

GI SPECIAL 3D4:



IRAQ WAR REPORTS

SOLDIER ASSIGNED TO MARINES KILLED IN AR RAMADI

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Soldier assigned to the 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), was killed in action while conducting combat operations against the enemy when his vehicle was attacked with an improvised explosive device in Ar Ramadi Nov. 2.

SOLDIER KILLED IN ACTION NEAR BAQUBAH

November 3, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 05-11-06C

Baghdad, Iraq – A Soldier assigned to the 43rd Military Police Brigade was killed in action while conducting combat operations in the vicinity of Baqubah, located north of Baghdad, Nov. 3.

The cause of death was an improvised explosive device.

SOLDIER KILLED, ANOTHER INJURED NEAR BALAD

November 3, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 05-11-04C

BAGHDAD, Iraq – A Soldier from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division died from wounds sustained when the patrol he was with came under attack by anti-Iraqi forces near Balad Nov. 2. He was attached to with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. Another Soldier injured in the attack was transported to a nearby medical facility and treated for his wounds.

Another Vermont Soldier Dies; QUESTION OF MOVING INTO A “MORE PEACEFUL AREA” BROUGHT UP

"They are not asking for relief but that is something the general officers are always aware of in doing the right things in taking care of the soldiers," Rainville said.

November 3, 2005 By Wilson Ring, The Associated Press

COLCHESTER, Vt. -- Another Vermont National Guard soldier has been killed in Iraq.

Second Lt. Mark Procopio, of Burlington, was killed Wednesday by a homemade bomb while on patrol in Iraq, the Guard announced Thursday morning.

Procopio, 28, was part of a patrol of four armored Humvees and two tanks. When the Marine Corps helicopter was shot down the patrol headed to secure the area.

Adjutant Gen. Martha Rainville said Procopio and his patrol were responding to a Marine helicopter that had come under fire and was about to crash when his Humvee hit an improvised explosive device.

Procopio is from a family of Vermont National Guard members. His father just retired as a colonel. His grandfather is a retired sergeant major.

Procopio's wife Erica also is in the National Guard. She is serving in Kuwait and was on her way back to Vermont Thursday.

He was the fourth member of Task Force Saber to be killed in action since the unit arrived in Iraq in July.

The unit is due to remain in Ramadi until next July.

Some American units in Iraq serving in dangerous areas have been moved into more peaceful areas, she said.

"There is precedent for doing this," Rainville said.

"I have been on the phone with the leadership discussing some concerns I have with this unit," Rainville said of Task Force Saber.

She would not describe those conversations, nor would she say if she felt Task Force Saber should be moved.

"They are not asking for relief but that is something the general officers are always aware of in doing the right things in taking care of the soldiers," Rainville said.

Procopio is the 19th Vermonter killed in Iraq.

Katrina Took His Home, Iraq Took His Life: "Please Be Careful, You Just Have Two More Months"

The back-to-back tragedy has fueled anger for some in Oneto-Sikorski's family. His aunt, Eloise Kindja, said the family has had a difficult time in securing hurricane relief and the soldier's mother is still waiting for a FEMA trailer.

"What more does she have to give to the country?" Kindja asked. "She gave her only son."

Nov. 03, 2005 By HOLBROOK MOHR, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JACKSON - Elaine Oneto was trying to rebuild her own life after Hurricane Katrina when she was informed her soldier son had lost his life in Iraq.

Now, coping with the loss of her home is taking a back seat to a new challenge - helping make a future for three young children who lost their father.

1st Lt. Robert C. Oneto-Sikorski of Bay St. Louis was on a foot patrol near al Haswah, in an area west of Baghdad, on Monday when he was killed by a roadside bomb, military officials said.

The news came at a time when the National Guardsman's family was reeling from the Aug. 29 hurricane. Oneto-Sikorski's home, like his mother's home, was flooded by Katrina's storm surge.

Oneto-Sikorski, 33, and Claire Rager, the mother of his children, were both stationed in Iraq with the 155th Brigade Combat Team, Oneto said.

Rager has been granted emergency leave and will return home for Oneto-Sikorski's funeral, but she will be coming back to a community virtually wiped off the map by the worst natural disaster to ever befall the state.

Oneto-Sikorski's children - ages 6, 8, and 11 - are staying with relatives near Memphis, where they relocated after the storm.

"He was devoted to his children. He is so much more than any of us could say," Oneto said. "He was a wonderful man who loved everyone and his loss is going to devastate this whole community."

"I'm going to do my best to make sure his kids never want for anything, and they remember him for the honorable and brave man that he was," she said.

"I talked to him Thursday night and we were talking about how he was going to come home in December," Oneto said. "I told him, 'Please be careful, you just have two more months. You just have two more months.'

Before his deployment, the Hancock High School and University of South Alabama graduate worked as a mechanical engineer at Northrop Grumman Ship Systems' shipyard in Pascagoula.

His mother said he loved playing the guitar and writing his own music.

His father, Bob Sikorski of Vancleave, said the two had recently finished rebuilding a Yamaha dirt bike that Oneto-Sikorski loved to ride. But more than anything, he loved his children.

"He loved his kids," Bob Sikorski said. "That little girl couldn't go to bed without a hug from him."

The back-to-back tragedy has fueled anger for some in Oneto-Sikorski's family. His aunt, Eloise Kindja, said the family has had a difficult time in securing hurricane relief and the soldier's mother is still waiting for a FEMA trailer.

"What more does she have to give to the country?" Kindja asked. "She gave her only son."

But, Kindja said, those material things, while important, pale with the loss of her nephew.

"I wish he had been my son," she said. "He was an absolutely incredible young man who loved everyone. They world is going to be a worse place without him."

Funeral arrangements were incomplete.

Confirmation: Resistance Shot Down U.S. Copter

11.3.05 By MARIAM FAM, Associated Press Writer

Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch told reporters Thursday that witnesses "believe they saw a munition fired at the helicopter and saw the helicopter break in pieces in midair and then crash."

“There Is No Clear Victory In Sight” “You’re Trying To Find An Enemy Who Looks Exactly Like The People You Don’t Want To Kill”

11.3.05 CBS

60 Minutes correspondent Lara Logan goes on patrol with Col. Slack and his men as they defend what has become known as the world’s most dangerous road, this Sunday, Nov. 6, at 7 p.m. ET/PT.

On one patrol, Logan watches as Slack approaches a slit-open fuel can in the road that turns out to be a bomb. “It’s either I do it or they do it,” says Slack, referring to his men.

He’s lost four of them over seven months, but almost as frustrating to Slack is the fact that the road is still not secure. “I would have to tell you that by the purest definition of secure, I still haven’t been successful. (Securing the road) is a work in progress,” he says.

Even with nearly 1,000 men to guard the road, Slack says it’s hard to catch insurgents who set off roadside bombs and conduct ambushes and suicide attacks because they blend in with the Iraqi population.

Besides assigning Iraqi police to guard exit ramps, he leads patrols into neighborhoods to seek out the enemy. “You’re trying to find an enemy who looks exactly like the people you don’t want to kill,” Slack tells Logan. “This is a vicious knife fight in a dark room, grappling with an unseen enemy, who, if he can get you, will kill you.”

Insurgents know that if they can kill anyone on the vital thoroughfare or disrupt its flow, they will get a lot of attention because it's the country's lifeline to the outside and has become a symbol of America's progress in Iraq. Many insurgents are willing to sacrifice all.

Despite making the road somewhat safer, attacks continue and there is no clear victory in sight.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW!



US soldiers return to their base after an assault on Iraqi insurgents south of Baghdad. (AFP/US Army/Spc Jennifer D. Atkinson)

TROOP NEWS

Thousands Rally Across US Against Bush's War

11.3.05 By Christine Kearney, Reuters

Thousands of protesters staged rallies on Wednesday across the United States against the policies of President George W. Bush, including the war in Iraq and response to Hurricane Katrina.

The World Can't Wait organization, a coalition of groups formed recently to stage the rallies, used the anniversary of Bush's re-election to call for his resignation in protests that took place in cities including New York, Los Angeles, Seattle, San Francisco and Chicago.

In New York, students walked out of schools and colleges and joined other supporters as thousands rallied in Union Square before marching nearly 2 miles to Times Square along avenues lined with police on motorbikes.

Demonstrators chanted and carried banners in a mainly peaceful protest. Police said three people were arrested.

Olivier Martineau, 16, walked out of his high school with 17 others to join the march. "I am strongly against the war in Iraq," he said. "We are always sticking our noses into other people's business when we don't even realize our battles at home."

Student Tuarian Wolfe, 19, carried a sign reading "No Iraqi ever left me on my rooftop to die," to protest the slow response to help poor people stranded in New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina.

Organizers said they planned to interrupt Bush's next State of the Union address in January.

In Chicago, organizers estimated more than 500 people attended a downtown rally amid police dressed in riot gear. A few masked protesters waved Iraq flags and vandalized American flags.

James Crimmins, 59, said he objected to "a war based on lies," while Gloria Rosenzweig, 60, said she protested Bush's record on the environment and believed young people were becoming more politicized.

"This war is now resonating with youth with the military recruiting in their high schools and they know they are not far away from danger," she said.

Plane In Crash That Killed 4 Was 510 Pounds Over Weight Limit

11.3.05 Associated Press

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla.: An Air Force probe has found that hostile fire didn't cause a May plane crash in Iraq that killed an Arizonan and three other U-S airmen, along with the Iraqi pilot.

Investigators found no evidence the plane was shot down nor any sign of mechanical problems.

However, they declined to offer an opinion on the cause, citing lack of legal protection from use in potential court action.

The plane went down trying to land on a road or while making a low observation pass about an hour after taking off. It was 510 pounds over its published weight limit, according to the report.

The report concludes the crew were killed instantly when the plane crashed nose-first and upside down at or near full power.

Stupid-Shit Milwaukee Mayor Says Veterans Can't Be For Peace

November 2, 2005 TOM HELD, Staff, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

The local Veterans For Peace chapter has found itself in conflict with organizers of the Milwaukee Veterans Day Parade over the peace group's exclusion from the event this Saturday.

Parade organizers have banned Veterans For Peace members from marching with their banner, saying the group's political activism violates the spirit of the event, which is to honor veterans.

John Zutz, a leader of the local peace group, called the decision unfair during a news conference Tuesday at the Peace Action Center on E. Keefe Ave.

The session turned into a spontaneous civics debate when Mary Ann D'Aquisto, president of Veterans Day Parade of Milwaukee Inc., arrived to explain her side.

"You're trying to use our parade to further your political agenda," D'Aquisto told Zutz. "It's a political organization; not a veterans organization."

Zutz then grabbed an American flag and suggested the veterans carrying the flags in the parade also would be making political statements.

Earlier, he had said that D'Aquisto and the other organizers who voted to keep out his group were themselves politicizing the event.

"They are choosing which political statements are correct and which are incorrect," said Zutz, who served with the Army in Vietnam in 1969 and '70.

Zutz also pointed to the origins of Veterans Day, which began in 1919 as Armistice Day, an occasion to celebrate the end of World War I and to perpetuate peace. When President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a bill in 1954 proclaiming Nov. 11 as Veterans Day, the World War II general called on all citizens to observe the day by remembering the sacrifices of all U.S. soldiers and by rededicating themselves to the task of promoting an enduring peace.

The Veterans For Peace members, roughly 20 in the Milwaukee area, will skip any protest at the parade itself but plan to "stand for peace" in Veterans Park, where the parade ends.

A Promise To His Troops

November 2, 2005 Los Angeles Times

Col. William Wood promised troops in the California National battalion that the killing and wounding of battered soldiers would come to an end. Less than 48 hours later, Col. Wood was killed in a roadside bomb explosion.

COUNTER-RECRUITMENT PROTESTERS DRIVE NAZIS OFF THE STREET

A large contingent of antiwar demonstrators confronted the Nazis, who were immediately surrounded by police and escorted away, with angry demonstrators in pursuit.

November 4, 2005 By Eric Ruder, Socialist Worker

In Boston, more than 2,000 people converged on the Boston Common on October 29 to hear Cindy Sheehan and an impressive sequence of speakers from groups including Iraq Veterans Against the War, Veterans for Peace and the Campus Antiwar Network. The rally was organized by a broad coalition made up of antiwar, student and community organizations.

“Keep pushing to have all the liars held accountable,” Sheehan told the crowd. “Change has to start from the bottom up!”

As the rally began, a small group of Republican counter-protesters were surrounded and drowned out by Campus Antiwar Network activists.

The rally then led into a boisterous march through the streets of downtown Boston despite a massive police presence. Along the march route protesters paused in front of the Tremont Street Baptist Church, where antiwar demonstrators chanted in solidarity with gay rights protesters who were picketing a meeting of the right-wing group Focus on the Family.

As marchers returned to the Boston Common, they encountered a small group of neo-Nazis holding anti-Semitic and homophobic signs. A large contingent of

antiwar demonstrators confronted the Nazis, who were immediately surrounded by police and escorted away, with angry demonstrators in pursuit.

In Rochester, N.Y., about 200 people met for a “2,000 Too Many” protest on October 29. Marchers met at the Federal Building carrying placards with the names of all the soldiers who have died in Iraq.

The protest was called by the citywide antiwar coalition Rochester Against War, and it drew members from the Campus Antiwar Network and Metro Justice. The crowd then marched through downtown.

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.

Only 15 Years Of Sexual Torment

September 21, 2005 Baltimore Sun,)

Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski questioned top Naval Academy leaders about why problems with sexual harassment have persisted at their institution despite numerous investigations and recommendations over the past 15 years. The Maryland Democrat met with the academy's Board of Visitors, a supervisory group made up of members of Congress and presidential appointees.

Pentagon Pigs Grab The Money

November 03, 2005 By William Matthews, Army Times staff writer

Alarmed at the rising cost of ships, aircraft, satellites and other weapons, members of the House Armed Services Committee were not sympathetic when the Pentagon's chief weapons buyer complained about his inadequate acquisition work force.

Citing an analysis that he conceded dates back a few years, Rep. Duncan Hunter said the \$15 million price tag for an Army helicopter included \$5 million to pay the wages of the acquisition personnel it took to make the purchase.

Lots Of Atheists In This Foxhole

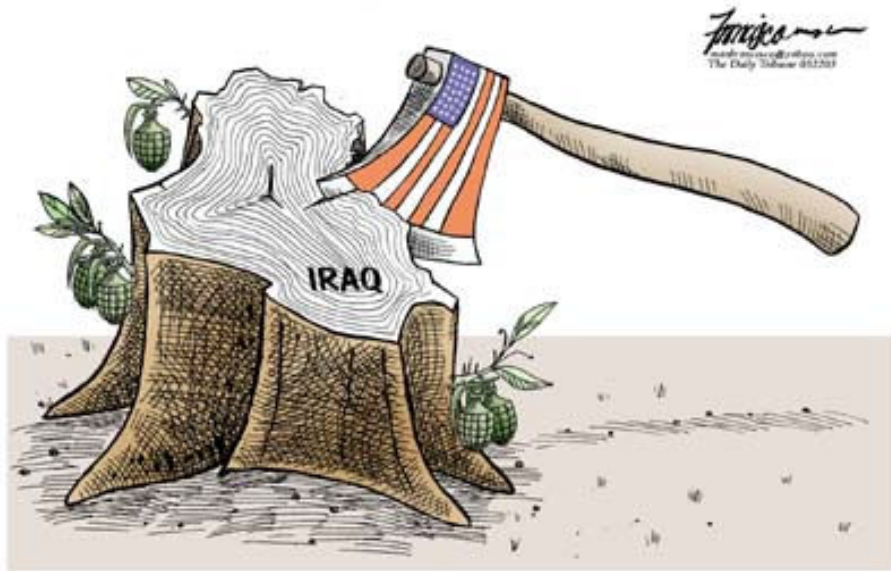
10.31.05 Army Times

Thousands of “nonbelieving Americans” are coming to Washington this Veterans Day for the “Atheists in Foxholes” rally, sponsored by the group American Atheists to challenge the adage that “there are no atheists in foxholes.” A parade and rally are planned on the National Mall that organizers say will include thousands of “atheists, freethinkers, humanists and other nonbelievers.”

“We’ve heard for too long the myth that ‘there are no atheists in foxholes,’ when in fact it’s just the opposite,” said Ellen Johnson, the group’s president. “Atheists have served this country with distinction in all branches of the armed forces ... defending our nation, our secular Constitution and our way of life.”

The guest speaker will be atheist Hans Kasten, an Army veteran of World War II and survivor of a Nazi prisoner-of-war camp. American Atheists bills itself as “a nationwide movement that defends civil rights for atheists; works for the total separation of church and state; and addresses issues of First Amendment public policy.” More information on the Veterans Day rally is online at www.atheistfoxholes.org.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



U.S. Troops “Brought All This Misery To Us”

November 03, 2005 By Thomas Wagner, Associated Press

In Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit, children appeared on the streets in new clothes, and the amusement park was crowded with families for the start of the Eid al-Fitr holiday.

"The real Eid for Iraqis will be the day that occupation forces get out of our country," said Aqel Omar, 48, a retired government employee, as he gathered with about 30 relatives.

"I hope that next year our country is liberated and stable and that we can rebuild it again."

In Tikrit, the day began for many Sunnis with early-morning services at their mosques. At one, a preacher called for the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from the country.

Zuhair Shihab, 45, the owner of a food stall in the park, said he felt sad, having just heard that the body of a friend had been found on a Baghdad street 10 days after he was kidnapped. Such killings are fairly common in Baghdad, some caused by fighting between Sunnis and Shiites, others the result of criminals taking hostages in search of ransoms.

Shihab also was angered by the coalition forces in Azamiyah.

"What kind of Eid we can we celebrate in the presence of U.S. troops?" he said. "They brought all this misery to us."

<p>OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME <u>NOW!</u></p>

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

**"Self-Emancipation Is The Only Sure
Way Out"**

From: Z
To: GI Special
Sent: November 03, 2005
Subject: self-emancipation

Christ almighty, the number of young Americans butchered by this goddamned administration has already climbed to some 2040! Just which part of "Armed invaders aren't welcome" do the megalomaniac Washington imbeciles find so hard to understand?

Is there any evidence Dubya and his gang give a flying fuck about the lives of young Americans? Would they dream of sending even their dogs and cats into this much danger? Or do they consider soldiers little more than toilet paper for their filthy rich butts, to be used and tossed away?

This outrageous abuse of soldiers has gone on way too long -- it must end. The troops need to pull themselves out of that godforsaken hell and come home now.

Self-emancipation is the only sure way out.

Solidarity,
Z



Daniel Torres did not die for his country. He died for the corporate elite in American.

**Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran**

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)

“Don't Crack On The Crackheads’

From: Anita Job
To: GI Special
Sent: November 03, 2005 5:12 PM
Subject: Don't Crack on the Crackheads

LAST GI SPECIAL HAD THE HEADLINE "CRACK-HEADS IN COMMAND" AND THE ARTICLE HAD A BUNCH OF DUMB ASS COMMENTS FROM RUMSFELD AND PACE ON "PROGRESS" IN IRAQ.

BUT I DON'T THINK IT'S FAIR TO THE CRACKHEADS OF THE WORLD TO INSULT THEIR INTELLIGENCE. ANY CRACKHEAD IN THE WORLD CAN SEE THAT IRAQ IS A CLUSTERFUCK OF WORLD PROPORTIONS.

RUMSFELD'S COMMENTS ABOUT "PROGRESS" ARE NOT ONLY THE RESULT OF STUPIDITY, THAT'S HIS STRATEGY FOR "VICTORY" IN IRAQ.

[Right. And deepest apologies to crackheads everywhere for the insulting comparison.]

Fuck A Bunch Of Exit Strategies!

Fuck a bunch of exit strategies! These people must be told that they will be punished if they vote another single dime for the extension of the war. Out now, and no equivocation! We are tired of your bullshit!

10/28/05 By Stan Goff, Stangoff.com [Excerpts]

Stan Goff's career as a soldier in Army Special Operations (Delta Force, Rangers, and Special Forces) took him from the invasions of Vietnam, Grenada and Haiti, to the training grounds of the cruel and corrupt Colombian and Peruvian armed forces. He taught Military Science at the US Military Academy at West Point, conducted classified missions in El Salvador and Guatemala, and was deployed with the ill-fated Task Force Ranger (of Black Hawk Down fame) to Mogadishu. There are snapshots of those experiences in the new book, Full Spectrum Disorder.

In the next few days, the Bush administration will nominate some right-wing appellate court judge (just guessing here) with excellent academic credentials and plenty of experience on the bench. They are in a very defensive posture right now, and the right-wing torpedo of the Miers nomination was a signal to Bush that as the polls continue to slide, so shall the monolithic discipline of the GOP. When the Titanic makes that loud

can-opener sound, its time to unleash the lifeboats. The Bush group has to reconsolidate its control over its restive fellow Repugs, and it needs to kowtow a bit.

Meanwhile, the more disciplined members of the DP will carefully nudge at key points of vulnerability without risking opposition to the war or any violation of the neoliberal orthodoxy.

But the rank-and-file of the DP — most of whom have long chafed at the rightward shift of their party — are in a mood to drag George, Dick, Condi, Donald, Scooter, and Karl out into the street, shoot them, and make a Mussolini display of their charred corpses. It's mixed consciousness, to be sure, but it's overall a good thing when people's blood is up that way.

The left should unite with that anger and whatever momentum is generated from it and use it to drive a figurative locomotive right through the breach of the Bush legitimacy crisis.

Lynch mobs around the White House might not indicate that the masses have embraced the revolution yet, but it sure makes for a great spectacle, and it is very very disruptive. Anything that helps knock the political stuffing out of this administration — even if it DOES help some opportunistic Democrats — is a big plus, because it is a reversal in the direction of power-flow back to the masses.

Once folks sense that power, they are often reluctant to surrender it again.

Let's not be confused however. Al Gore was baiting Bush the Elder before his stolen run for the presidency... for not having "taken out" Saddam Hussein.

The conquest of Iraq is seen by virtually the whole US ruling class — and that includes the leadership of the Democratic Party — as a necessity. The argument has always been about HOW, not IF. The Dems have been better about recognizing their real limitations and seen patience as a virtue.

The Republican neocon faction has been more inclined to think like a high school football squad drinking Purple Jesus. And at a certain stage in their drunken lunacy, they showed the ability to rev up their fans with wild-eyed masculine bluster.

Most Congressional Democrats, for example, are continuing to support the war, and treating the antiwar movement as anathema — even now that we are the majority — not purely out of opportunistic cowardice (though there is plenty of that), but because they are committed to the resuscitation, by any means necessary, of flagging American imperial power that's been held together by trickery ever since around 1971.

This is important further along in the "what is to be done" part. They want to stay in Iraq... and the only way to get them to turn their backs on that desire is to present them with a more powerful disincentive.

What can a mass movement accomplish given the implications of this scandal? Let me review what some implications are, at least from where I sit.

The Republican Party is on the ropes, so they will be working overtime to deal with serial indictments and metastasizing scandals.

The war is so unpopular that an online poll by MSNBC two days ago, posing the question, "Should we stay the course in Iraq?" received a 75% NEGATIVE response.

The center-right Democrats are behaving like the reptiles they are, and trying to duck the war while the Repugs rot from the inside. The leftish end of the DP is spinning out idiocies like alternative "exit strategies" that only extend the bloodbath for another year or so, in the hope that people will run back and hide in the House of the Lesser Evil.

But the only election that really gets people het up is the general election, and that's not for another three years, so the masses are not responding to their righteous fear of Republicans by seeking the kinder faces of Democratic charlatans.

The executive branch has been crippled by this scandal, and it appears Fitzgerald intends to extend and deepen his investigation. The likely Libby indictment is a way for him to smack the bushes with a stick and encourage the other snakes to haul ass.

A new word will now enter the daily vocabulary of some Washington functionaries, and that word is "immunity." Libby himself may become familiar with the term "cop a plea." Sandy won't want to dwell alone for the next thirty years... or maybe she will.

The people with the most to lose right now — aside from the casualties of war, that is — are members of Congress. they are as edgy as a caged cat in heat, because both Republicans and Democrats have to worry about their "phony-baloney jobs, gentlemen."

Fuck a bunch of exit strategies! These people must be told that they will be punished if they vote another single dime for the extension of the war. Out now, and no equivocation! We are tired of your bullshit!

My legislative strategy is this.

We organize locally all over the country to occupy local Congressional offices.

Find 200 people from each district, go visit them during office hours, call the press, weasel your way into the office with the maximum numbers possible, sit down, and refuse to move until your official agrees not to vote another dime. Those unwilling to risk arrest can provide the necessary support to maintain the sit-ins until the place smells like a poorly maintained stable.

The we see what happens, and take it from there. There is the potential here for hundreds of such actions, leaving any Congressperson or Senator who agrees not to fund the war alone (Republican or Democrat), and who knows what it might grow into.

That concludes today's rant.

Thank you for your attention.

“The 2004 Election Doesn’t Look So Momentous After All”

November 4, 2005 By Lance Selfa, Socialist Worker [Excerpt]

If Kerry-Edwards didn’t offer change to an electorate that was looking to be convinced of the need for change, that was the fault of the Democrats, not the electorate.

Another point worth noting is that real life has a way of imposing itself on politics, no matter what the Washington establishment wants.

Without even the hint of any opposition from the Democrats, the majority of Americans has seen through the Bush administration’s lies and turned against the war.

Last year, frightened liberals exhorted the electorate to vote for Kerry in “the most important election of our lifetimes.” One year later, with the Bush administration in disarray, the 2004 election doesn’t look so momentous after all.

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.

“Our Liberties Here At Home Will Be Further Eroded As More Americans Die”

Condemning Syria for having troops in Lebanon seems strange, considering most of the world sees our 150,000 troops in Iraq as an unwarranted foreign occupation.

October 26, 2005 By U.S. Representative Ron Paul (R-TX) Before the US House of Representatives, Information Clearing House [Excerpt]

Syria has been condemned for not securing its borders, by the same U.S. leaders who cannot secure our own borders.

Syria was castigated for placing its troops in Lebanon, a neighboring country, although such action was invited by an elected government and encouraged by the United States.

The Syrian occupation of Lebanon elicited no suicide terrorist attacks, as was suffered by Western occupiers.

Condemning Syria for having troops in Lebanon seems strange, considering most of the world sees our 150,000 troops in Iraq as an unwarranted foreign occupation. Syrian troops were far more welcome in Lebanon.

Secretary Rice likewise sees the problems in Syria - that we helped to create - as an opportunity to advance our Middle Eastern agenda. In recent testimony she stated that it was always the administration's intent to redesign the greater Middle East, and Iraq was only one part of that plan. And once again we have been told that all options are still on the table for dealing with Syria - including war.

The statement that should scare all Americans (and the world) is the assurance by Secretary Rice that the President needs no additional authority from Congress to attack Syria.

She argues that authority already has been granted by the resolutions on 9/11 and Iraq. This is not true, but if Congress remains passive to the powers assumed by the executive branch it won't matter.

As the war spreads, the only role for Congress will be to provide funding lest they be criticized for not supporting the troops.

In the meantime, the Constitution and our liberties here at home will be further eroded as more Americans die.

“The Formula For An Explosion”

We will thus have that most dangerous of political situations on our hands: a public which is suffering under economic hardship and military adversity while desperately yearning for change, but which is simultaneously unable to make the political system respond to its concerns.

That is the formula for an explosion.

November 1, 2005 By Steven LaTulippe. [Excerpts: Sent unsourced by Veterans For Peace Post] **He was an officer in the United States Air Force for 13 years.** He is a physician currently practicing in Ohio.

[M]y overseas friends are increasingly desperate for those of us inside the Empire to do something to stop the madness.

What they are failing to understand is that we don't have a system that is particularly responsive to the people. It is actually a well-disguised oligarchy which has been built on the ashes of our old republic.

Our options at this point are few and limited.

Most obviously, the electorate could bring back the Democrats.

Unfortunately, this avenue doesn't hold up to scrutiny.

Does anyone really believe that our problems will be solved by returning folks like former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to power? She is, of course, the one who famously stated that the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children caused by our sanctions were "worth it."

Or how about Democrats like former NSC advisor Sandy Berger, who was recently caught slipping out of the National Archives with stolen top-secret documents stashed in his underpants?

Or how about Sen. Clinton, who believes that we need to expand our military and send more troops to Iraq?

Or how about Bill Clinton, who attacked Serbia with no UN mandate and who based his assault on inaccurate (falsified?) intelligence?

<p>Or perhaps we should elect Senators Kerry and Edwards, both of whom voted for the Iraq War and the Patriot Act. Both men also stated during their election campaign that they meant to stay in Iraq until "we win it".</p>
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Do these folks have the right ideas to guide us out of our current difficult circumstances?

Obviously not.

If the Democrats are not to be trusted...then who?

Can the electorate turn to a third party?

This betrays yet another misunderstanding of our system.

Our congressional districts are gerrymandered, insulating almost all incumbents from the possibility of losing their reelection bids. Our ballot access laws force third parties to waste most of their resources merely getting their names on the ballots.

Our campaign finance laws disproportionately favor the established parties by allowing them to trade "favors" to special interest groups in exchange for campaign contributions. Our system even lavishes funding on the major parties' nominating conventions...essentially subsidizing naked propaganda.

Frankly, I'm not optimistic about the general direction of our increasingly rudderless nation.

The bipartisan elites are firmly entrenched and are unanimously wedded to the idea of "activist" government at home and to the promotion of empire abroad.

By the time the 2008 presidential election rolls around (and perhaps well before then), the American people will likely be in a very hostile mood. The harsh realities of our Iraqi quagmire will be readily apparent to everyone.

The special prosecutor will probably have exposed the mendacious manipulations that started the war. To make matters worse, our economy – which is being fueled by a geometrically inflating debt balloon – will likely be in a significant contraction.

We will thus have that most dangerous of political situations on our hands: a public which is suffering under economic hardship and military adversity while desperately yearning for change, but which is simultaneously unable to make the political system respond to its concerns.

That is the formula for an explosion.

The neocons have been stymied, at least temporarily. They've suffered an untimely interruption at the hands of Patrick Fitzgerald...just when their plans were reaching a climax.

We can all be thankful for that.

But there are still rough waters ahead.

There is more to this empire than a few deceitful White House officials. Interventionism and cronyism are deeply entrenched in our establishment, and they won't be uprooted without a fight.

OCCUPATION REPORT

How Bad Is It? Memories Of Cambodia

Meanwhile, no one believes that efforts to win people away from the ever-raging insurgency will bear fruit anytime soon. Nor can militants be defeated militarily.

November 3, 2005 By H.D.S. GREENWAY, Capital Newspapers

BAGHDAD -- "The first thing you should know is that the plane lands in a corkscrew landing -- perhaps appropriately a downward spiral."

Thus began a "visitor's guide" e-mail by Anne Barnard, The Boston Globe's woman in Baghdad. I was familiar with the landing technique, to avoid ground

fire, from the bad old days in Cambodia 30 years ago. What surprised me was the downward spiral here, despite all I had read.

Iraqi politicians live in guarded compounds to protect themselves, not only from insurgents, but from each other. The assassin's hand is never far, and death squads of one faction or another roam the city. Sometimes they are disguised as the police. Sometimes they are the police.

American armored convoys sally forth into the city's traffic, with frightened young soldiers who, in practice if not intention, shoot first if you get too close, and find out who you were later.

Meanwhile, no one believes that efforts to win people away from the ever-raging insurgency will bear fruit anytime soon. Nor can militants be defeated militarily.

Last week four reporters were listening to the impressive vice president, Adil Abdul-Mahdi, speak of a brighter future of accommodation and compromise leading to a cessation of violence when a knock on the door brought unwelcome news.

"They have assassinated my brother," Abdul-Mahdi told us, and the interview was hastily concluded.

“It Was Almost Impossible To Provide Security For The Oil Sector”

3 November, 2005 Gulf Times Newspaper

BAGHDAD: It has become a routine. Iraqi insurgents blow up one of the North Oil Company's facilities out in the scrubland. Engineers go and patch it up. The guerrillas fire on them and they beat a retreat.

It has happened regularly for the past two years and is happening now as North Oil tries to repair a gathering centre hit last week by four explosions. At this rate, officials say, it will take at least a month to restart exports.

Oil Minister Ibrahim Bahr al-Uloum said even with cash injections, a vicious circle of violence and economic stagnation will cap exports at no more than 3.5mn bpd for the next two years.

Iraqi officials and analysts said Until Iraq is secure, the oil sector will continue to struggle.

"You cannot divide security into oil security and the rest of the country's security. It is all one package," said Mustafa Alani, an Iraqi expert at the Gulf Research Center in Dubai.

“You cannot put a plan into action to protect the fields and the pipelines, for example. You can protect part of the oil industry, like a building or so, but not the whole sector. It is impossible,” he said.

Exports from the north have been virtually at a standstill because of repeated attacks. Delays in restoring a pipeline network have forced Iraq to inject oil back into the ground.

“How can you protect thousands of kilometres of pipelines?” Alani said. “The oil is being hit for political reasons because insurgents want to hit the government which depends on the oil revenues, so with no political and security stability you cannot secure the oil sector.”

Analysts linked development in the oil sector to improvements in the political process, security in Iraq and the withdrawal of US-led forces.

Oil exports are Iraq’s sole independent source of hard currency needed for reconstruction after crippling economic sanctions and three wars in the past quarter of a century.

Production has been stuck near 2mn bpd and a significant increase is not expected soon.

Repeated sabotage, combined with poor project management and political instability, have hampered Iraq’s aim to boost output to 3mn bpd, last seen in 1990.

Companies are hesitant to invest in Iraq, even though many of them are showing interest and are in constant touch with the minister, said an oil official who declined to be identified.

“Many of them said they are ready to work under the current security situation but they needed more guarantees from the ministry,” he said.

“But the current ministry could not give guarantees to any of them, it is an interim one and is leaving soon, besides there is no oil law that would protect any company.”

Alani said reforms in the oil sector were unlikely to take place overnight.

“Even if all the conditions in Iraq are good, like they have the money, security and political stability, the sector will not recover within three years.”

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)

U.S. OCCUPATION RECRUITING DRIVE IN HIGH GEAR; RECRUITING FOR THE ARMED RESISTANCE THAT IS.



Iraqi men are searched by US Soldiers from the First Battalion, 17th Infantry, looking for insurgents at a checkpoint in downtown Mosul. One soldier died of his wounds after his patrol struck a bomb in south Baghdad, while another soldier serving with a Marine unit was killed by a bomb explosion in Ramadi, in western Iraq.(AFP/Cris Bouroncle)

[Fair is fair. Let's bring 150,000 Iraqis over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their houses with force and violence, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it "sovereign" and "detain" anybody who doesn't like it in some prison without any changes being filed against them, or any trial.]

[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to occupy their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that?]

“The Whole Of The Countryside Outside Baghdad Is Under The Control, Is Now The Property Of The Armed Insurgents, Both Sunni And Shia”

I'll quote a U.S. Marine who said to me in San Diego a few months ago, "Our problem is we have this kind of false democracy," he said, "We vote for our senators and congressman for what they say they'll give us and they give us something and say something completely different."

September 21, 2005 Amy Goodman, Democracy Now, interviewed Robert Fisk in Santa Fe, New Mexico. [Excerpts]

Look, apart from the Kurdistan area, Iraq is in a state of total anarchy and chaos. No roads are safe outside Baghdad. Much of Baghdad is in insurgents hands. Only the little green zones, the armored hotel areas where the westerners live and swim, and some cases don't even leave their rooms, and that applies to many journalists, only here are people allowed to have the illusion that things are getting better, things are improving.

We now have a situation in Iraq where there is a full scale insurgency by both the Shiites and the Sunnis against western forces. Once an insurgency of that kind starts in a Muslim country, it is impossible to quench it. Sorry, you guys can we put the book back? Let's start again, we got it wrong at one point. You can't do that. You can't do that.

I was discussing with an Iraqi friend three weeks ago in Baghdad what he thought the answer was. He said, "There is no answer. You've got to go. You've got to go."

The American correspondents, some of them are guarded by armed Iraqis. The New York Times has a compound with four watch towers and armed Iraqis with "NYT" New York Times on their black t-shirts.

NBC lives in a hotel in the Karada District with iron grills. The A.P. lives in the Palestine Hotel with two armored walls.

Very rarely do they ever venture out and never do the American staffers go in the streets. As I say, we still go out with Iraqi friends. We actually go out to lunch in restaurants in Iraq. But I think that's probably because as long as we're with Iraqis and we look at our watch and say, 20 minutes, finish the meal, half an hour, got to be out. You're ok but it's a calculated risk.

But I think the whole Iraqi story for us as journalists is becoming almost impossible to cover. Certainly if you have a journalist who lives behind two armored walls of the hotel who just used a mobile phone to call British or American diplomats behind another concrete wall, you might as well live in County Mayo, Ireland or Santa Fe, New Mexico. There's no point in being there.

And for example, the last trip I made outside Baghdad it took me two weeks to arrange it to go down to Najaf. It was the most fearful trip. I drove the road with three Iraqi friends. One of them a Shiite proleter, a clergyman, a religious man.

All the checkpoints of the Iraqi army had been abandoned. This just after George Bush says the Iraqi army is in the field. There were up-turned Iraqi police cars, burned-out American vehicles. I didn't see a member of the Security Forces until I reached the outskirts of Najaf about 80 miles from Iraq.

The whole of the countryside outside Baghdad is under the control, is now the property of the armed insurgents both Sunni and Shia. This, we are not being told. This, president Bush will not acknowledge. This, our own dear Mr. Blair will not acknowledge.

But my goodness, as I say, I don't know how long we can continue doing this. Each time Patrick and I go to Iraq it's a little bit worse. And when we look back at what it was like a year ago, which was considered appalling, we're amazed at how free we were, how easily we went grocery shopping. I still go grocery shopping-- for six minutes only. Grab the bread, push my way to the front of the cue, pay, out. You learn a lot.

I went out to my favorite restaurant, the Ramaya, the other day to find it was no longer the Ramaya. It was now given an Islamic name and had a green neon sign. When I went inside, the menu was no longer in English, French, and Arabic. It was only Arabic. No more bottles of Lebanese red wine. It been totally Islamicized. You need to see this and understand it. But the problem is most of our colleagues are not permitted even by their head offices to do that.

For example, look at American intelligence. It's hopeless in Iraq. Absolutely hopeless. All they do is arrest the wrong people.

And the war in Iraq has been lost already.

It's only prison journalism or hotel journalism and the lies of the State Department and the Pentagon and the White House and the Downing Street and the Defense Ministry in London and so on that keep this spin rolling.

At some point there's going to be an explosion the like of which will be inexplicable by those in power. I don't know what it's going to be, but it will come.

You have a bigger problem in the United States in that, as I understand it -- well, I'll quote a U.S. Marine who said to me in San Diego a few months ago, "Our problem is we have this kind of false democracy," he said, "We vote for our

senators and congressman for what they say they'll give us and they give us something and say something completely different.”

Civilian Contractors In Iraq Dying At Faster Rate As Insurgency Grows

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

Nov. 01, 2005 By Seth Borenstein, Knight Ridder Newspapers

Keven Dagit's death Sept. 20 - along with two other truckers - didn't register on the tally of Iraq deaths broadcast daily. That's because they were civilians working for U.S. defense contractors.

Their deaths have more than tripled in the past 13 months.

As of Monday, 428 civilian contractors had been killed in Iraq and another 3,963 were injured, according to Department of Labor insurance-claims statistics obtained by Knight Ridder.

Those statistics, which experts said were the most comprehensive listing available on the toll of the war, are far from complete: Two of the biggest contractors in Iraq said their casualties were higher than the figures the Labor Department had for them.

The Labor Department lists 156 dead for an L-3 Communications subsidiary in Virginia. The company, which provides translators who work with the military, puts the death toll at 167, of whom 15 were Americans.

The Labor Department's accounting reports that Halliburton, the largest contractor in Iraq, has had 30 employees killed in Iraq and 2,471 injured. A Halliburton spokeswoman, Melissa Norcross, said Tuesday that the company had lost a total of 77 workers in Iraq, Afghanistan and its base in Kuwait. One worker is unaccounted for. Halliburton couldn't give a breakdown by country.

The government's listing shows the contractors' casualty rate is increasing. In the first 21 months of the war, 11 contractors were killed and 74 injured each month on average. This year, the monthly average death toll is nearly 20 and the average monthly number of injured is 243.

Keven Dagit, a truck driver for Halliburton, knew it. The day before he was killed he told his mother, "Now, it's really getting dangerous," she recalled. He left two daughters, ages 9 and 11.

So far this year, 196 contractors in Iraq have been killed and 2,427 have been injured, according to Labor Department statistics.

Private companies aren't obligated to report deaths to the news media, as the military does. But they're required to carry federal insurance for all their workers in Iraq and to report claims to the Labor Department under the Defense Base Act. That doesn't include contractors who work for agencies outside of the Pentagon, however.

Rick Kiernan, a spokesman for L-3 Communications, said his firm had had so many losses because its translators were "with the combatants; they're with the special forces; they're with the infantry units. That probably puts them out in the most dangerous places."

Kiernan noted that L-3's employees aren't killed in combat, they're being assassinated. Of the company's 152 dead Iraqi employees, 105 were murdered because they collaborated with Americans, he said.

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

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bush's Job Approval Hits New Low

November 3, 2005 CBS News

President Bush's job approval has reached the lowest level yet.

Only 35 percent approve of the job he's d

The plunge in poll numbers is another dose of bad news for a White House mired in it. The only recent president lower at this point in their second term was Richard Nixon.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S JOB APPROVAL

Approve

 35%

Disapprove

57%

Congress is rated even lower. Only 34 percent approve of its work.

Vice President Cheney has never been as popular as the president, but his favorable rating is down nine points this year to just 19 percent.

CLASS WAR REPORTS

Capitalism At Work:

“The End Of The Social Regime Of The Big Company That Pays Well And Offers Benefits”

22 October 2005 By Eric Le Boucher, Le Monde

In the last few weeks we've seen another piece of former American social protection collapse.

General Motors, which is suffering from significant financial losses and a reduction in its market share over the last twenty years, announced a cost-saving plan that will change the company's social contract.

First, the giant will reduce its health insurance payments for its 106,000 employees and one million pensioners by a billion dollars. Second, the bankruptcy of Delphi, which manufactured its components, will force it to take over payment of this former subsidiary's supplementary pensions. GM will not have the means, except by also limiting supplementary pension payments for its own employees.

The GM crisis announces the end of the social regime of the big company that pays well and offers benefits. Ford will surely follow down this path, a path down which the automobile groups were preceded by the airlines, oil companies, steel and chemical industries.

The good worker from these traditional sectors, a central figure of the famous American middle class, finds himself deprived of social coverage.

He will have to pay personally for a health insurance policy. The weakest and the least prudent will join the 45 million Americans who now have no health insurance whatsoever.

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