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New CIA Report Implicates Smithfield Company In Torture Cases

A Smithfield-based contractor for the CIA is implicated in the al-Nashiri torture case described in the long-anticipated CIA Inspector General's report. This report, quashed since 2006 by the Bush regime, and then postponed several times by the Obama administration, is set for release August 24.

“The role of Aero Contractors in providing planes, pilots, maintenance, and crews for torture missions must be investigated,” said Josh McIntyre, spokesperson for NC Stop Torture Now. “Whether detainees are guilty or innocent, threatening them with power drills is appalling and illegal. By ‘driving the getaway car,’ Aero has been a co-conspirator in horrendous abuses of human rights.”

According to leaks from the report, the CIA used mock executions to terrorize detainees and threatened detainees with pistols and electric drills.

Newsweek: Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri was threatened with a gun and a power drill during the course of CIA interrogation. According to the sources, who like others quoted in this article asked not to be named while discussing sensitive information, Nashiri's interrogators brandished the gun in an effort to convince him that he was going to be shot. Interrogators also turned on a power drill and held it near him. “The purpose was to scare him into giving [information] up,” said one of the sources. [<http://www.newsweek.com/id/213188>]

A federal law banning the use of torture expressly forbids threatening a detainee with “imminent death.” North Carolina Stop Torture Now believes that Aero Contractors' conduct may be part of a criminal conspiracy partially planned and acted upon within the State of North Carolina, and should be subject to prosecution by the State for criminal conspiracy.

According to U.K.-based journalist Stephen Grey (<http://www.ghostplane.net/timeline>), author of the book ‘Ghost Plane,’ an Aero Contractors plane was involved in the extraordinary rendition of al-Nashri. This plane was the Gulfstream jet N379P, the notorious “Guantanamo Express,” which was based at Aero's headquarters in Smithfield at that time.

Al-Nashri, who was alleged to be an al-Qaeda commander in the Gulf region, was captured after traveling from Yemen to Dubai, and was apparently transported on November 8, 2002, from the United Arab Emirates to a CIA facility in Jordan.

“NCSTN has compiled a packet of documentation that can serve as a starting point for investigating Aero Contractors’ involvement in the extraordinary renditions of Al-Nashiri and dozens of other prisoners,” said McIntyre. “We believe that a formal inquiry by the State of North Carolina is both vital and within the jurisdiction and capacity of the State, acting if necessary in concert with the FBI.”

In a letter to Holder sent on August 19, nine GOP Senators including North Carolina’s Sen. Burr opposed investigation of alleged CIA torture practices. “These Senators are saying that some parts of the Executive Branch are above the law,” McIntyre said. “Senator Burr’s views on torture don’t match those of most North Carolinians.”

A preview of the packet is available at <http://www.quakerhouse.org/packet-torture-01.htm>. More information about North Carolina’s role in extraordinary rendition to torture is at <http://www.ncstoptorturenw.net/resources.html>.

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