GI SPECIAL 4K1:

CELEBRATION TIME,
BUT NOT FOR THE OCCUPATION

Iraqi soldiers and civilians celebrate after US troops dismantled checkpoint at the entrance of Baghdad's enclave of Sadr City Oct. 31 2006. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

General Strike Forces
Collaborator Prime Minister To Order
Occupation Checkpoints Opened:
“Our Strike Would Have Spread To The Rest Of Baghdad Tomorrow And The Whole Of Iraq The Next Day”

“Motorists Stretched Their Arms Out To Flash V For Victory Signs. Some Celebrants Carried Pistols Or Rifles”

10.31.06: Shops closed as part of a general strike in Baghdad's Sadr City neighbourhood. Shiite militants have won a major political victory when Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki ordered US and Iraqi units to lift a blockade around Sadr City. (AFP/Ahmad Al-Rubaye)

[Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in. He writes: My hunch is that any moves the U.S. makes against Maliki and Sadr will come after the mid-term elections are in the bag. Bush isn't stupid enough to lose the war before Nov 7. After that, James Baker's panel will release its findings and from the looks of it, the main enemy in Iraq for the U.S. will be Sadr and his Mahdi army because it is quite large and refuses to collaborate with U.S. plans.]

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“If they had not lifted the siege, our strike would have spread to the rest of Baghdad tomorrow and the whole of Iraq the next day,” said Jalil Nouri, a senior aide of al-Sadr in Baghdad.
October 31, 2006 BAGHDAD, Iraq (CNN) & By SINAN SALAHEDDIN, Associated Press Writer & By Hamza Hendawi, Associated Press

U.S. and Iraqi checkpoints around Sadr City and other parts of Baghdad were being opened Tuesday with vehicles passing through unchecked, following an order by Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, the U.S. military said.

Residents danced in the streets with jubilation Tuesday after U.S. and Iraqi troops ended a weeklong security cordon of Baghdad’s Shiite Sadr City district. Men and children gave out chocolates and sodas as the troops packed up and drove away.

Motorists stretched their arms out to flash “V” for victory signs. Some celebrants carried pistols or assault rifles. Some wore black shirts and camouflage pants, hallmark choices of Mahdi Army militiamen.

Tuesday’s festive mood was in sharp contrast to the anger felt by many in Sadr City over the past week, when Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki’s government was accused of doing nothing to alleviate suffering in the teeming district.

Searches of vehicles at checkpoints on roads leading to Sadr City brought traffic to a near standstill. Motorists reported spending hours in their cars or taxis waiting for their turn to proceed.

Sadr City’s store owners and schools heeded a call from al-Sadr and stayed shut Tuesday as part of a protest strike. The strike call, announced by loudspeakers at mosques across Sadr City, was observed elsewhere in Baghdad.

Ahmed Jassim Mohammed, a 35-year-old textile merchant in Shurja market, Baghdad’s biggest and oldest, left his store shuttered Tuesday and returned home when he heard of the strike call.

“In solidarity with our people in Sadr city, 80 percent of Shurja market is closed today,” he said.

His friend Hazim Hassan, 28, was also not available for business Tuesday, closing his transport company offices to heed the strike call. “We have to be united and show support to our friends in Sadr City,” he said.

But when news broke that the security cordon was lifted, al-Sadr supporters declared it a victory for their leader.

“If they had not lifted the siege, our strike would have spread to the rest of Baghdad tomorrow and the whole of Iraq the next day,” said Jalil Nouri, a senior aide of al-Sadr in Baghdad.

“This is a victory for us and for al-Sayed Muqtada,” said Nouri, using an honorific to refer to al-Sadr.
U.S. troops were seen abandoning checkpoints and driving away in their Humvees and armored Stryker vehicles.

Jubilant al-Sadr supporters carried large portrait posters of their leaders as they marched in Sadr City to celebrate the end of what residents have been calling “the siege.”

U.S. forces disappeared from the checkpoints within hours of the order, setting off celebrations among civilians and armed men on the edge of the sprawling slum controlled by the Mahdi Army militia run by radical anti-American [translation: moderate, anti-Occupation] cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

Iraqi troops loaded coils of barbed wire and red traffic cones onto pickup trucks, while small groups of men and children danced in circles chanting slogans praising al-Sadr, who earlier Tuesday had ordered the area closed to the Iraqi government until U.S. troops lifted what he called their "siege" of the neighborhood.

The order for all the entrances of Sadr City to reopen by 5 p.m. (9 a.m. ET) came after a strike ordered by nationalist Muqtada al-Sadr shut down the sprawling Shiite slum Monday.

In a statement addressed to local supporters Monday, al-Sadr had warned of unspecified action if the military's "siege" continues. He also criticized what he called the silence of politicians over actions by the U.S. military in the district.

"If this siege continues for long, we will resort to actions which I will have no choice but to take, God willing, and when the time is right," he said.

Most shops, schools and government buildings were closed for the day to protest the checkpoints, some of which have paralyzed traffic across the capital over the past week.

By 10 p.m. ET, the status of each and every checkpoint was unclear, and Lt. Col. Jonathan Withington, spokesman for the U.S. 4th Infantry Division emphasized to CNN that the checkpoints were not being dismantled. [In your dreams.]

U.S. and Iraqi troops imposed checkpoints at the main entrance to Sadr City, while conducting raids in their search for an American soldier kidnapped in central Baghdad on October 23.

Tough measures, such as checkpoints, should not be imposed except during Baghdad's daily overnight curfew hours and during emergencies, al-Maliki said.

Checkpoints that had already been in place before the crackdown in Sadr City will remain, an Interior Ministry spokesman told CNN.

The White House disagreed with the characterization that the removal of checkpoints was a setback for the United States.
"To deal with checkpoints does not necessarily change the situation in terms of how you deal with Sadr City," White House press secretary Tony Snow said.

Jubilant Iraqis carry poster of Muqtada al-Sadr after US troops dismantled checkpoints around Baghdad's Shiite enclave of Sadr City Oct. 31 2006. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

Jubilant Iraqis carry a flag of Iraqi militia Mahdi Army and a national flag after US troops dismantled checkpoints around Baghdad's Shiite enclave of Sadr City Oct. 31 2006. (AP Photo/Karim Kadim) [Thanks to Pham Binh, Traveling Soldier, who sent this in.]
A 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team soldier carries barbed wire as soldiers lift the security cordon around central Baghdad neighborhood Karradah Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2006. U.S. troops threw a security cordon around Karradah last Monday and conducted an intensive search for a missing soldier, who has yet to be found. (AP Photo/Hadi Mizban)

Iraqis mass to celebrate their victory in forcing the Occupation to remove checkpoints around Sadr City, Baghdad, Oct. 31, 2006. (AP Photo/Hadi Mizban)
IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Ohio 1st Sgt. Killed

1st Sgt. Ricky L. McGinnis, 42, from Fairfield, Ohio died Oct. 26, 2006 in Balad of injuries sustained when a bomb exploded near his patrol in Muqdadiyah, the Army said. (AP Photo/U.S. Army)

Baghdad Soldier Killed By IED

31 October 2006 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20061031-02

BAGHDAD: A Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldier died at approximately 5:30 p.m. Monday when the vehicle he was riding in was struck by an improvised-explosive device south of Baghdad.

Baghdad Soldier Killed By Small-Arms Fire

31 October 2006 Multi National Corps Iraq Public Affairs Office, Camp Victory RELEASE No. 20061031-03

A Multi-National Division Baghdad Soldier died at approximately 5 p.m. Monday when he was hit by small-arms fire while conducting combat operations in western Baghdad.
Eaton Rapids High Grad Killed In Iraq, School Says

October 31, 2006 By Stacey Range, Lansing State Journal

Troy Nealey, a 2001 graduate of Eaton Rapids High School, was killed over the weekend in Iraq, a school official said today.

Sad News From Iraq Hits Utah, California

10/26/2006 By Jason Bergreen, The Salt Lake Tribune

Detective Vikki Carver began introducing herself to the Navy lieutenant when it hit her: He was there to tell her that her 23-year-old son, Charles O. Sare, had been killed in Iraq.

She had been walking into her office at the Cache County Sheriff's Office on Tuesday morning when she saw the lieutenant standing there.

"He didn't have to say anything," Carver said in a phone interview. "I just started crying. I knew."

Sare, a Navy seaman and paramedic, died Monday when the military vehicle he was a passenger in struck a roadside bomb near Iraq's Al Anbar Province, killing him and two others. The Department of Defense announced Sare's death Wednesday.

Sare was born and raised in Hemet, Calif., where he had lived with his father. He joined the Navy in 2004 because he wanted to earn an emergency medical technician license, become a paramedic and help people, his father, Charles Sare, of Hemet, said.

The Hemet High School graduate was a hospital corpsman assigned to Naval Ambulatory Care Center in Port Hueneme, Calif., and was currently serving with Multi-National Corps in Iraq. It was his first tour of duty. Sare had been in Iraq for two months of a six-month stint when he was killed, Carver said. He had chosen combat duty to further his training, she said.

Carver described her son as a happy person who always had a smile on his face. His dad, however, didn't know how to begin talking about him.

"There are too many word to describe him," he said. "He was too outgoing. He was too much of a jokester."

Charles Sare said he had fond memories about raising his son. "I just enjoyed every minute of it," he said. Boy Scouts and neighbors in Nibley, where Carver lives, placed flags up and down the street in remembrance of Charles O. Sare.

"The thing I will miss most about my son is his smile and eyes," Carver said.
Sare's 21-year-old brother took the news of his brother's death "pretty hard," Carver said.

Charles "liked people. Anybody could walk up and he would make you feel like his best friend," Carver said.

Funeral arrangements for Sare had not been finalized Wednesday, his father said.

Harper Native Killed In Iraq When Bomb Explodes Near Vehicle


WICHITA, Kan.: A Harper native killed when a bomb detonated near his vehicle in Baghdad was remembered as a caring young man who wanted to be the family's representative in the war on terrorism.

The U.S. Army announced Wednesday that Sgt. Willsun Mock, 23, died Sunday of injuries he suffered in the attack. He was assigned to the 1st Infantry Division in Schweinfurt, Germany.

His mother, Ann Mock, said Mock's two older brothers were married with children at the time of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorism attacks.

"He just felt it was his time," Ann Mock told The Wichita Eagle. "Of course he wanted to save the world. He was my peacemaker. He liked people. He loved people. And people remembered him after they met him."

Willsun Mock, who enlisted in the Army more than four years ago, was serving his second tour in Iraq when he was killed.

His mother said she was proud of Willsun, the second youngest of seven children.

"He loved his fellow man so much that it was very hard for him to see another world," his mother said. "He might have been very tough, very well-seasoned and very good at his job, but he wanted to help those people out. He wanted to help his fellow soldiers out."

Injured Local Soldier Heads Home

October 31, 2006 Bakersfield

A local army soldier heads home after he's injured in Iraq.
The family of soldier Merwin Stapp said he'll return to Meadows Field at 8:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Stapp is a member of the 160th airborne infantry.

He was injured when a roadside bomb exploded next to the hum-vee he was in.

Family members told us that Stapp will be home for 15 days.

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REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW

A U.S. soldier patrols a road near the scene of a car bomb attack in Baghdad October 21, 2006. (Mohammed Ameen/Reuters)

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Injured East Texas Soldier Leaves Iraq

10/28/06 by Larry Little, KTRE

"It's been very worrisome, and I just worry about him every day -- every day he's been over there," says Diana Robinson.

Robinson's son, Anthony Buckheit, was serving in Iraq when she received a phone call from the military.
"I got a phone call at 5:30 in the morning saying my son had been hit by an IED in a Bradley. The pictures I got were from the hospital of him with blood all over his face. He had 15 stitches in his face. It split his face open," says Robinson.

The accident gave Diana more reason to worry, but now her worries are over.

"I got a call this morning about 5:30, right after putting my face on, and he said, 'Mom, I am home,' and home right now is in Baumholder, Germany.

I can sleep tonight for the first time in months," says Robinson.

Diana says, though her soldier is safe, her thoughts and prayers are with the men and women still in harms way.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Three Occupation Soldiers Killed; Another Wounded: Nationality Not Announced

Oct 31 KABUL (AFP) & October 29, 2006 (AP)

A blast has ripped through a NATO convoy in eastern Afghanistan, killing three troops in an attack claimed by the Taliban.

Elsewhere, a policeman died in a bombing similar to scores planted by the extremist group.

The deaths took to five the number of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) soldiers killed since the weekend in a series of engagements -- some of them the most intense in weeks.

The soldiers were on patrol in the mountainous eastern province of Nuristan, bordering Pakistan, when a roadside bomb struck their vehicle, ISAF said in a statement. Two soldiers were killed and two wounded, one of whom died later.

The nationalities of the troops were not released by the 37-country ISAF, which says it is the responsibility of the troops' home nations.

Most of the soldiers in eastern Afghanistan are from the United States.

A purported spokesman for the extremist Taliban movement said it had carried out the attack with a remote-controlled device.
A bombing in southern Ghazni province’s Taliban-dominated Ander district also bore the hallmarks of the extremist group, which has claimed responsibility for scores of such attacks this year.

A man detonated explosives strapped to his body just steps away from a police patrol, interior ministry spokesman Zemarai Bashary said.

"One of our policemen was martyred and another was wounded," he told AFP.

Some 100 to 150 militants attacked a military base north of Tarin Kowt in Uruzgan on Saturday, said Maj. Luke Knittig, a spokesman for the NATO-led force. The alliance and Afghan troops fought back for several hours with small arms fire, attack helicopters and airstrikes.

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**TROOP NEWS**

**THIS IS HOW BUSH BRINGS THE TROOPS HOME:**

**BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE**

U.S. military medical personnel carry a wounded U.S. soldier on a stretcher after he was evacuated by a helicopter to a military hospital at the fortified Green Zone in Baghdad, October 30, 2006. (Thaier al-Sudani/Reuters)

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**U.S. Troops Level In Iraq Up Again;**
150,000 Highest Since January: Pentagon Acts Surprised

Oct 30 by Jim Mannion, AFP

With the US death toll in Iraq passing 100 this month and mid-term elections just days away, the Pentagon said the US force in Iraq has grown to 150,000 troops, the biggest it has been since January.

Eric Ruff, the Pentagon press secretary, said he did not know why US troops levels were climbing. "This is news to me," Ruff told reporters. "Talk to MNF-I (Multi-National Forces-Iraq). That's General Casey's decision."

The increase is noteworthy because US troop strength in Iraq is only 10,000 under the all-time high of about 160,000 reported in January after the Iraqi elections.

It had fallen to as low as 127,000 in June when US commanders still believed they could make troop cuts this year.

In mid-September, General John Abizaid, the top US commander in the Middle East, said more than 140,000 troops would be needed through the first six months of 2007 to check the violence.

Since then, US troop levels have oscillated between 142,000 to 147,000, the level it reached last week.

Support Events for First Officer War Resister Nov. 10-11: Patriot Refuses Illegal War

From: Veterans For Peace
To: GI Special
Sent: October 31, 2006
Subject: NYC Events in Support of Lt. Ehren Watada

VETERANS FOR PEACE MEDIA ADVISORY:
Chapter 034, NYC, PO Box 8150, New York, NY 10106
Voice Mail: 212-726-0557
Contact: Thomas Brinson, 631.889.0203 (mobile), ltbrin@earthlink.net

“We all have a duty as American citizens for civil disobedience, and to do anything we can within the law to stop an illegal war.” - LT Ehren Watada
Veterans groups are organizing events throughout New York City in support of U.S. Army First Lieutenant Ehren Watada, the first military officer to refuse to deploy to Iraq. Watada is currently being court-martialed for his refusal to participate in what he contends is an illegal war.

LT Watada’s refusal to deploy to Iraq is based upon his strong belief that the invasion and occupation of Iraq constitutes an illegal, unjust, immoral war in violation of the UN Charter, the Geneva Conventions and the Rome Statue of the International Criminal Court, as well as U.S. law to include the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

The events are being sponsored by New York City area Chapters of Veterans For Peace, Iraq Veterans Against the War, and United for LT Watada.

1) WHAT: Press Conference

WHEN: Friday, November 10, 2:00 pm

WHERE: 8th floor Conference Room of the United Nations Church Center, 777 United Nations Plaza on First Avenue

2) WHAT: A Showing Of Lieutenant Watada’s Moving Speech In Seattle On August 12, 2006, At The Veterans Of Peace National Convention.

As a result of this speech, LT Watada received an additional court-martial charge.

Speakers will discuss LT Watada’s courageous stand relative to the International Law concerning wars of aggressive resulting in crimes against humanity, and the duty of all patriotic citizens to resist the illegal, immoral, inhumane war in Iraq.

WHEN: Friday, November 10, 7:30 pm

WHERE: St. Paul & St. Andrews Church at West End Avenue and W. 86th Street

DETAILS: Speakers include:

Dave Cline, National President of Veterans For Peace

Jeremy Brecher, Editor of In the Name of Democracy: American War Crimes in Iraq and Beyond

Ann Wright, former U.S. diplomat and retired U.S. Army Reserve Colonel who served as a Judge of the International Commission on Bush War Crimes

Yonatan Shapira, Israeli Air Force Captain Refusnik

Jose Vasquez, New York City Chapter President and National Co-chairperson of Iraq Veterans Against the War
3) WHAT: The Watada family will march in the New York City Veterans Day parade with Veterans For Peace, Iraq Veterans Against the War, Military Families Speak Out, and Gold Star Families for Peace.

WHEN: Saturday, November 11th

WHERE: 5th Avenue from 23rd Street to 42nd Street

The Watada family will also participate in events arranged by United for LT Watada at the Macedonia AME Church at 37-22 Union Street in Flushing New York from 3:00 - 5:00 pm, Saturday, November 11th and at 7:00 pm that evening at Columbia University, Broadway and W. 116th Street in Room 312 of the Mathematics Building.

For more information about LT Ehren Watada, visit http://www.thankyoult.org/ or contact:
Thomas Brinson at 631.889.0203 for Veterans For Peace
Jose Vasquez at 646.723.1781 for Iraq Veterans Against the War
Gloria Lum at 646.824.2710 for United for LT Watada

Bottom Feeding Scum Sucker Grabs War Profiteers’ Money

October 31, 2006 Philadelphia Inquirer

In 2005, Rep. Curt Weldon, the influential vice chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, was able to tack a $2 million "earmark" onto the fiscal 2006 defense spending bill for a firm in his Pennsylvania district.

The company, Dynamic Defense Materials, employed as its lobbyist one of Weldon’s close friends and had given nearly $11,000 to Weldon or his political action committee.

The Defense Department did not request the funding, and most Congress members voting for the spending bill probably did not know about the earmark.

“Military Officers” Question A Key Tenet Of U.S. Strategy In Iraq

10.31.06 Los Angeles Times
Growing numbers of American military officers have begun to privately question a key tenet of U.S. strategy in Iraq—that setting a hard deadline for troop reductions would strengthen the insurgency and undermine efforts to create a stable state.

The Iraqi government's refusal to take measures to reduce sectarian tensions between Sunni Arabs and the nation's Shiite Muslim majority has led these officers to conclude that Iraqis will not make difficult decisions unless they are pushed.

Therefore, they say, the advantages of deadlines may outweigh the drawbacks.

**Soldier’s Mother Backs Iraq War Probe Vote; “We’ll Save Lives Getting The Troops Out Of There Now”**

Thousands of anti war protesters demonstrate outside Houses of Parliament in London, Oct. 31, 2006. Prime Minister Tony Blair faced a new challenge to his authority Tuesday as lawmakers debated the role of coalition troops in Iraq for the first time since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion and planned to vote on a proposal for an immediate inquiry into Britain’s role in the conflict. (AP Photo/Sang Tan)

[Thanks to Rose Gentle, who sent this in.]

31/10/2006 Ian Morgan, 24dash.com

The mother of a soldier killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq backed today’s Government vote on an immediate investigation into the war.
MPs will debate a motion tabled by the Scottish Nationalist Party and Plaid Cymru calling for an immediate inquiry by a committee of senior politicians.

Rose Gentle, whose 19-year-old son Gordon, of the Royal Highland Fusiliers, was killed in Basra in 2004, said the investigation should be held immediately to "save lives".

"This investigation should be done and it should be done now.

"That way we could save lots of lives. We'll save lives getting the troops out of there now," she said.

Mrs Gentle, from Glasgow, will join a group of families in a judicial review over the Iraq war at the High Court in London next month. The families have said they want the Government to be "held accountable" for a war which "breached international law".

Mrs Gentle backed today's vote and said she hoped the families received the same support when their case came to court. "I hope they're successful and I hope we are supported, and successful, next month," she said yesterday.

Her backing was echoed by anti-war groups who say the investigation is long overdue.

Andrew Burgin, of the Stop the War Coalition, said the "urgent and independent" inquiry must look into the "background, conduct and aftermath" of the conflict.

"I think there has to be, for the future of this country, a serious inquiry into what has to be the most disastrous foreign policy adventure since Suez, or probably before that.

Dismissing claims that holding the investigation now would have a negative impact on troops still serving in the country, Mr Burgin said: "Nothing can make the situation in Iraq any worse than it already is. The situation is absolutely dire.

Chris Coverdale of Action Against War agreed, adding a swift inquiry could help in withdrawing British troops from the war zone.

He said: "I think it is definitely the time to hold an investigation, and part of that investigation should be about uncovering the illegality of the war.

"When we went in it was illegal and it's still illegal now.

“This will not impact on troops, if the war is found to be illegal it could help to get them out."

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Yeah, Right;
Really Hilarious --
If You Don’t Think About It Too Much

A boy aims a toy gun towards a U.S. soldier from 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team at a checkpoint in Baghdad October 31, 2006. REUTERS/Namir Noor-Eideen (IRAQ)

Assorted Resistance Action

October 31, 2006 CNN & By SINAN SALAHEDDIN, Associated Press Writer & Reuters

A roadside bomb struck an Iraqi police patrol in the southern neighborhood of Dora, killing a police officer and wounding three colleagues, police said.

Guerrillas in Baqouba attacked a police patrol, killing one officer and injuring three others, according to a Diyala provincial police spokesman.

An Iraqi army soldier died in clashes with insurgents in Falluja, 50 km (30 miles) west of Baghdad, police said.

Four guerrillas and an Iraqi army lieutenant were killed in clashes in the northern town of Tal Afar, about 420 km (260 miles) north of Baghdad.

IF YOU DON’T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
END THE OCCUPATION

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS
“Stay The Course”

Mike Hastie
Vietnam Veteran
October 26, 2006

“Big Money And Gerrymandering Have Placed Government Out Of The Reach Of Most Americans”

Greencastle, Ind.

The middle-aged woman filling her gas tank on a day of endless rain laughed when a reporter asked her about the coming elections. “Politics,” she said, “are for silly people. Those ads come on television and I reach for the remote.”

I asked if she was planning to vote on Nov. 7.

“No,” she said. “That stuff really turns me off.”

If you pay close attention to the news and then go out and talk to ordinary people, it’s hard not to come away with the feeling that the system of politics and government in the U.S. is broken.

I spent the past week talking to residents in Chicago, southern Michigan and Indiana.

No one was happy about the direction the country has taken, but not even the most faithful voters were confident that their ballot would make any substantial difference.

“I vote,” said Angela Buehl, who lives in a suburb of Indianapolis, “but I don’t think anybody in Washington is listening to me.” She mimicked talking into a telephone: “Hello ... Hello ...?”

The politicians, special interests and the media are in a state of high excitement over next week’s midterm elections. They are addicted to the blood sport of politics, and this is a championship encounter.

But that excitement contrasts with what seems to be an increasing sense of disenchantment and unease that ordinary Americans are feeling when it comes to national politics and government.

For far too many of them, the government in Washington is remote, unresponsive and ineffective. [No. Not “far too many.” Still not enough. When there are enough, they will be in the streets, which is the effective road to change.]

Nearly all said they were repelled by the relentless barrage of tasteless and idiotic campaign commercials. “Talk to me,” said a woman in Mishawaka, Ind. “Don’t assume I’m an imbecile.”

The system is broken. Most politicians would rather sacrifice their first born than tell voters the honest truth about tough issues.

Big money and gerrymandering have placed government out of the reach of most Americans.

While some changes in the House are expected this year, the Brookings Institution and the Cato Institute tell us (in a joint report) that since 1998, House incumbents have won more than 98 percent of their re-election races.
Millions of thoughtful Americans have become so estranged from the political process that they’ve tuned out entirely.

Voters hungry for a serious discussion of complex issues are fed a steady diet of ideological talking heads hurling insults in one- or two-minute television segments.

The frustration with the current state of government and politics was palpable.

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send to contact@militaryproject.org:. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential. Same to unsubscribe.

**OCCUPATION REPORT**

**Good News For The Iraqi Resistance!!**

U.S. Occupation Commands’ Stupid Tactics Recruit Even More Fighters To Kill U.S. Troops

An employee picks up a poster showing late Shiite clerics Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr and Mohammed Baqir al-Sadr, right, both killed by Saddam Hussein's regime, in the offices
[Fair is fair. Let’s bring 150,000 Iraqi troops over here to the USA. They can kill people at checkpoints, bust into their private offices and houses with force and violence, butcher their families, overthrow the government, put a new one in office they like better and call it “sovereign,” and “detain” anybody who doesn’t like it in some prison without any charges being filed against them, or any trial.]

[Those Iraqis are sure a bunch of backward primitives. They actually resent this help, have the absurd notion that it’s bad their country is occupied by a foreign military dictatorship, and consider it their patriotic duty to fight and kill the soldiers sent to grab their country. What a bunch of silly people. How fortunate they are to live under a military dictatorship run by George Bush. Why, how could anybody not love that? You’d want that in your home town, right?]

“In the States, if police burst into your house, kicking down doors and swearing at you, you would call your lawyer and file a lawsuit,” said Wood, 42, from Iowa, who did not accompany Halladay’s Charlie Company, from his battalion, on Thursday’s raid. “Here, there are no lawyers. Their resources are limited, so they plant IEDs (improvised explosive devices) instead.”

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

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**And Now, News Of Fresh Disasters**

*Audit Faults US Training Of Iraqis
Security Woes Hinder Work In Provinces*

10.31.06 Boston Globe

Deteriorating security in Iraq and bureaucratic wrangling between the State Department and the Pentagon have undermined the U.S. government’s effort to train provincial leaders, according to a report by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction.

The teams were considered such a critical part of the Bush administration’s strategy to build up the new Iraqi government that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice presided over the inauguration of the first team in Mosul last November. But disagreements over which branch of the U.S. government would fund and protect the teams, along with threats and attacks on personnel, have greatly hindered the effort.

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Auditors Say Shift Of Rebuilding To Iraqis Appears 'Broken Down'

10.31.06 Washington Post

Ten months into a year-long effort to transfer control of Iraq's reconstruction to the Iraqis, federal auditors say, the government there is spending very little of its own money on projects, while the process for handing off U.S.-funded work "appears to have broken down."

Auditors with the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction found that beyond paying employee salaries and administrative expenses, only a small amount of money is being spent on actual work.

Auditors blamed "bureaucratic resistance within the Ministry of Finance, which traditionally has been slow to provide funds."

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward GI Special along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top or write to: The Military Project, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657

The Great Iraqi Collaborator Cop Training Fiasco Rolls On:
“Said Sgt. 1st Class William T. King Jr., ‘It’s Moving In Reverse’”
“Moore Estimated It Would Take 30 To 40 Years Before The Iraqi Police Could Function”
“How Can We Expect Ordinary Iraqis To Trust The Police When We Don’t Even Trust Them Not To Kill Our Own Men?”

[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]
The American soldiers and civilians who train the Iraqis are constantly on guard against the possibility that the police might turn against them. Even in the police headquarters for all of western Baghdad, one of the safest police buildings in the capital, the training team will not remove their body armor or helmets. An armed soldier is assigned to protect each trainer.


BAGHDAD: The signs of the militias are everywhere at the Sholeh police station.

Posters celebrating Moqtada al-Sadr, head of the Mahdi Army militia, dot the building's walls.

And then one rainy night this month, the Sholeh police set up an ambush and killed Army Cpl. Kenny F. Stanton Jr., a 20-year-old budding journalist, his unit said.

At the time, Stanton and other members of the unit had been trailing a group of Sholeh police escorting known Mahdi Army members.

"How can we expect ordinary Iraqis to trust the police when we don't even trust them not to kill our own men?" asked Capt. Alexander Shaw, head of the police transition team of the 372nd Military Police Battalion, a Washington-based unit charged with overseeing training of all Iraqi police in western Baghdad.

"To be perfectly honest, I'm not sure we're ever going to have police here that are free of the militia influence."

The top U.S. military commander in Iraq, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., predicted last week that Iraqi security forces would be able to take control of the country in 12 to 18 months. But several days spent with American units training the Iraqi police illustrated why those soldiers on the ground believe it may take decades longer than Casey's assessment.

Police officers are too terrified to patrol enormous swaths of the capital.

U.S. military reports on the Iraqi police often read like a who's who of the two main militias in Iraq: the Mahdi Army, also known as Jaish al-Mahdi or JAM, and the Badr Organization, also known as the Badr Brigade or Badr Corps.

One document on the Karrada district police chief says: "I strongly believe that he is a member of Badr Corps and tends to turn a blind eye to JAM activity." Another explains that the station commander in the al-Amil neighborhood "is afraid to report suspected militia members in his organization due to fear of reprisals."

American soldiers said that although they gather evidence of police ties to the militias and present it to Iraqi officials, no one has ever been criminally charged or even lost their jobs.
Among the worst of the suspected Mahdi Army members is Lt. Col. Musa Khadim Lazim Asadi, station commander of the Ghazaliyah patrol police.

"He has stated to us that he does not believe the Mahdi Militia is a bad organization," a military report said. "He had a picture of Sadr in his vehicle until we said something about it."

"He is a cancer to the station and the people of Ghazaliyah," the report concluded.

But when U.S. military officials visited Asadi on a recent afternoon, he not only denied that his men were involved in the militias or crime but refused to acknowledge that there had been any killings in the area at all. Although scores of tortured bodies are often found in the neighborhood, Asadi said the murders all took place somewhere else.

At his response, 1st Lt. Cadetta Bridges shook her head in disbelief. "This guy is a crook and a liar," said Bridges, 31, of Upper Marlboro. "They're all crooks and liars."

Visibly exasperated, Shaw and Bridges quickly left and headed for a police station in Mansour, a relatively safe neighborhood in central Baghdad, to meet with a police major they described as one of the better cops they'd encountered.

When Shaw asked what the police in Mansour were doing to reduce the violence, the major said: "There is nothing the police can do. The only solution is to create a government that will take away the militias. Then everything will be fine."

The major, who asked to be identified as Abu Ahmed because he feared for his safety if his full name was published, sat in a closet-size room that he hardly ever leaves. Orange-and-brown sheets covered a tiny bed next to his desk.

"I can't go home or I'll be killed," said Abu Ahmed, who sees his children only when police officers can bring them to the station. He sighed as he looked at photographs of two recently assassinated officers.

"And it's getting worse. So much worse."

"I think I must quit soon," he said quietly.

Arabi Araf Ali, a police officer in the southern neighborhood of Dora, said police do little more than pick dead bodies up off the street. In the station's parking lot nearby, a colleague washed off a police truck that had just been used to retrieve the corpses of five Shiite men slaughtered that morning. Brain matter littered the ground.

"Some parts of Dora are so dangerous," Ali added, "that we cannot even pick up the bodies there without Americans. We are just too afraid."

The Iraqi police are not the only ones who feel unsafe.

The American soldiers and civilians who train the Iraqis are constantly on guard against the possibility that the police might turn against them.
Even in the police headquarters for all of western Baghdad, one of the safest police buildings in the capital, the training team will not remove their body armor or helmets. An armed soldier is assigned to protect each trainer.

"I wouldn't let half of them feed my dog," 1st Lt. Floyd D. Estes Jr., a former head of the police transition team, said of the Iraqi police. "I just don't trust them."

Jon Moore, the deputy team chief, said: "We don't know who the hell we're teaching: Are they police or are they militia?"

Among Ani's bosses are the police chief for all of Baghdad, who has been linked to the Mahdi Army, and the minister of the interior, who is a member of Sadr's political bloc.

"I think he's trying to do the right thing," said Lt. Col Aaron Dean, the battalion commander, as he walked to his Humvee after the meeting with Ani. "But I know they're all under certain influences. If you take a big stand against the militias, they're going to come after you."

The difficulty of eliminating corruption and militias from the Iraqi police forces can be exasperating for the American soldiers who risk their lives day after day to train them. "We can keep getting in our Humvees every day, but nothing is going to work unless the politicians do their job and move against the militias," Moore said.

Sitting in the battalion's war room with four other members of his team, Moore estimated it would take 30 to 40 years before the Iraqi police could function properly, perhaps longer if the militia infiltration and corruption continue to increase. His colleagues nodded.

"It's very, very slow-moving," Estes said.

"No," said Sgt. 1st Class William T. King Jr., another member of the team. "It's moving in reverse."

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OCCUPATION ISN’T LIBERATION
BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!

OCCUPATION PALESTINE/LEBANON

Zionist State Commits ‘Intensive’ Airspace Violations:
“A Terrorist Act By Israel”
BEIRUT: Israeli warplanes committed their "most intensive" violations of Lebanese airspace since the July-August war on Tuesday, conducting mock raids over Beirut and several other parts of the country.

A Lebanese Army source told The Daily Star that eight Israeli fighter-bombers entered Lebanese airspace from the south and swept all the way to the capital, "lingering over the southern suburbs in the most intensive violations since the war" that ended on August 14.

The latest violations were met with condemnation from France, the European Union, and the United Nations, as well as Lebanese politicians.

France, which currently leads the UN peacekeeping force in South Lebanon, has said it might open fire on intruding aircraft.

Spanish Defense Minister Jose Antonio Alonso and EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana called for Israel to stop flights over Lebanon.

In the heaviest show of aerial power since the August 14 cease-fire, security sources said the Israeli jets swooped down at least six times to roar low over the southern suburbs, a Hizbullah stronghold that was heavily bombarded during the 34 days of war.

"The planes kept releasing flares as a precaution to divert any possible missiles as they flew low over Lebanon," said the military source.

The Daily Star correspondent in the Chouf area witnessed the showers of flares dropped by the planes over the predominantly Druze area.

The overflights began at 9:10 a.m. and ended at 10:10 a.m. on Tuesday morning, when "four of the eight Israeli planes flew over Southern Lebanon, and the other four went north and flew over the Bekaa, Mount Lebanon, Beirut and Chekka," said an official statement released by the Lebanese Army Command.

The army said their gunners fired "anti-aircraft weapons at the Israeli planes in the South."

While no actual bombings were reported, Lebanon is still recovering from the summer's Israeli air campaign, so the roars of the jets caused panic among many residents, although some of them took to rooftops and balconies to watch.
A number of aircraft also caused sonic booms over the Southern port city of Tyre and further inland at Nabatieh.

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has reported eight air violations in the South, its area of operations, over the past two days.

On the local front, Information Minister Ghazi Aridi’s response was harsher, with the official slamming the incident as "a terrorist act" by Israel.

"The low overflights (create) fear and panic and are clearly disregard and disrespect for UN Resolution 1701," he told a news conference.

"Yet they dare to continue to release statements in which they complain about Lebanon not respecting Resolution 1701 and continue to make demands to the international community," he added.

Despite the condemnations, Israeli Defense Minister Amir Peretz has vowed the flights will continue because of alleged arms smuggling to Hizbullah from Syria since the end of the war.

Meanwhile, there were reports of further violations on the ground in the form of a shooting incident in Kfar Shouba, where Israeli soldiers shot at farmers.

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

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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, who sent this in.]
NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

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

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