

# Why We NEED Torture “To Keep Us Safe”

By [Washington's Blog](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [Law and Justice](#)

You've heard people say that we should end all torture.

But do you want to hear why all of those naive and pampered idiots are wrong when they say we don't need torture? And why – in the real world in which we live – Dick Cheney is right?

Do you want to know the cold, hard facts about why we need torture?

There are none. None of the top military or defense experts think we need to torture. See for yourself ...

All of the Experts Say that Torture Doesn't Work.

The top interrogation experts all say torture that doesn't work:

- [The military agency which actually provided advice on harsh interrogation techniques for use against terrorism suspects](#) warned the Pentagon in 2002 that those techniques would produce “unreliable information.”

- [Army Field Manual 34-52 Chapter 1](#) says:

“Experience indicates that the use of force is not necessary to gain the cooperation of sources for interrogation. Therefore, the use of force is a poor technique, as it yields unreliable results, may damage subsequent collection efforts, and can induce the source to say whatever he thinks the interrogator wants to hear.”

- A declassified FBI e-mail dated May 10, 2004, regarding interrogation at Guantanamo states “[\[we\] explained to \[the Department of Defense\], FBI has been successful for many years obtaining confessions via non-confrontational interviewing techniques.](#)” (see also [this](#))
- Brigadier General David R. Irvine, retired [Army Reserve strategic intelligence officer who taught prisoner interrogation and military law for 18 years with the Sixth Army Intelligence School](#), says torture doesn't work
- The [CIA's own Inspector General](#) wrote that waterboarding was not “efficacious”

in producing information

- A former FBI interrogator — who interrogated Al Qaeda suspects — says categorically that [torture does not help collect intelligence. On the other hand he says that torture actually turns people into terrorists](#)
- A 30-year veteran of CIA's operations directorate who rose to the most senior managerial ranks, [says](#):

"The administration's claims of having 'saved thousands of Americans' can be dismissed out of hand because credible evidence has never been offered — not even an authoritative leak of any major terrorist operation interdicted based on information gathered from these interrogations in the past seven years. ... It is irresponsible for any administration not to tell a credible story that would convince critics at home and abroad that this torture has served some useful purpose.

This is not just because the old hands overwhelmingly believe that torture doesn't work — it doesn't — but also because they know that torture creates more terrorists and fosters more acts of terror than it could possibly neutralize."

- The [FBI interrogators](#) who actually interviewed some of the 9/11 suspects say torture didn't work
- A former [US Air Force interrogator](#) said that information obtained from torture is unreliable, and that torture just creates more terrorists
- The [number 2 terrorism expert](#) for the State Department says torture doesn't work, and just creates more terrorists
- The [Senate Armed Services Committee](#) unanimously found that torture doesn't work.
- A former [CIA station chief in Pakistan who served at the agency for three decades](#) doubts that torture saved any lives

Still don't believe it? [These people](#) also say torture doesn't produce usable intelligence:

- Former high-level CIA official Bob Baer said "And torture — I just don't think it really works ... you don't get the truth. What happens when you torture people is, they figure out what you want to hear and they tell you."
- Rear Admiral (ret.) John Hutson, former Judge Advocate General for the Navy,

said “Another objection is that torture doesn’t work. All the literature and experts say that if we really want usable information, we should go exactly the opposite way and try to gain the trust and confidence of the prisoners.”

- Michael Scheuer, formerly a senior CIA official in the Counter-Terrorism Center, said “I personally think that any information gotten through extreme methods of torture would probably be pretty useless because it would be someone telling you what you wanted to hear.”
- Dan Coleman, one of the FBI agents assigned to the 9/11 suspects held at Guantanamo said “Brutalization doesn’t work. We know that. “

Many other professional interrogators say the same thing (see [this](#), [this](#), and [this](#)).

In fact, one of the top interrogators in Iraq got information from a high-level Al Qaeda suspect not through torture, but [by giving him cookies](#).

And [top American World War 2 interrogators](#) got more information using chess or Ping-Pong instead of torture than those who use torture are getting today.

And [the head of Britain’s wartime interrogation center in London](#) said:

“Violence is taboo. Not only does it produce answers to please, but it lowers the standard of information.”

Indeed, one of the top military interrogators [said](#) that torture does not work, that it has resulted in hundreds or thousands of deaths of U.S. soldiers, [and](#) that torture by Americans of innocent Iraqis is the main reason that foreign fighters started fighting against Americans in Iraq in the first place (in fact, the experts agree that torture [reduces national security](#)).

And – according to the experts – torture is unnecessary even to prevent “ticking time bombs” from exploding (see [this](#), [this](#) and [this](#)). Indeed, a top expert says that [torture would fail in a real ‘ticking time-bomb’ situation](#) And Dick Cheney’s claim that waterboarding Khalid Shaikh Mohammed stopped a terror attack on L.A.? As the Chicago Tribune [notes](#):

The Bush administration claimed that the waterboarding of Khalid Shaikh Mohammed helped foil a planned 2002 attack on Los Angeles — forgetting that he wasn’t captured until 2003.

(see [this confirmation](#) from the BBC: “Khalid Sheikh Mohammed ... was captured in Pakistan in 2003”).

Indeed, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed himself [said](#):

During the harshest period of my interrogation I gave a lot of false information in order to satisfy what I believed the interrogators wished to hear in order to make the ill-treatment stop. I later told the interrogators that their methods were stupid and counterproductive. I’m sure that the false information I was

forced to invent in order to make the ill-treatment stop wasted a lot of their time and led to several false red-alerts being placed in the U.S.

And “the CIA inspector general in 2004 found that there was [no conclusive proof that waterboarding or other harsh interrogation techniques helped the Bush administration thwart any ‘specific imminent attacks,’](#) according to recently declassified Justice Department memos.”

And when long-time FBI director Mueller was asked whether any attacks on America been disrupted thanks to intelligence obtained through “enhanced techniques”, he responded [“I don’t believe that has been the case.”](#)

And see [this](#).

And if you believe that the military was pushing for “enhanced interrogation”, [think again](#) (and see [this](#)).

All of the Top Experts say Torture HURTS National Security

Torture REDUCES, rather than protects, American national security:

- The head of all U.S. intelligence [said](#):

“The bottom line is these techniques have hurt our image around the world,” [Director of National Intelligence Dennis] Blair said in the statement. “The damage they have done to our interests far outweighed whatever benefit they gave us and they are not essential to our national security.”

- A top counter-terrorism expert [says](#) torture increases the risk of terrorism (and see [this](#)).
- One of the top military interrogators [said](#) that torture by Americans of innocent Iraqis is the main reason that foreign fighters started fighting against Americans in Iraq in the first place (and see [this](#)).
- Former counter-terrorism czar Richard A. Clarke [says](#) that America’s indefinite detention without trial and abuse of prisoners is a leading Al Qaeda recruiting tool
- A former FBI interrogator — who interrogated Al Qaeda suspects — says categorically that [torture actually turns people into terrorists](#)
- A 30-year veteran of CIA’s operations directorate who rose to the most senior managerial ranks, [says](#):

“This is not just because the old hands overwhelmingly believe that torture doesn’t work — it doesn’t — but also because they know that torture creates more terrorists and fosters more acts of terror than it could possibly neutralize.”

- A former [US Air Force interrogator](#) said that torture just creates more terrorists
- A former [U.S. interrogator and counterintelligence agent, and Afghanistan veteran](#) said, “Torture puts our troops in danger, torture makes our troops less safe, torture creates terrorists. It’s used so widely as a propaganda tool now in Afghanistan. All too often, detainees have pamphlets on them, depicting what happened at Guantanamo.”



- The Senate Armed Services Committee [unanimously stated](#):

“The administration’s policies concerning [torture] and the resulting controversies ... strengthened the hand of our enemies.”

- [Two professors of political science](#) have demonstrated that torture increases, rather than decreases, terrorism
- The [reporter](#) who broke Iran-Contra and other stories [says that](#) torture actually helped Al Qaeda, by giving false leads to the U.S. which diverted its military, intelligence and economic resources into wild goose chases
- Raw Story [says](#) that torture might have resulted in false terror alerts
- Hundreds of other experts have said the same things

As Andrew Sullivan [writes](#):

We have expended enormous resources in fighting threats that are not there, while failing to expend the necessary resources and time to figure out accurately what exact threats we do face. When you hear of the intelligence extracted by torture, remember that it was the intelligence that “proved” that Saddam and WMDs and links to al Qaeda.

And remember, our [military](#) and [intelligence](#) leaders say that the economic crisis is now the biggest threat to America’s national security.

Guess what one of the major causes of the economic crisis was? According to a [Nobel prize-winning economist](#), [the head of JP Morgan](#) and others, the Iraq war and the war on terror in general were huge factors in destroying our economy.

The Senate Armed Services Committee concluded that [creating a link between Al Qaeda and Iraq](#) was one of the main purposes of the torture program. And the fake connection between Al Qaeda and Iraq was – in fact – [one of the main justifications for the Iraq war](#).

And see [this](#).

So it is indisputable that torture has reduced our national security in numerous ways.

Most of Those Tortured Were INNOCENT

One of the main justifications for torture is that the people being tortured were bloodthirsty terrorists, who would do far worse to us if we didn't stop them.

Is that true?

Judge for yourself:

- The number two man at the State Department under Colin Powell, Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, says that [many of those being held at Guantanamo Bay were innocent, and that top Bush administration officials knew that they were innocent](#). Moreover, he said:

“This philosophy held that it did not matter if a detainee were innocent. Indeed, because he lived in Afghanistan and was captured on or near the battle area, he must know something of importance (this general philosophy, in an even cruder form, prevailed in Iraq as well, helping to produce the nightmare at Abu Ghraib). All that was necessary was to extract everything possible from him and others like him, assemble it all in a computer program, and then look for cross-connections and serendipitous incidentals—in short, to have sufficient information about a village, a region, or a group of individuals, that dots could be connected and terrorists or their plots could be identified.

Thus, as many people as possible had to be kept in detention for as long as possible to allow this philosophy of intelligence gathering to work. The detainees' innocence was inconsequential. After all, they were ignorant peasants for the most part and mostly Muslim to boot.”

(see [this](#) and [this](#)). Many others also state that those tortured were mainly [innocent farmers, villagers, or those against whom neighbors held a grudge. Indeed, people received a nice cash reward from the U.S. government for turning people in as “suspected terrorists”](#) (and see [this movie](#))

- The commander of the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, Janis Karpinski, estimates that [90% of detainees in the prison were innocent](#)
- [Children were allegedly tortured](#) (and see [this](#) and [this](#))

Note: This essay is more appropriately titled something like “Send This to Everyone Who Still Believes that We Need Torture to Keep Us Safe”. But if I used that title, no one who supports torture would read it.

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