

# AMERICAN JOURNALIST SHOT DOWN IN AFGHANISTHAN

**Pulitzer Prize Winner Dies in Fiery Crash**

**Another Journalist Reported Killed in Separate Ambush**

**REUTERS**

**Kabul Afghanistan, June 15, 1996.** Well known photojournalist Darryl Sanders was killed late yesterday when the Afghan Army Russian made MI-8 helicopter he was riding in was shot down by heat seeking shoulder fired missiles. At the time, Mr. Sanders, on assignment for National Geographic Magazine, was on his way to investigate the reported death of his fellow photojournalist, James McNichol, reported killed yesterday in an ambush on a relief convoy in which he was traveling. Mr. McNichol's death is unconfirmed at this time as his body has not been identified at the convoy site, so he is officially listed as missing. Mr. Sander's body was also unrecovered as reportedly the passengers on the helicopters were burned beyond any hope of recognition and scattered in an inaccessible ravine.

## FAMED JOURNALIST JAMES McNICHOL MISSING AFTER CONVOY AMBUSH

**Body not recovered at massacre scene**

**Convoy Under Flag or Truce for Humanitarian Relief  
No One Claims Responsibility**

He was reported by the pilot as being aboard, prior to the crash and one of his camera bags was thrown clear and recovered virtually undamaged. Together this was considered sufficient evidence of his death.

If both deaths are confirmed it raises the question of whether there is a deliberate campaign being waged to kill American Journalists? Both the government and the Taliban deny responsibility for either incident, particularly since the convoy was traveling under safe passage by both sides. Suspicion is pointed at a rogue band operating under its own command. Both sides have promised a thorough investigation but in the chaotic conditions that exist in much of the country, responsibility will be hard to establish. Other American journalists are reported to be leaving Afghanistan.

The National Geographic Society today in a Washington DC press conference expressed its sympathy to the family and friends of Mr. Sanders and expressed hope that Mr. McNichol would still be found alive. The magazine currently has no other journalists in Afghanistan and in view of these incidents has no plans to send any in the immediate future. Other agencies are reported to be considering similar action.



Afghan girl playing Oud. Picture from film recovered at crash site. Others to be published in National Geographic Magazine