

Evidence of Bush Administration Human Experimentation on Men in CIA Secret Detention

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Violations of Nuremberg Code and Role of Health Professionals in Secret Torture Program Require Criminal Investigation

CCR Demands New Intra-Agency Interrogation Unit Disclose Nature of “Scientific Research” Into Questioning of Suspects

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New York - Today, the Center for Constitutional Rights issued the following statement in response to a new report by Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), Experiments in Torture: Human Subject Research and Evidence of Experimentation in the ‘Enhanced’ Interrogation Program. Download the report at <http://phrtorturepapers.org>.

Physicians for Human Rights has produced a powerful analysis of declassified documents which provide evidence that doctors and officials performed human experimentation and research on individuals in CIA detention, in violation of the Nuremberg Code. From calibrating sleep deprivation to refining waterboarding practices, the released documents indicate that health professionals illegally experimented on individuals in CIA secret detention. Looking at the evidence through this lens opens new and important avenues for the prosecution of torturers, particularly health professionals implicated in the creation of the torture program.

The health professionals monitored and adjusted various methods such as waterboarding, sleep deprivation and the combined use of “enhanced” interrogation techniques as interrogators performed them repeatedly on individuals in the CIA’s secret detention program. Part of the health professionals’ work appears to have been researching the individuals’ susceptibility to severe pain. By doing so, the health professionals appear to have used their medical expertise to attempt to immunize interrogators from future criminal liability by allowing interrogators to claim they did not to cross the line of “severe physical and mental pain.” The health professionals helped in the effort to provide legal cover for U.S. torture practices.

The Center for Constitutional Rights represents a number of men who are or were detained by the United States, including men who died in the custody of the Department of Defense at Guantánamo under suspicious circumstances and whose families have brought an action against in the United States in [al Zahrani v. Obama](#).

CCR has long called for accountability for torture. CCR joins PHR's call for the Attorney General to engage in a criminal investigation of illegal human experimentation and research on men in CIA detention, and further calls for investigation into possible experiments performed on men in military detention at Guantánamo and elsewhere, as well.

CCR also demands that the new intra-agency interrogation unit that was disclosed in February 2010 explain the nature of the "scientific research" it is conducting to improve the questioning of suspects. The current government may attempt to take advantage of ambiguity in Appendix M of the Army Field Manual, added by the Bush administration and left in place by the Obama administration, to justify the ongoing use of some "enhanced" interrogation techniques such as sleep deprivation in the new interrogation guidelines. Any ongoing unlawful human experimentation to "perfect" such techniques must immediately cease.

It is critical that we scrutinize forwarding-looking practices and policies as well as those of the recent past.

CCR has led the legal battle over Guantanamo for the last eight years - sending the first ever habeas attorney to the base and sending the first attorney to meet with an individual transferred from CIA "ghost detention" to Guantanamo. CCR has been responsible for organizing and coordinating more than 500 pro bono lawyers across the country to represent the men at Guantanamo, ensuring that nearly all have the option of legal representation. In addition, CCR has been working to resettle the approximately 30 men who remain at Guantánamo because they cannot return to their country of origin for fear of persecution and torture.

The Center for Constitutional Rights is dedicated to advancing and protecting the rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Founded in 1966 by attorneys who represented civil rights movements in the South, CCR is a non-profit legal and educational organization committed to the creative use of law as a positive force for social change.

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