

CITIZENS REPORT ON IRAQ



Attainable Victory vs. The Propaganda of Defeat

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report can best be described as a middle finger of defiance aimed at the gloom and doom armchair generals in Congress, the media and Fort Living room.

It is also offered as a beacon of hope to those Americans, Iraqis and coalition partners striving for victory in Free Iraq against a global political, military and media alliance committed to our defeat.

The American and Iraqi people were ill-served by the Iraq Study Group report issued last year. It was little more than a prescription for capitulation to our enemies and betrayal of our allies.

In the Citizens Report on Iraq, readers will learn that progress is being made in Iraq; there are large areas of Iraq that are safe and prospering; that the enemy is being killed and wounded in astounding proportion to American casualties; that the reporting on Iraq by the dominant media is universally despised as inaccurate and misleading by those fighting for free Iraq--Americans and Iraqis alike; that the so-called antiwar movement is led by terrorist supporting Marxists as part of a global alliance seeking America's defeat in the Global War on Terror and that a prominent White House correspondent has allied herself with one of these groups.

The report includes frank interviews with dozens of Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans, their families and several Gold Star parents. Those who think their support for President Bush and victory in Iraq has waned will be sorely disappointed.

The report includes an overview of captured Saddam Hussein era Iraqi government documents that demonstrate Saddam's commitment to international terrorism and research in to Weapons of Mass Destruction, including nuclear weapons.

Contributors include a history professor, an American contractor who has spent the past three years in Iraq, an Iraqi living in Baghdad, and numerous soldiers who spoke frankly on condition of anonymity.

The information in this report was gathered from original research and interviews, publicly available government reports, blog entries, news articles and transcripts.

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INTRODUCTION

The American people are woefully uninformed about the situation in Iraq and the political dynamics working in America and abroad to bring about our defeat. It is not the fault of the American people that they are uninformed; the fault lies clearly with the media, politicians and the government in failing to do their jobs of keeping the public adequately informed.

This report is an attempt to bring before the American people facts and observations that have gone unreported, underreported, lied about or not fully explained.

Accurate information about the situation in Iraq is virtually impossible to come by. The dominant media outlets have set a reporting template of failure and hopelessness in Iraq while the Bush administration and those who support Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) have not performed adequately in communicating to the American people.

The battle for Iraq will not be won or lost in Baghdad; it will be won or lost in the American heartland. Our enemies know this, as do the opponents of the Bush administration in the media and politics.

There is a concerted effort to bring about the defeat of America in Iraq. Middle Eastern dictatorships, Islamic terrorists, Marxist/socialist governments, American and global leftists, leading Democrat politicians, some in the executive branch and the dominant media have arrayed themselves against the free people of Iraq and the success of the Bush administration's revolutionary policy of bringing democracy to the last totalitarian region on Earth: The Middle East.

These forces are currently winning the propaganda war, setting the table for a political and military defeat that will have devastating effects on Iraqis and Americans alike.

Should America give up on the cause of freedom in Iraq, our allies worldwide will doubt America's commitment to them while our enemies will be emboldened. We will return to the post-Vietnam era when it was said the only thing worse than being America's enemy was to be her friend.

After the free people of South Vietnam were betrayed by the Democrat Congress with a cutoff of promised American aid, communist aggression increased worldwide. The Soviet Union and its communist allies pressed its advantage with political and military offenses in Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America and the United States.

A defeat in Iraq would bring similar offenses by our enemies with one exception. Unlike the Soviet Union which was afraid to directly attack the American homeland, our current enemies have no such fear as they demonstrated in 1993 and 2001.

WHAT THE TROOPS AND THEIR FAMILIES HAVE TO SAY

By Lynda Deming

In the quest to change the direction and/or tactics of the war in Iraq, or at the very least the rhetoric, there has been a plethora of advice offered. Without commenting on that advice, I believe it would behoove us all to give some attention to what our courageous service members' and their families' thoughts are on the subject.

Questions were posed in a forthright manner to reservists, active duty, recently discharged, retired and wounded members of our military. Several spouses, parents and Gold Star parents also participated.

Many are serving, have served in Iraq, or will deploy there shortly. Some have served in Afghanistan and Kuwait. Others retired before the Global War on Terror began and prior to 9-11. For their privacy and protection, their names, rank nor will status be shared in this report. The Gold Star parents went on the record for the interviews.

Several of those interviewed were wounded while serving in the war zones of Iraq and Afghanistan. Some of them are fighting to stay in the military, while others are awaiting their medical-board discharge. Still others will return to the battlefield when their healing is complete and their medical advisors deem them able.

It is noteworthy that no one who was asked to be interviewed declined.

Our men and women serving in the armed forces only want the support of those they serve, the American people. They neither ask for, nor desire hero status and are often embarrassed when referred to as such. Nevertheless, they are, and will continue to be, heroes to me and millions of Americans.

It has been an honor and privilege to know these fine men and women. Their sense of duty and love of country are amazing to behold.

THEY ARE TRULY AMERICA'S FINEST

SYNOPSIS OF WHAT THE TROOPS ARE SAYING

During the course of my travels, the places I have visited or lived and the friends I have made, I have been given a unique opportunity to talk to many members of our armed forces in a non-threatening environment.

The stories and anecdotes that have been shared over the past two-and-a-half years have brought me to tears, broke my heart and made it jump for joy. However, they also filled me with a sense of pride in my country and for those who sacrifice to keep it a beacon of light in a world filled with darkness.

The members of the United States military overwhelmingly love their country and serve to protect the liberty we have enjoyed for 230 years. They take great pride in liberating those who are oppressed and living under tyranny. The empathy for those who do not have the freedom that Americans are born with seems to guide them as they execute the missions they are assigned.

Over ninety-nine percent do not believe we should be discussing withdrawal or “redeployment” when we continue to be fully engaged in the mission. The idea that an exit strategy should be defined and debated in front of the world is ludicrous and dangerous in their eyes.

They believe it gives aid and comfort to the enemy and causes distrust amongst the allies and the Iraqis. The terrorists will simply wreak more havoc and cost more and more lives in order to facilitate the quick removal of the troops. It is dangerous to be discussing it.

They support their Commander-in-Chief and express great admiration for him, his courage and iron will. They all detest the denigration of President Bush and see nothing helpful that can come of it. This includes the half percent who do not particularly care for him. You can disagree without vilifying and attacking him, especially in a time of war.

Many of our troops are expressing angst over the deteriorating rhetoric and actions in Congress and in the government as a whole. While there is always one in every crowd, the large majority of the troops I have met liked Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and expressed concern about the new Secretary of Defense’s association with the Iraq Survey Group. The idea that we should negotiate with Iran and Syria is not a concept that most want to discuss, believing it is one of the most ridiculous things they have ever heard.

The biggest bone of contention by far, is the rules of engagement. While there are mixed opinions amongst the troops with regard to the troop surge, they are nearly all in agreement that they must be freed from political correctness to adequately protect themselves and others in their charge.

To say that our service members and their families have a negative opinion of the media and their “coverage” of the war would be a vast understatement. Most of the comments I

received to the question of media coverage, simply cannot be printed here.

The number one complaint is that none of the good that has been brought to Iraq ever sees a moment of coverage. Our troops are proud of the work and goodwill that they have accomplished. It is criminal that Americans are not aware of the progress that has been made.

Our troops believe in the mission and in the ability and desire of the Iraqi people to live in a free society that can sustain itself, govern itself and defend itself. They understand what the Iraqis must overcome and realize that it cannot take place overnight. They are willing to stay the course and complete the mission with full comprehension of what it would mean to the Iraqis and to the United States if we were to fail.

Many were hesitant to comment on whether the war has been worth it--it seems they are waiting to see if they will be cut off at the knees by our politicians, thus ending in defeat, or if they will be permitted to complete the mission and end victorious.

These valiant members of the military are all volunteers and have chosen this lifestyle and path. The defeatism that is emanating from politicians and the media is causing undue mental anguish for the men and women who wear our nation's uniform. The politicians and talking heads are callously throwing to the wolves our troops and our allies in Iraq.

THE QUESTIONS

QUESTION #1: Do you believe we should announce a withdrawal/redeployment date, regardless of the situation on the ground in Iraq? In other words, should an exit strategy be defined and broadcast?

QUESTION #2: Why or why not? (optional)

QUESTION #3: Do you appreciate, or believe it is helpful in any way, that the talking heads; politicians, pundits, members of the media, “experts” etcetera, continuously denigrate, insult, vilify and abuse the Commander-in-Chief?

QUESTION #4: What is your opinion of the reporting on Iraq and the war?

QUESTION #5: Do you believe the war has been worth it?

NOTE Questions 4 and 5 were added later in the project. It was not always possible to contact those who had already been interviewed to ask them the additional questions.

The interviews were conducted in person, on the telephone and by e-mail.

I would like to thank all those who agreed to the interviews and shared their thoughts so freely.

THE ANSWERS

Member A:

1. NO!
2. We must finish what we started. If we don't, it would be like Vietnam all over again.
3. NO!!! It sucks. I'm sitting there eating my food after completing a mission. CNN is on with everyone bitching and complaining about everything in the war. It was bad to hear. Feels like crap.

Member B:

1. NO!
2. If we surrender now, the Islamofascists win. They will say we lost. In Gulf War 1 we left Saddam Hussein in power. He, and other leaders in the area, took that as a win.
3. We are still getting equipment etc. to fight the war, so everyone can bitch and we fight for their right to do so. But, it is uncalled for and unproductive. We should censor during war time. When politics fails, the military steps in. They then get all the grief.
4. [Uncontrollable laughter heard] NEXT! It sucks! Should report on the good not just bad. We've done a lot of good over there.
5. Well, Saddam's dead! Mixed... Yes and no. We went and accomplished our goal, but seems it has run its course. Maybe we should let them have a civil war and let them kill themselves.

Member C:

1. NO! We shouldn't tell anybody when we plan to leave.
2. It would give the enemy the upper hand. It is bad enough that I saw on news today how our Javelin Rocket works. It is ridiculous to give our enemies that kind of information.
3. NO!!! Unless you work for him you have no right to criticize him. I like him!

Member D:

1. Yes, nothing we can do.
2. The ROE are making us afraid to shoot. Reports must be filed on every bullet missing when you return from a mission. Iraqi police are infiltrated with terrorists. It is more like gang fights than a civil war.

3. NO! I have great respect for my Commander-in-Chief! I love how he starts each meeting with prayer.

4. It SUCKS! Everything is negative...pure negative.

5. Not sure.....

Member E:

1. NO

2. It would give the terrorists, and other countries, encouragement.

3. NO, for the same reason as above. It encourages our enemies.

Member F:

1. NO, but

2. Need to force the Iraqi government to stand up.

3. NO! ROE need to change. There should be no politics in war.

Member G:

1. No

2. ROE are ridiculous. We need to bomb Sadr City.

3. No

Member H:

1. Absolutely NO WAY!

2. (declined)

3. No, I do NOT!

Member I:

1. NO! It is detrimental to our safety.

2. Everyone can't leave at once. Those left; troops, contractors and Iraqis, would be in great danger. They most likely would be massacred.

3. No, he IS the Commander-in-Chief. If you are not focused, you may make costly mistakes.
4. There are some facts, but too much publicity. Too much troop movement being broadcast.
5. Yes. It has been too slow, allowing some to be worn down, though. Should be quick, fast and total.

Family J:

1. No, can't do that.
2. Son says: "We are doing the right thing in Iraq." He wanted to go. He wants to be back there. There's a need.
3. No! With all the President is dealing with, he has done a fine job.
4. The media does not give the whole story. Do you think the stories they tell are factual? No, they are not!
5. Yes. And no, because of the loss of life.

Veteran K:

1. Absolutely NOT!
2. Sends a message that we are giving up.
3. NOBODY should bad mouth the Commander-in-Chief unless he is breaking the law. He was elected by the American people to represent them.

Family L:

1. Yes, want them home.....but NO.
2. The terrorists will kill the Iraqis and will bomb us here at home.
3. NO WAY! It is disrespectful. The protesters should sit in the President's seat to see what it is like.

Family M:

1. No

2. Need to do what needs to be done, but then get out.

3. No. I can respect all views, but he is the Commander-in-Chief and the President! Our troops volunteered!!! Those that criticize should get out and do their part.

Member N:

1. No, but we need to restore the peace, then yes, get the hell out.

2. We have the troops, the power and the knowledge, but there is a lot of politics going on and they have NO IDEA!

3. No I do not! We put him there to do a job and he is doing it!

Member O:

1. Yes

2. So that the families and the soldiers know what's going on.

3. No, it just adds fuel to the fire. The Commander-in-Chief is going to do what he thinks is best for the country.

4. The media should show all that's being done. Not giving disinformation on what is going on.

5. Yes, to some extent. We have established a foothold in the country and the area. We got Saddam. That's good!

Gold Star Parent P: Richard Linn

1. No...HELL NO! That information is on a need to know basis. Unless we announce when we're going to level the place.

2. What purpose would it serve other than to make libs feel better. It serves no good purpose at all. It would be a feel good political stunt, nothing more.

3. NO! If you have something specific to say, fine. It should be something with substance. Stirring up the mud is not helpful.

4. I don't follow the media - hit the high spots only. It is sensationalism, superficial.....talking heads.

5. It "ain't" over yet. How can you comment now? There's progress, but there are still things to finish.

Family Q:

1. No, shouldn't even be hinted at. Exit strategy is always defined, for those that need to know it.
2. Obviously, when you tell al-queda you are leaving town by a certain date, they will be waiting right behind you to take over.
3. No I don't. Not helpful. In a time of war it is treasonous.
4. Pretty bad. It has been terrible and harmful to our democratic Republic. The exceptions are Bill Roggio, Michael Yon etc., but they are the new media.
5. Yes in ways that I don't thoroughly understand. Nor does anyone else. History will show this war has been one of the most remarkable events in our lifetime.....**if we stay the course.**

Member R:

1. No. Maybe tell the Iraqi government, though.
2. It would give the terrorists a chance to work up their forces to take over.
3. No, I don't think it's good. It makes us look weak. If you have a valid point, fine. But calling him stupid etc. isn't right.
4. It's been REALLY bad. Only have the "if it bleeds it leads" crap on. They just show how bad it is, never show all the good.
5. Eventually Saddam Hussein had to be removed.

Veteran S:

1. NO
2. If there is a date certain, all the bad guys have to do is wait. Strategically inept.
3. NO! We are at WAR. We need to support the Commander-in-Chief.
4. It's tiresome. List of deaths and buildings blown up and nothing positive is ever reported. They are not reporting the news, they are propagandizing.
5. Removal of Saddam Hussein made it worth it. As the only superpower in the world, it is our duty to protect the weak and those who cannot protect themselves. It's a matter of duty and honor, rather than politics and money. Nobody hates war more than a soldier. Do you want to fight them over there, or here?

Family T:

1. No. That's stupid...foolish!
2. It is hurtful for our troops and our country. How do you expect to win, if you tell the enemy what you are doing?
3. No, I don't appreciate it. It is not helpful. It aids the enemy. It is counter-productive. It is character assassination and no good can come out of it.
4. Correspondents should stay home and let the troops do their job - fighting. Reporting? It is not reporting; it's interpretation and opinion and is inaccurate.
5. Oh my yes! We must keep fighting.

Veteran U:

1. No, obviously not.
2. You don't announce anything. It is bad strategy to announce your plans. You defeat the enemy's tactics.
3. Obviously NOT! He is the Commander-in-Chief. There is a way you talk when you are at war and there is a way you talk when we are at peace. Libs have been wrong all the way. We know what the cause is. May not always agree with the tactics, but this is not the way to deal with it. We live in a microwave society. Must have what we want immediately. Politicians like Murtha cause the enemy to fight harder. Politicians questioning the Commander-in-Chief? DEAD WRONG!
4. I'm not looking for a pollyanna view, but the reporting is a dis-service to the American people and the soldiers. The liberals are aiding and abetting the terrorists.
5. By all means! The American people don't know and understand. Yes, definitely it was worth it. **I volunteered to go to Iraq.** Knowing what I know today, I'd do it again.

Member V:

1. Yes, want the guys home.
2. I lost a lot of friends there. Every day kids are losing their Dads. For what? For a peace keeping mission? That's what they are calling it now. The war has been over for a long time now. Now it is just peacekeeping and reconstruction.
3. No, he IS the Commander-in-Chief. I was always told you don't have to respect the man, but the rank. I am not a big fan of the President.
4. Doing a really bad job and they LIE! They have reporters in Iraq, but they don't report.

I don't think they're doing a good job, can do better.

5. Yes and No. I think about the Iraqis. They have suffered a lot. Then we came to help them.

Veteran W:

1. No, definitely not.

2. That would telegraph our moves to the enemy. It would give them too much information. If we have an exit strategy, it should not be broadcast. I am not in favor of an exit strategy. I'm actually starting to hear this crap from idiot republicans.

3. NO! I definitely don't believe it is helpful. It is discouraging all the way down the chain of command.

4. It is all one sided and all negative. There is no doubt about that!

5. Up to this point it has been worth it, IF we WIN it! It will have been a travesty if we lose. We've killed a hell of a lot of terrorists.

Family X:

1. Yes. When the Iraq government can handle the insurgency without our help. Not before.

2. If our enemy knows our exit strategy is victory over them, they know all their efforts will be of no use. The reason they use mostly IEDs is the fact that to confront our forces in conventional battle is the day you will die.

3. NO, HELL NO, this gives aid and comfort to our enemy!

4. With the exception of Fox News it is very, very biased against our soldiers and our President. This bias gives aid and comfort to our enemy and results in greater casualties and death to our soldiers.

5. At this point I must say no or maybe. If we are in war we should prosecute it as war and let our troops do the job they are capable of doing. No enemy has ever been vanquished using the concept of limited warfare and insane rules of engagement.

Our restraint has limited the loses of our enemy to a level that they consider acceptable. They hide in the civilian population and come back the next day to kill us. To win this war we must attack the enemy at all quarters and all times. This will entail more civilian casualties. To win this war the sight of a United States Soldier must strike abject fear and terror into the heart of the enemy and the civilians he hides amongst.

Additional thoughts from Family X.....

If we had prosecuted World War II the way we have this war, we would have lost World War II. The reason we had a war in Korea and Vietnam is we forgot the doctrine of destroying our enemy with overwhelming force despite the civilian casualties.

We have let the enemy define the rules of engagement. Their should be only one rule of engagement. Kill the enemy and avoid intentional harm to civilians. If a civilian is injured because of his proximity to our enemy this is what happens in war. In all wars there are always more civilian casualties than military.

Since the insurgents do not wear uniforms nor follow the Geneva Conventions we are not bound by law to follow them either. Summary execution of insurgents caught on the battlefield would be very much within the law even in accordance with Geneva Conventions. To quote Freeper River Rat, "If you are not prepared to kill your enemy and all that stand with him, surrender to him for he has already defeated you." My favorite quote is, "CRY HAVOC AND LET SLIP THE DOGS OF WAR."

It is my firm belief that if we did this we would not have to fight wars in the future. Our enemy would know without any doubt that to attack us is to assure their own destruction and death.

My son (just back from his second tour of Iraq) explained it to me in a much shorter version. If you want to know how to win the war on the ground, ask the Sergeant who has been there and fought it.

* The rules of engagement give the enemy the advantage and cause American Deaths and the bad guys get away sometimes.

* This is an insurgency that does not respect the Geneva Conventions nor the rules of engagement.

* Let us do the job we are capable of doing, without the rules that tie our hands and get us killed. Our job is to kill them not have the rules kill us.

* We allow the enemy to have sanctuary in Iran and Syria.

Member Y:

1. Absolutely the wrong way to go.
2. President Bush's statement all along is the best one, which is something like: We will leave when Iraq is able to support and protect itself from enemies foreign and domestic.
3. Allowing for freedom of speech, this is wrong-headed at best and treasonous at worst.

4. It is not actual reporting for the most part; it is editorializing.

5. War is horrible. War is deadly. Every opportunity ought to be sought to prevent it. Once engaged, the nation must honorably and faithfully fight to win. I grieve with every American family who has lost a loved one or is dealing with the aftermath of serious wounds. We must continue to encourage the best possible result for the people of Iraq. That means politically, economically, and militarily. Regardless of the reasoning for being in Iraq, there is no question that Iraq now is inextricably tied to Al Qaeda and the war on terror. We cannot leave the battle and give the impression to the radical Islamists, to our allies, or to neutral parties that the radical Islamist vision is unstoppable or not to be resisted.

Member Z:

1. No. Apparently our country has forgotten every single lesson we've learned from past wars.

2. Imagine us, during the early, very dark days of World War Two, telling the Japanese that we were only going to fight them for 12 months, at which time, regardless of the "situation on the ground", we were going to bring our troops home. Telling your enemy that you will only fight them for so long is telling your enemy that you do not have the will to fight them.

After the debacle in Mogadishu, our lack of resolve inspired a generation of people who we are fighting right now; people who see us as "Paper Tigers". Strong on paper, weak in reality. That was a very small, but telling display of things to come. Using that as an example, many of the people we are fighting believe that we will run from Iraq, just as we ran from Aidid's thugs.

Why shouldn't they think we'll run. The media and democrat(ic) party give them plenty of hope. Leaving now would be disastrous. We've already lied to or talked out of both sides of our mouths to just about everyone in that part of the world. Who is going to stick their necks out to help us if we abandon the people in Iraq who have risked everything to try to make this work, not to forget the blood we've spilled. If we quit in Iraq or don't change the way we are doing things, we'd may as well just not even bother trying to stop Iran from taking over the middle east.

3. President Bush: I disagree with him on some things, but he is an outstanding Commander in Chief and right now, foreign policy is the most important issue on my plate.

We should always be searching for the best people for the job. We should always be looking for better ways to do things. Our country should operate like a family. You will have your differences and your fights, but they stay in house.

4. We do have freedom of speech. Simply because one has the right to say and print things, does not mean that one must. Responsible journalism would dictate that you may have your own opinion, but must present the facts. That means instead of just throwing raw information to the masses, place that information in context, verify that what you are telling people is actually true, and have an inkling of what is going on in the world.

Interviewing a Shiite man in Sadr City, putting his face on television, and giving his name is simply unbelievable. If he doesn't say exactly what Sadr wants to hear, he'll be found, tortured, and killed. Plain and simple. Yet CNN interviews people like this all the time asking them if they think we should leave.

People in the U.S. think that they are seeing the average Iraqi on the street and hearing his genuine opinion. No Iraqis who live outside the Green Zone tell anyone their true opinions. Why? Because bloodthirsty jihadis on the Shia and Sunni sides are terrorizing the city. Turning brother against brother and lifelong neighbors into strangers.

Why doesn't CNN go to the victims' families of Sadr's torture and kidnapping squads. Why don't they go to Irbil, Sulimaniya, and Dohuk, where there were international trade shows, generic McDonald's, modern soccer stadiums filled to the brim with fans of the local leagues, waterfalls, and well educated people who could answer questions in 6 different languages?

Why don't they do before and after interviews with Iraqi Army units who mere months ago were ragtag, military liabilities but who today wear uniforms properly, clean their weapons (sometimes), plan their own patrols, recruit their own intelligence sources, act upon information, and who are becoming assets? Why don't they? Because that information, every bit as true and valid as the daily attacks and casualty numbers, does not suit their political agendas.

We are far from perfect, but where the American soldier goes in Iraq, there is, even for just a short while, a light that stands in very stark contrast to the very real darkness in that part of the world. I hope that the "journalists" are happy that they are doing everything in their power to undermine and put out this light.

P.S. That CNN reporter who met with an insurgent leader to buy his film of American soldiers being sniped by insurgents should have been arrested and shot for treason. Or have "fallen" out of a helicopter over Baghdad.

4a. The war they are fighting is a PR campaign against the American people. They know they can inflict casualties in ever more clever ways, but it is not militarily possible for them to seize and hold ground in Iraq for any significant amount of time, unless we let them.

They are fighting now, not to beat us, but to outlast us and are using our press, to help influence a favorable outcome from the frighteningly ignorant, short sighted, morally challenged and emotionally guided American public.

5. People need to get rid of this notion that there was ever going to be a “Happily Ever After” in Iraq. Had we done nothing with Saddam, things would have been much worse. Now that we’ve done something, we have the potential to ensure that what occurs there is less worse.

We are dealing with mostly Arab muslims in the heart of a very dysfunctional part of the world. Where we embrace freedom, they embrace submission (the literal translation of Islam). We say “God Bless America”; they say “Allahu Akbar” (Allah is great).

The vast majority of the Iraqi people do not want or care about democracy. They want security. All of the people who glorify Islam as a religion of peace are either the smiling turbans who spew forth their garbage about tolerance or are people who haven’t examined the subject. Ask any ethnic or religious minority who has fled Islam’s clutches. They’ll tell you all about Islamic “tolerance”.

We did the right thing by getting rid of a thorn in our side who, was actively supporting people who were trying to kill Americans. I think that we did the right thing, but if we aren’t going to finish it, they we should have just bombed the living daylight of the country.

If we, as a country, come to the conclusion that we are going to use force to get our way, then we should use it overwhelmingly, not piddle around with opportunist thugs like Moqtada al Sadr. We aren’t going to have a Boy Scouts of Iraq anytime soon, but as long as Iraq isn’t a threat to us and might be a deterrent to others, that’s good enough for me.

Member Z Thoughts on the ISG Report:

-Talk with Syria and Iran to get peace. Brilliant! Groveling at the feet of your enemies is always one way to stop the fighting. Anyone who thinks that the Syrian and Iranian governments want anything in Iraq, other than what is going on right now, is out of touch with reality. That’s my take on things.

Member Z Additional thoughts:

I did not mention the Iraqi police in my letter, only the Iraqi Army. We did not work with them very often, and when we did, it was painful. Their corruption is more pronounced in Baghdad than in the other areas of Iraq that I was in, due to the sectarian tension. They’ve got a long ways to go and are making progress. A corrupt but improving police is better than a non existent police force. They sure don’t have a shortage of recruits.

Arabs are probably the most difficult people group in the world to work with, as your wounded will attest to. The Kurdish police in the northern parts of Iraq are far superior to the Arab units, as are most things Kurdish.

Member AA:

1. No, any exit strategy should NOT be defined, and certainly NOT broadcast to the general media.
2. Once it has been determined that we can effectively leave Iraq, it's because a number of events have transpired and everything has fallen into place. The second that it is announced that the US will pull all soldiers out by X-Day and Month, the region will fall into complete and utter chaos; leaving the US back at square one.
3. The President was elected by the majority, and is executing his duties in a manner that seems fit to him.

We are lucky as Americans to have the freedom of speech. But, as with any job or organization, the more you belittle the leader, the less and less they are looked up to, and respected.

Support the President, or provide a clear solution, that actually contains some common sense.

4. The reporting of Iraq is pathetic to say the least. You never hear the reports about how many schools are now opened, how many hospitals are up and running now. You never hear how much of the country now has running water or dependable electricity now. The Army hospitals in Iraq treat MORE local Iraqi citizens than it does wounded US and Coalition soldiers.
5. Was it worth the Founding Fathers to stand up to the British and fight for our freedoms? Was it worth the British to stand up and fighting the invading Nazis. It's been said countless times, that freedom isn't free. The war in Iraq is no exception to the saying. The Iraqis did not have the ability to stand up and fight to war for themselves, so America and her allies stepped in and helped. We are now working on building an infrastructure and a military that can defend their newly found freedom.

Member BB:

1. Yes
2. We need to make it clear that they need to take care of themselves and not rely on us to do their fighting.
3. No, you made your point. Badgering the CIC does nothing. People are aware of his mistakes and continuing the insults does nothing but lower yourself down to his level.
4. It is very one sided. They only report the negatives and they interview the people who are never on the ground making the mission happen. Interview the people involved, not

the people involved in decisions from their office.

5. Yes and no. Yes to take the fight to the enemy, but no because we have done nothing to fix things here. We are in the middle of a civil war that we can not control.

Gold Star Parent CC: Gregg Garvey

1. Absolutely Not.

2. Even a Little League ball player knows that you don't let the opposing team in on your steal signs & signals to bunt; so, I'd at least expect someone who represents that 7 yr. old in DC should know that as well.

3. It has been absolutely appalling & somewhat disheartening; the way that "OUR" President is constantly being analyzed, criticized even vilified by his political opponents who actually demand & show more respect to "OUR" real enemies than to Our Commander-in-Chief in a time of war...

I love our President. He is kind, but strong and has a phenomenal recall memory. President Bush has a wonderful sense of humor and is very smart. After his address to the Joint Session of Congress on September 20, 2001, the country would have followed him anywhere.

4. Local coverage to honor a hometown Fallen Hero has been positive but when the MSM attempts to show both sides of the story such as in Crawford, TX. & Washington, DC approx. a year & half ago, the coverage gave a lot more exposure, hence, support to those that opposed our President...Case in point, everyone knows who Cindy is ; but does anyone remember her son's name??

Last Wednesday I received a phone call from some newspaper asking for comments on President Bush's speech. That was FIVE hours before he was to give the speech. I told them to call me back after I listened to it. They never called.

My son Justin was one of the first soldiers deployed out of the 101st. It was his unit's position that was exposed by Geraldo Rivera when he drew a map of their location in the sand on international television. How do you think I feel about the media?

The media should go to Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Bethesda Naval hospital and ask them what they think. Their opinions count, not those of the idiots in Congress.

The only poll that should count is a poll of the Blue and Gold Star parents, our wounded warriors and active duty military members!

5. The End Will Justify The Means...If the end is Victory then YES...If the end is Retreat & Defeat, NO...

Asked to comment on the “troop surge”:

They're reinforcements, not a surge...going in to support their brothers in harms way... on the way to Victory...

Member DD:

1. NO!
2. I believe by announcing a date it would get worse because they know we are leaving. They will fight harder and put our troops in more danger. The troops will be focused on leaving and not on the mission and make dangerous mistakes.
3. NO I DO NOT! That gives that squeaky wheel minority a louder voice to make it seem like they are in the majority. It is actually bad for soldier morale, because speaking out against the Commander-in-Chief tells them that we don't support the mission, therefore do not support them. President Bush is **very** supportive of us. I find only a few soldiers that don't like the President, but most do like him, a lot! Many of the soldiers I know have said they are leaving the military when President Bush is gone. They will not serve under another democrat.
4. I think the media has done a very poor job of reporting. Only the bad stuff gets reported, while never showing all the good that we are doing or the support from the Iraqis that we enjoy. We are building schools and helping to bring power to those without it. Seeing the faces of the children when we take them the first pair of shoes they have ever had. The kids were amazed that they could wear shoes like the soldiers. They are thrilled with a new pencil.
5. Yes. I've seen all the good we've done over there. The north wasn't quiet when we first got there. The difference between now and then in the Kurdish area is great and you don't see it.

Gold Star Family EE: Joe and Jan Johnson

1. NO!!!!!!!!!!!!
2. Because if we announce an exit date then the insurgents would have time to plan their next moves.
3. While we believe in the right to freedom of speech, it is damaging to the morale of the troops and thus making it harder for them to stay focused on their job which puts them and their fellow troops in more danger.
4. So far we have no major complaints...just wish they would cover more positive viewpoints instead of dwelling on the negative ones....such as Sheehan and her Gold Star Parents for Peace. They DO NOT speak for ALL of us, only a chosen few.

5. If we had been in President Bush's shoes, we would have done the same thing. While it meant losing our son, many more lives were saved by taking Saddam out of power. Not to mention, it would probably be a lot harder on us losing our son if we thought the war was unjust. We have known freedom all of our lives. To even try to imagine the oppression that these people have lived under is just unimaginable.

Gold Star Parent FF: Debra Argel Bastian

1. We SHOULD NEVER announce a withdrawal or redeployment from Iraq.
2. As I have stated all along, this would only fuel the fire. All the enemy has to do is wait for us to do so, and they have a date when they can stage a takeover. An exit plan on the news.....God no! This would be an exercise in suicide for our country.
3. God NO! My son honored and loved his Commander-in-Chief and so do I. Those that use the deficit to denigrate the President do not understand that the deficit is irrelevant when it comes to the dangers we are facing as a nation. The Medicare drug benefit will be useless after the next terrorist attack. Senators should not be overseas negotiating with other countries, adopting a report that has not been approved by the President. These Benedict Arnolds do not set foreign policy. The President was elected by the American people to conduct the war and set our foreign policy, not Congress.

America refuses to show a united front to the world, which plays right into the hands of the enemy. We are seen as a paper tiger. We are being splintered as a country and it is being helped along by Congress and the media. They have almost achieved their goal while AMERICA SLEEPS.

4. I have no use for the media these days. There is no news, but only talking heads. More news at the top of the hour...means 60 seconds of actual news, and another hour of opinions. Most of these opinion heads, have no idea of what is happening in the war zone, no interest in the good things outside the war zone, and refuse to report the truth. We are all sick of it. The American public is in a daze, as they have been fed CNN and FOX, both which I think are not reporting the truth.

The Gold Star parents who support the war have been ignored. It is obvious to everyone that bad behavior as expressed by Code Pink and Cindy Sheehan capture the media's attention. The opinion of the other 90% of Gold Star families has been ignored. A good example is the good news that seven Gold Star parents brought back from Iraq. Our message was ignored, due to the elections, etc. The MEDIA won this election. America trusts in the news, the news feeds them nothing but garbage.....garbage in, garbage out.

5. My son was in Special Ops. The war is here, and America has been sheltered from the facts. We are fighting the war in this country as well as the Middle East. We are but one heartbeat away from another attack on this country. We will be tuned to American Idol, when the next strike comes. We are indeed, "A sleeping giant."

Gold Star Parent FF asked to comment on the “troop surge”

I am all for it and agree wholeheartedly with it. If we can't turn down the heat in Baghdad how are the Iraqis supposed to live their lives? Part of helping the Iraqis is making sure they can walk out their front door without being terrorized. They must have the ability to go to work, school and the market, free of violence. I don't see any other way right now. We must secure and stabilize their neighborhoods so they can step up and do their part.

Family GG:

1. Absolutely not.
2. Announcing dates would tell our enemy that they only have to "wait it out."
3. Vilifying our Commander-in-Chief during a time of war is counter-productive to our mission. Making President Bush the enemy takes our eyes off the ball and only emboldens our true enemy. One has to wonder what side those who engage in such activity are on.
4. The mainstream media have gone out of their way to minimize the successes and maximize the bad news out of Iraq . Yes, it's true that there is violence and chaos in some parts of Iraq , but there are also successes and a lot of good work being done over there. As a military spouse, I am constantly angry with the "if it bleeds, it leads" mentality. My husband, and others like him, have put their lives on the line to make Afghanistan and Iraq better places. The mainstream media should be ashamed of how they so willingly sell our troops, and their accomplishments, short.
5. The human price has been enormous, there is no doubt. However, a stable and democratic Iraq will reap benefits for centuries. The bloodshed is very unfortunate, but I do believe that once we complete our mission, if we're so allowed, the price we've paid will have been worth it. However, the Iraqis need to step up to the plate. Military families are having a hard time dealing with the reality that their family member is willing to risk his/her life for Iraq , but many Iraqis are not. This has to change.

Member HH:

1. No, I do not believe we should announce a withdrawal or redeployment date. I believe we should have a plan, but it's none of the world's business what that plan is. By broadcasting a date for redeployment, we're telling the terrorists where our weaknesses are. Like most things where there is risk involved it's a bad idea. However, an exit strategy should be well-defined in the minds of our military leaders and politicians. There is a very important part of that strategy that should not be debated or left out - victory and success!!

2. By announcing our exit strategy, we are giving the enemy the edge in making tactical decisions. The terrorists want an Islamic state and are doing everything they can to see that they are successful. We are the only things between an extremist Islamic government and democracy in Iraq. If we leave before the Iraqi government is capable of handling the threat themselves, the enemy has won and more than 3000 Americans truly did die for nothing. By announcing a timeline, the insurgents/terrorists need only bide their time, regroup, rearm, and strike when they have the advantage. Victory must be the only benchmark for redeployment.

3. No. Three years of publicly dragging the President through the mud has taken its toll on the American people. When told a lie enough time, people naturally begin to believe it.

Our military has been sacrificed at the alter of politics by politicians, the media and other so-called "experts". They've undermined our successes and amplified our failures to the point that we must constantly fight the enemy abroad and the disinformation at home.

Our focus should be on bringing peace and stability to Iraq, not defending ourselves against baseless accusations or answering for the actions of a few rogue idiots (Abu Ghraib). Because of the politicization of this war, our hands are tied to the point where it's almost impossible to do our jobs. Our Soldiers have become confused as to what their true mission is even though it's quite simple. But, our military is versatile and resourceful and we always find a way to succeed despite the obstacles in our way.

4. Oh, please, don't get me started. I'm utterly disgusted - almost to the point of nausea - at the type of reporting coming out of Iraq. It's hateful, misleading, and biased against America.

The headline in this week's Newsweek sums it all up - "How Daily Bloodshed, Deepening Hatreds and the American Occupation May Turn Iraq's Children into the Next Jihadists". **What a crock!!**

Where's the headline - "How Daily Interaction, Increased Emphasis on Creating Opportunities, and the American Soldiers Are Giving Iraq Children a Reason To be Optimistic About Their Futures"?

I know there are kids throwing rocks at our convoys every day. But there are also many kids giving us hugs and kisses as we present them with their first pair of shoes, study materials for school, and clothing to keep them warm in the winter. Piss on the media!!

5. So far. But pull out before we've accomplished a safe and secure Iraq and I'll change my mind in a heartbeat. If we're going to pull out prematurely, we should have never gone in.

**GOD BLESS OUR TROOPS AND THEIR FAMILIES
GOD BLESS THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
MAY HE CONTINUE TO BLESS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

IMPROMPTU TOWN HALL MEETING IN IRAQ

Sean Hannity was in Iraq with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld the week of December 8 to December 15, 2006. After Secretary Rumsfeld addressed the troops, Sean was visiting with them back stage in what turned into a Town Hall style meeting.

The troops present seemed eager to have their thoughts and opinions heard. I transcribed the video tape of this meeting that aired on Hannity and Colmes.

Sean: You guys see it a lot more than I do. Then you know what price has been paid.

Soldier 1: We are trying to change peoples mindset that they've had for 30 years. We have only been here 3 years. It is going to take a lot longer. We are still in Japan, Germany, Kosovo, Yugoslavia, Bosnia...we are in over 160 countries, the U.S. Military is. We are not pulling out of here anytime soon.

Sean: Let me ask you...what are your thoughts...you heard the Secretary of Defense, you hear the President, you know that this is very political back home, what are your thoughts about that?

Soldier 2: Look, look...we are all soldiers. We serve at the leisure of the President. You can hear it all you want, but 99.9% of the soldiers on the ground have taken a vow and an oath to do this and we're doing it honorably and we're **glad** to actually do it.

Sean: Do you hear the politics? Do you hear the debate?

Soldier 2: Oh absolutely...but you know what..... We watch this [Hannity and Colmes] and we compare it to the others and it's politicized no matter where you go. In order for us to do what it is that is required to do, you got to stop this.

I don't want to hear from an intellectual stand point that we support you guys, but when it comes to the practicality of it, you don't. Either you do or you don't. Follow me?

Sean: Meaning? We've had politicians say we can't win this war. You heard John Kerry's comments. You heard John Murtha's comments. You heard attacks against the President.

Soldier 1: Except by those politicians saying we can't win the war, that to me is telling that they don't have any faith in us. (as he sweeps the room with his arm) They have no faith in us soldiers. They don't believe in us and they can' put their trust in us.

Sean: Interesting to hear you say that. Are you saying that the United States of America, that if we put the time, money, energy, resources and focus on winning this, that we could lose? I don't believe that for a second. It's a political issue isn't it?

Soldier 3: We can win, but the politicians can lose it. It's the sergeant's and the lieutenants that are here fighting that can win this thing.

Soldier 1: We won every single thing in Vietnam, it was the politicians that pulled us out.

Soldier 2: You know what's really interesting about this is that they keep saying we can't win, but they've not defined what win is. Give us a definition of what win is and give it to the soldiers and watch out.

Sean: I think the President gave a pretty good definition of win. (background: I agree...yeah...roger that) That is an Iraq that is able to sustain themselves, protect themselves.....

Soldier 3: Because we won't be able to claim a victory until after we've pulled out and are gone. It will be how Iraq turns out after we've pulled out and the Iraqis take over and they are led by their own chosen leadership and how their Army and Security forces stand up. We won't know for years.

Soldier 4: It's a time issue. The American public, or whoever says you can't win the war, they can't win the war in the time they want. If anything is given enough time to get it done right, you need to do it thorough and you need to do it well. So it's

Soldier 1: You see America has turned into an instant gratification. They want it right then, right now, on their fingertips.....

Soldier 5: The bottom line is that, we hear what's being said in the media back home, but we're here and we see a different side of what's happening here.

Sean: Explain that - what's the difference between what people hear at home and what's happening here.

Soldier 5: Good example; this past Tuesday we went out to the city to deliver school supplies to the children. (SH: we're here in Mosul, so people know.) Yes, the Iraqi Army actually supplied our security force. We didn't have any problem with the locals. They were a little bit shy and nervous, but absolutely.....

Sean: So that transition is happening successfully? (Oh yeah!) In other words, you have trained the Iraqis and are now the Police Force and their military is now becoming more and more capable everyday?

Soldier 5: Oh yeah. The Iraqi Colonel assured our security and we have full faith and trust in him and he delivered.

Soldier 2: Also Sean, would you please make sure the American public knows these soldiers haven't been duped. We KNOW exactly what we were getting ourselves into

when we came into the military. We have a much more intellectual, smarter force today. These are soldiers who can think on their feet. They have a lot more responsibility than the average American.

Sean: When you say that, do you say that because of somebody like John Kerry's comments? You've heard those comments?

Soldier 2: Oh sure absolutely...Oh absolutely it is. That's why you saw the depiction of the soldiers from the guard unit that misspelled it - to these soldiers that's an insult. That's an absolute insult to sit there and say to these young men and women and the leaders and commanders and the first Army Sergeant Majors and the privates and that ... you know what? If you don't do this then this is.....that's totally an insult and the wrong answer. (Soldier in background: "Especially coming from him") Very uneducated...some of the most highly educated people [are here] cut off by Sean-

Sean: So you know the danger, (sure we do) you know America's at war, (Absolutely) you know we had the worst attack in history, (Uh-uh...yeah) and many of you signed up for this duty. (Uh-uh, right.) So the question is why?

Soldier 2: Because...look...I'm going to tell you right now, this is an old adage, but we love our country. It's that simple - **"WE LOVE OUR COUNTRY"**

COMMENTS AND STORIES FROM THE TROOPS

The second week of June 2006 was a time of jubilation and partying for our wounded warriors. Forty-eight hours after the death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was announced our heroes were **still** celebrating! Shouts of “President Bush rocks!” and “I love President Bush!” could be heard for blocks.

Many lamented that they were injured and could not be in theater to celebrate the momentous occasion with their buddies. One amputee was jumping up and down, with his prosthetic leg, cheering! Another who had lost one eye could be found sliding down the banister cheering! All were in great spirits and all gave their Commander-in-Chief the credit for having the fortitude to pursue the terrorists wherever they are.

Not one, but several soldiers have told me the same story at various times. It is the story of how the terrorists will hold a baby or small child in one hand and a weapon in the other. They will raise their weapon aimed at our troops, daring them to shoot.

Others have told about terrorists grabbing women and standing directly behind them while resting their weapon on the woman’s shoulder. The terrorists do this with evil grins on their faces.

There have been stories about the hospitality the Iraqi people show our troops. The smell of bread baking wafts through the air permeating the neighborhood. Soon the Iraqi locals appear offering loaves of warm bread to our troops to say, ‘thank you for being there.’

Many talk about the meals that local Iraqi families invite them to share. They are frequently invited in for tea. Some have been queried as to whether they would like to marry a daughter or sister. Our guys will explain they are married or have a girl back home. The father or brother will shrug and smile saying hey, I had to try. It is like a good natured game between them according to our soldiers.

Our troops have confronted evils no man should face. They do this to keep that evil from triumphing in Iraq and returning to America.

A platoon would go on daily patrols of a certain area. Everyday there was an eight year old boy that would run out to greet them smiling and laughing all the way. They became very attached to the child and would bring him gifts and play soccer with him.

One day, right on schedule, the boy came running toward them. This day he was not

smiling. Our troops waved and yelled hello. As the boy continued toward them, he sadly held open his jacket to show them he was wearing a bomb vest. Horrified, our soldiers yelled to him to stop, begged him to stop. His sad little face looked at them and said, “I can’t” as he continued toward them.

Speaking with some of our troops who have trained the Iraqi Security Forces has been interesting. Those who are responsible for training the Army and Air Force have a great deal of respect for the Iraqi recruits. They know the danger they face simply by joining the force and are amazed at their courage. They report that they are doing a great job. Some of the Iraqis tend to be, shall we say, a little overzealous in their duties, and must be restrained and taught the “PC” way to fight a war.

Those who train the Iraqi police force have a little different story. I am told they are the most corrupt entity in Iraq. The U.S. spent a billion dollars (so I was told) to provide the police force with new trucks. One soldier told me, “The police told our troops to their face that the trucks were (manure.) They were given gas for the trucks and they stole it and were selling it on the street for profit.” This type of behavior is frowned on by our troops and leaves a bad impression, not only of the police force, but also of Iraqis and the country in general for those whose experience has been limited to dealing with them.

Stories about Iraqi Security Forces embedded with our troops are funny, heartwarming and informative. Over a year ago, embedded forces had a lot to learn about the “civilized” way to fight and protect themselves. That is not the story though. The surprising part was that Iraqi forces have been embedded with our people for over a year. Who knew? According to the “news”, there was no Iraqi Army.

The stories range from laughter at the funny, and occasionally dangerous, things the Iraqis do, to real concern and sadness at what will happen to them if we withdraw before they are fully capable of handling the terrorists trying to take over their country.

One soldier looked at me, almost in tears, and said, “Don’t you understand we live, eat and sleep with these guys. They have become like family to us. There are guys over there that are like my brothers. They will be slaughtered if we leave too soon. This is very disturbing to me.”

One soldier would not talk to me until I stated my political beliefs. I explained that I do not visit to be political. I was told I could jolly well leave then, as he did not talk to people who were there to bash his Commander-in-Chief. Once I declared my allegiance to the President, the Troops and the Mission, he was more than happy to tell me his story.

This young man worked countless hours on President Bush's re-election campaign in 2004. Unbeknownst to most, his enlistment papers were laying at home, with nothing left to do but sign them. They were signed and turned on November 3, 2004. He would not have joined if President Bush had lost the election.

Unfortunately, this dedicated young man had to miss the inauguration as he was in boot camp. A year and a few days after signing those papers, I met him in the hospital as they were fighting to save his leg. A year later, he lost that battle, but not his love for President Bush.

I recently learned of a checkpoint stop that ended well. The soldier's voice trembled as the specifics of the stop were recited. The vehicle was stopped without firing the final shot. What our soldiers found was an Iraqi man strapped into the car so securely he could never have gotten out. He had tears running down his fearful face as he nodded to the floor of the passenger side of the vehicle. There, wrapped in explosives and tightly secured in place, was the man's six-year-old son. They were informed later that there were enough explosives to take out two-thirds of their convoy.

The child cried for hours and the Iraqi man was grateful to our troops for saving their lives.

We battle a ruthless, heartless, soulless enemy that MUST BE DEFEATED!

CONSENSUS ON THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

A common concern expressed by OIF veterans over the past couple of years has been that the Rules Of Engagement are tying the hands of our warriors and getting a lot of them killed. The enemy is very well aware of the asinine rules our troops are forced to die by and are often found knowingly laughing in the faces of our constrained warriors.

Excerpts from a November 24, 2006, comment by Russell Wohlford at www.danielpipes.org tells much about how our troops can be trusted to judiciously apply Rules of Engagement that do not tie their hands:

“I must admit, conditions have changed in Iraq since my 2003-04 tour there, but I think a few comments on some of these concerns might still be timely.

“Before my unit went to Iraq we were briefed on the Rules of Engagement for the theater. There were really only two rules, but the implications were far-reaching:
If you are fired on or if you feel threatened you may engage.
We were told, this was modified in practice, not to fire warning shots.

“These two rules gave us a considerable amount of freedom to react to or even preempt attacks. In mass briefings we were told that we were being entrusted with a great responsibility, down to the lowliest private every man and woman was a representative of the United States of America.

“We were told to follow the Geneva Conventions and the Laws of Land warfare and received, or taught in my case, classes on those Conventions and Laws. The unwashed and untutored, if we are to believe John Kerry, were the recipients of the least-restrictive ROE I have ever heard of. There were very few examples of accidental killings of civilians by my company.

“A great deal of care was taken not to kill or injure non-combatants by both sides for the most part. I don't think the local insurgents (a mix of farmers, ex-Republican Guards, Wahabbis, and opportunists looking for a paycheck) wanted to alienate the local populace so we saw little collateral damage from that sector.

“The locals, in Abu Saida for the most part, and in surrounding villages to a lesser extent, were quite friendly and I was told numerous times that these people relied on and expected our protection. In fact, because we were tight on the trigger and assisted with work on schools, the water plant, and a variety of other public-service related jobs, we were viewed quite favorably by the people of Abu Saida.

”Nothing was more telling than when an insurgent RPG team was engaged by rifle toting citizens as they attempted to infiltrate the town to attack our compound. People were shooting out of their windows and forced the bad guys to beat a hasty retreat. We

discouraged that type of activity, but I felt like these people not only liked us and wanted us there, but were willing to fight to protect us, a job clearly outside their purview or responsibilities.

”When we left Abu Saida I saw a lot of people crying. I am not ashamed to say that I let loose a few tears myself. We had very loose ROE, we used our firepower carefully not wantonly. We were responsible with our power and gained a measure of respect and I dare say affection from the people in our AO. They had very high expectations of Americans and I like to think that in at least our little corner of the Diyala Province those expectations were met.

”A last note here: My unit was not Airborne, not Special forces, the recipients of no particularly special training , we were far from elite. I was in a tank company. We had some arty guys and mechanics. If a bunch of dirty tankers, just the kind of undereducated rank and file grubs Mr. Kerry denigrates, can form a decent working relationship with a semi-rural population in an overwhelmingly Muslim market town in the middle of nowhere is there not hope? A little trigger control and the willingness to pick up a paintbrush or a hammer goes a long ways...”

Our men and women in uniform need to know that they have the right to defend themselves without worrying about being charged with murder.

They understand the risks of war and gladly go to protect their homeland, loved ones and those who cannot protect themselves. Asking them to be sacrificed on the altar of political correctness is too much.

Lynda Deming is a pseudonym for the author and interviewer of this section of the report. Ms. Deming was married to a Vietnam veteran. She has devoted much of her time in the past few years to supporting veterans of the Global War on Terror.

IRAQ FACT SHEET

AMERICA IS NOT ALONE IN IRAQ

As of December 22, 2006, the State Department reported 25 countries have a total of 15,197 forces in Iraq: Albania, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Georgia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, South Korea, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

The State Department website also lists the following information about Iraq:

Geography

Area: 437,072 sq. km.; about the size of California.

Cities: *Capital*--Baghdad (5.7 million, 2004 estimate). *Other cities*--Basrah, Mosul, Kirkuk, Sulaymaniyah, Irbil.

Terrain: Alluvial plains, mountains, and desert.

Climate: Mostly hot and dry.

People

Nationality: *Noun and adjective*--Iraqi(s).

Population (2006 estimate): 26,800,000.

Population growth rate (2006 estimate): 3.0%.

Ethnic groups: Arab 75%-80%, Kurd 15%-20%, Turcoman, Chaldean, Assyrian, or others less than 5%.

Religions: Muslim 97%, Christian 3%, others less than 1%.

Languages: Arabic (Official), Kurdish (Official), Assyrian, Armenian.

Education: *Years compulsory*--primary school (age 6 through grade 6). *Literacy* (2006 UNESCO est.)—74.1%.

Health: *Infant mortality rate*--48.64 deaths/1,000 live births. *Life expectancy*--69 yrs. (2006 est.)

Government

Type: Parliamentary democracy.

Constitution: October 15, 2005.

Independence: On October 3, 1932, Iraq gained independence from the League of Nations Mandate under British Administration. On June 28, 2004, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) transferred sovereignty to the Iraqi Interim Government. A new four-year, constitutionally based government took office in March 2006, and a new cabinet was installed in May 2006.

Branches: *Executive*--Presidency Council (one president and two vice presidents); Council of Ministers (one prime minister, two deputy prime ministers, and 34 cabinet ministers). *Judicial*--Supreme Court appointed by the Prime Minister and confirmed by the Council of Representatives. *Legislative*--Council of Representatives (CoR) consisting of 275 members.

Divisions: 15 governorates and one regional government. *Governorates*--Al Anbar, Al Basrah, Al Muthanna, Al Qadisiyah, An Najaf, Kirkuk, Babil, Baghdad, Dhi Qar, Diyala, Karbala', Maysan, Ninawa, Salah ad Din, Wasit. *Regional government*--Kurdistan Regional Government.

Economy

GDP (2006 proj.): \$47 billion (official exchange rate).

GDP per capita (2006 proj.): \$1635.

GDP real growth rate (2006 proj.): 4.0%.

Rate of inflation (12 months ending August 2006): 76.6%.

Unemployment rate (2005 estimate): 27%.

Budget (2006 est.): \$48.0 billion revenues and \$64.5 billion expenditures.

Public debt: Approximately \$125 billion.

Natural resources: Oil, natural gas, phosphates, sulfur.

Agriculture: *Products*--wheat, barley, rice, vegetables, cotton, dates, cattle, sheep.

Industry: *Types*--petroleum, chemicals, textiles, construction materials, food processing.

Trade: *Exports* (2006 est.)--\$30 billion. *Export commodities* (2006 est.)--crude oil (97%), other exports (3%). *Export partners* (2005 est.)--U.S. 49%, Jordan 20%, Canada 13%, Italy 12%. *Imports* (2006 est.)--\$29.7 billion. *Import commodities*--food, medicine, manufactured goods, refined petroleum products. *Import partners* (2005 est.)--Turkey 22%, U.S. 21%, Jordan 12%, Vietnam 5%.

GEOGRAPHY

Iraq is bordered by Kuwait, Iran, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. The country slopes from mountains over 3,000 meters (10,000 ft.) above sea level along the border with Iran and Turkey to the remnants of sea-level marshes in the southeast. Much of the land is desert or wasteland. The mountains in the northeast are an extension of the alpine system that runs eastward from the Balkans into southern Turkey, northern Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan, terminating in the Himalayas.

Average temperatures range from higher than 48°C (120°F) in July and August to below freezing in January. Most of the rainfall occurs from December through April and averages between 10 and 18 centimeters (4-7 in.) annually. The mountainous region of northern Iraq receives appreciably more precipitation than the central or southern desert region.

PEOPLE

Almost 75% of Iraq's population live in the flat, alluvial plain stretching southeast from Baghdad and Basrah to the Persian Gulf. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers carry about 70 million cubic meters of silt annually to the delta. Known in ancient times as Mesopotamia, the region is the legendary locale of the Garden of Eden. The ruins of Ur, Babylon, and other ancient cities are in Iraq.

Iraq's two largest ethnic groups are Arabs and Kurds. Other distinct groups are Turcoman, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Persians, and Armenians. Arabic is the most commonly spoken language. Kurdish is spoken in the north, and English is the most commonly spoken

Western language.

The majority (60-65%) of Iraqi Muslims are members of the Shi'a sect, but there is a large (32-37%) Sunni population as well, made up of both Arabs and Kurds. Small communities of Christians, Jews, Bahais, Mandaeans, and Yezidis also exist. Most Kurds are Sunni Muslim but differ from their Arab neighbors in language, dress, and customs.

GOVERNMENT

Iraq is a constitutional democracy with a federal system of government. The 2005 Iraqi Constitution guarantees all Iraqis basic rights in many areas. The executive branch is made up of the Presidency Council (one president, two deputy presidents) and a Council of Ministers (one prime minister, two deputy prime ministers, and 34 cabinet ministers). The President is the Head of State, protecting the Constitution and representing the sovereignty and unity of the state, while the Prime Minister is the direct executive authority and commander in chief. Beginning in 2006, the military and police began transitioning from being under the operational control of the Multi-National Forces-Iraq command to Iraqi command and control. The President and Vice Presidents are elected by the Council of Representatives (CoR). The Prime Minister is nominated by the largest bloc in the Council of Representatives. Upon designation, the Prime Minister names the members of his cabinet, the Council of Ministers, which is then approved by the Council of Representatives. The Council of Representatives may withdraw confidence from the Prime Minister, in which case the Prime Minister and Cabinet are considered resigned. Under normal circumstances, the executive branch serves a four-year term concurrent with that of the Council of Representatives.

Iraq's legislative branch consists of an elected Council of Representatives and an as-yet unformed Federation Council. The Council of Representatives consists of 275 members, each of whom is elected to four-year terms of service. At least one-quarter of the members of the Council of Representatives must be female. The responsibilities of the Council of Representatives include enacting federal laws, monitoring the executive branch, and electing the President of the Republic. The Federal Council will be established, by law, as a representative for governorates and territories that are not organized in a region.

Iraq's judicial branch is independent, and is under no authority but that of the law. The federal judicial authority is comprised of the Higher Judicial Council, Federal Supreme Court, Court of Cassation, Public Prosecution Department, Judiciary Oversight Commission, and other federal courts. The Higher Judicial Council supervises the affairs of the federal judiciary. The Federal Supreme Court is the highest court in the country, and the final authority on legal decisions. The establishment of the federal courts, their types, and methods for judicial appointments will be set forth by laws enacted by the Council of Representatives.

Principal Officials of the Iraqi National Unity Government

President--Jalal Talabani

Vice-President--‘Adil ‘Abd al-Mahdi

Vice-President--Tariq al-Hashimi

Prime Minister--Nuri al-Maliki

Deputy Prime Minister--Salam al-Zawba’i

Deputy Prime Minister--Barham Salih

Minister of Agriculture--Ya’rub Nadhim

Minister of Communications--Muhammad Tawfiq Allawi

Minister of Culture--As’ad Kamal Muhammad Abdallah al-Hashimi

Minister of Defense—Abd al-Qadir Muhammed Jasim al-Mufraii

Minister of Displacement & Migration--Abd al-Samad Rahman Sultan

Minister of Education--Khudayyir al-Khuza’i

Minister of Electricity--Karim Wahid

Minister of Environment—Narmin ‘Uthman

Minister of Finance--Bayan Jabr

Minister of Foreign Affairs--Hoshyar Zebari

Minister of Health--Ali al-Shammari

Minister of Higher Education--Abd Dhiyab al-Ajili

Minister of Human Rights--Wijdan Mikha’il

Minister of Housing & Construction--Bayan Daza’i

Minister of Industry & Minerals--Fawzi al-Hariri

Minister of Interior--Jawad al-Bulani

Minister of Justice--Hashim al-Shibli

Minister of Labor & Social Affairs--Mahmud Muhammad Jawad al-Radi

Minister of Municipalities & Public Works--Riyad Ghurayyib

Minister of Oil--Husayn al-Shahristani

Minister of Planning--Ali Baban

Minister of Science & Technology--Ra’id Fahmi Jahid

Minister of Trade--Abd al-Falah al-Sudani

Minister of Transportation--Karim Mahdi Salih

Minister of Water Resources--‘Abd al-Latif Rashid

Minister of Youth & Sports--Jasim Muhammad Ja’far

Minister of State for Civil Society--Adil al-Asadi

Minister of State for CoR Affairs--Safa al-Safi

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs--Rafi Hiyad al-Isawi

Minister of State for Governorates Affairs--Sa’d Tahir Abd Khalaf al-Hashimi

Minister of State for National Dialogue Affairs--Akram al-Hakim

Minister of State for National Security Affairs--Shirwan al-Waili

Minister of State for Tourism and Antiquities--Liwa Sumaysim

Minister of State for Women’s Affairs--Fatin Abd al-Rahman Mahmud

Major Political Parties and Organizations [Leaders]

Assyrian Democratic Movement [Yonadam Kanna]; Al-Da’wa [Ibrahim al-Ja’afari];

Constitutional Monarchy Movement [Sharif Ali Bin al-Hussein]; Hewan National Iraqi

Front [Saleh al-Mutlaq]; Independent Iraqi Alliance [Falah al-Naqib]; Iraqi Hizballah

[Karim Mahud al-Muhammadawi]; Iraqi Independent Democrats [Adnan Pachachi]; Iraqi Islamic Party [Muhsin Abd al-Hamid]; Iraqi National Accord (INA) [Ayad Allawi]; Iraqi National Congress (INC) [Ahmad Chalabi]; Iraqi National Unity Movement [Ahmad al-Kubaysi]; Iraqi Turkmen Front [Faruk Abdullah Abdurrahman]; Jama'at al-Fadilah [Ayatollah Muhammad 'Ali al-Yacoubi]; Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) [Massoud Barzani]; Kurdistan Islamic Union [Salaheddine Muhammad Bahaeddin]; Mithal al-Alusi List [Mithal al-Alusi]; Muslim Ulama Council [Harith Sulayman al-Dari]; National Democratic Movement; Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) [Jalal Talabani]; Al-Risalyun [Muqtada al-Sadr]; Al-Sadr Movement [Muqtada al-Sadr]; Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) [Abdul Aziz al-Hakim]; Yazidi Movement for Reform and Progress

Note: The Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan, the Iraqi List, and the United Iraqi Alliance were electoral blocs consisting of the representatives from the various Iraqi political parties. Alliances and Electoral blocs are subject to change.

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Since March 2006, the Government of Iraq has been a broad coalition led by a Shi'ite legislative bloc known as the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA). The UIA currently holds 128 of 275 seats in the Council of Representatives. The UIA is currently composed of SCIRI, the al-Sadr movement, al-Da'wa, Jama'at al-Fadilah, and various independents. Politicians with Sunni religious affiliations, including the Tawafuq and Hewar groups, presently hold 59 seats in the Council of Representatives. The Kurdish bloc known as the Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan (which includes the KDP & PUK) holds 53 legislative seats. Ayad Allawi's Iraqi National Accord (INA) holds 25 seats. The remaining seats are composed of various independent and secular politicians.

With regard to the executive branch, much care has been given to ensure that there is proportionate distribution of ministerial positions among the three major ethnic groups. For example, in the Presidency Council, President Jalal Talabani is Kurdish, Deputy President 'Adil 'Abd al-Mahdi is a Shi'a Muslim, and Deputy President Tariq al-Hashimi is a Sunni Muslim. Additionally, the Council of Ministers consists of 18 Shi'a Muslims, 8 Sunni Muslims, 8 Kurds, and 5 members of Ayad Allawi's secular INA.

The Government of Iraq is currently working toward amending the Constitution. The process is likely to be a long and careful one, as consideration needs to be given to the interests of each of the three major ethnic groups. Issues to be addressed include federalism and the sharing of oil revenues.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

With the fall of Saddam Hussein and the Ba'ath regime, Iraq has taken steps toward re-engagement on the international stage. Iraq currently has diplomatic representation in 54 countries around the world, including 3 permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva and the Arab League in Cairo. 47 countries have diplomatic representation in Iraq.

The Republic of Iraq belongs to the following international organizations: United Nations

(UN); Arab League (AL); World Bank (WB); International Monetary Fund (IMF); International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); Nonaligned Movement (NAM); Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC); Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC); Interpol; World Health Organization (WHO); G-19; G-77; Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (ABEDA); Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD); Arab Monetary Fund (AMF); Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU); Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD); International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); International Community for Radionuclide Metrology (ICRM); International Development Association (IDA); International Development Bank (IDB); International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); International Finance Corporation (IFC); International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCS); International Labor Organization (ILO); International Maritime Organization (IMO); Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC); International Organization for Standardization (ISO); International Telecommunication Union (ITU); Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC); United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); Universal Postal Union (UPU); World Customs Organization (WCO); World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU); World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); World Meteorological Organization (WMO); World Trade Organization (WTO) observer.

HOT SPOTS IN IRAQ

There is a swath of Iraq that runs from Diyala Province east of Baghdad, though Baghdad, Salah ad Din and across Anbar Province that comprises the most violence and instability in Iraq. Those areas have 37% of Iraq's population but 78% of the violence occurs there. Another trouble spot is Ninevah Province in the northwest.

ANBAR PROVINCE

Opponents of success in Operation Iraqi Freedom have set a template of failure in Iraq. Media coverage of hot spots like Anbar province have painted a picture of an area totally out of control and of the hopelessness of American efforts to bring peace and stability to that region.

A case in point is the Washington Post's front page story on November 28, 2006, by Thomas Ricks and Dafna Linzer titled *Anbar Picture Grows Clearer, and Bleaker*. The article is based on a classified Marine intelligence report that describes Anbar province as lost.

The Post article took that report as gospel and failed to place it in context with independent information about Anbar. Being that Mr. Ricks has already decided Iraq is lost (he commented on CNN International in November that Iraq would be better off under a dictatorship) he has no incentive to prove himself wrong.

However, information gleaned from other credible sources show that far from being lost, American and Iraqi military, joined by Sunni tribes, are making headway in Anbar.

About 25 Sunni tribes in Anbar have formed the Anbar Salvation Council to combat al Qaeda in Iraq. Sunni tribes have also formed the Sons of Anbar and have sent 1100 young men to neighboring Jordan for training to fight al Qaeda in Iraq.

Fallujah, which was once a base for al Qaeda, has progressed far enough from that dark era two years ago that the American military is drawing down its troop presence from 3000 to 300.

About the same time Mr. Ricks was spreading his gloom and doom, independent embedded reporter Michael Fumento filed a report that was published in the Weekly Standard, Return to Ramadi, November 27, 2006.

Fumento did not gloss over the violence in Ramadi, but the progress he reported should not be ignored by our media--even if it goes against their template of failure.

Ramadi has been slowly reclaimed and our efforts there are showing great progress. An op-ed titled Media Fails to Report Iraq Successes, by Maj. Ricco Player, Acting Public Affairs Officer, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division in Ramadi, published in the North County Times (California) on January 11, 2007 explains how the situation is improving:

(Ready First Combat Team) arrived in Ramadi in June 2006 and at that time this Forward Operating Base was getting hit with indirect fire every day.

That is no longer the case.

There were three Iraqi police stations. Today there are nine and multiple substations and Emergency Response Unit positions.

Tribal participation, which reflected nine uncooperative and three neutral tribes, now reflects three uncooperative, six neutral and 12 cooperative.

....There is violence in Ramadi ---- no question there.

But there are successes in Ramadi. For example, there are civic action programs, coupled with Iraqi police and tribal leaders are making tremendous gains by providing repairs to water pump stations, abandoned building demolition ---- which is vital because these places are laced with IEDs and are used as terrorist attack positions, rubble removal once the buildings are destroyed, school and hospital repairs and support to the local bank..

CBS News published a report on January 12, 2007 by embedded reporter Cami McCormick in Ramadi that confirmed the progress that Fumento and Maj. Player are reporting.

One aspect of al Qaeda in Iraq that is not reported effectively is how its extremist religious ideology and enforcement of Taliban-style edicts on the local populace has alienated Sunnis who once welcomed them as allies against America.

al Qaeda made life so miserable for the Sunnis in Anbar that many have turned against them and are coming to see the Americans as not so bad.

DIYALA

While most Americans know Sunni dominated Anbar province as an oil poor, mostly desert area with just a few major cities, Diyala Province is not as well known.

Col. David Sutherland, Commander, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, gave a briefing on December 15, 2006 that explains the situation in Diyala:

“Diyala is a province about as large as the state of Maryland. It covers approximately 30,000 square miles. Diyala has 13 cities ranging in size from 10,000 people to the largest at about 300,000 people in the provincial capital of Baqubah.

“There are two major rivers running through our area, the Tigris and the Diyala River, and one large lake that’s to the northern part of the region. These bodies of water are critical to the largely agricultural economy of the province. Diyala maintains a 170-

mile- long border with Iran. This border is secured by a brigade of 1,390 soldiers from the Department of Border Enforcement and includes a formal port of entry and a number of traditional, informal trade routes through the province. Baqubah, the capital of Diyala, is located approximately 25 miles to the northeast of Baghdad.

“Diyala has approximately 1.5 million people; 55 percent are Sunni, 30 percent are Shi'a and 15 percent are Kurd. This statistic is deceiving, as each city has an ethnically diverse population. Unique to Diyala is that we have 25 major tribes with over 100 subtribes in the province.

“Agriculture is the main industry in the province. Diyala has had a good date harvest. Last year, it was up 75 percent from the year before, and the rice harvest this year was up 50 percent from last year.

“Diyala's diversity is reflected in its government. The provincial governor is a Shi'a, while the deputy governor and one of the two assistant governors are Sunni, and the second assistant governor is of Kurdish descent. The provincial council, Diyala's legislative branch, is split with 20 Shi'a, 14 Sunni and seven Kurdish members. This means that politics are alive and well in Diyala, as each bloc must compromise and cooperate to accomplish its work.

“Markets are open in Baqubah. There are stalls of fresh vegetables and meat. The government is at work and going about the business of the province. I attend a variety of security and governance meetings weekly, while my officers attend similar meetings at all levels of the government. I attend weekly tribal conferences in towns such as Muqdadiyah, where as many as 70 sheikhs from across the province discuss their issues and ways to incorporate their traditional sources of power into the government's activities. Governor Ra'ad is ultimately involved in this -- intimately involved in this process. He attended a tribal conference in Baghdad just this week and is actively trying to engage the various groups and political process. This sort of initiative is critical to the long-term stability of the province.

“I want to shift gears now and talk to you a bit about our problem set.

“Many recent reports have made it seem that Diyala is a haven for terrorism, one so violent that people are afraid to go out of their homes. The reality is something different. Though there have been -- and I repeat, have been -- numerous incidents of violence, the government has not shut down, the security forces are standing their posts, and people walk the streets.

“Diyala is a convergence of ideals, political, religious and tribal. It is often referred to as "Little Iraq" because of its diversity. Public perceptions of corruption, inequity and fear are the driving force behind support to terrorist organizations. These are not new problems in Iraq, but problems that developed out of a desire for personal and financial gain. This desire is born from years of oppression under the former regime.

“Some political groups and tribal leaders are turning to terrorists and insurgent organizations for protection. This sort of unity only worsens the sectarian divide and encourages further violence. The key to security is separating the insurgents from the terrorists, and bringing the insurgents into the political process while defeating the terrorists with intelligence-driven operations. As the Iraqi army increases the pressure on the terrorists, their reaction has been to incite sectarian violence to discredit the government and the coalition. They will ultimately fail.

“It is important to remember that despite the positive trends I have noted, there is still violence in Diyala. In June of this year, Abu Musaab al-Zarqawi, the leader of al Qaeda in Iraq, was killed in the town of Hibhib, just five miles from where I'm talking to you now. Diyala was an important part of the caliphate, or fundamentalist Islamic state, that he declared in Iraq. As such, the province is a natural draw for al Qaeda, but also for other terrorist and insurgent organizations such as Ansar al-Sunna, the 1920s Revolutionary Brigade and Jaish-e-Mohammed.

“Diyala is the forefront of the battle with the terrorists. However, it does not mean that they have won the battle here; in fact, far from it. The enemy is trying to disrupt progress and derail democracy in this province. They are doing this through the use of IEDs, snipers, kidnappings, and less violent but no less effective methods such as phone threats, posters and graffiti. They are targeting Iraqi soldiers and police stations, but they are also targeting schoolteachers, bank tellers, government officials, hospitals and mosques.

“The Iraqi people are responding with great courage. I sat on a checkpoint with a small squad of Iraqi policemen under small-arms fire the other day.

“These men were low on ammunition, food and water, but they did not break. They stood their post, stood their post diligently. Just last week, a terrorist detonated a car bomb in front of the hospital in Khalis, again about four miles from where I'm talking to you. Three civilians were killed and four wounded. The hospital is still providing care to the people of Khalis and were doing so the very next day.

“The soldiers of the Grey Wolf Combat Team are equipped with the latest in armor, weapons and sensors to ensure that they remain the best-equipped army in the world. Training never stops. We continue to build upon the base of knowledge we developed at home in Fort Hood because this environment is continually changing. Enemy tactics evolve, political dynamics shift, and the skills of the allies improves.

“Since assuming authority of the province, we have conducted 24 named, deliberate operations and over 2,845 combat patrols, most of which were conducted with Iraqi soldiers and policemen. Our soldiers are coordinating over 290 projects to improve the infrastructure and economy of this region. In short, they are making a difference, and they are making a difference in this province every day.

“The Iraqi security forces are working to develop new tactics that emphasize narrowly focused and evidence-based operations to defeat terrorist networks. The Grey Wolf Brigade continues to work with the Iraqi army and police to improve their training, intelligence, logistics and command skills in order to enable these tactics.

“In Baqubah, for example, the Iraqi police are going through a pilot training program that emphasizes marksmanship, police skills, explosives recognition, and the values and ethics of a professional force. We are dedicated to helping the Iraqi security forces become a professional force that treats people with respect and enforces the rule of law, a force that is non-sectarian, professional and devoted to the safety and security of all Iraqis in the province.

“This is a dynamic period to be in Diyala, full of opportunities to improve the quality of life for the people of this province. The efforts of our combined patrols on the streets of these cities are only half the story. We are working closely with the Department of State's Provincial Reconstruction Team and the government of Diyala to rebuild the infrastructure that has suffered greatly from decades of neglect and strengthen the governmental institutions that have decayed from misuse.

“Developing a democratic ethos in a land that has lived in an autocratic society for generations is not easy and it takes time. However, these men and women are working every day to train today's leaders in how to be good representatives working on behalf of their people.

“Before I turn this over to you for your questions, I want to thank you for this opportunity. I say it every day along with my command sergeant major, Command Sergeant Major Felt, there is greatness in our formations. The soldiers of this team are working daily with the brave men of the Iraqi police and the army to ensure a better life for the Iraqi people. They continue to show confidence in their mission, competence in their skills and discipline to do what is right when no one is looking.

“It is an honor to serve with these men and women, and I am confident we will accomplish the mission that lies ahead during our time in Iraq.”

SALAH AD DIN

Salah ad Din is located northwest of Baghdad and is known mainly for being the province of Saddam's Hussein's hometown, Tikrit. The province has a population of around 1 million people. It's largest city is Samarra, home to the Askiri mosque. The golden dome of the Askiri mosque was destroyed in an attack in February, 2006. There was an average of twenty attacks per day on coalition forces in Salah ad Din in the fall of 2006.

The State Department initiated a Provisional Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Salah ad Din in October, 2006. Ambassador Khalizaid gave these remarks about the work of the PRTs:

“There is another challenge facing Iraqis: preventing regional powers who want Iraq to fail. Two countries are particularly playing a negative role: the Iranian and Syrian regimes. These regimes are supporting groups who are killing Iraqis. Their objective is to use Iraqis as cannon fodder in their plan to keep Iraqis divided and Iraq weak. Iraqis must unite against their enemies and against sectarianism and the killing of the innocent.

“In our vision, PRTs are designed to contribute to many of those goals. They are the embodiment of our commitment, at the provincial and local levels, to ensure Iraq's success. In Salah ad Din, the PRT will support national reconciliation by helping the Provincial Government to establish its working relations with the national government. At the same time, this will provide the Province's residents with an important role in Iraq's political process. Because security is the foundation for all the other building blocks of a democratic government and a growing economy, we are helping to manage the construction of an Iraqi Army base near Samarra that will improve security in that key city and along Salah ad Din's roads.

“The PRT will increase public access to government through programs that will educate provincial officials on the need for transparency and accountability to the needs of Salah ad Din's citizens. Already, they have also been working with the Provincial Council to establish rules of procedure for the Council and to define the roles of the Provincial Council and the Governor. The PRT is also working with local government officials to establish proper detention facilities, a circuit court to perform adjudications throughout the province, and to bolster the investigatory capacity of local police and judges. Finally, the PRT will foster economic development to develop Salah ad Din's enormous agricultural potential. The PRT is also working to establish a business center.

“Yet while the PRTs are a manifestation of the U.S.-Iraqi partnership to build a secure, sovereign, and prosperous Iraq, they can only play a supporting role. Now this country belongs to the Iraqi people, and in the end its success or – God forbid its failure – will depend upon the Iraqi people and their leaders. I believe Iraqis will succeed in meeting these challenges.

“As we move forward in rebuilding Iraq, it is important to recognize that mistakes have been made over the past three years. Despite these errors, the United States of America is committed to success in Iraq. With our coalition partners, we have already invested more than \$975 million in reconstruction in Salah ad Din. We are working hard on the electric power sector, and additional investment is being made on the province's roads, bridges, and transportation infrastructure. The upgrade of the Tuz water network, and the upgrading of the electrical transmission lines from Beji to Haditha are among the most significant projects soon to be completed or undertaken that will improve the lives of the people of Salah ad Din.

“It is also important to recognize that the last three years have brought many difficult challenges for the residents of Salah ad Din. Changes in the political, economic, and security situation across the province have forced Salah ad Din residents to re-forge their identity and their role in the national political process. In the proud tradition of Salah ad

Din Ayyoubi, the provincial leaders are meeting these continuing challenges directly, and are reestablishing the province as an important, vital part of the Iraqi nation.

“Salah ad Din’s success in addressing these challenges is critical for Iraq’s success. A successful Iraq will reshape the future of the Middle East, and the future of the Middle East will reshape the future of the world. So what is going on in Iraq is very important. This is why the PRTs are not strictly an American venture – others are also participating. The United Kingdom launched a PRT in Basra in May, and the Italians in Dhi Qar. Later this month, the Republic of Korea will lead a PRT in Iraq’s Kurdish Region.

“Let me end by saying we are committed to helping Iraqis stand on their own feet, and the improvement of local governance and communities is an integral part of this overall effort. Working together with the Iraqis and the international community, Iraq will succeed.”

NINEVAH PROVINCE

Talk radio host Hugh Hewitt conducted an interview with independent embed reporter Michael Yon on January 12, 2007. Yon, who had just left Mosul, Ninevah’s capital, spoke about the situation there:

Hugh Hewitt: Well let’s start there, and then work backwards to Anbar and Baghdad. How do the Iraqi Security Forces up in Nineveh Province appear to be improving in their efficiency, Michael Yon?

Michael Yon: Let me start just slightly north of there, Hugh, and go to two extremes. One extreme is the Kurdish north, where everything is a done deal, and the other extreme is Anbar Province, which you just mentioned, where the Iraqi Security Forces are really in the crawling stage at best. Now here in Nineveh Province, where Mosul is the capitol, the ISF is doing very well, actually. They were doing well even in 2005, but next week, on the 15th of January, we’re going to turn over, with a memo of understanding to the 2nd Iraqi Army division, to take hold here in Nineveh Province, so they’re going to have two Iraqi army divisions operating unilaterally here, and bilaterally, in Nineveh. And so, previously, the Americans were leading the military operations here, and trying to stand up the ISF. And then, after that, and I saw this with my own eyes in 2005, they began to do bilateral operations. And then by the time I left, there were limited unilateral operations where the ISF was conducting the intelligence and planning, and the actual operations. And now, we’ve gotten to the point where as of later next week, everything here...not everything, minor points that are still unilateral on the U.S. side, but I would say some large number, let’s just throw it out there, say 90% of the operations are going to be either unilateral with the ISF doing them, or bilateral with the ISF, or the Iraqi Security Forces, leading the operations. So in Nineveh, there’s been tremendous progress.

HH: Now in Mosul itself, can civilians walk the streets without fear of IED’s exploding and snipers?

MY: It's still dangerous here. It's not anything like it was when I left. Now when I talk with the soldiers here, to them, it seems very dangerous, which it is. They have about 8-12 IED's a day, still, but those IED's, generally speaking, are not anything like what they used to be about a year ago. A year to a year and a half ago, they would be catastrophic attacks, could destroy an entire vehicle. Now, a lot of them are actually just pipe bombs, and they're surface-laid. Now there was a vehicle that was very badly damaged about two days ago, a striker, but for the most part, they're just surfaced-laid pipe bombs, that sort of thing. The snipers previously were very good here in Mosul. Now, they're not so good. Now down in Ramadi, they're excellent, unfortunately. But no, in Mosul, the insurgents are on the run. They're hiding. And so they're fighting a losing game up here. It's not over, don't get me wrong. But the ISF is getting stronger faster than the insurgents are.

BAGHDAD

Outgoing Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was raked over the coals for remarks he made at a townhall meeting at the Pentagon on December 8, 2006:

My goodness, the stock market's open, their free press is there, they've got television, they've got radio, they've got schools that are open, the businesses are open, hospitals are open, there are new textbooks.

I mean, if you just watched what's happening every time there's a bomb going off in Baghdad, you'd think the whole country's aflame. But you fly over it, and that's just simply not the case. There are people out in the fields working, and there's cars in the gas lines waiting to get fuel.

His words are true. But his critics and opponents of Operation Iraqi Freedom twisted them to stick the knife in him one more time before he left office.

Here's a blog entry by an Army Captain currently serving in Iraq that was written several weeks before Mr. Rumsfeld made his remarks that confirms the truth of what he said:

“-- Flying over Baghdad, one can see mile after mile of tan, two-story homes stretching out to the horizon, satellite dishes visible on almost every roof. The day before our trip, Sadr City was hit by six car bombs, killing more than 180 Shi'a civilians and wounding 200 more, so the traffic today is relatively light. Many side streets appear to be blocked by the residents with trash or other improvised obstacles in order to prevent VBIEDs. The Iraqi children take advantage of this to play soccer unobstructed in the street. Unlike American cities, the neighborhoods appear to get worse the farther we fly from the city center, until eventually the city's outskirts are dominated by fields serving as impromptu garbage dumps.

“The country side transforms from green fields to a mixture of brown dirt fields bisected either by tall roads sprouting from irrigation canals or rows of palm trees. Soon, the only vegetation visible is the sparse scrub brush sprouting from the white, chalky ground. Eventually, the landscape becomes desert, and old fighting positions for tanks begin to

appear. As with the First Gulf War, the Iraqis made the mistake of not digging deep enough into the ground so that the position is not surrounded by an obvious berm of raised dirt, thereby giving away the position from a distance. In addition to the fighting positions, there are much deeper holes dug, with unpaved driveways about 50 feet long, wide enough for two trucks, and descending about 20 feet deep into the desert floor. I saw these on my trip to Tikrit as well, and had no idea what they could be. My best guess is that they are wells, although before the flight I was talking with one of the Blackwater guys relayed a story about four fully loaded Scuds that were just recently dug up, fully intact.

-- The landscape is dotted every few miles with single story, mud brick houses the same color as the surrounding desert. We come across some small farms farther out in the countryside. A man and a woman in a hijab are digging by hand with hoes. I cannot imagine what a rough life it must be for these rural Iraqis to eke a living out of this barren earth. And yet they've been doing this here for thousands of years. On the other hand, we also fly over fields with rows of crops covered with plastic insulation and more modern irrigation/spraying systems.

-- Our gunner, a former Special Forces operator armed to the teeth, makes an effort to wave back to everybody on the ground, who are surprisingly friendly: all the children on small farms we pass, boys shepherding flocks of sheep; a farmer waving a reed at us near a small mosque with the dome destroyed. Not all Iraqis were so friendly: on the trip back to Baghdad, we fly over a boy who appears to try to throw a rock at the trail helicopter.

-- As we cross over the Tigris, tall reeds (somewhere between 12-15 feet high, I'd guess) in which a person could disappear dominate the surrounding marshland. We pass two zaugurats (sp?) (circular pyramids that to most Westerners probably resembles a giant stone Cinnabon), one near a city, the other amidst the ruins in the middle of the desert. We fly over a gleaming white city with a large water tower over a small at a bend in the river. On the way back, we pass an ancient palace whose mud walls are still intact. One of the tragedies of Iraq is that there are so many beautiful old architectural sites that would allow the Iraqis to make a fortune from tourism if they would only stop killing each other."(Notes from Salah ad Din Province by Ben of Mesopotamia, December 1, 2006)

Baghdad is where most of the news comes out of Iraq to the rest of the world. It is common knowledge that our enemies stage terror attacks there to garner media coverage because that's where the most cameras and American reporters are.

In the past year, however, with the formation of the freely elected Iraqi government, our enemies have taken the fight in Baghdad to a new level because they cannot afford to allow the government to succeed. Al Qaeda, Sunni and Baathist deadenders and Iranian backed militias have all been maneuvering to prevent the government from controlling Baghdad.

Extremists from both sides have been instituting sectarian cleansing, creating rifts where

there were none before and which most Baghdad residents do not wish to see happen. Neighborhoods have been forced to wall themselves off and form their own protective patrols. Even if the planned operations to control Baghdad succeed, it will be years before the psychological and economic scars heal. An example to learn from might be the 1968 riots in Washington, D.C. when Martin Luther King was killed. Vibrant neighborhoods were destroyed and the racial divide exacerbated such that it was decades before those neighborhoods recovered.

The lack of an effective police force has only added to the misery of the residents of Baghdad. In the months before the liberation of Iraq, Saddam Hussein emptied his prisons of criminals, knowing that they would wreak havoc on the populace in his stead. Many professionals have left Baghdad, or sent their families away, as waves of kidnappings and murders took their toll.

But life goes on for the seven million people living there. The economy grows--not as much as it could--but it grows. Iraqis come from poorer parts of the country seeking a better life. Water, sewage, electricity and telephone service is improving. Civilian air traffic is expanding at Baghdad International. The daily traffic jams are a testament to the vitality of Baghdad despite all the danger.

PROGRESS IN IRAQ

Miracles have been performed in Iraq. Not by gods, but by men doing God's work. Saddam Hussein was one of the most evil rulers of the 20th century. Numerous Iraqis have told this writer that only America could have liberated them from Saddam and his sons. Without America, their fate was to be ruled by the Hussein family for years to come.

From the time Saddam took power in 1979 until he was overthrown by American and coalition forces in 2003, Iraq was run in to the ground while it's oil wealth was looted by Saddam and his henchmen.

The Iraqi people knew nothing but war, genocide, torture, paranoia, deprivation and tyranny for the entirety of Saddam's occupation of Iraq. Large segments of the population, especially Shiites in the former Saddam City area of Baghdad, now known as Sadr City, were denied proper education.

Those who question why Iraqis haven't gotten it together after being liberated almost four years ago must take in to account the psychological trauma of generations of Iraqis who suffered and survived those years. Nearly every family lost at least one family member to Saddam. Many lost dozens. The numbers of widows and mothers whose children were killed is staggering. Saddam even murdered members of his own family.

One Iraqi said after the liberation, "Now every mother owns her son. Before there were two choices: Die in Saddam's wars or die in Saddam's jails."

The national infrastructure of Iraq was in a shambles after Saddam's reign. The electric grid was woefully outdated and dedicated to serving the elite in Baghdad. The sewage system was in similar condition with places like Sadr City having no sewage system at all.

Yet out of the ashes of that cruel existence, a new Iraq is being born. While the enemies of freedom within and without Iraq try with all their might to strangle the infant Iraqi democracy in its cradle, Iraqis and those who want Free Iraq to succeed are valiantly making progress throughout the country.

Positive reports about this progress are hard to come by. In recent months two (just two) stories about that progress have hit the mainstream press. Unfortunately, they were published during the holidays when fewer people pay close attention to the news.

The first came out right before Thanksgiving:

"Most Americans don't understand something equivalent to the Marshall Plan has been accomplished in Iraq," said Dean G. Popps, principal assistant secretary of the Army for acquisitions, logistics and technology.

The Army is the program manager for \$20 billion in U.S. taxpayer money that flowed to Iraq after the 2003 invasion to spur a building boom of more than 4,000 projects.

....Today, the Pentagon is handing out a score sheet:

- Six new primary care facilities, with 66 more under construction; 11 hospitals renovated; more than 800 schools fixed up; more than 300 police stations and facilities and 248 border control forts.

- Added 407,000 cubic meters per day of water treatment; a new sewage-treatment system for Basra; work on Baghdad's three plants continues; oil production exceeds the 2002 level of 2 million barrels a day by 500,000.

- The Ministry of Electricity now sends power to Baghdad for four to eight hours a day, and 10 to 12 for the rest of the country. Iraqis are now free to buy consumer items such as generators, which provide some homes with power around-the-clock.

...The Army Corps has ferried reporters to what it considers successful sites in an effort to get a few positive stories on reconstruction. But rarely do any materialize, Mr. Popp said. (Rebuilding in Iraq Tops 4,000 by Rowan Scarborough, The Washington Times, November 20, 2006.)

A month later, during Christmas week, Newsweek International published an article about Iraq's booming economy. The information was so shocking that the author and editors at Newsweek, while not glossing over the troubles in Iraq (not included in this excerpt) didn't try to hide their amazement:

Civil war or not, Iraq has an economy, and—mother of all surprises—it's doing remarkably well. Real estate is booming. Construction, retail and wholesale trade sectors are healthy, too, according to a report by Global Insight in London. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce reports 34,000 registered companies in Iraq, up from 8,000 three years ago. Sales of secondhand cars, televisions and mobile phones have all risen sharply. Estimates vary, but one from Global Insight puts GDP growth at 17 percent last year and projects 13 percent for 2006. The World Bank has it lower: at 4 percent this year. But, given all the attention paid to deteriorating security, the startling fact is that Iraq is growing at all.

...Even so, there's a vibrancy at the grass roots that is invisible in most international coverage of Iraq. Partly it's the trickle-down effect. However it's spent, whether on security or something else, money circulates. Nor are ordinary Iraqis themselves short on cash. After so many years of living under sanctions, with little to consume, many built up considerable nest eggs—which they are now spending. That's boosted economic activity, particularly in retail. Imported goods have grown increasingly affordable, thanks to the elimination of tariffs and trade barriers. Salaries have gone up more than 100 percent since the fall of Saddam, and income-tax cuts (from 45 percent to just 15 percent) have put more cash in Iraqi pockets. "The U.S. wanted to create the conditions in which small-scale private enterprise could blossom," says Jan Randolph, head of sovereign risk at Global Insight. "In a sense, they've succeeded."

Consider some less formal indicators. Perhaps the most pervasive is the horrendous Iraqi traffic jams. Roadside bombs account for fewer backups than the sheer number of secondhand cars that have crowded onto the nation's roads—five times as many in Baghdad as before the war. Cheap Chinese goods overflow from shop shelves, and store owners report quick turnover. Real-estate prices have risen several hundred percent,

suggesting that Iraqis are more optimistic about the future than most Americans are. (Iraq's Economy is Booming by Silvia Spring, Newsweek International, December 25, 2006-January 1, 2007 issue.)

This writer witnessed firsthand the economic boom Newsweek describes on a trip to the Kurdish north with a group of Gold Star parents in November, 2006. Cars were everywhere. Appliance stores were everywhere. Construction of housing, buildings and roads was going on everywhere. New electricity and phone lines were going up everywhere--especially in the countryside. Restaurants, new car dealerships, computer stores, hotels and parks were opening everywhere.

The Kurdish north is the most peaceful part of Iraq, but that's not by chance - it came from years of hard work, dedication and a desire to look toward the future rather than seek retribution for the past.

It is a little known fact that no American has been killed in the Kurdish north since Operation Iraqi Freedom.

MANY IRAQIS FEEL SAFE IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS

An astonishing ninety-six percent of Iraqis surveyed in regions covering two-thirds of Iraq's eighteen provinces said they feel safe in their neighborhoods. (State Dept., October 2006, margin of error plus or minus four percent)

Those provinces are Dahuk, Irbil, Sulaymaniyah in the Kurdish north, Karbala, Babil, Wasit, Qadisiyah, Najaf, Muthanna, Dhi Qar, Maysan and Basrah in the central and southern regions.

A BEACON OF HOPE

The Free Iraqi government, as troubled as it is, is itself a miracle. In the last election held under Saddam Hussein, in October 2002, Saddam's government claimed he won 100 percent of the vote on a referendum on whether he should rule for another seven year term.

A little over two years later, real elections were held in Iraq, followed by a real referendum on a new constitution followed by a third real election for a parliament. Municipal elections have also been held.

The 21st century reality of purple fingered Iraqi voters and the tyrant Saddam being brought to justice has inspired hope in the hearts of other oppressed peoples in the Middle East and fear in the tyrants who rule them. Do not be fooled by those who talk about the Arab street rising up against America. It's been almost four years since Saddam was toppled. Since then the people of Lebanon have asserted themselves against Syrian domination and Iranian intrigue while Libya gave up their weapons of mass destruction without a fight. Egypt and Saudi Arabia have taken tiny steps toward democracy.

In the hearts of many in that region is a desire that America will one day liberate their country.



Irbil, Iraq, November 2006

U.S. DEATHS AS A RESULT OF INTERNATIONAL TERROR ATTACKS ON THE HOMELAND SINCE THE LIBERATION OF IRAQ:

Zero

U.S. CASUALTIES IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

An estimated 600,000 Americans have served in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

As of January 18, 2007, the Pentagon reports:

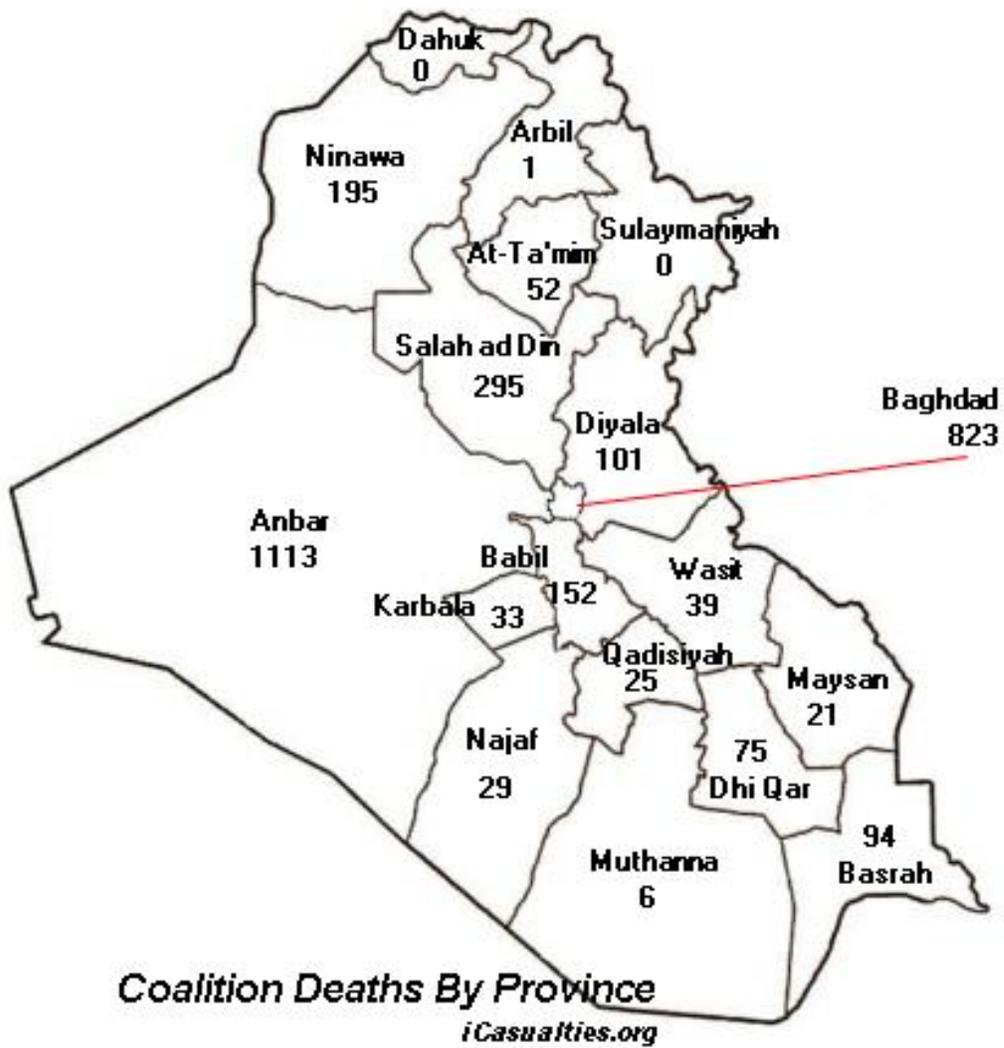
2,435 Americans have been killed in action serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom.
585 Americans have died from non-hostile causes.

There are large parts of Iraq where no American has been killed in the war, a fact the news media does not report.

Over 50% of those wounded in action returned to duty within 72 hours (12,733.)
10,218 wounded in action did not return to duty within 72 hours. Of those, there is no readily available information to determine how many wounded returned to duty in total.

As of September 15, 2006, National Geographic reported that 468 servicemen and women have lost a limb to amputation as a result of service in Iraq. Of those, 78 have lost more than one limb.

In late December 2006, news headlines reported that the number of U.S. deaths in Iraq had surpassed the number of those killed in the terror attacks of September 11, 2001 (2,967.) That it took almost four years of the terrorists being on the defensive in Iraq to reach what it took them two hours to accomplish when they were on the offensive was not reported by a news media eager to score political points.



ENEMY CASUALTIES AS A MEASUREMENT OF PROGRESS IN THE WAR ON TERROR

*By Larry Schweikart
Professor of History*

The “body count” of Americans killed in Iraq is updated daily by the U.S. media. At the time of this writing, just over 3,000 Americans have been killed in Iraq. (Notice that the media *never* includes American casualties in Afghanistan or elsewhere in the War on Terror—deliberately to “de-link” Iraq from the War on Terror).

A measurement of progress in any military conflict, however, is the number of enemy killed. If, as most leftists say, “*All Muslims are not violent/all Muslims are not terrorists*”—a point with which I agree—then we are left with a stunning conclusion: the number of terrorists is finite. Therefore, progress can, and should, be measured in part by how many terrorists/“insurgents” we have eliminated in Iraq and Afghanistan.

These are numbers that the news media refuses to report, and which the media does not want Americans to know. They are overwhelming. In the media’s campaign to demoralize Americans about the War on Terror, these are numbers that would cause most Americans to take heart.

Strangely, the media has received support from the Bush administration and the Pentagon, which have chosen not to release such numbers, let alone celebrate their implications. Why? The answer is that the Bush administration concluded early on that to emphasize enemy dead would revive the Vietnam-era “body count” paradigm, and President Bush chose to avoid that entirely. It was also thought that such an emphasis would appear “insensitive” and “un-politically correct” for our age. As a result, however, Americans are left not only with a one-sided assessment of what is happening in Iraq, and in the War on Terror, but more important are blinded to the incredible, and very real, progress we and our allies are making.

If the U.S. government does not routinely release these numbers, how are they obtained? They must be gleaned from other existing, often hostile, sources and involve a category loosely called “civilians.” For example, left-wing web sites, such as the “Iraq Body Count,” (www.iraqbodycount.net), claim absurd numbers of up to 44,000 civilians killed in Iraq. My early estimates extracted from combat accounts since the war began, put the number of terrorists/“insurgents” killed at 20,000 between 2003 and early 2006. I was low—way low.¹

Using *USA Today*, July 26, 2006, and the *New York Times* of June 7, one can figure out what is happening. Both sources cite the statistic of 3,149 “civilians” killed in June 2006. This is consistent with UN reports of 100 civilians per day killed in Iraq in June. Yet the

¹ Special thanks to an anonymous source known here as “Southack” for help on these numbers.

Iraq Coalition Casualty Count put the number of “Iraqi Security Forces and Civilian Deaths” in June at 870. If there were 3,149 “civilians” killed yet only 870 of them were genuinely civilians and security forces, what were the other 2,879 bodies? Terrorists and “insurgents” perhaps? Seems likely.

One of the difficulties that the UN and other “objective” observers have had is distinguishing civilians from terrorists. If the Iraq Coalition Casualty Count is anywhere near accurate, however, and some 2,800 “non-civilian” bodies were in Iraq morgues in June, then in fact some 93 terrorists/“insurgents” per day were being removed from the battlefield, or, since March 2003, it means well over 100,000 non-civilians have been killed by coalition forces since the beginning of combat—perhaps upwards of 120,000. To be safe, using UN/*New York Times* numbers, we arrive at 75 terrorists/“insurgents” per day, or 36,000 dead enemy fighters since combat began.

Americans have experienced a killed in action/wounded ratio of 13% (although an astonishing 55% of American wounded return to duty in 72 hours!) However, the terrorists are almost certainly experiencing a far lower level of medical success with their wounded. Therefore, it is likely that their numbers of dead-to-wounded are higher. At a ratio of eight wounded for every terrorist killed, using the low end of 36,000 enemy dead, we could conclude some 288,000 have been wounded since the beginning of combat. If, however, we assume that fewer wounded survive, then it is likely that the number is closer to 140,000. This doesn’t even factor in the deserters—all the jihadists who, upon seeing their vile brethren vaporized, quietly dropped their IEDs and went home, never to fight again. (One indicator that this is an impressive number is the surging size of the Iraqi national army and police forces, made up to some degree of former “dead-enders” who now hope to get on the winning side). Nor does it include the more than 5,000-plus known al-Qaeda dead in Afghanistan under Operation Enduring Freedom.

How realistic are these estimates? We glean some insight from reports of specific battles and campaigns that have already been published by the soldiers who were there. For example, Bing West’s book on Fallujah, *No True Glory* (Random House, 2005), offers insight on the incredible casualties inflicted on the jihadists in that 2004 battle, where one American sniper alone had 100 kills. Iraqi/Baghdad morgue totals, less actual identified civilian deaths, suggest more than 100,000 enemy dead in the last six months, a number consistent with individual battle reports over this time. This was further confirmed by *Newsweek*’s report last year that the mullahs were running out of males to use as suicide bombers, and they had resorted to using women. Further, the statistics on IEDs, presented earlier in *FrontPageMagazine.com*, indicate that the terrorists are having to launch more and more attacks with fewer and fewer results.²

In my book, *America’s Victories*, I argued that Iraq was a giant “Roach Motel,” in which the terrorists check in, and only leave via the morgue.³ The real Iraq body count suggest I

² See my article, “The Failing Insurgency,” *FrontPageMagazine.com*, August 14, 2006, <http://www.frontpagemag.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=23840>

³ Larry Schweikart, *America’s Victories: Why the U.S. Wins Wars and Will Win the War on Terror* (New York: Sentinel, 2006).

understated my case by several orders of magnitude. Let me reiterate that no one is looking at the enemy wounded, many of whom will never again fight, or deserters/quitters. As the Japanese found out with their kamikaze pilots, there is a finite number of “warriors” willing to commit suicide. There is also—even for the most fanatical of bushido-ist Japanese and Islamic jihadists—a critical mass in which “fighters” and would-be suicide bombers say “no mas” and quietly abandon the front. The “Roach Motel” strategy, as bloody as it is, works as well for us in Iraq as it worked for Lord Chelmsford when he sent his army into Zululand in 1879 to draw out the Zulus and destroy them. In Iraq, Abu al-Zarqawi’s last memos testify to the effectiveness of this strategy, as does his corpse.

Since I compiled these original statistics in the fall of 2006, I have kept a detailed record of enemy casualties, based on daily news reports. These daily reports suggest the number of enemy casualties has shrunk somewhat. This can be interpreted two ways: the pessimist would argue that we have become less effective and that the terrorists are winning. I would counter that in fact we have been *very* effective, and as a result we are rapidly approaching the “last 10% problem,” wherein as one gets closer to 100% success in anything, progress slows dramatically.

For example, based on news reports from both Afghanistan and Iraq since August 20, 2006, we have *confirmed* kills of 2,475 in Iraq and Afghanistan combined.⁴ This is a period of just over four months, meaning the annual toll at this rate is 7,425 dead and about 30,000 wounded. Repeat: these are the people we know of, where we can produce a body. What makes this a difficult process is that the governments in both Iraq and Afghanistan issue reports that cover different periods. For example, on 9/20/06, a news report from the Afghan government claimed 1,000 killed in “an offensive,” and in 9/29/06 in Iraq, an Iraqi minister said 104 terrorists were killed “in August.” Sometimes, the discrepancy is large, and in our favor. An August report in Afghanistan said “since September 1, 2006” 500 enemy had been killed, or 350 more than individual reports stated.

Such a lack of specificity and definition make absolute certainty almost impossible. But there are still other reports that confirm that even these numbers are likely low: in August, the Afghan government reported that, on top of the enemy killed, 80 “insurgents” went over to the government. In short, whatever the numbers are that we have, they are likely low, and the damage we are doing (including covert agents quietly eradicating terrorists) is substantial to say the least.

Conclusion

The implications of these numbers are staggering. Even using the lower-bound estimates, we have *wiped out an entire generation of terrorist-jihadists*. This will have a long-lasting impact on the Middle East and on the War on Terror. Is it any wonder we have not

⁴ In cases of conflict of numbers I used the higher number given, for a total difference of 225, making the lower-bound number since August, 2250.

suffered another attack here inside the U.S.? Some historians claimed that the carnage of the American Civil War “feminized” America in such a way as to give rise to the Progressive movement, with all its reforms. If that is true, we may be witnessing a quiet feminization of the Middle East as the macho suicide bombers and dead-enders vanish in a hail of lead and shrapnel. Not only are we physically eliminating the core of the terrorist enemy we confront, but we are possibly setting up the entire region for a social reform that it has never experienced: the growing influence of Muslim women who turn away from violence and the shame and honor culture that has produced Islam’s difficulties so far.

Larry Schweikart is a professor of history at the University of Dayton and is the co-author of the bestseller, A Patriot’s History of the United States with Michael Allen and is the sole author of America’s Victories: Why the U.S. Wins Wars and Will Win the War on Terror. Both books are due out in paperback editions this year. The paperback edition of America’s Victories will contain much of this analysis and other statistics on deaths due to IEDs.

DEBUNKING THE DISTORTIONS - IRAQ

I first arrived in Iraq in January 2004, posted at Camp Victory near the Baghdad Airport. Prior to arrival, my impressions of Iraq had been gleaned from various media reports. I attempted to get this information from as many sources as possible in order to get close to an accurate portrayal of events.

While I was still getting my bearings within those first few days in country, I saw that the general U.S. media had been misrepresenting many of the elements of the situation on the ground. For example, it was in January 2004 that I first heard Iraq was on the brink of civil war. This was relayed to me in a phone call I made to a friend back in the U.S. and the information had come from MSNBC. I have heard this information repeated over and over again in the past three years, but I have yet to see any sign of what is actually a civil war.

It's true that in central Baghdad, we hear the almost daily explosions of car bombs and IEDs. There is violence and it tends to run along sectarian lines. But this is more of an attempt by both the Shiite militias and al Qaeda to start a civil war. The Iraqi people are aware of this and are not buying into it. Most Iraqis don't really care who is Sunni and who is Shia. They intermarry, they form business partnerships and they mingle socially. The terrorist groups are trying to divide them and they don't really want to be divided. Most of Iraq is relatively peaceful today. Baghdad, Ramadi in Anbar Province and some Shiite pockets of southern Iraq are experiencing violence, but the majority of the country is now calm. Even parts of Baghdad experience little or no incidents at all. I hear this from my Iraqi co-workers who come into work from various parts of the city.

I befriended several soldiers with the 1st Cavalry on Camp Victory in my first six months in Iraq. They would tell me of raiding terrorist enclaves and of the resulting kills and captures. The company who employed me was renovating and building new water treatment plants out in villages that had never had clean drinking water before and as a result, infant mortality rates were decreasing. I was involved in the renovation and construction of public schools countrywide and attendance out in the provinces was increasing, particularly among girls.

I noticed that the mainstream media rarely or never mentioned these developments. They seemed obsessed with who was getting killed and the rising resistance to American troops in places like Fallujah and Najaf. Electrical output was exceeding prewar levels countrywide and yet, all we heard about on the news was about power outages in Baghdad. Because of these obvious distortions, I began to scrutinize reports about Iraq more closely than ever before. I was, and remain appalled at the blatant negative spin that was put on information coming out of Iraq to be beamed onto television sets, newspapers and the internet all across the U.S.A.

In April of 2004, when things had gotten particularly grim with al Qaeda and the Ba'athists rising up in Fallujah and Muqtada al Sadr's followers wreaking havoc in Najaf, al Kut, Baghdad and other parts of southern Iraq, the chow hall on what was then called

Camp Victory North (now called Camp Liberty) had to stop showing CNN on the big-screen TV during meals because the soldiers would get so angry at the skewed, negative reporting that they would shout, demanding that the DFAC staff “turn this crap OFF!” The perception among our soldiers who were patrolling the mean streets every day is that the reporting was exaggerated in order to make things look as if they were hopelessly out of control. This was a dark time, but U.S. forces were nowhere near to losing control of the situation. The DFAC staff began showing Sky News after numerous complaints and protests by the troops over CNN’s reporting. April 2004 was a very difficult time for us all (two of my co-workers were killed and one was kidnapped on April 9, 2004) and I didn’t think media spin could make it any worse than it was, but they somehow managed to do it. In personal conversations with our troops, they would almost unanimously express their disdain for the media coverage, frequently with vehemence. I did what I could to bolster their confidence and remind them that the majority of American people supported them and knew that they were doing a fantastic job.

I was at dinner in the crowded chow hall at Camp Taji, Iraq in November 2004 when it was announced on the TV news that John Kerry had decided to concede the presidential election. After a tense day of news of a possible repeat of 2000, the chow hall erupted into unabashed cheers, high-fives and hugs among the troops and contractors. I was astonished and delighted at the spontaneous and emotional reaction and joined the jubilation, blinking back tears of relief. Strangers were hugging strangers and one soldier picked me up and spun me around, whooping with joy. If there had been any doubt as to which candidate the deployed troops were supporting in that election, they were put to rest that evening.

I have worked on two coalition camps, two compounds in the red zone in Baghdad and in the International Zone over the past three years, affording me the opportunity to interact with many Iraqis from all walks of life. I have had Iraqi employees and co-workers, have worked with and gotten to know owners of construction companies, merchants, laborers, secretaries, engineers, their husbands, wives and their children. Iraqis do not tend to be shy about discussing politics. Perhaps it’s because they were forbidden to do so publicly for so long, but expressing opinions comes easily to the Iraqi people. Once I discerned this, I began to ask them questions about their impressions on many issues. I asked them what their shopkeepers and neighbors said about the various issues facing Iraq. I discovered that the vast majority of them are just like we are. I learned that they wanted the Americans to stay in Iraq for the unforeseeable future because they felt that their nation would disintegrate without our presence. They want to prosper and raise their families in peace and freedom. Their sense of humor mirrors ours and they are a warm, generous and emotional people, proud of their poetry, music and long, rich history. They tend to be bright, eager to learn and hard-working. I find them optimistic and cheerful for the most part which impresses me, considering the conditions under which they currently live.

They can express despair at times and this is usually when the violence is ramped up and they are frustrated with having to live in fear, to see their neighbors killed, to pass through multitudes of checkpoints just to get to work, or to sit in long lines at gas stations.

However, they tell me that things are much better as far as acquiring food, medicine and the basic necessities now that the sanctions are over. They are embracing the free-market economy and snapping up everything from iPods and PlayStations to designer clothing and imported foods and liquors. They emulate western culture in their dress, music and TV/movie tastes and even slang.

The media perception that the Iraqis do not want Americans in their country is one of their most flagrant misrepresentations. Iraqis have confirmed my suspicions that the media will talk to as many of them as they can until they find that person who will criticize President Bush and the Americans and that is the person who will be put on the air or quoted in the news story.

They have asked me, "Why does the American news make everything look so dark in Iraq? Why do they never talk about the good things?" The day after the 2006 midterm elections, several Iraqis expressed anxiety about their future to us and looked to us for encouragement we could not really give them. We did urge them to remain hopeful and told them that those of us who knew the truth would stay as long as we could and try to keep getting the truth out to the general public.

I am an optimist and I truly believe Iraq is going to work. I have seen too much good there and have witnessed the commitment the people have to freedom and democracy. For our troops and for the Iraqi people, I will continue doing my small part in attempting to get the real story out to the masses. If this includes remaining in Iraq to maintain credibility, then that is what I will do

(By Allegra, a pseudonym for an American who has spent the past 3 years as a contractor in Iraq)

THE BATTLE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

by Omar, co-editor, Iraq the Model website, Baghdad October 27, 2006

Excerpt:

...the outcome of war in Iraq does not affect Iraq alone, a victory means disrupting the ring of terror and extremism the enemies are trying to establish while failure would be equal to allowing them to establish that huge ring, or should I say that gigantic octopus of terrorists and terror-supporting regimes that would extend from Afghanistan in the east to Libya in the west and from Iraq in the north to Sudan and Somalia in the south.

And instead of creating islands of democracy and liberty, connecting them and extend from there to change the world to the better, the enemies would engulf those islands and add them to their multi-jointed entity of terror.

We need the decision-makers to rise above the rhetoric of who's right and who's wrong and focus on protecting the world from falling prey to the vicious enemies of civilization.

We are in the middle of this situation now and losing is not an option.

You know what, maybe the world isn't going to harvest direct benefits from winning the battle of Iraq but the world still has to spare no effort to win this battle, again not because winning will bring direct benefits but because losing here will bring subsequent losses that would no doubt be great.

(Omar, via e-mail, suggested this article for inclusion in this report)

THE MEDIA AS HEROES AND PROPHETS OF QUAGMIRE

Reporters are the true heroes in Iraq. Just ask them, they'll tell you:

Get off of it. I mean, we've got a hero in our newspaper, John Burns. Another hero, Dexter Filkins, there's a whole series of heroes over there. They're not biased about this. They want the best for the Iraqi people, they want democracy. Listen to what they're reporting, they're reporting chaos. (New York Times columnist David Brooks, Meet the Press, NBC, December 17, 2006.)

Neither the host Tim Russert, nor Brooks' fellow New York Times man Thomas Friedman who shared the segment with him, demurred.

Messer's. Brooks, Burns, Filkins and Friedman work for a newspaper that buried or ignored news about two real heroes: The only two service members awarded the Medal of Honor in the Global War on Terror.

The news of Army SFC Paul Ray Smith's Medal of Honor was reported on page A-13 of The Times, while the November 10, 2006 announcement by President Bush of Marine Cpl. Jason Dunham's Medal of Honor was ignored by The Times in the next day's issue. Both men gave their lives protecting their fellow soldiers and Marines in Iraq.

John Burns, Hero of Iraq, recently spoke about why The Times and the dominant media ignore positive developments in Iraq:

There are many good things that American forces -- that the Corps of Engineers, that U.S. AID and others are doing here which do not find an adequate voice, I will say, in the "New York Times." But we concentrate on what we think are the principal trend lines here. It's not to say we don't write about those things. And we think that the principal trend lines are the political and military events that we chronicle every day. And those, unfortunately, seem to be heading in all together the wrong direction. (Anderson Cooper 360, CNN, January 8, 2007.)

Thomas Ricks, reporter for The Washington Post, explained his point of view in reporting on Iraq:

Right now it's an insurgency, it's a civil war. It's, I think, the pure Hobbesian state, the war of all against all at this point. It isn't a—it's worse than a civil war in many ways. It's in a state of meltdown. The country is falling apart. (Meet the Press, NBC, December 10, 2006.)

Mr. Rick's hysterical outburst would be laughable if he weren't making his pronouncement on the most influential Sunday morning talk show on behalf of one of the most influential newspapers in the country.

“Hobbesian.” “All against all.” “Meltdown.”

Hogwash. This writer recently visited Iraq and saw none of what Messer’s, Ricks and Burns are reporting. I traveled large swaths of northern Iraq and saw no car bombs, no IEDs, no suicide bombings. I heard no gunfire. What I saw was a peaceful, booming society with a strong security presence to preserve their hard won freedom.

Kurdistan Regional Government Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani spoke about his take on the media’s reporting on Iraq in a meeting in Erbil I attended with a group of Gold Star parents whose sons had given their lives in Operation Iraqi Freedom:

“CNN International and al-Jazeera are equally bad in their coverage of the situation in Iraq. When I was in the United States recently and read the negative news in the Washington Post, New York Times and in the network TV broadcasts, I even wondered if things had gotten so bad since I had left that I shouldn’t return.” (CNSNews.com. November 6, 2006)

First Lady Laura Bush voiced her complaints about media coverage of Iraq:

“I do know that there are a lot of good things that are happening that aren’t covered and I think the drumbeat in the country from the media, from the only way people know what’s happening unless they happen to have a loved one deployed there, is discouraging and you know -- I know that the facts are not as discouraging.

“...Schools that are being built; parts of the country that are peaceful; and people are trying to rebuild their lives in a large part of Iraq. And we hear that, we hear that from friends, we hear that from Iraqis, we hear it from our troops who are there, and -- so, I’d like to see the media get a little bit more balanced view of it.” (Interview with Norah O’Donnell, MSNBC, December 14, 2006.)

For daring to buck the conventional wisdom of the high priests of the media, the First Lady (who, given her proximity to President Bush, might be in a position to know something about Iraq) was savaged by among others Rich Lowry, Editor of the National Review, who accused her of having “lost touch with reality on Iraq.”

The conventional wisdom of the media can often be wrong--seriously wrong. One only has to look at how former presidents like Truman, Ford and Reagan have been treated in and out of office. It took several decades for the same media that mercilessly tried to destroy these good men to recognize their intellect and the correct decisions they made regarding the most difficult issues of their presidencies.

While these men were in office, the certitude with which the media trashed these presidents as dunces, incompetents and dangers to the Republic brought great divisiveness to the country and crippled their presidencies. Now, years later as the truth has come out and history has validated their difficult decisions, their presidencies are held in much higher esteem by the media.

Such is the worth of the conventional wisdom of the media. We saw it with the coverage of the death of President Ford. The stumblebum who had made a crooked deal with President Nixon to pardon him in exchange for the presidency was now remembered as a great athlete and one of the most honest men in politics.

We've seen it in the coverage of the initial stages of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. "Quagmire." "Vietnam." "Quagmire." "Vietnam." If the media repeats it often enough then maybe one day it'll happen and they'll once again prove themselves to be the smartest people on the planet (as they regard themselves anyway.)

Like an unwelcome specter from an unhappy past, the ominous word "quagmire" has begun to haunt conversations among government officials and students of foreign policy, both here and abroad.

Could Afghanistan become another Vietnam? (A Military Quagmire Remembered: Afghanistan as Vietnam, R.W. Apple, Jr., The New York Times, October 31, 2001)

A week later, as Iraqi irregulars were harassing and slowing U.S. units in Nasiriya's "ambush alley," commentators back in Washington were describing a Vietnam-like quagmire. The "operational pause," when units stood in place and waited out a vicious sandstorm, was widely reported as a sign of a flawed battle plan and overextended supply lines. Then, after the sandstorms had cleared and the U.S. units resumed their northward march, many organizations were caught by surprise by the speed with which the Army and Marines took Baghdad. In hindsight, more patience and a longer view would have produced better reporting and analysis. Overall grade for consistency . . . C- (The Real-Time War (Iraq 2003) by Terence Smith)

From May 1 through June 1 in 2004, The New York Times put the Abu Ghraib scandal on the front page every single day--thirty two straight days.

Yet, as was mentioned before, The Times buried and then ignored the awarding of the only two Medals of Honor to soldiers who served in Iraq.

Former Secretary of Defense noted the disparity of coverage by the media in speeches and in an op-ed published a few months before his resignation:

Consider that a database search of the nation's leading newspapers turns up 10 times as many mentions of one of the soldiers punished for misconduct at Abu Ghraib than of Sgt. 1st Class Paul Ray Smith, the first recipient of the Medal of Honor in the global war on terror. (September 1, 2006, Los Angeles Times.)

Outside the White House Correspondents Association dinner on April 29, 2006, this writer conducted a survey of reporters, media executives, politicians and hangers on about their awareness of two individuals notable because of their actions regarding the Iraq war.

The Washington elite were presented with two pictures, one of Cindy Sheehan, the other of SFC Paul Ray Smith. Both were named, SFC Smith was pictured in uniform.

Out of over 100 Washington elite queried, all could tell why Cindy Sheehan was notable. However, only one could say why SFC Smith was notable. Only one: Fox News' Bret Baier was the only one who knew that SFC Smith was awarded the Medal of Honor.

No wonder the media thinks reporters are the real heroes in Iraq.

HELEN THOMAS, ALLY OF TERRORIST SUPPORTERS

Helen Thomas, columnist for the Hearst newspaper chain, is a credentialed White House correspondent who can be seen hectoring Bush administration spokesmen from her perch in the front row at the daily briefings.

Ms. Thomas has become a hero to the anti-American left for her obstreperous behavior and her opposition to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

On October 28, 2006, Ms. Thomas appeared at a fundraiser for the pro-terrorist antiwar group Code Pink. Ms. Thomas was given an award by Code Pink at the event. As documented elsewhere in this report, Code Pink has endorsed the terrorists in Iraq and has given them cash and humanitarian aid.

Ms. Thomas was notified of Code Pink's terrorist sympathies before the event, yet she lent her support to those working with our enemies any way.

Why Ms. Thomas has not been held accountable for giving her support to those who endorse and facilitate the killing of Americans and Iraqis by the terrorists in Iraq is a question for Hearst and the White House to answer.

--A book could be written about the hubris of the media and the fiasco of their coverage of Operation Iraqi Freedom. However for the purposes of this report, these select examples will do. Criticism of the media can be found throughout this report. It is the most common theme of those who have spent time in Iraq.--

THERE IS NO ANTIWAR MOVEMENT IN AMERICA

What the media call antiwar protests are actually pro-terrorist propaganda exercises organized by Marxist front groups whose leaders cut their teeth cheerleading the North Vietnamese communists to victory in the Sixties and Seventies, who spent their time in the Eighties aiding Marxist guerrillas in Central America and working with the Soviet Union on its nuclear freeze propaganda campaign, and in the Nineties organizing anti-capitalism riots while propping up Cold War remnant leftist dictators like Fidel Castro, Slobodan Milosevic and Saddam Hussein.

With rare exception, the media has deliberately failed to inform the American public about the beliefs and activities of the dominant so-called antiwar groups. Nor have they informed the public how closely these terrorist supporting groups are allied with a large portion of the Democrat party in Congress.

Three days after the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, the International Action Center, a front group for the communist Workers World Party, formed an antiwar group called International ANSWER. The cynical acronym ANSWER stands for Act Now to Stop War and End Racism.

ANSWER is pro-terrorist, anti-semitic and anti-American. It regularly holds pro-Hezbollah events in Washington, D.C. and in other major cities on both coasts.

It was one of the first of the antiwar groups to openly endorse the nascent insurgency in Iraq in 2003 with a statement published on the ANSWER and Workers World Party websites (Counter-Revolution & Resistance in Iraq by Richard Becker, May 15, 2003):

The anti-war movement here and around the world must give its unconditional support to the Iraqi anti-colonial resistance.

John Catalinotto, a spokesman for the International Action Center gave a speech in Rome, Italy on October 2, 2005 titled "Iraqi Resistance Supporters Within the US." He closed with this statement:

We and the Iraqi people have the same enemy, the imperialist government in Washington.

Long live the struggle of the Iraqi people to drive out the occupation. Long live the Iraqi resistance.

Former Johnson administration Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who served as counsel to Saddam Hussein, is a co-founder of the International Action Center and has spoken at many of their events.

ANSWER was publicly exposed and denounced by David Corn (Behind the Placards, Oct. 30, 2002) and the late Michael Kelly (Marching With Stalinists, Jan. 23, 2003) thus

paving the way for the next dominant players to come to the fore in the Marxist antiwar charade.

In 2002, a group of women bonded over their leftist anti-American politics to form two Marxist front groups: Code Pink Women for Peace, and United for Peace and Justice. Both groups were projects of Global Exchange; a Marxist NGO based in San Francisco founded by Fidel Castro groupie Susan 'Medea' Benjamin with her wealthy father's money.

Benjamin, along with Jodie Evans, a Wiccan named Starhawk and Gael Murphy formed Code Pink as a small publicity-stunt oriented outfit that branded itself as feminist while cloaking its Marxist roots. Code Pink has since expanded to small chapters across the country, but Medea Benjamin is the group's main headline grabber.

Benjamin and Global Exchange appointed old Sixties communist Leslie Cagan to head up the larger United for Peace and Justice as a Marxism-with-a-happy-face version of ANSWER that would be an easier sell to gullible liberals who wanted to recreate the Summer of Love.

While ANSWER and United for Peace and Justice have fought each other for the mantle of leading antiwar group and how public they should be in promoting anti-semitism and the destruction of Israel, they work together holding large rallies and marches.

The name United for Peace and Justice propagandizes the idea that the group is about non-violence and justice under the law. However, the group has been promoting and profiting from a music album titled "Halliburton Boardroom Massacre" by David Rovics.

The title song of the album is a call to arms that approvingly fantasizes the Columbine-style mass murder of the board of directors of defense contractor Halliburton by a soldier traumatized by war. Promotional material for the album encourages people to "take aim at a boardroom near you."

Code Pink joined many other so-called antiwar groups in the U.S. and around the world in publicly endorsing the insurgency in Iraq in 2005 at the World Tribunal on Iraq held in Istanbul, Turkey. This public embrace came after Code Pink gave the insurgency aid and comfort in the aftermath of Iraq's liberation with the establishment of Occupation Watch in Baghdad, an office dedicated to documenting coalition 'atrocities' and encouraging soldiers to quit fighting, and with transnational shipments of cash and 'humanitarian aid' to what Medea Benjamin called "the other side" in Fallujah.

Jodie Evans represented Code Pink at the World Tribunal on Iraq. A blog entry on the Code Pink website written by Evans from the tribunal gave her personal approval of the terrorists in Iraq:

We must begin by really standing with the Iraqi people and their right to resist. I can remain myself against all forms of violence, and yet I cannot judge what someone has to

do when pushed to the wall to protect all they love. What does the Iraqi resistance have to lose? They are fighting for their country, to protect their families and to preserve all they love. They are fighting for their lives, and we are fighting for lies. It is so amazingly obvious; we must get out of Iraq now. They will rebuild their country, it will take time, a long time, but they cannot start until we are gone.

This gushing endorsement of the killing of Americans and free Iraqis has since disappeared from Code Pink's website, but it has been documented.

The findings of the Jury of Conscience of the World Tribunal on Iraq, endorsed by United for Peace and Justice, Code Pink, International ANSWER and the Not in Our Name Project among dozens of 'peace' groups from the U.S. and around the globe, included this unambiguous endorsement of the terrorists in Iraq:

There is widespread opposition to the occupation. Political, social, and civil resistance through peaceful means is subjected to repression by the occupying forces. It is the occupation and its brutality that has provoked a strong armed resistance and certain acts of desperation. By the principles embodied in the UN Charter and in international law, the popular national resistance to the occupation is legitimate and justified. It deserves the support of people everywhere who care for justice and freedom.
(www.WorldTribunal.org, June 27, 2005)

Interestingly, and not widely reported, is the endorsement of that finding by the author of the popular Vagina Monologues, Eve Ensler, who served on the tribunal's jury.

A fourth Marxist group, the Revolutionary Communist Party, has created several front groups including the Not in Our Name Project and the more recent World Can't Wait (to Drive out the Bush Regime).

These Revolutionary Communist Party front groups have attracted the support of numerous Hollywood stars including Martin Sheen, Jane Fonda, Sean Penn, Susan Sarandon and Ed Asner.

Other organizations that have allied themselves over the past few years with these terrorist supporting groups in opposing America's efforts to prevail in the Global War on Terror include: Military Families Speak Out, Veterans for Peace, Iraq Veterans Against the War, the Cindy Sheehan led Gold Star Families for Peace, After Downing Street, Move On, Democrats.com, Raging Grannies and the American Friends Service Committee.

Many of the leaders of the main Marxist antiwar front groups work overseas with leftist and Islamic radicals in opposing America and Western civilization, as evidenced by the World Tribunal on Iraq.

While most of the American antiwar groups are careful to not run afoul of U.S. laws prohibiting financial aid to terrorists, some of their European allies have been upfront

about their financing of terrorism (Euro lefties Fund Iraq Insurgency by David E. Kaplan, U.S. News & World Report, June 23, 2005)

Those in Congress who have allied themselves with these terrorist supporting groups include the more than seventy member Out of Iraq Caucus, comprised of Democrat House Members led by Californians Lynn Woolsey, Maxine Waters and Barbara Lee, Rep. John Murtha, former Democrat presidential candidates Dennis Kucinich, Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson and Democrat National Committee Chairman Howard Dean.

Most of these groups function as 501(c)(3) tax exempt organizations.

ANTI-AMERICAN LEFT USES TRADITIONAL AMERICAN SYMBOLS TO UNDERMINE AMERICA

One of the more cynical tactics of the anti-American left has been to use traditional American symbols to prey on the sympathies and patriotism of normal Americans. For example, Military Families Speak Out (MFSO), which was founded in 2002 by two Sixties radicals.

The name of the group, while somewhat accurate, is an attempt to legitimize the leftist politics behind it by portraying itself as a popular pro-military group. Nothing could be further from the truth as MFSO has been working with many of the aforementioned terrorist supporting groups for years.

MFSO claims membership of around 3100 people. The universe of membership eligibility covers the extended family members of the approximately 2.4 million active duty, Guard and reserves comprising our armed forces.

The number of military family members MFSO represents is at best one tenth of one percent of military families around the country.

Cindy Sheehan's Gold Star Families for Peace was aided in it's founding by MFSO. Again, the left uses a traditional American symbol--the Gold Star mother--to prey on the sympathies of the American people.

The universe of membership eligibility for Gold Star Families for Peace covers any extended family member of a service member who died in any American war. The number of those who gave their lives in service to America from World War Two through the Global War on Terror is about 500,000.

Yet the membership for Gold Star Families for Peace is only about 108. At best, the number of Gold Star families Gold Star Families for Peace represents is about two hundredth of one percent.

Recently, another leftist outfit, Appeal for Redress, with help from several anti-American groups mentioned in this section, organized a campaign to get Guard, reserve and active

duty military to publicly denounce the war in Iraq under the guise of petitioning Congress. The group claims to have 1028 military signers of their petition.

With an estimated 2.4 million Guard, reserve and active duty, the group garnered support from about half of one tenth of one percent of servicemen and women.

The group claims 60 percent of the signers of their petition are OIF veterans. Out of 600,000 who have served in Iraq, that puts their support of OIF veterans at about one tenth of one percent.

THE LEFT LOVES DEAD AMERICAN SOLDIERS

The anti-American left uses American flag draped mock coffins in their protests to prey on the sympathies that normal Americans have for our fallen heroes. That these same groups support the terrorists that have put those men and women in real coffins is a point they hope Americans will ignore.

The left uses the names and photographs of the fallen in newspaper ads, on t-shirts, and in propaganda displays around the country. They also use crosses and empty combat boots to propagandize the deaths of our fallen heroes. These displays are made not to celebrate these men and women, but to try to demoralize patriotic Americans by making them believe we are paying too high a price defending our freedom.

The left uses the names and photographs of the fallen without the prior permission of their families. It causes these families great anguish to have their loved ones' abused in death like this. The left knows this, but they don't care.

Operation Iraqi Freedom has brought us a new tactic by the anti-American left: Celebrations of round numbers of dead American service members, the most recent of which was 3,000. Aided by the media, which used to accuse the Vietnam era Pentagon of being obsessed with *enemy* body counts, round numbers of dead Americans are called 'milestones' that are marked by the left with fervent party planning, press releases and candlelight celebrations that are little more than Valentines to their terrorist allies.

These public celebrations of American war dead have a dual purpose: Garner fawning coverage by the media to wear down morale at home and encourage the terrorists to keep killing Americans until the American people give up.

UNDERMINING MORALE AND THE MILITARY AT HOME

The anti-American left and their radical Islamist allies remember well the success the left had in demoralizing the home front during the Vietnam war. The U.S. never lost a major battle in Vietnam (including Tet, Walter Cronkite), yet the war is thought of as a loss for America because the war was lost on the home front.

In the Sixties and Seventies, the anti-American left worked with our communist enemies

to bring about the political victory they were unable to win on the battlefield. For example, Democrat Sen. John Kerry, then a reserve Naval officer who had served in Vietnam and Cambodia, met with our communist enemies in Paris in 1970. The next year he testified in uniform before the Senate that we should accept the communists' terms of surrender, while at the same hearing he vilified American soldiers as war criminals. Col. George 'Bud' Day, a prisoner of war being held by the North Vietnamese communists at the time has stated that Kerry's actions lengthened the POWs' captivity by giving the communists hope for a then elusive victory.

Just as during Vietnam, the left has been working to undermine morale by recruiting service members to act as spokesmen for their propaganda. One example is Army Lt. Ehren Watada who is facing court martial for refusing to deploy to Iraq when ordered to do so last year. Watada is being sponsored and promoted by the Revolutionary Communist Party front group the World Can't Wait and is attempting to 'put the war on trial.'

However, not every dissenting soldier paraded by the left is actually a veteran. The case of Jesse Macbeth shows how easily it is for the left to present lies as truth. Macbeth, who washed out of Army Basic Training in 2003, claimed to be a Ranger who dutifully followed orders to commit all sorts of atrocities in Iraq. MacBeth was a member and spokesman for Iraq Veterans Against the War for almost six months in 2006 before he was exposed as a fraud.

The left has been spreading propaganda to our troops by handing them subversive material at the gates to military bases, sending them subversive DVDs and e-mails and by contacting their families, including families of the fallen at funerals and memorial services.

Also just as during Vietnam, the left has been working to keep people from joining the military. Sadly, they have been joined by Vietnam veteran Democrat Rep. John Murtha in this effort. Murtha has told his fellow Americans to not serve their country in this time of war.

The left calls this effort 'counter-recruitment.' They use their dominance in the education field at the secondary and college level to agitate against the presence of military recruiters on campus and against recruiters contacting students. When they cannot prevent recruiters from being on campus, they use harassment and mob tactics to drive recruiters off campus.

The left also targets recruiting offices with protests and violence. Recruiting centers have had windows broken, vehicles torched and recruiters assaulted.

It's not that the left cares about our young people. They want to aid our enemies by causing our military to be undermanned and therefore unable to defend America.

Even wounded soldiers and their families have been targeted for abuse by the left at

military hospitals. Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. has been subjected to an almost two year campaign by the left of regular Friday night protests where the soldiers have been called murderers and war criminals. Similar protests have taken place with less frequency at Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego, California.

The main organizer of these despicable protests at military hospitals is Code Pink. Yet Code Pink counts among its many friends in Congress, Democrat Rep. John Murtha--who refused to disassociate himself from the group when challenged to do so last year.

WHERE ARE THE HUMAN SHIELDS NOW?

In the run-up to the liberation of Iraq, leftists from around the world traveled to Iraq as guests of Saddam Hussein to act as human shields. The propaganda stunt was meant to appeal to Western consciences as a means to prevent an attack on Saddam's government. The human shields said they wanted to protect Iraq's humanitarian infrastructure such as water treatment facilities and hospitals.

The human shields were housed and fed by Saddam's government. Their strategic placement was done in coordination with Saddam's government.

Medea Benjamin led a Code Pink delegation to Baghdad in February 2003 where she staged publicity stunts to persuade the world to keep Saddam in power.

When Saddam's government was overthrown, the human shields left.

In the nearly four years since, there have been no human shields from the left stationed in Iraq--even as terrorists have targeted Iraq's humanitarian infrastructure, workers and children with countless bombings.

The only ones acting as human shields for the Iraqi people are the men and women of the U.S. military and the coalition .

ANTI-AMERICAN GLOBAL ALLIANCE

The anti-American left has worked with the terrorist supporting governments of Cuba, North Korea, Syria, Iran and Saddam Hussein's Iraq to undermine America's efforts in the Global War on Terror. They have traveled to these countries (or in the case of North Korea aided it by protesting America in South Korea) and Venezuela to strengthen their bonds and plot strategy against America.

They have also organized international conferences that have brought together leftists and radical Islamists in Cairo, Beirut, Istanbul, Caracas, London and New York to coordinate strategies that give political cover to terrorism against American interests and Israel.

THE YEAR AHEAD

The anti-American left has been emboldened by the Democrats' sweep of the House and Senate in last November's election. They view the 110th Congress as theirs and intend to force the Democrats to bend to their will. The only thing standing in their way is the presidency of George W. Bush. The left hopes to fix that by engineering the simultaneous impeachment of President Bush and Vice President Cheney which would put Democrat Nancy Pelosi in the White House.

They will be aided by the Democrats' having declared impeachment to be a political, not legal process, when they voted at the end of his impeachment trial to keep President Clinton in office even though he was obviously guilty of committing felonies while president.

While impeachment is a long shot, the left will be working hard for it. Their short term goal is to defund Operation Iraqi Freedom. Initially, they will fight funding the proposed increase in troop strength in Iraq. They will also fight against more reconstruction money. They will then set about trying to impose deadlines on troop deployments by limiting funding authorizations.

They will also work to defund the terrorist detention center at Guantanamo while trying to litigate in our courts victories for the terrorists that cannot be won on the battlefield.

At the same time the Democrats will tie down the administration in investigations and twist the facts about Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo and terrorist interrogations such that some will say that the wrong person was hung on December 30, 2006. (The left has already said that, actually.)

Weak-kneed Republicans, more concerned with winning their next election or getting favorable press from the media elites than in preserving the Union, will slowly acquiesce as winter turns to spring. By fall we could very well be involved in a constitutional crisis not seen since the Civil War.

And it will be brought to you by people the media have told you very little about.

REFRESHER COURSE ON THE EVIL THAT WAS SADDAM HUSSEIN

Many opponents of Operation Iraqi Freedom have carried on over the past four years as if George Bush woke up one morning and knocked off Canada, instead of removing one of the top genocidal mass murderers of the 20th Century: Saddam Hussein.

Today, you can hear those opponents speak of how much better women had it under Saddam than now--conveniently neglecting the multitude of mass graves Saddam filled with Iraqi women and their children as well as the hundreds of thousands of women Saddam caused to be widowed and the hundreds of thousands of mothers who live without sons and daughters whose deaths were caused by Saddam.

Let us be clear: Saddam Hussein was an international terrorist who occupied the nation of Iraq. He harbored terrorists. He trained terrorists. He financed terrorists. He waged wars on his neighbors. He waged war on the people of Iraq. He corrupted the U.N. Oil for Food Program and looted the treasury of an oil rich nation while Iraqis suffered. He continued to work on WMD research until he was overthrown. The man was evil on a global scale.

Ask the Iraqis who suffered under Saddam. They've called him their Hitler, an occupier and, when asked about WMDs they've said that Saddam *was* a weapon of mass destruction.

Make no mistake; the world is a better and safer place with Saddam Hussein out of power and in the grave with his evil sons.

CAPTURED DOCUMENTS REVEAL SADDAM'S COMMITMENT TO WMDs, TERRORISM

From March 16th 2006 till November 2nd 2006 the Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO) released on its website thousands of documents captured in Iraq and that belonged to different departments and apparatus in Saddam's regime, such as the Iraq intelligence services, the Iraqi military institutions, Saddam's Presidential secretariat, etc.

Those documents represent only a very small portion of the millions of documents captured in Iraq after it was liberated. The documents that were made public on the FMSO website contain some very valuable information showing Saddam's strong relationship to international terrorism and show that Saddam's regime never stopped working on its WMD program.

Unfortunately on November 2, 2006, the website was shut down after the New York Times ran a story that day about complaints from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that on September 20, 2006, the FMSO website published a document from Saddam's regime's nuclear program that contained 'top secret' information on how

to build a nuclear weapon and that the information in the document could be used as helpful guidelines for other nations, including Iran, on how to build a nuclear weapon.

The problem with the New York Times article and the IAEA complaints is that the document published on the FMSO website on September 2006 is indeed an IAEA document that was presented by the Iraqis to the IAEA in 1996 as part of Iraq Full Final and Complete Declaration (FFCD) of its WMD programs. This FFCD document about Saddam nuclear program is not quite the top secret document that the IAEA claimed to it be since it has been available for many nuclear experts from different nations to look at and examine. Knowing the massive bureaucracy and the incompetence of the IAEA, it would have been quite easy for a nation like Iran (which is a member of the IAEA) to access this 1996 FFCD document and get the information that they want from it. The information contained in the document published in September 2006 would not benefit Iran anyway since the Iranians are already, and have been for several years now, at a more advanced stage than whatever technical information the 1996 FFCD document would provide.

Moreover there is a plethora of theoretical information available on the internet and published in academic books that give a lot of details on how to build a nuclear bomb, however the problem always remain on not how to build the bomb but how to get the right amount and quality of enriched uranium to do so.

Last, the IAEA has ignored a lot of important information in the Iraqi documents such as Iraq's re-use and rebuilding some portions of its banned nuclear program. Mainly the Iraqis were re-building their destroyed radio-chemistry nuclear laboratories and were fixing and re-using equipment that was crucial to their nuclear program like the Degussa vacuum furnaces.

One document dated January 2001 talks about Saddam himself authorizing his nuclear team to re-use the Degussa vacuum furnaces. The Degussa vacuum furnaces were supplied to Iraq in the 1980's by a German firm, Degussa AG, based in Frankfurt. These furnaces became the subject of investigations of the German firm in the early 1990s. The company claimed that they did not know that Iraq would have used them in its nuclear program. The New York Times published an article in 1998 titled "An Iraqi Defector Warns of Iraq's Nuclear Weapons Research" where the Degussa furnaces were mentioned as part of "previous" Iraq nuclear program and the controversy surrounding the sale of these furnaces and the investigations.

The preceding overview and the translation and analysis of the documents below were authored by Joseph Shahda, a blogger at FreeRepublic.com, a conservative news, analysis and activism forum. Mr. Shahda is originally from Lebanon and Arabic is his native language.

A. TERRORISM

There are ample evidences from some of the documents that Saddam's regime's relation to terrorism was much stronger than what most analysts believed before the start of the war.

1. One very important document talks about a meeting between the Iraqi Intelligence Service and Osama Bin Laden in 1995 under the authorization of Saddam Hussein himself (1)
2. Some documents talk about training the Arabs Fedayeens who are the non- Iraqi Arab terrorists since the year 2000 (2), train them to be suicide bombers and conduct other terrorist activities (3), and treat these Arabs Fedayeens the same as treating the Iraqi Special Forces in salaries and wages per an order from Saddam himself (4). These are the same Arabs Fedayeens who constituted later on the base of the "Foreign Terrorists Insurgency" in Iraq that has caused and continue to cause the death of thousands of innocents Iraqis.
3. Another document dated March 2003 talks about a meeting between Iraqi Officials in Damascus and the leaders of the Popular Front For the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) a terrorist group lead by Ahmad Gibril where the Palestinians pledged 500 fighters including groups that they call "Istish'Hadeyea" which means "Suicide Martyrdom" i.e. "Suicide Terrorists" to come to Iraq and fight the US lead coalition troop. (5)
4. A document dated May 1999 from Saddam Feedayeen headed by Uday Saddam Hussein talks about an operation called "Blessed July" to send suicide bombers and conduct terrorist operations in London. (6)
5. One particular document dated March 2001, talks about the Iraqi Air Force recruiting people from their own ranks to conduct "suicide missions" against Israel and US interests.(7)
6. Also one document dated March 2002 shows an order from Saddam Hussein to pay \$ 25,000 for the family of each Palestinian who conducts a suicide terrorist act against Israel.(8)

B. WMD PROGRAMS

On the WMD front, there are many documents which clearly show that Saddam's regime never stopped working on the WMD programs. In fact there is one document dated September 1998 where one senior Iraqi official admitted that they were conducting secret research related to the WMD programs but he warned the people involved in these program to be very careful from being caught by the UN weapons inspectors who were still in Iraq that month but kicked out by Saddam Hussein in December of that year. (9).

Below are summaries of the WMD documents related to Chemical Weapons programs

and the nuclear program.

I. CHEMICAL

Many captured Iraqi documents talk about the plans to produce the “Precursors” that can be used to make Chemical Weapons, these precursors were totally prohibited to be produced in Iraq as per the UN and they can only be imported in small quantities under strict UN rules and observations. It is worth noting that the plans and projects as shown in these documents were dated after December 1998 when the UN weapons inspectors left Iraq and before November 2002 when they came back, so Saddam regime had a free hand to venture in their WMD programs.

Most notably are documents:

1. Document that talks about the preparations of Potassium Cyanide and Sodium Cyanide where both of these materials can be used as precursors to make TABUN Nerve Gas. (10)
2. Document that talks about research to produce DICYLO HEXYL DIA CARBODIIMIDE which can be used to make VX Nerve Gas. (11)
3. Document that talks about a request for materials that can be used to make Chemical Weapons like Phosphorus Pentasulfide that can be used as a main precursor to make VX Nerve Gas. Other materials on the list like Phosphorus Oxy chloride, Thio phosphoryl Chloride and Thionyl Chloride that can also be used to make Chemical Weapons. (12)
4. Document about Saddam’s regime producing Nerve Gas detectors which was prohibited for the Iraqis to do by the UN since these detectors can be used by the Iraqis in case of an offensive Chemical attack to make sure that the wind carrying chemical gases does not blow back and hurt their troops. Even the Iraqis admit in the document that it was prohibited for them to produce the nerve gas detectors but they went on planning to produce it anyway. (13)
5. Document that talks about manufacturing of dozen Chemical contamination vehicles. These vehicles are mainly used during chemical warfare or during the transportation of chemical weapons or precursors to make chemical weapons. (14)

II. NUCLEAR

1. Moreover, there are documents that talk about Saddam’s regime’s projects to re-build some of the nuclear program facilities like RWTS (Radioactive Waste Treatment Station) (15) and Radio-Chemistry laboratories (16). These re-building of nuclear facilities projects were dated after the UN inspectors left Iraq in December 1998.
2. One particular document dated January 2001 shows an approval from Saddam Hussein to allow his nuclear scientists to use some nuclear equipment like the “Degussa” furnaces (17). The Degussa Vacuum furnaces were supplied to Iraq in the 1980’s by a German firm (Degussa AG based in Frankfurt Germany) and these furnaces later on became the

subject of investigations of the German firm in the early 1990's where the company claimed that they did not know that Iraq would have used them in its nuclear program. The New York Times had an article on August 15 1998 titled "An Iraqi Defector Warns of Iraq's Nuclear Weapons Research" (18) where the Degussa furnaces were mentioned as part of "previous" Iraq nuclear program and the controversy surrounding the sale of these furnaces and the investigations later on.

Footnotes: Below are the reference documents discussed above as shown in the DOCEX project and posted from March- November 2006 on the Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO) website.

- (1) Document: ISGZ-2004-009247
- (2) Document: CMPC-2003-005935
- (3) Document: ISGP-2003-00028868
- (4) Document: ISGQ-2004-00060580
- (5) Document: CMPC-2003-015588
- (6) Document: ISGZ-2004-018948
- (7) Document: BIAP-2003-000654
- (8) Document: ISGP-2003-00014647
- (9) Document: CMPC-2003-00284
- (10) Document: ISGQ-2003-00044424
- (11) Document: CMPC-2003-013956
- (12) Document: ISGQ-2005-00023243
- (13) Document: CMPC-2003-016083
- (14) Document: ISGQ-2004-00220151
- (15) Document: CMPC-2004-002191
- (16) Document: CMPC-2003-012331
- (17) New York Times article dated August 15 1998

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE:

America can not afford to lose in Iraq--neither can the Iraqi people. Were we to leave before the job is finished the damage done would be devastating: Sunni and Shia extremists would slaughter free Iraqis; terrorists would gain a base of operations with which they would plot attacks on America and our interests; the progress made by Iraqi Kurds would be wiped out; Iran, Syria, Turkey and Saudi Arabia would make moves and counter-moves to protect their selfish interests; America's allies in the Middle East would turn away from us as we would prove that we could not be trusted to stand by our friends.

The American people need to be patient. Experts say counter-insurgencies typically take from five to eleven years to defeat. In addition to an insurgency, we are fighting al Qaeda terrorists and have to deal with interference from Iran, Syria and duplicitous allies in the Middle East. This not a simple task, it will take time to resolve. Failure is not an option we can afford.

Much has been said by opponents of Operation Iraqi Freedom that Americans are not being asked to sacrifice to support the war. Americans do not need Big Daddy government to force them to do the right thing. Since the Global War on Terror began on September 11, 2001, when Americans took it upon themselves to fight back against the terrorists on United Flight 93, Americans have been volunteering to fight and support the war and our troops.

The best way to help is to join the military or work as a civilian for government agencies or contractors. If that is not possible for whatever reason, there are a multitude of ways Americans are volunteering and contributing. For example: care packages are being sent; donations are being made to buy things like helmet pads and Silly String; reputable charities are helping military families whose loved ones have been wounded or killed; volunteers are helping service organizations or acting as troop greeters for departing and arriving service members at airports; individuals are baking cookies or knitting blankets at home; communities have banded together to send school supplies, toys and sporting goods to children in Iraq that are distributed by soldiers and Marines.

Learn a language. America's efforts in the Global War on Terror are being hamstrung by a lack of fluent speakers of Arabic and other languages. Field intelligence, interrogations, document, video, phone and e-mail translations are all suffering from a lack of language skills. Good will efforts are also harmed by our lack of language skills.

Participate in pro-troops/pro-mission rallies and counter-demonstrations of antiwar protests. A major contributing factor to the betrayal of South Vietnam was the anti-American led protests that went virtually unchallenged. Peaceful, law-abiding demonstrations of support for our troops and their mission are a great morale boost and do not allow our domestic enemies to take to the streets unchallenged.

FOR AMERICAN POLITICIANS

Our troops must be allowed to win. The rules of engagement need to be adjusted so that they are able to take the fight to the enemy. The terrorists know what they can get away with and laugh at our troops. That needs to stop.

Former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld sent a classified memo to the White House in early November 2006 detailing options in Iraq that was leaked to the New York Times and published December 3, 2006.

Several of those recommendations were independently presented to a National Security Council staffer in a meeting in August 2005 by this writer and an Iraqi exile. In the meeting, the government was urged to start competing with meddling governments like Iran by buying the influence of Iraqi religious and political leaders and to initiate a massive jobs program to busy the idle hands of Iraqi men under pressure to take care of their families--thereby denying recruitment opportunities for Sunni and Shi'a insurgencies. These recommendations were rejected as "interfering with Iraq's sovereignty."

Those programs need to be enacted swiftly to ensure Iraq's sovereignty. Other governments are working to undermine free Iraq, we should be doing everything we can to help preserve it.

Mr. Rumsfeld also noted by inference in his memo that other U.S. government agencies have failed to adequately do their part in Iraq. These agencies must be forced to step up to the plate. Our military should not have to carry the burden shirked by others in the government.

Our allies and enemies are paying close attention to the words and actions of our politicians. Our allies are getting nervous and hedging their bets because they are the ones who will pay the price full on if we abandon them in Iraq. Our enemies are encouraged by politicians who preach defeatism and sow dissent at home. If politicians truly care about this country and want America to be secure, they will work to ensure our victory in Iraq, curb their rhetoric and stop associating with our domestic enemies like Code Pink and Cindy Sheehan.

Take care of our veterans and their immediate families.

Don't disparage the troops or their service. This is meant especially for Senators John Kerry, Richard Durbin and Representative John Murtha.

FOR PRESIDENT BUSH

Stop trying to appease your critics. Reinstate the Bush doctrine with regard to Syria and Iran. Win the #@*%ed war and be done with it.

FOR POLITICAL ACTIVISTS

The anti-American left is well funded and has national and international networks established. There is nothing on the pro-American right to effectively counter the left on the war. Grassroots activists on the right have been abandoned and ignored by grassroots leaders who have turned their fundraising efforts to issues like illegal immigration.

The public relations battle is being lost. It is not enough to rely on talk radio and the Internet to persuade the public of the need for victory--it takes grassroots organizing and activism. There are some grassroots organizers still out there doing the work, but they are starved for funding and support.

FOR IRAQIS

Free Iraqis understand that time is growing short for them. They know that their liberator, President Bush, has only two years left in office. Much as they would like to see him serve a third term as president, they are aware of our constitutional prohibition on that.

They are also concerned that the Democrats won both houses of Congress in the last election. They pay close attention to the American media and understand the implications for them of the rise to power by the Democrats.

Therefore it is imperative that free Iraqis work to preserve their freedom in the next two years. Many have and continue to do so. As corrupt as the Iraqi police forces have been, over 12,000 Iraqis have been killed while serving, training or applying to be Iraqi police officers. Iraqis are also volunteering to serve in the new Iraqi army, navy, air force and border patrol.

Iraqis overseas have been stymied from helping because of Iraqi politics, U.S. policies and threats of danger in Iraq and abroad. Many exiles do not want to be part of the dominant Iraqi political parties as they see them as corrupt or not working for the goal of a non-theocratic Iraq. The U.S. and Iraqi governments must make a greater effort to recruit Iraqi exiles and take advantage of their experience in free, pluralistic democratic societies.

Saddam's Hussein's daughter Raghda needs to be extradited from Jordan and brought to justice in Iraq for her alleged support of the insurgency.

Other leaders and financiers of the insurgency in neighboring countries must also be extradited and brought to justice in Iraq.

Preserving free Iraq will take a determined effort by Iraqis. An American civilian who volunteers in Iraq tells Iraqis who complain about their plight, "What have you done for free Iraq today?" This simple message should be on billboards everywhere in Iraq.

Religious factions should not be allowed to dominate the government. The religious

leaders, be they Sunni or Shi'a, have not brought peace to Iraq. Ayatollah Sistani, as respected as he is by the Shi'a, has allowed Moqtada al Sadr to undermine the government. American troops should not be put in the position of dealing with Sadr--the Shi'a need to dispatch him before he brings more death and misery to them and Iraq.

Those Sunnis who do so need to stop harboring terrorists in their midst. In some areas they are turning against them, but this needs to happen countrywide. The Haifa Street neighborhood in Baghdad is an example of an area where terrorists are harbored. Sunnis must surely realize that the terrorists they harbor care nothing for Iraqis. The same must be said about those who harbor Iranian agents.

Iraq is a wealthy country with enormous potential. The Iraqi people have been given the greatest gift one nation can give another: freedom. Iraqis need to follow the example set by their countrymen in the Kurdish north. A peaceful, prosperous, non-theocratic democracy in Iraq is not only possible, it already exists. Learn by that example and Iraq will succeed beyond all expectations

A CLOSING THOUGHT

By Joseph Shahda

The price of failure in Iraq will be that the terrorists--whether they are Al Qaeda or the Iranian and Syrian terrorist regimes or a combination of all of them--will not only control Iraq but the whole Middle East. With that control will come consequences to the US, the West, Iraqis, and all freedom loving people that are worse than our most horrible nightmares. The terrorists will use the hundred of billions of dollars in oil revenues available to them to orchestrate terrorist attacks that will be more horrific, more deadly, and more damaging than the 9/11 terrorists attacks, including the use of nuclear weapons. They will also use the oil they control as a weapon to blackmail the Western and the world economy in to submission for many years to come.

If a band of terrorists dwelling in camps in Afghanistan with a limited budget and few volunteers were able to carry out the 9/11 terrorist attack, killing almost 3000 of our citizens and severely disrupting our economy, imagine the incredible horrors that the terrorists will inflict on us if they control the whole Middle East and its vast resources.

Please bear this in mind as you decide whether to support victory or defeat in Iraq.

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