

Dan Rather Reports

Episode Number: 342

Episode Title: The Most Wanted Man in Iran

Description: Meet the leader of a group killing Iranian soldiers along the country's border with Pakistan. The Iranians call them terrorists with ties to Al Qaeda, but the group's leader says they're freedom fighters. Plus a weapon the U.S. wants to use but other countries want to ban.

THE MOST WANTED MAN IN IRAN:

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

GOOD EVENING. TONIGHT WE'RE GOING TO GIVE YOU A LOOK AT A COUPLE REPORTS WE RAN EARLIER THAT ARE BACK IN THE NEWS. BOTH DEAL WITH ISSUES FACING THE INCOMING OBAMA ADMINISTRATION. LATER IN THE PROGRAM, WE'LL TELL YOU THE STORY OF A WEAPON THE UNITED STATES SAYS IT NEEDS TO USE BUT MOST OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD BELIEVE SHOULD BE BANNED.

BUT FIRST WE GIVE YOU AN UPDATED LOOK AT QUESTIONS OF TERRORISM THROUGH A COUNTRY THAT WE OFTEN THINK OF AS A SPONSOR BUT NOT A VICTIM – IRAN. THERE, ALONG IRAN'S BORDER WITH PAKISTAN, A CONFLICT IS FESTERING THAT COULD HAVE PROFOUND GEOPOLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS, AS SEEN IN A REPORT WE FIRST RAN LAST YEAR.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

TONIGHT, WE'RE TAKING YOU TO A PLACE YOU MAY NEVER HAVE HEARD OF, LET ALONE SEEN IN THE NEWSPAPERS OR ON TELEVISION. IT'S A PROVINCE IN SHIA-DOMINATED IRAN, WITH A RESTIVE SUNNI POPULATION, IT'S CALLED BALOCHISTAN.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

YOU WILL SEE GRAPHIC FOOTAGE OF MILITANT STRIKES AND BRUTAL EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLINGS ON TWO SIDES OF A SIMMERING CONFLICT.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

YOU WILL MEET A PROMINENT LOCAL GUERRILLA COMMANDER WHO IS GAINING INTERNATIONAL RENOWN. SOME SEE HIM AS A BUDDING REVOLUTIONARY, OTHERS A BRUTAL TERRORIST. WE TALKED TO HIM, IN HIS FIRST-EVER TELEVISION INTERVIEW AMIDST GROVES OF DATE PALMS, AND

FOUND HE DIDN'T SOUND LIKE ANY MUSLIM EXTREMIST WE HAVE EVER HEARD.

ABDULMALIK RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

Despotic religious rule like Fascism, like Nazism, has been imposed upon the Iranians, upon the people, and particularly against ethnic minorities like the Baloch, Kurd, Arab, Azeri, Turk and religious minorities like Sunni, Jews and the Christians.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THIS IS 24-YEAR-OLD ABDULMALIK RIGI. AND AT THIS VERY MOMENT, HE'S IRAN'S MOST WANTED TERRORIST. HE LEADS A GUERRILLA FORCE THAT HAS BEEN REGULARLY ATTACKING THE IRANIAN MILITARY. BUT HE SAYS HE ISN'T A RELIGIOUS FANATIC, AND IN FACT, IT IS THE FANATICISM OF THE MULLAHS CONTROLLING IRAN THAT ARE IN HIS SIGHTS.

RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

Because there were no other ways for us to achieve our rights as humans, our belief, our nationality, our identity, our religion. The regime has stamped upon us. As a last option, we adopted militancy to get our freedom.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE REGION OF BALOCHISTAN COMPRISES SCORCHING HOT DESERTS AND DARK, BARREN MOUNTAINS. IT IS THE SIZE OF MONTANA AND WYOMING COMBINED, AND EMCOMPASSES VAST SWATHES OF IRAN, PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN: ONE OF THE MOST VIOLENT AND OVERLOOKED CORNERS OF THE EARTH. BUT YOU WILL NOT FIND THE NATIONAL BORDERS OF BALOCHISTAN ON ANY MODERN MAP. IT'S NEVER BEEN A MODERN, SOVEREIGN STATE BECAUSE MORE POWERFUL NEIGHBORS HAVE ALWAYS CARVED UP THE TERRITORY. WE SENT A REPORTER/PRODUCER WILLEM MARX TO FIND OUT WHAT WAS BEHIND THIS GROWING MOVEMENT, AND THE SWIRLING ALLEGATIONS THAT THESE MEN—WHO ARRIVED IN A HIJACKED IRANIAN JEEP—ARE BEING FUNDED BY THE CIA. RIGI APPEARED CALM AS HE BRAGGED ABOUT HIS SUCCESSFUL ATTACKS ON IRAN'S MOST ELITE TROOPS.

RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

We have carried out different types of operations, like sabotage, guerrilla attacks, encirclement ambushes, hit-and-runs, hand-to-hand combat, various different attacks on the regime.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, RIGI SAYS HIS MOVEMENT HAS EFFECTIVELY STRUCK THE IRANIAN ARMY, THANKS TO THE WIDESPREAD SUPPORT OF THE LOCAL BALOCH POPULATION.

RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

Until now, more than three to five hundred of the Iranian regime's forces have been killed since the beginning. The Iranian army, the Iranian forces, are very cowardly.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

WE OBTAINED FOOTAGE OF A RAID THAT RIGI AND HIS GROUP CONDUCTED—AND FILMED—LAST YEAR. THEY DROVE AROSS A DESERT BY DAY, AND AS THE SUN FELL THE MEN STOPPED TO SAY THEIR PRAYERS. THEY ARE MUSLIM, BUT THEY INSIST IT IS NOT RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM THAT DRIVES THEM TO VIOLENCE. THEN IN TOTAL DARKNESS THEIR LEADER RIGI ADDRESSES THE CAMERA, AND SECONDS LATER THE GROUP SEEMS TO SET OFF TOWARDS SOME NEARBY LIGHTS IN THE DESERT. WITHIN MOMENTS, MEN ARE SHOWN FACE DOWN AND BOUND TO THE GROUND. THESE CAPTIVES ARE SEEN AGAIN IN DAYLIGHT, CROUCHING AND BLINDFOLDED. THE NARRATOR SAYS THAT THE OPERATION HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED OUT BY RIGI AND HIS GROUP JUNDULLUH—THE ARMY OF GOD. IT IS NOT CLEAR FROM THIS VIDEO WHAT HAPPENED TO THESE HOSTAGES, OR INDEED WHO THEY WERE.

RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

We use conventional weapons that are being used in guerrilla warfare such as Kalashnikovs, cannons, the M-16, and other types of semi-heavy weapons like the HAGA. Regime also knows we have weapons like the SAM7, SAM9 but modern missiles we do not have. We don't have but we are trying to find them from somewhere.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR, A LARGE EXPLOSION NEAR THE IRANIAN CITY OF ZAHEDAN DESTROYED A BUS AND OTHER PASSING VEHICLES. THE BUS HAD BEEN CARRYING MEMBERES OF IRAN'S REVOLUTIONARY GUARD, AND 11 WERE KILLED WITH THREE-DOZEN MORE INJURED. IT WAS AN AUDACIOUS STRIKE AIMED AT THE VERY HEART OF IRAN'S ARMED FORCES, AND WAS CONDEMNED AS A TERRORIST ACT BY THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL. PREVIOUS INCIDENTS CLAMED ON RIGI BY THE AUTHORITIES HAD MORE OFTEN RESULTED IN CIVILIAN DEATHS. THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT DECLINED OUR REQUEST FOR AN INTERVIEW, BUT THEY DID DIRECT US TO THESE GRAPHIC IMAGES FOUND ON IRANIAN WEBSITES, THAT THEY SAY DEPICT VICTIMS OF RIGI'S ATTACKS. BUT WE MUST WARN YOU WE HAVE OBTAINED FAR MORE GRAPHIC FOOTAGE. THIS INCREDIBLY DISTRUBING VIDEO REPORTEDLY SHOWS RIGI BUTCHERING

HIS OWN BROTHER-IN-LAW. THE MAN'S ALLEGED DEFENSE WAS THAT OF PASSING INFORMATION ON THE GROUP'S ACTIVITIES TO IRANIAN AUTHORITIES. TONIGHT IS THE FIRST TIME THAT RIGI HAS SPOKEN PUBLICLY ABOUT HIS GROUP'S METHODS AND TECHNIQUES.

RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

We acquire our weaponry and our vehicles from Iran and the Iranian regime also has confessed that we acquired our equipment from its soldiers, from its military convoys that we ambushed and ransacked. And I said before, we acquire our weaponry from checkpoints, from soldiers and other military sites.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT THERE ARE QUESTIONS ABOUT WHERE RIGI IS GETTING HIS FUNDING, AND RUMORS THAT THE CIA IS FUNNELING MONEY TO THIS TERRORIST GROUP.

SADJADPOUR

There are allegations that have been made public that the American government, the CIA, has been supporting Balochi insurgents within Balochistan. The upsurge in violence are not coincidental, that they have to do with the fact that Iran and the us are essentially fighting this Cold War.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

KARIM SADJADPOUR IS A SCHOLAR AT THE CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE, AND AN EXPERT ON THE SUNNI MINORITIES IN IRAN, SUCH AS THE BALOCH.

SADJADPOUR

Well the Iranian government claims that it has very substantial evidence that outside forces like the United States are supporting Balochi insurgents in Balochistan, Kurdish insurgents in Kurdistan, Azari movements in Azerbaijan, and they claim to have very substantial evidence that the USA, the CIA, MI6, Mossad, are trying to use these groups to foment unrest within Iran.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT SADJADPOUR IS SKEPTICAL ABOUT SUCH CLAIMS THAT ARE REGULARLY MADE BY THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT.

SADJADPOUR

Whenever there are social protests, or political protests, or economic protests, rather than addressing the problems, they say these groups, these agitators are funded by Zionists or funded by the CIA and this is not unique to the Balochis.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE MAJORITY OF IRANIAN CITIZENS BELONG TO THE SHIA SECT OF ISLAM. AFTER THE REVOLUTION OF 1979 OVERTHREW THE US-BACKED SHAH, AYATOLLAH KHUMENEI INSTITUTED AN EXTREME FUNDAMENTALIST SHIITE GOVERNMENT. BUT THE BALOCH PEOPLE ARE SUNNI, LEADING TO SECTARIAN TENSIONS LIKE THOSE WE SEE IN IRAQ.

SADJADPOUR

I think when you have a regime in Tehran like you have now, which is essentially an Islamic republic, and very much kind of Shiite centric, this amplifies the alienation among the Balochi's, that because they're Sunni they're not Shiite, they're not tended to, and the reason why is not because they're in a remote area which is far away from Tehran, but by virtue of the fact that they're not Shiite and they're not Persian.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT HAS REPEATEDLY CALLED A RIGI A TERRORIST. IN A RECENT LETTER INTENDED FOR CIRCULATION AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND SECURITY COUNCIL, THE IRANIAN MINISTRY OF AFFAIRS STATE THAT RIGI IS "COMMITTING ARMED AND TERRORIST OPERATIONS WITH THE AIM TO 'TOPPLE THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT.'" RIGI REFUTES THESE CHARGES AND SAYS HIS VIOLENCE IS A REGRETTABLE REQUIREMENT FOR CHANGE TO OCCUR INSIDE IRAN.

RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

In our long-term strategy, we don't want to just kill; we want to create awareness, a public awareness and create hope among them in order to cause a general uprising.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

RIGI SAYS HE IS NOT FIGHTING FOR A SEPARATE BALOCHISTAN AND HE IS NOT LOOKING FOR INDEPEDENCE.

RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

We want a federal Iran, and territorial integrity should be secured. It should be a federal Iran, a United States of Iran.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT THIS KIND OF FEDERALISM IS SOMETHING THAT ANALYSTS LIKE SADJADPOUR DO NOT THINK IS POSSIBLE.

SADJADPOUR

The current inhabitants of Iran, whether they're Kurds, they're Balochis, they're Persians, they're Shiites, they're Turkmens, have been a part of the Iranian nation for a long time, so I think the prospect of Iran breaking up into several pieces, or succumbing to civil war or ethnic war along the lines of what we see in Iraq, or what we've seen in places like Lebanon, is extremely unlikely.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

MOST OF BALOCHISTAN IS DIRT POOR AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN IGNORED BY IRAN'S CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. IN THIS ECONOMIC VACUUM ILLEGAL OF TRADE, LIKE DRUG-TRAFFICKING AND OIL-SMUGGLING HAVE FLOURISHED. IN ONE OF THE REGION'S LARGER SMUGGLING TOWNS, WE SPOKE TO ONE IRANIAN BALOCH ABOUT THE ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS OF LIFE ON THIS FORGOTTEN FRONTIER.

IRANIAN BOLOCH MAN (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

What other work is there? It is the only work. Only Iranian "border work" is going on.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

HE SAYS HE IS FORCED TO SMUGGLE, BUT POVERTY IS NOT THIS MAN'S ONLY CONCERN.

IRANIAN BOLOCH MAN (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

If you speak, the government will execute you and say that you are an enemy of the Revolution. Nobody can say anything.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE SMUGGLER WAS HESITANT ABOUT OFFERING DIRECT SUPPORT FOR RIGI'S GUERRILLA MOVEMENT—BUT HE SAYS THAT EVERYBODY IN THIS BORDER REGION IS TALKING ABOUT THE GROUP.

IRANIAN BOLOCH MAN (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

There is Malik Rigi and his organization fighting—there is nobody else fighting. Iran is clearly accusing America of helping. He might be fighting on his own, but Iran is accusing America of helping, of financing, and of supplying weapons. He might be fighting on his own, America might have no knowledge. Iran is accusing America of helping Malik Rigi—that he is not fighting on his own.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND PERHAPS IT IS WITH OUTSIDE HELP THAT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE BALOCH IN IRAN MIGHT IMPROVE.

IRANIAN BOLOCH MAN (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

Baloch people are very poor. They don't have money or anything. It requires fighting, but as for weapons... help... who will provide?

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT MANY OTHER PEOPLE ARE ASKING NOT, "WHO WILL PROVIDE," BUT INSTEAD, "WHO IS PROVIDING?"

SADJADPOUR

There's been a lot of disenfranchisement within Balochistan because it's an area where there's heavy drug-trafficking, high unemployment, a lot of social problems, but it had been relatively calm. But what we've seen in the last two years is this upsurge in violence, so I think people have been fairly surprised and people have been questioning where these groups are getting their arms from.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

COMING UP NEXT, WE FOLLOW THE MONEY TRAIL TO SOME UNLIKELY LOCATIONS.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THESE ARE THE EMPTY MOUNTAINS AND DESERTS OF BALOCHISTAN, STRETCHING ACROSS IRAN'S BORDERS TO AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN. THIS HAS BEEN HOME BASE FOR THE BALOCH GUERRILLA LEADER ABDULMALIK RIGI SINCE HE LEFT SCHOOL AT 17. PROTECTED BY AS MANY AS 700 WARRIORS, HE NOW LIVES BEYOND THE REACH OF THE AUTHORITIES, WITH HIS WIFE AND THREE YOUNG CHILDREN.

RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

My mother and father are both alive, they are living with me in the mountains. All of my brothers are living in the mountains, and two of my sisters are refugees in the mountains.

STEPHANE DUDOIGNON, FRENCH PROFESSOR WHO SPECIALIZES IN ISLAM AND CENTRAL ASIA

If you study Abdulmalik Rigi's specific background, and personality, you find a background that is the traditional background of the Baloch, the Iranian Baloch tribal aristocracy.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

STEPHANE DUDOIGNON—A FRENCH PROFESSOR SPECIALIZING IN ISLAM AND CENTRAL ASIA—IS ONE OF THE FEW WESTERNERS TO HAVE TRAVELED EXTENSIVELY ACROSS IRANIAN BALOCHISTAN IN RECENT YEARS.

DUDOIGNON

You know that Balochistan, especially Balochistan, is a region where the cult of male courage, of weapons, and so on, always and still now occupies a central place in the local culture. This is probably one of the reasons why these armed opposition groups have been perceived locally as kinds of Robin Hoods, not as religious leaders, but as possible defenders of the interests of the local population.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND PROFESSOR DUDOIGNON SAYS SUPPORT FOR RIGI CAN ONLY GROW, THANKS TO THE SUNNI-SHIA DIVIDE THAT INCREASED WITH THE ELECTION OF THE HARDLINE IRANIAN PRESIDENT, MAHMOUD AHMADINEJAD.

DUDOIGNON

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad introduced himself as the champion of the Shiite cause, not only in Iran but also outside of Iran, it goes without saying that a lot of people in the peripheral Sunni peopled region of Iran begin to feel themselves out of the Islamic republic.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SOME OF RIGI'S TACTICS ARE REMINISCENT OF AL-QAEDA BUT PROFESSOR DUDOIGNON SAYS THAT IT IS LOCAL DISPUTES THAT ARE FUEING THE FIRE IN BALOCHISTAN.

DUDOIGNON

We are unfortunately in a period where it is enough to say the word Al-Qaeda, the word Taliban, if you want to be introduced as an expert. My deep conviction is that if you deal with these phenomena as deeply linked with the local and regional history, you get much closer with their reality.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

WHILE RIGI LEADS HIS BAND OF GUERRILLAS IN THE OPEN, THERE ARE OTHER MORE POWERFUL FORCES SEEKING TO OVERTHROW OR DESTABILIZE THE

IRANIAN GOVERNMENT. TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THIS SHODAWY WORLD, WE SPOKE TO A VETERAN FIELD COMMANDER OF A NOTORIOUS BALOCH RESISTANCE GROUP. HE REQUESTED THAT WE HIDE HIS IDENTITY AND DISGUISE HIS VOICE. HE SAYS RIGI'S FORCES ARE JUST ONE ACTIVE FRONT OF A MUCH LARGER ARMY LAYING IN WAIT.

FIELD COMMANDER

Our reserve forces are still at home, there are more than seven to ten thousand people. Trained, well-trained, but we cannot put them into the fire without having a guarantee from the United Nations or the big world powers who are governing the entire globe.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

HE SAYS HE'S BEEN FIGHTING FOR OVER 50 YEARS, AND USED TO OPERATE OUT OF SADDAM'S IRAQ. AT THAT TIME THE FORMER DICTATOR WAS FIGHTING A LONG-TERM PROXY WAR WITH HIS ARCH ENEMY IRAN, AND THE BALOCH GUERRILLAS WERE WILLING PARTICIPANTS. BUT NOW THE BALOCH MOVEMENT, HAVING LOST ITS FORMER SPONSOR, SADDAM, IS SEEKING NEW SOURCES OF FUNDING. REVOLUTIONS, AFTER ALL, DO NOT COME ON THE CHEAP.

FIELD COMMANDER

There are Baloch businessmen in the Arab world. There are Baloch businessmen in Africa, in Zanzibar, in Kenya and other states. And there are Baloch who are living in Europe, they are contributing some kind of help to Rigi, and it's a good thing. We appreciate what is happening and what is coming from them. It shows their sympathies to the movement, which is being led now by Mr. Rigi.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

RAIDS LIKE THIS ARE A TOOL OF TERROR, BUT CAN ALSO SERVE AS A FUNDRAIESER.

FIELD COMMANDER

Whenever he captures some officers, you see, he also takes ransom from them in millions. And it is enough for them to prolong, his, you see, movement for some time.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND BECAUSE BALOCHISTAN IS AT THE CENTER OF SMUGGLING ROUTES FOR OPIUM AND ARMS OUT OF AFGHANISTAN, AND OIL FROM IRAN, RIGI ALSO RAISES MONEY OFF THE REGION'S LAWLESSNESS.

FIELD COMMANDER

Balochistan is a free land for the smugglers, a haven for the smugglers. They have got safe passage through his areas. So anyone who passes through his areas safely—wants to take, export his goods, they have to pay some toll taxes. So they are paying a toll tax to Mr. Rigi.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT AS FOR RIGI, THERE IS ONE ALLEGED SOURCE OR REVENUE THAT HE VEHEMENTLY DENIES.

RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

I said we haven't had any secret relations with any intelligence service. The great amount of money to solve our problems we are not receiving because we know that if they were behind the scenes, the amount would be very big. The money we are receiving is very little. For example, if there are two or three thousand people in a country like Sweden, they donate ten or twenty dollars each per month.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THAT'S RIGHT, SWEDEN. THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY FROM THE DUST AND POVERTY OF BALOCHISTAN, THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF BALOCH PEOPLE LIVING HERE IN SWEDEN AS REFUGEES. AND WE MET WITH SOME OF THEM TO GAUGE THEIR SUPPORT FOR RIGI.

NASSER BOLADAI, BALOCH REFUGEE IN SWEDEN

Rigi is fighting for Baloch people's sovereignty as he has declared many times for the Baloch people's rights, he's fighting, for dignity of the Baloch people and he's fighting also, to live in a country where there's peace.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

NASSER BOLADAI FOUNDED AN EXILE POLITICAL GROUP CALLED THE BALOCHISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY, WHICH HE SAYS IS NOW SECRETLY ACTIVE INSIDE BALOCHISTAN, TRYING TO DESTABILIZE THE OPPRESSIVE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT.

BOLADAI

We see achieving Baloch people's sovereignty is a true job for us. We see it as working ourselves outside Iran and inside Iran. And to see that the people in the world understand what's happening in Balochistan.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THOUGH HE SAYS HE DOES NOT SUPPORT RIGI'S USE OF VIOLENCE, NASSER BELIEVES MILITANCY IS A NATURAL RESPONSE.

BOLADAI

Well, I think he's doing what he should do in these circumstances. You cannot choose for people to react in a way that I like. People react within those circumstances that they were brought up, within the chances have been given, and this is the only way for them to show the Iranian regime and to the world that the Baloch people are fighting against this regime.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

EVEN THOUGH RIGI LIVES LIKE A NOMADIC FIGHTER, HE'S BEEN SAVVY ENOUGH TO GET HIS MESSAGE OUT IN NON-VIOLENT APPEALS AIMED AT THE BALOCH DIASPORA IN EUROPE AND ELSEWHERE.

BOLADAI

But Mr. Rigi used Internet and radio, these kind of things, to give his message. So he just succeeded in bringing that out, outside the country by using internet. And the Baloch in Europe and everywhere they had these Internet sites and which it were not possible to build in Iran, they also supported him.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SWEDEN IS HOME TO RADIO BALOCHI FM, WHICH IS HEADQUARTERED HERE IN STOCKHOLM. IT BROADCASTS TO BALOCH COMMUNITIES IN EUROPE, IRAN AND PAKISTAN. MASOUD IS THE STATION'S MANAGER, BUT HE WAS RELUCTANT TO TALK ABOUT FUNDING FOR RIGI'S MOVEMENT.

MASOUD, RADIO BALOCHI FM STATION MANAGER
(TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

I don't know anything about that, I can't answer that. And I don't know anything about it.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND HE HAS REASON TO BE NERVOUS. IN 2003, SWEDISH NEWSPAPERS REPORTED THAT TWO IRANIAN AGENTS HAD BEEN EXPELLED FROM SWEDEN FOR SPYING ON THE BALOCH EXILE COMMUNITY. BT MASOUD DOES ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE POVERTY IN BALOCHISTAN WOULD PROVIDE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR A COUNTRY WITH MONEY AND INTERESTS.

MASOUD (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

The Baloch, as I said, they are very poor. Unemployment among the youth, it's 70 to 80 percent. They are poor. So I think through money the United States could buy these young people to fight against the Iranian state. Of course, there are a few percent who would strongly—with their hearts—want to help the US, and side with the United States. But through money, they would be able to buy massive numbers of young people to fight against the state. The police does what it wants, nobody controls them, nor from the central government... they are not controlled, they do what they want to. They shoot two to three young people in the streets daily, and they execute two or three young people every day in different cities of Balochistan.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

FOR ABDUL MALIK RIGI, BACK ON THE FRONT LINES, IT WAS THIS KIND OF BRUTALITY THAT HE SAYS NECESSITATED HIS NASCENT AND BLOODY REVOLUTION.

RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

One day I came to a street and I saw that eight of our youths were hanged at the same time in that neighborhood. I was thirteen at the time. It was a scene I saw with my own eyes. Eight people were hanging from a crane, eight youths together. And it was a scene that really created pain within me.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS SAY SUCH EXECUTIONS ARE COMMON IN IRAN'S PROVINCE OF BALOCHISTAN. THESE DISTURBING IMAGES WERE TAKEN THIS PAST FEBRUARY IN THE CITY OF ZAHEDAN. THE AUTHORITIES CHARGED THIS MAN WITH ORGANIZING THAT BUS BOMBING, FOR WHICH RIGI'S GROUP CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY. THE GUERRILLA LEADER INSISTS THAT MANY OF THE EXECUTED HAVE HAD NO PART IN HIS MOVEMENT, THEIR GRUESOME DEATHS A RESULT OF FALSE ACCUSATIONS.

RIGI (TRANSLATED FROM BALOCHI)

Until now, 14 members of the movement have been martyred. The Iranian government has captured so many people—more than three to five hundred Baloch. And thought they were innocent, they have been executed in our name.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

SINCE OUR REPORT FIRST AIRED, THE SITUATION ALONG THE IRAN-PAKISTAN BORDER HAS REMAINED ACTIVE AND VIOLENT. EARLIER THIS MONTH, THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT 16 SOLDIERS KIDNAPPED BY RIGI'S GROUP MONTHS EARLIER HAD BEEN KILLED. THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT VOWED TO CRUSH WHAT THEY SAID WAS A TERRORIST GROUP WITH TIES TO AL QAEDA.

NOW, WHEN WE RETURN, WE LOOK AT THE QUESTION OF CLUSTER BOMBS – THE UNITED STATES SAYS THEY ARE A VALUABLE, NECESSARY WEAPON BUT MUCH OF THE REST OF THE WORLD DISAGREES.

BOMBS LEFT BEHIND:

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

WELCOME BACK. EARLIER THIS YEAR WE BROUGHT YOU THE STORY ABOUT A WEAPON OF WAR. OF COURSE THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A NICE WEAPON. AFTER ALL, WEAPONS ARE DESIGNED TO KILL. BUT THIS REPORT LOOKS AT A WEAPON THAT NOT ONLY KILLS DURING WARFARE, BUT LONG AFTER THE FIGHTING HAS ENDED. AND THE VICTIMS ARE PEOPLE WHO NEVER FOUGHT, OR ARE NO LONGER FIGHTING.

THESE WEAPONS ARE "CLUSTER MUNITIONS" – OR, CLUSTER BOMBS, AS THEY'RE MORE COMMONLY KNOWN. THEY'RE SMALL BOMBS CONTAINED IN LARGER BOMBS OR ARTILLERY SHELLS, WHICH ARE DESIGNED TO SPREAD OUT AND DETONATE OVER A LARGE AREA. IN WARTIME, CLUSTER BOMBS ARE – TO PUT IT BLUNTLY – AN EFFICIENT WAY TO KILL MANY PEOPLE IN AN AREA THE SIZE OF A FOOTBALL FIELD.

BUT MANY OF THOSE CLUSTER BOMBS DON'T EXPLODE ON IMPACT AS THEY ARE DESIGNED TO DO. THEY GO OFF, WITH DEADLY EFFECT, AFTER THE WAR IS OVER, KILLING PEOPLE TRYING TO REBUILD THEIR NORMAL LIVES OR, ALL TOO OFTEN, CURIOUS CHILDREN. THAT'S WHAT'S HAPPENED IN THE WAKE OF THE WAR IN THE SUMMER OF 2006 BETWEEN ISRAEL AND HEZBOLLAH – THE IRAN-BACKED RADICAL ISLAMIC MILITIA IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. THAT WAR RAGED FOR JUST 34 DAYS. BUT PEOPLE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON DIED LONG AFTER THE WAR ENDED BECAUSE THEY STUMBLED OVER CLUSTER BOMBS LIKE THESE.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

IT'S ABOUT THE SIZE OF A SODA CAN AND JUST AS INNOCENT LOOKING. THAT WHITE RIBBON ATTACHED TO THE TOP IS SUPPOSED TO ARM THE BOMBLET WHEN IT'S DROPPED. THIS IS HOW CLUSTER BOMBS ARE SUPPOSED TO WORK – AS SEEN IN THIS AIR FORCE VIDEO – LARGE BOMBS OR MISSILES DISPERSE HUNDREDS OF BOMBLETES ACROSS A WIDE AREA. BUT THE BOMBLETS OFTEN DON'T EXPLODE ON IMPACT THE WAY THEY ARE DESIGNED TO. THE DUDS –

ALSO CALLED “SUB-MUNITIONS” – HANG IN TREES, OR LAY ON THE GROUND. WEEKS OR MONTHS LATER, JUST THE SLIGHTEST DISTURBANCE CAN SET THEM OFF. A CONTROL EXPLOSION IS THE ONLY WAY TO NEUTRALIZE THE DUDS THAT FAIL TO EXPLODE.

MARC GARLASCO, HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

When I got here and climbed up the stairway over there, we could see them hanging in the trees they were in the yard they were up on the – the veranda in the stairs and we even found some inside the home.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

MARC GARLASCO WENT TO SOUTHERN LEBANON SOON AFTER THE WAR TO ASSESS THE DAMAGE. GARLASCO NOW WORKS FOR THE ORGANIZATION ‘HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH’. HE WAS A SENIOR MILITARY ANALYST FOR THE PENTAGON. WE RECENTLY MET HIM IN THE SOUTHERN LEBANESE VILLAGE OF YOHMOR.

GARLASCO

Well when I first got here, shortly after the ceasefire-- walking down the street was actually pretty difficult, because there were sub-munitions, you know, littered everywhere. And so you would have to zigzag as you were going around and just be very careful.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

GARLASCO INTRODUCED US TO JAMAL, WHO RETURNED TO HER VILLAGE WHEN THE SHOOTING STOPPED.

JAMAL SHMAYSANI, YOHMOR RESIDENT

Very, very dangerous because we have to walk carefully – bombs everywhere, the house was terrifying, the glass everywhere.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

JAMAL’S HOUSE IN THE VILLAGE WAS STILL STANDING BUT SHE AND HER MOTHER-IN-LAW FOUND CLUSTER BOMBS EVERYWHERE.

SHMAYSANI

My baby can't go outside because maybe a bomb will exploded. I don't think that-- in America, you have this problem.

MAHMOUD BARAKAT, YOHMOR RESIDENT (TRANSLATED FROM ARABIC)

I came and I found the land filled with cluster bombs from here to there.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

NEIGHBOR MAHMOUD BARAKAT SAYS HE FOUND 50 CLUSTER BOMBS IN HIS SMALL OLIVE GROVE. LIKE HIM, MOST RESIDENTS IN THIS AREA OF SOUTHERN LEBANON ARE FARMERS. WITH DUD CLUSTER MUNITIONS COVERING THEIR FIELDS, MOST WERE FORCED TO WATCH THEIR HARVEST AND INCOME ROT AWAY. AFTER THE WAR, GARLASCO WAS TOURING A HOSPITAL WHEN THREE CHILDREN WERE RUSHED IN. HASSAN AND SUKNA HAD JUST RETURNED TO THEIR VILLAGE AND WERE PLAYING NEAR THEIR HOME WHEN A CLUSTER BOMB EXPLODED AT THEIR FEET. THEY BARELY SURVIVED.

HASSAN TAHINI, CLUSTER BOMB VICTIM (TRANSLATED FROM ARABIC)

The bombs exploded and threw me back approximately 2 meters. My intestine was hanging on the outside. I held my intestine and started running while shouting God is Great.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

HASSAN SPENT SEVERAL WEEKS IN THE HOSPITAL. MORE THAN A YEAR LATER, HIS FATHER TELLS US HE STILL HAS PAIN IN THE BELLY AND HAS TROUBLE EATING. SUKNA STILL HAS SHRAPNEL EMBEDDED IN HER LIVER. SHE SAYS SHE MISSES SCHOOL OFTEN AND WORRIES THE SAME THING COULD HAPPEN TO HER YOUNG SIBLINGS. THERE ARE MANY VICTIMS LIKE HASSAN AND SUKNA - THE UNITED NATIONS SAYS 67 CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 HAVE BEEN INJURED OR KILLED BY CLUSTER MUNITIONS IN LEBANON. GARLASCO SAYS THAT'S BECAUSE SO MANY OF THE CLUSTER BOMBS DID NOT EXPLODE WHEN ISRAELI TROOPS FIRST DROPPED THEM.

GARLASCO

They're designed very poorly. And therefore, they have a very large dud rate. The dud rate means that there are a number of these weapons that just don't explode when they hit the ground.

RATHER

The bomblets come down, but they don't explode when they hit the ground.

GARLASCO

That's right. They're designed to strike the ground and blow up. But that doesn't always happen. And so you get large numbers of dud fields, which basically turns into a minefield on the ground and it creates a humanitarian crisis because now people are in their homes, in their fields, driving

around in, basically, land mine fields.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

ON THE DAY WE VISITED YOHMOR - 16 MONTHS AFTER THE WAR ENDED - MINE REMOVAL TEAMS FOUND TWO MORE DUD CLUSTER MUNITIONS IN AN OLIVE GROVE AND FIELD. A NON-PROFIT GROUP CALLED "MAG" – OR "MINES ADVISORY GROUP" – IS TRYING TO CLEAN UP YOHMOR. SO FAR MAG WORKERS HAVE REMOVED MORE THAN 6,200 DUD CLUSTER MUNITIONS FROM YOHMOR ALONE, AND THEY FIND 2 OR 3 MORE EVERY DAY.

ANDY GLEESON, MAG

We've discovered a sub-munition, an M-series submunition. It's in a fully armed state, it's slightly corroded, so it can't be made safe so this will be destroyed later today. The lethal radius of one of these submunitions is anywhere from 8 to 10 meters

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

ANDY GLEESON, ONE OF THE MAG WORKERS, SAYS THE SMALL BOMBLETS BLEND EASILY INTO THE BRUSH AND CAN BE DIFFICULT TO SEE. IF THIS CLUSTER SUB-MUNITION EXPLODED, EVERYONE IN A 30 FOOT RADIUS WOULD LIKELY DIE. THIS LETHAL RADIUS MAKES CLEANING UP CLUSTER MUNITIONS AN ESPECIALLY DANGEROUS JOB. AT LEAST 13 MINE CLEARANCE WORKERS HAVE DIED ON THE JOB IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. EVERY FOOT OF CONTAMINATED AREA MUST BE GINGERLY CHECKED TWICE. A "MAG" TEAM IN HEAVY, PROTECTIVE GEAR DEMONSTRATED THE PAINSTAKING PROCESS FOR US IN A SAFE AREA. NOT ONE ROCK IS LEFT UNTURNED. AFTER THE INCH BY INCH VISUAL SEARCH, A MECHANICAL MINE DETECTOR RECHECKS THE AREA. EVERY AFTERNOON AT 1 O'CLOCK ALL THE DUD CLUSTER SUB MUNITIONS FOUND THAT DAY IN YOHMOR ARE DESTROYED. YOU CAN SEE JUST HOW DEVASTATING A BOMB-BLAST CAN BE IN THIS CONTROLLED DETONATION OF JUST TWO CLUSTER BOMBS. ISRAEL HAS COME UNDER INTENSE INTERNAL AND INTERNATIONAL CRITICISM FOR ITS USE OF CLUSTER BOMBS IN THE 2006 WAR AGAINST HEZBOLLAH. THE WAR STARTED WHEN HEZBOLLAH – WHICH THE U.S. LABELS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION – SENT IT'S FIGHTERS ACROSS THE BORDER IN TO ISRAEL HERE, WHERE THEY KILLED THREE ISRAELI SOLDIERS AND KIDNAPPED TWO OTHERS.

THAT RAID PROVOKED AN ISRAELI RETALIATION. THE ISRAELI MILITARY USED EVERYTHING FROM WARPLANES AND ROCKETS TO TANKS AND TROOPS IN AN EFFORT TO DESTROY HEZBOLLAH. AT THE SAME TIME, HEZBOLLAH FIGHTERS – WHO OFTEN DON'T WEAR UNIFORMS – FIRED THOUSANDS OF ROCKETS AND ARTILLERY SHELLS INTO ISRAEL FROM HEAVILY-POPULATED CIVILIAN AREAS IN LEBANON.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

A CEASE-FIRE ENDED THE WAR AFTER MORE THAN A MONTH OF FIGHTING. HEZBOLLAH SURVIVED, AND ISRAELI FORCES WITHDREW FROM SOUTHERN LEBANON. BUT THEY LEFT BEHIND TENS OF THOUSANDS OF DUD CLUSTER BOMBS FIRED BY ISRAELI FORCES. THE U.N. ESTIMATES THERE COULD BE UP TO A MILLION DUDS. IT MAY SURPRISE YOU TO LEARN WHERE MANY OF THE CLUSTER BOMBS USED BY ISRAEL IN THE WAR CAME FROM

GARLASCO

Most of the cluster munitions used during the war in Lebanon in 2006 were American manufactured weapons that Israel have-- has received from a variety of different agreements that they have with the United States to purchase and-- and acquire weapons of war.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AT LEAST EIGHT, U.S. PUBLICALLY TRADED COMPANIES HAVE MADE CLUSTER BOMBS OR THEIR COMPONENTS – INCLUDING GENERAL DYNAMICS, HONEYWELL, LOCKHEED MARTIN AND RAYTHEON. GARLASCO SAYS THERE ARE UPWARDS OF A BILLION SUB-MUNITIONS IN THE U.S. ARSENAL. THE PENTAGON HAS SOLD OR DISTRIBUTED CLUSTER BOMBS TO MORE THAN 20 COUNTRIES BESIDES ISRAEL, INCLUDING INDIA, PAKISTAN, GREECE, AND TURKEY. HEZBOLLAH ALSO USED CLUSTER BOMBS DURING THE WAR, FIRING ABOUT 100 CHINESE-MADE CLUSTER MUNITIONS AND THOUSANDS OF ROCKETS PACKED WITH BALL BEARINGS INTO ISRAEL. BUT THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME HEZBOLLAH HAD USED CLUSTER MUNITIONS. MARC GARLASCO, OF HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, BELIEVES HEZBOLLAH GOT ITS CLUSTER BOMBS FROM IRAN, THROUGH SYRIA

GARLASCO

Well we know Hezbollah was able to get the weapon. The concern is that other non-state actors will now have access to them. Or already have them in their arsenals. And then, what if you have an organization like Al Qaeda that was able to get some of these-- these cluster munitions and use them in civilian areas? It's-- it's something that's of great concern.

RATHER

How expensive are they?

GARLASCO

Oh, they're actually very cheap. Cluster munitions are-- are fairly cheap. You can get them-- I mean, it's not like I go out and-- and purchase them on the open market. But when militaries buy them, and you buy them in bulk-- you can get the sub-munitions down to less than a dollar.

CHRIS CLARK, UNITED NATIONS, SOUTH LEBANON

You see on this one it says 5 dash-- 76. This means this bomb was loaded with the cluster munitions in May 1976.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

CHRIS CLARK IS THE UNITED NATIONS PROGRAM MANAGER FOR MINE CLEARANCE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. IN THE UNUSUAL GARDEN IN FRONT OF THE U.N. OFFICE IN TYRE, CLARK KEEPS SOME OF THE BOMB PARTS HE'S FOUND IN LEBANON. HE SAYS THE UN HAS FOUND SIX DIFFERENT TYPES OF CLUSTER SUB-MUNITIONS -- ONE TYPE WAS MANUFACTURED IN ISRAEL. AND SOME OF THE AMERICAN WEAPONS WERE LEFT OVER FROM THE VIETNAM WAR. EVERY TYPE, HE SAYS, HAS OFTEN FAILED TO OPERATE CORRECTLY

CLARK

Apparently everything that could go wrong with these has gone wrong. And we see this on numerous sites. We have a type of cluster bomb here called an M-85. it's an Israeli designed cluster bomb. That has a manufacturer's and a military in-service failure rate, if you like, of less than one percent. It's 0.0-- 0.085 percent on there. We have proven on the ground here that this munition has a failure rate in reality of at least 10 percent.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

CLARK SAYS ON AVERAGE THE CLUSTER BOMBS THEY ARE FINDING HAVE ABOUT A 30% FAILURE RATE BUT SOME FAIL AS OFTEN AS 70% OF THE TIME. THIS MAP IN CLARK'S OFFICE SHOWS THE 963 CLUSTER BOMB STRIKES THE UN HAS FOUND IN LEBANON TO DATE. CLARK - WHO HAS WORKED IN SEVERAL OTHER NATIONS REMOVING CLUSTER BOMBS - SAYS HE WAS SURPRISED BY THE NUMBER OF DUD CLUSTER MUNITIONS IN LEBANON.

CLARK

After the NATO bombing campaign in Kosovo in 1999, Kosovo had a-- what was considered a huge cluster bomb problem. We had cleared-- around 25,000 individual cluster bombs. And that was considered to be about 90 percent of the overall problem. Here in-- in South Lebanon in the last year, year and a bit since the-- since the end of the war to date, we have cleared-- over 135,000 individual cluster bombs. And that's compounded by the fact that South Lebanon is a very small location. The end result is there's not much of day to day life in South Lebanon that's not touched in some way, shape, or form by these-- by these munitions.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT NO ONE KNOWS WHERE THOSE DUDS ARE, BECAUSE THE MAPS ISRAELI MILITARY GAVE THE U.N. ONLY INDICATE WHERE OLD LAND MINES WERE BURIED – NOT WHERE THE CLUSTER BOMBS FELL.

CLARK

They did hand over a danger area map-- that sort of said, you know, "Here would be dragons" on there so with no-- no reference to cluster bombs-- at all. So for our purposes absolutely useless.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

CLARK SAYS ISRAEL HAS NEVER TURNED OVER DETAILED INFORMATION – CALLED ‘STRIKE DATA’ – SHOWING PRECISELY WHERE, OR HOW MANY, CLUSTER BOMBS THEY DROPPED.

CLARK

What we need is the-- the official term is the strike data. It's not a map. It's a spreadsheet. And on that spreadsheet-- in-- in one column will be the-- the grid reference of the-- the target so we know where to go and look, the number of individual munitions fired into that area and the type.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE U.N. HAS ASKED REPEATEDLY FOR THAT INFORMATION. BUT ISRAEL SAYS THE STRIKE DATA IS A MILITARY SECRET AND THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO RELEASE IT.

EDO, ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES, RESERVIST

I think that they fear that whoever gets this information could learn quite a bit on-- on the rationale behind the usage of this weapon.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

EDO IS A RESERVIST IN THE ISRAELI ARMY. HE ASKED US NOT TO SHOW HIS FACE OR GIVE HIS LAST NAME FOR FEAR OF REPRISAL. DURING THE WAR, EDO SAYS HE OPERATED A ROCKET LAUNCHER WHICH FIRED CLUSTER MUNITIONS. HE SAYS THE ARMY WANTED TO LEAVE DUDS BEHIND TO CREATE DE FACTO MINE FIELDS.

EDO

They had a specific target. They were shooting at that target. And the side effect, a very desirable side effect, was leaving those duds behind. These duds prevent those people, the Lebanese that they were shooting at, it prevents them from returning to those places. And in a--

in a military point of view, that's a really desirable outcome. You don't have to go there. But you get the place mined.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

EDO SAYS HIS UNIT LAUNCHED MOST OF THE CLUSTER MUNITIONS DURING THE LAST FEW DAYS OF THE WAR. THE U.N. SAYS IT HAS EVIDENCE ISRAEL DROPPED 90% OF THE CLUSTER MUNITIONS DURING THE LAST 72 HOURS OF THE FIGHTING, WHEN A CEASE FIRE WAS IMMINENT. A RECENT INTERNAL ISRAELI ARMY INVESTIGATION CONCLUDED THAT CLUSTER MUNITIONS WERE ONLY FIRED IN CIVILIAN AREAS IN DIRECT RESPONSE TO ENEMY FIRE FROM HEZBOLLAH THIS VIDEO RELEASED BY ISRAEL SHOWS WHAT THEY SAYS IS HEZBOLLAH LAUNCHING ROCKETS FROM CIVILIAN AREAS. EDO, THE ISRAELI SOLDIER, THINKS THE STRIKE DATA WOULD SHOW SOMETHING ELSE – HE THINKS IT WOULD SHOW THAT ISRAEL WAS DELIBERATELY TARGETING CLUSTER MUNITIONS ON CIVILIAN AREAS, HEEDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES. HE SAYS THAT COULD VIOLATE THE AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH ISRAEL BOUGHT THE CLUSTER BOMBS FROM THE U.S. AND THE INTERNATIONAL LAWS OF WAR.

EDO

It's a weapon that you have no control on after it's fired. It's-- it's a stupid bomb. it's not guided, not aimed, not nothing. It just gonna go boom. And when you shoot this at an area where there's a high chance of civilian presence, then, according to the Geneva Conventions, you are-- you could be charged with crimes of war.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT A COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TO LOOK AT THE PERFORMANCE OF THE ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCES DURING THE WAR, FOUND NO EVIDENCE THAT THE ARMED FORCES CONSCIOUSLY VIOLATED THE RULES OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW. BUT THE COMMITTEE DID SAY THE USE OF CLUSTER BOMBS SHOULD BE RE-EVALUATED AND REGARDING THE USE OF THE WEAPON QUOTE “ ...THERE WAS A SUSTAINED STATE OF VAGUENESS IN INSTRUCTIONS, LACK OF OPERATIONAL DISCIPLINE AND ORDERS, THAT LED TO DEVIATION FROM EXPLICIT COMMAND REGULATIONS...THAT WAS NOT RECOGNIZED OR PREVENTED.....” WE WANTED TO ASK THE ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES ABOUT THEIR DECISION TO USE CLUSTER BOMBS, BUT THEY DECLINED TO BE INTERVIEWED ON CAMERA. THEY DID SEND US STATEMENT, WHICH READS IN PART QUOTE “...ISRAEL MADE USE OF LEGAL WEAPONRY ONLY, INCLUDING CLUSTER MUNITIONS. IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED THAT INTERNATIONAL LAW DOES NOT PROHIBIT THE USE OF CLUSTER MUNITIONS... NOT ONLY IS THE USE OF CLUSTER MUNITIONS LEGAL, IT IS A FORM OF WEAPONRY USED BY VIRTUALLY EVERY ARMY IN THE WESTERN WORLD... IN ITS USE OF CLUSTER MUNITIONS, ISRAEL ACTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE

LAWS OF WAR, PARTICULARLY THE PRINCIPLES OF DISTINCTION AND PROPORTIONALITY.” END QUOTE.

ACCORDING TO INTERNATIONAL LAW, CLUSTER BOMBS CAN BE USED AGAINST WHAT ARE CALLED LEGITIMATE MILITARY TARGETS. BUT THEY CANNOT BE DELIBERATELY FIRED AT CIVILIANS.

DANIEL REISNER, FORMER HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, ISRAELI ARMY

From the legal perspective, if it's a lawful weapon system, it's a legitimate target and it's a legitimate attack and international law does not currently have a requirement of taking into consideration post-war affects of the civilian population as part of your attack. That's not a legal requirement yet.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

DAN REISNER, THE FORMER HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL LAW FOR THE ISRAELI ARMY, SAYS LEGALLY ISRAEL WAS WITHIN ITS RIGHTS AND WITHIN THE LAW WHEN THEY LAUNCHED CLUSTER MUNITIONS.

REISNER

Now comes the question of morality, of strategy, et cetera. What do you want to achieve? Obviously, using a weapon system which has a long-term effect on the civilian population is something you should take into consideration. Especially if you want to make peace after the war. All sides of a conflict have post-war repercussions or ramifications. They don't make them unlawful. They do prove once again, the real downside of having a war.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

ISRAEL IS NOT THE ONLY ARMY TO USE CLUSTER BOMBS. THE U.S. HAS USED THEM IN MANY CONFLICTS. AMERICAN FORCES DROPPED ABOUT 15,000 CLUSTER BOMBS IN CAMBODIA IN THE EARLY 1970s. SOME OF THE DUDS THERE CONTINUE TO INJURE CHILDREN TODAY. MORE RECENTLY NATO FORCES DROPPED CLUSTER BOMBS IN KOSOVO DURING THE BALKAN WAR IN 1999 WHERE MORE THAN 152 NON-COMBATANTS WERE INJURED OR KILLED. AFTER THAT WAR, THE US MILITARY DROPPED THE BOMBS IN AFGHANISTAN IN 2001, AND AGAIN IN IRAQ IN 2003 WHERE THIS CHILD WAS INJURED BY A CLUSTER BOMB WHILE PLAYING SOCCER. THE US DEFENSE DEPARTMENT DECLINED TO BE INTERVIEWED FOR THIS REPORT BUT AN OFFICIAL SOURCE TOLD US THE US IS OPPOSED TO BANNING ALL CLUSTER MUNITIONS BECAUSE QUOTE “...THE U.S. ARMED FORCES RELY HEAVILY ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS FOR INDIRECT TACTICAL FIRES, AS DO MANY OTHER MILITARIES IN THE WORLD.” DEMOCRATIC SENATOR PATRICK LEAHY, OF VERMONT, THINKS THE PENTAGON POLICY IS JUST PLAIN WRONG.

SENATOR PATRICK LEAHY

I-- I think it's immoral. It'd be immoral to use poisoned gas, for example. It'd be immoral to use-- chemical weapons. When something that you know long after armies have left the battlefield that there are going to be things that are still gonna kill civilians, still gonna kill people long after the peace treaties have been signed, use of them, in my book, that's immoral.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

RETIRED MAJOR GENERAL GIORA EILAND IS THE FORMER HEAD OF MILITARY PLANNING FOR THE ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES. HE SAYS CLUSTER BOMBS ARE NO WORSE THAN OTHER WEAPONS OF WAR.

GIORA EILAND, FORMER HEAD OF MILITARY PLANNING, IDF

It is, I would say, naïve to believe that these are the most deadly or most lethal weapons that are used even against civilians. Much more civilians are killed by, let's say, ordinary, other bombs whether they are, sometimes, Israeli attacks in Gaza or Lebanon, or American attacks in Afghanistan and Iraq. So, there is nothing so specific about this. You want to support the war when you only kill the bad guys. But, whenever you begin to see pictures of innocent civilians-- children, women in the streets, you tend to say, "Well, that's not exactly the war that I supported." But, unfortunately, to certain extent, these are part of the results of this war whether you like it or not.

RATHER

Senator, you must hear these kind of criticisms from time to time. Say, "Listen, Senator Leahy's a nice senator. And he's an idealist and that's good. But we can't always apply idealism to our military strategy, tactics, and weaponry."

LEAHY

I'm not trying to apply idealism. I'm trying to apply realism. I have a pretty good idea what is needed. I talk to an awful lot of military. There are certain things that if we can rid of them we should. I don't think you will find many in our military today, if any, or commanders in the field say, "Sure, let's use something that's got a 20, or 30, or 40 percent dud rate." They're not going to because their own soldiers might have to march through that same area a month later. They don't want to do it. They know better. It's not being naïve.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT RETIRED ISRAELI GENERAL EILAND SAYS THE SITUATION IS MUCH MORE COMPLEX IN THE KINDS OF WARS OFTEN FOUGHT TODAY.

EILAND

One of the problems is that whenever you fight against terrorist organization, or guerilla organization, then the ordinary question that usually commander used to ask the intelligence officer, "Where is the enemy", are not relevant any more. Because the real questions today is, "Who is the enemy?" And this is a very confusing question, or at least the answer is very confusing, because there is no clear definition between combatants and other people.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SENATOR LEAHY SAYS THAT MORAL AND TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS SHOULD LEAD THE U.S. TO STOP GIVING AND SELLING THESE WEAPONS TO OTHER COUNTRIES.

LEAHY

We should not be exporting them. I don't think that there is any clear way you can guarantee how they're gonna be used. I'm very much in favor of not exporting our cluster munitions to any country, because they do become indiscriminate weapons of war. And if mistakes are made on either side in their use, if they're American munitions that are used, America's gonna get the blame.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

SENATOR LEAHY HAS ALREADY HAD SOME SUCCESS WITH HIS POLICY. HE SPONSORED LEGISLATION SIGNED INTO LAW BY PRESIDENT BUSH THAT BANNED THE U.S. FROM SELLING, OR TRADING, STOCKPILED CLUSTER MUNITIONS TO OTHER COUNTRIES FOR ONE YEAR.

BUT THAT SEEMS TO BE AS FAR AS THE UNITED STATES IS WILLING TO GO. IN EARLY DECEMBER, ROUGHLY 100 COUNTRIES SIGNED A TREATY BANNING OUTRIGHT PERMANENTLY THE USE OF CLUSTER BOMBS. THOSE COUNTRIES INCLUDED LEBANON, AND, IN A RARE BREAK WITH THE UNITED STATES ON MATTERS OF DEFENSE, AFGHANISTAN. THE UNITED STATES DID NOT SIGN. PRESIDENT-ELECT OBAMA HAS SUPPORTED CURBS ON THE USE OF CLUSTER BOMBS BUT HAS NOT ADVOCATED AN ALL-OUT BAN. IT SEEMS THAT THE FUTURE USE OF THESE WEAPONS BY THE UNITED STATES WILL AT THE VERY LEAST AWAIT A MORE COMPREHENSIVE MILITARY REVIEW.

AND THAT'S OUR REPORT FOR TONIGHT. WE HERE AT DAN RATHER REPORTS WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A HEALTHY AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON.

FROM NEW YORK, FOR HDNET, DAN RATHER REPORTING. GOOD NIGHT.