

Orange Alert: from Minneapolis Skyways to St. Thomas University

By Bill Sorem



The Minneapolis demonstration was coordinated with a protest in front of the White House on January 11, 2012, the tenth anniversary of the arrival of the first prisoners at Guantanamo Bay detention facility.

Photo: Andrew Courtney

Why were people in orange jumpsuits silently filing through the Minneapolis skyways? The answer may be ten years old, but those in the jumpsuits will tell you the problem is not in the past, but is a current one.

January 9, 2012 was the 10th anniversary of the memo that gave President George Bush the right to ignore the Geneva Conventions and authorize torture. Authors of the memo were Robert Delahunty, now a St. Thomas Law School professor and John Yoo, now a University of California at Berkeley law professor. Local peace activists have demonstrated against Professor Delahunty ever since he joined St. Thomas in 2004.

Many believe that the Delahunty-Yoo memo led directly to the torturing of prisoners at Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib prisons and many other human rights violations by American troops.

The “enhanced interrogation techniques” are reported to be continuing.

This year the demonstrators wore hooded orange jump suits, the attire of prisoners at Guantanamo, and marched silently through the Minneapolis skyways from The Peoples Plaza to the second floor library at The University of St. Thomas Law School library asking to see the books authored by Delahunty. They were denied admission. The “prisoners” then joined a rally in front of the law school.

The objectives of this continued protest effort include closing Guantanamo, more public disclosure of the on-going Delahunty-Yoo writings and a forum at St. Thomas

including Professor Delahunty and other lawyers with differing viewpoints. The protestors accuse Delahunty of war crimes. They have also been picketing St. Thomas Law School commencements arguing that the students are not getting a complete picture of the torture issue.

For more on the demonstration, see The Uptake at theuptake.org on January 12, 2012.