



CLIP TRANSCRIPT

Bisher al Rawi- The Pain I Carry Inside

The thing I learned with the Americans is that you could destroy somebody's life, destroy him completely, without even touching him. Like, as I said we were not in touch with our families, we could not get in touch with our families. However, the Red Cross gives you the facility of being able to write to your families. However, no guarantee the letter will get through, okay, no guarantee at all. And not even a glimpse of hope that the letter will get through. Okay?

And time taught us that. I'm not saying this because, like you know, people were getting letters and I'm claiming that. No, people did not get letters for a very, very long time. And then when you get a letter and it's dated nine months ago or a year ago, you say "Wow, I got a letter that's a year old!" And somebody got a letter six months old and says, "Wow this is a really, really fresh letter! It's only 6 months old." And this is how it was for a majority of the time.

So somebody who hasn't had any news of his family for many years now: The Red Cross approaches his cell and he says, "Oh, are you so and so?" You tell him, "Yes." He tells you, "I've got a letter for you from your family." So you're delighted, you're very, very happy. And then he gives you the letter, and you look at it, and the letter is all redacted. It's all in black. Nothing. Nothing. I don't know if you can imagine, or if the viewer can imagine, how would that individual feel. I mean many people broke down because of things like this.

I mean if, from my eye, I could simply say I think if the Red Cross had the decency...because they, of course the Red Cross, they know what they are giving people. They see all the letter is redacted. They could simply say to the person, "Look, your family sent you a letter, and the officials they've blacked it all out and there's nothing in it. But if you want, I can give it to you." If the individual has given that introduction, I think the situation would have been very, very much simpler and very...another problem to deal with.

But the way things were done, it was deliberately to destroy people. And this is a very, very simple example. I mean, again I can give you many, many examples: people would be sort of locked up in isolation for endless months; people would be sort of deprived from decent food for long periods of time; they could simply switch off...disconnect the water supply and you can't use your toilet; they could strip you, keep you naked, literally naked, or sometimes with just your underpants; they could go into the cell, beat you up, spray you with pepper spray and just leave you there; again, sleep deprivation was used extensively in Guantánamo, really extensively, but in a very, sort of, pretty sort of way, if one could call it pretty. So all they would say, they don't tell you, "We're subjecting you to sleep deprivation." You're in your cell and they tell you, "It's time to



move.” So basically you move from one cell to another. And an hour later, “It’s time to move.” So you move from one place to another. And an hour later, or two hours later, “It’s time to move.” And they keep doing that. And it’s no big deal. Orders are written on a piece of paper. The shift, the guards’ shifts change, and the new shift, they would just do the same routine again and again. It’s very, very simple. It’s no big deal.

But for the individual that this is happening to it’s...they destroy your life. They really destroy your life. However strong, however tough you are, however principled you are, however much you don’t want to cause any problems, it will destroy you. It’s not something you will see. As I said in the third world countries they’re so stupid. They beat you and, “Look,” you can always say, “Look, they’ve tortured me. They do this.” I came out of Guantanamo and physically, I could not show anything. But I have to tell you the pain I carry inside and the memories I have are really very great, and I have nothing to show.