



CLIP TRANSCRIPT

Albert Shimkus- Looking Back

Interviewer: Looking back, do you think you made some mistakes, that maybe you could have done it differently?

There's no question. You know, if I knew today what I knew, um...if I knew then what I knew today. Certainly I think the context of my investment in to what is reported to have occurred with abuse and interrogation, I would have ins...I probably would have insisted on transparency between me and previous commanders. You know, after General Lehnert, General Baccus, and General Miller, and others, I would have insisted on transparency for the JTF surgeon to know what was going on so we could make an ethical choice to disagree with whatever was occurring. Yeah, no question, I would have gone back. Yeah.

Interviewer: Well, you heard rumors that things were occurring in interrogations that...

Well, that's a good question too, and I've thought about that because I knew you would probably be asking that question. Um, [clears throat] my scope of interest was the care of the detainee population. And [clears throat] in my professional life, I, as a certified registered nurse anesthetist, I deal in very, um, significant physiological situations in which I resuscitate and deal with issues during surgery. As I toured more, I began to think about other things outside of my area of expertise. [Clears throat] And, um, my background is not forensic medicine. And knowing what I know now, I would have done things differently. But if I had put two and two together for a number of...no, for a few situations that occurred under my watch, and if I were thinking forensically, I would have concluded something else than what I concluded. [Clears throat] And so I think, by putting two together now, I think, you know, I would have asked some very difficult questions of the commander and/or of others. Um, with physiological symptoms that have been seen, you know, medicine treats what we're given. Emergency rooms and so forth, we just treat what...what is given to us in that context. And so I think the questioning perspective of a forensic physician, or me as a forensic...thinking forensically, we would have put...made a different choice about different things.

Interviewer: Can you give me s...a better understanding of that? I mean, what could you have done if you had, um, discovered that in fact somebody...

I would have gone to the JTF commander and said what's...what's happening, you know, what is...what is happening to present these kinds of symptoms, for example.



Interviewer: And what if he says to you, um, it's none of your business, you just treat symptoms?

Well that...that's a good point and...but that conversation never occurred. And if it did I think I then would have used the chain of command as I can use the chain of command to allow others to understand it. But, you know...and we all know that these kinds of things were maybe authorized at significantly higher authority than the Joint Task Force commander. Whether it would have...whether it would have made a difference or not I'm uncertain. But the clarity I have now was not the clarity I had then.