

What the Mainstream Media will not tell you: Letter From Fallujah

By [Donna Mulhearn](#)

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In-depth Report: [Fallujah: US War Crimes, IRAQ REPORT](#)

Sun, 18 Apr 2004

The Road to Fallujah

Fallujah is a bustling city of 350,000 people. Bigger than Newcastle, smaller than Sydney. Shops, small industries, markets, mosques – ordinary people going about life...

The road to Fallujah is one of the main highways west from Baghdad, so the town receives a lot of through traffic from cars, buses and trucks doing the trip from Baghdad to Jordan.

So driving towards Fallujah on Tuesday on a highway that was empty of any other vehicles felt eerie to say the least.

We soon realised why. An American military checkpoint was blocking the highway and not allowing most cars through.

We approached the checkpoint with caution – it was an intimidating sight with massive concrete blocks placed across the road, a collection of tanks, both on the road itself and up on an overhead bridge and heavily armed soldiers pointing guns in every direction, including ours.

The four cars ahead of us were thoroughly searched, refused permission to pass and then turned away. I noticed the cars contained Iraqi people, perhaps they were from Fallujah and wanted to go and check on relatives, perhaps they were carrying food, water and medicines in their cars to deliver to the besieged town, perhaps they were just Iraqis who wanted to travel freely in their country?

When the head American soldier saw us he looked relieved and broke out into a smile. “Hey, some foreigners, where ya’ll from?”

One of our group Joe, a British newspaper reporter, told him we were journalists from the BBC going to Fallujah to report on the situation there.

“Yeh, I’ve seen you on the television haven’t I,” the young soldier, Sergeant Trapner, asked Joe excitedly.

"Yeh," the soldier answered to himself with a big grin. "I see you all the time."

Joe, who has never worked for the BBC or been on television tried to disguise his shock from his enthusiastic new 'fan'. He turned away, trying to act humble and didn't answer the question. We all tried to hide our giggles – this soldier believing he has met a famous celebrity just might get us through the checkpoint.

"This is awesome," the soldier continued. "Can I have your autograph?"

Those of us still in the car could barely keep our composure as Joe signed some scribble on a piece of paper for Sergeant Trapner.

Our 'foreigner' status meant our cars were not even searched and we were invited out to chat with the soldiers while we waited for clearance to travel the road.

"So you're going to Fallujah?"

"We've killed a whole bunch of 'em there," Sgt Trapner announced with pride.

"But the bastards are killing us too!"

"I'm jealous you're going to Fallujah where the action is," another soldier added.

"I was there for a while and killed a few of the mother-fuckers. I'd love to go back and kill some more!"

I looked away, choosing not to respond.

I realised the war has totally de-humanised these soldiers. They were boasting about killing people, who they didn't even consider to be people.

De-humanising your victim as a 'bastard' or 'mother-fucker' makes it easier to kill them and then be proud of it.

We continued to chat with the soldiers, they gave us water and they seemed sincerely happy to talk to foreigners. In almost every sentence they expressed a deep hatred towards the Iraqi people. They clearly held no respect for the people they have come to 'liberate.'

As we talked we noticed a fleet of ambulances in the distance heading towards us – white vehicles with blue flashing lights, red crescents on the side and 'Ambulance' written in English and Arabic across the top.

The sight was immensely encouraging for me. Fallujah desperately needed these ambulances to get through.

But then my heart sank. The ambulances suddenly stopped on the road about 200 metres away. They had obviously seen the checkpoint and were assessing the situation.

After a few minutes, one by one the ambulances turned around and headed back to Baghdad – obviously too frightened at what trouble might occur at the checkpoint or perhaps believing they would not be allowed through.

"Good, we don't want anymore of those bastards getting through," a soldier said as he

watched the ambulances turn away.

I took a deep breath, my eyes stinging with tears as I watched the blue lights fade into the distance. I prayed they would find another road to Fallujah.

But there was another car brave enough to approach the checkpoint. In the car was a Doctor, dressed in a blue medical gown and surgical gloves on his hands, he looked as if he'd come straight from one hospital ward and was ready to walk right into the next one and get to work. His determined face told me he would not take 'no' for an answer if refused at the checkpoint.

After we lobbied on his behalf, the soldiers agreed to let him pass through with us.

Past the checkpoint the highway was still deserted except for the evidence of war all around us. The burnt out shells of trucks and cars littered the sides of the roads. Various debris from missiles and mortars were scattered everywhere. There had been heavy fighting here.

At one point our driver chose to exit the highway and approach Fallujah through the farmlands. We weaved through the villages, occasionally hearing gunshots and missile fire in the distance. On the outskirts of Fallujah we ran into a large American convoy of tanks and humvees. They were trying to 'secure' an area, so we could not continue any further until they'd finish their 'work.'

They eventually left, leaving just one last stretch of road for us to enter Falluja. It was a slow, nervous drive on that dusty road, weaving in and out of concrete blocks and razor wire. We didn't know who controlled the area, and there could have been snipers waiting to shoot at unidentified vehicles.

But finally we made it safely into Fallujah. It was mid-afternoon but the streets were deserted. It felt like a ghost town. Obviously many Fallujans had fled the violence and left, becoming refugees in their own country. Others were hiding in their homes too afraid to come out.

The town was under siege. By this stage it was estimated about 700 people had been killed defending the town from the collective punishment brutally inflicted on every man, woman and child, regardless of whether they were involved in the death of four US armed security guards a week before.

It was a terrible crime that police enquiries and a criminal investigation could have quickly dealt with – uncovering the guilty parties and enforcing appropriate criminal justice.

To bomb an entire city, causing so much death that it had to use its football fields as graveyards, seemed a rather rash over-reaction.

Driving through the empty streets of Fallujah I felt the stench of death in the air. I could feel the terror of the families locked behind the closed doors.

I felt sick.

Your pilgrim

Donna

PS: More about my time in Fallujah in next e-mail.

PPS: Could Australians please tell Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and Prime Minister John Howard to put a sock in it! Downer, in particular has been very nasty, accusing me of all sorts of things. He has no idea why I'm here and what I've been doing. If you want to help educate him you can e-mail his office on: minister.downer@dfat.gov.au

PPPS: "When you take away the humanity of another, you kill your own humanity. You attack your own soul because it is standing in the way. Hold on to your humanity." Stan Goff US Army (Retired) in an open letter to GIs in Iraq.

Wednesday, 21 Apr 2004

Arrival in Fallujah – Shots in my direction!

On arrival in Fallujah we drove through the deserted streets straight to the clinic where our friends had helped out a few days before.

It was a small neighbourhood clinic that had been transformed into a makeshift hospital after the main hospital in Fallujah was bombed and closed by the US military.

The staff adapted admirably to the influx of wounded that were continually delivered in the backs of cars, vans and pick-ups – extra beds were wheeled in and cans of soft drink were emptied from the 'coke' machine so it could be used to cool bags of blood.

But the clinic had no disinfectant, no anaesthetic, and other vital equipment required for the type of surgery the horrific wounds demanded. And as a form of collective punishment all electricity to Fallujah had been cut for days. The clinic had a generator, but when the petrol ran out the Doctors had to continue surgery using the glow from cigarette lighters, candles and torches.

We spoke to the Doctors – they were exhausted, and looked defeated as they told us the stories of their recent cases – a ten-year-old boy with a bullet wound to the head, a grandmother with an abdominal bullet wound – both the victims of U.S snipers, young men with severe burns, limbs blown off and so on. But each time a new patient arrived the Doctors quickly got up, put on a new set of surgical gloves and got to work.



A ten-year-old boy who was shot in the head by a US sniper. He was taken to the clinic in the arms of his father. He died.



A woman being rushed into the clinic on a stretcher. She has a shotgun wound to the head after being shot by US snipers trying to cross the street. She died.

Many had worked for 24 hours straight, others surviving on only a few hours sleep for days

at a time. They didn't complain. They are the heroes of Fallujah.

We talked about how we could help. In the last mission a few days earlier, our friends had been successful in negotiating with soldiers in getting wounded people off the street and evacuating families from areas of cross-fire.

The Doctors asked if we could accompany an ambulance packed with food and medical supplies across town to a hospital that had been cut off. It was in the US controlled section of the town so it was not able to receive aid because of constant sniper fire.

The Doctors figured our foreign nationality could make a difference in negotiating the safe passage of the ambulance with the soldiers.

It might seem a strange and unnecessary mission to help an ambulance drive from one place to another – anywhere else in the world it's a basic thing, but this is Fallujah and this is war and nothing is as it should be, despite guarantees laid out in the Geneva Convention.

The last time an ambulance went to this part of town it was shot at by US troops. I know this because two of my friends were in the ambulance at the time, trying to reach a pregnant woman who had gone into pre-mature labour. They didn't reach her, but the bullet holes in the ambulance are a testament to the fact they tried.

So we packed the ambulance with supplies and got in the back

With me were three other foreigners: Jo, Dave and Beth – two British, an American and an Aussie, a good representation of young people from the "Coalition of the Willing" trying to counter-balance the military intervention of our countries with loving intervention. We donned bright blue surgical gowns and held our passports in our hands. A couple of medical staff were with us, as well as the drivers in the front.

We drove slowly through the parts of Fallujah controlled by Iraqi fighters then stopped in a side street that faced a main road. We could not go any further because the main road was under watch and control of US snipers. They had developed a habit of shooting at anything that moved.

So we parked the ambulance in the side street and the four of us got out with the task of approaching the American soldiers, communicating with them and getting permission for the ambulance to continue to the hospital.

The area was completely quiet. The silence was unnerving.

We prepared the loudspeaker, put our hands in the air and held our passports high. Before we ventured onto the main road we called out a message from the side street.

"Hello? American soldiers! We are a group of international aid workers. We are unarmed. We are asking permission to transport an ambulance full of medical supplies to the hospital. Can you hear us?"

The reply was just a chilling silence.

We repeated the message. Silence again.

We looked at each other. Perhaps the soldiers were too far away to hear us? We had to walk onto the main road and take the risk that we would be clearly visible as unarmed civilians, and approach the soldiers with our hands in the air.

I took a deep breathe and for a split-second thought that this was probably the most dangerous thing I had ever done in my life.

As I exhaled, my heart gave me strength: I looked at the others and could tell we were all thinking the same thing: "If I don't do this, then who will?" Their courage inspired me as we all stepped out on the road together.

We walked slowly with our arms raised in the air. My eyes scanned the tops of the buildings for snipers. We didn't know where they were set up so we walked in the direction of the hospital.

We repeated the message over and over again on the loudspeaker, in the silence it would have been heard for hundreds of metres. It echoed eerily throughout the neighbourhood.

I turned my head briefly and just in time. In the distance I saw two white flashes, then the loud bang of gunshots and the ugly realisation that they were shooting into our backs.

It all happened so fast: ducking, hearing the whizz of the bullets above our heads, diving for cover off the side of the road against a wall.

We huddled there for a moment behind a bush, then someone cried: "Let's go". We crawled along the ground, at one stage I was walking low with my back hunched. In the scramble I fell. My hands broke my fall onto sharp gravel on the rough ground. I felt the sting of pain and could see the blood, but I had no time to stop and check what happened.

We ended up in someone's back yard then made our way back to the ambulances by jumping fences and going through gates.

My hands were covered with blood, my left foot cut and my passport was stained red, leaving an ever-constant reminder of the episode.

We re-grouped, but we didn't want to give up. Now we knew where the soldiers were, we could walk towards them. We decided to go out again.

Same drill: we called out the message first, then stepped out onto the road, this time facing the direction the gunfire had come from.

"Hello! American soldiers. We are foreign aid workers- British, Australian, American. We are not armed. We are asking permission to transport an ambulance on this road."

My injured hand was shaking as I held my passport now damp with my blood. I tried to work out what I was feeling: fear, anger, determination. I still don't know.

We had only repeated the message twice and walked a few metres when our answer came.

Two more bullets. By this stage I think I entered a state of shock. I had been shot at, not once, but twice by American soldiers after politely asking permission to transport aid to a hospital.

I guess the answer was 'No'.

Jo got angry. We all did. We stepped back to the corner but Jo continued on the loud speaker.

'Do you know it is against the Geneva Convention to fire at unarmed civilians and at ambulances?' she cried.

"How would you feel if your sister was trapped in a hospital under siege without food or water?"

We took the loudspeaker from her.

"May your trigger finger be plagued with warts," she continued under her breath.

We bundled in the back of the ambulance. It was a handy place to be with deep cuts and grazes on my hand. I bowed my head as someone tended to my wounds.

We headed back to the clinic. My head was spinning. I felt angry, I felt frustrated, my hands were aching. But strangely enough my spirit was intact. I had just walked with my hands in the air like a vulnerable lamb into the face of armed soldiers, yet this non-violent action and my complete and utter faith that the 'rightness' of the mission would protect me had been immensely empowering.

We didn't deliver the supplies, just a clear message to the military:

"We are not afraid. We will not be intimidated by your weapons.

"If we have to confront your violence to help people who are suffering then we will. We will do it without using violence.

"We will keep trying."

Your pilgrim,

Donna

PS: More about my Fallujah experience in the next e-mail.

PPS: Some people have asked: "how can you be sure it was American soldiers who shot at you?" The answer is that the area we were in was under the control of US soldiers for at least five days. Iraqi fighters did not have had access to the area the shots came from.

PPPS: Thanks to everyone who has sent me messages of support and letters to Howard and Downer. Sorry if other people cannot get e-mails through to me - if you're frustrated, try this address: donnainbaghdad@yahoo.com.au .

PPPS: "We will match your capacity to inflict suffering with our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with our soul-force." Dr Martin Luther King Jnr.

Thursday, 22 Apr 2004

Fallujah 2 – Silent victims/noisy cease-fire

Friends,

We got back to the clinic and unpacked the ambulance still bewildered by what had just happened – if it were not for my grazed and bleeding hands I might not have believed it.

Nevertheless we spent the next few hours trying to be useful around the place before the sun went down. Although we received a few curious looks from locals, the response to our presence was warm and friendly.

People asked what we were doing there and when we explained, faces broke out into large smiles and a tender “shukran”, (thank-you) followed. I felt this was as much a part of the mission as anything else – simply showing solidarity to people in their isolation and pain. To tell them that they are not alone, that somebody cares.

Delivering aid is one thing, but delivering a message of peace and friendship is just as important.

That afternoon on the footpath outside the clinic I saw one of the saddest sights of war. It was a small boy, about ten-years-old. He’d just got out of a van that was used to transport the wounded and dead. The disturbing thing was not that he was wounded. On the contrary – he was the one driving the van! He unloaded the bodies, reported the stories to the Doctors and onlookers and gave orders while casually holding a Kalashnikov in his hand as if it was a cricket bat. But the thing is, it wasn’t a cricket bat, but I couldn’t help thinking it should have been. With a scarf wrapped around his neck, a strong face and confident attitude, I could see he was an experienced fighter. My heart sank at the thought of this little boy, now a little ‘Mujahadeen’, playing with bullets instead of marbles. The locals said he was a good shot.

It got worse. I saw a cute little girl, with pigtails, pink shirt and a polka dot scarf, also about ten-years-old, also brandishing a Kalishnakov. It was almost as big as her, but she handled it with ease, and it was obvious she had handled it many times before. I hoped that she didn’t really use it – that she was just posing as a show of unity for these desperate people. I hoped she had dolls at home to play with. It’s children, whether wounded, killed, traumatised by bombing or prematurely recruited as soldiers that are always the silent victims of war.



This is the little girl I wrote about holding a Kalashnikov. You can see the hurt and anger in her eyes. The children are the silent victims of war.

As night fell on Fallujah, the eerie silence was broken only by the sporadic gunfire that echoed through the empty streets.

But that changed later when action from the so-called 'cease-fire' kept us awake half the night.

We stayed in the house of the Imam from the mosque. As we lay on mattresses on the floor we de-briefed about the day and made plans for the next one before eventually falling asleep.

At first I thought it was a dream – I was sure the mortar shells were being fired from the front yard, in fact right outside my window, so loud was the deep, resonating 'boom, boom, boom'. I felt it in my gut each time. It's an ugly sound. Makes me cringe.

It went on for ages. Rocket fire exchanging: from the ground to the air from the air to the ground like two boxers exchanging blows. At about 3am, the mosque joined in the noise and broadcast on the loudspeaker a call to prayer to encourage the people. So the haunting sound of the Imam singing intertwined with the bombs and mortar, making it feel the same as it did during the war last year. "It seems for these people, the war never ended," I thought.

I went outside and was relieved to note that the rockets were not being launched from the front yard. But it was from an area only a block away and I hoped they had a way of hiding the location. I looked up at the black, starry sky, breathed the cool night air and in between the bombs whispered the prayer I prayed so often last year during the bombing when I didn't know what else to say ... "Lord have mercy.'

The bombing continued another hour or so. God it's hard to get sleep during a cease-fire!

Your pilgrim,

Donna

PS: There have been many new members join 'The Pilgrim' e-mail group in the last week or so. For those who want to read stories that I've written during the last five months in Iraq (and before), you can find them at: www.groups.yahoo.com/group/thepilgrim

PPS: More pictures from Fallujah next.

PPPS: 'Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who are hungry and are not fed, those who

Sunday, 9 May 2004

Fallujah 7 – The Roadblock

So we began to walk down the empty, dusty road towards a collection of concrete blocks and razor wire where the soldiers were guarding the roadblock.

Behind us was a queue of hundreds of cars full of ordinary people from Fallujah – terrified and trying to flee to safety. A few had already given up and turned around after gun shots from US soldiers warned them not to come any closer.

Fallujah had become a bloody prison – no one was allowed in or out.

We couldn't see the soldiers but we followed the same procedure as a few days before: hijabs off so it was clear we were western, arms in the air, passport in hands and message on the loudspeaker: "Hello American soldiers, we are unarmed foreign civilians, we are trying to leave Fallujah – please don't shoot."

We repeated this a few times and walked slowly towards the checkpoint. I squinted into the distance as I heard our message echo back to us, but there was no movement ahead. We were half way down the road in no-man's land when finally I saw the outline of a soldier in the distance. We repeated the message and heard his faint reply: "we won't shoot, proceed."

Relieved, we walked the rest of the way to meet him. He was surprised to see us, and a little on edge, but greeted us cordially. About ten others hovered around with machine guns in hand a little bemused by the sight of us.

We explained that we had been in Fallujah to help deliver and distribute aid and that we were trying to get back to Baghdad. The soldier in charge agreed to let our two cars pass through. That was great news, but it was not enough.

"What about the others?" we asked. The 'others' being hundreds of families from Fallujah sitting in their hot, overcrowded cars hoping somehow to escape the hell that had descended on their city.

There were anxious women, frightened children, crippled old men and young men of fighting age who just didn't want to fight.

"You must let these people through," we pleaded. "They just want to travel to safety."

The soldier in charge hesitated.

"They are civilians with a few belongings just wanting to escape the violence," we explained.

We put the case for another five minutes or so and finally the soldier responded.

"Okay, we'll let the women and children through," he announced as though he'd made a great concession – but a concession that was useless.

This soldier didn't seem to have a grip on local culture, so I had to remind him. "The women don't drive cars. And if one or two of them do they can't go alone without the company of a man from their family," I told him gently.

His concession would mean that none of the hundreds of cars in the queue would be able to pass.

He nodded: "Okay, we'll let the old men through." Again, this would have allowed just a few cars to pass.

I didn't understand the logic in forcing the young men to stay, and questioned him.

"The men who want to leave don't want to fight you – surely you want to let them go so they are not forced to pick up a gun to defend themselves against you?"

The soldier in charge didn't respond out loud, but one of the others did, perhaps not meaning for us to hear.

'We want them all in there together so we can finish them off all at once, it makes it easier.'

I would have taken this unbelievable statement as a joke had not the soldier in charge reiterated his command immediately.

"No. The men cannot leave. We have orders."

We headed back to the queue of cars. The people were waiting patiently for us, their faces were hopeful.

A translator explained: "The women and children can go, and the old men."

A clean-cut man in his forties standing near me grabbed my arm. He held his baby daughter in his arms. "Can I go?" he asked with desperation.

My heart sank. I had to explain to this Iraqi man with his baby, wife and car full of kids that he could not leave the bombing, the shooting, the chaos of Fallujah on a public road that belonged to him.

A tank from a foreign country, which had come with claims of 'liberation', was taking this man's freedom before my eyes. Freedom to take his family to safety. Freedom to live in peace. Freedom just to live.

I put my head down. “No,” I said. “They won’t let you go.” Hardly believing the words as I spoke them.

“They will let your wife and children go,” I said knowing how stupid that would sound to him.

“How can they go alone?” he screamed pointing to the empty drivers seat where he would have to sit for his family to escape to safety. The fear on the face of his wife crushed my heart into pieces.

This scenario was the same for so many of the families in the queue.

I couldn’t take it anymore, couldn’t bear to see these families turn back to God knows what.

We headed back to the soldiers to try again. We told them the cars were all driven by men with their families. Not allowing them to pass would mean refusing women and children a passage to safety.

“Do you know the Geneva Convention?” we asked, not really expecting an answer.

The head guy shuffled from foot to foot as he deliberated. We stood holding our breaths with our fingers crossed.

“Okay,” he said. “Men can pass, but only if they are accompanying a family.”

Yes! That would at least ensure the women and children could get out, and many of the men.

We went back and explained the new condition. For people who couldn’t hear we just pointed to their car and gave a thumbs up.

They clapped, cheered and yelled out: ‘Thank you, God bless you’.

But it was a bittersweet victory – tempered by the fact that the only reason the soldiers allowed anyone through was because a bunch of foreigners were watching and reminding them of the Geneva Convention. They should have just let them through because they were Iraqi people wanting to move about in their own country. I shuddered to think what was happening at other checkpoints.

And still there were the young men. There was a large group in their early 20s in the back of a pick-up. They would not leave Fallujah today. We could not give them a logical reason and did not repeat to them the threatening words of the soldiers.

So we got back into our cars and slowly led the way through no-mans land toward the check-point. They searched our cars and we were ushered through. The car behind us, packed with a large family got through too. They stuck close behind us.

I turned my head to check what was happening. The soldiers were doing thorough searches of the cars. It would be a long day for these Fallujans, but hopefully they would eventually drive to safety.

As for the young men who didn’t want to fight – they would have to go back to the hell of Fallujah and face the uncertainty of being a civilian caught in a war where there were no rules.

As we drove away, I was overcome by sadness as I remembered the fear and desperation on the faces of the people.

I couldn't help thinking: why should these people be so frightened that they are forced to flee their own homes?

Why are they now refugees in their own country? Where would they go? How long will their lives be upside down?

How long before the killing would stop and promised "freedom" would come?

There were no answers as we drove away to the sound of another bomb blast shaking Fallujah.

your pilgrim

Donna

PS: Stories on the plight of the Fallujan refugees next.

PPS: Sorry if my inboxes are always full, try donnainbaghdad@yahoo.com.au if you're having trouble.

PPPS: Newcomers: previous stories on Fallujah can be found at www.sydneypeace.com, all stories at www.groups.yahoo.com/group/thepilgrim

PPPPS: "There is nothing more terrifying than ignorance in action." Goethe.

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Yes! That would at least ensure the women and children could get out, and many of the men.

We went back and explained the new condition. For people who couldn't hear we just pointed to their car and gave a thumbs up.

They clapped, cheered and yelled out: 'Thank you, God bless you'.

But it was a bittersweet victory - tempered by the fact that the only reason the soldiers allowed anyone through was because a bunch of foreigners were watching and reminding them of the Geneva Convention. They should have just let them through because they were Iraqi people wanting to move about in their own country. I shuddered to think what was happening at other checkpoints.

And still there were the young men. There was a large group in their early 20s in the back of a pick-up. They would not leave Fallujah today. We could not give them a logical reason and did not repeat to them the threatening words of the soldiers.

So we got back into our cars and slowly led the way through no-mans land toward the check-point. They searched our cars and we were ushered through. The car behind us, packed with a large family got through too. They stuck close behind us.

I turned my head to check what was happening. The soldiers were doing thorough searches of the cars. It would be a long day for these Fallujans, but hopefully they would eventually drive to safety.

As for the young men who didn't want to fight - they would have to go back to the hell of Fallujah and face the uncertainty of being a civilian caught in a war where there were no rules.

As we drove away, I was overcome by sadness as I remembered the fear and desperation on the faces of the people.

I couldn't help thinking: why should these people be so frightened that they are forced to flee their own homes?

Why are they now refugees in their own country? Where would they go? How long will their lives be upside down?

How long before the killing would stop and promised "freedom" would come?

There were no answers as we drove away to the sound of another bomb blast shaking Fallujah.

your pilgrim

Donna

PS: Stories on the plight of the Fallujan refugees next.

PPS: Sorry if my inboxes are always full, try donnainbaghdad@yahoo.com.au if you're having trouble.

PPPS: Newcomers: previous stories on Fallujah can be found at www.sydneypeace.com , all stories at www.groups.yahoo.com/group/thepilgrim

PPPPS: "There is nothing more terrifying than ignorance in action." Goethe.

Donna Mulhearn is an independent Australian Journalist reporting out of Iraq.

Pictures by Dahr Jamail, an independent journalist.

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