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REPORTER: Stephen Grey

PRODUCER: David Lewis

EDITOR: David Ross

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ARAR: The interrogator said, ‘Do you know what this is?’ I said, ‘Yes, it’s a cable,’ and he told me, ‘Open your right hand.’ I opened my right hand and he hit me like crazy. And the pain was so painful and of course I started crying, and then they asked me questions.

GREY: A prisoner released from a Syrian jail: he is one of an unknown number of terrorist suspects sent by the United States to countries where torture is routinely practiced.

PLETKA: Unfortunately there are times in war when it is necessary to do things in a way that is absolutely and completely abhorrent to most good, decent people. If it is absolutely imperative to find something out at that moment, then it is imperative to find something out at that moment, and Club Med is not the place to do it.

GREY: File on 4 has investigated this shadowy network of jails, and the system of prisoner transfers that operates outside the normal legal process. And we ask how far Britain is complicit in what, critics say, is a system of torture by proxy.

SIGNATURE TUNE

ACTUALITY OF CALL TO PRAYER

GREY: I'm at London Central Mosque, one of the biggest in Britain. Among the congregation here for Friday prayers is Yassir al-Sirri, an Egyptian dissident and a wanted man. Both Egypt and the United States call him a terrorist.

AL-SIRI: About five o'clock in the morning, the police broke in the door. They said to me, 'You are under arrest and we have a search warrant.' They took my three computers, my fax, all my files.

GREY: Al-Sirri has been convicted of no crime in Britain. A judge in one case called him an 'innocent fall guy'. But after he was arrested in October 2001, he believes his private address book and emails were passed by Britain to intelligence agencies worldwide. His evidence is that one contact after another of his was arrested in the following weeks. One was an Egyptian named Mohamed al Zery, who was claiming asylum in Sweden and asked for help with his application.

JÖNSSON: I was actually talking to Al Zery on telephone and suddenly there was a voice coming in, saying to Al Zery to end the telephone conversation that he had. It was the Swedish police who had come and arrested him.

GREY: Three weeks after the London raid, Kjell Jönsson, Al Zery's Swedish lawyer, was talking to his client about his asylum claim. He'd asked the Swedish Government to promise there'd be no quick decision on the case. But for Mr Jönsson it turned into the quickest expulsion he'd seen in thirty years of asylum work. Five hours after their arrest, both his client and another Egyptian were taking off from Stockholm's Brömma airport.

JÖNSSON: They were transported to the Stockholm Brömma airport and when arriving there, the Americans took over and they acted very quickly.

GREY: The secret of that night was the presence at the airport of an American plane, and a team of American agents who picked up the two Egyptian suspects.

JÖNSSON: They cut their clothes off, they received drugs per rectum, and they were handcuffed and shackled, they were blindfolded. The agents put diapers on them and they were dressed in orange-coloured overalls and they were taken out to a waiting US airplane.

GREY: These American agents that were there, who were they?

JÖNSSON: They were wearing black hoods and they had no uniforms. They were wearing jeans. The Swedish Security Police has described them as very professional. They managed to package them, it took something like five minutes, and it has been described that it was obvious that they have done things like this before.

GREY: These events were kept secret for more than two years, and so was the identity of the hooded American agents. But, with growing concern in Sweden, the country's Parliament has set up an inquiry and has already released documents which confirm what happened at the airport - and who the agents were. In one, an officer with the Swedish security agency revealed they'd had problems that night in getting hold of a plane and so they turned to the Central Intelligence Agency.

ANDERSSON: In the end we accepted an offer from our American friends, so to say, their counterpart service, the CIA, in getting access to a plane that had direct over-flight permits over all of Europe and could do the deportation in a very quick way.

GREY: For twenty-two years, Michael Scheuer was an officer in the CIA. In the late 1990s, he used to head the unit that was tasked with hunting down Osama bin Laden and he remained a senior counter-terrorism official until just last November. Mr Scheuer has confirmed what many have long suspected – that this case in Sweden was just one part of a much wider system by which America is secretly dispatching prisoners to jails across the world. It's called 'extraordinary rendition'.

SCHEUER: The practice of capturing people and taking them to third countries arose because the Executive Branch assigned to us the task of dismantling and disrupting and detaining terrorist cells and terrorist individuals. And basically, when CIA came back and said to the policymaker, where do you want to take them, the answer was – that’s your job. And so we developed this system of assisting countries who want individuals who have either been charged with or convicted of crimes to capture them overseas and bring them back to the particular country where they are wanted by the legal system.

GREY: The transfer of the two Egyptians from Sweden certainly appeared legal. Yet both men later complained that from the moment they arrived in Cairo, they were brutally tortured.

JÖNSSON: Al Zery was exposed to torture. He was kept in a very cold, very small cell and he was beaten and the most painful torture was the electrical torture that he was exposed to, where electrodes were put to all sensitive parts of his body at many times, and under surveillance by a medical doctor.

GREY: Did this torture leave any marks: is there any medical evidence that would support that?

JÖNSSON: Such torture does not leave medical evidence.

GREY: How do you know this happened?

JÖNSSON: I have extremely credible sources for information concerning this, but for security reasons, I cannot reveal that to you unfortunately.

GREY: Mohamed al Zery, Mr Jönsson’s client, has now been freed and was never charged with any crime. But he is still banned from leaving Egypt or from speaking openly about his time in prison. The Egyptian government denies the use of torture in its prisons. In a statement it told File on 4:

READER IN STUDIO: Torture is illegal in the Egyptian prison system and there are tight rules on the way prisoners should be treated. The National Council for Human Rights in Egypt monitors the treatment of prisoners and its findings are reported to the Egyptian Parliament. The Ministry of Interior does investigate allegations of torture, and officials who have been involved in torture will be prosecuted. On the specifics of the Swedish case, the government's position is that these allegations are, at the moment, unsubstantiated. Until there is evidence that these events took place, the government will not take any action.

GREY: We've discovered that the transfer of these two men from Sweden to Egypt by American agents was just one episode within a worldwide traffic of prisoners to countries in the Arab world. The prisoners have been captured and transported by America not only from the war zones of Afghanistan and Iraq, but from across the world including from Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Albania, the Sudan, the Gambia, Malaysia and Pakistan. Robert Baer is a former covert officer for the CIA. He left the agency after 21 years working mainly in the Middle East. He believes that rendition is slightly more sinister than just sending terrorists to prison – it's also about making them disappear and getting them tortured.

BAER: If you send a prisoner to Jordan you get a better interrogation. If you send a prisoner, for instance, to Egypt you will probably never see him again, the same way with Syria.

GREY: These countries such as Syria are countries which have been identified for years as foreign policy enemies of the United States. So how is it that an agent of the Pentagon or CIA can co-operate so easily with those regimes?

BAER: Simple rule – my enemy's enemy is my friend, in the Middle East, and that's the way it works. All of these countries are suffering in one way or another from Islamic fundamentalism, militant Islam. The Syrians have gone to the US government year after year saying, 'We need to co-operate on Islamic militants. We'll help you if you help us.' So at least until September 11 these offers were turned down. We generally avoided the Egyptians and the Syrians because they were so brutal.

GREY: Do you believe things really have changed since September 11?

BAER: Oh absolutely. I mean, September 11 justified scrapping the Geneva Convention, our rule of law as we knew it in the West.

GREY: Mr Baer says the CIA has been conducting renditions for years. What's new since 9/11 is that it has turned an occasional practice into something systematic. And he says it's now not just the CIA, but it's the US military which is also sending its prisoners to Arab jails.

EXTRACT FROM NEWS CLIP

PRESIDENT BUSH: On my orders, the United States military has begun strikes against Al Qaeda terrorist training camps and military installations of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan ...

GREY: A month after September 11, and while the war was getting underway in Afghanistan, Pakistan was beginning to crack down on foreign militants. And it was close to the Afghan border where a former coffee shop manager from Sydney, Australia, Mamdouh Habib, was arrested on a bus by Pakistani police. Though an Australian citizen, Mr Habib was soon handed over to American agents and they in turn flew him on to Cairo. His lawyer in America is Professor Joe Margulies, from the University of Chicago.

MARGULIES: The torture that he was subjected to was unspeakable, diabolically unspeakable. For instance, on some occasions he was brought into a room, handcuffed, that would slowly fill with water, until the water was just beneath his chin when he was standing on the tips of his toes, and left to stand there. And I can only imagine the terror of watching this water rise, knowing that you cannot escape, that you cannot get out. That strikes me as ingenious in its cruelty. He describes another incident where he was shackled and suspended from the wall, and his feet rested on a drum, and it had a metal bar running through it, and either end of the bar in the middle were wires, and when a switch was thrown an electric current would run through the drum

GREY: This is Dulles Airport, Washington, within easy reach of both the Pentagon and the CIA's headquarters in Langley, Virginia. Our flight logs show that on almost every occasion when the Gulfstream jet leaves America, it passes through this airport. Its destination - more than 49 cities across the world, including in Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Uzbekistan. These are all places where the US has been sending prisoners. The Gulfstream jet has been photographed by plane spotters. It's white and it's only marking is its American civilian registration number – until recently N379P.

We've seen further documents showing it was this plane that was used to take the two Egyptians from Sweden in December 2001. It was also seen two months earlier in Karachi, Pakistan, when men in masks pushed another terrorist suspect on board a flight for Jordan. The plane also flew from Washington to Cairo on 9 April 2002: a clue to how Mamdouh Habib was sent back from Egypt, at just this time, into American custody. I showed these flight logs to Robert Baer, the former CIA officer.

BAER: It's clearly connected with the renditions. The ultimate destination of these flights are places that, you know, are involved in torture.

GREY: What does the sort of number of those flights suggest to you?

BAER: It's an extensive programme and there's probably a lot of ones that use different airplanes.

GREY: We see they are using several executive jets. Why would they be using this type of plane?

BAER: There is no military marking. You can run these things out of shelf companies. You can set them up quickly, dismantle them when they are exposed, you can do it overnight – change the airplane if you have to. It's fairly standard practice.

GREY: Most people taken on such jets to a prison cell can't tell their story – or how they've been treated since. But there is one Canadian citizen, rendered to a Syrian jail cell by the US, who is now free to speak.

ACTUALITY IN OTTAWA

ARAR: We are in downtown Ottawa, it's minus 27. You never appreciate this freedom, you never know the value of it until you go through something like that.

GREY: Maher Arar is a mobile phone technician from Ottawa, Canada. In September 2002, he was returning home from a holiday in Tunisia and was changing planes at JFK airport in New York. He'd often visited and worked in the US, so he didn't expect any problems. But he never imagined just how far things would go.

ARAR: They took me to a room and they took my fingerprints and my photograph, and all of a sudden the FBI officials showed up. At the beginning it was routine questions about my travels. But then I became so surprised when they started questions about my relationships with people I knew in Ottawa, and that's when I said, 'My God, what's going on here is something more than routine questions,' you know.

GREY: What did they accuse you of doing during that questioning?

ARAR: Nothing. I did not know about the allegations until a couple of days later, they handed me over a very brief document alleging that I was a member of Al Qaeda, without presenting any evidence, and what that statement claimed is that they had classified information that they could not reveal to me.

GREY: It became clear the reason for his arrest was information passed to the US by Canada. Canada had its own secret investigation underway into a terrorist suspect in Ottawa. It seemed that Mr Arar had once used this man's name as an emergency contact when he signed for a lease on a flat. Though he is a Syrian national by birth, Maher Arar is also a citizen of Canada and has lived in Canada for seventeen years. So he was surprised to be answering these questions in New York that could so easily be dealt with back home - in Ottawa.

ACTUALITY OF SIREN

GREY: I'm standing outside an imposing building in a rundown suburb of Brooklyn, on the edge of the Hudson River. It's the Metropolitan Detention Centre. While being held here, Mr Arar got the first hint of what the Americans wanted to do with him.

ARAR: One of the INS officials, which is the Immigration Service in the States, he asked me to volunteer to go to Syria, and I was shocked to hear that, you know. I said, 'I'm going to Canada, I'm going home, why do you want me to go back to Syria?' and he said, 'You are special interest,' and really I don't know what that means, but when he insisted, I said, 'Well why don't you let me go back to Switzerland? That's where I transited before I came to New York.' And he kept repeating, I am special interest.

GREY: Why were you concerned that they might send you back to Syria?

ARAR: The serious allegations they had against me made me very worried, you know. And, frankly, one of my relatives was put in prison in Syria back in the eighties because he was accused of being a member of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement, and I heard stories from my parents when I moved to Canada, where people were tortured just because they had a link with any member of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement. I was very very scared. I started crying all the time, and emotionally I felt like hopeless, you know, and destroyed.

GREY: Twelve days after his first arrest at JFK, Mr Arar was woken at three in the morning to be told he was being removed from the US. He was driven to New Jersey and, still strapped in chains, was put aboard an executive jet.

ARAR: I thought when they put on this private jet with its leather seats, I started thinking about myself - who am I for them to do that? Am I that important for them? What kind of information I could offer to them. So I started thinking, what's going on here? So when they fed me this nice dinner, and there's a tradition, by the

GREY: Three days short of a year after being placed into Syrian custody, Maher Arar was released and flown home to Ottawa. No legal charges have ever been made against him by either Canada nor Syria. In Canada, his case has caused a political outcry and there's a public inquiry underway.

NEVE: I think Maher Arar's case suggests a very worrying scenario, that to know somebody who knows somebody who knows somebody may be enough in a post September 11 world to see you end up in a foreign jail cell experiencing torture.

GREY: There is no way for us to verify his claims of torture, but Alex Neve, the head of Amnesty International in Canada, has no doubts.

NEVE: I believe that Maher Arar was tortured in Syria. I believe it for a number of reasons. I interviewed him in considerable detail, and in the course of my many years of work with Amnesty International I have interviewed torture survivors here in Canada, in refugee camps, individuals who have just been released from jail cells, and I found his experience to be consistent and credible with what I have known and learnt and experienced at other interviews. It was also consistent with information that Amnesty has built up over many many years of work with respect to torture in Syria. The information he provided about how he was treated, descriptions of torture techniques, descriptions of the cells in which he was being held was consistent with what we have heard from other individuals who have experienced and survived torture in Syria.

GREY: Canada's inquiry into Maher Arar's case is asking detailed questions about how he got sent to Syria – and who actually authorised it. One of those in a position to know how the system works is Michael Scheuer, the former CIA official. He was one of the original architects of the policy of extraordinary rendition. Mr Scheuer headed the Osama bin Laden unit at the CIA and rendition was a tool they developed to deploy against Al Qaeda. Mr Scheuer has written two books about the war on terror, under the pseudonym 'anonymous' – but he's never talked before with such candour about the policy of rendition.

What kind of oversight is there in this process? Who signs off on it?

SCHEUER: There is a large legal department within the Central Intelligence Agency, and there is a section of the Department of Justice that is involved in legal interpretations for intelligence work, and there is a team of lawyers at the National Security Council. And on all of these things those lawyers are involved in one way or another and have signed off on the procedure. The idea that somehow this is a rogue operation that someone has dreamed up is just absurd.

GREY: But how high would each individual operation have to be approved? Does the President sign off on each one?

SCHEUER: As I remember when I was the chief, after the lawyers have vetted the information and had said, 'Okay, you can do this legally,' I think it went to either the Director of Central Intelligence or to the Assistant Director of Central Intelligence. So basically the number one and two men in the intelligence community are the ones who sign off.

GREY: But it seems that some innocent people are just getting caught up in this.

SCHEUER: I have never been involved in a case where I was not convinced, based on the intelligence, the information that was available, that these people deserved to be off the street. I very seriously doubt that any operation of this sort has ever been conducted unless it was reviewed by the legal authorities and finally approved. Now, were mistakes made? Absolutely. It is impossible not to have a mistake in the business of espionage and intelligence. There was never anything flip or blasé about the way this was approached. It was a deadly serious business, and if we were wrong, we were wrong. But the evidence pointed us toward what we did.

GREY: Mr Scheuer is under no illusions that these prisoners may be tortured. But he thinks that's not the business of an intelligence officer.

SCHEUER: The bottom line is getting anyone off the street who you're confident has been involved or is planning to be involved in operations that could kill Americans is a worthwhile activity.

GREY: Even if they are given electric shock treatment?

SCHEUER: The thing you have to remember, especially about the US clandestine service, is that it is peculiarly the tool of the Executive Branch and of the President. There is no operation in which the CIA has been involved in, for example, against either Al Qaeda or other Sunni terrorists that has not been approved by the legal authorities. So what do you do when you are given a task, you're told it's legal – proceed. I personally have no problem with doing any operation as long as it is judged legal by my superiors.

GREY: Even if that involves torture?

SCHEUER: It wouldn't be us torturing them. And I also think that there is a lot of Hollywood involved in our portrayal of torture in Egypt and in Saudi Arabia. It's rather hypocritical to worry about what the Egyptians do to people who are terrorists and not condemn the Israelis for what they do to people they deem terrorists. Human rights is a very flexible concept. It kind of depends on how hypocritical you want to be on a particular day.

GREY: But critics find it difficult to reconcile rendition with claims by President Bush and his government to uphold the United Nations Convention Against Torture, which states that:

READER IN STUDIO: No state shall expel, return or extradite a person to another state where there are substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture.

GREY: Every year, the US State Department condemns and details human rights abuse and torture in countries like Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. Last year's country report on Egypt, for example, described torture as "common and persistent." So, how does the US justify the rendition of prisoners to these countries? The US Department of Defense, the CIA, and the State Department all declined requests for interviews. But we did speak to Danielle Pletka, a vice president of the American Enterprise Institute, a think-tank in tune with the politics of the Bush administration.

PLETKA: I'm not a big fan of torture. I'm not a big fan of Syria or the way Egypt chooses to run its prisons and its security system, so I don't want to say that this is a blanket endorsement of either these countries or their tactics. Unfortunately, there are times in war when it is necessary to do things in a way that is absolutely and completely abhorrent to most good, decent people. And while again I don't want to say that the United States has engaged routinely in such practices, because I don't think that it is routine by any standard, but that said, if it is absolutely imperative to find something out at that moment, then it is imperative to find something out at that moment, and Club Med is not the place to do it.

GREY: So you think it's fair to use others for interrogation?

PLETKA: It's really not a question of fair. It's a question of trying to get to the bottom of the planning and operation of extremist groups that want to use terrorist tactics against us. This is about stopping murder. At the end of the day, I don't think that many Americans are uncomfortable with the idea that almost all means should be used in order to stop those kinds of actions.

GREY: In Europe, however, there are signs that law enforcement agencies are beginning to question these kind of trade-offs, and ask whether rendition by US agents might even amount to illegal kidnap. In Germany, prosecutors are investigating one credible case of a German citizen who says he was snatched by US agents while visiting Macedonia. He was sent to Afghanistan. And in Italy, File on Four has learned of another investigation underway into the daylight kidnapping of a suspected Al Qaeda activist. It's another case with the hallmarks of rendition.

ACTUALITY IN MILAN

GREY: It was here, on Milan's Via Guerzona at noon on February 16, 2003, where an Egyptian named Abu Omar disappeared on what should have been a ten minute walk from his home to a local mosque. An eyewitness said he was stopped on the street by three white men, with a van drawn up onto the pavement. Abu Omar had been under surveillance by Italian authorities but they've denied any role in his disappearance. The suspicion is he was seized by American agents, taken to a US Air Force Base, and flown on to Egypt.

GREY cont: Armando Spaturo, the deputy chief prosecutor of Milan, is investigating the case as a kidnap. And, although he refused to be drawn on who might be responsible, he wants to find out how Abu Omar ended up in Egypt. You are convinced that he is in Egypt?

SPATURO: Yes. I cannot disclose any confidential information on the investigation, but we are absolutely sure.

GREY: Is it possible that he organised his own kidnap, that this was an attempt to escape from the Italian police?

SPATURO: No. Absolutely. We are sure that he preferred to remain in Italy with all his friends, because in these days we were tapping his conversations and we had no element to suppose that he wanted to escape.

GREY: We know your investigation is not finished and nothing is proven in this case, but if it is true that American agents did take Abu Omar to Egypt, if it's true, would that actually be illegal?

SPATURO: If it was true, it would be a serious breach of Italian rule. It would be absolutely illegal.

GREY: If other countries are beginning to question American policy on rendition, there is no sign of such concerns yet expressed in Britain. But there are indications that Britain plays an active part in providing the intelligence that leads to capture and rendition by the US – even of British citizens. Wahab Al-Rawi, an engineer, came to this country two decades ago to escape the repression of Saddam Hussein and he was given a British passport. On November 8, 2002, he was on business in Banjul, capital of the Gambia in West Africa. He went to the airport that night to meet his brother Bisher and two other business partners. But then things started to go wrong. They were all arrested and handed over by the Gambians for interrogation by American agents.

AL-RAWI: The American started questioning me about the business, what we were doing, if I had any connections with any terrorists, and he would go on and on and on, trying to prove a theory, for example, where he would say, 'Well actually you are here to carry out operations against American targets,' and I would tell him, why would we come through the airport, you know, if we were real terrorists we could have gone through the borders, which are porous and unguarded. When he was finished, you know, two hours later, I asked him if I could see, now I could see the High Commissioner, and he told me who do you think ordered your arrest? He was inferring that the British had ordered the arrest.

GREY: Were you surprised by what he said?

AL-RAWI: Oh definitely, very surprised, because I didn't know why they ordered my arrest.

GREY: But what was strange to Wahab al Rawi was that he was being questioned at all in Africa and by US intelligence agents. He had already spoken to agents from Britain's security service, MI5, who had met him back at London City Airport.

AL-RAWI: I passed through the checkpoint and I went to the waiting lounge, I was having my coffee. A gentleman came and approached me. He asked if I could follow him into a room to be asked a few questions, so I did. There were two gentlemen, one sat at the table and the other by the door. They introduced themselves as the British Security Service. They asked me all the usual questions. They asked me who I knew, they asked me what I was doing, where I was going, and I showed them all the paperwork and all my bank statements and I showed them that this is a legitimate business, nothing sinister about it.

GREY: Did they actually accuse you of anything at all?

AL-RAWI: No, no, they were very very helpful, they were very nice. They wanted to find out if I was legitimate.

GREY: And did they suggest that you might have any problems when you went to the Gambia?

AL-RAWI: No. They wished me all the luck. All of their questions were satisfactory and all my answers seemed to be satisfactory to them.

GREY: After twenty-seven days of questioning in the Gambia, Mr al Rawi was finally freed by the Americans, who had no evidence he was involved in terrorism or any kind of political activity. But his brother Bisher and another of his partners were detained. On December 8, 2002, the same Gulfstream executive jet we've been tracking was flown out from Washington DC to Banjul. It's likely this was the same plane that took them on to Afghanistan and then to Guanatamo Bay, Cuba, where both remain. The flight logs of the Gulfstream executive jet also show it was a regular visitor to Britain.

EXTRACT FROM FLIGHT LOGS

READER IN STUDIO: 15 January 2002:

READER 2 IN STUDIO: Prestwick to Washington.

READER IN STUDIO: 12 February 2002:

READER 2 IN STUDIO: Queen Alia Airport, Jordan to Prestwick.

READER IN STUDIO: 24 July 2003:

READER 2 IN STUDIO: Cairo to Glasgow.

READER IN STUDIO: 12 September 2003:

READER 2 IN STUDIO: Aqaba Airport, Jordan to Prestwick.

GREY: We wanted to ask the Foreign Office about these flights, about Britain's involvement in the arrests in Gambia, and about rendition. But no minister was available to be interviewed.

READER IN STUDIO: 15 May 2004:

READER 2 IN STUDIO: Marrakech to Northolt.

READER IN STUDIO: 25 June 2004:

READER 2 IN STUDIO: Oman to Prestwick.

GREY: Politicians too have found it difficult to get answers. Conservative MP Andrew Tyrie has been asking the Foreign Office about Britain's role in rendition.

You've raised the issue of rendition with the government. Have you had any kind of satisfactory answer?

TYRIE: No. Far from it. I get very slow and incomplete replies to letters I write or to questions I raise in the House, whether orally or in writing. This whole area makes me more and more concerned. It's important that we take a stand as a country against, essentially, what many would regard as abuses of human rights, and I think we should make it absolutely clear that we deprecate the removal of people from one jurisdiction to another in order to have them tortured.

GREY: Although they wouldn't be interviewed, the Foreign Office did issue a statement in which they said they were strongly opposed to torture.

READER IN STUDIO: Evidence obtained as a result of any acts of torture by British officials, or with which British authorities were complicit, would not be admissible in criminal or civil proceedings in the UK. It does not matter whether the evidence was obtained here or abroad. Of course, the prime purpose for which we need intelligence on counter-terrorism targets is to avert threats to British citizens' lives. Where there is reliable intelligence bearing directly on such threats, it would be irresponsible to reject it out of hand.

GREY: The sharing of intelligence and a wider co-operation between countries is essential to defeating the threat from global terrorists. But, as we've seen, it can also sometimes lead to the arrest and torture of innocent people. And even among the architects of the policy of rendition, there are those like the CIA's Michael Scheuer, who believe that, in working so closely with the countries that reject human rights, the West is storing up problems for the future.

SCHEUER: Any kind of a detainee capture is a technical success, but in the strategic sense we are losing, and one of the main reasons is because of our support for dictatorships in the Muslim world. We're in a lot of positions around the world where we don't have a lot of options, and sometimes you have to work with the devil. As long as American policymakers don't address the idea of how to handle people we capture in some sort of a systematic way that is consistent with the American legal system, we have no choice but to use those people. So you do what you can with what you have.

SIGNATURE TUNE