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CONGRESS

# Lawmakers View Images From Iraq

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**W**ASHINGTON, May 12 — Lawmakers who viewed hundreds of images of mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners said Wednesday that the photographs were even more graphic than they had expected, and included pictures of forced sexual acts between male detainees, a soldier posing with the body of a dead prisoner, and consensual sex between American soldiers.

All afternoon, a parade of solemn Senate and House members filed into secure rooms in the Capitol and in the House Rayburn Office Building to view about 1,800 images, many of them duplicates, along with some video clips. The lawmakers emerged shaken and aghast, even though they had already seen some of the images in news photographs.

"What we saw is appalling," the Senate majority leader, Bill Frist of Tennessee, told reporters.

Nancy Pelosi of California, the House Democratic leader, said, "It's a sad day when Congress is called to see these photos."

Uniformed military officials presided over the viewings, flashing the images onto a large screen for about two seconds at a time, lawmakers said. But the officials declined to answer questions or provide a narrative to explain the pictures. Lawmakers were instead given a document reminding them that the images were collected as part of a military investigation and were considered "active evidence."

Some of the pictures were dark and grainy, and the lawmakers said they were sometimes confused about what they were seeing. Among the most shocking images, several said, was a video of a male detainee repeatedly banging into a cell door, until he collapsed. Senator [Joseph I. Lieberman](#), Democrat of Connecticut, said it appeared that the man had a rope lashed around his waist and that someone was pulling him toward the door.

"It just deepens the conclusion that this was a cellblock that had gone wild," Mr. Lieberman said.

Representative Trent Franks, Republican of Arizona and a member of the House Armed Services Committee, said he was particularly offended by a photograph in which "a prisoner was sodomizing himself," with a banana. "My conclusion is that that was probably coerced somehow," Mr. Franks said.

Lawmakers said they could not tell where the pictures were taken, but the images of mistreatment appeared to be confined to the Abu Ghraib prison. "It was of the same prison and the same people we had before," said Senator John Cornyn, Republican of Texas. "It did not



Jay Westcott

Daniel Stanley, a Pentagon official, and an officer carried images of the abuse of Iraqi prisoners to a viewing session for senators.


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suggest anything broader or deeper."

Meanwhile, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, appearing at a Senate Appropriations hearing, defended the interrogation techniques used in Iraq.

"Any instructions that have been issued or anything that's been authorized by the department was checked by the lawyers in your shop, in the department, in the office of the secretary of defense, and deemed to be consistent with the Geneva Conventions," Mr. Rumsfeld said.

But Richard Durbin, an Illinois Democrat, countered, "I don't believe what you have issued is consistent with the Geneva Convention."

Mr. Rumsfeld said that half a dozen military investigations were completed or under way into the abuses. "With respect to what took place at Abu Ghraib, we will get to the bottom of it," Mr. Rumsfeld said.

The explicit nature of the photographs left the lawmakers deeply conflicted over whether the images should be made public. Some who previously favored a public release said they had changed their minds and were swayed by remarks from military personnel that to do so would violate the prisoners' right to privacy and protection from humiliation under international law.

"When I walked into the room my view was they ought to be made public; I always lean toward full disclosure," said Senator Charles E. Schumer, Democrat of New York. "But when the military explained to us that to release them would violate their privacy and the Geneva accord, I agreed with their assessment."

Others, both Democrat and Republican, said the images renewed their determination that the abuse had to be fully investigated, and some said the pictures made them doubt that the mistreatment was limited to a handful of low-level soldiers.

"Some of it is clearly individuals acting in a rogue manner," said Senator Lindsey Graham, Republican of South Carolina. "Some of it has an elaborate nature to it that makes me very suspicious of whether or not others were directing or encouraging."

Senator Frank R. Lautenberg, Democrat of New Jersey, agreed, saying, "It is impossible that this could have been carried out without the knowledge of higher-ups."



Stephen Crowley/The New York Times  
Senators Saxby Chambliss and Kay Bailey Hutchison left a room in the Capitol on Wednesday after seeing images showing the abuse of Iraqi prisoners.

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But on a day when the story of the beheading of Nicholas Berg, an American civilian in Baghdad was also in the news, other lawmakers said the public should not lose sight of the brutality of terrorists. "The way he was beheaded once again makes graphically clear that the other side knows no mercy," said Senator Dianne Feinstein, Democrat of California, who called the pictures she viewed disgusting.

In the Senate, the pictures were available for three hours, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., in a tightly controlled room on the fourth floor of the Capitol, where the public elevators go only to the third floor. Senator John W. Warner, the Virginia Republican and chairman of the Armed Services Committee who worked with the Pentagon to arrange the viewing in Congress, took to the Senate floor earlier in the afternoon to urge his colleagues to see the photographs.

But he said they should be careful in describing them, particularly in light of the murder of Mr. Berg in an incident that Islamic militants have said was a response to the prison abuse. Lawmakers, Mr. Warner said, must "not incite in any way anger against our forces or others working in the cause of freedom."

Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, said he had not seen the pictures and saw no need to. Senator Trent Lott, Republican of Mississippi, said he felt the same way.

"I've already seen enough," Mr. Lott said. "Why would I want to go see a bunch of perverted pictures?"

Still unanswered is the question of why the photographs were taken. "I got the idea they were sort of taken in the nature of souvenirs," Mr. Cornyn said, "because they were all taken from personal cameras. They did not appear to be organized."

The images included a picture of an American military woman posing with a dead body, and many sexually explicit photographs, said Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell, Republican of Colorado. He said the photographs also showed dogs snarling at cowering prisoners; other lawmakers said some prisoners appeared to have dog bite wounds and abrasions.

"It is totally vulgar behavior," said Mr. Campbell, who served in a police unit in the Air Force. "It just really bothered me that it could be our military people doing that."

### Army Shows Intelligence Training

FORT HUACHUCA, Ariz., May 12 — Military officials here at the Army Intelligence Center, where field interrogators are trained, insisted Wednesday that they never condoned the use of



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force during questioning.

"We don't deal in any of that stuff," said Maj. Gen. James A. Marks, the commander here, who spent three months in Iraq in 2003 as chief intelligence officer. He opened the base to reporters to try to show what he said was the professionalism of the center's training methods.

"What you saw in those pictures is anathema to me," General Marks said. "I can't fathom someone doing that. It's against everything the Army stands for."

His immediate concern, he said, was to dispel the notion that military intelligence officers had ordered the military police at Abu Ghraib to "soften up" Iraqi prisoners.

"If we don't shape this, we're going to be at the end of the whip," he said, referring to the growing impression of an abusive free-for-all that was dominated by the need for "actionable intelligence."

"We don't soften up prisoners," he said. "It's not a technique we use."

Last year, 257 soldiers graduated from the human intelligence collector program.



Stephen Crowley/The New York Times  
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