

Attack on Baghdad hotel leaves U.S. colonel dead

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz escaped unharmed as hundreds were evacuated Sunday

By E.A. Torriero and Mike Dorning
Chicago Tribune (KRT)

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A brazen dawn attack Sunday on a heavily fortified hotel used by coalition forces and contract workers killed a U.S. colonel, wounded 15 people and struck at the heart of American power in the Iraqi capital.

Hundreds of people involved in the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq evacuated the Al Rashid Hotel on Sunday hours after the insurgents used a homemade launcher to fire 8 to 10 rockets at the well-guarded building. The attack occurred inside the so-called Green Zone, which includes the hotel and Saddam Hussein's Republican Palace, which is now the coalition headquarters.

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, who was staying at the hotel, escaped the attack without injury. His voice breaking, Wolfowitz declared that

"these terrorist attacks will not deter us from completing our mission."

Hours before the attack, a U.S. Black Hawk helicopter came under guerrilla fire Saturday and was destroyed outside a base in central Iraq, shortly after Wolfowitz visited there. There is nothing to indicate Wolfowitz was a target in either attack, the Pentagon said. Visiting Iraq to tout American successes, Wolfowitz left the country late Sunday as scheduled.

The daring assaults disturbed U.S. officials and highlighted the vulnerability of the coalition to hit-and-run attacks that the Pentagon says are escalating in numbers and ingenuity.

Secretary of State Colin Powell said on NBC's "Meet the Press" that while the United States expected postwar security to be a challenge, "we didn't expect it would be quite this intense this long."

The Rashid complex is one of the most fortified American outposts in Iraq. But, despite a maze of concertina wire, towering fortifications of sand, high-tech surveillance and American troop patrols, the 13-story hotel is vulnerable to aerial assaults.

"As you were walking up the stairway, all you'd see is bloody footprints."

Sp. John Larkin
National Guard

Sunday morning's rocket attack was the third series of volleys to hit the hotel compound in the last six weeks.

Workers and guests who frantically fled the hotel Sunday morning in pajamas, shorts and T-shirts told of a chaotic scene of water pipes bursting as rockets hit at about 6 a.m. on three floors, including the 11th, one floor below where Wolfowitz was staying. Balconies were sheared off two rooms, and windows were blown out in the hotel.

U.S. Special Forces troops rushed into the hotel as residents screamed for medics.

American soldiers carried bloodied victims out in stretchers, while other victims walked out dazed, using towels and T-shirts to bandage wounds

caused by flying debris.

Most of the hotel guests were asleep at the time of the attack and many rushed barefoot across broken glass. The hotel's main staircase was strewn with glass that shattered during the attack, soldiers reported.

"As you were walking up the stairway, all you'd see is bloody footprints," said Sp. John Larkin of Jacksonville, Fla., a National Guardsman who assisted with first aid.

Four or five medics struggled to keep a soldier alive who lost a limb from the blast, Larkin said. One American, identified by Wolfowitz as a colonel, died in his room. Seven U.S. civilians were injured along with four American military personnel and four foreigners, the U.S.-led coalition said.

Some of the workers criticized the coalition for not putting patrols on the hotel roof and sealing off nearby roads, where rockets have been launched.

"Why didn't they take extra precautions after the previous attacks?" asked one contractor, requesting anonymity. "I will never go back and live in there."

U.S. commanders theorize from an initial assessment of the rocket launcher found on a nearby street that the attack had been planned for months, said U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Martin Dempsey said Sunday night.

The assault was timed to discourage Iraqis and tarnish the coalition after it reopened a crucial bridge over the Tigris River and lifted curfew for the holy month of Ramadan, Dempsey said.

Wolfowitz insisted after the attack that the U.S. would carry on its mission in Iraq, but Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut said the attack emphasizes the danger of the occupation.

"The fact that the opposition, the terrorists, the insurgents, fired rockets at the hotel where Paul Wolfowitz was and got away with it is shocking. Why aren't we protecting the perimeter? Where did they get those sophisticated rockets?" Lieberman asked on "Face the Nation."

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Interest in recalling governors spreading

Constituents of several states are inspired by the recall election in California

By Seth Freedland
The Orange County Register (KRT)

SANTA ANA, Calif. — The political energy California voters sparked seems to have spread to some other states facing similar troubles.

In the 18 states with the ability to recall elected officials, several elections of officials reported a spike in interest and inquiries about recalls. But only a few pro-recall groups have been able to get their movements running. These states have recalls in the works:

Arizona

A group says it has 10,000 of the 300,000-plus signatures needed to recall Democratic Gov. Janet Napolitano.

The petition submitted to the secretary of state's office lists the grievances. A sample: "She has shown little to no regard for the Legislature of the state of Arizona and has assumed their authority upon herself by the use of line item vetoes. ... She has made promises to a number of communities who supported her during her election campaign and now find themselves disadvantaged by her failure to perform them."

Recall committee spokesman Kyle Logan said, "We had already had established (our campaign) before you guys knew who won. (But) the spotlight definitely inspired us to file this recall."

"We're waiting for somebody to back us with money," he said. "But

people despise this governor. This will happen."

Napolitano spokesman Paul Allvin said he isn't worried: "If anyone tried (a recall of Napolitano), it wouldn't go anywhere."

Nevada

A group of Nevada conservatives upset about the largest tax increase in state history began recall proceedings Wednesday against Republican Gov. Kenny Guinn. Complaints all center on the issue of taxes.

Guinn pushed through an \$836 million tax increase, including a payroll tax bringing in more than \$320 million over the next two years. Two bank taxes add an additional \$39 million. Recall proponents say all these taxes are only necessary due to Guinn's "mismanagement" of the state budget.

"I'm hoping people in Nevada look at California and get excited about the possibilities," said Tony Dane, chairman of The Committee to Recall Governor Guinn.

By Oct. 8, however, Christopher Hansen, vice chairman of the Recall Guinn Committee, said his group has collected only about 12,000 signatures. Supporters must secure 128,019 signatures of registered voters in the next month to put the recall on election ballots.

Guinn spokesman Greg Bortolin said, "It is absurd for anybody to think we have given the time of day to this recall effort."

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CONDOMS

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She also said funding for the project might be difficult to obtain, especially in a time of budget tightening. But she pointed out that condoms are low-cost or often free.

Freshman Jessica Hirschy said she thought the project would be a wonderful idea as long as the condoms were distributed very discreetly.

"If parents visit and they see a big box of condoms in the bathroom, that's not going to give a good impression of dorm life," she said.

Freshman Colin Culbreth thought putting condoms in the residence halls would promote safer sex, adding that there are probably a lot of stu-

dents who are too embarrassed to get them from the health center.

Mabry said her group is hoping to see its project implemented by the end of the school year.

The group is currently doing research and trying to figure out how many University groups they will have to go through to make the project happen. Also, group members are in contact with similar groups on campuses across the nation. Mabry said that on Nov. 4, the group's first meeting, a solid timeline will be established for the project.

For more information or to get involved, contact Students for Choice at 346-0644, or by e-mail at S4Choice@gladstone.uoregon.edu.

Contact the people/culture/faith reporter at jaredpaben@dailyemerald.com.

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