

GI SPECIAL 2#74

WAIT FOR THE UN? BULLSHIT. BRING THE TROOPS HOME NOW!



Resistance In Falluja: “If Any American Appears On The Street We Will Shoot Him”

May 3 (IPS) Aaron Glantz FALLUJAH

Amid the stench of death, there is also a sense of victory in Fallujah. Young Mujahadin fighters carrying Kalashnikovs now drive around the city on top of cars and motorbikes. People on the streets cheer them.

Another small crowd gathers around the remains of a mosque. Two craters caused by U.S. bombs have become filled with raw sewage. **Despite the destruction all around, most of the men gathered here feel they have won a hard-fought victory.**

“For 25 days they used everything they had -- tanks, planes, helicopters, everything and many other kinds of weapons,” says Ayyad Tapid Abbas. “They couldn't enter this heroic city. God is with us and we are right. If any American appears on the street we will shoot him.”

Sheikh Abdul Kadr al-Isawie from the mosque goes a step further. He says images released this week of U.S. soldiers torturing Iraqi prisoners at Saddam's old prison Abu Grahib show that suffering and cruelty are the norm under U.S. occupation. “This torture

will not pass without punishment," he tells IPS. "This is against our dignity. That's what the residents of Fallujah say."

He is hardly bothered by the fury unleashed by the killing of four U.S. contractors whose bodies were dragged through the town and then hung from a bridge. He says a similar fate will meet the members of the U.S.-appointed Iraqi Governing Council if they fail to act over allegations of brutality against incarcerated Iraqis.

"I swear to God that we will pull out the members of the Governing Council and we will hang them on the old Fallujah bridge," he tells IPS. "Those are the men who brought America and this destruction and they will hang on the doors of all the houses in Fallujah."

Al-Isawie denies that such actions amount to terrorism. "Is there any terrorist in Iraq?" he asks. "There is no terrorism and that's a fact. We only defend our houses and our city."

A team of local volunteers wearing surgical masks lifts the rotting body of a middle-aged woman from a shallow grave in the front yard of a house. The house owner says the body lay there three weeks.

A U.S. aircraft bombed her car as she fled the city with her husband. The husband was buried in the garden of the house next door. The destroyed remains of the car are scattered a few metres away.

"We couldn't give her a proper burial," the house owner told IPS, "because every time we would go outside, American snipers would shoot at us. They even shot at us when we retrieved her body from the car after the Americans bombed it."

The head of the medical says his clinic's ambulance was fired upon by U.S. Marine snipers twice during the siege. One of the clinic's volunteers was killed.

"The Americans are dogs," he says. "They try to kill anybody who works in humanitarian aid. They attack any humanitarian aid worker, doctor, or ambulance to kill him." Many more bodies continue to rot under buildings that collapsed under U.S. bombing, he says.

Ahmed Saud says a niece also died in the U.S. military assault, but he has not found her body. Nor has he been able to locate any of her eight children.

"Every day (the Americans) show us that Saddam Hussein made many mass graves," he says. **"Resistance to occupation is normal.** How could they do this? Even the little children and the families (are dead)."

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

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

Marine Found Dead In Euphrates River

May 7, 2004 United States Department of Defense News Release No. 430-04

The Department of Defense announced today the death of a Marine.

Cpl. Jeffrey G. Green, 20, of Dallas, Texas, was found deceased on May 5 in the Euphrates River, in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. Cause of death is under investigation. He was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Two Journalists Killrd In Latafiya

May 7 2004 AFP

A Polish and an Algerian journalist, both working for Poland's TVP television, were shot dead by gunmen south of Baghdad, their Iraqi companion said.

A Polish cameraman was also wounded in the attack in Latafiya, 30km from Baghdad, Assir Kamel al-Kazzaz said.

The four were driving when gunmen pulled up behind and raked their vehicle with gunfire, Kazzaz said, killing the Polish journalist and bringing the car to a halt.

The gunmen then turned round and came back to fire again, killing the Algerian and wounding the cameraman, he said.

An AFP photographer saw the two bodies on the roadside, in an area around Mahmudiya, Iskandiriya and Latifiya where insurgents have carried out a series of deadly ambushes since killing seven Spanish intelligence agents there last November.

A Little Taste Of Guerrilla War Reality; “The Militia Members Have Melted Away”

May 5, 2004 CNN NEWSNIGHT AARON BROWN

JANE ARRAF, CNN BAGHDAD BUREAU CHIEF (voice-over): Only the moon lights these streets as the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment rolls out its tanks. **With ambush the militia's favorite strategy, the Army is grateful for the power cuts. The first of two U.S. casualties here on this night is wounded at a checkpoint.**

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The persons inside the vehicle engaged the soldiers at the checkpoint?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Correct.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The soldiers returned fire?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Correct, destroyed the vehicle.

ARRAF: **Officers at this mobile command center learn the soldier has been shot in the abdomen but is expected to be OK.**

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: (Unintelligible) over there checking on the casualty.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Roger.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Beautiful.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The ambulance is already on the road (unintelligible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Is that big fire off to the east the vehicle you engaged? Over.

ARRAF: The Army's main target is Muqtada al-Sadr's local office and a nearby girls' school where they find mortars and 70 mortar rounds. Lieutenant Colonel Bob Burns has called in a C-130 to fire 40mm cannon into Sadr's headquarters. They planned to blow it up with Hellfire missiles if they met resistance. Instead the building is empty.

(voice-over): The militia members though have melted away.

MAJ. JOHN STEELE, U.S. ARMY: I did expect a lot more enemy contact based on the intel assistance that we had, the ambushes here in the past. That has not happened. I think the enemy knows if they try to stay and fight us toe-to-toe that they'll lose so the probably went to ground tonight. **They'll come back if they want to come and engage us in ambushes.**

Polish Soldier Dies In Road Accident

May 8, 2004 The Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland - A road accident near the Iraqi city of Karbala killed one Polish soldier and wounded two, a spokesman for the Polish-led multinational force said.

The accident happened at about 10 a.m. when a civilian truck hit a military vehicle in a convoy that was traveling in the opposite direction, Lt. Col. Robert Strzelecki said by telephone from the force's Camp Babylon headquarters.

The vehicle rolled down an embankment, killing the driver and injuring two Polish soldiers, Strzelecki said. The injured soldiers were taken to a military hospital. He refused to identify the victims.

TROOP NEWS

Wounded Plainwell Reservist Reflects On Iraq Duty; Optic Nerve And Face Blown Away

May 06, 2004 Associated Press PLAINWELL, Mich.

Wounded during an attack on his convoy in Iraq, Sgt. Michael Bevins now wears a narrow black metal bracelet bearing the name of a fellow soldier who didn't make it home.

Bevins, 35, recalls nothing from Feb. 16, when he climbed in the back seat of the Humvee behind Pvt. Nichole M. Frye. There were five soldiers in the vehicle when an improvised explosive device struck the convoy.

Frye, 19, of Lena, Wis., was killed. One soldier was thrown from the vehicle and two others were injured along with Bevins, who was assigned along with Frye to the 415th Civil Affairs Battalion of the Army Reserve in Kalamazoo.

"I'm extremely grateful to be alive," Bevins, who had been in Iraq just more than a week, told the Kalamazoo Gazette for a recent story.

When asked about the bracelet - which reads "Killed In Action. Nicole Frye" - Bevins' eyes fill with tears.

"It's something I'll never forget," he said.

Shrapnel blew a hole through the side of Bevins' face. The bones of his lower right eye socket, cheek and support for the roof of his mouth were gone, their fragments imbedded in his sinuses and behind his eye.

His right optic nerve was severed, and there remains a piece of shrapnel in his leg. With the wounds, including the jagged slice in the artery in his neck, he lost seven pints of blood.

Bevins' wife, Patricia, had said goodbye before to her husband, who had served in Kosovo and Bosnia. But in January she said it felt different as buses left the Army Reserve facility in Kalamazoo.

Michael Bevins joined the reserves out of high school. He and Patricia graduated from Plainwell High School, married and had three children. He took classes at Western Michigan University, eventually earning a degree in mechanical engineering.

The first week in Iraq, the unit had been distributing school books, water and other nonmilitary supplies.

Bevins did mostly administrative work, but he remembers he could not promise he would be safe.

"I said I'd be back," he said.

Death Comes To Arkansas Soldiers; Worse Than Vietnam

Army Times 5.10.04

When large numbers of National Guard and Reserve units are deployed to war, single states or regions tend to get hit heavily during a single clash because the groups are organized by state.

That was what Arkansas experienced April 24, when four members of the 39th Infantry Brigade were killed in rocket attacks at their base camp north of Baghdad.

Not even Vietnam produced as deadly a day for Arkansas soldiers as that day, according to the Associated Press.

Ex-Bridgeport Man Wounded In Iraq, On Way Home

May 06, 2004 By AARON LEO Connpost.com

Douglas Alvarez, a former Bridgeport resident serving in the U.S. Navy, is returning home after being injured in the arm and abdomen in a mortar attack Sunday in Iraq.

Alvarez, 39, was expected to arrive in Maryland on Wednesday evening to undergo surgery at a hospital in Bethesda, said his father, Leo Alvarez, of Miami. Douglas Alvarez also had surgery in Germany, he added.

Leo Alvarez said Douglas' wife informed him over the phone Wednesday afternoon. "She told me he was talking very optimistically," he said. "I started calling everybody."

He had prepared himself for the possibility Douglas could be injured. "You always have to think of the worst" but hope for the best, he added.

Alvarez's mother, Belkis Alvarez, is a Bridgeport resident. Douglas Alvarez attended Garfield School and Bullard- Havens Regional Vocational-Technical School in Bridgeport. He enlisted in the Navy days after graduation.

"He loves [the Navy]," Leo Alvarez said.

He moved to Tampa, Fla., in 1986 after getting married, and has two daughters, 11 and 13, Leo Alvarez said.

But Douglas frequently returns to Bridgeport. "He loves Bridgeport," his father said. "Every time he gets a chance, he goes there."

Leo Alvarez said he would fly to Maryland today or Friday to see his son.

Fresh Meat For Bush's' Slaughterhouse: 1,000 New York Guardsmen Headed For Iraq

Army Times 5.10.04

More than 1,000 New York Army National Guard soldiers will be mobilized for deployment to Iraq, where they are expected to serve for a year.

The soldiers from the 42nd Infantry Division based in Troy will mobilize by mid-May. Troops in the division's operations units will report for training to Fort Drum near Watertown, while those in logistics will report to Fort Dix, N.J.

Between 1,200 and 1,400 42nd Infantry Division soldiers from around the state will be on active duty. They will arrive in Kuwait in October, and then move to Iraq by Christmas, where they'll serve on the ground as command-and-control troops for most of 2005.

Stop-Loss Called 'Draft By Default'

Army Times 5.10.04

Extending the deployments of U.S. troops in Iraq beyond their planned rotation dates is "a draft by default," said Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee, D-Texas, in an April 20 speech on the House floor. "We are keeping people over there who have, in fact, done their service."

Rumsfeld Thinks Anthrax Is A Chemical Weapon

Army Times 5.10.04

In an April 22 meeting with members of the Newspaper Association of America, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld responded to a question about the military's anthrax vaccine program by saying he believes it's the "right policy." **He then veered onto the subject of chemical weapons.** He said U.S. forces regularly trained in chemical protective suits early in the Iraq mission, and cited the discovery of several thousand sets of Iraqi protective suits south of Baghdad as evidence that Iraq units "had prepared ... to function in a combat zone where chemical weapons would be used."

Opponents of the mandatory anthrax vaccine policy pointed out that no biological or chemical weapons have been found either in Iraq or Afghanistan and that anthrax is a biological, not chemical, agent. Moreover, they said Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, among other senior officials, have attributed the anthrax used in attacks through the U.S. Postal Service to a U.S. military or other government source, not foreign militaries.

Defense Dept. Taking Service Members' Money, Won't Give It Back

Army Times 5.10.04

Rep. Vic Snyder of Arkansas, ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services total force subcommittee, thinks the Montgomery GI Bill program needs to be changed because **service members who must pay \$1,200 to enroll in the program don't get the money back if they never use benefits.** "It would seem, at a minimum, we could say you should be able to at least draw out your \$1,200 after eligibility runs out, since it was your money," Snyder said.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Al-Sadr Denounces U.S. Abuse of Prisoners; Al-Madhi Army Out In Force

5.7.04 By SCHEHEREZADE FARAMARZI, Associated Press Writers

KUFA, Iraq - Radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr denounced the U.S. abuse of Iraqi detainees at Abu Ghraib prison, dismissing an apology by President Bush and demanding Friday that the American soldiers charged with abuse be tried in Iraqi courts.

Meanwhile, one of al-Sadr's senior aides told worshippers in Basra that anyone capturing a female British soldier can keep her as a slave. Waving an assault rifle, Sheik Abdul-Sattar al-Bahadli also said anyone capturing a British soldier will receive about \$350 and anyone killing one will receive \$150. He held what he said were documents and photographs of three Iraqi women being raped at British-run prisons in Iraq

With hundreds of nearby U.S. troops on a mission to capture him, al-Sadr arrived from Najaf at the main mosque in Kufa surrounded by a large number of heavily armed black-garbed gunmen, including at least one carrying an anti-aircraft gun.

"Yes, yes, to freedom! Yes, yes, to independence!," several thousand worshippers chanted as the young cleric delivered a sermon condemning the United States for abusing Iraqi detainees at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison.

"What sort of freedom and democracy can we expect from you when you take such joy in torturing Iraqi prisoners?" said al-Sadr, his shoulders draped with a white coffin shroud symbolizing his readiness for martyrdom.

U.S. troops have not moved to capture al-Sadr for the past month as he has attended the Kufa prayers. **The military has been treading carefully in its confrontation with al-Sadr and his al-Mahdi Army militia, fearing that too much aggression near some of Shiism's holiest shrines will inflame Iraq's Shiite majority.**

Al-Sadr's al-Mahdi Army militia was out in force in Kufa and Najaf, fearing a U.S. assault could be imminent. Militiamen and U.S. troops had a fierce mortar exchange overnight.

Fighters — draped with ammunition belts and carrying automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenade launchers — moved around the streets of both cities in large numbers and took positions behind buildings and earthen mounds.

Early Friday, four mortar rounds and a rocket-propelled grenade hit near an Italian base in the southern city of Nasiriyah, and two Iraqi police officers were wounded, an Italian spokesman said.

Overnight, a barrage of mortars hit the U.S. base in Najaf, the latest in near nightly shelling. The U.S. troops responded with heavy force, firing back with mortars and howitzers as F-16s overhead directed fire.

The return fire hit a house, killing six family members — including children aged 2, 4 and 5 — and wounding three others.

"It was around midnight and we were preparing to go to bed," said Aziba al-Issa, 28, whose husband, daughter, brother-in-law and nephews were killed.

"The bomb fell on our room," she said from a Kufa hospital bed as she recovered from shrapnel wounds. Her two daughters also were wounded.

The militiamen's mortar position was destroyed, said Maj. Todd Walsh, of the 2nd Battalion, 37th Regiment, 1st Armored Division. The fighters' mortars were becoming more accurate over time, so commanders decided to intensify their response to wipe out the position, Walsh said.

Abu Ghraib: Iraqi Demonstrators Have Some Opinions: "No Iraqi Trusts America Or Britain Whatever They Do."

May 5, 2004 CNN NEWSNIGHT AARON BROWN

WEDEMAN (voice-over): **A spokesman for protesters reads out a list of demands presented to U.S. officials.**

"Trials for those who abused Iraqi prisoners, a halt to mistreatment and abuse, free access to prisoners for lawyers and human rights groups."

Hundreds, Sunnis and Shiites, attended the demonstration organized by the Society of Muslim Scholars trying to make their voices heard inside the prison walls.

"Yes they said they will study our demands and they said they will improve the situation" says (unintelligible), who was part of the delegation who met with the Americans "but they're liars."

WEDEMAN: But among the protesters outside, little faith in American promises to right past wrongs. Protesters we spoke with said they were aware of the condemnation of prisoner abuse by Bush administration officials and brushed it aside.

"We don't trust them," says Abu Juwad (ph), a former prisoner. "No Iraqi trusts America or Britain whatever they do."

"Bush should leave us alone" says policeman Mehdi (ph) whose brother is a prisoner. "We don't want his democracy."

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/qi-special/>

Blasts Destroy Collaborators Party Building In Baaquba

May 6, 2004 BAAQUBA, Iraq (Reuters) - **Two bombs destroyed the headquarters of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in the Iraqi city of Baaquba on Thursday, witnesses said.**

A hospital source said the explosions in the city 40 miles north of Baghdad had wounded at least four people.

The PUK is headed by Jalal Talabani, a member of the U.S.-appointed Iraqi Governing Council.

Roadside Bomb Kills Four Iraqi Police in Mosul

May 7, 2004 MOSUL, Iraq (Reuters)

A roadside bomb killed four Iraqi policemen and wounded one other in the northern Iraq city of Mosul on Friday, police and hospital officials said.

The bomb detonated as a patrol was passing through the al-Jadida district in the southern part of the city. Police said there was an exchange of gunfire with the attackers immediately after the attack, but no one was arrested.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

The Fish Rots From The Head

5.7.04 By Lou Plummer, Veteran, United States Army, former corrections officer, now activist against the War On Iraq.

One Friday in my early twenties, I took off my camouflage fatigues for the last time. The following Monday I reported to the best civilian job I could get. I was given a new uniform, a can of mace, a set of handcuffs and the keys to a cellblock at a state prison in North Carolina.

Although I was no longer in the infantry, my boss was still a sergeant and his boss was still a lieutenant. The paramilitary replaced the military but there was still an enemy and a mission. I no longer trained to kill Central-American

communists. Instead, every day, I faced a prison population that was nearly eighty percent African-American in a state with a population that is nearly eighty percent white.

It was my intention to treat the inmates I was charged with supervising in much the same way I had been treated as a junior enlisted soldier in places like Ft. Benning, GA and Ft. Hood, TX. **I had been belittled and dehumanized in the name of discipline. I intended to use the same tactics to control the criminal scum I was assigned to manage.**

I was quickly disabused of that notion by more seasoned guards, and surprisingly, by inmates who, SHOCK! GASP!, weren't mindless crack addicted drones. I was reminded that I'd volunteered to be in the military and that none of the prisoners on C-Block had signed a contract assigning them to their current surroundings. It wasn't a matter of coddling anyone. It was a pragmatic approach to effectively managing other human beings in a high pressure situation.

I also quickly learned that the management of the prison where I worked was intensely interested in keeping their jobs. They didn't want to rehabilitate anyone. They didn't want to heal anyone's inner child. They didn't want to cure anyone's psychological disorders. They only wanted to continue to operate their little fiefdom as far from public scrutiny as possible. They weren't even especially interested in getting promoted. Self-preservation was their goal.

It appears as though that model is not the one used at Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad. The management of that institution is intensely interested in more than just self-preservation. They've been presented with a unique opportunity to take advantage of a hellish situation to advance themselves in ways they never dreamed possible. They have an almost unlimited supply of evildoers from whom information must be extracted so that they can be BROUGHT TO JUSTICE! And, hey, if a few higher-ups can make their bones at the same time, that's just icing on the cake.

To accomplish this noble mission, the officers and administrators of Abu Ghraib have a contingent of young soldiers much like I once was. These young men and women are products of a military that gave them a one-hour class on the Geneva Convention during their first month in the military. They have been trained and trained and drilled into mind-numbing unquestioning obedience ever since that moment. Few of them have the slightest idea on how to refuse an unlawful order, much less on how to report a war crime.

Just as I didn't question my place in a prison system that was blatantly racist, these soldiers place undeserved trust in the system, in their superiors and in the righteousness of their cause. Untold millions of dollars and hours of clandestine research have gone into studies on the best ways to extract information from human sources. The Central Intelligence Agency has been repeatedly sanctioned for offenses so horrendous that recounting them reminds us of bad spy novels: LSD experiments, assassination programs, and exploding cigars.

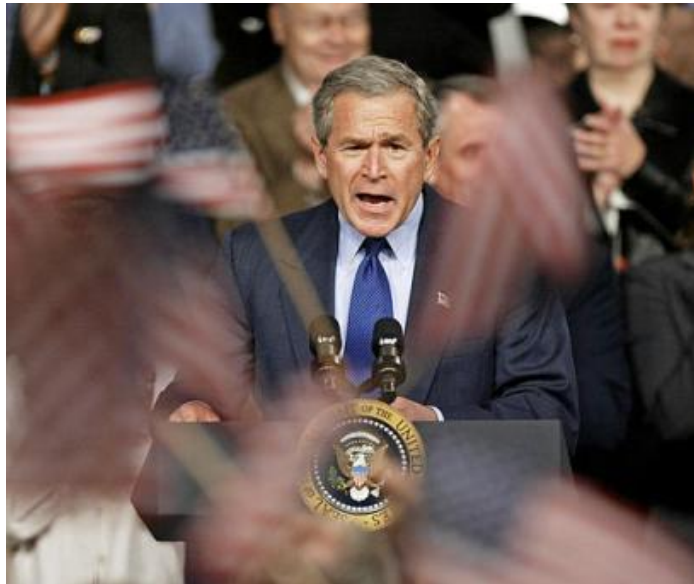
Is anyone really surprised that in defending themselves, the working class scapegoats of this whole horrible situation are pointing the finger at their superiors, at OGAs (Other Government Agencies) and at that new phenomena in the out-sourced military of the 21st century – civilian contactors (i.e., mercenary corporations)?

These soldiers, many of whom have been conditioned to accept racism and human degradation by working in US prisons, are as much to blame for the outrages in Iraq as I was to blame for the conditions of the prison I worked in.

All of us participated in a state-sanctioned evil. **There is an attitude in our country that trains us to accept the fate of those who we are told are less deserving than ourselves. It isn't the little people on the bottom who can be condemned for designing the system. It is the self-serving masterminds at the top who should bear that burden.**

President Bush says that he intends to get to the bottom of this situation. I suggest that he forgo that plan. He should instead get to the top of it instead. (He can start by looking in the mirror.)

Warden-In-Chief; Unbridled Asshole



May 7, 2004, in Dubuque, Iowa. (AP Photo/Morry Gash)

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

U.S. Prison Warden In Army Uniform Spouts Racist Bullshit; A Loathsomely Perfect Example Of The Prison Guard “Mentality”

05/06/04 SAN FRANCISCO (Reuters) By Adam Tanner

A former U.S. military commander in Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison has described a chaotic atmosphere of disdain for Iraqi prisoners in which U.S. guards killed at least four during two riots.

Army National Guard Lt. Michael Drayton commanded the 124-person 870th Military Police Company from November to March at the prison, which is the subject of intense focus after pictures of Iraqi prisoners being abused appeared last week.

"You got to understand, although it seems harsh, the Iraqis they only understand force," he told Reuters in an interview. "If you try to talk to them one on one as a normal person, they won't respect you, they won't do what you want, prisoner or just normal person on the street." (You have to understand, although it seems harsh, that prison guards and correction officers only understand force. If you try to talk to them one on one as a normal person, they won't respect you, they won't do what you want, prisoner or just normal person on the street. That's why soldiers hate them and, in Vietnam, U.S. soldiers killed them wholesale. A cop is a cop, a prison guard is a prison guard, and military or civilian, the same brutal stupidity reigns supreme. Thanks to Lt. Michael Drayton for giving the world such an absolutely perfect example.)

"So you've got to be forceful with them in some ways."

"There is a frustration factor dealing with the Iraqis. Everybody wants to choke them. I don't care who you are, (if) you spend enough time around Iraqis." (There is a frustration factor in dealing with the prison guards. Everybody wants to choke them. I don't care who you are, if you spend enough time around prison guards.)

U.S. military police worked 12- 18-hour shifts guarding the prison. "At any time we may have had 250 -- the most -- MPs, and you had over 7,000 security detainees and 400 to 500 actual prisoners."

"You had to make up things as you go."

"You get the feeling of being overwhelmed, because you were overworked and it was pretty frustrating," he said. Military intelligence officials often interviewed prisoners but did not help administer the facility, he said.

What An Amazing Coincidence!



Palestinians stripped “naked” while amused Israeli soldiers look on...

In November of 2002, I was shocked and angered by the image of a Palestinian middle aged man who had been made to strip naked in the cold and rain and walk back and forth like a dog for the amusement of the Israeli soldiers who sat in the tanks and armored personnel carriers. This image touched me profoundly...This was what came to my mind...

NOW with the fresh round of photos of Iraqi prisoners, stripped NAKED, being humiliated, and demeaned, while the amused sadistic US soldiers look on... **These images reminded me once again of the similarities of the suffering of the Palestinians and the Iraqis at the hands of an inhumane occupation...**

Naked:

As I stand before you...
Stripped of my rags
“Exposed”
Shame and dishonor
Rush to cover me...
What do you see?
Stripped of my dignity
Of my humanity
What do you see?
As I gaze down, head lowered
My eyes cannot see
The mud at my feet
Shame
Anger
Naked
Are you pleased?

Will stripping me of my dignity
Enhance your security?
What do you think it does for me?

Mike Odetalla 11-2002

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Terrorist Conspirators Getting Their Bullshit Organized



Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, right, huddles with Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Richard Myers on Capitol Hill Friday, May 7, 2004, (AP Photo/Dennis Cook)

ONE ANSWER TO THEIR LIES:



Demonstrators protest Iraqi prisoner abuse at a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee May 7, 2004, Rumsfeld was testifying. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

Kerry And Nader Won't Stop the War But Independent Action Can

May 06, 2004 by Mark Harris ZNet

"What's incredible was the guy who was president then was Richard Nixon, which shows that when you build a big movement from down below, regardless of who's in the White House, you can bring about change." -- Tony Mazzochi, former legislative director of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers Union, on passage of the first Occupational and Safety Health Act in 1970. (New York Times, Aug. 24, 2002)

It's unfortunate that the upcoming U.S. Presidential election offers no likelihood whatsoever that an antiwar candidate will be elected who will do the principled thing and end the U.S. occupation of Iraq. At least not at their own initiative. **Apparently, Senator John Kerry's run-away Democratic primary campaign has emboldened the Massachusetts politician only in the sense that he has stepped up his efforts to win support from those who share his friend Senator John McCain's (R-Ariz.) view that the occupation of Iraq remains a "noble cause."**

Kerry's stay-the-course stance on Iraq is becoming more ironic by the day as support for the occupation plummets, both domestically and in Iraq. A recent New York Times/CBS News poll found 46 percent of Americans believe the United States should find a way to get out of Iraq. **In Iraq itself, a poll taken by western news services just prior to the recent outbreak of violence in Fallujah found a majority of Iraqis -- 57 percent -- want the U.S. military and its occupation allies out of the country 'in the next few months.'** Where the violence of recent weeks has since driven Iraqi opinion is not hard to surmise.

The "Anybody But Bush" vision now has most of the progressive milieu in its trance, but it is not a vision as much as it is a paucity of vision. Faced with a war sparked by the extremist right-wing politics of the Bush Administration, the best so many otherwise articulate and powerful voices for justice can muster is an insistence on supporting whoever happens to win the Democratic nomination. It's a telling sign now of how truly rudderless left-progressive politics is in the United States. **It's also revealing just how desperate progressives are that a return to the Clinton-style politics Kerry embraces is now considered almost a god-send.**

In fact, the social policy of the Clinton Administration was the most conservative of any administration since the end of World War II, as historian Howard Zinn reminds us in the revised edition to his "A People's History of the United States."

The entire tenure of the Clinton Administration was defined by erosion of New Deal social policy, gutting welfare and other safety net programs, deregulating industries, union and environmental protections, and generally cozying up to the interests of silver spoon investors and corporate executives, the principal beneficiaries of the era's market prosperity. The campaign slogan of 1992, "Putting People First," came to mean "putting the bond market" first, as Edward Herman, Wharton School professor of finance, remarked a few years ago in a Z magazine round-up on the Clinton legacy. In this

sense, the Clinton Presidency was but a stage-setting prelude to the Republicans Gone Wild nightmare of the current administration.

If Ralph Nader, an early endorser of the small Labor Party group founded by the late union organizer Tony Mazzochi, was actually running a campaign advocating Mazzochi's idea of truly independent, working-class campaigns for office, in opposition to the corporate-dominated two parties, it could at the very least set an example of the direction grass-roots organizing needs to go if independent political action is ever going to gain momentum in this country.

Unfortunately, that is *not* what Nader is doing.

The Nader campaign seeks to oppose the Democratic Party while ostensibly trying to boost the party, hoping to pressure Kerry from the grass-roots left to take better positions on a host of issues.

Accordingly, **Nader thinks he can pull large blocs of disillusioned nonvoters, independents, and even Republicans into voting booths, blocs otherwise beyond Kerry's reach, who, the thinking goes, will then invariably translate part of their presence in the voting booth into backing for various progressive Democrats running for local and state offices.**

It's a confused, ambiguous strategy and it makes about as much sense as Michael Moore's endorsement of General Wesley Clark, who led NATO in bombing civilian targets in Belgrade in 1998, as a "peace" candidate for the Democratic nomination.

(Nader is also opposed to the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq because, in his deluded vision, a UN army has to take over the occupation, and continue killing more resisting Iraqis with different occupation soldiers. Nader knows perfectly well, as does the whole world, that UN sanctions killed Iraqis by the hundreds of thousands for over ten years, and now he has the despicable arrogance to demand that the same UN occupy Iraq by military force. In Naders mind, you see, Iraqis can't run their own nation. They need occupation by the UN. Not only is he for imperial rule in Iraq in different clothes, his condescending program is blatant racism.)

Of course, it's possible the U.S. military may perpetrate a repression so thorough and bloody that it effectively puts down the rebellion. For now.

But with weapons you can never obliterate the spirit of human resistance. They also cannot kill everyone. The spirit of nationalism is such that the Iraqi people will in the long run never countenance the ongoing occupation of their country, puppet government or not, especially with the current atrocities and killings becoming part of their collective memory. They will one way or another be the final arbiter of the future of Iraq.

As a labor organizer, Tony Mazzochi understood that the type of progressive social change that endures always originates and grows from the grass roots,

from the cellar floor, challenging the existing status quo as well as whatever conventional wisdom tells us about the limits of what is "practical" to achieve.

Social change rather happens when the dissent in the air gets organized and visible and takes to the streets as well as the ballot box. And getting organized has never depended upon "lesser-evils" or benevolent elites. Our battle now is not just against a military occupation, but against militarism itself.

Undoubtedly, last year's antiwar protests lost some of their urgency following the quick military victory by U.S. and British forces over Saddam Hussein's government. Yet mainstream American politics is as much a creature of paradox as it is mostly an exercise in sound bites and personality contests. **It was thus perhaps at the moment of President Bush's most triumphal war posturing, when he paraded macho style in full flight uniform on the flight deck of a U.S. aircraft carrier, celebrating "Mission Accomplished" in Iraq, that a sense of the seismic credibility chasm the Administration was about to plunge into began to edge into fuller view.**

The chasm has opened. What is unfolding now in Iraq is a political disaster for the United States.

The antiwar marches before the war and most recently on March 20 sent a vibrant, defiant message that international and domestic opposition to the U.S. war and occupation of Iraq runs deep. They must continue. Now more than ever. Louder than ever. Bigger than ever. No matter who is in office. The killing must stop.

Think "Out Now" Bring the troops home now.

(For more, see "Bush's Vietnam?" at www.isreview.org.)

GET 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/>

**25% Want Troops Out "As Soon As Possible;"
Another 30% Say No More Than 18
More Months**

Wall St. Journal 5.7.04

"In the Wall St. Journal/NBC poll, one in four Americans say troops should leave Iraq as soon as possible and another 30% say they should come home within 18 months. Some of Mr. Bush's supporters fear that reaction to the prison abuses will so sway public opinion against U.S. involvement in Iraq that he won't be able to accept the losses needed to achieve military success."

"I Solemnly Swear That I Will Tell The Lies, The Whole Lies, And Nothing But The Lies, So Help Me Bush."



Rumsfeld before Congress, May 7, 2004,. (AP Photo/Ron Edmonds)

Received:

From: AS
To: GI Special
Sent: May 07, 2004 10:10 AM
Subject: Re: GI Special 2#73: To The Troops In Iraq

GI Special 2#73 is one of the best yet. My congratulations on an issue probing and sorely needed. Great work. **Also, I wanted to run something by you. How conceivable (at this point) do you think it would be to hold a press conference featuring an Iraqi parent (or two) who had a child killed there and a U.S. parent (or two) having undergone the same?**

See you soon and again, congratulations.

Reply: Yes, that would illustrate the human cost of the imperial war and get some press attention for sure. Go for it!

May 03, 2004
To: GI Special
From: X, Vietnam
Greetings

Absolutely, agree with you that it's time for the working class to take over and run things!.....Hopefully, in the US as well one day!

Do you think we will see the Iraqi resistance announcing an alternative government soon, to undermine whatever plans the US and UN have to continue the occupation under another name? Or, is that not necessary? Awhile ago in GI SPECIAL you had an interview with someone from the resistance talking about announcing an alternative political programme and a united resistance government.....seems like the way to go, when the time is right.....

Thanks for your excellent work.
Cheers from X

REPLY:

The question in Iraq will be "Who takes over?" and gets the oil wealth.

The problem when a country is invaded and occupied is that there is a tendency for all questions to be buried under nationalism, which, as Marx, Lenin and countless others have pointed out, is a capitalist ideology.

In Iraq, with all that oil, every bourgeois and petite bourgeois formation in the country would love to get their hands on the money. Some will wear religious faces, some democratic faces and undoubtedly some will even call themselves "socialist." What they will all have in common is a program that leads to the party bosses living very well while working people live poorly and pay for the privileged lifestyles of the new rulers.

How they will amalgamate with each other, form alliances and combinations to divide up the pie, scheme to keep workers down, and so forth is hard to tell from here.

Usually during and after a national liberation war, some formation of the intelligentsia grabs the money and the power, using, in the past, the peasantry as their armed force.

What may be hopeful is that with the modern population shift to the cities, at least there could be an opening for some party based in and fighting for the urban working class to take all power away from the other classes.

It's a thin hope so far, and early days, and chances probably not great in Iraq, but the fact that Iraq has an urban liberation movement, not a rural based liberation movement as most were in the last century, offers some hope of moving in the right direction. It's much harder for a pack of intellectuals rooted in the petite bourgeoisie to take power on

the back of a peasant army when there isn't so much peasantry left, and millions more live in the cities today than any time before in human history.

The fact that in Fallujah at least some of our class is armed may also make it more problematic for an enemy class to simply proclaim its rule and take over without opposition.

Certainly an urban resistance movement which rests on some proportion of the working class would have more potential to move beyond defense against a foreign army to at least the possibility of working class insurrection. The Paris Commune and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution against Russian imperialism both saw that sort of development emerge. To win, there also has to be a working class revolutionary party to offer coordination and a lead.

So far, the only programs I've seen from any resistance combination are nationalist programs for capitalism. If anyone learns of any resistance party in Iraq that is for the workers power, including social ownership of the oil industry under workers control, with benefits to go to the working class and what there remains of a poor peasantry, let me know.

Solidarity, T.

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