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August 26, 2005

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The Honorable Joseph E. Schmitz
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Defense
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Mr. Schmitz:

On June 1, 2005, I wrote to request that your office investigate allegations that U.S. interrogators at Guantanamo Bay made anti-Semitic remarks to detainees in order to interfere with the relationship between these detainees and their attorneys. Specifically, I asked "that your office determine whether these allegations are true and, if so, who made the comments and how widespread the practice of directing anti-Semitic remarks to Muslim detainees is at Guantanamo Bay."¹

I am writing today to seek clarification as to whether your office undertook an investigation of this matter and made an independent judgment about whether the allegations are true.

On June 21, your office sent a letter stating that you referred my inquiry to the U.S. Southern Command Inspector General "and requested he provide [me] a direct response."² On June 30, Brigadier General Kenneth J. Glueck, Jr., the Chief of Staff of the Southern Command, informed me in a letter that "the allegations that the interrogators made anti-Semitic comments or told the detainees not to trust their lawyers are false."³ To support this claim, Gen. Glueck attached the declaration of Esteban Rodriguez, the civilian Director of the Joint Intelligence Group at Guantanamo Bay. Mr. Rodriguez states that he is "responsible for managing and overseeing interrogation operations at the detention facility."⁴

¹ Letter from Rep. Henry A. Waxman to Joseph E. Schmitz, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Defense (June 1, 2005).

² Letter from John R. Crane, Assistant Inspector General, to Rep. Henry A. Waxman (June 21, 2005).

³ Letter from Kenneth J. Glueck Jr., Chief of Staff, U.S. Southern Command, to Rep. Henry A. Waxman (June 30, 2005).

⁴ Declaration of Esteban Rodriguez (May 5, 2005).

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Group at Guantanamo Bay. Mr. Rodriguez states that he is “responsible for managing and overseeing interrogation operations at the detention facility.”⁴

In his declaration, which was signed almost a month before I wrote to you, Mr. Rodriguez asserts that he spoke with the two interrogators who allegedly told detainees not to trust their lawyers because they are Jewish. According to Mr. Rodriguez, these two unnamed interrogators “informed [him] that these allegations are false and that [they] never made disparaging comments about the lawyers.”⁵

The response from Gen. Glueck is helpful, but it is not the same as a thorough independent investigation. An independent investigation would, of course, seek the views of Mr. Rodriguez and the two interrogators. But investigators would also interview others with potentially relevant information, including the detainees who made the claims, their attorneys, translators, and other interrogators. There is no indication from Gen. Glueck’s letter that any of these individuals were contacted. Instead, the declaration in the letter transmits only the statements of the interrogators.

If your office has conducted the necessary independent investigation, I would appreciate a copy of your findings. If not, I urge you to do so without further delay.

Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Minority Member

⁴ Declaration of Esteban Rodriguez (May 5, 2005).

⁵ *Id.*