

# AT GITMO, CAPTAIN JOHN MAKES SURE DETAINEES DON'T GET "AN OVERABUNDANCE OF THINGS"

Carol Rosenberg, Ryan Reilly, and Charlie Savage have all posted their stories on the government's attempt to make the raid on detainees sound better. (Except as noted, the quotes below come from Rosenberg.)

But the accounts only seem to make it worse. Start with the fact that two of the officers interviewed – Captain John and Lieutenant Hermoine (a pseudonym, according to Rosenberg) – refused to give their names to reporters.

Then there's Colonel John Bogdan's claim that, even though he watched the raid via video, no video of the raid exists. (Jim wrote about Bogdan [here](#).)

The chief of the guard force, Army Col. John Bogdan, said he monitored the mission by video screen and radio but told reporters that no taped record existed of the skirmish to independent review what went on Saturday morning.

Given that the most seriously injured of the five detainees and four guards reportedly injured in the raid was a detainee who allegedly banged his own head against his cell, I find the claim of no video especially curious.

There are the discrepancies in Bogdan's story laid out by Rosenberg.

The chief of the guard force, Bogdan, had earlier told reporters that the military had "not at all" lost control of the communal prison.

But once the captives used cereal boxes and other material to cover up 147 of the 160 cameras inside the cellblocks the military had simply “lost the ability to monitor them 100 percent.”

Bogdan, speaking to reporters for the first time since the prison camps’ hunger strike and non-compliance crisis, offered a confusing explanation of what went on in the raid – but said that some of his troops were armed with shotguns with “less-than-lethal” ammunition, cartridges loaded with rubber pellets as well as single rubber-tip bullets. He could not offer a clear explanation of how many of the “less than 70” captives met U.S. soldiers with weapons as they burst into different recreation yards.

He started off describing the figure as 8 to 12 but then described a series of events that added up to 48, or the majority of communal captives, resisting troops in riot gear pushing their way in with shields.

Of course, if only 12 detainees resisted the guards, it wouldn’t explain why all detainees lost their communal privileges. So I can see why that story might need to include 48 detainees.

There’s the reported claim, from Savage, that the timing of the raid had nothing to do with the Red Cross visit, seemingly belied by the fact that guards were training for this raid during the entire ICRC visit.

It came just after a three-week visit by the International Committee of the Red Cross. Admiral Smith said its departure had nothing to do with the timing, and he said he waited after the detainees began to cover the cameras to give them a chance to again comply with the rules.

Col. John Bogdan, the leader of the guard force, said that guards trained

for the raid for three weeks.

There's the fact that the entire raid purportedly served to ensure guards would have uninterrupted views on detainees, yet just hours after the raid, a second detainee managed to strangle himself (but did not succeed in killing himself).

In the latest measure of the mounting tensions, the chief medical officer said that two men had attempted to commit suicide by strangulation over the weekend – one Saturday night while under lockdown at the former communal camp hours after the raid.

There's the report that prison staff have "discovered" additional detainees that might be candidates for abusive force feeding, which sure sounds like retaliation.

Prison medical staff said 45 of the 166 captives were considered hunger strikers Tuesday but predicted the figure would rise because Navy medical staff had identified an undisclosed number of additional captives who might be candidates for tube feedings now that the captives were under lockdown.

But ultimately, it's the story of control, which seems to defy earlier claims that the hunger strikes weren't a response to increasingly abusive treatment from guards.

The commander, Capt. John, an Army reservist who refused to provide his last name, said that the once-compliant captives commonly ignored soldiers' orders for months, since before he took charge in January, a situation that left the American captors of the foreign men with "no control over whether their behavior was good or bad."

[snip]

“I’ve never been in a civilian prison that looked anything like communal here,” said Capt. John, who said he had worked as a guard in Louisiana lockups that contained both convicts and pretrial detainees prior to his mobilization last year. But Guantanamo’s communal POW-style captives, men captured more than a decade ago and held without charges ever since, have “a lot of ideas here that they deserve an overabundance of things.”

Perhaps the nicest touch comes from Reilly, whose slide show accompanying the article includes an image of the sign outside Camp 6. “Honor Bound to Defend Freedom,” it reads.

I guess, in the name of defending freedom, Captain John believes he must ensure that these POWs, who have been cleared for release, don’t get access to satellite TV to occupy their infinite detention.