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## **Soldier Who Reported Abuse Was Sent to Psychiatrist**

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An Army intelligence sergeant who accused fellow soldiers in Samarra, Iraq, of abusing detainees in 2003 was in turn accused by his commander of being delusional and ordered to undergo a psychiatric evaluation in Germany, despite a military psychiatrist's initial judgment that the man was stable, according to internal Army records released yesterday.

The soldier had angered his commander by urging the unit's redeployment from the military base to prevent what the soldier feared would be the death of one or more detainees under interrogation, according to the documents. He told his commander three members of the counterintelligence team had hit detainees, pulled their hair, tried to asphyxiate them and staged mock executions with pistols pointed at the detainees' heads.

In another case detailed in the Army files, soldiers in a Florida National Guard unit deployed near Ramadi in 2003 compiled a 20-minute video that depicted a soldier kicking a wounded detainee in the face and chest in the presence of 10 colleagues and soldiers positioning a dead insurgent to appear to wave hello. The video was found in a soldier's computer files under the heading "Ramadi Madness," and it initially prompted military lawyers to recommend charges of assault with battery and dereliction of duty for tampering with a corpse.

The unit's commander told Army investigators he was concerned about the images becoming public and promised to take steps to "minimize the risk of this and other videos that may end up in the media."

Both criminal investigations involved events that occurred before the May 2004 revelation of widespread detainee abuse committed by U.S. military personnel at Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad in late 2003, but unlike that event, neither of these cases led to criminal charges.

These cases were among 13 described in more than 1,000 pages of Army criminal records released at the Pentagon under the order of a New York federal judge. They detail the Army's investigations of other allegations by U.S. military personnel in Iraq of abuse, rape and larceny by fellow soldiers.

Investigations into similar allegations were previously disclosed in tens of thousands of pages of records made public since December under a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit by the American Civil Liberties Union. Those records describe allegations of detainee abuse in Afghanistan and at the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in addition to Iraq, and show that when FBI field agents and interrogation specialists in the Defense Intelligence Agency protested alleged abuse, the complaints were generally ignored.

Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales, asked about detainee abuse yesterday on CNN's "Wolf Blitzer Reports," said he was not surprised. Gonzales said that he presumed the military used lawful interrogation techniques but that "sometimes people do things that they shouldn't do. People are imperfect . . . and so the fact that abuses occur, they're unfortunate but I'm not sure that they should be viewed as surprising."

In New York, ACLU staff attorney Jameel Jaffer said the new files "provide further evidence that abuse of detainees was widespread." He added: "In light of the hundreds of abuses that we now know to have taken place, it is increasingly difficult to understand why no senior official, civilian or

military, has been held accountable." The ACLU has called for the Justice Department to appoint a special counsel and for Congress to hold hearings on the abuse.

In each of the 13 cases described in the latest set of documents, the Army concluded that "the investigations failed to support any criminal charges," according to a statement it released yesterday. In three of the investigations, the Army probes were closed without the finding of sufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegations.

Those conclusions are consistent with the majority of the 226 Army investigations into alleged wrongdoing in Iraq and Afghanistan that have been completed so far; in 70 percent of those, the Army closed its probes after concluding it could not substantiate the allegations. Of the soldiers who have been disciplined in the remaining cases, only 32 faced a court-martial, which is roughly equivalent to a criminal trial, while 88 others were given nonjudicial or administrative sanctions.

The Army intelligence sergeant subjected to a psychiatric evaluation was serving with Detachment B, 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion, and told investigators that he witnessed an escalation of violence against detainees shortly after arriving at the unit's Samarra detention facility in April 2003.

Although his name is not listed in the documents, the episode precisely matches events described publicly last year by California National Guard Sgt. Greg Ford, a former state prison guard and Navy SEAL team medic whose complaints were dismissed by the Army in October 2004 as lacking sufficient evidence. Ford said last night, after hearing what the documents stated, that he is the sergeant described.

The soldier complained that he had had to resuscitate abused detainees and urged the unit's withdrawal. He told investigators that the unit's commander, an Army captain, responded by giving him "30 seconds to withdraw my request or he was going to send me forcibly to go see a psychiatrist." The soldier added: "I told him I was not going to withdraw my request and at that time he confiscated my weapon and informed me he was withdrawing my security clearance and was placing me under 24-hour surveillance."

A witness in his unit told investigators that the captain later pressured a military doctor -- who had found the soldier stable -- into doing another emergency evaluation, saying: "I don't care what you saw or heard, he is imbalanced, and I want him out of here."

The next day, after the doctor did another evaluation, the soldier was evacuated from Iraq in restraints on a stretcher to a military hospital in Germany, despite having been given no official diagnosis, according to the documents. A military doctor in Germany ruled he was in stable mental health, according to the documents, but sent him back to the United States for what the soldier recalls the doctor describing as his "safety."

The soldier depicted the evacuation as part of an effort to cover up wrongdoing. But other members of his team denied the allegations, saying that the unit was professional and that they never saw abusive behavior at the facility. Investigators closed the case without filing charges, writing that the investigation "did not identify any witnesses" to the abuse and did not "produce any logical subjects."

The new documents also describe allegations by a military interrogator, who was not named, that members of Task Force 626 -- an elite U.S. military unit assigned to hunt in Iraq for senior officials in Saddam Hussein's government -- used harsh interrogation tactics and abused detainees at a secret detention facility called Camp Nama in Baghdad in April and May of last year. The Army's criminal investigators turned the investigation over to Special Operations and closed the case; the Special Operations probe concluded the allegations of wrongdoing were unfounded.

In the "Ramadi Madness" case, investigators determined the video "contained footage of inappropriate rather than criminal behavior" and determined that the detainee who was kicked was not abused.