

The CIA's New Deputy Director Ran a Black Site for Torture

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In May, 2013, the Washington Post's Greg Miller [reported](#) that the head of the CIA's clandestine service was being shifted out of that position as a result of "a management shake-up" by then-Director John Brennan. As Miller documented, this official - whom the paper did not name because she was a covert agent at the time - was centrally involved in the worst abuses of the CIA's Bush-era torture regime.

As Miller put it, she was "directly involved in its controversial interrogation program" and had an "extensive role" in torturing detainees. Even more troubling, she "had run a secret prison in Thailand" - part of [the CIA's network of "black sites"](#) - "where two detainees were subjected to waterboarding and other harsh techniques." The Senate Intelligence Committee's report on torture also detailed the central role she played in the [particularly gruesome torture](#) of detainee Abu Zubaydah.



Beyond all that, she played a vital role in the [destruction of interrogation videotapes](#) that showed the torture of detainees both at the black site she ran and other secret agency locations. The concealment of those interrogation tapes, which violated both multiple court orders as well the demands of the 9/11 Commission and the advice of White House lawyers, was [condemned](#) as "obstruction" by Commission Chairs Lee Hamilton and Thomas Keane. A special prosecutor and Grand Jury [investigated those actions](#) but ultimately chose not to prosecute.

That CIA official's name whose torture activities the Post described is Gina Haspel. Today, as BuzzFeed's Jason Leopold [noted](#), CIA Director Mike Pompeo [announced](#) that Haspel was selected by Trump to be Deputy Director of the CIA.

This should not come as much of a surprise given that Pompeo himself [has said](#) he is open to resurrecting Bush-era torture techniques (indeed, Obama's CIA Director, John Brennan, was [forced to withdraw](#) from the running in late 2008 because of [his support for some of those tactics](#) only to be [confirmed in 2013](#)). That's part of why it was so controversial that 14 Democrats - including their Senate Leader Chuck Schumer, Dianne Feinstein, Sheldon Whitehouse and Tim Kaine - [voted to confirm Pompeo](#).

That Haspel was the actual subject of the 2013 Post story was an open secret. As Leopold [said](#) after I [named her](#) on Twitter as the subject of that story: "all of us who covered CIA knew. She was undercover and agency asked us not to print her name." Gina Haspel is now slated to become the second-most powerful official at the CIA despite - or because of

- the central, aggressive, sustained role she played in many of the most grotesque and shameful abuses of the War on Terror.

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