

GI SPECIAL 3A5



Homeless Vietnam veteran in San Francisco 2002. (I talked with him the following day.) Eventually, he will be replaced by Iraq veterans. You don't have to be homeless on the street, to be homeless in the mind. Betrayal is the nightmare.

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

“We Can't Give Up: Let's Not Shut Up”

[ROSE GENTLE'S SON GORDON, A MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH ARMY, WAS BETRAYED AND DIED IN IRAQ. TODAY, THEY SHE FIGHTS TO END THE WAR, AND BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW.]

From: Rose Gentle
To: GI Special
Sent: Monday, January 03, 2005

hi

its rose gentle

two men wanted for murder,
don't let yours be next.
tell them it's time to stop,
help us get justice,
if i can you can,
so help us

it's to let mums see how we all feel

come home soon boys
it's 2005
we can't give up
let's not shut up

a dear son
something will remind me
i never know just when
it might be something someone says
and it all comes back again.
the times we spent together
the happiness
the fun.
once again I feel the pain
of life without my son.

it's said that time's a healer.
i am not sure this is true
there's not a day goes by son
that i don't cry for you.

to all us mums
from rose gentle

love you Gordon
miss you more

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.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS:

US Troops Wounded In Iraq Pass 10,000 Mark: 5,396 Too Badly Hurt To Go Back To War: More Troops Called Up For The Slaughter

1/4/2005 By Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) The number of U.S. troops wounded in Iraq since the start of the war in March 2003 has surpassed 10,000, the Pentagon said Tuesday in a delayed update of its casualty data.

Of the 10,252 total wounded, the Pentagon said 5,396 were unable to return to duty and 4,856 sustained injuries that were light enough to allow them to resume their duties. The total is normally reported each week, but the Pentagon had not updated the figures since Dec. 22, when the number of wounded stood at 9,981.

In a related development, the Pentagon announced that a brigade-size unit of the 28th Infantry Division of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, said to number about 2,400 part-time soldiers, will deploy to Iraq as part of a rotation of troops scheduled to begin in mid-2005.

The 48th Infantry Brigade of the Georgia Army National Guard is the other major National Guard unit in the 2005 rotation, which was outlined by the Pentagon **in a Dec. 14 announcement that did not mention the Pennsylvania Guard unit.**

Baghdad IED Kills Three U.S. Troops, Two Wounded

Jan. 04, 2005 NICK WADHAMS, Associated Press

A roadside bomb killed three U.S. soldiers in Baghdad. The blast came near midday.

They were with Task Force Baghdad. Two soldiers were wounded in the attack, the military said.

This is the deadliest day for the U-S military since a suicide bomber killed 22 people, including 14 U-S soldiers and three American contractors December 21st.

Balad IED Kills One 1st ID Soldier, Another Wounded

Jan. 04, 2005 NICK WADHAMS, Associated Press & CENTCOM 05-01-06C

A roadside bomb attack killed one 1st Infantry Division soldier and wounded another near Balad, 50 miles north of Baghdad about 11:34 a.m.

The Soldiers were evacuated to a Multi-National Forces medical facility for treatment.

Marine Killed In Anbar

Jan. 04, 2005 NICK WADHAMS, Associated Press

A U.S. Marine assigned to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force was killed in action in Anbar province, which includes Fallujah.

Council Bluffs Marine Killed; "I Just Wanted Him To Come Home."

January 4, 2005 By ASSOCIATED PRESS

An Iowa Marine killed in Iraq was being remembered today as a man who would put a smile on someone's face.

Thomas Houser, 22, of Council Bluffs, died Monday, Iowa time, his stepdad Larry Ward said.

Ward said he and Houser's mother, Mary Ellen, learned of Thomas' death when two Marines rang their doorbell at 12:15 a.m. today and told them Thomas had been killed in action.

"It's hard ... you don't even want to think about it but you know it's happened," Larry Ward said.

He said he and his wife looked out the window when the doorbell rang.

"When we saw the Marines, we knew what had happened," Ward said, his voice breaking with emotion.

He said his wife sensed something was wrong because they hadn't heard from Thomas since last month.

"My wife is the one that ... the mother's always the one ... they seem to sense it, they seem to know, the moment I opened the door ..." Ward said, his voice trailing off.

The Wards were not alone in their grief today. Their home was filled with more than 20 friends and former classmates of Thomas.

Ward said Thomas, a 2000 graduate of St. Albert's Catholic High School in Council Bluffs, played football and was on the St. Albert's team that went to the state playoffs in 2000. He also wrestled and competed in track, Larry Ward said.

He was last home for a brief, 4-day visit in August, Ward said.

During that time he visited with family and friends.

"He didn't have much time because he had to go back to Iraq," Ward said.

Houser, based out of Camp LeJeune in South Carolina, enjoyed having fun, Ward said.

"He enjoyed life," Ward said. "He'd put a smile on your face."

His unit, which the Wards couldn't recall, was stationed in Fallujah.

Deb McGuire, an art teacher at St. Albert's, said he last spoke to Houser in an hour-long phone call between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

"When I was talking to him he said 'The hardest thing for me is sometimes the people I eat supper with, I don't see the next day.' I guess that's when the fear comes in.

"I just wanted him to come home."

Occupation Says Falluja Still Not "Under Control"--- Keeping Press Out To Hide Reality

[Yeah, right. It was supposed to be under control in November. Then it was supposed to be under control in December. Now Col. Mathew says it "should" be

under control by the end of January. And they won't let the press in to find out how big their lies really are.]

04 Jan 2005 FALLUJAH, 4 January (IRIN)

The situation in Fallujah is still not clear. **According to Col. Clark Mathew, spokesman for the US Marines, night time attacks continue in some areas of the city.** US forces have informed residents not to leave their homes after the imposed curfew of 1800 to 0600.

Mathew explained that most attacks were in areas where US troops have bases [Duh!] in order to secure the city, but added that by the end of this month the situation should be under control.

"The US troops are saying that soon Fallujah will be rebuilt. I believe that this city won't offer a minimum of living conditions until another year has passed. **I am still searching for what they have been calling democracy," Muhammad Kubaissy, a civilian from Fallujah, told IRIN.** His home and two shops were destroyed in the fighting.

"They came to bring us freedom, but all Iraqis are now prisoners in their own homes," he added.

Residents of Fallujah have been asking the Iraqi government to allow journalists and TV reporters to enter the city in order to show the reality.

The government will only allow journalists to visit with a special identity card, saying it is for their own safety. Many journalists have been turned away from Fallujah after not receiving authorisation from US-troops guarding the city.

"We need someone here to show the reality of Fallujah. Even when some journalists are here they are being followed by the Marines. We need someone to help us. The world should see the real picture of Fallujah," Sheikh Abbas al-Zubeiny told IRIN.

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

Haitian Émigrés' Son Killed: "I Wanted Him To Have A Good Life"

January 4 2005 By Kevin Spear, Orlando Sentinel

Orlando - When they reached the United States, Haitian immigrants Joseph and Daniela LeBrun had one goal -- their children would go to college and have a chance to live the American dream.

But in 2003, two sons dropped out of college to join the Army telling their parents they thought it was their patriotic duty. Jeff was sent to Iraq and elder brother Stanley to Korea.

On Saturday, the LeBrun, who live in Kissimmee, learned Spc. Jeff LeBrun had been killed in Baghdad when his military vehicle struck an improvised explosive device. He was 21.

"I wanted him to have a good life," said Daniela LeBrun, 47, who works in the cafeteria of the Orlando Sentinel. "I didn't want him to have the same job as I have now."

Joseph LeBrun, 50, said Army representatives told him his son was driving to a hospital when the explosion occurred. LeBrun was assigned to the Army's 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) based in Fort Drum, N.Y.

"He was a really, really, really sweet, sweet young man," Daniela LeBrun said. "I am lost now."

Monday evening the LeBrun, were waiting for Stanley LeBrun, 24, to arrive in Orlando from Korea. The LeBrun, have two other children - a son, 13, and a daughter, 15

On Monday, the Pentagon announced LeBrun was one of the first U.S. servicemen to die in Iraq in 2005.

SNIPER BAIT: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



US soldiers next to a fire in Mosul. (1.1.05 AFP/Mauricio Lima)

Two Local Soldiers Hurt In Bomb Blast

January 4, 2005 By John Andrew Prime, The Shreveport Times

Two soldiers with the Shreveport-based 1/156th Armor Battalion were injured when a roadside bomb detonated near their truck in Baghdad Sunday, their family members report.

Spc. Daniel Titus and Sgt. Chris Murphy were injured in the blast that happened Sunday, Shreveport time, according to members of their families. Titus, 23, is the son of Beverly and Gerald Titus of Bossier City and is a 1999 graduate of Parkway High School. Murphy, 24 and a 1998 Byrd High School graduate, is the son of Bobbie and Byron Trust of Shreveport.

Titus suffered shrapnel injuries to his face and arm and a facial bone was broken, Beverly Titus said. "He was pretty well banged up," she said.

Murphy suffered two breaks in one thigh bone, Bobbie Trust said. She said she spoke to him late Sunday, but did not learn which leg had been injured.

Both soldiers were flown from Iraq to the U.S. Army Regional Medical Center at Landstuhl, Germany.

Titus said she had been informed late Monday that her son was in serious condition, mainly due to concerns about an injury to his lungs.

Murphy had undergone surgery to place pins in his broken femur and to clean a wound, Bobbie Trust said.

She added she had been told his injuries were not life-threatening.

"They expect both boys to make a full recovery," she said.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation, the cuts to veterans' benefits, or the dangers of depleted uranium - is the first reason Traveling Soldier is necessary. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

TROOP NEWS

**“Home is the hunter, home from the hill...
And the sailor, home from the sea....”**



BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.

Firefighters salute as the fire truck carrying the casket of Maine Army National Guard Sergeant Thomas Dostie proceeds to his funeral in South China, Maine December 31, 2004. Sergeant Dostie, a volunteer firefighter, was killed in Mosul. REUTERS/Brian Snyder

15 Countries Cut Iraq Forces In 2004

(Los Angeles Times, January 4, 2005)

15 countries, including Spain, Poland and Hungary, have either scaled back their already relatively small force levels in Iraq, announced pullouts or withdrawn their troops altogether during the last year.

Drugs, Booze Easy For GIs To Get In Iraq

(Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, January 3, 2005)

Booze and drugs are easy to find, even for soldiers. Hundreds of soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division have been punished for alcohol or drug possession since the division's arrival in Iraq in April.

“Serving Officer” Nails Rumsfeld’s Lying Bullshit

Jan. 03, 2005 By JOSEPH L. GALLOWAY, Knight Ridder Newspapers

WASHINGTON - The Army, beset with complaints that its troops are going into combat in inadequately armored Humvees, will send an older and less used class of armored personnel carriers to Iraq after spending \$84 million to add armor to them.

These vehicles, both veteran warhorses, are the M113/A3 armored personnel carrier and the M577 command post carrier. Both will be tougher and safer than newly armored Humvees.

Rumsfeld recently told a Tennessee National Guard soldier, who asked why his outfit had to scavenge dumps in Kuwait for scraps of armor for their Humvees, that "you go to war with the Army you have, not the Army you might like to have."

One serving officer, who asked not to be identified, said Rumsfeld "didn't even let us go to war with the Army we had; he made us leave half our armored vehicles at home in pursuit of lighter, faster and cheaper."

BE ADVISED: Sneaky Assholes Screwing National Guard & Reserve Troops With “Active Duty For Training” Classification

1.5.04 By Colonel Dan, Via James, Veterans For Peace

Subject: general definition of "veteran":

Reference to article in Fall 2004 AMVETS Magazine relating to Veterans, active duty, and Reserve service, by Jim Doran, NSO

<p>Many National Guard & Reserve members get screwed by the way the Reserve Hqs and National Guard Bureau word & fund their active duty orders. far too many use the term ADT - Active Duty for Training, in their orders whether they be title 10 or title 32.. when in fact it is not training.. it is doing..</p>

It often is based on which fund account they have money in, not whether it is "doing", or training.

For instance for a long time National Guard recruiting officers & NCO's on Title 10 recruiting duty, had "ADT" on either their orders or their DD 214... they weren't training.. they were doing, they were recruiting.. or Truck Co's on missions, running across the country hauling stuff for Depots, active units or other reserve units... they are doing.. not training...whether in IDT drill status, Annual Training, or ADT... **yet they will have a hard time getting any veteran benefits, VA compensation, or Veteran status with this service... they get injured, TS.**

And Military Federal Technicians?... fugetaboutit.. they have no status.. no rights... aren't even protected by Fed Civ service labor laws.

You spend 30 years in Reserves, get 3000 retirement points, or about the equivalent of 10 years active duty.... you got fewer benefits than a first year Pvt

Army Caught Faking Tillman Killing



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Steve Benson

PART 2:

When she first learned that friendly fire had taken her son's life, "I was upset about it, but I thought, 'Well, accidents happen,' " Mary Tillman said in a telephone interview yesterday. "Then when I found out that it was because of huge negligence at places along the way -- you have time to process that and you really get annoyed.

December 6, 2004 By Steve Coll, Washington Post Staff Writer

Just days after Pat Tillman died from friendly fire on a desolate ridge in southeastern Afghanistan, the U.S. Army Special Operations Command released a brief account of his last moments.

The April 30, 2004, statement awarded Tillman a posthumous Silver Star for combat valor and described how a section of his Ranger platoon came under attack.

"He ordered his team to dismount and then maneuvered the Rangers up a hill near the enemy's location," the release said. "As they crested the hill, Tillman directed his team into firing positions and personally provided suppressive fire. . . . Tillman's voice was heard issuing commands to take the fight to the enemy forces."

It was a stirring tale and fitting eulogy for the Army's most famous volunteer in the war on terrorism, a charismatic former pro football star whose reticence, courage and handsome beret-draped face captured for many Americans the best aspects of the country's post-Sept. 11 character.

It was also a distorted and incomplete narrative, according to dozens of internal Army documents obtained by The Washington Post that describe Tillman's death by fratricide after a chain of botched communications, a misguided order to divide his platoon over the objection of its leader and undisciplined firing by fellow Rangers.

The Army's public release made no mention of friendly fire, even though at the time it was issued, investigators in Afghanistan had already taken at least 14 sworn statements from Tillman's platoon members that made clear the true causes of his death. The statements included a searing account from the Ranger nearest Tillman during the firefight, who quoted him as shouting "Cease fire! Friendlies!" with his last breaths.

But the Army's published account not only withheld all evidence of fratricide, but also exaggerated Tillman's role and stripped his actions of their context.

Tillman was not one of the senior commanders on the scene -- he directed only himself, one other Ranger and an Afghan militiaman, under supervision from others. And witness statements in the Army's files at the time of the news release describe Tillman's voice ringing out on the battlefield mainly in a desperate effort, joined by other Rangers on his ridge, to warn comrades to stop shooting at their own men.

The Army's April 30 news release was just one episode in a broader Army effort to manage the uncomfortable facts of Pat Tillman's death, according to internal records and interviews.

During several weeks of memorials and commemorations that followed Tillman's death, commanders at his 75th Ranger Regiment and their superiors hid the truth about friendly fire from Tillman's brother Kevin, who had fought with Pat in the same platoon, but was not involved in the firing incident and did not know the

cause of his brother's death. Commanders also withheld the facts from Tillman's widow, his parents, national politicians and the public, according to records and interviews with sources involved in the case.

On May 3, Ranger and Army officers joined hundreds of mourners at a public ceremony in San Jose, where Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), Denver Broncos quarterback Jake Plummer and Maria Shriver took the podium to remember Tillman. The visiting officers gave no hint of the evidence investigators had collected in Afghanistan.

In a telephone interview, McCain said: "I think it would have been helpful to have at least their suspicions known" before he spoke publicly about Tillman's death. Even more, he said, "the family deserved some kind of heads-up that there would be questions."

McCain said yesterday that questions raised by Mary Tillman, Pat's mother, about how the Army handled the case led him to meet twice earlier this fall with Army officers and former acting Army secretary Les Brownlee to seek answers. About a month ago, McCain said, Brownlee told him that the Pentagon would reopen its investigation. McCain said that he was not certain about the scope of the new investigation but that he believed it is continuing. A Pentagon official confirmed that an investigation is underway, but Army spokesmen declined to comment further.

When she first learned that friendly fire had taken her son's life, "I was upset about it, but I thought, 'Well, accidents happen,' " Mary Tillman said in a telephone interview yesterday. "Then when I found out that it was because of huge negligence at places along the way -- you have time to process that and you really get annoyed."

Army Cites Probable Friendly Fire

As memorials and news releases shaped public perceptions in May, Army commanders privately pursued military justice investigations of several low-ranking Rangers who had fired on Tillman's position and officers who issued the ill-fated mission's orders, records show.

Army records show that Col. James C. Nixon, the 75th Ranger Regiment's commander, accepted his chief investigator's findings on the same day, May 8, that he was officially appointed to run the case. A spokesman for U.S. Central Command, or CENTCOM, which is legally responsible for the investigation, declined to respond to a question about the short time frame between the appointment and the findings.

The Army acknowledged only that friendly fire "probably" killed Tillman when Lt. Gen. Philip R. Kensinger Jr. made a terse announcement on May 29 at Fort Bragg, N.C. Kensinger declined to answer further questions and offered no details about the investigation, its conclusions or who might be held accountable.

Kensinger's May 29 announcement that fratricide was probable came from an executive summary supplied by Central Command only the night before, he said. Because Kensinger was unfamiliar with the underlying evidence, he felt he could not answer questions, Bush said.

For its part, Central Command, headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, handled the disclosures "in accordance with [Department of Defense] policies," Lt. Cmdr. Nick Balice, a command spokesman, said in an e-mail on Saturday responding to questions. **Asked specifically why Central Command withheld any suggestion of fratricide when Army investigators by April 26 had collected at least 14 witness statements describing the incident, Balice wrote in an e-mail: "The specific details of this incident were not known until the completion of the investigation."**

Few Guidelines for Cases

The U.S. military has confronted a series of prominent friendly-fire cases in recent years, in part because hair-trigger technology and increasingly lethal remote-fire weapons can quickly turn relatively small mistakes into deadly tragedies. Yet the military's justice system has few consistent guidelines for such cases, according to specialists in Army law. Decision-making about how to mete out justice rests with individual unit commanders who often work in secret, acting as both investigators and judges. Their judgments can vary widely from case to case.

"You can have tremendously divergent outcomes at a very low level of visibility," said Eugene R. Fidell, president of the National Institute of Military Justice and a visiting lecturer at Harvard Law School. **"That does not necessarily contribute to public confidence in the administration of justice in the military. Other countries have been moving away" from systems that put field commanders in charge of their own fratricide investigations, he said.**

In the Tillman case, those factors were compounded by the victim's extraordinary public profile. Also, Tillman's April 22 death was announced just days before the shocking disclosure of photographs of abuse by U.S. soldiers working as guards in Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison. The photos ignited an international furor and generated widespread questions about discipline and accountability in the Army.

Commemorations of Tillman's courage and sacrifice offered contrasting images of honorable service, undisturbed by questions about possible command or battlefield mistakes.

Whatever the cause, McCain said, "you may have at least a subconscious desire here to portray the situation in the best light, which may not have been totally justified."

A Disaster Unfolds

Working in private last spring, the 75th Ranger Regiment moved quickly to investigate and wrap up the case, Army records show.

Immediately after the incident, platoon members generated after-action statements, and investigators working in Afghanistan gathered logs, documents and e-mails. The investigators interviewed platoon members and senior officers to reconstruct the chain of events. By early May, the evidence made clear in precise detail how the disaster unfolded.

On patrol in Taliban-infested sectors of Afghanistan's Paktia province, Tillman's "Black Sheep" platoon, formally known as 2nd Platoon, A Company, 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, **became bogged down because of a broken Humvee.**

Lt. David Uthlaut, the platoon leader, recommended that his unit stay together, deliver the truck to a nearby road, then complete his mission. He was overruled by a superior officer monitoring his operations from distant Bagram, near Kabul, who ordered Uthlaut to split his platoon, with one section taking care of the Humvee and the other proceeding to a village, where the platoon was to search for enemy guerrillas.

Steep terrain and high canyon walls prevented the two platoon sections from communicating with each other at crucial moments. When one section unexpectedly changed its route and ran into an apparent Taliban ambush while trapped in a deep canyon, the other section from a nearby ridge began firing in support at the ambushers. As the ambushed group broke free from the canyon, machine guns blazing, one heavily armed vehicle mistook an allied Afghan militiaman for the enemy and poured hundreds of rounds at positions occupied by fellow Rangers, killing Pat Tillman and the Afghan.

Investigators had to decide whether low-ranking Rangers who did the shooting had followed their training or had fired so recklessly that they should face military discipline or criminal charges. The investigators also had to decide whether more senior officers whose decisions contributed to the chain of confusion around the incident were liable.

Reporting formally to Col. Nixon in Bagram on May 8, the case's chief investigator offered nine specific conclusions, which Nixon endorsed, according to the records.

Among them:

- **The decision by a Ranger commander to divide Tillman's 2nd Platoon into two groups, despite the objections of the platoon's leader, "created serious command and control issues" and "contributed to the eventual breakdown in internal Platoon communications." The Post could not confirm the name of the officer who issued this command.**
- **The A Company commander's order to the platoon leader to get "boots on the ground" at his mission objective created a "false sense of urgency" in the platoon, which, "whether intentional or not," led to "a hasty plan." That officer's name also could not be confirmed by The Post.**
- Sgt. Greg Baker, the lead gunner in the Humvee that poured the heaviest fire on Ranger positions, "failed to maintain his situational awareness" at key moments of the battle and "failed" to direct the firing of the other gunners in his vehicle.
- The other gunners "failed to positively identify their respective targets and exercise good fire discipline. . . . Their collective failure to exercise fire discipline, by confirming the identity of their targets, resulted in the shootings of Corporal Tillman."

The chief investigator appeared to reserve his harshest judgments for the lower-ranking Rangers who did the shooting rather than the higher-ranking officers who oversaw the mission. While his judgments about the senior officers focused on

process and communication problems, the chief investigator wrote about the failures in Baker's truck:

"While a great deal of discretion should be granted to a leader who is making difficult judgments in the heat of combat, the Command also has a responsibility to hold its leaders accountable when that judgment is so wanton or poor that it places the lives of other men at risk."

Gen. John P. Abizaid, CENTCOM's commander in chief, formally approved the investigation's conclusions on May 28 under an aide's signature and forwarded the report to Special Operations commanders "for evaluation and any action you deem appropriate to incorporate relevant lessons learned."

Deciding Accident or Crime

The field investigation's findings raised another question for Army commanders: Were the failures that resulted in Pat Tillman's death serious enough to warrant administrative or criminal charges?

In the military justice system, field officers such as Nixon, commander of the 75th Ranger Regiment, can generally decide such matters on their own.

In the end, one member of Tillman's platoon received formal administrative charges, four others -- including one officer -- were discharged from the Rangers but not from the Army, and two additional officers were reprimanded, Lt. Col. Bush said. He declined to release their names, citing Privacy Act restrictions.

Baker left the Rangers on an honorable discharge when his enlistment ended last spring, while others who were in his truck remain in the Army, said sources involved in the case.

Military commanders have occasionally leveled charges of involuntary manslaughter in high-profile friendly-fire cases, such as one in 2002 when Maj. Harry Schmidt, an Illinois National Guard pilot, mistakenly bombed Canadian troops in Afghanistan. But in that case and others like it, military prosecutors have found it difficult to make murder charges stick against soldiers making rapid decisions in combat.

The list of cases in recent years where manslaughter charges have been brought is "almost arbitrary and capricious," said Charles Gittins, a former Marine who is Schmidt's defense lawyer. Gittins said that senior military officers tend to focus on low-ranking personnel rather than commanders. In Schmidt's case, he said, "every single general and colonel with the exception of Harry's immediate commander has been promoted since the accident." Schmidt, on the other hand, was ultimately fined and banned from flying Air Force jets.

Short of manslaughter, the most common charge leveled in fratricide is dereliction of duty, or what the military code calls "culpable inefficiency" in the performance of duty, according to military law specialists. This violation is defined in the Pentagon's official Manual for Courts-Martial as "inefficiency for which there is no reasonable or just excuse."

In judging whether this standard applies to a case such as Tillman's death, prosecutors are supposed to decide whether the accused person exercised "that degree of care which a reasonably prudent person would have exercised under the same or similar circumstances."

Even if a soldier or officer is found guilty under this code, the punishments are limited to demotions, fines and minor discipline such as extra duty.

Records in the Tillman case do not make clear if Army commanders considered more serious punishments than this against any Rangers or officers, or, if so, why they were apparently rejected.

Staff writer Josh White contributed to this report.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP



(Graphic: London Financial Times)

A Message From The Iraq Resistance

From: Max Watts
Sent: January 04, 2005

PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST SUPPRESSED FACTS ABOUT THE VIETNAM WAR HAS BEEN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE VIETNAMESE RESISTANCE AND THE US SOLDIERS RESISTING THE WAR AGAINST VIETNAM.

GI'S FROM GERMANY VISITED MME BINH, THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE PROVISIONAL GVT OF SOUTH VIETNAM - I.E. THE "VIETCONG" - IN PARIS AND WERE VERY WELL RECEIVED.

SGT JOHN HERNDON WROTE TO THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT: "IF YOU DON'T SHOOT, WE WON'T SHOOT."

THE VIETNAMESE POSTED THIS LETTER (WITH A VIETNAMESE TRANSLATION) THROUGHOUT SOUTH VIETNAM... AND MUCH MORE...

HERE IS THE FIRST SUCH DOCUMENT WE HAVE SEEN FROM IRAQ - SCROLL DOWN TOWARDS THE END

MAX WATTS, A FRIEND OF RESISTANCE IN THE ARMY

A Message From The Iraq Resistance

Islamic Jihad Army - A message in English

"We are simple people who chose principles over fear."

Propaganda or disinformation? You decide.

Iraqi Resistance speech on videotape December 13 2004

Title: Communiqué Number 6

The media platoon of the Islamic Jihad Army. On the 27th of Shawal 1425h. 10 December 2004

People of the world! These words come to you from those who up to the day of the invasion were struggling to survive under the sanctions imposed by the criminal regimes of the U.S. and Britain .

We are simple people who chose principles over fear.

We have suffered crimes and sanctions, which we consider the true weapons of mass destruction.

Years and years of agony and despair, while the condemned UN traded with our oil revenues in the name of world stability and peace.

Over two million innocents died waiting for a light at the end of a tunnel that only ended with the occupation of our country and the theft of our resources.

After the crimes of the administrations of the U.S. and Britain in Iraq , we have chosen our future. The future of every resistance struggle ever in the history of man.

It is our duty, as well as our right, to fight back the occupying forces, which their nations will be held morally and economically responsible; for what their elected governments have destroyed and stolen from our land.

We have not crossed the oceans and seas to occupy Britain or the U.S. nor are we responsible for 9/11. These are only a few of the lies that these criminals present to cover their true plans for the control of the energy resources of the world, in face of a growing China and a strong unified Europe . It is Ironic that the Iraqi's are to bear the full face of this large and growing conflict on behalf of the rest of this sleeping world.

We thank all those, including those of Britain and the U.S. , who took to the streets in protest against this war and against Globalism. We also thank France , Germany and other states for their position, which least to say are considered wise and balanced, til now.

Today, we call on you again.

We do not require arms or fighters, for we have plenty.

We ask you to form a world wide front against war and sanctions. A front that is governed by the wise and knowing. A front that will bring reform and order. New institutions that would replace the now corrupt.

Stop using the U.S. dollar, use the Euro or a basket of currencies. Reduce or halt your consumption of British and U.S. products. Put an end to Zionism before it ends the world. Educate those in doubt of the true nature of this conflict and do not believe their media for their casualties are far higher than they admit.

We only wish we had more cameras to show the world their true defeat.

The enemy is on the run. They are in fear of a resistance movement they can not see nor predict.

We, now choose when, where, and how to strike. And as our ancestors drew the first sparks of civilization, we will redefine the word "conquest."

Today we write a new chapter in the arts of urban warfare.

Know that by helping the Iraqi people you are helping yourselves, for tomorrow may bring the same destruction to you.

In helping the Iraqi people does not mean dealing for the Americans for a few contracts here and there. You must continue to isolate their strategy.

This conflict is no longer considered a localized war. Nor can the world remain hostage to the never-ending and regenerated fear that the American people suffer from in general.

We will pin them here in Iraq to drain their resources, manpower, and their will to fight. We will make them spend as much as they steal, if not more.

We will disrupt, then halt the flow of our stolen oil, thus, rendering their plans useless.

And the earlier a movement is born, the earlier their fall will be.

And to the American soldiers we say, you can also choose to fight tyranny with us. Lay down your weapons, and seek refuge in our mosques, churches and homes. We will protect you. And we will get you out of Iraq , as we have done with a few others before you.

Go back to your homes, families, and loved ones. This is not your war. Nor are you fighting for a true cause in Iraq .

And to George W. Bush, we say, "You have asked us to 'Bring it on', and so have we. Like never expected. Have you another challenge?"

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.

Baghdad Governor Slain

Jan. 04, 2005 NICK WADHAMS, Associated Press, BAGHDAD, Iraq

The governor of the Baghdad region, known for cooperating closely with American troops, was assassinated along with six bodyguards as he drove to work Tuesday in yet another bloody day of insurgent attacks that exposed grave security flaws in Iraq

Al-Haidari's three-vehicle convoy was passing through Baghdad's northern neighborhood of Hurriyah when gunmen opened fire, said the chief of his security detail, who asked to be identified only as Maj. Mazen.

"They came from different directions and opened fire at us," Mazen said, reached on al-Haidari's cell phone.

He is the highest-ranking Iraqi official killed since the former president of the now defunct Governing Council - Abdel-Zahraa Othman, better known as Izzadine Saleem - was assassinated in May. **Al-Haidari worked closely with the U.S.-led multinational forces.**

Truck Driver For U.S. Military Killed

January 5, 2005 Agence France-Presse

A Turkish truck driver was killed in an ambush near the town of Baquba, police said, adding that he was working under contract with the US military.

Partisans Kill More Occupation Guards

January 5, 2005 Agence France-Presse

Three Iraqi soldiers were killed in a bomb attack on their convoy in the city of Samarra, [not] recaptured from insurgents in a major US-led assault in early October, an army officer said.

A roadside bomb killed three Iraqi National Guardsmen and wounded two near Baqouba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, U.S. military spokesman Neal E. O'Brien said.

In the nearby town of Duluiya, an insurgent was killed and five soldiers wounded in a firefight, police said.

Eight Baghdad Occupation Guards Blown Up; Constant Street Fighting In Capitol

01/04/05 Jan. 04, 2005 NICK WADHAMS, Associated Press & IRIB News & Aljazeera

Baghdad, Iraq -- Iraqi police now say 10 people were killed when a tanker truck packed with explosives blew up in western Baghdad. The attack, near an Iraqi National Guards barracks, wounded 60 people.

Eight Iraqi commandos were killed, the Interior Ministry said.

One witness, Abu Maiss, said the vehicle slammed into the gates of the base of the elite commando division, which is also near the heavily-fortified Green Zone of central Baghdad, and hit a car, before bursting into flames. He told AFP a garbage truck slammed into the gates of the base of the elite commando division and hit a car, before bursting into flames, where policemen had gathered after receiving their pay.

"A large number of police had left the headquarters after receiving their salaries, when a garbage truck sped toward them," Maiss said.

<p>Such car bombs have become tragically routine in Baghdad, the blasts echoing across the city almost every morning along with the sound of small-arms fire and mortar and rocket attacks.</p>
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FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

balls up from...

From: OMR
To: GI Special
Sent: Tuesday, January 04, 2005 7:14 AM
Subject: balls up from...

...spc4. 525MI, VietNam, Republic of...
latest take on all things...
"hey, where are we going"..."and why the fuck am I in a handbasket?"

"I think everybody just feels very ready to have everybody come home, and I think everybody is just a little tired," said Adrienne Eckstein, whose husband, Lt. Col. Jeffrey R. Eckstein, commands the 84th Engineer Battalion. January 03, 2005
Associated Press

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Afghan Casualty Based At Bragg

[Thanks to Lou P who sent this in.]

Jan 4, 2005 By Kevin Maurer, Staff writer, The Fayetteville (NC) Observer

A Fort Bragg Special Forces soldier was killed over the weekend in southern Afghanistan, the Department of Defense said Monday.

Sgt. 1st Class Pedro A. Munoz, 47, of Quebradillas, Puerto Rico, died Sunday in Shindand, Afghanistan. **Munoz was an operations and intelligence sergeant** assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group.

Munoz is survived by his wife, Gisela, and his daughter, Dalia, U.S. Army Special Operations Command said.

A native of Quebradillas, Puerto Rico, Munoz joined the Army in February 1986. He was assigned to the 3rd Special Forces Group and deployed for operation Desert Storm.

Received:

GOT THAT RIGHT!

From: B
To: GI Special
Sent: Tuesday, January 04, 2005 12:09 PM
Subject: thanks

I found your site thru an article by Ron Jacobs, thanks for your work.

Anything that might help to stop this madness is a step in the right direction.

NO ONE needs to kill anybody in war, they are for the benefit of a very few, and it is those few who should go to war not young men and women.

If it was about oil in Iraq, we only had to buy it, not kill for it.

So, thank you, **maybe if enough soldiers stand against this folly, more will take heart and end this war from the ground up.**

B
Bend, Oregon

Received:

Israeli High School Students Resist Militarization

From: JH

To: GI Special
Sent: January 04

It can and will happen here, too, when we make it happen. But for now the miracle is happening in an even more militarized society, Israel.

full story here

<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/520381.html>

The principal of Ironi Aleph high school in Tel Aviv, Ram Cohen, couldn't believe what was happening to him. As he prepared to enter the auditorium yesterday with the guest speaker, an Air Force brigadier general invited to inject a little fighting spirit into students and motivation to enlist, he found three seniors chained to the entrance in protest over "the school's militarization."

Web Copies

For back issues see: GI Special web site at <http://www.militaryproject.org/>

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/> ; www.gifightback.org ;

<http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/gi-special.htm>, www.williambowles.info/gispecial

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