

VOTER GUIDE FOR PEOPLE OF FAITH

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA AND GOVERNOR MITT ROMNEY ON TORTURE

As people of faith, we know that some things, no matter what our motivations, are always wrong.
Torture is one of them.

Torture as an Interrogation Method

President Barack Obama

In 2007: *“The secret authorization of brutal interrogations is an outrageous betrayal of our core values, and a grave danger to our security.”*¹

In 2009: *“I was clear throughout this campaign and was clear throughout this transition that under my administration the United States does not torture...We will abide by the Geneva Conventions. We will uphold our highest ideals.”*²

On January 22nd, 2009, two days into his presidency, President Obama issued an executive order banning torture and allowing the International Committee of the Red Cross access to all detainees. That order remains in place today.³

Governor Mitt Romney

In 2007: *“I oppose torture. I would not be in favor of torture in any way, shape, or form.”*⁴

In 2011: *“We’ll use enhanced interrogation techniques which go beyond those that are in the military handbook right now.”*⁵ “Enhanced interrogation techniques” is a euphemistic term used to describe waterboarding, sexual degradation, slamming detainees against walls, induced hypothermia, and other forms of abuse that are widely held to be torture.

In 2012 it was reported that Governor Romney’s advisors have recommended that he “rescind and replace President Obama’s executive order [banning torture]” and allow the use of “enhanced interrogation techniques.”⁶

VOTER GUIDE FOR PEOPLE OF FAITH

Waterboarding

President Barack Obama

In 2011: *“Waterboarding is torture. Anybody who has actually read about and understands the practice of waterboarding would say that that is torture. And that's not something we do -- period.”*⁷

Governor Mitt Romney

In 2011 when asked if he believed waterboarding is torture: *“I don't. And I, but I don't, I'm not going to lay out the list of what is and what is not torture.”*⁸

Guantanamo

President Barack Obama

In 2009 President Obama signed an executive order calling for the prison at Guantanamo Bay to be closed within a year. When he signed the order, there were 242 detainees in Guantanamo. Today there are 166 remaining.⁹

In 2012: *“I still want to close Guantanamo. We haven't been able to get that through Congress.”*¹⁰

Governor Mitt Romney

In 2007: *“I want them on Guantanamo, where they don't get the access to lawyers they get when they're on our soil...My view is we ought to double Guantanamo.”*¹¹

¹ http://blogs.suntimes.com/sweet/2007/10/sweet_blog_special_obama_react.html

² http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28574408/ns/politics-white_house/t/obama-names-intel-picks-vows-no-torture/

³ http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/EnsuringLawfulInterrogations

⁴ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ok6COVvMtNU>

⁵ http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/28/us/politics/election-will-decide-future-of-interrogation-methods-for-terrorism-suspects.html?ref=charliesavage&_r=0

⁶ http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/28/us/politics/election-will-decide-future-of-interrogation-methods-for-terrorism-suspects.html?ref=charliesavage&_r=0

⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/11/14/us-usa-campaign-obama-foreign-idUSTRE7AD0IN20111114>

⁸ http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/28/us/politics/election-will-decide-future-of-interrogation-methods-for-terrorism-suspects.html?ref=charliesavage&_r=0 (audio clip)

⁹ <http://hereandnow.wbur.org/2012/10/09/guantanamo-khalid-sheikh>

¹⁰ http://articles.nydailynews.com/2012-10-18/news/34562049_1_prison-purchase-guantanamo-prison-thomson-correctional-center

¹¹ <http://www.pri.org/stories/politics-society/despite-differences-guantanamo-prison-out-of-sight-if-not-mind-in-presidential-election-11640.html>