

# Center for the Victims of Torture

## Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

[https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/13/opinion/americas-lasting-shame-the-torture-of-detainees.html?\\_r=2](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/13/opinion/americas-lasting-shame-the-torture-of-detainees.html?_r=2)

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**To the Editor:**

[U.S. Torture Leaves a Legacy of Detainees With Damaged Minds](#) (Lasting Scars series, front page, Oct. 9) reminds readers of the horrors endured by former Guantanamo and C.I.A. black-site detainees and their symptoms from torture by the United States.

What these men describe, including nightmares, flashbacks, depression and more, is consistent with those expressed by the survivors of torture from around the world whom we care for at the Center for Victims of Torture.

These men, like all survivors of torture, should be provided access to specialized rehabilitative care, as guaranteed by the [Convention Against Torture](#).

The United States must assert itself as a leader in addressing its failings by acknowledging the torture and immediately begin actions to meet these men's right to rehabilitation.

CURT GOERING

Executive Director

Center for Victims of Torture

St. Paul

**To the Editor:**

It is a sad moment in American history for the United States to have violated international codes of ethical conduct and inflicted such horrific harm on so many. The fact that some psychologists aided by collusion between the leadership in the American Psychological Association and the Defense Department and the Central Intelligence Agency played a central role in developing and maintaining the torture apparatus is appalling.

If the psychological association had followed the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Association in prohibiting its members from participating in interrogations, the torture program would have come to a screeching halt, given that it was necessary to have health personnel present during these interrogations to provide the cover of their safety and doing no harm.

The abuses meted out by the United States in the war on terror as painfully described in your excellent article will ultimately be seen as one of our country's most egregious ethical lapses.

J. WESLEY BOYD

Needham, Mass.

*The writer is an associate professor of psychiatry and a faculty member of the Center for Bioethics at Harvard Medical School.*

**To the Editor:**

Thank you for your strong and heartbreaking article about the ruined lives of men (some entirely innocent) who were tortured by the United States government.

We have gotten so much wrong since the attacks of 9/11. Nothing, however, has been more maddening to me than living in a country a

thousand times more powerful than its enemies that has insisted that torture is being tough on terrorism.

When your fear is so great that you resort to torture, its not toughness; its cowardice. And we all bear the burden of responsibility for these men, whose lives have become waking nightmares.

It is important to remind ourselves of the cost when fear occludes our capacity to recognize the humanity of others who are far more like us than not.

TRIP QUILLMAN

Seattle

**To the Editor:**

I wonder anew why those in high places who authorized torture and those who carried it out have never been punished. Equal justice for all?

MURRAY POLNER

Great Neck, N.Y.

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