

# National News

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## Army Reserve Members Are Leaving

U.S. Army reserve retention fell 6.7% short of its goal in Fiscal Year 2003, according to testimony reported on Nov. 19. The fall was largely the result of an unexpected exodus of career reservists, the ones who train junior officers and operate complex systems. These are the hardest to replace because they have years of experience and are expected to pass on that experience to new reservists. Even if recruiting meets its goals, the overall experience level falls when careerists leave prematurely.

The higher than expected departure rate is primarily attributed to the repeated long family separations being experienced by many reservists. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker told the Senate Armed Services Committee, on Nov. 19, that "our experience tells us that the longer we operate at the tempos we have, the greater the challenge will be" in recruiting and retention.

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## A CFR Proposal To Divide Iraq in Three

The "president emeritus" of the New York Council on Foreign Relations and former editor for the *New York Times*, Leslie Gelb, proposed a "three-state solution" to partition Iraq, in the *Times* on Nov. 25. Gelb's idea was not that much different from the most fanatic neo-con proposals to pull out of the Sunni triangle and flatten it.

Gelb called for dividing the country into Kurdish, Shi'ite, and Sunni sections (he called this division "natural," on the false historical claim that national unity was only forced on Iraq by the British); and then pulling all U.S. economic aid and military force out of the Sunni triangle, which would free U.S. troops "from fighting a costly war they may not win." Then, American officials could "wait for the troublesome and domineering Sunnis, without oil or oil revenues, to moderate their ambitions or suffer the

consequences."

Gelb wrote that President Bush's new strategy of transferring power quickly to the Iraqis, and the alternatives posed by his critics, all "share a fundamental flaw," that they commit the United States "to a unified Iraq, artificially and fatefully made whole from three distinct ethnic and sectarian communities."

"Central Iraq is largely without oil," he wrote, "and without oil revenues, the Sunnis would soon become poor cousins." Of course, "without power and money, the Sunnis may cause trouble" so, as his mentors in London did with India and Pakistan, Gelb maintained we must help the Kurds and the Shi'ites within Central Iraq to move either north or south. "This would be a messy and dangerous enterprise, but the U.S. would and should pay for the population movements and protect the process with force. . . . Washington would have to be very hard-headed and hard-hearted, to engineer this break-up, But such a course is manageable, even necessary."

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## November Deadliest Month for U.S. Forces

According to official Pentagon statistics, 79 U.S. soldiers died in Iraq in November, 39 of them in helicopter crashes, the most in any month since the March 20 invasion. March saw 65 deaths, and April 73, during the major combat phase of the war; and from May until October, the death rate among American troops was averaging one per day but, because of the increased lethality of insurgent attacks, is heading towards three per day. All told, 437 American troops have died in Iraq, 298 of them as the result of hostile action, and 2,094 have been wounded in action, mostly from roadside bombs that contain anything from rocks to nails.

The *Washington Post's* coverage included a human interest-type story on the largest Army hospital in Iraq. The article quotes one doctor saying: "The injuries are horrific. They are beyond anything that you see in a text book and they are the worst that I have ever seen."

Nor is the suffering limited to Americans. A Spanish military intelligence team was ambushed on a highway 18 miles south of Baghdad, with seven officers killed and one wounded, on Nov. 29. Britain's Sky News showed TV footage of about a dozen men gathered around the bodies kicking them and chanting pro-Saddam slogans.

Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, the U.S. military commander in Iraq, expressed concern, that some U.S.-trained Iraqi police may be involved in coordinating attacks on U.S. and coalition troops.

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## Officer's Own Account Of Samarra Fighting

An unidentified U.S. Army "combat leader" wrote to the website Soldiers for the Truth, maintained by retired Army Col. David Hackworth, about the U.S. attack on the Iraqi town of Samarra on Nov. 30: "Most of the casualties were civilians, not insurgents or criminals as being reported. During the ambushes the tanks, brads [Bradley Fighting Vehicles] and armored HUMVEES hosed down houses, buildings, and cars while using reflexive fire against the attackers. . . . The convoy continued to move, shooting at ANY target that appeared to be a threat. RPG [rocket-propelled grenade] fire from a house, the tank destroys the house with main gun fire and hoses the area down with 7.62 and 50cal MG fire. Rifle fire from an alley, the brads fire up the alley and fire up the surrounding buildings with 7.62mm and 25mm HE rounds.

"The ROE [rules of engagement] under 'Iron Fist' is such that the US soldiers are to consider buildings, homes, cars to be hostile if enemy fire is received from them regardless of who else is inside. It seems to many of us this is more an act of desperation, rather than a well thought out tactic. We really don't know if we kill anyone, because we don't stick around to find out. Since we are armored troops and we are not trained to use counter-insurgency tactics, the logic is to respond to attacks using our superior firepower to kill the rebel insurgents. This is done in many cases knowing

**THE PENTAGON** will allow a U.S. citizen detained by military to speak to a lawyer. The Defense Department announced on Dec. 2 that it will allow Yaser Esam Hamdi, a U.S. citizen held incommunicado for almost two years, to have access to a lawyer. Up to this point, the Justice Department has argued that Hamdi was not entitled to a lawyer, since he has been designated as an “enemy combatant.” But the DoD emphasizes that this “should not be treated as a precedent.”

**MEDICARE** chief and free-market ideologue Thomas Scully announced his resignation as administrator of the Federal agency that oversees Medicare and Medicaid, after the Medicare reform bill passed, and effective Dec. 16. He will take one of five lucrative offers from law firms, advising on how to work with the American Enterprise Institute-crafted Medicare bill that Congress just approved.

**CONGRESS** has passed HR 3077, the International Studies in Higher Education Act, which includes creation of an International Education Advisory Board. Under the pretext of supervising the use of Federal education grants, such a Board—including Homeland Security personnel—would monitor college activities for “anti-American bias.” The bill grew out of a Congressional hearing at which Stanley Kurtz, of the neo-con *Weekly Standard*, demanded action to counter scholars who engage in “extreme and one-sided criticisms of American foreign policy.”

**A SERIOUS FIRE** occurred at about 1:30 a.m. on Dec. 2 at *EIR*'s office in Washington, D.C., which rendered the office uninhabitable. The office was unoccupied at the time. The D.C. Fire Inspector has declared the fire accidental, although the basis of his finding is unknown at this time. *EIR* is investigating the cause of the fire in conjunction with law enforcement authorities.

that there are people inside these buildings or cars who may not be connected to the insurgents.

“Not all the people in this town were hostile, but we did see many people firing from rooftops or alleys that looked like average civilians, not the Feddayeen reported in the press. I even saw Iraqi people throwing stones at us, I told my soldiers to hold their fire unless they could identify a real weapon, but I still can't understand why somebody would throw a stone at a tank, in the middle of a firefight.

“Since we did not stick around to find out, I am very concerned in the coming days we will find we killed many civilians as well as Iraqi irregular fighters. . . . We are probably turning many Iraqis against us and I am afraid instead of climbing out of the hole, we are digging ourselves in deeper.”

## Tom DeLay's Many-Year Reich

“The Republican Party is in the position to reshape American politics and . . . society for more than a generation,” House Majority Leader Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Tex.) said at the Restoration Weekend Nov. 15-16, sponsored by David Horowitz's Center for the Study of Popular Culture. Other speakers included former CIA Director James Woolsey and Zionist warrior Daniel Pipes.

In the past, DeLay said, history has determined the actions of conservatives. “But I believe times have now changed and opportunities are wide open for us as a movement. I believe we're entering into an era in which conservatives will turn that trend on its head so that . . . the terms of history will be dictated by our actions.”

Delay called for replacing the progressive income tax with a national sales tax, and privatizing Social Security and Medicare. Within the next 15 years of imperial success, many governments will have been overthrown: “We can expect a free trade zone encompassing the entire Western hemisphere, including post-Castro Cuba. We can look forward to free trade with self-sufficient democracies in Taiwan, Iraq, Afghanistan.”

James Woolsey told the group he is nervous about leaving Iraq too soon, and called for installing a Hashemite monarchy there.

Daniel Pipes disagreed with the Bush Administration's public rationale for the war on Iraq, saying bluntly, “However popular the uprooting of Saddam Hussein, they do not want us there. . . . We have no, *no* moral responsibility to the Iraqi people. Our moral responsibility is to ourselves. I very much disagree with the name ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom.’ It should have been ‘Operation American Security.’ Our goal is not a free Iraq. Our goal is an Iraq that does not endanger us.” He said a “democratic-minded strongman” should rule Iraq.

## California ‘Beast-Man’ Gov. Bullies Legislators

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger began touring districts on Dec. 1 to mobilize mobs to force Democratic legislators to comply to his austerity demands by referendum or otherwise. His “plan” is to float \$15 billion in bonds to cover immediate budgetary shortfalls, and enact a mandatory statewide spending cap. There was an urgency driving Schwarzenegger, which is that Dec. 5 was the deadline for legislative approval for these measures to appear on the March ballot. There continued to be stubborn resistance from key Democrats, as well as some Republicans.

Schwarzenegger tried a charm offensive over breakfast with Democratic legislators, but then headed to San Diego, where he called on the “people” to make sure he gets support from the legislature. The Hollywood-bred strongman vowed that there would be “severe casualties” in the March primaries and November elections if legislators refuse to back him.

Appearing on four right-wing radio talk shows in the San Diego area, Schwarzenegger spoke at a mall rally, holding a large fake credit card. “This is a state credit card,” he said, following the script. The legislators have an “addiction to spending, spending, spending. Here's what we do.” At that point he ripped up the phony card, to the cheers of the mob.