

4 March 2012, 1408 hours

Interview of

(b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

[At 1410 hours, BG Watson advised (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c of his UCMJ, Article 31 rights for possible violations of the UCMJ Article 92, dereliction of duty. At 1412 hours, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c waived his right to counsel and agreed to make a statement.]

[At 1414 hours, BG Watson administered the oath to (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c]

(b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c **first being duly sworn, did testify in substance as follows:**

I am (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c. I am assigned to Task Group Trident and work as a member of the squad for the IRF [Immediate Reaction Force]. I have worked in that position for approximately 2 to 3 months. I deployed to Afghanistan on (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c. Prior to that, I worked at the ECP [Entry Control Point] Spartan gate, and then I was moved to the QRF [Quick Response Force], then to housing unit Alpha to do DFIP [Detention Facility in Parwan] operations for about one month, and then I was moved to the IRF.

Prior to this deployment, I did not receive official training on Qurans and how to handle them. At (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c we were told that there were people trained from that religion that would handle the books and that we wouldn't have to. Based on that training, I can imagine there would be a little bit of tension if we were seen handling religious books.

On 20 February, I walked into work at approximately 1800 hours, and (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c said he had been contacted by supply to move books from the library to a truck at around 2100 hours. He said we were going to move them when supply contacted us. Supply called at 2130 hours, and at that time, we moved the books from the library to the truck. Once we moved the books, and they were loaded on the truck, we had ANA [Afghanistan National Army] confront us. We had the truck move forward and out of the gate a little bit so we could shut the gate.

We normally do shift change between 1800 to 1830 hours, but I came in a little bit early that night. The NCOIC [noncommissioned officer in charge] was (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c but it was his low-battle rhythm night, so the assistant NCO, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c, was in charge that night; he arrived at work just after I did.

I was not aware that a search took place in the library the previous evenings before our detail to move the books. (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c did not specify who from supply called him to coordinate the detail, but I believe it was people from the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c. I had no idea where the books were going to be moved to or what they were going to do with them. We've been tasked out to do several things like move water or escort, so to be asked to assist with moving the books didn't seem out of the ordinary.

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When we held our team meeting, [REDACTED] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c did tell us that we were going to assist supply with moving books, but I don't think he knew anything more than I did and that was that we had to move books from the library to the truck. We were never informed that there were any religious materials involved. We were told that they were books that detainees had written in, so they had to be removed from the library. [REDACTED] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c did not tell us they were religious books or that we had to be careful when we handled them. He did not say that we should be careful that the ANA did not see us moving the books. We grabbed loads of books and brought them out to the truck a load at a time. Supply provided three bodies, so we all just carried loads of books out to the truck. We were not being secretive about moving the books at all. There was never any intent to hide our actions. When I saw all the books, I thought there must be about 300 books on the floor and there were a lot to be moved. The ANA didn't see us moving the books until we were just about finished. They just saw us moving the books, but I went back inside and I don't know what was said by the ANA; I can't imagine what they did say, really. The ANA seemed excited about what they saw us doing. We finished loading the books and about three ANA walked past us and came back with a group of about 15 to 20 people. There was one ANA that I believe was a [REDACTED] (b)(6), (b)(7)c, and he asked us why we were moving books and for what purpose. An interpreter was with the ANA [REDACTED] (b)(6), (b)(7)c, so we told him that the books had been written in and were no longer allowed to be in the library. I was too far away from the conversation, so I only heard them tell the linguist why the books were being moved.

I did not hear anyone say there were religious books or Qurans in the pile. I don't recall the ANA telling us that what we were doing was not good. The conversation with the ANA did seem a little tense. I thought that the tension was over the amount of books that we had gotten out of the library. I didn't think that the tension was due to religious or sensitive books being in the truck. With the large group of ANA coming down, we were concerned about getting the gate closed because we had no idea what their intentions were. We were alarmed at the number of ANA that showed up. I had no idea what they were going to do. Our NCOIC talked to the [REDACTED] (b)(6), (b)(7)c through the linguist trying to figure out what was going on and why they came down with so many people. I was too far away to hear what they were saying. The only part of their conversation I was able to catch was why we were moving books.

We never had to deal with the ANA directly until we had to do force cells; anytime we had to do escorts, it was always two Americans. The escort cell deals with the ANA more frequently than I do and work as one American and one ANA moving the detainees. Personally, no - I never trusted the ANA very much. I never knew what they were going to do or what they were up to. I always made it a note to be very cautious around them in what I do and say because I think they understand more than what they let on. No, I don't trust them. I know that my feelings were shared among a few others; other guard units that I talked to during lunch felt the same way I did. I wouldn't say that the distrust affected how we dealt with the ANA that night since we were just given a task and were trying to get it done.

I'm not aware of any routine run that goes to the burn pit. We were told they were going to dispose of them, but they did not say if they were going to storage or the burn pit. I don't recall any of the guys on the detail saying where the books were going.

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To summarize, I arrived at work about 1800 hours on 20 February. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c was contacted about the tasker to move the books. There was a team meeting held in which [redacted] (b)(6), (b)(7)c [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c laid out the tasker. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c never said we had to hide what we were doing from the ANA. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c did not tell us that there were religious books to be moved. The team did not think the books were going to the burn pit. The ANA were excited by what they saw us doing. I believed they were excited because of the number of books we removed from the library. The ANA went away, but they came back with an ANA officer. That officer asked what we were doing with the books through a linguist. I did not speak to the linguist or the ANA officer. I did not hear the ANA officer talk about religious books. The additional 15 to 20 ANA that came to the area appeared to be unhappy about the books being loaded. The team did not know where the books were going. To my recollection, nobody told the truck to go, go, go when the ANA showed up. I was told that the books were being removed from the library because the detainees had written in them. I was not told that the books were being removed from the library because they were radical, extremist books.

[Interview terminated at 1426 hours.]