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The Nation Must Say No to Torture

Contra Costa Times (Walnut Creek, CA)
May 4, 2006

President Bush asserts "We do not torture," but what he and his administration say and what they do are quite different.

As you reported on April 27, many reputable sources have documented that torture is widespread and systematic, not just at Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib, but also at lesser known prisons such as Bagram, north of Kabul in Afghanistan. Even more horrifying, on those occasions when it is revealed, it goes largely uninvestigated and unpunished.

Clearly, these barbaric acts can no longer be blamed on "a few rotten apples," as the administration contends; torture is the unspoken (and unspeakable) policy of our current government, and that it has been officially sanctioned at the highest levels seems the unavoidable conclusion.

The administration and the military have the opportunity to change course now, as they consider whether to file criminal charges against Lt. Col. Steven Jordan, former head of the interrogation center at Abu Ghraib.

Torture is morally indefensible. It is not even effective at obtaining reliable information. It puts our own soldiers at greater risk of being tortured if they are captured. I ask each reader to write or call your representatives.

Let them know your own feelings about the use of torture, and urge them to investigate Jordan's culpability and to indict him if appropriate.

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