

To the Editor:

The C.I.A. inspector general's report confirms that doctors played the same role in C.I.A. interrogations as they did under Gen. Augusto Pinochet's regime in Chile: assuring that men would stay alive while tortured. The new documents shatter the pretense that physicians and psychologists safeguarded detainees; instead, they acted as enablers of brutality.

No military, C.I.A. or contract physicians or psychologists have been held accountable for such staggering ethical breaches. Federal agencies that employed them and state licensing bodies have a responsibility to discipline them.

The New York State Assembly is considering a bill sponsored by Richard N. Gottfried that would prohibit licensed health professionals from abetting torture. Such a bill would restore the role of health professionals as healers rather than as cogs in the machinery of torture.

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Baltimore, Aug. 26, 2009

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