Torture must end now

Our military and government have been accused of committing torture by very reputable and influential sources. In response to these accusations, our leaders have either summarily dismissed them as false or have attributed them to the enemies of the United States. Either case, the parties and institutions allegedly involved are not held accountable and continue to get funding and support. Their actions make us all culpable (as taxpayers and voters) especially given the attention, albeit suppressed, that these purported crimes have received. It is better that we come to terms with these issues now, before more of and the victims and their sympathizers decide that revenge represents the most humane and just form of justice of the most barbaric kind will not bring the peace that we desire.

So who is to blame that our government is currently capable for torture? In its 2004 Annual Report, Amnesty International argued that the United States was disregarding international law, as well as its own strong words from one of the largest human rights organizations in the world, and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977. Earlier this year, as reported by CBS and ABC news, a secret report put out by the International Committee of the Red Cross argued that the U.S. government committed acts of torture against detainees in coverts detention sites throughout the world. This revelation is significant as the ICRC is the appointed legal guardian of the Geneva Conventions and oversees the treatment of prisoners of war. In 2006, a veteran from the Washington Post on November 30, 2008, Matthew Alexander, leader of an interrogation team that worked in Iraq in 2006, states, "Torture and abuse continue to be practiced in America, and the No. 1 reason foreign fighters flock there to fight were the abuses carried out at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. Our policy of torture was direct and swiftly recruiting fighters for al-Qaeda in Iraq... How anyone can say that torture keeps Americans safe is beyond me—because you don't count American soldiers as Americans." As reported in The New York Times on April 21, 2009, Admiral Dennis Blair, current Director of National Intelligence, claims that, "The information gained from these techniques was valuable in some instances, and there is no way of knowing whether the same information could have been obtained through other means." He continues, "The bottom line is that these techniques have been hurt our image around the world, the damage they have done to our interests far outweighed whatever benefit they gave us and they are not essential to our national security." These are just two of many high ranking intelligence & military officials that have stated their serious concerns regarding the incarceration and interrogation practices utilized by U.S. forces (and their hired contractors) in Iraq, Guantanamo, and elsewhere. It isn't like we are unaware and don't know it is happening. Abu Ghraib's photos are all over the Internet. Reports from activities going on in the Guantnamo prison are coming out regularly. "Enemy combatants" and "extraordinary rendition" are household terms. Waterboarding is mentioned so often, one might think it is an Olympic sport. Even the School for the Americas, one of the most well-kept secrets of U.S. foreign policy, is something most Americans have never probably heard: if you haven't, visit www.sow.org. Given all this, we still don't seem to be ready to push our government to take steps in curbing its involvement in these horrific and unlawful acts. When will you be ready to do so?

If we are going to survive on this planet, our species had better figure out that certain destructive behaviors against one's own kind don't result in harmony and good will. Brutalizing and torturing other human beings will not make for lasting peace. We need to do all we can to root out torture in our military operations as well as in our domestic justice and police systems. Just saying "No, it isn't torture," won't cut it. We have to be vigilant. We need to bring the skeletons out of our collective closets and seek appropriate reparations and justice as necessary. if we don't, it will continue in our name. The buck must stop here. But will it?

President Obama'ssentiment on torture can be summarized in the following comment he made in January, 2009: "Obviously we're going to be looking at past practices, and I don't believe that anybody is above the law, but my orientation is going to be to move forward. We can't just move forward. First we must come clean. Unfortunately, last week, the Democratically-led Senate voted 90-6 to withhold funds (580 million) to close the Guantnamo prison, and following President Obama vowed to do during his first week in office. This past week saw President Obama agreeing to revise the "military commissions" which rights groups have tried to try detainees. According to Larry Cox, Executive Director of Amnesty International, these commissions represent "incredible broken, so discredited, that it cannot be saved by any amount of administrative or legislative duct tape. Americans have put faith in the federal court system for hundreds of years. All detainees can be tried in these courts and brought to justice. The rule of law must be our guide as the nation comes to terms with Guantanamo and reclaim its moral authority. "Thus, it doesn't appear that our President or Congress is fully committed to human rights or public safety," he said. This is now the time we spoke up and let our government (and the world) know that the people of the U.S. do not support torture and demand that it stop now.----and allow such abuses to continue.

Packard, Studebaker, Hudson, Auburn, Oldsmobile, DeSoto, Pierce-Arrow, Stutz, Cord, Mammon, Duesenberg, Nash, Franklin, Edsel, LaSalle, Essex, Stanley, Graham, Aero, Crosley, Kaiser—the pages of automotive history are heavy with the obituaries of car nameplates that have gone on to that Great Junkyard in the Sky.

Why should Pontiac be any different, or Chrysler for that matter? It’s no great tragedy, at least not one that we haven’t experienced time and time again. It’s been obvious for some time that the global auto industry was overstocked in production capacity and undersold in customers. Some winnowing was inevitable.

Right now it seems that American manufacturers are the ones being comforted. Chrysler is CURRENTLY on life-support, Italian style, and General Motors is undergoing a series of painful amputations. Whether either can survive remains an open question. It would be a tragedy to lose them. Not the bogus tragedy referred to earlier—an automotive icon of your youth disappears, so what?—but a real, practical tragedy; hundreds of thousands of jobs gone, whole towns dead.

We are in a world where we strive to save these companies but there comes a time when the situation becomes hopeless and it is time to cut your losses and move on. We’re not there yet, but we can see it from here. To look on our cars, ye mighty, and despair; it seemed to say.

But now we’ve moved to the close of that Shelley poem.

"Round the decay of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare.

The "lone and level sands stretch I away."

Dr. as we like to call it these days; Detroi.

Actually, downtown Detroit does look too bad; it’s got a pulse. Like many center cities these days it exists primarily as an entertainment center, with extravagant athletic and cultural facilities as well as fine hotels, restaurants and casinos. But most of the development has been in the older neighborhoods really—and Shelle desolate vision is made flesh. Much of the city is a wasteland of vacant lots and decayed buildings framed by weeds growing through the long-abandoned sidewalks.

There’ll be others of dozens other cities join Detroit in the urban ash-heap if it motorists goes down.

Car companies die for a variety of reasons, sometimes because they made bad decisions more often it’s management that drive them in. That’s pretty much the case here in recent years. Our auto executives have been locked in a mindset that belie a decent profit could be turned only by making big cars, trucks and vans. Which I fine as long as the American public to big, not so good for the rest of the record memory. When the mood turns small, the Japanese manufacturers mow in and ate their lunch.

You could make a case that Chrysler stopped being a company years ago that it invented the van and was cont to make its money on them, with cars as afterthought. Now it’s going to be an Italian company that makes its me on small cars, very small. Why isn’t GM Motors was conceyled nearly as century as an automotive giant that would be specific car for every income class. Cadillac and Buick were the luxury brand; Chevrolet and Oldsmobile for the working man. Then they decided there was a hole to be filled in the luxury field and the LaC was born. The Pontiac was developed between Olds and Chevy.

All of this demanded a huge deal with General Motors and a vast bureaucracy superstructure worked, but to keep people buying cars they had to make cars that were quiet and "planned obsolescence" became watchword. That was when old Goyman started to crumble.

I wish our car companies really well, I really do if we go away we will feel the pain in pl we didn’t know we had places.

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