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Forensic Psychiatric Evaluation

Name: Mohamed Ahmed Ben Soud
Date of Birth: March 23, 1969
Date of Interview: January 31, 2017
Date of Report: March 24, 2017

Qualifications of Examiner. I graduated in 1965 with an A.B. degree *cum laude* from Amherst College, followed in 1969 by an M.D. degree *cum laude* from the University of Vermont College of Medicine. After completing an internship in internal medicine at Boston City Hospital, I went on to train as a resident psychiatrist at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center in Boston and at the Tufts-New England Medical Center, from 1970-1973. My psychiatric training included diagnosing and treating Vietnam veteran returnees who suffered from what we now recognize as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Following my residency, I served two years' active duty in the U.S. Naval Reserve as a psychiatrist, treating Marines and sailors returning from combat in Vietnam. I then completed an additional 25 years as a psychiatrist in the VA, where I continued to treat combat veterans with PTSD. During this period, I took a sabbatical to undergo additional training in behavioral neurology at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston.

In 2000, I retired from U.S. Government Service and became employed as a psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), which is the major teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School (HMS). At MGH I have continued to specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of persons with PTSD, now mostly civilians. I am a full Professor at Harvard Medical School. I have been conducting clinical research into PTSD for 34 years and have approximately 250 publications in the peer-reviewed medical literature, most on PTSD. I am certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology in Psychiatry with Added Qualifications in Forensic Psychiatry. I am the first or second author of five book chapters and three articles on PTSD and the law. I also co-authored the chapter on PTSD in the American

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Past Psychiatric History. Mr. Ben Soud reported no history of psychiatric or psychological problems prior to his capture and detention.

Occupational History. From 1992-2002, Mr. Ben Soud was a salaried member of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) opposed to the regime of Muammar Gaddafi. Prior to his membership in the LIFG, he was a student in the School of Sciences at the University of Libya. Currently, Mr. Ben Soud is employed by a company that imports and exports granite. He works eight hours a day, six days a week. Although he can do his work adequately, his memories of Cobalt and lingering low self-esteem make him feel incompetent, and cause him to doubt his ability to do a good job. He has received some feedback from his supervisors that he has a negative attitude, and that he needs to be more self-confident. Mr. Ben Soud believes this has blocked his chances at receiving a promotion and attaining a higher income.

Mental Status Examination. Mr. Ben Soud arrived on time for the evaluation. He was well groomed and casually but appropriately attired. He appeared his stated age of 47. His demeanor was sincere. He was fully cooperative with the interview. Mr. Ben Soud appeared to be a reasonably good historian. During most of the interview, his affect appeared euthymic. He smiled on several occasions, once broadly, and he laughed once. However, as he spoke of various unpleasant events in his life history, especially the degradation and humiliation he experienced during his confinement, he frowned and looked down. He did not cry, but he looked like he might have been on the verge at one particularly difficult moment. At one point, he was unable to get himself to relate an especially degrading incident, which he found too disturbing or shameful to even name. He did not demonstrate psychomotor retardation or agitation. I did not sense any evidence of symptom fabrication or exaggeration. He was fully oriented. His thought processes were well organized and without evidence of loose or bizarre associations. There was no evidence of delusions or hallucinations. His intellectual functions were grossly intact. He appeared to be of at least average intelligence.

think being known to be part of a revolutionary movement who was prepared to use force caused any of the anxiety that you experience? A. No ... I do not say that these things are simple things, but the fear and the insomnia that I felt, I felt it then, that was after the period of Cobalt and the images that come to me are because of that. It never happened to me all through my life that my dignity was afflicted except when I was at that prison Cobalt ... Q. Can you describe for me the last time you had a nightmare and what the nightmare was? ... A. Last week ... I saw that I was in a place where the door was pushed forcibly and I thought that this place was the same place that I were in and my hands were shackled and it was the same place that I lived in ... Q. And these people that are dragging you, how do you know that they weren't from the Libya prison as opposed to from Cobalt? A. The image that came to me was that of those people who wear masks and wearing black clothes. Q. And in the Libyan prison, did they not wear masks and black clothes, the interrogators? A. No ...

Diagnostic Impressions (DSM-5)

- 309.81. Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) previously severe, currently in partial remission
- 296.26. Major Depressive Disorder (MDD), single episode, in full remission
- 298.8. Brief Psychotic Disorder with marked stressors, fully recovered, or
- 293.0 Delirium, fully recovered

Opinion

The following are the diagnostic criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from the American Psychiatric Association's current *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders*, fifth edition (DSM-5). The criteria are followed by my comments as to whether Mr. Ben Soud met them, and how.