

GI SPECIAL 2#54

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME-- PAYBACK IS OVERDUE



US soldier on a stretcher, US Airbase of Ramstein, Germany, April 8. Eight US soldiers injured in combat in Iraq were flown from Iraq to the US hospital in Landstuhl today. (AP Photo/Michael Probst)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

US Convoy Attacked Near Baghdad

8 April 2004 Sofia News Agency

Insurgents have attacked an American military convoy on a highway some 20 kilometers west of Baghdad.

Two vehicles have been put on fire, surrounded by dancing and cheering armed insurgents, AFP reported.

U.S. Convoy Attacked, Burning



Sunni resistance soldiers celebrate in front of a burning US convoy they had attacked earlier in Abu Gharib, on the outskirts of Fallujah. (AFP/Karim Sahib)





Iraqis sitting on a truck loaded with medical and food supplies bound for the flashpoint town of Fallujah, pass a burning US convoy attacked in Abu Gharib. (AFP/Karim Sahib)

U.S. Headquarters Attacked, Burning



Smoke billows from the Coalition Provisional Authority headquarters in Baghdad following mortar attack by resistance. (AFP/Nicolas Asfour)

Six U.S. Soldiers Killed In Action

4.8.04 BAGHDAD (Reuters) & & HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND, Release Number: 04-04-14C

The U.S. military said it had suffered six more combat deaths in Iraq on Wednesday and Thursday.

Five more soldiers were killed in action on Wednesday and Thursday, and added that another soldier had died after being wounded in a bomb attack on April 4 in the northern city of Mosul.

Two Marines had been killed in western Iraq, one on Wednesday and one on Thursday.

One Task Force 1st Armored Division Soldier was killed when two rockets impacted Camp Cooke at about 5:30 p.m. April 7.

One 1st Infantry Division Soldier was killed as the result of a small-arms fire attack at a checkpoint near Samarra at about 9:25 p.m. April 7.

One 1st Infantry Division Soldier was killed when a combat patrol was attacked by an improvised explosive device, a rocket-propelled grenade and small-arms fire near the town of Khan Bani Sa'ad at about 10:45 a.m. April 8. A quick reaction force responded, detaining two individuals.

A Task Force Olympia Soldier died April 8 from injuries suffered in an improvised explosive device attack on a Coalition convoy in Mosul April 4. The name of the Soldier is being withheld pending notification of next-of-kin.

Two More US Marines Killed, One Wounded By Snipers In Fallujah

FALLUJAH, Iraq (AFP) 4.8.04 & By LEE KEATH, Associated Press Writers

Two US marines were killed by snipers in the Iraqi town of Fallujah, west of Baghdad, as they pressed an offensive to crush insurgents, a marine officer revealed.

One of the marines was shot dead by a sniper as he climbed a ladder. The second died after he was hit in the neck as he passed a window, the officer said Thursday.

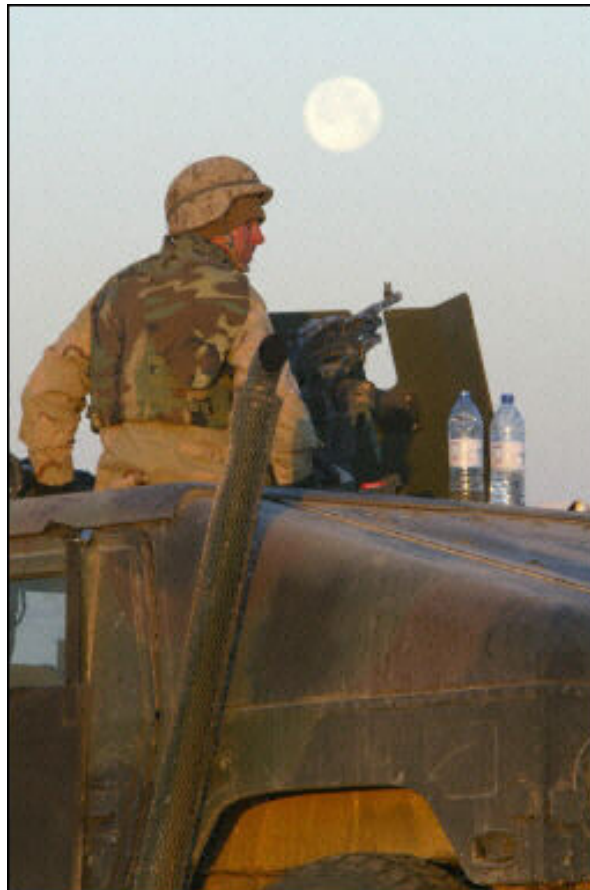
A third marine was shot and wounded in the leg, the source said, adding that the shootings happened in the industrial area of Fallujah.

A total 10 Marines are known to have been wounded since they launched a siege of Fallujah, west of Baghdad, early Monday. **The Marines have not given a full casualty count.**

U.S. Marines fought insurgents for a second day. **One U.S. Marine was reported killed by the military,** although it released no details. **(No, not killed by the military, killed by Pussface Asshole Bush.)**

Marines battled again around the Abdel-Aziz al-Samarrai mosque, which **Marine Capt. James Edge said insurgents were again using as a base despite a six-hour battle Wednesday to uproot them.** Helicopters were deployed to support the Marines, he said.

HELL ON EARTH: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



US Marine near Fallujah. (AFP/Cris Bouroncle)

The Tunnel At The End Of The Light: Sanchez Admits Sunni, Shia Have Joined Forces Against Occupation

4.8.04 By LEE KEATH, Associated Press Writers

Army Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, the top U.S. general in Iraq said there appeared to be links "at the lowest levels" between the Shiite militia — which has been battling coalition forces in at least a half-dozen southern cities this week — and Sunni Arab insurgents who have long fought U.S. troops in central Iraq cities such as Fallujah and Ramadi.

MORE:

Sanchez Has It Right: Thousands Of Sunnis And Shias Join To Relieve Falluja



Iraqis gather in Abu Gharib, before marching toward the flashpoint town of Fallujah. **Thousands of Sunni and Shiite Muslims backed by cars full of food and medical supplies headed on foot toward the town of Fallujah which has been besieged by US forces.**(AFP/Karim Sahib)

Big Bush Success Uniting Sunnis And Shias

CONTRARIAN COMMENTARY FROM ANDY MARTIN FOR OUT2.COM, (PALM BEACH, FLORIDA) (April 7, 2004)

The most frightening gap we confront is President Bush's awareness of the dangers he is facing. It is chilling to read his remarks in Arkansas Tuesday, in which he claimed we face "terrorists" who are opposed to "freedom."

How can we characterize people fighting in their own front yard as "terrorists," and people fighting for what they hope will end the occupation as opposing "freedom." Maybe Bush has hired Ariel Sharon's speechwriter. It does appear that the president is increasingly out of touch with reality.

Bush has accomplished the impossible in one area: he actually has Sunnis and Shiites making nice again. Who'd a thunk it?

Shia Army Controls Iraq Cities



Shia Al- Mahdi Army soldiers stand guard outside Al Kufa mosque in Kufa, April 6, 2004. (AP Photo/Muhammed Muheisen)

4.8.04 By LEE KEATH, Associated Press Writers, BAGHDAD, Iraq

Shiite Muslim militants held three southern Iraqi cities.

The militia led by radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr has full control over the city of Kut and partial control in Najaf. Residents of Kufa said militiamen also control that southern city by holding police stations and government buildings. (And everything else.)

Polish, Bulgarians Attacked; Five Million Shias On The Move

April 8, 2004 The Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland - **Polish and Bulgarian soldiers drove off Shiite Muslims who attacked them near the municipal hall in the Iraqi city of Karbala during all-night battles, a Polish spokesman said Thursday.**

Coalition forces suffered no casualties but killed nine attackers and wounded an estimated 20 others, Lt. Col. Robert Strzelecki in a telephone interview from Iraq.

The attacks began about 11 p.m. Wednesday and continued until nearly sunrise, Strzelecki said. The attackers, loyal to hardline cleric Muqtada al-Sadr used machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and small arms during fighting which the spokesman described as heavy.

Strzelecki estimated there were 500 to 600 al-Sadr supporters in Karbala and that a "substantial" number of them took part in the attack on the city hall.

The Shiite uprising comes as thousands of pilgrims are flocking to Shiite shrines for religious ceremonies this weekend marking al-Arbaeen, which ends the mourning period for a Shiite saint martyred in the 7th century.

Strzelecki said that some 5 million people are expected and stressed that they would be protected.

Two Marine Cops Wounded

April 8, 2004 (AP) CENTEREACH, N.Y.

A 24-year-old Marine from Long Island was wounded in Iraq, the U.S. Marine Corps said Wednesday.

Cpl. Joseph Napolitano, a graduate of Centereach High School, was hurt Monday "as a result of enemy actions" near Al Ramadi, the Marine Corps Military Police Company said in a statement.

Also wounded was Cpl. Jesse R. Sorkness, 24, of Eagan, Minn., who joined the Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion, 4th Marine Division in August 1999. Sorkness was transported to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

HOW MANY MORE FOR BUSH'S WAR?



A U.S. Marine carries a wounded comrade after their tank was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade in Fallujah.

Explosions Near Japanese Camp

April 7, 2004 The Associated Press

TOKYO - Three explosions were reported near the camp where Japanese troops are based in southern Iraq, a defense official said Thursday. No injuries were reported.

Officials were investigating the cause of the explosions, which were heard by Japanese troops late Wednesday evening outside their camp near the southern city of Samawah, a Defense Agency spokesman said on condition of anonymity.

A mortar shell was later found outside the base perimeter, Kyodo News agency said, citing unnamed defense officials. The spokesman denied that.

Mujahedeen Threaten To Burn Japanese Prisoners Alive; Israelis Also Captured

April 8, 2004 Associated Press, BAGHDAD, Iraq & JASON KEYSER, Associated Press

Three Japanese were kidnapped by insurgents in Iraq, and captors armed with automatic rifles and swords threatened today to burn the Japanese alive if Tokyo did not withdraw from the U.S.-led coalition.

The Arabic TV station Al-Jazeera, broadcasting to Iraq and the rest of the Arab world, showed portions of a tape from a previously unknown group calling itself the "Mujahedeen Squadrons" showing the Japanese blindfolded and surrounded by gunmen. It also shows their passports.

Associated Press Television News obtained a copy of the full tape, which also shows four armed, masked men pointing knives and swords at the captives' chests and throats.

On Al-Jazeera, an announcer read a statement that he said came with the video in which the kidnappers issue a three-day ultimatum for Japan to announce it will withdraw its troops from southern Iraq.

"Three of your sons have fallen into our hands," the Al-Jazeera announcer read. "We offer you two choices: either pull out your forces, or we will burn them alive. We give you three days starting the day this tape is broadcast."

The full video shows the Japanese crouched on the floor of a concrete walled room with an iron door. Four masked men dressed in black stand behind them holding automatic weapons and RPG launchers.

The gunmen then show passports identifying the three as: Noriaki Imai, born 1985; Soichiro Koriyama, 32; Nahoko Takato, 34. They also show a press card for Koriyama from the weekly newspaper Asahi.

Two Arab residents of east Jerusalem - one an Israeli citizen working for a U.S. aid group, also were detained Thursday.

The events suggested a new tactic by insurgents to pressure the governments of Washington's allies in Iraq, and posed dire implications for U.N. workers, journalists, religious groups, security personnel and other civilians doing business here.

This was the first time foreigners have been snatched for political reasons, and the first such dramatic video ultimatum.

Al-Jazeera editors said the three were taken hostage in southern Iraq, where black-clad Shiite militiamen have been engaged in an uprising this week. The exact date of their capture was not known.

News of the kidnappings of the two Arabs came in video footage from Iranian television, rebroadcast on Israeli television. It shows images of the men's documents, including an Israeli driver's license, a health insurance card and a supermarket card. A U.S. driver's license from the state of Georgia also was displayed.

The men identify themselves as Nabil Razouk, 30, and Ahmed Yassin Tikati, 33.

Briton Taken Prisoner In Nassiriya

8 April, 2004 BAGHDAD (Reuters)

A British civilian has been taken prisoner in the southern Iraqi town of Nassiriya, the scene of heavy fighting between radical Shi'ite militiamen and Iraqi troops, a coalition official says.

The official named the man as Gary Teeley, a British contractor. He was taken on Tuesday and had not been heard of since. He said on Thursday efforts were under way to locate him.

TROOP NEWS

Troops In Iraq Fucked Again

To: GI Special
From: V, Washington DC
4.8.04

According to reports coming here, the U.S. military command in Iraq has already asked for reinforcement. **The Pentagon has not made an official decision so far, but a report came that the replacement by fresh troops of 24,000 U.S. officers and men, planned for the current week, has been postponed, and they will stay in Iraq for an indefinite period of time.** So, they will increase the soldiers by not returning the ones who were supposed to go home, as their "replacements" arrive.

Military Gays In Iraq Accepted By U.S. Troops; It's Politician Bigots Causing The Problems

Army Times 4.12.04

The Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military at the University of California, Santa Barbara says in a February study that openly homosexual service members of other nations are serving in Iraq and are accepted by U.S. troops.

The study says the presence and acceptance of openly gay troops runs counter to the Pentagon's argument that morale, discipline and unit cohesion would be compromised if homosexuals were allowed to serve openly in the U.S. military.

The authors of the study say their analysis undermines the basis for the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy implemented early in the Clinton administration that allows homosexuals to serve in the U.S. military as long as they keep quiet about their sexual preference and do not have gay sex. **A policy change is unlikely, however, because neither the Bush administration nor Congress seems to want to reopen debate about homosexuals in the ranks.**

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to the E-mail address up top. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

REAL BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



A U.S. Army soldier watches from a highway railing as a truck burns at rear, **following an attack on Baghdad's airport road. For nearly a week, the roads leading to the airport have been under attack by resistance mortar teams and small units armed with RPGs.** April 5, 2004. (Ceerwan Aziz/Reuters)

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

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

THIS IS WHAT RESISTANCE TO FOREIGN OCCUPATION LOOKS LIKE



A British Army Land Rover lies burned while surrounded by happy children near Amara April 6, 2004.



Armed Shias chant anti-US slogans in Sadr City. The Iraqi capital's biggest Shiite neighborhood seethed with rage after at least 57 residents were killed in a US counteroffensive against militiamen loyal to radical leader Moqtada Sadr. (AFP/Patrick Baz)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

“A New Generation Exposed To Unnecessary Death And Destruction”

To: GI Special

From: David Honish <http://www.veteransforpeace.org>

I saw on ABC Night Line tonite that Jack Smith died today of a reported heart attack and stroke.

He was only 58 years old. His Dad was Howard K. Smith, also of ABC news. Jack served as a TV news correspondent in Viet Nam. Prior to that he served as an infantryman in Viet Nam. He is mentioned briefly in the book "We Were Soldiers Once, And Young."

His company was overrun and nearly annihilated in the battle for LZ X-ray in the Ia Drang Valley battle. Jack, like the other survivors of his company, had to escape and evade the NVA.

At one point while crawling past the dead soldiers of a M-60 machine gun crew he heard approaching NVA and played dead, hoping the appearance of his wounds would aid his masquerade. It worked so well that the NVA used what they thought was his dead body as a sand bag to support the bipod legs of the M-60 when they captured the gun and used it against the U.S. troops.

After they ran out of ammo and moved on with the captured gun, Jack was able to stop playing dead and continue crawling in search of friendly troops. Having your body used as a supporting rest for a machine gun firing at your buddies has to be a pretty tough thing to deal with?

As a psychiatric nurse, I have seen a lot of folks with debilitating PTSD from far less. That incident undoubtedly took a physical, as well as a mental toll. 58 seems kind of young to me for a fatal heart attack and stroke? I can't help but think that his experiences in Viet Nam took years off his life. Saigon fell to the NVA in April 1975. **Twenty nine years later that war claimed yet another victim.**

I wish I could say that we have learned something from Viet Nam about wars fought for politician's egos and the profits of global corporations. I wish we had learned more from using chemical weapons in WWI, radiation exposure of the atomic veterans of tests in Nevada in the 1950's, and the use of defoliants like Agent Orange in Viet Nam.

It is unfortunate that Congress failed in its responsibility to decide whether or not to declare war. It is worse that GW is allowed to send those that did not desert THEIR Air National Guard units over to Iraq to steal oil for his campaign contributors.

So now we have a new generation exposed to unnecessary death and destruction, this time with depleted uranium exposure instead of Agent Orange. Will those

that survive today be the ones 29 years from now that seem too young for fatal heart attacks and strokes?

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. For copies on web site see:**<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/>

The New Issue Of Traveling Soldier Is Out!

This Issue Features:

1. "I saw the destroyed villages, I saw lives destroyed by what happened there":

An interview with USMC LCPL Mike Hoffman, who was in the invasion of Iraq and is now a member for Veterans for Peace and the Campus Antiwar Network in Philadelphia, about his experiences there and the prospects of more GIs opposing the occupation of Iraq. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/4.04.hoffman.php>

2. Lou Plummer reports on the military families, vets, and GIs who marched at Ft. Bragg on March 20th. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/4.04.march20.php>

3. Larry Syverson reports on the military families' march on the White House, Walter Reed Medical Center where most of the wounded from Iraq are sent and Dover Air Force Base, where Bush has banned any coverage of the returning dead from Iraq. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/4.04.weekend.php>

4. What they won't tell you about Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – Hospital worker Tom Barton explains that one of the best ways for returning GIs to cope with PTSD is through anti-war activism. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/4.04.ptsd.php>

5. Wounded soldier needs your help! The Pentagon has sent a medically unfit soldier back to the front-lines on patrol in Baghdad. Send an email to his mother to help get him out of harm's way. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/4.04.wounded.php>

6. The lesser evil in 2004? John Kerry, seen by many as the anti-war movement's hope, is nothing of the sort. Voting for him isn't the answer - it's building a movement in the streets, on the campuses, at workplaces, and amongst veterans and active duty GIs. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/4.04.kerry.php>

7. The story of the first soldier to quit Iraq war, Camilo Mejia, with an appeal from his mother to support him in his fight for Conscientious Objector status. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/4.04.mejia.php>

8. A report on Marine morale in Okinawa, Japan
<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/4.04.okinawa.php>

9. Words from the front-lines, a compilation of what soldiers are saying about the war in Iraq. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/4.04.words.php>

The Iraqi Inversion

By MAUREEN DOWD, April 8, 2004, New York Times

WASHINGTON: Maybe after high-definition TV, they'll invent high-dudgeon TV, a product so realistic you can just lunge through the screen and shake the Bush officials when they say something maddening about 9/11 or Iraq, or when they engage in some egregious bit of character assassination.

And I was desperately wishing for it yesterday, when Donald Rumsfeld held forth at a Pentagon briefing.

Even though the assumptions the Bush administration used to go to war have now proved to be astonishingly arrogant, naïve and ideological, Mr. Rumsfeld is as testy and Delphic as ever about the fragility of Iraq.

"We're trying to explain how things are going, and they are going as they are going," he said, adding: "Some things are going well and some things obviously are not going well. You're going to have good days and bad days." On the road to democracy, this "is one moment, and there will be other moments. And there will be good moments and there will be less good moments."

Calling the families of more than 30 young Americans killed this week in the confusing hell of Iraq must be a less good moment.

Our troops in Iraq don't know who they're fighting and who they're saving. They don't know when they're coming home or when they're being forcibly re-upped by Rummy. Our diplomats in Baghdad don't know who they're handing the country over to next month. And Bush officials don't know where to go for help, since the military's tapped out, the allies have cold feet, the Arab world's angry and the rest of the globe is thinking, "You got what you deserved."

Every single thing the administration calculated would happen in Iraq has turned out the opposite. The W.M.D. that supposedly threatened us did not exist. The dangerous dictator was deluded and writing romance novels. The terrorism that would be thwarted has mushroomed in Iraq and is feeding Arab radicalism.

Mr. Rumsfeld thought invading Iraq would exorcise America's Vietnam syndrome, its squeamishness about using force. Instead, it has raised the specter of another

Vietnam, where our courageous troops don't understand the culture, can't recognize the enemy and don't have an exit strategy. And the administration spins the war every day.

The hawks thought they could establish a democracy that would produce a domino effect in the Arab world. Wrong. The dominoes are falling in a scarier direction.

The president thought he could improve on the ending to his father's gulf war. Wrong again.

OCCUPATION REPORT

General Sanchez Is Right Again!

April 8, 2004 BAGHDAD, Iraq (CNN)

Army Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez said at a Baghdad Thursday news briefing. "*We will not let a small group of criminals and thugs control the destiny of this country,*"

CRIMINAL WITH THUG



Bremer with Sanchez (AP Photo/Greg Baker)

Not long after he spoke, two mortar rounds fell into the Green Zone, the headquarters of the coalition in Baghdad. (!)

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

FLAG DESECRATION



Jason Reed/Reuters

Wall St. Loves Lula & Chavez

4.6.04 Wall St. Journal, Joel Millman

A growing list of hard-line populists have come to power in the region over the past few years. Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Venezuela's Hugo Chavez and Argentina's Néstor Kirchner all won elections threatening to go eyeball-to-eyeball with international bondholders, but, once in power, none have been as strident as they were on the campaign trail.

'These guys straddle two Sides,' says Walter Molano, an economist with BCP Securities in New York. "Lula [da Silva] knows how to communicate to the people. But at the end of the day, Lula does Wall Street's bidding, and Hugo Chavez pays his coupon."

(For more see the article "Brazil: Reform And Revolution," by Tom Lewis, at www.isreview.org.)

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