

HELGERSON'S REPORTS WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED

Since I've been talking so much about Helgerson, and since we now have proof that Helgerson's investigation was always central to discussions of the torture tape destruction, I would be remiss in ignoring this bit from the LAT (h/t Laura).

The CIA has completed a controversial in-house probe of its inspector general and plans to make a series of changes in the way the agency conducts internal investigations, according to U.S. intelligence officials.

CIA Inspector General John L. Helgerson has consented to more than a dozen procedural changes designed to address complaints that investigations carried out by his office were unfair to agency employees, the officials said.

But the agency will not force Helgerson to revise previously issued reports or acknowledge flaws in the reports, including one report that was sharply critical of top CIA officials for intelligence failures before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"The broader objective is to make the process fair, or fairer," said a senior U.S. intelligence official familiar with the matter.

In particular, the official said, the changes are designed to give employees a greater ability to defend their actions and present their views in reports issued by the inspector general, whose job is to be an in-house watchdog.

The officials said the changes would

probably be announced next month by CIA Director Michael V. Hayden, who ordered the internal probe this year.

Note the timing on the story: December 23. After the whole torture tape thing blew up, and after CIA had agreed to share documents with Congress. That is, after it was clear that the centrality of the Helgerson's report on interrogation methods to, at least, the Congressional inquiry into the torture tape destruction.

So sometime around the same time as the torture tapes were blowing up in CIA's face, Michael Hayden reached an agreement with Helgerson that would change the process of IG reports going forward, but would not change the report at the center of the scandal.

And how convenient that both men, Hayden and Helgerson, have only now recused themselves from the ongoing investigation.