

# Demand Accountability for Bush's Top-Down Torture

By [ACLU](#)

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Friday night, in a national television interview on *ABC News*, President Bush directly admitted what we have suspected all along: The White House was deeply and intimately involved in decisions about the CIA's use of torture.

For the first time, George W. Bush acknowledged that he knew his top national security advisers discussed and approved specific details of the CIA's use of torture. "I'm aware that our national security team met on this issue and I approved," he said. He also defended the use of waterboarding — simulated drowning where the victim feels like they are about to die.

Congress should long ago have gotten to the bottom of which top officials approved, condoned and authorized U.S. involvement in torture. But, now that the President has admitted to a policy of top-down torture, the ACLU is calling on Congress to demand an independent prosecutor to investigate possible violations of the War Crimes Act, the federal Anti-Torture Act and federal assault laws.

[Tell your members of Congress: Don't Look the Other Way on Torture.](#)

These latest revelations confirm our worst fears about subversion of the Constitution and betrayals of the rule of law by top government officials. Recent reports indicate that members of the Bush administration including Dick Cheney, Condoleezza Rice, Donald Rumsfeld, Colin Powell and George Tenet met regularly and approved the CIA's use of "combined" "enhanced" interrogation techniques, even pushing the limits of the now infamous 2002 Justice Department "Yoo torture memo."

That long-secret memorandum became public recently as a direct result of ACLU lawsuits aimed at getting out the truth. And the truth is, the indefensible legal opinions put forward in the torture memo tried to give the President a virtual blank check to ignore the rule of law and to violate human rights standards.

[Don't tolerate torture. Demand accountability for torture now!](#)

We have to do everything possible to reject the Bush administration's top-down torture policies. That's why the ACLU is stepping up pressure on Congress to use its constitutional powers to prevent illegal conduct.

It's also why the ACLU has taken the extraordinary step of offering our assistance to Guantanamo detainees being prosecuted under the unconstitutional military commissions process. It is more important than ever that the U.S. government, when seeking justice against those it suspects of harming us, adhere to due process and the rule of law.

## [Don't Tolerate Torture. Tell Congress to Demand Answers!](#)

The ACLU's letter calling for an independent prosecutor for torture crimes and any criminal cover up is available at:

[www.aclu.org/pdfs/safefree/lettertocongress\\_2007\\_1213.pdf](http://www.aclu.org/pdfs/safefree/lettertocongress_2007_1213.pdf)

ABC's recent news story is available online at:

<http://abcnews.go.com/TheLaw/LawPolitics/story?id=4635175&page=1>

Information on the ACLU's Freedom of Information Act lawsuit revealing information on the U.S.'s treatment of detainees is available online at:

[www.aclu.org/torturefoia](http://www.aclu.org/torturefoia)

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