

GI SPECIAL 3C21:

“So Let The Wicked Perish At The Presence Of God” PAYBACK IS OVERDUE



“Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered: and let them that hate him flee from before his face. As smoke vanisheth, so let them vanish away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.” ~ Psalm 67 (68): 2-3. [via Daithí Mac Lochlainn, The Gaelic Starover]

More Pentagon Treachery: Troops Not Told They Have Ineffective Body Armor

[Thanks to CS & PB, who sent this in.]

But more than a year after military officials initiated an effort to replace the armor with thicker, more resistant plates, tens of thousands of soldiers are still without the stronger protection because of a string of delays in the Pentagon's procurement system.

August 14, 2005 By MICHAEL MOSS, New York Times

For the second time since the Iraq war began, the Pentagon is struggling to replace body armor that is failing to protect American troops from the most lethal attacks by insurgents.

The ceramic plates in vests worn by most personnel cannot withstand certain munitions the insurgents use.

But more than a year after military officials initiated an effort to replace the armor with thicker, more resistant plates, tens of thousands of soldiers are still without the stronger protection because of a string of delays in the Pentagon's procurement system.

[Those shabby excuses just won't cut it anymore. Tell us about how Rumsfeld and Bush have personally intervened to order a crash program to mass produce the new armor. You can't? Because there isn't any crash program? And because they didn't personally intervene? Gee, what a surprise. Said it before, say it again: the enemy is in Washington DC, not in Iraq. The enemy of every member of the armed forces and every American who isn't one of the elite rich and powerful, that is. The government is in the hands of our enemies, this war is a war to benefit our enemies, and we need our troops home to protect us against these enemies domestic, who are having it all their own way. Enough.]

The effort to replace the armor began in May 2004, just months after the Pentagon finished supplying troops with the original plates - a process also plagued by delays.

The officials disclosed the new armor effort Wednesday after questioning by The New York Times, and acknowledged that it would take several more months or longer to complete.

Citing security concerns, the officials declined to say exactly how many more of the stronger plates were needed, or how much armor had already been shipped to Iraq.

"If I had the capability, I'd like to see everybody that needs enhanced SAPI to have it and **at the rate we have now, we're going to have months before we get the kind of aggregate numbers we want to have,**" General Catto said, referring to the thicker plates, known as the Enhanced Small Arms Protective Insert. "That's just a fact of life because of the raw materials paucity and the industrial base."

Military officials say they have kept the effort to supply troops with the stronger body armor quiet to avoid alerting the insurgency, which they say is adept at mining news media reports for any evidence of weaknesses in the American force. At the request of the Pentagon, The Times has omitted from this article details

that would expose vulnerabilities in the original armor and the types of munitions that the original plates cannot repel.

[What idiot thought this bullshit up? And the simple minded reporter buys it. The resistance has plenty of U.S. vests to test: the thieving collaborators in Bush's fake Iraqi government are busy selling the resistance all the U.S.-sourced military supplies they need, and, duh, the resistance military staff scientists are just as capable of testing the body armor as any asshole at the Pentagon.

[No, the only people deceived have been U.S. troops, because the Pentagon politicians didn't want the troops and their families to find out another example of just how little they give a shit about protecting the troops, and how they handled this problem as "procurement" business as usual.]

In all, the war was 10 months old before every soldier in Iraq had plates in late January 2004.

Four months later, the Pentagon quietly issued a solicitation for the enhanced plates that would resist stronger attacks. At the same time, it worked to make improvements to the vests, including adding shoulder and side protection.

Shortly after the Iraq war began, insurgents began attacking American soldiers engaged in stationary tasks like directing traffic or less arduous combat operations.

Cpl. Nicholas Roberts, 23, a marine from Colorado, was wounded last December in Ramadi, west of Baghdad, when his armor plates failed to deflect an insurgent's attack. He just started walking again this summer after nine operations. In wearing the armor, he said, "you know your risks, that it's not going to stop everything."

"Unfortunately," he added, when told about the enhanced plates, "they didn't have that when I was in." [And still don't, which is the whole point of this fucking article.]

Meanwhile, a burst of research is under way to develop even stronger body armor, though some earlier efforts appear to have slipped through the cracks. [Oh please, stop with these meaningless bullshit words that offer an excuse without blaming any of the assholes responsible. "Efforts" don't "slip through cracks;" people either act or fail to act. This lame crap just let's them off the hook. "Oh yeah, the troops didn't have armor when they invaded, and have shitty armor now. Oops, it just fell through the cracks."]

At the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Stephen D. Nunn said his group formulated a polymer that can be added to the ceramic plates to increase their strength. "Our material and assembly seems to perform better than anything else I've read about," he said.

But the group's contract was limited to fortifying helicopters. When that project ended in 2001, there was no money to extend the work to body armor, Mr. Nunn said.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - 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)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



U.S. Marines from Lima Company of the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment from Ohio, walk along a cliff in Parwana, near Haditha, Aug. 6, 2005. (AP Photo/Jacob Silberberg)

U.S. Bradley On Fire In Baghdad: Casualties Not Announced



A U.S. military vehicle burns after being struck by a roadside bomb, Aug. 13, 2005, in Baghdad. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

13 August 2005 Aljazeera.Net & By SAMEER N. YACOUB, Associated Press Writer & (KUNA)

A car bomber has blown himself up in front of a US military vehicle in south Baghdad on Saturday killing one civilian, an Interior Ministry official said.

One Bradley Fighting Vehicle was damaged and caught fire in Baghdad's Sadr City district, but U.S. officials had no casualty report.

An American patrol was trying to defuse a charge on a Dura street.

An official said "A bomber drove a car and blew it in front of the US vehicle. We do not know if there were any US casualties, but one civilian was killed and one wounded."

U.S. Drone Down?

13 August 2005 Aljazeera.Net

An Iraqi group calling itself the Islamic Resistance Movement Twentieth Revolution Brigades says it has downed a US spy drone in the Abu Ghraib district, west of Baghdad.

The group posted a video on the internet showing armed men firing a missile and then pieces of wreckage said to be parts of the drone.

U.S. Occupation Massacres Civilians In Nasaf

[Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

13 August 2005 Aljazeera.Net

Residents of Nasaf, a town just outside Ramadi, west of Baghdad, said a roadside bomb exploded next to a US armoured patrol as it passed near the Ibn al-Jawzi mosque shortly after prayers on Friday.

The attack was followed by heavy US gunfire which left 15 Iraqis dead and 17 wounded, residents said.

US troops opened fire, the residents said, shooting towards those emerging from the mosque.

Munem Aftan, the director of Ramadi General Hospital, said 15 people were killed, including eight children. Seventeen people were wounded.

The death toll was initially reported as two dead, but doctors said it had risen sharply overnight, with several of the severely wounded succumbing to their injuries.

Iraqi civilians frequently complain that US troops open fire indiscriminately after they are attacked.

More Useless Pissing In The Wind: Towns Abandoned After Being “Secured”

8.12.05 USA Today

U.S. Marines who recently completed an offensive to disrupt insurgent supply lines in western Iraq say there aren't enough troops to leave behind in towns to maintain security after American forces leave. 'It's A Matter Of Available Forces,' Marines Say

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Pointless, Unnecessary Bullshit: Bring Them All Home Now, Alive



U.S. Marines prepare for rain in their trench in Kandagal village, Kunar province, eastern Afghanistan, Aug. 11, 2005. (AP Photo/Tomas Munita)

U.S. Occupation Massacres At Rauf; Local Officials Say U.S. Command Lying Again

August 12, 2005 By NOOR KHAN, Associated Press Writer

QALAT, Afghanistan -- Afghan villagers said Thursday that U.S. warplanes had bombed houses, killing several civilians and wounding others, including an infant.

Zabul Gov. Ali Khail said U.S.-led coalition forces made "a mistake" during operations against militants in the southern province and that civilians had died. He gave no details.

The U.S. military denied civilians were at the scene of the fighting in Day Chopan district Monday and the district's police chief said Taliban insurgents had been hiding in

the area. American officials said earlier that 18 suspected Taliban guerrillas and one U.S. service member had been killed in the clash.

Two villagers at a hospital in Qalat, the capital of Zabul, told the Associated Press that their home village of Rauf had been pounded by American bombs on Monday night and early Tuesday.

"The children were crying and they were very afraid," said a weeping Sadia Bibi, 50. "These planes killed my relatives. We are poor and innocent people. Why are they killing us?"

Bibi's 20-year-old daughter Najiba Bibi and 6-week-old grandson were being treated for injuries to their hands and legs, which she said were struck by shards of brick during the bombing. Both the woman and the boy were bandaged.

Bibi said her 55-year-old brother, Abdul Shakor, and his wife were killed along with a 16-year-old boy named Matiullah.

A relative who brought the injured to the hospital, Abdul Halim, 35, said his neighbor's house had been bombed, killing a man who lived there.

Also, one woman from the village died at a hospital in neighboring Kandahar province after arriving there with two other injured women on Wednesday, a doctor at the hospital, Mohammed Hashil, told AP by phone.

They suffered injuries to their heads and shoulders, also from bricks blasted apart by the explosions. The surviving women -- Shums Bibi, 35, and Fatima Bibi, 24 -- were in stable condition, he said.

U.S. military spokeswoman, Lt. Cindy Moore, however, said intelligence indicated that no civilian casualties had occurred. [Right. Obviously one of Rumsfelds' professional occupation liars knows more about it than the dead villagers.]

Day Chopan's police chief, Dashir Ahmad, said U.S.-led forces had mistakenly bombed civilian homes, but that Taliban insurgents had been hiding there. He did not elaborate.

Assorted Resistance Action:

August 13, 2005 Daily Times

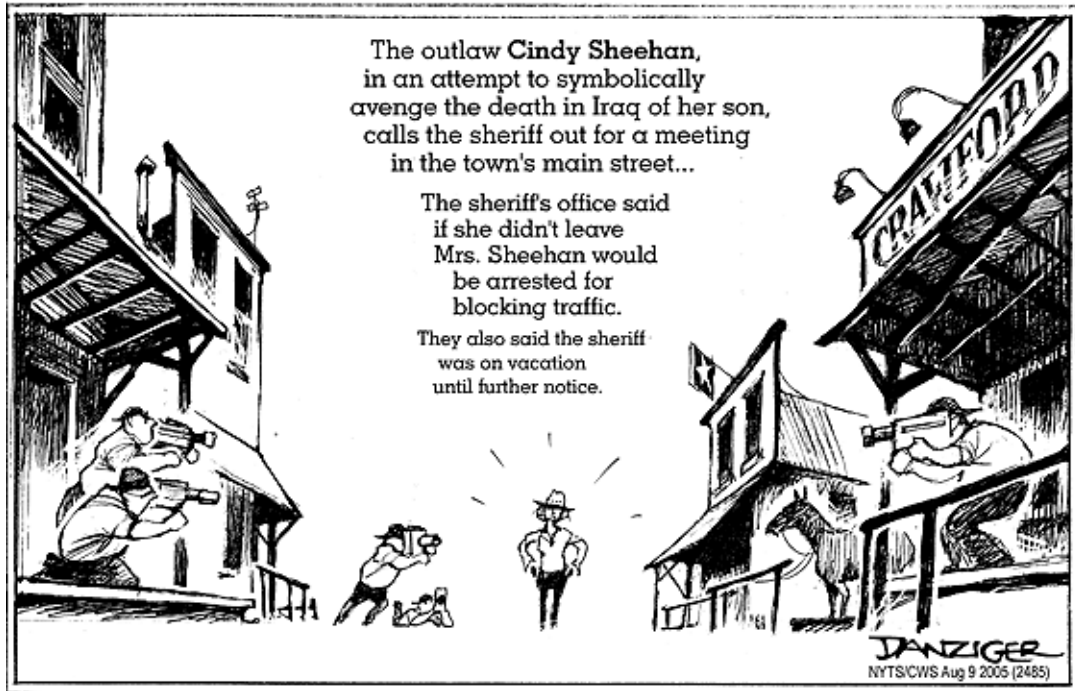
A private truck carrying equipment for US-led coalition reconstruction projects was hit by two RPGs late on Tuesday in eastern Logar province, said the province's police chief, Khan Muhammad.

A container on the back of the truck was damaged, but the driver was unharmed, he said.

On Wednesday, a bomb exploded near a police jeep parked at a compound used by election workers in Logar, causing damage to the vehicle but no casualties.

CRAWFORD TEXAS WAR REPORTS:

High Noon in Crawford



People Are Saying “I Want My Country Back, And We Want Our Troops Home”

August 12, 2005 Amy Goodman, Democracy Now!

CINDY SHEEHAN: We had over 700 people come through our camp yesterday, and we are expecting thousands this weekend.

It is just so incredibly amazing to me. I think people in America just needed a way to stand up and have their voices count. And for some reason, this is a way for them to do it.

AMY GOODMAN: *Cindy Sheehan, are you calling for people to come to Crawford to protest? **Are you calling for a massive protest?***

CINDY SHEEHAN: Well, that's what we have been calling for.

It's starting to scare me a little bit, because that's what's happening.

There's people coming from all over the country and all over the world to stand in solidarity with us, and I think it's what needs to happen, though, because, you know, 52% of America think this war is a mistake and want our troops to come home, and the media and the government need to see the numbers, need to see that we mean business.

And I just think that this is just totally spontaneous, and people have told me they have dropped everything to get in their car and get down here, and to me, it's just amazing.

People are tired of what's going on in this country, and they're standing up and saying, 'Enough is enough! I want my country back, and we want our troops home.'

Sheehan – An Heroic Stand Against A Most Despicable Figure

Now, it is no longer the answer to Citizen Cindy Sheehan's Grail question that is important, but the asking of it. "For what 'noble cause' did my son Casey die?"

Again, and again and again, until the walls of Jericho come tumbling down and the seas rage and the thunder of centuries breaks over the land, to bring the healing rains of truth and justice and peace in this most troubled of all troubled times.

And so the voices rise, first the voice of Citizen Cindy Sheehan, and then her friends, one by one, then tens, then thousands, then tens of thousands, and then all over the world, millions and millions of voices, daring to ask the Grail question, louder and louder and louder, at a time when all sound is forbidden.

8-13-5 By Patricia Henry, Rense.com

This is a time for heroic writing about a heroic woman taking a heroic stand against one of the most unheroic and despicable figures in American history.

This is a time to ask the Big Questions, the Grail questions.

Citizen Cindy Sheehan, in her floppy hat, holding a white cross, asks the President: "For what 'noble cause' did my son Casey die?"

Like Parsifal ("Pierce-the-veil"), Citizen Cindy Sheehan dares to ask the President of the United States of America, the wounded Fisher King, vacationing in his Wasteland, her heartbroken Grail question: "For what 'noble cause' did my son Casey die?"

Citizen Cindy Sheehan, playing the simple fool, asks her simple fool's question, the question that has not, until now, had a name and a face. "For what 'noble cause' did my son Casey die?"

And the wounded Fisher King and his Court have no answer for Citizen Cindy Sheehan.

It is a Joan of Arc, David and Goliath, Gandhi against the British Empire, Martin Luther, and Martin Luther King historic moment.

The very public asking of Citizen Cindy Sheehan's Grail question demands a Grail answer.

But there is no Grail answer. There is no 'noble cause' that can validate her son Casey's death, and there never has been.

Not then. Not now. Not ever.

We all know this, but now we have the opportunity to know it in a public way, to read it written large on the collective global psyche.

The naked truth is that Citizen Cindy Sheehan's son Casey, like so many others, Iraqis and Americans alike, died for no reason in an illegitimate invasion, a ruthless land grab driven by the worst motives for the worst reasons in our collective national memory.

So Citizen Cindy Sheehan dares to ask, again and again, the Grail question of our long hot summer: "For what 'noble cause' did my son Casey die?"

Citizen Cindy Sheehan is daring to do what no Member of the United States Congress has dared to do. She is daring to do what no TV Talking Head, no member of the White House Press Corps, no Supreme Court Justice, no Governor, no General, no Admiral, no Chairman of the Board of a Fortune 50, 100 or 500 company has dared to do.

Citizen Cindy Sheehan is standing in the dusty road to the Fisher King's Little Chapel in the Prairie Ranch, in the hot sun and sweeping rains, and asking about this "noble cause," for which her beloved son Casey died.

And Cindy Sheehan is not getting any answers.

And just as, in another classic myth, the pompous, vain and delusional Emperor "had no clothes," no clothes at all, as he stood there naked demanding admiration from his

subjects, the pompous, vain and delusional President of the United States of America has no clothes either, and no answer to the grieving mother who waits by the side of the road for him to answer her simple question.

"For what 'noble cause' did my son Casey die?"

The President of the greatest superpower on earth has no answer for the Grail question his Parsifal asks: "For what noble cause did my son Casey die?"

He has no answer at all.

What is it about death he does not understand?

The President of the greatest superpower on earth has no answer to Citizen Cindy Sheehan's Grail question, because to answer Citizen Cindy Sheehan's Grail Question is to open the Pandora's box of deceits, lies, treasons and treacheries upon which this blatantly illegal invasion and occupation is based, and to do that in public would mark the end of history for him and his despicable Administration.

The truth of the Emperor's nakedness would be there for all to see, because there is no "noble cause."

There is only ongoing, meaningless slaughter of innocents which will do nothing to promote peace among nations, and which will do much to end "the American Century" and silence forever the dream of 200 years upon which this country was founded.

Every day, in interview after interview, Citizen Cindy Sheehan puts it to the naked Emperor, the wounded Fisher King: "For what 'noble cause' did my son Casey die?"

And from the Wounded Fisher King, in his wasteland, from the posturing and posing Emperor, there are only the sounds of silence.

Once upon a time, a former President of the greatest superpower on earth wrote his memoirs.

The time was five years ago, to be exact, and in these memoirs, titled "A World Transformed," the former President, George Herbert Walker Bush, Father of George W. Bush, wrote the following to explain why he didn't go after Saddam Hussein at the end of the gulf War:

"Trying to eliminate Saddam...would have incurred incalculable human and political costs. Apprehending him was probably impossible. We would have been forced to occupy Baghdad and, in effect, rule Iraq... There was no viable 'exit strategy' we could see, violating another of our principles. Furthermore, we had been consciously trying to set a pattern for handling aggression in the post-Cold War world. Going in and occupying Iraq, thus unilaterally exceeding the United Nations' mandate, would have destroyed the precedent of international response to aggression that we hoped to establish. Had we gone the invasion route, the United States could conceivably still be an occupying power in a bitterly hostile land."

As one commentator said in response to this prescient prediction: "If only his son could read."

Citizen Cindy Sheehan is waiting in the sun and the rain for an answer to her Grail Question: "For what 'noble cause' did my son Casey die?"

And there is only the long, slow wailing of wind across the searing hot summer Texas wasteland, and the Greek chorus of weeping mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, children and widows, Americans and Iraqis alike, who stand vigil, with Citizen Cindy Sheehan, for an answer to her question that will never come...

Because it does not exist.

Now, it is no longer the answer to Citizen Cindy Sheehan's Grail question that is important, but the asking of it.

Again, and again and again, until the walls of Jericho come tumbling down and the seas rage and the thunder of centuries breaks over the land, to bring the healing rains of truth and justice and peace in this most troubled of all troubled times.

And so the voices rise, first the voice of Citizen Cindy Sheehan, and then her friends, one by one, then tens, then thousands, then tens of thousands, and then all over the world, millions and millions of voices, daring to ask the Grail question, louder and louder and louder, at a time when all sound is forbidden.

Tiananmen Ranch: "There Comes A Time When The Tide Will Turn"

August 12, 2005 James Moore, huffingtonpost.com

In every standoff there comes a time when the tide will turn in one direction.

In our culture, these moments are palpable because a complicated question has been rendered into a simple confrontation between the just and the unjust, the big guy and the little guy, the powerful and the weak.

And we all know who Americans choose in those kinds of fights.

Cindy Sheehan, with her soft voice and steely determination, has given us a simple choice.

We can stand with a mother who doesn't want other mothers to suffer the way she is suffering; or we can side with a president who offers us platitudes instead of exit strategies and unfounded optimism instead of honest logic.

I'm on Cindy's side.

Honor Guard By Iraq Veterans Against The War



Cindy Sheehan, center, with Iraq Veterans Against The War, as dozens of cars drive on the road leading to President Bush's ranch near Crawford, Texas, Saturday, Aug. 13, 2005. A grieving mother's anti-war protest entered its second week, gaining momentum as hundreds of people descended Saturday on a road leading to the Western White House. (AP Photo/LM Otero)

“She Has Just Driven In From Iowa. Her Son Is A Soldier”

(Aug 11) Greg Moses, Peacefile.org, CAMP CASEY, TX

Dot's turn to tell her story gets interrupted about one o'clock in the morning when up the short sidewalk from the highway walks a woman barely middle aged.

She has just driven in from Iowa. Her son is a soldier stationed in California.

She figures she has a year to stop the war before he completes his training.

He wouldn't like it that she's here, "but we all have to do what we must," she says softly.

“This Is The Moment”

13 August 2005 By Helen Kennedy, The New York Daily News

"This is the moment. This may be the time when we finally get the attention of the American people," said Linda Waste of Georgia, who stood with Sheehan and about 50 others yesterday as Bush went by.

Waste has three sons, a grandson and a granddaughter either in Iraq or just back. Last week she joined Military Families Speak Out, a group that wants the troops brought home.

Staten Islanders Stand Up For Cindy Sheehan

August 12, 2005 By TEVAH PLATT, ADVANCE STAFF WRITER

Seventeen hundred miles southwest of Staten Island, Cindy Sheehan, a California mother whose son was killed in Iraq in April 2004, is camped outside President Bush's Crawford, Texas ranch, vowing she will not leave until he meets with her to discuss why her son died.

Outside Borough Hall in St. George, yesterday, a group of Staten Islanders holding a vigil hoped Ms. Sheehan might become "the Rosa Parks of the peace movement."

About 15 members and supporters of Peace Action of Staten Island convened on Bay Street yesterday evening with signs reading, "Another mother for Cindy," "Support our troops -- Bring them home" and "Cindy wants answers -- We want answers."

Peace Action wants to know why U.S. troops are in Iraq.

"I believe we're there to get control over oil," said Debra Anderson of West Brighton, a secretary and board member of Peace Action of Staten Island, whose husband has been serving in Iraq since September. "I believe it's an illegal, immoral, unjust war. ... I'm supporting our troops by working hard to bring them home."

Jim Clark of New Brighton compared the war in Iraq to the war in Vietnam, of which he is a veteran. "This was a decision to go into a country that was not attacking us," he said. "They used a lie to convince the people we needed to be there."

"It's not just that I have questions [about the war]," said Kathy Hollings of West Brighton, Peace Action chair. "George W. Bush seems to have questions about why we're there."

Two hundred fliers were distributed by the peace activists.

"This isn't just a Staten Island movement," said Ms. Hollings. "It's a city movement, a state movement and a national movement... that cuts across the spectrum of the population."

The demonstrators said they wanted to show their solidarity with Ms. Sheehan.

"I hope I never have to be in her shoes-- I'm so motivated and inspired by her efforts," said Susan McAnanama, who organized the vigil with Mrs. Anderson.

"I think Cindy is a lightning rod," said Ms. McAnanama. "I think she's going to activate a lot of people."



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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 inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.

TROOP NEWS

Most Decorated Green Beret Commander Transfers Medal to Kevin Benderman, GI War Resister



Kevin with fellow conscientious objectors Aidan Delgado (left) and Camilo Mejía (right) on the day of the Court-Martial, July 29, 2005. Photo credit: Maritza Mejía, distributed by www.bendermandefense.org.

www.bendermandefense.org

Lt. Co. James Bo Gritz received the above award on 22 Feb. 1967 for heroism not involving actual conflict with an armed enemy in the Republic of Vietnam. He was serving as deputy commander of a mobile guerilla task force at the time.

Lt. Col. Gritz transferred this award to Sgt. Kevin Benderman, citing "Sgt. Benderman's moral courage, above and beyond the call of duty, resulting in the severest of punishment for himself, are in keeping with the very highest humanitarian traditions and reflect great credit upon himself and the spirit of leadership and sacrifice within America's Armed Forces."

Lt. Col. Gritz has been called "THE" American Soldier, by Gen. William Westmoreland, and is the most decorated Green Beret Commander having been awarded 62 valor citations.

Sgt. Benderman receives this honor with pride, and with respect for what it represents.



Award of the Soldier's Medal to Sgt. Kevin Benderman (Regular Army)

**By Direction and Authority of We the People,
this highest award for valor not Involving deadly force, is transferred from the
undersigned recipient to Sgt. Kevin Benderman this 29th Day of July 2005.**

**Lt. Col. James Bo Gritz
Regular Army US Spl. Fcs, Ret.**

MORE:

The Benderman Appeal Needs Help:

Funds needed for legal fees and appeal of court martial conviction
<http://www.bendermandefense.org> (direct, but not tax deductible)
http://www.traprockpeace.org/kevin_benderman.html (tax deductible)

Bush Spits On His Generals

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

August 12, 2005 By Edwin Chen and Mark Mazzetti, L.A. Times Staff Writers & 8.13 By
Ronald Brownstein and Mark Mazzetti, L.A. Times Staff Writers

CRAWFORD, Texas - President Bush on Thursday dismissed as "speculation" recent statements by senior U.S. generals in Iraq that the Pentagon could begin withdrawing troops by spring, saying that an exit timetable would be based solely on political and military progress.

"The president has now twice in effect overruled or corrected" the Pentagon, said Bill Kristol, editor of the conservative Weekly Standard. "I think the president realizes how much damage was being done by the appearance coming out of the Pentagon of seeking urgently to get out" of Iraq.

This dissonance on message is unusual in an administration that prides itself on coordination and discipline.

A premature pullout would send a "terrible signal" to the enemy, Bush said, and would amount to a betrayal of millions of Iraqis who voted in parliamentary elections in January.

"The position of this government is clear - that as Iraqis stand up, we'll stand down," Bush said after meeting with members of his national security team.

Bush avoided directly contradicting Army Gen. George W. Casey and Army Lt. Gen. John R. Vines.

But his words were a sign that the White House wants to carefully manage expectations about the U.S. military's future in Iraq at a time when public support is dropping and casualties are mounting.

In recent weeks, several top commanders have said that they would be ready to recommend a reduction of about 30,000 U.S. troops early next year if scheduled elections in October and December go smoothly and sufficient progress is made training Iraqi forces to take over counterinsurgency missions.

Bush distanced himself from such predictions Thursday, pointing out that he, not the generals, would have the last word.

"The decision finally will be made by me - upon the recommendation of Gen. Casey, through Secretary Rumsfeld, to me," Bush said.

Pentagon officials have their own reasons for hoping for a troop withdrawal: They are concerned about the strain that redeployments are having on the all-volunteer military, and whether repeated combat tours in Iraq could lead to an exodus from the military services.

But Bush on Thursday described recruitment and retention in optimistic terms.

He pointed out that all active-duty branches would meet their reenlistment goals this year, and said the Army met its July goal for new active-duty recruits.

But he did not mention that Army officials were not expecting to meet their annual recruitment targets.

Italy Speeds Up Troop Reduction In Iraq

13 August 2005 Aljazeera.Net & Reuters

Italy, a month ahead of schedule, has started reducing its presence in Iraq by drawing down the first 130 forces in a planned 300-troop withdrawal, a Rome-based military source said on Saturday.

Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi last month insisted he would not speed the withdrawal from Iraq, despite calls to speed the process -- even from allies within his government -- following the deadly bomb attacks in London.

"Between 120 and 130 men from San Marco battalion have returned to Italy and will not be replaced," Lieutenant-Colonel Fabio Mattiassi, spokesman for the Italian contingent in Nasiriya, said.

The announcement appeared to confirm a report in Saturday's La Stampa newspaper and previous statements by Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi that Italy would recall 300 soldiers from its 3000-strong contingent operating under British command in southern Iraq.

Berlusconi faced massive protests at home when in June 2003 he committed Italian soldiers to Iraq.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Wives Of The “Disappeared” Demonstrate In Baghdad



Wife of Khudar al-Azaw, holds his photograph as she cries during a protest of women demanding to know where the men in their families were taken after an early morning raid in their neighborhood, Aug. 13, 2005, in Baghdad. Khudar al-

Azaw and dozens of other neighborhood men were taken during a pre-dawn raid by Iraqi police conducting raids on their homes. No details were given to the remaining family members. (AP Photo/Samir Mizban)

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

Assorted Resistance Action:

12 August 2005 AFP & 13 August 2005 Aljazeera.Net & & By SAMEER N. YACOUB, Associated Press Writer & (Reuters)

A driver working for the US-financed television station al-Hurra was shot and killed in front of his home in a south Baghdad neighbourhood, a Defence Ministry source reported. The armed men fled on foot.

Armed assailants killed four soldiers at the al-Siniya base west of the northern oil refinery town of Baiji on Saturday, said Iraqi army captain Toufik Khalaf.

Two soldiers were killed when armed men attacked an Iraqi army checkpoint in al-Dhuluiyah, 70km north of Baghdad.

An Iraqi translator for US forces was shot dead on Saturday while in front of his house in al-Sharquat, 300km north of the capital.

Two Iraqi police officers were shot to death in Samarra, police said.

In Baghdad, police Maj. Ahmed Kamil was killed in an ambush in a western neighborhood, police said.

One Iraqi soldier was shot dead in the Dora district of south Baghdad, police said.

BAGHDAD - A roadside explosive struck an Iraqi army patrol in the Sadr City district of Baghdad wounding five soldiers, police said.

KIRKUK - A police officer was killed and three others were wounded when an explosive device they were trying to defuse in the centre of Kirkuk went off, police said.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

No Oil For Blood.

Aug 11, 2005 Marie Cocco, Newsday

No oil for blood.

Iraq exported 1.6 million barrels per day in July, according to the oil ministry, at least half a million barrels a day less than in the waning months of Saddam Hussein's regime. Hours-long lines at gas stations are a constant of daily life, and the country must import gasoline.

How did an administration overflowing with oilmen get it all so wrong?

Betrayal

Aug 12, 2005 Michael A. Fletcher, Washington Post

Celeste Zappala of Philadelphia said her son, Sgt. Sherwood Baker, was killed in Baghdad while looking for nonexistent weapons of mass destruction. "This war is a disaster," Zappala said. "It is a betrayal of our military. It is a betrayal of our democracy."

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.

“We Are Fortunate Only That So Few Of Them Choose To React Violently”

8-13-5 From “Seeing Our Way Out Of Iraq,” Rense.com [Excerpt]

What we are doing in Iraq and Afghanistan, tolerating in Palestine, and perpetrating in Guantanamo and numerous other prison locations looks like our way of life, and that way of life is deeply resented and opposed by millions of people.

We are fortunate only that so few of them choose to react violently.

The attackers are not trying to wreck our home life. They want us to stop destroying theirs.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Welcome To Liberated Iraq



Raghad Ali, cries during a protest of women demanding to know where the men in their families were taken after an early morning raid in their neighborhood, Aug. 13, 2005, in Baghdad. **Ali's father and dozens of other neighborhood men were taken during a pre-dawn raid by Iraqi police conducting raids on their homes. No details were given to the remaining family members.** (AP Photo/Samir Mizban)

U.S. Imperial Envoy Tells Iraqis What To Put In New Constitution

8.12.05 Los Angeles Times]

U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad has presented to selected Iraqi leaders a U.S. version of provisions for the new Iraqi constitution that remain in doubt.

Winning More Friends: For The Armed Resistance That Is



U.S. Marines with the 5th Marine Regiment guard Iraqi men as Marines search their cars in Ramadi July 25, 2005. REUTERS/HO/USMC/Cpl. Tom Sloan

There's nothing quite like invading somebody else's country, forcing the citizens who live there out of their cars at gunpoint, publicly humiliating them in front of their families by lining them up like prisoners of war, and arresting any who object. This is guaranteed to arouse an intense desire to kill you as soon as possible in every the patriotic, self-respecting civilian who lives there.

But your commanders know that, don't they? Don't they?

**“You Have Killed The Innocent
And Such Things Will Lead The
People To Destroy You”
“The People Will Make A
Revolution Against You”**

"It was three-thirty in the morning and they were all asleep, Yassin and his friends Fahed and Walid Khaled. There was an American patrol outside and then suddenly, a Bradley armoured vehicle burst through the gate and wall and drove over Yassin. You know how heavy these things are. He died instantly. But the Americans didn't know what they'd done. He was lying crushed under the vehicle for 17 minutes. Um Khaled, his friends' mother, kept shouting in Arabic: "There is a boy under this vehicle."

13 August 2005 By Robert Fisk in Baghdad, Independent News & Media (UK) Ltd.

There's the wreckage of a car bomb that killed seven Americans on the corner of a neighbouring street. Close by stands the shuttered shop of a phone supplier who put pictures of Saddam on a donkey on his mobiles. He was shot three days ago, along with two other men who had committed the same sin. In the al-Jamia neighbourhood, a US Humvee was purring up the road so we gingerly backed off and took a side street. In this part of Baghdad, you avoid both the insurgents and the Americans - if you are lucky.

Yassin al-Sammerai was not.

On 14 July, the second grade schoolboy had gone to spend the night with two college friends and - this being a city without electricity in the hottest month of the year - they decided to spend the night sleeping in the front garden. Let his broken 65 year-old father Selim take up the story, for he's the one who still cannot believe his son is dead - or what the Americans told him afterwards.

"It was three-thirty in the morning and they were all asleep, Yassin and his friends Fahed and Walid Khaled. There was an American patrol outside and then suddenly, a Bradley armoured vehicle burst through the gate and wall and drove over Yassin. You know how heavy these things are. He died instantly. But the Americans didn't know what they'd done. He was lying crushed under the vehicle for 17 minutes. Um Khaled, his friends' mother, kept shouting in Arabic: "There is a boy under this vehicle."

According to Selim al-Sammerai, the Americans' first reaction was to put handcuffs on the two other boys. But a Lebanese Arabic interpreter working for the Americans arrived to explain that it was all a mistake. "We don't have anything against you," she said.

The Americans produced a laminated paper in English and Arabic entitled "Iraqi Claims Pocket Card" which tells them how to claim compensation.

The unit whose Bradley drove over Yassin is listed as "256 BCT A/156 AR, Mortars". Under "Type of Incident", an American had written: "Raid destroyed gate and doors."

No one told the family there had been a raid. And nowhere - but nowhere - on the form does it suggest that the "raid" destroyed the life of the football-loving Yassin al-Sammerai.

Inside Yassin's father's home yesterday, Selim shakes with anger and then weeps softly, wiping his eyes. "He is surely in heaven," one of his surviving seven sons replies. And the old man looks at me and says: "He liked swimming too. "

A former technical manager at the Baghdad University college of arts, Selim is now just a shadow. He is half bent over on his seat, his face sallow and his cheeks drawn in.

This is a Sunni household in a Sunni area. This is "insurgent country" for the Americans, which is why they crash into these narrow streets at night. Several days ago, a collaborator gave away the location of a group of Sunni guerrillas and US troops surrounded the house. A two-hour gun-battle followed until an Apache helicopter came barrelling out of the darkness and dropped a bomb on the building, killing all inside.

There is much muttering around the room about the Americans and the West and I pick up on this quickly and say how grateful I am that they have let a Westerner come to their home after what has happened.

Selim turns and shakes me by the hand. "You are welcome here," he says.

"Please tell people what happened to us." Outside, my driver is watching the road; it's the usual story. Any car with three men inside or a man with a mobile phone means "get out". The sun bakes down. It is a Friday. "These guys take Fridays off," the driver offers by way of confidence.

"The Americans came back with an officer two days later," Selim al-Sammerai continues. "They offered us compensation. I refused. I lost my son, I told the officer. 'I don't want the money - I don't think the money will bring back my son.' That's what I told the American." There is a long silence in the room. But Selim, who is still crying, insists on speaking again.

"I told the American officer: 'You have killed the innocent and such things will lead the people to destroy you and the people will make a revolution against you. You said you had come to liberate us from the previous regime. But you are destroying our walls and doors.'"

I suddenly realise that Selim al-Sammerai has straightened up on his seat and his voice is rising in strength. "Do you know what the American said to me? He said, 'This is fate.' I looked at him and I said, 'I am very faithful in the fate of God - but not in the fate of which you speak.'" [The "American Officer" is a perfect example of the kind of Imperial condescension that boils the blood of any patriot Iraqi who hears him spew his worthless bullshit. One can read what little there is of his racist "mind": "Oh, these primitive people believe in fate, I saw that in a movie, so I'll say something about fate. That will shut up the natives." Well, the British assholes had the same attitude about the crude, stupid Americans in 1776. The end result here will be exactly the same, for exactly the same reasons. Imperial arrogance kills the Imperially arrogant.]

Then one of Yassin's brothers says that he took a photograph of the dead boy as he lay on the ground, a picture taken on his mobile phone, and he printed a picture of it and when the Americans returned on the second day they asked to see it.

"They asked me why I had taken the picture and I said it was so people here could see what the Americans had done to my brother. ***They asked if they could borrow it and bring it back. I gave it to them but they didn't bring it back. But I still kept the image on my mobile and I was able to print another.***"

And suddenly it is in my hands, an obscene and terrible snapshot of Yassin's head crushed flat as if an elephant had stood upon it, blood pouring from what had been the back of his brains.

"So now, you see," the brother explains, "the people can still see what the Americans have done." [And the asshole who lied about returning the picture turns out to be the stupid player. It wasn't enough to kill the kid, no, there had to be an attempt to steal the picture as well. And the next time an IED goes off in this

neighborhood, the U.S. command will get all indignant about it; "What's the matter with these people, don't they love freedom?" Yes, they do love freedom. That's why there'll be more IEDs. Duh.]

In the heat, we slunk out of al-Jamia yesterday, the place of insurgents and Americans and grief and revenge.

"When the car bomb blew up over there," my driver says, "the US Humvees went on burning for three hours and the bodies were still there. The Americans took three hours to reach them. All the people gathered round and watched."

And I look at the carbonised car that still lies on the road and realise it has now become a little icon of resistance.

How, I ask myself again, can the Americans ever win? [Easy; just run over more little kids, act all superior about it, talk down to the natives, and steal their pictures. That should guarantee victory, right?]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

U.S. Injustice Department Pisses On State Governors Again

8.12.05 New York Times

The Justice Department has concluded that the Pentagon has the authority to move National Guard units without the consent of state governors, who share control over the use of those units. [Huh? According to the Bush traitors, the governors have nothing to say about what is done with the Guard. So what "control" is it they supposedly "share?"]

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