

# CHELSEA MANNING WARNED OF NURI AL- MALIKI'S CORRUPTION IN 2010. DAVID PETRAEUS' SUBORDINATES SILENCED HER.

In early 2010, Chelsea Manning discovered that a group of people Iraq's Federal Police were treating as insurgents were instead trying to call attention to Nuri al-Maliki's corruption. When she alerted her supervisors to that fact, they told her to "drop it," and instead find more people who were publishing "anti-Iraqi literature" calling out Maliki's corruption.

On 27 February 2010, a report was received from a subordinate battalion. The report described an event in which the FP detained fifteen (15) individuals for printing "anti-Iraqi literature." By 2 March 2010, I received instructions from an S3 section officer in the 2-10BCT Tactical Operations Center to investigate the matter, and figure out who these "bad guys" were, and how significant this event was for the FP.

Over the course of my research, I found that none of the individuals had previous ties with anti-Iraqi actions or suspected terrorist or militia groups. A few hours later, I received several photos from the scene from the subordinate battalion.

[snip]

I printed a blown up copy of the high-resolution photo, and laminated it for ease of storage and transfer. I then

walked to the TOC and delivered the laminated copy to our category 2 interpreter. She reviewed the information and about a half-hour later delivered a rough written transcript in English to the S2 section.

I read the transcript, and followed up with her, asking for her take on its contents. She said it was easy for her to transcribe verbatim since I blew up the photograph and laminated it. She said the general nature of the document was benign. The documentation, as I assessed as well, was merely a scholarly critique of the then-current Iraqi Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki. It detailed corruption within the cabinet of al-Maliki's government, and the financial impact of this corruption on the Iraqi people.

After discovering this discrepancy between FP's report, and the interpreter's transcript, I forwarded this discovery, in person to the TO OIC and Battle NCOIC.

The TOC OIC and, the overhearing Battlecaptain, informed me they didn't need or want to know this information any more. They told me to "drop it" and to just assist them and the FP in finding out where more of these print shops creating "anti-Iraqi literature" might be. I couldn't believe what I heard, (24-25)

At the time, David Petraeus was the head of CENTCOM, the very top of the chain of command that had ordered Manning to "drop" concerns about Iraqis being detained for legitimate opposition to Maliki's corruption.

Manning would go on to leak more documents showing US complicity in Iraqi abuses, going back to 2004. None of those documents were

classified more than Secret. Her efforts (in part) to alert Americans to the abuse the military chain of command in Iraq was ignoring won her a 35-year sentence in Leavenworth.

Compare that to David Petraeus who pretends, to this day, Maliki's corruption was not known and not knowable before the US withdrew troops in 2011, who pretends the US troops under his command did not ignore, even facilitate, Maliki's corruption.

#### **What went wrong?**

The proximate cause of Iraq's unraveling was the increasing authoritarian, sectarian and corrupt conduct of the Iraqi government and its leader after the departure of the last U.S. combat forces in 2011. The actions of the Iraqi prime minister undid the major accomplishment of the Surge. (They) alienated the Iraqi Sunnis and once again created in the Sunni areas fertile fields for the planting of the seeds of extremism, essentially opening the door to the takeover of the Islamic State. Some may contend that all of this was inevitable. Iraq was bound to fail, they will argue, because of the inherently sectarian character of the Iraqi people. I don't agree with that assessment.

The tragedy is that political leaders failed so badly at delivering what Iraqis clearly wanted – and for that, a great deal of responsibility lies with Prime Minister Maliki.

Unlike Manning, Petraeus adheres to a myth, the myth that this war was not lost 12 years ago, when George Bush ordered us to invade based on a pack of lies, when Petraeus and his fellow commanders failed to bring security after the invasion (largely through the priorities of their superiors), when Paul Bremer decided to criminalize the bureaucracy that might have

restored stability – and a secular character – to Iraq.

Of course, Petraeus' service to that myth is no doubt a big part of the reason he can continue to influence public opinion from the comfort of his own home as he prepares to serve his 2 years of probation for leaking code word documents, documents far more sensitive than those Manning leaked, as opposed to the 35 years in Leavenworth Manning received.

Which is, of course, a pretty potent symbol of our own corruption.