

EXHIBIT 53

Doctors' Conduct at Guantánamo

To the Editor:

Re "Interrogators Cite Doctors' Aid at Guantánamo" (front page, June 24):

The Pentagon claims that new guidelines preserve an ethical role for health personnel in interrogations. In fact, rather than simply adopting well-established standards set by the major medical associations (including the American Medical Association) and the United Nations, Pentagon officials have revised them.

They have introduced specious distinctions that permit health professionals to take part in coercive interrogations, to open medical files to interrogators and even to be present during abusive interrogations, all of which are prohibited under universally accepted standards.

This approach follows the Bush administration's response to the Geneva Conventions, the Convention Against Torture and United States criminal laws against torture: if existing standards and law become an inconvenience to coercive interrogation, it reinterprets and rewrites them, and then claims to abide by them.

LEONARD S. RUBENSTEIN

Executive Director

Physicians for Human Rights
Washington, June 24, 2005

others regarding safeguarding patients' medical records and prioritizing patients' well-being, were clearly violated.

The Pentagon may state that these psychiatrists were "acting as behavioral scientists," but this does not relieve them of their ethical obligations. The medical profession must respond with condemnation and by revoking the medical licenses of any physicians who behaved unethically.

RICHARD GOMBERG, M.D.

Newton, Mass., June 24, 2005

To the Editor:

The purported ambiguity in the American Psychological Association's code of ethics regarding systematic abusive interrogation practices at the Guantánamo prison obscures the basic fact that most of us learned early in our lives that there is a fundamental and inviolable difference between right and wrong.

One does not need a legalistic ethics code to know that psychologists refuse to lend their professional skill and expertise to the torture of fellow human beings. It is simply wrong.

JAY S. KWAWER

New York, June 24, 2005

The writer is director of clinical education at the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis and Psychology.

To the Editor:

As a psychiatrist, I was sickened to read of fellow psychiatrists' participation in coercive interrogations at Guantánamo. I take issue with your saying that these activities "raise new questions about the boundaries of medical ethics."

The ethical boundaries are clear. The American Medical Association's principles of medical ethics begin: "The physician shall be dedicated to providing competent medical care, with compassion and respect for human dignity and rights."

The annotations for psychiatrists state, "Ethical considerations in medical practice preclude the psychiatric evaluation of any person charged with criminal acts prior to access to, or availability of, legal counsel."

Both of these principles, along with

To the Editor:

In "Interrogators Cite Doctors' Aid at Guantánamo," you report, "In one example, interrogators were told that a detainee's medical files showed he had a severe phobia of the dark and suggested ways in which that could be manipulated to induce him to cooperate."

How in the world could this be construed as anything other than a gross violation of medical ethics? If this is not psychological torture, then what is?

Not only is this behavior unethical for the "health practitioner," who surely took the oath "first, do no harm," it is a definite violation of international law. I am ashamed of the behavior of my compatriots.

JASON KOLAKOWSKI

Lakewood, Colo., June 24, 2005