

MORAL CLARITY

The perpetrators of every atrocity in history would defend their actions as justified. The Inquisitions were designed to bring man closer to God. The Crusades were intended to bring Christ to the heathens. The Salem Witch Trials were to eradicate evil and save souls. Our genocidal treatment of the Native Americans was motivated by Manifest Destiny and the advancement of Christian America. The Holocaust was perpetrated to save the Aryan race. The tortures, mutilations and murders by the KKK were intended to protect the white race and enforce racial boundaries.

Blowing up abortion clinics and murdering doctors promotes the right to life. The murderous actions of 9/11 were intended to discourage the American cultural and religious incursion into the world of Islam. The horrors of the American torture of detainees was designed to save American lives. Additionally, every assassin in history felt his or her actions were for the good of the cause (whatever that cause) and the world was a better place as a result of their action.

Put simply, *evil* done for a good cause is not evil. It's just very important to be the ones who decide what qualifies as evil or a good cause. Dick Cheney tells us it's not torture, so it can't be evil. Charles Krauthammer tells us it has worked to keep us safe, so it's not evil.

I feel so much better about this torture issue now that these two gentlemen have

clarified the moral implications for me.

Gary Crum
Junction City

TOTALITARIAN ACT

People Against the National Defense Authorization Act (PANDA) testified in front of the Lane County Commissioners Dec. 16. What was requested was the assurance that if the feds tried to enforce this distasteful act, called the NDAA, our local law enforcement, far from cooperating, would go as far as impeding federal cops from "kidnapping" Lane County residents.

Yes, state and federal laws already prohibit features of the NDAA such as the indefinite detention, rendition, torture and possible execution of American citizens unequivocally. That the NDAA was approved at all by Obama's administration proves even more clearly that 9/11, although carried out mostly by foreign Saudis, was done with the complicity of the Bush-Cheney administration and the corporate-military apparatus with the intent to implement what Naomi Klein calls the "shock doctrine": During times of upheaval the state will pass laws so odious that the citizenry normally would not tolerate them.

My own personal experience living in totalitarian Argentina from 1968 to 1985 can attest to the fear of a government that gives itself powers over life and death, freedom and torture. During my childhood, doors would be kicked down by police and

people would be taken away, never to be heard from again — all for "crimes" such as having long hair and a beard or for one's choice of books and music.

These people expressed opposition to a military dictatorship that took over power undemocratically, by force. The victims became *los desaparecidos* (the disappeared).

David Ivan Piccioni
Eugene

VOTER FRAUD?

I understand the state has rejected 4,600 ballots for signature problems. If 4,600 ballots have signatures that do not match their registration cards, isn't the implication that someone other than the registered voter forged a ballot? Isn't that illegal, as a serious crime? Why doesn't the state investigate? The investigation would begin by interviewing the person listed as the legitimate voter. If the state really thinks voter fraud is going on, then aren't they avoiding their responsibility to investigate and prosecute a serious crime?

Please pose my questions to election officials. I would love to hear their response.

Jan Nelson
Crow

THE REIGN OF FLUFF

In recognition of Scott Martinez's and Mark Robinowitz's letters Dec. 11 regarding oppression and journalist Gary Webb:

The other day I happened to catch that lying fool, Bill O'Reilly, state drably that people "have no interest in what's going on in the rest of the world," which is true to a degree, because he is the face and voice-piece of a media that no longer is interested in world news, only fluff that's "First, Live and Loco."

There was a time when foreign desks thrived, along with good journalism. Now it's corporate consolidation and the government's unabashed contempt for the people to hear and see what shock economics has wrought onto the world. In the absence of foreign desks, what reporting is left are AP snippets quoting anonymous sources from the Pentagon or officials, leaving any semblance of honesty invalid.

When a courageous journalist like Gary Webb exposed the government/CIA as the true drug criminals of the world, not the pimps and users they created in order to demonize and incarcerate, he highly threatened the power of government and industry to operate with impunity — so kill the messenger.

That is a message a coward like Bill O'Reilly respects if he's to keep his job. Gary Webb respected the message — and honest reporting — enough to bravely lose his job, and his life, for it.

Sean S. Doyle
Corvallis

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