

1 La Rond Baker, WSBA No. 43610  
2 lbaker@aclu-wa.org  
3 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF WASHINGTON FOUNDATION  
4 901 Fifth Avenue, Suite 630  
5 Seattle, WA 98164  
6 Phone: 206-624-2184

7 Steven M. Watt (*pro hac vice* pending)  
8 Dror Ladin (*pro hac vice* pending)  
9 Hina Shamsi (*pro hac vice* pending)  
10 Jameel Jaffer (*pro hac vice* pending)  
11 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION FOUNDATION  
12 125 Broad Street, 18th Floor  
13 New York, New York 10004

14 Paul Hoffman (*pro hac vice* pending)  
15 Schonbrun Seplow Harris & Hoffman, LLP  
16 723 Ocean Front Walk, Suite 100  
17 Venice, CA 90291

18 Attorneys for Plaintiffs

19 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
20 FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

21 SULEIMAN ABDULLAH SALIM,  
22 MOHAMED AHMED BEN SOUD, OBAID  
23 ULLAH (AS PERSONAL  
24 REPRESENTATIVE OF GUL RAHMAN),

25 Plaintiffs,

26 v.

JAMES ELMER MITCHELL and JOHN  
"BRUCE" JESSEN

Defendants.

Civil Action No.

2:15-CV-286-JLQ

COMPLAINT AND  
DEMAND FOR  
JURY TRIAL

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Defendants James Elmer Mitchell and John “Bruce” Jessen are psychologists who designed, implemented, and personally administered an experimental torture program for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (“CIA”).
2. To create a torture program with a scientific veneer, Defendants drew on experiments from the 1960s in which researchers taught dogs “helplessness” by subjecting them to uncontrollable pain. Defendants theorized that if human beings were subjected to systematic abuse, the victims would become helpless and unable to resist an interrogator’s demand for information. The CIA adopted Defendants’ approach and paid Defendants to devise, supervise, refine, and evaluate the resulting torture program. With Defendants’ support, the CIA sought and obtained authorization from U.S. government agencies and officials for use of torture and cruel methods, and, over time, for the program’s continuation and expansion.
3. Plaintiffs Suleiman Abdullah Salim and Mohamed Ahmed Ben Soud were kidnapped by the CIA and tortured and experimented upon in accordance with Defendants’ protocols. They were subjected to

1 solitary confinement; extreme darkness, cold, and noise; repeated  
2 beatings; starvation; excruciatingly painful stress positions; prolonged  
3 sleep deprivation; confinement in coffin-like boxes; and water torture.  
4  
5 Plaintiffs Salim and Ben Soud suffered lasting psychological and  
6 physical damage from this torture. Gul Rahman was tortured in many  
7 of the same ways, including after Defendant Jessen trained and  
8 supervised CIA personnel to apply these methods. Shortly after that  
9 training, Mr. Rahman died as a result of hypothermia caused by his  
10 exposure to extreme cold, exacerbated by dehydration, lack of food,  
11 and his immobility in a stress position. His family has never been  
12 officially notified of his death and his body never returned to them.  
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- 15  
16 4. Plaintiffs Salim, Ben Soud, and Mr. Obaid Ullah on behalf of Mr.  
17 Rahman's estate bring this action against Defendants for their  
18 commission of torture, cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment; non-  
19 consensual human experimentation; and war crimes, all of which  
20 violate well-established norms of customary international law.  
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**II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

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3 5. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C.  
4 § 1331 (federal question); 28 U.S.C. § 1332 (diversity jurisdiction);  
5 and 28 U.S.C. § 1350 (Alien Tort Statute).

6  
7 6. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant John “Bruce”  
8 Jessen because he is domiciled in Spokane, Washington.

9  
10 7. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant James Elmer  
11 Mitchell because these causes of action arise from or are connected  
12 with his extensive business activities and residence in Washington  
13 State.

14  
15 8. Venue is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(3).

**III. PARTIES**

16  
17 9. Plaintiff Suleiman Abdullah Salim is a Tanzanian citizen. In March  
18 2003, the CIA and Kenyan Security Forces captured Mr. Salim in  
19 Somalia, where he was working as a fisherman and trader, and  
20 rendered him to Kenya. From there the CIA rendered Mr. Salim to an  
21 Agency prison in Afghanistan, referred to in an official U.S.  
22 government report as COBALT. Mr. Salim was held at COBALT  
23 from March 2003 until May 2003. He was then transferred to a second  
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1 CIA prison in Afghanistan, referred to as the “Salt Pit,” where he was  
2 held for 14 months. In July 2004, Mr. Salim was transferred from the  
3 custody of the CIA to the custody of the U.S. military and held at a  
4 prison at Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan for four years. He  
5 was released from U.S. custody on August 17, 2008 and given a  
6 memorandum from the U.S. Department of Defense stating that he  
7 “has been determined to pose no threat to the United States Armed  
8 Forces or its interests in Afghanistan.” The U.S. government has  
9 never charged Mr. Salim with any crime. He currently lives in  
10 Zanzibar with his wife and their three-year-old daughter.

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- 15 10. Plaintiff Mohamed Ahmed Ben Soud (formerly Mohamed Shoroeiya,  
16 Abd al-Karim) is a Libyan citizen. In April 2003, U.S. and Pakistani  
17 forces captured Mr. Ben Soud in Pakistan, where he was living in exile  
18 from Muammar Gaddafi’s regime. The CIA rendered him to  
19 COBALT. Mr. Ben Soud was held at COBALT for a year, until April  
20 2004. He was then transferred to a second CIA prison, where he was  
21 held for 16 months, until August 2005. The U.S. government has  
22 never charged Mr. Ben Soud with any crime. In August 2005, the CIA  
23 rendered Mr. Ben Soud to Libya, where he was imprisoned by  
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1 Gaddafi's regime for over five years. Mr. Ben Soud was released from  
2 prison on February 16, 2011, following the overthrow of Gaddafi. Mr.  
3 Ben Soud lives in Misrata, Libya, with his wife and their three  
4 children.  
5

6 11. Plaintiff Obaid Ullah is an Afghan citizen and the personal  
7 representative of the estate of Gul Rahman. Mr. Rahman was also an  
8 Afghan citizen. In 2002, Mr. Rahman and his family were living as  
9 refugees in the Shamshato Refugee Camp, Peshawar, Pakistan. On or  
10 around November 5, 2002, the CIA captured Mr. Rahman in  
11 Islamabad, Pakistan, where he had gone for a medical checkup, and  
12 rendered him to COBALT. On November 20, 2002, Mr. Rahman was  
13 tortured to death. Mr. Rahman is survived by his wife and four  
14 daughters.  
15

16 12. Defendant James Elmer Mitchell is a U.S. citizen and a psychologist.  
17 Defendant Mitchell was the chief psychologist at the U.S. Air Force  
18 Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape ("SERE") training program,  
19 Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington. From 2001 to 2005, Defendant  
20 Mitchell worked as an independent contractor for the CIA. From 2005  
21 to 2009, Defendant Mitchell was the Chief Executive Officer of a  
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1 company he co-founded, Mitchell, Jessen & Associates, with corporate  
2 headquarters and offices in Spokane, Washington, through which he  
3 worked under contract to the CIA.  
4

- 5 13. Defendant John “Bruce” Jessen is a U.S. citizen and a psychologist.  
6 Defendant Jessen was the chief psychologist for the Department of  
7 Defense Joint Personnel Recovery Agency, which oversees all four of  
8 the SERE training programs, serving there until 2002. From 2002 to  
9 2005, Defendant Jessen worked as an independent contractor for the  
10 CIA. From 2005 to 2009, Defendant Jessen was the President of a  
11 company he co-founded, Mitchell, Jessen & Associates, with corporate  
12 headquarters and offices in Spokane, Washington, through which he  
13 worked under contract to the CIA.  
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17 **IV. LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

- 18 14. The Alien Tort Statute (“ATS”), 28 U.S.C. § 1350, enacted in 1789,  
19 permits non-citizens to bring suit in U.S. courts for violations of the  
20 law of nations or a treaty of the United States. Under the ATS, federal  
21 courts are authorized to recognize a common law cause of action for  
22 violations of clearly defined, widely accepted human rights norms.  
23  
24 *Sosa v. Alvarez-Machain*, 542 U.S. 692 (2004). The ATS extends  
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1 jurisdiction to federal courts to adjudicate non-citizens' claims for  
2 violation of those international law norms when the claims "touch and  
3 concern the territory of the United States." *Kiobel v. Royal Dutch*  
4 *Petroleum Co.*, 133 S. Ct. 1659, 1669 (2013).

- 5  
6 15. Defendants' conduct described herein constitutes (1) torture and cruel,  
7 inhuman, and degrading treatment; (2) non-consensual human  
8 experimentation; and (3) war crimes, all of which are violations of  
9 "specific, universal, and obligatory" international law norms, as  
10 evidenced by numerous binding international treaties, declarations, and  
11 other international law instruments. *Sosa*, 542 U.S. at 732.

12 Accordingly, Defendants' conduct is actionable under the ATS.

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15 16. Defendants Mitchell and Jessen are liable because they directly violated  
16 these prohibitions while acting under color of law.

- 17  
18 17. Defendants Mitchell and Jessen are also liable because they conspired  
19 with the CIA in violating these international law norms, or committed  
20 those violations as part of a joint criminal enterprise with the Agency,  
21 and aided and abetted the CIA in their commission.  
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1 18. This Court has jurisdiction under the ATS to adjudicate Plaintiffs’  
2 claims because they touch and concern the territory of the United  
3 States. For example:  
4

- 5 • Defendants Mitchell and Jessen are U.S. citizens;
- 6 • Defendants Mitchell and Jessen are domiciled in the United States;
- 7 • Defendants Mitchell and Jessen devised their torture plan in the  
8 United States;
- 9 • Defendants Mitchell and Jessen supervised their plan’s  
10 implementation from the United States, including pursuant to contracts  
11 they executed with the CIA in the United States;
- 12 • Defendants Mitchell and Jessen participated in and oversaw  
13 Plaintiffs’ torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment; non-  
14 consensual human experimentation; and war crimes while Plaintiffs  
15 were held in the custody and control of the CIA in detention facilities  
16 operated by the U.S. government.

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21 19. Congress’s express intent in enacting the ATS was to give non-citizens  
22 access to U.S. courts to hold U.S. citizens accountable for violations of  
23 international law norms that “touch and concern” the United States, as  
24 Defendants’ actions do.  
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**V. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

**GENERAL FACTS**

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4 20. Defendants’ design and implementation of, and personal participation  
5 in, the experimental CIA torture program is documented in, *inter alia*,  
6 official government reports, Congressional testimony, Defendant  
7 Mitchell’s own public admissions, and investigative reports by the  
8 media and non-governmental organizations. Official and public  
9 government reports documenting Defendants’ role include the CIA’s  
10 June 2013 Response to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence’s  
11 Study on the Former Detention and Interrogation Program (June 27,  
12 2013) (“CIA June 2013 Response”); CIA Office of Inspector General  
13 Special Review of Counterterrorism Detention and Interrogation  
14 Activities (Sept. 2001 – Oct. 2003) (May 7, 2004) (“CIA OIG  
15 Report”); the Senate Committee on Armed Services Inquiry into the  
16 Treatment of Detainees in U.S. Custody (Nov. 20, 2008) (“SASC  
17 Report”); and the report of the Department of Justice’s Office of  
18 Professional Responsibility Investigation into the Office of Legal  
19 Counsel’s Memoranda Concerning Issues Relating to the Central  
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1 Intelligence Agency's Use of "Enhanced Interrogation Techniques" on  
2 Suspected Terrorists (July 2009).

- 3  
4 21. Defendants' central role in devising and administering the CIA's  
5 torture program is also detailed in the Executive Summary of the  
6 Senate Select Committee on Intelligence ("SSCI") *Study of the CIA's*  
7 *Detention and Interrogation Program* ("SSCI Report"), which was  
8 publicly released on December 9, 2014. The report also identifies  
9 Plaintiffs by name as three of the 39 named victims and survivors of  
10 Defendants' "enhanced interrogation techniques." The SSCI Report  
11 "is the most comprehensive review ever conducted" of the CIA's  
12 detention and interrogation program, and is based on six million pages  
13 of material, including "CIA operational cables, reports, memoranda,  
14 intelligence products, and numerous interviews conducted of CIA  
15 personnel by various entities within the CIA...as well as internal email  
16 and other communications." SSCI Report 9.

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21 **Defendants Devise a Torture Program for the CIA.**

- 22  
23 22. Defendants Mitchell and Jessen laid the foundations for the CIA's use  
24 of torture in or around December 2001 when, at the request of the  
25 Agency, they collaborated in reviewing a document known as the  
26

1 “Manchester Manual.” The Manual was found by the Manchester  
2 (England) Metropolitan Police during a search of an alleged al-Qa’ida  
3 member’s home. The CIA assessed the Manchester Manual to be an  
4 al-Qa’ida document that included strategies to resist interrogation.  
5

6 23. The CIA requested Defendant Mitchell’s review of the Manchester  
7 Manual. Defendant Mitchell collaborated with Defendant Jessen to  
8 provide the review, even though neither Mitchell nor Jessen “had  
9 experience as an interrogator, nor did either have specialized  
10 knowledge of al-Qa’ida, a background in terrorism, or any relevant  
11 regional, cultural, or linguistic expertise.” SSCI Report 21. The  
12 Agency thought Defendants had expertise in “non-standard means of  
13 interrogation.” SSCI Report 32 n. 138 (citing CIA June 2013  
14 Response 49). It conducted no research on the theory and practice of  
15 traditional, non-coercive interrogation methods.  
16

17 24. Defendants Mitchell and Jessen produced a white paper for the CIA  
18 entitled *Recognizing and Developing Countermeasures to Al-Qa’ida*  
19 *Resistance to Interrogation Techniques: A Resistance Training*  
20 *Perspective*. In it, Defendants told the CIA that the Manchester  
21 Manual was evidence that al-Qa’ida members were trained to resist  
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1           interrogation, elaborated on their purported resistance capabilities, and  
2           proposed countermeasures that could be employed to defeat that  
3           resistance. SASC Report 7.  
4

5       25. Defendants proposed a pseudoscientific theory of countering resistance  
6           that justified the use of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, and  
7           degrading treatment. Their theory relied on the work of psychologist  
8           Dr. Martin Seligman, who in the 1960s pioneered studies on a concept  
9           called “learned helplessness.” In his experiments, Dr. Seligman  
10          restrained dogs and subjected them to random and repeated electric  
11          shocks. Dogs that could not control or influence their suffering in any  
12          way “learned” to become helpless, collapsing into a state of passivity.  
13          Dr. Seligman found that if a researcher inflicted uncontrollable pain on  
14          a dog for a long enough period, the animal abandoned any attempt to  
15          escape its confinement or avoid further pain, even if given the  
16          opportunity.  
17

18       26. Defendants hypothesized that they could “counter” any resistance to  
19           interrogation on the part of detainees by inducing the same state of  
20           “learned helplessness” in humans that Seligman had induced in dogs.  
21           They proposed that interrogators induce “learned helplessness” in  
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1 people suspected of withholding information by confining them under  
2 physically and psychologically abusive conditions and further abusing  
3 them using coercive techniques. Defendants theorized that detainees  
4 would become passive, compliant, and unable to resist their  
5 interrogators' demands for information.  
6

7  
8 27. Defendants subsequently devised and proposed coercive methods and  
9 conditions of detention that bore a distant resemblance to training  
10 techniques they had used as instructors in the SERE training programs.  
11 As part of the SERE program, military personnel volunteer for training  
12 to resist abusive interrogation in the event of capture by an enemy that  
13 does not abide by the Geneva Conventions and other international laws  
14 prohibiting torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading  
15 treatment. Defendants, who had no experience with real-life  
16 interrogations, relied on their experience with SERE training at  
17 Fairchild Air Force Base to create and justify the torture program.  
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21 28. All SERE training programs incorporate strict physical and  
22 psychological safeguards to protect students from harm, including  
23 “medical and psychological screening for students, interventions by  
24 trained psychologists during training, and code words to ensure that  
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1 students can stop the application of a technique at any time should the  
2 need arise.” SASC Report xxvi. A declassified version of the SERE  
3 training manual specifically requires that “[m]aximum effort will be  
4 made to ensure that the students do not develop a sense of ‘learned  
5 helplessness’” during training.  
6

7  
8 29. Because Defendants’ very purpose was to induce “learned  
9 helplessness,” the abusive methods that they devised and proposed to  
10 apply to CIA prisoners incorporated none of the SERE-school  
11 controls.  
12

13 30. Defendants’ hypothesis became the basis for the experimental tortures  
14 that they and the CIA inflicted on prisoners. In a memorandum dated  
15 December 30, 2004, the CIA confirmed to the Department of Justice  
16 Office of Legal Counsel (“OLC”) that “[t]he goal of interrogation is to  
17 create a sense of learned helplessness and dependence conducive to the  
18 collection of intelligence in a predictable, reliable, and sustainable  
19 manner. . . . it is important to demonstrate to the [detainee] that he has  
20 no control over basic human needs.” Defendants’ experimental  
21 “learned helplessness” model remained a key feature of the CIA’s  
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1 torture program from its inception to its end in 2009. SSCI Report  
2 484–487.  
3

4 **Defendants test, apply, and refine torture.**

5 31. In late March 2002, the CIA and Pakistani government authorities  
6 captured Zayn al-Abidin Muhammad Husayn, also known as Abu  
7 Zubaydah. The CIA rendered Abu Zubaydah to Thailand. Initially  
8 Abu Zubaydah was hospitalized for serious gunshot wounds to his  
9 thigh, groin, and stomach sustained during his capture, and from April  
10 15, 2002, he was held at a CIA black-site prison referred to as GREEN  
11 in the SSCI Report.  
12

13  
14 32. Before the CIA conducted any meaningful assessment of Abu  
15 Zubaydah’s level of cooperation, on April 1, 2002, it contracted with  
16 Defendant Mitchell to “provide real-time recommendations to  
17 overcome Abu Zubaydah’s resistance to interrogation.” SSCI Report  
18 26. That same evening, Mitchell, “who had never conducted an actual  
19 interrogation, encouraged the CIA to focus on developing ‘learned  
20 helplessness’ in CIA detainees.” SSCI Report 463–464.  
21

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24 33. Even as Mitchell and the CIA were considering Abu Zubaydah’s  
25 torture, FBI agents with interrogation experience and Arabic language  
26



1 skills were interviewing him in the hospital using non-coercive,  
2 rapport-building interrogation methods. “Abu Zubaydah confirmed  
3 his identity to the FBI officers, informed the FBI officers he wanted to  
4 cooperate, and provided background information on his activities.”  
5  
6 SSCI Report 25. FBI agents continued to obtain information from  
7  
8 Abu Zubaydah while he was hospitalized. FBI agents assisted in Abu  
9  
10 Zubaydah’s medical care and remained at his bedside to establish trust  
11 and rapport.

12 34. On the assumption that Abu Zubaydah was withholding information,  
13  
14 Mitchell recommended that Abu Zubaydah be “kept in an all-white  
15  
16 room that was lit 24 hours a day, that Abu Zubaydah not be provided  
17  
18 any amenities, that his sleep be disrupted, that loud noise be constantly  
19  
20 fed into his cell, and that only a small number of people interact with  
21  
22 him.” SSCI Report 26. The CIA ultimately adopted this  
23  
24 recommendation. In early April 2002, CIA Headquarters sent Mitchell  
25  
26 to GREEN to consult on the psychological aspects of Abu Zubaydah’s  
interrogation.

35. In the first two weeks of April 2002, an interagency conflict developed  
between the CIA and FBI over whether Abu Zubaydah should be

1 tortured. “In a message to FBI Headquarters, an FBI special agent  
2 wrote that the CIA psychologists had acquired ‘tremendous  
3 influence.’” SSCI Report 27. The conflict was resolved when the  
4 White House transferred full responsibility for Abu Zubaydah’s  
5 continued interrogation to the CIA.  
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8 36. Once in control of the interrogation, Defendant Mitchell seized the  
9 opportunity to test Defendants’ theory on Abu Zubaydah. Defendants  
10 would go on to document their methods meticulously.  
11

12 *Phase I: “Setting the conditions” for “learned helplessness”*

13 37. While Abu Zubaydah was still hospitalized, Mitchell and the rest of  
14 the CIA interrogation team implemented their “new interrogation  
15 program.” SSCI Report 27.  
16

17 38. The program began by setting abusive conditions that were specifically  
18 intended to “enhance[] the strategic interrogation process” through  
19 “psychological disorientation,” and to increase Abu Zubaydah’s “sense  
20 of learned helplessness.” SSCI Report 26 n. 94. On April 15, 2002,  
21 pursuant to Defendant Mitchell’s scripted plan, Abu Zubaydah was  
22 sedated and moved from the hospital where he was still recovering  
23 from his injuries to a tiny cell in GREEN. He was stripped naked and  
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1 held in solitary confinement. His cell was brightly lit with four  
2 halogen lights 24 hours a day. The cell's temperature was kept  
3 extremely cold and he was constantly bombarded with either loud rock  
4 music or discordant noise. Throughout, he was kept shackled to one of  
5 two chairs in his cell, and only unchained long enough to let him use  
6 the toilet, which was a bucket in the cell. His diet was restricted to  
7 minimal sustenance. He was continuously deprived of sleep;  
8 whenever he started to fall asleep, one of his guards sprayed water in  
9 his face to wake him. He was continually and repeatedly interrogated  
10 while held under these conditions for the next two to three weeks.

14 39. At the end of April 2002, assessing Abu Zubaydah to still be  
15 uncooperative, Defendant Mitchell and the rest of the CIA  
16 interrogation team at GREEN provided CIA Headquarters with three  
17 strategies for obtaining information from him. CIA Headquarters  
18 chose the most coercive option, which had been proposed by Mitchell.

21 40. In early June 2002, Defendant Mitchell and the other members of the  
22 CIA interrogation team at GREEN proposed that Abu Zubaydah be  
23 subjected to several weeks of isolation, in part to keep him "off-  
24 balance" and so the interrogation team could discuss the "endgame"  
25  
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1 for him with CIA Headquarters. SSCI Report 30. CIA Headquarters  
2 agreed and Abu Zubaydah was held in complete isolation without  
3 being asked any questions for 47 days, from June 18 to August 4,  
4 2002.

5  
6 *Phase II: “Aggressive phase” of torture and cruel, inhuman, and*  
7 *degrading treatment*

8  
9 41. In July 2002, Defendant Mitchell and the CIA assessed Abu Zubaydah  
10 as “uncooperative,” and decided that additional coercive measures  
11 were required for him to become “compliant” and reveal the  
12 information the CIA believed he was withholding. SSCI Report 31.  
13 Based in part on a psychological evaluation Defendant Mitchell  
14 conducted of Abu Zubaydah, Defendant Mitchell proposed a new  
15 “aggressive phase” of Abu Zubaydah’s torture during which he would  
16 be subjected to a regime of 12 highly coercive methods that  
17 Defendants had devised. SSCI Report 42.

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19  
20 42. Also in July 2002, on Defendant Mitchell’s recommendation, the CIA  
21 contracted with Defendant Jessen to join Defendant Mitchell to assist  
22 him in testing and developing the Defendants’ theory on Abu  
23 Zubaydah.  
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1 43. Working with the CIA, Defendants helped convince Justice  
2 Department lawyers to authorize specific coercive methods that  
3 Mitchell had initially proposed for use on Abu Zubaydah. These  
4 methods included: (1) the attention grasp, (2) walling, (3) facial hold,  
5 (4) facial slap, (5) cramped confinement, (6) wall standing, (7) stress  
6 positions, (8) sleep deprivation, (9) waterboard, (10) use of diapers,  
7 (11) use of (non-stinging) insects, and (12) mock burial. SSCI Report  
8 31–32. The CIA agreed to propose all but the “mock burial” technique  
9 to the Attorney General and OLC.  
10

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13 44. On July 24, 2002, the Attorney General gave his verbal approval to all  
14 of the proposed methods except the waterboard. Defendants and the  
15 CIA interrogation team stated that they would not proceed until the  
16 Attorney General also approved use of the waterboard. Defendants  
17 asserted that the waterboard was an “absolutely convincing technique,”  
18 necessary for use on Abu Zubaydah. SSCI Report 36. On July 26,  
19 2002, the Attorney General approved the use of the waterboard.  
20  
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22  
23 45. On August 1, 2002, OLC authorized the use of every method the CIA  
24 proposed, except that it did not address the diapering technique. The  
25 methods OLC authorized, together with others that were subsequently  
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1           devised, developed and refined by Mitchell and Jessen, were referred  
2           to as “enhanced interrogation techniques.”  
3

4           46.    On August 4, 2002, Defendants Mitchell and Jessen began what they  
5           and the CIA referred to as the “aggressive phase” of Abu Zubaydah’s  
6           torture. Defendants personally conducted or oversaw this phase,  
7           subjecting Abu Zubaydah to a combination of the 10 coercive methods  
8           on a near 24-hour basis until August 23, 2004. The abusive  
9           “conditions” of Abu Zubaydah’s detention—combining prolonged  
10           solitary confinement, sensory bombardment by light and sound, use of  
11           extreme temperature, nudity, sleep deprivation and dietary  
12           restrictions—remained in place for the duration of this phase.  
13

14           47.    At approximately 11:50 a.m. on August 4, security personnel entered  
15           Abu Zubaydah’s cell, shackled and hooded him, and removed his  
16           towel, leaving him naked. Without asking any questions, Mitchell and  
17           Jessen then placed a rolled towel around his neck like a collar and  
18           slammed him against a concrete wall. They removed his hood and  
19           performed an “attention grab” on him, directing his face toward a  
20           coffin-like box. SSCI Report 41.  
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22           48.    Defendants Mitchell and Jessen subjected Abu Zubaydah to “cramped  
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1 confinement” in two boxes that they had designed. Defendants forced  
2 Abu Zubaydah inside the larger of the two boxes, which was coffin-  
3 sized, for several hours before forcing him inside the second,  
4 significantly smaller, box, which measured 2.5 foot square and 21  
5 inches deep. In the smaller box, Zubaydah was made to squat in a  
6 fetal position, reopening the stomach wounds he had sustained at the  
7 time of his capture. When Abu Zubaydah was inside each box, a  
8 heavy cloth was draped over the outside to block any light, increase  
9 the temperature inside, and restrict the air supply.  
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13 49. Once Abu Zubaydah was removed from the smaller confinement box,  
14 Defendants Mitchell and Jessen again subjected him to repeated wall  
15 slamming. In between, they shouted questions at him, demanding  
16 information on terrorist operations planned against the United States.  
17 SSCI Report 41. Each time Abu Zubaydah denied having the  
18 information, Defendants beat him severely around his face and torso,  
19 using the facial slap, abdominal slap and facial grab techniques.  
20 Defendants repeatedly employed this routine for some six and a half  
21 hours on the first day of the “aggressive phase.”  
22

23  
24  
25 50. At approximately 6:20 p.m. on the first day, Defendants Mitchell and  
26

1           Jessen introduced the “waterboard” into the regimen. Defendants  
2           conducted two to four waterboard sessions daily in this same manner.  
3  
4           In total they waterboarded Abu Zubaydah 83 times in August 2002  
5           alone.

6           51. Over approximately three subsequent weeks, Defendants Mitchell and  
7           Jessen continued to subject Abu Zubaydah to walling, facial and  
8           abdominal slaps, the facial hold, stress positions, cramped confinement  
9           in stress positions (in the large and small boxes), prolonged sleep  
10          deprivation, and waterboarding repeatedly and in varying  
11          combinations on a near 24-hour basis.

12          52. During this period and as a result of Defendants’ methods, Abu  
13          Zubaydah, “cried,” “begged,” “pleaded,” “whimpered,” became  
14          “hysterical” and “distressed to the level that he was unable to  
15          effectively communicate.” He became “compliant” to the extent that  
16          when an interrogator “raised his eyebrow, without instructions,” Abu  
17          Zubaydah “slowly walked on his own to the water table and sat down.”  
18          When the interrogator ““snapped his fingers twice,” Abu Zubaydah  
19          would lie flat on the waterboard.” SSCI Report 42–43.

20          53. In an email dated August 21, 2002, discussing their waterboarding of  
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1 Abu Zubaydah, Defendants wrote, “As for our buddy; he capitulated  
2 the first time. We chose to expose him over and over until we had a  
3 high degree of confidence he wouldn’t hold back. He said he was  
4 ready to talk during the first exposure.” SSCI Report 471 n. 2578.

5  
6 54. Some contemporary CIA observers of Defendants’ methods were  
7 “disturbed” by what they saw and concerned about consequences. A  
8 few days into the “aggressive phase,” “[s]everal on the team [were]  
9 profoundly affected . . . some to the point of tears and choking up.”  
10 SSCI Report 44. Others were concerned that Abu Zubaydah would die  
11 from Defendants’ methods, and videotaped his interrogation in an  
12 attempt to protect themselves from legal liability. The CIA later  
13 destroyed those tapes.  
14

15  
16  
17 55. On August 23, 2002, the “aggressive phase” of Abu Zubaydah’s  
18 torture stopped. Defendants told the CIA it was a “success” because  
19 they could “confidently assess that he does not/not possess undisclosed  
20 threat information, or intelligence that could prevent a terrorist event.”  
21 SSCI Report 46. Defendants explained: “Our goal was to reach the  
22 stage where we have broken any will or ability of subject to resist or  
23 deny providing us information (intelligence) to which he had access.”  
24  
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1 *Id.*

2 56. Defendants recommended to the CIA that “the aggressive phase . . .  
3 should be used as a template for future interrogation of high value  
4 captives.” SSCI Report 46. Presumably referring to themselves,  
5 Defendants recommended that psychologists “familiar with  
6 interrogation, exploitation and resistance to interrogation should shape  
7 compliance of high value captives prior to debriefing by substantive  
8 experts.” *Id.*

9  
10  
11 57. Using their torture of Abu Zubaydah as a model, Defendants  
12 developed a phased program to induce “learned helplessness” in CIA  
13 captives through the infliction of severe physical and mental pain and  
14 suffering. Defendants “largely devised the CIA enhanced  
15 interrogation techniques,” SSCI 471 n.2578, including by designing  
16 instruments of torture such as confinement boxes. They standardized,  
17 refined and recalibrated their methods over time.

18  
19  
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21 58. Defendants and the CIA collaborated in applying their coercive  
22 methods to varying degrees as they deemed necessary for individual  
23 prisoners. In the phased program, Defendants designated coercive  
24 conditions and methods as either “standard”/“conditioning” or  
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1 “enhanced”/“aggressive,” depending on the perceived degree of  
2 physical or psychological coercion applied to prisoners.  
3

4 59. Defendants’ first phase “set the conditions” for inducing a state of  
5 “learned helplessness” in CIA captives. Abusive “conditions” in this  
6 phase began as soon as persons were captured and rendered by the  
7 CIA to its black site prisons. Conditions during rendition included  
8 sensory manipulation and humiliation to create “significant  
9 apprehension” and “dread.” Memorandum from CIA to OLC,  
10 Background Paper on CIA’s Combined Use of Interrogation  
11 Techniques (Dec. 30, 2004). This “conditioning” phase was continued  
12 once captives were imprisoned at CIA black sites. Prisoners there  
13 were subjected to some or all of: solitary confinement; constant  
14 extreme light or darkness; the perpetual loud playing of music or white  
15 noise; extreme temperatures; forced nudity or dressing solely in  
16 diapers; restrictions on food and water; shackling in painful stress  
17 positions; and prolonged sleep deprivation. Some or all of these  
18 confinement conditions remained in place for the duration of  
19 prisoners’ confinement and interrogation, including during any second  
20 “aggressive” phase of interrogation and after.  
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- 1 60. The conditions at COBALT, where all three Plaintiffs were held,  
2 conformed to Defendants' first phase. In April 2003, the CIA's chief  
3 of interrogations explained that COBALT was "good for interrogations  
4 because it is the closest thing he has seen to a dungeon, facilitating the  
5 displacement of detainee expectations." SSCI Report 50 n.240.  
6  
7 "[D]etainees were kept in total darkness. The guards monitored  
8 detainees using headlamps and loud music was played constantly in  
9 the facility. While in their cells, detainees were shackled to the wall  
10 and given buckets for human waste." SSCI Report 49. A CIA  
11 interrogator at COBALT during that time stated that detainees  
12 "literally looked like a dog that had been kenneled." When the doors  
13 to their cells were opened, "they cowered." SSCI Report 50 n.240.  
14  
15 61. If Defendants and the CIA assessed a prisoner as "resistant" after the  
16 first phase, they progressed to the second, the "aggressive phase," and  
17 used some or all of the coercive methods Defendants had initially  
18 tested on Abu Zubaydah. These methods were applied repeatedly, in  
19 combination, and in escalating fashion, until Defendants and the CIA  
20 assessed a prisoner psychologically broken.  
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1 62. Defendants trained and supervised CIA personnel in applying their  
2 phased torture program. For example, in November 2002, Defendant  
3 Jessen traveled to COBALT for approximately a week to assess the  
4 “resistance” of prisoners to interrogation and determine whether they  
5 should be subjected to the “aggressive phase” of the program. While  
6 there, he instructed and trained CIA personnel in assessing prisoners’  
7 “resistance” and in using coercion on them. Among the CIA personnel  
8 Jessen trained and supervised was the officer then in charge of  
9 COBALT, referred to in the SSCI Report as “CIA Officer 1.”  
10

11  
12  
13 63. Together with the CIA, Defendants supervised and oversaw the  
14 implementation of Defendants’ experiment. Because the program’s  
15 underlying theories had never been tested on actual prisoners before,  
16 Defendants and the CIA experimented on individual prisoners to  
17 assess whether: (1) they had been tortured long enough to induce a  
18 state of “learned helplessness” or additional torture was necessary; (2)  
19 certain combinations and sequences of torture techniques were most  
20 effective at overcoming “resistance”; and (3) prisoners became fully  
21 compliant with their interrogators’ demands once they had been  
22 reduced to a state of learned helplessness.  
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1 64. Defendants’ role in assessing and evaluating their torture experiment  
2 gave rise to significant conflicts of interest. In January 2003, CIA  
3 personnel expressed concerns over Defendants’ financial and ethical  
4 conflicts of interest in employing coercive methods, assessing their  
5 “effectiveness,” and being paid for both. They observed that “the  
6 same individuals applied an EIT [Enhanced Interrogation Technique],  
7 judged both its effectiveness and detainee resilience, and implicitly  
8 proposed continued use of the technique—at a daily compensation” of  
9 \$1,800 a day, “or four times that of interrogators who could not use the  
10 technique.” SSCI Report 66. The CIA has since acknowledged that  
11 “the Agency erred in permitting [the Defendants] to assess the  
12 effectiveness of enhanced techniques. They should not have been  
13 considered for such a role given their financial interest in continued  
14 contracts from CIA.” CIA June 2013 Response 49.

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20 65. On May 31, 2015, Defendant Mitchell confirmed in an email to the  
21 law firm Sidley Austin that he and Defendant Jessen were never fully  
22 able to assess the effectiveness of their theory and coercive methods.  
23  
24 Their contract was terminated, he stated, before they were able “to find  
25  
26

1 and pay an independent researcher, not involved with the program,” to  
2 make a final assessment.

3  
4 66. Defendants were compensated for and profited from their work with  
5 and on behalf of the CIA. From 2001 to 2005, as independent  
6 contractors to the CIA, Mitchell and Jessen each received \$1,800 per-  
7 day, tax free, amounting to \$1.5 million and \$1.1 million respectively.  
8

9 67. In 2005, as the number of detainees in CIA custody grew, Defendants  
10 formed a company, Mitchell, Jessen & Associates, with corporate  
11 headquarters and offices in Spokane, Washington, to meet the CIA’s  
12 increasing need for their services. Under Defendants’ direction and  
13 control, Mitchell, Jessen & Associates provided security teams for  
14 renditions, interrogators, facilities, training, operational psychologists,  
15 de-briefers, and security personnel at all CIA detention sites. By April  
16 2007, 11 out of 13 interrogators (85%) used by the CIA were directly  
17 employed by Mitchell, Jessen & Associates. As of July 2007, the  
18 company had between 55 and 60 employees.  
19

20 68. Until the termination of its contract by the CIA in 2010, the Agency  
21 paid Mitchell, Jessen & Associates \$81 million to implement and assist  
22 in rendition and coercive interrogation of CIA prisoners.  
23  
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1 69. Defendants and the CIA continued to use the phased torture program's  
2 most "aggressive" techniques until November 8, 2007. Defendants  
3 and the CIA subjected at least 119 individuals to either the partial or  
4 full phased program.

5  
6 70. Plaintiffs are among 39 individuals who were experimented on and  
7 subjected by Defendants and the CIA to the most coercive methods of  
8 torture.  
9

10 **SPECIFIC ALLEGATIONS BY PLAINTIFFS**

11 **Suleiman Abdullah Salim**

12  
13 71. Suleiman Abdullah Salim was born in Stone Town, Zanzibar,  
14 Tanzania in 1972. Mr. Salim left high school early to fish and trade  
15 around the Swahili coast. In 2003, Mr. Salim settled in Mogadishu,  
16 Somalia, and in March that year he married a Somali woman, Magida.  
17

18 72. On or around March 15, 2003, agents from the CIA and the Kenyan  
19 National Intelligence Service abducted Mr. Salim in Mogadishu. He  
20 was rendered to Nairobi, Kenya, where he was secretly detained and  
21 interrogated on a daily basis for some eight days by Kenyan  
22 authorities. On or around March 23, 2003, Mr. Salim was transferred  
23 to the exclusive custody and control of U.S. officials. Mr. Salim's  
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1 detention in Kenya and subsequent transfer to U.S. custody is  
2 confirmed in public statements made at the time by Kenya's then-  
3 national security chief, Chris Murungaru.  
4

5 73. The CIA rendered Mr. Salim to its COBALT black site prison in three  
6 stages: from Kenya to a U.S. Air Base in Bossasso, Somalia; from  
7 Bossasso to Djibouti; and, on or around March 26, 2003, from Djibouti  
8 to COBALT.  
9

10 74. During Mr. Salim's custody by the CIA, he was experimented upon  
11 and subjected to a regimen of torture and cruel, inhuman, and  
12 degrading treatment in accordance with the phased torture program  
13 that Defendants Mitchell and Jessen designed, supervised, and  
14 implemented. Mr. Salim suffered coercion and abuse during his  
15 rendition; torture, cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment during his  
16 confinement; and further torture and abuse through the application of  
17 at least 8 of the 10 coercive methods Defendants devised for the  
18 torture program: prolonged sleep deprivation (seating and standing),  
19 walling, stress positions, facial slaps, abdominal slaps, dietary  
20 manipulation, facial holds, and cramped confinement (large and small  
21 boxes). In addition, Mr. Salim was subjected to prolonged nudity and  
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1 to water dousing that approximated waterboarding. He was also  
2 strapped to a waterboard and threatened with waterboarding. Some of  
3 these methods were used on Mr. Salim repeatedly and in combination.  
4

5 *Phase I: "Setting the conditions" for "learned helplessness"*

6 75. The CIA began its torture of Mr. Salim during his rendition, subjecting  
7 him to severe physical and mental pain and suffering through  
8 humiliation, extreme sensory deprivation, and other forms of abusive  
9 treatment, in accordance with Defendant Mitchell and Jessen's  
10 specifications. CIA personnel first cut Mr. Salim's clothes from his  
11 body. Once he was naked, they forcibly inserted an object into his  
12 anus, causing him excruciating pain. They photographed him; Mr.  
13 Salim could sense the flash of a camera. He was then dressed in a  
14 diaper, a pair of trousers, and a short-sleeved shirt. CIA personnel  
15 stuffed earplugs in his ears, placed a hood over his head, and over  
16 those, placed a pair of goggles and headphones. They cuffed and  
17 shackled him. Disorientated and terrified, Mr. Salim was shoved  
18 aboard a small aircraft, chained to the floor between two guards, and  
19 flown some eight or more hours.  
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1 76. Upon landing, CIA personnel unchained Mr. Salim, forced him off the  
2 plane, and threw him into the back of a truck. He was pinned to the  
3 floor on his stomach—with someone’s knee pressing into the small of  
4 his back—and driven a short distance down a bumpy dirt track road.  
5 Two large men then removed him from the truck and marched into a  
6 nearby building, which was the CIA’s COBALT prison.  
7

8  
9 77. Mr. Salim was detained at COBALT for approximately five weeks.  
10 He was shackled, handcuffed, blindfolded, and in headphones when he  
11 first entered COBALT. His sense of smell was immediately flooded  
12 with an overpowering stench that reminded Mr. Salim of rotting  
13 seaweed. After his headphones, hood, and earplugs were removed, he  
14 was overwhelmed by ear-splitting noise: loud western pop-music  
15 sometimes interrupted by a mixture of cacophonous sounds like  
16 yowling and the clanging of bells. Mr. Salim could also make out the  
17 sounds of voices speaking in different languages, including English,  
18 Kiswahili, and Somali. He heard phrases such as, “*there’s no God, no*  
19 *God, no God.*” Even once his blindfold was removed, Mr. Salim could  
20 not see—the entire building was pitch black, though he sensed it was  
21 large and cavernous. Mr. Salim and other CIA prisoners came to call  
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23  
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1 COBALT “The Darkness.”

2 78. The putrid smell, crashing noises and loud music, and pitch blackness  
3 at COBALT remained constant for the entire five weeks of Mr.  
4 Salim’s imprisonment. The smell and the noise were at their most  
5 intense in Mr. Salim’s cell. The only time the noise and music let  
6 up—and then only very briefly—was when the tracks changed or  
7 when the system malfunctioned. The only light Mr. Salim saw was  
8 from the flashlights used by his guards and the dim lights and  
9 spotlights used in the rooms where he was interrogated.  
10

11  
12  
13 79. Upon arrival, guards marched Mr. Salim to a tiny, damp, and frigid  
14 concrete cell, which was about eight feet high, seven feet long, and  
15 three feet wide. It was pitch black and empty except for a rug on the  
16 floor. Mr. Salim had no bed or blanket, despite the cold, and no  
17 bathroom or washing facilities. On one of the walls there was a small,  
18 rusty metal hoop. The guards chained Mr. Salim’s arms and legs to  
19 the hoop, with his arms outstretched and at eye level. The only  
20 position he could adopt was a squatting position that very quickly  
21 became uncomfortable and extremely painful, and kept him from  
22 sleeping.  
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1 80. For approximately a week, Mr. Salim was kept in the dark in his frigid  
2 cell, continually chained to the wall in an excruciating stress position,  
3 deprived of sleep, food, and water, and subjected to deafening noise  
4 and a nauseating stench. He was in constant fear.  
5

6 81. The first sustenance Mr. Salim received was approximately two days  
7 after his arrival, when guards gave him a small piece of bread in a  
8 watery, tasteless broth and a large bottle of water. The guards briefly  
9 unchained him to allow him to eat. This was also the first time that  
10 Mr. Salim was permitted to use the metal bucket that the guards placed  
11 in his cell as a toilet. Before this, Mr. Salim urinated and defecated in  
12 his diaper and the clothes in which he had been rendered from  
13 Somalia.  
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17 82. For his entire time in COBALT, Mr. Salim was deprived of food and  
18 given the same meal—a small chunk of bread in a watery broth—only  
19 once every other day. He was given a single bottle of water every day  
20 to be used both for drinking and hygiene.  
21

22 83. The only time Mr. Salim left his cell during the first week or so in  
23 COBALT was about two days after his arrival, when two guards took  
24 him to meet with a man whom Mr. Salim assumed to be a doctor or  
25  
26

1 nurse. Mr. Salim was blindfolded for the duration of the visit and the  
2 man never introduced himself. The man conducted a general medical  
3 examination, weighing Mr. Salim and palpating various parts of his  
4 body. He paid particular attention to Mr. Salim's broken nose and  
5 fingers—sustained during his abduction in Mogadishu about two  
6 weeks before. After taking an X-ray of Mr. Salim's hand, the man told  
7 Mr. Salim that his fingers were broken, put them in a cast, and gave  
8 Mr. Salim a painkiller. Mr. Salim was provided with painkillers on a  
9 daily basis thereafter. He did not take them, however, and instead  
10 secreted them in his clothing or in his cell. Mr. Salim had become so  
11 distressed and desperate that he had begun to contemplate suicide. He  
12 thought that once he had enough painkillers he could use them to kill  
13 himself.  
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19 *Phase II: "Aggressive phase" of torture and cruel, inhuman, and*  
20 *degrading treatment*

21 84. Two or three days after his medical examination, Mr. Salim's torture  
22 increased in severity. To Mr. Salim, it seemed that the man who had  
23 examined him had given the go-ahead for more abuse.

24 85. Before implementation of the "aggressive phase," Mr. Salim had not  
25 been questioned. Mr. Salim was one of "[a]t least 6 detainees [who]  
26

1 were stripped and shackled nude, placed in the standing position for  
2 sleep deprivation, or subjected to other CIA enhanced interrogation  
3 techniques prior to being questioned by an interrogator in 2003.”

4  
5 SSCI Report 77 n. 409.

6  
7 86. For the next two or three weeks, Mr. Salim was subjected to greater  
8 humiliation, prolonged periods of sleep deprivation, repeated dousing  
9 in extremely cold water in a manner that approximated waterboarding,  
10 beatings, attention grabs, forceful slaps to the face and body, cramped  
11 confinement in two boxes—one coffin-sized and the other  
12 significantly smaller—and prolonged nudity. He was also strapped to  
13 a waterboard and threatened with waterboarding.  
14

15  
16 87. On the first day, two guards dressed entirely in black came to Mr.  
17 Salim’s cell. Working by flashlight, they unchained Mr. Salim from  
18 the wall of his cell, cuffed his hands and shackled his legs, marched  
19 him to a large, dimly-lit room, and sat him down in a chair. Mr. Salim  
20 was surrounded by eight or nine men, all but one of whom wore black  
21 hats, masks, and overalls. The unmasked man seemed to be the leader.  
22  
23 Mr. Salim later learned he was called “Viram.” Viram silently  
24 approached Mr. Salim with an electric razor in one hand. He began to  
25  
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1 shave Mr. Salim's head, and after one swipe passed the razor to one of  
2 the masked men. Each of the masked men took a turn with the razor,  
3 shaving Mr. Salim until he was bald and removing all his facial hair.  
4 The entire episode left Mr. Salim deeply humiliated, degraded, and  
5 terrified of what would happen next.  
6

7  
8 88. The two guards who had brought Mr. Salim into the room then forced  
9 Mr. Salim to stand, removed his handcuffs and shackles, and ripped  
10 the clothes from his body. Once he was naked, they cuffed and  
11 shackled Mr. Salim again and laid him down in the center of a large  
12 plastic sheet that covered part of the floor. A thin film of ice-cold  
13 water covered the surface of the plastic sheet. Using a large jug, two  
14 men repeatedly doused Mr. Salim in gallons of ice-cold water. The  
15 water was so cold it left Mr. Salim breathless. In between the water  
16 dousing, the two men kicked and slapped Mr. Salim on the stomach or  
17 face and shouted at him in English. After some 20 or 30 minutes of  
18 this water torture, the men pulled up the corners of the freezing cold  
19 sheet and rolled Mr. Salim inside. Covered in the plastic sheet, Mr.  
20 Salim was left to shiver violently in the cold for some 10 or 15  
21 minutes.  
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1 89. Mr. Salim was then taken into another room where two guards forcibly  
2 restrained him and a spotlight was aimed directly in his face. A third  
3 unmasked man then shouted at Mr. Salim in English while another  
4 man translated into Somali. Mr. Salim had a limited grasp of English  
5 but knew Somali fairly well. The interrogator demanded personal  
6 background information from Mr. Salim and asked what Mr. Salim  
7 had been doing in Somalia and who he knew there. The interrogator  
8 listed names of people and asked Mr. Salim if he knew any of them.  
9 Mr. Salim answered truthfully that he was a trader doing business in  
10 Somalia; that he had recently married a woman from there; and that he  
11 only knew one person from the interrogator's list of names, and only  
12 because he had bought a boat from that person. The interrogation team  
13 changed two times during the "aggressive phase." Throughout Mr.  
14 Salim's interrogation and the entire time he spent in U.S. custody, he  
15 was asked the same questions and he provided the same truthful  
16 responses.  
17

18 90. After roughly half an hour, Mr. Salim was taken back into the first  
19 room. His head was covered in a cloth bag, and he was again placed in  
20 the middle of the plastic sheet. His two interrogators repeated the ice-  
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1 cold water dousing, but this time the cloth bag clung to Mr. Salim's  
2 face, suffocating him. Mr. Salim felt like he was drowning. His heart  
3 felt as if it was beating out of his chest. He was paralyzed with cold.  
4 This water dousing session ended like the first: the men rolled Mr.  
5 Salim in the plastic sheet so he felt "like a corpse" and left him in the  
6 cold for around 15 minutes before he was dragged once again to the  
7 second room for interrogation. The water torture sessions followed by  
8 interrogation continued in this same manner for hours.  
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12 91. After the last water-torture session ended that first day, Mr. Salim's  
13 interrogators showed him a small wooden box, measuring about three  
14 square feet. There were holes on one side and another was hinged  
15 with a lock and padlock. Naked, chained, and shackled, Mr. Salim  
16 was stuffed inside the box and it was locked shut. The space was pitch  
17 black, and so small that Mr. Salim had to crouch over on his knees.  
18 The box smelled rancid. Mr. Salim was locked in the box for what he  
19 estimates was half an hour, though it felt much longer.  
20  
21

22 92. Mr. Salim vomited in pain and fear while he was inside the small  
23 cramped confinement box. Interrogators used this technique on him  
24 only on the first day, but they threatened to use it on him on a number  
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26

1 of other occasions during interrogations at COBALT. At one time  
2 they stuffed him inside the box for a short period without locking the  
3 door. Even the threat of this technique filled Mr. Salim with dread.  
4

5 93. Immediately after the first cramped confinement session, Mr. Salim  
6 was interrogated again.  
7

8 94. At the end of this first day of “aggressive” torture, Mr. Salim was  
9 taken back to his cell by two guards and again put in a painful stress  
10 position. The guards chained him, naked, to the metal ring in the wall  
11 but now used a slightly longer length on the leg and arm chains, which  
12 allowed Mr. Salim to sit on the floor of his cell instead of squatting. It  
13 was still extremely painful, however, and coupled with the constant  
14 loud music and cold, Mr. Salim was unable to sleep.  
15

16 95. For the duration of this “aggressive phase,” Mr. Salim was kept naked.  
17 The only time he was given clothing was during a few of his  
18 interrogation sessions. Mr. Salim did not understand why he was  
19 given clothing for these sessions, nor why he was stripped afterwards.  
20

21 96. On the second day of the “aggressive” phase, Mr. Salim was again  
22 subjected to repeated and hours-long water torture and interrogation  
23 sessions.  
24  
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1 97. After the last water torture session ended on the second day, Mr. Salim  
2 was taken to a room in which a wooden wall had been constructed.  
3  
4 The lead interrogator placed a foam collar, attached to a leash, around  
5 Mr. Salim's neck. Using the leash, the interrogator threw Mr. Salim  
6 against the wooden wall. Mr. Salim crashed into the wall, and as he  
7 rebounded, the interrogator struck Mr. Salim in the stomach. The  
8 interrogator repeated this procedure several times, shouting at Mr.  
9 Salim as he propelled Mr. Salim against the wall and beat him.  
10

11 98. After the walling ended, Mr. Salim was interrogated again.  
12  
13 Immediately after the interrogation, he was forced into a tall, thin,  
14 coffin-like box. The box was just wide and high enough to  
15 accommodate a fully grown adult with arms stretched over their head.  
16  
17 Once crammed inside, Mr. Salim's hands were chained above his head  
18 to a thin metal rod that ran the width of the box. The door of the box  
19 was then closed and Mr. Salim was left in darkness, with music  
20 blasting at him in the box from all angles.  
21

22 99. After two or three hours in the tall box, Mr. Salim was removed and  
23 taken to an interrogation room. Interrogators then shone a spotlight in  
24 his face and bombarded him with the same questions they had asked  
25  
26

1 the day before. Once this interrogation session ended, guards took Mr.  
2 Salim back to his cell and chained him by his legs and arms to the iron  
3 ring in the wall. He was left overnight in pain, naked, cold, and unable  
4 to sleep.  
5

6 100. Mr. Salim was subjected to water torture and interrogation sessions for  
7 two more days. On the third day, after one of the water torture  
8 sessions ended and before the interrogation session began, one  
9 interrogator attached a chain with a large ball at the end around Mr.  
10 Salim's waist and made him drag it around the perimeter of the  
11 room—naked with a hood over his head—for thirty minutes, until he  
12 collapsed with exhaustion, weakened by hunger and the water torture.  
13

14 101. On the fourth and final day of Mr. Salim's water torture, at the end of  
15 one of the sessions, interrogators strapped his hands and feet to a  
16 pivoted, wooden board—a water board—and threatened to waterboard  
17 him, but instead spun him around 360 degrees several times.  
18

19 102. Around the beginning of the third week of Mr. Salim's detention at  
20 COBALT, sometime after the water torture sessions had ended, Mr.  
21 Salim was subjected to prolonged standing sleep deprivation in a new  
22 painful stress position. Two guards took Mr. Salim from his cell to a  
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1 small, pitch-black room. Working by flashlight, the guards chained  
2 Mr. Salim's arms above his head to a metal rod that ran the width of  
3 the small room and positioned him so that the balls of his feet barely  
4 touched the floor. Mr. Salim was left hanging, naked, in the darkness,  
5 barraged with ear-splitting music. During this entire period, Mr. Salim  
6 was given no food and only sips of water. He remained suspended  
7 from the ceiling without interruption, including when he relieved  
8 himself. The only time he was taken down was for interrogation. On  
9 occasion, he started to drift into sleep but immediately jolted awake  
10 from the excruciating pain that shot through his arms and shoulders as  
11 they momentarily supported his full body weight. Mr. Salim was  
12 subjected to this form of standing sleep deprivation for what seemed to  
13 him four or five days.

18 103. As a result of the prolonged standing sleep deprivation, Mr. Salim's  
19 back and shoulders ached and his arms felt as if they had become  
20 dislocated. Both Mr. Salim's legs were swollen and there was a  
21 sickening smell from beneath the plaster cast on his hand. A large cut  
22 had also opened on the same hand. Once the technique stopped and  
23 Mr. Salim was taken back to his cell, a male doctor or nurse came to  
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26

1 treat Mr. Salim, doing nothing for his swollen legs but removing the  
2 cast from his fingers and attempting to straighten them. He also  
3 bathed Mr. Salim’s wound and re-banded his fingers.  
4

5 104. Two or three weeks after the “aggressive phase” had begun, Mr.  
6 Salim’s interrogators assessed him “broken” and “cooperative” and  
7 stopped it.  
8

9 105. During the fourth or fifth week of Mr. Salim’s detention at COBALT,  
10 a man Mr. Salim had never seen before administered what Mr. Salim  
11 believes was a polygraph test. He started by asking Mr. Salim a series  
12 of questions that Mr. Salim thought bizarre—Are the lights on or off?  
13 What time of day is it?—as well as the same questions previous  
14 interrogators had shouted at him. Mr. Salim answered in his limited  
15 English, providing the same truthful answers as before.  
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18 106. Sometime after this polygraph test, guards took Mr. Salim from his  
19 cell, blindfolded him, strapped him to a stretcher, and wheeled him to a  
20 dimly lit room. There he received three very painful injections in his  
21 arm. Mr. Salim was not told what these injections were for, and he did  
22 not consent to them. From under his blindfold, Mr. Salim could see  
23 that he was hooked up to some kind of a computer screen or monitor.  
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1 After the injections were administered Mr. Salim felt drowsy, like a  
2 drunken person, and his face went numb, as if he'd been slapped very  
3 hard. The next thing Mr. Salim was aware of was waking up in his  
4 cell, chained to the wall. He has no recollection of what happened to  
5 him in the intervening period, or how long the period lasted.  
6  
7

8 107. In approximately his fourth or fifth week at COBALT, Mr. Salim  
9 become so hopeless and despondent that he decided to kill himself by  
10 taking the painkillers he had stockpiled in his cell. As he began to take  
11 the pills, however, guards stormed into his cell and stopped him.  
12

13 108. Immediately after Mr. Salim's failed suicide attempt, CIA personnel  
14 transferred him from COBALT to another CIA black-site prison. Two  
15 or three guards restrained him and another dressed him in shorts and a  
16 t-shirt, cuffed his hands, and shackled his legs. A guard stuffed plugs  
17 in his ears, placed a hood over his head, and placed goggles and  
18 headphones over the hood. Mr. Salim was then dragged into the back  
19 of a vehicle. He was driven a short distance, some 15 or 20 minutes,  
20 to an underground prison that Mr. Salim later learned was known as  
21 the "Salt Pit."  
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1 109. The CIA held Mr. Salim incommunicado and in solitary confinement  
2 in the “Salt Pit” for 14 months. The Agency did not interrogate him  
3 during that time, although the FBI did. On about seven occasions, two  
4 individuals who represented themselves as agents of the FBI, one male  
5 and the other female, came to talk to him. The male agent called  
6 himself “Mike,” and spoke to Mr. Salim in Kiswahili. Mike asked Mr.  
7 Salim the same questions that he had been asked in COBALT, and Mr.  
8 Salim again gave the same truthful responses.

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12 110. The only other visitor Mr. Salim had during his time in the “Salt Pit”  
13 was one of his interrogators from COBALT. The interrogator brought  
14 fruit and nuts for Mr. Salim, said he had been forced to torture Mr.  
15 Salim, apologized, and asked for Mr. Salim’s forgiveness.

16  
17 111. In approximately July 2004, Mr. Salim was transferred to the custody  
18 of the U.S. military and held at a prison at the Bagram Air Force Base,  
19 a thirty-minute helicopter ride away. For over four years, Mr. Salim  
20 was detained at Bagram, where his prisoner number was 1075.  
21 Throughout, Mr. Salim was held in solitary confinement in a series of  
22 small cages in a large, hanger-type building. Bright lights remained on  
23 constantly. He never saw daylight.  
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1 112. On August 17, 2008, a representative of the International Committee  
2 of the Red Cross (“ICRC”) told Mr. Salim that he was to be released.  
3  
4 The ICRC gave Mr. Salim a memorandum from the U.S. Department  
5 of Defense confirming his detention by the “United States/Coalition  
6 Forces,” certifying his release, and stating that Mr. Salim “has been  
7 determined to pose no threat to the United States Armed Forces or its  
8 interests in Afghanistan.” The memo also stated that there were no  
9 charges pending against Mr. Salim.  
10

11  
12 113. The ICRC arranged to fly Mr. Salim to Dubai, and from there to Dar  
13 es Salaam and on to his home and family in Zanzibar.

14  
15 114. Upon Mr. Salim’s return, he made repeated efforts to find his wife,  
16 with whom he had lost all contact during his incommunicado  
17 detention. He has never been able to find her. Mr. Salim now lives  
18 with his second wife, whom he married in 2011, their three-year-old  
19 daughter, and his extended family.  
20

21 115. Mr. Salim continues to suffer acute physical injuries from torture. He  
22 experiences debilitating pain in his jaw and teeth, making it difficult to  
23 eat solid foods. His senses of taste and smell are impaired. He suffers  
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1 severe pain in his back, shoulders, and legs. The chronic pain makes it  
2 extremely difficult for Mr. Salim to work or perform other activities.

3  
4 116. Mr. Salim also suffers severe and lasting psychological injuries from  
5 torture. His injuries include frequent nightmares and terrifying  
6 flashbacks to his time in COBALT and, during daytime, frequent  
7 spells of dizziness and confusion. A forensic examination conducted  
8 after his release confirms many other symptoms of post-traumatic  
9 stress disorder, including intrusive recollections, avoidance/emotional  
10 numbing, hyper-arousal symptoms, and major depression.

11  
12  
13 **Mohamed Ahmed Ben Soud (formerly Mohamed Shoroeiya, Abd**  
14 **al-Karim)**

15 117. Plaintiff Mohamed Ahmed Ben Soud is a Libyan citizen, born in  
16 Misrata in 1969. In 1991, Mr. Ben Soud fled Libya, fearing  
17 persecution for his opposition to Muammar Gaddafi's regime. In exile,  
18 Mr. Ben Soud later joined a group opposed to the Gaddafi government,  
19 the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group. He resided temporarily in a  
20 number of countries before settling in Pakistan. In April 2003, he was  
21 living in the city of Peshawar with his wife, whom he married in 2000,  
22 and their nine-month old daughter.  
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1 118. On April 3, 2003, Mr. Ben Soud was arrested during a raid on his  
2 home by U.S. and Pakistani forces. During the raid, Mr. Ben Soud  
3 was shot in the left leg. The gunshot shattered a bone.  
4

5 119. Mr. Ben Soud was detained, interrogated and abused for two weeks by  
6 Pakistani and U.S. officials. At one point, a doctor x-rayed his injured  
7 leg and fitted it with a plaster cast. The interrogators questioned Mr.  
8 Ben Soud about his knowledge of terrorism threats against the United  
9 States and his connections with al-Qa'ida. Mr. Ben Soud explained  
10 truthfully that he had no knowledge of any terrorism plans against the  
11 United States and no connection with al-Qa'ida. Mr. Ben Soud was  
12 repeatedly asked these same questions during his time in U.S. custody.  
13

14 120. On April 18, Mr. Ben Soud's U.S. interrogators told him that he was  
15 being uncooperative and that they were going to send him to a place  
16 where he would be made to cooperate. That night, Mr. Ben Soud was  
17 blindfolded and handcuffed and driven some forty minutes to an  
18 airport. The CIA rendered Mr. Ben Soud to its black-site prison,  
19 COBALT.  
20

21 121. During Mr. Ben Soud's imprisonment by the CIA, Mr. Ben Soud was  
22 experimented upon and subjected to and regimen of torture and cruel,  
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1 inhuman, and degrading treatment in accordance with the phased  
2 torture program that Defendants Mitchell and Jessen designed,  
3 supervised and implemented. He suffered coercion and abuse during  
4 his rendition; torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment  
5 during his confinement and further torture and abuse through the  
6 application of 9 of the 10 coercive methods Defendants devised for the  
7 torture program: prolonged sleep deprivation (seating and standing),  
8 walling, stress positions, the facial slap, abdominal slap, dietary  
9 manipulation, the facial hold, cramped confinement (large and small  
10 boxes), and a form of waterboarding. In addition, he was subjected to  
11 prolonged nudity and water dousing that approximated waterboarding.  
12 Some of these methods were used on him repeatedly and in  
13 combination.  
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19 *Phase I: "Setting the conditions" for "learned helplessness"*

20 122. The CIA began its torture of Mr. Ben Soud during its rendition of him  
21 to COBALT by subjecting him to severe physical and mental pain and  
22 suffering through humiliation, extreme sensory deprivation, and other  
23 forms of abusive treatment in accordance with Defendant Mitchell and  
24 Jessen's specifications. Mr. Ben Soud's blindfold was removed, and  
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1 he saw he was surrounded by five or six men, all dressed in black and  
2 wearing masks so that only their eyes were visible. A strong light was  
3 shone directly into his face. CIA personnel cut his clothes from his  
4 body. Once Mr. Ben Soud was naked, one of the men conducted what  
5 appeared to be a medical examination, checking his anus, eyes, ears,  
6 nose and throat. He was then dressed in a diaper, a pair of trousers and  
7 a short-sleeved shirt. The men handcuffed Mr. Ben Soud and chained  
8 his cuffs to a belly chain. They shackled his legs together and fastened  
9 them to the same belly chain. They stuffed earplugs into his ears and  
10 taped cotton pads over his eyes. They covered his head with a hood  
11 and placed headphones over the hood and his ears. Deafened, blinded,  
12 and terrified, Mr. Ben Soud was forced up a set of stairs and into what  
13 he sensed was an aircraft. Once inside, he was chained to one of the  
14 seats, and flown for what seemed like an hour, although it was difficult  
15 for him to gauge time given his disorientation and sensory deprivation.

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21 123. After landing, Mr. Ben Soud was removed from the plane and thrown  
22 into the back of a truck. He landed on top of another prisoner. The  
23 vehicle drove a short distance, arriving at a hangar-type building,  
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1 which was COBALT. Mr. Ben Soud was removed from the back of  
2 the truck and hoisted onto someone's shoulder.  
3

4 124. Inside COBALT, Mr. Ben Soud's headphones, hood, earplugs, and  
5 blindfold were removed. CIA personnel sat him on an old ammunition  
6 box at a table with two spotlights aimed directly at his face. Across  
7 the table from him stood a middle-aged woman whom he identified  
8 from her accent as American. Two guards stood behind him, one on  
9 each side. Through a translator, the woman shouted at him that he was  
10 a prisoner of the CIA, that human rights ended on September 11, and  
11 that no laws applied in this prison. She asked him no questions.  
12

13  
14 125. Guided by flashlights, two guards then took Mr. Ben Soud to a small,  
15 concrete, pitch-black, windowless cell measuring approximately 13  
16 feet high by 10 feet long, with a steel door and tiny barred ventilation  
17 slot. There was a metal ring attached to one wall. A small metal  
18 bucket served as a toilet. There were no washing facilities, only a  
19 liter-sized water bottle that was filled every morning but was sufficient  
20 only for drinking. There was no bed, just two thin blankets, one of  
21 which Mr. Ben Soud used to sleep on and the other he used as a cover,  
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1 although the cover did little to keep him warm during the winter  
2 months.

3  
4 126. In the cell, the CIA guards removed Mr. Ben Soud's handcuffs and  
5 belly chain, his clothing and his diaper, but left the shackles around his  
6 ankles. The whole procedure was precise and well-practiced, seeming  
7 almost scientific to Mr. Ben Soud. Mr. Ben Soud was left naked.

8  
9 127. Mr. Ben Soud was kept naked for more than a month. At what he  
10 estimated was the end of May, he was provided with clothing for the  
11 first time, a light pair of trousers and a t-shirt, but both were cut-up  
12 oddly, missing a leg or a sleeve.

13  
14 128. Throughout his time in COBALT, Mr. Ben Soud was bombarded by  
15 Western music. The music was played at ear-splitting levels and filled  
16 the entire building. It only ever stopped very briefly as the tracks  
17 changed or when the system malfunctioned. Mr. Ben Soud's cell was  
18 kept pitch black, and stank. At first, the stench came chiefly from the  
19 toilet bucket, but eventually also from Mr. Ben Soud, who was not  
20 permitted to wash for five months nor cut his hair, beard or nails. The  
21 smell in his cell was so bad that the guards wore masks when they  
22 came to take him to interrogation.  
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1 129. Mr. Ben Soud was subjected to food deprivation and dietary  
2 manipulation throughout his year-long detention at COBALT. In the  
3 first five months, from April until September 2003, Mr. Ben Soud was  
4 provided one meal a day, and occasionally two meals. These meals  
5 consisted of rice or bread and beans. After five months, meals were  
6 provided on a more regular basis, but the nutritional quality remained  
7 low. Mr. Ben Soud was weighed by a medic when he first arrived at  
8 COBALT and again three months later. In this period he lost nearly  
9 49 pounds, falling from 187 pounds to 139 pounds.  
10

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13 130. Throughout Mr. Ben Soud's imprisonment at COBALT he was  
14 subjected to sleep deprivation, able to sleep only for minutes at a time  
15 because of painful stress positions, constant blaring music, and guards  
16 banging loudly on the door of his cell every hour or so. In the first few  
17 months at COBALT, Mr. Ben Soud was continually placed in one of  
18 three painful seated stress positions: he was kept chained to the ring on  
19 his cell wall by one wrist; both wrists; or by the wrists and both legs.  
20 The seated positions were, "[t]o accommodate [Mr. Ben Soud's]  
21 injuries . . . rather than being shackled standing during sleep  
22 deprivation, [he should] be 'seated, secured to a cell wall, with  
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1 intermittent disruptions of normal sleeping patterns.” SSCI Report  
2 492 n.2675. Once medics removed the cast from his injured leg, Mr.  
3 Ben Soud was subjected to standing sleep deprivation. Guards would  
4 take him from his cell and force him to march around the prison naked,  
5 ““15 minutes every half-hour through the night and into the morning.””  
6 SSCI Report 492. This caused Mr. Ben Soud excruciating pain in his  
7 leg.  
8

9  
10 131. For Mr. Ben Soud, the prolonged sleep deprivation was the worst form  
11 of torture that he had to endure. It drove him close to madness.  
12

13 132. During the first two weeks of Mr. Ben Soud’s detention at COBALT,  
14 he was interrogated on a regular basis. Mr. Ben Soud was cuffed,  
15 shackled and naked, with a spotlight aimed in his face, and two  
16 interrogators took turns questioning him. In addition to the questions  
17 he had been asked in Pakistan, the interrogators asked Mr. Ben Soud  
18 whether he knew certain individuals, including Osama Bin Laden, Abu  
19 Faraj al Libi, and Abu Leith al-Libi. Mr. Ben Soud answered truthfully  
20 that he knew of them but only from reports in the media. In response  
21 to the questions he had also been asked in Pakistan, Mr. Ben Soud  
22 gave the same truthful answers as before: he had no connections with  
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1 al Qa'ida and he was neither involved in nor knew of any terrorism  
2 plots against the United States.  
3

4 *Phase II: "Aggressive phase" of torture and cruel, inhuman, and*  
5 *degrading treatment*

6 133. It was difficult for Mr. Ben Soud to have a firm sense of time—the  
7 differences between day and night were almost imperceptible—but he  
8 estimates that roughly two weeks after he arrived at COBALT his  
9 torture increased in severity with the introduction of new methods.  
10

11 134. The "aggressive phase" of Mr. Ben Soud's torture lasted for about four  
12 or five weeks. During this phase, Mr. Ben Soud saw Defendant  
13 Mitchell three times in COBALT: at least twice while being subjected  
14 to water torture, where Mitchell appeared to be observing and  
15 supervising the proceedings, and once at the end of the "aggressive  
16 phase."  
17

18  
19 135. The "aggressive phase" was conducted by two separate interrogation  
20 teams. Each team tortured Mr. Ben Soud for approximately two  
21 weeks. The first team was comprised of a male lead interrogator and  
22 four assistants, both men and women. The second team was  
23 comprised of two male lead interrogators and four or five male and  
24 female assistants.  
25  
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1 136. The first interrogation team subjected Mr. Ben Soud to repeated  
2 walling sessions, abdominal slaps, and water torture sessions, often in  
3 combination on the same day for over a two-week period.  
4

5 137. During wall slamming sessions the lead interrogator placed a foam  
6 collar around Mr. Ben Soud's neck and then slapped him firmly, first  
7 in the face and then in the stomach, before throwing him against a  
8 wooden wall. Interrogators repeated walling and slaps for 20 or 30  
9 minutes before taking Mr. Ben Soud to be interrogated in another  
10 room, and then back again for another session. As the sessions  
11 continued they became increasingly painful. The noise of Mr. Ben  
12 Soud hitting the wall was also extremely loud and terrifying to him.  
13 When back in his cell, Mr. Ben Soud could hear others also being  
14 subjected to walling, even above the noise of the music.  
15  
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17 138. About a week after his first wall slamming session, Mr. Ben Soud's  
18 interrogators started to combine walling with water torture. On the  
19 first day of his water torture, two guards took Mr. Ben Soud from his  
20 cell to a room where the interrogation team and some others were  
21 waiting. A large plastic sheet covered part of the floor. Guards forced  
22 Mr. Ben Soud, naked, into the center of the plastic sheet. With his  
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1 hands cuffed at the wrists, they forced his arms over his head. On the  
2 lead interrogator's word, four of the assistants pulled up the four  
3 corners of the sheet to form a shallow basin. They then threw buckets  
4 of ice-cold water over Mr. Ben Soud's face and body until he was  
5 partially submerged in the ice-cold water. The water seemed to have  
6 been treated with some substance and clung to Mr. Ben Soud's body  
7 like a gel. It was so cold he shook violently. A person whom Mr. Ben  
8 Soud took to be a doctor monitored the proceedings, periodically  
9 checking Mr. Ben Soud's vital signs. When the doctor decided that  
10 Mr. Ben Soud's temperature was dangerously low, he would give  
11 instructions for warm water to be thrown over him until Mr. Ben  
12 Soud's temperature raised modestly. The water torture sessions lasted  
13 about half an hour to forty minutes, sometimes longer. After each  
14 ended, Mr. Ben Soud was taken naked and shivering to another room  
15 and interrogated. This process was repeated multiple times.

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21 139. After the first water torture session, the cast on Mr. Ben Soud's leg  
22 began to disintegrate. The same doctor who had monitored his  
23 temperature examined the plaster. In the next session, the doctor tried  
24 to protect the plaster by covering it in a plastic bag before the water  
25  
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1 was applied, in accordance with guidance in a CIA cable: “For water  
2 dousing, [Mr. Ben Soud’s] injured leg[] would be ‘wrapped in  
3 plastic.’” SSCI Report 492 n.2675. When this proved ineffective,  
4 however, the doctor later designed and fitted Mr. Ben Soud with a cast  
5 that could be easily removed during water torture sessions.  
6

7  
8 140. After approximately two weeks, the lead interrogator told Mr. Ben  
9 Soud that he was not being cooperative and that another team of  
10 interrogators would be taking over to make Mr. Ben Soud cooperate.  
11 Before leaving, he provided Mr. Ben Soud with a pair of trousers and a  
12 t-shirt.  
13

14  
15 141. For the next two to three weeks, a second interrogation team took over  
16 and subjected Mr. Ben Soud to a combination of walling, water  
17 torture, cramped confinement in large and small boxes, prolonged  
18 standing sleep deprivation and a form of waterboarding, while  
19 threatening him with additional abuses. The new team stripped Mr.  
20 Ben Soud of the clothing he had briefly possessed; he was kept naked  
21 for the duration of this period.  
22

23  
24 142. The walling and accompanying physical beatings were more severe  
25 than those conducted by the first team. The water torture sessions also  
26

1 increased in intensity because interrogators covered Mr. Ben Soud's  
2 head with a hood before pouring ice-water over him. The addition of  
3 the hood caused Mr. Ben Soud to choke and suffocate. He felt like he  
4 was drowning.  
5

6  
7 143. Mr. Ben Soud's interrogators also placed him in a narrow, coffin-like  
8 box which was approximately 1.5 ft. wide and tall enough for him to  
9 stand with his hands chained above his head in a painful position.  
10 Speakers were located on both sides of the box at the level of his ears.  
11 Once inside, loud Western rock music was turned full volume through  
12 the speakers. Mr. Ben Soud was forced into this box for forty-five  
13 minutes, and found it unbearable. After using this technique on him  
14 once, interrogators threatened him with it again if he did not cooperate.  
15

16  
17 144. Interrogators also forced Mr. Ben Soud into a smaller wooden box,  
18 measuring approximately 3 feet by 3 feet. The box had a series of  
19 small holes on each side. Once squeezed inside, the box was locked  
20 and Mr. Ben Soud was left there for some forty-five minutes. Again,  
21 Mr. Ben Soud found this experience unbearable. He was subjected to  
22 this method once, but interrogators threatened Mr. Ben Soud with its  
23 use on numerous other occasions.  
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1 145. During this same period, for one and a half days, Mr. Ben Soud was  
2 hung naked from a metal rod by his arms. He was positioned with his  
3 arms over his head and so that the balls of his feet—including the foot  
4 of his broken leg—were barely able to touch the ground. If he  
5 loosened his arms, they felt like they would come out of their sockets.  
6 It was impossible for Mr. Ben Soud to sleep. The room was small and  
7 pitch-black except for a tiny blinking red light level with his head. As  
8 he was being strung up he could see blood-smearred walls by the light  
9 of the guards' flashlights. Loud Western music was blasted into the  
10 room for the duration of his suspension from the ceiling. After a very  
11 short time, alone in that room and unable to sleep, Mr. Ben Soud  
12 began to hallucinate and slowly became hysterical. After a day and a  
13 half, the guards released him and brought him to see a doctor, who  
14 examined his legs. They had become engorged and swollen with fluid,  
15 his broken leg especially. Both limbs were excruciatingly painful.  
16 Mr. Ben Soud was unable to walk and had to be carried by the guards  
17 to the examination room for treatment.

18 146. On one occasion, Mr. Ben Soud was subjected to a form of  
19 waterboarding. He was strapped to a wooden board that could spin  
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1 around 360 degrees. His interrogators spun him around on this board  
2 with a hood over his head covering his nose and mouth. While  
3 strapped to the board with his head lower than his feet, his  
4 interrogators poured buckets of cold water him. While they did not  
5 pour water directly over his mouth and nose, they threatened to do so  
6 if he did not cooperate.  
7  
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9 147. After two to three weeks, the interrogation team assessed Mr. Ben  
10 Soud as “broken” and “cooperative,” and stopped the “aggressive  
11 phase” of his torture.  
12

13 148. From around June 2003 through April 2004, Mr. Ben Soud continued  
14 to be subjected to solitary confinement, other forms of extreme sensory  
15 deprivation, including being kept in the dark and bombarded with high  
16 decibel music, painful stress positions and prolonged sleep  
17 deprivation.  
18

19 149. During this period, there was also a change in the personnel  
20 conducting his interrogations, which now consisted only of  
21 questioning. These sessions occurred on a daily basis, but towards the  
22 end of Mr. Ben Soud’s time in COBALT they became less regular.  
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1 150. On September 3, 2003, Mr. Ben Soud was taken outside, into the  
2 daylight. It was the first time he had seen the sun in over four months.  
3 He knew the exact date because he spoke with an American man at  
4 this time and noticed the date and time on his wrist watch. Seeing the  
5 date allowed Mr. Ben Soud to calculate the time he had spent in  
6 COBALT. He then kept a tally of the days moving forward using  
7 paper and a pen that his captors provided to him.  
8

9  
10 151. On April 25, 2004, Mr. Ben Soud was transferred to another CIA black  
11 site prison referred to in the SSCI Report as ORANGE, where he was  
12 detained and interrogated for a further year and four months. Mr. Ben  
13 Soud was held in secret, in solitary confinement and chained to the  
14 wall of his cell when he was not being interrogated.  
15

16  
17 152. On August 22, 2004, the CIA rendered Mr. Ben Soud from ORANGE  
18 to Gaddafi's government in Libya.  
19

20 153. In Libya, Mr. Ben Soud was handed over to Libyan officials. He was  
21 detained pending a show trial and sentenced to life imprisonment on  
22 July 20, 2006. He was released February 16, 2011, a day after the  
23 uprising that led to the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime.  
24  
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1 154. Mr. Ben Soud lives in Misrata together with his wife and their three  
2 children. He continues to suffer physically and psychologically from  
3 the tortures he endured when he was a subject of Mitchell and Jessen's  
4 experimental program. He experiences pain in his left leg in particular  
5 and is unable to walk on it for any length of time. A CIA cable from  
6 May, 2003 "stated that, even given the best prognosis, [Mr. Ben Soud]  
7 would have arthritis and limitation of motion for the rest of his life."  
8 SSCI Report 492. He has been diagnosed with rheumatism in his  
9 knees and back and has been prescribed medication for the pain. Mr.  
10 Ben Soud has also been receiving on-going treatment for hearing loss  
11 in both ears, and hears a continuous ringing sound. He has also lost  
12 his sense of taste and smell. He continues to suffer deep psychological  
13 harm.

### 18 **Gul Rahman**

19 155. Gul Rahman was born in Afghanistan in the 1970s. He married there  
20 and he and his wife had four daughters. In 2001, the family fled  
21 Afghanistan to Pakistan to escape the armed conflict after the U.S.-led  
22 invasion. They lived together as refugees in the Shamshatoo refugee  
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1 camp located on the outskirts of Peshawar, in Pakistan. Mr. Rahman  
2 earned a living selling wood to the other Shamshatoo camp refugees.  
3

4 156. On October 28, 2002, Mr. Rahman, who suffered from allergies, went  
5 to Islamabad for a medical checkup. He stayed the night in Islamabad  
6 with an old friend and former employer, Dr. Ghairat Baheer. While  
7 living in Afghanistan before 2001, Mr. Rahman had [periodically]  
8 worked as a driver for Dr. Baheer, who was a physician and leader of  
9 Hezb-e-Islami, a group formed in opposition to the Communist  
10 Government of Afghanistan.  
11  
12

13 157. In the early hours of October 29, 2002, Dr. Baheer's home in  
14 Islamabad was raided in a joint U.S./Pakistani operation. Mr. Rahman  
15 was taken captive, together with Dr. Baheer, two guards and a cook.  
16 All of them were detained at a facility in Islamabad for about a week.  
17

18 158. On or around November 5, 2002, Mr. Rahman was rendered by the  
19 CIA from Pakistan to the CIA's black-site COBALT prison.  
20

21 159. During Mr. Rahman's custody by the CIA, he was experimented on  
22 and subjected to a regime of torture and abuse in accordance with the  
23 phased program Defendants Mitchell and Jessen designed, supervised  
24 and implemented. Mr. Rahman suffered abuse and coercion during his  
25  
26

1 rendition; torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment during  
2 his confinement; and further torture and abuse through the application  
3 of at least 6 of the 10 coercive techniques Defendants devised for the  
4 torture program: facial holds, insult slaps, abdominal slaps, stress  
5 positions, dietary manipulation, and prolonged sleep deprivation. Mr.  
6 Rahman was also subjected to prolonged nudity and water dousing.  
7 Some of these coercive methods were used on Mr. Rahman repeatedly  
8 and in combination.  
9

10  
11  
12 160. In November 2002, Defendant Jessen conducted a psychological  
13 evaluation of Mr. Rahman at COBALT “to determine which CIA  
14 enhanced interrogation techniques should be used on him” to counter  
15 perceived resistance. SSCI Report 497. Defendant Jessen concluded  
16 that Mr. Rahman was resistant and that further torture would be  
17 required to “break” his will and render him compliant. Defendant  
18 Jessen directly participated in the more “aggressive phase” of Mr.  
19 Rahman’s torture, with the assistance of an individual identified in the  
20 SSCI Report as CIA Officer 1. Both Jessen and CIA Officer 1 tortured  
21 Mr. Rahman. The abuses to which Jessen and CIA Officer 1 subjected  
22 Mr. Rahman included “48 hours of sleep deprivation, auditory  
23  
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1 overload, total darkness, isolation, a cold shower and rough treatment”  
2 SSCI Report 54.  
3

4 161. Defendant Jessen also oversaw and encouraged Mr. Rahman’s  
5 continued torture by the other CIA agents and guards Jessen was  
6 training. Those methods included “rough takedown”/“hard  
7 takedown,” which “was done for shock and psychological impact and  
8 signaled the transition to another phase of the interrogation.” CIA OIG  
9 Report at 77. Defendant Jessen described the technique as a  
10 “thoroughly planned and rehearsed” form of severe physical and  
11 psychological abuse that when performed on Mr. Rahman resulted in  
12 abrasions to his face, legs, and hands from his being slapped, punched  
13 and dragged naked, hooded and bound over the concrete and dirt floors  
14 of COBALT. Defendant Jessen explained that after the technique was  
15 used, “interrogators should speak to the prisoner to give them  
16 something to think about.” SSCI Report at 56 n. 278.  
17

18  
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20  
21 162. Before Defendant Jessen departed COBALT, he proposed that the CIA  
22 continue its torture of detainees using the methods he and Defendant  
23 Mitchell had devised for the agency “and offered suggestions to [CIA  
24 OFFICER 1], the site manager, on the use of such techniques.” SSCI  
25  
26

1 Report 54. After Defendant Jessen's departure, CIA interrogators  
2 continued to use many of those same methods on Mr. Rahman.  
3

4 "Rahman was placed back under the cold water by the guards at [CIA  
5 Officer 1]'s direction. Rahman was so cold that he could barely utter  
6 his alias . . . the entire process lasted no more than 20 minutes. It was  
7 intended to lower Rahman's resistance and was not for hygienic  
8 reasons. At the conclusion of the shower, Rahman was moved to one  
9 of the four sleep deprivation cells where he was left shivering for  
10 hours or overnight with his hand chained over his head." SSCI Report  
11 at 63 n.314.  
12  
13

14 163. On November 19, 2002, CIA Officer 1 assessed Mr. Rahman as still  
15 uncooperative, and ordered him to be shackled in a painful stress  
16 position that required Mr. Rahman to kneel on the bare concrete floor  
17 of his cell with his hands chained above his head. CIA Officer 1 also  
18 ordered Mr. Rahman to be stripped of his clothes, except for a  
19 sweatshirt, as punishment for a perceived lack of cooperation during  
20 an earlier torture session. CIA Officer 1 ordered Mr. Rahman to be  
21 left partially nude and in a stress position overnight, when the  
22 temperatures were known to dip below 36 degrees Fahrenheit.  
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1 164. On November 20, 2002, guards found Mr. Rahman dead in his cell.  
2 An autopsy report and internal CIA review found that Mr. Rahman  
3 likely died from hypothermia caused “in part from being forced to sit  
4 on the bare concrete floor without pants,” with the contributing factors  
5 of “dehydration, lack of food, and immobility due to ‘short chaining.’”  
6 SSCI Report at 54–55 n. 272.  
7

8  
9 165. The CIA and the CIA Office of the Inspector General completed  
10 reports on Mr. Rahman’s death on January 28, 2003 and April 27,  
11 2003, respectively. Mr. Rahman’s death was also examined by the  
12 CIA Inspector General in a report on the CIA’s detention and  
13 interrogation activities from September 2001 to October 2003, dated  
14 May 7, 2004. No one was held accountable for Mr. Rahman’s death or  
15 the torture that caused it.  
16  
17

18 166. In March 2003, CIA Officer 1 was recommended for a “cash award”  
19 for his “consistently superior work” and remained in charge of the  
20 COBALT facility until July 2003. SSCI Report 55.  
21

22 167. The CIA covered up Mr. Rahman’s death until 2010, when the  
23 Associated Press reported on the story. Mr. Rahman’s wife and four  
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1 daughters have never been officially notified of Mr. Rahman's death,  
2 nor has his body ever been returned to them for a dignified burial.  
3

4 **VI. CAUSES OF ACTION**

5 **First Claim for Relief**

6 **Alien Tort Statute: Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, and**  
7 **Degrading Treatment**

8 168. Defendants Mitchell and Jessen tortured Plaintiffs and subjected them  
9 to other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment under color  
10 of law in that they intentionally inflicted severe physical and mental  
11 pain or suffering on each of the Plaintiffs, for the purposes of obtaining  
12 information or a confession, punishing them, and/or intimidating or  
13 coercing them, and that they did so at the instigation of or with the  
14 consent or acquiescence of public officials or other persons acting in  
15 an official capacity.  
16

17 169. Defendants are directly liable because they designed, developed, and  
18 implemented a program for the CIA intended to inflict physical and  
19 mental pain and suffering on Plaintiffs, and because Plaintiffs were  
20 tortured and subjected to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment as a  
21 consequence of their inclusion in that program.  
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1 170. Defendants are also liable because they conspired and/or acted  
2 together in a joint criminal enterprise with agents of the United States  
3 in Plaintiffs' torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.  
4  
5 Defendants entered into an agreement with agents of the United States  
6 to design and implement a program of torture and cruel, inhuman, and  
7 degrading treatment for the CIA and Plaintiffs suffered severe physical  
8 and mental pain and suffering as a consequence of their inclusion in  
9 that program. Defendants participated in or committed wrongful acts  
10 in furtherance of the conspiracy, resulting in injury to Plaintiffs.  
11

12  
13 171. Defendants are also liable because they aided and abetted Plaintiffs'  
14 torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment by agents of the  
15 United States. Defendants intended to cause Plaintiffs severe physical  
16 and mental pain and suffering. Defendants controlled and profited  
17 from Plaintiffs' pain and suffering. Torture and cruel, inhuman, and  
18 degrading treatment were an inextricable and purposeful component in  
19 every aspect of Defendants' program. Defendants provided substantial  
20 practical assistance to agents of the United States, resulting in  
21 Plaintiffs' torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment.  
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1 172. Defendants’ acts and omissions caused Plaintiffs to suffer damages,  
2 including severe physical, mental, and emotional pain and suffering.  
3

4 173. Defendants’ acts or omissions were deliberate, willful, intentional,  
5 wanton, malicious, oppressive, and in conscious disregard for  
6 Plaintiffs’ rights under international and U.S. law and should be  
7 punished by an award of punitive damages in an amount to be  
8 determined at trial.  
9

10 **Second Claim for Relief**

11 **Alien Tort Statute: Non-Consensual Human Experimentation**

12 174. Defendants Mitchell and Jessen experimented on Plaintiffs under color  
13 of law and without Plaintiffs’ consent. Specifically, Plaintiffs were  
14 forced to be part of the test of Defendants’ experimental theory that  
15 prisoners could be reduced through abusive treatment to a state of  
16 “learned helplessness” and thereby rendered passive, compliant, and  
17 unable to resist their interrogators’ demands for information. As part  
18 of this experiment, Defendants implemented an experimental protocol  
19 that required assessments of whether (1) prisoners had been tortured  
20 long enough to induce a state of “learned helplessness” or additional  
21 torture was necessary; (2) certain combinations and sequences of  
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1 torture techniques were most effective at overcoming “resistance”; and  
2 (3) whether detainees became fully compliant with interrogators’  
3 demands once they had been reduced to a state of learned helplessness.  
4

5 175. Defendants are directly liable because they experimented on Plaintiffs  
6 by seeking to induce in them a state of “learned helplessness” to break  
7 their will by means of torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading  
8 treatment. Defendants monitored, recalibrated, and refined their  
9 experiment based on their assessment of Plaintiffs’ and other  
10 prisoners’ physical and psychological reactions to torture and cruel,  
11 inhuman, and degrading treatment.  
12

13  
14 176. Defendants are also liable because they conspired and/or acted  
15 together in a joint criminal enterprise with agents of the United States  
16 in conducting their experiments on Plaintiffs without their consent.  
17 Defendants conspired with agents of the United States to experiment  
18 on Plaintiffs by torturing and subjecting them to cruel, inhuman, and  
19 degrading treatment and by monitoring, recalibrating, and refining  
20 their experiment based on their assessment of Plaintiffs’ and other  
21 prisoners’ physical and psychological reactions to their torture and  
22 cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment. Defendants participated in  
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1 or committed wrongful acts in furtherance of said conspiracy and/or  
2 joint criminal enterprise, resulting in injury to Plaintiffs.  
3

4 177. Defendants are also liable because they aided and abetted agents of  
5 the United States to experiment on Plaintiffs without their consent.  
6 They controlled and directly profited from those experiments. Non-  
7 consensual human experimentation was an inextricable and purposeful  
8 component in every aspect of Defendants' program. Defendants  
9 provided substantial practical assistance to U.S. government officials  
10 in experimenting on Plaintiffs, resulting in Plaintiffs' becoming  
11 subjects of non-consensual human experimentation, and resulting in  
12 their physical pain and mental suffering, as a consequence.  
13  
14  
15

16 178. Defendants' acts and omissions caused Plaintiffs to suffer damages,  
17 including severe physical, mental, and emotional pain and suffering.  
18

19 179. Defendants' acts or omissions were deliberate, willful, intentional,  
20 wanton, malicious, and oppressive, and in conscious disregard for  
21 Plaintiffs' rights under international and U.S. law prohibiting non-  
22 consensual human experimentation and should be punished by an  
23 award of punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial.  
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**Third Claim for Relief**

**Alien Tort Statute: War Crimes**

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4 180. Plaintiffs were subjected to war crimes of torture, cruel treatment and  
5 other “outrages upon personal dignity,” and “medical and scientific  
6 experimentation” without their consent in the context of an  
7 international armed conflict.  
8

9 181. Mitchell and Jessen are directly liable for these war crimes.  
10 Defendants designed, developed, and implemented a program intended  
11 to inflict physical pain and mental suffering on Plaintiffs. Plaintiffs  
12 were tortured and cruelly treated as a consequence of their inclusion in  
13 that program. Defendants also experimented on Plaintiffs without  
14 their consent by attempting to induce in them a state of “learned  
15 helplessness” to break their wills by torturing and cruelly-treating  
16 them, and by monitoring, recalibrating, and refining their mistreatment  
17 based on their assessment of Plaintiffs’ and other prisoners’ physical  
18 and psychological reactions to torture and cruel treatment.  
19  
20  
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22

23 182. Mitchell and Jessen are also liable because they conspired and/or  
24 entered into a joint criminal enterprise with agents of the United States  
25 in the commission of these war crimes: (1) *Torture and cruel*  
26

1 *treatment*: Defendants entered into an agreement with agents of the  
2 United States to design and implement a program for the CIA intended  
3 to inflict physical and mental suffering on Plaintiffs. Plaintiffs were  
4 tortured and cruelly treated within that program. Defendants  
5 participated in or committed wrongful acts in furtherance of said  
6 conspiracy and/or joint criminal enterprise, resulting in injury to  
7 Plaintiffs. (2) *Non-consensual medical and scientific human*  
8 *experimentation*: Defendants conspired or entered into a joint criminal  
9 enterprise with agents of the United States to experiment on Plaintiffs  
10 without their consent by abusing them to induce a state of “learned  
11 helplessness.” Defendants and agents of the United States  
12 experimented on Plaintiffs by torturing and cruelly treating them, and  
13 monitoring and assessing their physical and psychological reactions to  
14 that torture and cruel treatment. Defendants participated in or  
15 committed wrongful acts in furtherance of said conspiracy and/or joint  
16 criminal enterprise, resulting in injury to Plaintiffs.

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23 183. Defendants Mitchell and Jessen are also liable because they aided and  
24 abetted agents of the United States in the commission of these war  
25 crimes: (1) *Torture and cruel treatment*: Defendants intended to inflict  
26

1 physical and mental pain and suffering on Plaintiffs. They controlled  
2 and directly benefited from Plaintiffs' torture and cruel treatment.  
3  
4 Torture and cruelty were an inextricable and purposeful component in  
5 every aspect of the CIA's torture program. Defendants' provided  
6 substantial practical assistance to agents of the U.S. government in  
7 carrying out that program, resulting in Plaintiffs' torture and cruel  
8 treatment. (2) *Non-consensual medical and scientific human*  
9  
10 *experimentation*: Defendants aided and abetted agents of the United  
11 States in experimenting on Plaintiffs without their consent. They  
12 controlled and directly benefited from those experiments. Non-  
13 consensual medical and scientific experimentation was an inextricable  
14 and purposeful component in every aspect of the CIA's torture  
15 program. Mitchell and Jessen provided substantial practical assistance  
16 to U.S. government officials in experimenting on Plaintiffs resulting in  
17 Plaintiffs' being experimented on without their consent and their  
18 torture and cruel treatment.  
19  
20  
21  
22

23 184. Defendants' acts and omissions described herein caused Plaintiffs to  
24 suffer damages, including severe physical, mental and emotional pain  
25 and suffering.  
26



1 185. Defendants' acts or omissions were deliberate, willful, intentional,  
2 wanton, malicious, oppressive, and in conscious disregard for  
3 Plaintiffs' rights under international and U.S. law prohibiting war  
4 crimes and should be punished by an award of punitive damages in an  
5 amount to be determined at trial.  
6  
7

8 **VII. REQUEST FOR RELIEF**  
9

10 Plaintiffs respectfully request that this Court grant the following relief:

- 11 A. compensatory damages in an amount to be proven at trial, but in an  
12 amount over \$75,000;  
13 B. punitive and exemplary damages in an amount to be proven at trial;  
14 C. reasonable attorneys' fees and costs of suit; and  
15 D. such other relief as the Court deems just and proper.  
16

17 **VIII. JURY TRIAL DEMAND**  
18

19 Plaintiffs demand a jury trial on all issues so triable.  
20  
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25  
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1 Dated: October 13, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

2 s/ La Rond Baker

3  
4 Steven M. Watt (*pro hac vice*  
5 pending)  
6 swatt@aclu.org  
7 Dror Ladin (*pro hac vice* pending)  
8 dladin@aclu.org  
9 Hina Shamsi (*pro hac vice* pending)  
10 hshamsi@aclu.org  
11 Jameel Jaffer (*pro hac vice* pending)  
12 jjaffer@aclu.org  
13 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES  
14 UNION FOUNDATION  
15 125 Broad Street, 18<sup>th</sup> Floor  
16 New York, New York 10004  
17 Phone: 212-519-7870

La Rond Baker, WSBA No. 43610  
lbaker@aclu-wa.org  
AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES  
UNION OF WASHINGTON  
FOUNDATION  
901 Fifth Avenue, Suite 630  
Seattle, WA 98164  
Phone: 206.624.2184

18 Paul Hoffman (*pro hac vice*  
19 pending)  
20 Hoffpaul@aol.com  
21 Schonbrun Seplow Harris &  
22 Hoffman, LLP  
23 723 Ocean Front Walk, Suite 100  
24 Venice, CA 90291  
25 Phone: 310-396-0731  
26