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WASHINGTON — CIA health professionals may have committed war crimes by collecting and analyzing data on brutally interrogated detainees in potential violation of U.S. and international bans on research on human subjects without their consent, a human rights organization said Tuesday.

Physicians for Human Rights called on President Barack Obama and Congress to establish a commission of inquiry to examine the participation of CIA and private medical personnel in the interrogation program, including possible breaches of domestic and international laws.

“The CIA relied upon health professionals at every step to commit and conceal the brutal and systematic torture of national security detainees,” the organization said in an analysis of [a four-year study](#) of the agency’s interrogation program released last week by the Senate Intelligence Committee. “While most of the acts detailed . . . violate international human rights and domestic laws prohibiting torture, several of these alleged violations can also constitute war crimes.”

In raising possible war crimes by medical personnel, the analysis cited bans on experimentation on prisoners that grew out of the trials of Nazi officials and doctors held in Nuremberg, Germany, after World War II.

CIA spokesman Christopher White denied that CIA medical personnel violated any laws, saying that officers of the agency’s Office of Medical Services monitored the health of detainees and “did so consistent with their professional obligations.”

“The men and women who participated in this program did so at the direction of the president and with the approval of the Department of Justice,” White said. “Sadly, the (Senate) study

makes a number of unsubstantiated allegations, mainly a result of the report's many investigative and methodological flaws. Anyone making allegations based solely on the (Senate) study does so at their own peril."

The Senate report found that the CIA's use of waterboarding, which simulates drowning, sleep deprivation and other brutal interrogation methods on suspected terrorists in secret overseas prisons produced no significant intelligence. The agency also misrepresented the program's effectiveness to the White House, Congress and the public, said the report written by the committee's Democratic majority.

The CIA admitted that mistakes were made while the program ran under the Bush administration from 2002 until 2007. The agency and the committee's Republican minority, which dropped out of the investigation after it began in 2009, found that the program gained life-saving information and disrupted terrorist plots. They denied that the techniques constituted torture.

Former Bush administration officials and former CIA officers also disputed the findings, with former Vice President Dick Cheney asserting that "I would do it again in a minute."

The committee's report showed that CIA and private medical professionals were centrally involved in the program, and that they "violated numerous international treaties, laws and ethical codes," said the Physicians for Human Rights analysis.

Leading roles were played by two private psychologists, James Mitchell and Bruce Jessen, who developed and administered the harsh techniques and formed a private company to which the CIA paid \$81 million.

Office of Medical Services personnel monitored detainees as they were subjected to the techniques and evaluated whether detainees were fit to undergo harsh interrogation.

Physicians for Human Rights said that CIA medical personnel "intentionally inflicted harm" and helped facilitate torture. In one example, it pointed out, a CIA medical expert requested that

saline solution be used to waterboard Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the alleged mastermind of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, to prevent him from developing “water intoxication.”

CIA medical personnel administered other procedures to detainees, including “rectal feeding” and “rectal rehydration.” The CIA said that the procedures were medically necessary.

The Senate report, however, found that the procedures were unjustified, and Physicians for Human Rights called them some “of the most egregious examples of direct medical participation in torture.”

In perhaps its most critical finding, the organization said that the Senate report contained new information that suggested the collection and analysis of data from the interrogations by CIA medical professionals “may constitute human subjects experimentation.”

The U.S. and international laws prohibiting research on humans without their consent grew out of experimentation by Nazi doctors on German citizens and on World War II concentration camp inmates. Such research also occurred in the United States under the Tuskegee experiment that monitored black men left untreated after being diagnosed with syphilis, the Physicians for Human Rights analysis said.

The Senate findings, the analysis said, showed that CIA medical personnel collected data, such as the length of waterboarding applications, how much water was used and detainees’ appearances after the sessions, during the early phases of the program.

The information apparently was later used by the Office of Medical Services to develop draft guidelines in 2004 for using harsh techniques and helped the Department of Justice determine in 2004 and 2005 what methods could be considered legal, it continued.

The Department of Justice’s Office of Legal Counsel “relied heavily on OMS data and analysis” in issuing a 2005 opinion that found that the harsh techniques were legal, it said.

The data collection, said the analysis, “is consistent with definitions of human subjects research under U.S. federal codes.”

“If further investigation establishes that human subjects research without consent was performed systematically on detainees then such activities are violations of the Nuremberg Code and could constitute a crime against humanity,” said the analysis.

The Nuremberg Code grew out of the Nazi war crimes trials in which medical experiments were declared a crime against humanity. A 1998 treaty that established the International Criminal Court also stated that medical experiments conducted on detainees captured in international or internal conflicts are war crimes. The U.S. signed but did not formally ratify the 1998 treaty.

Physicians for Human Rights pointed to two instances cited by the Senate report in which CIA personnel expressed concerns that “studying the results of CIA interrogations would amount to human experimentation.”

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