



IRAQ INVESTIGATIONS



Charges Preferred Against Six Marines

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. (Aug. 3, 2006) -- Based on findings of a Naval Criminal Investigative Service investigation, charges have been preferred against three Marines for assault on an Iraqi civilian. The alleged incident took place on April 10, 2006, in Hamdania, Iraq, which is west of Baghdad.

Charged were:

- Lance Cpl. Saul H. Lopezromo
- Pfc. Derek I. Lewis
- Lance Cpl. Henry D. Lever

Lance Cpl. Lopezromo, Pfc. Lewis and Lance Cpl. Lever were initially placed on pretrial restriction to the base upon their return to Camp Pendleton. They were later released from restriction after further evaluation.

Also today, additional charges were preferred against three other Marines as follows:

- Sgt. Lawrence G. Hutchins III, for assault on three Iraqi civilians
- Cpl. Trent D. Thomas, for assault on an Iraqi civilian
- Lance Cpl. Jerry E. Shumate Jr., for assault on an Iraqi civilian

Sgt. Hutchins, Cpl. Thomas and Lance Cpl. Shumate have previously been charged in an unrelated incident with kidnapping, murder and conspiracy, in connection with the death of an Iraqi citizen, and are in pre-trial confinement in the Camp Pendleton brig.

The six Marines were assigned to 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, while deployed to Iraq. They are currently assigned to Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Marine leadership became aware of the alleged assaults in early May 2006 during a criminal investigation into an unrelated incident.

Based on preliminary findings of the criminal investigation, the Marines were reassigned to the battalion headquarters at Camp Fallujah, Iraq and restricted to their living quarters pending their return to Camp Pendleton on May 24, 2006.

It is important to note that the charges and specifications are accusations against the individual and that the accused is presumed innocent.

All Marines are trained in the Law of Armed Conflict and are expected to fully comply with it. The Marine Corps takes allegations of wrong-doing by Marines very seriously and is committed to thoroughly investigating such allegations. The Marine Corps also prides itself on holding its members accountable for their actions. We are absolutely committed to holding fair and impartial proceedings in full compliance with the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Note: This is a separate incident from one in which other members from 2nd Platoon, Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division were charged on June 21, 2006 in connection with the death of an Iraqi citizen.

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Charges Preferred Against 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment Marines, Aug. 3, 2006

- Related to assaults that allegedly occurred on April 10, 2006 -

The below Marines are in pre-trial confinement in the Camp Pendleton brig on charges unrelated to this incident, and are charged as follows:

Sergeant Lawrence G. Hutchins III, U.S. Marine Corps

Charge: Violation of the UCMJ, Article 128 (**Assault**)

Specification 1: Did assault Khalid Hamad Daham with a force likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm by striking him with closed fist and knee in the head, face and torso.

Specification 2: Did assault Hassam Hamza Fayall with a force likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm by choking him.

Specification 3: Did assault Ali Haraj Rbash by placing a loaded pistol in his mouth and with a force likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm by choking him.

Corporal Trent D. Thomas, U.S. Marine Corps

Charge: Violation of the UCMJ, Article 128 (**Assault**)

Specification: Did assault Khalid Hamad Daham with a force likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm by striking him with closed fist and knee in the head face and torso.

Lance Corporal Jerry E. Shumate Jr., U.S. Marine Corps

Charge: Violation of the UCMJ, Article 128 (**Assault**)

Specification: Did assault Khalid Hamad Daham with a force likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm by striking him with closed fist and knee in the head face and torso.

Charges Preferred Against 3/5 Marines, Aug. 3, 2006

- Related to assaults that allegedly occurred on April 10, 2006 -

The below Marines are not in pre-trial confinement, and are charged as follows:

Lance Corporal Henry D. Lever

Charge: Violation of the UCMJ, Article 128 (**Assault**)

Specification: Did assault Khalid Hamad Daham with a force likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm by striking him with closed fist and knee in the head face and torso.

Private First Class Derek I. Lewis

Charge: Violation of the UCMJ, Article 128 (**Assault**)

Specification: Did assault Khalid Hamad Daham with a force likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm by striking him with closed fist and knee in the head face and torso.

Lance Corporal Saul H. Lopezromo

Charge: Violation of the UCMJ, Article 128 (**Assault**)

Specification: Did assault Khalid Hamad Daham with a force likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm by striking him with closed fist and knee in the head face and torso.