

National Religious Campaign Against Torture

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

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Public Facing Advocacy Writing

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 11, 2014

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National Interfaith Group Applauds Senator Feinsteins Defense of Congressional Oversight Regarding Torture Program

WASHINGTON Today, prompted by controversy over a Central Intelligence Agency internal review document that is said to corroborate the results of the Senate Intelligence Committee investigation into CIA torture, Committee Chairman Sen. Dianne Feinstein vigorously defended the Committees work, suggesting that If the Senate can declassify this report, we will be able to ensure that an un-American, brutal program of detention and interrogation will never again be considered or permitted. She described how the CIA repeatedly removed documents it had previously provided the Committee and how it, possibly illegally, monitored the Committees work. She also said that the CIAs acting general counsel, an individual who is named more than 1,600 times in the Committees report, may have attempted to intimidate Committee staff.

Rev. Ron Stief, executive director of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, responded to Sen. Feinsteins comments by saying: We applaud Senator Feinstein for once more reminding the CIA that the use of torture was un-American, brutal, and should never happen again. As people of faith, the National Religious Campaign Against Torture believes that no one in the CIA stands above their moral responsibility to humanity. The facts of CIA torture contained in the Senate Intelligence Committees report should come out now so we can get beyond the bickering and take the next steps toward a torture-free future.

Matt Hawthorne, NRCATs policy director, added: Senator Feinsteins description of what appears to be the CIAs attempt to obstruct congressional oversight is chilling. As she said, Committee staffers have spent years uncovering the horrible details of a CIA program that never, never, never should have existed. The CIA operates in the shadows, but for our democracy to function, the agency must be accountable to robust congressional oversight. If, as she described, the CIA has monitored staff computers, removed documents, and is now intimidating staffers with apparently unfounded legal accusations, then we should all be very concerned about the future of congressional oversight.

Under NRCATs leadership, clergy across the country published opinion pieces in newspapers in all 50 states calling for the release of the Senate Intelligence Committee report on the CIAs use of torture. In December, a compilation of all published op-eds thus far ([listed online at NRCATs website](#)) was distributed to the members of the Senate Intelligence Committee, to demonstrate the diverse religious communities united support for release of the report.

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) is a membership organization committed to ending U.S.-sponsored torture, and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. Since its formation in January 2006, more than 300 religious organizations have joined NRCAT, including representatives from the Catholic, evangelical Christian, mainline Protestant, Unitarian Universalist, Quaker, Orthodox Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Bahai, Buddhist, and Sikh communities. Members include national denominations and faith groups, regional organizations and local congregations.

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