

A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE TORTURE TAPE INVENTORY

The ACLU has released the inventory of torture tapes the CIA destroyed (h/t MD).

Silly me. I once suggested that the CIA didn't have a torture tape librarian! This is, as it turns out, a fairly meticulous list of torture tapes.

The inventory makes clear something I had suggested on Monday. While there were over 90 tapes destroyed, they are still just torture tapes from two detainees. There are clear references to Abu Zubaydah in the first set (labeled Detainee #1), so the second set must be al-Nashiri (Detainee #2).

Note the description on the first tape "Do not tape over." Then tapes 89 and 90 are listed as "Tape and rewind." And the two al-Nashiri tapes are also "Tape and rewind" tapes. This suggests that at some point, the CIA stopped keeping each torture video, and started simply reusing them—much the same way the White House started reusing the storage tapes for its email (I'm sure that's just a coinkydink, really). Al-Nashiri was captured in November 2002, so they presumably switched to tape and rewind by then. (That is, incidentally, around the time they first briefed Congress on the torture they were doing, though they claimed they were not yet doing it.)

But look at the numbering. Tapes 91 and 92—presumably of al-Nashiri—are labeled Tapes 2 and 3. This suggests there's a Tape 1 that is not in this inventory. Where did Tape 1 from al-Nashiri go?

In any case, it looks like they took about six months of tapes of Abu Zubaydah's interrogations, saved them for years, and destroyed them in 2005. You think that's one of

the many reasons they have never gotten around
to charging Abu Zubaydah?