

On Rogues and Rogue States

Old, New, and Improved

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)
Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [US NATO War](#)
[Agenda](#)
In-depth Report: [IRAQ REPORT](#)

I have just finished reading William Shirer's Berlin Diary. (This may not fascinate you, but I am coming to something.) I first encountered it in high school. It is of course Shirer's account as a correspondent in Germany of the rise of the Nazis. Most of it is well known to the educated. The Nazis, who had control over the domestic press, convinced the German population that the Poles were threatening Germany, as plausible as Guatemala threatening the United States. The Poles were said to be committing atrocities against Germans.

Then the Reich, with no justification whatever, having absolute air superiority, attacked Poland, bombing undefended cities and killing huge numbers of people. It was a German pattern several times repeated. Many reporters told of the smell of rotting bodies, of refugees dying of hunger and thirst. Today the Reich is endlessly remembered as a paragon of evil. It was.

How did Nazi Germany differ from the United States today? There is the same lying. Washington insisted that Iraq was about to get nuclear weapons, biological agents, that it had poisonous gas. None of this was true. The government, unimpeded by the media, persuaded over half of the American population that Iraq was responsible for Nine-Eleven. Now it says that Iran works to get nuclear weapons, and of course that the Russians are coming. The American press, informally but strictly controlled, carefully doesn't challenge any of this.

Having prepped the American public as the Nazis prepped theirs, Washington unleashed a savage attack against Iraq, deliberately destroying infrastructure, leaving the country without power or purified water. The slaughter was godawful. But, said America, the war was to rid the Iraqi people of an evil dictator, to bring them democracy, freedom, and human rights. (The oil was entirely incidental. The oil is always incidental.)

Fallujah, Iraq, after the American military brought it democracy, human rights, and freedom.

Guernica, after the visit of the Kondor Legion. For the historically challenged, this was the Spanish city bombed during the Spanish Civil War by the Germans in support of the Falangists.

Washington never sleeps in its campaigns to improve the lives of people whose most fervent wish is that America stop improving their lives. To give the Afghans democracy, human rights, and American values, the US has for eighteen years been bombing, bombing, bombing a largely illiterate population in a nation where America has no business. It is a

coward's war with warplanes butchering peasants who have no defenses. The pilots and drone operators who do this deserve contempt, as does the country that sends them. How many more years? For what purpose? And how were the German Nazis different?

The German Gestapo perpetrated sickening torture in hidden basements. America does the same, maintaining torture prisons around the world. In these, men, and no doubt women, are hung by their wrists for days, naked in very cold rooms, kept awake and periodically beaten (exactly as described by survivors of Soviet torture. Nazis, whether American, Russian, or German, are Nazis.)

Photos of Iraqis at the American torture operation at Abu Ghraib showed prisoners, almost naked, lying in pools of blood. Tell me, please, how this differs from what was done by the Reich? (The bloodier photos are no longer online. Many that remain seem to have been edited.)



[Abu Ghraib](#). A happy American girl soldier. Note rubber gloves. The US military used many female soldiers for this duty. They apparently were kinky, as they seemed to get a kick out of it. A female general ran the operation.

Gina Haspel, head of the CIA, is a sadist who tortured Moslem prisoners, reminiscent of Ilse Koch, the notorious Nazi torturess, who also worked in prisons. It is easy to find victims there, I suppose.



An Abu Ghraib pic apparently no longer online. I found it on an ancient memory stick. Are we having fun yet?

President Trump has just [pardoned](#) several American war criminals, saying he wanted to give US soldiers the "confidence to fight." This amounts to blanket permission to commit atrocities. A purpose of military training being to extirpate human decency and

mercifulness, the obscene barbarism is not surprising. Atrocities are what soldiers do, and will do as long as the wars go on, being furiously denied by the government. (When I covered Force Recon, the Marine Corps Special Forces, the motto on the wall was “Crush Their Skulls and Eat Their Faces.”)

Perhaps the best known example of implied approval was Nixon’s pardon of Lt. Calley, who ordered the murder of Vietnamese villagers, for which he received three years of house arrest.

The Germans wanted empire, *lebensraum*, and resources, in particular oil. Americans want empire and oil, control of which allows control of the world. They go about getting them by invasion and intimidation. Thus America wants to bring democracy and human rights to Iraq, Iran, Venezuela, and Nigeria, which have *lots* of oil, while it has occupation troops in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and elsewhere in the Mideast. What part of Syria is Trump occupying? Surprise, surprise! The part with the oil. Oil for the Americans, land for the Germans.

As Shirer points out, the German public was not enthusiastic about the war, at least not through 1940, as neither is the American public today. Neither public showed any concern about the hideousness its government inflicted around the world. What is the difference?

The parallels with the Reich are not complete. Washington does not essay genocide against Jews or blacks or any other internal population, being content with killing whoever its bombs fall upon. Trump cannot reasonably be likened to Hitler. He lacks the vision, the backbone, and apparently the viciousness. Hitler was a very smart, very evil man who knew exactly what he was doing, at least politically. This cannot be said of Trump. However, Hitler was, and Trump is, surrounded by freak-show curiosities of great bellicosity. Adolf had Goering, Goebbels, Himmler, Reinhardt Heydrich, Julius Streicher, Eichman. Trump has John Bolton, as amoral and pathologically aggressive as any in the Fuehrer’s entourage, or under a log. Pompeo, a bloated toad of a man, bears an uncanny resemblance to Goering. Both he and Pence are Christian heretics, Evangelicals, who believe they are connected to God on broadband. O’Brien sounds like Bolton. All want war with Iran and perhaps with China and Russia. Sieg heil, and run like hell.



My Lai, after Lt. Calley of the SS Totenkopf Div...excuse me, the Americal Division, I meant to say, brought human rights, freedom, and the American way.

[Wikipedia](#): "Between 347 and 504 unarmed people were killed by U.S. Army soldiers ...Victims included men, women, children, and infants. Some of the women were gang-raped and their bodies mutilated as were children as young as 12.")

For this Calley got three years house arrest, less than the sentence for a bag of methamphetamine, until pardoned by Nixon. Many Americans said, and many still say, that he should not have been punished at all, that we needed to take the gloves off, let the troops fight. Again, this is what Trump said.

The German Nazis worshiped Blood and Soil, the land of Germany and the Teutonic race, which they believed to be genetically superior to all others. Americans can't easily worship race. Instead they think themselves Exceptional, Indispensable, a Shining City on a Hill, the greatest civilization the world has known. Same narcissism and arrogance, slightly different foundation.

Nazi Germany was, like Nazi America, intensely militaristic. The US has hundreds of bases around the world (China has one overseas base, in Djibouti), spends appallingly on the military despite the lack of a credible military enemy. It currently buys new missile submarines (the Columbia class), aircraft carriers (the Ford class), intercontinental nuclear bombers (the B21), and fighter planes (the F-35).

Nazi Germany attacked Poland, Norway, Belgium, France, Russia, America, and England. America? Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia, Syria, supports a brutal proxy war against Yemen (Yemen is a grave threat to America), threatens Venezuela, China, and Iran with attack, embargoes Cuba. These are recent. Going back a bit, we have Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Yugoslavia, the intervention in Panama, on and on. Millions and millions killed.

The Third Reich was, and America is, the chief threat to peace on the planet, a truly rogue state.

Is this something to be proud of?

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