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From: Lieutenant General A P Ridgway CB CBE  
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CDI 1/3/2

Lieutenant General Sir J G Reith KCB CBE  
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27 November 2003

**THE NEED TO REVIEW UK MILITARY DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE FOR PRISONER HANDLING, TACTICAL QUESTIONING AND INTERROGATION**

Reference:

A. JWP 1-10 March 2001 Edition.

1. Thank you for your letter<sup>1</sup>, in which you highlight your concerns regarding the media impact surrounding poor Prisoner Handling (PH) procedures. I share your concerns and if we are to avoid further adverse allegations against UK Forces in Iraq and other Theatres there is an urgent need to address the situation. Responsibilities in this area are complex. Interrogation and Tactical Questioning (TQ) policy and training are my responsibility. Development of PH Policy on the other hand is the responsibility of DCDS(C)<sup>2</sup>. Management of the Prisoner of War Handling Organisation in Theatre is a J1 (Provost) responsibility, supported by J3 and J4, and therefore appropriately lies with DCDS(Pers).

<sup>1</sup> D/PJHQ/CJO/DO dated 24 Oct 03.

<sup>2</sup> Prisoner Handling, Survival Evasion Resistance Escape, Combat Recovery and Joint Personnel Recovery Policy was a function of DJW and, following MOD restructuring, now resides within D Strategic Support.

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2. The practice of hooding detainees is not, and never has been, taught on any of the TQ or interrogation courses run at Chicksands<sup>3</sup>. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and some UK forces in Theatre may have followed suit. As you point out blindfolding is permitted under the Geneva Convention (GC) for force protection and OPSEC purposes and is accepted under the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC). I do, however, agree that there is need for better instruction to emphasise the negative IO effects of this activity and that the use of blindfolds should be the exception rather than the rule. My research suggests that, within Joint Forward Interrogation Teams (JFITs), hooding was used to protect interrogators from recognition by terrorist suspects but this practice ceased early during OP TELIC, following medical advice. Darkened sunglasses are now used instead.

3. Whilst the tightening up of both interrogation and TQ training at Chicksands and the procedures within JFITs will have some effect, the majority of alleged incidents seem to have occurred during the arrest and detention of detainees, before they reached the JFIT and entered the formal questioning process. This suggests that arresting units, in the PH role, are not clear on the procedures for the treatment of PW and detainees. To improve this situation the following action is required:

- Reference A requires revision to include clear guidelines on PH procedures for capturing units. - D Strat Support.
- The content and frequency of unit LOAC training should be reviewed. - DGT & E
- Better education of units and individuals prior to operational deployments is needed. - Front Line Commands, following PJHQ direction.
- Departmental responsibilities for the PWHO and PH policy and training need to be reviewed. - DCDS(C).

4. In the meantime, I will ensure that instruction at Chicksands is updated to provide clearer guidance for specialist TQ and Interrogators.

Y  
[Signature]  
CDI

Copy to:

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Policy Director  
COS Fleet  
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