Quotes: Release the SSCI Torture Report

- **Letter from 26 Retired Generals and Admirals to SSCI Members.** “The Committee’s comprehensive review into the CIA detention and interrogation program will demonstrate the negative impact of torture on our national security and stand as a testament against those who urge otherwise…. We strongly urge you to adopt the report and make it public with as few redactions as possible.”

- **Lieutenant General Harry E. Soyster (Ret.) and Major General William L. Nash (Ret.).** “We need to examine the CIA’s past conduct, and we can’t do so if the SSCI report is locked away. It must be made public so that we can avoid repeating our mistakes and ensure that our national security policies comport with American ideals and laws, and protect our troops.”

- **Major General William L. Nash (Ret.).** “The shame hidden behind the cloak of secrecy that still surrounds the use of extraordinary rendition, secret detention, and torture should be lifted by making a full disclosure. Openness lends credibility to pledges not to act in such a manner again and can help the United States regain some of the respect it has lost at home and abroad as a result of these activities.”

- **Rear Admiral John D. Hutson (Ret.).** “In fact, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence has written an over 6,000 page report that details the use of torture in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is the real story of torture, and the American people deserve to read it. This CIA torture report has been held up in committee for more than a year, but its findings must be made public if we, as a nation, are to close this chapter on torture and move forward.”

- **Brigadier General David R. Irvine (Ret.).** “It’s important for people to understand what happened….The rest of world knows what we did; it’s the American people who are who are in the dark.”

- **Tony Camerino, former Air Force interrogator.** “We don’t condone torture not because it isn’t effective, but because we place our moral principles and lawful obligations first. As we reaffirm our commitment to our values, there’s no reason to ignore the record. It’s time for Americans to know the truth about the real consequences of the CIA’s torture program. Now that the SSCI has approved its study, it should be made public.”

- **Michael Marks, retired Naval Criminal Investigative Service special agent.** “A message at the beginning of the movie says it is “based on firsthand accounts of actual events.” But it isn’t based on the best, most complete

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information. That’s contained in the Senate report. The Intelligence Committee should now vote to declassify it so that Americans can see what was done in their name — the fact-based account, as opposed to Hollywood’s version.”

Jim Clemente, Retired Special Agent, FBI Behavioral Analysis Unit. “Perhaps the largest accumulation of data on interrogation practices post-9/11 is the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence’s (SSCI) comprehensive report on detainee handling. Since President Obama made transparency a cornerstone of his administration, I call on him and the SSCI to release the full report to the public. The president lived up to his transparency promise when he released the ‘torture memos.’ It’s time for him to do so again.”

The Los Angeles Times. “Yet neither the inconclusiveness of criminal investigations nor changes in the law justify official amnesia about torture. Although much is known about how, in the panic after 9/11, the Bush administration resorted to tactics impossible to reconcile with the Geneva Convention and alien to American values, a complete picture has yet to emerge. That is why it is essential that the Senate Intelligence Committee make public the results of its investigation of the CIA's interrogation program.”

The Philadelphia Inquirer. “The broader conclusion to be drawn from the 6,000-page report, according to the panel’s chair, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D., Calif.), is that the Bush-era use of secret overseas prisons and ‘so-called enhanced-interrogation techniques were terrible mistakes’… The report's unveiling cannot come soon enough, since Americans have yet to be told in any sufficient detail what antiterror tactics were employed in the name of keeping them safe after the 9/11 attacks.”

Portland Press Herald. “There’s plenty about torture that is not a secret. For one, it’s illegal. For another, most experts consider it ineffective. And a country’s willingness to use torture damages its reputation in the world and in history. Now we should find out finally what was done in the war on terror and what was its result.”

Senator John McCain. “It is my hope that we can reach a consensus in this country that we will never again engage in these horrific abuses, and that the mere suggestion of doing so should be ruled out of our political discourse, regardless of which party holds power. It is therefore my hope that this Committee will take whatever steps necessary to finalize and declassify this report, so that all Americans can see the record for themselves, which I believe will finally close this painful chapter for our country.”

Senator Dianne Feinstein, Chair of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. “I also believe this report will settle the debate once and for all over whether our nation should ever employ coercive interrogation techniques.”

Reverend David McKee, former president of the Virginia Council of Churches. “The Senate Intelligence Committee has spent years investigating CIA interrogations, including the use of torture. The report on its investigation is likely to contain evidence proving once and for all that torture is an ineffective interrogation technique and a net negative for national security. It is also likely that the information in the report will point to new safeguards that can be employed to prevent future use of torture. The American people need to see the results of this investigation — redacted as needed, certainly, to preserve vital interests. I believe that if we have all of the

7 http://seattletimes.com/html/opinion/2020084338_michaelmarksopedxml.html
10 http://www.philly.com/philly/opinion/20121219_Inquirer_Editorial___Zero__movie_is_just_a_fantasy.html
information, the American people will do the right thing and reject torture as immoral, illegal, ineffective and harmful to our national security.”

Frederick Neidhardt, professor emeritus of microbiology and immunology at the University of Michigan medical school. “Though the practice [of torture] has been halted, what is the safeguard that it will not occur again? The Senate Intelligence Committee is due shortly to vote on adopting and releasing to the public its in-depth report on the use of "enhanced interrogation techniques" seeking information in the aftermath of 9/11. The American people deserve to know its contents, fully and unexpurgated.”

Reverend Jill Saxby, Executive Director, Maine Council of Churches. “‘We the people’ are ultimately responsible for what is done in our name. Our job as citizens doesn’t end with voting. It continues by holding our government up to the scrutiny of open, public judgment. And that begins with getting our own story straight, with ourselves and with history. With one vote to adopt and release the intelligence committee report, [Senator Olympia] Snowe can help us all to do just that.”

Reverend Jerry Stinson, Senior Minister, First Congregational Church, Long Beach. “As people of faith, and as Americans, we call upon the Senate Intelligence Committee to release the facts about the U.S. government's use of torture. If the report fails to be made public, torture will never cease to haunt our collective conscience. Let us set the record straight and move forward. The very morals our country was founded upon are at stake.”

Reverend Thomas Wenski, Archbishop of Miami. “Our government is accountable to the people. If our citizens do not understand and know about past torture policies and practices of the U.S. government, they will not be able to hold our government accountable. Releasing the results of the Senate Intelligence Committee’s investigation into CIA interrogation practices will provide that information. Knowing the truth about any situation is powerful. Understanding the truth about U.S.-sponsored torture can help ensure that it will never occur again.”

14 http://www.timesdispatch.com/opinion/their-opinion/mckee-we-need-to-know-the-truth-about-torture/article_a32a9a36-ab40-5c62-877d-b41c787ab53b.html