

Iraqi Monster Blows Up Kids – Slams Bomb Into 18 Children Waiting for Candy

July 14, 2005

New York Post

By Andy Soltis

Copyright 2005, All Rights Reserved

An Iraqi terrorist plowed his bomb-laden car into a crowd of Baghdad children receiving candy from GIs yesterday, triggering a horrific explosion that killed at least 18 kids.

The attack left 27 people dead, including one GI, and a newborn was among the dozens of wounded, stunned officials said.

"What sort of resistance is this? It's a crime!" screamed one Iraqi mother, whose 13-year-old son was among the dead.

The brutal attack was the second in four days to kill more than two dozen people in Iraq.

Witnesses said it occurred shortly before 11 a.m., as GIs entered the Shiite and Christian neighborhood of al-Jaddeda in eastern Baghdad to warn residents to stay indoors because there were reports of a car bomb in the area.

Some of the soldiers handed out chocolate candy and small toys from a Humvee while others cordoned off streets that led to a highway. Suddenly, a brown Toyota Land Cruiser roared out of a side street, headed for the Humvee and children, and exploded.

"The scene was almost indescribable," said battalion commander Lt. Col. Kevin Farrell.

"People nearest the blast, some were literally obliterated on the scene. Multiple lacerations and traumatic amputations.

"At least nine people I saw were killed instantly in a most horrific fashion."

The explosion touched off a fireball that reduced three houses to rubble. Rescuers found at least 70 people injured - most of them children - but including at least three GIs.

Sgt. Dan Huell said he was knocked to the ground by the thundering blast, then jumped and ran toward the Humvee.

"You see all the screaming, hollering, injuries," he said. "The few that we could evacuate - soldiers pulled them up, hand-carried a few of them. Little kids, hand-carried into our vehicles. We got them treated."

The survivors were rushed to Kindi hospital where parents gathered for news.

Abu Hamed said when he heard the explosion he "rushed outside to find my son. I only found his bicycle."

At the hospital morgue, he recognized his son only from his face.

"The rest of the body was completely burned," he said.

Another father, Abu Mohammed, said, "My son was lucky. He was injured by a piece of shrapnel that lodged in his head.

"All the rest of his friends died," he said.

Twelve of the dead were 13 or younger, and four others were 14 to 17. Among the wounded was 4-day-old Miriam Jabber, cut slightly by flying glass and debris.

After the bombing, charred remains of the Toyota, wrapped in barbed wire, sat on the road. Women screamed in anger near pools of blood.

Hours later, about 200 people turned out for the funeral of five victims, in keeping with Muslim tradition to bury the dead quickly.

The crowd shouted, "Allahu akbar!" - "God is great!" - and some fired weapons into the air.

"There is simply no excuse or justification for murdering innocent civilians, particularly children," White House spokesman Scott McClellan said.

Yesterday's attack followed a bombing on Sunday, when a terrorist wearing an explosive vest killed 25 people at an army recruiting station in Baghdad.

The latest slayings also recalled a ghastly triple car bombing in September which targeted a group of GIs as they gave out candy to mark the opening of a water-treatment plant. The blasts killed 41 people, including 34 children.

U.S. officials said yesterday's attack occurred when the driver of the Toyota, which had a license plate from the southern city of Basra, failed to get through the military cordon and decided to kill himself and everyone near the Humvee.

"The car bomber made a deliberate decision to attack one of our vehicles as the soldiers were engaged in a peaceful operation with Iraqi citizens," U.S. military spokesman Maj. Russ Goemaere said.

"The terrorist undoubtedly saw the children around the Humvee as he attacked. The complete disregard for civilian life in this attack is absolutely abhorrent."