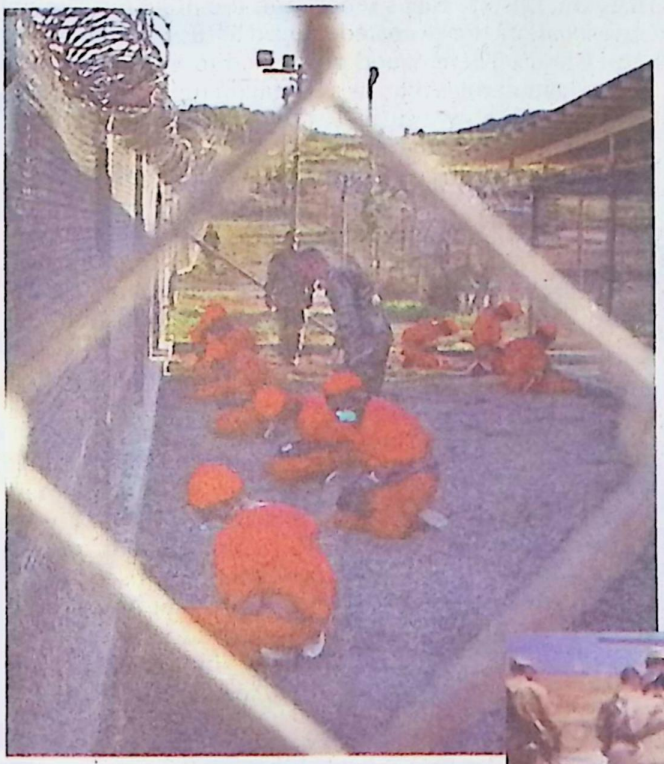


nique we called 'monstering.' We said that if you put one interrogator in with one prisoner and scrupulously gave them the same water and food and bathroom breaks, the interrogation could go on as long as the interrogator could stand it. Of course, we were hoping that the interrogator would be fully rested, whereas the prisoner would have just come off the battlefield."

Monstering wasn't in the Army manual, and before he came to Bagram, Mackey wouldn't have imagined improvising techniques that deviated from his training. But in Afghanistan, he increasingly felt compelled to produce intelligence that might help his fellow soldiers. "When I arrived, I would never have countenanced monstering," he told me. "But we saw how little success we were having against a determined enemy. So we went to what we thought was the absolute edge."

The Bush administration had decided at the beginning of the conflict that the Geneva Conventions did not apply to the Afghan detainees. But Mackey's commander never told him of that decision, and Mackey worried that he could be disciplined for breaking the rules. "As part of your training as an interrogator, it's hardwired into your system that a violation of the Geneva Convention will bring swift justice down on you," he says. At one point, Mackey remembers, a military police official at Bagram suggested that the interrogators use dogs to scare the detainees. "He was a reservist from Michigan, where there's a big Arab population, and he said that Arabs are terrified of dogs," Mackey says. "I remember sitting in a hot pizza oven of an office, arguing with everyone, trying to figure out how we could do this. But we couldn't - not out of any love for the enemy. We just thought we would get into trouble."

Asked about Mustafa's story of abuse - which would have taken place while his team was based at Bagram - Mackey says the culprits couldn't have been members of his unit, the only one formally questioning prisoners at the base (though he says he can't be sure whether the CIA had interrogators there). Former detainees, he points out, have "everything to gain for their cause by lying or exaggerating wildly." But, he adds, "10 months ago I would have told you, categorically, there was no way that this sort of thing could have happened. Now...the criminal abuses in Iraq - and the murders in Bagram - have robbed me of the comfort and uniformity of blanket denials."



IN AUGUST 2002, Mackey and his team turned over the detention unit in Bagram to the 519th Military Intelligence Battalion from Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The new head of the interrogation unit was Captain Carolyn Wood, a 34-year-old officer and 10-year Army veteran. Wood rewrote the interrogation policy set by Mackey's group, adding to it nine techniques not approved by military doctrine or included in Army field manuals. Her expanded list included "the use of dogs, stress positions, sleep management, [and] sensory deprivation," according to an internal Pentagon investigation known as the Fay-Jones report; the report noted that other