



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ARMY NURSE CORPS
2250 STANLEY ROAD
FORT SAM HOUSTON, TX 78234-6100

February 24, 2005

American Nurses Association
ATTN: Ms. Barbara Blakeney, President
8515 Georgia Avenue
Suite 400
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3492

Dear Ms. Blakeney:

As Chief of the Army Nurse Corps, I have been asked to respond to your February 3, 2005, letter to the Secretary of Defense regarding recent media reports about the role of military medical personnel in detainee operations at Abu Ghraib. I want to reassure you that I and other senior leaders within the Army Medical Department take these allegations very seriously.

The Army Surgeon General initiated a formal assessment team in November, 2004, to aggressively gather facts and all pertinent information about medical support for detainees in Iraq, including the role of behavioral health providers in the interrogation process. That assessment is ongoing and is not expected to be completed for several more months. If the team finds problems, we will correct them. If the team finds evidence of wrong-doing, the military justice system will deal with it as appropriate. We will wait for the team to complete its work before we draw conclusions or make decisions about future actions.

Although the assessment team has not finished its work, so far there has been no evidence of Army Nurse Corps members being involved in any inappropriate or unethical behavior in working with detainees. Our Nurse Corps officers are trained to the highest ethical standards, and their performance throughout Operation Iraqi Freedom has been nothing less than magnificent. Our nurses have played a vital role in saving the lives of countless American Soldiers, Iraqi civilians, and detainees.

I am extremely proud and honored to be the Chief of the Army Nurse Corps. I welcome the opportunity to open a dialogue with the ANA on any issues regarding the role and performance of registered nurses in the Army. I also appreciate your generous offer of your organization's expertise and guidance. Please contact me directly if you have additional questions about Army nurses.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gale S. Pollock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gale S. Pollock
Major General, US Army
Chief, Army Nurse Corps