

GI SPECIAL 4G28:



All Flights Out Canceled For Troops At The End Of Their Deployment: Stryker Soldiers Forced To Stay In Iraq: Occupation Troops To Go From 127,000 to 134,000; Command Admits Baghdad Not Won For Bush

Jul. 27, 2006 PAULINE JELINEK and RYAN LENZ, Associated Press & by Jim Mannon
AFP

WASHINGTON

Military commanders in Iraq are developing a plan to move as many as 5,000 U.S. troops with armored vehicles and tanks into the country's capital in an effort to quell escalating violence, defense officials said Thursday.

As part of the plan, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld on Thursday extended the tours of some 3,500 members of the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team. It was scheduled to be leaving now, but instead, most of its 3,900 troops will serve for up to four more months.

About 200 of its troops had arrived at Fort Wainwright, Alaska, and another 200 were in Kuwait.

Army officials said the status of those troops would be decided on a case-by-case basis, but that soldiers could be sent back from Kuwait or even Alaska if they are considered essential to the mission.

All flights out for soldiers currently at the end of their deployment were canceled as of Tuesday, as commanders wrestled with the plan and how to supply troops needed for it, a third official said.

The 172nd uses the lighter, faster Stryker troop-carrying vehicle and includes about 4,400 troops. At least 200 have returned to Alaska; others were in Kuwait awaiting transportation home. It wasn't clear Thursday how many members of the unit remained in Iraq.

Defense experts inside and outside the Pentagon worry that diverting U.S. troops to Baghdad could weaken their ability in other parts of the country. [Fucking brilliant deduction.]

The move indicated that US commanders have effectively given up hopes for even a gradual reduction in the US force this year.

It boosted the size of the US force from 14 brigades to 15 brigades, and from 127,000 troops to at least 130,000.

Army officials said that by the end of August the US force should increase to about 134,000 troops with the arrival of another brigade from the 82nd Airborne Infantry Division.

MORE:

Rumsfeld Says Troops Forced To Stay In Iraq “Got On With Life”

Jul. 27, 2006 by Jim Mannion AFP

"If you extend somebody, is there some disappointment that they won't be home when they thought they would be home? Sure," US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told reporters.

He said when an army unit was extended for several months two years ago, "they handled it in a professional way, and got on with life."

[Send this rotten, lying, betraying piece of shit to Ramadi; let him "get on with life."

MORE:

U.S. Command Admits Occupation Has Not Won In Baghdad; [Guess What the Opposite Of "Win" Is]

JULY 26, 2006 BY MICHAEL R. GORDON, THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY

"Baghdad is truly a must-win," said Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV, the senior spokesman for the military command here. "The prime minister has stated it. General Casey has stated it. We have to win in Baghdad. We don't have an option"

[Oh right. That's what an earlier version of this silly asshole said about Saigon. And what an earlier German version of this silly asshole said about Stalingrad. You see, there is another option. War ends. Troops come home. Think Vietnam. The U.S. troops there rebelled and wouldn't fight a rotten Imperial war anymore. Game over.]

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

MARINE KILLED IN AL ANBAR 27 JULY

7/28/2006 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS
RELEASE Number: 06-07-02C

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq: A Marine assigned to Regimental Combat Team 5 died due to enemy action while operating in Al Anbar Province today.

West Side Native Killed

7/28/2006 WCPO

Delhi Marine Corporal Timothy Roos was waiting for the day he would get to come home from Iraq to see his newborn daughter.

But the day, which was planned for late September, would never come for the 20-year-old.

Corporal Roos was killed in Ramadi earlier this week when a bomb exploded under his Humvee, his family told 9News on Friday.

They found out about his death around 4 a.m. Friday, less than two weeks after Corporal Roos' wife gave birth to a girl.

Roos, who was on his second tour of duty in Iraq, graduated in 2003 from the Oak Hills Diamond Oaks vocational program, where he was enrolled in ROTC.

He had dreamed of being a Marine since he was a boy, his family told 9News. Roos was even married in his Marine uniform.

"Tim was a very family oriented person," said brother-in-law Brian Pearson. "He wanted to be a Marine since he was two years old. He was very proud to serve our country. He was very much looking forward to coming home to seeing his daughter."

Corporal Roos was commanding trucks in the Ramadi area when a bomb went off under his Humvee, the military told his family.

Maryland Soldier Killed

July 27, 2006 The Associated Press, ROSE HAVEN, Md.

Family members said a soldier from southern Anne Arundel County was killed Saturday in an ambush in Iraq.

Army Staff Sgt. Christopher Swanson, 25, of Rose Haven, was on his third tour of Iraq when he was killed. His uncle, Glenn Swanson, said his nephew was destined to be a career soldier and said he was a dedicated servant.

Swanson was the captain of the soccer team at Southern High School and graduated in 1999.

His funeral is set for Tuesday at 11 a.m. at First Baptist Church in Upper Marlboro. He will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

Salvadoran Soldier Killed Near Diwaniya

Jul 28 The Associated Press

A Salvadoran soldier was killed in Iraq on Thursday, the second soldier from this Central American nation to be killed in the conflict in eight days.

The deaths come as Salvadoran President Tony Saca was preparing to ask the nation's congress to approve sending a seventh contingent of 380 troops to replace those now in Iraq.

Deputy Sgt. Donald Alberto Ramirez died from head injuries after the ambulance he was driving was hit with an explosive device on the outskirts of the southern Iraqi city of Diwaniya, Salvadoran Defense Minister Otto Romero said.

With Thursday's death, a total of four Salvadorans have been killed in the Iraqi conflict.

Six Georgian Troops Wounded Near Baquba

27 Jul 2006 Reuters & Civil Georgia, Tbilisi

Guerrillas opened fire on Georgian troops manning a checkpoint near the Iraqi town of Baquba.

Six Georgian servicemen have suffered with a bomb splinter injuries in the Iraqi town of Baquba, a source from the Ministry of Defense told Civil Georgia on July 27.

"All of them are slightly injured," the source said.

Meanwhile Reuters reported quoting an Iraqi army source that gunmen opened fire on a checkpoint manned with Georgian soldiers in Khairnabat, near Baquba 65 km north of Baghdad, on July 27.

Green Bay Soldier Injured In Fatal Attack; Command Negligence Investigation Begins

Jul 27, 2006 (AP)

GREEN BAY: A Green Bay man is one of three soldiers injured in an attack in Iraq that killed a Cedarburg man.

The family of Sergeant Jeff Vorpahl says he was driving the Humvee when the explosion occurred. The Humvee was hit by an improvised explosive device on Monday, killing 27-year-old Stephen Castner.

The soldiers are with the Milwaukee-based 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery Regiment.

Vorpahl's stepfather, Jim Welter, says his stepson underwent several hours of surgery and is expected to recover from his injuries. Welter hopes to have Vorpahl back in the U-S this week.

Vorpahl has served in Iraq for almost a year.

Meanwhile, Governor Doyle says the National Guard Bureau has promised to review training and equipment issues after the fatal attack.

The dead soldier's father has raised complaints about the training Castner received and the limited equipment available to the unit.

Doyle says the concerns are legitimate -- and he brought them up with Lieutenant General H-Steven Blum, the chief of the National Guard Bureau.

According to Doyle, Blum promised to assign the Guard's inspector general to review the issues.

Daphne Soldier Wounded In Baghdad

July 28, 2006 By GUY BUSBY, Staff Reporter, The Press-Register

Family members said Thursday that they are waiting on further word about a Daphne soldier injured when his Bradley fighting vehicle was destroyed in an explosion in Baghdad.

Spec. Ian Boone, 21, a 2003 Baldwin County High graduate, was burned over his face and neck, had his right elbow injured and was cut on his face and head, his stepfather, Ben Powell, said.

Boone, a trooper in the Army's 10th Cavalry, was either on patrol or returning from a patrol when his vehicle rolled over an improvised explosive device, Powell said.

At about 8:15 a.m. Tuesday, approximately three hours after the explosion, Boone called his family to say that he was not seriously injured. The soldier also said he would not be evacuated out of Iraq for medical treatment after the explosion that injured four members of his patrol, his stepfather said.

"He wanted to call us to beat the official call to let us know he was OK," Powell said. "He called my cell phone so I'd get the call and could tell his mother and she wouldn't worry. As luck would have it, she was in the truck with me and knew right away that something had happened."

Karen Powell said she realized that something was wrong when her husband answered the telephone.

"The whole time Ian's been over there, I was expecting a phone call. You see so many kids over there have something happen to them. When the phone rang, he didn't recognize the number, but I said 'you better answer it, it might be Ian.' When he answered, he said 'Are you OK?' and my heart just dropped," she said Thursday. "I knew it was Ian and something was wrong."

She said that while Boone told her that he was not badly injured, she continues to worry about his condition.

"That's my baby and I can't get to him," she said.

While attending high school, Boone also worked at the Battleship USS Alabama, where his mother now works in the gift shop, Karen Powell said.

Yvonne Rabren, a fellow employee, said Boone has corresponded with workers at the battleship through letters and e-mails since going to Iraq.

"He was a wonderful worker and we're all mother figures here, so we all took him under our wing," Rabren said. "He was so well mannered and always willing to do anything to help."

She said workers at the park were stunned to learn that Boone had been injured.

"I was in total shock. I had to sit down," she said. "Everyone was very, very upset when we heard."

Ben Powell said the Tuesday explosion was not the first time that his stepson had been in an attack.

"He had a close call about a month or so back when the Hummer he was in got destroyed, but he wasn't hurt. I told him, 'You've got to realize you're not bullet-proof, buddy,'" Powell said. "This was worse. He called to say -- he calls me 'old man' -- 'Old man, I got hurt, but I'm OK.'"

Powell said Boone shipped out for Iraq on Thanksgiving 2005 and is due to return to the United States when his tour of duty ends in November.

Boone enlisted in Daphne in July 2004 and was recently notified that he was on the promotion list for sergeant, Powell said.

Powell, who retired from the Navy after 20 years, said he expects Boone to complete his tour in Iraq.

"He's the type that's not going to quit," Powell said. "He a good soldier, well, I've been told you don't call them soldiers in the cavalry, they're troopers."

He said that even though Boone was shaken after the explosion, he kept his sense of humor.

"He took a camera back with him after he came home from mid-tour leave in March and we'd gotten on him for just sending pictures of landscapes, nothing of him," Powell said. "He said to not count on any pictures for a while because the camera was in the Bradley."

Boone's other family members include his father and stepmother, Danny and Helen Boone of Little River; two sisters, Alicia Odom of Daphne and Angelina Jackson of Clarksville, Tenn.; brother, Todd Powell of Daphne; and grandparents, Todd and Doris Gentry of Linden, Powell said.

U.S. Vehicle Attacked Near Kirkuk; Casualties Not Announced

7.28.06 (KUNA) An improvised bomb attack targeted Multi-National Force (MNF) vehicle on the way of Kirkuk.

**NO MISSION;
HOPELESS WAR:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



U.S. Army Soldiers assigned to 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team fire mortar illumination rounds in support of a targeting mission in Tall Afar, Iraq, July 4. (AP Photo/Department of Defense, Sgt. Jacob N. Bailey)

Collaborators Killing Each Other

27 Jul 2006 Reuters

A policeman and an Iraqi soldier were killed after their patrols opened fire on each other near a petrol station in the town of Debes, 45 km (28 miles) northeast of Kirkuk, police sources said.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

16 Dead In Helicopter Crash: Two Dutch Soldiers, Two Americans

July 27, 2006 AFP & AP

All 16 people including two Dutch soldiers were killed when their helicopter crashed in south-east Afghanistan, a military spokesman says.

The civilian MI8 helicopter crashed for unknown reasons into mountains in Paktia province on Wednesday.

"There were 16 people on board of multiple nationalities. There are no survivors," US-led coalition spokesman Colonel Thomas Collins said.

Colonel Collins confirmed that two of the dead were Dutch soldiers serving with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

The Russian-made chopper hit a mountain in Algadi village of Jani Khail district in Paktia, provincial police chief General Mohammad Ayob told AFP.

The spokesman says there's no indication yet what caused the crash. He says those on board included at least two Americans.

Two Foreign Occupation Troops Wounded; Nationality Not Announced

July 28, 2006 2:23 FISNIK ABRASHI, Associated Press Writer & July 27 (Xinhua)

Two coalition soldiers were wounded during a clash with Taliban rebels Thursday in the troublesome Sangin district of southern Helmand province, said Maj. Scott Lundy, a coalition spokesman. He did not disclose the soldiers' nationalities.

Four policemen were killed as the militants attacked their vehicle in Jalai district at around 11:00 a.m. (0630 GMT), the official in Kandahar told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

He said another policeman was killed as militants targeted his vehicle in Loya Wala area in Kandahar city Wednesday night.

Top U.S. General Says Taliban Can't Take Over Afghanistan: [July 28, 2006 AP Headline]



Saigon 1975 [vietnamwar.com]

Top Confederate General Says Grant Can't Take Over Richmond
December 20, 1864 CSA Press Release

Top American General Says Mao Can't Take Over China
Jan. 14, 1945 New York Times

Top American General Says Ho Can't Take Over South Vietnam
Every Other Day From 1968-1974

TROOP NEWS

THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



The flag-draped casket of Marine Lance Cpl. Geoffrey R. Cayer, 20, from St. Joseph's Church after his funeral service in Fitchburg, Mass. July 26, 2006. Cayer, assigned to 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif. died July 18 in Iraq. (AP Photo/Elise Amendola)

U.S. Government Shits On Combat Vets With Traumatic Brain Injury: “There Wasn't Any Follow-Up Care”

"Their (VA's) way of dealing with it was dumping him in an extended care facility, which is a nice name for a nursing home facility."

7/24/2006 By Dennis Camired, Gannett News Service [Excerpts]

They've suffered some of the most devastating survivable injuries in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, but they may not be getting the help they need from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

More than 1,000 veterans and their families now share a unique struggle to regain their health after suffering what medicine calls traumatic brain injuries, but what individuals and loved ones find is a complex knot of physical, mental and emotional problems.

Living with the lingering effects of TBI; a blow to the head so severe it disrupts the brain's function; can require a long-term commitment of health care and support, as Sarah Wade has found with her husband.

But, she said, "There wasn't any follow-up care."

Her husband, Ted, was brain injured and lost his right arm while serving as a sergeant with the Army's 82nd Airborne Division. It was Valentine's Day, 2004, when buried artillery shells detonated under his Humvee near Fallujah.

"Their (VA's) way of dealing with it was dumping him in an extended care facility, which is a nice name for a nursing home facility."

Sarah Wade, who lives in Chapel Hill, N.C., with her husband, said their problems with the VA started after Ted Wade left the VA center in Richmond, Va., which offers specialized care for severe and multiple injuries.

She has been acting as her husband's case manager since the VA manager didn't know enough about his injuries.

"One of the things with the VA is that they can always tell you what they can't do, but they can never tell you what they can do," she said, citing the time his private rehabilitation benefits ran out.

"When his contract was up, they (VA) tried to put him in an adult daycare program and transfer his medical care back in-house," she said.

"They had no one who has the expertise to treat him there, otherwise he wouldn't have been sent to this doctor in the first place."

Lisa Schuster of Sylvania, Ohio, said it's difficult to find rehabilitation care at VA medical centers and clinics for her son, former Army Spec. 4 Matthew Drake, who suffered a traumatic brain injury in Iraq when a suicide car bomber targeted his Humvee in 2004.

"At many (VA) facilities, there just is no established traumatic brain injury program and they have no traumatic brain injury specialists," Schuster said. "They kind of operate on a fill-in-the-gap protocol."

Traumatic brain injury is becoming one of the signature combat wounds of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, with about 1,200 reported as of March.

In a recent study of 52 brain-injured veterans, including Ted Wade, the VA Inspector General found that access to care is frequently difficult and many veterans and their families reported problems dealing with the VA health care system.

Schuster said her son is recovering slowly and can walk with a cane for short distances, but she is still struggling trying to care for him in a specially adapted extension to her home built with community donations.

"Financially and emotionally, the support for families just isn't as good as it should be," Schuster said.

"I asked for counseling. I mean I have more post-traumatic-stress-disorder symptoms than he does because he doesn't remember anything."

The VA response was to permit six sessions, Schuster said.

When the VA medical center in Ann Arbor, Mich., could no longer care for him, Schuster said she and her son ran out of options.

"The VA hospital basically had maxed out its resources and I had nowhere to go with him but (home)," she said. "We're struggling mightily now to find the resources to meet **his needs.**"

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Major Resistance Attack Slams Housing For Rich & Powerful Collaborators

7.27.06 By RYAN LENZ, Associated Press Writer

A rocket and mortar barrage followed by a car bomb blasted an upscale [translation: ruling class], district Thursday, killing 31 people and wounding 153, police said.

The explosion occurred about 200 meters (yards) way from the house of Vice President Adil Abdul-Mahdi, a senior figure in the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution [translation: Supreme Council In Favor Of The U. S. Occupation] in Iraq.

The mortars all landed in mainly commercial areas, with one exploding about 150 meters (yards) from SCIRI's headquarters in Karradah.

The attack was the largest on Karradah in about a year.

The area includes the home of President Jalal Talabani and the head of SCIRI, Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim.

Pipeline Blown Up As Usual

28/07/2006 Evening Echo

A bomb tore through a pipeline southwest of Samarra, about 60 miles north of Baghdad.

The pipeline carries oil from Iraq's largest refinery in Beiji.

Assorted Resistance Action

July 27, 2006 By RYAN LENZ, Associated Press Writer & Reuters & 7.28.06 Reuters & Aljazeera & Evening Echo & AFP

An improvised bomb exploded in one of the patrolling police vehicles on the main street of Kirkuk.

Resistance fighters killed two civilians in Tikrit who were employed by US troops.

The drive-by shooting occurred in the al-Qadissya neighbourhood of Tikrit, about 80 miles north of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb exploded on an Iraqi army patrol near Karmah, 25 miles west of Baghdad, killing four soldiers, police Lt. Ahmed Ali said.

A senior officer in the police unit that protects oil installations was slain in west Baghdad, police reported.

A policeman was killed while leaving a barber shop in the northern city of Mosul.

A policeman was wounded when guerrillas opened fire on him in the city of Mosul 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police sources said.

A roadside bomb killed two policemen and wounded two more near Tikrit, 175 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad, police sources said.

An army lieutenant was wounded and a soldier was killed when guerrillas attacked their car in the city of Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles north of Baghdad, police sources said.

Also Thursday, a car bomb exploded near a vegetable stand in Baqouba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, wounding three police said.

A translator working for U.S. troops was found killed in his car near Kut, 170 km (105 miles) southeast of Baghdad, police said.

A roadside bomb exploded near a police patrol, wounding two policemen in Baquba 65km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

An Iraqi army lieutenant was killed on Friday as his checkpoint was attacked by unknown gunmen southwest of Kirkuk.

Iraqi police source said a checkpoint in the Tal Al-Thahab area was attacked by unknown gunmen using a white sedan, which resulted in the killing of first lieutenant Arshad Nour Ibrahim.

Meanwhile, unknown gunmen using a civilian vehicle have captured a security personnel from the Al-Qadisya area close to Kirkuk power station.

Guerrillas killed an Iraqi soldier in the village of Riyadh.

East of Kirkuk, in Hawija, which has been a focus for the insurgency, a policeman and a bystander were shot dead in an attack aimed at a passing police patrol.

In the oil refining town of Baiji, in the centre of the country, a train station official was shot dead.

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

'Operation Shell Game' To Confuse Insurgents, General Says U.S. To Move Troops From Southern Iraq To North, And From Northern Iraq To South

July 28, 2006 The Borowitz Report

In a bold attempt to confuse Iraqi insurgents, the U.S. will move 10,000 troops from southern Iraq to the north, and will then move 10,000 other troops from northern Iraq to the south, the Army chief of staff confirmed today.

Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker said at a Pentagon briefing today that the plan, called Operation Shell Game by the Army brass, was the Army's best bet for leaving Iraqi insurgents scratching their heads.

"This is the largest mobilization, re-mobilization, and mobilization in U.S. military history," Gen. Schoomaker said. "We believe that the Iraqi insurgents won't know what hit them - or, what didn't hit them."

In order to move the Army units from the south to the north while moving an equal number of units from the north to the south, the U.S. military logged onto Mapquest.com early Friday morning, Gen. Schoomaker said.

While some military experts praised Operation Shell Game as a clever strategy to perplex the Iraqi insurgency, critics of the plan wondered aloud whether the Pentagon is increasingly trying to confuse the American people as well.

Gen. Schoomaker, who paused a full ten seconds in an earlier press briefing when asked if the U.S. was winning the war in Iraq, only to answer "I don't think we're losing" -- sought to clarify his position in today's press conference:

"Right now I would have to say the war in Iraq is a tie."

Thou Shalt Not Kill For Oil In Iraq.



From: Richard Hastie
To: GI Special
Sent: July 26, 2006

Thou Shalt Not Kill For Oil In Iraq

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
July 26, 2006

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)

“It Is Time To Replace Every Leader Of Every Nation On Earth”

July 23, 2006 Jesse, TvNewsLIES.org [Excerpt]

It is time to replace very leader of every nation on Earth.

It is time to replace every member of every ruling body in every nation on Earth.

They have failed. They are responsible for death and hatred beyond human comprehension. They are leading us to extinction. They are destroying the very planet on which we live.

These "deciders" make decisions and pass laws that no citizen of the world would approve. They make decisions that would outrage people of all political and religious beliefs and would vehemently oppose.

They force people to hate one another and then they send us to commit atrocities against each other while they remain out of harms way.

It is time for the people of the world to wake up from this insanity and stop fighting for these evil people!

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.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Robbers In Uniform Driving Military Vehicles Steal \$1.3 Million; Nationality Not Announced

27 Jul 2006 Reuters

Men wearing military uniforms and using military vehicles attacked a cash-in-transit vehicle and stole two Iraqi billion dinars, worth around 1.3 million dollars, police sources said.

“The Mahdi Army Has Evolved Into A Social Force To Be Reckoned With”

“When The Americans Were Here Yesterday, They Were Shooting At Our People Here, Not The Criminals”

Nevertheless, one US general says that he considers Sadr's militia, with its thousands of poorly trained irregulars and its growing reputation for sectarian killings [created by occupation propagandists], to be one of the country's gravest security threats [translation: threats to the U.S. Occupation regime.]

"They're organized and they're spreading," he says.

24 July 2006 By Dan Murphy and Awadh al-Taiee, The Christian Science Monitor

BAGHDAD

A floundering government campaign to crack down on militias and increasing sectarian killings have many Shiites turning to militias for protection, particularly radical [translation: Anti-U.S. occupation] cleric Moqtada al-Sadr's violent [translation: armed and prepared to resist U.S. efforts to destroy them] Mahdi Army.

The US and British military have stepped up raids on its leadership after growing impatient with the new government's failure to arrest the militia's commanders. [Right. And “violent,” used above, means they don't just stand around sucking their thumbs while the Occupation Commanders order them killed. Duh]

But Sunday, two suicide car bombs in the capital and one in the troubled northern oil city of Kirkuk killed a total of 60 Iraqis, as new Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki jetted off to Britain and the US for talks with Prime Minister Tony Blair and President George Bush on Iraq's crumbling security situation.

Some residents blamed the US raid for the market attack, charging that it forced Mahdi Army members to abandon some of their impromptu checkpoints in the area that are meant to keep out attackers. [“Some”? Were there any who disagreed? Or is this just more reportorial whoring for the occupation?]

"When the Americans come through and break up the checkpoints, that's when we get hit by suicide bombs, like today," says Ahmed Awadh, a Sadr City resident who works in the Ministry of Trade.

"I support the Mahdi Army because they know us here, and we know them. Their checkpoints protect us," he says. "They know all the families, and who has business here.

"It's clear the Americans don't want to provide us with security. They've had three years."

Immediately following the market blast, Mahdi Army militiamen poured out of the neighborhood's warren of alleys, shutting down dozens of streets and setting up checkpoints, trying to protect against follow-up attacks.

The district of about 2 million, 8 percent of Iraq's population, is largely policed by the militia. The group runs health clinics and religious courts, and arranges lodging for Shiite refugees from Sunni-dominated parts of the country.

Sadr's movement has built a powerful following because of its aid efforts, and Sadr is positioning himself as a voice for poor Shiites who have seen little tangible benefit from regime change.

That follows the same strategy of his father, for whom Sadr City is named, who garnered enormous support among poor Shiites for speaking out against Saddam Hussein until he was killed by the regime in 1999.

"The police and Army don't protect us. When the Americans were here yesterday, they were shooting at our people here, not the criminals," says Mohammed al-Askhar, a Mahdi Army member who insisted on using only his nom-de-guerre, which means "Mohammed the Blondie."

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's "government has shown it's powerless. The residents of Sadr City will protect themselves. Everyone here is behind us. We will only disarm when the violence is over," he says.

Sadr and Mahdi Army members brush off allegations from US officials and Sunni Arab politicians that its members run some of the death squads that target Sunni Arabs in revenge attacks.

Nevertheless, one US general says that he considers Sadr's militia, with its thousands of poorly trained irregulars and its growing reputation for sectarian killings, to be one of the country's gravest security threats.

"They're organized and they're spreading," he says.

But Mr. Sadr is a powerful member of the ruling coalition in his own right. His movement holds 30 seats in parliament, and his loyalists control four ministries.

While once considered disorganized rabble rousers, the Mahdi Army has evolved into a social force to be reckoned with.

"Today, the Sadrists play a central part in government and parliament," the International Crisis Group, a Brussels-based think tank, wrote in a report earlier this month. "The Sadrist movement has deep roots, and its demands reflect many justified grievances."

Maliki appears uncertain of his military's willingness to target Sadr's followers. Many Mahdi Army members also double as Iraqi soldiers and police. There could also be political fallout for Maliki if he appears to be an American puppet. .

Sadr has made the comparison himself with Hizbullah. Speaking on Friday, he vowed to support to the group.

"As the idol of America fell, so will the idol of Israel," he said.

While once considered disorganized rabble rousers, the Mahdi Army has evolved into a social force to be reckoned with.

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE/LEBANON

“They Can Withstand Anything But Bowing To The Americans And Israelis”

July 23, 2006 Mitchell Prothero, The Guardian (UK) [Excerpts]

For many who support Hizbullah, 10 days of bombing in Lebanon has not dulled the will to fight. Many claim they can withstand anything but bowing to the Americans and Israelis, reports Mitchell Prothero.

The minute Umm Ali hears the Israeli fighter jet engines overhead, she stops looking through the rubble of her destroyed Haret Hreik home in Beirut's southern suburbs, turns her scarf-covered head toward the sky and begins to shout in Arabic at the unseen enemy above. 'Allahu Akbar, God is the Greatest!' she cries, pumping her fist in the air and cursing the Israeli pilots bombing her nation from above.

Within a few seconds another woman also in a full hijab, or headscarf, joins her.

'With our blood and souls we redeem you, Sayeed Nasrallah,' they chant, their voices bounce off the rubble and smoldering jetsam of their lives a week before and draw the attention of two men four floors up in a damaged but livable apartment building. They're

almost certainly Hizbollah spotters or snipers because no one but Hizbollah fighters remain in the ground zero of the Israeli campaign to destroy the Shitte militant group.

They begin to wave posters and sing songs honoring the leader of Hizbollah and the war he has started against Israel.

The mood is upbeat and defiant despite the square kilometer having been pummeled into bricks and concrete dust. It's as if they are fighting the Israelis the only way they can: By refusing to be cowed.

A few days after the scene of defiance in Haret Hreik, the city of Baalbek is also deserted save for Hizbollah fighters. But these guys lack the swagger their comrades in the city displayed. Eerily silent save for the occasional motorist speeding out of town and the periodic thunder of distant air-strikes in the surrounding hills of the Mt. Lebanon range, the fighters are coolly welcoming to a car full of western journalists that have surprised them by arriving amid the battle.

Mohammed Mulimh, 29, a farmer, hasn't joined Hizbollah, and can't as he is a one-legged Sunni Muslim. But he supports their efforts and thinks their resolve can win. 'We are used to this,' he says, sipping coffee and resting the one good leg he has. He lost it at five years old to an Israeli air strike during their last invasion in 1982.

'We are farmers, we can fall back on the land, hide in caves, make our own cheese and eat our lambs. The Israelis in their bunkers, this life upsets them. They will quit.'

Back in Beirut on Friday, more than 1,000 refugees from south Lebanon and from Dihya have taken shelter in a three-story underground parking garage.

They're tired and hot in the humidity of the Beirut summer and some young teenagers begin to fight before they are separated and yelled at by ubiquitous Hizbollah volunteers. They appear to be unarmed but their authority is uncontested as they organise people into patrols to clean the parking garage of trash, monitor the sick and tend to the babies.

These might well be the cleanest, most tidy refugees in the history of displaced persons.

Other than the volunteers, who readily admit to being Hizbollah, patrolling with their handheld radios, there's a noticeable lack of fighting age men. There's no point asking where they are. These people don't know, answering only that their son or father is a 'Mujihadeen' or holy warrior.

But here even 18-year-old Ali is a Mujihad for he patrols the complex looking for sick people to take to the clinic staffed with doctors three hours a day upstairs near the supermarket. If the sick cannot wait until it opens, ambulances supplied by Hizbollah will take them to hospitals.

'Mr Hassan Nasrallah has said that this is a war and we will never stop fighting it,' he says. 'It is uncomfortable but we do not mind it. They will not make us quit.'

As he talks, an older woman in a headscarf, who will not give her name, appears and wants to talk.

'If America and Israel want to do this to us, there is nothing we can do about it,' she says. 'We don't care about staying here as long as the boys who are fighting and Sayeed Nasrallah and the leaders are ok.

“We can withstand anything as long as we don't have to bow to the Americans and Israelis. Death is normal to us and it means we will go to heaven. May God bless all the Mujhadeen around the world,' she exclaims.

Almost a dozen people have gathered to hear her speech and all nod knowingly. They don't sing but after 10 days they have yet to wilt.

“To Avoid Such ‘Potential Threats’ That Living Children May Pose Later On, Israel Is Killing Them Now In Lebanon” “It All Makes Complete Sense”

21 July 2006 SPENCER OSBERG, Special to Shunpiking Online [Excerpts]

In the villages in the hills east of the costal town of Naquora, Rami says the Israelis have bombed all the roads and bridges, meaning nobody can leave and supplies cannot get in. People are beginning to starve and they're too afraid to leave the basements of their homes.

Now the Israelis are bombing the houses. He says there is nowhere to hide and you unable to run.

Between 40 and 70 families from the town took refugee from the bombing at a school, and then on Monday the Israelis bombed the school, killing almost everyone. Rami says seven families were sheltering in a large house next to the hospital and the Israelis bombed them.

It took emergency crews two days to remove all the bodies because the Israeli jets continued to bomb it over and over again, killing some of the emergency workers.

He was helping with the emergency crews trying to rescue people from the rubble and get people to hospital (the Israelis also bombed a section of the hospital on Sunday).

The hospitals in his area and around the south are running out of drugs, bandages and all supplies, and don't have enough doctors or nurses because many of them fled. This means many of the wounded that could be saved are dying because they can't be treated. These people are not yet on the official casualty count.

The morgue has so many bodies that they had to simply start stacking them on top of each other; a lot of the time they were simply collecting pieces of people and putting them in bags to store at the morgue.

Rami described how four members of a German-Lebanese family were killed in the South when an Israeli bomb hit their house.

The grandparents were on the first floor and were blown apart by the blast wave, while the mother and young child were climbing the stairs from the basement, and so were cut in half by the same blast.

The father was on the back deck, and was thrown through the air by the explosion, losing an arm but surviving, but has gone insane with despair and rage.

The Israelis hit the house of another friend in the Red Cross. The blast wave tore most of the skin off the front of his wife, exposing her internal organs. She is still alive but is certain to die within the next few days. His young daughter was also heavily wounded and is now blind. Rami says his friend just fell apart and started banging his head on a wall and screaming.

I asked him if there were a lot of people knew who were killed, and he said it was really hard to tell, because most of the bodies, if still whole, are burned black and unidentifiable.

I remember on the second or third day I heard of a statement concerning the Israeli offensive by my honourable Prime Minister Stephen Harper, to the effect of "Israeli has the right to defend itself."

And as I was thinking this we were watching footage on TV from the village of Dweir in the area of Nabatieh, where an Israeli missile had brought down a house where a family of ten were sheltering. They were all killed, and emergency people were now digging their corpses out of the smashed concrete.

One of diggers stopped as he passed by the camera and held up a body he was carrying by its under arms. She wasn't heavy, would have stood hip height if she could, maybe eight-years old, maybe 10 or 12, it was kind of hard to tell.

She was covered in grey dust from her shoeless toes to the curls on her drooping head, and as the camera panned past her lifeless face you could see the blood caked beneath her nose, and I thought, what exactly is Israeli defending itself from?

I guess if she had survived, when she grew up she might hate the people who'd killed her family, destroyed her home and the homes of her neighbours and flattened her country.

This in turn could place her in the category of 'potential security threat.'

So to avoid such 'potential threats' that living children may pose later on, Israel is killing them now in Lebanon.

It all makes complete sense.

MORE:

Israel Is Killing Them Now In Palestine Too



Palestinian boys sit around the body of three-year-old Palestinian girl Baraa Habib during her funeral in Gaza City. Twenty-four Palestinians, including a baby and two toddlers, were killed as Israel pounded the Gaza Strip with air strikes and artillery on the deadliest day in the territory for two weeks. (AFP/Mahmud Hams)

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

“It’s Absurd To Pretend To Destroy A Movement With Such Popular Support As Hezbollah”

The Israeli army could not put down a Shi'ite guerrilla outfit in southern Lebanon - nor a bunch of stone-throwing Palestinian kids, for that matter.

The US Army could not cope with a bunch of scruffy Sunni Arabs armed with fake Kalashnikovs. Sunnis or Shi'ites, stateless or in failed states, freedom fighters or "terrorists", they simply will not go away.

July 25, 2006 Pepe Escobar, Asia Times [Excerpts]

Israel's feverish military machine at least conveys the impression it knows exactly what it's doing - with its made-in-the-USA bombs destroying not just military but civilian targets.

But this does not mean Israel is winning its war against Hezbollah.

Some, but still only a few, Israelis - sometimes in the columns of the daily newspaper Ha'aretz - are beginning to notice that this carnage will lead nowhere.

There are no more than 5,000 Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon. Hezbollah the political party - heavily involved in health, education and social services - is what really matters for Lebanese.

It's absurd to pretend to destroy a movement with such popular support as Hezbollah. Secular democrats may not empathize with the movement, but any serious Middle East observer cannot question its legitimacy.

It may take time, but the Arab street - and radical Islam - will renew efforts to try to hang the rulers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and Kuwait from lampposts sooner rather than later.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah's asymmetrical war effort is absorbing everything thrown at it.

According to Jane's Weekly, Hezbollah has done a perfect Vietcong - its fighters operating in a network of underground reinforced bunkers and command posts near the Lebanese-Israeli border almost unassailable by Israel Defense Force bombs.

The practical result is that Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah is ever more popular all over the Arab street. Kind of like the new, 21st-century Saladin.

Hezbollah's moral and political cache could not but rise among peoples and movements worldwide who keep being bombed to oblivion but never had a chance to bomb back.

In Iraq, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani was forced to issue a fatwa denouncing the Israeli assault. This means that Sistani knows very well Iraqi Shi'ites may be on the verge of turning all their anger against - who else - the occupying Anglo-American axis.

The fatwa may not be enough to appease them. Israel's rampage has even unified Baghdad's parliament; Sunnis, Shi'ites and Kurds took a unanimous vote condemning Israel and calling for a ceasefire.

As if the few thousand Sunni Arab guerrillas bogging down the mightiest army in history were not enough, Muqtada's Mehdi Army has all the potential to make life even more hellish for the Americans in Iraq.

So this is the way the "war on terror" ends - not with a single bang but with the multi-sonic bangs of asymmetrical actors getting re-energized in their fight against the US-Israel axis.

The Israeli army could not put down a Shi'ite guerrilla outfit in southern Lebanon - nor a bunch of stone-throwing Palestinian kids, for that matter.

The US Army could not cope with a bunch of scruffy Sunni Arabs armed with fake Kalashnikovs. Sunnis or Shi'ites, stateless or in failed states, freedom fighters or "terrorists", they simply will not go away.

Pursuing their own logic, equally impatient Washington neo-cons and Israeli Likudniks would cherish nothing better than the wholesale destruction of civilian infrastructure in Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon, and then in Syria and Iran.

What happened in Iraq, and is still happening in Gaza and now in Lebanon, spells that the world will have to get used to a new reality.

But against this, the asymmetricals will not only be lurking in the shadows; they will retaliate.

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)

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bush Losing Support Of Key Voting Block

[Thanks to Frank M, who sent this in.]

WASHINGTON June 15 - President Bush appears to be losing support among a key group of voters who until now have stood firmly with the president.

A new Gallup poll shows that Bush's approval rating has fallen below 50% and now stands at just 44% among total fucking morons. This represents a dramatic drop compared to a poll taken just last December when 62% of total fucking morons expressed support for the president and his policies.

The current poll, conducted by phone with 1,409 total fucking morons between June 4 and June 8, reveals that only 44% of those polled believe the president is doing a good job, while 27% believe he is doing a poor job, and 29% don't understand the question.

Faltering approval ratings for the president among a group once thought to be a reliable source of loyal support makes Republicans nervous about the upcoming mid-term elections.

"We've got a big problem if we can't depend on the support of total fucking morons," says Sen. Rick Santorum (R-PA), "Total fucking morons are a key factor in our electoral strategy, and an important part of today's Republican coalition."

"We've taken the total fucking moron vote for granted," says Rep. Tom Feeney (R-FL), "and now we're paying for it." Feeney says the poll is a dire warning for Republicans.

"This should send a signal that we have to regain control of the debate if we want the support of our key constituencies in the coming election and beyond. We need to bring public discourse back into the realm of stupidity and vacuity. We should be talking about homosexual illegal immigrants burning flags. We should be talking about the power of pride. We should be talking about freedom fries. These are the issues that resonate with total fucking morons."

But some total fucking morons say it's too late.

Bill Snarpel of Enid, Oklahoma is a total fucking moron who voted for Bush in both 2000 and 2004.

But he says he won't be voting for Bush in 2008.

"I don't like it that he was going to sell our ports to the Arabs. If the Arabs own the ports then that means they'll let all the Arabs in and then we'll all be riding camels and wearing towels on our heads. I don't want my children singing the Star Spangled Banner in Muslim."

Total fucking moron Kurt Meyer of Turlock, California also says his once solid support for Bush has collapsed. "He invaded Iraq and all those soldiers died, and for what? We destroyed all their WMDs, but now their new president is making fun of us and saying he's going to build nuclear bombs and that we can't stop him. Well, nuclear bombs are even worse than WMDs, so what did we accomplish?"

Laura McDonald, a total fucking moron from Chandler, Arizona, says she is disappointed that the president hasn't been a more forceful advocate of Christian values.

"This country was founded on Christian values," she says, "but you'd never know it with all the Mexicans running around. I thought Bush was going to bring Jesus back into the government. Instead, Christians are persecuted worse than ever before in history because all these Mexicans come here and tell Christians that we have to respect their religious beliefs. So now it's illegal for children to pray in school. Soon it will be illegal for them to speak English."

Not all total fucking morons have turned their backs on the president. Jeb Larkin of Topeka, Kansas says he still fully supports Bush. "He is doing a great job. He is a great president. He is a great decider. I have a puppy. His tail sticks straight up and you can see his butthole."

And not all Republican law makers are concerned about the poll, Sen. Lamar Alexander (R- TN), for one. He agrees that the Republican party should not take total fucking morons for granted, but he says they "really don't have anywhere else to go. Just try having a conversation with one of them about global warming. They'll say, 'Oh, but Rush says volcanoes consume more ozone than humans do.' I mean, they're morons! Total fucking morons!"

"They've got nowhere else to go," Alexander reaffirms with a smile, "and they always vote."

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.

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