dictatorship. Duh.] (AFP/File/Joseph Barrak)

Seabees Back To Iraq: “It’s Going To Be Worse”

October 2, 2004 Biloxi Sun Herald

Builder 1st Class Bobby Carey, an Iraq veteran, isn't sure what to expect in the way of living and working conditions for deploying Seabees.

"It's unpredictable," said the Oklahoma native. "We'll have to get over there and see what's going on."

Carey, 28, has helped prepare other Seabees for harsh desert conditions and combat. **However, he served in Iraq last year, before insurgents began stepping up attacks.**

"It's going to be worse," he said.

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 7 from Gulfport began shipping out Thursday evening. Part of the battalion will serve in Guam, while several hundred Seabees likely will serve in Iraq. Seabees from NMCB 17, a reserve battalion in Ft. Carson, Colo., also left with the Gulfport battalion.

While the unit doesn't know its exact destination, other Seabee units from Gulfport have worked throughout the dangerous Sunni triangle in the past 18 months.

In preparation for the deployment, NMCB 7 excelled in recent field exercises, added Maculan, who will help lead a battalion with many seasoned veterans.

"For a lot of the guys, it's their second time," he said.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



(Graphic: London Financial Times)

Senior Collaborator Killed

4 Oct 2004 BAGHDAD, (AFP)

BAGHDAD, (AFP) - A top official at Iraq's science and technology ministry has been shot dead along with a female civil servant by unknown attackers in Baghdad, the interior ministry said.

"Thamer Abdellatif, one the general directors of the ministry, and a civil servant, Ikhlas Ghalib, were shot dead at 7:30 am (0430 GMT) in the al-Qhadeer district in the centre of Baghdad," said ministry spokesman Colonel Adnan Abdelrahmane.

The pair were targeted in their car as they drove to work, he said.

Police Chief Killed

10.4.04 Luke Bakeer, Reuters

The chief of police in Balad Ruz, a rebel bastion just north of Baghdad, was killed.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Losing A War The Old Fashioned Way: Attrition

28-sep-2004 xymphora

*"In our ability to let loose destructive power at great distances and by air, the United States military is undoubtedly unparalleled as a power today. And yet here's the counterintuitive way you have to think about American airpower in Iraq: **Watch where the bombs and missiles are falling - starting with Falluja and ending up on Haifa Street - and you can map almost exactly where American power is blinking off. The use of air power, in other words, is a sign of American weakness. Its use maps our inability to control Iraq.***

To the extent that you can monitor our air power, you'll know much about what's going badly in that country, in part because the resort to air power in a guerrilla war means the surefire alienation of the contested population. It means that you've given up on 'hearts and minds,' to use a classic Vietnam-era phrase, and turned to the punitive destruction of bodies and souls."

The United States is losing the war in Iraq one war crime at a time. **The Pentagon is completely oblivious to the fact that these air attacks on civilians should be profoundly embarrassing to the United States, and continues to announce these barbarities as if they were military successes.**

And still, the Americans are losing, and losing badly.

They are actually losing in the good old fashioned way that would have been understood by the Ancient Greeks. Each time they have a battle, the Americans suffer more debilitating casualties than the resistance.

The Americans are losing for the simple reason that they are running out of troops.

This explains the more and more ridiculous stories we see of attempts to deal with the lack of American troops.

It also explains the reliance on aerial bombardment of civilians. Aerial bombardment is completely useless against the resistance, who are highly mobile and simply evacuate the area, leaving the women and children and old men to die under American bombs.

If these bombs are killing any members of the resistance, it is by sheer luck. The increasing American reliance on the war crime of aerial bombardment reflects the desperation of an army that is out of answers.

With every battle it cedes more and more ground to the resistance, and suffers a disproportionate number of casualties. They can't replace the troops they would lose. **Each case of aerial bombardment increases the fury of the Iraqi people, and thus the size and determination of the resistance. It is a vicious cycle the Americans can't hope to win.**

The attack on Iraq has turned into one of the main embarrassments in American military history.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

“Will we ever have peace?” “We’ll have victory,” he replied.

September 27, 2004 Israel Shamir

In *The Dune*, a visionary film that predicted the US invasion of the Middle East, the spiritual leader of the Resistance is asked:

- Will we ever have peace?
- We’ll have victory, - he replied.

Indeed, the invader may relent and seek for peace; an attacked must seek victory until the invader will seek peace.

The rule is often forgotten by modern proponents of pacifism and non-violence. They preach non-violence to the oppressed as the panacea for their troubles. Not surprisingly, non-violence gets very good media coverage and is supplied for downtrodden in great abundance.

Too often, non-violence grows not out of humility and self-sacrifice, but out of self-preservation and fear; fear of supporting the right side in the war. It is easier to be “against wars and violence” in general than it is to stand against an aggressor and invader, especially if your country happens to be the aggressor and invader.

Thus, in Italy, Communist leader Fausto Bertinotti has proclaimed that he is “against the Iraqi War for he is a pacifist and against wars in general”. After such a statement, he had no reason to demand the return home of Italian soldiers. And he did not.

Good Americans supported the Viet Cong against their own army; and good French – like our friends Ginette Scandrani and Serge Thion – supported the Algerian resistance. Pacifism offers a coward’s escape from facing moral choice.

Hail the warriors; hang not on their shooting arm. Maybe we won’t have peace; but we’ll have victory.

“The Americans Who Die In Iraq Will Have Died For Nothing.”

August 30, 2004 By Charlie Reese, King Features Syndicate

When you look at the Vietnam War Memorial, with those 57,000 names of dead Americans on it, you should feel anger.

All of those young lives were sacrificed by blundering civilian politicians and bureaucrats who made their deaths meaningless. They died because of the posturing and ineptness of politicians in Washington who sent them to war for no logical reason and with no grand strategy for winning.

Vietnam today is a communist country. It could have become a communist country without 57,000 Americans dying in its jungles, mountains and rice paddies. At no time were the communists in Vietnam a threat to the United States.

Now we have Americans dying in another country that was not and never could have been a threat to the United States. Iraq had a bad dictator. Lots of countries have or have had bad dictators. Some of the dictators were installed by the United States, and others were aided by it. Merely toppling a foreign dictator is not a legitimate use of the U.S. military.

Nor is the world safer for the absence of Saddam Hussein, as the present administration keeps saying. That's because Saddam was never a threat to the world in the first place.

American politicians so demonized Saddam, you would think that he was a genius in charge of a large industrial country. He is not a genius. Iraq is not a large country. The only war Saddam ever won was against Kuwait, which is the geographical equivalent of a postage stamp. Saddam was a ruthless, but not overly bright, thug who held power in a small country with a divided population. He was a threat only to his own people.

And you tell me: What is being accomplished by these young Americans dying in Iraq? It's not saving Americans from weapons of mass destruction. There aren't any. It's not saving America from al-Qaida. Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden hated each other and never cooperated. Are these young people dying just to do a favor for the Iraqis? The Iraqis don't want us in their country. It's pretty hard to justify the claim that Iraqis are grateful when they are busy killing their so-called liberators.

It might not be on the same scale, but it's Vietnam all over again.

A war in a foreign country that was no threat to the United States. No strategy for victory. A complete misreading of both the country and its people.

In the end, the Americans who die in Iraq will, like their brothers who died in Vietnam, have died for nothing.

We'll end up installing a replacement dictator. But even if the Iraqis have elections, those elections should not be purchased with American blood.

I would hope that the American people would be (expletive deleted) tired of politicians (expletive deleted) away the lives of our sons and daughters for stupid or hidden reasons. No American soldier should ever die, except in defense of his or her own country. Period. End of story. And every politician who wastes American blood should be thrown out of office.

The Cheap Lies, 1910 And 2004

"The loud little handful -- as usual -- will shout for the war. The pulpit will -- warily and cautiously -- object... at first. The great, big, dull bulk of the nation will rub its sleepy eyes and try to make out why there should be a war, and will say, earnestly and indignantly, 'It is unjust and dishonorable, and there is no necessity for it.'

Then the handful will shout louder. A few fair men on the other side will argue and reason against the war with speech and pen, and at first will have a hearing and be applauded, but it will not last long; those others will outshout them, and presently the antiwar audiences will thin out and lose popularity.

Before long, you will see this curious thing: the speakers stoned from the platform, and free speech strangled by hordes of furious men...

Next the statesmen will invent cheap lies, putting the blame upon the nation that is attacked, and every man will be glad of those conscience-soothing falsities, and will diligently study them, and refuse to examine any refutations of them; and thus he will by and by convince himself that the war is just, and will thank God for the better sleep he enjoys after this process of grotesque self-deception."

Mark Twain, "The Mysterious Stranger" (1910)

Kerry Channeling Nixon '68

20041004 Charles Krauthammer / Syndicated columnist, Seattle Times

Nixon, remember, was vilified by Kerry and his antiwar colleagues for prolonging the suffering and dying in Vietnam for four unnecessary years.

Yet here is Kerry, after 30 years of torturous re-examination of Vietnam, coming full circle and running as Nixon 1968: Mysterious plan, Iraqification, out in four years. A novelist could not have written this tale. It would be too implausible.

OCCUPATION REPORT

A FAILED "TRANSITION"

A Study by the Institute for Policy Studies and Foreign Policy In Focus
Full report with citations (.pdf document); http://www.ips-dc.org/iraq/failedtransition/A_Failed_Transition-webver.pdf

KEY FINDINGS

'A Failed Transition' is the most comprehensive accounting of the mounting costs of the Iraq war on the United States, Iraq, and the world. Among its major findings are stark figures about the escalation of costs in these most recent three months of "transition" to Iraqi rule, a period that the Bush administration claimed would be characterized by falling human and economic costs.

1. U.S. Military Casualties Have Been Highest During the "Transition": U.S. military casualties (wounded and killed) stand at a monthly average of 747 since the so-called "transition" to Iraqi rule on June 28, 2004. This contrasts with a monthly average of 482 U.S. military casualties during the invasion (March 20-May 1, 2003) and a monthly average of 415 during the occupation (May 2, 2003-June 28, 2004).

2. Non-Iraqi Contractor Deaths Have Also Been Highest During the "Transition": There has also been a huge increase in the average monthly deaths of U.S. and other non-Iraqi contractors since the "transition." On average, 17.5 contractors have died each month since the June 28 "transition," versus 7.6 contractor deaths per month during the previous 14 months of occupation.

3. Estimated Strength of Iraqi Resistance Skyrockets: Because the U.S. military occupation remains in place, the "transition" has failed to win Iraqi support or diminish Iraqi resistance to the occupation.

According to Pentagon estimates, the number of Iraqi resistance fighters has quadrupled between November of 2003 and early September 2004, from 5,000 to 20,000.

The Deputy Commander of Coalition forces in Iraq, British Major General Andrew Graham, indicated to Time magazine in early September that he thinks the 20,000 estimate is too low; he estimates Iraqi resistance strength at 40,000-50,000. This rise is even starker when juxtaposed to Brookings Institution estimates that an additional 24,000 Iraqi resistance fighters have been detained or killed between May 2003 and August 2004.

4. U.S.- led Coalition Shrinks Further After "Transition": The number of countries identified as members of the Coalition backing the U.S.-led war started with 30 on March 18, 2003, then grew in the early months of the war. Since then, eight countries have withdrawn their troops and Costa Rica has demanded to be taken off the coalition list. At the war's start, coalition countries represented 19.1 percent of the world's population;

today, the remaining countries with forces in Iraq represent only 13.6 percent of the world's population.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Kerry, Newest Neo-con

October 4, 2004 By WILLIAM SAFIRE, New York Times

As the Democratic Whoopee Brigade hailed Senator Kerry's edge in debating technique, nobody noticed his foreign policy sea change. **On both military tactics and grand strategy, the newest neoconservative announced doctrines more hawkish than President Bush.**

First, on war-fighting in Iraq: Hard-liners criticized the Bush decision this spring not to send U.S. troops in to crush Sunni resistance in the Baathist stronghold in Falluja. Our forces wanted to fight to win but soft-liners in Washington worried about the effect of heavier civilian casualties on the hearts and minds of Iraqis, and of U.S. troop losses on Americans.

Last week in debate, John Kerry - until recently, the antiwar candidate too eager to galvanize dovish Democrats - suddenly reversed field, and came down on the side of the military hard-liners.

"What I want to do is change the dynamics on the ground," Kerry volunteered. "And you have to do that by beginning to not back off of Falluja and other places and send the wrong message to terrorists. ... You've got to show you're serious."

Right on, John! Although he added his standard softener of "sharing the stakes" with "the rest of the world," **he issued his radically revised military policy: wipe out resistance in terrorist strongholds like Falluja, which requires us to inflict and accept higher casualties.**

Kerry's belated but welcome hawkish call to "change the dynamics on the ground" supports the joint U.S.-Iraqi seizure of control of that terrorist haven. It will be bloody, but such use of firepower in "serious" denial of sanctuary should save lives in the long run.

Next, to grand strategy: Kerry was asked by Jim Lehrer, "What is your position on the whole concept of pre-emptive war?" In the past, Kerry has given a safe never-say-never response, but last week he gave a Strangelovian answer: **"The president always has**

the right and always has had the right for pre-emptive strike." He pledged never to cede "the right to pre-empt in any way necessary" to protect the U.S.

But in embracing his right to pre-empt - always derided in horror by the two-minutes-to-midnight crowd as impermissible "preventive war" - Kerry felt the need to interject: "That was a great doctrine throughout the cold war. And it was one of the things we argued about with respect to arms control."

Hold on; nuclear pre-emption was never America's "great doctrine" during confrontation with the Soviets. Our strategic doctrine, which some of us remember, was at first "massive retaliation," later "mutual assured destruction." **Maybe arms control negotiators listed pre-emption or preventive war as a dangerous notion of extremists, but only kooks portrayed by the likes of Peter Sellers called for a nuclear final solution to the Communist problem.**

If Bush had defined pre-emption as such a "great doctrine throughout the cold war," we would have seen sustained snickering on cable and horrified eye-rolling from the Charles River Gang.

On stopping North Korea's nuclear buildup, Kerry abandoned his global-testing multilateralism; our newest neocon derided Bush's six-nation talks and demands America go it gloriously alone.

And in embracing Wilsonian idealism to intervene in Darfur's potential genocide, Kerry's promise of troops outdid Pentagon liberators: "If it took American forces to some degree to coalesce the African Union, I'd be prepared to do it."

<p>His abandoned antiwar supporters celebrate the Kerry personality makeover. They shut their eyes to Kerry's hard-line, right-wing, unilateral, pre-election policy epiphany.</p>
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KERRY: I WILL FIX MOUNT ST. HELENS

Bush 'In Denial' About Volcano, Senator Charges

October 3, 2004 The Borowitz Report

Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry kept President Bush on the defensive today, telling a Pittsburgh audience that Mr. Bush had allowed the long-dormant volcano Mount St. Helens to erupt on his watch, adding that he would "fix Mount St. Helens once and for all" if elected in November.

"When George Bush was elected president, Mount St. Helens was nothing but a trivia question," Mr. Kerry said. "Well, guess what, folks - it's spewing volcanic gases right now and it's only a matter of time before she blows."

Mr. Kerry said that Mr. Bush had refused to keep an eye on the troubling increase in volcanic activity at Mount St. Helens because he was "totally obsessed with Iraq."

"I've got news for George Bush, " Mr. Kerry said. "Saddam Hussein isn't erupting. Mount St. Helens is erupting."

After accusing Mr. Bush of being "in denial" about "the molten magma stewing inside that scary sucker," **Mr. Bush fired back, saying that it would be "sending the wrong message" to say that Mr. St. Helens was erupting.**

Supreme Court Justice Anthony Scalia rose to the president's defense, saying that he believed it would be "awesome" to have group sex inside the volcano's red-hot crater.

"Throw in a few barnyard animals and that's what I call a party," Justice Scalia said.

In other campaign news, Mr. Bush ridiculed Mr. Kerry's statement that the U.S. must pass "a global test" before using military force, adding, "I have never passed a test in my life and I'm not going to start now."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Resistance Fields 1,700 Troops In Zabul: Bush Buddy Babbles Bullshit

2004/10/04 By The Associated Press and The Christian Science Monitor

"All the Americans did was take away the dead bodies after the battle was over."

The deaths of three Afghan soldiers and two militants over the weekend -- barely noted in news reports -- brought to at least 957 the number of people reported killed in political violence this year, according to an Associated Press review. The toll includes about 30 U.S. soldiers.

On Saturday, rebels killed two militia guards at the home of a former senior official in Uruzgan province, said Police Chief Rozi Khan. A third soldier died when troops came under fire as they tried to flee with a suspect captured during the battle. The prisoner also was fatally wounded, Khan said.

In Qalat, the capital of restive Zabul province, security chief Lt. Gen. Amir Mohammad Noori said his 1,500 police and 500 Afghan National Army soldiers are ready for whatever the Taliban have planned for election day.

Even so, he conceded that the Taliban are evenly matched, with 1,700 guerrillas in Zabul, and that they travel freely in far-off districts such as Sari and Khake Afghan.

"We have a very strong plan for security," Noori said. "We'll have patrols, we'll strengthen our checkpoints. The road will be closed to any armed people, unless they have a permission slip from their commander." [Looks like 1,700 permission slips headed your way.]

This is small comfort for Malik Ali Mohammad, the commander of Khake Afghan district. Mohammad said he is disappointed by U.S. forces, who neglected to support him against the Taliban last week.

"We called the American forces, but they didn't come to help us," he said. "In 4 1/2 hours of face-to-face fighting, we didn't get any support. What can the Afghan government do for us? They don't have transportation to get to our areas. All the Americans did was take away the dead bodies after the battle was over."

"If we don't have disarmament in Afghanistan, we will get the same faces in Parliament, and if they get into Parliament, we should all pack our bags and give up," said Andrew Wilder, head of the Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit, an independent think tank in Kabul. "I'm really in favor of elections, but this is the last important opportunity to get things right."

Such a dark assessment, echoed by a number of recent reports on deteriorating security, contrasted with the bright picture presented to Congress last week by assistant Secretary of State Richard Armitage.

Armitage told members of Congress that the Afghan elections would be a "success," although he expected the Taliban to attempt to disrupt the process.

Received:

Correction:

From: David Cline, Veterans For Peace
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2004 9:12 PM
Subject: Re: GI Special 2#B81: Most Mil. Families Oppose War

Vigil for the Fallen was on 10/2 but in NYC not Washington, DC

Bringing The Troops Home From Iraq Now Is NOT Debatable-

01 Oct 2004, Oct. 17- Million Worker March

**Bringing the Troops Home from Iraq is NOT debatable—
Nor was is part of the debates last night
We Need Our Own Voice in the Debate**

That's way we must be in Washington DC on October 17

Whatever your view of the debates last night, this much was clear-- although the big topic of debate was supposed to be the war and continued occupation of Iraq -- **Nobody in the debate called for bringing the troops home now.**

This is the reason why those of us who are demanding that the troops come home now must do everything we can to keep the debate in the street.

The street is the only place where the anti-war position is being forcefully made. Oct 17 is the next big chance for the anti-war movement to join the debate and WE MUST NOT FAIL TO SHOW UP FOR IT.

We need our own voice in the debates!

Working people will speak for themselves, in their own voice on October 17 at the Million Worker March.

On October 17, we will have the opportunity to enter the debate, on our terms, in our name, as we march on Washington, DC.

This is a march and a movement initiated by working people--starting with ILWU Local 10 in San Francisco. The leadership of the movement is drawn from working people. And the issues we will raise are issues that effect working people.

Momentum is building for the Million Worker March---new organizing centers are springing up all over the country

(see <http://antiwar4themillionworkermarch.org/organizingcenters.htm>)

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