
The Torture Team

Posted by DavieDites - 2008/04/18 18:57

A senior law professor is shortly to publish a book of that title. It documents the responsibility of the US government for introducing torture as standard in the handling of political prisoners. The outrages at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo were directly initiated by the US government and were not the actions of a few, low grade, reservists.

They might be able to flannel us with terms like "highly coercive interrogation techniques" but they will not be in power forever. Can we hope that eventually the net will tighten around them and they will end up in the Hague?

Re:The Torture Team

Posted by The Laird - 2008/04/18 21:44

Can we hope that eventually the net will tighten around them and they will end up in the Hague

Not much chance of that Davie:(

Re:The Torture Team

Posted by Clare - 2008/04/18 23:08

Davie, they will never end up in the Hague. That's our fault, collectively I mean, because there weren't enough of us outraged enough to say "This isn't happening." When I think of all Britain signed up to in the Geneva Convention the whole Guantanamo thing makes me want to vomit. That the US labelled their prisoners "Illegal Combatants" rather than PoWs in order to deny them their rights under the Geneva Convention and got away with doing it just beggars belief. But we wore it. We wore all of it. The world wore it. There just isn't any justice for people like Bush and Blair.

Re:The Torture Team

Posted by DavieDites - 2008/04/19 08:24

I am beginning to be less pessimistic. The neo-cons planned that this would be the American century. They have fallen on their faces in the first decade. The weakness of US has been exposed just as Russia re-emerges as a super power, with China treading on their heels.

Throughout the world the prestige enjoyed by the US of A has collapsed. With their economy in severe difficulties the people of the US might just look for a scapegoat and Bush will not be in the White House much longer.

According to the Guardian today, some of the top aides have been advised not to travel abroad in case they may be arrested and prosecuted. If only one or two of those aides were brought to court, the whole house of cards could collapse.

Maybe wishful thinking but I am more hopeful today.

Re:The Torture Team

Posted by DoricMan - 2008/04/19 11:21

DavieDites wrote:

Maybe wishful thinking but I am more hopeful today.

Let us hope so Davie.

But doing nothing about "Man's inhumanity to man" is very troublesome for me. I hope our new US relationship, whatever that is, leads us to be more robust in denouncing torture, wherever it exists.

Re:The Torture Team

Posted by scunnert - 2008/04/19 14:50

The dirty has been done and we're all complicit - there are those in the world who will not forgive us this.

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Re:The Torture Team

Posted by Meg - 2008/04/23 10:10

We must all do what we can. Has everybody seen the new Amnesty video on waterboarding? In case there is anyone who isn't sure what it is -

You are tied to a board, your ankles, wrists, chest and head strapped firmly down. Water pours onto your face, flows up your nose, into your mouth, down your throat and fills your lungs and stomach. You gag, choke and struggle for breath.

Please pass on the video if you can, to highlight this issue.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLL7O9hIloA>

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Re:The Torture Team

Posted by scunnert - 2008/04/23 16:06

Thank you for the link Meg - very powerful and disturbing wee vid!

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Re:The Torture Team

Posted by Viv - 2008/04/28 16:38

Thanks for posting the video. I've posted it on my home forum. It's a horrible practice and takes away any suggestion of the high moral ground for those who use it.

I agree, there are no circumstances where torture is acceptable. Those who use it should be brought to account.

But where a person in military service is told to use that on a prisoner, there should be some ability to say no if it offends personal ethics.

Otherwise, there is no practical difference from those in the wartime German Military who stated they should not be held liable because they were just "following orders".

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Re:The Torture Team

Posted by Robin T Cox - 2008/04/28 17:31

Clare wrote:

But we wore it. We wore all of it. The world wore it.

Not all of us, I think.

<http://256.com/gray/thoughts/2003/20030324/cook.html>

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Re:The Torture Team

Posted by Jimbo - 2008/04/28 18:54

Hi Robin,

good reminder.

It was a strong, sensible speech from Robin Cook.

I watched him give this speech and everything he said flew in the face of the lies Blair told in order to get his war, or was it his legacy.

Iraq's military strength is now less than half its size than at the time of the last Gulf war. Ironically, it is only because Iraq's military forces are so weak that we can even contemplate its invasion. Some advocates of conflict claim that Saddam's forces are so weak, so demoralized and so badly equipped that the war will be over in a few days.

We cannot base our military strategy on the assumption that Saddam is weak and at the same time justify pre-emptive action on the claim that he is a threat. Iraq probably has no weapons of mass destruction in the commonly understood sense of the term - namely a credible device capable of being delivered against a strategic city target. It probably still has biological toxins and battlefield chemical munitions, but it has had them since the 1980s when US companies sold Saddam anthrax agents and the then British Government approved chemical and munitions factories.

Why is it now so urgent that we should take military action to disarm a military capacity that has been there for 20 years, and which we helped to create? Why is it necessary to resort to war this week, while Saddam's ambition to complete his weapons program is blocked by the presence of UN inspectors?

Cook knew Blair was lying and stood up in Parliament to make his case. He was the only one to do so. Clair Short made a pretendy gesture but it amounted to just sham politicking.

Unfortunately the sheep who pass for politicians were happy to follow the war-monger and pretend to believe his dodgy dossier.

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Re:The Torture Team

Posted by DavieDites - 2008/05/01 16:31

It is sad that Robin Cook got in with such a bad crowd. If Gordon Broon had sided with Cook then Blair would have been stopped in his tracks. Broon tried to stay aloof from the Iraq controversy until he was pitchforked into giving a belated statement of support, but he could have prevented UK involvement. By not doing so, he has his hands covered in the blood of the innocents and should end up in the Hague.

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