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Weather

Baghdad
 FR, 17/06
 +44..+46 °C
 NW, 6 m/s

Basrah
 FR, 17/06
 +47..+49 °C
 NW, 6 m/s

Calendar-Filter

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Today

US sergeant charged for fragging commanders

By: antiwar.com on: 17.06.2005 [03:29] (157 reads)



(2998 bytes)

As AntiWar.com's Justin Raimondo asked, "A nation at war with itself — who will win that one?"

A U-S Army staff sergeant has been charged with killing his two commanders last week at a base outside Baghdad.

The military says it's believed to be the first case of an American soldier in Iraq accused of killing his superiors.

It was first believed that the June seventh deaths of Captain Phillip Esposito and First Lieutenant Louis Allen resulted from "indirect fire" from a mortar round.

But the military now believes they died from an explosive device, possibly a grenade.

Sergeant Alberto Martinez has been charged with two counts of premeditated murder, according to a statement issued in Baghdad.

The so-called "fragging" incident happened near Tikrit.

Fragging is a term used to refer to soldiers killing their superiors.

Report by the AP

TIKRIT, Iraq - (KRT) - A 37-year-old staff sergeant was charged in the deaths of two of his superior officers in the first alleged case of its kind in Iraq.

The stunning announcement Thursday of the court-martial came amid continued violence in Iraq against U.S. and Iraqi security forces. Eight Iraqi police were killed in a car bombing on the airport road in Baghdad, and the U.S. military reported the death of five Marines and a sailor in violence in western Iraq.

Staff Sgt. Alberto B. Martinez of the 42nd Infantry Division was charged Wednesday with two counts of premeditated murder for the June 7 attack that

killed Capt. Phillip T. Esposito, 30, and Lt. Louis E. Allen, 34.

Martinez, a National Guardsman from Troy, N.Y., was a soldier in the division's Headquarters and Headquarters Company. Esposito and Allen were that unit's top two commanders.

U.S. military officials refused to comment on reports that Martinez was facing disciplinary action that could have motivated him to act.

"We don't have an idea as to any motive at this time," said Maj. Patrick Swan, a spokesman for the Multi-National Force in Iraq. Swan said that charges against additional soldiers could not be ruled out.

Martinez was being held late Thursday under military confinement in Kuwait and has been provided an attorney from the U.S. Army Trial Defense Service. Swan could not say whether the soldier had turned himself in or whether he had been implicated in the attack by evidence found after an extensive investigation.

The Army's Criminal Investigation Division had been looking into the deaths of Esposito and Allen for more than a week. The two officers died about 10 p.m. on June 7 inside a former palace that has been converted to barracks for U.S. soldiers on the lush grounds of one of Saddam Hussein's former compounds in Tikrit.

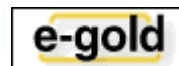
It was initially believed the men died from injuries in a mortar attack, but forensic evidence soon ruled that out. Within days, the Army announced the officers' deaths were being investigated as crimes.

[link](#)



May 29: Two by suicide car bomb, eastern Baghdad

Min	Max
22248	25229



Baghdad

May 25: One by suicide bomber, Al-Saydia, Baghdad

May 25: 1-3 near Mosul University

May 25: Policeman by roadside bomb, Dahuk

May 24: Six near girls' school, Alwiyah, Baghdad

May 23: 33-35 by suicide car bombs, Tal Afar

May 23: 9-21 at Shiite mosque, Mahmoudiya

May 23: Policeman in Dora, Baghdad

May 23: Two shot dead in Mansour, Baghdad

May 22: Trade Ministry official, driver, western Baghdad

May 22: One by roadside bomb near Oyoun

May 21: One in shooting in Al-Gzalia, Baghdad