

GITMO: Symbol of America's Moral Depravity. Torture and Extrajudicial Incarceration

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GITMO one of many US global torture prisons. It's best known one. The tip of the iceberg.

Run out of sight and mind. Extrajudicially and then some. America's gulag operates worldwide.

Unknown numbers of victims suffer horrifically. US barbarity has no limits. Anything goes is official policy.

Systematically ignored by major US media. Silence about horrendous human rights abuses.

Short-lived accounts on the Senate's torture report the exception proving the rule. Coverup and denial conceals the worst of what remains ongoing.

Senate Intelligence Committee members excluded what most needs highlighting. Stopped short of demanding accountability.

Wrongdoers remain absolved. Free to continue what international law prohibits at all times, under all circumstances, with no allowed exceptions.

Torture is illegal. Continuing on Obama's watch. Law Professor Mark Denbeaux heads Seton Hall University's School of Law's Center for Policy & Research (CP&R).

Best known for his GITMO reports. Including detainee profiles. Bogus allegations against them.

Government and media accounts suppressing hard truths. Innocent victims outrageously called dangerous.

Around 775 earlier ones now number 122. Lawlessly held. The vast majority uncharged. Most others (perhaps all) wrongfully accused.

So-called 9/11 plotters had nothing to do with what happened. Other victims faced trumped up charges.

Guilt by accusation suffices. Due process nowhere in sight. Nor any form of judicial fairness.

CP&R's newest report is titled "[Guantanamo: America's Battle Lab.](#)" Saying GITMO's stated purpose was a Big Lie.

Claiming it "was to house the most dangerous detainees captured in the course of the Global War on Terrorism."

Innocent victims substituted. Treated like lab rats. Not POWs. Subjected to horrendous treatment.

Torture by any standard. "(O)verwhelmingly condemned by federal government agencies at the time, and criticized by all by the agencies involved in intelligence gathering," said CP&R.

Brutalizing torture became "enhanced interrogation." Language changed. Barbarism continued.

"The government sought information on the most effective ways to torture a human physically..."

Wanting "information on the most damaging ways to break a man psychologically...(I)nsight as to just how far the human body could be pushed in pain and terror before organ failure or death."

Straightaway new detainees got psychosis-inducing drugs. Isolated for up to 30 days without access to human contact.

Including denied medical care. Lawyer visitations. ICRC representatives seeking firsthand information on conditions.

GITMO pushed intelligence gathering techniques to the limit. Nothing too extreme was off-limits.

"(E)xperimentation (on defenseless victims) generate(d) data (used) to counsel and train interrogators at military facilities across the globe," said CP&R.

GITMO was a "command center for worldwide interrogation coordination..." It's no POW detention center.

It "operated as America's Battle Laboratory." Lawlessly. Ruthlessly. Out of sight and mind. Subjecting innocent victims to horrendous treatment.

"America's most notorious detention facility was covertly transformed into a secret interrogation base designed to foster intelligence's curiosity on the effects of torture and the limits of the human spirit," CP&R explained.

"Although the government continues to mislead the public by touting that GITMO houses the "worst of the worst," hard truths show otherwise.

What civilized nation uses ordinary human beings as lab rats to test their physical and psychological limits when subjected to the most extreme forms of torture?

Which ones continue doing it globally? Operating unaccountably. Flouting international law.

Accomplishing nothing to enhance national security. Everything to violate the most basic standards of human decency.

Revealing America's dark side. Its ruthlessness. Its contempt for rule of law principles. Fundamental ones too important to ignore.

Policies approved at the highest levels of government. Legal interpretations twisted to justify the unjustifiable.

“(H)arsh interrogation, coupled with the ignoring and dismissal of criticisms led to actions that were harmful on many levels: medically, morally, politically, for accountability, and ethically,” said CP&R.

“And as the center (of) worldwide management of interrogation, the effects of (GITMO’s) Battle Lab would...stretch far beyond the shores of Guantanamo Bay.”

Ongoing on Obama’s watch worldwide. At secret sites. Innocent victims continue being brutalized.

On January 16, London’s [Guardian headlined](#) “Guantanamo Diary exposes brutality of US rendition and torture.”

Saying a current GITMO detainee’s “groundbreaking memoir (explains) the harrowing details of (America’s) rendition and torture programme from the perspective of one of its victims is to be published (this week) after a six-year battle for the manuscript to be declassified.”

The first published book by a current US detainee. In 20 countries. “(S)erialised by the Guardian amid renewed calls by civil liberty campaigners for its author’s release.”

Mohamedou Ould Slahi explains what no one should have to endure. Brutalizing treatment in multiple US torture prisons.

Number 760 at GITMO since August 2002. Despite having committed no crimes. Or planning them.

In 2010, judicially cleared for release. Remaining incarcerated. Unlikely to be freed any time soon.

Slahi recounted his ordeal in English. Including “sleep deprivation, death threats, sexual humiliation and intimations that his torturers would go after his mother.”

Subjected to “additional interrogation techniques.” Personally approved by then Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Blindfolded. Forced to drink salt water. Taken out to sea on a high-speed boat. Beaten for three hours while immersed in ice.

“The end product of the torture, he writes, was lies,” said the Guardian. He made numerous false confessions.

Anything to stop pain and torment. Telling interrogators whatever they wanted to hear. Making stuff up.

Saying he planned to destroy Toronto’s CN Tower. Asked if he spoke truthfully, he said:

“I don’t care as long as you are pleased. So if you want to buy, I am selling.”

His “manuscript was subjected to more than 2,500 redactions before declassification,” said the Guardian.

His published text includes all censor marks. His publishers hope to be able to release an uncensored edition if and when he’s released.

The toll on his mind and body was horrific. Describing it saying:

“I started to hallucinate and hear voices as clear as crystal. I heard my family in a casual familial conversation...”

“I heard Qur’an readings in a heavenly voice. I heard music from my country.”

“Later on the guards used these hallucinations and started talking with funny voices through the plumbing, encouraging me to hurt the guard and plot an escape.”

“But I wasn’t misled by them, even though I played along.” ‘We heard somebody – maybe a genie!’ they used to say.”

“ ‘Yeah, but I ain’t listening to him,’ I responded...I was on the edge of losing my mind.”

The ACLU launched an online petition on Slahi’s behalf. Calling for his release. Its national security policy director Hina Shamsi saying:

“Mohamedou Slahi is an innocent man whom the United States brutally tortured and has held unlawfully for over a decade.”

“He doesn’t present a threat to the US and has never taken part in any hostilities against it.”

“We’re asking the government to put an end to (his) years-long ordeal by not contesting his habeas case and releasing him without delay.”

“We hope everyone moved by (his) story of abuse and unlawful detention will join us in seeking his freedom.”

Post-9/11, he was lawlessly detained. On suspicion of plotting to bomb Los Angeles international airport.

Despite no corroborating evidence. Other than what was extracted through torture.

“In 2004, a military lawyer refused to play any further part in the prosecution on the grounds that the evidence against him was the product of torture,” said the Guardian.

Attorney Nancy Hollander represents Slahi. He never was “charged with anything,” she said.

“The US has never charged him with a crime. There is no crime to charge him with.”

“It’s not that they haven’t found the evidence against him.” There’s none. “He’s in what I would consider a horrible legal limbo, and it’s just tragic. He

needs to go home.”

His “book takes us into the heart of this man the US government tortured, and continues to torture with indefinite detention.”

“We feel, smell, even taste the torture he endures in his voice and within his heart. It is a book everyone should read.”

His publisher called his book “gracious, brutal, humbling, at times funny, but more often enraging, and ultimately heartbreaking testimony by a truly gifted writer.”

“And all of his many international publishers hope that by bringing his story to the wider world we can play a part in ending his wrongful and barbaric imprisonment.”

The Guardian quoted DOD spokesman Lt. Col. Myles Caggins duplicitously saying:

“We continue to detain Mohamedou Slahi under the Authorization for the Use of Military Force of 2001 (AUMF) as informed by the laws of war.”

“He has full access to federal court for review of his detention by United States district court via petition for writ of habeas corpus.”

No US authorization sanctions torture or other forms of ill-treatment.

No laws of war approve holding noncombatant civilians captives for unjustifiable reasons. None permit doing so without clear inculpatory evidence.

Slahi’s [Guantanamo Diary](#) will be published on January 20. It’s available now through Amazon and other sources.

A testimony to America’s dark side. Its moral depravity. Its shocking contempt for human life and welfare.

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