

Water Over Their Heads

Lost in the swirl of the Super Tuesday vote was a very important story about your safety and security. In order to better define the debate on torture, the Senate Intelligence Committee is investigating the interrogation technique known as "waterboarding," whereby a bound captive is placed upside down underwater.

It is not a nice feeling.

CIA director Michael Hayden told the Senators that, since 9/11, the agency had used waterboarding exactly three times in order to extract information from reluctant captives. The men involved were all al-Qaeda big shots and, according to the CIA, they all gave up information that prevented terror attacks that could have killed thousands.

Also, the director of national intelligence, Mike McConnell, told the Senators that al-Qaeda is being protected inside Pakistan and is currently training agents to infiltrate the United States with the purpose of killing civilians.

Now, this is nothing new to those of us who understand that the leader of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, has failed to control both al-Qaeda and the Taliban inside his country. So those evil people now have a sanctuary from which to launch their murderous operations.

My question is, what will the presidential candidates do about that, and about the interrogations of captured terror suspects?

John McCain, Hillary Clinton, and Barack Obama all say waterboarding is torture and should be outlawed. So let's assume it will be after President Bush leaves office. Let's also assume that most captured terrorists will not give up their comrades under standard Geneva Convention interrogation

methods.

Who wins under that scenario? Well, it looks like the terrorists do, right? With waterboarding out and chatting in, the bad guys have one less thing to worry about. Do you feel safer knowing name, rank, and jihad number is all that's required of a captured al-Qaeda?

And then there's Pakistan. What exactly are the candidates going to do about that country? I understand that change and hope and health care are big themes this year, but I'd like my health care program to include not being blown up by fanatical killers trained in Pakistan. File that under "preventive medicine."

Of course, it's the media's fault. Instead of concentrating on vital life-death issues, the press goes nuts when Bill Clinton scolds a reporter. With the "gotcha" game paramount, the waterboarding and Pakistan/al-Qaeda stories are largely ignored. The candidates are rarely even asked about them because questions about Hillary's Wal-Mart connections are so important.

The American people need to wise up. Yeah, the Presidential horse race is fun and interesting. But on vital questions of the day, the candidates spit out flimsy, general rhetoric and walk away.

To protect my family, I want the waterboarding option included amongst presidential powers. As for Musharraf, I want this guy held accountable.

Sorry if that interrupts the hope train.