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NEWS RELEASE

7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command
 Public Affairs Office
 Grafenwöhr, Germany

PHONE:
 DSN 475-7776 COMMERCIAL (49) 09641-83-7776

E-mail: jmtcpao@eur.army.mil
 Website: <http://www.hqjmtc.army.mil>

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On Sept. 16, 2008, criminal charges were preferred against Master Sgt. John E. Hatley, 40; Sgt. 1st Class Joseph P. Mayo, 27; and Sgt. Michael P. Leahy, Jr., 26; all formerly assigned to 1st Batt., 18th Inf. Regt.

All three Soldiers are charged with one specification of a violation of the Uniformed Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), Article 118, premeditated murder; one specification of a violation of the UCMJ, Article 81, conspiracy to commit premeditated murder; and one specification of a violation of the UCMJ, Article 134, obstruction of justice. These charges relate to an incident that occurred during March/April 2007 at or near Baghdad, Iraq.

Hatley and Leahy were also charged with crimes stemming from a separate incident that occurred in early Jan. 2007 at or near Baghdad, Iraq. Based on this incident, both are charged with one additional specification of a violation of the UCMJ, Article 118, premeditated murder, and one additional specification of a violation of Article 81, conspiracy to commit premeditated murder. Leahy was also charged with one specification of a violation of Article 78, accessory after the fact.

Preferal of charges represents an accusation only; the accused are presumed innocent unless or until proven guilty. The cases will be processed in accordance with normal procedures.

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