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100 Years of Amoral

A Monday Morning Musing from Mickey, the Mercenary Geologist

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Amorality: *The lack of moral sense or principles:* Webster's New World Collegiate Dictionary.

Last month I had an interesting discussion with a very smart 17 year old Canadian boy; let's call him "The Kid." The Kid argued that torture of political prisoners, specifically "*water boarding*", is justified when terrorism a la 9-11 is a purported threat to the United States. I argued that any torture of any human being under any circumstance is unequivocally immoral.

At the time, I didn't even know what "*water boarding*" was but listened to his description and was absolutely appalled that my government would condone such inhumane tactics. For some reason, I have naively thought we Americans were better than the fascist Japanese at Bataan or the communist North Vietnamese in the Hanoi Hilton.

As an aside, I don't agree with much of John McCain's politics but he is a Man's man and he absolutely has the right take on the issue of torture.

After going a few rounds, The Kid and I finally agreed to disagree.

The Kid still lives in the nest and I have observed that Fox News is a constant companion in his household. It's likely he has never been exposed to all sides and perhaps is not yet old enough to question and think independently. Hell, my parents are staunch Republicans so I was a Nixon supporter at age 16. But then I went to off to college and became a McGovern campaign worker at age 20.

I suspect that when The Kid starts college at the University of Chicago next year and gets bombarded by the other, equally as biased and equally as dangerous ultra-left wing of the American political spectrum, his views on the morality of torture may tend to change. I certainly hope so because he really is A Good Kid.

In 1902, America was involved in a war to suppress rebellion in the Philippines, which the U.S. had taken from Spain in the Spanish-American war, then decided to keep for itself instead of granting the Filipinos their promised independence. That imperialism outraged American author, icon, and moralist Mark Twain. So did "*the torturing of Filipinos by the awful 'water cure'.*"

He wrote: *“To make them confess—what? Truth? Or lies? How can one know which it is they are telling? For under unendurable pain a man confesses anything that is required of him, true or false, and his evidence is worthless.”*

(For more about Twain’s contributions to American thought and society, see the July 14 issue of Time magazine.)

So lo and behold, we’ve actually been doing this to our *“enemies”* for over 100 years!

How long will it be before our *amoral* United States government imprisons law-abiding but dissenting American citizens without trial, conviction, and sentence and applies their newly coined euphemism for the horrible drowning torture, *“water boarding”*, to extract *“confessions”* from those of us who dare to freely speak our minds and disagree with their socio-fascist policies?

It is totally incomprehensible to me, and was also to Mark Twain more than a century ago, that there is a debate in our free society over whether torture of political prisoners is just or unjust and should be allowed or banned.

It is blatantly unconstitutional in the United State of America to imprison people for their political views. A government that purports to support the intrinsic rights of the people to live free and without undo interference from that very government cannot tolerate such atrocities.

The Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution is considered by my fellow Americans to be the foundation of our inherent freedoms and that which distinguishes us from all other nations on the face of the Earth.

The Sixth Amendment states: *“In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district where in the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defense.”*

I can only hope that our freedoms remain as sacrosanct to our government leaders today as they were to our Founding Fathers 221 years ago.

Oh, I almost forgot to tell you: The Kid is half Filipino.

Apparently even the descendants of betrayed and conquered peoples have forgotten past injustices and are now infected with the very same amorality as their once hated imperialist conquerors.

Que lastima.

Ciao for now,

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