

Rice, others OK'd waterboarding in 2002

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- U.S. administration figures, including Condoleezza Rice and John Ashcroft, approved harsh CIA interrogation methods as early as summer 2002, documents indicate.

Declassified information about the evolution of the Bush White House's decisions to employ interrogation methods on terrorism suspects that some consider to be torture -- such as simulated drowning known as waterboarding -- were contained in Senate Intelligence Committee documents released Wednesday by U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, The Washington Post reported.

A timeline indicated that Rice, who was then President George W. Bush's national security adviser, and Ashcroft, who was attorney general, were first informed of and approved the CIA's plans to use waterboarding and other harsh measures on "high value" terrorism detainees in May 2002, the newspaper said.

Rice reportedly approved use of harsh techniques on detainee Abu Zubaida, a Saudi-born Palestinian Arab who was believed to be holding information about an imminent terrorist attack. The documents indicate Rice met on July 17, 2002, with the -CIA director, George Tenet, telling him "the CIA could proceed with its proposed interrogation of Abu Zubaida."

The timeline also indicates that Rice, Ashcroft, Vice President Richard Cheney and others again approved the CIA techniques in July 2003, the Post said.

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