

CIA destroys interrogation tapes

by UPI

WASHINGTON - The CIA destroyed videotapes in 2005 that showed the U.S. use of harsh interrogation techniques, its director told employees Thursday, various reports said. CIA Director Michael Hayden also said at the time the leaders of the House and Senate intelligence committees were informed about the existence of the tapes and about the agency's plans to destroy them amid concern that tapes could endanger CIA interrogators, The Washington Post reported Thursday. "The tapes posed a serious security risk," Hayden wrote to CIA employees. "Were they ever to leak, they would permit identification of your CIA colleagues who had served in the program, exposing them and their families to retaliation from al-Qaida and its sympathizers." Hayden told the spy agency that the videotapes were recorded in 2002 after President George Bush had authorized the use of harsh interrogation methods. "The agency was determined that it proceed in accord with established legal and policy guidelines," Hayden wrote. "So, on its own, CIA began to videotape interrogations." It was not clear who within the CIA authorized the destruction of the tapes involving two terror suspects, but The New York Times reported Thursday that current and former U.S. officials said it had been approved at the highest levels of the agency.

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