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QUANTICO, Va. — Cpl. Wassef Ali Hassoun, the Marine who disappeared under mysterious circumstances while on duty in Iraq, insisted on Monday that he was captured by insurgents and that he is still a loyal Marine.

"I did not desert my post," he told reporters outside Quantico Marine Corps Base. "I was captured and held against my will by anti-coalition forces for 19 days. This was a very difficult and challenging time for me.'

He did not answer any questions during his brief appearance. He was joined by his brother, who arrived from Utah.

"I would like to tell all the Marines as well as all those others serving in Iraq to keep their heads up and spirits high. Once a Marine, always a Marine, Semper Fi," Hassoun said, invoking the Marine Corps motto, Latin for 'always faithful.'

Marine spokesman Lt. Col. Dave Lapan said the Marine Corps was not in a position to confirm or refute Hassoun's claim.

June 20 from his base near the troubled Iraqi city of Fallujah and turned up unharmed at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut on July 8. It remains unclear how he traveled from Iraq to Lebanon, where he was born and still has some relatives.

On June 27, Arab television showed a videotape of a blindfolded Hassoun, a sword hanging over his head. At one point during his disappearance, a group claiming to represent his captors announced that he had been beheaded after being lured from the base by a love affair.

The military is investigating whether the reported kidnapping was a hoax and whether the Muslim Hassoun deserted his unit.

Hassoun is in the midst of what the Marines call a "repatriation process" in which he is debriefed and given time to decompress and avoid the media spotlight, officials said.

Hassoun arrived at Quantico on Friday after six days of medical evaluation at a military hospital in Germany. In the coming days, he will leave Quantico for Camp Lejeune, N.C., his home base, Lapan said. He will continue the repatriation process there, Lapan said.

Continued from page Hassoun, 24, of West Jordan, Utah, disappeared in title only. "The president is very open to ideas that build

BY: WILL LLOYD

implementing," McClellans The commission report is expected to discuss an tionship between Iraq's neig and traditional foe Iran an al-Qaida terror organization

the reforms that we're als

Rudder

Continued from page | be creati

Battle Monuments Commis and visitors to the site.

Everett, the team's geom cist, brings the ability to underground.

"We use metal deter ground penetrating radar magnetics to find buried crete, iron and disturbed Everett said. "We're looking underground fortifications we would then build maps of the Wall subsurface structures."

arties. Everett said that unlike n North lar research conducted at the & Deli of of Custer's last stand at word of Big Horn, which changed way historians have viewed Smith sa battle "this will give us ada picture of the battle, but thes shouldn't change too much

Everett said there is pri nothing has been planned yet, inary interest in doing who has research at San Jacinto.

"There are a lot of unknown the history of that particulars

Marine says he did not desert post

By Matthew Barakat THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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The Tradition at Northgate

VP

Continued from page 1

so students should have more convenient access to our office," Bresciani said.

Kathy DiSanto, an administrative assistant who helped plan the event, said being in a hightraffic area is important.

"At the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs, students are our main interest," DiSanto said. "We have an open door policy and we want students to feel comfortable in our office." The vice president for stu-

dent affairs serves as a senior administration officer of the University and oversees several departments focused on providing a high quality environment to students to promote success, Bresciani said.

"This is the students' University; we're here to serve students and we want them to know where we are and that they're welcome here," DiSanto said.

Bresciani said he hopes faculty and staff will reference the

with students this summer. "We want students to be familiar with our location,"

new location in their interactions

Bresciani said. "It's an incred-

ible improvement in terms of accessibility.' There may be a similar event held in the fall when more students are on campus, but

"We want students to know where we're located so that they down there," Everett said. "The can utilize services in student a lot of potential for constraint affairs," Kelley said.

Suicide

Continued from page 1

he had driven from Saudi Arabia into Iraq.

The fuel tanker attack on the police station in the Seidiyeh neighborhood of Baghdad took place just after 8 a.m., as police gathered to receive their daily assignments.

"We were all standing in a row, listening to our officer as he gave us our assignment for the day," said Mehdi Salah Abed Ali, 32, lying in a bed at al-Yarmuk hospital with his leg bandaged.

The police station was fenced in, and the tanker exploded about 500 feet away in the

middle of the neighborhood. The attack killed nine people and wounded at least 60, said Saad al-Amili, a Health Ministry official.

The tanker's presence in the industrial area did not raise concerns until it started speeding toward the police station, said Ahmed Nouri, who works at a nearby

"I was standing with a friend when we saw the tanker speeding in an unnatural way," Nouri said, describing the driver as a young man with a light beard.

After the attack, protesters gathered and chanted, "Long live Saddam!" before police dispersed them by firing in the air.

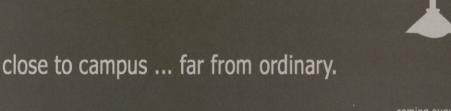
Militants have used near-constant car

bombs, sabotage, assassinations and nappings as weapons in their 15-month insurgency. They increasingly have large police and local officials to try to desta the interim Iraqi government and pa those it considers collaborators with the forces who drove Saddam Hussein power last year.

Monday's attack was the fourth since 14. At least 31 people have been killed On Sunday, two car bombs in likit two police officers and wounded five of

On Thursday, attackers detonated 1 bomb near police and government built in the western city of Haditha, killing Iraqis and wounding about 40.

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