

Life endures in 9-11's wake Attacks spur UNC push for bioterror research

America, shaken, retains memories

BY CLEVE R. WOOTSON JR.
STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

Everybody who comes into Armond Flood's office is a patriot. The U.S. Navy petty officer graduated from recruiting school 10 days after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

He was shipped immediately to the Navy's recruiting office in Raleigh, where in a year, he put 50 bodies into the nation's sea-based fleet.

That number, the highest in the state that year, garnered him a promotion and three awards that hang behind the desk where he speaks with potential recruits.

Flood says he still believes in patriots, but not as many come into his office now.

More than two years have passed since the attacks that rocked America, and Saturday marks the one-year anniversary of the onset of U.S. military action in Iraq.

The war and the once-imminent threat of terrorist acts slowly has crept to the back of Americans' minds, said Richard Kohn, chairman of UNC's curriculum on peace, war and defense.

"A lot of other things look more threatening, like the lack of jobs or the fact that our wives are griping at us constantly or the price of gasoline ... approaching \$2 a gallon," Kohn said.

"There are things that are more important to people on a day-to-day basis than whether they are going to get blown up."

Kohn said that with the exception of Washington, D.C., and New York City, a sense of crisis hasn't persisted in the United States.

"It's just not the same," he said. "That sense of vulnerability is not that acute. Other priorities have displaced terrorism in the forefront of public consciousness."

Although the fire in the hearts of many is dying, the strong thoughts and poignant actions of those who have been actively concerned about the issue haven't wavered, said Jason Crawford, president of Patriots for the Defense of America, a nonpartisan group that supports the country's actions to defend itself against terrorism.

"If you look at the population at large, I think the issue has died down," he said.

"Back in March (2003), you saw all sorts of rallies for and against the war. Now it's sort of a done deal."

But the impact, and the change in the nation's psyche, is not gone forever, Kohn said. It's just harder to find.

People still get butterflies when they look at the New York skyline, he said. They still get lumps in their throats when they go through

airport security. David Solnit, chief organizer of Direct Action to Stop the War, said his group and others opposed to the war saw more activism in the past year than in the past two decades.

"We've had hundreds of thousands of people in the street last year," Solnit said.

He said that even though he thinks national fervor is dying down, some issues inherent to the war in Iraq and the more abstract battle against terrorism will always be ingrained in people's minds.

"People may not have changed their minds on the issue, but they may think it's not as important," he said.

Flood said he still remembers sitting around the television with his classmates in recruiting school, watching the events of Sept. 11 unfold.

He said the past year of war does not fade from the mind of anyone in the military easily.

But two years ago, with a new Navy recruiting job and the rest of his career ahead of him, Flood said he had to put the tumultuous events behind him and focus on the task at hand.

"Everything was back to normal," he said.

He might have been just a year or two ahead of the rest of the nation.

Contact the State & National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

BY NORA WARREN
STAFF WRITER

Since Sept. 11 and the invasion of Iraq, UNC researchers have responded to national threats by expanding current research focuses to include security defenses.

The focus on developing vaccines that once meant cures for common diseases, for instance, is now seen as a preventative measure against intentional bioterrorist attacks.

Money for such projects has come from many of the same federal research foundations UNC has typically drawn from, like the National Institutes of Health. But now the Department of Homeland Security is earmarking funds from those foundations toward defense purposes.

"Existing relationships with the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security have been enhanced," said Karen McCall, vice president for public affairs and marketing for UNC Health Care.

According to Steven Zeisel, associate dean of research in the School of Public Health, the addition of an infectious disease research floor in the school's new building is in part a reaction to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Zeisel said his department has long studied infectious diseases, but now they are applying their research for defense purposes.

The school is adding population epidemiology to understand and respond to the threats diseases such as SARS and smallpox can pose.

UNC officials also are getting involved in military support efforts. The National Program for Citizen-Soldier Support is a multi-campus initiative that would provide aid to the families of guard and reserve military.

"What we're looking to provide is a facilitator in each community (where a guard or reserve member resides)," said retired Maj. Gen. Doug Robertson, director of UNC's Highway Safety Research Center, who is working on the project.

Robertson said that because these military members are in the reserves and not on active duty, often they do not live near bases, where there is a high level of support for military families.

U.S. involvement in Iraq has meant that many reserve troops

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STEVEN ZEISEL, ASSOCIATE DEAN OF RESEARCH, UNC SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

have been deployed for several months, leaving families in need of aid.

This program would place retired military personnel in communities to offer help and raise awareness about the hardship of having a family member serving in the military.

"We're trying to strengthen, enhance and expand the current military to support reserve families," Robertson said.

But for all University-related measures to aid research to support Homeland Security efforts, UNC is not receiving the department's grant money to fund these initiatives.

As of now, UNC has not received any money directly from the department's \$36.2 billion dollar budget. And, according to Jim Peterson, associate vice chancellor for research, UNC has no immediate plans to get these special grants.

"We don't have any proposals in to Homeland Security," he said.

According to the Department of Homeland Security's Web site, only \$350 million of the \$36.2 billion is devoted specifically to the funding of vigorous research related activities.

"It's not like there's this massive new funding source and the money is flowing," said Allison Rosenberg, associate vice chancellor for federal and research affairs.

One way the University is funding initiatives is by teaming up with other institutions and universities to get grant money.

The National Program for Citizen-Soldier Support works with nine universities as well as UNC-TV to acquire funds from the Department of Defense, but grant money has yet to be awarded to the initiative.

Likewise, Zeisel said researchers in the School of Public Health receive grant money from the National Institutes of Health.

According to the institute's budget outline, while it has experienced several budget appropriations increases in the past few years, certain funds are earmarked for research in security and defense purposes.

Zeisel said that reserving money for specific means can take it away from research in other areas, such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

He said the government needs to establish long-term financial support for defense-related research.

A long-term commitment to development in this research could inspire researchers to focus on defense research and create a generation of specialized scientists, he said.

"We might attract people who would have otherwise gone into programming games for kids into programming (research) models."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

Violence mars Iraq 1 year later

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD, Iraq — More violence struck Iraq ahead of the anniversary of the start of the U.S.-led war that ousted Saddam Hussein: a deadly car bomb exploded Thursday in a southern city, three Iraqi journalists were killed in a drive-by shooting and three U.S. soldiers perished in mortar attacks.

The suicide car bombing occurred near a hotel in Basra as a British military patrol passed by, killing two men and a boy in addition to the bomber. A man who got out of the car before the blast was stabbed to death by passers-by.

The Iraqi journalists were killed as they drove to work at a coalition-funded television station in Baqouba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad. Nine other employees of Diyala TV were wounded in the attack on their minibus, said Sanaa al-Daghistani, the station's information director.

Rebels often target Iraqis perceived as collaborators with the occupation.

The U.S. military, meanwhile,

lowered the death toll in a suicide bombing at a Baghdad hotel on Wednesday to seven after initially putting it at 27.

Late Thursday, insurgents targeted the Ministry of Oil and the Bourj al-Hayat Hotel in Baghdad with several rockets and explosive devices. There were no injuries. One projectile created a hole in the second floor of the hotel, which sometimes houses Kurdish politicians.

Siens also walked briefly in the area housing the U.S.-led coalition headquarters. A U.S. military official said that there had been an attack and that it was under investigation. There were no casualties.

It was unclear whether insurgents were timing attacks to overshadow the anniversary of the March 20, 2003, start of the war that toppled Hussein, though assailants often have conducted attacks on holidays and other significant dates.

The aim of anti-U.S. forces appears to be demonstrating that Iraq is ungovernable despite some American progress in its nation-

building effort, including the formation of an Iraqi police force, the signing of an interim constitution and plans to hand over power to Iraqis on June 30.

"We were fighting them knowing full well the better we did the harder it would get," said Maj. Gen. Martin Dempsey, commander of the U.S. Army's 1st Armored Division, which oversees security in Baghdad. He said the fight in Iraq is evolving into a battle against shadowy extremists who attack civilians rather than soldiers.

"It is far easier to fight an enemy who fights you conventionally and who fights you in some similar fashion to the way you fight him than it is to fight an enemy who uses the tools of terror," he said.

A man suspected of involvement in the Basra bombing who left the vehicle shortly before the blast was caught by passers-by and stabbed to death, said police Lt. Col. Ali Kazem. Two others who were spotted getting out of the vehicle were caught by members of the public and later arrested.

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