

## Quotes

(Excerpted from Worship Service, No2Torture Gathering, January 6, 2006)

Kirsten Klepfer, Pastor, Grinnell, Iowa

### Voices from prison:

*“...They were laughing, taking pictures, and they were stepping on our hands with their feet. And they started taking one after another and they wrote on our bodies in English. I don't know what they wrote, but they were taking pictures after that. Then, after that they forced us to walk like dogs on our hands and knees. And we had to bark like a dog and if we didn't do that, they start hitting us hard on our face and chest with no mercy. After that, they took us to our cells, took the mattresses out and dropped water on the floor and they made us sleep on our stomachs on the floor with the bags on our head and they took pictures of everything.”*

Abu Ghraib Detainee, Haidar

Haidar was released without charge or trial in April 2004.

*“[T]hey treated us like animals, not humans. They kept doing this for a long time. No one showed us mercy. Nothing but cursing and beating. Then they started to write words on our buttocks, which we didn't know what it means. After that they left us for the next two days naked with no clothes, with no mattresses, as if we were dogs.”*

Abu Ghraib Detainee Nori, January 2004.

*Then [the guard] brought a box of food and he made me stand on it, and he started punishing me. Then a tall black soldier came and put electrical wires on my fingers and toes and on my penis, and I had a bag over my head. Then he was saying 'which switch is on for electricity?'*

Iraqi detainee, Abu Ghraib prison, January 16 2004

*“It was a very bad place. Whenever I started to fall asleep, they would kick on my door and yell at me to wake up. When they were trying to get me to confess, they made me stand partway, with my knees bent, for one or two hours. Sometimes I couldn't bear it anymore and I fell down, but they made me stand that way some more.”*

Mohammed Ismail Agha, aged 13

*"First the group took her out of her cell and escorted her down the cellblock to an empty cell. One unidentified soldier stayed outside the cell; while another held her hands behind her back, and the other forcibly kissed her. She was escorted downstairs to another cell where she was shown a naked male detainee and told the same would happen to her if she did not cooperate. She was then taken back to her cell, forced to kneel and raise her arms while one of the soldiers removed her shirt. She began to cry, and her shirt was given back as the soldier cursed at her and said they would be back each night."*

*"Our interrogations in Guantánamo, too, were conducted with us chained to the floor for hours on end in circumstances so prolonged that it was practice to have plastic chairs for the interrogators that could be easily hosed off because prisoners would be forced to urinate during the course of them and were not allowed to go to the toilet. One practice that was introduced specifically under the regime of General Miller was "short shackling" where we were forced to squat without a chair with our hands chained between our legs and chained to the floor. If we fell over, the chains would cut into our hands. We would be left in this position for hours before an interrogation, during the interrogations (which could last as long as 12 hours), and sometimes for hours while the interrogators left the room.*

Shafiq Rasul and Asif Iqbal.

*"Around 11 they took me for interrogation. It was in a metal container, a caravan, with chairs. I was forced to kneel with my feet in the air and my arms raised in the air. If my hands or feet went down they would hit me. The interrogation lasted three or four hours. They put tissue in my mouth. I could hardly breathe. There was abuse throughout the night. We were beaten on the ground. They placed tape on our mouths, and bags on our heads."*

Ahmad Mohammad Hussein al-Badrani

### **For those who have died:**

Abdul Jaleel, January 9, 2004. The autopsy report concluded that, "the severe blunt force injuries, the hanging position, and the obstruction of the oral cavity with a gag contributed to this individual's death. The manner of death is homicide."

Abd Hamad Mawhoush, November 26, 2003. Died in US custody after two soldiers slid a sleeping bag over his body, except for his feet, and began questions him as they rolled him repeatedly from his back to his stomach. Then a soldier sat on his chest and placed his hands over the detainee's mouth.. It was during this interrogation that the detainee became non-responsive. Four soldiers were charged in the death of Abd Hamad Mawhoush.

Nagem Sadun, June 6, 2003. Died three days after his arrest as a result of “asphyxia due to strangulation.” The military investigation also found that on June 6 he was left “naked outside in the sun and heat for most of the day and into the night.” A Marine reservist was convicted of assault and dereliction of duty.

### **Voices of Hope:**

*Do we sacrifice our ideals in order to preserve security? Terrorism inspires fear and suppresses ideals like freedom and individual rights. Overcoming the fear posed by terrorist threats is a tremendous test of our courage. Will we confront danger and adversity in order to preserve our ideals, or will our courage and commitment to individual rights wither at the prospect of sacrifice? My response is simple. If we abandon our ideals in the face of adversity and aggression, then those ideals were never really in our possession. I would rather die fighting than give up even the smallest part of the idea that is “America.”*

-Captain Ian Fishback  
1<sup>st</sup> Battalion,  
504<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment,  
82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division,  
Fort Bragg, North Carolina

*Lately I feel so tired. There’s always a part of me that wants just to sleep; sleep and make all of THIS – the war, my government’s policies and actions, the counter-violence of the insurgency, all the greed and sin in the world – just go away for awhile. I can identify with the apathy of citizens who give in to violence: yes, just make the evil go away, press the button, fire the missile, send the young ones off to war. Take any way out. There is no way out. But there is a way through. I tasted it the other day, when I was tired and wanted to hide, but instead went down the street to visit an Iraqi family who are going through a troubled time. On the way, I met little Huda in the street. I gave her a kiss; she gave me a piece of candy. Simple relationships, simple human connections – that’s the way through.*

– Sheila Provencher, Christian Peacemaker Teams-Iraq

*Day after day around supper time a mother and her three children walk by our living room window to the park across the street. The western sun illuminates her face. She looks tired, as do so many, many people here in Iraq. She looks a bit fearful too. Will today be the day the insurgents set off a car bomb near the park? Will today be the day the young men of the Iraqi National Guard, riding like cowboys in the back of their pickup trucks, get trigger happy and start shooting with her children in the line of fire. Underneath the fatigue and fear I sense hope and courage in her heart. It reflects on her children as the setting sun reflects on the nearby Tigris River. She lives in the present moment – aware of the dangers and uncertainties, yet not giving in to despair. She gives me courage to face the overwhelming difficulties of life in this broken land.*

-Tom Fox, Christian Peacemaker Teams, abducted November 29, 2005 in Iraq

Quotes have been taken from:

Amnesty International Reports:

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR510632005>

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR511452005>

Report sent to the Armed Services Committee:

<http://www.ccr-ny.org/v2/reports/docs/Gitmo-compositestatementFINAL23july04.pdf>

Human Rights Watch Report:

<http://www.hrw.org/background/usa/gitmo1004/>

Dialogue: Weary of War – Sustained Together (Tom Fox quote)

<http://www.cpt.org/archives/signs/2005/fall05.php#dialogue>

IRAQ REFLECTION: The perspective of love by Sheila Provencher

<http://www.cpt.org/archives/2005/may05/0003.html>