

The Red Cross report, made public here for the first time, details in specific and explicit terms the various methods and “enhanced techniques” the CIA used to interrogate prisoners in a secret “global internment system” set up at the direction of President George W. Bush less than a week after the attacks of September 11, 2001.

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The reports stark and unmistakable conclusion:

... the ill-treatment to which [detainees] were subjected while held in the CIA program, either singly or in combination, constituted torture. In addition, many other elements of the ill-treatment, either singly or in combination, constituted cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Both torture and “cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment” are forbidden by many treaties to which the United States is signatory, including the Convention Against Torture and the Geneva Conventions. In essence, the U.S. has violated international law.

"[N]obody's above the law, and if there are clear instances of wrongdoing...people should be prosecuted ..." - President Obama

The ICRC, which is the appointed legal guardian of the Geneva Conventions and the body appointed to supervise the treatment of prisoners of war, speaks in this matter with the force of law.

“In addition, many other elements of the ill treatment, either singly or in combination, constituted cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.” - ICRC

This “alternative set of procedures,” as President Bush characterized them in a White House speech, including extended “sleep deprivation,” prolonged forced nudity, bombarding detainees with noise and light, repeated immersion in cold water, prolonged standing, sometimes for many days, beatings of various kinds, and “waterboarding”—or, as the report’s authors phrase it, “suffocation by water.” These interrogations are described in chilling first-person accounts gathered confidentially by ICRC investigators.

The accounts of the detainees themselves,

including the most prominent captured in the War on Terror, describe their detention from the time they were secretly brought to “the black sites”—secret prisons around the world, including in Thailand, Afghanistan, and Poland, through the interrogations using “waterboarding,” beatings, and other techniques.

"We don't kick the [expletive] out of them. We send them to other countries so they can kick the [expletive] out of them"- a US official quoted in "Interrogations: Questioning Terror Suspects in a Dark and Surreal World", NY Times, Jan. 2003

Fourteen “high-value detainees” were interviewed over many days for the report, including Abu Zubaydah, Khalid Shaik Mohammed, and Walid bin Attash. The fourteen remain imprisoned in Guantánamo.

The accuracy of the account by these detainees is ensured by the consistency of the detail they provided even though they are entirely isolated from one another and from anyone who could act as intermediaries.

These personal accounts are excerpted in great and disturbing detail in “US Torture: Voices from the Black Sites.” They describe daily life in the secret prisons for the first time in a publicly available account. Mark Danner, who has covered the torture story

in *The New York Review* since 2004, reporting extensively on Abu Ghraib and the Iraq War, analyzes the current debate over torture, the harm it has done and continues to do to the country, and the possibility of meaningful Congressional investigations, bipartisan “truth commissions,” and perhaps prosecution of those who have tortured.

We need to get to the bottom of what happened—and why—so we make sure it never happens again. —Senator Patrick Leahy, Chairman, Senate

More info: A podcast with Mark Danner discussing the article is available on nybooks.com

For the full article: “US Torture: Voices from the Black Sites”

www.nybooks.com/articles/22530


Sources:

- www.nybooks.com/danner-blacksites.pdf
- www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/15/AR2009031502724.html

ACTION: add your name and / or the name of your organization to a petition to Attorney General Eric Holder calling for the criminal prosecution of those involved in torture and other war crimes. Go to <http://democrats.com/special-prosecutor-for-bush-war-crimes>

Note: Other peace leaflets produced by 8th Day Center can be found at www.8thdaycenter.org/resources/leaflets.html
You may wish to use them for your own vigils, in classrooms, etc.

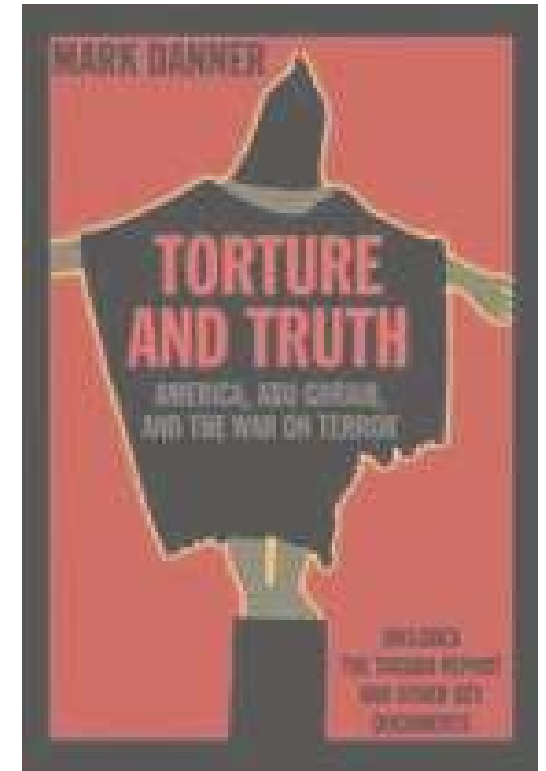
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RED CROSS SECRET REPORT: Torture at CIA Jails



The United States tortured prisoners, according to a secret report on “The Black Sites” by the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], excerpted in great detail in the new issue of *The New York Review of Books*, 4/9/09.