

UNCLASSIFIED

AL83

**Eley, Darlyce M**

RELEASED IN FULL

From: PM-ActionTeam-Director  
 Sent: Sunday, May 09, 2004 8:24 AM  
 To: Mitchell, Theresa K(L/PM, Room 6420); Dolan, JoAnn(Main State Room 6429)  
 Cc: Buchwald, Todd F(Main State Room 6429); PM-ActionTeam-Coordinator; PM-ActionTeam-Director; Ingram, Harold L(MS Rm 6526)  
 Subject: FW: Prisoners' early accounts of extensive Iraq abuse met U.S. silence

FYI - article mentions AP asked questions last Oct.

Bill Krug

-----Original Message-----

From: PM-ActionTeam-Coordinator  
 Sent: Saturday, May 08, 2004 3:15 PM  
 To: Likins, Rose M; Bloomfield, Lincoln P Jr; Sakoda, Robin H; Schmeelk, Peter G; PM-Front-Office  
 Cc: PM-ActionTeam-Director; PM-ActionTeam-Coordinator  
 Subject: Prisoners' early accounts of extensive Iraq abuse met U.S. silence

Detailed allegations of psychological abuse, deprivation, beatings and deaths at U.S.-run prisons in Iraq were met by public silence from the U.S. Army last October six months before shocking photographs stirred world outrage and demands for action.

At the time, one ex-prisoner sensed that words might count for little. Instead, Rahad Naif told a reporter, "I wish somebody could go take a picture of Camp Bucca."

By CHARLES J. HANLEY- AP Special Correspondent-

These early accounts by freed prisoners, reported by The Associated Press last fall, told of detainees punished by hours lying bound in the sun; being attacked by dogs; being deprived of sufficient water; spending days with hoods over their heads.

One told AP of seeing an elderly Iraqi woman tied up and lying in the dust; others told of ill men dying in crowded tents.

They spoke repeatedly of being humiliated by American guards. None mentioned the sexual humiliation seen in recently released photos, but Arab culture might keep an Iraqi from describing such mistreatment.

In contrast to suggestions that the photos indicate isolated abuse by a few, these Iraqis told of widespread practices in several camps that would violate the Geneva Conventions and other human rights standards. On Friday, in an unusual public statement, the international Red Cross agreed, disclosing that its inspectors last year found a "broad pattern" of abuse.

On Oct. 18, AP posed specific questions about the reported abuses to the U.S. military command in Baghdad and the 800th Military Police Brigade, which was in charge of detainees at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison and other facilities.

The MP unit drafted responses, AP later learned, but the Baghdad command did not release them. No explanation was given. The AP report, published Nov. 1, cited a statement to Arab television by the MP commander, Brig. Gen. Janis Karpinski, that prisoners were treated humanely.

Meantime, "between October and December 2003, at the Abu Ghraib Confinement Facility (BCCF), numerous incidents of sadistic, blatant, and wanton criminal abuses were inflicted on several detainees," according to the report of a later Army investigation.

That Army report said the photos from Abu Ghraib dated from this period both before and after the AP article appeared.

The Army's report, which found that soldiers also committed "egregious acts and grave breaches" at Camp Bucca in southern Iraq, did not come to light until they were disclosed in the May 10 issue of The New Yorker magazine. It had been classified "secret."

That investigation was prompted by a soldier's complaint to superiors in January about fellow guards' actions.

The half-dozen ex-prisoners interviewed by AP in October were freed without charges after spending months in Abu Ghraib, Camp Bucca and the Baghdad airport's Camp Cropper.

Some Americans were humane, they said, but many were not.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: WILLIAM J GEHRON  
 DATE/CASE ID: 14 DEC 2004 200303827

UNCLASSIFIED

DOS-001584

## UNCLASSIFIED

"They don't have morals. They don't respect old or young. They humiliate everybody," said Naif, 31, a Baghdad resident like the others and one of three brothers confined.

Women guards especially were verbally abusive, with obscene invective; "insulting our sisters and parents. It was very hard to accept," he said.

"Some are like children, showing off their muscle," his brother Hassan, 32, said of the MPs.

Last summer, when temperatures topped 120, guards struck one man at Camp Cropper with an "electric stick" because he was slow carrying water, and then "tied his hands and put him in the sun for three hours," said Ziad Tarik, 24.

This punishment in "The Garden" also was recounted by others: being made to lie bound in the sun for hours on a patch of sand enclosed by razor-wire, even for such lesser infractions as shouting to the next tent or stealing food.

They also told of beatings by guards for example, of an Abu Ghraib prisoner who refused to eat.

"He was stubborn, so they hit him, and he spent three days in the hospital," Tarik said.

"They used to hit people and turn dogs loose on them," said Saad, 36, the third Naif brother, who spent 2@1/2 months in Abu Ghraib.

"They used to humble people by putting nylon bags over their heads, for three days, with their hands tied up. I know one who died because he couldn't breathe."

The U.S. military and CIA now say at least 14 detainee deaths have been or are being investigated.

The camps held not only men captured in the anti-U.S. insurgency, but many others picked up by U.S. troops in broad neighborhood sweeps, on slight suspicions or unverified tips, or as curfew-breakers, checkpoint-dodgers or common criminals. Up to 8,000 are believed still held.

The Naif brothers said they and neighbor Tarik were seized by American soldiers after a nasty quarrel with another neighbor, who had links with the U.S. occupation and apparently denounced them as resistance supporters. The brothers were thrown into three separate camps.

Prisoners regularly rose up in protest or riots to demand they be charged or freed, and sometimes to seek better treatment for ill comrades, the men said.

"They'd turn dogs on us to put down the demonstrations," said Ra'id Mohammed Hassan, 42.

He said he was taken to Camp Bucca after Americans searching his car found a weapon, a common item for Iraqis.

The ex-detainees complained they were never given enough water for drinking and washing and at times were denied food as punishment.

"Once we were saying prayers for the death of a prisoner, and we were chanting, so they kept food from us for a day and a half," Saad Naif said.

In hours of AP interviews, the Iraqis said the Americans' treatment of women detainees and the sick most appalled them.

Hassan Ali Muslim, 28, detained for alleged carjacking but never charged, remembered one man being brought into their stifling, overcrowded tent at Camp Cropper in a sickbed. He said another died beside him.

"He was an old man. We had to line up for food, and it was very hot and it took a very long time, and wasn't good for sick people," Muslim said. "After the meal he began breathing heavily, and he just died."

The men told of detainees in wheelchairs and poorly treated diabetics, of epileptic seizures and nervous breakdowns.

"I saw four die in our camp," Tarik said of Abu Ghraib. Even when fellow prisoners warned of one man's worsening condition, he said, "they said they wouldn't take him (to a hospital) until it's serious and he's about to die."

Saad Naif said the "worst thing" was the treatment of women.

"Innocent women were kept for months in the same clothes. I saw a woman about 80 years old her hands were tied up and she was lying in the dust," he said.

Hassan Naif recalled a day at Camp Cropper when a man saw his sister being punished by being stretched out bound in the sun. He angrily tried to cross the razor wire ringing his tent, "and they shot him in the shoulder," he said.

Saad Naif said he saw another prisoner shot dead when he approached the wire at Abu Ghraib.

Muslim, whose father was jailed under the ousted Baathists, said the U.S. system hardly compared with the old regime's bloody political prisons, and he said living conditions improved at times under the Americans.

Camp Cropper, whose overcrowded conditions had grown notorious, was closed Oct. 1. The secret Army investigation, nevertheless, found that the worst abuses continued at least into December at Abu Ghraib.

Much of what the ex-detainees told AP meshed with what delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the only outsiders allowed into the camps, were said to have found on visits last year.

Those findings were confidential, but the human rights group Amnesty International said last summer it learned that the ICRC inspectors were finding serious abuses, and it charged that "torture and gross abuse of human rights" were occurring.

On Friday, the Red Cross disclosed it had repeatedly demanded last year that U.S. authorities correct problems in the detention centers. The Americans took action on some issues but not others, it said.

"We were dealing here with a broad pattern, not individual acts. There was a pattern and a system," Pierre Kraehenbuel, the Red Cross operations director, said in Geneva.

Inside the camps, too, appeals were made.

Saad Naif said one prominent detainee, a former Iraqi provincial governor, urged U.S. military officers to halt the abuses.

"He told them, 'What you are doing to the Iraqi people will turn against you,' and that they must win the support of the people, not the opposite," Naif said. "They told him to mind his own business."

UNCL<sup>2</sup>ASSIFIED

DOS-001585

DOS-001586  
UNCLASSIFIED

Associated Press Special Correspondent Charles J. Hanley has covered the Iraq crisis since mid-2002 and most recently reported from Iraq in the fall of 2003.

(Copyright 2004 by The Associated Press. All Rights Reserved.)

DOS-001586

UNCL<sup>3</sup>ASSIFIED