

Opinion: Iraq vet unnerved when raided by cops

By Alex Horton, Washington Post

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I got home from the bar and fell into bed soon after Saturday night bled into Sunday morning. I didn't wake up until three police officers barged into my apartment, barking their presence at my door. They sped down the hallway to my bedroom, their service pistols drawn and leveled at me.

It was just past 9am, and I was still under the covers. The only visible target was my head.

In the shouting and commotion, I felt an instant familiarity. I'd been here before. This was a raid.

I had done this a few dozen times myself, 6,000 miles away from my Alexandria, Va., apartment. As an Army infantryman in Iraq, I'd always been on the trigger side of the weapon. Now that I was on the barrel side, I recalled basic training's most important firearm rule: Aim only at something you intend to kill.

I had conducted the same kind of raid on suspected bombmakers and high-value insurgents. But the Fairfax County officers in my apartment were aiming their weapons at a target whose rap sheet consisted only of parking tickets and an overdue library book.

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