

YET ANOTHER TORTURE COVER-UP



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When the Brits announced a year ago they'd hold an inquiry into torture, I suggested it was an attempt to get torture victims like Binyam Mohamed to settle so the British government could conduct a sham investigation. In November, Mohamed and others agreed to a settlement.

And today we discover (shock!) that the investigation is a whitewash after all. (h/t fatster)

The government's plans for an inquiry into the UK's role in torture and rendition after 9/11 are in disarray after human rights groups queued up to denounce it as a sham and lawyers for the victims said they were boycotting the hearings.

Their anger was prompted by the publication of the detailed terms of references and protocols under which the inquiry will be run by Sir Peter Gibson, a retired judge. It showed that key hearings will be held in secret and the cabinet secretary will have the ultimate say over what the public will and will not learn.

Individuals subjected to rendition and torture during the so-called war on terror will not be permitted to ask questions of MI5 or MI6 officers and the inquiry will not seek any evidence from foreign intelligence agencies, such as the CIA, about British involvement in the torture and abuse of detainees.

The protocol states that the aim is to “establish a reliable account of what happened”, but critics point out that it also says the inquiry “will not request evidence from the authorities of other countries or their personnel”.

The Western democracies—Spain, Germany, the UK and, of course, the US (Poland has not yet thrown their inquiry)—are getting pretty good at this torture kabuki.

But I guess with all the practice they’ve had, that’s not surprising.