

TIME

P R E S S R E L E A S E S

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TIME Exclusive: Inside the Wire at Gitmo

TIME OBTAINS SECRET INTERROGATION LOG FROM GUANTANAMO; INCLUDES MOMENT-BY-MOMENT ACCOUNT OF INTERROGATION OF DETAINEE WHO U.S. BELIEVES WAS THE '20TH HIJACKER'

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New York – TIME has obtained the first documented look inside the highly classified realm of military interrogations since the Gitmo Camp at Guantanamo Bay opened. The document is a secret 84-page interrogation log that details the interrogation of 'Detainee 063' at Guantanamo Bay. It is a remarkable look into the range of techniques and methods used for the interrogation of Mohammed al Qahtani, who is widely believed to be the so-called 20th hijacker, a compatriot of Osama bin Laden and a man who had tried to enter the U.S. in August 2001 to take part in the Sept. 11 attacks. TIME's report, by Adam Zagorin and Michael Duffy, appears in this week's issue (on newsstands Monday).

A Night Watchman's Diary: The log reads like a night watchman's diary. It is a sometimes shocking and often mundane hour-by-hour, even minute-by-minute account of a campaign to extract information. The log records every time al- Qahtani eats, sleeps, exercises or goes to the bathroom and every time he complies with or refuses his interrogators' requests. The detainee's physical condition is frequently checked by medical corpsmen—sometimes as often as three times a day—which indicates either spectacular concern about al-Qahtani's health or persistent worry about just how much stress he can take. Although the log does not appear obviously censored, it is also plainly incomplete: there are numerous gaps in the notes about what is said and what is happening in the interrogation booth beyond details like "Detainee taken to bathroom and walked for 10 minutes," TIME reports.

Chief Pentagon spokesman Larry DiRita tells TIME that the log was compiled by various uniformed interrogators and observers on the Pentagon's Joint Task Force at Gitmo as the interrogation proceeded. It is stamped SECRET ORCON, a military acronym for a document that is supposed to remain with the organization that created it. A Pentagon official who has seen the log describes it as the "kind of document that was never meant to leave Gitmo."

Winter 2002-03 – Additional Techniques Approved: Despite the information gaps, the log offers a rare glimpse into the darker reaches of

intelligence gathering, in which teams that specialize in extracting information by almost any means match wits and wills with men who are trained to keep quiet at almost any cost. It spans 50 days in the winter of 2002-03, from November to early January, a critical period at Gitmo, during which 16 additional interrogation techniques were approved by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld for use on a select few detainees, including al-Qahtani, TIME reports.

More Muscular Strategies: Al-Qahtani's resilience under pressure in the fall of 2002 led top officials at Gitmo to petition Washington for more muscular "counter resistance strategies." On Dec. 2, Rumsfeld approved 16 of 19 stronger coercive methods. Now the interrogators could use stress strategies like standing for prolonged periods, isolation for as long as 30 days, removal of clothing, forced shaving of facial hair, playing on "individual phobias" (such as dogs) and "mild, non-injurious physical contact such as grabbing, poking in the chest with the finger and light pushing." According to the log, al-Qahtani experienced several of those over the next five weeks. The techniques Rumsfeld balked at included "use of a wet towel or dripping water to induce the misperception of suffocation." "Our Armed Forces are trained," a Pentagon memo on the changes read, "to a standard of interrogation that reflects a tradition of restraint." Nevertheless, the log shows that interrogators poured bottles of water on al-Qahtani's head when he refused to drink. Interrogators called this game "Drink Water or Wear It."

Dripping Water or Playing Christina Aguilera Music: After the new measures are approved, the mood in al-Qahtani's interrogation booth changes dramatically. The interrogation sessions lengthen. The quizzing now starts at midnight, and when Detainee 063 dozes off, interrogators rouse him by dripping water on his head or playing Christina Aguilera music. According to the log, his handlers at one point perform a puppet show "satirizing the detainee's involvement with al-Qaeda." He is taken to a new interrogation booth, which is decorated with pictures of 9/11 victims, American flags and red lights. He has to stand for the playing of the U.S. national anthem. His head and beard are shaved. He is returned to his original interrogation booth. A picture of a 9/11 victim is taped to his trousers. Al-Qahtani repeats that he will "not talk until he is interrogated the proper way." At 7 a.m. on Dec. 4, after a 12-hour, all-night session, he is put to bed for a four-hour nap, TIME reports.

Invasion of Space by Female: Over the next few days, al-Qahtani is subjected to a drill known as Invasion of Space by a Female, and he becomes especially agitated by the close physical presence of a woman. Then, around 2 p.m. on Dec. 6, comes another small breakthrough. He asks his handlers for some paper. "I will tell the truth," he says. "I am doing this to get out of here." He finally explains how he got to Afghanistan in the first place and how he met with bin Laden. In return, the interrogators honor requests from him to have a blanket and to turn off the air conditioner. Soon enough, the pressure ratchets up again. Various strategies of intimidation are employed anew. The log reveals that a dog is present, but no details are given beyond a hazy reference to a disagreement between the military police and the dog handler. Agitated, al-Qahtani takes back the story he told the day before about meeting bin

Laden, TIME reports.

A 24-Hour Time Out: But a much more serious problem develops on Dec. 7: a medical corpsman reports that al-Qahtani is becoming seriously dehydrated, the result of his refusal to take water regularly. He is given an IV drip, and a doctor is summoned. An unprecedented 24-hour time out is called, but even as al-Qahtani is put under a doctor's care, music is played to "prevent detainee from sleeping." Nine hours later, a medical corpsman checks al-Qahtani's pulse and finds it "unusually slow." An electrocardiogram is administered by a doctor, and after al-Qahtani is transferred to a hospital, a CT scan is performed. A second doctor is consulted. Al-Qahtani's heartbeat is regular but slow: 35 beats a minute. He is placed in isolation and hooked up to a heart monitor, TIME reports.

Has Big Story to Tell: Over the next month, the interrogators experiment with other tactics. They strip-search him and briefly make him stand nude. They tell him to bark like a dog and growl at pictures of terrorists. They hang pictures of scantily clad women around his neck. A female interrogator so annoys al-Qahtani that he tells his captors he wants to commit suicide and asks for a crayon to write a will. At one stage, an Arabic-speaking serviceman, posing as a fellow detainee, is brought to Camp X-Ray for a short stay in an effort to gain al-Qahtani's confidence. The log reports that al-Qahtani makes several comments to interrogators that imply he has a big story to tell, but interrogators report that he seems either too scared or simply unwilling, to tell it. On Jan. 10, 2003, al-Qahtani says he knows nothing of terrorists but volunteers to return to the gulf states and act as a double agent for the U.S. in exchange for his freedom. Five days later, Rumsfeld's harsher measures are revoked after military lawyers in Washington raised questions about their use and efficacy, TIME reports.

TIME's complete report is available on TIME.com and will appear in the issue on newsstands Monday.

The direct link to the story is at:

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1071284,00.html>

For extracts from the log, exclusively on TIME.com, click here:

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1071202,00.html>

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