

HEADQUARTERS
MULTI-NATIONAL CORPS - IRAQ
BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 08342

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

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FICI-MD

6 October 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Nutritional sufficiency of a diet of bread and water

1. Purpose: The purpose of this memorandum is to respond to a question regarding the nutritional sufficiency and/or health effects of eating primarily a diet of bread and water over a period of time.
2. Applicable Policy: CJTF-7 policy requires all detainees to be treated like EPWs pursuant to the principles of the Geneva Convention (III) Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (GPW). In accordance with GPW, EPWs should be provided with a diet that is sufficient in quantity, quality, and variety to maintain good health and prevent the onset of nutritional deficiencies.
3. Discussion: A diet of bread and water for up to seventeen days should not cause any health problems. Fasting for days at a time for religious or social reasons typically has no detrimental effect on an individual's health. Adequate consumption of fluids is necessary to ensure that an individual does not become dehydrated.
4. If an individual has certain medical conditions, such as diabetes, eating bread and water alone could have an effect on their health. Over a substantial period of time, a person eating only bread and water might suffer a protein and/or vitamin deficiency. They would then exhibit health problems related to those deficiencies. However, it takes longer than seventeen days to develop a vitamin or protein deficiency.
5. POC for this memorandum is the undersigned.


JOSEPH WOOD
LTC, US Army
Chief, Clinical Operations
MNC-I Surgeon's Office

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