

Iraqi officers on the lam in in the U.S.

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- Iraqi law enforcement and military officers training in the United States for special intelligence programs disappeared or left their posts to seek asylum. The Washington Times Thursday said it has learned nearly a dozen Iraqi officers fled U.S. military training facilities and five Iraqi military personnel training with the U.S. Army disappeared between 2005 and 2007. "Nothing that this command is aware of would suggest that any of those students who departed from their training or returned back to Iraq poses any threat to the United States," an Army training spokesman said. Rep. Lamar Smith, the ranking Republican on the House Judiciary Committee, says the findings are a grave national security risk. "The trainees are given access to highly sensitive information intended to help in the stabilization of Iraq. Proper screening for entry into the program and strict controls during the training are necessary to protect both our national security and our soldiers overseas," Smith told the Times. The Times uncovered the disappearance of the Iraqi Air Force colonel from a base in Alabama in March.

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