

VIDEO: Journalists Killed in Iraq: Does it Reveal a U.S. Military Cover Up?

Wikileaks Video (edited version)

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Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

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In 2007, two Reuters employees — photographer Namir Noor-Eldeen and driver Saeed Chmagh — were killed by a U.S. helicopter strike in Baghdad. The U.S. military's [official response](#) to the killings argued that the attack occurred after security forces came under fire from men accompanying the reporters, and that the rules of engagement were followed in returning fire. Skeptical of the military's claim, Reuters filed a Freedom of Information Act request for video of the killings, but was unable to get the videos from the military, despite warnings from the Pentagon's inspector general that future shootings were "[likely to reoccur](#)" if the event was not closely examined.

During an event this morning at the National Press Club, whistleblower website Wikileaks unveiled that it has a video, obtained from unnamed military sources, from one of the Apache helicopters involved in the attack. The video, which has now been uploaded to YouTube and placed on [a Wikileaks website](#) dedicated to the incident, appears to show that the military's helicopters attacked the Reuters employees unprovoked, apparently mistaking their cameras and tripods for weapons. The video does not show the victims firing on U.S. military personnel, nor does it show that they were any apparent threat. Watch it (warning — contains violent imagery):

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If the video is indeed an accurate portrayal of events, it would appear that the military's official response to the events is inaccurate and that it has not been telling the truth when it claims that the Apache attack "occurred [after security forces came under fire](#)." Additionally, it would appear that the Apache pilots in question violated the [2007 U.S. Rules of Engagement for Iraq](#), which permit the use of "deadly force" only against individuals who "pose a threat to Coalition Forces by committing a hostile act or demonstrating hostile intent."

The Wikileaks' revelation strengthens the case for a thorough and transparent investigation into the events that led to the killing of the Reuters employees and Iraqi civilians.

UPDATE

Last month, the New York Times revealed that [Wikileaks has been targeted](#) by the Pentagon and related intelligence agencies for its cooperation with military whistleblowers. In 2008,

the U.S. Army Counterintelligence Center put together a report outlining tactics to suppress whistleblowers, in which it cited Wikileaks by name as one organization it intends to “[destroy \[as\] a center of gravity](#)” for whistleblowing activity. Meanwhile, the Wikileaks founder [has alleged](#) that his organization is being intimidated and spied on by American intelligence agencies.

UPDATE

Reuters editor-in-chief David Schlesinger released the following statement: “The deaths of Namir Noor-Eldeen and Saeed Chmagh three years ago were tragic and emblematic of the extreme dangers that exist in covering war zones. We continue to work for journalist safety and call on all involved parties to recognise the important work that journalists do and the extreme danger that photographers and video journalists face in particular. The video released today via Wikileaks is graphic evidence of the dangers [involved in war journalism and the tragedies that can result.](#)”

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