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Member of US special forces killed by enemy fire

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TOM BROKAW, anchor:

It is the price of war. People die from enemy fire, and so far in Afghanistan, for all the bombing and shooting, the United States has been remarkably fortunate. But tonight, a member of the special forces is dead, killed by enemy fire, the first American soldier to be killed by hostile action. A CIA operative also was wounded. The earlier American casualties involved so-called friendly fire and another CIA man. NBC's Jim Miklaszewski is at the Pentagon for us again tonight, and he has a lot of ground to cover. Jim:

JIM MIKLASZEWSKI reporting:

Tom, the US special forces soldier and a CIA operative were meeting today with friendly tribal leaders when they suddenly found themselves in the middle of a deadly firefight. The attack came in this dangerous no-man's-land of eastern Afghanistan. A team of US special forces and CIA paramilitaries ambushed by enemy troops.

General TOMMY FRANKS (US Central Command): What I know is that there was an exchange of small-arms fire, that--that this American serviceman was doing his job.

MIKLASZEWSKI: A second commando team rushed to the scene, but was too late. One Army special forces soldier was shot and killed, a CIA operative wounded and MedEvac'd to Uzbekistan in serious condition. Nearby, US warplanes launched a fierce attack against an al-Qaeda terrorist complex for a second day in a row in the Gardez-Khowst region, just three miles from the Pakistan border where al-Qaeda forces have been regrouping.

Mr. FRANKS: Intelligence indicated that there was al-Qaeda activity in and around this

complex of sufficient size to warrant our need to go back in there, and so that's what we did.

MIKLASZEWSKI: Intelligence also indicated Osama bin Laden himself may have been there, but it will takes days to determine who may have been killed in the attacks. US officials say it is possible, however, that bin Laden is wounded. In this latest video released last month, bin Laden's left arm remains motionless, indicating it may have been injured in a fall or a US bombing. The US military is also taking custody of more prisoners, now 273. NBC News has learned that one of them is a top al-Qaeda official, Ibn Al-Shaykh al-Libi, who was in charge of military training at bin Laden's terrorist camps and could provide valuable information about how the terrorists were trained and what other American targets they intend to attack.

And in what may be somewhat encouraging news, US military officials report today despite bin Laden's intense interest and efforts, US troops in Afghanistan have found no evidence he has actually produced any weapons of mass destruction. Tom:  
BROKAW: Thanks very much, NBC's Jim Miklaszewski tonight.

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