

4 March 2012, 1449 hours

Interview of

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

[At 1451 hours, BG Watson advised (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c of (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c UCMJ, Article 31 rights for possible violations of the UCMJ Article 92, dereliction of duty. At 1452 hours, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c waived (b)(6), (b)(7)c right to counsel and agreed to make a statement.]

[At 1455 hours, BG Watson administered the oath to (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

(b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c **U.S. Navy, 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, 6B, and am a squad member on the night shift IRF [Immediate Reaction Force] team. I have worked in that position for three months. I deployed to Afghanistan at the end of (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

In my pre-deployment training, I did not receive training about the Quran or its importance to the Muslim faith. From my experience at the DFIP, I learned that we were not allowed to search the Quran.

On the night of 20 February, I arrived at work at 1815-1820 hours. At that time, we were given the normal pass down that nothing was going on, that was it. At about 1900 hrs, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c and I were in the office, and (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c from the S2 told us that there were books in the library that needed to be moved, (b)(6), (b)(7)c said they were going to need our help. (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c did not say the books were going to the burn pit or that we needed to hide it from the ANA [Afghanistan National Army], (b)(6), (b)(7)c did not say that there might be religious books among them. The NCOICs [noncommissioned officers in charge] on duty that night were myself and (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c I'm not sure when (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c found out we were asked to move the books, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c confirmed that we would move the books and the whole team was tasked for the detail. We were told that books were going to be destroyed because they were contraband and that all the books on the floor had to be moved to the truck. I asked (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c the question myself about (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c meant by the books being destroyed, and (b)(6), (b)(7)c said that supply was going to the burn pit, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c did not say anything had to be secretive or that the ANA could not see us doing it. I think I would have remembered if he said anything like that, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c did not say what kind of books they were, just that they were contraband. We're tasked all the time to make runs and perimeter checks and all types of things, so we just went ahead and followed the order; it did not seem unusual.

To remove the books from the library, we passed the books to one another in boxes. To expedite the moving, we put them in trash cans as well. We started loading the books around 2125 hours, and it was about 2145 hours when we finished. We were shuffling back and forth, throwing the books onto the truck. We were just throwing them in there. As we were finishing, the ANA and a linguist came outside and went back in. Then the linguist came out and asked us what we were doing. We told him we were removing books and that there was contraband books onto the

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truck. He went inside; and when he came back out, he spoke to [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) and told him that some of the books were Qurans. I wasn't there for that conversation, but I understood that the linguist said that some of the books were Qurans. We kept on moving the books because we were told that the books were contraband. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) was in charge of the group that night, and [redacted] (b)(6) was the one speaking to the linguist. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) told the linguist that the books were contraband. The linguist did tell [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) that some of the books were Qurans. I believe that [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) knew the truck was going to the burn pit. I knew the truck was going to the burn pit, but I'm not sure that [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) knew that. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) was not at the meeting with [redacted] (b)(6), (b)(7)c and [redacted] (b)(6), (b)(7)c, and I were present at that meeting. I did not tell [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) that the truck was going to the burn pit when I briefed [redacted] (b)(6) on the tasking from [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7). I think we all knew that the truck was going to the burn pit; I asked the question myself about where the books were going. I don't know what [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) told the linguist about where the books were being taken.

Even though the linguist told us the books contained Qurans, we didn't know that the books really were Qurans. We had an order from [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) to remove the books, so we followed that order. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) was not present when we were loading the books or when the linguist and ANA were present. Knowing that the truck was bound for the burn pit, and that the linguist said that some of the books on the truck were Qurans, we still let the truck go to the burn pit. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) did tell the truck to go, go, go at one point, knowing that there may be Qurans on it.

The ANA General came out from the four corners and asked us through the linguist what was going on. The linguist explained to the Colonel that books were being moved and that some of the books were Qurans. The linguist and the Colonel were talking to [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) and [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) told them that the books were contraband, but I don't know exactly what [redacted] (b)(6) said to them. I don't remember [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) telling the ANA Colonel or the linguist that the books were going to storage. I believe [redacted] (b)(6) told them something about the fact that we were just doing our job. The Colonel didn't seem really upset and the other ANA soldiers seemed calm.

We get along with the ANA pretty good. If they tried to prevent us from making a mistake and told us that we were moving Qurans, it's not that I didn't trust that they were telling us; it's just that we received an order and we were following through with it.

I came on duty about 1815-1820 hours for the night shift on 20 February. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) from S2 asked us to help remove the books from the library. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) talked to the entire team, with exception of [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) and [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) and [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7). I asked supply where the books were going and the driver of the truck [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) said they were going to the burn pit. At no time did I tell [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) where the books were going. I think that the entire team knew the books were going to the burn pit. There was never any discussion about hiding our activities from the ANA. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7) never told me that there were religious books in the pile of books. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c told me the books were contraband. We did not put the books in trash cans because they were religious material. We put them in the trash can because there were a lot of books, and it was easier than making numerous trips. The linguist went inside the escort office and explained that there were Qurans in the books. Knowing that there were Qurans among the books, no-one tried

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to stop the truck before it left. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c heard the discussion with the linguist that there were Qurans in the books. [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c told the truck to go, go, go.

[Interview terminated at 1529 hours.]