

1 [Steve Stefanowicz, civilian, was interviewed on 12 February
2 2004, as follows:]

3 Q. Has anybody informed you as to the nature of your
4 presence here with us this morning?

5 A. No.

6 Q. I'm amazed. Okay, so you were basically told to just
7 show up?

8 A. It's the extension of a 15-6 and I'm not Army, so I'm
9 not familiar with the extent of what a 15-6 is.

10 Q. That's fair. Let me go ahead then and inform you of
11 the nature of this interview. I'm Major General Taguba, the
12 Deputy Commanding General of the Coalition Land Forces Component
13 Command, headquartered at Camp Doha, Kuwait. My Commanding
14 General, Lieutenant General David McKiernan, appointed me as the
15 investigating officer under the provisions of Army Regulation
16 15-6, which gives us the authority to conduct the investigation,
17 and also the direction of General John Abizaid, the Commander of
18 CENTCOM, Central Command. This investigation is to gather all
19 relevant facts and circumstances surrounding the recent
20 allegations of maltreatment of detainees at the Abu Ghurayb,
21 also known as the Baghdad Central Confinement Facility, as well
22 as detainee escapes and accountability lapses as reported to
23 CJTF-7. Now, we were also directed to investigate the training

1 standards, employment, command policies and internal policies
2 concerning the detainees held at Abu Ghurayb Prison. And we're
3 also to assess the command climate and the supervisory presence
4 of the 800th Military Police Brigade Chain of command.

5 I also want to advise you that the course of our
6 interview will be recorded so we can capture the accuracy of the
7 questions and the responses for the record. So, do you have any
8 questions before we continue?

9 A. [Negative response.]

10 Q. Sir, for the record, would you please state your full
11 name, your social security number, your job position and of
12 course your unit of assignment.

13 A. Sure. My name is Steven Anthony Stefanowicz, [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]. I am the assistant site lead for Khaki, who is employed,
15 as well an interrogator, who is employed by CJTF-7, to support
16 operations, KMI operations throughout theater, specifically, Abu
17 Ghurayb.

18 Q. Thank you. When were you assigned to conduct your
19 present duty assignment?

20 A. I arrived in country, in Iraq, on 5 October 2003, and
21 on 5 October, we arrived at the prison, as well.

1 Q. Prior to that, were you informed of the--I would
2 assume, back in the United States, as to the nature of your duty
3 assignment?

4 A. To the extent of....

5 Q. What you were going to be----

6 A. Yes, I was informed that I was going to be an
7 interrogator, possibly at Abu Ghurayb or other facilities in
8 ccountry.

9 Q. What was your job position back in the United States
10 prior to being informed that you were coming to Iraq?

11 A. For 6 months, I was off, roughly 6 months, prior to
12 that, I was off. And prior to that, I was mobilized from
13 November '01 until March of '03.

14 Q. Doing what?

15 A. I'm a Navy intelligence specialist. I was working
16 with DIA, Defense Attaché System.

17 Q. But you're no longer associated with the Navy, or are
18 you still on----

19 A. I'm on Inactive Ready Reserve status, so I could come
20 out here on this deployment.

21 Q. Was your background pretty much on Navy intelligence,
22 HUMINT?

1 A. My last, basically 2 years, have been involved on the
2 HUMINT side. And prior to that, between intel analyst, as well
3 as imagery.

4 Q. Now, did you have a previous assignment that's
5 coincidental, even relative to what you're conducting today,
6 like a GTMO or Bagram or anyplace else?

7 A. You mean interrogation assignment?

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. In a military setting, no, but my commercial training,
10 if that's what you're alluding to, has come from what I've done,
11 International Recruitment, similar training from my DIA
12 counterpart, I was a case officer, running sources, do business
13 development is the same thing as dividing and gathering your
14 networks, interviewing your possible staff that you might hire
15 or hire for other companies. It's the same hiring and
16 questioning process that you would through, an interrogation,
17 questioning or screening series.

18 Q. Training, that sort of thing?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Did you have any experience whatsoever being directly
21 involved with interrogation of a detainee?

22 A. When I was operational, or provided operations and
23 supervision support out of the USDA [inaudible].

1 Q. So you're out here on the 5th of October, on or about,
2 there about, and you were directly assigned to the Abu Ghurayb
3 confinement facility.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Who was your supervisor at that time, if you recall?

6 A. Within the JDIC Ice operations?

7 Q. Sure.

8 A. The...who was the NCOIC...I can't recall the NCOIC's
9 name. They were part of the--when we were arriving, there was a
10 turnover there. So he was only there for about a week. From
' that point, Chief Graham, John Graham was the secondary OIC, and
12 then Captain Carolyn Wood was the OIC.

13 Q. Now, the JDIC did not exist at that time, or did it
14 exist when you arrived?

15 A. From my understanding, it did exist.

16 Q. All right, to your understanding. Did you receive any
17 in-briefs or set of instructions on the operating environment
18 and what the nature of the, specific nature of your duties would
19 be?

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. Who gave you that instruction?

22 A. Captain Wood.

1 Q. Captain Wood did? Did that set of instructions
2 include any familiarity at all or refresher training on the
3 Geneva Convention?

4 A. No.

5 Q. No? Did you, since you were in that particular set of
6 experiences previously as a Naval officer in the Reserves, in
7 the context of other training that you conducted prior to your
8 assignment here, did you have any knowledge whatsoever or
9 training, interaction with detainees or through interrogative
10 means or detention include some knowledge or familiarity with
11 the Geneva Convention?

12 A. Yes, I have. In fact, I read up on that on my own, as
13 well as provided the--recently, I've used them again to refresh
14 and provide guidance for a friend of mine.

15 Q. But when you arrived here, there was nothing....

16 A. There was nothing formal in place pertaining to the
17 Geneva Convention, that's correct.

18 Q. But you were informed or at least had knowledge of the
19 contents of the provisions of....

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Did you have any assumption at all or any knowledge
22 that you, being a civilian contractor, also could be held liable

1 for any violations that might be consistent with the Geneva
2 Convention?

3 A. Absolutely. That was one of the first questions prior
4 to my arrival. And once I did arrive in country within our
5 organization, as well as within the military setting what
6 statutes the civilians fall under versus military members, which
7 are punishable by the UCMJ. Civilians are punishable, from my
8 understanding, under the Federal court system.

9 Q. Did you inquire as to what your status would be while
10 you're in a combat operating area, that your status, if you were
11 ever captured by anti-coalition forces, did you inquire into the
12 nature of what your status will be if you were captured or
13 detained?

14 A. From my understanding, since we are contracted, I just
15 assumed, because on my CAC card, it says we're covered under the
16 Geneva Conventions.

17 Q. But nothing beyond that.

18 A. No.

19 Q. So in a case where you may be held or detained or
20 killed or wounded in a combat area, it was never stipulated to
21 you in any clear terms?

22 A. No, not at all.

1 Q. Okay, all right. Let me move forward. You've been
2 there since the 5th of October.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And conducting interrogations or whatever you're being
5 directed to do, I'm not asking you--let me preface this, not
6 asking you the contents of any interrogation, but could you
7 elaborate a little bit on the typical operation of an
8 interrogation? I mean, when do you--is there a plan of sorts
9 that you discuss previously with a translator? Is there a plan
10 of sorts that you discuss with anybody from the MPs that are
' holding the detainee, time, that sort of thing?

12 A. All the interrogators are assigned to teams, Alpha
13 through Charlie, through Echo. We're given--we'll just start
14 with a new case file.

15 Q. Sure.

16 A. Find the assessment, let's see where the detained has
17 derived from, what the circumstances of capture are. As the
18 interrogator, you sit down with your analyst. You go through,
19 find out as much information about the detainee as possible, the
20 capturing unit, check with the magistrate's office, review what
21 they have on file, collect whatever you need from to put in your
22 file to build up the foundation. At that point in time, you
23 schedule with your section chief as to the time of

1 interrogation. In most of the cases I work in, I usually have
2 an analyst there with me, so I brief the analyst prior to going
3 into the interrogation. To what depth and what extent, that
4 will vary with what the interpreter will receive. And also,
5 it's a matter of comfort and level of trust with the
6 interpreter, as well. Some, we use specifically as just--if you
7 want an umbilical cord of the interrogator. Others can become
8 more in depth who are assigned to more of your high value
9 targets who will become more actively involved and read up on
10 reports, etceteras.

11 Q. Basically, do you typically work with the same
12 interpreter, or do you change around based on the nature of----

13 A. Recently, I've worked with the same interpreter due to
14 the significance of the case and the level of his expertise.
15 But prior to that, I had used a reasonable amount of the
16 interpreters.

17 Q. Is there an established or a set schedule, written or
18 otherwise, that says, "These are the detainees I want to
19 interview today?"

20 A. Depending on your case load, you work with your
21 section chief and you're organizing your schedule throughout the
22 time period.

1 Q. Let me be a little bit more specific. The detainees
2 that are held at Tier 1 A, they're held there for a specific
3 purpose that you're familiar with. In your interaction with the
4 MPs that are holding, or at least a company or a unit that is
5 holding that particular detainee, when you have a set schedule,
6 is that schedule articulated to them verbally or is it
7 articulated to them in a written form?

8 A. It's not articulated to them at all.

9 Q. So how does that happen?

10 A. In terms--you do your prep and planning. Depending on
11 the reaction and the information received or not received from
12 the previous interrogation is how you'll schedule and time your
13 next interrogation. In some cases, it could be late at night
14 due to the fact that the detainee is less alert and is apt to
15 get more information because all they want to do is go back to
16 bed.

17 Q. Sure.

18 A. Versus a midday one when they're nice and relaxed and
19 had a good night's sleep. They're more responsive and are able
20 to countermeasure us and etceteras. So, in terms of putting
21 those efforts, they're done within the operations section. I'm
22 not outside with the MPs.

1 Q. And is that an established or a standard operating
2 procedure that's provided and approved by----

3 A. That has been the operating procedure that's been
4 presented to us upon my arrival and I've assumed to be the norm
5 since then.

6 Q. And that was briefed to you by whom?

7 A. It wasn't briefed, that's just what was.

8 Q. What was, so that was your understanding. Was that in
9 a written form or common practice?

10 A. Common practice, nothing written.

11 Q. Nothing written; so that was basically left to your
12 approach or a common approach within----

13 A. As well as the coordination with your section chief.

14 Q. So that was an approved process. So there's no
15 question in your mind that that was the approved process?

16 A. For setting a time period for coordinating
17 interrogations in isolation--or segregation, as it's referred to
18 now?

19 Q. Sure.

20 A. [Affirmative response.]

21 Q. Was there ever a requirement in the unit or the
22 battalion that you belonged to, that you were associated with,
23 which is I believe at that time, the 165th MI Battalion.

1 A. Prior to that, it was the 519th.

2 Q. Was it the 519th MI Detachment?

3 A. Right.

4 Q. Was there a requirement to put an interrogation plan
5 in writing?

6 A. Yes, you have to have a double-sided interrogation
7 plan, what your approach is, whether or not the detainee's
8 information has been researched, whether it needs national
9 agency check and background check etceteras, exploitation, any
10 type of requirements that are outstanding for collection against
11 HCRs, things along that nature. Then you turn it over and you
12 write out an interrogation plan. The one currently being used
13 now is an evolutionist one that was being used previously. So
14 it's been an ongoing living document. That's how they've been
15 documenting the process.

16 Q. Who approved that plan?

17 A. Section chief reviews it. Then it goes to either the
18 NCOIC or the OIC.

19 Q. What governs that interrogation plan?

20 A. The rules of engagement.

21 Q. The rules of engagement. How long has that rules of
22 engagement been published?

23 A. As far as I know, since the time I've arrived.

1 Q. It's been posted?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Do you recall that being briefed to you when you first
4 arrived?

5 A. We were given a--everybody, from a Khaki perspective,
6 and any people we bring in on board are given the rules of
7 engagement brief. We have to sign that. Now, we've signed
8 multiple variations since we've arrived, but everybody has had
9 to read them and re-sign them.

10 Q. Does that interrogation plan look anything--I'm sorry,
11 rules of engagement, look something similar to that [while
12 showing document to Mr. Stefanowicz].

13 A. This is the copy that was posted in the ISO.

14 Q. Okay. It was posted in October when you first
15 arrived?

16 A. No, this was posted--I'm not quite sure when they
17 posted it. They've had an 8 1/2 by 11 piece of paper up on a
18 bulletin board. And then recently, I think it was in December,
19 I can't remember the actual time, it was early December, end of
20 February--November, when you go out through the doorway, there's
21 a bunch of pieces of....

22 Q. This particular interrogation rules of engagement was
23 posted, I believe, after Colonel Tom Pappas assumed command of

1 the Forward Operating Base Abu Ghurayb. And this particular
2 interrogation rules of engagement was approved by General
3 Sanchez because of differing and inconsistent practices done
4 during interrogation. Was that explained to you?

5 A. No.

6 Q. So you just took it at face value that this was
7 revised due to other things that had occurred. Have you had any
8 knowledge of interrogators being disciplined for going beyond
9 the bounds of their authority?

10 A. Just recently.

11 Q. Which one was that?

12 A. Just seen members, I'm not sure from where--I was told
13 right when we arrived, there was an incident in the segregation
14 section where a soldier was----

15 Q. Segregation in the hard site?

16 A. Yeah, alpha section. It used to be isolation, but now
17 the new term is "segregation," the hard site. And they came in
18 for their final, I guess, I wasn't sure if it's Article 15 or
19 what the procedure was, and people I had seen when I first
20 arrived were coming back in and reintroducing....

21 Q. Based on those infractions, do you recall the
22 Battalion Commander, Detachment Commander, the Brigade Commander

1 gathering all the interrogators and amplifying any kind of
2 corrective actions to be taken?

3 A. You mean right after this----

4 Q. Right.

5 A. I mean, nothing strikes the mind. We've had recent
6 refreshers on rules of engagement. But citing, "Hey, this, X, Y
7 and Z happened. Do not do this. Do not repeat the behaviors,"
8 and lessons learned from it? No.

9 Q. So you don't recall any of that. Moving a little
10 faster here. You made a statement that was dated the 22d of
11 January of the events on the 20th of December. It was you,
12 Sergeant Eckron, you also mentioned John Israel in there, of
13 remanding or returning a prisoner back to the custody of the
14 MPs. I believe you mentioned Sergeant Cathcart and Staff
15 Sergeant Elliott, if I'm not mistaken. Can you describe for us
16 the events, what was going on?

17 A. After conducting our interrogation that evening, which
18 at that point in time, common practice was, we were afforded the
19 option to interrogate in the upstairs shower facilities or a
20 rear stairwell down in the far left corner of the isolation,
21 Alpha wing. When we had concluded our interrogation, we had
22 handed off the detainee to the MPs who came back to the
23 stairwell to receive the detainee. We proceeded forward. The

1 MP and the detainee were behind us, handcuffed, restrained,
2 walked him back to what we call the hole, which is a complete
3 segregation cell, no walls, there's no wires. The MPs placed
4 the detainee in the room. As we were getting ready to walk up
5 the steps, heard suspicious sounds. They were suspicious. I
6 didn't see anything. We heard something suspicious enough that
7 we confronted the MPs.

8 Q. What kind of sounds? Yelling? Choking?

9 A. Not a yelling, not a choking sound, an "Umph." You
10 know, say if--the only way I can equate it to is if you're--and
11 you're getting in you're getting in a fist fight and somebody
12 hits you in the stomach, and "Umph," and they knock the wind out
13 of you.

14 Q. Now, the MPs would not have weapons on them at any
15 time, a baton or firearms or anything that you observed?

16 A. Batons, no, I've never seen an MP with a baton in that
17 wing at all. The MPs, it was common practice for an MP to carry
18 a weapon. They would have weapons in there in their staging
19 area.

20 Q. Although firearms are not included [inaudible] SOP on
21 allowing firearms in there while they're handling a detainee,
22 but there are other items that could be construed as a weapon.

3 A. Yes.

1 Q. A knife....

2 A. Everybody--my rules are, meaning MI, no knives, no
3 Gerbers, nothing.

4 Q. None of that.

5 A. So we are sanitized. And that's strictly enforced on
6 a regular basis. Everybody's checked. I've gotten to the point
7 I don't even carry a Gerber anymore because it's not worth the
8 problem of taking it on and off throughout the day. So if they
9 were wearing one, you actually couldn't see if they were or not.
10 At the finish, when we had walked, went upstairs and we signed
11 the detainee in the log, from that point, when the MPs were
12 standing around waiting for them to come back up, we confronted
13 them, "What was that all about?" They weren't happy or
14 comfortable with the fact that we questioned them on that. Once
15 that was done, we presented that to them, we went back into the
16 operations area. I spoke directly to Chief John Graham, and
17 then we also----

18 Q. Graham was your ICE there?

19 A. Yes, he was the OIC at the time. Captain Wood was
20 gone. She has been redeployed. Chief Graham was the OIC for
21 the evening, and presented it to him, as well as we went with
22 that to Chief Reeves, who was in operations, and we presented it
23 to both of them.

1 Q. That was a verbal report to them.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Do you have any knowledge, whatsoever, of the use of
4 dogs in interrogation or in the detainees' cells?

5 A. In the detainees--for interrogation purposes?

6 Q. Right, to intimidate the detainee or other than for
7 what the purpose is to search?

8 A. I know, just the searching aspect, I have not used
9 them as part of--using dogs to intimidate----

10 Q. Not you, per se, but rumors or anything of that sort,
11 but the use of military working dogs----

12 A. The only thing I've been a part of is walking down and
13 seeing the dogs doing the searches and in that capacity.

14 Q. Did you physically observe that, or did you just have
15 knowledge of it?

16 A. Had knowledge of it and one instance where I did
17 observe, was in one of my written statements, which I indicated
18 when I came down, my detainee was on three sessions of a managed
19 program. So given that, he was then under medical supervision,
20 trying to determine if the doc was in yet for the psychological
21 supervision. It was right around the time when then the
22 psychologist came on board. So we had been monitoring all the
23 different facets, mental, physical well-being. And he had

