

GI SPECIAL 3C85:



Camp Casey, Crawford, Texas: August 2005

Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

The Enemy Attacks Iraq Vets: Schemes To Cut PTSD Benefits

Oct 15, 2005 by Gene C. Gerard, opednews.com. [Excerpt]

The Veterans Affairs Department is reviewing one-third of the cases of veterans who are receiving disability benefits for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

After conducting an internal study the VA believes it was too lenient in deciding which soldiers were eligible for PTSD benefits. Last year, the VA spent \$4.3 billion on PTSD disability and the VA hopes to reduce these payments by revoking PTSD benefits for many veterans.

This will be the final insult to soldiers who were asked to fight a war in Iraq on false premises.

Under the guidelines of the current review, soldiers who cannot prove that a specific incident, known as a "stressor," was sufficient to cause PTSD, their benefits will be revoked.

Comment: T

Fucking bullshit. Somebody is supposed to say, "Why, at 04:13 on 8 May 2004, it was that mortar shell that hit 6.9 feet from my tent that did it."

Can't name and document "a specific incident"? Too bad, lose your benefits.

The enemy has figured it out.

Most PTSD occurs after an accumulation of incidents. For example, driving convoy guard for 4 months may involve a series of attacks, none producing a specific physical injury, but the cumulative stress induces PTSD. People who know anything at all about PTSD know that either one horrifying experience, or a long series of highly dangerous incidents, or a combination of the two, can produce PTSD. This is not rocket science. But it is science. So they have devised a scheme to deny benefits to most troops.

[When the enemies domestic came up with this plan, they knew that demanding "a" specific incident would throw most vets off the PTSD rolls. This is a deliberate, planned enemy attack.

The enemy isn't in Iraq. The troops and the Iraqis have a common enemy: the people who control the Imperial government in Washington DC. Could you ask for a clearer piece of proof? T

Given the nature of warfare in Iraq it's not surprising that many returning soldiers are suffering from mental illness.

In the July 2004 issue of the New England Journal of Medicine Colonel Charles W. Hoge, M.D., the chief of psychiatry at Walter Reed Army Institute, published a preliminary study of the effects of the war in Iraq on military personnel.

The study concluded that almost 20 percent of soldiers who served in Iraq returned home suffering from PTSD. The study found that there is a clear correlation between combat experience and PTSD. The study concluded that, "Rates of PTSD were significantly higher after combat duty in Iraq."

Approximately 86 percent of the soldiers in the study were involved in combat in Iraq. On average, soldiers engaged in two firefights for each tour of duty. And 56 percent of

soldiers had killed an enemy combatant. An estimated 28 percent were directly responsible for the death of a civilian. Additionally, 68 percent witnessed fellow soldiers being killed or seriously wounded.

Although the number of soldiers suffering from PTSD is high, Dr. Hoge's study found that a majority of veterans are not seeking treatment.

Only 40 percent of returning soldiers acknowledged that they need mental health care, and only 26 percent were receiving care. As such, the number of veterans approved for PTSD compensation by the VA is relatively small.

Yet the VA believes too many soldiers were approved for PTSD disability compensation and is now seeking to deny soldiers this benefit.

It's easy to understand why the VA has seen an increase in soldiers seeking benefits due to PTSD.

What's difficult to comprehend is why the very agency responsible for meeting the needs of our veterans is now turning its back on them.

[Wrong. Nothing difficult about it. That's their job, fucking over veterans so the Imperial elite in DC can save money for themselves, and their war profiteering friends. This is not rocket science either. Do you really think the political class, who started this war for Empire based on a pack of lies, gives a shit about what happens to disabled soldiers? They're just an unproductive expense. Fuck the wounded troops; they can live in the streets.]

Perhaps the Bush administration is seeking to reduce compensation to soldiers for PTSD so that more money can be diverted to the on-going war in Iraq. [Duh.]

Or, perhaps the effort to revoke PTSD benefits is an attempt to assert that the war has not been that devastating.

What is certain is that the very people asked to sacrifice their lives, if necessary, for the nation are now being punished for doing so.

[Wrong again. Get real. They weren't asked to "sacrifice" for "the nation." They were ordered to fight and die for corporate greed, oil, and Empire. The idea that the elite class that controls the government is "the nation" is a disgusting obscenity. They are predators and parasites on the nation, and their only interest is enriching their own selves, their friends, business partners, and allies. The only honorable war today is class war against them, to take our country back.]

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Five US Soldiers Killed By Ramadi Bomb

Oct 16 Reuters & MNF

Five U.S. Marines assigned to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), were killed in Iraq on Saturday when their vehicle was hit by an improvised bomb in the western city of Ramadi, the U.S. military said on Sunday.

Three Maryland National Guards Killed

10.16.05 AP

Three members of the Maryland National Guard's 243rd Engineer Company were killed in Iraq. Defense officials identified the soldiers as: Sgt. Brian R. Conner, 36, of Baltimore; Spc. Samuel M. Boswell, 20, of Elkridge, Md., and Spc. Bernard L. Ceo, 23, of Baltimore.

U.S. Marine Killed BY Saqlawiya IED

10.16.05 Reuters

A U.S. Marine was killed when his vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb in Saqlawiya, near Falluja, on Saturday, the military said in a statement.

British Senior MP Investigator Dead

16 October 2005 FOCUS News Agency & MOD

Baghdad: British Ministry of Defense announced that the senior military police investigator in Iraq was found dead Saturday at the British base in Basra, AFP reported. His name is Captain Ken Masters. Captain Masters was Officer Commanding 61 Section, Special Investigation Branch, Royal Military Police.

He had been responsible for the investigation of all in-theatre serious incidents plus investigations conducted by the General Police Duties element of the Theatre Investigation Group. He was commissioned from the ranks in 2001 and served most of his career with the Special Investigation Branch.

Blast Kills Lawrence Soldier

September 24, 2005 By O'Ryan Johnson

A soldier from Lawrence died this week at a German hospital from wounds he suffered in an explosion in Ramadi, Iraq.

Sgt. Pierre Raymond, 28, an Army mechanic assigned to a Marine unit, had only been in the country about a month when he was injured, family members said.

"He was a laid-back sort of guy, always there for people," said Raymond's 32-year-old brother, Alfio, of Lawrence. "Easygoing. Always happy."

Raymond was asleep on Sept. 15 when a blast from a lobbed explosive device ripped through his barracks wall, shooting a piece of shrapnel into his neck, said the Department of Defense and Alfio Raymond.

Raymond was a 1994 graduate of Salem (N.H.) High.

Guardsmen Who Died Doubted Iraq Effort



Sgt. Howard P. Allen, 31, was killed by a bomb blast in Iraq. He is shown in an undated photo with his kids (from left) Edwin, Caitlin and Devlin. Family photo

He wrote a Web log last Saturday, "Long lost friends," in which he said the only reason for America's involvement in Iraq is that President Bush wanted to better his father.

Sept. 29, 2005 The Arizona Republic

Sgt. Howard Paul Allen of Mesa fought in Iraq in a situation that frustrated him and at times depressed him.

Allen wrote Aug. 25: "You feel that bomb go off in your dreams, but it's not your buddy this time but you."

The 31-year-old Arizona Army National Guardsman and graduate of Paradise Valley High School was killed Monday in Baghdad when a bomb exploded near his vehicle.

Allen, who had a 3-year-old son and stepchildren 12 and 10, lived in north central Mesa, served four years in the Navy and was promoted to sergeant in the guard Aug. 21. His wife said he had just re-enlisted for six more years.

He graduated from high school in 1993 and was a member a school program for marketing studies and an anti-drunken driving organization.

He referred to Iraq as "hell" and found some solace on the Internet where he shared much of his life, even intimate details, over a period of years. He had posted three messages since he was sent to Iraq in March.

Through his LiveJournal on-line blogging, he connected with old friends, called his fellow soldiers "family," people who would be there for each other "in a heartbeat" if something went wrong.

"The main thing I want people to know is that the men and women he served with were everything," his wife, Patience, 31, a Web designer, said as she stood in her front yard Wednesday. "He volunteered for missions so his friends' lives would not be put on the line."

She said her husband expressed anti-war feelings after he went to Iraq, but he wasn't driven by it.

"He took that job extremely seriously," she said. "He did what they wanted him to do."

He wrote a Web log last Saturday, "Long lost friends," in which he said the only reason for America's involvement in Iraq is that President Bush wanted to better his father.

Patience Allen said the couple were last together when Allen returned to Mesa in July for a three-week furlough.

Funeral services are pending.

Sniper's Bullet Kills Fort Benning Soldier

Sep. 28, 2005 BY MICK WALSH, Staff Writer, Ledger-Enquirer

Kimberly Benford's anxiety level jumped dramatically in late July when she learned her husband's unit was being shipped out of the relative calm of Baqouba to the troubled western region of Iraq.

It was in Ramadi, a hotbed of the insurgency, where Fort Benning's 2nd Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment, was relocated.

And it was in Ramadi where Staff Sgt. Jason Benford, 30, was killed on Tuesday.

"He'd told me it was absolutely a different ball game out there compared to Baqouba," said Kimberly Benford Wednesday afternoon from her home in the Moore's Forest subdivision in Columbus. "Before the move, we instant messaged each other twice a day and talked on the phone regularly. But since he went to Ramadi, I had one phone call from him. And it came the day before he died."

Sgt. Benford, a native of Toledo, Ohio, who had been in the Army 11 years, was on his second tour in Iraq, having served in Operation Iraqi Freedom I as a member of the 3rd Brigade's 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment.

With the 2-69, he was a Bradley Fighting Vehicle commander. He was on patrol Tuesday when a sniper put a bullet into his head, killing him instantly.

He became the 17th Fort Benning soldier to die in either Iraq or Afghanistan since February, and the sixth from the 2-69.

Kimberly Benford was notified by military personnel of her husband's death shortly after she arrived home Tuesday from her job at Dr. Vincent Naman's office.

"None of this seems real to me," she said Wednesday. "It's been 24 hours and I'm having a hard time processing everything. And it's just as hard on the boys."

They are 10-year-old Lane, a student at Double Churches Elementary, and 4-year-old Jacob, a pre-schooler. "Lane is taking it particularly hard. He and his dad were really into sports."

Jason Benford, whose mother Mary Benford is en route from her home in Sarasota, Fla., spent the Fourth of July holidays with his family.

"We packed a lot in during those two weeks," said Kimberly. "We spent time in Panama City, went to a Braves game in Atlanta and had fun at Whitewater. It was a great time to be together -- just the family."

Kimberly, who had attended Hardaway High School in the early '90s, met Benford in Columbus in the mid '90s. "My mother had told me not to date soldiers," she laughed. "But I did and married him."

Soon after the marriage, they were shipped to Germany for three years, then reassigned to Fort Benning. They had planned to remain here after Jason's retirement.

Funeral services are pending because Benford's body has not yet been returned to the States. His battalion plans a memorial service at Kelly Hill next week.

Kimberly wanted to reassure folks that she's being comforted by her mother, Ann Smith, and expects a group of 2-69 wives to pay her a visit. Benford is also survived by a brother, John Benford, who works for the Federal Emergency Management Agency in Pensacola, Fla.

Native Of Michigan's Thumb Killed: “He Said He Wasn't Needed There”

September 29, 2005 (AP)

DEFORD, Mich.: A native of Michigan's Thumb who was on his second tour of duty in Iraq with the U.S. Army was killed while on patrol, military officials say.

Sgt. 1st Class Casey E. Howe, a 32-year-old native of Deford, was part of a convoy headed to join an Iraqi contingent when his patrol hit an improvised explosive device Monday, military officials said. Another soldier, Master Sgt. Tulsa Tuliau, 33, of Watertown, N.Y., also was killed in the blast near Rustimayah.

Howe and Tuliau were members of the 3rd Battalion, 314th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 78th Division, based at Fort Drum, N.Y.

In his last conversation with his father, Howe talked of looking forward to spending his retirement in the Upper Peninsula fishing and hunting.

"He had six more years (in the Army) and we were going to get a cottage and go fishing and hunting," Richard Howe of Smiths Creek, who chatted with his son for about 20 minutes on Friday, told The Detroit News.

Donald Markel, who was Howe's wrestling coach at Cass City High School, said Howe was a team player with strong leadership skills and a good sense of humor.

"He was the type of person you could really enjoy being around," Markel told The Saginaw News. "He wasn't a jokester, but he had a unique perspective on things that would absolutely bring a smile to people's faces."

Howe was member of the school's wrestling team for four years and was team captain during his senior year.

"He'd give everything he had when he walked out onto the mat," Markel said. "There were often times when I would put him into situations where we knew he would have a tough match, but he accepted those kinds of challenges where some kids would shy away. He would do whatever it took to help the team."

Howe joined the Army 14 years ago after attending Soumi College and was on his second tour in Iraq, his father said.

The Army suited his energetic personality, said Andrea Neilson, a close family friend.

"He was high-strung and thought he could take on the world," Neilson told the Detroit Free Press.

The elder Howe said his son questioned why he was sent back to Iraq the second time.

"He said he wasn't needed there," the father said. "They had enough people."

But he said his son loved being in the military.

"He wanted to live it," the father said.

Howe is survived by his wife, four children and parents, all of Smiths Creek, Army officials said.

Howe was the 60th member of the U.S. armed forces with known Michigan ties to be killed in Iraq.

Soldier From Oceanside Killed

Oct. 03, 2005 Associated Press

OCEANSIDE, Calif. - Army Sgt. Paul C. Neubauer told his sister he wouldn't make it out of Iraq alive.

"He said, 'I have a feeling about this time that I won't be coming back,'" Neubauer's sister, Elizabeth, recalled.

It was last November, and the Neubauers had gathered in Grand Junction, Colo., for their mother's funeral.

"The comment really surprised me. It was so unlike him. I told him that he would be fine - he had seen combat numerous times - and that we would laugh about this on the front porch when he returned," she said. Paul Neubauer asked his sister to look after his wife and daughter.

On Sept. 23, a roadside bomb killed Neubauer, 40, of Oceanside and another soldier in the Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division based in Oakdale.

"He was a really smart guy who did really bad in school," Elizabeth Neubauer said. "But he taught himself Chinese and Greek when he was in junior high, and this was in western Colorado, where you aren't exposed to that kind of thing."

Another Stop-Lossed Soldier Killed: “He Got A Lot Of Roadside Bombs”



Sep 27, 2005 Anna Duckworth, Reporting, (CBS)

The family of Staff Sergeant Daniel R. Scheile of Antioch, one of two California national guardsmen killed Friday in a roadside bombing in Baghdad, today talked about their loss outside the Antioch home he shared with his wife Jennifer and 2 young daughters ages 9 and 5.

The 37-year-old Scheile and 40-year-old Sgt. Paul Neubauer of Oceanside were assigned to the Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment in Oakdale. After the bomb exploded next to their armored personnel carrier in southeast Baghdad, enemy forces attacked them with small arms fire.

Scheile's wife held a press conference at her home surrounded by her husband's relatives. She said she was originally going to keep her grief private, but her oldest daughter encouraged her to talk publicly about what a wonderful father and husband Scheile was. One by one, the group of relatives took their turn to speak about Scheile. His sister was the last family member to have contact with him, on the day he died.

“He emailed me,” said Trina Scheile as she struggled to hold back tears. “and said that it was really bad ... and he just needed someone to talk to.”

Father Ron Scheile said his son told him a similar tale. “He told me, uh, that it was really bad. I talked to him just before the incident happened and (said) he got a lot of roadside bombs. “

Scheile, who worked as a concrete mason with his father, had been in the service for 18 years, but on active duty only since last year. He left for Iraq in January and was originally set to come home in July, but his return was pushed back to November. He was awarded a Purple Heart in June after surviving another roadside bomb attack.

Mayville Soldier Dies: “To Me He’s Not My Soldier – He’s My Child”

Sept. 27, 2005 By Lara Margelofsky, Fohn Du Lac reporter

MAYVILLE — Two soldiers from Fond du Lac County units of the 127th Infantry of the National Guard are dead and a third is injured as the result of an apparent roadside bombing Monday morning in Iraq.

The fatalities are the first of the Iraq War for the 127th Infantry unit. Those who were killed Monday were Michael Wendling of Mayville and Andy Wallace of Oshkosh (see accompanying story). Brownsville soldier Jeremy Roskopf was injured. The three were traveling together when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb, according to family members.

Wendling, who was a 2003 graduate of Mayville High School and son of Randy and Carrie Wendling, had been a member of the National Guard since his junior year of high school was known to have a “great sense of humor” and to take things in stride. “He was actually pretty upbeat about the whole thing,” his father said. “He didn’t have any hesitation about going and we supported how he felt.”

Wendling was the youngest of four children and a member of Fond du Lac’s C Company, 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry of the National Guard, which arrived in Kuwait last month. The group was based in Kuwait but frequently departed on missions over the Iraqi border.

“I really think he did (enjoy himself). He would send pictures and describe what he was doing,” Wendling’s father said. “We heard from him pretty often and got a lot of e-mails.”

His last e-mail arrived Saturday morning.

The next time Wendling’s parents would hear about their son would be face to face with military messengers. Military personnel went to their employers in Brownsville and Mequon to inform them that their 20-year-old had been killed.

“Two guys just came down, but there was very little they could tell us,” Wendling’s mother said. “They just said it was a roadside bomb.” The soldiers also told the Wendlings that their son had made it to the hospital, but didn’t survive much longer.

“For him to even be in that position is just unthinkable,” his mother said hours after finding out her son had been killed. “I just want him to be alive.”

“I am his mom,” she said. “And to me he’s not my soldier – he’s my child.”

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE:

BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



A US soldier walks at the scene of a car bomb attack in Baghdad Oct. 10 2005..(AP Photo/Mohammed Uraibi)

Ramadi: The Resistance Rules

At dawn on Wednesday, at the newly fortified polling place, soldiers took up defensive positions facing the highway and the houses beyond. An explosion made a thud some distance away.

"If it's light," Sergeant Labor said, "we're going to be moving out of here."

October 13, 2005 By SABRINA TAVERNISE, The New York Times

RAMADI, Iraq, Oct. 12 - The soldiers moved quickly under cover of darkness. Driving loaders and forklifts with their headlights off, they worked through the night on Tuesday, placing neat concrete barricades in front of a municipal building in western Iraq.

On Saturday, the building will be one of many places where residents vote on a new constitution. But the area, less than a mile from a large American base here in the capital of Iraq's Sunni Arab heartland, has been the site of at least four sniper shootings of American soldiers since late August, and officers were not taking any chances.

"Smoke them now," Sgt. First Class Karl Labor told his men, soldiers from the First Battalion, 172nd Infantry Brigade, an Army unit attached to a commanding Marine brigade, who took their last drags. "At 600 yards, it's easy to hit that glow," said Sgt. Joe Linnane, motioning to a cigarette tip seen through the greenish light of night-vision goggles.

In Ramadi, the province's capital and perhaps its most dangerous city, Humvees race from a base down an empty, bullet-torn main street to reach the governor, who is sequestered in a building two miles away. Roadside bombs are a daily reality, and the locations of the polling sites are kept secret even from the governor. They will be announced at the last minute.

It was after midnight on Tuesday when Sergeant Labor's troops, part of the Marine Second Brigade combat team, rolled out of the base, called Ar Ramadi, one of four American military bases here.

The 14-vehicle convoy waited in the darkness for more than an hour while a Humvee that had been hit by a roadside bomb was towed through the gate. Tracer fire from an F-16 plane lighted up the sky over the trucks.

"So much for it being quiet out there," Sergeant Labor said.

Building walls at the front of the polling place would help keep the area free of bombs and protect against suicide car bombers, soldiers said. They worked steadily through the night, while keeping an eye out for snipers and intruders.

"You can't stand outside here in the daytime," said Sgt. Don Biddiscombe, from Shamokin, Pa.

Election commission workers who arrived Wednesday morning from Baghdad were staying at an American base in an area cordoned off with barbed wire.

A soldier standing guard explained apologetically that troops could not be sure that there were no insurgents among them, and so he could not allow them free rein.

Most Ramadi residents have not actually seen the draft constitution, said Maj. Daniel Wagner, a civil affairs team commander for a Marine unit in downtown Ramadi, who said he had taken a small box of copies with him on foot patrols this week. Nevertheless, he said, "Everyone out there on the street says they'll vote." **[They do. For their freedom from the Bush dictatorship. With weapons.]**

The city, with a population of about 400,000, has neither a newspaper nor a cellphone system. Its main street, which passes by the governor's headquarters, looks like a ghost town. Storefronts are boarded up. Windows gape with no glass. Some buildings are partly destroyed. Bullet marks pock walls.

Two new police stations near American bases send out limited patrols.

Still, basic services seem to be functioning. Residents interviewed in an American military civil affairs office said they had water and, like the rest of Iraq, limited electricity. An 8-year-old girl, Noor, said her school was open.

Reaching the governor's office requires an armed escort even in the courtyard. During an hourlong interview, sniper fire popped in the yard, obliging Mr. Rashid and his guests to move to another room away from exposed windows.

Since Mr. Rashid, a 48-year-old civil engineer, took office in June, selected by a local council, one attempt has been made on his life, and his son has been kidnapped (and later released). His predecessor was found dead in a house after a fight between insurgents and American forces.

At dawn on Wednesday, at the newly fortified polling place, soldiers took up defensive positions facing the highway and the houses beyond. An explosion made a thud some distance away.

"If it's light," Sergeant Labor said, "we're going to be moving out of here."

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Afghan Crash Ended Life Of Aspiring Chopper Pilot



09.28.2005 By Carol Ann Alaimo, ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Tucson Army Sgt. Kenneth Ross was just a skinny kid when he fell in love with helicopters.

As a 10-year-old, he decorated his bedroom with model choppers and vowed to fly them someday. He was on his way to making that dream come true when it took him to his grave at age 24.

Ross, a 1999 Mountain View High School graduate known for his toothy grin and love of life, was killed in action Sunday, one of five crew members on a CH-47 Chinook that crashed in a mountainous region of Afghanistan that is a hotbed of Taliban insurgents.

Oregon Mourns Fallen Soldiers; Surface-To-Air Missile Involved

9/27/2005 By Terry Murry of the East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The bodies of Adrian Stump and Tane Travis Baum are on their way home, said the wife of National Guard Capt. David Doran, the commander of D Company, 113th Aviation. The two were killed when their helicopter crashed in Afghanistan over the weekend.

In addition to Baum and Stump, three others were killed in the crash. They are Chief Warrant Officer John Flynn of Sparks, Nev.; Sgt. Kenneth Ross of Peoria, Ariz., and Sgt. Patrick Stewart of Fernley, Nev.

The two Nevada soldiers were part of the 113th, based in Reno. Ross was assigned to the Army's 7th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, based in Germany.

The deaths of Stump and Baum are the first Oregon National Guard casualties in Afghanistan.

They were killed approximately five miles north of Deh Chopan, Afghanistan. The cause of the crash is still under investigation by the military.

Unofficial initial reports indicated rebels fired a surface-to-air missile at the helicopter.

Stump and Baum were full-time employees of the Oregon National Guard at the Pendleton armory. Stump had been attending college at Eastern Oregon University, but flight school took precedence.

"I'm sure he intended to return to school," said Shauna Doran. "He wanted to fly so bad, God might as well have given him wings."

Baum was married to Tina Baum and is the father of two sons, Dyllon, 6, and Caelan, 4. Memorial accounts have been set up for the family at Schools Plus Community Credit Union and the Southgate branch of Community Bank.

"Because he worked at the facility full time, they all knew him so well," Shauna Doran said. "I am so sorry for Tina and those two little boys."

The close-knit group from Pendleton, as well as all their families, are mourning, Doran said.

“What happened when that helicopter wrecked has changed all of us forever,” she said.

Fort Bragg Soldier Killed



Sep 29, 2005 By JAY PRICE, Staff Writer, The News & Observer

A Fort Bragg soldier was killed in Afghanistan just two days after his younger brother had come home from a tour in Iraq with the Marine Corps.

Staff Sgt. Robert F. White, 34, of Cross Lane, W.Va., was killed Monday in an ambush west of Kandahar in the southern part of the country, according to Pentagon and Fort Bragg officials.

White, a squad leader with the 82nd Airborne Division, was part of a quick reaction force sent out to investigate a report of improvised roadside bombs when a rocket-propelled grenade struck the Humvee he was riding in.

Another soldier, whose name was not released, was wounded in the attack.

White was an unusually experienced infantryman, who had graduated from the elite Ranger school and also from Air Assault school. He had served in Kosovo, Korea and Nicaragua, said his mother, Shirley White, also of Cross Lane.

"With all of Bob's qualifications, we never really worried about him like we did about his younger brother, who's only 20 years old," she said.

That brother, Andrew, returned from Iraq on Saturday. The joy of his homecoming lasted little longer than the weekend.

"We've got ... pretty mixed emotions right now," Shirley White said.

As a boy, Robert White was a competitive swimmer. He played a drum in his junior high school's band and was a wrestler there and in high school, his mother said.

White always had a positive attitude and smile on his face, no matter how tough the situation, his battalion commander, Lt. Col. David P. Anders, said in a news release. His mother echoed that, saying her son smiled all the time.

"He was very soft-spoken, but when he was around, you always felt better," she said. "He was like a big kid."

That is probably why children liked him so much, she said. White was a Boy Scout leader with his son's troop in Hope Mills, the Cumberland County community where he lived with his wife, Cathy, and son, Zachary, 15.

"Zachary was working toward become an Eagle Scout, and Bob was planning to help him when he got back," Shirley White said. "I guess that will have to wait awhile."

White's survivors also include his father, Stan White, of Cross Lane; two sisters, Phyllis Sellard, 40, and Christina White, 17; and an older brother, William White, 38.

TROOP NEWS

What People Think About The War

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in.]

10 October, 2005 CBS News poll

Should the United States troops stay in Iraq as long as it takes to make sure Iraq is a stable democracy, even if it takes a long time, or should U.S. troops leave Iraq as soon as possible, even if Iraq is not completely stable?

Stay as long as it takes	36%
Leave as soon as possible	59
Don't know/NA	

How would you say things are going for the U.S. in its efforts to bring stability and order to Iraq? Would you say things are going very well, somewhat well, somewhat badly, or very badly?

Very well	4%
Somewhat well	39
Somewhat badly	27
Very badly	28

Don't know/NA 2

In order to pay for Hurricane recovery and rebuilding in the Gulf Coast, would it be acceptable or unacceptable to you to cut spending on the war in Iraq?

Acceptable 62%
Unacceptable 33
Don't know/NA 5

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.

Decorated Royal Air Force Officer Who Fought In Iraq Faces Jail Over 'Illegal War'

[Thanks to NB, who sent this in from the UK.]

He said that Kendall-Smith did not object in principle to serving in any war, provided it was legal. "This is the first case of its kind involving Iraq. My client has considered this very carefully and in great depth. He is not arguing that he is a conscientious objector. He is arguing that the war is manifestly unlawful," he said.

October 16, 2005 David Leppard, Times Newspapers Ltd.

AN RAF officer could be jailed for refusing to serve in Iraq because he believes that the war there was illegal.

Flight-Lieutenant Malcolm Kendall-Smith is to be court-martialled for "refusing to obey a lawful command" after he told his commanding officer that he would not go to Basra.

He is the first British officer to face criminal charges for challenging the legality of war.

Kendall-Smith, 37, unit medical officer for RAF Kinloss in Morayshire, has been decorated for his role in support of military operations in Afghanistan and for two previous tours in support of the RAF in Iraq.

However, after studying the legal position, including the advice of Lord Goldsmith, the attorney-general, he decided this year that the war was unlawful and it would therefore be wrong for him to return.

Justin Hugheston-Roberts, his solicitor, said preliminary court martial proceedings were expected to begin this year.

He said that Kendall-Smith did not object in principle to serving in any war, provided it was legal. "This is the first case of its kind involving Iraq. My client has considered this very carefully and in great depth. He is not arguing that he is a conscientious objector. He is arguing that the war is manifestly unlawful," he said.

Kendall-Smith, as a serving officer, is barred by military regulations from talking to the media. A colleague said: "Malcolm joined the RAF out of a spirit of idealism. He felt he wanted to do something good, to make a difference. It was good old battle of Britain stuff, helping the good guys fight the fascists.

"When he first went to the Gulf in 2003, his awareness of the legal position was far less than it is now. He is now in no doubt that the war was illegal and that the government has spun its position on the evidence. He takes the view that this is something which is worth going to prison for.

"When he explained to his commanding officer that he thought the war was unlawful, he was told that the attorney-general had declared it legal. Malcolm simply replied that the attorney-general had said one thing, then later said more or less completely the opposite."

A central part of Kendall-Smith's legal case will be the manual of RAF law which states that a serving officer is justified in refusing to obey a command if it is illegal. His lawyers will also argue that his commission, granted by the Queen, requires him to act according to "the rules and discipline of war".

He is posted with a staff of four at the regional medical centre at Kinloss, which employs more than 3,000 military personnel and is home to the Nimrod Maritime Reconnaissance Aircraft fleet.

He was suspended on full pay after being interviewed by the Royal Military Police in June. On October 5 he was charged after being served with court martial papers by the RAF prosecuting authority in Innsworth, Gloucestershire.

The Ministry of Defence said: "An RAF officer is due to appear before a general court martial on a date and location yet to be confirmed. The officer will be charged with four counts of disobeying a lawful command. It would be inappropriate to give further details."

The court martial will be heard at a military base by a senior judge and a board of at least five high-ranking officers, with an air commodore as president. There will be no jury and the case will be heard on a military base. The RAF will pay his defence costs but the reserves the right to reclaim the money if he is convicted.

Silly Man Shows He Knows Nothing Of War [This Is Not A Satire]

14 October 2005 Kim Sengupta in Al Amarah, Iraq, The Independent (UK)

Roadside bombings, sniper attacks and the steady toll of casualties have caused immense frustration among British soldiers from the 1st Battalion, the Staffords Battle Group at Abu Naji.

The enemy, says Captain Will Blackhurst, are cowardly. "They hide in shadows and then run away before you have the chance to capture, or, if necessary, kill them." [Where was he in 1776 when they really needed him? Oh yeah, that's right, he was in command and Lexington and Concord, whining the same stupid pathetic crap.]

***Punks In Command:* Teacher Critical Of Naval School Policy Barred From Event At Campus Store**

October 14, 2005 Baltimore Sun

The Naval Academy has refused to permit a professor who has been critical of its admissions policy to hold a book signing at the campus bookstore-a practice regularly allowed for other faculty-citing a seldom-applied "conflict of interest" rule that governs federal employees.

Bruce Fleming, an English professor and author of "Annapolis Autumn," said he believes the decision is unfair. [Duh.]

Desperation Time? Marines Try To Recruit 85 Year Old Anti-War Activist



October 13, 2005 By Bryan Johnson, komotv

SEATTLE - A Seattle woman who has been an anti-war crusader for the peace for the past 58 years is being recruited by the Marines.

It is apparently all a mistake.

Barbara "Bobbie" Mercer got a letter from General W.E. Gaskin, the commanding general of Marine Corps recruiting.

It says: "Now is the time to put your unique language skills to the test as a member of the United States Marine Corps. Your command of the Arabic language will be invaluable..."

The letter came to the Mercer home on Capitol Hill late last month. It's a home where the password is peace and peace messages are on display.

"He wanted to recruit me for my skill in the Arabic language," she said. "I don't speak Arabic. I learned a little French but my accent is terrible."

The general thought she did. He urged Mercer to seize the opportunity to defend our nation and spread the message of freedom.

Her reaction: "Well, I just thought they were pretty desperate for wanting an 85-year-old."

Yes, she's 85, and participated in her first picketing in 1947 -- a march against the draft.

The Marine Corps admits this was all a mistake. They are looking for a few good men and women. Young men and women. They do have a delayed entry program, but that's for those who want to graduate before serving.

It's not for 85-year-olds.

The letter goes on to say: "We'll push your physical and mental limits beyond anything you've ever known." When that's read aloud, she laughs.

"Did that intrigue you?" I asked. She replied: "No". Her husband Lyle added: "She just came back from senior aerobics, Bryan. That's all she needs!" To which she added: "I was pushed to the limit there."

Incidentally, although the Mercers have marched in peace rallies since 1947, they are not pacifists. They saw the horrors of war.

Lyle was a paratrooper in World War II. Bobbie was an Air Corps nurse who flew with the wounded from Europe to the United States. They met while both were lieutenants in the Air Corps.

Lyle Mercer said of his reaction to the letter: "My first reaction was there must be some sort kind of another huge Bush goof-up to be recruiting an old, retired veteran." He quickly corrected the reference to "old" with the word mature. He and his wife both laughed.

They both say they are too old for war, but they are always ready for peace rallies. The last one they attended was a rally for peace in Iraq on Sept. 24, that was just one day before their 60th wedding anniversary.

Payday Loan Predators Slapped Down In Jacksonville

October 13, 2005 By Karen Jowers, Army Times staff writer

An effort to help reduce the cost of payday loans for service members in Jacksonville, Fla. has expanded to help the entire community.

The Jacksonville City Council passed an ordinance Oct. 11 that places a cap of 36 percent on the annual interest rate that can be charged on payday loans. The effective date of the ordinance is pending the mayor's signature.

City Council President Kevin Hyde said council members viewed the effective annual percentage rate of as high as 390 percent allowed on payday loans under Florida law is "unconscionable."

But those in the payday loan industry say the cap will cripple their operations in Jacksonville. **"A 36 percent A.P.R. effectively prohibits the operation" of payday lenders**, said Lyndsey Medsker, spokeswoman for the Community Financial Services Association. **[Better and better.]**

Hyde cited a University of Florida study that showed the area had a higher number of payday lenders than any other county in Florida.

"We have more payday lenders than McDonald's, and they're clearly clustered around military bases," he said. "I understand we're the first municipality in Florida to do this and I hope others will follow suit."

“Certainly what the city council did was a bold step and something that the state legislators failed to do to protect the citizens of Florida,” including service members based there, said Lynn Drysdale, Jacksonville Area Legal Aid attorney.

Dave Faraldo, director of the Jacksonville chapter of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, said a sailor came into his office the day after the ordinance was passed with a payday loan debt higher than any he’d ever seen. The relief societies try to impress upon troops that they should seek help from them before going to payday lenders.

But at least now, he said, if troops — or anyone in Jacksonville — seek out a payday lender in the future, they will be charged “reasonable” fees.

He hopes other counties and the state legislature will take similar steps. “Down here in Florida, when you spray one yard for cinch bugs, you have to spray the whole area. Otherwise, they’ll move out to other people’s yards,” he said.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

How The Occupation Lost Basra To The Mahdi Army

Moqtadr al-Sadr has yet not played all of his cards. He still has loyal followers all across the South and as well as in his primary political base in Baghdad’s Sadr City.

What happened in Basra may be a preview of a strategy aimed at causing the collapse of the U.S. political position in one city after another.

October 12, 2005 By Gareth Porter, Foreign Policy In Focus

To understand just how tenuous the U.S. position in Iraq is at the moment, we have only to look at the way Basra, Iraq’s second largest city, in the solidly Shiite South slipped out of the control of occupation forces last month.

A crucial factor in Basra’s sudden political transformation is that the local security forces and Shiite political leadership in Basra turned against the British and sided with the Mahdi Army. Through the six hours of violence, not a single Iraqi policeman came to the aid of the beleaguered British forces.

Two days later, hundreds of policemen marched through downtown Basra waving pistols and AK-47s and shouting “no to occupation.”

The stunning transformation of Basra from a secure rear area for U.S. and British troops into a center of anti-occupation agitation reveals the utter weakness of the Shiite political base on which the United States must now rely to sustain its occupation of the country.

After the election in January, according to senior police officials in Baghdad, the police force in the city was under the control of militant Shiite Badr Organization, which is aligned with the government of Prime Minister Jafari. But the loyalty of many militiamen in Basra to the Badr Organization proved in the end to be very weak. By the time of the protests, the Mahdi Army was clearly predominant within the police force.

The strategic significance of events in Basra becomes clearer if it compared with a parallel event in the Vietnam War. In 1966 an anti-government and anti-U.S. Buddhist "Struggle Movement" loosely aligned with the Communist forces carried out an uprising and seized power in Hue, the ancient capital and center of Buddhist agitation. The U.S. command responded by airlifting South Vietnamese government battalions into Hue to reassert military control.

In Iraq, however, there were no government units available to send into Basra to take back the city. And neither the British nor the Americans had enough troops to impose direct control on Basra by force.

Comments to the press by British officers in Basra make it clear that the command understands that the city slipped out of control because the occupation forces could not trust the very people who they thought were their loyal allies.

The U.S. command, meanwhile, refuses to acknowledge publicly that it faces a powerful anti-occupation movement in the South. Two weeks after the Basra uprising, Gen. George Casey, the commander of U.S. forces in Iraq, went so far as to claim that "lately" Moktadr al-Sadr had become "part of the solution" in Iraq.

If the U.S. command really believes that, it may be in for a nasty surprise.

Moqtadr al-Sadr has yet not played all of his cards. He still has loyal followers all across the South and as well as in his primary political base in Baghdad's Sadr City.

What happened in Basra may be a preview of a strategy aimed at causing the collapse of the U.S. political position in one city after another.

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

A Dress Made In The USA

October 15, 2005 By LEE KEATH, The Porterville Recorder

"The government can't just sew together an outfit and dress the people up by force. We do not see ourselves or see our future in this draft," Gazwan Abdul Sattar, 27-year-old Sunni teacher, said after voting "no."

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

OCCUPATION REPORT



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)

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

On Cutting Off Heads

13 October 2005 By Nigel Morris, The Independent UK

Quoting Robert Fisk:

"You can go and see Saving Private Ryan or Kingdom of Heaven, people have their heads cut off. When it comes to real heads being cut off, you can't. I think television connives with governments at war."

Asked if the "anger and passion" he felt over the events he witnessed had affected his objectivity, he said: "When you are at the scene of a massacre, you are entitled to feel immense anger and I do."

He rejected suggestions that graphic pictures of the dead in newspapers took away their dignity. He said: "My view is the people who are dead would want us to record what happened to them."

“The Great Anglo-Saxon Empire Has Reached Its ‘Sell By’ Date”

October 15, 2005 by Bill Bonner via Veterans For Peace. [Excerpt]

The great Anglo-Saxon empire has reached its "sell by" date.

Its imperial advantage – its lead in the Industrial Revolution – has disappeared. It now counts on the savings of foreigners to keep going.

But while its homeland bound citizens groan under the burden of debt, its military and political leaders still talk tough. "You got terrorists with a grudge against the United States?" asked the Commander-in-Chief. Well "bring 'em on."

He might as well have put a gun to his head. Now, with the curiosity of a reporter watching a hanging, we wait to see if he pulls the trigger.

<p>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.</p>
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Stupid Lie About U.S. Casualties Stamped Out

October 12, 2005 From: Diane Rejman, Veterans For Peace
Subject: Re: VFPD How many really died? Thunder Run!

The rumor about 10-12,000 dead has been debunked. It came from a source with a history of publishing undocumented, untrue items.

And even without knowing this - how could anybody believe that 8-10,000 families are being quiet? If this many names are missing from the "official" count, **SOMEBODY**, probably a LOT of somebodies, would be making a big stink about it.

Of course maybe there's a conspiracy out there to identify families who are ok or happy about losing a family member, and once these families are identified, the name is not published. And just maybe, 80 percent of the families of dead soldiers fall into this category. (I sure hope this doesn't start another internet rumor. **BELIEVE ME** - I just made this up.)

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Pentagon Babes Set Up "Unrehearsed" Televised Meeting of Troops and President



CLASS WAR REPORTS

Shut 'Em Down!



Residents protest on Stickney Avenue as they encounter National Socialist Movement members in Toledo, Ohio October 15, 2005. At least two dozen people were arrested on Saturday after a planned march by white supremacists in Toledo prompted a crowd to pelt police with rocks and bottles and set a fire, city officials said. Members of the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement had been scheduled to march under police protection through north Toledo, with anti-Nazi groups set to counter-protest. But police canceled the event and told the neo-Nazi group to leave as tensions rose and violence erupted nearby, the Toledo Blade reported. REUTERS/The Blade/Allan Detrich

Comment: D

To: GI Special
From: D
10.16.05

Saturday, several hundred protestors shut-down a planned neo-nazi march, and chased the nazis out of Toledo. The police (true to form) protected the two-dozen racist nazis, and tear-gassed the anti-nazi protestors, arresting over 100 of them.

Politicians and the media are blaming "gang members" for the "violence" against the nazis. Carrying this message non-stop, the news media has been demonizing blacks for

defending their neighborhood, while making the nazis look like boy scouts. (almost no mainstream articles even mention the words "racist" or "racism").

Leading this attack on "rioting gangs" is the mayor of Toledo, who himself is black (!) (more evidence of the ongoing conservatism of the black middle class).

(If) Gang members were involved, so what? Historically, many black gangs were initially formed as groups to protect their communities against violent racist mobs. One of the greatest ghetto rebellions in U.S. history, the 1965 Watts Rebellion, involved many black youths who were members of such gangs, and after the rebellion many of them became active in groups like the Black Panther Party.

Many news analysts are saying that "this is exactly what the nazis wanted"--to provoke a "violent response."

That's bullshit.

Confrontation is the last thing the nazis want. They want people to "ignore" them. They want to march through black neighborhoods without opposition. They want people to believe that nazis have the right to "free speech."

If any racists--the nazis, the Klan, the minutemen--try to march through your streets, don't try to "ignore" them.

Shut 'em down!

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