



NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

DEC 16 2011

Mr. Charley Barth
Director of Records
Department of the Navy
CNO (DNS-5)
720 Kennon St. SE, Bldg 36, Rm. 203
Washington, DC 20374

Dear Mr. Barth:

According to an account in the December 14, 2011, *New York Times*, records relating to the "Haditha Massacre" of Iraqi civilians were recently discovered in a junkyard outside Baghdad. The records in question appear to constitute the interrogations of U.S. Marines regarding the involvement of American troops in the events at Haditha, Iraq in November 2005. The *New York Times* believes these records come from an inquiry by Maj. Gen. Eldon Bargewell while serving as Operations Officer for Multinational Force Iraq.

We request that you look into this matter to determine whether an unauthorized destruction or removal of Federal records actually occurred and then notify us of your findings by January 17, 2012.

According to 36 CFR 1230.10, "The heads of Federal agencies must: (a) Prevent the unlawful or accidental removal, defacing, alteration, or destruction of records . . . Records must not be destroyed except under the provisions of NARA-approved agency records schedules or the General Records Schedules issued by NARA."

If you conclude Federal records were destroyed or removed without proper authorization, we request that you furnish us with a report as required and described by 36 CFR 1230.14 (enclosed). Your report should include a review of the efforts you have taken to recover the records and a statement about the safeguards established to prevent another incident like this from happening in the future.

We look forward to your response and thank you for your cooperation. Please contact Steven B. Rhodes at 301-837-3055 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

PAUL M. WESTER, JR.
Chief Records Officer
for the U.S. Government

Enclosure

NATIONAL ARCHIVES and
RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

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