

1 ARTICLE 15-6 INVESTIGATION INTERVIEW

2
3 At Camp Doha, Kuwait, on 15 February 2004:

4 MAJOR GENERAL ANTONIO M. TAGUBA, U.S. Army, CFLCC Deputy Commanding
5 General deposing.

6 MASTER SERGEANT JOHN E. DAVIS, U.S. Army, CFLCC-SJA, Senior Court
7 Reporter, has been detailed reporter for this interview and has been
8 previously sworn.

9 BRIGADIER GENERAL JANIS L. KARPINSKI, U.S. Army, was sworn, and
10 interviewed as follows:

11 Q. Has anybody mentioned to you the context of the
12 investigation, or scope of anything in that nature?

13 A. No. As a matter of fact I was kind of frustrated because I
14 tried to get something from General Diamond and General Kratzer, and
15 nobody would tell me.

16 Q. Okay. Well, rightly so, I think because of the sensitivity
17 of the investigation----

18 A. Yes, sir.

19 Q. ----and based on some allegations that were made, but let
20 me go ahead then and start off and go to the proceedings here, some
21 administrative requirements. I'm Major General Taguba. I'm The
22 Deputy Commanding General of the Coalition Land Forces Component
23 Command, as you know headquartered here at Camp Doha. The Commanding

1 General, Lieutenant General David McKiernan, has appointed me as the
2 Investigating Officer under the provisions of AR 15-6. Also, at the
3 direction of General John Abizaid who is the Commander of CENTCOM.
4 Our investigation is to gather all facts-- relevant facts and
5 circumstances surrounding recent allegations of maltreatment of
6 detainees at the Abu Ghraib Prison also known as the Baghdad Central
7 Confinement [sic] Facility. As well as detainee escapes and
8 accountability lapses as reported by CJTF-7. Our investigation is to
9 further look into the training, the standards, employment, command
10 policies, and internal policies concerning the detainees held at the
11 Abu Ghraib Prison. And finally, we were directed to assess the
12 command climate, the supervisory presence of the 800th Military Police
13 Brigade chain of command. That includes everybody that's organic to
14 you, to your unit, and those that were tasked organized to you-- your
15 Brigade during the period of time when you were in command. You've
16 already met the members of the investigation team. I want to advise
17 you that you have been sworn in by Lieutenant Colonel Kluka. All of
18 our comments and your responses will be recorded for accuracy. Of
19 course you'll get a chance to look at them before once again that you
20 sign any of the statements. So before we begin I ask you if you have
21 any questions on the scope or nature of this inquiry?

22 A. An aggressive undertaking and-- but I don't have any
23 questions, sir.

1 Q. Okay, wonderful. For the record would you please state
2 your name, your rank, social security number, and duty position?

3 A. My name is Janis Lee Karpinski. I'm a Brigadier General,
4 and the Commander of the 800th MP Brigade, and my social security
5 number is: [REDACTED]

6 Q. Thank you. And you're currently the Commanding General of
7 the 800th MP Brigade?

8 A. Yes, sir.

9 Q. Okay, good. The allegations were-- related to events that
10 happened roughly between October, December timeframe, since that's
11 still under investigation by the CID, when would-- when were you
12 first made aware of those circumstances and the events that happened
13 there at Tier 1A at the hard site at Abu Ghraib?

14 A. I was up at Ashraf at the MEK compound and I received an
15 email from Colonel Marcello the commander of the CID, and he said, "I
16 just want you to be aware I'm getting ready to go in and brief
17 General Sanchez. I want you to be aware that there have been-- that
18 we're doing an investigation at Abu Ghraib Prison for detainee abuse
19 involved," uh-- I don't even remember if there was two or three
20 sentences. And that was about January 24th, 23rd----

21 Q. Thereabouts?

22 A. Thereabouts.

1 Q. What action did you take after that, upon that
2 notification?

3 A. I sent an email back to him, I said, "I don't know what to
4 say." There wasn't enough specifics in that statement. I called
5 him. I left a message for him. I was down in-- the next morning I
6 was down in-- at Victory, and two days later Colonel Marcello came
7 over to see me, and told me that he was briefing General Wojdakowski
8 in an-- I think it was an interim briefing, and he wanted me to see
9 what they had accumulated thus far.

10 Q. Sure.

11 A. Showed me some of the pictures.

12 Q. Sure.

13 Q. And I still didn't know what to say to him. It was I
14 called out to-- it was worse than I had-- could ever imagine. It's
15 still too difficult for me to think that soldiers would have done
16 some of things that were photographed.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. I called out to Colonel Phillabaum. He'd been over the
19 same day that I got the email from Colonel Marcello. Colonel
20 Maddocks called me up at Ashraf and he said----

21 Q. Your XO?

22 A. My XO. And he said, "I have Colonel Phillabaum and Colonel
23 O'Hare in the office, I'm afraid this isn't good news. There's been

1 some-- there's an investigation going on at Baghdad Central." I
2 said, "I'm aware of it, and it's an investigation so I don't want you
3 to talk about it on the phone, but what's Colonel Phillabaum say?
4 So, he said he didn't know anything about it. It wasn't that he was
5 not giving you information, but it's-- as far as what he could tell
6 me it's really bad and I said okay I got an email from Colonel
7 Marcello the CID commander so I know that it's still an open
8 investigation."

9 Q. Did General Sanchez call you, or did you call him?

10 A. He did not.

11 Q. He did not. Did you inform General Diamond of this events?

12 A. I did not.

13 Q. You did not?

14 A. And I did not because Colonel Marcello made it very clear
15 that it was an open investigation and that General Sanchez was
16 briefed about it and General Wojdakowski was briefed about it.

17 Q. Who directed you or if you took the initiative of
18 suspending Lieutenant Colonel Phillabaum and Captain Reese?

19 A. General Sanchez called me into his office that afternoon.
20 I saw Colonel Warren outside and he said General Sanchez is really
21 upset about the investigation. And he said, "I don't really know
22 what action he's going to take." And I said, "Well I was scheduled
23 to go out there, so I'll just hold off until he tells me what he

1 wants me to do." So, when I went in to see him he said, "I want you
2 to do an assessment of their leadership abilities and make a
3 determination if they're able to hold leadership positions." And and
4 I-- I said, "I can go out to Baghdad Central first thing in the
5 morning. I can spend the day out there, or three days out there. As
6 you know sir, you're FRAGO sent my up to Ashraf and I don't know if
7 General Surgeon has any plans for any kind of activities up there I
8 don't' want to throw anything off track inadvertently." And he said,
9 "Do you want me to tell you what your priorities are?" And I said,
10 "No, sir. I understand priorities, but I didn't want to disrupt any
11 of those-- since that-- that direction is coming from the SECDEF's
12 office, I didn't want to disrupt any of those plans."

13 Q. Sure.

14 A. So he said, "No, there's nothing scheduled. Just go out to
15 Baghdad Central." So, I did. Spent the day out there and the next
16 morning out there, and spoke to the people that were running the
17 cellblock then-- and I've been out there many times and we discussed
18 some of our concerns. Sat down and discussed with Colonel Pappas in
19 November and about some of the concerns and the procedures and the
20 manpower drain of running the interrogation cells the way he wanted
21 them run.

22 Q. Sure.

1 A. And the reason I remember it very specifically was because
2 we sat down and spoke. It was Major Williams, his deputy; one of the
3 captains, Captain Wood-- there was two Captains, Colonel Pappas, and
4 I had maybe my Operations Officer with me and two are three people.
5 And he wanted to speak to me about the four people that the MI
6 Brigade was being tasked to provide to cover a tower for force
7 protection.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And he said, "Those four people will have a tremendous
10 impact on the interrogation operation." And I said, "Well, it's not
11 like you're running through this thing rapid speed anyway, so-- I
12 mean slowing it down you're gonna stop it." He said, "Exactly," and
13 I said, "This is a tower that affects your soldiers. It's for
14 soldiers. I mean I've got more than 85 that are involved in internal
15 security." He said, "It's very difficult to provide those four
16 soldiers," and I said, "I'll think about it." But----

17 Q. Those were four MI soldiers?

18 A. Four-- it didn't have to be MI soldiers, no sir.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. It could be four soldiers. Could be clerks, cooks,
21 drivers, whatever.

22 Q. Anybody, okay.

1 A. So, umm, and I-- I actually said that to him, you know,
2 "Give us your cooks," and he said, "Well then the mess hall won't
3 operate as well." So, I left and when I came back not only was
4 Colonel Pappas the FOB Commander, but somehow all of these assets for
5 him to operate Abu Ghraib prison as an FOB fell from the sky. He had
6 a LRS Battalion, he had two Infantry Platoons, he had an Engineer
7 Company minus one platoon, and I saw him out there maybe four days
8 after I came back and he said and I said, "Gee it seems like those
9 four weren't a problem after all." And I said, "But you're going to
10 get a request from us to be exempted from the internal taskings,
11 because I counted and I got 83." And he said, "Ma'am, I counted and
12 I got a 121." And I said, "That's a whole MP company doing nothing
13 but force protection, and escorting contractors around so, we're
14 gonna have to get out of the business of doing some of the other
15 things for your interrogation operation specifically."

16 And he wrote a memo up in December that said, "I'm very
17 concerned about the security posture out here the MP's have-- are no
18 longer escorting detainees going through the interrogation process.
19 We've had to take that on. We tried to implement all the measures to
20 make cellblock 1A, and 1B specifically an MI operation." Those kind
21 of things. And it really was a memorandum for record as much as it
22 was a request for additional help out there at Abu Ghraib. So when--
23 when this whole situation came to light consistently out at Baghdad

1 Central I was hearing, "Well we couldn't by and check that cellblock
2 anymore because the MI people said that it wasn't "our" operation."
3 Colonel Jordan had exclusive rights of escorting us if we wanted to
4 go in. We had to take permission from Colonel Jordan. And it was
5 consistent with an incident that occurred in November, I believe when
6 a handgun found its way into the cellblock, and as soon as it
7 happened and we heard about it I called out to Major Dinenna out at
8 the 320th and I said, "Get us an SIR. Get us one immediately while
9 the information is fresh." And he said, "Ma'am, Colonel Jordan has
10 issued a "gag" order for the MP's. They can't even give me a
11 statement." And I said, "Bullcrap that's not-- I mean there still my
12 MP's. Get a statement so we can publish an SIR. This is a serious
13 infraction." So Colonel Jordan called me back and said, "Ma'am, I
14 just want to make sure." I said, "MP's don't operate that way. I
15 want the information. I want the facts, and you don't have any right
16 to impose a "gag" order." And he said to me, "Well they're-- they're
17 TACON to us so, we really own the MP's." And I said, "I'm not
18 debating now but I'm going to get the SIR if I have to come out there
19 and get it myself." So they sent an SIR shortly after that, but it
20 gave very broad statements. Very generic because they weren't
21 certain on actually how it happened. And then when I was out there
22 the next day Colonel Jordan specifically looked for me and told me
23 his version of what happened. And I'm not questioning Colonel

1 Jordan's honestly or validity or anything. I'm sure what he was
2 doing at that time was something that he was either being told to do,
3 or thought was the right thing to do. But the version that he gave
4 me was when he said, "I was there when it happened, so I know this,
5 this, and this took place," was not exactly what the CID
6 investigation eventually showed. So, there was disparity between the
7 two reports.

8 Q. Now that-- that happened sometime in November, and I
9 believe Colonel Pappas had received a FRAGO appointing him as the
10 Forward Operating Base Commander.

11 A. Right.

12 Q. And I believe the specific instruction was that all tenant
13 units would be TACON to him for security detainees and force
14 protection. Was that conveyed to you previously, or did you----

15 A. No, sir.

16 Q. Your S-3 mentions that to you-- so you had no knowledge of
17 that particular directive or fragmentary order from CJTF-7?

18 A. No, sir.

19 Q. Had no warning.

20 Q. Okay. So when you found that out did you go back to
21 General Wojdakowski or General Miller to question that FRAGO?

22 A. I did, and General Wojdakowski was on Emergency Leave at
23 the time. I believe his father was either in the hospital, or had

1 passed away at that point, and I went to General Miller. General
2 Miller was not there for two days, and I don't know why I don't
3 really recall, but somebody said, "General Fast is the one who had
4 that FRAGO cut. You might want to go and talk to her." So I did.
5 And I said, "Ma'am you have a second? I just want to know about
6 the-- Colonel Pappas being appointed as the FOB Commander." She
7 said, "It's done." And that was as far as the conversation went.

8 Q. Did you go back to General Sanchez to seek clarification on
9 anything that constrained-- or limits of TACON, because as you know
10 TACON doctrinally says that the gaining unit, being that of the 205th
11 MI Brigade, will establish priorities over all of the tenet units
12 that associated with that?

13 A. I went to Colonel Pappas first to get clarification. I
14 still at that point had not seen the FRAGO.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. That is what I asked for when I went to General Miller's
17 office.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And they didn't have a copy of it. Wasn't that they were
20 unaware of it they heard something about. I don't know if its been
21 published yet. It still might be in draft, and they had it. I
22 believe that General Fast picked it up off of her desk. She picked a
23 piece of paper up and I don't know if it was the FRAGO or not.

1 Q. Do you have any knowledge of what might have precipitated
2 that?

3 A. Have no idea.

4 Q. Okay. Could have been that when General Sanchez had
5 visited the facility; I think with you back October sometime that he
6 might have discussed with you about the force protection posture at
7 the facility?

8 A. No sir, he did not. He-- what he said to me then during
9 the briefing he said, "Where's the Civil Affairs in this?" And I
10 said, "Sir, the Civil Affairs commander told me himself that his guys
11 where not going outside the wall." "Why not?" He said, "It's to
12 dangerous." He said, "Who's the Civil Affairs commander?" I said,
13 "That's Colonel Reagan." And he said to his aide, "Get him on the
14 phone." And he left the briefing when Colonel Reagan was on the
15 phone and he walked out of the room went to the phone and we could
16 hear him. And he was saying, "Do you understand? You have this-- is
17 this clear? You get your Civil Affairs out-- you're supposed to be
18 working in the community this is a Civil Affairs function." And we
19 all heard his side of the conversation. But I saw Colonel Reagan
20 that night at the CJTF-7 Headquarters and he said, "We're not going."

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. And he-- he-- he had made-- had his aide make two-phone
23 calls. One was to the Civil Affairs commander, and the other one was

1 to General West who was the C-4. And he said, "What the hell is
2 going on out here? Why haven't you given any support? Why aren't
3 you-- have you been out here? I want you to get out here as soon as
4 you can." And I saw General West either that night, or very early
5 the next day, and he said that they were going to go out there and
6 that they were going-- and that was delayed because General
7 Wojdakowski formed that-- like a "Task Force."

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And had the Engineer-- the C-4, the C-3, everybody in there
10 from the staff and said, and he told me-- and he said in front of
11 them, "As I've told you before we can't give you anything because
12 you're TACON."

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. "But we're going to change all that. We're going to make
15 Abu Ghraib an enduring camp, and we're going-- that'll open up the
16 doors." So after that meeting General West said to me, "We'll be
17 able to do-- I mean there's going to be more activity out there than
18 you can imagine. There's going to be contractors who are going to
19 do-- get a DFAC out there. We're going to go out there-- if your S-4
20 can give me a call, we'll set up a time when we can go out there, and
21 we'll walk the ground." And they did.

22 Q. Prior to-- prior to that-- that mission was given to the
23 800th MP then relegated to the 320th MP Battalion to conduct operations

1 I believe after you assumed command of the Brigade on or about July.
2 What was the intent then that you understood of why you were provided
3 that mission set at the Abu Ghraib prison site?

4 A. We needed a location to build another internment facility,
5 a north internment facility because at that time it was no longer an
6 EPW, Third Country National, IR mission, Internment Resettlement
7 Operation. It was a Iraqi Civilian Criminal Confinement mission.
8 So, the original idea was that they would relocate the remaining
9 several hundred prisoners up to Baghdad because they were General
10 Officers, and Freedom-- Foreign Fighters, and Third Country
11 Nationals, and there was really only about 300 of them. And the idea
12 was that they would relocated north because that was the focus of the
13 operation at the time. And Bucca was 12 hours away at its earliest.
14 We were using Bucca almost at that point almost primarily as a place
15 to push detainees from Cropper because Cropper was overcrowded, but
16 Baghdad Central was intended and discussed and approved as an interim
17 facility only for many reasons. It was extremely controversial
18 because of the hanging, and the torture chambers that were there. It
19 was well known for its horrible procedures for its overcrowding
20 conditions, and of course for, you know, reports of----

21 Q. Sure.

1 A. ----60,000 people being hung there. It was very heavily
2 looted. The only place that really was untouched unfortunately was
3 the hanging chamber, and the torture facilities. The rest of it
4 was--the infrastructure was pulled out. There was rubble that was
5 literally knee deep. Concrete, glass, wire, rubble, re-barb,
6 everything. And the 72nd MP Company, which is a Las Vegas National
7 Guard Company, moved into that facility at the direction of the 18th
8 MP Brigade who was their headquarters at the time. When we got there
9 in July, I saw a Company Commander and his First Sergeant who
10 relieved to see somebody come to visit them. Come to tell them,
11 "We're going to take care of you." Because up until that time they
12 hadn't seen the 18th MP Brigade Commander, and there only recollection
13 of seeing the Command Sergeant Major was when he stopped by and
14 managed to tell a soldier that his sleeves were too short on his
15 uniform.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And we walked through that facility and I said, "There's no
18 way that you can make this into a prison. And he said, "Ma'am, if
19 you'll give us support, come back in two weeks and you'll see what
20 the soldiers have done. We already have a plan." So I said, "I'll
21 give you all the support you need, but I'm not even sure we're going
22 to be able to use this facility." And I think at that time they were
23 holding a few of the Division 1st AD, or-- I think it was 1st AD that

1 was there at the time, or maybe 3rd ID, a few of their soldiers, not
2 more than 20-- uh prisoners, not more than 20. So, what they did was
3 clean up a couple of the cells, and they were holding them there. I
4 went down to CPA, met with the subject matter experts down there at
5 CPA, and I said, "What is the plan?" And Lane McCotter, Bill Irvine
6 was the senior guy there at the time, Lane McCotter was one American,
7 and Gary Deland was the other one. And they said, "Well, we're
8 probably not going to be able to use it because of that "Hanging
9 Chamber," and the reputation." And I said, "Well who's going to make
10 a decision because I have an MP Company out there and another
11 battalion coming up.

12 Q. Was the 72nd assigned to you at that time? They were still-
13 - they were assigned to the 18th?

14 A. They were assigned to the 18th, yes sir, and so was the 400th
15 MP Battalion.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. And then at the TOA when we moved up to Baghdad they were
18 reassigned under the 18th-- 800th MP Brigade. So, we worked through
19 this process through this CPA and it was like I said it was extremely
20 controversial, and at one point the Deputy Secretary of Defense,
21 Wolfowitz, said, "I can't be convinced," and Secretary Rumsfeld said
22 the same thing, "Find another place. And this isn't going to work."
23 And what Bill Irvine did was go to Ambassador Bremer and I was in the