

# *White House Tries to Shield Top CIA Official from Torture Testimony*

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Washington, February 24 (RHC)-- In the United States, the Donald Trump administration is seeking to shield a high-ranking intelligence official from testifying over his role in torturing prisoners at a secret CIA "black site."

In a court filing, the Justice Department says it will assert a state secrets privilege to shield CIA deputy director Gina Haspel from being deposed in a civil trial against psychologists James Mitchell and Bruce Jessen. The pair are being sued for overseeing the torture of four men, one of whom died in CIA custody.

Haspel was reportedly present at a CIA black site in Thailand in 2002, as interrogators carried out Mitchell and Jessen's program of waterboarding, beatings, sleep deprivation, starvation, and other forms of torture. This month, the former acting director of the CIA confirmed that in 2005, Haspel personally oversaw the destruction of videotapes showing torture at the black site.



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