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## **Iraqi Victim Says U.S. Torture Worse Than Saddam**

REUTERS  
January 12, 2005

FORT HOOD, Texas - A former inmate at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison forced by U.S. guards to masturbate in public and piled onto a pyramid of naked men said Tuesday even Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein did not do such things.

The inmate testified at the court martial of reservist soldier Charles Graner, accused ringleader of guards who engaged in the abuse, which prompted outrage when pictures of the sexual humiliation were published around the world.

"I couldn't believe in the beginning that this could happen, but I wished I could kill myself because no one was there to stop it," Hussein Mutar, who was sent to Abu Ghraib accused of car theft, said in videotaped testimony.

"They were torturing us as though it was theater for them," he said, as the prosecution wound up its case against Graner on assault, dereliction of duty and other charges that could bring him up to 17 1/2 years in prison.

An obviously ill-at ease Mutar added: "I was extremely emotional because (even) Saddam didn't do this to us."

Graner and Pvt. Lynndie England, with whom he fathered a child and who is also facing a court-martial, became the faces of the Abu Ghraib prison scandal after they appeared smiling in photographs that showed degraded, naked prisoners.

Since the scandal erupted last year, the Bush administration has blamed it on a small group of soldiers.

But investigations have shown many prisoners in Iraq, Afghanistan and at the U.S. Navy base at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba also suffered abusive treatment after the government looked at ways to obtain more information in its war against terrorism.

### **SEXUAL HUMILIATION**

At the trial military prosecutors have presented evidence not seen before in public from Abu Ghraib, including a video of forced group masturbation and a picture of a woman prisoner ordered to show her breasts.

Graner's lawyer Guy Womack argues his client was only following orders to soften up prisoners for military intelligence agents. He said activities such as making human pyramids with naked hooded prisoners were not illegal.

In earlier video testimony Tuesday, Ameen Al-Sheikh, a Syrian who said he went to Iraq to oppose the U.S. occupation, declared, "Graner was the primary torturer."

Al-Sheikh, well known in Abu Ghraib for having once obtained a gun from an Iraqi guard and exchanged fire with American soldiers, appeared wary in his testimony.

“That Graner guy is a man who hurt his country, hurt his people and I think he will receive his punishment,” he said. He said Graner forced him to eat pork and drink alcohol, practices against his Islamic religion.

Graner said outside court of the man, “The last time I saw him he was threatening to kill me.”

Three soldiers in Graner's former unit had testified on Monday about his key role in stacking naked prisoners into a pyramid, putting a leash on a prisoner and other abuses in the highest security area of the prison just outside Baghdad.

Two investigators testified that they had identified prisoners shown in the abuse pictures as common criminals arrested on charges including robbery, assault and prostitution.

Wednesday, the defense will open its case that will include testimony from Graner.