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Summary of Administrative Review Board Proceedings for ISN 659

The Administrative Review Board was called to order.

The Designated Military Officer (DMO) was sworn.

The Board Reporter was sworn.

The Translator was sworn.

The Detainee entered the proceedings.

The Presiding Officer announced the convening authority and purpose of the Administrative Review Board proceedings.

The Administrative Review Board members were sworn.

The Assisting Military Officer was sworn.

The Presiding Officer asked the Detainee if he wishes to make a statement under oath. (Muslim oath offered).

The Detainee accepted taking the Muslim oath.

The Presiding Officer read the hearing instructions to the Detainee and confirmed that he understood.

The Assisting Military Officer presented the Enemy Combatant Notification form, Exhibit EC-A, to the Administrative Review Board.

The Assisting Military Officer presented the Enemy Combatant Election Form, Exhibit EC-B, to the Administrative Review Board.

The Assisting Military Officer read the AMO Comments from the Enemy Combatant Election Form, Exhibit EC-B.

Assisting Military Officer: The Detainee's initial Administrative Review Board interview occurred on 14 September 2005 and lasted 70 minutes. After a review of the Administrative Review Board's purpose and procedures, the Arabic translated Unclassified Summary of Evidence was read to the Detainee. When the Detainee was asked if he wanted to attend the Administrative Review Board, present a written or oral statement, or have the Assisting Military Officer speak on his behalf, the Detainee said, "I don't have any problem with that." A follow up interview occurred on 15 September 2005 and lasted 5 minutes. The Detainee was given a copy of the translated Unclassified Summary of Evidence for his records. The Detainee was polite and cooperative during the interview.

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The Designated Military Officer presented the Unclassified Summary of Evidence, Exhibit DMO-1, and DMO-2, to the Administrative Review Board.

The Designated Military Officer stated that a copy of these exhibits had been previously distributed to the Assisting Military Officer and Detainee.

The Presiding Officer noted from the Enemy Combatant Election Form that the detainee wanted to respond to each item of information from the Unclassified Summary as it was presented.

The Designated Military Officer gave a brief description of the contents of the Unclassified Summary of Evidence, Exhibit DMO-1, to the Administrative Review Board.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee fought in Bosnia in 1995.

Detainee: I have never been in Bosnia.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee traveled from Tunisia to the United Kingdom via Italy, passing through Rome, Naples, and Sicily.

Detainee: I traveled from Algeria to the United Kingdom not from Tunisia...I mean I traveled from Algeria to Italy.

Presiding Officer: How did you get to the United Kingdom?

Detainee: I got to the United Kingdom by plane from Rome, Italy.

Designated Military Officer: In the summer of 2001, the Detainee traveled to Jalalabad, Afghanistan where he stayed at an Algerian guesthouse.

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee traveled from London, United Kingdom to Islamabad, Pakistan and then was escorted to Jalalabad, Afghanistan.

Detainee: Yes, that is right.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee volunteered to go see the Al Farouq camp. While visiting Al Farouq, attempts were made to recruit the Detainee and other visitors.

Detainee: I have never been to Al Farouq.

Designated Military Officer: Upon hearing that the Taliban were fleeing, Detainee set out with about 150 others toward the mountains of the Afghanistan and Pakistan borders.

Detainee: There were just 3 of us not 150.

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Presiding Officer: Please clarify. Were there just 3 people you traveled with?

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee received weapons training during his time in the military.

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: While at the Algerian guesthouse the Detainee was trained on small arms.

Detainee: I have never in my life trained in Afghanistan.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee traveled to the United Kingdom. There he became involved with other Algerians.

Detainee: All that I knew in the United Kingdom was just one.

Presiding Officer: You only knew one person in the United Kingdom?

Detainee: He is the one that helped me go to Afghanistan.

Presiding Officer: While you were in the United Kingdom whom did you associate with? The question is more dealing with whom you associated with while you were in the United Kingdom and not who got you there.

Detainee: When I went through the interrogation I gave them all of the names and details about the people I hung out with.

Presiding Officer: How many [people] were there?

Detainee: [There were] a lot of them and most of them [were] Algerian.

Presiding Officer: Thank you. We will ask more questions later.

Designated Military Officer: While at the Finsbury Park Mosque, four individuals attempted to recruit the Detainee to go to Afghanistan.

Detainee: This is not true.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee gave money to the Finsbury Park Mosque. He later found out that part of the money went to fund individuals going to Afghanistan and other areas of the world where jihad was being fought.

Detainee: This is not right.

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Designated Military Officer: The Detainee was eventually told that he "needed to go to Afghanistan".

Detainee: He explained to me and he advised me to go to Afghanistan.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee socialized with four men at the Algerian house. Two died in the bombing of Afghanistan and two died at the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Detainee: That is right.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee was intentionally deceptive during questioning.

Detainee: Which interrogation?

Presiding Officer: We do not know specifically.

Detainee: Who was the one interrogating me?

Presiding Officer: During the interrogations by the U.S. they say you have been deceptive. Is this true or false?

Detainee: I would like to listen to the question one more time. *(The translator repeats the question.)* Yes, that is right.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee has recounted the details of his travel from Algeria to Italy, including his purchase of a fake identification.

Detainee: Yes, that is right.

Designated Military Officer: In 1992, the Detainee served in the military. The Detainee deserted the Algerian military.

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee deserted the Algerian military because of bad food and poor treatment. He also resented being sent to the front lines to fight mujahedin. He disliked fighting mujahedin.

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee acknowledged having been told that something would happen to the United States within one week of the September 11th attacks.

Detainee: I was lying to the interrogator.

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Designated Military Officer: The Detainee, at a later time, when asked to discuss his time at Al Farouq, stated it was "one of the lies". He had never been to Al Farouq.

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee is a strong supporter of the Al-Jibhat Al-Islamia Al-Inqatha, elsewhere referred to as the Islamic Liberation Front (ILF). Though not a member himself, the Detainee supports the group. He loves the ILF because of its opposition to the Algerian government, which is largely corrupt.

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee fled to cross the border into Pakistan, but was captured by the Pakistani Army.

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: As he and others were transported from the scene of arrest, there was a bus accident. The Detainee escaped, but was recaptured.

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee denied ever having been to Bosnia. He admitted saying this in the past and that it was a lie.

Detainee: I never said anything about Bosnia and I never lied about Bosnia.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee does not like the Algerian government as it has become corrupt, with mafia style leadership.

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee left Algeria because he hated the country. He denied going to fight jihad and denied being a member of al Qaida.

Detainee: I don't hate Algeria and I am not with al Qaida.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee knows nothing of Usama Bin Laden or any ties between ILF and the al Qaida and Taliban.

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee denies knowledge of any rumors or plans of future attacks on the United States or United States interests.

Detainee: I don't know anything.

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Designated Military Officer: The Detainee has stated that if the "United States is killing innocent civilians like we are told, that is not right, but if they are just fighting with the Taliban and other armed groups, I do not have a problem because I am not part of any of it."

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee does not feel that the United States is a threat to Islam as a religion, just to groups that use Islam as a reason to fight against the United States. He does not agree with using religion as a reason to fight because that is not what Islam is about.

Detainee: Yes.

Designated Military Officer: The Detainee was queried regarding any knowledge or planning of internal uprisings at the Guantanamo Detention Facility, with negative results.

Detainee: I don't know anything about this.

The Designated Military Officer confirmed that he had no further unclassified information and requested a closed session to present classified information relevant to the disposition of the Detainee.

The Presiding Officer acknowledged the request.

The Presiding Officer opened the Administrative Review Board to the Detainee to present information with the assistance of the Assisting Military Officer.

The Detainee made no statement.

The Assisting Military Officer had no questions for the Detainee.

The Designated Military Officer had no questions for the Detainee.

Administrative Review Board Member's questions:

Board Member: You were in London for quite a while. How did you support yourself?

Detainee: How was I living?

Board Member: Yes.

Detainee: The government gave me some money because I applied for political asylum.

Presiding Officer: The British Government?

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Detainee: Yes.

Board Member: Did you live with anyone else?

Detainee: The owner of the house.

Board Member: Was he an Algerian?

Detainee: No, he was Jamaican.

Board Member: When you went to the mosque in London what kind of messages would you hear?

Detainee: [Messages] about everything.

Board Member: Did you hear about jihad?

(The translator asks for clarification of the question.)

Presiding Officer: He is asking that when you were at the mosque did you ever hear a message calling for jihad?

Detainee: He was [talking about] go[ing] to jihad, but if you want to go you can go.

Board Member: What was your purpose in going to Afghanistan.

Detainee: To immigrate.

Board Member: What were you going to do there?

Detainee: The living there is cheap and easy and you can live in an Islamic country.

Presiding Officer: But, what were you going to do for a living? In the United Kingdom the government supported you. How were you going to live in Afghanistan?

Detainee: In Afghanistan there were charity groups that helped me get food and plus the Afghanistan Government gave me a piece of land to build a house...when I ask they will give it to me. I was living in an Algerian guesthouse and they gave me everything.

Presiding Officer: You said the government, was it the Taliban government that gave you...

Detainee: If I ask, they will help me. The kind of help that the Afghanistan government will give me...the piece of land; once you finish building the house they will give you gas, electricity, and water.

Presiding Officer: I asked if you were talking about the Taliban government.

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Detainee: Of course.

Board Member: Do you speak any Afghani languages?

Detainee: I did not have enough time to learn the language I only stayed 3 and half months.

Board Member: When did you first learn about the attacks on the United States that occurred on the 11th of September 2001?

Detainee: When the bombing started in Afghanistan we knew from that.

Board Member: The bombing started in October, you did not know before that?

Detainee: Yes, I knew about the attacks.

Board Member: When did you find out about that?

Detainee: I can't tell you exactly.

Presiding Officer: You heard about September 11th, the attacks on the World Trade Center, you heard about that before the bombing started.

Detainee: Yes, of course.

Board Member: Do you recall who told you?

Detainee: All of the people heard about it. Why would [I be the only one] that heard about it?

Board Member: I know that they did not have a lot of news agencies there.

Detainee: We knew because people started leaving their houses.

Board Member: You are a supporter of this group call the Islamic Liberation Front?

Detainee: In Algeria?

Presiding Officer: Where were you a member of the Islamic Liberation Front?

Detainee: I have never been a member of any party.

Presiding Officer: Okay. Where did you support it? Where did you [know] about it? You told us earlier that you liked them. You said 'yes' when we read that [allegation].

Detainee: Yes, but I am not a member.

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Presiding Officer: Okay, but where did you hear about them? In Algeria, the United Kingdom, where?

Detainee: In Algeria because that is where they started.

Board Member: What was it about their philosophy that you supported?

Detainee: They don't like dictatorship of the government and they are trying to do a coup or get rid of that government.

Board Member: Do they encourage violence against it?

Detainee: The Islamic Liberation Front does not like violence, but the government like[s] and start[s] the violence.

Board Member: Do you speak English?

Detainee: Very little.

Presiding Officer: How long did you live in the United Kingdom?

Detainee: A year and a half.

Presiding Officer: You don't know English?

Detainee: I forgot about it in Cuba.

Board Member: I have a lot of questions for you.

Detainee: I'm here.

Board Member: How old are you?

Detainee: 33 years.

Board Member: 33 years. You said you left Algeria because you hated the government, is that right?

Detainee: Yes.

Board Member: Why did you hate the government?

Detainee: The country had a lot of sources. They are so rich, but the people are so poor.

Board Member: Were you poor?

Detainee: Yes.

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Board Member: How did it affect you personally?

Detainee: I could not build my own life.

Board Member: So you left for Italy?

Detainee: Yes.

Board Member: What year was that?

Detainee: End of 1999.

Board Member: In 1998, Usama Bin Laden issued a fatwa. Do you remember that?

Detainee: I knew about Usama Bin Laden when I was in England after I bought videotape.

Board Member: You didn't know about him in Algeria?

Detainee: We have enough problems in Algeria. We don't want to know any overseas...

Presiding Officer: What kind of videotape?

Detainee: Its just [a] videotape.

Presiding Officer: Was it very supportive of Usama Bin Laden?

Detainee: It was about the life experience in Afghanistan and the war between the Afghanistan and Russia.

Presiding Officer: Did you go to Afghanistan because of the information on this tape?

Detainee: No, I didn't go because of the tape.

Presiding Officer: Thank you.

Board Member: You went to Italy. Do you speak Italian?

Detainee: No.

Board Member: A little bit?

Detainee: I just spent days in Italy.

Board Member: Just days! You went to Italy and then from there you went to? U.K.

Detainee: Yes.

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Board Member: Did somebody help you once you arrived in Italy to get to the U.K.?

Detainee: Help with what?

Board Member: Travel, taxi, place to stay?

Detainee: This is very obvious. I know the hotels and I know the buses I can use. This is something I know.

Board Member: So you were comfortable with getting around Rome by yourself?

Detainee: In language? No. But going from place to place, yes.

Board Member: How did you get the money?

Detainee: What do you mean in Algeria, in Italy? When I left Algeria I had money on me.

Board Member: When you left you had money?

Detainee: Yes.

Board Member: Where did you get the money?

Detainee: I worked. I was a painter and I worked in a pizza place.

Board Member: What neighborhood did you live [in] when you got to the U.K.?

Detainee: Gatwick.

Board Member: There is more than one mosque in London?

Detainee: I went to two mosques.

Board Member: Why did you pick Finsbury mosque as one of them?

Detainee: There were a lot of Algerians. They have a coffee shop around the mosque.

Board Member: The Finsbury mosque. Did you sell anything outside the mosque?

Detainee: I didn't have enough time.

Board Member: Why didn't you have enough time?

Detainee: I was studying, reading. My brother bought a house there and I was remodeling my brother's house in England.

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Board Member: Did you think about coming to the United States?

Detainee: From England?

Board Member: From England?

Detainee: No.

Board Member: Think about Canada?

Detainee: No. It's so far. I didn't want to go far away.

Board Member: Were you happy to be in England?

Detainee: I wasn't happy, but I just got there. I was trying to...there's a lot of paper[work] to fill. I had to go back and forth to the department to talk to them. The problem with that...they don't give you those things easy.

Board Member: But England was better than Algeria?

Detainee: Yes. Some [things are] better in England and some [are better] in Algeria.

Board Member: There were some Internet cafes close to the mosque?

Detainee: I didn't see any. I was going to a big area there and I would sit.

Board Member: There were some coffee shops close to the mosque?

Detainee: The mosque is up there and the coffee shops are on the bottom.

Board Member: Did you spend a lot of time there?

Detainee: If I didn't have anything or I [was] not studying, yes, I would go there.

Board Member: Back in Algeria, did you voluntarily join the military or were you conscripted?

Detainee: No. Almost everything you want to do in Algeria you have to have a military identification; for that reason I went and join[ed] to have that identification.

Board Member: You didn't want to join and fight the mujahedin?

Detainee: No.

Board Member: Who's the Imam at the Finsbury mosque?

Detainee: On Fridays, Abu Hasam; on regular days many of them.

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Board Member: At that point, somebody within the mosque asked you to go to Afghanistan?

Detainee: Yes.

Board Member: Why?

Detainee: Just advised me and told me this and that.

Board Member: Explain to me why you left Algeria. You went to Italy. You get to London. You applied for political asylum and you go from a Western country to Afghanistan?

Detainee: The freedom in Afghanistan is more than England. In Afghanistan they don't ask you to bring any money with you or any documentation. People would help you and it's simple there.

Board Member: We asked you about that video that you saw of Usama Bin Laden. You knew that he was in Afghanistan.

Detainee: Yes, I knew.

Board Member: You knew he was al Qaida?

Detainee: I didn't know about al Qaida. All that I knew is that I saw Usama Bin Laden in videotape.

Board Member: Did you think you would see him when you went to Afghanistan?

Detainee: No.

Board Member: You knew they were fighting?

Detainee: I didn't know there was fighting, but I knew the Russians left Afghanistan. There was opposition too. There was [a] fight between them. Sometimes they fight.

Board Member: Did you know about the Taliban?

Detainee: Yes, I knew the government of Afghanistan was [the] Taliban government. Everybody knows through the T.V.

Board Member: You left London; you had a pretty good life in London...

Detainee: Not that good, good. There were problems.

Board Member: What problems?

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Detainee: It's daily problems. When you go to get the house, those people who applied for political asylum...the owner he would ask for the money or he didn't get the money, I couldn't get in, I had to go back...that kind of problems.

Board Member: Did you ever hear about your political asylum application?

Detainee: I have political asylum in [England].

Board Member: What was your reason? What reason did you give them?

Detainee: I escaped from the military court, because I left the military. I have a problem with the government, that's all.

Board Member: Were there al Qaida members within the Finsbury mosque?

Detainee: I don't know any members of al Qaida or Taliban in England. I went for prayer. After that we would leave and go to the restaurant or to the coffee shop.

Board Member: Did you hear any fatwas out of the mosque?

Detainee: I didn't hear it.

Board Member: Do you agree with Usama Bin Laden and what he stands for?

Detainee: I never heard him saying something.

Board Member: Why do you think you're here?

Detainee: They arrested me Pakistan while I was leaving Afghanistan. Usama Bin Laden was in Afghanistan...when they arrested me they thought I was with Usama Bin Laden, because I was leaving Afghanistan.

Board Member: Do you think you are a threat to America?

Detainee: You figure it out.

Board Member: Thank you.

Presiding Officer: We'll all figure it out. That is what were here to do.

Detainee: I gave all that I have for the [past] four years. You can decide.

Presiding Officer: Okay. Your family, you mentioned a brother. Is he still living in London?

Detainee: Yes, he's married and he has his house there.

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Presiding Officer: How about the rest of your family where are they?

Detainee: In Algeria.

Presiding Officer: Have you ever been to Tunisia at all?

Detainee: Yes.

Presiding Officer: Okay. You mentioned that you didn't get any weapons training in Afghanistan, but you did get weapons training in the Algerian army. Did you ever carry any weapons or fire any weapons at all when you were in Afghanistan?

Detainee: There [was] no reason to have a weapon on me or to shoot.

Presiding Officer: The Algerian safe house you stayed in, in Jalalabad, did you see anyone there who had weapons?

Detainee: Yes, there were weapons there.

Presiding Officer: Who had those?

Detainee: In that house, there was a small room; there were weapons there.

Presiding Officer: Who used those weapons and what did they use them for?

Detainee: I was new there. I didn't ask.

Presiding Officer: How long were you there in the safe house?

Detainee: Three months and some days.

Presiding Officer: You lived three months, how many other people were in that house?

Detainee: I could not tell you exactly, because they were moving in and out.

Presiding Officer: Roughly, how many?

Detainee: People go in and out. I can't tell.

Presiding Officer: 100?

Detainee: I don't know. You can put a 100 people there.

Presiding Officer: 10?

Detainee: More than 10.

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Presiding Officer: Okay, you have a small amount of people there and you have weapons and you have no idea who's using them or what there for?

Detainee: There was no war in Jalalabad. Why [would] they use the...

Presiding Officer: Did any of the people in that safe house did they go fight the Northern Alliance?

Detainee: I don't know.

Presiding Officer: Did they fight any, were they all very supportive of the Taliban?

Detainee: Everybody loves the Taliban, because [the] Taliban was following God's law.

Presiding Officer: I'm asking you if the people who lived in that house...did they use weapons at all in support of the Taliban?

Detainee: All that I know is that I was living in that house. In the morning they take food, breakfast, and there was a river close and we would go and take a shower there and come back. We pray.

Presiding Officer: Do you know what the other people were doing there? You were just waiting for three and half months just showering and eating. What were the other residents doing just showering and eating?

Detainee: I cannot ask people what they are doing.

Presiding Officer: You didn't ask people. You live with them for three and half months...

Detainee: I knew just four people and I gave their names.

Presiding Officer: Those four people are the ones who died?

Detainee: Yes.

Presiding Officer: You don't know any of the people who were staying in that house. None of them were fighters?

Detainee: Even if he was a fighter, he's not going to come and tell me, "I am a fighter." He would come and drink a coffee or eat with us and leave.

Presiding Officer: What kind of weapons?

Detainee: All Russian made.

Presiding Officer: Anything more than guns. Were there any bombs?

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Detainee: I didn't see any bombs. Kalashnikov, pistols...Kalashnikov pistols only.

Presiding Officer: No grenades?

Detainee: I didn't see any grenades.

Presiding Officer: Were the same amount of weapons there everyday or were there different amounts every time?

Detainee: I didn't have the key. I didn't go to that room. I went to the kitchen.

Presiding Officer: I think people were there fighting and you know that.

Detainee: Even if I know, I'm not going to say something about [it], because that's never concerned me.

Presiding Officer: When you were in Italy and you traveled to the United Kingdom, were some of your documents false?

Detainee: From Italy to England?

Presiding Officer: Yes, were they falsified?

Detainee: Yes, yes.

Presiding Officer: Who did that for you?

Detainee: People [who did] that for a living.

Presiding Officer: That's what we're asking. There are people there who gave you false documents and helped you get to the United Kingdom?

Detainee: You pay money they give you whatever you need?

Presiding Officer: You said you found out about September 11th. Do you remember... you said you just heard it on the street no one told you?

Detainee: I heard about it as the others heard.

Presiding Officer: You mention the Islamic Liberation Front, did you ever hear about the Islamic Liberation Front...I know they were against Algeria? Did you ever hear them talk about killing people in the West or killing people in the...

Detainee: They don't have anything to do with the West. They are fighting in Algeria.

Presiding Officer: How about the Taliban when you were in Afghanistan, did you ever hear about them talk about killing non-Muslims?

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Detainee: Taliban have one problem...they don't obey their rules. The opposition of Taliban was Dustum and Massoud.

Presiding Officer: They were fighting against Dustum and Massoud?

Detainee: That's the problem with them.

Presiding Officer: Well, they also supported Usama Bin Laden, who killed many people in the West.

Detainee: They support any Muslim, not just Usama Bin Laden.

Presiding Officer: If we transfer you back to Algeria, what will you do?

Detainee: If they don't kill me in Algeria. I'll find my way. I can live.

Presiding Officer: What kind of work will you do?

Detainee: I did a lot of jobs. I want to work construction, painting houses. I worked in a pizza place and made some hard candies.

Presiding Officer: You think the Algerian government will kill you if you get...

Detainee: The way I left there, yes.

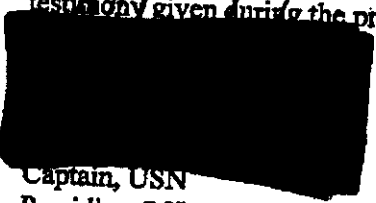
The Presiding Officer read the post-Administrative Review Board instructions to the Detainee and adjourned the open session of the Administrative Review Board.

The Presiding Officer opened the classified portion of the session.

The Presiding Officer adjourned the classified portion of the session and the Administrative Review Board was closed for deliberation and voting.

AUTHENTICATION

I certify the material contained in this transcript is a true and accurate summary of the testimony given during the proceedings.


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