

U.S. 'Crating Prisoners' and Flying them Around Eastern Europe in C-130 Prison Planes

By [Wayne Madsen](#)

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Although The Washington Post failed to report on the details of CIA (now Pentagon-run) "black" interrogation sites in eastern Europe, WMR is able to report on the particulars of the covert operation. According to a well-placed intelligence source who served in eastern Europe, prisoners from Iraq and elsewhere have been flown from airport to airport in eastern Europe on board C-130 planes. Placed in what were described as "dog-sized" cages, the covert operation became fully operational after the disclosures of prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib, Baghdad and Camp Bucca, Umm Qasr, Iraq. The "crated" prisoners were either removed from the C-130s for interrogation at Soviet-era detention centers that were in various states of repair or were kept on board the aircraft and subjected to brutal interrogation by U.S. and/or contractor personnel, who, in some cases, were ex-members of the Soviet KGB, Stasi, and other eastern European security services. C-130s are used because of their short take-off and landing capabilities on short air strips located in remote regions.

The source, who spoke on a condition of anonymity, witnessed the ground work being laid for the "black sites" in a number of countries and locations. These include the Taszar airbase in south-central Hungary, near the town of Pecs; Lv'iv, Ukraine; Szczynto-Szymany, Poland; Skopje, Macedonia; Mihail Kogalniceanu airbase in Romania; Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia; Shkoder, Albania; Burgas, Bulgaria; and the Markuleshti air base in Moldova.

Crating prisoners harkens back to the Vietnam War when the U.S. used "tiger cages" installed by the French on Con Son island off Vietnam to hold political prisoners. The U.S. used the tiger cages to detain and torture suspected Viet Cong sympathizers. Many of the prisoners were merely innocent Buddhists and anti-war activists. The flying of caged prisoners from airport to airport on chartered C-130s is yet another indication of what military judge advocate general (JAG) lawyers have cited as the Bush administration's penchant for placing prisoners in "law free zones."

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