

# TORTURE: A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY



Above: Abu Ghraib, U.S. prison in Iraq

**L**ET'S make it plain: torture is, literally and in essence, a crime against humanity. Like rape, it is a systematic attempt to violently degrade people and rob them of their very humanity. Any government which not only tolerates such things but which, from its highest offices, justifies and insists on them as "instruments of policy"... any government which does not, once this has been exposed, prosecute the perpetrators but instead provides them in advance with immunity...reveals itself as a system that requires such crimes, and such criminals, or its functioning. Any people that does not resist such crimes, and demand prosecution of the torturers and, even more so, those who formulated the policy at the highest levels, reveals themselves to be *complicit* in those crimes. And in passively allowing the humanity of others to be degraded and attacked, they lose their own.

Threats to kill the children of a detainee...  
Threats to sexually abuse the female relatives of a detainee...  
Use of waterboarding in ways that greatly exceeded even the guidelines approved by Bush's "Torture Memo" White House Office of Legal Counsel...  
These and other new outrages are documented in a recently released 2004 report from the CIA's Office of Inspector General.

If those who set up, legitimized, and endorsed *open* torture simply walk away and go free, that is nothing other than a statement that torturers need not look over their shoulders *in the future*.

On the other hand, if people in this country DO resist, if they DO demand that *everyone* who was part of torture, up to and including those in the White House who orchestrated it, be prosecuted, and wage a serious political struggle to make that happen, it can be the beginning of a struggle that can, among other things, lead to the beginnings and possibility of *real* justice—and not some phony, feel-good, 'let's-forget-about-the-past-and-move-on' so-called redemption and/or "reconciliation" that only ultimately enables still more, and still worse, crimes by the bloody criminal enterprise known as America.



Above: Artist's depiction of waterboarding

Handgun and Power Drill  
91. [redacted] interrogation team members, whose purpose it was to interrogate Al-Nashiri and debrief Abu Zubaydah, initially staffed [redacted]. The interrogation team continued EITs on Al-Nashiri for two weeks in December 2002 [redacted] they assessed him to be "compliant." Subsequently, CTC officers at Headquarters [redacted] sent a [redacted] senior operations officer (the debriefer) [redacted] to debrief and assess Al-Nashiri.

92. [redacted] The debriefer assessed Al-Nashiri as withholding information, at which point [redacted] reinstated [redacted] hooding, and handcuffing. Sometime between [redacted]

28 December 2002 and 1 January 2003, the debriefer used an unloaded semi-automatic handgun as a prop to frighten Al-Nashiri into disclosing information.<sup>44</sup> After discussing this plan with [redacted] the debriefer entered the cell where Al-Nashiri sat shackled and racked the handgun once or twice close to Al-Nashiri's head.<sup>45</sup> On what was probably the same day, the debriefer used a power drill to frighten Al-Nashiri. With [redacted] consent, the debriefer entered the detainee's cell and revved the drill while the detainee stood naked and hooded. The debriefer did not touch Al-Nashiri with the power drill.

2004 CIA Inspector General Report (censored by CIA) pages 44-45

Abu Zubaydah [right] was tortured by a CIA interrogation team headed by former Air Force psychologist James Mitchell in 2002. CIA torture included waterboarding, sleep deprivation, isolation, exposure to extreme temperatures, enclosure in tiny spaces, bombardment with agonizing sounds at extremely damaging decibel levels, and religious and sexual humiliation (International Committee of the Red Cross report, February, 2007). Mitchell believed that Abu Zubaydah must be treated "like a dog in a cage." (Jane Mayer, *The Dark Side...*)

