

about the trials and barred access to international journalists. However, that was only the beginning of Castro's reign of terror.

Accounts of psychological torture, abuse and neglect have slowly begun to emerge from Cuba's prisons. Stories of rat- and bug-infested cells, beatings, solitary confinement and a lack of medical treatment seem to be the standard in Castro's prisons. The accounts are so horrible that they have led a spokesperson for the U.S. State Department to declare that "the Cuban Government seems to be going out of its way to treat these prisoners inhumanely."

The wife of journalist Hector Maseda, sentenced to 20 years, shared his accounts of bed bugs so rampant in one jail that prisoners cannot sleep. Family members of journalist Oscar Espinosa Chepe, who is suffering from liver disease and gastrointestinal bleeding, shared his stories of being denied medical care. His family fears he may die.

The wife of Juan Carlos Gonzalez Leyva, a blind dissident, recently presented one of his letters to the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva. In the letter he talks of the daily "sawdust shower" that he has been subjected to by a fellow inmate. Gonzalez writes that the substance "gives me the sensation of millions of bugs constantly running all over me." He continues, stating, "I don't know if this is a biological substance or a chemical agent. But I know that it is not insects because when I touch my skin there are no actual bugs that I can feel."

Other prisoners, Mr. Speaker, complain of leaking cells, no sheets, no pillows and no eating utensils.

Amnesty International recently declared the 75 dissidents and opposition leaders "prisoners of conscience." These 75 convictions bring Cuba's total to 90 "prisoners of conscience" currently in Cuban prisons. This makes Cuba the country with the highest number of prisoners with that status in the Western Hemisphere. Various other organizations inside and outside Cuba place the number of political prisoners at more than 300.

However, these are the stories and prisoner accounts that have managed to be leaked to the public. There is no telling what evils lurk in Castro's jails and what stories and horrors have yet to see the light of day.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me and condemn Castro's incarceration and mistreatment of the 75 dissidents and all of its political prisoners. Congress must send a strong message to Castro that the abuse of Cuban political prisoners has not gone unnoticed and will not be allowed to continue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PENCE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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TIME FOR AN END TO THE  
ADMINISTRATION'S SECRECY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the special congressional panel looking into the September 11 attacks issued its report. It said the intelligence community could have done a much better job in protecting the American people. That truly is an understatement.

But what stands out is the fact that the Bush administration has taken secrecy to a new unacceptable level. The administration insists on keeping secret 28 pages of that report. It is widely believed that these 28 pages deal with the possible involvement of foreign governments in the 9/11 tragedy and specifically Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Speaker, the Bush administration clearly exaggerated the immediate threat to the United States posed by the regime of Saddam Hussein in order to justify the war in Iraq, and, indeed, I have supported the calls for an independent commission to get to the bottom of that deception.

The administration's credibility has been greatly damaged by the revelations about the manipulated statements in the President's State of the Union address. Now we have 28 pages of a report of a vitally important study that are being kept away from the American people.

Do the American people not deserve to know the truth, whole truth, the whole story about 9/11? Do the families of 9/11 not deserve to know? What is the Bush administration now hiding about Saudi Arabia's possible involvement? How can the Bush administration justify keeping this secret from the American people?

In an editorial entitled "Deception and Denial," the London-based Financial Times this morning says the following about the Bush administration:

"The scale of the Bush administration's official obstruction is clear." And the article goes on to say "The Bush administration has done everything they can do to make sure that's not the focus," said William Wechsler, a former White House official who coauthored a recent report critical of the Saudi failure to cut off financing for terrorist troops." The Bush administration wants "to talk about tactical breakdown, but they do not want to talk about the elephant in the room," i.e., specifically Saudi Arabia. According to the Financial Times, "the tantalizing glimpses of the Saudi role that survived the censor's pencil are by far the report's most potentially explosive aspects."

We know there were meetings between some of the hijackers and Omar al-Bayoumi, a Saudi citizen. What does that mean in the context of 9/11? There are reports that al-Bayoumi supplied at least some of the hijackers with cash. Is that true? Unless the Bush administration drops its insistence on secrecy, the American people and families of the victims of 9/11 might never know the truth.

The Bush administration says it cannot tell the American people the whole truth because of national security concerns. One should ask, is it national security that the Bush administration cares about or is it political security? Or could it be access to Saudi oil? As the Financial Times said this morning, "It is hard to avoid suspicion that some of the coyness may have political origins." The decision to keep this information secret adds "a new layer of haze over its credibility," says the Financial Times.

It is time for the Bush administration to tell the families and to tell the American people what it knows about the possible involvement of foreign governments or foreign nationals in the events of September 11, and no one should be exempt from that scrutiny. No country, no person. It is time for an end to the Bush administration's secrecy.

[From the Financial Times, July 25, 2003]

REPORT RAISES NEW QUESTIONS ON SAUDI  
ROLE IN 9/11 ATTACKS

(By Marianne Brun-Rovet and Edward Alden)

WASHINGTON.—The September 11 hijackers received foreign-government support while they were in the US plotting the attacks on New York and Washington, the leader of a congressional inquiry charged.

The conclusion, which is strongly hinted at in the declassified parts of the inquiry's 900-page report released yesterday, will raise new questions about the role of Saudi Arabia in particular. The Bush administration insisted on deleting a 28-page section of the report that focused on the link to foreign governments.

Senator Bob Graham, the former Democratic intelligence committee chairman who led the investigation, said the hijackers "received, during most of this time [in the US], significant assistance from a foreign government which further facilitated their ability to be so lethal". He would not identify the government.

But he charged the Bush administration with refusing to release the information "to protect the country or countries . . . that were providing direct assistance to some of the hijackers".

The report also contains new evidence that US intelligence agencies and the Federal Bureau of Investigation knew far more about some of the hijackers activities than has been revealed.

While the administration has insisted that the plot could not have been unraveled from the information available, a congressional official said: "There was no smoking gun in the sense of all the details and the specifics in one piece of intelligence . . . But that is not the same as saying that this attack could not have been prevented."

Despite the deletions demanded by the administration, which held up the report's release for nearly seven months, it contains new evidence that indicates the Saudis may