

# *CIA Officials Knew Torture Victim Maher Arar Was Innocent*

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Ottawa, April 8 (RHC)-- CIA whistleblower John Kiriakou has revealed new details about the CIA's internal debate over the arrest, rendition and torture of Canadian citizen Maher Arar.

Kirakou told The Canadian Press news agency numerous colleagues warned against arresting Arar, saying he was innocent. But Kiriakou said an unnamed female officer insisted on pressing ahead, saying Arar had links to *al-Qaeda*.

Arar was arrested at New York City's John F. Kennedy International Airport in 2002, while traveling through to Canada after a family vacation. He was sent to Syria, where he spent nearly a year being tortured, interrogated and imprisoned in a "grave-like cell."

Canada formally apologized to Arar and paid a \$10 million settlement after an inquiry found he was totally innocent. But the United States, which was responsible for his rendition, has never apologized.

Kiriakou, meanwhile, remains under house arrest after revealing the identity of a covert officer to a reporter who did not publish it. John Kiriakou exposed the Bush-era torture program and became the only official to be jailed in connection with it.



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