



## **Exposing the Truth of U.S. Torture: Restoring Human Dignity**

### **THE TORTURE REPORT**

**What it is**

**Why it matters**

**What you can do**

**WHAT THE REPORT IS:** The Torture Report is a 6,000 page document that is the result of a four year investigation by the Senate Intelligence Committee into the CIA's rendition, detention, and interrogation practices during the post-9/11 era. It was adopted with a bipartisan 9-6 vote by the Senate Intelligence Committee in 2012. On April 3, 2014, in a bipartisan 11-3 vote, the Committee agreed to make public the 400 page executive summary and findings of the report.

**WHAT THE REPORT DESCRIBES:** Although the report is currently classified, statements by officials who have read the report suggest that it describes the CIA's use of morally abhorrent and horrific acts of torture during the detention and interrogations of suspected terrorists after 9/11. It is also said to show that torture did not provide critical intelligence leading to Osama bin Laden and that there is no reason to believe that evidence obtained through torture could not have been obtained through other, moral and legal, means.

**CURRENT STATUS OF THE REPORT:** The Senate Intelligence Committee voted to make the executive summary and findings of the Torture Report public and now awaits declassification. Unfortunately, President Obama chose to put the CIA in charge of redacting the report, which creates a potentially serious conflict of interest - the CIA is in charge of redacting a report that is critical of the CIA. Even prior to the vote to release, the CIA attempted to obstruct the Committee's investigation by restricting its access to information, spying on its computers, and attempting to intimidate Committee staff who were conducting the investigation.

#### **When you say "torture," what are you really talking about?**

We already know that the CIA waterboarded detainees, subjected them to sensory deprivation, sleep deprivation, isolation, extremes of heat and cold, and beatings.

The CIA also forced detainees to remain awake, in stress positions, unable to use the toilet, or relax, for up to a week at a time.

The CIA used secret overseas prisons and worked with other countries to torture detainees. The report may reveal additional details about this, Guantanamo, or the role of medical professionals.

## **WHY THE REPORT MATTERS – THE MORAL VIEW:**

The public has not only the right to know the truth about the abuses carried out by the U.S. government – in our name – it also has an obligation to know. The CIA may often operate in the shadows, but it is ultimately responsible to our elected leaders, and they are ultimately responsible to us. As citizens in a democracy, it is important to know what took place, review it in terms of our faith values, and determine what the next steps should be.

As people of faith, we believe that torture is a sin against humanity and against God. Torture violates the God-given dignity and worth of every person. We bear a fundamental duty to protect that dignity and worth. Together we can shine the light and expose the truth of the U.S. torture program and create a future where human dignity is restored.

**WHY THE REPORT MATTERS – THE LEGAL VIEW:** Unfortunately, current law was insufficient to prevent the Bush Administration, the CIA, and unethical lawyers from twisting the law in a way that was used to authorize torture. We must expose the truth of the U.S. torture program so that we can put in place stronger laws that will more effectively prevent torture in the future.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** During the next few months, the CIA will review and redact the to-be-released portions of the report. The redactions need to be minimal and should not block the release of embarrassing information, or information that is critical of the CIA or the torture program.

You can make a difference by acting now:

- Contact the President and tell him that you expect him to take personal responsibility for strict oversight of the redaction process. President Obama banned torture on his second full day in office. Now he needs to ensure that the CIA doesn't cover it up. We have a letter you can send at [www.nrcat.org/GetInvolved](http://www.nrcat.org/GetInvolved)
- Consider organizing an educational event using the short film “No Doubt, It Was Torture.” Watch the 11 minute film and lead a discussion using the study guide designed for a one-hour session at [www.nrcat.org/NoDoubtFilm](http://www.nrcat.org/NoDoubtFilm)
- Put your Facebook and Twitter accounts into action to share anti-torture messages. We have samples at [www.nrcat.org/GetInvolved](http://www.nrcat.org/GetInvolved)
- Be ready to respond once the executive summary, findings, and conclusions are made public. Join the National Religious Campaign Against Torture's e-mail list to be sure you are contacted with opportunities to ask your legislators to put into law new anti-torture safeguards or write an op-ed or letter to the editor.

**For more information and links to all these activities, go to:  
[www.nrcat.org/GetInvolved](http://www.nrcat.org/GetInvolved)**

## **LEARN. PRAY. ACT.**

-  [www.nrcat.org](http://www.nrcat.org)
-  [www.facebook.com/nrcat](http://www.facebook.com/nrcat)
-  [www.twitter.com/nrcattweets](http://www.twitter.com/nrcattweets)
-  [www.instagram.com/nrcatphotos](http://www.instagram.com/nrcatphotos)
-  [www.pinterest.com/nrcat/](http://www.pinterest.com/nrcat/)

 **National Religious Campaign  
Against Torture**