



IRAQ INVESTIGATIONS



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Charges Dismissed Against Marine Officer in Haditha, Iraq Investigation

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. (June 17, 2008) - A military judge here today dismissed all charges, without prejudice, against Lt. Col. Jeffrey Chessani.

Chessani was charged with dereliction of duty and violation of a lawful order for his alleged actions and inactions following an incident in Haditha, Iraq on Nov. 19, 2005, in which Iraqi civilians were killed.

Because the charges were dismissed without prejudice, the government may re-prefer charges against Chessani, however, the military judge ruled that the Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Central Command, the Commander, I Marine Expeditionary Force, and the Commander, Joint Forces Command and their respective subordinate commands are prohibited from doing so.

The military judge's decision is also subject to appeal by the government.

The military judge ruled in favor of a defense motion to dismiss charges due to the appearance of unlawful command influence in the case.

Charges were referred to general court-martial Oct. 19, 2007.

The military judge for the proceeding was Col. Steven Folsom.

The charges are accusations against the individual and the accused is presumed innocent. The Marine Corps is committed to a fair proceeding in compliance with the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

More information on the charges, specifications and legal proceedings can be found at <http://192.156.19.109/lapa/iraq-investigations.htm>

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