

The US Is the World's Worst Human Rights Violator

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The US government has always been the first to call out other nations with poor track records on human rights abuses. Invariably they are the two nations viewed most threatening to America's global hegemony and power – rivals Russia and China. Other loudly criticized countries are those less powerful Third World nations that most defy US dominance. Any nation on earth is at risk of America's wrath that fights to protect its own self-interest over and above the American Empire's in a noble effort to minimize economic exploitation in the plundering of precious natural resources and subjugating and locking its native population into permanent Third World serfdom. But any country going against the world's most powerful nation is automatically deemed an enemy of the Empire and subject to such labels as axis-of-evil and a serious affront to human rights. No surprise that countries like Venezuela, Cuba, Iran, Syria and North Korea are all targeted in the crosshairs of the next war or next regime change living under decades of heavy-handed economic sanctions designed to break the will of these independent smaller nations bold enough to resist US aggression, superpower control and full frontal dominance.

On the other hand, when a country's government encourages and willingly allows a strong US presence with active duty military installations numbering [over 1000](#) globally accompanied by an army of private contractors and transnational corporations, corrupt dictators with the worst human rights records in the entire world are merely given a free pass, immune from any US criticism. As long as you succumb and are minimally complicit in the raping and pillaging of your own nation and people by the global bully, be assured America will have your back and always turn a blind eye to your heinous crimes against humanity and human rights violations of the most vile kind – that is until the US ultimately uses you up and turns on you (like it predictably does with all its past tyrannical friends Mubareck, Hussein and Gaddafi just to name a few).

The ethics card is arbitrarily used only out of self-serving, psychopathic convenience. Like the psychopathic corporations that exploit people around the world into cheap labor bondage, likewise the psychopathic US government's only interest (aside from its own) is the corporate interests it is most beholding to and sworn to protect. Instead of our government operating "of the people, by the people and for the people," since 9/11 no longer sworn to uphold the Constitution, the US government is now sworn to operate in the sole interest "of the corporation, by the corporation and for the corporation" – since higher courts have given corporations all the rights that used to belong to the people. Lincoln must be turning over in his grave now to see what his United States have become.

Since 2008 evaluating countries annually throughout the world on various human rights violations, a UK company called [Maplecroft](#) has been assessing and ranking nations for the most serious human rights offenses. In that first year 20 nations were listed as "extreme" offenders. Freedom of speech, press, religion and movement along with freedom from

death, torture and slavery are all considered basic human rights. Another important criteria used is employment and work conditions. A total of 31 indices of measurement were generated to produce 197 individual nations' scores and rankings from low in human rights violations to medium, high and extreme.

In December the group released its 2014 findings announcing a 70% increase in nations falling into the extreme category of worst human rights offenders. That original list of 20 rose to an alarming 34 countries this year. According to Maplecroft, the ten worst offenders of human rights around the globe in descending order are Syria, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Pakistan, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar, Yemen and Nigeria. Of all nations assessed, those measured with the most significant spikes this year in violating human rights are Syria, Egypt, Libya, Mali and Guinea-Bissau.

The US falls into the medium range for human rights while only Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Scandinavian countries, United Kingdom, France, Switzerland, Austria and Germany are rated low on human rights abuse. Aside from the already specified ten worst offenders, other nations classified in the extreme category of abusers are Mexico and Columbia in the Western Hemisphere largely due to drug cartels, a number of small African nations along with global giants India, Russia and China. Maplecroft puts out its annual findings as valuable information as much for transnationals considering global expansion and investment as well as for public consumption. Prior to analyzing this particular data, it then seems worth exploring other findings and measures that may shed further light on this complex but important examination of current global trends in human rights.

Within the spectrum of nations systematically engaging in state sponsored executions of its own citizens, every year the US ranks within the top five nations in the world. Considering that many states have suspended their policy of executing death row prisoners due to DNA evidence proving that too many innocent people are convicted, it reflects an arrogant callousness to go on killing possibly innocent victims of a broken barbaric system of injustice. Yet the state of [Texas](#) continues to lead the way with 514 since 1976, nearly five times the number of the next state.

The top offender amongst national governments killing its own population by execution is China, although its secrecy in refusing to disclose numbers makes for a best guessed estimate of up to 5000 people a year. [Amnesty International](#) reports that China puts more people to death than the rest of the world combined. Other countries promoting capital punishment in recent years include the stalwart US ally Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Yemen and North Korea.

With more than 2.2 million Americans currently in prisons, the [incarceration rate](#) of the United States is the highest in the entire world at 743 out of every 100,000 people, comprising 25% of the world's total inmate population and near four times the rate of the next nation. All other countries on earth imprison far less with the next highest nation's rate at just over 200 out of 100,000 people.

As of late an extremely hot topic in the news is the international human rights offense of torture. Last week's US Senate Intelligence Committee's findings are accusing the CIA under the Bush-Cheney regime from 2002-2006 of regularly engaging in a litany of appalling, internationally banned torture techniques on thousands of "war on terror" detainees. Though the committee can declassify its own report, it is urging President Obama to

declassify and release the findings to the public charging the CIA with gross deception in holding back both the frequency and severity of its torture practices in dozens perhaps hundreds of secret detainment centers throughout the Middle East, Central Asia, Europe and of course Guantanamo.

Some of the Congressional report's findings from its four year investigation were released to [McClatchy](#), indicating that the CIA had previously lied to the committee in efforts to cover up its widespread use of "enhanced interrogation techniques" that included waterboarding, electrode shock to genitals, ripping out of fingernails, hanging upside down for hours on end.

Predictably the CIA still insists that its methods never constituted torture nor were ever illegal. But the Senate findings refute the CIA's claims, concluding that the CIA willfully evaded all oversight mechanisms operating without approval from either the Department of Justice or even its own CIA headquarters. The bottom line to all the torture and abuse inflicted on so many innocent victims throughout the world is that the US produced next to no useful information in its war on terror.

Back in 2004 when General David Petraeus was first sent to Iraq to train Iraqi security forces, he was directly involved in Iraqi death squad commando units marauding through city streets engaging in sectarian killings and operating hundreds of police commando centers for torture and death. The story broke in March last year when the [Guardian](#) and BBC Arabic released a documentary with both American officers and Iraqi generals and government officials interviewed linking and implicating Petraeus' direct and active involvement.

The Pentagon assigned to Iraq an infamous veteran of the 1980's dirty wars in El Salvador and the Iran-Contra fiasco, an American Army colonel named James Steele to help train, consult and coordinate systematic murder, detainment and torture of thousands of Iraqis, many innocent civilians, contributing to Iraq's descent into full blown sectarian civil war.

Another Army officer, Colonel Coffman, who reported directly to Petraeus, worked in unison with Colonel Steele in setting up Iraqi death squad commando units. Torture has always been believed to be a useful military tactic in counterinsurgency warfare to learn critical information about the enemy. So it was simply business as usual to the one who literally wrote the book on US counterinsurgency (the COIN Manual). The fact that conducting such torture in murderous dirty wars constitutes serious Geneva and human rights violations made no difference to the general, the Pentagon that sent the dirty war expert to Iraq, or the Bush administration that endorsed the use of torture and Iraqi death squads.

A spokesman for the ex-CIA Director Petraeus last year responded to the charges stating that everything the general learned and knew was passed onto to his chain of command in Washington as well as to top Iraqi leadership, thereby deploying the typical CYA strategy, when in doubt conveniently spread the blame onto others in order to make yourself look least bad. Clearly Bush, Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld all knew international laws that expressly forbid torture were being regularly violated. But then as proven liars and war criminals many times over, what else can be expected?

In the face of this latest incriminating evidence from the Senate, even the CIA's historic ally and protector the Intelligence Committee chair Diane Feinstein believes the CIA has finally gone too far. Of course she only admitted this last month upon learning the CIA bugged her

own committee. But up until that moment she had given the NSA and CIA carte blanche rights, endorsing all the invasive unconstitutional surveillance that for years has been systematically tracking all Americans. And only when she too felt violated herself did she begin to criticize the CIA at all.

Clearly these latest revelations show that the CIA systematically disregarded all protocol as well as international and Geneva convention rules prohibiting torture and inhumane treatment of detainees. The Abu Ghraib prison scandal in 2005 Iraq was just one tip of the iceberg, illustrating high profile example of US human rights abuses that have long been embedded as standard US foreign policy throughout the Middle East and North Africa.

But since those in the CIA, Pentagon and Washington all lie for a living every single day, the American public is not so naïve as to actually believe that the brutally illegal US torture practices ended in 2006. After all, a [recent poll](#) found that Americans believe that 75% of US politicians are corrupted by campaign donations and lobbyists. And with his track record, there is little reason to think anything has changed under Obama who from the get-go campaigned on the false promise to close down Guantanamo prison. But of course it is still operating today and in all likelihood so are all those secret hidden unlawful US torture chambers around the world. Torture is as serious a human rights violation as any, and in this regard, undoubtedly the United States is guilty amongst the world's worst offenders.

In 2012 the Committee to Protect Journalists ranked the most [censored nations](#) in suppressing and imprisoning journalists to include many of the same top offenders in human rights already identified in other studies earlier. They are North Korea, Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Myanmar.

But the Obama administration is gravely undermining freedom of press here in America as well. Last year by aggressively harassing and threatening formal arrest of a number of AP reporters, confiscating computers and phone records, placing even mainstream journalists under high surveillance, Obama sent a clear message to independent journalists that printing the truth that might incriminate the US government will be met with severe negative consequences. Obama also failed to deliver on his campaign promise for transparency that he was elected on. His policy of secrecy and intimidation toward those responsible for accurate news coverage is only surpassed by his policy of violating whistleblowers' rights, harassing, demonizing and charging them with violating the [espionage act](#) more than all other previous administrations combined.

In summary of the above findings, since the US has chiefly been responsible for escalating the civil war in Syria by financing and arming America's supposed enemy al Qaeda to overthrow Syrian leader Assad, is also responsible for the 2011 regime changes in both Libya and Egypt leaving those two nations in chaotic shambles, and already spent well over 4 trillion dollars draining the US economy while laying waste to both Afghanistan and Iraq in decade long wars, leaving the nations in far worse shape than prior to US invasion and occupation, a solid case can be made that the United States is also a major human rights offender.

Additionally, with frequent drone strikes killing innocent civilians in our supposed ally Pakistan along with Somalia and Yemen (latest Yemen estimate 300-430 [deaths](#)), America bears much of the blame for the majority of these most notorious human rights offenders. It should be noted that many of these nations have maintained poor track records long before any major US intervention. But with all the human tragedy that such an aggressive US

foreign policy has caused in the majority of these worst human rights offenders, US culpability has made life far worse for citizens living in most top 10 human rights violating nations.

After all, in Iraq alone the US has killed a million and a half of its citizens. With the sectarian civil war in Iraq that the US created still raging, at least 4000 more deaths each year continue nonstop to this day, destroying property into the billions, surging rates of cancer and birth defects that have left still floundering economies led by corrupt weak puppet governments. The sheer and utter destruction the US has brought to so many of the globe's most notorious human rights offenders, with no sign of improvement, merely adds another dark blemish to the already overwhelming evidence that America has miserably failed every nation where it intervenes. But despite inflicting so much pain and devastation on so many nations' populations around the world, regularly violating their sovereign rights, the February coup in Ukraine the latest example, while breaking every international law, Geneva Convention and UN Charter rule, an overwhelming case can be mounted against the United States as the planet's worst human rights violator of them all.

That is why when Obama accuses Russia and China of unjustified unilateral military aggression, defying and violating all international laws, disregarding other nations' sovereignties, and maintaining horrendous human rights records, the entire world laughs at America's blatant hypocrisy and double standard. Since the US has enjoyed its sole global superpower status for near a quarter century now, it has relentlessly taken advantage of less powerful nations citing US exceptionalism as its inflated sense of entitlement and self-justification. The US as the world's bully can commit transgression after transgression anywhere on earth whenever it wants with complete impunity and unaccountability because its Empire dominance and strength permit getting away with it.

A quick final review places America near the top in killing and at the top in locking up its own citizens, especially if they are darker-skinned. It also ranks number one in the world in killing foreigners as well as ranks very high torturing those same foreigners especially if they happen to be darker-skinned non-Christians. Based on recent global events, the US has threatened and bullied the rest of the world into submission for so long now that the tables may finally be turning. It appears that the geopolitical chessboard might have America the big loser when the petrodollar no longer rules. Russian President Putin is currently seeking to set the precedent to trade in rubles. As America's chief creditor, China along with Russia are leading the revolt to overthrow the US dollar as the standard international currency. Europe usually gives into US demands but needs Russia's natural gas piped in more than it does America's war with Russia. Obama's latest war drumming rhetoric and negative sanctions simply may not stick. The US government's long history of violating others' human rights justified by its own inflated sense of entitlement and exceptionalism appears to be rapidly catching up, and soon American citizens may be joining the rest of the world paying a very heavy price for the sins of its leaders.

Joachim Hagopian is a West Point graduate and former Army officer. His written manuscript based on his military experience examines leadership and national security issues and can be consulted at <http://www.redredsea.net/westpointhagopian/>.

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