

Chicago Spy Novelist A.C. Frieden Attends “War on Terror” Seminar and Movie Screening

CHICAGO, Illinois, USA (Dec. 7, 2010) – Chicago-based fiction author A.C. Frieden attended the seminar titled *War on Terror: GITMO, Human Rights, National Security and Immigration* hosted by the Chicago Bar Association. The event began with a screening of the acclaimed short film “The Response,” starring Aasif Mandvi (*The Daily Show*), Kate Mulgrew (*Star Trek: Voyager*) and Peter Riegert (*Animal House, The Sopranos*). The movie was a 2010 Academy Awards contender for best live action short film among other praise it has garnered in the U.S. and internationally. Actual transcripts from the Combatant Status Review Tribunals (CSRTs) and other tribunal documents were used to create this fictional story of detainee Al Aqar, a Western-educated Ph.D. engineer accused of being a terrorist and a bomb maker in Afghanistan. In the story, a shackled and chained Al Aqar is questioned by three military judges who must decide his fate.

“Most Americans are unaware of the ongoing tribunals in Guantanamo,” said Frieden, who through his literary activities has research both here and abroad issues relating to espionage and counter-terrorism. “The film captures the legal, cultural and human rights challenges that began with the invasion of Afghanistan.” The movie offers an insightful recreation of the proceedings at the U.S. military base in Cuba used by the Bush and Obama administrations to hold persons suspected of ties to al-Qaida or the Taliban. “It presents the ethical and legal dilemmas for the U.S. to continue this seemingly perpetual war, in part because of the amorphous goals and unclear rules,” added Frieden.

The half-day seminar also featured presentations by various counter-terrorism experts, including Colonel Brittain Mallow, who served as the commander of the Criminal Investigation Task Force (CITF), a team of military investigators formed to investigate and prepare criminal cases against suspects involved in the 9/11 attacks. Other panelists included Tom Malinowski, Washington Director of Human Rights Watch and former special assistant to President Bill Clinton; Major General Charles Tucker, Jr. (retired), Executive Director of International Human Rights Law Institute; General Paul Kern, U.S. Army (retired) and Senior Counselor with The Cohen Group; Gary Isaac, a litigator and corporate advisor with Mayor Brown LLP who played an active role in a landmark Guantanamo detainee lawsuit; Thomas P. Sullivan, who is partner at Jenner & Block LLP and former U.S. Attorney who has recently represented Guantanamo detainees; and Mary Meg McCarthy, an immigration lawyer and Executive Director of the National Immigrant Justice Center.

During and after the conference, Frieden spoke with Colonel Mallow and Tom Malinowski on a various topics, ranging from human rights in North Korea to extraordinary renditions. “Panelists offered a unique look into U.S. counter-terrorism strategy, all of which is highly informative for authors who, like me, focus on espionage thrillers,” said Frieden after the seminar.

About the author: A.C. Frieden is a Swiss-Brazilian novelist and lawyer based in Chicago. He is currently working on several political and espionage novels, including a sequel to his latest thriller *Tranquility Denied*, as well as various other fiction and non-fiction literary projects. For more information, visit his website at www.acfrieden.com and his literary travel/research blog.

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