



No Time for the Truth: The Haditha Incident and the Search for Justice

Nathaniel R. Helms, Haytham Faraj

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An Unflinching Look at a Black Chapter in Our War in Iraq and America's Failure to Serve Justice

In the waning days of 2005, twelve Marines were ambushed by Sunni Muslim insurgents on Route Chestnut, an ancient Mesopotamian road at the south edge of Haditha, Iraq, when an IED detonated under one of four Humvees they occupied, killing or wounding a quarter of their number. The surviving Marines quickly counterattacked. Their merciless response killed twenty-four Iraqi citizens, including an old man and ten women and children. This horrific encounter was quickly dubbed the Haditha Massacre and compared to My Lai, and its echoes still resonate today. Prompted by international condemnation, the Pentagon and Marine Corps initiated court-martial proceedings against the Marines involved.

No Time for the Truth is the first book to show how the subsequent seven-year investigation and trial—which resulted in only a single minor conviction—was no more than theater meant to appease an outraged public and salvage US-Iraq relations. Authors Nathaniel Helms and Haytham Faraj, who served as defense counsel, reveal how the Pentagon pressured prosecutors to protect the integrity of the Marine Corps by hiding the fully gruesome nature of killings perpetrated by “battle-rattled” soldiers, with the intention of laying blame at the feet of a single staff sergeant. This is a stunning account of one of the darkest moments in the war in Iraq, a critical examination of whether justice was even sought after, and a powerful statement that in war, “truth is the first casualty.”

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