

LOOK FORWARD, AND PROMOTE THE TORTURERS

There's Matt, who froze Gul Rahman to death in the Salt Pit. Paul, his boss and the CIA Station Chief of Afghanistan, who ignored Matt's requests for more help at the prison. There's Albert, who staged a mock execution of Rahim al-Nashiri, and his boss, Ron, the Station Chief in Poland, who witnessed the forbidden technique and did nothing to stop it. There's Frances, the analyst who was certain that Khaled el-Masri had to be the terrorist with a similar name, and Elizabeth, the lawyer who approved Frances' decision to have el-Masri rendered and tortured. There's Steve, the CIA guy who interrogated Manadel al-Jamadi and, some say, effectively crucified him. There's Gerry Meyer, the Baghdad station chief, and his deputy, Gordon, who permitted the ghost detainee system in Iraq. And of course, there's Jennifer Matthews, the Khost station chief who ignored warnings about Humam Khalil Abu-Mulal al-Balawi that might have prevented his attack (and her own death).

These are the CIA officers responsible for the Agency's biggest known fuck-ups and crimes since 9/11.

The AP has a story tracking what happened to those officers. And it finds that few were held accountable, particularly not senior officers, and even those who were reprimanded have continued to prosper in the agency.

In the years since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, officers who committed serious mistakes that left people wrongly imprisoned or even dead have received only minor admonishments or no punishment at all, an Associated Press investigation has revealed.

[snip]

Though Obama has sought to put the CIA's interrogation program behind him, the result of a decade of haphazard accountability is that many officers who made significant missteps are now the senior managers fighting the president's spy wars.

The AP investigation of the CIA's actions revealed a disciplinary system that takes years to make decisions, hands down reprimands inconsistently and is viewed inside the agency as prone to favoritism and manipulation. When people are disciplined, the punishment seems to roll downhill, sparing senior managers even when they were directly involved in operations that go awry.

Paul—the guy who let the inexperienced Matt freeze Gul Rahman to death—is now chief of the Near East Division.

Ron—who watched Albert stage a forbidden mock execution—now heads the Central European Division.

Albert—who staged the mock execution—was reprimanded, left the CIA, but returned to the CIA as a contractor involved in training officers.

Frances—who insisted Khaled el-Masri be rendered and tortured—was not disciplined and now heads the CIA's "Global Jihad" unit.

Elizabeth—the lawyer who approved el-Masri's rendition—was disciplined, but has since been promoted to the legal adviser to the Near East Division.

Steve was reprimanded—not for his interrogation of al-Janabi, but for not having him seen by a doctor. He retired and is back at CIA as a contractor.

Gordon—the Deputy at the Baghdad station at the time of the worst torture—was temporarily barred from working overseas and sent to training; he's

now in charge of the Pakistan-Afghanistan
Department of the Counterterrorism Center.

And, as the AP notes, several of these people
are now among Obama's key counter-terrorism
advisors. (Of course, John Brennan, who oversaw
targeting for Dick Cheney's illegal wiretap
program, is his top counter-terrorism advisor.)

No wonder Obama has no problem pushing our
Egyptian torturer, Omar Suleiman, to lead Egypt.
It's completely consistent with our own practice
of promoting our own torturers.