

U.S. didn't research waterboarding

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The Bush administration did not research the "waterboarding" torture technique enough to realize it had been deemed ineffective by U.S. trainers, sources say.

If they had done so, they would have found that experts had found that waterboarding, in which trainees were made to experience near-drowning as part of the Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape, or SERE, program, was useless. The technique was part of the Cold War-era military survival training and when used, on U.S. volunteers, produced false confessions, the New York Times reported Wednesday.

Neither President George Bush's senior advisers nor then-CIA Director George Tenet, who insisted that the agency had thoroughly researched the SERE proposal, had probed its history enough to discover that veteran military trainers had warned in internal memorandums that, morality aside, its methods were ineffective, unnamed sources told the Times.

The process of approving the harsh interrogation techniques was "a perfect storm of ignorance and enthusiasm," an unnamed former CIA official told the newspaper.

A declassified Senate report indicated that SERE was adapted for use against detainees held at the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, prison camp at the urging of a military behavioral scientist and was approved by the Pentagon, the Times said.

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