

# Thousands mistakenly on terror list

WASHINGTON (AP) - Thousands of people have been mistakenly linked to names on terror watch lists when they crossed the border, boarded commercial airliners or were stopped for traffic violations, a government report said last Friday.

More than 30,000 airline passengers have asked just one agency — the Transportation Security Administration — to have their names cleared from the lists, according to the Government Accountability Office report.

Hundreds of millions of people each year are screened against the lists by Customs and Border Protection, the State Department and state and local law enforcement agencies. The lists include names of people suspected of terrorism or of possibly having links to terrorist activity.

"Misidentifications can lead to delays, intensive questioning and searches, missed flights or denied entry at the border," the report said. "Whether appropriate relief is being afforded these individuals is still an open question."

When questions arose about tens of thousands of names between December 2003 and January 2006, the names were sent back to the agencies that put them on the lists, the GAO said. Half of those were found to be

misidentified, the report found.

In December 2003, disparate agencies with counterterrorism responsibilities consolidated dozens of watch lists of known or suspected terrorists into the new Terrorist Screening Center run by the FBI.

People are considered "misidentified" if they are matched to the database and then, upon further examination, are found not to match. They are usually misidentified because they have the same name as someone in the database.

People are considered "mistakenly listed" if they were put on the list in error or if they should no longer be included on the list because of subsequent events, the report said.

Problems developed with terrorist watch lists after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Maher Arar, a Canadian software engineer, was detained at New York's Kennedy Airport in 2002 because Canadian officials had asked that he be placed on a watch list. The U.S. transferred him without court approval to Syria where he was tortured and imprisoned for a year. A Canadian inquiry found that Arar should not have been on the list because he didn't do anything wrong.

The no-fly list given to airlines to make sure terrorists don't board airplanes grew ex-

ponentially after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The no-fly list is part of the Terrorist Screening Center database.

Young children and well-known Americans like Sen. Edward M. Kennedy were stopped at airports because their names were the same as those on the no-fly list.

The list has contained the names of Bolivia's President Evo Morales and Nabih Berri, Lebanon's parliamentary speaker, according to a report by CBS' "60 Minutes," to be broadcast Sunday.

Richard Kopel, acting director of the screening center, said in a statement that Morales and Berri are not on the current no-fly list. He did not address whether they were in the past, noting only that the list changes daily.

Two international flights — in December 2004 and May 2005 — were diverted because passengers were misidentified as on the no-fly list.

Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press that watch lists aren't perfect. "The watch list was the first stage of building a security net for the aviation system," Chertoff said.

He said an agreement reached Friday be-

tween the U.S. and the European Union would help prevent people from being misidentified.

The agreement calls for airlines to submit 34 pieces of data — including names, addresses and credit card details — about passengers flying from Europe to the United States.

The report said agencies are working to minimize the effect on people who are frequently misidentified.

TSA puts people on a special list of names that have been checked and cleared after they've complained to a call center and provided the agency more identification.

Customs annotates its database with a note that certain people shouldn't be stopped. As of September 2006, Customs annotated more than 10,300 names. Customs also gives pre-approved low-risk travelers ID cards that provide expedited processing.

Customs acknowledged to the GAO that it needs to do a better job of providing guidance for their redress procedures for people who believe they've been misidentified.

The Justice Department is leading an effort to make sure that all agencies formally document opportunities for redress and that agency responsibilities are clear, the report said.

## Tennessee GOP eyes Ford's campaign

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) - Democrat Harold Ford Jr. has been one of the most effective political candidates this year. Just ask Tennessee Republicans.

"Junior, as I will call him, has done an excellent job of campaigning," said Jim Melton, 59, of Maryville in east Tennessee. "He has done an excellent job of appearing to be conservative. He is not."

Melton is backing Ford's Senate rival, Republican Bob Corker, in the highly competitive race to replace Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, who decided to forgo another term to concentrate on a possible White House bid.

Tennessee hasn't elected a Democrat to the Senate since 1990, and the contest should have been relatively easy for Corker, the former Chattanooga mayor. Not only is Ford trying to buck the state's Republican trend, he is trying to become the first Black senator elected in the South since Reconstruction.

Against those odds, the charismatic Ford, a 36-year-old centrist Democrat and five-term congressman, has waged a nearly flawless campaign, combining self-deprecating television ads with solid oratorical skills and a direct appeal to religious conservatives who would typically vote Republican.

In one commercial, Ford walks down the aisle of his Memphis church, sun shining through the stained glass windows, and says: "I started church the old-fashioned way — I was forced to. And I'm better for it."

"Here, I learned the difference between right and wrong," he says before accusing Republican opponents of "doing wrong," distorting his record on homeland security and military spending.

He settles into a pew and adds: "I won't let them make me someone I'm not, and I'll always fight for you. Give me that chance."

Ford's effort is making Republicans nervous.

"We have to get the vote out, or we're going to be in big trouble," said Doug Grindstaff, a Republican Party chairman in Williamson County, which encompasses the conservative suburbs around Nashville.

"I'm not confident at all," said Marc Trotter, 44, executive chef at the Nashville Convention Center and a Corker supporter. "That's why I'm going to make sure I get out and vote."

Polls show the two candidates locked in a tight race with early voting beginning Oct. 18. The outcome of the race is critical to control of the Senate, with Democrats needing to gain six seats to

wrest the majority from the GOP. The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee has spent \$1.3 million to help Ford.

In a clear sign of unease, Corker overhauled his campaign late last month, replacing his campaign manager with the chief of staff for Republican Sen. Lamar Alexander, hiring a number of Alexander aides and moving his headquarters from Chattanooga to Nashville.

The National Republican Senatorial Committee has spent more than \$1.4 million on the race, including campaign ads targeting Ford. The Republican National Committee has chipped in \$968,325. All this money is separate from the millions Corker has raised.

In one RNC ad, an announcer says: "Border security doesn't just stop illegal immigrants; it stops terrorists. But Ford voted four times against funding for more border agents."

The ad shows a dark, shadowy figure walking down a hallway. Ford has complained about a Republican attempt to make his race an issue.

Race and family are ever-present for Ford, and he often finds himself answering for the latter. For all the talk of Ford's campaign skills, the two issues stand as major obstacles for him.

Ford comes from a pow-

erful Memphis political family, with eight members who have served as state lawmakers, local politicians or in Congress. His father has 11 siblings, and Ford has said he has 91 first cousins. It is a family touched by scandal.

His father was tried and acquitted on federal bank fraud charges in 1993. His uncle, Emmitt, resigned from the Tennessee House in 1981 after a conviction on insurance fraud. Another uncle, John, resigned from the state Senate last year after being charged with taking \$55,000 in bribes. He has pleaded not guilty and is awaiting trial.

In the first of three scheduled debates Saturday, Corker said Ford came from

a family engaged in "machine-type politics." Said Ford, "Let me be clear:

I love them." He urged Corker to stick to the issues.

The two debate again on Tuesday and at the end of this month.

Corker has had President Bush headline two fundraisers in Tennessee to raise \$2.6 million. The most recent was off limits to cameras and reporters — perhaps a reflection of Bush's low approval ratings in Tennessee. First lady Laura Bush was scheduled to attend a Corker fundraiser on Wednesday. In one of his ads, Corker tells his mother, Jean, that he cut violent crime by 50 percent while mayor of Chattanooga.

"Fifty percent? Mmmm, not bad," Jean Corker responds, before giving her son an affectionate nod.

But analysis of the FBI's annual report, considered to be the most comprehensive source of crime data, shows violent crime dropped less than 30 percent during Corker's administration. That led Democrats to accuse Corker of lying to his own mother. Ford recently campaigned with Mark Warner, the Democratic former governor of neighboring Virginia and another White House hopeful. "There's a lot of things you can say about Harold Ford," Warner said, "but nobody's not going to call him independent."

### Affirmative action

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requesting an investigation of the more than \$1 million in compensation earned by Connerly as head of the ACRI and the ACRC.

In the letter, Conyers wrote that "Mr. Connerly's compensation, when including amounts treated as expenses, raises questions about use of the organizations' funds. It appears that he may have been paid amounts far greater than the value of any services he may have rendered."

Waymire said Gratz was invited to submit her name to the University of Michigan's waiting list but failed to do so. If Gratz had, Waymire said, she would have been admitted to the school for the fall 1995 semester.

"The fact is, Jennifer Gratz did not go

to the University of Michigan because of her own inaction," Waymire said. "She should take personal responsibility for her failure to follow procedures that hundreds of others used to gain admission to the university, and stop blaming others for her shortcomings."

Driver said BAMN is appealing Tarnow's decision and fighting the proposal via leafleting and community forums. Waymire said One United is working on its own ad campaign to counter MCRI's.

"People are working very hard to get the info out," he said. "But we know the other side is willing to use any kind of untruth."

Leonard Sparks writes for Afro Newspapers.