



CLIP TRANSCRIPT

Darrel Vandeveld- The Algerian Six

And ultimately we ended up taking into custody the so-called “Algerian Six.” And what I can tell you about that is the task force at the time was commanded by then Brigadier General David Petraeus. And we would have meetings. And what I can tell you about the meetings are that Petraeus was undoubtedly the smartest man in the room—I know that’s become cliché after Enron—but really he was...he dominated those meetings.

Near the end of my time there, we did in fact take into custody...well we didn’t take into custody – they were already in the custody of the Bosnians whom we had influenced, I think I can say, to...uh, to have these six Algerians arrested. And under the Bosnian constitution—which had been drafted and translated from the original English—they did have rights, and they were entitled to be released, and they were about to be released under the Bosnian constitution. And then through various machinations that I can’t disclose, they ended up on a plane first to...uh, to Bagram and then ultimately to Guantanamo.

The...I didn’t realize it at the time, obviously, but it was really...th...the plight of the “Algerian Six” came to symbolize how wrong Guantanamo was because ultimately they were all released, with one exception, and they were repatriated, not to Algeria—which is...you know, I’m sure they would have been tortured and killed there—but back to Bosnia where they had families.

And it...so they were apprehended and sent to Guantanamo on the flimsiest of...of information and evidence. Um, I can tell you what’s been reported in the newspaper. There apparently were some wireless intercepts that connected them with...they thought...we thought, uh, the potential bombing of the U.N. headquarters in Bosnia, and perhaps even the U.S. embassy. And I’ve...I’ve heard—I don’t have any verification of this and it certainly didn’t come to me through any official sources, so it’s...I’m not obligated to keep it a secret—uh, General Petraeus apparently went to the Bosnian police station, where these six were due to be released, with a money belt containing at the time...what we thought at the time was probably a...you know, a huge sum of money—twenty thousand dollars—to pay off the jailers to turn over these guys to our task force who arranged for them to be spirited away on an air craft. So that was my first introduction to, really, the War on Terror.