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Should American forces be held accountable for refusing to protect gay Iraqis?

. yes . no

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## Iraqi death squads slaughtering gays

### Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani orders killings

by Doug Ireland

A gay man identified only as Ammar was abducted and shot in the back of the head in January 2006.

Following a death-to-gays fatwa issued last October by Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani death squads of the Badr Corps have been systematically targeting gay Iraqis for persecution and execution, gay Iraqis say. But when they ask for help and protection from U.S. occupying authorities in the "Green Zone," gay Iraqis are met with indifference and derision.

"The Badr Corps is committed to the 'sexual cleansing' of Iraq," says Ali Hili, a 33-year-old gay Iraqi exile in London. Hili fled to the U.K. five months ago with some 30 other gay Iraqis who founded the Abu Nawas Group there to support persecuted gay Iraqis.

The well-armed Badr Corps is the military arm of the Iranian-backed Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), the powerful Shia group that is the largest political formation in Iraq's Shia community, which was headquartered in Tehran until

Saddam Hussein's fall.

The Ayatollah Sistani, the 77-year-old Iranian-born cleric who is the supreme Shia authority in Iraq, is revered by SCIRI as its spiritual leader. His anti-gay fatwa says that "people involved" in homosexuality "should be killed in the worst, most severe way of killing."

Speaking by telephone from London, the Abu Nawas Group's Hili said, "there is a very, very serious threat to life for gay people in Iraq today. The Badr Corps was killing gay people even before the Ayatollah's fatwah, but Sistani's murderous homophobic incitement has given a green light to all Shia Muslims to hunt and kill lesbians and gay men."

Hili says "Badr Corps agents have a network of informers who, among other things, target alleged 'immoral behavior.' They kill gays, unveiled women, prostitutes, people who sell

or drink alcohol, and those who listen to western music and wear western fashions.

"Badr militants are entrapping gay men via internet chat rooms. They arrange a date and then beat and kill the victim. Males who are unmarried by the age of 30 or 35 are placed under surveillance on suspicion of being gay, as are effeminate men. They will be investigated and warned to get married. Badr will typically give them a month to change their ways. If they don't change their behavior, or if they fail to show evidence that they plan to get married, they will be arrested, disappear and eventually be found dead. The bodies are usually discovered with their hands bound



Shia death squads — following the orders of Ali Al Sistani — are murdering gays and lesbians in Iraq.

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## Charlotte Business Guild to host Food Lion CEO Rick Anicetti

Local LGBT biz guild reaching out to mainstream companies

by Bert Woodard

The Charlotte Business Guild (CBG) is not only growing in membership, but also in stature in terms of reaching out to the Charlotte region's mainstream business community. Just recently, Guild officials met with Charlotte Chamber officials about nurturing a relationship between the two organizations. Bob Morgan, new president of the Chamber, will speak at the September CBG meeting.

The April Guild meeting also represents a major step forward for the Guild, with Food Lion CEO Rick Anicetti speaking. Anicetti becomes the first CEO of a major corporation to speak to the Guild.

"Under Rick Anicetti's leadership, Food Lion is not only making great strides as a company, but the company is also working to make the company a more inviting, tolerant place to work for all its employees," said CBG President Kelley Doherty. "Food Lion has joined Bank of America, Wachovia, Duke Energy and The Compass Group as examples for other companies and

corporations to follow in creating a workplace that is truly open and nurturing, which we all know results in more productivity and better results for the company and its investors."

The Guild will also welcome members of Food Lion's LGBT employees association — Food Lion, LLC, Business Resource Group — and other Food Lion employees.

"We have had several Food Lion employees join the Guild and look forward to a strong relationship between the company and the Business Guild," Doherty continued. "To have the CEO of a major Charlotte area corporation speak to us is exciting. It should be a special evening, for not only

Charlotte Business Guild members, but for Food Lion's LGBT employees."

### info:

Tuesday, April 18  
VanLandingham Estate, 2010 The Plaza, Plaza-Midwood  
5:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Cocktails and food, 5:30-7 p.m., Program from 7-8 p.m.  
\$15 for CBG members, \$20 for guests and non-members  
Reservation by noon on Sunday, April 16 by emailing  
businessguild@yahoo.com or calling 704-565-5075.



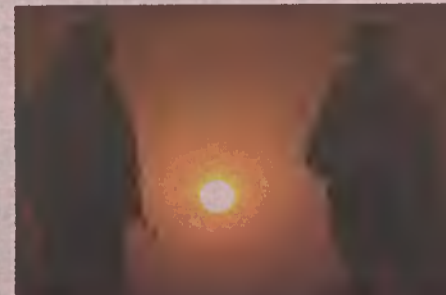
Food Lion CEO Rick Anicetti.

## Soldier's story

### Things I miss (and things I won't)

Editor's Note: These are the thoughts of a gay soldier — a North Carolina native — who has been deployed to Iraq. Because of the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, he must remain anonymous.

By the time you read this article it will be nearly time for me to come home



on leave. I'm not sure how this is going to feel — life here and the pace back at home will be dramatically different. I'm looking forward to the time back at home — there are so many things I miss back there — and so many things I won't miss here.

I'm so tired of the same meals all the

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