

**MILITARY ANALYST FEEDBACK**  
**POST GUANTANAMO VISIT**  
(Transcripts: June 25-27, 2005)

Note: These are clips found as of 1500 Monday. More may follow.

**Highlights:**

- **General Montgomery Meigs**
  - *WNBC-NY*, 6/25: The DoD is starting to do a better job of telling the Gitmo story, which is “professionally run.”
  - *MSNBC News Live*, 6/25: Compared Gitmo to the DoD Leavenworth facility. All the right things, including interrogations, are being done “correctly.”
- **Command Sergeant Major Steven Greer**
  - *Fox and Friends* – 6/26: What we have done to “consistently ensure humane treatment” is amazing...the interrogations are “definitely working.”
- **Major General Donald W. Shepperd**
  - *CNN American Morning*, 6/27: Gitmo “bears no resemblance” to how it’s portrayed in the press. The guards are dedicated and doing “an extremely tough job” with the dangerous detainees.
- **Colonel Jack Jacobs (three different clips)**
  - *MSNBC*: 6/26: Gitmo is “a very nice facility.” But the DoD’s invitation for analysts to tour the facility was “long overdue...” “There’s nothing to be ashamed of” and “it makes no sense” to close Gitmo.
  - *MSNBC*, 6/26: Conditions at Gitmo have changed for the better over the years... the soldiers “go out of their way” to accommodate Islam at the prison
  - *MSNBC*, 6/26: Conditions exceeded expectations – the cells are “high tech.” The interrogators are establishing relationships with detainees to gain information, but “it takes time.”
- **Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Cucullu**
  - *Fox and Friends* – 6/27/05: Gitmo is a “very smooth-working, operating procedure that may have had problems in the beginning but is now up and running.” The facility and guards are “impressive.”

## Transcripts:

### General Montgomery Meigs

*(Found Weekend Today Show clip and MSNBC - this Weekend clip)*

#### WNBC-NY (NBC) - Today

6/25/2005 7:08:07 AM

**Newscaster:** Earlier this week a team of human rights experts at the United Nations accused the U.S. of unfair treatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay. And joining us this morning from Washington, D.C., two NBC news analysts, both former generals, Barry McCaffrey who's returned from a trip to Iraq and Montgomery Meigs, who recently returned from, I believe, just yesterday, a visit to Guantanamo Bay. Good morning to both of you...

**Newscaster:** General Meigs, let me turn to you and Guantanamo Bay. You were just there at the invitation of the U.S. military. Give us your general impressions. **Meigs:** Well, we went to just about every corner of the place. Escorted by Major General Hood, the commander down there. There's been over \$100 million of new construction. The place is professionally run. I was impressed. **Newscaster:** isn't the debate though not so much about exactly how prisoners are being treated there but more on whether or not Guantanamo Bay has become a symbol? A symbol to the Muslim world and in particular -- a recruitment tool for terrorists because of what it represents? **Meigs:** Well, I think the problem we have is in terms of the general treatment of prisoners early on in the war. Let me give you an example. The Red Cross just spent six weeks there interviewing prisoners, going to every part of the prison. It's not an irretrievable situation. You're going to have to have something like Guantanamo to hold these 500-odd terrorists who were very seriously dedicated people. It might as well be Guantanamo as just the Department of Defense is going to tell the story of what's really going on there. I think they're starting to do a much better job of that now. **Newscaster:** General Meigs and General McCaffrey, thanks very much to both of you this morning.

#### MSNBC News Live

6/25/2005 11:20:12 AM

**Newscaster:** Meanwhile Guantanamo Bay is just one of the fronts on the war on terror causing frustration. Earlier I got a firsthand account from two retired generals. They now serve as analysts.

...General Meigs, thanks for your patience. You returned from a visit to Camp Delta in Guantanamo Bay, a source of a lot of controversy. What were your perceptions there?

**Meigs:** The place is very professionally run. There's been \$100 million spent in construction, which has brought the facilities up to a very high standard in terms of confinement facility. The confinements were sound, similar to what we use in the Department of Defense facility at Leavenworth. We talked with the senior interrogation heads, and interrogations were being done correctly - nothing like what you read in the log in "Time" magazine... Looks to me like they've got that thing up and running properly. **Newscaster:** But how much were you actually able to see? There's a lot of controversy, because of the treatment of detainees during interrogations ... Amnesty and The Red Cross are both saying the prisoners may have been abused and that they were

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not allowed to see all that was going on. Were you able (confirm?) **Meigs:** Yes. I know the commander. He was trying to show us everything because he's got a good story to tell. The Red Cross had just spent six weeks there interviewing prisoners, getting access to any part of the facility. And as I understand it, secondhand, their issues concern individual cells for prisoners, as opposed to two or three prisoners in a cell. That is not unusual in confinement facilities, in that the prisoners can talk to each other cell-to-cell, et cetera. So I would say as time goes on, this story is going to abate. They are doing the right things at Guantanamo. **Newscaster:** I will have more on their thoughts on whether the media is giving America the accurate picture of what's really happening in the war on terror. Meanwhile, a look at your weather...

### Command Sergeant Major Steven Greer

(Found Sunday Fox News clip; the Saturday clip was not available)

#### Fox News -- Fox and Friends Sunday

6/26/2005 9:45:13 AM

**Newscaster:** There has been a lot of debate about conditions at Gitmo. Our next guest said it is not the detainees who are getting abused but the prison guards. In Washington to explain is command sergeant Steve Greer. He went to the facility and he was there for Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Sergeant, I saw you yesterday on shows and one of the interesting things the points you made was you ate the food the detainees eat and it is better than foods that the actual guards eat. It even costs more. **Greer:** Yes. That's absolutely right. It is amazing the amount of steps that we have taken and put in place to ensure there is a consistently humane treatment for all detainees. Some 520 currently inside Gitmo. They've been there awhile. **Newscaster:** You said the people being treated harshly are the guards themselves. What you are also saying, Sergeant is that these prisoners have not been broken in any way. **Greer:** Well, what I would tell you is that the interrogation strategy down there is based on rapport building because that works. You don't torture detainees to gain information - it's critical information to fight the war on terror. What they have done is designed a rapport building based on certain activities. If you are not compliant you get less incentives. I watched a Libyan being interrogated - he was eating Hostess donuts and reading a magazine from the coast of Libya. Another interrogation I watched (included) the detainee watching Martha Stewart Living and drinking Seattle's Best Coffee. These are incentives given to detainees if they are compliant if they continue to provide information to their interrogators. **Newscaster:** we have had e-mails and discussed this as a talking point early in the show. We have had people e-mail in to say this is nothing but a dog and pony show and of course conditions will be good and respectful because you guys will be brought down there and everybody knows it. What do you say to that? **Greer:** That's nonsense. That B roll footage you ran there - that's camp x-ray - that thing has been gone for two years. There have been millions of dollars of construction and operation costs put into the camps at Camp Delta. Here's the deal. The International Red Cross has 24/7 access to detainees and they have met with every single detainee. Not to mention, anybody who thinks that there is something going on other than humane treatment there never served a day in the military

because the soldiers and sailors I know would never put up with it. They wouldn't allow this to go on....

**Newscaster:** Steve, this is what I want to know. We had interrogations - you witnessed four of them. My question is, if these interrogations are indeed working, are we further along on the intelligence trail? Are we any closer to cracking Al-Qaeda? Are we closer to getting Osama bin Laden? **Greer:** I don't know. Yes, they are definitely working. I spoke to the senior interrogator - a female who has been there two years, she said every single week they gain credible information that helps us uncover the structure of a Canadian and associated networks. Not to mention Al-Qaeda's pursuit of WMD, terrorist techniques and skill sets the way they recruit, recruiting centers and locations as well as how terrorist organizations used legitimate financial businesses as fronts to fund terrorism. **Newscaster:** The interrogations you viewed - what were they like? **Greer:** it was really hair-raising to watch the interrogations and to see an Al-Qaeda operative face-to-face with an American interrogator and interpreter. To see the cat and mouse game that goes on... There was one individual who was leaning forward in his seat very focused and attentive, with the detainee watching every word he said, he was there two years and he was a leader within the camp itself.... **Newscaster:** thank you for joining us today. Take care.

**Major General Donald W. Shepperd**

(Found CNN American Morning News and Friday live clip only; CNN Radio transcripts not available)

**CNN -- American Morning**

6/27/2005 9:14:57 AM

**Newscaster:** On Friday, a group of former military leaders, who are now TV commentators, also toured the prison. Don Sheppard was there. He's in Washington this morning for us. Nice to see you, General. You went Friday. How long were you there? What did you get to see? **Shepperd:** We were there the whole day. We got to see the entire detention facility, talk to the guards, see interrogations, observe interrogations, and talk to interrogators. We had pretty much free run of the place to talk to anyone we wanted to talk to. **Newscaster:** What did you come away thinking? **Shepperd:** I came away thinking what the congressional delegation said. What we saw in Guantanamo bears no resemblance to what we are reading in the present press. Most of the people writing about this, I believe, have never been there. We have impressions of an old facility camp that was closed three years ago. We have a modern, well-constructed prison guarded by very, very dedicated people, doing an extremely tough job in the midst of a very dangerous people. **Newscaster:** Did you talk to interrogators there as well? What kind of questions did you have for them? **Shepperd:** We talked to interrogators and watched them at work as well. A lot of people have the impression of people at Guantanamo, people with no rights and being mistreated. This is consistent with what I heard from the interrogation training in Arizona, mistreatment does not work. You can't get things out of people by torturing them. All it does is screw things up. You have to establish rapport over a long period of time, keep the interrogations going and eventually people will give you information that you then coordinate with other pieces of information to bring you actionable intelligence and that's what's happening now.

**Newscaster:** You had free run of the place and that you got to watch them at work pretty much unfettered for a day. Isn't it fair to, well, if there's abuse going on it sure isn't going to happen while the U.S. Congressional delegation is going through and certainly not while former people who are now analysts on TV, are hanging out in town? I mean, it seems to me, obviously you wouldn't see those things, I think that's fair to say, isn't it?

**Shepperd:** Absolutely. They put their best foot forward. In any prison situation you have to continually guard against abuses. There have been abuses at Guantanamo in the past. I think they have been fixed and they're constantly on the alert for them. What we saw was a bunch of dedicated people that are really mad and feel attacked by the things coming out in the print press about this. They say, I don't know where these people are getting information. They haven't been here, and I haven't seen it going on. **Newscaster:** not only coming out in the print press, journalists who haven't had a chance to visit, talking about Amnesty International, they called Guantanamo modern gulag, the IRC said tactics were tantamount to torture. IRC comes by frequently to check on prisoners. They're there all the time. The same with Amnesty International, they are people there. These are not journalists typing on computers in another state and never have left the country.

**Shepperd:** The International Red Cross has access 24 hours a day 7 days a week at times and place of their choosing. You've got to realize that people think about Guantanamo as in previous wars where you captured detainees and hold them until the end of the war and release them. Guantanamo is detaining people, keeping them off of the battlefield, releasing ones not guilty and punishing and bringing to military tribunals ones that are. That's what we saw going on. And I believe that's what's going on now, after some rough starts. **Newscaster:** What do the interrogators tell you about information they're getting from folks who remain detained there?

**Shepperd:** These people have been here, some, two, three years. **Newscaster:** Are you still getting valuable information? **Shepperd:** Absolutely yes. You get bits and pieces. New people coming in all of the time, new faces, they reconfirm new things and go into databases line things up, they say we've gotten a lot of information to prevent attacks in this country and other countries with the information they're getting from these people and it's still valuable. Former Air Force Major General Don Shepperd joining us CNN military analyst back from Gitmo. Thanks for talking with us.

### Live from CNN

(6/24/05 2:50 p.m.)

**Newscaster:** We have just established a line to Guantanamo Bay to our military analyst, General Don Shepperd. He arrived there as part of a trip put together by the Pentagon in the wake of that human rights report that criticized conditions at the prison for war detainees. General Shepherd is on the phone with us right now. What do you see? **Shepperd:** I'm seeing a lot of rain right now. We're in the middle of a drenching rainstorm. Every American should have a chance to see what our group saw today. The impressions you're getting from the media and from pronouncements of people who have not been here are false. What we're seeing is a modern prison system with dedicated people, interrogators who know what they're doing. And people are being well treated. We had a chance to tour the facility, eat what the prisoners eat, we've seen people being interrogated. It's nothing like the impression from the media.

**News caster:** You said you got to talk to the interrogators and guards. What have they told you? **Shepperd:** The interrogators, we have the opinions that people have been mistreated. Everyone we talked to, and this is consistent with things I have known in the past, every interrogator will tell you the key is a relationship based on respect. Eventually, they will begin to talk and you get pieces of information you can fit together with pieces of information from somewhere else. Pressure doesn't work, disrespect doesn't work, and torture is counterproductive. That came from everyone, men and women who were interrogators down here. **News caster:** This leads me to my next question. Of course, this was a trip organized by the Pentagon. Do you feel like you're getting full access? Are you seeing a true picture? **Shepperd:** That's a good question. They are proud to have people down here to see what we're seeing. Obviously, they're going to put their best foot forward, and obviously, there will be abuses or people disobeying the regulations. I have been in prisons and jails in the United States, and this is by far the most dedicated force I've ever seen in any correctional institution anywhere. **News caster:** You mentioned you have spoken with guards. What are they saying? **Shepperd:** Very interesting. I had lunch with one of the female guards and then I talked to a group of male guards as well. I said, do you ever see anything that goes on that resembles mistreatment of prisoners or mistreatment by the prisoners of guards. They say they're on alert at all times. They're not armed when they're around the guards (sic - meant to say "prisoners"). You don't do that because obviously weapons can be taken and used against you. But basically, they treat the prisoners firmly with respect. They don't engage in a lot of banter with them. They say the prisoners do things that we've heard about in the media. They sometimes get riled and will throw feces, they'll throw urine at the guards. But this entire system is based upon compliance. In other words, if you comply with the rules, you're gonna be treated well, you'll be given more privileges just like any detention facility, and if you don't, your life is going to be much more miserable than those who do. So, all of the guards seem to be very professional. None of them that I have talked to have observed anything in the way of mistreatment or any really bad incidents. The biggest thing they say is violence between the prisoners themselves. A lot of the prisoners don't like each other. They're from different countries. **News caster:** On the flipside, have you had access to the prisoners themselves and what are their conditions? **Shepperd:** We have not had access to the prisoners themselves. We are told what they are and we have seen all the facilities. We have watched interrogations. We just watched interrogations of two high-value prisoners who have been here for a considerable amount of time. The facilities are basic of prisons anywhere. We have seen the cell said. They're 7 x 8 cells. They're clean. they have a toilet in the facility. They have a water fountain in the facility. They have a bed. They are given the Koran. They're given a mattress. They're given clothes, recreational things such as playing cards, chess, checkers, that type of thing. We have not had access to talk to the prisoners and, again, that's one thing you've got to be very careful of. You want to establish a prisoner relationship with the interrogators and not have that proliferated with other people. **News caster:** Let's back up for just a moment because you said you watched an interrogation. Explain to us how that played out and were there any instances of abuse or possible abuse? **Shepperd:** Absolutely not. Basically, you're able to observe interrogations. When you say, "we watched them," I want to be very careful about how I

