

By Adrian Castaneda and Steven T. Jones

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John Yoo – the infamous author of [legal memos justifying torture](#) for the Bush Administration and a controversial UC Berkeley law professor – continued his surreal book tour yesterday, stopping in San Francisco yesterday to [appear on KQED's forum](#)

And while host Michael Krasny did little to challenge Yoo's tortured logic, including the ludicrous assertion that tactics like waterboarding are legal because they weren't specifically outlawed by Congress, two callers who are lawyers correctly noted that the U.S. is bound by several treaties that bar torture, as well as inhumane or degrading treatment of prisoners, which the U.S. clearly engaged in based on Yoo's legal advice that only pushing a prisoner to the brink of death or major organ failure constitutes impermissible torture.

One of those callers specifically asked Yoo why his memo to the White House – written in the wake of 9/11, which Yoo considers an “unprecedented” event that conveyed great new powers to the president – didn't cite the U.S. constitutional provision that makes Congressional-approved treaties the “supreme law of the land,” comparable to any other laws Congress approves.

Yoo never answered that question, and Krasny quickly dropped the issue to quote an e-mail that was supportive of Yoo, the only such comment during the hour-long show. It's a shame that Krasny was far easier on this [locally infamous figure](#) than the Daily Show's Jon [Stewart, whose interview with Yoo](#) last month was far tougher and more revealing.

That's particularly galling given that it was just last week that the Department of Justice issued its final report criticizing Yoo's “flawed legal reasoning” even though it stopped short of finding professional misconduct that would warrant criminal sanctions or disbarment. That final report

by David Margolis of the Justice Department overruled a preliminary report by the Office of Professional Standards that did find professional misconduct based on the fact that Yoo “knowingly provided incomplete and one-sided advice” to justify the Bush Administration’s desire to torture detainees that it dubbed “enemy combatants.”

Protesters with World Can’t Wait and other groups have been [hounding Yoo on his tour](#) to promote his new book, “Crisis and Command: A history of executive power from George Washington to George W. Bush,” calling him and Jay Bybee (another Bush Administration lawyer who approved torture and is now a judge on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco) to be tried for their role in facilitating war crimes.

“These are men covered with the blood of countless victims of unspeakably cruel torture, rendition, and imprisonment without any recourse to trial in hell hole dungeons across the planet,” reads a World Can’t Wait missive.

For his part, Yoo is unrepentant and dismissive of critics, repeatedly citing unnamed polls that he says indicate most Americans support the so-called “enhanced interrogation methods” and believe they have prevented terrorist attacks. “I don’t think the majority of the American people think we went too far,” Yoo told Stewart.

On Forum, Yoo criticized the Office of Professional Responsibility’s finding as “shoddy,” saying that the investigators did not take into account the pressure and national urgency of the months just after the 9/11 attacks. Yoo placed blame for the torture scandals not on the one-sided misinformation in his legal briefs but on the fact that Congress didn’t create specific laws to define torture technique after adopting international torture treaties into American law. Yoo also blamed Congress for its inability or unwillingness to reign in the President’s broad wartime powers. “Congress still has enormous authority over national security matters when it chooses to use them,” he said.

Congress also has the power to subpoena Yoo and hold public hearings on the latest Justice Department report, which critics say whitewashed what many consider to be blatantly illegal activities by Yoo and other Bush Administration officials – or to formally support the indictment of Yoo and others by a Spanish judge investigating U.S.-approved torture -- if it chooses to do so.