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'WE WILL DECLARE VICTORY SOON'



Bomb Explodes In Northwest Pakistan, Killing At Least 25



10 Years Later, Guantanamo Is STILL Open



Europe Complicity In CIA Renditions Questioned

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JILL LAWLESS | 12/19/11 09:23 AM ET | **AP**

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LONDON — A majority of 28 mostly European countries have failed to comply with freedom of information requests about their involvement in secret CIA flights carrying suspected terrorists, two human rights groups said Monday.

London-based Reprive and Madrid-based Access Info Europe accused European nations of covering up their complicity in the so-called "extraordinary rendition" program by failing to release flight-traffic data that could show the paths of the planes.

The groups said only seven of 28 countries had supplied the requested information. Five countries said they no longer had the data, three refused to

release it and 13 had not replied more than 10 weeks after the requests were made.

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Europe's silence is in contrast to the United States, which handed over Federal Aviation Administration records with data on more than 27,000 flight segments.

The groups' report said that the U.S. had provided "by far the most comprehensive response" and accused European countries of lagging behind when it came to transparency.

"Is it an access to information problem, or is it a problem with this particular issue? It's a bit of both," said Access Info Europe executive director Helen Darbishire. "European countries have not completely faced up to their role here."

Human rights campaigners have worked for years to piece together information on hundreds of covert flights that shuttled suspected terrorists between CIA-run overseas prisons and the U.S. military base at Guantanamo Bay as part of the post-Sept. 11 "War on Terror."

The CIA has never acknowledged specific locations, but prisons overseen by U.S. officials reportedly operated in Thailand, Afghanistan, Lithuania, Poland and Romania – where terror suspects including Khalid Sheik Mohammad, mastermind of the Sept. 11 attacks, were interrogated in the basement of a government building in the capital, Bucharest.

Human rights advocates claim that the CIA used the program to outsource torture of detainees to countries where it is permitted.

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In a 2007 probe, Swiss politician Dick Marty accused 14 European governments of permitting the CIA to run detention centers or carry out rendition flights over their territories between 2002 and 2005.

The European prisons were closed by May 2006, and the CIA's detention and interrogation program ended in 2009.

The Council of Europe estimated in 2007 that 1,245 CIA-operated flights had passed over the continent, but an accurate count may be impossible.

The human rights groups said they had identified 54 U.S.-registered aircraft believed

to be involved in rendition flights. They submitted freedom of information requests to 28 mostly European countries, as well as air traffic regulator Eurocontrol, for data on the planes' movements.

Along with the United States, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania and Norway



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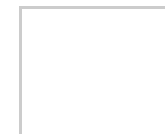
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released the information. Five countries said they did not have it – Britain, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia and Slovenia.

The groups have not received a reply from Albania, Austria, Azerbaijan, Cape Verde, Georgia, France, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Romania, Russia, Spain and Turkey.

Canada, Portugal and Sweden declined to release the information, as did Brussels-based Eurocontrol.

In the cases of Canada's air navigation controller NAV Canada and Eurocontrol it was argued that the organizations were not public bodies and so not covered by transparency laws.

Reprieve investigator Crofton Black said Eurocontrol's silence was "a shocking indictment of European complacency."

"It's equally unacceptable that countries such as Austria, France, Italy, Latvia, Romania and Spain simply ignore requests for data relating to serious human rights abuses," Black said.

The haphazard compliance with freedom of information rules is in line with a major international survey by The Associated Press, which found that while more than 100 countries have right-to-know laws, more than half do not follow them.

The two rights groups encouraged all countries to stick to their own rules and publish any information they held on rendition flights so the full truth could be known.

"There has been a systematic failure across many different countries to piece this together," Darbishire said. "It's very, very worrying."

Reprieve: <http://www.reprieve.org.uk>

Access Info Europe: <http://www.access-info.org/>

Jill Lawless can be reached at: <http://twitter.com/JillLawless>

(This version CORRECTS Corrects name of Federal Aviation Administration.)

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Esther21072011

I'm one of the 53% that pays taxes

439 Fans



01:55 PM on 12/19/2011

They were all complicit. You can't invade a country's airspace - nor land your plane - without the host country's approval. Especially after 9/11

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LMPE

I connect the most dissimilar things

1292 Fans



01:39 PM on 12/19/2011

You'd think that after decades under the Soviet boot, Poland would never even consider assisting in torture. You'd think, anyway.

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niumarmion

a temporary being

106 Fans



02:33 PM on 12/19/2011

Plus they were one of the most tolerant countries in Europe. That is why it had such a large Jewish population before the war. But when you live in between Germany and Russia, you try to be friends with the U.S.

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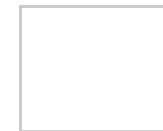
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Gracie fr

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01:19 PM on 12/19/2011

In 2003, in his State of the Union address to Congress, George Bush referred to the prisoners – more than ten and a half thousand of them – the United States had taken into custody in the course of the war in Afghanistan and the larger theatre of the war on terror. Not all were in prison, he said: some had been 'otherwise dealt with'. 'Let's put it this way,' he continued, 'they are no longer a problem to the United States and our friends and allies.....' To date, Bagram continues to be a dark hole whereas Egypt, Jordan and Syria are in too much turmoil to comply with rendition requests even as these countries torture their own citizens. That Europe has refused to deliver documents comes as no surprise. If the ICC ever became an institution worthy of its name, governments across the board would be guilty of aiding and abetting torture and in some cases torture itself. What we do know comes from the tireless efforts of "plane spotters" who stand on the edge of runways taking down serial numbers which are later traced through aviation flight records....

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Esther21072011

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01:52 PM on 12/19/2011

After those tail numbers blew the secrecy of the rendition flights - they now use planes with no tail numbers.

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HUFFPOST SUPER USER

Gracie fr

190 Fans



02:25 PM on 12/19/2011

...Logical move.Untracability.....

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an seanchus mor

24 Fans

12:17 PM on 12/19/2011

Not surprising considering the damning report of the council of Europe on special rendition and presumably the complicity of some member states in it-

<http://assembly.coe.int//main.asp?link=http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/doc06/edoc10957.htm?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc06/EDOC10957.htm>

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MikeDu

Both salubrious and lugubrious concurrently.

1967 Fans



12:08 PM on 12/19/2011

Poor CIA, what are they going to do now that their favorite despots to send prisoners to be tortured have been overthrown? I recall someone once saying you ship people to Syria if you want them tortured. You ship people to Egypt if you want them tortured to death.

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Esther21072011

I'm one of the 53% that pays taxes

439 Fans



01:53 PM on 12/19/2011

They are on a ship sailing the seas - that never docks - so it's never under the jurisdiction of any government.

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h111aryc1inton

Just trying to tell the truth

217 Fans

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08:41 PM on 12/19/2011

What a smart idea - glad to know the CIA is doing something positive with all

that taxpayer money they get.

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omobob

left coast, usa

1386 Fans



12:02 PM on 12/19/2011

> A majority of 28 mostly European countries have failed to comply with freedom of information requests about their involvement in secret CIA flights carrying suspected terrorists, two human rights groups said Monday.

A collusion among the kidnapers and torturers to get their stories straight just incase someone notices they broke the law. Torture is illegal. Even if the US says it is not. Sen. John McCain knows the difference.

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Cannonball Taffy O Jones

Khaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaan!

586 Fans



11:38 AM on 12/19/2011

I am old enough to remember the days when 'rendition' was known as 'kidnapping'

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HUFFPOST SUPER USER

omobob

left coast, usa

1386 Fans



12:02 PM on 12/19/2011

> when 'rendition' was known as 'kidnapping'

Well observed. Well noted. faved. cheers

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HUFFPOST SUPER USER
Fireslayer
 586 Fans



11:21 AM on 12/19/2011

Public awareness of torture and illegal detention is like shining infra-red light on bacteria- it soon dies away.

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Esther21072011
I'm one of the 53% that pays taxes
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01:53 PM on 12/19/2011

Or - in this case - it just moves to a different place.

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jessdog
 70 Fans

09:02 PM on 12/19/2011

I see your a big fan of torture and I bet you probably agree with the way U.S service men were tortured at the Hanoi Hilton

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