

Attack on helicopter leaves 16 Americans dead

A transport helicopter was hit in Iraq Sunday, killing at least 16 Americans and injuring about 20 others

By Stephen J. Hedges and E.A. Torriero
Chicago Tribune (KRT)

AL HUSAY, Iraq — At least 16 Americans, many on their way out of Iraq for military rest and recreation leave, were killed Sunday when their transport helicopter crashed after being hit by what witnesses said was a shoulder-fired missile.

The strike was the deadliest single attack on U.S. forces since the March 19 invasion of Iraq.

The CH-47 Chinook helicopter crashed and burned at 9 a.m. Iraq

time shortly after departing the Army's Camp Ridgeway, formerly Iraq's Al Taqaddum air base, 35 miles west of Baghdad. At least 20 others in the helicopter were injured.

The U.S. military would not officially disclose the cause of the crash but witnesses and an Army source in Fallujah pointed to a possible rocket-propelled grenade or an SA-7 missile.

The chopper went down en route to Baghdad International Airport as it passed over the wheat fields and groves of date palm trees surrounding this simple, scattered farming village, about 9 miles southeast of Camp Ridgeway.

The attack occurred after loyalists of deposed Iraq leader Saddam Hussein had called for "days of resistance," and U.S. officials warned of intelligence that suggested a marked

increase in planned attacks on U.S. military, Iraqi government and civilian targets.

In the town of Abu Gharib, just miles from the crash site, a convoy of unmarked U.S. military vehicles was attacked Sunday morning and set on fire, witnesses said. The American command did not release details of the attacks, but the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said that two of its civilian contract workers were killed.

Another American soldier died from wounds suffered in a roadside bombing outside Baghdad.

The U.S. deaths came after one of the most violent weeks in post-combat Iraq. More than 70 Iraqis and Americans have been killed in eight days of violence including a rocket attack on the Al Rashid hotel, where Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wol-

fowitz and coalition officials were staying, and five suicide bombings.

The number of casualties in Sunday's helicopter assault was certain to increase the pressure on the White House and Pentagon to take control of the escalating insurgency against soldiers and civilians in Iraq.

"Today was pretty bad," said Army Pfc. Misty Scheirer, 23, of Knoxville, Tenn., an 82nd Airborne Division private on guard at a base near Fallujah. "You get kind of used to it, but of course it brings you down. It just makes it worse that they were almost just out of here."

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, appearing on several Sunday morning talk shows, said "Clearly, it's a tragic day for Americans," and that the "work in Iraq is difficult."

"It's a long hard war, and we're go-

ing to have tragic days," Rumsfeld said on ABC's "This Week."

A second Chinook helicopter flying with the first was not hit. Those on the stricken aircraft came from a variety of units, an Army spokesman said, and included a number of reservists and possibly some civilians associated with the U.S.-led coalition. The Army's 82nd Airborne Division has troops deployed throughout western Iraq, and Camp Ridgeway is one of its operating bases.

A spokesman at Ft. Carson, Colo., said the Chinooks were carrying soldiers from Ft. Carson, Colo.; Ft. Sill, Okla.; Ft. Campbell, Ky.; and Ft. Hood, Texas.

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Church welcomes its first gay bishop

Despite protests by church officials, the Episcopal Church ordains its first openly homosexual bishop

By David O'Reilly
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

DURHAM, N.H. — In a ceremony that included cheers, applause, protests and warnings of a schism, the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire on Sunday ordained the Rev. V. Gene Robinson as the denomination's first openly gay bishop.

Standing before a makeshift altar in the University of New Hampshire arena, Robinson, 56, vowed to be a "faithful pastor and wholesome example for the entire flock of Jesus," words from the traditional Episcopal ordination rite for bishops.

Deep divisions over Robinson's consecration threaten a split in the church. The Rev. Rowan Williams, archbishop of Canterbury and spiritual leader of the worldwide Anglican faith, said in a statement Sunday that the divisions "are a matter of deep regret."

The conservative American Anglican Council said the consecration of an openly homosexual bishop was "heresy, blasphemy and sin," and vowed to create a "mainstream" Anglican church.

The divorced father of two grown daughters, Robinson has lived in open relationship with another man for the last 14 years. He was elected by the New Hampshire diocese in June and his election was ratified by the denomination's General Convention in August.

Although the crowd applauded Robinson for more than a minute, the landmark consecration sends the Episcopal Church USA and the worldwide Anglican Communion into uncharted territory.

Church conservatives, who believe the Bible teaches that homosexual acts are sinful, had warned that elevating Robinson would cause mass defections of Episcopalians.

Eight dioceses in the United States had threatened to disaffiliate with the 2.4 million-member Episcopal Church USA if Robinson was consecrated.

"Today is a grievous day in the history of our Church. Heresy has been held up as holy. Blasphemy has been redefined as blessing," the American Anglican Council said Sunday in a statement.

There were a few protesters carrying signs outside the arena Sunday.

The consecration ceremony allowed for objectors early on, and five people came forward to protest. Assistant Bishop David Bena of Albany, N.Y., approached the altar to declare that Robinson's "chosen lifestyle" is incompatible with Scripture and the teaching of this church, and warned that "the future of the (Anglican) communion will be put in jeopardy."

Last month, Williams, archbishop of Canterbury, called all the primates to London to discuss the crisis. They issued a unanimous statement urging the U.S. church not to proceed, saying Robinson's ordination could "tear the fabric" of worldwide Anglicanism.

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ADMISSIONS

continued from page 1A

backgrounds and cultures.

Senior Vice President and Provost John Moseley said given the current economic climate, he views enrollment this year as a success because it was so close to last year's number of 20,044.

"We were trying to reduce students to provide quality education," he said, adding that it is important for admissions to maintain a stable and balanced enrollment.

"We're pretty close to where we needed to be and wanted to be," he said.

Director of first-year programs Marilyn Linton said she has heard positive reviews coming from faculty who teach freshmen classes. She said this year's freshmen seem to be highly engaged and motivated during class.

"It probably does all translate into a better class experience for all students," she said.

As for diversity, Office of Multicultural Affairs Director Carla Gary said

she views the enrollment rise as a good chance for all students to experience multiple voices and backgrounds. She said she credits the increase to the University's outreach efforts as well as word of mouth.

"This is really important for the campus, period," she said, adding that there are different ways to view the increase.

Gary said in terms of actual numbers — with 2,607 students of color in a population of more than 20,000 — people might say the increase is "almost negligible." However, she said another way to view the increase is "we're not losing students (of color), we're gaining."

She said while the increase is a good step toward assuring a diverse campus, creating an atmosphere in which students of color want to remain at the University is key.

"The hard task is keeping people here," she said.

Contact the higher education/student life/student affairs reporter at chelseaduncan@dailymerald.com.

EMU BOARD MEETINGS
FALL, NOVEMBER 2003

11/5	Full Board Meeting
11/12	House Committee & Budget Committee
11/19	Full Board Meeting
11/25	House Committee & Budget Committee

All meetings are at 4:00 pm.
See Schedule of Events for room location.

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