

# TORTURE TAPES AND CIA RETIREMENTS

The NYT originally broke the news of the torture tape destruction on December 6, 2007. And on October 25, 2007, the government informed Leonie Brinkema that they had found three unrelated tapes of interrogations that should have been disclosed during the Moussaoui trial. Those two events were the first we had confirmation of the scandal surrounding the CIA's taping—and subsequent destruction—of torture tapes.

Those events followed—distantly—the retirement of Jose Rodriguez, who we know was in charge of CTC when the torture tapes were made and was later in charge of Clandestine Services when the torture tapes were destroyed. Rodriguez's replacement was reported publicly on September 14 and he left on September 30.

The torture tape revelations also followed—distantly—the September 25 withdrawal of the nomination of John Rizzo to be CIA General Counsel, a function had he filled on an interim basis for some years. We know Rizzo was involved in the authorization of torture, though he claimed to be mysteriously out of the loop of 2005 discussions about whether or not to destroy the torture tapes.

Given the lapse of time between the Rodriguez retirement and the Rizzo withdrawal, it was unclear whether there was a connection.

And while it's still unclear whether there's a connection, it turns out the timing of CIA internal discussions about the torture tape destruction and Rodriguez' retirement and Rizzo's withdrawal is much closer than we knew.

The torture tapes FOIA reveals that the CIA was discussing the torture tape destruction on September 25 and October 5, 2007. It describes a Top Secret September 25, 2007 email “discussing the review and disposition of the tapes” and must have attached these earlier discussions

(that's why they were included in this Vaughn Index). And it describes a Secret October 5, 2007 email which appears to link to the earlier email approving of the destruction of the tapes. John Durham has claimed a law enforcement exemption over the latter of these two emails, suggesting that release of that email would interfere with whatever investigation of the torture tape destruction he is doing.

Again, not that there's a connection, but CIA was linking to discussions that Rodriquez was involved in and Rizzo may have been involved in at precisely the time they effectively ended their CIA careers.