

Moral Blindness on U.S. Aggression and Torture

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As I was reading an [editorial](#) in the Washington Post yesterday condemning Russia for its war of aggression in Ukraine and the torture of Ukrainians, I just kept asking myself: Why isn't the Post condemning the U.S. government for the same thing? And yet, not one single mention of what the U.S. government did to the people of both Afghanistan and Iraq.

Why? Why not use the opportunity to show the world that U.S. officials deserve to be punished for what they did to the people of Afghanistan and Iraq just as much as Russian officials deserve to be punished for what they are doing in Ukraine?

Let's begin with Iraq, a nation that never attacked the United States or even threatened to do so. The U.S. war on that nation was a pure, unadulterated "war of aggression," the type of war condemned by the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal.

The *Post* clearly understands the concept of a "war of aggression" because it describes Russia's invasion of Ukraine as "an unjustified war of aggression." Given such, why didn't the *Post* use its editorial to condemn both regimes — the U.S. regime and the Russian regime — rather than focus only on the Russian regime?

One of the fiercest battles in the U.S. war of aggression against Iraq occurred in the city of Fallujah. When that battle was going on, the mainstream media was referring to U.S. troops as the "good guys" and to the Iraqi defenders as the "bad guys." I kept thinking: But those "bad guys" are just defending their country from illegal invaders. Why are they "bad guys" for doing that? The Ukrainian soldiers are not considered "bad guys" for defending their country, are they? Is it because U.S. forces are automatically and always to be considered "good guys," even when they are waging a war of aggression against another country?

Afghanistan was labeled a “good war” because Osama bin Laden, who was accused of orchestrating the 9/11 attacks, was living there. U.S. officials claimed that that fact removed that particular invasion from the realm of a “war of aggression.”

Not so! The reason that President Bush ordered his army to invade Afghanistan is that Afghanistan had refused to accede to his extradition demand for bin Laden. Bush called such refusal “harboring” terrorists. But Afghanistan had the legal right to refuse to accede to Bush’s extradition demand, given that there was no extradition treaty between the United States and Afghanistan. Moreover, there was never any evidence that the Afghanistan government was complicit in the 9/11 attacks. Thus, the U.S. war on Afghanistan was a pure, unadulterated war of aggression. Just as the U.S. war on Iraq was.

Sometime after the launching of those two wars of aggression, rumors began circulating that U.S. forces were torturing people. Here at The Future of Freedom Foundation, we immediately began calling for investigations and condemning all acts of torture.

We were inundated with vicious attacks from U.S. interventionists who fervently denied that U.S. forces would ever engage in torture and fiercely criticizing us for even suggesting the possibility that they would do so.

And then the proof began surfacing, such as the vicious torture at Abu Ghraib, Gitmo, secret CIA prison camps, and elsewhere.

What did our critics say then? No, they didn’t apologize. Instead, they maintained that the torture was no big deal. Some of them even defended the torture, which to me was very bizarre, given that the people who were being tortured were the victims of U.S. wars of aggression.

I recall reading about one Iraqi man who kept exclaiming during his torture session, “Sir, why are you doing this to me?” I found it fascinating that he would refer to his torturer as “Sir,” and I concluded that it was because he had a high respect for Americans. I could easily see why he couldn’t understand why Americans were torturing him, given that he and his nation had never done anything against the United States. In fact, Iraq’s dictator, Saddam Hussein, had even been a partner and ally of the United States during the 1980s. Americans often tend to forget that but certainly the Iraqi people had not forgotten it.

At one point, it was discovered that the U.S. national security establishment was videotaping its torture sessions. My immediate reaction was: Why would they do that? For fun viewing later on? For future torture training sessions? When it was discovered that the torture tapes had been destroyed to prevent Congress from viewing them, I was not surprised that no one was prosecuted for intentionally destroying evidence of a crime. By this time, I had come to the realization that the higher-ups in the U.S. national security state form of governmental structure are immune from criminal liability.

One of the points I kept making about all this mayhem is that wars of aggression and torture are what communist and other totalitarian regimes do and that America should not be doing what they do. Supporters of these two U.S. wars of aggression and the torture that came with them had a difficult time seeing my point.

And that’s the real value of the *Washington Post’s* editorial yesterday condemning Russia for its war of aggression and the torture of prisoners and detainees. It’s always easy to pull the

speck out of someone else's eye. It's not so easy to pull the plank out of one's own eye. Even though the *Post's* editorial fails to mention the U.S. government, one can easily apply the principles enunciated in the editorial to the U.S. wars of aggression against Afghanistan and Iraq and to the U.S. torture of people from those two countries.

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