

GI SPECIAL 3B4:



Military Family Speaks Out Against Stop-Loss

[Thanks to Desmond G. who sent this in.]

April 16, 2005 By Michelle Esteban, (KOMO RADIO-TV), KING COUNTY

Military families are speaking out about the military's "stop-loss" policy.

Critics call it a backdoor draft but the military calls it critical to national safety. The policy temporarily extends a soldier's service to his country, whether that soldier wants to stay or not.

Sgt. Mark Bryant, 23, was one of the soldiers selected for an extra year in Iraq.

Before he left, Mark made a videotape for his son Tanner, 2, so he doesn't forget his father.

Tanner watches his dad on TV every day and talks to him. "Look it daddy. The giraffe!" the boy says as he holds a toy up to the TV.

In the video, Mark says, "Tanner boy, I love you."

Tanner will have to settle for the TV dad for a full year until his dad comes back home.



Mark's wife, Michelle, says her family is a victim of the military's stop-loss policy.

"It was so difficult to have to say goodbye knowing that some of them weren't coming home and it could be him," cries Michelle, 22.

Federal law can keep military units from retiring in times of war or national emergency.

That's what happened to Mark.

A month after he finished his four year commitment he got stop-lossed and his service time was temporarily extended.

"It's so aggravating, because he signed up for four years and he put in his four years," says Michelle.

H. Thomas Byron, attorney for the U.S. Justice Department, sees it differently.

"It doesn't say he's promised he'll be released on any certain date," said Byron during a court hearing last week in Seattle.

"When they sign up with recruiters they don't mention that to some people. I don't think it's fair," says Michelle.



Both Michelle and Mark claim they never heard of stop-loss until it happened.

"I'm trying to speak for the people who feel the way I do. I'm not expecting everyone to agree with me, but it's how I feel," says Michelle.

For now, Tanner's TV daddy will have to do. When the videotape is over, he bolts up to the TV says goodbye, and gives the screen a big kiss.

Mark is due home in October but knows he could get stop-lossed again.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

ONE SOLDIER KILLED, ONE INJURED IN IED ATTACK SOUTH OF BAGHDAD

April 18, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 05-04-20C

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- A U.S. Soldier died from wounds received at about 10:40 p.m. Sunday from an Improvised Explosive Device explosion south of Baghdad. A second Soldier was injured during the attack.

Second 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment Soldier Dies From Fire Wounds

By SCOTT SHACKFORD/City Editor

A second soldier from the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment has died from injuries in a guard tower fire in Iraq.

Spc. Tyler Dickens, 20, of Monroe, Ga., died Wednesday at a military hospital in Texas of injuries sustained April 7 while on guard duty in Iraq, the Athens (Georgia) Banner-Herald reported Thursday.

According to the Banner-Herald report, Dickens was injured by a rocket-propelled grenade explosion in the tower where he was standing watch. He was evacuated to the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio and died there of his injuries.

A memorial service being planned for Dickens will take place sometime next week at Fort Irwin.

Ft. Hood Soldier Dies Of IED Wounds

April 18, 2005 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 373-05

Pvt. Aaron M. Hudson, 20, of Highland Village, Texas, died April 16 in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries sustained April 15 in Camp Taji, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his patrol. Hudson was assigned to the 401st Military Police Company, 720th Military Police Battalion, 89th Military Police Brigade, Fort Hood, Texas.

Soldier Killed In Muqdadiyah; Non-Combat Casualty

April 18, 2005 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 371-05

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

Pfc. Steven F. Sirko, 20, of Portage, Ind., died April 17 in Muqdadiyah, Iraq, of non-combat related injuries. Sirko was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Benning, Ga.

18-Year-Old Soldier Killed

4-18-05 Marianne Martinez, KOLD News 13 Reporter

Sam Huff, 18, was killed this weekend in an explosion while driving in a convoy around Baghdad. She was a member of the military police.

Huff graduated from Mt. View High School less than a year ago. Students knew her for her leadership as a drum major in the band.

Friends and teachers say even though she had a commanding demeanor, she was also warm and friendly.

"Even though she was tough, she'd start smiling afterward," said Mt. View junior Courtney Neuman, who knew Huff through the band. "Her smile was contagious."

U.S. Soldiers Wounded In Rutba Attack; Personnel Carrier Destroyed

17 April 2005 Aljazeera.Net

Aljazeera has learned that **a number of US soldiers were wounded and a military personnel carrier was destroyed in a car bomb attack on the highway east of the city of Rutba on Sunday.**

A US helicopter was seen evacuating the wounded.

Five Marines Injured In Kuwait Road Accident

April 18, 2005 Associated Press

KUWAIT CITY — **Five Marines were injured in a road accident,** but their injuries were not life-threatening, a spokesman for the American military said Sunday.

The accident took place on a highway Saturday afternoon and all the Marines were in one vehicle, said Lt. Col. Pete Pearse, declining to give further details until an investigation is complete.

The Marines were hospitalized, Pearse said. He would not elaborate.

TROOP NEWS

Re: Military Project Update From Georgia State

April 17, 2005, DG

I've come into contact with service members quite a lot in the past few months. The last week in particular has been very exciting.

After the Iraq Veterans Against the War meeting, a member of the National Guard spoke to Mike Hoffman and left before I could talk to him. Luckily, he signed the contact list for our antiwar group. This brought up the idea of getting a few antiwar service members and veterans together for a meeting.

The same day, I ran into another student in the Army Reserves and told him about the idea for a meeting. He thought it was a good idea and we exchanged contact info.

Later ,that evening, the GSU student antiwar group called a meeting on activism. We decided to hold it outside in the plaza on campus since the weather was nice, and this turned out to be a great idea.

After we started the meeting, a few students stopped by to listen in, attracted by our "bring the troops home now" table cloth. One of those students joined the discussion and we found out he was an Afghanistan veteran. He left his contact info on our sign-up sheet as well.

An Iraq veteran, who helped us get signatures for our counter-recruitment petition, joined the meeting soon after.

We talked about setting up a meeting of current and recent service members to discuss the war and what they want to do to stop it. A major goal is to find out if they know other antiwar service members.

<p>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.</p>

Kiss Of Death Dept.

Time, April 25, 2005

The U.S. military plans to increase the number of advisers working with the Iraqis from 2,000 to 10,000.

It is a potentially harrowing assignment, modeled on the adviser program in the Vietnam War.

GI Bill Fails Student Vets

[Sender's Comment: Hi Guys (T Barton / Charlie A (IVAW) - FYI
Keep fighting the good fight!
Tom Palumbo
Sgt, USA (Retired for Good]

March 29, 2005 By Alison Young, KRT CAMPUS, WASHINGTON

Nearly three months into the spring semester, Army veteran Melishsa Fairman can't afford some textbooks because the Department of Veterans Affairs hasn't come through with her education benefits.

"I'm making it, barely. But I'm making it," said Fairman, 28, who's studying business at Tallahassee Community College.

About 100 of the 475 students who attend the Florida college with help from the Montgomery GI Bill and other VA education programs are still waiting on payments even though they applied for the benefits in December, said Delorise Robinson, the college's veterans affairs specialist.

Nationwide, more than 35,000 students have waited more than 60 days for the VA to approve their education claims in recent months, prompting colleges to defer tuition payments and offer emergency loans to students waiting on checks.

Nearly 100,000 other veterans have experienced delays of one to two months, according to a Knight Ridder analysis of VA claims data for Oct. 1-Feb. 28.

"You can't really concentrate on school because you're worrying about how you're going to make it," Fairman said.

"I have family that helps me, but they're getting about tired of me."

National Guard Recruiters Shunned: "Why Do You Want To Die?" "It's Ruined My Life Completely"

What's more, some Guard members say they regret ever joining.

"It's ruined my life completely," said Ray Murdock, a Bass River Township resident and specialist in the Army National Guard. "It's going to take me a long, long time to recover from this."

April 18, 2005 By TOM DAVIS, Staff Writer, North Jersey Media Group

The blood and turmoil of war are behind him. Now Sgt. 1st Class Rob Barea is fighting a new battle: He's trying to line up recruits for the New Jersey National Guard.

Occasionally, he'll get a kid who wants to travel or take advantage of the free tuition program. Others will meet Barea at a local high school and do sit-ups for him on the hallway floor to prove they're fit to fight.

Then they go home and talk to their folks.

"Some (parents) respect it," said Barea, a veteran of the 1999 Kosovo war.

"But others ask: "Why do you want to die?"

The National Guard clearly has become a hard sell. Because of the war in Iraq, the free tuition and other benefits are no longer attractive. Instead of a relatively safe, part-time commitment, it's viewed as a one-way ticket to the battlefield.

Although recruiters are working day and night, potential recruits are staying away in droves.

New Jersey recruiting offices that were crowded 10 years ago are nearly deserted. Some report a 50 percent drop in business from a decade ago.

"I don't want to be in a life-or-death situation," said Kim McSharar, a senior at Lodi High School who once considered joining the military.

Potential recruits also hear the stories of people pulled from their families and full-time jobs to serve 12 to 18 months in a war zone. They fear losing their lives outside of the Guard and detaching themselves from the people they're already struggling to support.

Unlike the part-time reserves, the New Jersey Guard provides a free education at any state school. But signing up also requires a three-year commitment.

In that time, some parents say, anything can happen.

"They always think there's something behind it," said Sgt. 1st Class Gabriel Gonzalez, a recruiter in Teaneck.

Alexandra Diakos, a 16-year-old sophomore at Lodi High School, wants to join. She's athletic, although a bit unsure of her goals. The college opportunity excites her, though.

Aiming to impress the recruiters, she recently did sit-ups outside the school's cafeteria as they counted.

If Diakos joins when she's 17, she'll need her parents' signature, which is required for recruits under 18. She's not sure she'll get it.

"They're understanding," she said, "but they're afraid."

What's more, some Guard members say they regret ever joining.

"It's ruined my life completely," said Ray Murdock, a Bass River Township resident and specialist in the Army National Guard. "It's going to take me a long, long time to recover from this."

Ten years ago, you could trip over people" at a recruiting station, Gonzalez said. Now, if the recruiters sign up two a week at any station, that's good.

Few have enlisted at the Teaneck and Riverdale armories, the only National Guard recruiting centers in Bergen, Passaic and Morris counties.

Recruiters often sit and wait for people to walk in, but end up looking at empty chairs.

In Paterson, Passaic and Hackensack, recruiters pitch college and job-training opportunities.

But in inner-city neighborhoods, disenfranchisement from the military, and the war, is heavy, recruiters say.

"I've gone to high schools where people have called me a murderer and a killer," Vasquez said.

At the more suburban schools, students hang out with the recruiters during their lunch periods. They pick up fliers.

Showing interest is a far cry from signing up, however.

Recently, recruiters set up a table outside the cafeteria at Lodi High School. They gave out free pencils and notebooks to students passing by. Pvt. Stephanie Saunders, a recent recruit, gave students a pep talk.

"You meet people who are willing to go to war with you, and die with you," she told a group of students.

Jacqueline Mendez, a 17-year-old senior, said she's ready to join, as long as she can go to a fashion school, too.

She did add one condition, however.

"I don't want to go to war," she said. "I can't shoot anybody. I'd be too scared."

Students Telling Uncle Sam: "Don't Call Us, We'll Call You"

Chicago Tribune, April 17, 2005

As Iraq war deaths have surpassed 1,500 and the Army fails to meet recruiting goals, high school students and their parents are making it increasingly difficult for military recruiters to get access to their contact information.

Guardsmen Who Challenged "Stop-Loss" Policy Leaving For Afghanistan: "The Ugly Little Secret In The Pentagon Is That Emiliano Santiago's Voluntary Service Is Now Involuntary."

[Thanks to Desmond G. who sent this in.]

April 15, 2005 By Alex Fryer, Seattle Times staff reporter

Sgt. Emiliano Santiago is expected to ship out to Afghanistan today after losing his challenge to the Pentagon's stop-loss policy that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Santiago, a Pasco electrical technician who serves in the Oregon National Guard, completed an eight-year military commitment in June 2004. A few months later, his helicopter-refueling unit was placed on active duty.

As part of the Pentagon's "stop-loss" policy, Santiago was ordered to join his unit in Afghanistan.

He sued the government and lost in federal district court last December.

On April 6, a three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals took just hours to reject his case that stop-loss was unconstitutional and violated his military contract. The judges also refused to order an injunction preventing Santiago's deployment.

Santiago's pro bono legal team appealed the injunction to U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who determines which cases from the 9th Circuit will be heard by the high court. She turned down Santiago's request for review.

In November 2002, the Army involuntarily extended the enlistment of all National Guard soldiers whose units were alerted or ordered to active duty.

The 27-year-old employee at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratories in Richland is set to deploy from Fort Sill in Oklahoma today, said his lawyer, Steve Goldberg of Portland.

It is unclear when Santiago will return to the U.S., although most deployments last 12 months. The Pentagon renewed his military obligations until 2031, an arbitrary date set for "administrative convenience," according to court papers.

Spokesperson at Fort Sill said Santiago did not wish to speak to reporters. **[Didn't want to or was the decision made without consulting him about it?]**

Santiago's case attracted national attention, and Rep. Jim McDermott, D-Seattle, advocated for him on the House floor, citing the impact stop-loss might have on future military recruitment.

"I rise to alert the American people to the case of Emiliano Santiago. His case — his plight — should be known, and feared, by every high-school junior and senior across the country," McDermott said during a speech Wednesday.

"The ugly little secret in the Pentagon is that Emiliano Santiago's voluntary service is now involuntary."

Although it has tracked several unsuccessful challenges to stop-loss across the country, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard has not taken a position on the policy.

Michael Cline, executive director of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard said "We've had lawmakers ask us about it, but there hasn't been a groundswell about stop-loss. **It's not been a major issue for us.**" **[Put his ass in uniform, ship him to Afghanistan right now, and see if he thinks it's a "major issue" then.]**

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Bus Bombed In Basra; 13 Occupation Cops Killed & Wounded

April 18, 2005 AFP

In the southern city of Basra, at least two police were killed and 11 wounded when two roadside bombs went off as a police bus drove by, said police spokesman Colonel Karim al-Zaidi.

Another officer said as many as five people might have been killed in the attack.

Pipeline To Turkey Blown Up Again



Iraqi police officers, assigned to protecting oil production and distribution, watch from across the Tigris River as fire and smoke billow from a pipeline fire following an explosion near Beiji, April 18, 2005. The Beiji refinery is the largest in Iraq. (AP Photo/Bassem Daham)

April 18, 2005 The Associated Press, MADAIN, Iraq

Iraqi officials say militants have set off an explosion that's heavily damaged an oil pipeline near the country's largest refinery.

The blast has sent burning oil floating across the surface of the nearby Tigris River.

Flames and smoke shot high into the air and engulfed parts of a nearby railroad bridge.

The pipeline had once exported oil to Turkey, but many attacks have heavily damaged the line.

Iraqi Police General Killed By Resistance In Mosul

4/18/2005 Anatolia.com Inc.

BAGHDAD - An Iraqi police general was killed on his way to work in the main northern city of Mosul, police said Monday.

Brigadier General Yunis Mohammed Sulaiman, police spokesman in Mosul, was killed in his car on Sunday, they said.

Widespread Resistance Action

April 18, 2005 AFP & Aljazeera.Net & (Xinhuanet) & By Hadi Mizban, Associated Press

In northern Iraq, an interpreter for US forces and an Iraqi soldier were killed when a mortar fell on an Iraq army position near Shirkat, 300 kilometres north of the capital, said Mohammed Owali, an Iraq army commander.

Two other Iraqi soldiers were killed and one wounded when mortars fell on their barracks in Al-Duluiyah, an army spokesman said.

A roadside bomb exploded Sunday morning at a civilian car in Dhuluiyah, north of Baghdad, killing three people, including two police officers, a police officer said.

"The bomb blasted at 8:00 a.m. (0400 GMT) in the town of Duluiyah as a civilian car passed by, killing two police officers and a civilian," Ibrahim al-Jaboury told Xinhua.

Lieutenant Nadhum Mutlaq and Lieutenant Latif Naser were heading to office when the blast occurred at about 300 meters away from a police checkpoint, killing them along with one civilian.

An Iraqi policeman was killed in a roadside bomb attack in the refinery town of Baiji, said police.

In Tuz, one Iraqi soldier was killed and another wounded in a small-arms attack, police said.

The Army of Ansar al-Sunna has said it abducted and shot dead three Iraqis working at a US base.

The captives - two brothers and their cousin - said on a video posted on the internet that they were hired by a Jordanian firm to maintain a swimming pool at the US base near the capital Baghdad.

"I advise Iraqis not to work with Americans. I regret what I did," said one blindfolded hostage in the video posted on the group's website.

A Filipino man working at a US-run military camp was shot dead in downtown Baghdad.

Rey Torres, who worked as a security guard and driver for a Qatari subcontractor at Camp Victory, was attacked in Baghdad on Sunday night shortly after he ended his shift, the foreign department there said.

Foreign Secretary Roberto Romulo issued an urgent appeal to Filipino workers to leave Iraq immediately.

Seven Iraqi Kurdish civilians working on a US military base were captured late on Sunday in central Iraq after leaving work, a police chief told AFP.

Armed men seized the seven Kurds after stopping their bus as they travelled home from the base in the Mansuria region to Khanaqin, some 180km northeast of Baghdad.

The bus driver, whom the armed men beat up, alerted police.

On Monday, two Iraqi policemen were killed and six injured when a roadside bomb exploded as their two patrol vehicles drove through Basra in southern Iraq, police Capt. Alaa Hasan said.

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

Another Anti-Occupation Demonstration In Baghdad

Apr 18, 2005 By HADI MIZBAN, Associated Press Writer

In another protest in Baghdad, hundreds of Shiites demanded the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq and condemned all terrorist attacks against Iraqis.

Raising Iraqi flags, the protesters chanted, "No to terrorism. No to occupation."

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

"And What Does That Tell You, Sir?"

[Thanks to Desmond G. who sent this in.]

Officer Vs. NCO Observations

The Company Commander and the First Sergeant were in the field.

As they hit the sack for the night, the First Sergeant said, "Sir, look up into the sky and tell me what you see?"

The CO said, "I see millions of stars."

1st Sgt.: "And what does that tell you, sir?"

CO: "Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Theologically, it tells me that God is great and that we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it tells me that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you, Top?"

1st Sgt.: "Well sir, it tells me that somebody stole our tent."

Veterans For Peace President's Message

There have been a few who have tried to take us off course with calls for continuing the occupation and a "responsible" exit strategy but I think most members recognize the futility of such illusions.

Today we need to redouble our efforts to end the occupation and bring our troops home now, not sometime later.

March 19 marks a shameful milestone for our country because 2 years ago, our government launched an unjustified military attack on Iraq. Although this invasion was in violation of international treaties and laws, the Bush administration repeatedly told the country and the world that it had solid proof of claims that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and was linked to international terrorism.

Despite the objections of millions both at home and abroad, the majority in Congress capitulated and gave the White House the green light to attack. Two years later it is obvious that this invasion was illegal and unnecessary as the reasons given for military action have proven one after another to be fabrications and lies.

After the presidential elections last fall, some activists became disheartened. That's the bad news but the good news is that people are beginning to get moving again. In February, some of us participated in the United for Peace & Justice national assembly in St. Louis, where representatives from hundreds of groups agreed upon a strategic focus and a number of action plans in opposition to the continuing occupation of Iraq.

On the second anniversary of the invasion rallies and vigils were held in 800 cities and towns including a march of 4000 near Fort Bragg, NC, led by returned Iraq war vets, Gold Star and other military families and veterans of past conflicts which received national attention and support.

Opposition and resistance among active duty and reserve military personnel continues to grow in actions ranging from speaking out against the war and filing lawsuits against stop-loss to refusals of deployment orders. Some have even fled

the country. In some states, campaigns calling for the return of National Guard units for home front duty have taken off.

The numbers of those joining the military are falling as many young people and their parents are realizing that promises of educational benefits and other enticements are really a cover for the grim realities of military service today. Organized counter-recruitment efforts to get the truth to young people continue to build.

Members and chapters of Veterans For Peace play an important part in these and other efforts and have become a recognized and respected force.

There have been a few who have tried to take us off course with calls for continuing the occupation and a "responsible" exit strategy but I think most members recognize the futility of such illusions.

It should be clear by now that Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld and Co. are intent on staying in Iraq and are setting up permanent military bases, having given large corporations the green light to fleece the Iraqi economy and the US treasury, no matter what the cost in blood.

Today we need to redouble our efforts to end the occupation and bring our troops home now, not sometime later.

We have to insist that they are treated right when they get back with proper healthcare, jobs, education and housing. We also need to hold those politicians accountable who are responsible for this war through whatever means are available to us including calling for the President and Vice-President's impeachment.

It all seems like a monumental task but standing up for what is right and just has never been easy and that is why we need Veterans For Peace now more than ever.

David Cline President

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.

“A New Line Of Spin”

4/14/2005 Al Jazeera Publishing Limited

Last weeks vast protest showed that the opposition is still growing, the biggest since foreign troops invaded, in spite of U.S. and British protestations of have Iraqis' best interests at heart.

Even more significant, the protestors were mainly Shias, who poured in from the impoverished eastern suburb known as Sadr City.

The Bush-Blair spin likes to suggest that protest is confined to Sunnis, with the nod and wink that these people are simply disgruntled former Saddam supporters or people linked to al-Qaida, and therefore need not be treated as legitimate objectors.

The fact that the march was largely Shia and against Saddam, Bush and Blair gives the lie to that.

In a new line of spin - which some commentators have taken to mean that the U.S. is preparing for a pullout - U.S. commanders claim the rate of attacks is down.

The figures are not independently monitored. Even if true, they may be temporary. Thirdly, they fly in the face of evidence that suggests the U.S. is failing. Most of western Iraq is out of U.S. control. The city of Mosul could explode at any moment while Ramadi is practically a no-go area.

Who's Killing Who?

Casualties Of Colonial Wars: Kenya And Iraq

April 17, 2005 montages.blogspot.com

To justify its continuing occupation of Iraq, Washington has endeavored to portray itself as the selfless protector of the Iraqi people who are menaced by ruthless terrorists.

The corporate media has obliged Washington, by creating an impression that most guerrilla attacks target Iraqi civilians and that most Iraqi civilian casualties are caused by guerrillas, not by US and other coalition troops and Iraqi soldiers and policemen trained by them.

Lins de Albuquerque asserts: "In the first two weeks of January, at least 202 people died as a result of the insurgency in Iraq. The killings have been indiscriminate."

As Dave Lindorff notes, however, the US and coalition troops have been killing civilians at "a rate both higher than the rate they are being killed by insurgents and higher than the rate that the U.S. forces have been killing insurgents."

Indeed, according to the Iraqi Ministry of Health's statistics, "operations by U.S. and multinational forces and Iraqi police are killing twice as many Iraqis -- most of them civilians -- as attacks by insurgents."

A *Lancet* study published last November confirms the ministry's findings: "Violent deaths were widespread . . . and were mainly attributed to coalition forces. Most individuals reportedly killed by coalition forces were women and children." That is not surprising, given the sheer quantity of firepower at the US military's disposal, which even the most sophisticated guerrilla force cannot match.

While it is clear that the US and coalition forces have been killing more civilians than combatants and that more civilians have been killed by the US and coalition forces than by guerrillas, questions still remain.

First of all, do Iraqi guerrillas themselves in fact attack more civilians than combatants, as the corporate media regularly suggests?

M. Junaid Alam published an excellent article in *LeftHook* to answer this question: "Does the Resistance Target Civilians? According to US Intel, Not Really."

Drawing upon Anthony H. Cordesman's report "The Developing Iraqi Insurgency: Status at End-2004" and "A Report Card on Iraqi Security" that accompanied Eric Schmitt's article "U.S. Commanders See Possible Cut in Troops in Iraq" in the *New York Times*, Alam graphically illustrates the fact that "the number of attacks on 'Coalition Forces' far exceeds that of any other category. . . . Indeed, attacks on military occupying forces, and by extension mostly US military forces, accounts for 75% of all attacks. Meanwhile, civilian targets comprise a mere 4.1% of attacks."

The fact that most Iraqi guerrillas seek to concentrate on attacking foreigners doing the work of colonial occupation rather than Iraqi civilians is quietly reflected in Washington's latest policy change on reconstruction of Iraq: "The administration is 'shifting work to Iraqi subcontractors that are somewhat less susceptible to insurgency attacks and are not burdened by the same heavy overhead expenses of foreign firms,' the State Department report (to Congress issued on April 6) said."

Why, then, does the Iraqi resistance, like the US and coalition forces, take a larger toll on civilians than combatants? Alam observes: "Looking at deaths and injuries in the period examined by the CSIS report, we see that 451 "Coalition Forces" were killed and 1,002 injured, whereas 1,981 civilians were killed and 3,467 injured."

Alam's answer is that unarmed and untrained civilians are far more likely become casualties of war than "professionally trained soldiers" protected by "sophisticated military armor." and that fanatics's propaganda of deeds is magnified many times by the American propaganda machine that pays "up to \$US10,000 (\$A13,700) a time to opportunists, criminals and chancers who passed off fiction and supposition about Zarqawi as cast-iron fact, making him out as the linchpin of just about every attack in Iraq."

Moreover, many of the Iraqi civilians who have been killed or wounded by guerrillas were applicants seeking jobs as soldiers or policemen. Washington's practice of forcing such job applicants to wait outside concrete barriers for security reasons makes them virtual sitting ducks:

To sum up, the army of occupation is responsible for by far the largest proportion of civilian casualties; both the army of occupation and armed resistance to it have killed more civilians than combatants; and a large majority of casualties are Iraqis rather than foreigners.

That fits into the tragic historical pattern established by colonial occupations and anti-colonial rebellions and revolutions. To take just one example, consider the Mau Mau rebellion against the British Empire in Kenya:

The British declared the Kenya Emergency in 1952, when seven years of restless dissatisfaction with British rule culminated in the full-scale rebellion known as Mau Mau. It was very largely the struggle of the Kikuyu, the country's majority ethnic group -- about 1.5 million in a native population of five million -- who had lost much of their land to white settlers and had moved into reservations or continued farming as tenants. The Emergency saw out two prime ministers -- Churchill and Eden -- and ended in January 1960.

In that time, Mau Mau supporters killed at least 2000 African civilians and inflicted some 200 casualties on the army and police. In all, 32 white settlers died in the rebellion. For their part, the British hanged more than 1000 Kikuyu, detained at least 150,000 and, according to official figures, killed around 12,000 in combat, though the real figure, in David Anderson's view, is 'likely to have been more than 20,000'. In addition, Caroline Elkins claims, up to 100,000 died in the detention camps.

Because colonizers always employ indigenous collaborators (in the roles of civilian administrators as well as soldiers and policemen) as buffers between them and anti-colonial guerrillas, more indigenous collaborators than foreign soldiers and civilians become casualties of anti-colonial insurgency. That is as inevitable as the fact that colonizers kill more indigenous civilians and combatants than anti-colonial guerrillas do.

The only way to escape the dynamics of colonial and anti-colonial violence is to end colonialism itself.

OCCUPATION REPORT

The Great Iraqi Hostage Fraud

April 18, 2005 AFP & By HADI MIZBAN & Paul Haven, Associated Press Writers

MADAIN - The Iraqi army said it had found no hostages in the besieged town of Madain, where Sunni militants had reportedly been holding Shiite residents captive.

"The whole city is under control. We've secured houses where people said there were hostages. We could not find any. I don't think we'll find any," said Iraqi Brigadier General Mohammed Sabri Latif.

The military action followed reports that Sunni gunmen had abducted dozens of people and had threatened to kill them unless all Shiites left the town.

When an AP photographer joined hundreds of police entering the town Monday, they met no resistance and found no hostages.

Shiite leaders and government officials initially claimed Sunni militants captured up to 100 Shiites in and around Madain last week and were threatening to kill them unless all Shiites left the area.

By the end of the day, however, Iraqi officials had produced no hostages and Iraqi military officials and police who provided information about the troubles could not be reached for further details.

MORE:

Mission Preposterous

April 18, 2005 From Ahmed Al-Habbabi, anti-allawi-group

The Anti-Iraqi Guards stormed Medaiin today. Although no hostages were found, meticulous searches unearthed the following cache:



One used artillery shell!



NO! There were TWO used artillery shells! Believe me.

(Medaiin 04/18/2005. Photos from iraqpartol.com)

MORE:

Iraqi Defense Official Involved In Hostage Fraud Killed

April 19, 2005 Robert F. Worth, New York Times BAGHDAD

A high-ranking Defense Ministry adviser was assassinated late Monday night by armed gunmen at his house in southern Baghdad. Maj. Gen. Adnan Qaragholi was killed just after 11 p.m. when 10 gunmen forced their way into his house in the Doura neighborhood and shot him to death, Interior Ministry officials said.

They escaped without being caught, and neighbors alerted the police to the killing, the officials said.

A Comment On This Story

From: K, Anti-Allawi Group
Sent: April 18, 2005
Subject: Re: Mako Moushkeelat!!.....News Flash!

Al-Jazeera Newsflash (**appropriately edited**):

Formidable Iraqi National Guard General Adnan Thabit, who led the operation of Medain, holding a large basket to fill with freed hostages, and who appeared a few hours ago making a statement on Al-Jazeera about the operation... to save the

hostages... who didn't exist... was regretfully assassinated in his home in southern Baghdad this evening.

What do you make of that?

Last Camp Bucca Escapee Caught

April 18, 2005 Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — The last of 11 detainees who escaped from the U.S. military's largest detention center in Iraq has been recaptured, a military spokesman said Sunday.

One of the escapees, 24-year-old Hussein Nima, told The Associated Press on Saturday the group decided to flee because of bad treatment and delays in investigating their cases. Detention centers in Iraq have been criticized for holding prisoners indefinitely.

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

Used And Thrown Away: Occupation Abandons Collaborators

April 18, 2005 Miami Herald

Alyaa said she was the first woman in her neighborhood to sign up to work with the U.S. government after Saddam Hussein fell.

She used to stand shoulder to shoulder with an American soldier in front of the U.S. military's Camp Scania in the Rashid section of Baghdad. As a translator, Alyaa, 24, talked to Iraqis who lined up at the entrance seeking compensation for dead relatives and destroyed homes.

Now, because of that work, her life is in danger and in limbo.

Alyaa, who asked that her last name be withheld out of fear for her safety, fled to Jordan with her cousin Shaimaa after insurgents killed an uncle and kidnapped Shaimaa and another cousin.

Alyaa hoped to find a haven in the United States but discovered the State Department isn't resettling refugees from Iraq. She's lost her faith in the country she once loved.

"We gave them our friendship," Alyaa said during a recent interview at an Amman restaurant. "We gave them our hard work. And they don't even help us to have a new life." Is it so hard, she asked, "for America to give a visa to Iraqis to have a new life that they took from them?"

Nongovernmental organizations first became aware of the problem as U.S. soldiers approached them for help in getting their translators out of the country, only to be told it was impossible.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

CH-47 Makes Forced Landing Near Kandahar

April 18, 2005 By Paul Haven, Associated Press

Taliban rebels ambushed a patrol of Afghan soldiers in southwestern Oruzgan province, sparking a one-hour firefight, Gov. Jan Mohammed Khan told The Associated Press.

The military said Monday that one of its CH-47 helicopters operating in the south made a "precautionary landing" near Kandahar after developing a mechanical problem. Moore said nobody was injured in the incident, which occurred early Sunday, and the helicopter was repaired on site.

A rapid reaction force was sent out to bring the soldiers on board safely back to base. Moore had no details on how many soldiers were on the helicopter when it was forced to land.

General Barno Predicts Taliban Will Collapse Within A Year

April 18, 2005 By Paul Haven, Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — America's senior military commander in Afghanistan warned Saturday that Taliban-linked terrorists might launch a large-scale attack in coming months in a desperate attempt to reverse their waning fortunes.

But Lt. Gen. David Barno said the future was against them and predicted the near-total collapse of the Taliban within a year.

For related stories, see:

General Cornwallis Predicts American Rebels Will Collapse Within A Year

General Stuart Predicts Union Armies Will Collapse Within A Year

General Kesselring Predicts Russians Will Collapse Within A Year

General Westmoreland Predicts Vietcong Will Collapse Within A Year

President George W. Bush Proclaims End Of Iraq Conflict

Received:

ALERT: Attacks On Free Speech At SFSU

From: Phil Gasper

Sent: Monday, April 18, 2005 4:00 PM

Please Forward Widely

Students at San Francisco State still need your help. The attack against students activists for the March 9th counter recruitment protest has escalated.

On April 1, 2005, the six student organizations that endorsed the demonstration (Students Against War (SAW), LA Raza, Voices for Sexual Freedom (VOX), Pilipino American Collegiate Endeavor (PACE), M.E.C.h.A. and the International Socialist Organization (ISO)) received letters stating that the administration is beginning formal Disciplinary Proceedings against them.

This is on top of the 3 individual students who received letter from judicial affairs on March 22nd.

The groups involved may be facing formal hearings as soon as Monday, April 25, 2005.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

We ask the public to continue speaking-out against the administration's plans to limit free speech rights, and demand that no sanctions be placed on students organizations that helped to plan the March 9th protest.

Please contact:

Robert A. Corrigan, SFSU President

Phone: (415) 338-1381, Fax: (415) 338-6210

Email: corrigan@sfsu.edu

please CC your email to: cansfsu@hotmail.com

Penny Saffold, SFSU Vice President/Dean of Students

Phone: (415) 338-2032, Fax: (415) 338-0900

Email: psaffold@sfsu.edu

please CC your email to: cansfsu@hotmail.com

Also, please sign our online petition at
<http://www.petitiononline.com/556/petition.html>

Received:

From: JL
To: GI Special
Sent: April 18, 2005 9:08 PM
Subject: Keep up the good work

Please keep up the good work.

I read as often as I can.

It is heartening to read the submissions of folks on the receiving end of "our" misbegotten government's policies.

There's hope yet that the scales will fall from enough Americans' eyes to allow us to take back our country from the corporate representatives who presently hold power.

Please keep up the good work. It's a very good thing, what you're doing.

REPLY: The really good work is being done by troops organizing against the war, and the military family members, veterans and civilians reaching out to help them and give them aide and comfort. That's our hope.

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.williambowles.info/gispecial,
<http://www.albasrah.net/magalat/english/qi-special.htm>**

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