

Donald Trump Predicted to Appoint Mastermind of Bush Torture Program as CIA Chief

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Jose Rodriguez, one of the masterminds behind the infamous George W. Bush torture and retention program, may be selected by the new administration to run the CIA, according to an influential law firm where Trump's major ally serves as a senior adviser.

The prediction that Jose Rodriguez, a career intelligence officer and former head of CIA National Clandestine Service (NCS), may lead the CIA comes in a post-election [memo](#) published by Dentons, a multinational law and lobbying firm. The company is involved in delivering legal advice to the Trump campaign, according to the [Intercept](#).



Dentons' memo provides a detailed analysis of the 2016 election, as well as looking at the policy priorities of President-elect Trump and his potential cabinet options, including those of the intelligence community. While some posts list a variety of candidates, the CIA director's job has only one projected nominee – Jose Rodriguez.

Rodriguez joined the CIA in 1976 and quickly progressed through the ranks, serving as a field operative and station chief in a number of Latin American countries. In 2002, he was promoted to head of the agency's Counterterrorism Center, the CIA division which spearheaded the fight against Al-Qaeda and its affiliates.

About 136 individuals were detained without trial and subjected to torture in CIA black sites worldwide. According to a 2014 Senate inquiry, interrogation tactics [included](#) sleep deprivation during prolonged standing, rectal feeding, freezing to death, the use of insects

as a means of torture, and, last but not least, waterboarding.

Rodriguez, who in 2004 was appointed chief of the NCS to oversee all human intelligence gathering by US agencies, defended the CIA practices, telling the [New Yorker](#) in a 2012 interview that they *"fell well short of what is torture."*

He argued that the methods previously employed by Nazi and the Japanese secret services during WWII *"had the legal backing, but we had no moral qualms about doing this."* Torture and harsh treatment helped prevent *"another 9/11"* and gather *"valuable intelligence,"* the top CIA officer insisted in the interview.

In 2005, after the *"enhanced interrogation,"* a euphemism for torture, was revealed by the media, Rodriguez played a key role in discarding evidence, destroying 92 tapes showing the waterboarding of suspect Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who is reported to have been waterboarded 183 times.

[‘Everything...was a lie’: Former CIA analyst, John Kiriakou on the agency deleting torture report](#)

According to a declassified CIA email [cited](#) by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Rodriguez said *"the heat from destroying is nothing compared to what it would be if the tapes ever got into [the] public domain... they would make us look terrible."*

Rodriguez' career profile apparently sits well with some of Trump's statements on tackling terrorism suspects.

"What do you think about waterboarding?" Trump asked the crowd during the June Ohio rally. Supporters cheered as he gave the answer: *"I like it a lot. I don't think it's tough enough."*

Last November, Trump touted the benefits of harsh interrogation practices, telling a separate campaign rally that waterboarding *"works,"* adding *"if it doesn't work, they deserve it anyway for what they do to us."*

Dentons itself, a multinational law and lobbying firm with over 120 offices worldwide, employs Donald Trump's ally Newt Gingrich, former speaker of the House of Representatives, as a senior adviser who is [mentioned](#) in the post-election memo as a potential Secretary of State.

It is unclear if the 73-year-old politician, however, who previously resigned as Speaker because of ethics violations and a string of controversies, would accept a nomination.

Other candidates to enter the Trump cabinet include some hawkish figures who served in the Bush administration, like Ambassador John Bolton, who never renounced his bellicose support for the 2003 Iraq invasion. Critics argue that his bluntness has ruined many significant negotiations on biological weapons destruction and nuclear disarmament.

Talking to [Democracy Now](#), Glenn Greenwald, a co-founder of the Intercept, has called Bolton *"one of the most sociopathic warmongers on the planet, in charge of anything,"* also describing other members of Trump's transitional cabinet as *"genuinely terrifying prospects."*

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