

THE REACH OF WAR: Disarray in C.I.A., Mystery Arsenals, and Prison Abuse**CONTRACTORS*****Ex-Detainees
Sue Companies
For Their Role
In Abuse Case***

By KATE ZERNIKE

WASHINGTON, June 9 — Lawyers representing former detainees who say they were sexually humiliated, beaten, and tortured at Abu Ghraib prison said Wednesday that they have sued two private companies that provided translators and interrogators at the prison.

The lawsuit, filed by the Center for Constitutional Rights and a Philadelphia law firm, accuses the Titan Corporation and CACI International Inc. of conspiring to abuse detainees in order to secure more contracts from the United States government.

It alleges that the two companies and three men who worked for them directed and participated in illegal conduct at the prison to squeeze information from detainees in an effort to prove that the companies should be awarded more contracts.

The plaintiffs say they were hooded, raped, stripped naked and kept in isolation, and subjected to repeated beatings with chains and boots.

Two of the men, Stephen A. Stefanowicz and John B. Israel, worked as interrogators for CACI; a third, Adel L. Nakhla, was a translator for Titan.

"It is patently clear that these corporations saw an opportunity to build their businesses by proving they could extract information from detainees in Iraq, by any means necessary," Susan Burke, of the Philadelphia law firm of Montgomery, McCracken, Walker, & Rhoads, said in a statement.

A Titan spokesman, Ralph Williams, called the lawsuit "frivolous."

Jody Brown, a CACI spokeswoman, said the allegations were "irresponsible and malicious" and noted that no charges had been filed against any of the company's employees.

"As we have said before, we do not condone, tolerate or endorse any illegal behavior by our employees in any circumstance or at any time," she said in a statement. "We will act forcefully if the evidence shows that any of our employees acted improperly. But we will not rush to judgment on the basis of slander, distortion, speculation, innuendo, partial reports or incomplete investigations."

Saleh, et al.

vs.

Titan Corporation, et al.

United States District Court
Southern District of California
No. 04-CV-1143 R (NLS)
Filed June 9, 2004