

QUOTATIONS: The Torture Debate in America

1. "In this past year, 2004-2005, we have learned much. We have learned that, starting in 2002, the abuse of prisoners from Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere took place at more than one American military prison; that ghost prisoners and ghost detention centers exist under American supervision; that the practice of rendition, sending prisoners to countries that torture, is practiced by the United States government; that the Bush administration supported a policy that narrowly defined torture and then declare abusive behavior permissible in the case of suspected terrorists, enemy combatants, and other detainees of the war on terror"

"*The Rule of Law Finds Its Golem: Judicial Torture Then and Now*" in The Torture Debate in America, Greenberg, p.1.

2. "Torture is indeed contrary to every relevant international law, including the laws of war. Yet...torture is widespread and growing."

"*Torture*," Henry Shue, in Torture: A Collection, p. 47.

3. "The war against terrorism is a new kind of war, a new paradigm [that] renders obsolete Geneva's strict limitations on questioning of the enemy prisoners and renders quaint some of its provisions."

Alberto Gonzalez, quoted in "*Torture, American Style*," Publication #3 Historians Against the War. p. 16.

4. "...this country seems to be undergoing an historic shift – from the highly secretive tortures by the Central Intelligence Agency during the Cold War to the open, even defiant use of coercive interrogation as a formal weapon in the arsenal of American power, acceptable both to the U.S. courts and the American people."

A Question of Torture, McCoy, p.6.

5. "Alas, what is so striking, now, about these left-wing groups is their amorality..

Human Rights Watch and the Center for Constitutional Rights have become misnomers for groups preoccupied with the sensibilities of jihadist terrorists hell-bent on killing innocent Americans yet completely unmoved about the horrific torture of American servicemen and kidnapped Israeli soldiers.... How safe we must all feel knowing they are watching out for the human right of terrorists and making sure Islamists are provided more constitutional protection than they are willing to grant our President, the Commander in Chief.

"It's Not Torture and It Is Necessary," Rabbi Aryeh Spero, Discoverthenetworks.org:

A Guide to the Political Left, January 16, 2007.

6. "...ethics is about what we ought to do in our position as the most powerful country in human history. Strategic deception plans, global assassinations done by the military –all will define who we are and what we want to become as a nation. Unintended consequences are huge."

Retired Special Forces colonel, in Chain of Command, Hersh, p. 261.

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7. "'They did it the wrong way,' a Pentagon adviser on the war on terror told me, 'and took a heavy-handed approach based on coercion, instead of persuasion – which actually has a much better track record. It's about rage and the need to strike back. It's evil, but it's also stupid. It's not torture but acts of kindness that lead to concession. The persuasive approach takes longer but gets far better results.' "

Chain of Command. Hersh, p.14.

8. "Only the most doctrinaire civil libertarians (not that there aren't plenty of them) deny that if the stakes are high enough, torture is permissible. No one who doubts that should be in a position of responsibility."

Judge Richard Posner, in Torture: A Collection, p. 27.

9. "The photos from Abu Ghraib show how "CIA torture methods have metastasized like an undetected cancer inside the U.S. intelligence community over the past half century." McCoy, p.5.

10. "I submit that we are at an historical moment, and important turning point, not just in this torture debate but in this country's relations with the international community."

The Politics of Torture, McCoy, 5.

11. "What is the basis for human rights? There are only three options. Rights are established by divinity, by natural law, or by pragmatic consensus. I wish we could get everybody to agree on one of the first two. But the philosophical and religious clashes that have raged unceasingly and often violently since the birth of civilization prove that we cannot. So we are left with public opinion – global public opinion... Human rights are whatever the international community – through its various declarations, covenants, treaties, and conventions – say they are."

"*What Torture Has Taught Me.*" William F. Schulz, U.U.World, Winter, 2006.

12. "A sort of 'don't ask, don't tell' policy has emerged... With no limitations, standards, principles, or accountability, the use of such techniques will continue to expand... The total 'ban' now in effect has been a license for hypocrisy and pervasive torture with deniability."

Alan Dershowitz, Torture: A Collection, p. 265. (Arguing for torture "warrants")

13. "American programs of extraordinary rendition and harsh treatments for prisoners have not, when considered strategically, been weapons against terrorism. Every time a new repressive measure is approved by Congress or the president, Osama bin Laden must cheer. Ultimately these are tactics that

encourage terrorism and help lose the war. Ignoring human rights helps recruit terrorists, justifies terrorism, and defeat the best thing we having going for us – the fact we stand for something better: for freedom, tolerance, and laws that protect us all.

Stephen Grey, Ghost Plane, p. 268.