

Witness Against Torture

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

<https://witnessagainsttorture.com/2017/01/26/wat-denounces-trump-administrations-draft-executive-order-detention/>

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Witness Against Torture Calls for the Rejection of Executive Order Measures, Warns of Broad Dangers of Trump Agenda

The draft of an Executive Order on US detention and interrogations threatens a nightmarish return to the illegal, immoral, and un-American torture policies of the Bush administration. Its proposed measures from the re-establishment of CIA black sites, to the review of interrogation practices as detailed in Army Field Manual, to the denial of International Committee of the Red Cross access to US detention centers point to one thing: the resumption of the cruel, inhuman, degrading, and torturous abuse of Muslims.

The drafts proposal to halt all transfers from Guantanamo and bring new captives to the prison is also outrageous. Guantanamo has never been, as the draft claims, a critical tool in the fight against global threats. It has been a place of rampant torture; a detention center for hundreds of innocent men making up the prisons great majority; a cause of radicalization worldwide; and a stain on Americas reputation.

The executive order is based in two fictions: that US torture worked in securing critical intelligence, and that nearly one-third of men released from Guantanamo then engaged in anti-American violence. The US Senate Torture Report refutes the claim of tortures efficacy. The figure on post-release violence is grossly inflated and obscures that only a tiny fraction of the men released under President Obama are even suspected of engaging in anti-US hostilities.

Torture has weakened American security and brought misery to its Muslim victims and their families, says Jerica Arents, a Witness Against Torture organizer from Chicago. It is frightening that we are even discussing its return. Tough talk on Guantanamo, says Maha Hilal, the Executive Director of the National Coalition to Protect Civil Freedoms, only reinforces Islamophobic fears that threaten the civil and human rights of Muslims, at home and abroad. The demonization of Muslims must end.

That the Trump administration would consider the executive order, says history professor and Witness Against Torture member Jeremy Varon, speaks to our worst fears: that Trump is an authoritarian strongman willing to use lies and criminal violence in service of a dangerous, nationalist agenda. History warns us where that leads.

